



My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Χριστός ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη!
Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

In this Sunday's Gospel we hear of a miraculous pool in the city of Jerusalem, called Bethesda, where an angel was known to trouble the waters so that those who suffered from illness or had disabilities were known to lay in the pool. And it is this place, and a lonely paralytic, that stops our Lord.

Knowing that this man has been paralyzed for thirty-eight years, and that he has waited by the water for a long time, Jesus asks the man if he wishes to be healed. The paralyzed man responds, *"Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going, another steps down before me."* Jesus said to him, *"Rise, take up your pallet, and walk."* And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked." (John 5:6-8)

The authorities are so shocked by this man's breaking the Sabbath, they fail to notice the miracle the Lawgiver Himself has performed. Even the man on whom this blessing is bestowed fails to appreciate what Christ has done for him. Our Lord warns him, *"See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you"*, but still the man points Him to the authorities. (John 5:14-15)

The Evangelist meant for this miracle to illustrate Christ honoring the Spirit of the Law—but today I wish to concentrate on something else. The man's statement, *"Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled..."* illustrates an important point about loneliness. This man was not simply looking to be healed, he wished to be seen.

Christ approached the Paralytic to demonstrate how we are to treat others. His Creator knew him, but as human beings, they were strangers to one another. And yet still, our Lord helped him. We do not have the capacity to perform miracles like Jesus, but we can do our best to demonstrate kindness and love. We are not simply called to give our possessions or our treasures to those less fortunate, but our time as well. In this era, let us remember the Paralytic's statement, and reach out to those who are sheltering alone, so that they can say, *"I have someone..."*

+SEVASTIANOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta

We welcome His Eminence Metropolitan Sevastianos of Atlanta today to celebrate Mother's Day and this past Friday's Feast Day of St. Christopher the Great Martyr, whose name our parish bears. We pray God grant Him many more years of good health and joy as He serves as our Bishop. Εἰς πολλὰ ἔτη, Δέσποτα.



SAINT CHRISTOPHER HELLENIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

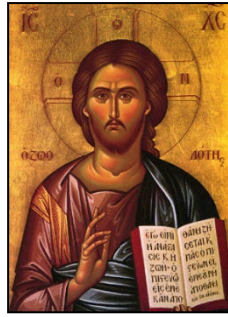
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org

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, May 11, 2025

ON THIS DAY, THE *FOURTH* SUNDAY OF PASCHA, WE MEDITATE ON ONE OF THE VERY GREAT MIRACLES OF OUR LORD, THAT OF THE HEALING OF THE PARALYTIC BY THE POOL AT BETHSAIDA. JESUS' POWER TO HEAL IS LINKED WITH THE RESURRECTION, WHERE IT PROCLAIMS THAT HE WHO OVERCAME DEATH IN HIS OWN BODY HAS POWER OVER ALL HUMAN FLESH. OUR LORD CAN HEAL THE PARALYTIC BECAUSE HE HIMSELF CAN RISE FROM THE DEAD. ON THIS DAY WE ALSO COMMEMORATE THE Renewal of Constantinople; Hieromartyr Mocius; Methodius & Cyril, Equal-to-the Apostles, Illuminators of the Slavs; Theopemptos the Martyr & his Companions; Dioscoros the New Martyr; & Argyrios the New-Martyr of Epanomi. *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 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./2./9. Hymn for the Feast of Pascha (our Lord's passover from death to life):

Sung three times after the opening of the Divine Liturgy, before the Small Entrance, and after the distribution of Holy Communion: Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

3. Small Entrance Exclamation of the Priest:

On the occasion of today's feast, the Priest intones the following at the Small Entrance: "In your choirs, bless the Lord, you of Israel's wellspring. Save us, O Son of God, who did rise from the dead, we sing to You: Alleluia!"

4. Resurrectional Hymn - Third Tone (Today) – (Hymnal-pp.106-109):

Sung after the Small Entrance: Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord has shown the mighty power of His arm. He has trampled down death by death, becoming the firstborn of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell and has granted to all the world His great mercy.

5. 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.

6. Kontakion of Pascha – (Hymnal-pp.274-277):

Sung after the Small Entrance: Into the grave You descended, Immortal One, yet You destroyed the power of Hades, and as victor You arose, O Christ our God; You proclaimed to the Myrrh Bearing Women a greeting of joy, You brought peace to Your Holy Apostles, and to the fallen You granted resurrection.

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

Today , the following hymn is sung instead of "Axion Estin" or "Truly it is proper to call you blessed...": The angel cried to her who was filled with grace, exclaiming: “Rejoice, O purest Maiden! Again, rejoice, I tell you, because your Son is risen from three days of entombment.” With one voice, O Virgin, the faithful cry, “Rejoice!” to you, Rejoice, Living City, and the Gateway of the Lord. Light of the Resurrection of Him born of your womb, dead but now arisen, shine down on us who are blessing you.

