



Sunday, December 3, 2023



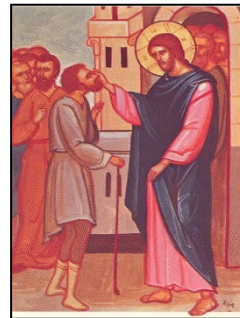
GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

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

313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

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

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, December 3, 2023

For those receiving Holy Communion, kindly stand immediately in front of the podium that Fr. George is using as he distributes the Eucharist to you. The podium helps him stabilize his body while his imbalance symptoms are being treated. He appreciates your prayers and support.

ON THIS DAY, THE 14TH SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES The Holy Prophet Sophonias (Zephaniah); Our Righteous Father John, Bishop and Hesychast; Holy Martyrs Agapius and Seleucius; Theodore, Archbishop of Alexandria; Angelis the New Martyr; & Karpos the Hieromartyr. *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 (First Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.98-101):

It is sung *before* and *after* the Small Entrance: Although Your tomb was sealed with a stone, O Savior, and Your most pure body was guarded by the soldiers, You rose on the third day giving life to all the world. Therefore, O giver of life, the powers of heaven praise You: Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ. Glory to Your kingdom. Glory to Your saving wisdom, O only lover of mankind.

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 – Preparation for the Nativity – (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

<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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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 (Ephesians 5:8-19)

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts,

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

Luke 18:35 As He approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. 36 When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. 37 They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." 38 Then he shouted, "Jesus,

Son of David, have mercy on me!" 39 Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 40 Jesus stood still and ordered the man to be brought to Him; and when he came near, He asked him, 41 "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me see again." 42 Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has saved you." 43 Immediately he regained his sight and followed Him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, praised God.

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

¹⁹"So 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." (Ephesians 2:19-20)

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

According to a Greek legend, in ancient Athens a man noticed the great storyteller Aesop playing childish games with some little boys. He laughed and jeered at Aesop, asking him why he wasted his time in such a frivolous activity.

Aesop responded by picking up a bow, loosening its string, and placing it on the ground. Then he said to the critical Athenian, "Now, answer the riddle, if you can. Tell us what the unstrung bow implies."

The man looked at it for several moments but had no idea what point Aesop was trying to make. Aesop explained, "If you keep a bow always bent, it will break eventually; but if you let it go slack, it will be more fit for use when you want it."

People are also like that. That's why we all need to take time to rest. Start by setting aside a special time to relax physically and renew yourself emotionally and spiritually . . . and then pray. You will be at your best for the Lord if you have taken time to loosen the bow and receive His Word . . . His encouragement, . . . His guidance.

What is Prayer?

Prayer is doxology, praise, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, and intercession to God. "When I prayed, I was new," wrote a great theologian of Christian antiquity, "but when I stopped praying, I became old." Prayer is the way to renewal and spiritual life. Prayer is aliveness to God. Prayer is strength, refreshment, and joy. Through the grace of God and our disciplined efforts prayer lifts us up from our isolation to a conscious, loving communion with God in which everything is experienced in a new light. Prayer becomes a personal dialogue with God, a spiritual breathing of the soul, a foretaste of the bliss of God's kingdom.

As we pray deeply within our hearts we grow in prayer. By the grace of God, we suddenly catch a glimpse of the miracle of the presence of the Holy Spirit working within us. At first it is only a spark but later it becomes a flame freeing and energizing our whole being. To experience the fire of God's holy love, to give it space within us to do its cleansing and healing work as a breath of the Holy Spirit, and to use it as light and power for daily living – such are the goals as well as the fruits of true prayer.

Today is “Parish Thanksgiving Sunday”

We thank *Susan & Pete Kleto* for offering the five Artos (loaves of bread) in thanksgiving to God for the health and welfare of them and their family and God’s many blessings in our lives.



Likewise, today we thank God and celebrate Name Days, Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries, and other special occasions that occurred recently or during the month of December. Congratulations to everyone celebrating their special events today.



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

On this *the 981st 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!***

If you would like to offer the Five Loaves for one of the open months in 2024, email Presbytera Marinda Tsahakis. She is happy to assist you and add your name below.

