



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Metropolis of Atlanta
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
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March 2018 Bulletin



From His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios:

My Beloved Ones,

As we approach the Second Sunday of Lent, the appointed Gospel is a testament to the power of faith. Our Lord was teaching in Capernaum, the small fishing village on the Sea of Galilee. By this point in His ministry, Jesus was respected and widely known. For this reason, Jesus was preaching to a fully crowded household.



In fact, the house was so crowded, that a paralytic was unable to get past the door. However, the four men who carried the paralytic's bed were determined. These men removed the very roof under which Jesus was teaching, lowering the paralytic in front of the Lord. The

Lord was deeply moved by this display of faith, saying to the paralytic. *"My son, your sins are forgiven."* (Mark 2:5) Naturally, some of the Scribes who were in attendance were scandalized, though they would not say so. Instead they thought, *"Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"* (Mark 2:7)

Christ of course, as the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, knew their hearts, and in turn questioned them. *"Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins—he said to the paralytic— I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home."* (Matthew 2:9-11) Immediately, the paralytic took up his bed and went home, with all the people amazed by the miracle.



There are two key things to be seen in this reading. The first, and most notable, is Christ's admonition to the scribes for hardening their hearts. First, they fail to acknowledge or understand that Christ is God. But they are just as equally guilty of being so faithful to the letter of the Law, that they lose sight of its compassionate spirit.

However, I believe that the Gospel reading has an important message for those of us who *do* now recognize Christ as Lord. Keep in mind the paralytic. Here, we see a man who was constantly in the vulnerable position of being carried around and attended to by others. In a world without medical technology and an understanding of disabilities, his existence was likely a very lonely one.

Now he hears of a great prophet and teacher; a miracle-worker—the Messiah! But when the paralytic arrives, it is far too late to pass through the doorway. We are now faced with another possibility: he could have been discouraged by the crowd. He

could have fallen into sadness or bitterness and demanded that his friends return him to his home. Instead, he and his fellows did not lose heart. So eager were they that their friend might be able to hear and see the Lord, that they lowered this man and his bed through the roof! For this display of belief and courage, Christ chooses to reveal Himself to all in His fullness, as the Creator and healer of all living things.

May we too, in the depths of our struggles, and during the remainder of the Fast, model our own lives after this brave paralytic, who never lost sight of what was truly important: to hear the voice of our Lord. In doing so, may our faith be strengthened, and thus, worthy enough to be saved ourselves, by His loving-kindness.

Schedule of Services

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on Mar 4 with Fr Ezekiel

Saturday Vespers at 6:00 pm on Mar 10 with Fr Ezekiel

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on Mar 11 with Fr Dean

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on Mar 18 with Fr Ezekiel

Akathist Hymn Service at 6:00 pm on Mar 23 with Fr Ezekiel

Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am on Mar 25 with Fr Ezekiel

Visitors

A warm welcome to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church.

We are glad to have you worship with us today.

While Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians,

we invite those who are not Orthodox Christians to

remain until the end of the worship service,

and receive a blessing from our Lord Jesus Christ,

through the offering of the Blessed Bread.

Please remember to allow the children to receive Communion first.

Please join us for Fellowship Hour in our Social Hall after Liturgy.

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Annunciation of the Theotokos - March 25 . . . The biblical story of the Feast of the Annunciation is found in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke (1:26-39). The Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary, who was living in Nazareth, and said to her, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you." Mary was perplexed and wondered what kind of greeting this was. The angel told her not to be afraid, for she had found favor with God. He said, "You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary responded to the angel by asking how this could happen since she had no husband. The angel told her that the Holy Spirit and the power of God would come upon her, and that the child to be born of her would be called holy, the "Son of God." In faith and obedience to the will of God, Mary replied to the angel, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be according to your word." Upon her response, the angel departed. It is on the Feast of the Annunciation, that Orthodox Christians commemorate both the divine

initiative of God, whereby He took on flesh from the Virgin for our salvation, and the human response, whereby Mary freely accepted the vocation offered to her. *Mary could have refused, for she was not a passive instrument, but an active participant with a free and positive part to play in God's plan for our salvation. Thus, when on this and other feasts the Orthodox Church honors the Theotokos, the Mother of God, it is not just because God chose her but also because she herself chose to follow His will.*

International Women's Day – March 11 . . . International Women's Day is celebrated to honor women of the world. It celebrates the social, economic, and political achievement of women. In honor of this day we are going to give flowers to all the woman who attend Sunday service on March 11 and serve luncheon to honor them.

