



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

v 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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Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, Chancellor

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, November 19, 2023

ON THIS DAY, THE NINTH SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE, THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES Obadiah the Prophet; Martyr Barlaam of Caesarea; Martyr Heliodorus; & Anthimos, Thallalaeos, Christopher, Euphemia & her children, the Martyrs. *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 meeting 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 (Grave Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.122-125):

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: By Your Cross, O Lord, You destroyed death; to the thief You opened paradise. The myrrhbearers' sorrow You transformed into joy, and You sent Your apostles forth to proclaim that You had risen from the dead, Christ our God, bestowing on all the world Your great mercy.

3. 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.

4. Kontakion for Feast of the Theotokos (11/21) – (Hymnal-pp.236-239):

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: Behold the temple of the Savior, His precious bridal chamber. Behold the virginal and sacred vessel of God's glory. Today she enters into the house of the Lord, bearing within her the grace of the Holy Spirit. For this, the angels exclaim: She is indeed the heavenly tabernacle.

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S DIVINE LITURGY

<p><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></p>	<p>– St. John Chrysostom</p>
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Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Ephesians 2:14-22)

¹⁴For He is our peace; in His flesh He has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. ¹⁵He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. ¹⁷So He came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; ¹⁸for through Him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, ²⁰built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone. ²¹In Him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²²in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Luke 12:16-21)

¹⁶Then He told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' ¹⁸Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' ²⁰But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"For, 'Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved.'" (Romans 10:13)

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

Thanksgiving was never meant to be contained in a single day. Thanksgiving is a spirit we should have for more than just one day – even for more than one year. Thanksgiving is a spirit we should show all during our Christian life. Real thanksgiving is found in expressing our thankfulness with others who are needy in our land. Real thanksgiving is found in having a personal, ongoing

relationship with God in the person of Jesus Christ, Who is our Savior and Lord. Perhaps my greatest reason for thanksgiving in every season is the fact that our Almighty God, the One Who is AWESOME and SOVEREIGN over the entire universe – desires to have a personal relationship with me. He wants to set up residence in my heart. “ *...Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.*” (Rev. 7:12)

The Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple – November 21

(cont. from back cover)

The Orthodox names of the All-Holy Virgin

From the names alone that Orthodoxy gave to the All-Holy Virgin, they fully adorned Her person – not as a theatrical spectacle, as is done elsewhere, namely, depicting Her as a doll that was loaded with rings and earrings and a whole cluster of other profane and senseless things – from these alone, I say, it becomes obvious how truly spiritual is the veneration of the All-Holy Virgin in Greek Orthodoxy. First of all is Her holiest name: Panagia (All-Holy One). Then, the other names: the Superbly-Blessed, the Theotokos (God-bearer), the All-pure One, More Honorable than the Cherubim and More Glorious than the Seraphim, the Living and Plentiful One, the Fountain, the Ensouled Ark, the Undeified One, the Immaculate One, the Fully-Graced One, the Ever-Blessed and All-Blameless One, the Protection, the Listening One, the Speedily-Acting One, the Quick-Responding One, the Sanctified Temple, the Rational Paradise, the Unwithering Rose, the Golden Censer, the Golden Light, the Mana-Receiving Jar, the Heavenly Ladder, the Fervent Intercessor, the Unconquerable Fortress, the Source of Mercy, the World’s Shelter, the King’s Throne, the Gold-Cladded Tower and Twelve-fold Walled City, the Sun-Illumined Throne, the Protective-Shelter of the World, the Fine-Fruit-Bearing Tree, the Good-Shading Tree of Rich Foliage, the Ray of the Spiritual Sun, Holy Zion, God’s Habitation, the Heavenly Gate, the Patron of the aggrieved,

the Staff of the Blind, the Joy of the Afflicted, and a thousand others, which are recorded in the books of the Church. Close to them are the names that hagiographers inscribe upon Her holy icons: the Guide, the Sweet-Kissing One, the One that is Wider than Heaven, the Hope of the hopeless, the Speedy Visitation, the Spotless One, the Hope of the Christians, the Consolation, the Merciful One, and many others, which are written under the abbreviation: **MP ΘΥ**, which means *Mary Mother of God*. How much love, how much reverence and how many tears of devotion these names alone reveal, which were not pronounced as easily as the words that exit from the mouth, but as names that were engraved in souls with pain and humility and faith.

