



**Saint Nicholas
Greek Orthodox Church**

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Sunday, September 7, 2025

Sunday Before the Holy Cross

8:45am: Orthros

10am: Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Hymns of the Day

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Fourth Mode

When the women Disciples of the Lord had learned from the Angel the joyful message of the Resurrection and had rejected the ancestral decision, they cried aloud to the Apostles triumphantly: Death has been despoiled, Christ God has risen, granting His great mercy to the world.

Ἀπολυτίκιον Ἀναστάσιμον. Ἦχος δ΄.

Τὸ φαιδρὸν τῆς ἀναστάσεως κήρυγμα, ἐκ τοῦ Ἀγγέλου μα-
θοῦσαι αἱ τοῦ Κυρίου Μαθήτριάι, καὶ τὴν προγονικὴν ἀπόφασιν
ἀπορρίψασαι, τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις καυχώμεναι ἔλεγον· Ἐσκύλεται
ὁ θάνατος, ἡγέρθη Χριστὸς ὁ Θεός, δωρούμενος τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ
μέγα ἔλεος.

Apolytikion for the Forefeast of the Nativity of the Theotokos in the Fourth Mode

Unto us is born today Mary the child of God, * as the branch
from Jesse's root, and as the fruit of David's loins, * and all
creation is re-created and deified. * O heaven and the earth,
rejoice in unison. * Sing praises unto her, O all you Gentile
clans. * Joachim is exultant, and Anna is keeping festival,
crying out: * "The barren woman bears the Theotokos, * the
nourisher of our Life."

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 the Forefeast in the Third Mode

On this day the Virgin Maid, Mary the pure Theotokos, the
unentered bridechamber of the great Heavenly Bridegroom,
now is born of barren Anna by the divine will, to be made
ready for God the Word as His chariot: for which she was
foreordained as the gate of God and the very Mother of Life.

Gospel and Epistle Readings

Epistle Reading

Galatians 6:11 – 18

Brethren, see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

Gospel Reading

John 3:13 – 17

The Lord said, “No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through

him.”

Saints and Feasts

Forefeast of the Nativity of the Theotokos

The Most Holy Virgin Mary was born in the small city of Galilee, Nazareth. Her parents were Righteous Joachim of the tribe of the Prophet-King David, and Anna from the tribe of the First Priest Aaron. The couple was without child, since Saint Anna was barren.

Having reached old age, Joachim and Anna did not lose hope in God’s mercy. They had strong faith that for God everything is possible, and that He would be able to overcome the barrenness of Anna even in her old age, as He had once overcame the barrenness of Sarah, spouse of the Patriarch Abraham. Saints Joachim and Anna vowed to dedicate the child which the Lord might give them to the service of God in the Temple.

On one of the feastdays at the Temple in Jerusalem the elderly Joachim brought his sacrifice to offer to God, but the High Priest would not accept it, considering him to be unworthy since he was childless. Saint Joachim in deep grief went into the wilderness, and there he prayed with tears to the Lord for a child. Saint Anna wept bitterly when she learned what had happened at the Jerusalem Temple. Never once did she complain against the Lord, but rather she prayed to ask God’s mercy on her family.

The Lord fulfilled her petitions when the pious couple had attained to extreme old age and prepared themselves by virtuous life for a sublime calling: to be the parents of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the future Mother of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sunday Before the Holy Cross

Saint Helen, the mother of Saint Constantine the Great, when she was already advanced in years, undertook, in her great piety, the hardships of a journey to Jerusalem in search of the cross, about the year 325.

A temple to Aphrodite had been raised up by the Emperor Hadrian upon Golgotha, to defile and cover with oblivion the place where the saving Passion had been suffered. The venerable Helen had the statue of Aphrodite destroyed, and the earth removed, revealing the Tomb of our Lord, and three crosses. Of these, it was believed that one must be that of our Lord, the other two of the thieves crucified with Him; but Saint Helen was at a loss which one might be the Wood of our salvation.

At the inspiration of Saint Macarius, Archbishop of Jerusalem, a lady of Jerusalem, who was already at the point of death from a certain disease, was brought to touch the crosses, and as soon as she came near to the Cross of our Lord, she was made perfectly whole. Consequently, the precious Cross was lifted on high by Archbishop Macarius of Jerusalem; as he stood on the ambo, and when the people beheld it, they cried out, "Lord, have mercy."

It should be noted that after its discovery, a portion of the venerable Cross was taken to Constantinople as a blessing. The rest was left in Jerusalem in the magnificent church built by Saint Helen, until the year 614. At that time, the Persians plundered Palestine and took the Cross to their own country. Late, in the year 628, Emperor Heraclius set out on a military campaign, retrieved the Cross, and after bringing it to Constantinople, himself escorted it back to Jerusalem, where he restored it to its place.

Wisdom of the Fathers

“If we too, brethren, wish to dwell not on earth but in heaven, and not to fall to the ground or into sin that pulls us down, but to reach out continuously towards the divine heights, let us fear God, abstain from everything evil, return to Him through good works, and strive by self-control and prayer to wipe out the evil accretions within us, to change our inner thoughts for the better, and, according to the prophet, to be in labour with the spirit of salvation and bring it to birth, having as our helper, through invoking her name, the Virgin who was today bestowed upon her parents through prayer and a manner of life pleasing to God. She transformed their sorrow, annulled the ancestral curse, and brought our first Mother’s pangs to an end, painlessly bearing Christ in her virginity.”

- St. Gregory Palamas, *Homily* 42 “On the Birth of the Mother of God”.

“In all the paths upon which men journey in this world, they will find no peace until they draw nigh to hope in God. The heart finds no peace from toil and from stumbling-blocks, until hope enters it, makes it peaceful, and pours joy into it. That worshipful and all-holy mouth spoke of this when it said, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ Draw nigh, He says, and hope in Me, and find rest from labor and fear.”

- St. Isaac the Syrian, *Ascetical Homilies* 51, §248.

Parish Prayer List

Please remember in your God-pleasing prayers the servants of God:

Connie (Constantina) Joufflas; Robert Tewis; Lance
(Stylian) Schmitt; Olivia Coe; Robert Foster

If you would like for yourself or a loved one to be added to the prayer list, please contact Fr. Jeremy.



Parish Information

Church School

Church School for our children begins following Holy Communion. We have two classrooms: one for elementary-school ages, and one for middle school and up. Please allow our Church School kids and their teachers to come up for Communion first.

Introduction to Orthodox Christianity

Our Adult Ed class will begin following Coffee Hour today, September 7. We will meet in the classrooms downstairs. Any who would like to learn more about our Orthodox Faith, whether a newcomer or a life-long member, are welcome to attend. Please contact Fr. Jeremy to be added to the distribution list for readings.

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!

Men's Breakfast

Our next Men's Breakfast will take place on Saturday, **October 4 at 8am**. 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, September 11** at 12pm.



This Week at St. Nicholas

Following Divine Liturgy this morning, we will offer Catechumen Prayers for Takota Fischer.

- Monday, September 8 **Nativity of the Theotokos:**
8:30am Orthros, 9:30am Divine Liturgy
- Wednesday, September 10: 6pm Small Paraklesis
- Thursday, September 11: 12pm Ladies' Luncheon
- Saturday, September 13: 4pm Byzantine Chant Class,
5pm Great Vespers