





SAINT CHRISTOPHER HELLENIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

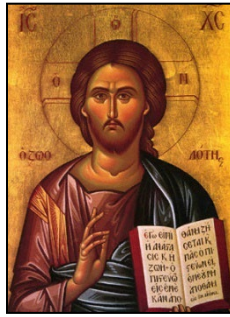
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org

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 4, 2025

ON THIS DAY, THE *THIRD* SUNDAY OF PASCHA, WE COMMEMORATE THE SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN (THEOTOKOS, MARY MAGDALENE, MARY, WIFE OF CLEOPAS, JOANNA, WIFE OF CHOUZA, SALOME, MOTHER OF THE SONS OF ZEBEDEE, MARY AND MARTHA, SISTERS OF LAZARUS, AND SUSANNA), AS WELL AS JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA, THE HIDDEN DISCIPLE, AND NICODEMUS, THE DISCIPLE WHO WENT TO THE LORD AT NIGHT. ON THIS DAY WE ALSO COMMEMORATE Pelagia the Nun-martyr of Tarsus; Hilary the Wonderworker; Euthemios, Bishop of Madytos; & Athanasios, Bishop of Corinth. *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.

***DURING THE 40 DAYS FOLLOWING OUR LORD'S PASCHA/PASSOVER
FROM DEATH TO LIFE, ORTHODOX FAITHFUL ARE ENCOURAGED TO
GREET ONE ANOTHER UPON FIRST ENCOUNTER AS FOLLOWS:***

Christ Is Risen! Truly He Is Risen!

Reflection About Today's Religious Theme:

On this *Third Sunday of Pascha*, the Church commemorates the first Apostles to proclaim the Resurrection: *the women who witnessed the burial of Christ and who when coming to anoint His Body found that the Resurrection had taken place.* Remembered also are *Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.* Scripture mentions seven of the Lord's women disciples by name: Theotokos, Mary Magdalene; Mary, the mother of James and wife of Cleopas; Joanna, the wife of Chouza, a steward to Herod Antipas; Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee; Susanna; and Martha and Mary, the sisters of Lazarus. Luke 8:1-3 records women disciples traveled with our Lord and supported Him and the Twelve out of their means.

SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE

1./2./11. 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 - Second Tone (Today) – (Hymnal-pp.102-105):

Sung after the Small Entrance: When You descended into death, Life immortal, You vanquished the power of hell by Your resplendent divinity, and when You raised the dead from the depths of darkness, all the heavenly powers cried out triumphantly: O giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You.

5. Hymn for Sunday of Myrrh Bearers – (Hymnal-pp.158-161):

Sung after the Small Entrance: The noble Joseph took Your most pure Body down from the tree. He wrapped it in clean linen, anointed it with spices, and placed it in a new tomb. But on the third day, You rose, O Lord, bestowing on all the world Your great mercy.

6. Another Hymn for Myrrh Bearers Sunday– (Hymnal-pp.162-165):

Sung after the Small Entrance: The Angel stood by the tomb and cried out to the myrrh-bearing women: Myrrh would be fitting to anoint the dead, but Christ has shown Himself to be free from corruption. Therefore, proclaim that the Lord is risen, bestowing on all the world His great mercy.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp.304-307):

Today , the following hymn is sung instead of "Axion Estin" or "Truly it is proper to call you blessed...": The Angel cried out to the woman full of grace: Rejoice, O Pure Virgin; again I say, rejoice, for your Son is risen from the tomb on the third day. Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you. Exult and be glad, O Zion. Be radiant, pure Theotokos, in the resurrection of your Son.

10. 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.

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
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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 (Acts 6:1-7)

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. ²And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, ⁴while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.” ⁵What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Gospel Reading (Mark 15:43-16:8)

Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate

and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if He were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether He had been dead for some time. When he learned from the centurion that He was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. Then Joseph brought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid.

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint Him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified. He has been raised; He is not here. Look, there is the place they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you." So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

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

*"Glory in His Holy Name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice."
(1 Chr. 16:10)*

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

In Orthodox Christianity, the Bishop's pastoral ministry is deeply rooted in the tradition of apostolic succession and the spiritual oversight of the faithful. The bishop, or *episkopos* (Greek for "overseer"), is seen as the successor to the Apostles, entrusted with preserving the teachings of the Church and guiding the spiritual life of the community.

The pastoral role of a Bishop includes:

- **Teaching and Doctrine:** *Ensuring that the faith remains true to Orthodox teachings and addressing theological concerns.*
- **Liturgical Leadership:** *Leading worship, administering sacraments, and maintaining the integrity of liturgical practices.*
- **Spiritual Shepherding:** *Providing pastoral care, guiding clergy and laity, and fostering the spiritual growth of the faithful.*
- **Church Governance:** *Overseeing the administration of the diocese, appointing clergy, and maintaining order within the Church.*

Orthodox pastoral theology emphasizes the Bishop's role as a shepherd, mirroring Christ's ministry. The Bishop is not merely an



administrator but a spiritual father, guiding the faithful toward *deification*—union with God through the sacramental life of the Church.