The Orthodox hymns to the All-Holy Virgin

The same is the case with the hymns to the All-Holy Virgin, which are innumerable like the stars of heaven and are exquisite in beauty, and which were composed by saintly hymnographers who “constituted a spiritual chorus!” In this fragrant orchard are placed all the unfading flowers and sweet herbs of speech. Indeed, it was the All-Holy Virgin herself that prophesied of herself, when she went to the house of Zachariah and Elizabeth embraced Her, that all generations will call Her blessed: “In those days, Mary arose and went to the mountainous region in the region of Judah and entered the house of Zachariah and greeted Elizabeth. And as Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary the child jumped inside her womb.” (2)

And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and cried with a loud voice and said: “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And from where did this good come to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Because, as soon as the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the child jumped in my womb, and blessed is she who

believed in what the Lord said of her.” (3) And Mariam said: “My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, because He condescended to look upon His humble servant. Henceforth, all generations will call me blessed, because the Mighty One has made great things in me, and sanctified is His name, and His mercy goes on from generation to generation to those who have the fear of Him.”

The Orthodox Icons of the All-Holy Virgin

Just as there are countless hymns of the Virgin Mary, so there are countless icons of Her in unobtrusive colors, which embellish our churches and are painted on plank or wall. In every Orthodox church there stands her icon on the iconostasis at the right side of the Holy Gate. In other icons she is painted as a nun, but in the icons of the iconostasis she is always depicted holding Christ in her arms on her left side, but rarely on her right (then she is called *Dexiokratousa*=Right-holder). Her head is covered modestly and solemnly with a maphorion, a loosely fitting and priestly dress, of dark crimson color, falling on her shoulder in a spacious setting, leaving uncovered only her elongated face and her hands. Inside the cover is shown a narrow strip from the bonding of her head which tightens her forehead and allows only the edges of the ears to appear. Her forehead is like dark ivory, pure, simple, and crystal clear. The eyebrows are arched, vibrant and long, reaching near her ears, her eyes almond-like, with shadowy, brown, deep, serious but luscious, as egg whites clean but shaded. Her look is melancholic, simple, direct, quiet, nice, dear, but sorrowful and joyous together, strict but also compassionate, most holy, spiritual, innocent, thoughtful, unblemished, hopeful, patient, meek, most unassuming, distant from all carnal consideration, a mystical mirroring of paradise, royal and humble, human and divine, harmless, brotherly, courteous, examining, alert, serene, philanthropist, motherly, maiden, cool, caustic for those who have evil thoughts, tender, piercing, searching, unpretentious,

predominant, condescending, supplicatory, unshakable. Her nose is long and narrow, moderate, Jewish, fleshless, with thin nostrils, slightly overturned, modest. Her mouth small, shy, prudent, closed, clean, shaded in the cheek, as if smiling slightly. Her chin is flared, respectable, unpretentious, humble. Her cheek, virginal, clean, soft, fragrant, shy, pale with very slight redness. Her neck, bent humbly, joins the chin with a gentle shade which was called *sweetness* by the older icon-painters. Her whole face is priestly and religious and reveals an ancient tribe. Her immaculate hands are small, narrow with long fingers and thin nails. With the left hand she holds Christ, while her right hand is leaning modestly on her chest, in a supplicatory position, with the index finger away from the others. In more ancient icons this hand is more upright and higher, near the neck.

The most severe type of the All-Holy Virgin is the so called **Odegetria=The Guide**, which has her head erect, her expression more impassive and her whole posture more priestly. On the other hand the **Glykofilousa=Sweet-kissing** Virgin has her head reversely curved towards her Child, whom she embraces more tightly, and her expression is more emotional. The **Platytera=Wider than the Heavens** Virgin is depicted seated on the throne, rigorous and unbending, and holding Christ on her knees, leaning one of her hands on his shoulder and with the other holding his foot or a cloth.

