

Apolytikion of Great and Holy Pascha in the Plagal First Mode

Christ is risen from the dead, by death, trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Second Mode

When You descended unto Death, O Lord, You who are immortal Life put Hades to death, by the lightning of Your divinity. And when You raised the dead from the netherworld, all the hosts of heaven sang aloud to You, "O Christ God, Giver of life, glory to You!"

Apolytikion for Holy Myrrhbearers Sunday in the Second Mode

When he took down Your immaculate Body from the Cross, the honorable Joseph wrapped it in a clean linen shroud with spices and laid it for burial in a new tomb. But on the third day You rose, O Lord, and granted to the world the great mercy.

Apolytikion for Holy Myrrhbearers Sunday in the Second Mode

The Angel who had come to the sepulcher said to the Myrrh-bearing women, "Ointments are appropriate for mortal men; but Christ is indeed a stranger to decay. Now go proclaim that the Lord has risen and granted to the world the great mercy."

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

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, after You filled the Disciples with joy, by promising to send them the Holy Spirit, and You blessed them and established their faith, that You are the Son of God, the 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.

Apolytikion of St. Katherine (Protectress of our Chapel)

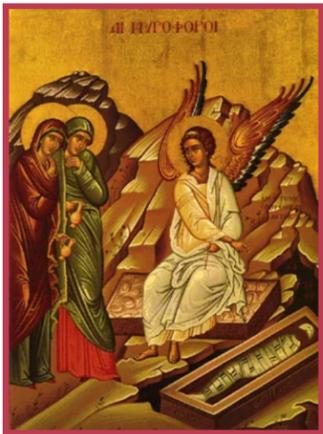
Let us praise and extol the all-lauded Bride of Christ,* the Protectress of Sinai, divine Saint Katherine,* as the one who gives aid and her assistance to us;* for she brilliantly suppressed the impious orators,*with the sword of the Spirit.* And being crowned as a martyr,* she asks that all receive the great mercy.

Seasonal Kontakion in the Plagal Fourth Mode

Though You went down into the tomb, O Immortal One, yet You brought down the dominion of Hades; and You rose as the victor, O Christ our God; and You called out "Rejoice" to the Myrrh-bearing women, and gave peace to Your Apostles, O Lord who to the fallen grant resurrection.

The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7.

In those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "it is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochoros, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaos, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.



The Gospel of Mark 15:43-47; 16:1-8

At that time, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered if He were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether He was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that He was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking Him down, wrapped Him in the linen shroud, and laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James saw where He was laid.

And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might go and anoint Him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, He is not here; see the place where they laid Him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him, as He told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Christ is risen from the dead, by death, trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs, He has granted life.

Χριστός ανέστη εκ νεκρῶν, θανάτῳ θάνατον πατήσας, και τοις εν τοις μνήμασι ζωὴν χαρισάμενος.

Christos anesti eknekron, thanato thanaton patisas, ke tis en tis mnimasi, zoin charisamenos

OUT OF RESPECT FOR THE ICON PRINTED ON THE BULLETIN, PLEASE RECYCLE RATHER THAN DISCARD IN THE GARBAGE

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WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN

April 26 – May 3, 2026

Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

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 Ascension's ministries and vibrant parish life.

COMMUNION GUIDELINES: To partake of Holy Communion, one must be a Baptized/Chrismated Orthodox Christian and be in good standing with the church. Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and regular participation in Holy Confession are welcome to receive communion. One should also be present at the Liturgy before the Scripture readings. Please follow the directions of the ushers during Holy Communion, and, also please allow the Sunday Church School staff and students to commune first so they can make their way to class and promptly begin their lessons. Thank you.

Spiritual Reflection

"The Theotokos is our first model of womanhood for her humility, purity, and obedience. The Myrrh-Bearing Women are another for their courage, forethought, steadfastness, and above all, love."

