

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Plagal First Mode

Let us worship the Word, O ye faithful, praising Him that with the Father and the Spirit is co-beginningless God, Who was born of a pure Virgin that we all be saved; for He was pleased to mount the Cross in the flesh that He assumed, accepting thus to endure death. And by His glorious rising, He also willed to resurrect the dead.

Apolytikion for Sun. of Orthodoxy in the Second Mode

We worship Thine immaculate icon, O Good One, asking the forgiveness of our failings, O Christ our God; for of Thine own will Thou wast well-pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh, that Thou mightest deliver from slavery to the enemy those whom Thou hadst fashioned. Wherefore, we cry to Thee thankfully: Thou didst fill all things with joy, O our Saviour, when Thou camest to save the world.

Apolytikion of the Church in the Fourth Mode

Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Thy disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit; and they were assured by the blessing that Thou are the Son of God and Redeemer of the world.

Ἀνελήφθης ἐν δόξῃ, Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, χαροποιήσας τοὺς Μαθητάς, τῇ ἐπαγγελίᾳ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος· βεβαιωθέντων αὐτῶν διὰ τῆς εὐλογίας, ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ λυτρωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου.

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!"

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40.

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

The Gospel of John 1:43-51



At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Ascension of Our Lord Greek Orthodox Church



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WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN February 25 – March 4, 2018

Welcome To Our Visitors

WELCOME TO THE ASCENSION PARISH. Your presence has brought us much joy. We hope your visit is memorable and meaningful in every way. Our doors and hearts are always open to you. Please join us for fellowship following the Divine Liturgy and visit with Fr. Sotiri and with members of the Parish Council. They will answer questions and provide you with information regarding the programs and life at the Ascension.

Spiritual Reflection

"Orthodox religious thought lays the utmost emphasis on the image of God in the human person. ...Because she or he is an icon of God, each member of the human race, even the most sinful, is infinitely precious in God's sight. This respect for every human being is visibly expressed in Orthodox worship, when the priest censures not only the icons but the members of the congregation, saluting the image of God in each person."

Kallistos Ware

Weekly Calendar

Sunday	February 25	Sunday of Orthodoxy
8:15 a.m.	Orthros	
9:15 a.m.	Sunday Church School	
9:30 a.m.	Divine Liturgy followed by Procession of Icons Coffee Fellowship hosted by The Marriage Ministry Girls' Chanting Practice immediately following Liturgy	
6:30 p.m.	Pan-Orthodox Vespers, SS Constantine & Helen, Palos Hills	
Monday	February 26	
5 p.m.	Great Compline	
5:45 p.m.	JOY/Jr. GOYA	
7:30 p.m.	GOYA	
Tuesday	February 27	
4:45 p.m.	Greek School	
Wednesday	February 28	
10 a.m.	HOPE	
Thursday	March 1	
6:15 p.m.	Greek School Beginners/Advanced Beginners	
7:45 p.m.	Greek School Intermediate/Advanced (@ 1221 House)	
Saturday	March 3	To commemorate St. Nicholas Planas
8 a.m.	Orthros	
9 a.m.	Divine Liturgy	
5 p.m.	Vespers	
Sunday	March 4	St. Gregory Palamas
8:15 a.m.	Orthros	
9:15 a.m.	Sunday Church School	
9:30 a.m.	Divine Liturgy Stewardship Presentation	

Our Sunday Volunteers

Prosphora: Illiana Radaios
Epistle Reader: Frank Kazas
Greeters: Chris and Jayne Chatzidakis
Ushers: David Rutkowski, (UIC)
 Kathie Rutkowski, Peter Venetos, Tom Kiriakos, Carol Stamas, Frank Kazas, Steve Demet

Prayer Requests for Health

PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR PERSONAL PRAYERS the servants of God: Eleni, George, Louise, Anastasia, Stella, Mitchell, Joanne, Panagiotis, Christina, Dee, Helen, Sophia, Connie, Janet, Anthony, Fred, Katerini, George, James, Theresa

Lenten Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life!

Do not permit the spirit of laziness, curiosity, lust of power and idle talk to come into me.

Rather, grant me your servant, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love.

Yes, Lord and King! Grant me to see my own faults and not judge my brothers and sisters,

For You are blessed now and unto the ages of ages.

Amen.

Announcements

+ **SERVICES DURING LENT:** The Ascension of Our Lord wishes you a blessed and reflective Lenten journey. Due to space and parking restrictions in our temporary home, many of the services traditionally offered at Ascension throughout Lent will not take place this year. The Great Compline service will take place on Mondays in the chapel at the house at 5 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Please stay tuned to our bulletin, E-Newsletter and website for the most up-to-date information and announcements related to this most sacred season.

+ **CONFESSIONS:** Fr. Sotiri will hear confessions throughout Lent up until the week before Holy Week. Please call the Church office to make an appointment.

