

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.

Apolytikion for Thomas Sun. in the Grave Mode

The tomb being sealed, You rose from the sepulcher, O Christ God, the Life. And the doors being shut, You came to the disciples, O resurrection of all. Through them You renew a right spirit within us, according to Your great mercy.

Apolytikion for the Holy Icon Panagia Glykophilousa in the First Tone

Your holy Icon we praise as a very precious boast of Philotheou Monastery, for in it we behold you, O Pure One, kissing Christ as a babe, and we behold your great glory, O Virgin, and we cry out: Glory to your great deeds, O Pure One, glory to your sympathy, glory to your providence for us, O Spotless One.

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 5:12-20.

In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

The Gospel of John 20:19-31



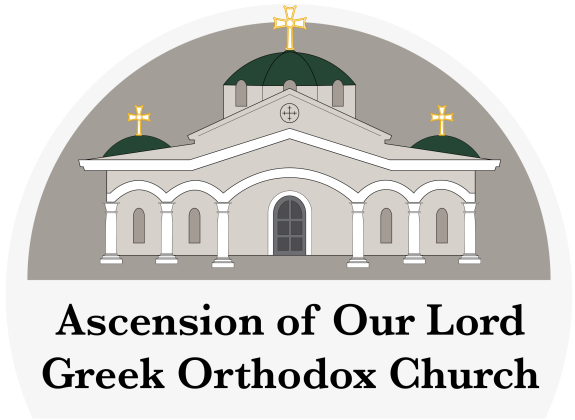
On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe." Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see My hands; and put out your hand, and place it in My side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and My God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may have life in His name.

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 νεκρών, θανάτω θάνατον πατήσας, και τοις εν τοις μνήμασι ζωήν χαρισάμενος.

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

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WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN April 27 - May 4, 2025

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

“God loves each of us as if there was only one of us.”

Saint Augustine of Hippo

Weekly Calendar

<u>Sunday</u> 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	<u>April 27</u> Orthros Divine Liturgy followed by Procession of Glykophilousa Icon Sunday Church School Coffee Fellowship hosted by Sophie Beris & Eleni Anteliz Philoptochos Packing for Feed the Hungry event	<u>Thomas Sunday</u>
<u>Monday</u> 6:30 p.m.	<u>April 28</u> Jr. GOYA & GOYA Greek Night	
<u>Tuesday</u> 11 a.m. 5 p.m.	<u>April 29</u> Feed the Hungry @ Annunciation Cathedral, Chicago Greek School	
<u>Wednesday</u> 6 a.m.	<u>April 30</u> Encounter the Word	
<u>Thursday</u> 9:30 a.m.	<u>May 1</u> Fr. Sotiri to Serve Liturgy at Greek American Rehab Center, Wheeling Ascending in Orthodoxy Adult Greek School: Beginners/Advanced Beginners Adult Greek School: Intermediate/Advanced	
10:30 a.m. 6:15 p.m. 7:45 p.m.		
<u>Friday</u> 10 a.m. 6:30 p.m.	<u>May 2</u> HOPE Group Faith/JOY	
<u>Saturday</u> 3:30 p.m. 5 p.m.	<u>May 3</u> Byzantine Chant Class Vespers	
<u>Sunday</u> 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	<u>May 4</u> Orthros Divine Liturgy	<u>Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women</u>

+ **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.

+ **CHRISTOS ANESTI! OUR SINCERE THANKS** to each and every one of you who helped us prepare, traverse and celebrate Lent, Holy Week and Pascha with such a loving, faithful and giving spirit! Your presence gave Fr. Sotiri great strength and we thank Father along with Fr. Jim & Fr. Alex, as well as our chanters, for leading us through all of the prayerful and beautiful services. We also offer gratitude to the women who so beautifully decorated the Kouvouklion and all of the icons; to the ladies and children who dyed and wrapped red eggs, to all who cleaned the church; to our Girls’ chant group that chanted Lamentations; to the ushers who welcomed the faithful and ensured everything went smoothly all week; to everyone involved in processing the beautiful Kouvouklion and Epitaphio; to all Acolytes who were loyally present throughout Lent and Holy Week; to the Parish Council who hosted a joyful fellowship gathering after Anastasi; to the Agape Vespers Gospel Readers and the chocolate bunny provider who greatly enriched the service on Pascha. Thank you, also, to the office staff for the ongoing support throughout Great Lent & Holy Week. This list goes on, as does the love you all have for our Parish. Thank you to all stewards who contributed their creative talent and endless devotion, as well as financial contributions, to make our journey to Pascha spiritually fulfilling. Visit our website photo gallery to view highlights of our services and parish life! MAY OUR RISEN LORD continue to bless and spiritually strengthen Ascension of Our Lord, and each and every member of our Parish family.

Sunday Volunteers

Prosporo Bakers: Mary Paganis & Christine Stathakopoulos
Epistle Reader: David Rutkowski
Greeter: Lela Gramatis
Ushers: UIC: Nick Marino, Jessie Roberts, David Rutkowski, Alex Gianaras, Chris Chatzidakis, Alex Marx

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, Finn, 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, Bertha

Vigil Lights

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

Stewardship 2025

The theme of the 2025 Stewardship Campaign is, “Your own from Your own.” Let us draw together as a parish family to demonstrate our gratitude to God and lovingly serve Him by supporting Ascension. What better way to demonstrate our thanks and faith in God than by offering a portion of what God has blessed us with to support His ministries. Stewardship is the lifeblood of our Parish. To date, we thank the 291 families that have pledged \$478,039 as well as generously offer their time and talents to this Parish! As of this week, we are at 74% of our 2025 stewardship target of \$650,000. *(Please be aware that Stewardship doesn’t automatically renew annually.* Please contact the office with any questions.

