

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, September 24, 2023



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

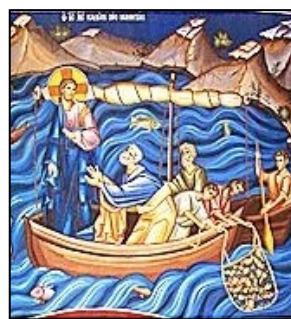
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St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



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Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, Chancellor

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Fr. George arranged for Fr. Ken Anthony to serve in his place today and appreciates Fr. Ken's assistance. Fr. George is celebrating his 50th High School Class Reunion in Virginia with Presbyteria Marinda. He thanks our Lord and Savior for His blessings these past 50 years and for being able to share with his childhood friends this weekend and extol the memory of departed classmates.

ON THIS DAY, THE CHURCH COMMEMORATES Thecla the Protomartyr & Equal to the Apostles; Silouan of Athos; Coprios the Righteous; Juvenaly & Peter the Aleut, New Martyrs of Alaska; Stephen the Martyr; The Most Holy Theotokos of Palianis; and The Commemoration of the Miracle of the Theotokos Myrtidiotissis in Kythira. *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 *before* and *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 for Miracle of the Theotokos Myrtidiotissis – (not in Hymnal):

It is sung after the Small Entrance. O come, all you people, and let us in faith clap our hands and sing sacred songs to her who is the Mother of God, and longingly cry aloud: "Rejoice, O protection of all those who entreat you; rejoice, the salvation of those who honor you with longing; rejoice, O Lady who restored the paralyzed man to health."

4. Hymn for St. Thecla – (not in Hymnal):

It is sung after the Small Entrance. All aflame with love for your Creator, from the teachings of the sacred preacher, you disregarded as fleeting all things mundane. And being bold in the face of the penalties, you gave yourself as a beautiful gift to God. Thecla, glorious companion of the Apostle Paul, we pray you entreat your Bridegroom, Christ, and ask Him to grant us His great mercy.

5. 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.

6. 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><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 24:12-35)

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. Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. And He said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed Him over to be condemned to death and crucified Him. But we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find His body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision

of angels who said that He was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Him." Then He said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into His glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them the things about Himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, He walked ahead as if He were going on. But they urged Him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So He went in to stay with them. When He was at the table with them, He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was talking to us on the road, while He was opening the Scriptures to us?" That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and He has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how He had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (2 Timothy 3:10-15)

Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Luke 5:1-11)

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on Him to hear the word of God, He saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then He sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have

caught nothing. Yet if You say so, I will let down the nets.” When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” For he and all who were with Him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed Him.

THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE

(TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

“Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your Name; deliver us, and forgive our sins, for Your Name’s sake.” (Psalm 79:9)



This Sunday, Stephen Sarantis and Tom Farmakis will present to our parish a special donation from our sisters and brothers at Transfiguration Church in Marietta, GA, in support of our Building Fund. Pictured with them are Fr. Panayiotis Papageorgiou, Proistamenos, his clergy and Parish Council President. We are deeply appreciative of this extraordinary gift and thank Transfiguration Church and its parishioners.

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

During the Divine Liturgy, after the recitation of the Creed, as the Priest begins the Prayer of the “Anaphora” (*prayer of consecration for the gifts of bread and wine to become the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ*), he exclaims: “*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you.*”

This Trinitarian blessing is both an *ancient* and *contemporary* liturgical practice and is taken *verbatim* from St. Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians, 13:14. Each day of our lives, we undoubtedly encounter many who are in need of the power of this spiritual blessing which we are free to share. *Grace, love, and communion (fellowship)* – these gifts are all grounded in the eternal, sacrificial, and gracious nature of our God. *What if each of us shared these blessings daily with God’s children as we encountered them?* As we depart today, let us *not* delay in considering our friends and neighbors who need the richness of this blessing to be bestowed upon them. Who knows, God may even place strangers in our midst with which to share this blessing. May we bless all of them abundantly and graciously. *For He is a good and loving God, and to Him we give glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.*



ST. JOHN THE THEOLOGIAN *(cont. from back cover)*



Characteristic is the way in which he begins narrating the life of Christ in the Gospel he wrote: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

It begins with the fundamental truth that the Word, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, is perfect God and existed always with the Father. There was never a moment He did not exist. He is eternally begotten of the Father and is without beginning and without end. He existed before creation, since it was He who created the world, which means that all of creation, visible and invisible, was created by Him. The Triune God, "the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit," created all things. The Son and Word of God is light and life, Who illumines mankind, as long as they are receptive to illumination, that is, those who have the preconditions to see this light, which is not created or sensed, but uncreated.

