

The Sunday before the Nativity
The Sunday of the Holy Fathers
Matthew 1:25

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS. (KJV)

The Sunday before the Feast of the Nativity

The present Gospel brings believers to the threshold of the celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ. The Gospel inspires believers to reflect on Joseph's experience with the angel in a dream.

The virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ was revealed to Joseph. The action of the Holy Spirit is verified. Joseph learned Jesus' name and was encouraged to take Mary as his wife. Jesus was to save His people from their sins.

During the remaining days of the Nativity Fast believers have the opportunity to search deep within their hearts and minds about Jesus' virgin birth and His purpose in saving His people from their sins.

Believers benefit by considering the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives in creating new life. Jesus' saving His people from their sins continues to the present day.

The birth of Jesus Christ is considered to be contemporary, taking place in the present. The Church proclaims "God is with us" on the Feast of the Nativity. Jesus Christ is present to save every person as a sinner.

Considering personal sinfulness during this week can lead to repentance and embracing the New Born Christ Child. Each Feast of the Nativity is New! Each experience with Jesus Christ is New!

Believers embracing Christ on the Feast of the Nativity become New in Christ. The Church provides believers with the opportunity to experience repentance of sins and newness in Jesus Christ.

The hunger in the soul draws believers to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ satisfies the hunger in the soul. Peace comes upon the believer when repentance occurs and Christ fills the soul.

Barriers arise during the course of life. Jesus Christ helps believers find ways to overcome the barriers and experience peace. Newness in Christ can arise from tragedies and unexpected hardships.

Jesus Christ's love transcends barriers and tragedies in life. Jesus Christ's birth changed the course of history. Believers benefit from focusing exclusively on Jesus Christ in the remaining days of the Nativity Fast.

Personal self-examination benefits believers looking deep with the heart, mind and soul to ensure Jesus Christ is first and foremost. Joy abounds in believers' lives when Jesus Christ is foremost in life.

The Feast the Nativity is at hand. Let us ready ourselves to greet the New Born Christ Child. Anticipate the joy that comes from knowing "God is with us" Newness in Christ is here!

The Sunday of the Holy Fathers. St. Boniface. Serbian Fathers' Day. December 19/January 1, 2022. Father Rodney Torbic