Announcements

+ **WE WILL BE PROCESSING THE WONDROUS ICON OF PANAGIA GLYKOPHILOUSA (“The Sweet-Kissing”) AT THE CULMINATION OF TODAY’S LITURGY.** This icon, which is fittingly found at the base of the left side of our solea, is commemorated on the Sunday of St Thomas and will be processed around our sanctuary. The Glykophilousa Icon belongs to the Eleousa (the Virgin of Tenderness) category of icons, where the Mother accepts the affection shown by the Child Christ. The icon depicts the Theotokos inclining toward Christ, Who embraces her. She seems to be embracing Him more tightly than in other icons, and her expression is more affectionate. There are many miracles of the Glykophilousa Icon.

- + **PHILOPTOCHOS UPDATES**
 - **Xristos Anesti! TODAY after coffee hour in the Anagnos Fellowship Hall,** we will be packing up the bags with the meals to take to **FEED THE HUNGRY. On Tues, April 29th** we will be distributing approximately 130 lunches to the hungry in the basement of the Annunciation Cathedral. Meet us by the stage area after coffee hour. Please contact Kathie Rutkowski at rutkowskik57@gmail.com or 847-421-8267 with questions.
 - **SAVE THE DATE, Thurs, May 15th – General Meeting and Elections for 2025-2027 Board Members, 6:30pm.** Details to follow soon.
 - **APRIL SNAPSHOT OF SUPPORT:** Hellenic College Holy Cross, Sisterhood of Saint Basil Academy, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), Bishop’s Welfare Fund

+ **JR. OLYMPICS: PRACTICES ARE IN MOTION!** It is not too late to sign up to compete, coach, or volunteer for Team Ascension! We are actively gearing up for another exciting year of Jr. Olympics, which will take place over Memorial Day Weekend 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. Please scan the QR code on the flyer to fill out the form and join in on the fun—the **deadline to join is May 1!** For more information, contact Anna Goldenstein at anna.goldenstein@gmail.com, or visit our Jr. Olympics webpage.

+ **IS SOMEONE IN YOUR HOUSE CELEBRATING A GRADUATION MILESTONE THIS YEAR?** Ascension’s annual graduate tribute will take place following Liturgy on Sunday, June 15th 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 30th** 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 graduates at the conclusion of the June 15th Divine Liturgy!

+ **SAVE THE DATE: THE NEXT PARISH ASSEMBLY MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE ON Sunday, JUNE 1st.** Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important meeting immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

+ **PARISH GOLF OUTING - SAVE THE DATE!** Please mark your calendars and SAVE THE DATE, for our Annual Parish Golf Outing & Fellowship Dinner, Friday June 13th at the Arboretum Golf Club in Buffalo Grove. We’re also looking for some volunteers to help on the Golf Committee, please contact Steve Sintetas, sas1@me.com, or Demetri Katsulis, dtk111@comcast.net, if you are interested.

+ **REGISTRATION FOR FANARI & LIGHTHOUSE IS OPEN!** Lighthouse for graduating High School Seniors is open at chicago.goarch.org/lighthouse. Register for FANARI SUMMER CAMP for rising 6th grade through rising 12th graders at <https://www.fanari.camp/summer-camp>. Counselor applications are at <https://www.fanari.camp/counselorapp>. Financial support for Fanari summer camp is available through the Carol Stamas Fanari Scholarship - interested families should contact Fr. Sotiri by calling the church office.

+ **VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL RETURNS THIS SUMMER!** Please save the date for Ascension’s Vacation Church School 2025! VCS will take place July 28 – August 1 for K-8th graders. More information will be announced very soon!

+ **UPCOMING PARISH ACTIVITIES – SAVE THE DATES!** Jr. GOYA/GOYA Greek Night 4/28 | Feed the Hungry 4/29 | Jr. GOYA/GOYA Service Project 5/3 | IOCC Grand Banquet 5/8 | Jr. Olympics, May 24-25 | SCS End-of-Year Recognition 5/18 | Greek School End-of-Year Program & Graduation 5/20 | Great Vespers for Ascension 5/28 | Ascension Feast Day 5/29 | Spring Parish Assembly 6/1 | Pentecost 6/8 | Parish Golf Outing 6/13 | Grad Sunday 6/15|Vacation Church School week of 7/28

+ **WE ARE IN NEED OF COFFEE FELLOWSHIP HOSTS THIS SPRING & SUMMER** Please volunteer to host coffee with your family, or together with another family, so that we may continue our fellowship after Liturgy throughout the summer months. You may sign up via our website, or by calling the church office.

Did You Know

Do you know why we don’t kneel between the Feast Days of Pascha and Pentecost? To answer this, let’s find out why we kneel at all. Kneeling, bowing and prostrations were conducted even in the Old Testament as a sign of deep prayer, repentance, lamentation and devout respect and worship. Even Jesus knelt before His Passion in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:29). According to a canon by the First Ecumenical Council, we are not to kneel between Pascha and Pentecost because of the “brilliant solemnity of the events which the Church commemorates” after Christ’s Resurrection. We celebrate His third day Resurrection and therefore do not need to lament. St. Basil teaches us that by standing, we are reminded that we have risen from the dead together with Christ and we ought to seek the things above.