

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!"

Memorial Hymn

Remember, O Lord, as You are good, Your servant, and forgive every sin he has 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, 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.

Apolytikion of St. Katherine (Protectress of our Chapel)

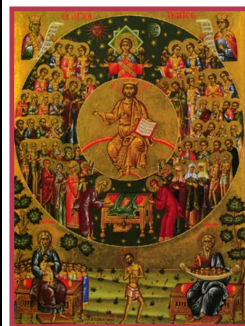
Let us praise and extol the all-lauded Bride of Christ,* the Protectress of Sinai, divine Saint Katherine,* as the one who gives aid and her assistance to us;* for she brilliantly suppressed the impious orators,*with the sword of the Spirit.* And being crowned as a martyr,* she asks that all receive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

Seasonal Kontakion in the Second Mode

O Protection of Christians that never falls, intercession with the Creator that never fails, we sinners beg you, do not ignore the voices of our prayers. O good Lady, we implore you, quickly come unto our aid, when we cry out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who protect now and ever those who honor you.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:1-10.

Brethren, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access by faith to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man - - though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.



The Gospel of Matthew 6:22-33

The Lord said, "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field,

how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

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

Ascension of Our Lord Greek Orthodox Church



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WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN June 21 - 28, 2026

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 soul that knows it has not acted unjustly and has not violated the moral law, rejoices, is peaceful, and celebrates. This fact bears witness to the innate longing for goodness. Thus, the soul delights in justice and truth, while it grieves over injustice and falsehood... A good conscience brings comfort to the soul that is suffering for virtue, for what is good, righteous, true, for the salvation of the many..."

St. Nektarios

Weekly Calendar

Sunday **June 21** **3rd Sunday of Matthew**
8:15 a.m. Orthros
9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Memorial: Nick Stevens (6 months)
Coffee Fellowship Hosted by Philoptochos in honor of Father's Day

Monday – Friday: Fr. Sotiri at Fanari Camp

Saturday **June 27**
5 p.m. Vespers

Sunday **June 28** **4th Sunday of Matthew**
8:15 a.m. Orthros
9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy

+ **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.

+ **DEADLINE THIS FRIDAY FOR THE 2026 FAITH SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE** The application for HS Seniors is 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.

+ **SAVE THE DATE for the ANNUAL MID-SUMMER SOCIAL**, July 26th. Sponsored by Men's Koinonia, this gathering gives the families and youth in our Parish the opportunity to enjoy ice cream, hotdogs, fun and fellowship immediately following Liturgy

+ **LETTERS OF GOOD STANDING** Stewards, please be advised that if you need the church office to produce a Letter of Good Standing (i.e.: for a Sacrament you may be sponsoring, etc.), the office would appreciate at least a one-month lead time. Sacraments taking place in 2026 will require a stewardship commitment for the calendar year 2026. (Stewardship 2026 program to be announced later this November.) Additionally, if the Sacrament you are sponsoring is taking place outside of the Metropolis of Chicago, there is a fee of \$100, made payable by check to the Metropolis of Chicago and processed through our office. If you have any questions, contact the church at 847.482.1200.

+ **PLEASE CONSIDER HOSTING A SIMPLE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP THIS SUMMER** with your family, or together with another family, so that we may continue our fellowship after Liturgy throughout the summer months. There are a few dates open in July and more in August. You may sign up via our website, or by calling the church office. Thank you to all of our hosts who help make our fellowship hour so meaningful and enjoyable!

+ **THE GREEK FEST SEASON IS IN MOTION!** Support our local Metropolis Churches and celebrate summer Greekstyle! Visit the Metropolis of Chicago Parish Festival webpage for all the information at <https://chicago.goarch.org/parish-festivals-26/>

+ **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.

Sunday Volunteers

Prospora Bakers: Christine Stathakopoulos
Epistle Reader: David Rutkowski
Greeters: Chris & Jayne Chatzidakis
Ushers: **UIC: Demetri Katsulis**, Chris Chatzidakis, Lou Demas, Dean Argiris, Spiro Maglaras, Steve Sintetas

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

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 326 families that have pledged \$532,842 as well as generously offer their time and talents to this Parish! As of this week, we are at 74% 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

To all our Fathers, Grandfathers, Godfathers, Stepfathers, Spiritual Fathers and Heavenly Fathers – we wish you a very blessed and Happy Father's Day!

