

“Our Church Family worships the Holy Trinity– Father, Son and Holy Spirit– and every Sunday, the Lord’s Day, we commemorate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

Welcome to the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church of Stamford



YOUR PASTORAL TEAM

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SAINTS OF THE DAY

March 25th, 2018

25η Μαρτίου 2018

5th Sunday of Great Lent
The Annunciation of the Theotokos &
Ever Virgin Mary

Ε΄ Κυριακῆ τῶν Νηστειῶν
Ο Εὐαγγελισμὸς τῆς ὑπεραγίας Δεσποίνης
ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας

SCHEDULE OF LITURGICAL HOURS

Sunday Orthros 8:45 AM

Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM—11:30 AM

Weekday Divine Liturgy 9:30 AM—10:30 AM

Paraklesis & Vespers 7:00 PM—8:30 PM

Office Hours : Monday—Friday 8:00 AM—4:00 PM

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What's Happening This Week!

Mon 3/26	Tue 3/27	Weds 3/28	Thurs 3/29	Fri 3/30	Sat 3/31
	Greek School 4pm - 6pm 	Greek School 4pm - 6pm	Bingo 7:00pm	Greek School 4pm - 6pm	Greek School 10am - 12pm Saturday of Lazarus Orthros & Divine Liturgy 8:30am - 11:00am Community Palm Making & Youth Retreat 11:30am - 2:30pm Stamford UNITED GOYA Community Service Covenant House 4:30pm - 6:00pm

...Kid's Korner...



Today, we celebrate the wonderful feast day of the **Annunciation**. That's the day when an angel visited Mary and told her that she would be the Theotokos, the Mother of God! Nine months later is Christmas, the birthday of our Lord. Today is also our church's feast day.

As you probably remember, angels are messengers from God. Many years ago, a very important Archangel was sent by God to deliver a message to a young virgin named Mary who was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph.

That angel was the Archangel Gabriel. Many people have called Gabriel the leader of the angels, because he had such an important job to do—announcing the "good news" to young Mary.

But what else did Gabriel do? Well, Gabriel is the angel who explains mysteries. He tells about things that are hard to understand. (Remember, it was hard for Mary to understand how she could have a baby.) Gabriel also told Zachariah that his wife, Elizabeth, was going to have a child, baby St. John the Baptist. It was Gabriel who told Mary's parents that they were going to have a baby too—the baby Mary. Gabriel also announced the "good news" of Jesus' birth to the shepherds on that first Christmas. The Bible tells us that whenever God has something important to announce, it was usually Gabriel that delivers His message.



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By
and
JEFF
KEANE

"I guess this means that March is gonna go out like a lamb."



Today's Sunday Hymns—Οἱ Σημερινοὶ Ὑμνοὶ τῆς Κυριακῆς



Ἀπολυτίκιον Ἀναστάσιμον. Ὑμνος α΄. - Resurrectional Apolytikion. Mode 1.

Τοῦ λίθου σφραγισθέντος ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, καὶ στρατιωτῶν φυλασσόντων τὸ ἄχραντόν σου Σῶμα, ἀνέστης τριήμερος Σωτήρ, δωρούμενος τῷ κόσμῳ τὴν ζωὴν· διὰ τοῦτο αἱ Δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐβόων σοι ζωοδότα. Δόξα τῇ Ἀναστάσει σου Χριστέ, δόξα τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου, δόξα τῇ οἰκονομίᾳ σου, μόνε φιλόανθρωπε.

The stone had been sealed by the Jews, * and a guard of soldiers was watching Your immaculate body. * You rose on the third day, O Lord * and Savior, granting life unto the world. * For this reason were the powers of heaven crying out to You, O Life-giver: * Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ; * glory to Your kingdom; * glory to Your dispensation, only One who loves mankind

Τῆς Ἑορτῆς. Ὑμνος δ΄. - For the Feast of the Annunciation. Mode 4.

Σήμερον τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν τὸ Κεφάλαιον, καὶ τοῦ ἀπ' αἰῶνος Μυστηρίου ἡ φανέρωσις, ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, Υἱὸς τῆς Παρθένου γίνεται, καὶ Γαβριὴλ τὴν χάριν εὐαγγελίζεται. Διὸ καὶ ἡμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ τῇ Θεοτόκῳ βοήσωμεν· Χαῖρε Κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ Κύριος μετὰ σοῦ.

Today is the summary of our salvation, and the revelation of the age-old mystery. For the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel announces the good news of grace. Therefore, let us join him, and cry aloud to the Theotokos: "Rejoice, Maiden full of grace! The Lord is with you."

