

Oct 16, 2004 - THEOTOKOS - St. John  
the Baptist, Ottawa - Zi topic #2 5 P.M.

Theotokos - the one who brought  
forth God.

Bohorodyt'sya - Mother of God -

- the one who brought the Son,  
the Eternal Word of God, through  
whom all things were created,  
into his own creation.

What does the Bible say?

Luke: the Annunciation at Nazareth.

Gabriel is sent to a young  
virgin - Mary was probably  
about 15 years old or so.

- she was betrothed to Joseph -

- she (+ Joseph) were of the family  
of David.

→

Luke: 1:30-37 " But the angel said: 'Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus (Yeshua - Joshua = Saviour). He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the Kingdom of David, his father; he will rule over the people of Jacob forever and his reign shall have no end.

Then Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be if I am a virgin?' And the angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the holy child to be born shall be called son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible.'

note virgin - attempts have been made to translate almah in Isaiah 7:14 as young girl and note virgin -  
① note that a young girl getting pregnant would not be perceived as a "sign" (miracle) (e.g.)

② When the Septuagint was translated from Hebrew into Greek - the word almah was translated as parthenos = virgin, i.e. 250 years before the birth of Christ, the ~~pro~~ translation of Isaiah's prophecy was understood as virgin and not just young maiden.

- note Joseph adopts Jesus; so Jesus even through Joseph is legitimately considered a descendant of David.

In Matthew's gospel, Joseph considers divorcing Mary secretly since he knows that he (Joseph) is not

responsible for Mary's pregnancy.

What does LUKE say about MARY? :

- ① Annunciation of Jesus.
- ② The visitation - Mary visits Elizabeth: The Magnificat.
- ③ The birth of Jesus at Bethlehem.
- ④ The presentation of Jesus in the temple (40 days)
- ⑤ Jesus teaching in the temple at age 12.

What does MATTHEW say about Mary? :

- ① Joseph is not Jesus' biological father.
- ② The holy family lived in Egypt.
- ③ The holy family settled in Nazareth.

What does JOHN say about Mary?

- ① Wedding at Cana.
- ② Jesus gives Mary over to John's care.

- this tells us that Mary did not have other children (at least not living.)

How do we know about the virginity of Mary and her being overshadowed by the Spirit of God?

Without doubt from herself or from Joseph she fore he died, but he apparently died before Jesus began his public ministry.

( Joseph's first marriage was to Salome  
James - Jesus - Simon & Jude )

There are so many beliefs about Mary that are not in the Bible. Don't ~~or~~ our important beliefs have to be in the Bible?

No - at least that's what the Bible says.

John 21:25 "But Jesus did many other things, if all were written down, the world itself would not hold the books recording them."

Luke 24:27 "Then starting with Moses and going through the prophets, he explained to them everything in the Scripture concerning himself"

Where are these explanations to be found in the Bible? - nowhere - we must go to oral tradition - to the fathers of the Church.

Luke 24:45 "Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." -

Where is this information recorded in the Bible? - Nowhere -  
- The Church exists before the NT canon (4<sup>th</sup> cent)  
We must, therefore, look to the earliest generations of Christians to find these explanations and interpretations.

We must look to Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, Irenaeus of Lyons, Clement, Justin, Hippolytos and others of the apostolic and sub-apostolic age.

- Mary lived with John -  
presumably, they talked about Jesus - John probably got quite a bit of information about Jesus from Mary -

- Polycarp hears John preach -
- Irenaeus hears Polycarp preach
- Irenaeus ~~to~~ goes to Gaul (France)  
etc.

The Apocrypha is also a source for a lot of tradition, but we must follow the fathers very carefully; since much in the apocrypha is fantastic and erroneous.

Nevertheless, there is some authentic oral tradition in the apocrypha.

The sources for the major Marian feasts are in the apocrypha.

The sources for:

The Birth of the Theotokos (Sept 8)  
 Her conception by St. Anne (Dec 9)  
 Her entrance into the Temple (Nov 21)  
 Her Dormition (Aug. 15 -  
 are found in →



The Protoevangelium of James  
Pseudo Matthew  
The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary  
The Falling asleep of Mary  
The Passing of Mary.

Most of this accepted apocryphal  
~~and~~ teaching is found in  
the liturgical hymnography.

The kontakia of Romanos  
the melodist.

St. Ephraim the Syrian

St. Cassiane the Monk

St. George of Nicomedia

St. Germanos of Constantinople

St. John Mavropous, Metropolitan  
of Euchaites

St. Joseph the hymnographer

St. Theodore the Studite

Anatolios

Andrew of Pyros

Basil the monk

Byzas

Leo the Master.

Jacob of Serug<sup>16</sup>

Much of the theological insight is found in the dogmatica at vespers.

- the theotokia for each day -
- the akafists.
- molebens -
- canons.

