



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

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St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: [www.saintchristopherhoc.org](http://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 Sunday, December 29, 2013

#### *SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD & SAVIOR*

**ON THIS DAY, THE SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST, WE COMMEMORATE THE HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS FOREFATHERS OF GOD, SAINTS JOSEPH, THE BETROTHED OF THE VIRGIN MARY; JAMES, THE BROTHER OF THE LORD (IAKOVOS); AND DAVID, THE PROPHET AND KING. On this day, we also commemorate 14,000 infants (Holy Innocents) slain by Herod in Bethlehem; Righteous Father Marcellus, Abbot of the Monastery of the Unsleping Ones (+486); and Righteous Father Thaddeus the Confessor. *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. Hymn for Second Antiphon – (Hymnal-p.-28):**

*On the occasion of today's feast, we sing the following hymn instead of the regular Soson imas. "Save us, O Son of God": "Save us, O Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, Who sing to You, Alleluia.*

### **2./4. 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."*

### **3. 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.*

### **5. Hymn for Saints Joseph, David, and Iakovos – (Hymnal-pp.202-203):**

*It is sung after the Small Entrance: Go, holy Joseph, tell David what the angel said. With the shepherds and the wise men from afar, praise the Son of the Virgin, begging Him to save our souls.*

### **6. 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.

**7. 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

**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 (Gal. 1:11-19)**

*For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal His Son to me, so that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother.*

**Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Matt. 2:13-23)**

*Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there*

*until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the Child, to destroy Him." Then Joseph got up, took the Child and His mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called My Son." When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more." When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the Child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the Child and His mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."*

**THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE** (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

"For a Child has been born for us, a Son given to us; authority rests upon His shoulders; and He is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

(Isaiah 9:6)

**PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:**

Try to imagine a world in which the *wolf* and the *lamb* will share the same stall. The *leopard* and the *baby goat* will sleep together. A *little child* will put halters on a *lion* and a *calf* and lead them around. The *lion* will eat straw like the *oxen*. A *little child* will reach down into a *cobra's den* and not be harmed. That's what the world will be

like one day, according to Isaiah the prophet (Isa. 11:6 and 65:25). At some future time, the earth will be as full of the knowledge of the Lord as the oceans are with water; then no creature shall harm any other creature in all of God's earth.

*How and when will the prophecy of Isaiah become a reality?* Remember, Holy Scripture does not declare that Isaiah's golden age will come through the achievements of *people*. It will become a reality when Jesus returns in the clouds with great power and glory for all the world to see. But until then, there will be wars and rumors of war. Nation shall rise up against nation. Therefore, we should be wise as snakes but innocent as doves.

There is a *tiger* within you and me that wants to snarl at people on the other side of the political or ideological fence. There is a *wolf* within us that re-opens old wounds and past failures even within our own households, just to make sure that even those nearest to us know we haven't forgotten their failures; maybe *forgiven*, but not forgotten.

There is a *cobra* within us that lies in wait for people who are different from us, so that we can catch them fulfilling our prejudices about them. There is a *bear* within us that gives other people only one chance to disappoint us; and if they do, we reject them forever.

*What are we to do with ourselves, with this bundle of contradictions, with this combination of wolf and lamb?* Only through yielding ourselves to the will of our **Heavenly Father** can we be fundamentally changed. When we welcome our **Incarnate Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ** into our daily lives, we have power

to combat the sins and temptations of this world. Through **the Holy Spirit**, we can restrain the *beast* within us and unleash *the angel*.

*Have you made that discovery yet?* Once you do, the *beast* within is restrained, and the *angel* is unleashed. Then we become our Lord's co-workers, preparing for that great day when Jesus will return in all His glory and the entire earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

Some years ago a new Christmas custom began in the New England area. Some Christian families there decided to limit their outdoor decorations to a single white candle in each window. *That candle declared that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.* It affirmed that Jesus alone is Lord. This style of decorating caught on and spread across the country. It is the opposite of the gaudy and tacky style that is popular in many places. The single candle in the window is beautiful in its simplicity. It declares that in this home and in these hearts, Jesus Christ comes first.

Anytime a person claims Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, he or she resembles that single candle, a sentinel for the Kingdom of God, a clear sign to the world that one day Jesus Christ will return in glory. Then the wolf and the lamb will lie down together. *"...so that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bend, in Heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* (Phil. 2:10-11)

#### **Stewardship 2014**

We thank everyone who has offered your family's 2014 Stewardship Commitment Card. Please place your envelope in today's offering tray. Extra cards/envelopes are on the entrance table. *Every parishioner is asked to support our Stewardship Program!*



["Follow" & "Like" our Facebook page.](#) *Be sure to check our status for updates and photos.*

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And on this the four hundred and ninety-first 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 WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

*(In celebration of the Feast of the Nativity, the period from 12/26-1/4 is fast free.)*

### **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

### **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 1<sup>st</sup> of the Year  
& Blessing of the Vasilopita**

### **Thursday, January 2, 6:30 p.m. – Choir Practice**

### **Sunday, January 5 (Eve/Vigil-Theophany of our Lord and Savior/Strict Fast):**

**7:45 am Orthros Service**

**9:00 am Divine Liturgy/Blessing of the Water/Oath of Office for 2014 Parish  
Council Members/Coffee Fellowship**

**11:30 am Parish Council Meeting**

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