

## Hymns and Holy Scripture Readings

### 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 Forefeast of the Nativity in the Fourth Mode

Be thou ready, Bethlehem, Eden hath opened unto all. Ephratha, prepare thyself, for now, behold, the Tree of life hath blossomed forth in the cave from the Holy Virgin. Her womb hath proved a true spiritual Paradise, wherein the divine and saving Tree is found, and as we eat thereof we shall all live, and shall not die as did Adam. For Christ is born now to raise the image that had fallen aforetime.

### Apolytikion for Sun. before Nativity in the Second Mode

Great are the achievements of faith! In the fountain of flame, as by the water of rest, the Three Holy Children rejoiced. And the Prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. By their prayers, O Christ our God, save our souls.

### Memorial Hymn

Remember, O Lord, as You are good, Your servants, and forgive every sin they have committed in this life. For no one is sinless except You, Who have power to grant rest to those who have fallen asleep.

### 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, Χριστὲ 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 Third Mode

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to \* God the Word ineffably, \* Who was before all the ages. \* Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing \* the gladsome tidings; \* with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him \* Who is willing to be gazed on \* as a young Child Who \* before the ages is God.

### The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40.

BRETHREN, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God.

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 armies 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 tempted, 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 Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife. but knew her not until she had borne a son: and he called his name Jesus.

## Ascension of Our Lord Greek Orthodox Church



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## WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN December 23 - 30, 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

*"I too will proclaim the greatness of this day: the Immaterial become incarnate, the Word is made flesh, the invisible makes itself seen, the intangible can be touched, the timeless has a beginning, the Son of God becomes the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, always the same, yesterday, today and forever. . . This is the solemnity we are celebrating today: the arrival of God among us, so that we might go to God, or more precisely, return to Him. . . Revere the nativity which releases you from the chains of evil. Honor this tiny Bethlehem which restores Paradise to you. Venerate this crib; because of it you who were deprived of meaning (logos) are fed by the divine Meaning, the divine Logos Himself."*

**St. Gregory the Theologian**

## Weekly Calendar

<b>Sunday</b> 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	<b>December 23</b> Orthros Divine Liturgy Memorial for the Souls of the Servants of God: Lena Verges (40 Days); Konstantinos Gekas (6 yrs) Coffee Fellowship hosted by The Hefner Family	<b>Sunday Before Nativity</b>
<b>Monday</b> 7:30 a.m. 5 p.m.	<b>December 24</b> Great Hours followed by Vespers-Liturgy (@ House Chapel) Christmas Vespers (@ Daniel Wright Middle School)	<b>Eve of the Nativity</b>
<b>Tuesday</b> 8:30 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	<b>December 25</b> Orthros @ Daniel Wright Divine Liturgy	<b>Holy Nativity</b>
<b>Wednesday</b> 8 a.m. 9 a.m.	<b>December 26</b> Orthros @ House Chapel Divine Liturgy	<b>Synaxis of the Theotokos</b>
<b>Thursday</b> 8 a.m. 9 a.m. noon	<b>December 27</b> Orthros @ House Chapel Divine Liturgy Senior Synaxis Christmas Party, Dover Straits	<b>St. Stephanos, The First-Martyr</b>
<b>Saturday</b> 6:30 p.m.	<b>December 29</b> Men's Ministry Wine Sharing Event	
<b>Sunday</b> 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m. noon	<b>December 30</b> Orthros Divine Liturgy College/Young Adult Brunch, Strawberry Fields, Lincolnshire	<b>Sunday Before Theophany</b>

## Holy Communion Etiquette

- + If you are either baptized and/or confirmed as an Orthodox Christian and have spiritually prepared to receive Holy Communion, please come up with reverence and humility, row by row, and depart as directed by the ushers. Please remain in your rows until an usher indicates your row should move forward. If you are standing in the back of the nave, please wait until an usher directs you.
- + In receiving Communion, you should place the cloth under your chin, recite your CHRISTIAN NAME, and wipe your mouth after receiving. If you are wearing lipstick please remove it prior to receiving Communion.
- + Whether you are an Orthodox Christian or not, please come forward at the dismissal to receive the blessed bread which is offered to everyone who worships with us. May the blessings of Christ be with you.