Lay Prayer Service/Book Study , March 14, 21, & 28 . . . Nancy Malek will conduct a lay prayer service and book study from 5:30 – 7:00 on Wednesday, March 14, 21, & 28.

Church Cleaning, March 14 & 17 . . . Cleaning of the Church will be at 10:00 on Wednesday, March 14, and Saturday, March 17. If you have any questions, please see Nancy Malek.

Decorating of the Church for Palm Sunday, Saturday, March 31 . . . Decorating the Church for Palm Sunday will be held on Saturday March 31 at 10:00. Volunteers are needed.

Church Yard Sale . . . Date to be announced. Please remember to bring your yard sale donations to church. Contact person is Nancy Malek.

Fellowship Hour After Liturgy . . . Holy Trinity needs every parishioner to sign up and host a fellowship hour after Sunday Liturgy. Everyone should be proud to host a fellowship hour. Show your culinary creativity. Bring your favorite ethnic foods. Hosting a fellowship hour makes everyone more a part of the church community



2018 Church Calendars . . . The 2018 Church Calendars are available in the Church Narthex. They were donated by George Contas in memory of his mother, Stamatia Toula Contas.

Birthdays for March . . . Happy Birthday to Virginia Freeman, March 1, Alexandru Tulburi, March 2, Eleftheri Vganges, March 3, Nicholas Gestring, March 4, Angelo Hagicostas, March 7, Jerry Strickland, March 8, Alexander Michailos, March 9, Ken Gestring, March 10, Allan Koskan, Antonio Loucangeli, March 15, Margarita Lopareva, March 17, Dina Craig, March 19, Alexandru Tulburi, Jr., March 26, Yelena Zheletkaya, March 27, and Julia Craig, March 28.

Church Thanks . . . Thanks to all those who have given their time and talents in helping out at Holy Trinity throughout the year. Your time and help contributes

significantly in welcoming new parishioners, keeping up the church/grounds and keeping the church available for all Orthodox to attend. Thanks again to those generous parishioners who have brought their special food items for our after Liturgy social hour.

Many thanks to Eleni Vganges, Virginia Freeman, and Nancy Malek for making the Prosforo Thanks to George & Sheila Yurchak for putting together our Bulletin and Newsletter each month. Our sincere appreciation goes out to Fr Dean for driving from Mobile and Fr Ezekiel for driving from Louisiana on Sundays and all the other days for special events.

Get Well . . . Prayers and blessings to Fr Jim Karagas, Karen Bridges, Elizabeth Vamvakas, Alan Koskan, Photine and Angelo Hagicostas, George Vaporis, Lela & Mitch Roberts, Nancy Malek, Virginia Freeman, Freddie Nosser, Tom Portaritis, Katerina Vamvakas, Nikki Arnold, and Jessie & Sophia Beddore. Fr Dean or Fr Ezekiel will conduct home visitations and give communion to those parishioners who are ill and can't be with us for Liturgy. Please contact a parish council member or the priest to make arrangements. If we missed someone please contact Nancy Malek at 228-265-1411. We want to pray as a community for those that may be too ill to be with us during church services.



Prayer Box. . . We have a prayer box in the Narthex. If there is anyone you wish a prayer said, place their name in the box, or contact Nancy Malek at 228-265-1411.

Religious Education

Fr Dean and Fr Ezekiel will continue the weekly religious education classes after Fellowship Hour. **ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.**

Religious Needs

Clergy are available for talk, confession, pastoral counseling, spiritual care, individual prayer, etc. Tours of our church can be arranged. If you want to set up an appointment, please contact George Yurchak 228-831-5820 or georgeyurchak@yahoo.com.

Ethnic Marketplace & Gift Corner

Please remember the Ethnic Marketplace and Gift Corner for your shopping needs. We have many ethnic items for sale. Included in the Marketplace are olive oil, halva, olives, jellies, pickled tomatoes, seaweed salad, candies, Greek cheeses and coffee, etc. In the Gift Corner we have Greek tablecloths and aprons, icons, bracelets, Greek coffeepot & coffee, jewelry, Greek CDs, incense and charcoal, Russian dolls, nesting dolls, lacquered Russian products, Russian kitchen supplies, Greek T-shirts, etc.

