



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 Sunday, December 6, 2015

ON THIS DAY, THE 10TH SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE, THE CHURCH our Father among the Saints, Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra of Lycia (+343) and Holy New-Martyr Nicholas of Asia Minor (+1657). *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 (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 St. Nicholas the Wonderworker– (not in Hymnal):

It is sung after the Small Entrance. A canon of the Faith, and the image of meekness, a teacher of self-control, you revealed to your flock the authentic Truth. Through this Truth you achieved the heights of humility, and through poverty, riches. Father and Hierarch Nicholas, pray for us to Christ our God, to 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 (Hebrews 13:17-21)

Hebr. 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls and will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with sighing — for that would be harmful to you. 18 Pray for us; we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. 19 I urge you all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you very soon. 20 Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, 21 make you complete in everything good so that you may do His will, working among us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Luke 13:10-17)

Luke 13:10 Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 11 And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. 12 When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." 13 When He laid His hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. 14 But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the Sabbath day." 15 But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? 16 And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham

whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" 17 When He said this, all His opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that He was doing.

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

(TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

(James 1:17)

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

The Great Steward of the Church

St. John the Almsgiver was a seventh century Patriarch of Alexandria. What does Patriarch John have to do with Stewardship? If we look more carefully at his life, we will see that he was one of the great Stewards of the Church of Christ. His was the true embodiment of giving because of the many philanthropic programs he initiated as Patriarch.

Those who knew him spoke of his great compassion for the needy. He would never think of ignoring a beggar, a prisoner, or any afflicted person that he met in the street. As often as he gave, though, he never seemed to run out of resources for the work of the Church. God abundantly blessed him in every conceivable way because of his charity to others. The following episodes in the life of St. John the Almsgiver allow us the opportunity to learn from this great Steward of the Church who taught us about giving.

An indication of the kind of Patriarch that he was to become is given to us upon the occasion of his enthronement to the Patriarchal See of Alexandria. His first act as Patriarch was to summon the treasurers and financial administrators of the various branches of the Church. He addressed them in the following words: "It is not right, brethren, that we should prefer anyone over Christ."

The whole assembly which had gathered together was deeply touched by his words and in complete agreement with him. Then the holy man continued: "Go, therefore, through the whole city, please, and make a list of all my masters down to the last."

But his listeners could not imagine who his masters could be. In astonishment they asked him to reveal the names of those who were above him in stature. After all, he was the Patriarch. He opened his mouth and again said: "Those whom you call poor and beggars, these I proclaim my masters and helpers. For they, and they only, are really able to help us and bestow upon us the Kingdom of Heaven."

Once his command was carried out with all speed, he instructed his private treasurer to set aside a daily sum sufficient for the needs of these poor; and there were more than seven thousand of them. St. John, we are told, was in the habit of sleeping on the cheapest of beds and using only very poor coverings in his room. One of the city's wealthy landowners once went into the Patriarch's room and saw that he was only covered with a torn and worn quilt, so he sent him a new quilt costing thirty-six nomismata (currency). He urged the Patriarch to cover himself with the quilt, remembering the one who gave it to him in prayer.

John took and used it for one night because of the giver's insistence, but throughout the night he kept saying to himself, "How can I lie under a blanket costing thirty-six nomismata while Christ's brethren are pinched with cold? How many are there this minute grinding their teeth because of the cold? How many have only a rough blanket half below and half above them so that they cannot stretch out their legs but lie shivering, rolled up like a ball of thread? How many have no second garment either in summer or winter and so live in misery? Mad yet, I who hope to obtain everlasting bliss, am being kept warm by a blanket worth thirty-six nomismata.

Indeed, if I live like this and pass my life in such ease I cannot expect to enjoy the good things prepared for us on high; but I will certainly be told, as was the other rich man: "...You in your lifetime received good things, and Lazarus, in like manner, evil things; but now he is comforted here and you are in anguish!" "Blessed be God!" "I shall not be covered with it another night. For it is right and proper that one hundred and forty-four of my brothers and masters should be covered rather than me, one miserable creature." For four simple blankets could be purchased for one

nomisma. Early on the following morning, therefore, he sent it to be sold, but the man who gave it to him saw it and bought it for thirty-six nomismata and again brought it to the Patriarch.