Τοῦ Ναοῦ. - Hymn of our Parish.

Σήμερον τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν τὸ Κεφάλαιον, καὶ τοῦ ἀπ' αἰῶνος Μυστηρίου ἡ φανέρωσις, ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, Υἱὸς τῆς Παρθένου γίνεται, καὶ Γαβριὴλ τὴν χάριν εὐαγγελίζεται, Διὸ σὺν αὐτῷ τῇ Θεοτόκῳ βοήσωμεν, Χαῖρε Κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ Κύριος μετὰ σοῦ.

Today marks the crowning of our salvation and the revelation of the mystery before all ages. For the Son of God becomes the son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaims your grace. Wherefore, we also cry out with him, "Hail, O full of grace, the Lord is with you".

Κοντάκιον. Ὑμνος πλ. δ΄. - Hymn of the Liturgical Season in Mode pl. 4.

Τῇ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ τὰ νικητήρια, Ὡς λυτρωθεῖσα τῶν δεινῶν εὐχαριστήρια, Ἀναγράφω σοι ἡ Πόλις σου Θεοτόκε. Ἄλλ' ὡς ἔχουσα τὸ κράτος ἀπροσμάχητον, Ἐκ παντοίων με κινδύνων ἐλευθέρωσον, Ἵνα κράζω σοι Χαῖρε νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

O Champion General, I your City now inscribe to you. Triumphant anthems as the tokens of my gratitude, being rescued from the terrors, O Theotokos. Inasmuch as you have power unassailable, From all kinds of perils free me, so that unto you I may cry aloud: Hail, O Bride unwedded.

Ο ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος πλ. δ΄. Ψαλμὸς ΟΕ΄.

. Εὐξασθε καὶ ἀπόδοτε Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν πάντες οἱ κύκλῳ αὐτοῦ οἴσουσι δῶρα.

Στίχ. Γνωστὸς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ὁ Θεός, ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ μέγα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

**Πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολῆς Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα.
(2:11-18)**

Ἀδελφοί, ὁ ἀγιάζων καὶ οἱ ἀγιαζόμενοι ἐξ ἐνὸς πάντες· δι' ἣν αἰτίαν οὐκ ἐπαισχύνεται ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοὺς καλεῖν, λέγων· "Ἀπαγγελῶ τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου, ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε"· καὶ πάλιν· "Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποιθὸς ἐπ' αὐτῷ"· καὶ πάλιν· "Ἴδου ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ παιδιά ἃ μοι ἔδωκεν ὁ Θεός". Ἐπεὶ οὖν "τὰ παιδιά" κεκοινώνηκε σαρκὸς καὶ αἵματος, καὶ αὐτὸς παραπλησίως μετέσχε τῶν αὐτῶν, ἵνα διὰ τοῦ θανάτου καταργήσῃ τὸν τὸ κράτος ἔχοντα τοῦ θανάτου, τοῦτ' ἔστι τὸν διάβολον, καὶ ἀπαλλάξῃ τούτους, ὅσοι φόβῳ θανάτου διὰ παντὸς τοῦ ζῆν ἔνοχοι ἦσαν δουλείας. Οὐ γὰρ δήπου ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται, ἀλλὰ "σπέρματος Ἀβραάμ" ἐπιλαμβάνεται. Ὅθεν ὄφειλε κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι, ἵνα ἐλεήμων γένηται καὶ πιστὸς ἀρχιερεὺς τὰ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, εἰς τὸ ἰλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἀμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ. Ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεῖς, δύναται τοῖς πειραζομένοις βοηθῆσαι.

