



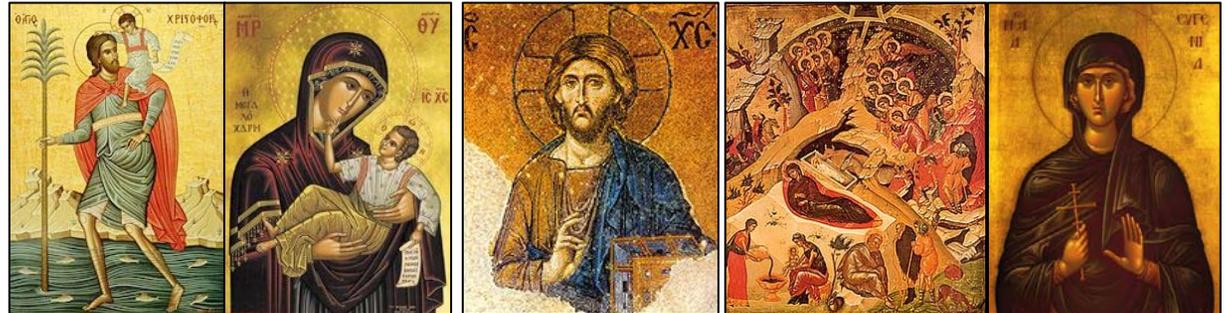
GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

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

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Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

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

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, December 24, 2017

ON THIS DAY, THE EVE & THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST WHICH WE REFER TO AS THE SUNDAY OF THE GENEALOGY OF CHRIST, WE COMMEMORATE all of our Holy and God-bearing Fathers and Mothers who have been well-pleasing to God, beginning from Adam to Joseph, the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos Mary, according to genealogy, as the Evangelist Luke has recorded historically (Luke 3:23-38), as well as, the Holy and Righteous Prophets and Prophetesses of God, and especially the Prophet Daniel and the Holy Three Youths. Today, we remember the following people who lived during Old Testament times: *The first created human beings, Adam and Eve; Abel, son of Adam and Eve; Seth, son of Adam and Eve; Enos, son of Seth; Cainan, Son of Enos; Mahalalel, son of Aainan; Jared, son of Mahalalel; Enoch, son of Jared; Mathusaleh, son of Enoch, Lamech, son of Mathusaleh; Noah, son of Lamech; Shem, son of Noah; Japheth, son of Noah; Arphaxad, son of Shem; Cainan, son of Arphaxad; Salah, son of Cainan; Eber, son of*

*Salah; Peleg, son of Eber; Reu, son of Peleg; Serug, son of Reu; Nahor, son of Serug; Terah, son of Nahor; The Holy Patriarchs Abraham, son of Terah; Isaac, son of Abraham; Jacob, son of Isaac; Holy Twelve Patriarchs and sons of Jacob and Rachel: Rubin, Symeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulon, Isaacher, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph and Benjamin; Saints Perez and Zerah—twins, sons of Judah; The Saints Hezron, son of Perez; Ram, son of Hezron; Amminadab, son of Ram; Salmon; Obed, son of Boaz by Ruth; Jesse, son of Obed; The Holy Kings David, son of Jesse; Solomon, son of David; Rehoboam, son of Solomon; Abijah, son of Rehoboam, Asa, son of Abijah; Jehoshaphat, son of Hezekiah; Amon, son of Manasseh; Josiah, son of Amon; Jeconiah, son of Josiah; The Saints Shaltiel, son of Jeconiah; Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel; Abiud, son of Zerubbable; Eliakim, son of Abiud; Azor, son of Eliakim; Zadok, son of Azor; Achim, son of Zadok; Eliud, son of the Betrothed, son of Jacob; The Righteous Melchizedek and Job; Holy Prophet Moses; Saint Hur, and Holy Nathan; Holy Prophet Daniel; Three Holy Children: Ananias, Azarias and Mishael; Patriarch Isaak; The Righteous Leah, first wife of Patriarch Jacob; Rachel, second wife of Patriarch Jacob; Asenath, spouse of Patriarch Joseph; Miriam, sister of the Holy Prophet Moses; Prophetess and Judge Deborah; the Righteous Ruth; Righteous widow of Zarephath to whom the Holy Prophet Elias was sent; Righteous Shumanite woman who showed hospitality to the Holy Prophet Elisha; Righteous Judith; Righteous Esther; Righteous Hannah, mother of the Holy Prophet Samuel; and Righteous Susanna. **ON THIS DAY, WE ALSO COMMEMORATE** Holy Eugenia, the Righteous Nun-Martyr of Rome (+262) and her father Phillip, Patriarch of Alexandria (+300); Martyrs Achaikos and Vassila; & New Martyr Ahmet (+1682). *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./2. Resurrectional Hymn (Fourth Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.110-113):

It is sung *before* and *after* the Small Entrance: The joyful news of Your resurrection was proclaimed by the angel to the women disciples. Having thrown off the curse that fell on Adam, they ran elatedly to tell the apostles: Death has been vanquished; Christ our God is risen from the dead, blessing all the world with His great mercy.

3. Hymn for Sunday of the Genealogy of Christ – (Hymnal-pp.194-195):

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: How great is the power of faith. By faith three young men rejoice in flames as if in refreshing water, and Daniel in the lions' den is like a shepherd with his sheep. Through their prayers, Christ our God, save our souls.

