



Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

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Sunday, March 24th, 2024

First Sunday of Lent: Sunday of Orthodoxy

8:30am: Orthros, 10am: Divine of St. Basil the Great

12:30pm: Youth Church School & Adult Ed

Synodikon of Orthodoxy

As the prophets beheld, as the apostles have taught, as the Church has received, as the teachers have declared, as the world has agreed, as grace has shown forth, as truth has been revealed, as falsehood has been dispelled, as wisdom has become manifest, as Christ awarded;

Thus we declare; thus we affirm; thus we proclaim Christ our true God, and honor His saints in words, writings, thoughts, sacrifices, churches, and holy icons;

On the one hand, worshiping and reverencing Christ as God and Lord, and on the other, honoring the saints as true servants of the same Lord of all, and offering them proper veneration.

This is the faith of the apostles. This is the faith of the fathers. This is the faith of the Orthodox. This is the faith on which the world is established.

Therefore, with fraternal and filial love we praise the heralds of the faith, those who with glory and honor have struggled for the faith, and we say: to the champions of Orthodoxy, faithful emperors, most-holy patriarchs, hierarchs, teachers, martyrs, and confessors: May your memory be eternal.

Everlasting be their memory. (x3)

Let us beseech God that we may be instructed and strengthened by the trials and struggles of these saints, which they endured for the faith even unto death, and by their teachings, entreating that we may to the end imitate their godly life. May we be deemed worthy of obtaining our requests through the mercy and grace of the Great and First Hierarch, Christ our God, through the intercessions of our glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, the divine angels and all the Saints. Amen.

Prokeimenon:

Who is so great a God as our God? You alone are the God who does wonders.

Hymns of the Day

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the First Mode

The stone had been secured with a seal by the Judeans, * and a guard of soldiers was watching Your immaculate body. * You rose on the third day, O Lord * and Savior, granting life unto the world. * For this reason were the powers of heaven crying out to You, O Life-giver: * Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ; * glory to Your eternal rule; * glory to Your dispensation, only One who loves mankind.

Apolytikion of the Sunday of Orthodoxy in the Second Mode

We venerate Your immaculate icon, O good Lord, and entreat You to forgive our offenses, O Christ our God. By Your own choice you were pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh, to deliver us, whom You created, from our slavery to the foe. Therefore we cry to You with gratitude: You have filled all things with joy, O our Savior, by coming to save the world.

Apolytikion of Saint Nicholas in the Fourth Mode

An example of the faith and a life of humility: * as a teacher of abstinence you did inspire and lead your flock, * and through the truthfulness of your deeds * were exalted to greatness through your humility, * uplifting all, and by poverty gaining wealth. * Father and hierarch Saint Nicholas, * intercede with Christ our God * that our souls may be saved.

Kontakion of Lent in the Plagal Fourth Mode

To you, the champion commander, I your city * inscribe victorious anthems of thanksgiving * for deliverance from suff'rings, O Theotokos. * In as much as you have power unassailable, * from all manner of dangers, O set me free; * that I may cry out to you, * rejoice O Bride Unwedded.

Hymn to the Theotokos

In you, O Lady full of grace, all creation rejoices, the hosts of Angels and the human race. O consecrated temple and allegorical Paradise, virgins boast of you. For God became incarnate from you, yes, our eternally existing God became a child from you. He made a throne of your womb, and He

made your body wider than the heavens. In you, O Lady full of grace, all creation rejoices. Glory to you!

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

St. Pauls' Letter to the Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he looked to the reward.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated— of whom the world was not worthy— wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Gospel Reading

John 1:43-51

At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Saints and Feasts

Sunday of Orthodoxy

For more than one hundred years the Church of Christ was troubled by the persecution of the Iconoclasts of evil belief, beginning in the reign of Leo the Isaurian (717-741) and ending in the reign of Theophilus (829-842). After Theophilus's death, his widow the Empress Theodora, together with the Patriarch Methodius, established Orthodoxy anew. This ever-memorable Queen venerated the icon of the Mother of God in

the presence of the Patriarch Methodius and the other confessors and righteous men, and openly cried out these holy words: "If anyone does not offer relative worship to the holy icons, not adoring them as though they were gods, but venerating them out of love as images of the archetype, let him be anathema."

Then with common prayer and fasting during the whole first week of the Forty-day Fast, she asked God's forgiveness for her husband. After this, on the first Sunday of the Fast, she and her son, Michael the Emperor, made a procession with all the clergy and people and restored the holy icons, and again adorned the Church of Christ with them. This is the holy deed that all we the Orthodox commemorate today, and we call this radiant and venerable day the Sunday of Orthodoxy, that is, the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.

Forefeast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos

Six months after John the Forerunner's conception, the Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth, a town of Galilee, to Mary the Virgin, who had come forth from the Temple a mature maiden. She had been betrothed to Joseph four months. On coming to Joseph's house, the Archangel declared: "Rejoice, thou Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

After some consideration and fear because of this greeting, the Virgin, when she had finally obtained full assurance concerning God's unsearchable condescension and the ineffable dispensation that was to take place through her, and believing that all things are possible to the Most High, answered in humility: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." And at this, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her all-blameless womb, and the Son and Word of God,

Who existed before the ages, was conceived past speech and understanding, and became flesh in her immaculate body.

Bearing in her womb the Uncontainable One, the blessed Virgin went with haste from Nazareth to the hill country of Judea, where Zacharias had his dwelling; for she desired to find Elizabeth her kinswoman and rejoice together with her, because, as she had learned from the Archangel, Elizabeth had conceived in her old age. Furthermore, she wished to tell her of the great things that the Mighty One had been well-pleased to bring to pass in her, and she greeted Elizabeth and drew nigh to her.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, she felt her six-month-old babe, Saint John the Baptist, prophesy of the dawning of the spiritual Sun. Immediately, the aged Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and recognized her as the Mother of her Lord, and with a great voice blessed her and the Fruit that she held within herself. The Virgin also, moved by a supernatural rejoicing in the spirit, glorified her God and Savior, saying: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," and the rest, as the divine Luke hath recorded.

Parish Information

Church School

Church School meets on Sundays following Divine Liturgy, at approximately noon. Our two Youth Church School classrooms meet downstairs.

Orthodox Christianity 101

Our Orthodox Christianity 101 class meets in the Church hall following coffee hour. Anyone who is interested in learning the

basic teachings and practices of the Orthodox Christian faith is welcome to attend! We will read and discuss the book *Welcome to the Orthodox Church* by Frederica Mathewes-Green.

Men's Breakfast Group

The next Men's Breakfast will be on **Saturday, March 2** at 8am. Bring your favorite breakfast foods, and feel free to invite a friend!

Ladies' Potluck Luncheon

Our Ladies' Potluck Luncheon group meets on the second Thursday of each month! The next luncheon will take place in the Church hall on **Thursday, April 11** at 12pm.

Byzantine Chant Classes

Byzantine chant classes take place on **Saturdays at 4pm**. If you are interested in learning and helping out, please feel free to attend!

This Week at Saint Nicholas

Following Divine Liturgy this morning, we will celebrate the procession with the Holy Icons.

- Monday, March 25 **Holy Annunciation**: 8:30am Orthros, 9:30am Divine Liturgy, 6pm Great Compline
- Wednesday, March 27: 6pm Presanctified Liturgy
- Friday, March 29: 6pm Salutations to the Theotokos (2nd Stasis)
- Saturday, March 30: 4pm Byzantine Chant Class, 5pm Great Vespers