



## *Sunday Bulletin September 3, 2023* *Greek Orthodox Church of the* *Annunciation*

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



### **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. Fourth Mode. Psalm 103.24,1.**

**O Lord, how manifold are your works. You have made all things in wisdom.**

**Verse: Bless the Lord, O my soul.**

**The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 16:13-24**

Brethren, be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicos, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men. The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If any one has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

### **Gospel Reading**

**Matthew 21:33-42**

The Lord said this parable, "There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?'"

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

Dearly Beloved Faithful who thirst for the Word of God:

As we have begun the ecclesiastical New Year two days ago, we are reminded of the gracious words of our Lord as he stood in a Synagogue and opened the book of the Prophet Isaiah and we heard the following words:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Two days ago, September 1st, marked the Indiction, or *Indictio* as it was known in the earlier centuries of Church history, which is the start of the ecclesiastical New Year, we offer special prayers "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." The Lord preaches to us the *Good News* and we start this great year fully attentive and thirsty for His Word, with our hearts and minds open to His calling.

We may wonder and ask, "How will we benefit from this?" Well, the start of the Church New Year is an opportunity for a *fresh new start* in our lives. It is an opportunity to begin to live a Godly life and to focus on what really matters in life: our personal relationship with God. A life without faith is a life with no shield against evil forces. Our faith is our breastplate of armor. Our prayers are our incense that ascend to Heaven. Our fast is our *secret text message* to God. Our devotion to His Holy Icons in Church is our *Skype* or *FaceTime* with God. For He sees us and we see Him through the majesty of the Holy Icons, our windows to Heaven.

In today's gospel reading, we heard how the tenants killed the servants and then the son/ heir of the rich man/master. The cornerstone referred to in the gospel reading is our Lord Jesus, the son of God. The ones who were killed before Him were the prophets and the martyrs. We thank God for His beloved son! Let us be one with the Cornerstone of our faith! Be joyous today for the start of this blessed ecclesiastical New Year and be more joyous than the secular January 1st New Year. May the blessing of our Lord be upon you as you venture into this Blessed New Year. Quench your thirst with the Word of God! May this year be the year of intense scripture study.

Prayerfully yours, in His service,

+Fr. Michael

## Saints and Feasts Commemorated

### Anthimus, Bishop of Nicomedia



After the death of the 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia, their Bishop Anthimus fled to a certain village to care for his remaining flock. The Emperor Maximian sent men in search of him. When they found him, he promised to show Anthimus to them, but first took them in as guests, fed them, and only then made himself known to them. Amazed at his kindness, the soldiers promised him to tell Maximian that they had not found him. But Anthimus went willingly with them, and converting them by his admonitions, baptized them on the way. He boldly confessed his Faith before Maximian, and after frightful tortures was beheaded in the year 303 or 304.

### Holy Father Theoctistus and his fellow struggler Euthymius the Great

Saint Theoctistus, a monk at the Palestinian lavra of Pharan, embraced a more severe life in the wilderness with his friend Saint Euthymius the Great. They founded a monastery, of which Theoctistus was the abbot. He reposed in deep old age in 451.

### Polydorus the Martyr of New Ephesus

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Demetrios Pappastratis (father of George Pappastratis), Angelo Romas, Persa Nizamis, Mitry Ganim, Ted Simon, 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.

### **ATTENTION ALL YOUTH WORKERS**

Whether it be teaching our youth to Greek dance or conducting Sunday School or Greek lessons or working with our Youth of our Parish IN ANY CAPACITY, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit have mandated that everyone working with the Youth must complete a background check and online Youth Safety training through Sterling. Please contact the Metropolis of Detroit and speak with the Metropolis Youth Director about details at (248) 823-2411. Please go on the [YouthSafetyPlatform.goarch.org](http://YouthSafetyPlatform.goarch.org) website and register.

## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

Many things does He intimate by this parable, God's providence, which had been exercised towards them from the first; their murderous disposition from the beginning; that nothing had been omitted of whatever pertained to a heedful care of them.

### **St. John Chrysostom**

Homily 68 on Matthew 21, 4th Century

And observe also both His great care, and the excessive idleness of these men for what pertained to the husbandmen, He Himself did... and He left little for them to do; to take care of what was there, and to preserve what was given to them.

### **St. John Chrysostom**

Homily 68 on Matthew 21, 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.*