



## St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210

Peachtree City, GA 30269

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**Saturday, October 28, 2023**

*Fr. George will bless your pets from 11:00 am until noon in the church parking lot. Open to all who wish to have their animals blessed. Bring your animal(s) either on a leash, in a crate, or a suitable container to ensure safety for all pets.*

### WHY BLESS ANIMALS?

It is our conviction at St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church that all creation is holy. Our spiritual leader, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, beautifully stated: *"Everything that lives and breathes is sacred and beautiful in the eyes of God."*

We at St. Christopher Church believe it is our responsibility as human beings to love, honor, and care for God's earth; that He created and blessed every creature that swims in its oceans, walks, or crawls on its

soil, or flies in its skies. And it is for this reason, that we have taken time on this day, to honor God by blessing His animals who have brought us so much joy and happiness and who have adorned our lives and our earth.

## **HOW WILL MY ANIMAL BE BLESSED TODAY?**

Fr. George Tsahakis will be saying an ancient Christian prayer known as “The Blessing of the Animals,” which has been handed down through the centuries from St. Modestos.



## **WHO ARE WE?**

St. Christopher Church is Peachtree City’s only Orthodox Christian parish. Founded in 2003, it is a growing, joyous, and vibrant community open to all who seek to know and worship God. We invite you to ask us questions about our faith and to visit our website at [www.saintchristopherhoc.org](http://www.saintchristopherhoc.org). And of course, we invite you and your family to visit us on Sunday mornings for worship and a full array of programs for children and adults. Our Sunday Divine Liturgy begins at 9:00 a.m.

## Life of ST. MODESTOS, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM



The inspiration for today's blessing of the animals event, St. Modestos, was born in 292 in Palestine. When he was less than a year old, his parents were put to death for practicing Christianity, and he was brought into the imperial household and raised as a non-believer. As a teenager, though, an awakening occurred. He learned of his parents' martyrdom, and that he had actually been baptized before their execution. A Christian goldsmith began to teach and mentor him, but the man's jealous sons eventually sold St. Modestos into slavery in Egypt, where he remained seven years before gaining his freedom (he converted his master's family to Christianity) and returning to Jerusalem. After a pilgrimage to Mt. Sinai, he made his way to a monastery where he was ordained a priest, and he quickly became known for his devotion to the faith, holiness, and loving nature. After years of dedicated service, he was selected as Patriarch of Jerusalem. It was during these latter years of his life that his long-time devotion to God's Creation intensified and blossomed. He had a particular affection for animals—he saw them as sublime and mysterious gifts from God. Often, he would bless livestock, praying for their health and productivity, and glorying in the vast beauty of all Creation. For centuries, he has been known as the Orthodox Christian patron saint of animals.



"God saw all that he had made,  
and it was very good.  
And there was evening, & there  
was morning — the sixth day."

**Genesis 1:31**

## **Genesis 1:24-31**

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so. Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.