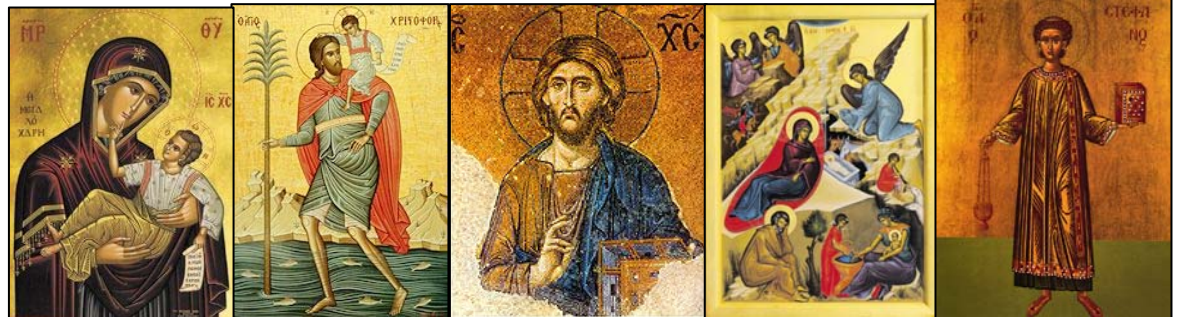




GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: www.goarch.org
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: www.atlanta.goarch.org
St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: www.saintchristopherhoc.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, *Chancellor*

Liturgical Guide for Thursday, December 26, 2013

ON THIS DAY, on the Eve of the Feast, we commemorate St. Stephen, Archdeacon & First Martyr (+34); Righteous Father Theodore the Confessor, brother of St. Theophanes the Hymnographer (+845); Righteous Father Theodore, Patriarch of Constantinople; Holy Priest-Martyr Maurice, and the other 70 martyred with him; and Righteous Father Luke of Triglia in Bithynia. *Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.*

Welcome, Visitors and Newcomers, to our Parish!

We invite you to enter your name, mail/email addresses in our Guest Register (near the entrance) if you are interested in joining and assisting with our mission's development. We want to keep you informed of our schedule and location of services. *You and your family are welcome; we look forward to knowing you. We invite you and your family to join and assist us often!* PLEASE CONSIDER THAT ONLY BAPTIZED AND CHRISMATED ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS IN CANONICAL GOOD STANDING MAY APPROACH FOR HOLY COMMUNION. ALL ARE INVITED TO PARTAKE OF THE ANTIDORON ("INSTEAD OF THE GIFTS") DISTRIBUTED AT THE CONCLUSION OF TODAY'S DIVINE LITURGY.

SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE

1./4. Hymn for St. Stephen, Archdeacon & 1st Martyr – (not in Hymnal):

It is sung *after* the Great Doxology and *after* the Small Entrance: St. Stephen, First Martyr of Christ God, the diadem of a King was given you for a crown for all you endured for Christ. Truly You put to shame Jews who were your persecutors. You have seen the Savior at the Right Hand of the Father; to Him cease not to pray for our souls.

2./3. Special Hymn for the Feast of the Blessed Birth of our Lord (sung before and after the Small Entrance) – (Hymnal-pp.198-201):

“Your birth, O Christ our God, shines forth on all the world with the light of knowledge. For at Your Birth, those who had adored the stars were taught by a star to worship You, the Sun of Justice, and to know You, the Dawn from on high. O Lord, glory to You.”

5. Hymn Commemorating St. Christopher – (see music distributed):

It is sung after the Small Entrance: Made comely with garments woven from your venerable blood, you stand before the Lord, the King of Heaven and earth, O famed Martyr Christopher. With the choirs of Angels and the Martyrs you chant, singing the thrice-holy hymn and most awesome praises. Thus, by your intercessions with God, save us, your servants.

6. Kontakion of the Blessed Birth of our Lord – (Hymnal-pp.244-247):

It is sung after the Small Entrance: Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth presents a cave to the Unapproachable One. Angels with shepherds give Him glory; wise men follow a star as they journey to Him who is God from all ages, yet for our sake is born as a little child.

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY

The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts. – St. John Chrysostom

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60)

⁸*Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.* ⁹*Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen.* ¹⁰*But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.* ¹¹*Then they secretly instigated some men to say, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.”* ¹²*They stirred up the people as well as the*

elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. ¹³They set up false witnesses who said, “This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; ¹⁴for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us.” ¹⁵And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel. ⁷Then the high priest asked him, “Are these things so?” ²And Stephen replied: “Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, ³and said to him, ‘Leave your country and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you.’ ⁴Then he left the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God had him move from there to this country in which you are now living. ⁵He did not give him any of it as a heritage, not even a foot’s length, but promised to give it to him as his possession and to his descendants after him, even though he had no child. ⁴⁷But it was Solomon who built a house for him. ⁴⁸Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with human hands; as the prophet says, ⁴⁹‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? ⁵⁰Did not my hand make all these things?’ ⁵¹”You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. ⁵²Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. ⁵³You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.” ⁵⁴When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. ⁵⁵But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶“Look,” he said, “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he died.

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Matt. 21:33-42)

³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country.³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce.³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another.³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way.³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.⁴⁰Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”⁴¹They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’?”

And on this the eleventh year of celebrating the Feast of St. Stephen at our St. Christopher’s parish community, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women and children, if we commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia area for the glory of God!

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

(In celebration of the Feast of the Nativity, the period from 12/25-1/4 is fast free.)

Thursday, December 26 (Feast of St. Stephen, Archdeacon & First Martyr):

4:00 p.m. Great Vespers Service

4:45 p.m. Divine Liturgy

Friday, December 27 – Monday, December 30 – Metropolis of Atlanta Winter Youth Rally - Atlanta, GA - Fr. George will be involved all - day with this event

Sunday, December 29 (Sunday after the Nativity of our Lord):

7:45 am Orthros Service

9:00 am Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship Reception

11:00 am Let’s EAT™ Join us at Broadway Diner, 535 S. Glynn St., Suite 1009, Fayetteville, GA 30214 on Sunday, December 29th, 11:45 a.m.

Tuesday, December 31 (Eve - Circumcision of our Lord/St. Basil/New Year’s):

4:00 pm Great Vespers Service

4:45 pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil/Doxology on the 1st of the Year & Blessing of the Vasilopita

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!