

THE PASTOR'S CORNER

THE GRANDPARENTS OF JESUS

Every Sunday following Labor Day has been designated "Grandparents Day" in our nation, a wonderful occasion to be reminded of how faith is often handed on through families, the first teachers of faith to their children. The writing that follows is an apocryphal (not scriptural) account of Our Lady's parents, the grandparents of Jesus, The Protoevangelium of James, was written around 120AD, some sixty years or so after the Dormition and Assumption of Mary.

We wish all our grandparents a blessed Grandparents Day!

The Birth of Mary the Holy Mother of God, and Very Glorious Mother of Jesus Christ.

In the records of the twelve tribes of Israel was Joachim, a man rich exceedingly; and he brought his offerings double, saying: There shall be of my superabundance to all the people, and there shall be the offering for my forgiveness to the Lord for a propitiation for me... And there stood over against him Rueben, saying: It is not meet for you first to bring your offerings, because you have not made seed in Israel. And Joachim was exceedingly grieved, and he went away.... And he called to mind the patriarch Abraham, that in the last day God gave him a son Isaac. And Joachim was exceedingly grieved, and did not come into the presence of his wife; but he retired to the desert, and there pitched his tent, and fasted forty days and forty nights, saying in himself: I will not go down either for food or for drink until the Lord my God shall look upon me...

And his wife Anna mourned in... two lamentations, saying: I shall bewail my widowhood; I shall bewail my childlessness.... Judith, her maid-servant, said: How long do you humiliate your soul? Behold, the great day of the Lord is at hand, and it is unlawful for you to mourn. And Anna was grieved exceedingly, and put off her garments of mourning, and cleaned her head, and put on her wedding garments, and about the ninth hour went down to the garden to walk. And she saw a laurel, and sat under it, and prayed to the Lord, saying: O God of our fathers, bless me and hear my prayer, as You blessed the womb of Sarah, and gave her a son Isaac....

And, behold, an angel of the Lord stood by, saying: Anna, Anna, the Lord has heard your prayer, and you shall conceive, and shall bring forth; and your seed shall be spoken of in all the world. And Anna said: As the Lord my God lives, if I beget either male or female, I will bring it as a gift to the Lord my God; and it shall minister to Him in

holy things all the days of its life. And, behold, two angels came, saying to her: Behold, Joachim, your husband, is coming with his flocks. For an angel of the Lord went down to him, saying: Joachim, Joachim, the Lord God has heard your prayer. Go down hence; for, behold, your wife Anna shall conceive.... And, behold, Joachim came with his flocks; and Anna stood by the gate, and saw Joachim coming, and she ran and hung upon his neck, saying: Now I know that the Lord God has blessed me exceedingly; for, behold the widow no longer a widow, and I the childless shall conceive.... And Joachim said: Now I know that the Lord has been gracious unto me, and has remitted all my sins. And he went down from the temple of the Lord justified.... And her months were fulfilled, and in the ninth month Anna brought forth. And she said to the midwife: What have I brought forth? And she said: A girl. And said Anna: My soul has been magnified this day. And she laid her down. And the days having been fulfilled, Anna was purified, and gave the breast to the child, and called her name Mary.

And the child grew strong day by day; and... when she was a year old, Joachim made a great feast, and invited the priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and all the people of Israel. And Joachim brought the child to the priests; and they blessed her, saying: O God of our fathers, bless this child, and give her an everlasting name to be named in all generations. And all the people said: So be it, so be it, amen. And he brought her to the chief priests; and they blessed her, saying: O God most high, look upon this child, and bless her with the utmost blessing, which shall be for ever.... And Anna made a song to the Lord God, saying: I will sing a song to the Lord my God, for He has looked upon me, and has taken away the reproach of mine enemies; and the Lord has given the fruit of His righteousness, singular in its kind, and richly endowed before Him....