



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

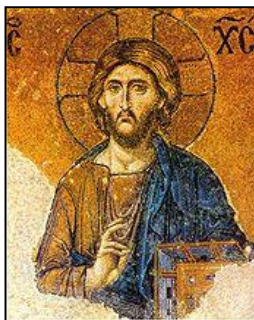
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org

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

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: www.atlmetropolis.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: www.saintchristopherhoc.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



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

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, February 2, 2020

ON THIS DAY, WE COMMEMORATE THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE (*HYPAPANTE*) AT WHICH TIME THE RIGHTEOUS SYMEON RECEIVED HIM IN HIS ARMS; JORDAN THE NEW MARTYR (+1650); GABRIEL THE NEW MARTYR OF CONSTANTINOPLE (+1676); AND AGATHADOROS THE MARTYR OF CAPPADOCIA. *To Him be glory and dominion forever and always. 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 held in the arms of the righteous Symeon, as we sing to You, Alleluia."

2./5. Hymn for the Feast of the Presentation – (Hymnal-pp.212-215):

It is sung before and after the Small Entrance: Rejoice, O woman full of grace, O Virgin Theotokos, for there rose from you the Sun of Justice, Christ our God, who enlightens those in darkness. You too exult and be glad, just and aged Simeon, for you carried in your arms the Redeemer of our souls, who bestows on us the grace of resurrection.

3. Small Entrance Exclamation of the Priest:

On the occasion of today's feast, the Priest intones the following at the Small Entrance: "The Lord has made known His salvation; He has revealed His justice before the Gentiles. Save us, O Son of God, Who was held in the arms of the righteous Symeon, as we sing to You, Alleluia."

4. Resurrectional Hymn (Plagal of the 4th Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.126-7):

It is sung before and after the Small Entrance: From on high You descended, O merciful Lord. You accepted the cross and three days in the tomb to free us from the bondage of sin, O our life and resurrection. Glory to You, O Lord.

6. Kontakion of the Presentation of the Lord – (Hymnal-pp.250-253):

It is sung after the Small Entrance: For our salvation You took flesh and You sanctified the Virgin's womb; You blessed the aged Simeon as You lay resting in his arms; and having come to save us all, O Christ our God, to

these troubled times, bring Your lasting peace. Give strong and undaunted faith to all Your people, O only lover of mankind.

7. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (not in Hymnal):

On the occasion of today's feast, the following hymn is sung instead of "Axion Estin" or "Truly it is proper to call you blessed..." Theotokos, as the hope of us Christians, one and all, guard and shelter and protect those who put their hope in you. O believers, come let us perceive a type in the law, and the shadow and the letter. Every male that opens the womb shall be holy to God. So the unoriginate Father's firstborn Logos and Son, who is the firstborn of the Mother who knew not man, we magnify.

8. Communion Hymn – (Hymnal-p.324):

On the occasion of today's feast, the following hymn is sung instead of "Aineite" or "Praise the Lord": "I will lift the cup of salvation, and call on the Name of the Lord. (Ps. 115[116]). Alleluia."

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY

<i>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.</i>	<i>– St. John Chrysostom</i>
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Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (Luke 2:25-33)

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him what was customary under the law, Simeon took Him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing Your servant in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about Him.

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Hebrews 7:7-17)

It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. In the one case, tithes are received by those who are mortal; in the other, by one of whom it is

testified that he lives. One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him. Now if perfection had been attainable through the levitical priesthood — for the people received the law under this priesthood — what further need would there have been to speak of another priest arising according to the order of Melchizedek, rather than one according to the order of Aaron? For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. Now the One of Whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. It is even more obvious when another priest arises, resembling Melchizedek, one who has become a priest, not through a legal requirement concerning physical descent, but through the power of an indestructible life. For it is attested of Him, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Luke 2:22-40)

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him what was customary under the law, Simeon took Him in his arms and praised God, saying, “Master, now You are dismissing Your servant in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel.” And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about Him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to His mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed — and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” There was also a prophet, Anna the

daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon Him.

MEMORY VERSE (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

“Master, now You are dismissing Your servant in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel.” (Luke 2:29-32)

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

A few years ago there were billboards scattered throughout the United States with messages from God. Someone had purchased the space and conducted an advertising campaign for God. Actually, the person responsible for these “Messages from God” chose to remain anonymous. The Smith Agency in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, launched the advertising campaign in September, 1998. Andrew Smith, the agency's president, said that an individual simply appeared in their office one day and hired them on the spot. He said that their agreement with this individual prohibited them from releasing his name but he did say that the person is quite well known.