The Epistle in Modern Greek

Ἀδελφοί, διότι καὶ ἐκεῖνος ποὺ ἀγιάζει καὶ ἐκεῖνοι ποὺ ἀγιάζονται, ἔχουν ὅλοι τὴν ἰδίαν καταγωγὴν. Διὰ τὸν λόγον αὐτόν, δὲν ἐντρέπεται νὰ τοὺς ὀνομάξῃ ἀδελφοὺς, ὅταν λέγῃ, Θὰ ἀναγγεῖλω τὸ ὄνομά σου εἰς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς μου, εἰς τὸ μέσον συνάξεως θὰ σε ὑμνήσω, καὶ πάλιν, Ἐγὼ θὰ ἔχω τὴν πεποιθησίν μου εἰς αὐτόν, καὶ πάλιν, Ἴδου ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ παιδιά τὰ ὅποια μοῦ ἔδωσε ὁ Θεός. Ἐπειδὴ λοιπὸν τὰ παιδιά ἔχουν αἷμα καὶ σάρκα, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτός, κατὰ παρόμοιον τρόπον, ἔγινε μέτοχος τῶν ἰδίων, διὰ νὰ καταργήσῃ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου ἐκεῖνον ποὺ ἔχει τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ θανάτου, δηλαδὴ τὸν διάβολον, καὶ νὰ ἐλευθερώσῃ ἐκείνους πού, ἀπὸ τὸν φόβον τοῦ θανάτου, ἦσαν ὑποδουλωμένοι καθ' ὅλην τὴν ζωὴν των. Διότι, βέβαια, δὲν ἔρχεται νὰ βοηθήσῃ ἀγγέλους, ἀλλὰ ἔρχεται νὰ βοηθήσῃ ἀπογόνους τοῦ Ἀβραάμ. Διὰ τοῦτο ἔπρεπε νὰ γίνῃ καθ' ὅλα ὁμοίος μὲ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς του, διὰ νὰ εἶναι εὐσπλαγχνος καὶ πιστὸς ἀρχιερεὺς εἰς τὴν ὑπηρεσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὥστε νὰ μπορῇ νὰ ἐξιλεώσῃ τὰς ἀμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ. Διότι ἐπειδὴ ὑπέφερε ὁ ἴδιος μὲ ὅσα ἐδοκιμάσθηκε, εἶναι ἰκανὸς νὰ βοηθήσῃ ἐκείνους ποὺ δοκιμάζονται.

THE EPISTLE

Prokeimenon. Mode pl. 4. Psalm 75 (76).

Pray and return to the Lord Your God; all around Him shall bring gifts.

Verse: In Judah God is known; Great is His Name in Israel.

**Saint Paul's Letter to the Hebrews
(6:13-20)**

Brethren, he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I, and the children God has given me." Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he was made like us in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

ΤΟ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ

Ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Λουκᾶν ἁγίου Εὐαγγελίου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα.
(α' 24 - 38)

Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκεῖναις συνέλαβεν Ἐλισάβετ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ, καὶ περιέκρυβεν ἑαυτὴν μῆνας πέντε, λέγουσα ὅτι οὕτω μοι πεποίηκεν ὁ Κύριος ἐν ἡμέραις αἷς ἐπεῖδεν ἀφελεῖν τὸ ὄνειδος μου ἐν ἀνθρώποις. Ἐν δὲ τῷ μηνὶ τῷ ἕκτῳ ἀπεστάλη ὁ ἄγγελος Γαβριήλ ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς πόλιν τῆς Γαλιλαίας, ἣ ὄνομα Ναζαρέτ, πρὸς παρθένον μεμνηστευμένην ἀνδρὶ, ᾧ ὄνομα Ἰωσήφ, ἐξ οἴκου Δαυὶδ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς παρθένου Μαριάμ. καὶ εἰσελθὼν ὁ ἄγγελος πρὸς αὐτὴν εἶπε· Χαῖρε, κεχαριτωμένη· ὁ Κύριος μετὰ σοῦ· εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν γυναιξίν. Ἡ δὲ ἰδοῦσα διεταράχθη ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ αὐτοῦ, καὶ διελογίζετο ποταπὸς εἶη ὁ ἀσπασμὸς οὗτος. Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ ἄγγελος αὐτῇ· Μὴ φοβοῦ, Μαριάμ· εὗρες γὰρ χάριν παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ. Καὶ ἰδοὺ συλλήψῃ ἐν γαστρὶ καὶ τέξῃ υἴον, καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν. Οὗτος ἔσται μέγας καὶ υἱὸς ὑψίστου κληθήσεται, καὶ δώσει αὐτῷ Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς τὸν θρόνον Δαυὶδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ βασιλεύσει ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰακώβ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, καὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔσται τέλος. Εἶπε δὲ Μαριάμ πρὸς τὸν ἄγγελον· Πῶς ἔσται μοι τοῦτο, ἐπεὶ ἄνδρα οὐ γινώσκω; Καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἄγγελος εἶπεν αὐτῇ· Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σὲ καὶ δύναμις ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοι· διὸ καὶ τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον κληθήσεται υἱὸς Θεοῦ. Καὶ ἰδοὺ Ἐλισάβετ ἡ συγγενὴς σου καὶ αὐτὴ συνειληφυῖα υἴον ἐν γήρει αὐτῆς, καὶ οὗτος μὴν ἕκτος ἐστὶν αὐτῇ τῇ καλουμένῃ στείρᾳ· ὅτι οὐκ ἀδυνατήσῃ παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα. Εἶπε δὲ Μαριάμ· Ἴδου ἡ δούλη Κυρίου· γένοιτό μοι κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου. Καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ἀπ' αὐτῆς ὁ ἄγγελος.

