



*Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: [www.patriarchate.org](http://www.patriarchate.org)  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: [www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)  
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: [www.atlanta.goarch.org](http://www.atlanta.goarch.org)  
St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: [www.saintchristopherhoc.org](http://www.saintchristopherhoc.org)*

## **St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church**



313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210  
Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

**Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, *Chancellor***

### **Liturgical Guide for Sunday, December 31, 2017**

**ON THIS DAY, THE SUNDAY BEFORE THE THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST, WE COMMEMORATE THE APODOSIS (LEAVE-TAKING) OF HIS NATIVITY. WE ALSO COMMEMORATE THE HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS FOREFATHERS OF GOD, SAINT JOSEPH THE BETROTHED OF THE VIRGIN MARY; JAMES, THE BROTHER OF THE LORD (IAKOVOS); AND DAVID, THE PROPHET AND KING. On this day, we also commemorate Melania the Younger, Nun of Rome (+439) and the Martyr and Presbyter Zoticus of Rome, Patron of Orphans (+337-353). *Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.***

## **Welcome, Visitors and Newcomers, to our Parish!**

We invite you to enter your name, mail/email addresses in our Guest Register (near the entrance) if you are interested in joining and assisting with our mission's development. We want to keep you informed of our schedule and location of services. *You and your family are welcome; we look forward to knowing you. We invite you and your family to join and assist us often!*

*Please consider that only baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians in canonical good standing may approach for Holy Communion. All are invited to partake of the Antidoron ("instead of the gifts") distributed at the conclusion of today's Divine Liturgy.*

## **SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE**

### **1. Hymn for Second Antiphon – (Hymnal-p.-28):**

*On the occasion of today's feast, we sing the following hymn instead of the regular Soson imas. "Save us, O Son of God": "Save us, O Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, Who sing to You, Alleluia.*

### **2./5./11. Special Hymn for the Feast of the Blessed Birth of our Lord (sung before and after the Small Entrance) – (Hymnal-pp.198-201):**

*"Your birth, O Christ our God, shines forth on all the world with the light of knowledge. For at Your Birth, those who had adored the stars were taught by a star to worship You, the Sun of Justice, and to know You, the Dawn from on high. O Lord, glory to You."*

### **3. Small Entrance Exclamation of the Priest:**

*On the occasion of today's feast, the Priest intones the following at the Small Entrance: "Before the morning star, from the womb, I have begotten you. The Lord has sworn and will not repent. You are a Priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. Save us, O Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, as we sing to You, Alleluia."*

### **4. Resurrectional Hymn (Plagal of the First Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.114-117):**

*It is sung before and after the Small Entrance: To the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born of the Virgin for our salvation, let us, the faithful, give praise and worship. For He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death and raise the dead by His glorious resurrection.*

**6. Hymn for Saints Joseph, David, and Iakovos – (Hymnal-pp.202-203):**

It is sung *after* the Small Entrance: Go, holy Joseph, tell David what the angel said. With the shepherds and the wise men from afar, praise the Son of the Virgin, begging Him to save our souls.

**7. Hymn Commemorating St. Christopher – (see music distributed):**

*It is sung after the Small Entrance:* Made comely with garments woven from your venerable blood, you stand before the Lord, the King of Heaven and earth, O famed Martyr Christopher. With the choirs of Angels and the Martyrs you chant, singing the thrice-holy hymn and most awesome praises. Thus, by your intercessions with God, save us, your servants.

**8. Kontakion of the Blessed Birth of our Lord – (Hymnal-pp.244-247):**

*It is sung after the Small Entrance:* Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth presents a cave to the Unapproachable One. Angels with shepherds give Him glory; wise men follow a star as they journey to Him who is God from all ages, yet for our sake is born as a little child.

**9. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (not in Hymnal):**

*Today, instead of “Axion Estin” or “Truly it is proper to call you blessed...”, we sing:* O my soul, magnify the ever-virgin Maid who from the curse has redeemed us. Easier for us is from fear to love silence, free of any peril as it is, O Virgin; whereas to weave stirring hymns out of longing in earnest, is difficult. Therefore, O Mother, give us strength to match our volition, we pray you.

**10. Communion Hymn – (Hymnal-p.326):**

*On the occasion of today’s feast, the following hymn is sung instead of “Aineite” or “Praise the Lord”:* “The Lord has sent redemption to His people. (3) Alleluia.”

**SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S  
ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY**

*The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts.*  
– St. John Chrysostom

### **Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (John 20:11-18)**

*“But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ She said to them, ‘They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.’ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?’ Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, ‘Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni!’ (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold on to Me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to My brothers and say to them, I am ascending to My Father and Your Father, to My God and Your God.’ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’; and she told them that He had said these things to her.”*

### **Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (2 Tim. 4:5-8)**

*<sup>5</sup>As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully. <sup>6</sup>As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup>From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for His appearing.*

### **Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Mark 1:1-8)**

*1*The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. *2*As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; *3*the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’” *4*John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the

forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, "The One Who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE** (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

"For a Child has been born for us, a Son given to us; authority rests upon His shoulders; and He is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."  
(Isaiah 9:6)

**PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:**

(Excerpt from Fr. George's Message in our January, 2018 Newsletter)

