

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the First Mode

The stone having been sealed by the Pharisees and chief priests, * and Your allimaculate body being guarded by soldiers, * You rose on the third day, O Lord and Savior, granting life unto the world. * Then the powers of the heavens cried out to You, O Giver of Life, and shouted, * "Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! * Glory to Your eternal rule! * Glory to Your plan for saving us, only benevolent God!"

Apolytikion for Sun. of St. Mary of Egypt in the Plagal Fourth Mode

In you, O Mother, is preserved undistorted what was made in the image of God; for taking up the cross, you followed Christ and by example taught, that we should overlook the flesh, since it passes away, and instead look after the soul, since it is immortal. And therefore, O devout Mary, your spirit rejoices with the angels.

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 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 Hebrews 9:11-14.

BRETHREN, when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

The Gospel of Mark 10:32-45



At that time, Jesus took his twelve disciples, and He began to tell them what was to happen to Him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and spit upon Him, and scourge Him, and kill Him; and after three days He will rise." And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to Him, and said to Him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And He said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to Him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to Him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant of James and John. And Jesus called them to Him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

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 March 29 – April 5, 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.

ON FASTING BEFORE THE PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY. A reminder that just as we do not eat prior to receiving Holy Communion on Sunday mornings, we likewise observe a total fast prior to receiving Holy Communion in the evening. To that end, the faithful are advised to try and at least refrain from eating and drinking after taking a light lunch, according to their ability.

Spiritual Reflection

"The sacred and Most Holy Body of our Lord, when properly and worthily received, becomes a weapon for those who fight the good fight, it becomes the cause of returning back to God for those who went astray; it strengthens the sick, it delights the healthy, it heals illnesses, it preserves health; with the Holy Communion, it is easier to correct ourselves, to become more forbearing and more patient in the pains and the sorrow, more warm in love, more sensitive to knowledge, more willing to obedience, more sensitive and more responsive to the energy of the (divine) charismata."

St. Nicodemos of Mt. Athos

Weekly Calendar

Sunday 8:10 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	March 29 Orthros Divine Liturgy Sunday Church School <u>Memorials</u> Metropolitan Athenagoras (9 months) George Argus (40 days) Aimiliane Monaxi (5 years) Coffee fellowship hosted by Sunday Church School 40-Day Blessing, Daughter of Stacy & Zachary Lutwak-Fitzgerald Parish Oratorical Festival	Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt
12:00 p.m. Monday 5 p.m. 6 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	March 30 Great Compline Jr. GOYA GOYA	
Tuesday 6 a.m. 5 p.m. 7 p.m.	March 31 Encounter the Word Greek School Vicariate Council	
Wednesday 5 p.m. 7 p.m.	April 1 9 th Hour & Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Lenten Lecture Series & Light Lenten Dinner	
Thursday 6:15 p.m. 7:45 p.m.	April 2 Adult Greek School: Beginners/Advanced Beginners Adult Greek School: Intermediate/Advanced	
Friday 10 a.m. 5:30 p.m.	April 3 HOPE Group Youth Lenten Retreat	
Saturday 8 a.m. 9 a.m. 11 a.m. 11 a.m.	April 4 Orthros Divine Liturgy Philoptochos Pascha Lambades & Bake Sale Palm Cross Making, Church Decorating & Light Lunch hosted by Senior Synaxis	Saturday of Lazarus
11 a.m. 5 p.m.	Acolyte Meeting to Prep for Holy Week Vespers	
Sunday 8:10 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11 a.m. 7 p.m.	April 5 Orthros Divine Liturgy followed by Blessing of the Palms Philoptochos Pascha Lambades & Bake Sale Nymphios Service/Service of the Bridegroom	Palm Sunday

+ **LAST WEEK TO SCHEDULE CONFESSIONS** with Fr. Sotiri through his confession calendar from the link on our home page or at: <https://calendly.com/frsotirios>. Father will hear confessions **until this Friday, April 3rd**. You may also call the church office to make an appointment.