THE GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel is according to Luke
(1:24-38)

In those days, Elizabeth the wife of Zacharias conceived and for five months she hid herself, saying, "Thus the Lord had done to me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men." In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

The Gospel in Modern Greek

Ὑστερα ἀπὸ τὰς ἡμέρας αὐτὰς ἡ Ἐλισάβετ, ἡ γυναῖκά του, ἔμεινε ἔγκυος καὶ ἔκρυβε τὸν ἑαυτὸν της ἐπὶ πέντε μῆνας καὶ ἔλεγε, «Αὐτὸ μοῦ ἔκανε ὁ Κύριος κατὰ τὰς ἡμέρας, πὸν ἐνδιαφέρθηκε νὰ μοῦ ἀφαιρέσῃ τὴν ἐντροπὴν μεταξὺ τῶν ἀνθρώπων». Κατὰ δὲ τὸν ἕκτον μῆνα ἀπεστάλη ὁ ἄγγελος Γαβριήλ ἀπὸ τὸν Θεὸν εἰς πόλιν τῆς Γαλιλαίας, πὸν ὠνομάζετο Ναζαρέτ, πρὸς παρθένον, ἡ ὁποία ἦτο μνηστευμένη μετὰ ἄνδρα ὀνομαζόμενον Ἰωσήφ ἀπὸ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Δαυὶδ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς παρθένου ἦτο Μαριάμ. Καὶ ὅταν παρουσιάσθη εἰς αὐτὴν ὁ ἄγγελος τῆς εἶπε, «Χαῖρε, κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ Κύριος εἶναι μαζί σου, εὐλογημένη εἶσαι σὺ μεταξὺ τῶν γυναικῶν». Αὐτὴ δὲ μόλις τὸν εἶδε, ἐταράχθη μετὰ τὰ λόγια αὐτὰ καὶ ἐσκέπτετο τί σημαίνει ὁ χαιρετισμὸς αὐτός. Καὶ ὁ ἄγγελος τῆς εἶπε, «Μὴ φοβᾶσαι, Μαριάμ, διότι εὐρήκεις χάριν ἐκ μέρους τοῦ Θεοῦ. Θὰ μείνης ἔγκυος καὶ θὰ γεννήσῃς υἴον καὶ θὰ τὸν ὀνομάσῃς Ἰησοῦν. Αὐτὸς θὰ εἶναι μέγας καὶ θὰ ὀνομασθῇ Υἱὸς τοῦ Ὑψίστου καὶ θὰ τοῦ δώσῃ ὁ Θεὸς τὸν θρόνον τοῦ Δαυὶδ τοῦ πατέρα του, καὶ θὰ βασιλεύσῃ εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰακώβ αἰωνίως καὶ ἡ βασιλεία του δὲν θὰ ἔχῃ τέλος». Εἶπε δὲ ἡ Μαριάμ πρὸς τὸν ἄγγελον, «Πῶς θὰ γίνῃ αὐτό, ἀφοῦ δὲν ἔχω ἄνδρα;». Ὁ ἄγγελος ἀπεκρίθη, «Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον θὰ ἔλθῃ σ' ἐσὲ καὶ δύναμις τοῦ Ὑψίστου θὰ σὲ σκιάσῃ· διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πὸν θὰ γεννηθῇ θὰ ὀνομασθῇ Υἱὸς Θεοῦ. Καὶ ἡ Ἐλισάβετ ἡ συγγενὴς σου, συνέλαβε καὶ αὐτὴ υἴον εἰς τὰ γεράματα της καὶ αὐτὴ πὸν θεωρεῖται στείρα, εἶναι τώρα εἰς τὸν ἕκτον μῆνά της, διότι κανένα πρᾶγμα δὲν εἶναι ἀδύνατον εἰς τὸν Θεόν». Εἶπε τότε ἡ Μαριάμ, «Ἴδου ἡ δούλη τοῦ Κυρίου· ἄς μοῦ γίνῃ ὅπως εἶπες». Καὶ ἔφυγε ἀπ' αὐτὴν ὁ ἄγγελος.