Next Sunday, May 11th, His Eminence Sevastianos will be visiting our parish for the first time as our new Metropolitan of Atlanta. In preparation, I have invited Dr. Constantine Kokenes to lead our chantors for the Orthros Service and assist our Choir during the Divine Liturgy for the special hymns in Hierarchical Liturgy. You, the faithful pillars of our parish, are essential to completing our local Body of Christ. Please join us to *1) worship with our new Metropolitan, 2) allow our youth to meet Him and receive His blessings, 3) to honor our Mother's on Mother's Day, and 4) to celebrate with a joint Mother's Day/Name Day Luncheon the Name Day of our parish which we will celebrate on Friday, May 9th*. All are welcome! Please bring your family and friends for worship and fellowship. Orthros, 8:15 a.m. & Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m.

From **obedience**
comes **humility**,
from humility
comes
discernment.
From discernment
comes **insight**,
and from insight
comes
foresight.



During my theological school training, I had the blessing to meet and hear Christos Yannaras (1935–2024), a Greek philosopher, Eastern Orthodox theologian and author of more than 50 books which have been translated into many languages. He was a professor emeritus of philosophy at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens. As we consider the choice of welcoming our new Metropolitan in person, I want to share what he wrote about our participation in the worship services of the Orthodox Church:

"The liturgical unity of the faithful, under whatever conditions and in whatever institutions, networks and structures, is the starting point for the transformation of mass coexistence into a communion of persons, a society."

For me personally, that calling reflects our Risen Lord's desire that we come together in the fullness of our local parish of St. Christopher... not only when the Bishop is visiting, but every

opportunity we have to honor and serve God so that the eight counties we serve receive the witness of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

During this paschal period, I encourage you to reflect on the following spiritual teaching of St. Seraphim of Sarov that emphasizes the importance of peace, mercy, and unity in fellowship: "You cannot be too gentle, too kind. Shun even to appear harsh in your treatment of each other. Joy, radiant joy,



streams from the face of him who gives and kindles joy in the heart of him who receives. All condemnation is from the devil. Never condemn each other. We condemn others only because

we shun knowing ourselves. When we gaze at our own failings, we see such a swamp that nothing in another can equal it. That is why we turn away and make much of the faults of others. Instead of condemning others, strive to reach inner peace. Keep silent, refrain from judgment. This will raise you above the deadly arrows of slander, insult and outrage and will shield your glowing hearts against all evil."

Thank you for
your gifts of
time, talents,
and treasures...
today and
always!



Building Our Future: Join Our \$1.5M Capital Campaign

Dear Parish Family,

We are excited to announce the launch of our \$1.5 million Capital Campaign, a five-year endeavor to build our future home. This is an incredible opportunity for us to come together as a community and create a space that will serve and inspire for generations to come.



To make this vision a reality, we encourage everyone to fill out pledge cards now. Our lenders are looking for a strong show of commitment from the parish, and your early pledges are crucial to meeting their requirements. As we consider discussions with outside donors, our ability to demonstrate the Parish Family's commitment to the capital campaign is an integral part of the process and success to raise funds from outside our parish. During our last campaign, we raised an impressive average of \$264K per year, and with your continued support, we are confident we can do it again.

Your participation is vital. Please continue your existing commitment to the stewardship fund and start giving to the new capital campaign or consider increasing your existing building fund pledge amount. Together, we can turn our dreams into reality.

Let's build our future home with faith, dedication, and collective effort. Please consider completing the online pledge card today, [St Christopher Capital Campaign Pledge Card Link](#), so we can show the lenders our unwavering commitment and take the next steps toward our shared goal.

Here are some examples to consider:

GIVING SCENARIO 1:

Currently giving \$100/month

- \$40 to Building Fund
- \$60 to Operations

During the Building Fund Campaign

- **\$80** to Building Fund
- **\$60** to Operations

Total Giving Increase = 40%

GIVING SCENARIO 2:

Currently giving \$200/month

- \$100 to Building Fund
- \$100 to Operations

During the Building Fund Campaign

- **\$200** to Building Fund
- **\$100** to Operations

Total Giving Increase = 30%

GIVING SCENARIO 3:

Currently giving \$300/month

- \$100 to Building Fund
- \$200 to Operations

During the Building Fund Campaign

- **\$200** to Building Fund
- **\$200** to Operations

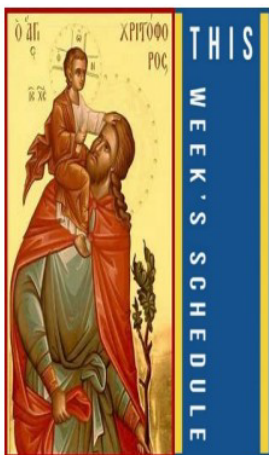
Total Giving Increase = 33%

Please consider giving with your heart.

