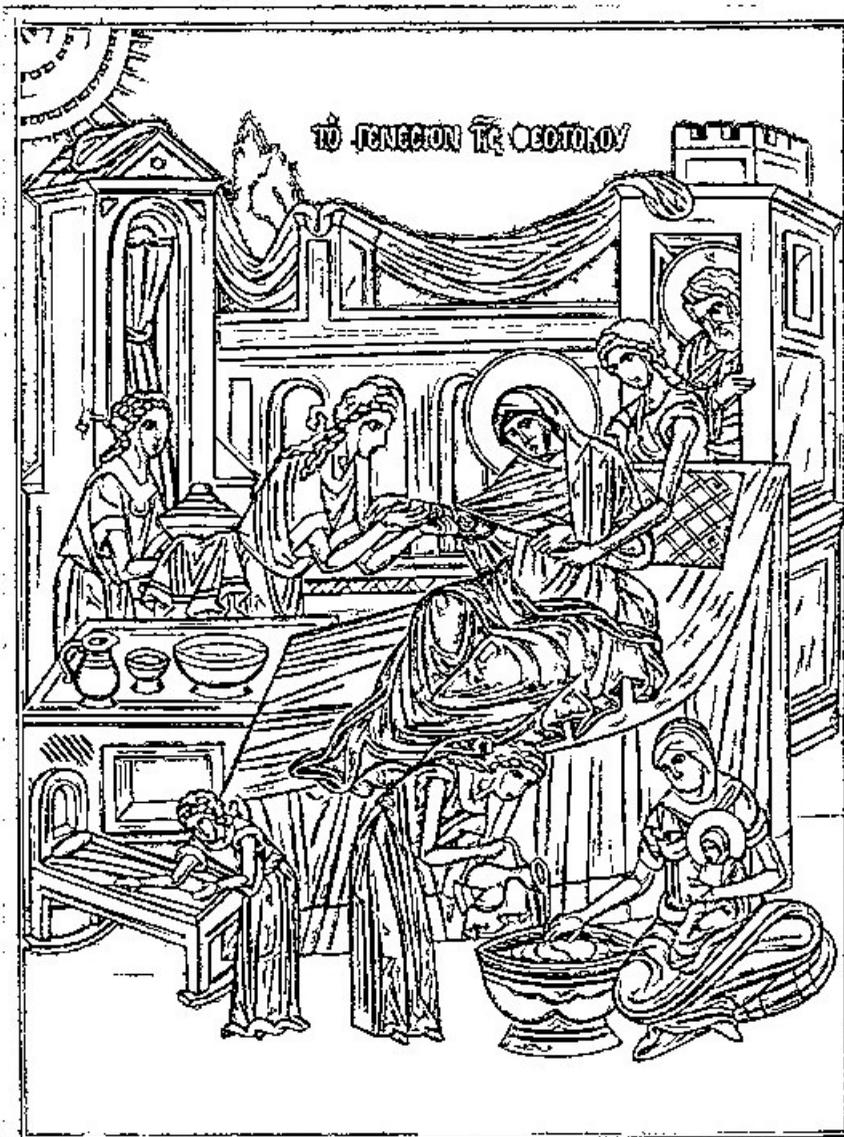


The Birth of the Theotokos



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2023 Alexandra Houck. Email is orthodoxchildrensword (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at myocn.net.

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

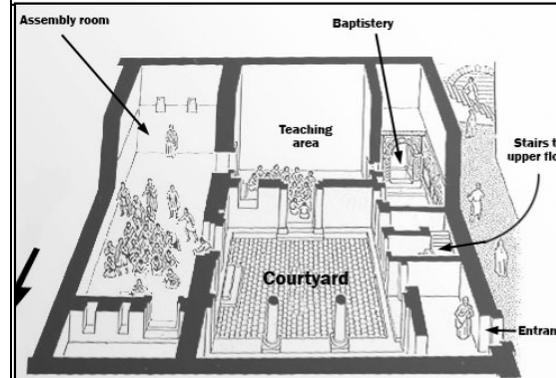
Sunday, September 3, 2023

Volume 11, Issue 36

A Ministry of the
Orthodox Christian Network



A church in a house?



This is what the inside of one house church looked like. It is from the year 245!

Have you ever visited a very big church? One where you felt very small, and the priest and the altar seemed very far away from you? Well, nowadays we have lots of Christians around us, our friends and our families especially. But after Christ lived on earth, the Christian Church had to grow and grow. Many people were still learning about who Jesus Christ was and what He did for us all!

In those years, there were no big huge churches. People gathered together in houses. They prayed together. They celebrated the Holy Eucharist (Communion). They ate together and learned about God together.

In today's Epistle reading, Saint Paul writes about some Christians who didn't worship in a big, huge church. He writes, "Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord." These two (Aquila and Prisca) were great helpers for Saint Paul. They loved God very much. They were very faithful and they wanted to tell other people about Him! So, they invited Christians to come together to worship in their house.

Archeologists have found some of these house churches from almost two thousand years ago!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Apostles
- Aquila
- Birthday
- Faithful
- Feastday
- House Church
- Mary
- Priscilla
- Saint Paul
- Worship

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

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

You don't see too many icons where saints are hugging! But here are Saints Joachim and Anna, the father and mother of baby Mary.

They are hugging because they loved each other as husband and wife. But they loved God even more!



THE BIRTHDAY OF MARY

THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

Is another school year starting for you? You probably know what you do on the first day of school, maybe even what you wear. Maybe your parents take a picture of you. You probably remember what you do on the last day of school, too, because maybe you look forward to it all year!



A new year has started in our Orthodox Church, too. Our year starts on September 1st. We remember the *first* great holiday of the year. It's the birthday of Mary, the Theotokos. Her parents, Saints Joachim and Anna, loved God very much and they prayed for years and years that God would give them a baby. They never gave up on God, even though it took so many years for their prayers to be answered! God was listening to them, and He answered their prayers in a very special way.

The very *last* great feastday of the year is about Mary, too. (We just celebrated it in August.) It's her Dormition, when she died and joined her Son, Jesus Christ, in heaven. So, remember the beginning and the end of the year are feastdays for our Holy Mother, because she brought Jesus Christ into the world. We can ask her to bless our school year—from beginning to end!

We celebrate this great feast on Friday, September 8th (OC: September 21st).