MEMORIALS & CHURCH SERVICES

Memorials:

4/22/18 - 6 month memorial for John Rassias & 3 year memorial for Efthymia Emmanoulidis.

Church Services:

3/31/18 - Saturday of Lazarus. Orthros at 8:30am & Divine Liturgy at 9:30am followed by community palm cross making & children's retreat at 11:15am - 2:30pm.

4/1/18 - Palm Sunday. Orthros at 8:45am & Divine Liturgy at 10am followed by community fish luncheon.

4/1/18 - 1st Bridegroom/Nymphios Service at 7pm.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS



Congratulations to our Stamford UNITED Juniors Basketball team for winning the 2018 CEOBL championship and to our Annunciation Youth Basketball team for coming in second. Bravo to coaches John Skoparantzios, Paul Poulos and Louis Re-canatini and to your players for a great year!



Today we welcome warmly to our church community His Grace Bishop Sevastianos of Zelon and thank him from the bottom of our hearts for presiding over our Annunciation Day Divine Liturgy. We also extend a warm welcome to Fr. Harry Pappas and the faithful of the Church of the Archangels and sincerely thank them for worshipping along with us so that we may celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation and Greek Independence Day as one Greek Orthodox community of Stamford. We also warmly welcome the Honorable David Martin, our Stamford Mayor, and thank him for worshipping with us and celebrating Greek Independence Day with us. The flag raising will occur immediately following today's Divine Liturgy. The program will continue in our community center where a fish luncheon will be served to all, sponsored by the Church of the Archangels and hosted by our Annunciation's Ladies Philoptochos and PTA. All members of the Stamford Greek Community are welcome!



If you are interested in receiving the Sacrament of Confession, please see Fr. Evan to schedule an appointment.



If you would like to help alleviate the cost of purchasing the flowers needed to decorate the various icons for Holy Week, the Epitafeo and the lilies for Easter, please see either Mrs. Efi Tournas or Ms. Georgia Stathopoulos for further information.



Please support our church by purchasing a beautifully decorated children's Easter candle which are for sale in the narthex of the church. \$15 dollars/candle. Please see a parish council member for further information.

CONFESSION: THE HEALING SACRAMENT

Enter the Church and wash away your sins. For here is a spiritual hospital and not a court of law. Do not be ashamed to enter the Church; rather be ashamed when you sin and not when you repent. ~ St. John Chrysostom

Do you remember the movie, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, when Indie finds himself in a cave, trying to pass three obstacles to retrieve the Holy Grail? To pass the first he is told, "Only a penitent man will pass." As he repeats this phrase to himself over and over, he approaches the place where many had fallen before him. At the last second, just as blades are falling over his head, Indie cries out "a penitent man is humble before God!" and drops down to his knees, causing the blades to pass harmlessly over his head.

We, too, are called to drop to our knees before God in humility. But this is only the outward sign of the Sacrament of Repentance or as it's commonly called "Confession". There must also be a spiritual dropping to the knees in humility before God.

Confession has its roots in Christ, the Apostles and in Scripture. Jesus tells his Apostles, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (Matt.16:19), St. John reminds us that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9) In the Old Testament, Nathan the priest/prophet forgives David's sin of adultery and murder of Bathsheba's husband after David's repentance and confession (2 Sam 11:1-12:13). David's contrition is found in the psalm which is used in Sacrament of Confession and in the Divine Liturgy to this day (Psalm 50).



Following the words of Christ, His Apostles and the experience of Scripture, Christians understood that the grace of ordination endows the priest, as the shepherd of the flock, with the authority, discernment and compassion, to remit the sins of those who confess them, and, on behalf of Christ, to offer absolution.

Some people still ask, "Can't I just confess to God privately?" Yes, you can but there's no biblical basis for it. No prayers of absolution are read. No forgiveness is offered. It's easy to pray in isolation, yet never come clean. It's more effective to confess to God before a priest and benefit from the guidance that is offered. Just like going to a doctor when we are sick to receive treatment for our physical health and recovery, we should do the same for our spiritual health. Going to the *spiritual hospital* that is the Church to receive treatment for our ailing soul's recovery is the best choice because it unfetters our soul as it journeys towards salvation.