**+ ON BEHALF OF THE ASCENSION PARISH FAMILY, we wish you a blessed time with your families throughout this spiritual Nativity season. Merry Christmas and many blessings in the New Year!**

## Our Sunday Volunteers

**Prospora:** Illiana Radaios & Elaine Stevens  
**Epistle Reader:** Thomas Poulakidas  
**Greeters:** Eric & Marcia Moore  
**Ushers:** Nick Marino (UIC), Peter Venetos, Tom Kiriakos, Bill Athenson, Doug Hugdahl, Diane Sigalos, Mike Sutherland, Chris Chatzidakis

## 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, James, Theresa, Peter, Anna, Ignacio

## Announcements

- + **WE THANK OUR DEVOTED PARISHIONERS WHO HAVE PROVIDED ASSISTANCE FOR AND DURING THE DIVINE LITURGY THIS PAST YEAR** including Chanters, Altar Boys, Ushers, Prospora bakers, Greeters, Epistle Readers, Koliva Preparers and Coffee Fellowship hosts. Your love for the Ascension Parish is truly recognized and appreciated. God bless you and your loved ones always.
- + **EPIPHANY HOME BLESSINGS** – According to the Greek Orthodox tradition, the month of January is the time for home blessings. If you wish for Fr. Sotiri to bless your home, please complete the insert and return it to the Church Office by 1/7/19.
- + **STEWARDS: PLEASE PICK UP YOUR 2019 ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDARS & SCRIPTURE CARDS** on your way out of Church today.
- + **YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE: WE ARE IN NEED OF COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOSTS IN THE NEW YEAR:** Please volunteer to host coffee fellowship with your family, or together with another family, so that we may continue our fellowship after Liturgy. You may sign up via our website, or by calling the church office. Thank you in advance for offering your love and commitment to this important ministry.
- + **2018 STEWARDSHIP: ONLY ONE-WEEK LEFT!** There's only a little over one week left to make your contribution to the 2018 stewardship year! To date for 2018 Stewardship, 316 Ascension families have pledged \$363,678 of which \$348,285 has been received. If you haven't submitted your pledge for 2018 or have not yet fulfilled your 2018 pledged amount, please consider doing so now as we are approaching year-end. Thank you.
- + **GARC VISIT:** This past Monday, many of our youth and their parents, along with Fr. Sotiri, made our annual Christmas visit to the residents of the Greek American Rehabilitation Center. It is always a blessing to share the spirit and true meaning of Christmas with them. We also thank our GOYANs and Men's Ministry for making Christmas a little merrier and helping to fill the Christmas stockings for a group of residents. There is no greater joy than reaching out and sharing our blessings with others.
- + **OUR ANNUAL PARISH ICE-SKATING PARTY** takes place on Friday, December 28th from 6 – 8 p.m. at Centennial Ice Arena at Highland Park. Please note that dinner will not be served this year. See insert for event details!
- + **ATTENTION COLLEGE STUDENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS:** You are invited to join Fr. Sotiri, Carol Stamas, and Caity Anast for brunch after Divine Liturgy on Sunday, December 30th at Strawberry Field Cafe, 410 Milwaukee Ave., Lincolnshire. **Please RSVP to Carol by December 28th at: cestamas@comcast.net**
- + **ATTENTION YOUNG ADULTS (ages 21 – 40):** The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago recently announced an open invitation for young adults and emerging leaders, ages 21-40, to apply for the newly created Young Professional Advisory Board of the Metropolis which will advise the Metropolitan and the Metropolis Council. More information and a link to the online application can be found on Ascension's OCF webpage.
- + **A HOLLY JOLLY TIME** was had by all at the Philoptochos Membership Christmas party. Much appreciation to Violetta and Robert Buhler for hosting this festive gathering and welcoming us into their beautiful home where we enjoyed food, fellowship & a spirited ornament exchange. Even Santa Clause made a surprise appearance to hand out gifts. Merry Christmas to all!
- + **SAVE THE DATE! ASCENSION OF OUR LORD'S ANNUAL APOKREATIKO GLENDI** will be held on Sunday, March 3, 2019, at the Concorde Banquets in Kildeer, at 4:30 p.m. There will be dinner, dancing, games and fun for all! Stay tuned for more details!
- + **PHILOPTOCHOS SNAPSHOT OF SUPPORT: DECEMBER DONATIONS:** UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) and National Philoptochos General Medical Fund
- + **CONSTRUCTION FUNDING UPDATE:** As we look toward occupying our new church by Pascha, we are within reach of our final funding to be in our new spiritual home debt-free: a final \$335,000 in new pledges needs to be raised, and a total of \$315,000 on existing pledges needs to be collected, to be mortgage-free. Please consider making a year-end charitable contribution if you have not yet donated. We need your help! Please consider donating today! Also, if you have had an existing pledge, but have not yet had an opportunity to fulfill it, we would be grateful if you were able to do so prior to calendar year-end. Every dollar spent on paying down debt is money taken away from growing our ministries. Be sure to visit our website at ascensiongoc.com to view an exciting video tour of the construction progress to date of our new church! Please contact Fr. Sotirios at 847-482-1200, or by email at frsotirios@ascensiongoc.com, to donate today. Thank you.