God is uncreated and therefore His energies are uncreated. And there is an infinite difference between that which is uncreated and that which is created. What is created is finite, subject to decay and death, and is unable to regenerate and save, while that which is uncreated, the Holy Triune God, is without beginning and without end, and is the light and life of humanity. Those who live in the darkness of their

passions cannot understand the existence of this light, and therefore cannot defeat the darkness of sin and the error of heresy. This light, which is the glory of Christ, John saw on Mount Tabor, together with Peter and James, "as much as it was possible for them." He testifies to and confesses what he saw, heard, felt, smelled, and experienced in his entire existence, which was transfigured. Because on Tabor we not only have the transfiguration of Christ, but also that of His disciples. Their sensible eyes were transfigured, so that they were able to see the light of Christ. "That light was not sensible, nor did those who beheld it see it



with their simple sensible eyes. The eyes of the disciples were reformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Regarding the vision of this Light, Saint Gregory Palamas writes: 'Eyes that can perceive natural things would be blind to this Light.' For the vision of this light to take place, He "opened their eyes and brought them from blindness to sight." Therefore, the disciples were transfigured in order to be found worthy to see the glory of God in the human nature of the Word" (Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos, *Saint Gregory Palamas as an Hagiorite*).

There are also saints today who have experiences similar to those of the holy Apostles. That is, they experience the three stages of the spiritual life, namely the purification of the heart, the illumination of the nous, and the vision of the uncreated light. The Orthodox Church has preserved this faith unadulterated, as it was given by Christ to the Apostles, together with the method of healing the soul of the passions. The passionate cannot truly love, because they mingle love with selfishness and self-interest. And it is known from history, as well as from recent events, that the greatest

crimes to humanity have been committed in the name of love and justice. Authentic love is related to the true faith and inner purity and is not expressed "with words or speech but with actions and in truth" (1 Jn. 3:18).



Saturday, October 14th, 2023

6 PM Appetizers | 7 PM Dinner

The Shipyard at Trilith

COME ENJOY A TASTE OF GREECE!

DELICIOUS FOOD • LIVE MUSIC • GREEK DANCING



**Tickets: \$150 for Individual
\$250 for Couples
Sponsorships Available!**

**Tickets include an all you can eat Greek buffet, open bar,
champagne wall, red carpet for our 20th Anniversary, & more!**

To purchase, please scan the QR code or visit

<https://onecau.se/greekfest>

Questions? Contact Tammy at tammy@soulakos.org or 404-625-4663

Brought to you by St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

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On this the 972nd 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!***

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September 24, 1st Sunday of St. Luke

9:00 Divine Liturgy

10:15 Memorial Service for John & Evangeline

Georgeo & George & Penelope Spetsios

10:45 Religious Education Classes (for all ages)

11:30 Community Luncheon in place of Let's EAT!

October 1, 2nd Sunday of St. Luke

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy

10:15 Memorial Service for Athanasios, Irene
& Athena Christodoulou

10:30 Blessing of Five Loaves & October
Commemorations

11:00 Religious Education Classes (for all ages)

Holy Apostle & Evangelist John the Theologian is commemorated, September 26th. The following reflection of him "as a Model of our Lives" is reprinted from www.johnsanidopoulos.com. +Fr. George Tsahakis



The Apostle and Evangelist John is the soaring eagle of Theology. He wrote the most theological of the Gospels. The Church awarded him with the title of Theologian and in iconography he is depicted with an eagle near his head. But he is also the Evangelist of Love. Not only because he constantly refers to love, but also because he experienced it and expressed it. He was the disciple "whom Jesus loved," but he also very much loved his Teacher. He followed Him in the most difficult moments of His earthly life. When the other disciples hid "for fear of the Jews," he was present at His arrest, trial

and on Golgotha, where at the foot of the Cross Christ entrusted to him His mother. Together with his brother James and Peter, they were a trio of disciples that Christ took with Him to the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus, to Mount Tabor where "He was transfigured before them," as well as to Gethsemane where He prayed before His Passion.

He also loved all people, because whoever loves God loves everything He created, especially his fellow man - everyone, without exception, whether friends or enemies, indiscriminately. It was a true love without selfishness, self-interest, or racism, which are characteristics of impure and impassioned love. Because the saints are passionless and pure, they experience authentic love that embraces even their enemies. On the island of Patmos where he was exiled, because of this love, he was made worthy to see and record the Apocalypse. He also wrote three wonderful epistles. *(cont. inside)*