Ο ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ

Η εορτή του Ευαγγελισμού της Θεοτόκου είναι Δεσποτικοθεομητορική εορτή. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι είναι Δεσποτική επειδή αναφέρεται στον Δεσπότη Χριστό, ο οποίος συνελήφθη στην γαστέρα της Θεοτόκου, και θεομητορική εορτή επειδή αναφέρεται στο πρόσωπο εκείνο που συνετέλεσε στην σύλληψη και την ενανθρώπιση του Λόγου του Θεού, δηλαδή την Παναγία. Ο Ευαγγελισμός της Θεοτόκου είναι η αρχή όλων των Δεσποτικών εορτών. Το περιεχόμενο της εορτής αναφέρεται στο γεγονός κατά το οποίο ο Αρχάγγελος επισκέφθηκε με εντολή του Θεού την Παναγία και την πληροφόρησε ότι έφθασε ο καιρός της σαρκώσεως του Λόγου του Θεού, και ότι αυτή θα γίνει η μητέρα Του. (Λουκά α', 26-28).

Η λέξη “ευαγγελισμός” δηλώνει την καλή είδηση, την καλή αγγελία. Πρόκειται για την πληροφορία που δόθηκε δια του αρχαγγέλου ότι ο Λόγος του Θεού θα ενανθρωπήσει για την σωτηρία του ανθρώπου. Ουσιαστικά πρόκειται για την εκπλήρωση της υποσχέσεως του Θεού, που δόθηκε μετά την πτώση του Αδάμ και της Εύας (Γεν. γ', 15), η οποία λέγεται πρωτευαγγέλιο. Γι' αυτό, η πληροφορία της ενανθρωπήσεως του Λόγου του Θεού είναι η μεγαλύτερη είδηση μέσα στην ιστορία.

Η καλή αγγελία, το ευαγγέλιο, ο Ευαγγελισμός είναι διόρθωση των γεγονότων που έγιναν στην αρχή της δημιουργίας του ανθρώπου, στον αισθητό Παράδεισο της Εδέμ. Εκεί από γυναίκα άρχισε η πτώση και τα αποτελέσματά της, εδώ από γυναίκα άρχισαν όλα τα αγαθά. Έτσι, η Παναγία είναι η νέα Εύα. Εκεί υπήρχε ο αισθητός Παράδεισος, εδώ η Εκκλησία. Εκεί ο Αδάμ, εδώ ο Χριστός, ο νέος Αδάμ. Εκεί η Εύα, εδώ η Μαρία. Εκεί ο όφις, εδώ ο Γαβριήλ. Εκεί ο ψιθυρισμός του δράκοντος-όφως στην Εύα, εδώ ο χαιρετισμός του αγγέλου στην Μαρία. Με αυτόν τον τρόπο διορθώθηκε το σφάλμα του Αδάμ και της Εύας.

Ο Αρχάγγελος απεκάλεσε την Παναγία “κεχαριτωμένη”. Της είπε: “Χαίρε, κεχαριτωμένη, ο Κύριος μετά σου, ευλογημένη συ εν γυναίξιν” (Λουκ. α', 28-29). Η Παναγία αποκαλείται “κεχαριτωμένη” και χαρακτηρίζεται “ευλογημένη”, αφού ο Θεός είναι μαζί της. Η απάντηση της Παναγίας στην πληροφορία του αρχαγγέλου ότι θα αξιωθή να γεννήσει τον Χριστό ήταν εκφραστική: “Ίδου η δούλη Κυρίου, γένοιτό μοι κατά το ρήμά σου” (Λουκ. α', 38). Φαίνεται εδώ η υπακοή της Παναγίας στον λόγο του αρχαγγέλου, αλλά και η υπακοή της στον Θεό, για ένα γεγονός που ήταν παράδοξο και παράξενο για την ανθρώπινη λογική. Έτσι υποτάσσει την λογική της στο θέλημα του Θεού.

Βιώνοντας σήμερα το γεγονός του ευαγγελισμού, της σαρκώσεως του Λόγου του Θεού, αδελφοί μου, δοξάζουμε το Θεό για το άπειρο έλεος Του και αγωνιζόμενοι καθημερινά επιζητούμε την ένωση μαζί του, τη Χάρη και τη θέωση.

What do you want to be when you grow up? It's the usual question we were asked when young. Now we in turn ask it to our children and grandchildren. It's also a common question, but not necessarily a simple one. Some of us still try to answer it because we are all responsible for creating the life we want. Look at your relationships, friendships, your family and marriage, your education and career, your home. All of these are attempts to create your life. We have decisions to make and opportunities before us. The difficulty comes when we start to believe and carry the burden that we are the ultimate creator of our life.

This is what happened to King David when he decided that God needed a big cedar house like his. David believed that he would build God's house, exactly his way. Until God said, “No.” God reminded David that He is the builder and creator of life. It has been this way from the beginning when God said, “let there be light” and there was light. God said, “Let us create man in our image and likeness” and He did. Creation is the larger context for today's Gospel, the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary.

