



St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

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Pastoral Message from Fr. George, August 27, 2025



The Light of St. Fanourios – Revealing God's Grace in Hidden Places

*"For there is nothing hidden that will
not be disclosed, and nothing
concealed that will not be known or
brought out into the open."
– Luke 8:17*

Beloved in Christ,

Today August 27th, we honor and
reflect upon the life of St.
Fanourios, the Great Martyr and
Revealer of lost things. Though
much of his earthly life remains

veiled in mystery, the light of his witness continues to shine
brightly in the hearts of the faithful. His name, derived from the
Greek word "*fanerono*" meaning "*to reveal*," speaks not only to the

miracles attributed to him but also to the deeper spiritual truth that God is always working to reveal His grace—even in the most hidden corners of our lives.

A Saint Shrouded in Mystery

Unlike many saints whose biographies are well-documented, St. Fanourios is known primarily through a single icon discovered on the island of Rhodes. This icon, miraculously preserved, depicts twelve scenes of his martyrdom—each one a testament to his unwavering faith and courage. Though we do not know the details of his birth, family, or ministry, we know enough: he was a man who loved Christ so deeply that he endured suffering with joy and bore witness to the Gospel with his life.

Isn't it striking that God chose to reveal this saint not through words, but through an image? It reminds us that holiness is not always proclaimed—it is often *shown*, quietly and powerfully, through the lives of those who suffer, serve, and remain faithful.

The Ministry of Revealing

St. Fanourios is especially beloved for his intercessions in helping people find lost items—keys, documents, even direction in life. But his gift is not merely about locating misplaced objects. It is about revealing what is spiritually lost: *hope, peace, reconciliation, and purpose*.

In a world where so much feels hidden—truth, justice, even God's presence—St. Fanourios reminds us that nothing is truly lost to God. *Through prayer, patience, and trust, what is hidden will be revealed. What is broken will be restored. What is forgotten will be remembered.*

What Is God Revealing to You?

Let us take a moment to reflect:

- Is there something in your life that feels lost—perhaps a relationship, a sense of direction, or your inner peace?
- Are you searching for clarity in a decision, or healing from a past wound?

St. Fanourios invites us to bring these hidden places before God—not with fear, but with faith. His life teaches us that God is always in the business of revealing grace, even when we least expect it.

A Challenge

This week, I invite you to light a candle in honor of St. Fanourios and pray not only for what you seek to find, but for the courage to face what God may reveal. And if you feel moved, bake a traditional *Fanouropita*—not just as a ritual, but as a prayer in action, offering thanksgiving for the saint’s intercession and God’s providence.

Closing Prayer:

*O Holy Fanourios, faithful servant of Christ,
 You who endured suffering with joy and revealed the
 light of God in darkness,
 Intercede for us who seek what is lost—
 Not only in our homes, but in our hearts.
 May your life inspire us to trust in God’s timing,
 To embrace mystery with faith,
 And to walk boldly in the light of Christ.
 Amen.*

[Note: On Sunday, September 7th, we are invited to support our Philoptochos’ Fanouropita Luncheon, Bake Sale & Auction. Fr. George will bless our baked goods. Proceeds from the Bake Sale & Auction will support our Metropolis of Atlanta Youth Ministries.]

Move With Grace



As the sun gently rises above the river's surface, a lone double crested cormorant glides silently, carving a perfect V of ripples into the morning stillness. There is no rush, no noise—only movement in harmony with creation.

In this moment, we are invited to reflect on the path we carve through life. Like the cormorant, we are called to move with grace, guided by the light of Christ, disturbing the waters not with chaos but with purpose. The ripples we leave behind—our words, our actions, our prayers—extend far beyond us, touching others in ways we may never see.

Let this image be a reminder to glide gently today, to let your soul be still, and to allow the ripples of your faith to bless the world around you.

"Be still, and know that I am God." — Psalm 46:10

+FGT

A New Beginning in Christ

- Ecclesiastical New Year, September 1st

Beloved in Christ,

On September 1st, we stand at the threshold of a new ecclesiastical year—a sacred moment to begin again, not with resolutions of the world, but with the resolve of the soul. The Church, in her timeless rhythm, invites us to reorient our lives toward the Creator, who in His infinite wisdom has set the times and seasons by His sole authority.

This day is not merely a marker of time—it is a call to re-center our lives in Christ. It is a sacred invitation to recommit ourselves to prayer, to deepen our love for one another, and to walk more intentionally in the light of the Gospel.

We remember that our Lord, in Luke 4:16, entered the synagogue “*as was His custom*” and read from the scroll of Isaiah, proclaiming the year of the Lord’s favor. In this spirit, we too proclaim this new year as a time of divine favor—a time to seek healing, justice, and peace.

