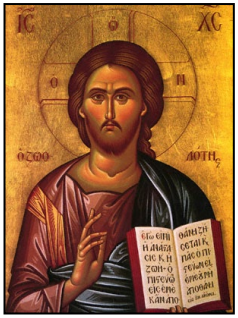
St. Ephraim the Syrian

(Feast Day is January 28)

Sunday, January 24, 2021

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, January 24, 2021

ON THIS DAY, THE 14TH SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE, WE COMMEMORATE Xenia, Deaconess of Rome; Vavylas the Holy Martyr; Xenia of St. Petersburg, Fool-for-Christ; and Philo the Wonderworker, Bishop of Karpasia in Cyprus. *Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.*

Thank You for Your Understanding

We welcome our parishioners who pre-registered and are attending services in person today and we also welcome those who are viewing our online video streaming at home. Let us comply with the guidelines we have provided everyone. We appreciate your kind understanding that our church is beginning phase one of the re-opening of our doors. Fr. George is deeply appreciative to you and all who are assisting during worship services.

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 (Plagal of the 4th Tone) – *(Hymnal-pp126-7)*:
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.

3. 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.

4. Kontakion sung in anticipation of the Presentation of the Lord *(to be celebrated 2/2) (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.

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 21:15-25)
When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time He said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said

to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to Him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this He said to him, "Follow me." Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about him?" Jesus said to him, "If it is My will that he remain until I come, what is that to You? Follow me!" So the rumor spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to You?" This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (1 Timothy 1:15-17)

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Luke 18:35-43)

As He approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." Then he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stood still and ordered the man to be brought to Him; and when he came near, He asked him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me see again." Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has saved you." Immediately he regained his sight and followed Him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, praised God.

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

"The LORD is my strength and my might, and He has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise Him, my Father's God, and I will exalt Him." *(Exod. 15:2)*

"St. Ephraim the Syrian as a Model for Our Lives"

(continued from back cover)

Whoever defeats these passions, keeps their nous clear of thoughts. And the purified nous is illumined by the grace of God and acquires remembrance of God and uninterrupted prayer.

3. "Patience is not one, but is found within many other virtues. Because patience is associated with all the virtues. Rejoice then in your troubles, and progress in your sufferings; rejoice in your temptations... in long-suffering it is mature, in love it is perfect, insults it turns to blessings... in fasting it is willing, in prayer it is enduring, in service to others it is polite, in meetings it is pleasant. He who has gained patience, has gained hope, because such a man is adorned with every good work."

Nothing can be done without patience, either physically or spiritually. Patience gives birth to trust and love for God and gives birth to hope. It removes stress, this modern scourge, and gives us inner peace. Then a person becomes polite and pleasant.

4. “Speak much to God, and little to men. And if you spread you hand out to work, let your mouth chant and your mind pray. Psalmody is calm of soul, author of peace. Psalmody is convener of friendship, union of the separated, reconciliation of enemies. Psalmody attracts the help of the Angels, is a weapon in night-time fears, repose of the day’s toils, safety for infants, adornment for the old, consolation for the elderly, most fitting embellishment for women. It makes deserts into homes, market places sober. It is the ABC for beginners, progress for the more advanced, confirmation for the perfect, the voice of the Church. It makes festivals radiant; it creates mourning that is in accordance with God, for psalmody draws tears even from a heart of stone. Psalmody is the work of the Angels, the commonwealth of heaven, spiritual incense. Psalmody is enlightenment of souls, sanctification of bodies.”

We usually do the opposite. We usually say many things to people but speak little or not at all to God. If we want to prosper, we must learn to pray much and speak little. And when we work it would be good to chant, especially if our work is manual. Then our nous will be free of passionate thoughts and our souls will calm.

Source: *Ekklesiastiki Paremvasis*, "Ὅσιος Ἐφραίμ ὁ Σύρος", January 2017. Translated by John Sanidopoulos.

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

St. John Chrysostom offered the following consideration on acts of charity: Imagine a carpenter with the crudest of tools. It takes him many days to make a simple table; and its quality is so low that the price he obtains for it is poor. He has a choice: either he can spend all the money he earns on food and drink or he can set some money aside, even if it means going hungry, in order to buy better tools. If he does the latter, then he will soon be making good tables much more quickly, and so his earnings will quickly rise.