God speaks the creative word and through them, today, we remember the Virgin's words, “Let it be with me according to your word.” Her words, “Let it be,” echo God's words, “Let there be.” It is like an ongoing call and response between God and humanity. God prays creation into existence and the Virgin says, “Amen. Let it be.” This is not an ending to the creation story but its continuation and the beginning of our salvation. Think about it. God says, “Let there be” and His words bring forth creatures into the world. The Virgin says, “Let it be” and her words will bring forth the Son and *Logos* into the world. Pretty amazing, right?

Jesus takes flesh because the Virgin's humanity allows Him to do so. This only happens with her, “Let it be.” The Virgin's gift to God is her humanity and through her, our humanity. The incarnation of God in Christ is not, however, limited to the Virgin. God chooses human flesh, not a cedar house, as His dwelling place. Each one of us now stands before God as a “favored one” having the possibility to carry God within our own humanity.

The Virgin is a part of us. She is that part of us that is womb-like, the part that gives birth to Christ in our world. To reject her is to say no to God. To reject her is to reject the Holy of Holies within us. To reject her is to end the ongoing story between creation and salvation. To love and venerate the Virgin, however, is to discover the life God is creating in us - and finally - who are we to become when we grow up. Mary teaches us how to say, “Yes.”

With this “Yes” impossibility becomes reality. The veil between divinity and humanity has fallen. And the voice of the Archangel Gabriel, rings out and says, “Nothing is impossible with God.” Amen!



Stewardship Reflection

Why should I give?

Giving is Biblical – “Man shall not appear before the Lord empty handed. Man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing that the Lord your God has given you.” (Deuteronomy 16:17)

Giving Connects us with others – “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:40)

Giving establishes priorities – “Store up for yourselves a good foundation for the time to come, so that you may lay hold on eternal life.” (1 Timothy 6:21)

Giving Energizes – “He who sows generously, reaps generously.” (2 Corinthians 9:6)

Giving Creates Perspective – “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where our treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matthew 6:20)

Giving draws us closer to God's Character - “For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son.” (John 3:16)

Giving is doable by everyone – “Let each of you give according to what your heart tells you, not reluctantly or out of a sense of duty, for God loves the one who gives gladly.” (2 Corinthians 19:7)

Everyone is called to be generous!

Did you know people search for three things?

- 1st – people seek **Transcendence** (desire to know God).
- 2nd – people seek **meaning and significance**.
- 3rd – people seek **community**.



Our mission is to know God through the Good News of salvation offered by Jesus Christ our Lord, to journey towards sanctification through our participation in the sacramental, spiritual and ethical life of the Church, and to build a community that glorifies God, seeking to do His will of loving one another, we may attain His Kingdom. Please join us in this sacred mission! Thank you and God bless you!

2018 Stewardship Report

<u>Week 11</u>	<u>Total collected to date</u>	<u>GOAL: Stewardship Budget</u>
\$5,815	\$52,035	\$120,000

- + GOAL is the target amount listed in our 2018 Budget Report.
- + Our church hopes to meet the financial needs of its ministries, programs and annual operating budget through our Christian Stewardship Program. It is our responsibility to contribute our fair share supporting our church as an expression of thanks for the many blessings that God has given us. Please make your stewardship pledge today. If you've already made your pledge thank you and God bless you!



Γιατί να συμμετέχω ενεργά στο έργο της Εκκλησίας;