*Each of us has opportunities to make our world more beautiful. I am hoping it will motivate us to pick out – before 2017 ends – real and creative plans you and others can focus special attention on. Let your aim be to help sustain and benefit God's creation. After reading the reflection above, I challenge us likewise to pray and seek God's will to view our earthly existence with renewed conviction that our world is a priceless treasure. May we be reminded that God depends on each of us – as part of His Body – to use His blessings and our talents in new and inspiring ways... to serve one another and make our world more beautiful!*

As spiritual refreshment, I lift up a few verses from *An Akathist in Praise of God's Creation*, by Metropolitan Tryphon (Turkestanov), 1934. Take the next few moments to separate yourself from your worldly cares and read and ponder these words praising God for your existence. In so doing, you harken

back to your origin as part of God's divine plans. *Likewise, you can see yourself and your potential to join others to make our world more beautiful.*

### **Kontakion 1**

Incorruptible Lord, Your right hand controls the whole course of human life, according to the decrees of Your Providence for our salvation.

We give you thanks for all Your blessings, known and unknown: for our earthly life and for the heavenly joys of Your kingdom which is to come. Henceforth extend Your mercies towards us as we sing: Glory to you, O God, from age to age!

### **Ikos 1**

I was born a weak, defenseless child, but Your angel, spreading his radiant wings, guarded my cradle. From my birth, Your love has illumined my paths, and has wondrously guided me towards the light of eternity. From my first day until now, the generous gifts of Your providence have been wonderfully showered upon me. I give You thanks, and with all those Who have come to know You, I exclaim:

Glory to You for calling me into being,

Glory to You for spreading out before me the beauty of the universe,

Glory to You for revealing to me through heaven and earth the eternal book of wisdom,

Glory to Your eternity within this fleeting world,

Glory to You for Your mercies, seen and unseen,

Glory to You for every sigh of my sorrow,

Glory to You for every step in my life's journey, for every moment of joy,

Glory to You, O God, from age to age.

## Kontakion 2

O Lord, how lovely it is to be Your guest: breeze full of scent; mountains reaching to the skies; waters like a boundless mirror, reflecting the sun's golden rays and the scudding clouds. All nature murmurs mysteriously, breathing depths of tenderness, birds and beasts bear the imprint of Your love, blessed are you, mother earth, in your fleeting loveliness, which wakens our yearning for happiness that will last forever in the land where, amid beauty that grows not old, rings out the cry: Alleluia!

## Ikos 2

You brought me into this life as into an enchanted paradise. We have seen the sky, like a deep blue cup ringing with birds in the azure heights. We have listened to the soothing murmur of the forest and the sweet-sounding music of the waters. We have tasted fragrant fruit of fine flavor and sweet-scented honey. How pleasant is our stay with You on earth: it is a joy to be Your guest.

Glory to You for the feast-day of life,

Glory to You for the perfume of lilies and roses,

Glory to You for each different taste of berry and fruit,

Glory to You for the sparkling silver of early morning dew,

Glory to You for each smiling, peaceful awakening,

Glory to You for eternal life in us, a messenger of heaven,

Glory to You, O God, from age to age. Amen!



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# Vasilopita Luncheon

Sunday, January 7

After Divine Liturgy

All donations will benefit St. Basil's Academy

Members of Philoptochos will provide  
a soup and sandwich smorgasbord.

Bring a dessert to share!



## Invite friends and family!!!!

Calling all veteran and new bakers!!!

Please consider donating **1** Vasilopita bread or  
cake for live auction and **1-2** smaller vasilopita to  
sell at donation price.

Contact: Marinda Tsahakis or Helen Psihountas by

~January 1<sup>st</sup>~



On this *the 687<sup>th</sup>* Sunday of our St. Christopher's parish community, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women and children, if we commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia area for the glory of God!

## **COMMUNITY WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

### **Sunday, December 31 (Sunday before the Holy Theophany):**

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship Reception
- 10:45 a.m. Religious Education Classes (*for all ages*)
- 11:45 a.m. Let's EAT!

### **Monday, January 1 (Circumcision of our Lord/St. Basil/New Year's):**

- 8:45 a.m. Orthros Service
- 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy of St. Basil/Doxology on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the Year  
& Blessing of the Vasilopita

### **Wednesday, January 3:**

Fr. George will offer Orthros at 8:00 a.m. & Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m. at the Archangel Michael Chapel at the Metropolis of Atlanta.

### **Thursday, January 4, 6:30 p.m. – Choir Practice**

### **Friday, January 5 (Vigil for Theophany of our Lord and Savior/Strict Fast):**

- 9:00 a.m. Service of Royal Hours

### **Saturday, January 6 (Theophany of our Lord and Savior):**

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service, followed by Blessing of Waters
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

### **Sunday, January 7 (St. John the Holy Glorious Prophet, Baptist, & Forerunner):**

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
- 10:30 a.m. GreekFest Planning Meeting (brief)
- 11:00 a.m. Hands of Love - Community Vasilopita (Bread of St. Basil) Luncheon to benefit St. Basil's Academy

***Your continued support and mutual encouragement  
are essential and appreciated!***