Let us begin this year with humility and hope. Let us ask God to bless our parishes, our ministries, our families, and our hearts. May this ecclesiastical year be one of spiritual growth, renewed purpose, and holy joy.

Orthodox offer two special hymns on September 1st where we proclaim:

“Creator of the universe, setting times and seasons by Your sole authority, bless the cycle of the year of Your grace, O Lord...”

“You who created all things in Your infinite wisdom... guide our works according to Your divine will.”

These words remind us that time itself is a gift—an offering from God to be sanctified, not squandered. The new year is not just a calendar change; it is a spiritual invitation to renew our hearts, our homes, and our ministries in the grace of Christ.

We pray for peace—for our rulers, our communities, and our Church. We ask for victories—not of pride or conquest, but of virtue, compassion, and truth. We seek blessing in our comings and goings, trusting that each step we take is guided by divine providence.

Let this year be one of intentional discipleship. May our prayers deepen, our service expand, and our love grow more Christ-like. And through the intercessions of the Theotokos, may we be guarded in peace and strengthened in purpose.

Blessed Ecclesiastical New Year to you and your families. May it be a year of grace, renewal, and holy joy.

+Fr. George Tsahakis
for September 1, 2025

The Orthodox icon most closely associated with the Ecclesiastical New Year (September 1st) is one that depicts Christ reading from the scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue, based on Luke 4:16–21. This moment is spiritually significant because, according to Holy Tradition, it marks the beginning of Christ’s public ministry and is linked to the Church’s observance of the *Indiction*, the start of the liturgical year.



- **Christ in the Synagogue of Nazareth:** He is shown standing, holding or reading from a scroll, surrounded by listeners. The scroll often contains the words from Isaiah 61:1–2: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me...”*
- This icon emphasizes Christ as the **fulfillment of prophecy** and the **Lord of time**, aligning with the hymns of the day that praise Him as the **Creator of the universe** who sets times and seasons by His authority.

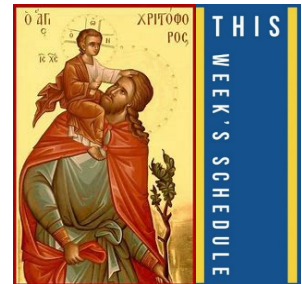
Reflection Questions for Family Discussion:

1. How can we sanctify time in our daily life this year?
2. What spiritual “victories” do we hope to pursue in the months ahead?
3. In what ways can we align our work and service with God’s divine will?
4. How can we contribute to peace in our parish, family, and community?

Join Us Often with Your Family

Friday, August 29th – Beheading of St. John the Baptist

9:00 Divine Liturgy (Day of Strict Fast)



10:00 Brunch & Learn - *Join us for a light brunch and a moment of deep reflection as we contemplate the life and martyrdom of **St. John the Baptist**, whose unwavering commitment to truth led to his beheading. In a world that often rewards silence over conviction, what does his witness say to us today?*

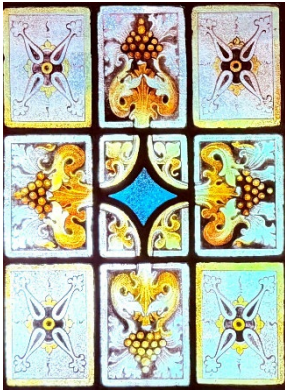
Sunday, August 31st – Twelfth Sunday of St. Matthew

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy (*No Religious Education on Labor Day weekend*)

11:00 Let's EAT!

Deepest Condolences to the Family of Jose Antonio Vidal



We offer our heartfelt condolences and prayers during this time of profound loss on the death of *Jose Antonio Vidal*, beloved Stepfather of Santiago Gallo. Just as we prayed for Jose while he was sick and suffering, we now pray for his eternal repose following his passing on Monday.

Jose's life was a beautiful testament to love, service, and devotion. As a husband, father, grandfather, son, and brother, he poured his heart into his family, offering unwavering support, joy, and wisdom. His love for each of them was evident in the way he lived—with humility, strength, and a generous spirit.

His service to our country as a United States Marine and later as a police officer and K9 officer for the City of Atlanta speaks volumes about his courage and commitment to protecting others. Jose lived not for himself, but for the well-being of those around him. His selflessness and dedication to duty were matched only by his compassion and kindness.

Beyond his professional achievements, Jose's music brought light and joy to many. His talent as a guitar player reflected the depth of his soul and the warmth he shared with the world.

Though words cannot ease the pain of his loss, we pray Santiago, Alexia, and their family find comfort in the legacy Jose leaves behind—a legacy of love, honor, and service. May Jose's memory be eternal, and may God grant his family peace and strength in the days ahead.

With deepest sympathy and prayers, +Fr. George