- **Η συμμετοχή μας αναφέρεται στην Άγια Γραφή** - “ Ο άνθρωπος δέν θα εμφανίζεται μπροστά στον Κύριο με άδεια χέρια. Ο καθένας θα προσφέρει ότι μπορεί ανάλογα με την ευλογία, που θα του έχει δώσει ο Κύριος ο Θεός σας. ” (Δευτερονόμιον 16:17)
- **Συμμετέχοντας συνδεόμαστε με τούς συνανθρώπους μας** - “ Αλήθεια σᾶς λέγω, ὅ,τι ἐκάνατε εἰς ἓνα ἀπό τούτους τούς ἀσήμεντους ἀδελφούς μου, σ’ ἐμέ τὸ ἐκάνατε. ” (Ματθαῖον 25:40)
- **Συμμετέχοντας καθιερώνουμε προτεραιότητες** - “ Καὶ ἔτσι νὰ ἀποταμιεύσουν διὰ τὸν ἑαυτὸν τους ἓνα καλὸ θεμέλιον διὰ τὸ μέλλον, διὰ νὰ λάβουν τὴν αἰώνιον ζωὴν. ” (Α΄ Προς Τιμόθεον 6:21)
- **Συμμετέχοντας νιώθουμε ενεργοποιημένοι** -“ Ἐκεῖνος πὺ σπέρνει μὲ ἀφθονίαν, θὰ θερίση καὶ μὲ ἀφθονίαν. ” (Β΄ Προς Κορινθίους 9:6)
- **Συμμετέχοντας δημιουργούμε προοπτικές** - “ Ἄλλὰ θησαυρίζετε διὰ τὸν ἑαυτὸν σας θησαυροὺς εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, ὅπου οὔτε σκόρος οὔτε σαπίλα τοὺς καταστρέφει καὶ ὅπου κλέπται δέν κάνουν διάρρηξιν καὶ κλέβουν. Διότι ὅπου εἶναι ὁ θησαυρός σου, ἐκεῖ θὰ εἶναι καὶ ἡ καρδιά σου. ” (Ματθαῖον 6:20)
- **Συμμετέχοντας ερχόμαστε πιο κοντά στο χαρακτήρα του Θεού** - “ Διότι τόσον πολὺ ἀγάπησε ὁ Θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε ἔδωκε τὸν Υἱόν του τὸν μονογενῆ, διὰ νὰ μὴ χαθῆ ὅποιος πιστεύει εἰς αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ νὰ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον. ” (Ιωάννην 3:16)
- **Η συμμετοχή είναι εφικτή από όλους μας** - “ Ὁ καθένας ἄς δίνη ὅ,τι τοῦ λέγει ἡ καρδιά του, ὄχι μὲ λύπην ἢ ἀναγκαστικά, διότι ὁ Θεὸς ἀγαπᾷ τὸν χαρωπὸν δωρητήν. ” (Β΄ Προς Κορινθίους 19:7)

Όλοι καλούνται να είναι γεναιόδωροι!

Γνωρίζατε πως οι άνθρωποι αναζητούν τρία πράγματα;

- 1ον-Υπέρβαση (επιθυμία να γνωρίσουν το Θεό).
- 2ον- Κατανόηση και σημασία.
- 3ον-Κοινότητα.



Η αποστολή μας είναι να γνωρίσουμε το Θεό μέσα από τα Καλά Νέα που μας προσφέρει ο Κύριος ημών Ιησούς Χριστός, στο ταξίδι προς την σωτηρία συμμετέχοντας στα μυστήρια όπως και στη πνευματική και ηθική ζωή της Εκκλησίας. Να οικοδομήσουμε μια κοινότητα που δοξάζει το Θεό και αποσκοπεί να κάνει το θέλημα Του, αγαπώντας αλλήλους, ώστε να εισέλθουμε στην Βασιλεία Του.

Παρακαλούμε ακολουθήστε μας σε αυτή την Ιερή Αποστολή. Ευχαριστούμε και ο Θεός να σας ευλογεί.



**ANNUNCIATION CHURCH
COMMUNITY PALM CROSS MAKING &
CHILDREN'S RETREAT
FOR PALM SUNDAY**

**AFTER THE SATURDAY OF LAZARUS LITURGY
ON SATURDAY, MARCH 31st
11:15AM - 2:30PM**

REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS WILL BE SERVED

ALL ARE WELCOME!





**Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church
Bible Study Schedule for 2017-2018**



**Third Monday of each month from 7PM - 8PM &
Third Friday of each month from 11AM -12PM**

Recommend Books: The Orthodox Study Bible, (Thomas Nelson Press, 2008)

Monday, September 18th & Friday, September 15th
Why is God seen as Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

Monday, October 16th & Friday, October 20th
What is the Church and why is She important?

Monday, November 20th & Friday, November 17th
How important is the Bible in Orthodoxy?

Monday, December 18th & Friday, December 15th
Is Holy Communion really Jesus' Body and Blood?

Monday, January 15th & Friday, January 19th
Is baptizing infants really biblical?

Monday, February 19th & Friday, February 16th
Does the virginity of Mary contradict Scripture?

Monday, March 19th & Friday, March 16th
Why do we Fast and what's so important about it?

Monday, April 16th & Friday, April 20th
Is the veneration of Icons idolatry?

Monday, May 21st & Friday, May 18th
Does Orthodoxy really think it's the "True Church"?

Monday, June 18th & Friday, June 15th
How does Orthodoxy view salvation?



Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

- Prayer of St. Francis