



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, February 14, 2016**

**ON THIS DAY, THE 17TH SUNDAY OF SAINT MATTHEW, WE REMEMBER** our Righteous Father Auxentios the Presbyter (+470); Righteous Father Abraham (+422); Righteous Father Maron of Syria (+4<sup>th</sup> cent.); Holy Priest-Martyr Philemon, Bishop of Gaza; Holy and Righteous Martyr Damianos the Younger (1568); Holy New Martyr George of Mytilene (1693); Cyril, Equal-to-the-Apostles & Teacher of the Slavs; and Holy New Martyr Nicholas of Corinth (1554).. *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 Commemorating St. Auxentios – (see music distributed):**

*It is sung after the Small Entrance:* As a citizen of the desert and an angel incarnate and a wonder-worker you shone forth, O Auxentios, our God-bearing father. Since you received the spiritual gifts by fasting and vigilance and prayer, you can cure those who are ailing and heal the souls of those who run to you with faith. Glory to Him who gave His might to you; glory to Him who placed a crown on you; glory to Him who operates through you, providing cures to all.

#### **4. 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.

**5. Kontakion – (Hymnal-pp.224-227):**

*It is sung after the Small Entrance: O unfailing protection of Christians, and our faithful advocate before the Creator: though we are sinners, do not ignore our entreaty; but in your goodness, grant your timely help to us who appeal to you in faith. Quickly make intercession; on our behalf make speedy supplication, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you.*

**SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY**

<p>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</p>
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**Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (Luke 24:1-12)**

*But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how He told you, while He was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” Then they remembered His words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 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.*

### **Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (2 Cor. 6:16-7:1)**

<sup>16</sup>What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

<sup>17</sup>Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, <sup>18</sup>and I will be your father, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” <sup>7</sup>Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God.

### **Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Matthew 15:21-28)**

<sup>21</sup>Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>22</sup>Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” <sup>23</sup>But He did not answer her at all. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” <sup>24</sup>He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” <sup>25</sup>But she came and knelt before Him, saying, “Lord, help me.” <sup>26</sup>He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” <sup>27</sup>She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” <sup>28</sup>Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

#### **MEMORY VERSE (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):**

“O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love endures for ever.” (1 Chronicles 16.34)

## **PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:**

*With Valentine's Day being today, I am wondering if any of us will sparkle more than we did last Sunday . . . !*

How many of us will celebrate Valentine's Day with a little bit of "bling!?" The holiday that elevates the warmth of our love and the softness of our hearts also pushes us to give a gift of something cold and hard — a diamond.

Diamonds, we are continually reminded, are forever. That's why they are worthy of a significant financial investment. Diamonds are expensive because they are rare, elusive, and found only in tiny bits and pieces. Yet if you could travel 50 light years away from Earth, to star BPM 37093, located in the Centaurus constellation, you would arrive at "Lucy" — a burned out sun, a "white dwarf," whose entire central core is a planet-sized chunk of crystallized carbon — a diamond — 10 billion-trillion-trillion carats worth, to be precise.

This "space diamond" was named "Lucy" after the Beatle's hit, "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." By comparison, the largest earth-diamond, the Golden Jubilee Diamond, is 545 carats — a sandal toe full of diamond "sand" on one of Lucy's dunes.

Diamonds are a chosen and cherished gem because of their sparkle and glow. They ignite with a kind of inner fire when the light hits them. Unfortunately for "Lucy," that means that the solid diamond core of that dwarf star is as unremarkable and unassuming as any other stone. You could take a drawer full of exquisite diamond gemstones and dump them in a drawer and

— without the gift of reflective light —you wouldn't know you had anything different than a box of rocks.

The miracle of reflected light is what our goal in life is all about – to become transfigured in our Lord Jesus Christ. We begin Great & Holy Lent on Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. With just over a month, that gives me time to begin planning strategies that will enable me to journey toward Christ in a deliberate and committed manner. It is my prayer that the miracle of God's divine light will “transform” and “transfigure” each of our lives so we grow closer in union and harmony with Him. As we travel our 2016 lenten journey together, may the brilliance and purity of the light that illumines Jesus attract our attention.

Transforming our lives in the image and likeness of our Lord is a central part of Orthodox theology. Just as He transfigured Himself and appeared to His disciples in divine glory on Mt. Tabor shortly before His last days leading up to His Crucifixion and Resurrection, I pray that we consider this miraculous event as proof that Jesus Christ is the light and glory coming from God, our Heavenly Father. Through Christ's voluntary passion for each of us, He assured us of the voluntary nature of His suffering and death for the salvation of the world.

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ invites every human being to seek to attain spiritual transfiguration in order to be granted eternal life and everlasting paradise. Each day, may we consider what kinds of things we can do to share God's love, compassion, and charity to others so that our Lord judges us worthy of this gift. Amen!



**Adult Religious Education Class – Fr.  
George Tsahakis**

*Sunday, February 14, 2016*

*For today's lesson, Fr. George will review and  
lead a discussion of the article:*

**I Won't Force My Kids  
To Go To Church**

*(Brief excerpt follows... come to class for more!...)*

*“My parents forced me to eat three times a day growing up. No joke. Three times. Every. Single. Day. And it wasn't always stuff I liked, either. Matter of fact, I complained a lot about what my mom made. ‘Ewww, gross! Meatloaf? Seriously? Mom you know we hate this stuff!’ So as I approached adulthood I made an important decision. Since my parents forced me to eat while I was growing up, I decided I was done with meals. Oh, here and there I'll eat out of obligation. I mean, family traditions like Thanksgiving and Christmas, yeah, I'm there. But daily eating? No way. I'm done.*

*Set in any other context, excuses people make for not going to church sound completely ridiculous. But set in the context of Christianity, people say these things in all seriousness while others nod sagely in somber agreement....*



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*Be sure to check our status for updates and photos.*

And on this 595<sup>th</sup> 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, February 14 (Sunday of the Canaanite Woman):**

**7:45 am Orthros Service**

**9:00 am Divine Liturgy/Trisagion Service - Andreas Roussos/  
Coffee Fellowship**

**10:45 am Religious Education Classes (*for all ages*)**

**11:45 am Parish Council Meeting**

### **Thursday, February 18:**

**6:30 pm Choir Practice – *please join us!***

### **Sunday, February 21 (Sunday of the Publican & the harisee/Triodion Begins Today):**

**7:45 am Orthros Service**

**9:00 am Divine Liturgy/ Parish St. John Chrysostom  
Oratorical Festival/Coffee Fellowship/GOYA  
Meeting**

**11:30 am Hellenic Dance Practice**

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