+ **REGISTRATION OPEN FOR VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL:** Ascension is excited to announce the theme of this summer's Vacation Church School: "**LEVEL UP! Equip the Full Armor of God**" which will take place July 27-31. The week-long program is designed for rising Kindergarteners through 8th graders, and will focus on how to equip ourselves for spiritual struggle by strengthening ourselves as St. Paul tells us in Ephesians 6. Please see the flyer for more information and to register. We look forward to spending a fulfilling week together with our youth immersed in worship, outdoor activities, arts & crafts, and hands-on learning.

+ **FORE! SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 27th ANNUAL ASCENSION GOLF OUTING** on **Saturday, August 22nd**, at The Aboretum Club in Buffalo Grove. Sponsored by our Koinonia Men's Ministry, the Shotgun Start is at 12:30 pm, followed by a dinner in the early evening which is open to all! This is Koinonia's Main Fundraiser for the year, and proceeds will help support the ministries of the church, as well as local charities. More info to follow in upcoming weeks, including a price break incentive for those who register early. Please contact Steve Sintetas, Koinonia President at sas1@me.com or (630) 774-3512 if you can help plan this year's annual Golf Outing, as we are in need of volunteers.

+ **NEW GOYA LEADERSHIP**--Congratulations to the newly-elected officers of the 2026-2027 GOYA Board! The Board is an opportunity for our high school youth to become more involved in the life of the Church, grow as youth leaders, and take greater ownership over their GOYA ministry. The Board Officers are: Maria Zouras, Events Chair; Yanni Boufis, Outreach Chair; Ava Alimissis, Communications Chair; and Christina Karahalios, Finance Chair. May God bless them and strengthen them as they lead their peers in the coming ministry year!

+ PHILOPTOCHOS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **THANKS TO OUR PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE**, who shared 2025-26 disbursements with our membership at our annual Celebration of Giving on June 2 at Dover Straits. We joyfully completed a successful year of fundraising, in line with our mission as friends of the poor. Photos of the happy evening are available at ascensiongoc.com.
- **SUMMER HAS BEGUN**, but Philoptochos is thinking about fall, winter and next spring! The board met this week to start laying out plans for another exciting ecclesiastical year! Stay tuned for details—and if you haven't joined Philoptochos yet, or have taken a "break" in involvement, we hope to see you at our Membership Kickoff in the fall!
- **SAVE THE DATE AND INVITE A FRIEND!** Ascension Philoptochos is joining with three local Philoptochos Chapters to present a Women's Retreat this fall. "**Finding Peace and Strength in a Chaotic World**" features keynote speaker **Presvytera Jeannie Constantinou, PhD**, renowned Orthodox speaker, author, podcaster, and Bible scholar. It's set for Saturday, November 14, 2026 at St. John the Baptist Church in Des Plaines, and open to Orthodox women of all ages. Look for registration details, coming in September.

+ **WILL YOU BRING TWO?** Our Project HOPE ministry requests your help! Please participate in our current food collection project and bring two cans or boxes of food to Liturgy on Sunday mornings throughout the summer and place them in the collection bins on the way into our Anagnos Fellowship Hall.

+ **WE WISH ALL OF OUR YOUTH ATTENDING FANARI, LIGHTHOUSE AND IONIAN VILLAGE CAMP SESSIONS THIS SUMMER** an uplifting, safe, fun and blessed experience. May God grant you safe travels and spiritually guide you while you are away from home. Please note that Fr. Sotiri will be at Fanari camp this week; and, John Anton will be there the week of June 29th.

Did You Know?

Who is God the Father? In the Nicene Creed, we proclaim Him to be "the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible." The 7th Ecumenical Council taught that we cannot depict Him in icons because God Almighty is not visible to us: "*No man has ever seen God*" (1 John 4:12) However, with the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, a new relationship with God the Father began. Christ, being fully God and fully man, gave us the boldness to call God "Our Father" in the Lord's Prayer as He does. He also teaches us that "*If you really know me, you will know my Father as well.*" (John 14:6-7) All of Christ's words and works are those of His Father; "*I and the Father are one.*" (John 10:30) Thus, we are to both call on God with boldness as Our Father through His Son, and also to know Him and join ourselves to Him by doing His works as Christ has done.