



Sunday Bulletin September 13th, 2015
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

4121 O'Hara Drive Vestal, NY 13850
Phone: (607) 797-0824 Fax: (607) 797-0824
<http://www.annunciationvestal.ny.goarch.org>

Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-Proistamenos

~~~~~

## **Epistle Reading**

**St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 6:11-18**

BRETHREN, see with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand. It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that would compel you to be circumcised, and only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may glory in your flesh. But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God. Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

## **Gospel Reading**

**John 3:13-17**

The Lord said, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life." For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."

*Message from Fr. Michael....*

Dearly Beloved Faithful in the Lord:

As we reflect upon the events of September 11th, 2001, we are forever scarred by those tragic memories. Over three thousand innocent men, women, and children were suddenly deprived of God's gift of life. The Twin Towers which once stood as an icon of American financial success were turned into dust and rubble in 102 minutes. A cowardly terrorist act of that event has adversely affected not only America but the entire world. The liberty we once knew has been affected. Security measures have become more intrusive in the lives of the private citizen, as a result of this tragedy. The world will never be the same again. Man has become less trusting of his neighbor, Fear has plagued the hearts of Americans. How can we love our neighbor as ourselves when we fear that our neighbor could be a potential terrorist?

The lesson of 9/11 is that we are to put our trust in God as He is the Hope for our salvation. We are to continue to love our neighbor as ourselves as God has commanded. We are not to fear the evil of the world. Instead we are to remain vigilant and with God's help, we are to defeat evil. Brothers and sisters, we have God on our side! The adversary of evil cannot defeat us! Although 9/11 was one of the most tragic events of all times, the people of God still live on and preach God's word. Christianity has not been defeated! Jesus Christ is still the Son of God and we are still God's people! We pray for those who lost their lives during that event. The ultimate sacrifice of loss of life by rescuers, police officers and firefighters, also should not be forgotten. We pray for the Lord's mercy and ask for the salvation of all who perished on that tragic day. It may seem that Satan won the battle on that day. However, please understand that God will win the war! The victims of 9/11 are God's people who are returning back to their Creator! The enemy has been defeated as he has not taken our faith, our hope, or our love. Therefore, God and His people remain victorious! Remember, no one can take away your faith unless you allow them to do so!

As we reflect upon this 14th anniversary of 9/11, please pray for the victims of this tragedy and their families. May their memory be eternal! We also pray for the innocent victims who were gassed in Syria and well as for all those who were displaced from their homes from the tragedy resulting from that civil war. We pray for the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings, the victims of the heinous shootings at Ft. Hood, Texas, Binghamton, N.Y., the movie theater in Colorado, the University in Virginia, the elementary school in Connecticut, and the list goes on...

Derive strength in knowing that God is the Lord and therefore exalt Him forever! No adverse powers can destroy the people of God! God's children are the Holy People of God! They are God's property and no evil force can take away from God what rightfully belongs to Him unless the People of God allow for that.

Reflecting upon the memories of 9/11, I remain  
Prayerfully yours in His service,

+Fr. Michael

## **The Consecration of the Church of the Holy Resurrection (Holy Sepulchre)**

The church that is honoured far above all others is that of the Holy Resurrection, which Saint Constantine the Great constructed at the place of Golgotha, where our Saviour was crucified and buried. For a long time this place had been purposely buried beneath the earth by the Jews and heathen; furthermore, during the reign of Hadrian (117-138), a temple dedicated to Aphrodite was built over the site so that this sacred place might be even further desecrated and fall into utter oblivion. It was here that the Cross was hidden. However, at the command of the pious Emperor Constantine, excavations were made and the tokens of the saving Passion were found. It was here, then, that the very great and magnificent temple named in honour of Christ God's Resurrection-the Anastasis-was built under the supervision of the blessed Helen, while Dracilian was Eparch of Palestine and Macarius was Archbishop of Jerusalem. It was the latter, also, who exalted the venerable Cross and performed the consecration of this temple in the year 336.