The Orthodox Churches of the All-Holy Virgin

In Greece, most of the churches of the All-Holy Virgin hold their Feast on the Dormition of the Theotokos, *i.e.* on the 15th of August. The hymns chanted on this Feast are the most exquisite. The Doxastikon of Vespers is the only hymn that is chanted in the eight tones, each phrase has a different tone. It starts with the first tone and ends again with the first. But the whole of Greece praises the All-Holy Virgin not only with the chanters and the

priests in the churches, but also with everything it has, with the villages, the mountains, the islands, which bear Her holy name. The boats sail in the cool sea, passing by the headlands where Her monasteries are built, having carved on their stern Her much loved and venerated name. Anyone sailing in Greek waters, in whatever place may find himself on the Feast Day of the All-Holy Virgin, will hear bells ringing from the sea. Some come from the Holy Mount Athos which is known as the Garden of the All-Holy Virgin, others from Tinos, where one of Her most famous palaces is located, others from Salamis where the Monastery of the Phaneromeni=The Revealed One keeps Her Feast, others from Mytilene, from the All-Holy Virgin of Agiassos and Petra, others from the Monastery of Siphnos, others from Skiathos, others from Naxos - from every island, from every headland, from every dry land.

Notes:

1. - See "Joyous Mourning" issue 61 vol 6, *Hellenike Demiourgia*, pp. 247-251.
2. - The child was the Forerunner.
3. – I.e. what was said to the Virgin Mary by the Archangel Gabriel at the Annunciation.

- From *The Forerunner*, August 2013. Translated by the Rev. Dr. George Dion Dragas.



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

On this *the 979th 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! ***Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!***

