



My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In this week's Epistle, the Apostle Paul writes to the Romans, discussing the difference between those who have the Law of Moses, and those who do not. As the Romans were once pagans, this discussion is very important to them. St. Paul begins by demonstrating how all are children of God. *"Glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality"* (Romans 2:10-11). St. Paul, understands that *"...the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith."* (Galatians 3:24)

The Apostle knows that it is just as possible for a Gentile to do good, as it is for a follower of the Law to commit a sin. *"When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts..."* (Romans 2:14-15) This

statement brings to mind Jesus's warning to the lawyer who wished to test Him on what our Lord considered to be the Greatest Commandment in the Law: *"'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets"* (Matthew 22:37-40). This final sentence, *"...on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets"*, shows us that those pagans who had not observed the laws concerning the sacrifices and the dietary commands could still be counted as sons and daughters of God by holding fast to the principles of loving God and neighbor.

Our Lord did not come to overturn the Law by emphasizing the universality of these Commandments. For, as He said, *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill"* (Matthew 5:17)/ St. Paul explains it perfectly when he says, *"...it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified"* (Romans 2:13). After 2,000 years of the Gospel being spread on this earth, we would do well to ask ourselves: is God's law written on our hearts, or are we like so many of those individuals who profess to believe in Christ, without living like Disciples?

Truly, in opening His arms to all those who do the will of His Father, Christ demonstrated that actions are indeed, more powerful than words.

+SEVASTIANOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta

Liturgical Guide for June 22, 2025



SAINT CHRISTOPHER HELLENIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

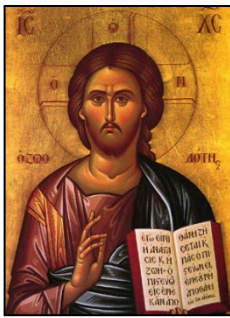
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org

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

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

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, June 22, 2025

ON THIS DAY, THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW, WE COMMEMORATE Andrew of Crete, Author of the Great Canon; Martha, mother of St. Symeon Stylites the Younger; Asclepias the Wonderworker; and Michael Choniates, Metropolitan of Athens. 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. 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 – (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

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 (Mark 16:1-8)

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.

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Rom. 2:10-16)

but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality. All who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears

witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them on the day when, according to My gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

Gospel Reading (Matthew 4:18-23)

As He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fish for people.” Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. As He went from there, He saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

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

“Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive.” (Mt. 21:22)

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

If we are going to be most effective in reaching people for Christ, I believe our strategy should be to show people that we really care. Evangelism and missions must be relational in nature. I can’t find an incident in Holy Scripture in which Jesus walks up to someone and says: “I am the Messiah” and then He shows care for them. No, our Lord offered His care for them first, and then He revealed Himself to

them. With this thought in mind, consider the following story which I wish to use to highlight the various strategies being used to witness the “Good News” of our Lord, using its simple plot involving a passenger on a luxury liner who suddenly falls overboard.

The passenger who has fallen overboard cannot swim. In desperation, he begins calling for help. Now it just so happens that several “would-be rescuers” on deck witness the incident. The first person after seeing the man fall overboard immediately reached into his briefcase and pulled out a book on how to swim. He now tossed it to him and he yelled: “Now brother, you read that and just follow the instructions and you will be all right.”

The man next to him had another approach. He immediately jumped into the water and began swimming all around the drowning man saying: “Now just watch me swim. Do as I do and you will be all right.” The person next to him looked upon the drowning man’s plight with deep concern. He yelled out: “Now, just hold on friend. Help is on the way. We are going to establish a committee and discuss your problem. And then, if we have come up with the proper financing, we will resolve your dilemma.”

The next man on deck yelled out to the drowning man: “Friend, this situation is not nearly as bad as you think. Think dry!” By this time the drowning man was going down for the third time and desperately began waving his arm. Seeing that, the next man on board yelled out: “Yes brother, I see that hand, is there another? Is there another?” *And finally, the last man on deck immediately plunged into the water, at the risk of his own life, and pulled the victim to safety.*

Today, our great nation celebrated its independence as a new nation on July 4, 1776. This occasion affords us a chance to thank God for the freedoms we possess as citizens of the United States of America.* As stewards of God's blessings and our personal freedom, let us recommit our allegiance to our country and its opportunity for us to choose to live life as God has directed us. Rather than squander these blessings on the failed approaches noted in the story above, let us imitate the life-saving rescuer: *Let us "plunge ourselves into the water, even if it means sacrifice, inconvenience, or risk to our own life, and pull ourselves and others entrusted to us to God's Heavenly Kingdom, here and now, and to the ages of ages to come."*

As encouragement, St. Paul shared to the first Christians in Thessaloniki, Greece some 2,000 years ago: "We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that He has chosen you, because our message of the Gospel [Good News] came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake." (1 Thess. 1:2-5)

On this the 1057th 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!***

Sunday, June 22nd – 2nd Sunday of St. Matthew*

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy

11:00 Bonus Father's Day Celebration –
Join us for Brunch

** We welcome Fr. Ken Anthony to our parish on Sunday while Fr. George and his family are in NC for a family funeral.*



Fr. George & Presbyteria Marinda pray all our living fathers be blessed with many more years of good health and we pray for eternal memory for our fathers of blessed memory.