When the wealthy landowner saw it put up for sale again the next day, he bought it once more and carried it to the Patriarch and implored him to use it. When he had done this for the third time, the Saint said to him jokingly, "Let us see whether you or I will give up first!" For the man was exceedingly wealthy and the Saint took pleasure in getting money out of him for the sake of the poor. The Patriarch used to say that if, with the object of giving to the poor, anyone were able, without ill-will, to strip right down to their shirts, he would do no wrong, especially if they were heartless skinflints. For in so doing, he would save their souls.

One day the Patriarch heard of a generous giver and so he sent for him privately and said jokingly, "How is it that you became so generous? Was it natural for you, or did you have to force yourself?" The man answered, "I used to be very hardhearted and unsympathetic and one day I lost my money and was reduced to poverty. Then my reason began to say to me, 'Truly, if you had been generous, God would not have forsaken you.' And immediately I decided to give five coppers a day to the poor. But when I started giving them, Satan immediately checked me by saying, 'Those coppers would really have been enough to buy a bath ticket or vegetables for your family.'

When I felt at once that I was taking the money out of my children's mouths and so I gave nothing. But I noticed that I was being mastered by greed, so I said to my servant, "I want you to steal five coppers each day without my noticing it, and give them to charity.'" "My servant, a worthy fellow, began by stealing ten coppers, and occasionally even more. As he noticed that we were being blessed, he began to steal larger sums of money and give them away."

"One day I was expressing my astonishment at God's blessings to us! I said to him, 'Those five coppers, boy, have greatly benefited us. So now I want to give ten.' At that the servant said to me with a smile, 'Yes, be thankful for my thefts, since but for them we should not even have bread to eat today. However, if there can be a just thief, I am he!' And he told me that he had given larger amounts than the five or ten coppers. So it

was through my servant's faith that I grew accustomed to giving with all my heart." The holy Patriarch was much edified by this story.

One last story in the life of St. John has to do with his practice of giving money to every poor person that he met. A stranger to the city, one who noticed the remarkable sympathy of the Holy Patriarch, decided to put him to the test. The stranger dressed himself up in old clothes and approached the Patriarch as he made his rounds of the hospitals. He came to John and said, "Have mercy on me for I am a prisoner of war."

John said to his purse-bearer, "Give him six coins." After the man had received his money he left, changed his clothes, met John in the street a second time and falling at his feet said. "Have pity on me for I am in need." Again the Patriarch said to his purse-bearer, "Give him six coins." As the man left, the purse-bearer nudged the Patriarch to let him know that it was the same man. This time the Patriarch responded, "Give him twelve coins, for it might be my Christ come to test me."

Our Church, too, calls upon each of us to become Stewards. Unlike the man in disguise, our Church comes openly seeking support for the worthy work of the Church. If Patriarch John was doubly generous to the disguised man, thinking that he might be Christ, how generous should we be to the Church which is the body of Christ?

[Thanks to the Rev. Fr. John Chakos for this reflection.]



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[Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church.](#) *Be sure to check our status for updates and photos.*

And on this 585th 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!

Everyone is invited to join us for our
**2015 Community Christmas Program
& Lenten Luncheon**
Sunday, December 13, following church services!



As we prepare for the Holy Nativity of our Lord on December 25th, Fr. George has selected a special program that brings our parish family a conversation among three of the shepherds outside Bethlehem following the visit from the angel. The shepherds are overwhelmed by their experience and decide to share with everyone the Good News of the Savior's birth.

We hope your family, including your children, will participate... just two rehearsals – Sunday, December 6th after Religious Education and Saturday, December 12th, after morning services. Our thanks to Katie Wilson for overseeing this year's program. Please call her to volunteer... in the Nativity Scene, as one of the three shepherds, set production, singing carols (choir), and "behind the scenes helpers". This annual event is open to our parishioners of all ages... but you must volunteer by calling Katie at 404/434-0877 and coming to practices.