January 7, 2024 - Dedee & Kirk Panayis & Maria Panayi

February 4, 2024 - to be announced

March 3, 2024 - to be announced

April 7, 2024 - to be announced

May 12, 2024 - Presbytera Marinda & Fr. George Tsahakis

June 2, 2024 - to be announced

July 7, 2024 - to be announced

August 4, 2024 - Dedee & Kirk Panayis & Maria Panayi

September 1, 2024 - Faye Georgeo

October 6, 2024 - to be announced

November 3, 2024 - Faye Georgeo

December 1, 2024 - Presbytera Marinda & Fr. George Tsahakis

December 3, 14th Sunday of St. Luke

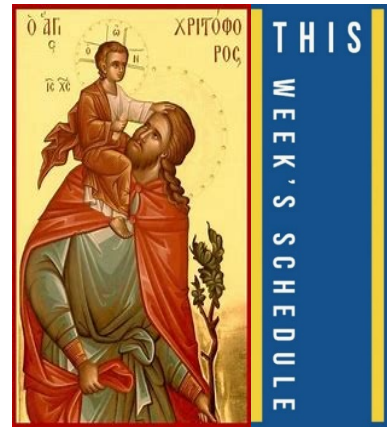
7:45 Orthros

**9:00 Divine Liturgy, Blessing of Five
Loaves offered by Susan & Pete Kleto
& December Commemorations**

11:00 Religious Education Classes

Noon Community Tree Decorating – all invited to assist

**Noon Deadline for Parish Council Nominations to be
received by Board of Elections members**



December 4, Feast of St. Barbara (Archangel Michael Chapel)

8:15 Orthros & Divine Liturgy

7:00 Parish Council Candidate Training Seminar via Zoom

December 6, St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (St. Christopher Church)

9:00 Divine Liturgy

December 10, 10th Sunday of St. Luke

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy, 40 Day Memorial, Prayer Shawls

Blessing, & Special Presentation

11:00 Religious Education Classes Noon Parish Council Meeting



**St. Christopher
Christmas Pageant
on Sunday,
December 17th**

A cherished tradition in Orthodox parishes is for our youth and adults to offer a Christmas pageant in remembrance of the Nativity of our Lord

Jesus Christ. During religious education classes on the next two Sundays, we will assign and rehearse parts and music. **Parents**, please bring your children and support their participation. **Adults**, we welcome your involvement. **Think of it this way:**

Sunday, 12/3 + Sunday, 12/10 + Sunday, 12/17 = 3 Sundays

3 like the 3 Persons of the Holy Trinity – Father, Son, & Holy Spirit

& then Sunday, Christmas Eve, 12/24, followed by the Nativity of our Incarnate Lord on Monday, 12/25! Join us!

St. Nicholas the Wonderworker is remembered Wednesday, December 6th. The following reflection was written by Archimandrite Gregory Konstantinos and is reprinted from www.johnsanidopoulos.com. **+Fr. George Tsahakis**



Saint Nicholas of the Storm-Tossed, the Saint of the Sea, beloved by people and protector of sailors and all the poor, and a supporter of the afflicted, is particularly honored today by all Orthodox people throughout the world.

On this day, the Saint is celebrated in all the chapels that stand on various beaches and ports as vigilant guards blessing and co-sailing with our sailors.

As Archbishop of Myra in Lycia of Asia Minor, the Saint was always present among us. The Saint was and is a lover of mankind and a lover of the poor, a defender of truth and justice.

The saints of our Church who are registered in our calendar have the privilege to console us.

With the great unrest that exists and that we experience in our days, we have need of their visitation. The economic, spiritual, and moral crisis of recent years hopes for and expects help from heaven.

In his time Saint Nicholas was the patron of the hungry and hurting among his fellow men. Many are his miracles.

That time is like our own. There was deprivation, poverty, need, miseries, and disappointments, but charity, consolation and spiritual stimulation were not lacking.

Saint Nicholas is a shining example. In a time like ours today that offers some conveniences and comforts, as well as confusion and agitation, the Saint guides us from above.

Many people want to take the place of God in our lives. Wickedness and deceitfulness find ways to get into the depths of our soul to trap us. But the Saint liberates us.

Some of our fellow men underestimate the saints while others exaggerate them, thereby underestimating the person of Christ.

The saints, as we know, are good and trusted friends, fierce intercessors, affectionate mediators.

Saint Nicholas crosses seas and lands to protect and save those who are at risk.

He is a known, beloved, and revered Saint. He stands boldly before Christ, and He listens to him willingly.

This is why he is loved by the people. His icons wear a "shirt" of silver, and with their many offerings and lamps they work miracles for all those who embrace them with warm faith.