+ **STEWARDSHIP 2018:** Our 2018 Stewardship theme is: "Work at it with All Your Heart." Stewardship contributions cover operating expenses for our church and provide the annual funding needed to operate the vibrant ministries of this Parish. Our 2018 Operating Fund is budgeted at \$500,000.00. This Fund is separate from our capital campaign fundraising initiative to build our new church and community center facilities. To date, the total pledged for Ascension in 2018 is \$246,249 by 156 families. Let us work to keep the momentum going for this Parish and for the glory of God.

+ **CONSTRUCTION FUNDING UPDATE: The time has come! Please, if you have not yet contributed to the capital campaign fund, the time is now!** We are at a critical juncture and need to raise the final \$1.65M to build our new church. *Debt-free.* Every donation matters, no matter how big or small! We ask that you open your hearts, have a family discussion, and consider this unique opportunity to pledge. Our Donor Recognition Wall will forever profile each family donor's name and we want you to be a part of it. Please contact Fr. Sotirios at 847-482-1200, or email at frsotirios@ascensiongoc.com. We thank you in advance for your love to building *Our Church - Our Faith - Our Legacy.*

+ **ANNOUNCING A SPECIAL PRESENTATION ON STEWARDSHIP:** Next week immediately following Liturgy, we've invited Jerry Mlnetos, a nationally recognized speaker from Orthodox Parish Development, to speak to us about expanding the practical aspects of good stewardship in order to fruitfully use God's gifts of time, talent and treasure. SCS teachers will expand their lessons so parents can stay for this short, yet very impactful presentation.

+ **SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL REMINDERS:** OCMC Coin boxes were distributed last week. Please encourage your children to collect and donate change, a true act of almsgiving during this Lenten season. Boxes are to be returned to Church no later than Sunday, March 18th.

+ **REMINDER: IONIAN VILLAGE SUMMER 2018 REGISTRATION BEGINS THIS THURSDAY, MARCH 1st AT 12 p.m. EST** for young people currently in grade 9 through 12. For more information, visit www.ionianvillage.org

+ **FANARI CAMP 2018** Registration opens at 12 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6th for children entering 6th grade through 11th grade in the fall of September 2018. For more info, go to <http://www.fanari.org/>.

+ **CELEBRATION OF BOOKS** The annual celebration of books will once again take place at Holy Apostles Church in Westchester, on Sunday, March 4th – Thursday, March 8th. See the insert for this year's schedule of speakers and presentations. For more information, visit: www.holyapostleschurch.com

+ **LENTEN FAMILY RETREAT:** Join other Orthodox families at St. Demetrios' Church in Chicago on Saturday, March 10 for a one day Lenten Retreat titled, Transforming our Baptismal Garments into the Armor of God. The retreat leader, Rev. Fr. Ephraim Peters, currently serves SS. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Chicopee, Mass. Workshops for adults, interactive sessions for children, "coffee talks" for teens, as well as child-care for babies! Support for children with special needs will be available upon request. Find more information and to register, visit www.GOCFamilySynaxis.org, or email Chicago.Family.Synaxis@gmail.com.

+ **LAST CALL FOR MISSION TEAM CHICAGO BENEFIT DINNER:** Ascension is hoping to fill a table for this year's benefit dinner which takes place on Thursday, March 15th @ 6:30 p.m., at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Des Plaines. Keynote speaker Bishop Athanasius (Akunda) of Kisumu and All Western Kenya will talk about the growth of Orthodoxy in East Africa. All proceeds will go to support the work of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) in Kenya and throughout the world. Please contact the office at 847.482.1200 with your reservation.

+ **PHILOPTOCHOS SNAPSHOT OF SUPPORT** Our Philoptochos Chapter's February contributions included donations toward: Saint Photios Shrine and Autism Assistance Fund.

The Sunday of Orthodoxy

The Sunday of Orthodoxy is the first Sunday of Great Lent. The dominant theme of this Sunday since 843 has been that of the victory of the icons. In that year the iconoclastic controversy, which had raged on and off since 726, was finally laid to rest, and icons and their veneration were restored on the first Sunday in Lent. Ever since, this Sunday has been commemorated as the "Triumph of Orthodoxy." The Seventh Ecumenical Council dealt predominantly with the controversy regarding icons and their place in Orthodox worship. It was convened in Nicaea in 787 by Empress Irene at the request of Tarasios, Patriarch of Constantinople. The Council was attended by 367 bishops. Almost a century before this, the iconoclastic controversy had once more shaken the foundations of both Church and State in the Byzantine Empire. Excessive religious respect and the ascribed miracles to icons by some members of society, approached the point of worship (due only to God) and idolatry. This instigated excesses at the other extreme by which icons were completely taken out of the liturgical life of the Church by the Iconoclasts. The Iconophiles, on the other-hand, believed that icons served to preserve the doctrinal teachings of the Church; they considered icons to be man's dynamic way of expressing the divine through art and beauty

Excerpt taken from "Coffee with a Little Stewardship" series by the Serbian Orthodox Church