

*SUNDAY OF THE FOREFATHERS 12/11/22*

Saturday: 5:30 PM (E) ✱ Jean Ferko (req. by Mike Ferko)

Sunday: 8:30 AM (G) ✱ Debbie Pangratz (req. by Don & Pauline Kowalski)  
11:00 AM (E) For the People of Ukraine*CONFESSIONS*

Wednesday: 7-7:30 PM (G)

Friday: 7-7:30 PM (E)

*SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS OF THE HOLY ANCESTORS 12/18/22*

Saturday: 5:30 PM (E) ✱ Jean Ferko (req. by Nancy KomisarSKI &amp; Family)

Sunday: 8:30 AM (G) ✱ John and ✱ Mary Antolik (req. by Mary Tammaro)  
11:00 AM (E) ✱ Mary Beth Smogorzewski (req. by Don & Pauline Kowalski)**OUR RETURN TO THE LORD FOR ALL HE HAS GIVEN US:**

12/04/22 \$914.00

**CHRISTIAN CUPBOARD DECEMBER COLLECTION – Hot Chocolate/Cocoa Mix**

Please check the expiration dates. Expired items cannot be distributed.

**GOD WITH US ONLINE**

The Eastern Catholic Directors of Religious Education Association has established an online religious education site: God With Us Online. This offers catechetical programs with some of the most talented teachers of the faith. You can register for free online classes at [www.easterncatholic.org](http://www.easterncatholic.org). Descriptions are given for the various subjects and dates of the classes. All classes begin at 8 PM (EST).

**ANGEL GIVING TREE – Today is the last day to donate!**

The funds collected will be sent to Second Harvest Food Bank which supplies food to soup kitchens, shelters, and food pantries throughout Erie County.

*Prayer to Sts. Cyril & Methodius*

*O Holy Slavonic Apostles, Cyril and Methodius, you led those lost souls and us with them from the darkness of pagan error to the light of the true faith of Christ. Now you rejoice with Christ in heaven. We rejoice in your glory, with which God has rewarded your untiring zeal. We humbly thank Him for the great gift of Christianity which our heavenly Father has bestowed upon us through your efforts. Intercede with God for us who are unworthy descendants of Adam. Grant that we may be strengthened in the true faith which you preached in the Slavic lands. Amen.*

**THE ANCESTORS OF JESUS**

The ancestors of our Lord are our ancestors, for by the Incarnation, we are made members of God's own Family. Genesis 9 informs us that everyone is a descendant of Noah. All the nations of the earth are born of one of Noah's sons: Shem, Ham, or Japheth.

Noah had three sons, but God chose only one of them for a special mission and purpose. God singled out a chosen family, the line of Shem, to receive his blessing. "Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem." Shem is the progenitor, the grandfather, so to speak, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the fathers of God's chosen people: the Shemites, a.k.a. the Semites (from this comes the term "antisemitism").

God promised Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed through his family. Jesus Christ, Savior of the world is the promised descendant of this very special family. Jesus is the great blessing produced by Shem's family.

*Jesus - The Sun of Righteousness*

In the Roman Empire, December 25 was the feast of the unconquered sun. This was the winter solstice festival at the conclusion of the weeklong celebration of Saturnalia, the feast of Saturn the sun god. As winter comes on the days get shorter: the forces of darkness are defeating the sun. But with the winter solstice, the days cease getting shorter and start recovering. The sun remains unconquered and begins its slow recovery. These events are a natural fit for the Christian community looking to spread the message of Christ.

The Church saw the good elements of the people's worship of the sun and transferred these to the Sun of Righteousness. The acknowledgement of the power of nature in the dawn of the new day, the gift-giving to friends and neighbors and the celebration of life itself – all were part of this pagan festival week.

Just as St. Paul tells those worshipping the "unknown God" in Acts all about Jesus Christ, the Church asked Romans to reconsider their worship of the sun and transfer this to the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus.

*ANOINTED - MESSIAH - CHRIST*

Israel could not forget God's promise that a son of David would rule over His people forever. In the period after the exile, as Jews pondered the Scriptures, there arose a hope that God would somehow raise up a new leader from David's descendants who could re-establish a kingdom that would last forever. Psalm 89 (especially verses 2-5 and 20-52) calls upon God to keep His promise. As the actual government of the Holy Land passed from Persians to Greeks to Romans, expectation grew. Since kings were anointed rather than crowned in Israel, the person hoped for came to be known as "the Anointed." From the Hebrew form of that word comes the title "Messiah" while the Greek form gives us the title "Christ."

**AIM HIGH**

What can I, a weak fragile sinner, do? God says to you: do not be afraid of holiness, do not be afraid to aim high, to let yourself be loved and purified by God, do not be afraid to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit. Let us be infected by the holiness of God. It is the meeting of our weakness with the strength of his grace; it is having faith in his action that allows us to live in charity, to do everything with joy and humility, for the glory of God and as a service to our neighbor.

–Pope Francis