With gratitude and hope,

Tom Farmakis





Sunday, May 4th – Sunday of the Myrrhbearers

**9 am Great Doxology, Divine Liturgy,
followed by Blessing of Five Loaves & May
Commemorations**

***(offered by Dedee & Kirk Panayis & Maria
Panayi)***

11 am Religious Education Classes

12 pm Parish Council Meeting

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

9 am Divine Liturgy

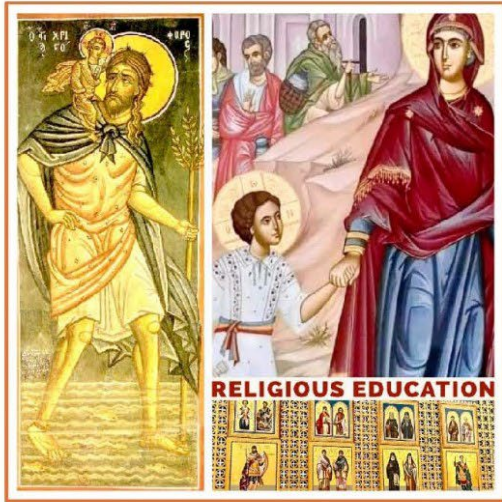
**Sunday, May 11th – Sunday of the Paralytic, Mother's
Day/Name Day (from Friday)**

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

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

11:00am Mother's Day Luncheon

On this the 1051st 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!***



Adult Class

Sunday, May 4, 2025

Fr. George Tsahakis

For our Adult Religious Education Class today, I share the following blog from my Brother Priest, Fr. Athanasios Haros, Dean of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Tarpon Springs, Florida. I wrote to him:

Christ is risen!

Thank you, dear Father for this powerful and stirring message. I plan to reprint it for my adult religious education class on Sunday and lead a discussion on its many dimensions... sacrificing for our Risen Lord, supporting each other in need, placing our decisions in the context of the authentic Body of Christ, serving as stewards of God's creation and especially His Holy Church, and so much more. Your gift is priceless... thanks and glory to God!

Faithfully yours, +Fr. George



[Note: Fr. George is displaying page 1 only to inform you of today's lesson. The full message will be distributed during class.]

Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women – May 4, 2025

About the beginning of His thirty-second year, when the Lord Jesus was going throughout Galilee, preaching, and working miracles, many women who had received of His beneficence left their own homeland and from then on followed Him. They ministered unto Him out of their own possessions, even until His crucifixion and entombment; and afterwards, neither losing faith in Him after His death, nor fearing the wrath of the Jewish rulers, they came to the Sepulcher, bearing the myrrh-oils they had prepared to anoint His body. It is because of the *myrrh-oils* that these God-loving women brought to the tomb of Jesus that they are called the *Myrrh-bearers*. Of those whose names are known are the following: first of all, the most holy Virgin Mary, who in Matthew 27:56 and Mark 15:40 is called “the mother of James and Joses” (these are the sons of Joseph by a previous marriage, and she was therefore their step-mother); Mary Magdalene (celebrated July 22); Mary, the wife of Clopas; Joanna, wife of Chouza, a steward of Herod Antipas; Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee, Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus; and Susanna. As for the names of the rest of them, the evangelists have kept silence (Matt 27:55-56; 28:1-10. Mark 15:40-41. Luke 8:1-3; 23:55-24:11, 22-24. John 19:25; 20:11-18. Acts 1:14).

Together with them we also celebrate the secret disciples of the Savior, Joseph and Nicodemus. Of these, Nicodemus was probably a Jerusalemite, a prominent leader among the Jews and of the order of the Pharisees, learned in the Law and instructed in the Holy Scriptures. He had believed in Christ when, at the beginning of our Savior’s preaching of salvation, he came to Him by night. Furthermore, he brought some one hundred pounds of myrrh-oils and an aromatic mixture of aloes and spices out of reverence and love for the divine Teacher (John 19:39). Joseph, who was from the city of Arimathea, was a wealthy and noble man, and one of the counsellors who were in Jerusalem. He went boldly unto Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, and together with Nicodemus he gave Him burial. Since time did not permit the preparation of another tomb, he placed the Lord's body in his own tomb, which was hewn out of rock, as the Evangelist says (Matt. 27:60).

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