+ **RSVP TO JOIN US AT THE GREEK HERITAGE PARADE** Everyone is invited to represent our Parish at this year's Chicago's Greek Heritage Parade on Sunday, April 19th at 2:30 pm in the Greektown area on Halsted Street. Please see flyer and scan the QR code to let us know you're planning to be there!

+ **RECRUITING NOW FOR JR. OLYMPICS (MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND - MAY 23-24!** Team Ascension is 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. We are currently recruiting players, coaches and volunteers so we can form our teams and finalize the practice schedule. Please scan the QR code on the flyer to register and help us organize our teams—the deadline to join is May 1! For more information, contact Anna Goldenstein at anna.goldenstein@gmail.com, or visit our Jr. Olympics webpage.

Stewardship 2026

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 259 families that have pledged \$395,188 as well as generously offer their time and talents to this Parish! Stewardship is the lifeblood of our Parish. As of this week, we are at 55% 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.

Sunday Volunteers

Prophoro Bakers: Mary Paganis & Tasia Alexakos
Epistle Reader: Katherine Schreiber
Ushers: **UIC:** Loukas Jonson, Vicki Betsios, Demetri Katsulis, Spiro Maglaras, Jessica Hallam, 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

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**

+ **AS WE APPROACH HOLY WEEK**, we humbly request any contributions to offset the costs of the items listed on the enclosed flyer. To make a donation, please contact Lenora Vasilopoulos in the Church office at 847.482.1200.

Did You Know?

The way we celebrate Lazarus Saturday already points to Our Lord's victory over death. Just like Sundays are a day of the resurrection, every Saturday of the year is a day to remember those who have fallen asleep...*except* for Lazarus Saturday! On this day, we remember a dead man who has risen. Accordingly, we celebrate this Saturday as if it were a Sunday, chanting "Save Us, O Son of God, *risen from the dead...*", reading "Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ...", and chanting the resurrectional evlogitaria. Christ is already bringing life to those in the tombs!

Announcements

+ **ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM PARISH ORATORICAL FESTIVAL TODAY!** Please support our talented 4th – 12th graders today as they present their St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival submissions in the categories of speaking, writing, drawing and chanting following coffee fellowship. Our Sunday Church School ministry will be hosting a light lunch for all families that stay for the festival. It is very inspiring to witness the prayerful and hard work they commit to these presentations. We look forward to encouraging our youth through our attentive presence and wish them all good strength!

+ **THIS WEDNESDAY IS OUR LAST LENTEN LECTURE** and culminates with our final offering around this year's theme of prayer: the documentary, "Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer". For the first time on film, desert hermits, monks and nuns share their prayer practices and invite us into their private cells, caves and sanctuaries. Our Greek School ministry will be hosting the light Lenten dinner. Please join us!

+ **RSVP BY TOMORROW FOR OUR YOUTH LENTEN RETREAT** on Friday, April 3rd from 5:30-8:00 p.m. The retreat is for our youth in grades K-8 and a Lenten Dinner will also be served. We'll explore Jesus' entry into Jerusalem with a lesson and palm cross folding, plus fun games and activities. You won't want to miss this fun evening of faith before Holy Week begins! See flyer - **please RSVP by tomorrow, Monday, March 30th**.

+ **HELP IS NEEDED NEXT WEEK: PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO PREPARE FOR PALM SUNDAY & HOLY WEEK !** Following the Divine Liturgy on the Saturday of Lazarus, we'd like to get as many volunteers as possible to help fold palms and decorate the church and Narthex for Palm Sunday and Holy Week. Senior Synaxis will be hosting lunch for us (see below)! On Good Friday, volunteers are needed following the 8 a.m. Royal Hours Service to prepare for Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Pascha services by decorating the Kouvouklion, wrapping Red Easter eggs, cleaning and enjoying fellowship. Please set aside time to help our Parish prepare for Christ's Resurrection!

+ **SENIOR SYNAXIS INVITES THE ENTIRE PARISH TO MAKE PALM CROSSES** immediately following Divine Liturgy on the Saturday of Lazarus, April 4th. Join us for this beautiful Lenten tradition as we prepare for Palm Sunday and Holy Week as a parish family. Senior Synaxis will be offering a light Lenten lunch for all volunteers. Please RSVP to Kay James at 847.533.1225, or yayia.kayjames@gmail.com so appropriate plans can be made for lunch. Thank you!

