

“They fell down and worshiped Him.”



The Children's Word

“Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven.” Mark 10:14

Sunday, December 25, 2016

Volume 4, Issue 52

A Ministry of the
Orthodox Christian Network



Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh

Have you ever had trouble finding the perfect Christmas gift for somebody? It's hard to find something that would really fit somebody perfectly.



Today is the feastday of the Nativity, the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ! In the Gospel reading, we hear how when the wise men came to worship the baby Jesus, they brought Him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Is that the kind of present *you* would give to a new baby? Probably not!

But these three gifts really were the perfect gifts for our Lord, because they have extra special meanings behind them! Why did they give gold, frankincense, and myrrh? Well, one of the saints of our Church, Saint Irenaeus, explained just why! Gold was for Christ, because He is King. The incense was given because He is God. (Remember, we use incense when we worship God.) And the myrrh reminds us of how Jesus would die for us. People would put sweet-smelling myrrh on the bodies when they had died. (Remember the myrrh-bearing women?)

These three gifts really were the perfect gifts, because they show just *who* this holy baby, our Lord Jesus Christ, was!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- FRANKINCENSE
- GIFTS
- GOLD
- GREAT FEAST
- MYRRH
- NATIVITY
- SYNAXIS
- THEOTOKOS
- WISE MEN

Y E A K N Y U Q A Q G T X S S
 O S V N D A N Q J Y S I Y T Q
 P N J O M M T L K A D N F O Q
 V E H R R Y M I E C A K W W F
 E C T F B D S F V X J E I F T
 S N Q M J Q T T I I U J S U O
 Y I L G J A Z S F H T Z E D K
 K K U O E T M J T I U Y M L U
 P N T R U V H K F C G K E O R
 Q A G B Q S Q Y W U F B N G G
 Q R T H E O T O K O S A B F Z
 O F A X M R X T T L E O R Y Y
 K Z W A D D Q K B H N A U L P
 J M H Z P Z N L V G U P V H A
 C T M U A S P O H I V U G S Z

MARY, THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

WHAT'S A SYNAXIS?

Have you ever played a little game, “What does it make you think of?” When you say a word, the other person has to think of a word it makes him think about. So, if you heard “dog,” you might say “cat.” If you heard “king,” you might say “queen” or “crown” or “throne.”



When we think about Christmas and the birth of Jesus Christ, we can't help but think about one other person, too. Who? Well, Mary, the Mother of God, of course! Today, we celebrate the Nativity, the birth of Christ. But tomorrow, the feast continues! We celebrate His mother.

In our Church, we call it the “synaxis” of the Theotokos. That word, synaxis, means “coming together.” For many, many years, faithful Christians came together to celebrate some more. They came together to honor the person who made that day happen. We love Jesus's mother very much, and we honor her so many times during the year. We remember how she did what God wanted her to do—how she held God inside of her, how she took care of Jesus as a child, and how she stayed with Him, even when He died on the Cross.

So, today, when we think of what Christmas means, who else does it make you think about?

We celebrate the feastday of the Synaxis of the Theotokos, tomorrow, Dec. 26th.

What's in the icon?

On the first page, you can see the icon of the “Adoration of the Magi.” The wise men are adoring the new baby and bringing Him gifts!

This icon from Ethiopia tells the same story. Can you find their gifts?