Prioritize Sunday as the Anchor of Your Family's Week

The Divine Liturgy is the primary worship service in the life of the Orthodox Church. It is where the Body and Blood of Our Lord and Savior is offered for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Simply put, attending the Divine Liturgy as a family should be a priority. The Lord's Day isn't merely the day we go to church – it is the primary day we become the Church – the people of God. (By George Tsongranis)

STEWARDSHIP

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUBMIT YOUR PLEDGE FOR 2018

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is grateful for every donation received throughout the year. Your generous support enables Holy Trinity to spread the teaching of Our Lord Jesus Christ, serve regular Divine Liturgies and Sacraments and provide spiritual nourishment to our faithful, their families and those in need. Your pledge of support is a sign of your heartfelt participation in the life of our parish family and it plays a vital role enabling us to meet our financial responsibilities.

We pray that everybody who attends Holy Trinity and cares for its financial security will make a pledge for 2018. If you haven't received a pledge form you can download it from www/holytrinitybiloxi.org website, under Stewardship or pick up a hard copy either at the candle counter or from any Parish Council member. You need to make a pledge as soon as possible. Pledge forms will be available at church. Please take a few minutes to fill out the pledge form and submit it to Craig Henderson (President, Parish Council/Stewardship Chairman), George Yurchak (Vice-President, Parish Council) or Rodney Bridges (Treasurer, Parish Council).

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH STEWARDS FOR 2018

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the 2018 Stewardship Program as of February 22, totaling \$27,420. Holy Trinity has received pledges from the following:

Caleb Bridges
Rodney & Karen Bridges
CoCo Collins
John & Donna Collins
George Contas
John Demetrakopoulos
Hugh & Brandi Donohoe
Virginia Freeman
Craig & Karen Henderson

Cristian & Meri Ionescu
Mihail Kastrinos
Karen Kohl
Karen Komenko
John & Cornelia Koniditsiotis
Eva Magiros
Carl & Nancy Malek
Tom & Pat Portaritis
Melissa Schwartz

Leah Summers
Angelos & Elizabeth Vamvakas
George Vaporis
Eleni Vganges
Spiro Vganges
Dimitri Vlahos
Kosta Vlahos
George & Sheila Yurchak

Church Directory

Liturgical Services

Sundays – Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

Church Clergy

Rev. Fr. Dean Gigicos

Rev. Fr. Ezekiel Vieages

Chanters – Angelos Vamvakas, Rodney Bridges,
Hugh Donohoe, Luke Pappas, Haylie &
Ryan Waldrop

2018 Parish Council

President – Craig Henderson

Vice President – George Yurchak

Treasurer – Rodney Bridges

Secretary – Brandi Donohoe

Member – Cristian Ionescu

Librarian Hugh Donohoe, Brandi Donohoe

Historian Brandi Donohoe, Akaterina Vamvakas

Maintenance and Repair

Chair – Craig Henderson

50th Anniversary Celebration

Commemorative Album - Brandi Donohoe

Youth Education & Culture Committee

Chair – George Yurchak

Greek Culture Chair – George Yurchak

Ukrainian Culture Chair – Nataliya Petrovska

Romanian Culture Chair – Meri Ionescu

Georgian Culture Chair – Medea Ghurtskaia

Moldovan Culture Chair – Alexandru Tulburi

Russian Culture Chair – Oksana Kozhanova

Kazakhstan Culture Chair - Natalya Gray

Belarousian Culture Chair – Darya Borst

Staff

Kiosk – George Yurchak

Office Administrator – Sheila Yurchak,
Karen Henderson

Publications Editor – Sheila Yurchak

Cleaning – Chrisanthi Beach, Fanoula Christidis,
Virginia Freeman, Akaterina Vamvakas,

Parish Ministries

Altar Boys – Joseph Lawson

Youth Ministries – George Yurchak

Youth Group Chair – Joseph Lawson,
Korina Bodisch

Feed the Hungry – Jerry Strickland,
Virginia Freeman, Nancy Malek

Sunday School – Akaterina Vamvakas

Ladies of the Agape Chair – Nancy Malek

Stewardship Chair – Craig Henderson

Reader – Rodney Bridges, John Collins,
CoCo Collins

Adult Education – George Yurchak

Prayer/Study Group – Nancy Malek

Outreach – Karen Komenko, Akaterina Vamvakas

Technology – Karen Kohl, Spiro Vganges

Pastoral Assistant – Craig Henderson,
Caleb Bridges

Society of Wisdom – George Vaporis

Strategic Planning – Chair, CoCo Collins

Web Master – Steve Collins