



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: www.goarch.org

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St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



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

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, December 13, 2009

ON THIS DAY, THE 11TH SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES the Holy Forefathers/Ancestors of Christ; Glorious Holy Martyrs Eustratios, Auxentios, Eugenios, Mardarios, and Orestes of Sebaste (+305-310); Holy Martyr Loukia the Virgin (+304); Righteous Father Arsenios of Latro; Holy Priest New-Martyr Gabriel, Archbishop of Serbia (+1659); and St. Herman the Wonderworker of Alaska & First Saint of America. *Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.*

Welcome, Visitors and Newcomers, to our Mission 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./2. Resurrectional Hymn (Second Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.102-105):

It is sung *before* and *after* the Small Entrance: When You descended into death, Life immortal, You vanquished the power of hell by your resplendent divinity, and when You raised the dead from the depths of darkness, all the heavenly powers cried out triumphantly: O giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You.

3. Hymn for Sunday of the Forefathers of Christ – (Hymnal-pp.186-189):

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: By their faith You justified Your ancestors, Christ our God, and through them, of old You betrothed to Yourself the Church brought together from the nations. Let these saints rejoice in glory, for from their seed has come forth a noble fruit, she who gave You birth without seed. Through their prayers, Christ our God, save our souls.

4. Hymn Commemorating St. Christopher – (see handout):

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.

5. Kontakion – Preparation for the Nativity (11/26-12/24) – (Hymnal-pp.240-243):

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: Today the Virgin goes forth, making her way to a cave where from her, ineffably, God the eternal Word will be born.

Let the world be filled with joy, hearing these tidings. Joining the angels and shepherds, let us give glory to Him who is God from all ages, yet wills to be seen 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

Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (Luke 24:12-35)

But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened. Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. And He said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed Him over to be condemned to death and crucified Him. But we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find His body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Him." Then He said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into His glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them the things about Himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, He walked

ahead as if He were going on. But they urged Him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So He went in to stay with them. When He was at the table with them, He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was talking to us on the road, while He was opening the Scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and He has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how He had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Col. 3:4-11)

Col. 3:4 When Christ Who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. 5 Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient. 7 These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life. 8 But now you must get rid of all such things — anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive language from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices 10 and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. 11 In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Luke 14:16-24; Matt. 22:14)

Then Jesus said to him, "Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my regrets.' Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my regrets.' Another said, 'I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.' So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry

and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' And the slave said, 'Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.' Then the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

(TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

"and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you." (*Ephesians 4:32*)

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

Today's Special Commemoration:



The Holy Forefathers/ Ancestors of Christ

On the Sunday that occurs on or immediately after the eleventh of this month, we commemorate Christ's forefathers according to the flesh, both those that came before the Law, and those that lived after the giving of the Law.

Special commemoration is made of the Patriarch Abraham, to whom the promise was first given, when God said to him, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18). This promise was given some two thousand years before Christ, when Abraham was seventy-five years of age. God called him and commanded him to forsake his country, parents, and kinsmen, and to depart to the land of the

Canaanites. When he arrived there, God told him, "I will give this land to thy seed" (Gen. 12:7); for this cause, that land was called the "Promised Land," which later became the country of the Hebrew people, and which is also called Palestine by the historians. There, after the passage of twenty-four years, Abraham received God's law concerning circumcision. In the one hundredth year of his life, when Sarah was in her ninetieth year, they became the parents of Isaac. Having lived 175 years altogether, he reposed in peace, a venerable elder full of days.

Stewardship 2010

We thank George Psihountas for offering the Stewardship Presentation last Sunday. We also thank all families who have offered their 2010 Stewardship Commitment Card in response. If you have not done so already, please place your envelope in today's offering tray or in the basket in the entrance area. Extra cards/envelopes are available. *Every parish family is asked to support our Stewardship Program!*

Everyone is invited to join us for our

Annual Community Christmas Program "A Christmas Box" & Lenten Luncheon

Immediately following Next Sunday's church services at 10:30 a.m. on December 20th.

*Please bring a Lenten dish to share
with your family and five others!*

And on this the two hundred and ninety-eighth Sunday of 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

Nativity Fast from November 15 – December 24

Sunday, December 13 (11th Sunday of St. Luke):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- 10:30 a.m. Hands of Love – St. John the Wonderworker Christmas Collection
[We are collecting toys, hats, scarves, and mittens for kids and teens]
- 10:30 a.m. Parish Council Elections (*polls close at 1:00 p.m.*)
- 10:45 a.m. Religious Education Classes
- 11:30 a.m. Christmas Program Rehearsal for “A Christmas Box”
- 11:45 a.m. Parish Council Meeting
- 7:00 p.m. Ecumenical Service at Annunciation Cathedral – with Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta & Archbishop Wilton Gregory of Atlanta and our choirs

Wednesday, December 16 (Eve of Feast - Feast of Daniel the Prophet & the 3 Holy Youths):

- Afternoon Sacrament of Holy Confession for children and adults
(telephone Fr. George, 770/381-1842 to schedule appointment IN ADVANCE)
- 6:30 p.m. Divine Liturgy & lenten community dinner

Saturday, December 19 (Feast of St. Boniface the Merciful):

- 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy, Community Breakfast, & Christmas Play Practice
(Dress Rehearsal)

Sunday, December 20 (Sunday before the Holy Nativity):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- 10:15 a.m. Prayer Shawl Presentation
- 10:30 a.m. Parish Christmas Program, followed by Lenten Luncheon
- 11:30 a.m. GOYA Meeting

Thursday, December 24 (Christmas Eve Vigil):

- 8:00 a.m. Great Hours of the Nativity of our Lord
9:00 a.m. Vespers of the Nativity of our Lord
6:00 p.m. Orthros of the Nativity of our Lord
7:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Friday, December 25 (Christmas – Nativity of our Lord, God, & Savior Jesus Christ):

- 11:30 a.m. “Feed the Homeless” at St. John the Wonderworker Church in Atlanta

Sunday, December 27 (Sunday after the Holy Nativity/Feast of St. Stephen the 1st Martyr):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros
9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy & Sacrament of Chrismation – Steven Wilson
(*No Religious Education Classes today*)

Sunday, December 27 – Wednesday, December 30

Metropolis of Atlanta – GOYA Winter Youth Rally (Annunciation Cathedral)

Thursday, December 31 (Eve of Feast of Circumcision of our Lord/St. Basil the Great):

- 5:00 p.m. Orthros
6:00 p.m. Liturgy of St. Basil/Doxology on the 1st of the Year
& Blessing of the Vasilopita

8:00 p.m. - ? New Year's Eve Parish Fellowship Celebration - All parishioners and their families of St. Christopher Church are invited to our Outreach Committee's Parish Fellowship Event being hosted by Tammy and Costas Soulakos. They are providing the entree/main dish and drinks and our families are invited to bring your special "New Year's" food for our appetizers, salads, vegetables, bread, and dessert. Fr. George is offering our January 1st Church Services late afternoon/early evening tonight, before this fellowship event on 12/31 - on the Eve of the Feast of our Lord's Circumcision and St. Basil the Great and bless our Vasilopita. After church services, join the Soulakos' for this special effort whose aim is to help us get to know one another and enjoy fellowship with our families. *Happy New Year 2010!*

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!

Sacrament of Holy Confession

For our children and adults who wish to receive the Sacrament of Holy Confession before Christmas, please **TELEPHONE** Fr. George at (770) 381-1842 **IN ADVANCE** to schedule an appointment. He will be offering the Sacrament of Holy Confession on Wednesday afternoon, December 16th.