+ **ATTENTION ALTAR BOYS!** Fr. Sotiri and Pastoral Assistant John Anton will be holding a mandatory Acolyte Meeting on Lazarus Saturday, April 4th after Divine Liturgy to help prepare for the holiest days of the year: Holy Week & Pascha! Please plan to attend.

PHILOPTOCHOS UPDATES

- **Come to the Pascha Glendi!** Dine, dance—and you might take home concert tickets! Our spectacular Basket Venture dazzles with more gifts than ever. Make your reservation today, and help support Philoptochos' charitable initiatives. Cocktails, dining, dancing and fun for the kids begins at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 17 at the Concorde. See the enclosed flyer and reserve your seats by April 5!
- **Have you placed your order** from the Pascha Bake Sale? (We Always Sell Out of Baklava.) Baking experts have kept our Ascension kitchen hopping—and it's time for you to claim your sweets! Place your pre-order and **guarantee** that your favorites will be waiting for you to pick up on Palm Sunday weekend. Reserve using the enclosed form below by March 29! Need a lambada for your little one? We offer hand-decorated traditional and battery-operated candles. Stop by our table on your way into coffee hour.
- **Glendi Sponsorships Available!** Our partnership with parishioners like you make good works happen! Opportunities to sponsor our PASCHA GLENDI are available, and greatly appreciated, at one of the following levels: Benefactor: \$1250, Trustee: \$750, Patron: \$500, Sponsor: \$250, Friend: \$100. Contact Kathy Gianaras at kkgianaras@gmail.com or visit the Glendi table in the lobby after Divine Liturgy. Thank you!
- **Save the Date:** Philoptochos invites the entire Ascension parish to welcome renowned Human Trafficking expert **Fr. Peter Spiro on Thursday, April 30** in Anagnos Fellowship Hall. Fr. Spiro is Chief Chaplain for the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and Director of the FREEDOM Ministry and the ARISTEVI Foundation. His presentation, "Human Trafficking—An Attack on the Icon of Christ," will bring awareness about what can be done to help defeat this terrible crisis. Our Philoptochos Chapter Meeting begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by the open program at 7:00 p.m. Details to come!
- **March Snapshot of Support:** This month we continued our charitable initiatives by financially supporting the following: Support a Mission Priest Fund, Orthodox Christian Missions Fund, Metropolis of Chicago Oratorical Festival, St. Iakovos Retreat Center, Hellenic College Holy Cross Fund, Vasilopita Fund and St. Basil Academy & Youth/Young Adult Program Funds.

+ **PASCHAL CELEBRATION:** Immediately following the Resurrection Service, Parish Council invites everyone to come together as a parish family in our Anagnos Fellowship Hall to joyfully celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior and proclaim "Christos Anesti"!

FREE SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE ON PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, GOOD FRIDAY & HOLY

SATURDAY EVENINGS If needed, we will have a complimentary shuttle bus available as follows: On Palm Sunday, Good Friday evening and Holy Saturday evening, the shuttle will run between the church and **Daniel Wright School**, which is just 1/4 mile south of the church. On Holy Wednesday for the 3 p.m. Holy Unction Service, the shuttle will transport parishioners between Ascension and **Banner Day Camp**, just north of the church. **If our lot is full during either of these services, please park in these respective locations and take advantage of the complimentary shuttle bus.**

PARKING IN OUR FIRE LANE AND CIRCULAR DRIVEWAY IS ILLEGAL & UNSAFE! Please take note that the entrance to the church parking lot, as well as the circular driveway/drop-off area, is a NO PARKING ZONE. Emergency vehicles must be able to enter the church without obstructions. Illegally parked cars will be ticketed. Double-parking in the parking lot is also prohibited. We further request that you do not park on grass and please be courteous and respectful of our neighbors' property. Thank you.