



Sunday Bulletin March 31, 2019
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

4121 O'Hara Drive Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: (607) 797-0824 Fax: (607) 797-0824
<http://www.annunciationvestal.ny.goarch.org>
Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-
Proistamenos

~~~~~

## **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. Plagal Second Mode. Psalm 27.9,1.**  
**O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.**  
**Verse: To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.**

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6**

BRETHREN, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

## **Gospel Reading Mark 8:34-38; 9:1**

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

*Message from Fr. Michael....*

Dearly Beloved Faithful in the Lord:

On this third Sunday of Great Lent, we celebrate the Adoration or Veneration of our Lord's life- giving Cross. The Cross is the tree of incorruption. Through its veneration, we attain everlasting glory while preparing us for life eternal with our creator. He who was hung upon the tree suspended the land amidst the waters. For this Tree of salvation is the Cross that we are called upon to pick up and carry in the pursuit of eternal life.

As we proceed along the difficult and austere path of Great Lent, we turn to the symbol of sacrifice. The Holy Cross is the symbol of our Lord's sacrifice. When our Lord Jesus, walked on this earth, He subjected Himself to crucifixion. He gave His life for the ransom of the many. Here is God, who walked amongst us, in the form of a man. The Lord had indicated, in scripture, that if we wish to be saved, we are to take up our cross and follow Him.

The Cross of our Lord is a weapon against evil. Its veneration protects us against the influence of demons. It is the invincible trophy by which we may be saved. As we venerate the Holy Cross of our Lord, we share the Lord's Holy Passion so that we may draw near to His Holy Resurrection. The Holy Cross of our Lord is the tree of life...eternal life. May we see the glory of our Lord through the descent of the Heavenly hosts, which fill our church today, as we venerate the precious symbol of our faith. We embrace this ornament of the saving Passion of our Lord in the hope that we will be saved.

May our Lord grant us His mercy and save us. May we view the Lord's Cross with adoration and may we spiritually ascend on it with our Lord for everlasting salvation. This we pray in His holy name. Amen.

Worshipping our Lord's precious Cross, I remain

Yours, in His service,  
+Fr. Michael

And see how He also makes His discourse unexceptionable: not saying at all, "whether you will, or no, you must suffer this," but how? "If any man will come after me."



### **St. John Chrysostom**

Homily 55 on Matthew 16, 1. B#54, p.339., 4th Century

"I force not, I compel not, but each one I make lord of his own choice; wherefore also I say, 'If any man will.' For to good things do I call you, not to things evil, or burdensome; not to punishment and vengeance, that I should have to compel.

### **St. John Chrysostom**

Homily 55 on Matthew 16, 1. B#54, p.339., 4th Century

## **Sunday of the Holy Cross**

With the help of God, we have almost reached the middle of the course of the Fast, where our strength has been worn down through abstinence, and the full difficulty of the labour set before us becomes apparent. Therefore our holy Mother, the Church of Christ, now brings to our help the all-holy Cross, the joy of the world, the strength of the faithful, the staff of the just, and the hope of sinners, so that by venerating it reverently, we might receive strength and grace to complete the divine struggle of the Fast.

March 31

### **Apolytikion for Sun. of the Holy Cross in the First Mode**

Save, O Lord, Thy people and bless Thine inheritance; grant Thou unto the faithful victory over adversaries. And by the power of Thy Cross do Thou preserve Thy commonwealth.

## **The Holy Hieromartyr Hypatius, Bishop of Gangra**

This Saint, who was from Cilicia of Asia Minor, became Bishop of Gangra, the capital of Paphlagonia. He was present at the First Ecumenical Council. Because of his confession of the Orthodox Faith, he was put to death by the Novatians, a sect which denied that sins committed after Baptism could be forgiven.

## **Akakios the Confessor**

## **Seasonal Kontakion in the Plagal Fourth Mode**

To you, Theotokos, invincible Defender, having been delivered from peril, I, your city, dedicate the victory festival as a thank offering. In your irresistible might, keep me safe from all trials, that I may call out to you: "Hail, unwedded bride!"

