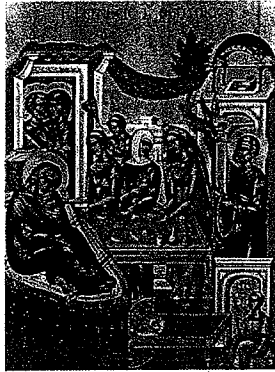


The Olive Shoots
St. Symeon Orthodox Church
September 7, 2014
(Feast on September 8, 2014)
✦Nativity of the Theotokos✦



“This day is the beginning of all holy days!”
- Saint Andrew of Crete

www.theoliveshoots.webstarts.com

Schedule:

Monday-Liturgy for the feast at 10:00 am



Troparion Tone 4

Thy nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole
universe.

The Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from
Thee, O Theotokos.

By annulling the curse he bestowed a blessing.
By destroying death he has granted us eternal life.

Kontakion Tone 4

By thy nativity, O most pure virgin,
Joachim and Anna are freed from barrenness;
Adam and Eve from the corruption of death.
And we, thy people, freed from the guilt of sin, celebrate
and sing to thee:

The barren woman gives birth to the Theotokos, the
Nourisher of our Life.

Today's Bible Verse:

"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

- Luke 11: 28

The Nativity of the Theotokos

Joachim and Anna were a loving couple, faithful to God and devoted to each other. But the long years of their marriage had never brought them a child. They prayed daily for the blessing of a son or daughter, but the years went by and no child was born.

In the Hebrew society of Joachim and Anna's time, the greatest of all earthly blessings was to have many children. So, as you might guess, not having any children was a very big problem. People looked at a couple with no children as having failed to earn God's favor. In fact, we are told that one day when Joachim went to worship and make an offering to God, he was turned away because he was not a father, and therefore he was not worthy to make an offering. There was nothing Joachim could do but go slowly and sadly back home.

You can imagine how painful it was for Joachim and Anna to live without children. They watched their friends rejoice when babies were born, laughing and playing with them. They saw others have the joy and pride that comes with watching children grow up and start lives of their own.

But Joachim and Anna did not blame God. They were not angry at their friends' happiness as parents. They patiently waited and prayed, and God did something nobody would expect. When Anna and Joachim were old, He gave them a child. And she was not just any child. She was to have the most wonderful destiny that any human being has ever had: she would be the Theotokos, the Birthgiver, the Mother of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Theotokos is prefigured in the Old Testament in many ways. She is shown in the Burning Bush that burned yet was not consumed. She is seen in a vision by Ezekiel as the East Gate through which the Prince enters. Jacob sees her in his vision of a ladder connection Earth to Heaven. The Jar of Manna that was carried in the Ark of the Covenant. All these things came to be true. She is the Holy Theotokos!

[-http://dce.oca.org](http://dce.oca.org)

NATIVITY OF THE
THEOTOKOS