## **Cornelius the Centurion & Martyr**

Saint Cornelius was a Roman by race, a pagan by religion, a centurion in rank, an inhabitant of Caesarea of Palestine, a man pious and God-fearing who gave many alms to the people and prayed continually unto God. In accordance with an angelic vision granted to him, he sent to Joppa that they might bring the Apostle Peter. Saint Peter catechized him in the Faith of Christ and baptized all his household (Acts, ch.10). This became the beginning and the first fruits of the calling of the nations. It is said that, after this, he became a bishop, as some say, of Caesarea; but others say of Scepsis, which is not far from Troas; and that he died as a martyr.

# **'MEET ME IN THE STAIRWELL'**

You say you will never forget where you were when you heard the news On September 11, 2001. Neither will I.

I was on the 110th floor in a smoke filled room with a man who called his wife to say 'Good-Bye.' I held his fingers steady as he dialed. I gave him the peace to say, 'Honey, I am not going to make it, but it is OK. I am ready to go.'

I was with his wife when he called as she fed breakfast to their children. I held her up as she tried to understand his words and as she realized he wasn't coming home that night.

I was in the stairwell of the 23rd floor when a woman cried out to Me for help. 'I have been knocking on the door of your heart for 50 years!' I said. 3, 'Of course I will show you the way home - only believe in Me.

I was at the base of the building with the Priest ministering to the injured and devastated souls. I took him home to tend to his Flock in Heaven. He heard my voice and answered.

I was on all four of those planes, in every seat, with every prayer. I was with the crew as they were overtaken. I was in the very hearts of the believers there, comforting and assuring them that their faith has saved them.

I was in Texas, Virginia, California, Michigan, Afghanistan. I was standing next to you when you heard the terrible news. Did you sense Me?

I want you to know that I saw every face. I knew every name - though not all know Me. Some met Me for the first time on the 86th floor.

Some sought Me with their last breath. Some couldn't hear Me calling to them through the smoke and flames; 'Come to Me... this way... take my hand.' Some chose, for the final time, to ignore Me. But, I was there.

I did not place you in the Tower that day. You may not know why, but I do.. However, if you were there in that explosive moment in time, would you have reached for Me?

Sept. 11, 2001, was not the end of the journey for you . But someday your journey will end. And I will be there for you as well. Seek Me now while I may be found. Then, at any moment, you know you are 'ready to go.'

I will be in the stairwell of your final moments.

## **God**

During the next 60 seconds, stop whatever you are doing, and take this opportunity. (Literally it is only 1 minute.) All you have to do is the following:

Stop and think and appreciate God's power in your life, for doing what you know is pleasing to Him. If you are not ashamed to do this, follow the instructions. Jesus said, 'If you are ashamed of Me, I will be ashamed of you before My Father'

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Michalena (Skiadas) Sukenik, Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon, Presbyteria Magdalena Michalopoulos, Helen Economides, and Henry Nussbaum. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy today we will have the procession and service for the Elevation of the Cross, as there will be NO SERVICES on Monday, September 14th which is the actual feast day for the Elevation of the Cross.

SERVICE START TIMES: As of September 6th, 2015, we will resume our regular schedule of services: Orthros: 8:45 am Divine Liturgy: 9:45 am

Any parishioners, in good financial standing (i.e. up to date with dues payment status) who would like to be on the parish council along with all current parish council members who would like to run for another term should submit their names to the Parish Council office, prior to the November 15th General Assembly meeting.

Pasticho Open Golf Tournament  
Sunday, September 20th, 2015  
1:00 pm start at Traditions at the Glen in Johnson City  
\$80 per player and \$320 per foursome  
Included Golf, Prizes, contests, and full Greek buffet  
Contact John Koutsaris for details at [Jkouts24@yahoo.com](mailto:Jkouts24@yahoo.com) or (607) 343-0090  
This is a church fund raising event. Please join us and support this wonderful annual event.

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us, to grow in Christ and in our Orthodox Faith. For any spiritual, religious, or sacramental matters, please contact Fr. Michael (607) 795-1474. For any building, facility or church property issues, please contact Parish Council President Steve Anastos, (607) 296-9799. Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.