Orthodox Christian Network

Weekly Calendar

Sunday 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	April 26 Orthros Divine Liturgy Sunday Church School <u>Memorials</u> Plato (40 Days) and Constance Bageris (40 days) Constance Gekas (1 year) Demetre Kaoukis (1year) Andreas Kalyviaris (3 years) George N. Papageorge (23 years); Nomiki Maillakakis (4 years) Coffee Fellowship hosted by Sunday Church School 3 rd – 5 th grade Families Philoptochos Packing for Feed the Hungry	Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women
Monday 6:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	April 27 Jr. GOYA GOYA	
Tuesday 11 a.m. 5 p.m.	April 28 Feed the Hungry, Annunciation Cathedral, Chicago Greek School	
Wednesday 6 a.m. 7 p.m.	April 29 Encounter the Word Jr. Olympics Basketball Practice, Sprague Elementary School Gym	
Thursday 10:30 a.m. 6 p.m. 6:15 p.m. 7 p.m. 7:45 p.m.	April 30 Ascending in Orthodoxy Philoptochos Chapter Meeting Adult Greek School: Beginners/Advanced Beginners Human Trafficking Presentation, Rev. Dr. Fr. Peter J. Spiro, Open to entire parish, Anagnos Fellowship Hall Adult Greek School: Intermediate/Advanced	
Friday 7 p.m.	May 1 Jr. Olympics Basketball Practice, Sprague Elementary School Gym	
Saturday 11 a.m. 1 p.m. 5 p.m.	May 2 Baptism: Georgia, Daughter of Alexander & Theodora Langston <i>Sponsors: Jennifer and Michael Schnur</i> Baptism: Weston, Son of Clayton & Samantha Larson <i>Sponsors: Michael & Jaime Phelan</i> Vespers	
Sunday 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m. 12:00 p.m.	May 3 Orthros Divine Liturgy Sunday Church School 40-Day Blessing, Son of Amanda-Ann and Charlie Jones Baptism: Louis, Son of Steven & Christina Papastefan <i>Sponsor: Grant Papastefan</i>	Sunday of the Paralytic

+ **IS SOMEONE IN YOUR HOUSE CELEBRATING A GRADUATION MILESTONE THIS YEAR?** Ascension's annual graduate tribute will take place following Liturgy on Sunday, June 7th and will honor graduates of 8th Grade, High School, College, Graduate and Post-Graduate programs. Please email the following information no later than **Friday, May 22nd** to suzannesaric@ascensiongoc.com: Name(s) of your graduate(s); parent's names; school from which they are graduating; full name/location/major of school they plan to attend; university or post-graduate degree earned (and if applicable, post-baccalaureate program if they're going on); and, most importantly, a photo (.jpg portrait/headshot). We look forward to recognizing and honoring our 2026 graduates!

+ **CONGRATULATIONS TO ASCENSION'S ORATORICAL FINALISTS** who competed on Bright Saturday, April 18, at the Metropolis-level festival at St. Mary Church in Minneapolis, MN. We congratulate the following Ascension finalists: Maria Zouras, who placed 2nd in the Senior Division Speech Category; Chris Zouras, who took 3rd in the Essay Category; Thanasi Maglaras who placed 2nd in the Senior Iconography Category; and Niko Malamis who took 3rd place in the Jr. Division Essay Category. Following Liturgy, the two winners at Ascension's Parish festival (Maria Zouras, Senior Division & Demetre Abulashvili, Jr. Division) will share their speeches with our congregation. **AXIOI** to all of our youth! We are very proud of you. May God continue to bless the talents He has bestowed on you.

Sunday Volunteers

Prosporo Bakers: Sophie Beris & Amelia Bartholomew
Epistle Reader: Bill Gaston
Greeter: Lela Gramatis
Ushers: UIC: Kathy Demas, Eleni Hloros, Alex Gianaras, Dean Argiris, Robert Buhler, Nick Poteres

Prayer Requests

PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR PERSONAL PRAYERS the servants of God: Eleni, George, Anastasia, Stella, Mitchell, Joanne, Panagiotis, Christina, Dee, Helen, Sophia, Connie, Katerini, James, Theresa, Peter, Anna, Alexander, Anthony, Magdalena, Maggie, Panagiotis, Paraschos, Chris, Don, Justin, Ignacio, Kevin, Theodore, Mary, Madison, Trinity, Evangelos, John, Rick, Robert, Tom, Georgia, Kristi, Rob, Maureen, Antonia, Christina, Constantine, Irene, Iliana, John, Carolyn, Mary, Maria, Patrick, John, Panagiota, Luci, Stephanos, Leonidas, Vasiliki, Nikki, Anastasios, Stacey, Eleni, Helen, George, Gregory, Irene, Artemis, Efstathia, Maria, Vasilios, Christina, Tom, Nick, Thomas, Nikita, Haralambos, Dean, Margarita, Steven

Vigil Lights

Vigil lights offered by Elaine Palmer in loving memory of her husband, John Palmer.

Stewardship 2026

Stewardship is the lifeblood of our Parish. We demonstrate our gratitude and faith in God by offering a portion of what God has blessed us with to support His ministries. Thank you to the stewards who have already set up their pledges for 2026 during our "Rise Up and Build" Campaign. To date, we thank the 293 families that have pledged \$458,000 as well as generously offer their time and talents to this Parish! As of this week, we are at 64% of our budgeted 2026 stewardship target of \$720,000. *(Please be aware that Stewardship doesn't automatically renew annually. We ask that you recommit your annual stewardship of time, talent and treasures by completing the online 2026 Stewardship Pledge form.)* If you have any questions, please contact the office. Let us draw together as a parish family to demonstrate our gratitude and lovingly serve God by supporting Ascension.