4. Hymn for Eve of the Nativity of Christ – (not in Hymnal):

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: As she carried in her womb what she conceived without seed, Mary went to Bethlehem with elder Joseph to enroll, for they were of the house and the lineage of David. The time arrived for her to give birth to her Child; but then there was no place in the inn for them. Therefore the grotto served as a luxurious royal palace for the Queen. And Christ the Lord is born, to raise the image which was formerly fallen.

5. 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.

6. Kontakion – Preparation for the Nativity – (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 (John 20:1-10)

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that He must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Hebr. 11:9-10, 32-40)

By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets — who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and

goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented — of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Matt. 1:1-25)

An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will

save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

“You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at His birth, for He will be great in the sight of the Lord..” (Luke 1:14-15)

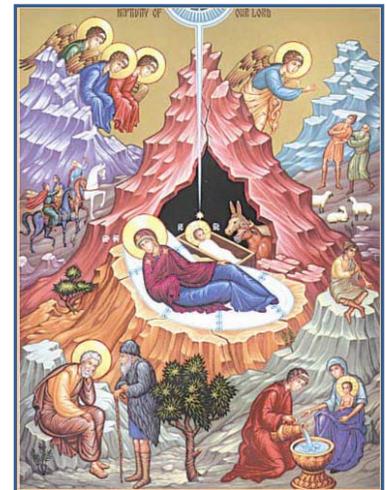
Encyclical of Archbishop Demetrios for The Nativity of Christ 2017

December 25, 2017 – The Nativity of Christ

*Light of Light, Brightness of the Father,
You have made the whole creation shine with joy!*
(Hymn of Vespers of the Feast)

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We glorify Christ on this blessed and glorious Feast for having come to us and for revealing the abundant and redeeming grace of God. We glorify Him for entering our humanity for our salvation. We glorify the miracle of His Incarnation and give thanks with great joy for this mighty act of God. We glorify God before all the world, because our Savior has come and *the people who sat in darkness, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, Light has dawned.* (Matthew 4:16)



Today, the Son of God, as Radiance sent by the Father, has come and illuminated all of Creation. As in the darkness of night when the angels appeared to the shepherds, *and the glory of the Lord shone all around them*

(Luke 2:9), Christ enters a world that has fallen into the darkness of sin and in need of the hope of light. Christ is born, and just as the shepherds we will go out glorifying and praising God for all that we have seen in the light of this holy Feast.

We glorify Him today, for as the Son of Brightness, as the Live-giving light, Christ illuminates the path to God. As the star led the wise men to Bethlehem so they could worship the newborn King, He reveals to us the way of regeneration and salvation. He is the light that guides us on our way to communion with God on our journey of faith. As He is the dawn of a new day of deliverance, we see that *every valley has been lifted up, and every mountain and hill has been made low* (Isaiah 40:4), and in His glory the way of the Lord has been revealed.

Christ is born, and we now see truth. He is the light of divine wisdom, and His radiance dispels the shadows of deception, fulfills the ancient prophecies, and reveals the divine plan for our redemption. All who witness His Holy Nativity glorify Him as being the ultimate light of truth and the sublime wisdom of God.

With paternal love in Christ,

† **DEMETRIOS**

Archbishop of America

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

The message of Christmas is that God intrudes upon the weak and the vulnerable, and this is precisely the message that we so often miss. God does not come to that part of us that struts through life, confident in our self-sufficiency. God leaves His treasure in the broken fragmented places of our life. God comes to us in those rare moments when we are able to transcend our own selfishness long enough to really care about another human being.

On the wall of the museum of the concentration camp at Dachau is a large and moving photograph of a mother and her little girl standing in line of a gas chamber. The child, who is walking in front of her mother, does not know where she is going. The mother, who walks behind, does know, but is helpless to stop the tragedy. In her helplessness she performs the only act of love left to her. She places her hands over the child's eyes so she will at least not see the horror to come. When people come into the museum they do not whisk by this photo hurriedly. They pause. They

almost feel the pain. And deep inside I think that they are all saying: “O God, don't let that be all that there is.”

God hears those prayers and it is in just such situations of hopelessness and helplessness that His almighty power is born. It is there that God leaves His treasure, in Mary and in all of us, as Christ is born anew within. Amen!



"Follow" & "Like" our new Facebook page. *Be sure to check our status for updates and photos.*

On this *the 686th* 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!

COMMUNITY SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 24 (Eve of the Holy Nativity of our Lord):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- 10:15 a.m. Community Christmas Pageant and Luncheon
(Everyone invited to join us!)

Monday, December 25 (Holy Nativity of our Lord & Savior, Jesus Christ):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. Basil
- 11:30 a.m. Feed the Homeless at St. John the Wonderworker Church

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

Wednesday, December 27 – Saturday, December 30:

Metropolis of Atlanta Winter Youth Rally in Atlanta - Fr. George will represent His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios who is away this week.

Thursday, December 28:

- 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Sunday, December 31 (Sunday before the Holy Theophany):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship Reception
- 10:45 a.m. Religious Education Classes *(for all ages)*
- 11:45 a.m. Let's EAT!

***Your continued support and mutual encouragement
are essential and appreciated!***