These 15 messages signed by God have appeared on billboards and buses:

1. Let's Meet at My House Sunday Before the Game.—God
2. C'mon Over and Bring the Kids.—God
3. What Part of “Thou Shalt Not...” Didn't You Understand?—God
4. We Need to Talk.—God
5. Keep Using My Name in Vain And I'll Make Rush Hour Longer.
— God (*This ad is placed in congested urban areas.*)

6. Loved the Wedding; Invite Me to the Marriage.—God
7. That “Love Thy Neighbor” Thing; I Meant It.—God
8. I Love You... I Love You... I Love You.—God
9. Will The Road You’re on Get You to My Place?—God
10. Follow Me.—God
11. My Way Is the Highway.—God
12. Need Directions?—God
13. You Think It’s Hot Here?—God (*During the Summer*)
14. Tell the Kids I Love Them.—God
15. Have You Read My #1 Best Seller? There Will Be a Test.—God

It was a cute campaign and clever and it would be nice if God would spend a little more time advertising His thoughts. But this exposes a tendency we have as humans. We want a definitive answer. We want some rules to go by and we want to be told how to behave and what we should do. The Ten Commandments do this for us but we slowly found out—through centuries and centuries of countless sins and human atrocities—that we were not able to abide by them.

So what is God to do? Take out an ad campaign on our city buses and billboards? No, I don’t think so. Instead He does something very different that we read about when we commemorated the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ in early January. Recall how our Heavenly Father said, *“This is My Son, the Beloved, with Whom I am well pleased.”* (Matt. 3:17) What a difference! Instead of rules written on tablets, buses, and billboards as noted above, God says, in effect, *“I’d like to introduce you to someone special. Here, I want you to meet My Son. I love Him a great deal. I am so proud of Him.”*

What do you do about that? It’s one thing to forget a commandment. It’s quite another to slam the door in the face of a relative. Today, we are reminded of God’s presence and power in our lives as we commemorate the presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple. How, by clinging to the words of the Elder Simeon after he received our Lord into His arms: *“Master, now You are dismissing Your servant in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel.”* (Luke 2:29-32) **Amen!**

"World Watch List of 2019"

This week we continue reviewing the 50 countries where it's most dangerous to follow Jesus. May we offer prayers in support of their efforts and pray for God's peace and good will to prevail!

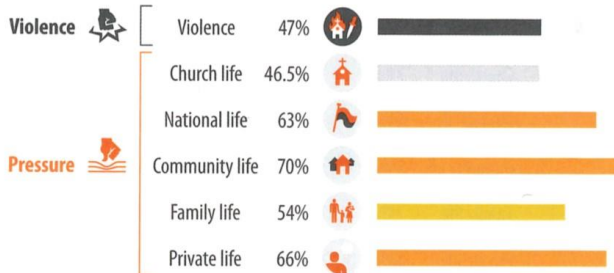


Bangladesh

Source of persecution Islamic oppression
Population 166,368,000
Christians 869,000
Main religion Islam
Government Parliamentary republic
Leader President Abdul Hamid

Profile of persecution

Based on World Watch List 2019 data



All Christians face threats

Those who convert to Christianity from a Muslim, Hindu or other ethnic, tribal background face the most severe persecution in Bangladesh. They often gather in small house churches or secret groups due to fear of attack. Both newer evangelistic churches and historical churches like the Roman Catholic church are increasingly faced with attacks and death threats. Tribal Christians like the Santal are twice as vulnerable because they face both ethnic and religious discrimination.

Prayer points

- Pray for converts who face the threat of divorce or loss of custody if their faith is discovered.
- Pray with Christian business owners who are socially boycotted or who have had to give up their shops due to pressure from the Muslim majority.
- Pray for churches who face increasing levels of monitoring by authorities.



Today is “Parish Thanksgiving Sunday”

... the custom of offering the Five Loaves monthly reminds us of the generosity and multiplication of the gifts of fish and bread that our Lord multiplied and shared with all present. Through this Orthodox Service, we return thanksgiving to God for multiplying our own gifts and hence, the icon of this miracle has been selected as our logo for “**Parish Thanksgiving Sunday**”... *the first Sunday of every month!*

We thank **Faye Georgeo** for making and offering on behalf of her and her family our five Artos (loaves of bread) for the Service of the Blessing of the Five Loaves.



Likewise, today we thank God and celebrate Name Days, Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries, and other special occasions that occurred recently or during the month of February. The Artos (blessed sweet bread) will be distributed to everyone during today’s **Lunch & Learn** offered by **Faye Georgeo**. Join us! Congratulations to everyone celebrating their special events today and thanks to all who offered our parish their gifts for God to use and multiply.

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

On this the 791st 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 (CHECK WEB CALENDAR FOR MORE...)

Sunday, February 2 (Feast of the Presentation of the Theotokos into the Temple & Souper Bowl of Caring):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy/Blessing of Five Loaves & February Commemorations,
followed by Lunch & Learn offered by Faye Georgeo
- 11:15 a.m. Religious Education Classes (*for all ages*)
- 12:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!