Announcements

+ PHILOPTOCHOS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **REV. DR. PETER J. SPIRO**, a renowned expert, will speak on "**Human Trafficking—An Attack on the Icon of Christ**" on **Thursday, April 30** in Anagnos Fellowship Hall. Philoptochos invites the entire Ascension parish to welcome Fr. Spiro and hear his presentation about this terrible crisis. See the flyer for details.
- **FEED THE HUNGRY** is set for Tuesday, April 28 at Annunciation Cathedral. We will be prepping and packing our 150 meals in the Anagnos Fellowship Hall after coffee fellowship on Sunday, April 26. If you are able to help on either day, please email Kathie Rutkowski at Rutkowskik57@gmail.com.
- **GLENDI PHOTOS** are available for viewing on the Ascension website's photo gallery! Relive the exciting night out!
- **APRIL SNAPSHOT OF SUPPORT:** This month, Philoptochos financially supported the following charitable initiatives: Metropolis Philanthropy Fund, Sisterhood of St. Basil Academy, IOCC, 2026 Philoptochos National Convention Sponsorship and the Bishop's Welfare Fund.

+ **LAST CALL FOR JR. OLYMPICS -- PRACTICES BEGIN THIS WEEK!** May 1 is the deadline to sign up to compete, coach, or volunteer for Team Ascension! Team Ascension is gearing up for another exciting year of Jr. Olympics, which will take place over Memorial Day Weekend, May 23-24 at SS Constantine & Helen Church, Palos Hills. There will be a full offering of more than 15 competitive events for youth between 7-18 years old. Practices begin this week (see calendar on left side of bulletin and also consult parish calendar on website homepage). Please scan the QR code on the flyer to register and help us organize our coaches and teams—the deadline to join is this Friday, May 1! For more information, contact Anna Goldenstein at anna.goldenstein@gmail.com, or visit our Jr. Olympics webpage.

+ **PLEASE SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR FEASTDAY SERVICES:** Hierarchical Great Vespers will take place the evening of Wednesday, May 20th and Orthros & Divine Liturgy will take place on Thursday morning, May 21st. Please reserve these important dates in your calendar so we can be present as a parish family in prayer.

+ **THE 2026 FAITH SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP** application for HS Seniors is now available to download with a deadline submission of June 26, 2026. Visit thefaithendowment.org/scholarships. Eligible applicants must be active members of a Greek Orthodox parish.

+ **VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL RETURNS THIS SUMMER!** Please save the date for Ascension's Vacation Church School 2026! VCS will take place July 27 – 31 for K-8th graders. More information will be announced very soon!

+ **PASTORAL NEEDS, HOSPITAL CALLS, NURSING/REHAB AND HOME-BOUND PARISHIONERS:** If you have a pastoral need or emergency and would like to speak to Fr. Sotiri, or know of someone who would like to schedule a pastoral visit, please contact Father via the office.

+ **FANARI and LIGHTHOUSE INFO & DATES:** **FANARI Summer Camp Registration** is open for rising 6th grade through rising 12th graders. Five sessions will be offered: June 14 – 20; June 21–June 27; June 28 –July 4; July 5 –July 11; and July 12– July 18, 2026. FANARI Staff applications opened Monday, February 23rd. Lighthouse Camp for High School Seniors, which will take place Saturday, June 13– June 20, 2026 at Carroll University in Milwaukee, is also taking registrations. For more information, visit www.fanari.camp.

+ **SAVE THE DATE: THE NEXT PARISH ASSEMBLY MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE ON Sunday, JUNE 14th.** Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important meeting immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

+ **REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR IONIAN VILLAGE** for the Summer 2026 programs: Session One: June 16 – July 5, 2026; IV NEXT: July 5 – 15, 2026; and Session Two: July 15 – August 3, 2026. Ionian Village is the international camping ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America located in Peloponnesus, Greece. Each 20-day session is open to young people who will have completed grades 9 through 12. For more information, visit www.ionianvillage.org/.

+ **THE CALL TO SERVE** – Please consider Stewardship of your time and talent at one of our Weekly Services. Whether it is being a Greeter, Usher, Epistle Reader, Icon Decorator or Prospora Baker, Ascension is always grateful to have parishioners be an integral part of its Liturgical life. For more information, please contact the church Office at 847.482.1200

Did You Know?



What is the *Epitaphios*? Many people confuse the *epitaphios* with the large, elaborately carved wooden canopy representing Christ's tomb, which is actually called the *kouvouklion*. The *epitaphios* ("on the tomb") is actually the beautifully embroidered cloth icon placed on the *kouvouklion*, which depicts Christ's dead body lying on the tomb. Initially, the cloth was used to cover the Gospel book as it was brought out on Holy Friday for veneration. Over time, the cloth became the focus of the liturgical services of Holy Friday and Saturday. On these days, it is processed around the church, venerated by the faithful, and ultimately placed on the altar table, where it remains until the feast of the Ascension.