This choice is analogous to a spiritual choice that each of us must make. Either we can spend for our own pleasure all the wealth we possess, or we can set aside part of our wealth to give to others. If we do the latter, then we may sacrifice a few immediate, earthly pleasures; but the joy we earn for ourselves in Heaven far, far surpasses the pleasure we have lost on earth. *Every act of charity on earth is an investment in Heaven.*

To learn about programs and ways you can help, please visit: stbasil.goarch.org

"Hands of Love" will be accepting monetary donations and gift cards for Staples, Home Depot, Lowes, Walmart and Target for the children of the Saint Basil Academy throughout January 2021.

Anna Andreeva-Naydenova, "Hands of Love " Philoptochos Ministry Chair

Follow us!

SCAN ME

Peachtree City GREEK FEST

GREECE on the GO

SAT. MARCH 6

This year's DRIVE THRU ONLY offerings still promise to make you feel like you're enjoying a meal in the center of Athens. Rain or shine, Greece On The Go brings you some of our favorite foods, including souvlaki on skewers, Greek potatoes, Greek salad, and yummy pastries! Cars and golf carts welcome!

SEE YOU THERE!

March 6, 11 AM - 6:30 PM
Shakerag Knoll Parking Lot
192 McIntosh Trail,
Peachtree City, GA 30269

You'll turn in off of McIntosh Trail and follow directions of volunteers to place your order and pick up food!

Proceeds will benefit St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church building fund & outreach ministries!

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

On this *the 841st* 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, January 24 (14th Sunday of St. Luke):

7:45 a.m. Orthros Service
9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
10:45 a.m. Religious Education Class (at church) – Presbytera Marinda Tsahakis and Lydia McGee will teach our class today as we continue the theme of religious persecution. *Please join us.*

Youth Religious Education Class Reminder: This afternoon, we encourage our parents to share the digital religious education lessons their teachers emailed. Next Sunday, students and parents in each class will join their teachers in a Virtual Religious Education Lesson as we did last Sunday. Thanks for helping us teach our Orthodox faith to our youth.

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated! Thank you!

The following reflection, "St. Ephraim the Syrian as a Model for Our Lives" by Fr. George Papavarnavas is reprinted from *www.johnsanidopoulos.com.* **+Fr. George Tsahakis**

Saint Ephraim was born in the early fourth century in Nisibis of Syria from parents who were Confessors and Martyrs, as he wrote, "I am from a family of martyrs," for during the period of harsh persecution under Diocletian they gave their bold confession for the true God and they sealed it with the blood of their martyrdom. For a teacher he had Bishop James, a man of great theological education, who also ordained him a deacon. He received no other ordination. He was a true ascetic, a fiery orator and a famous writer. They called him a prophet of Syrians, a pillar of Orthodoxy, the mouth and lyre of the Spirit, and vessel of compunction. Shortly before his repose he visited Basil the Great in Caesarea of Cappadocia. He reposed in peace.

We will now enter the fragrant meadow of his inspired writings, in order to reap some flowers, which are full of exquisite fragrances, in order to offer them to those who are addicted to heavenly scents. In other words, we will list extracts from the writings of the Saint, which are always timely, instructive and beneficial.

1. "From the land comes the joy of harvest, from the vineyard fruits that give food, and from the Scriptures teaching that gives life. The land has one season for the harvest, and the vineyard has one season for the vintage, but the Scripture when read always overflows with teaching that gives life. The land when it has been harvested lies fallow and the vineyard when the grapes have been picked is unproductive, but when Scripture is harvested the grapes of those who expound it are not lacking in it. It is picked every day and the grape clusters of the hope in it are never exhausted."

Here the Saint wants to highlight the great value of Holy Scripture and the benefits one gets from studying it. Indeed, Holy Scripture is spiritual food and drink, which nourishes, refreshes and enlivens man, literally "intoxicate" him, and gives wings to hope. But no matter how many fruits one reaps from it, it remains inexhaustible of heavenly meanings and hopeful messages.

2. "Eight are the thoughts that cause sin: gluttony, lust, avarice, anger, despondency, despair, vainglory and pride. Gluttony is healed by temperance and the fear of God; lust by vigil, thirst and the remembrance of death; avarice by indigence and frugality; anger with gentleness, long-suffering, prayer and forgiveness; despondency by not grieving over temporal things, even if we are beaten, mocked, or persecuted, we are not to grieve, but to rejoice, and we should only grieve when we commit a sin. Even then, however, we should grieve within measure, lest we fall into despair and be led to destruction; despair with work, contemplation, prayer and unceasingly standing near God; vainglory by not loving the praises of people, nor leadership, and with self-reproach; and pride with no matter what you do, you should not say you did it by your own effort or bravery, but with God's strength." ***- continued inside bulletin***