8. Communion Hymn – (Hymnal-pp.318-319):

On the occasion of today's feast, the following hymn is sung instead of "Aineite" or "Praise the Lord": Receive the Body of Christ; drink from the font of immortality.

Special Thanks to Dr. Constantine Kokenes, who led our chantors this morning. We appreciate him and his family being our special guests.

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 (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 (Acts 9:32-42)

Now as Peter went here and there among all the believers, he came down also to the saints living in Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years, for he was paralyzed. Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; get up and make your bed!" And immediately he got up. And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord. Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

Gospel Reading (John 5:1-15)

After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids — blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me." Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk." At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk. Now that day was a Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." But he answered them, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is

the man who said to you, ‘Take it up and walk’?” Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you.” The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

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

“Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for You are my praise.”
(Jer. 17:14)

Pastoral Message from Fr. George



During this Bright period of the Resurrection, let us reflect on our Risen Lord as the Good Shepherd, the image used in the passage of John 10:1-21 ~ *Jesus Christ is depicted as the Good Shepherd Who lays down His life for us ~ His Sheep.*

This week the world witnessed the election of a new pontiff. The man chosen, Cardinal Robert Prevost, will be known as Pope Leo XIV – the first pope ever from the United States. *Our world leader, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios shared:*



"Indeed, a Pope of American origin has been elected, who took the name Leo XIV. From what I remember during my time in Rome, Leo XIII was distinguished for his social teachings. We hope that Leo XIV will also embrace the Church's contribution to the world, not only in the social sphere but by offering answers to the existential questions that continue to concern humanity."

On this the 1052nd 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! On behalf of our parish, we thank you. ***Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!***

On this Mother's Day, Fr. George wishes to give emphasis to the important role of a Presbytera in the Greek Orthodox Church.



Presbytera Marinda has been my “*gift from God*” which is the meaning of her Orthodox name, *Theodosia*. As a spiritual mother, she is deeply intertwined with the life of our parish, providing emotional and spiritual support to me, helping me navigate the challenges of pastoral ministry. She helps me manage the demands of parish life as we seek together to maintain a strong family foundation.

Throughout our 45 years of marriage, Presbytera Marinda and I ensured our children and now our grandchildren are immersed in the Church, learning firsthand the values of service and devotion. Sometimes, clergy families feel they live in a “fishbowl,” constantly observed by parishioners. Presbytera Marinda plays a crucial role in ensuring our children always feel supported

and understood and our home is a nurturing environment.

While not an official clergy member, the Presbytera often serves as a mentor and role model for parishioners. She fosters a welcoming atmosphere, integrating me and our family into the life of the parish. Many parishioners turn to Presbytera for counsel, comfort, and encouragement.

Her role has been one of sacrifice, love, and quiet strength, ensuring that both her family and the parish thrive. Presbytera Marinda is deeply involved in prayer and spiritual guidance, offering wisdom to parishioners. She has taken on roles in Sunday school, Bible studies, Philoptochos, as well as teaching others how to bake prosphora and artos. Indeed, her life of faith, humility, and service sets a powerful example for others.

Throughout the 30 years of our shared ministry as I have served in the Priesthood, Presbyteria Marinda has helped me tirelessly juggle family life, parish duties, and personal spiritual growth. As a confidante to both her husband and parishioners, she often carries the weight of others' struggles. Clergy families sometimes feel pressure to meet high expectations, making privacy and personal time difficult. Nonetheless, Presbyteria Marinda always seeks to foster relationships among parishioners, creating a welcoming and supportive environment. As a tireless participant in all groups of our parish, she strengthens our faith. Whether organizing events, comforting those in need, or simply being present, she plays a vital role in our parish life.

In appreciation of Presbyteria Marinda's quiet strength, deep faith, and unwavering support as the mother of our children, grandmother of their children, and spiritual mother of St. Christopher Church, I am presenting a special gift in her honor to decorate our future church. It is a small mosaic I commissioned in the past year from a religious artisan in England... it is a copy of a famous dove made in the 6th century found in the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, Italy. Framed in light wood, it is made from Venetian glass "tesserae" (small square tiles cut by hand), stone and gold leaf tesserae.



The dove carries profound symbolism in Christianity, representing peace, purity, and the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, doves were used as offerings, symbolizing purification and reconciliation with God.

Jesus instructed His disciples to be "as gentle as doves" when spreading His message. May this dove, be a reminder of God's presence, renewal, and peace – symbolism which Presbyteria Marinda has never ceased to offer to me, to her family, and to each of you.

May this dove mosaic express our thanksgiving to her and to the future Presbyteres that will serve our St. Christopher Church, now and always. Amen.