Reading is under copyright and is used with permission, all rights reserved by: Narthex Press - Northridge, CA

**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 Presbytera 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.

There will be a JOY/HOPE meeting on Sunday, March 31, 2019 during the coffee hour fellowship. See you there. On Holy Friday, April 26, 2019, we will have Camp Annunciation at 12 noon for our youth in our fellowship hall with a prayerful focus on Good Friday and the preparation for Holy Pascha.

At the conclusion of Divine services today, we will have a 3 Year Memorial Service for Melissa Pappas, beloved wife of Nicholas Pappas, and wonderful mother to Andrea, Nicholas, Nadine, and Alicia. Additionally, at that time, we will have an Anniversary Memorial Service for Gus (Constantine) Pappas, beloved past parish council President and father to current parish council President, Nick Pappas. May their memory be eternal! Our prayers and best wishes go out to the entire Pappas family.

The Philoptochos meeting will be held on Sunday, April 7th, during the Coffee Hour Fellowship. We welcome and encourage new members to join.

Greek Festival food preparations will commence next week, please join us, we need help. We are making Pastichio on April 3, 2019 and Moussaka on April 7, 2019 starting at 10:00 AM, until we finish in the day. I ask all ladies to come and help, even men can come for support. Please contact Athena at (607) 761-3453. Louis Koutsaris will need help in the kitchen during the morning hours for early preparations. Please contact George or Kostas for details. Again we need help in the kitchen morning and afternoon hours. Check with George and Nick.

Hellenic Dancers Announcement: Dance practice for the older boys who want to learn the pentozali needs to start the last week of April. For further information please talk directly to Steve Yacalis or call him at (607) 222-5176.

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.

## **Holy Week Schedule for the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation for 2019**

**Presiding Priest/Proistamenos: Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis**

**Saturday of Lazarus, April 20, 2019: Orthros 9 AM Divine Liturgy 10 AM**  
(at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Binghamton)  
(This will be followed by the making of crosses from palms afterwards at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation in Vestal at 12 noon)

**Palm Sunday, April 21, 2019: Orthros 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM**

**Palm Sunday evening, April 21, 2019: Service of the Nymphios/  
Bridegroom matins 6:00 PM**

**Holy Monday, April 22: Service of the Bridegroom matins 7:30 PM**

**Holy Tuesday, April 23: Service of the Bridegroom matins and Hymn of Kassiani  
6:30 PM**

**Holy Wednesday evening, April 24: Service of the Bridegroom matins 5:30 PM  
Service of the Sacrament of Holy Unction to immediately follow**

**Holy Thursday morning, April 25: Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil the Great  
9:30 AM**

**Holy Thursday evening, April 25: Service of the Holy Passions of our Lord and  
the 12 Gospels 6:00 PM**

**Holy Friday morning, April 26: Service of the Royal Hours 9:00 AM**  
(All are invited to assist in the flower decoration of the Epitaphios at the conclusion of this service. Fr. Michael will provide written excuses for school absences for those children who spend the day at the church.)

Camp Annunciation Holy Friday Program begins with decorating the Epitaphios followed by a light Lenten lunch at 12 noon. All are encouraged to bring and share a dish to pass that conforms with the fast of Holy Friday). A JOY/HOPE meeting will be at 1 PM. All adults and children are invited to attend.

**Holy Friday afternoon, April 26: Service of Great Vespers of the Apokathelosis  
(The un-nailing of our Lord from the cross) 3 PM**

**Holy Friday evening, April 26: Service of the Lamentations matins 6:30 PM**

**Holy Saturday morning, April 27: Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great  
(The First Resurrection of our Lord raising Adam and Eve from the dead) 10 AM  
Holy Saturday night, April 27: Matins of the Pascha 11:00 PM**

**'O Come and Receive Ye the Light...' 11:45 PM  
Reading of the Gospel of the Resurrection of our Lord 12 AM midnight  
followed by the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom**

**Easter Sunday (Pascha), April 28: Vespers service of Agape (The Gospel will be  
read in multiple languages. Please see Fr. Michael if you are interested in reading the  
Gospel in ANY other language besides Greek and English) 11 AM**