

EPISTLE READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Apostolic Reading is from Saint Paul's second letter to the Hebrews Chapter 11, Verse 9-10, 32-40: BRETHREN, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

GOSPEL READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Gospel Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew Chapter 1, Verses 1-25: The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES: We will hold Hierarchical Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity this Wednesday, December 25. Orthros will begin at 9am, followed by Liturgy at 10:15am. His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos will preside. We look forward to celebrating Christmas together. Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

MATCHING DONATION OPPORTUNITY: An anonymous donor has generously contributed \$50,000.00 to the Annunciation Cathedral Building Fund and challenged our community to match this amount by December 31, 2024. This is a unique opportunity to raise at least \$100,000.00 toward the completion of our new Cathedral. Every dollar donated will be fully restricted to the Building Fund and used exclusively to bring our shared vision to life. Contributions made during the 2024 calendar year may also provide tax benefits. Join us in meeting this challenge and help us create a lasting legacy for future generations! Donate today and double your impact.

STEWARDSHIP: As the year comes to a close, we are thankful for your support of the Cathedral. Now is the time to review your statements that arrived in the mail and finish your pledging for 2024. We will launch our 2025 Stewardship on Sunday, January 12.

AN INVITATION TO HOST COFFEE HOUR: As part of our revitalized coffee hour program, we're calling on all ministries, organizations, and our parishioners (individually or in teams!) to sign up to host one or more coffee hours over the course of the year. We'll supply the coffee/ cream/ sugar, tablecloths, napkins, utensils - and you supply the goodies (e.g., pastries, donuts, bagels & cream cheese, small sandwiches, fruit/vegetable/cheese platters and assorted dips, or other similar items). We're currently seeking hosts for the month of December (29th) and January (19th and 26th). Please reach out to Irene Melitas (irene.melitas@annunciation.org, or, 925.212.8561) to sign-up and learn more.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN: Every third Tuesday of the month, we come together to prepare, serve, and share a hot meal with those in our neighborhood. Our next gathering will take place on Tuesday, January 21. If you are interested in volunteering, please sign up at www.annunciation.org/community-kitchen-signup. You can also support this ministry by making a financial donation at <https://www.annunciation.org/community-kitchen-donate>

PHILOPTOCHOS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Christmas Bake Sale-Philoptochos will be selling premade boxes of pastries after church. \$25/box. No preorders.

Vasilopita Orders-Place your order for vasilopita prior to Dec 15th. Pick up date is Dec 22nd. Order forms available near the pangari or place your order after church at the Philoptochos table.

Vasilopita Breakfast-The breakfast is hosted by the Cathedral and will be catered by Stella's Catering. Come celebrate the New Year.

Crab Feed-Our annual crab feed will be held Friday, Jan 31, 2025. An Early Bird special price of \$90/person during the month of December 2024 is being offered. The price will jump to \$100/person beginning January 1, 2025. Pick up a flyer near the pangari or place your reservation after church at the Philoptochos table.