Friday, May 9th – Feast of St. Christopher the Martyr

9 am **Divine Liturgy**

Sunday, May 11th – Sunday of the Paralytic, Mother's Day/Name Day (from Friday)

8:15 am **Orthros**, with Dr. Constantine Kokenes, Chantor & Our Chantors

9:30 am **Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Sevastianos Presiding**

11:00am **Mother's Day Luncheon** (everyone invited – no charge as we honor our mothers)

Sunday, May 18th – Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

7:45 am **Orthros**

9:00 am **Divine Liturgy**, followed by Religious Education Graduation

11:00 am **Religious Education Classes** (*Last Day of classes for 2024-2025 year*)

11:45 am **Philoptochos Board Meeting**



On Friday, our parish celebrated the Feast Day of St. Christopher the Great Martyr, whose name our parish bears.

Protopresbyter Fr. George Papavarnavas, reflecting on his icon, offers: *"In Orthodox iconography the Saint is depicted transporting Christ on his shoulder, which is why, according to tradition, he was named Christopher (Christ-bearer). This does not appear in his biographies, but what is true and of greater significance is that he was indeed a Christ-bearer and God-bearer, since he had*



Christ in his heart living within him and walking among him: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be My people" (2 Cor. 6:16; Lev. 26:12; Jer. 32:38; Ezek. 37:27).

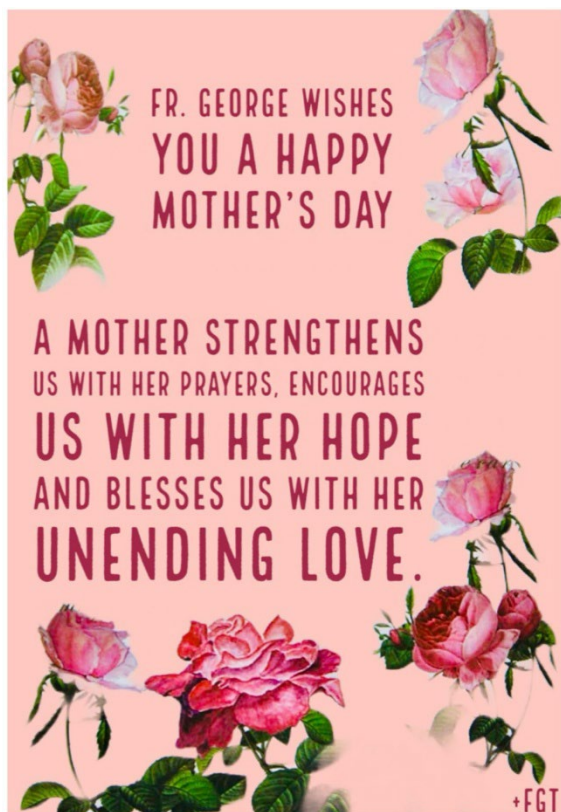
St. Christopher's story is a powerful example of faith and service. According to tradition, he was a giant who sought to serve the most powerful ruler. After realizing Christ was the greatest King, he devoted himself to carrying travelers across a dangerous river. One

day, he carried a child who became so heavy that Christopher struggled to reach the other side. The child then revealed Himself as Christ, explaining that Christopher had been carrying the weight of the world.

Applying this to our Christian witness today, we can take inspiration from Christopher's unwavering faith and service:

- **Serving Others:** Like Christopher carried travelers, we can help those in need—physically, emotionally, or spiritually.
- **Bearing Burdens:** Life brings challenges, but carrying them with faith, knowing Christ walks with us, strengthens our witness.
- **Courage in Faith:** Christopher was martyred for his beliefs. While we may not face persecution, standing firm in our faith in difficult times is a modern form of martyrdom.
- **Guiding Others to Christ:** Christopher helped people cross the river. We can help others navigate life's struggles and lead them toward Christ.

The life of our parish's patron saint is a story reminding us that faith is not just belief—it's action. In response, let us pray and reflect how we see ourselves living out our Christian witness?



Let us offer deep appreciation to Stephen Sarantis, President of the Parish Council, for planning today's delicious luncheon honoring both our mothers and remembering St. Christopher's Feast Day this past Friday.

Special thanks to all who assisted with this event, including all who set up, served, cooked, and will clean up.

We thank Helen and George Psihountas for offering the two colorful flower arrangements on

either side of the Royal Gate that were used on Friday as well.

Fr. George & Presbyteria Marinda offered the yellow lily garlands they made to decorate St. Christopher's icons on the *Iconostas* (front altar wall) and on the *Proskynitarion* (veneration stand) in thanksgiving to God for his 70th birthday on Monday.

Fr. George will offer our parishioners a special Mother's Day Card in thanksgiving for our mothers, both living and those of blessed memory. ***May their memory be eternal.***

We especially thank His Eminence Metropolitan Sevastianos of Atlanta for His pastoral visit today. Εἰς πολλὰ ἔτη, Δέσποτα.