For our Lenten luncheon, parishioners are asked to bring the following:

Last Name A-D: Lenten Salads

Last Name E-L: Lenten Pasta, Rice, or Potato Dish

Last Name M-T: Lenten Vegetables or Vegetable Casseroles

Last Name U-Z: Lenten Desserts

(All shellfish entrees are welcome if you wish to donate.)



“The image that is particularly critical and lasting in our minds is the example of persecution endured today by Christians, irrespective of confession, in the wider region of the Middle East, where even the simple admission of Christian identity places the very existence of our faithful in daily threat. These exceptionally extreme and expansive occurrences of violence and **persecution against Christians cannot leave the rest of us – who are blessed to live peacefully and in some sense of security – indifferent and inactive.**”

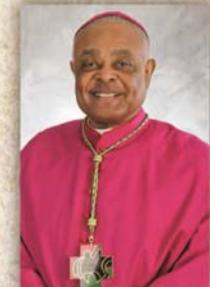
- His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew speaking to an ecumenical gathering in Finland, September, 2013

ORTHODOX-CATHOLIC ECUMENICAL GATHERING

— OFFICIANTS —



HIS EMINENCE
METROPOLITAN ALEXIOS
GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA



HIS EXCELLENCY, MOST REVEREND
WILTON D. GREGORY
CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP OF ATLANTA

FOCUSING OUR PRAYERS FOR THE
CHRISTIANS PERSECUTED IN THE MIDDLE EAST



MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015 AT 7 PM

THE GREEK ORTHODOX
CATHEDRAL OF THE ANNUNCIATION

2500 CLAIRMONT ROAD, N.E., ATLANTA, GA 30329 | 404-633-5870



KEYNOTE SPEAKER
BISHOP SEVASTIANOS

CHIEF SECRETARY OF THE HOLY EPARCHIAL SYNOD
OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

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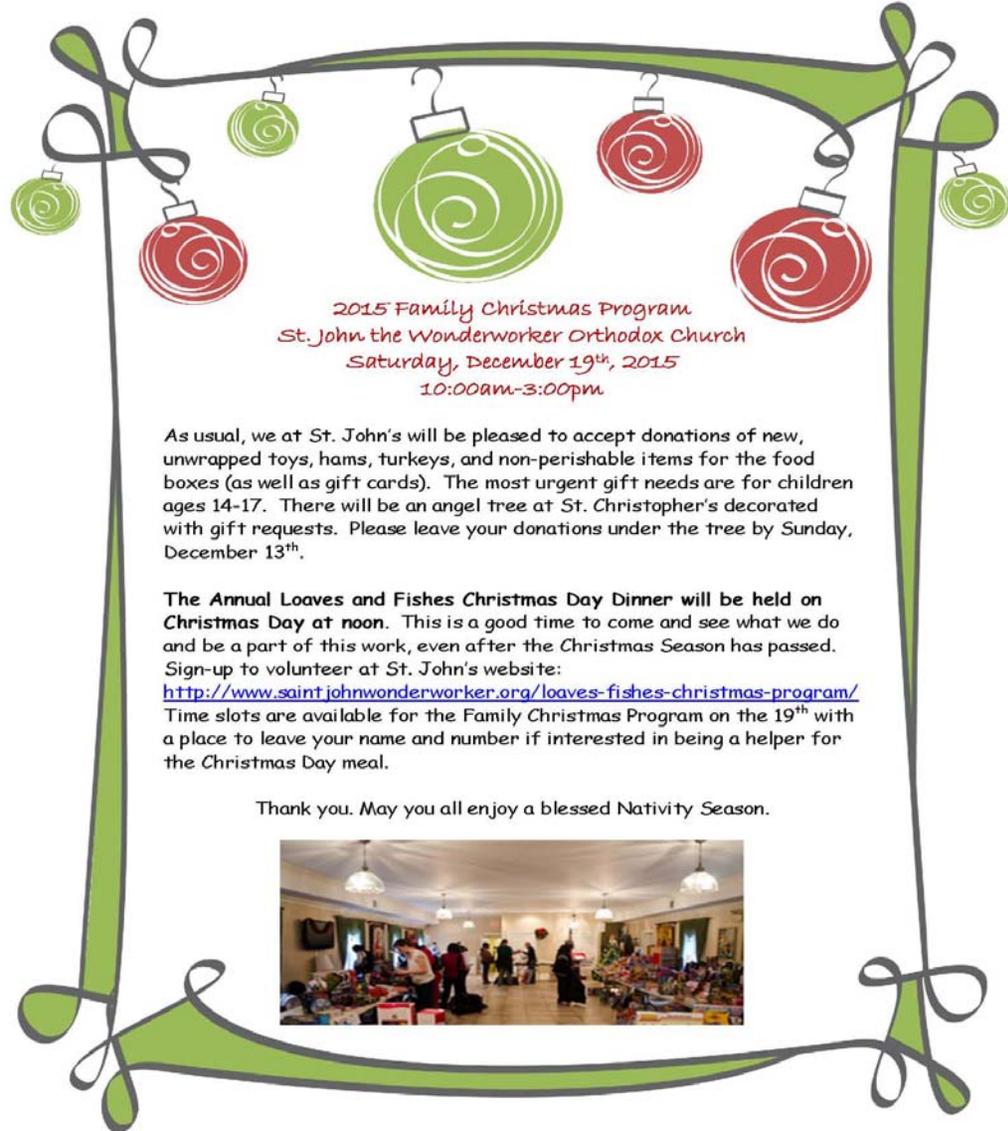
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Hands of Love: December 2015



