



Sunday Bulletin November 24, 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. Plagal Second Mode. Psalm 27.9,1.**

**O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance. To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.**

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:4-10**

Brethren, God who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God: not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

**Gospel Reading Luke 18:18-27**

At that time, a ruler came to Jesus and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.' " And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

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

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

In the Holy Gospel reading today, we heard the story of a rich man asking the Lord about inheriting eternal life. During the time that Jesus walked the earth, a wealthy Jew was often wealthy because he had worked with the oppressive Romans often at the cost of his own people. We heard that he adhered to the commandments yet he betrayed his own people. His obedience to the Law of Moses was a superficial obedience and was not a spiritually deep rooted one with love. He displayed a false piety which served to distract others from his unpius ways. He learns that "to inherit life" he must sell his possessions, "and give to the poor" and become a follower of Jesus he turns away in sorrow "for he was very rich." He is condemned for his love of worldly things. The rich man places greater value on his earthy treasures than those he should lay up for himself in the Kingdom of Heaven. He is so consumed with his love of wealth that he is truly lost. He is willing to give up eternal salvation in order to hold on to his worldly possessions. It is though he loves his possessions more than he loves God. Although the rich man stated, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

St. Clement wrote that this was a trick by the rich man to try to "convict Christ of introducing laws of His own and of dishonoring the commandments spoken by the most wise Moses" (Commentary on Luke, Homily 122, quoted in quoted in ACTS, NT, vol III: Luke, p., 283). The rich man was not looking to establish a friendship with our Lord. The rich man was fooling no one but himself. He was actually poisoning his own soul through his own misguidedness. Salvation, i.e. inheritance of eternal life, joy, and peace could have been granted to him and all he had to do was to follow Christ. If he understood and adhered to a life of self-denial, then he would have moved away from the temporal or worldly things and sought refuge with those things which are everlasting.

Brothers and sisters, are we leading a life of misguidedness? Are we too concerned about what we could acquire on Black Friday shopping in stores? Are we too busy complaining about the workings of our church without trying to help God's Church? Do we sit back and let others labor for God while we do nothing to keep God's Church lovingly united? Do we point our finger at others while not realizing that there are three fingers pointing right back at us? St. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians:8-12: "If there be a ready mind, it is accepted according to what a man has and not according to what he has not" Are we the rich man who walks sad due to not being ready for joy? We are not that type of person! For that type of person prefers to carry the weight of his own sin rather than acquiring the freedom that is gained from taking up the Cross and following our loving Lord, Jesus.

May we lay up treasures in Heaven as our prayers ascend as one, I remain

In His service,  
+Fr. Michael

## Afterfeast of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple



### Apolytikion of Afterfeast of the Entry of the Theotokos Fourth Tone

Today is the prelude of God's pleasure and the proclamation of man's salvation. The Virgin is clearly made manifest in the temple of God and foretells Christ to all. Let us also cry out to her with mighty voice, "Hail, fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation."

## Peter, Archbishop of Alexandria

Saint Peter illustriously occupied the throne of Alexandria for twelve years, and, as Eusebius says, "was a divine example of a bishop on account of the excellence of his life and his study of the sacred Scriptures" (see Eusebius, Eccl. Hist., Book VII, 3 2; Book VIII 11, 13; and Book IX, 6). He excommunicated Arius for his sympathy with the Meletian schism. When Arius learned that Saint Peter had been imprisoned, he sent many priests and deacons to him, asking that he receive him back into the communion of the Church before his martyrdom. When the ambassadors of Arius, who had not, like Saint Peter, perceived the ruin he would engender, were astonished at the vehemence with which Saint Peter refused to receive Arius again, he revealed to them a dread vision he had seen, in which the Master Christ had appeared to him as a child wearing a garment torn from head to foot. When Saint Peter asked the Lord who rent His garment, the Lord answered that it was Arius, and that he must not be received back into communion. The holy hieromartyr Peter was beheaded during the reign of Maximinus in the year 312; he is called the "Seal of the Martyrs," because he was the last Bishop of Alexandria to suffer martyrdom under the pagan Emperors. His successors to the throne of Alexandria, Saints Alexander and Athanasius the Great, brought to final victory the battle against Arius' heresy which Saint Peter had begun.

## Our Holy Father Clement, Pope of Rome

Saint Clement was instructed in the Faith of Christ by the Apostle Peter. He became Bishop of Rome in the year 91, the third after the death of the Apostles. He died as a martyr about the year 100 during the reign of Trajan.

## Hermogenes, the Martyr

## Philoumenos and Christopher the Martyrs

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Bassam, brother of Jeanet Hazar, Maria Lambrinos, Steve Anastos, Lilly Kashou, Angelo Romas, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. 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**, immediately preceding the distribution of Holy Communion, we will have a 40 day Blessing for Cassie (Skiadas) Kermidas and the Churching of Theodore John, son of John and Cassie Kermidas. Congratulations, best wishes, and prayers go out to their families.

## **ANNUAL CHURCH COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD**

Sign up is located in the narthex. We would like to have everyone included in this project. Donation of \$10 is requested to be included in the Community Christmas Card as a fundraiser for the church to offset the costs of printing and mailing the cards. Please PRINT names clearly and legibly.

Philoptochos is having a Bake Sale. Contact Jeanet Hazar at 725-2978 or you can visit the website to place your order at [www.greekladiesvestal.com](http://www.greekladiesvestal.com). We are selling Baklava \$15.00/dozen, a tray of 60 pieces \$70.00. Kourambiethes \$10.00/dozen & Koulourakia \$8.00/dozen. Pick up dates at the church, Saturday, Dec. 14th or Saturday, Dec. 21st.

## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

*Love of money is the worship of idols, a daughter of unbelief, an excuse for infirmities, a foreboder of old age, a harbinger of drought, a herald of hunger.*

### **St. John Climacus**

*The Ladder of Divine Ascent, Step 16:2,7 and Step 17:1, 6th Century*

*He who has conquered this passion has cut out care; but he who is bound by it never attains to pure prayer.*

*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 (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact a member of the council.*

## **SCHEDULE OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES FOR 2019 CHRISTMAS SEASON**

**Sunday, December 22**

**Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord**

**Orthros 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy 10:00 am**

**Sunday School and Greek School X-mas Pageant to follow the Divine Liturgy**

**Tuesday, December 24**

**Christmas Eve Orthros 9:00 pm**

**Christmas Divine Liturgy 10:00 pm (Since we are having Christmas Liturgy which concludes at or before midnight, there will be no services on Christmas Day in the morning)**

**Sunday, December 29**

**Sunday after the Nativity**

**Orthros 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy 10:00 am**

**The Oath of Office will be administered by Fr. Michael to the new Parish Council members for the 2020-2022 term. At the conclusion of the service, under the chairmanship of the Priest, the newly elected Parish Council members will retreat to the church office, where officer elections will be conducted.**

**Wednesday, January 1, 2020**

**Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord and the feast day of St. Basil the Great**

**Orthros 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10:00 am**

**Sunday, January 5, 2020**

**The Eve of the Feast of the Holy Theophany of the Lord**

**Orthros 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy 10:00 am**

**Monday, January 6, 2020**

**Feast of Holy Theophany**

**Orthros 8:45 am and Divine Liturgy 9:45 am**

**The Great Blessing of the Waters is to be at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on this day.**