IOCC Sunday

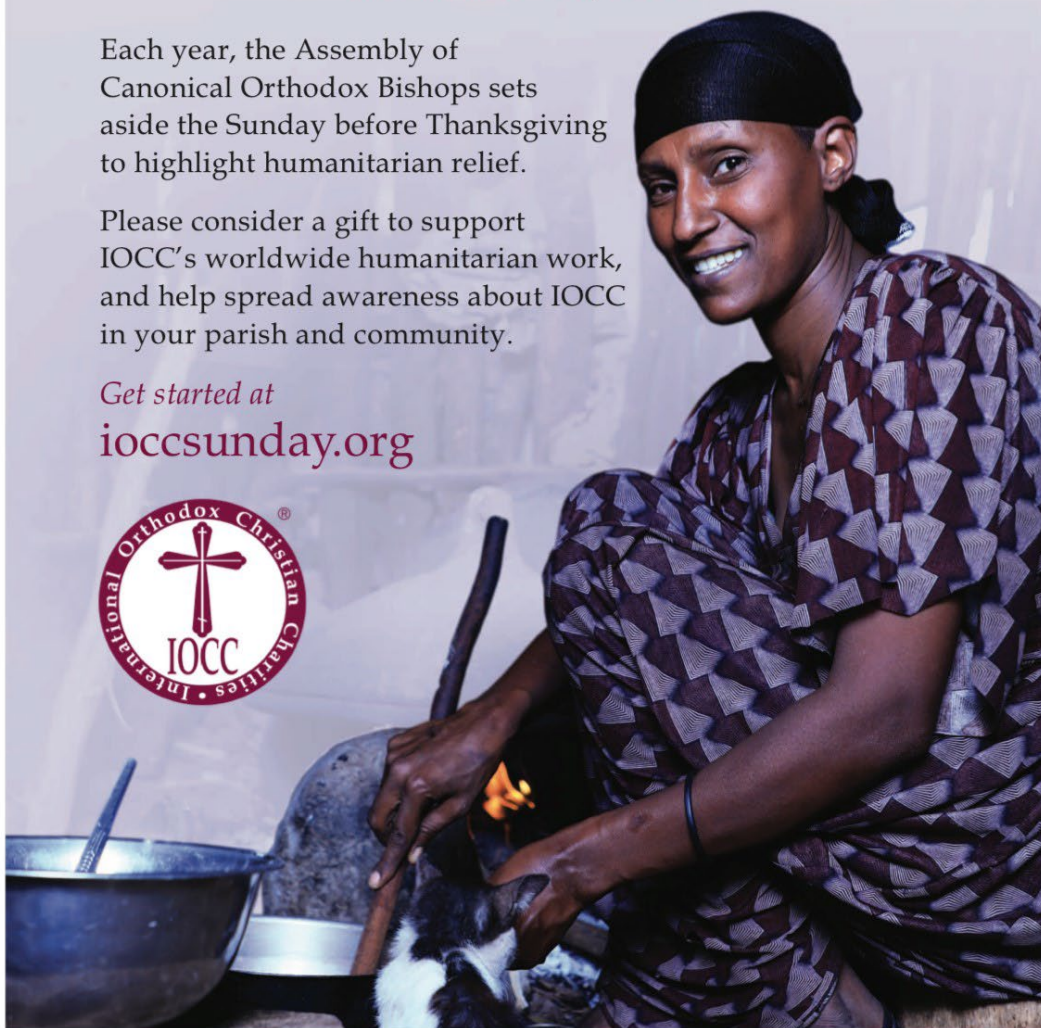
CELEBRATING IOCC'S WORK

November 19, 2023

Each year, the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops sets aside the Sunday before Thanksgiving to highlight humanitarian relief.

Please consider a gift to support IOCC's worldwide humanitarian work, and help spread awareness about IOCC in your parish and community.

Get started at
ioccsunday.org



INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

November 19, 9th Sunday of St. Luke/IOCC

9:00 Divine Liturgy

10:45 Religious Education Classes

November 21, Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple (St. Christopher Church)

9:00 Divine Liturgy

November 22, (Archangel Michael Chapel)

8:00 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy

November 23, Thanksgiving Day

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to His Holy Name! (Ps. 97:12)

November 25, Feast of St. Katherine the Great Martyr (St. Christopher Church)

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy

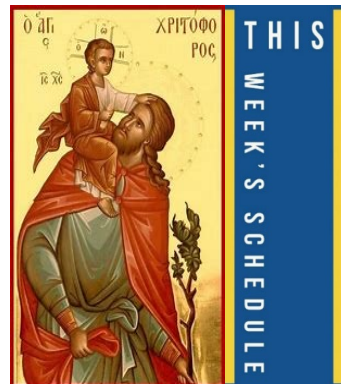
November 26, 13th Sunday of St. Luke

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy

10:45 General Parish Assembly

1:00 Let's EAT!



The Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple – November 21

The following reflection, “The Panagia: The Joy of all Christians” was written by Photis Kontoglou. It is reprinted from www.johnsanidopoulos.com. **+Fr. George Tsahakis**

The All-Holy Virgin: the spiritual adornment of Orthodoxy

The Virgin Mary is the spiritual adornment of Orthodoxy. For us Greeks she is the pained mother, the comforter, and the protector, who stands by us in every circumstance. In every part of Greece countless churches and monasteries are built, palaces of this humble queen, and a large number of small country-churches are scattered on the mountains, the plains and the islands, sweet-scented by the fragrance of her virginity and spirituality. Within each of these shrines, one finds the old and venerable icon with the dark and golden-waxed face, which is constantly wet from the tears of our tortured people, because we have no other to help us, except the All-Holy Virgin Mary, “for as sinners we have no other constant mediator before God in times of trouble and affliction as we bend beneath our multiple faults.” The beauty of Mary is not carnal, but spiritual, because where there is pain and holiness, there is only spiritual beauty. Carnal beauty brings carnal excitement, whereas spiritual beauty brings devotion, respect, and pure love. This is the beauty that the All-Holy Virgin has. And this beauty is imprinted on her Greek icons which were made by pious people who were fasting, chanting and clad in broken-heartedness and spiritual purity. It is this mystical beauty, depicted on the face of the Virgin, that draws like a magnet pious souls, quietening and comforting them. And this spiritual fragrance is the so-called Joyful Mourning (1), which is granted to us by the religion of Christ, an herb unknown to people who do not go near Him who is the good shepherd. This joyful sorrow is depicted in every creation of Orthodox art, and sheds a fragrance like myrrh and aloe, whether this creation is an icon, or hymnody, or chanting, or manuscript, or vestments, or words, or actions, or blessings, or greetings, or monastery, or monastic cell, or carved wood, or embroidery, or candle, or lectern, or candelabra, or whatever is a vehicle for sanctification.

- **Continued inside**