Basic dogmas about the Theotokos -

- ① perpetual virginity
- ② called Theotokos -

R.C. - ③ Immaculate Conception

④ Assumption - Dormition  
↓  
hope for us

Mary is a type of the Church - as the Mother of Christ she is the mother of the Church for the Church is the Body of Christ -

She is God's most perfect creature -

All the angels and saints combined  
are not as holy as Mary,  
- she is a model of SYNERGY-cooperation  
Iconography - Mary's centrality  
is not separated from her  
role as Theotokos - she is  
almost always depicted with  
Christ.

- ①. Platytera - more spacious  
than all the heavens
- ②. Odigitria - she who points  
the way.

Without Jesus - ① Seven Swords  
piercing her.

② Protection -

Sat. Nov. 13, 2004 St. John the Baptist, Ottawa  
Topic #3 - Reclaiming Christmas.

We are getting into what is called the "Holiday Season" — In the secular world the party begins when Santa Claus arrives right about now and continues, reaching a crescendo & then coming to an abrupt halt on Dec. 25. It might linger for a few more days, but for all intents and purposes it's over on Dec 25.

This is the exact opposite of not only what we should be doing as Christians, but has, since time immemorial, been the normal practice for all cultures.

— You prepare for the feast & then you begin celebrating on the actual day of the feast. 20

The secular culture which presently predominates seems to do <sup>many things</sup> every thing upside down, inside out and backwards.

This reality presents us with a great challenge, since we have a highly developed sense of the sanctification of time. The period from Nov 15 - Dec. 24 is for us a time of prayer and fasting. We do not celebrate the feast until it happens. (and then we pull out all the stops.)

- What we must work at is a major paradigm shift -
- this we will do mostly among ourselves + with family + friends, periodically expressing our position to

the broader culture.

We can start by taking a look at terminology.

For as long as I can remember the Knights of Columbus have been advertizing: "Keep Christ in Christmas."

The fact is that Christmas, by definition, is the feast of the birth of Christ. For so many today Christmas is just an excuse for a party.

Consider using the term: "Birth of Christ." Get into the habit of saying this to Christians.

- Use your brains in a pluralistic society -  
rabbi - / me. Hanukkah Christmas

This is different from going along with the secular flow.

A.M.°K - at mall - Happy Holiday -  
- have a nice celebration of the Birth of Christ.

- Santa Claus - means St. Nicholas -  
- but really only if you're Dutch or German -

Santa Claus is a pathetic secular parody of a very holy bishop who participated in the first ecumenical council.

- He was bishop of Myra - near Demre - & was known for his love for the poor -

The giving of gifts to the poor started as an authentic Christian custom & has been cheapened - when G. I had to give <sup>steamed</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to five</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>days</sup>

Our present ~~Coca~~ Santa Claus was created by Coca Cola -

Always call him Saint Nicholas  
- even in the secular world.

- this avoids trauma of  
children finding out that  
the fat elf isn't real -  
Saint Nicholas is real.

- present custom of St.  
Nicholas arriving on  
Dec 24/25 instead of Dec 6  
is from New York City - expl.

- In Greece small gifts  
are given by St. Basil  
on Jan. 1 - cash in on sales

Respecting sacred time.

We actually don't have a  
liturgical season called Advent,  
but simply a 40 day fast  
named for St. Philip. (Nov 19)  
→



The traditional fast is from meat & dairy products - fish & oil are normally permitted -

We should especially try to avoid foods associated with Christmas until Dec. 24/25 -  
e.g. Christmas candy - eggnog.

- We should also try to avoid Christmas parties - this is not always the easiest thing to do -

- big problem - they serve meat. but more people are vegetarian today -

- if possible suggest party after Christmas -  
many people might welcome this especially if they're exhausted from too many Advent parties -

try to minimize commercial  
influence - be in control -  
minimize trips to mall -

Advertising works - Christmas  
is magic - but once the  
feast arrives, not before.

- T.V. ads etc. - try to  
diminish secularism +  
consumerism + increase  
Christian influence -

- Christmas tree - tree of  
life - tree of Jesse +  
burning bush - tree of the  
cross.

- decorations - Christmas  
balls - "DECAL IT" - 100  
prints  
crosses -

Candy canes - staff of St.  
Nicholas - Mom's altar - kids  
visiting got a candy cane.  
Call it St. Nicholas staff

Christmas cards - if you send them - never send secular cards even to your atheist friends.

Some people are getting fed up - it's getting expensive & it's the last thing they want to do at the beginning of December -

It's good to keep in touch - to let people know you're thinking of them - If you enjoy it at Christmas - do it - or try Easter instead.

Gifts - some people are finding the expense ridiculous.  
- strict Ukrainian tradition gives no gifts for the Birth of Christ but only

small ones for St. Nicholas -  
- some people have the  
\$100. - Christmas. -

possibilities for gifts -

- Dec. 6 - St. Nicholas -
- Dec 24/25 - The Magi or  
St. Nicholas -
- Jan. 1 St. Basil the  
Great (e.g. Greece)

R. Mike.