"For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore, I command you to do this word which says, You shall surely open your hands to your brother, to your poor and needy in your land." (Deut. 15:11)



2015 Family Christmas Program
St. John the Wonderworker Orthodox Church
Saturday, December 19th, 2015
10:00am-3:00pm

As usual, we at St. John's will be pleased to accept donations of new, unwrapped toys, hams, turkeys, and non-perishable items for the food boxes (as well as gift cards). The most urgent gift needs are for children ages 14-17. There will be an angel tree at St. Christopher's decorated with gift requests. Please leave your donations under the tree by Sunday, December 13th.

The Annual Loaves and Fishes Christmas Day Dinner will be held on Christmas Day at noon. This is a good time to come and see what we do and be a part of this work, even after the Christmas Season has passed. Sign-up to volunteer at St. John's website:
<http://www.saintjohnwonderworker.org/loaves-fishes-christmas-program/>
Time slots are available for the Family Christmas Program on the 19th with a place to leave your name and number if interested in being a helper for the Christmas Day meal.

Thank you. May you all enjoy a blessed Nativity Season.



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Nativity Fast – continues through December 24

Sunday, December 6 (10th Sunday of St. Luke/St. Nicholas the Wonderworker)

- 7:30 a.m. Orthros Service
- 8:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- 10:00 a.m. Memorial Service (3 years) - Παναγιωτη Ζωγραφος
- 10:45 a.m. Religious Education Classes (*for all ages*)
- 11:30 a.m. Community Christmas Tree Decoration/Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

Monday, December 7 (Archangel Michael Chapel at Metropolis Offices):

- 9:00 a.m. Fr. George will offer Divine Liturgy at Archangel Michael Chapel, 2480 Clairmont Road, NE, Atlanta, GA 30329. Feel welcome to join him.
- 7:00 p.m. Catholic Orthodox Ecumenical Gathering – Annunciation Cathedral, 2500 Clairmont Road, NE, Atlanta, GA 30329

Thursday, December 10:

- 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Friday, December 11:

- TBA Sacrament of Holy Confession – Schedule with Fr. George in advance BEFORE today by calling 770/381-1842

Saturday, December 12 (Feast of St. Spyridon the Wonderworker):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- 10:30 a.m. Christmas Program Rehearsal

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

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy/Prayer Shawl Blessing
- 10:30 a.m. Community Christmas Program with Luncheon to follow
- 11:00 a.m. Parish Council Elections
- 12:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting
- 5:00 p.m. Deadline Goal to Collect 2016 Stewardship Pledge Cards

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!