



Sunday Bulletin February 10, 2019
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

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**Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-
Proistamenos**

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## **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. Grave Mode. Psalm 63.11,1.**  
**The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord.**  
**Verse: Oh God, hear my cry.**

**The reading is from St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 2:1-10**

Timothy, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to satisfy the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hardworking farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David, as preached in my gospel, the gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered. Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus with its eternal glory.

## **Gospel Reading**

**Matthew 15:21-28**

At that time, Jesus went to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." And he answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

*Message from Fr. Michael.....*

Dearly Beloved Faithful in the Lord:

In today's gospel reading, we heard the story of the Canaanite woman who had a daughter possessed by a demon. She asked the Lord for His help to heal her. The Lord does not immediately answer and turns to His disciples and says " I was sent to the House of the lost sheep of Israel." The Lord told her it is not good to take then children's bread and to throw it to the dogs. The Canaanite woman and her daughter were Gentiles. God's blessings, in the Old Testament, were for the chosen people of the Old Testament, the Jews. and not the Gentiles. The woman did not argue with the Lord and instead said, "even the dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." The Lord was impressed with the woman's faith and healed her daughter.

You are probably wondering, why does God restrict salvation to the Jews and not offer this to the Gentiles? The Jews believed that the Messiah was for the chosen people of God. The Jews further believed that God's blessings only came to them and no one else in the world. Interestingly, the Canaanite woman, despite being a Gentile, knew who Christ was as she referred to Him as the "Son of David." When a Jew refers to someone as the "Son of David", they are referring to the Messiah. During the conversation with her, the Lord sees that the woman is of great faith, greater than the Jews and His disciples. The Lord was using this instance to provide a lesson to His disciples. The disciples learn of the truth God's blessings and salvation through the lesson that the Lord provided through His exchange with the Canaanite woman. This woman knew that the Lord's blessings extend to all people who believe in Him. The lesson here is that the crumbs that fall from the table of Abraham feed and bless the entire world. It was the humility and sincerity that impressed the Lord which kept him engaged with the conversation they had.

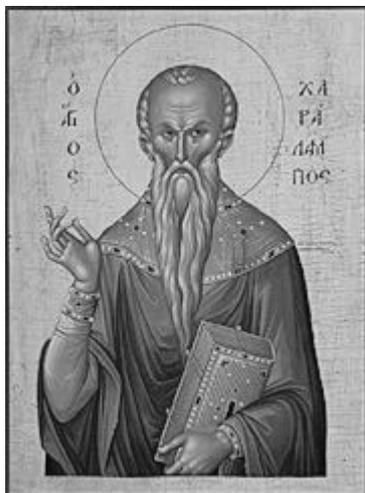
Seemingly, there was a delay by our Lord in healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter was another lesson provided by the Lord to strengthen her faith. We learn of patience in this story. Her lesson from this conversation is like that of the righteous St. Simeon when the forty-day old Christ was presented in the Temple and Simeon proclaimed, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word. For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people: A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of the Thy people Israel." Simeon's life of patient waiting for the Messiah came to fulfillment when he held the baby Jesus in his arms in the Jerusalem Temple. God's anointed, the Savior, had finally come. And that is good news both for the Jew and the Gentile, for the whole world. The patience of the Canaanite woman and of St. Simeon was rewarded, for both received the Messiah with faith. final insight in this conversation is like that of St. Simeon when the forty-day old Christ is presented in the Temple: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word. For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people: A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of the Thy people Israel." Simeon's life of patience waiting for the arrival of the Messiah came to fulfillment when he held the infant Jesus in his arms in the Temple. The Messiah had finally arrived. That was great news both for the Jew and the Gentile and for the entire world. The patience of the Canaanite woman and of St. Simeon were rewarded, as each received the Messiah with faith.

We have received the Lord today by coming to church. We have patiently waited for Sunday to arrive and we are here to receive the crumbs that spilled from the Master's table to bless us and to feed us with His Divine Word.

Prayerfully in His service,  
+Fr. Michael

## Saints and Feasts Commemorated

### Hieromartyr Haralambos



This Saint was a priest of the Christians in Magnesia, the foremost city of Thessaly, in the diocese having the same name. He contested during the reign of Alexander Severus (222-235), when Lucian was Proconsul of Magnesia. At the time of his martyrdom the Saint was 103 years of age.

St. Haralampus is commemorated on February 10th, with the exception when this date falls on the Saturday of the Souls preceding Lent or on Clean Monday (the first day of Lent), in which case the feast is celebrated on February 9th.

February 10

#### Apolytikion for Hieromartyr Haralambos in the Fourth Mode

An unshaken pillar of the Church of Christ God art thou, an ever-resplendent lamp, O Haralampus most wise, which shineth through the earth; in martyric contest thou hast shined on the whole world, and thou hast dispelled the moonless night of the idols. Now boldly intercede thou with Christ that we may all be saved.

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## Wisdom of the Fathers

She had a great perfection of faith. She had no uncertainty about His divine majesty. She had no small measure of the virtue of patience. Yet the pitying Physician of the pitiful disdained her petitions. He kept her waiting for answer in order to demonstrate to us the perseverance of this woman that we can always imitate. She had the characteristics of constancy and humility. She willingly embraced the indignity she received, and even confirmed the Lord's statement. This woman rightly signifies the faith and devotion of the Church gathered from the nations.

#### Saint Bede

Hom. I. 22, In Lent, Homilies on the Gospels, Bk. One, 216, 217.

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Angelo Romas, Maria Lambrinos, Lilly Kashou, Issam Kashou, Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon, and Presbyteria Magdalena Michalopoulos. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

Today, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, we will have a 9 Year Memorial Service for Anesti Sousouris, beloved son of Panagioti (Peter) and Stella (Stavroula) Sousouris. Peter and Stella have graciously donated the food and have cooked lunch for all of us today in our Fellowship Hall. We thank them for their generosity and our prayers and best wishes go out to them. May Anesti's memory be eternal!

JOY/HOPE meeting will take place today following the Divine Liturgy during Coffee Hour. Please join us, we look forward to seeing everyone there!

Greek School would like to start up soon! Greek School will be held once per week on Saturday mornings. It is open to all children 7 years and older. (You don't have to be Greek to be a Greek school student). Please do not sign up if you are involved in Saturday morning sports. Please see Mrs. Gianoula Alikakos to sign up for Greek School. We look forward to starting Greek School classes soon.

NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING IS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2019.

NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING WILL BE ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2019 DURING OUR COFFEE HOUR FELLOWSHIP HOUR.

## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

When you see life's pleasures, beware that they might not distract you, for they conceal death's snares. Likewise a fisherman casts not his hook to no purpose. As bait for his hook, the enemy uses the delusion of sensuality to arouse desire, that he might thereby catch men's souls and subject them to himself. A soul which has been caught to serve the enemy's will then serves as a snare for other souls, for it conceals the grief of sin with its apparent delight.

### **St. Ephraim the Syrian**

A Spiritual Psalter no 43, pg. 74, 4th century

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. **Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church.** After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael at (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact the Parish Council President or a member of the council. Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.