



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

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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, March 18, 2018

ON THIS DAY, THE *FOURTH* SUNDAY OF LENT, WE COMMEMORATE OUR RIGHTEOUS FATHER JOHN OF THE LADDER (CLIMACUS), AUTHOR OF “THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT” (649 A.D.). (SEE *TRIODION INSERT ON NEXT PAGE*). WE ALSO COMMEMORATE Cyril, Patriarch of Jerusalem; Trophimos & Eukarpion, Monk-martyrs of Nicomedeia; and Edward the Martyr, King of England. *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.

TODAY'S Spiritual Theme From the Triodion:

On the *Fourth Sunday of Lent*, the Church commemorates the famous saint and ascetic *St. John of the Ladder (Climacus in Greek)*, who was head of the monastery located on Mt. Sinai for much of his life. St. John got his name from a famous book of spiritual exercises which he wrote and entitled *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, and which he intended to serve as a means of climbing spiritually from earth to heaven. His book of spiritual directions is read in monasteries during Lenten periods and is available to us in English.

SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE

1./2. Resurrectional Hymn (Plagal of the 4th Tone) – (Hymnal-pp. 126-7):

It is sung *before* and *after* the Small Entrance: From on high You descended, O merciful Lord. You accepted the cross and three days in the tomb to free us from the bondage of sin, O our life and resurrection. Glory to You, O Lord.

3. Hymn for St. John of the Ladder – (Hymnal-pp.136-139):

This hymn is sung after the Small Entrance: Like warm and gentle rain, your tears of compunction made the desert burst forth in bloom. Your patient endurance made your sufferings bear fruit one hundredfold and your wondrous deeds have filled all the world with light. O holy father John, intercede with Christ our God to save our souls.

4. 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.

5. Kontakion sung for Lenten Sundays – (Hymnal-pp. 268-271):

It is sung after the Small Entrance: Victorious Lady, mighty champion, defending us, we your servants now inscribe to you this hymn of thanks, for you rescued us from suffering and tribulation. Theotokos, with your power that can never fail, keep us safe from every danger our whole life long that we may cry to you: Rejoice, O Bride unwedded.

6. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp. 298-301)::

On the first five Sundays of Great Lent when we use the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, a different hymn is sung instead of “Axion Estin” or “Truly it is proper to call you blessed...”: In you, O woman full of grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the race of mankind. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virginal souls, from you our God was incarnate and became a child, He who is God from all ages. By making your womb His throne He made you more spacious than all the heavens. In you, O woman full of grace all creation rejoices. Glory to you.

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 (Hebrews 6:13-20)

When God made a promise to Abraham, because He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by Himself, saying, "I will surely bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Human beings, of course, swear by someone greater than themselves, and an oath given as confirmation puts an end to all dispute. In the same way, when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God would prove false, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Gospel Reading (Mark 9:17-31)

Someone from the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they could not do so." He answered them, "You faithless generation, how much longer must I be among you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him to Me." And they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw

Him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. Jesus asked the father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if You are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us." Jesus said to him, "If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out, "I believe; help my unbelief!" When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You spirit that keeps this boy from speaking and hearing, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!" After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand. When He had entered the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" He said to them, "This kind can come out only through prayer." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for He was teaching His disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill Him, and three days after being killed, He will rise again."

MEMORY VERSE *(TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):*

"Pursue peace with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord." *(Hebrews 12:14)*

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

Although postage stamps become more expensive, at least they have one attribute that most of us could emulate: they *stick* to one thing until they get there. Perhaps that's a reminder for us as we continue our journey through Great Lent to struggle faithfully

and persevere to overcome all obstacles that keep us from clinging to our Almighty God.

- Let us pray and seek God's strength to reflect His light amidst the darkness of the tragedies occurring in the U.S. and throughout the world.
- Let us witness and proclaim God's love and mercy each day, as if we were His angelic messengers on earth.
- Let us look for God's wonders amidst our trials and challenges, and use them as opportunities to grow stronger and confident that God is with us always.
- Let us proclaim the glory of God and His unfathomable power rather than focus on the pessimism of the world.
- Let us denounce the seeds of doubt sown by Satan and his demonic spirits.
- God's providential care is like a cup overflowing with the nectar of eternal hope. His light is like a torch that shines brighter than the sun. His truth shines forth and causes our fears to be plunged into darkness. Let us serve and assist Him today, tomorrow, and always.

- In closing, let us cling to St. Peter's words of encouragement in his First Letter, 4:13: *"But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when His glory is revealed."* (1 Peter 4:13) Amen!



HANDS OF LOVE

Hands of Love: March

"For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore, I command you to do this word which says, You shall surely open your hands to your brother, to your poor and needy in your land." (Deut. 15:11)



All Sundays in March: One Roof Outreach Ministry of Coweta County
(People serving the Lord in a unified way to meet the spiritual and physical needs in our community.)

We will be collecting **personal hygiene items** and **non-perishable foods**. For their thrift store, they will accept any gently used items that someone can wear or use to make a home.

Non-perishable food items: Cereal, Grits, Oatmeal, cornbread mix, peanut butter, jelly, canned spaghetti sauce, spaghetti, rice, mac & cheese, instant potatoes, evaporated milk, juice, tea, sugar, corn, green beans, sweet peas, beans, peas, white potatoes, yams/sweet potatoes, tomatoes, tomato sauce, greens (collards/turnip/spinach), mixed vegetables, fruit, soup, ramien noodles, tuna, salmon, and canned meat.

Personal hygiene items: Toilet tissue, paper towels, bar soap, toothpaste, shaving cream, disposable razors, lotion, shampoo, dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, feminine products, disposable diapers, wet wipes, and trash bags. These are items that cannot be purchased with EBT cards.

One Roof is an alliance of churches of many different denominations, as well as community organizations and businesses. Through their joint efforts, they strive to improve the community. This ministry offers help in emergency financial situations, runs a food pantry, and a thrift store. One Roof's goal is to bring community resources together to meet the financial and spiritual needs of those in need in Coweta County.

Just as we "filled the table" on "Souper Bowl Sunday" for The Fayette Samaritans, let's "fill the table" again for "One Roof Outreach", as we begin our journey through Great Lent to Holy and Great Pascha. Thank you for your generous support.

Anna Andreeva-Naydenova, "Hands of Love" Ministry Chair

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On this *the 697th* 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 SCHEDULE

Today is the 4th Sunday of Great & Holy Lent

Sunday, March 18 (Sunday of St. John Climacus):

- 7:45 am Orthros Service
- 9:00 am Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship
- 10:45 am Religious Education Classes
- 11:30 am Philoptochos General Meeting

Wednesday, March 21 (5th Wednesday of Great Lent):

- 6:00 p.m. Service of the 9th Hour & Presanctified Liturgy
- 7:15 p.m. Community Family Dinner & Lenten Program

Thursday, March 22:

- 6:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Friday, March 23 (5th Friday of Great Lent):

- *Fr. George will offer Sacrament of Confession to those who scheduled.
- 7:00 p.m. Akathist Hymn (*note later starting time*)

Sunday, March 25 (Feast of the Annunciation & Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt):

- 7:45 am Orthros Service
- 9:00 am Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship
- 10:45 am Religious Education Classes
- 12:00 pm Let's EAT!

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