



*Sunday Bulletin March 5, 2017*  
*Greek Orthodox Church of the*  
*Annunciation*

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**Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-  
Proistamenos**

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**Epistle Reading Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40**

Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

**Gospel Reading John 1:43-51**

At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

*Message from Fr. Michael...*

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

Welcome to the Sunday of Orthodoxy! On this auspicious occasion, we take pride knowing that Orthodoxy triumphed over the iconoclastic heresy of the early centuries. It was the faithful then that prevailed over those who sought to destroy the Church. It is also the faithful now who are charged not only with preserving the Church but are charged with fostering and expanding the reaches and boundaries of our Orthodox Church. Through the prayers of our faithful and following the writings and teachings of the fathers, our Holy Orthodox Faith continues to blossom. As pious Orthodox Christians, we must stand firmly by our faith. It is the faith of our Fathers. Christ the Savior has said that "neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candle stick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." (Matthew 5, 15) The light of Orthodoxy was not lit to shine only on a small number of faithful. Our Orthodox Church is the universal church! May the light of Orthodoxy reach the far corners of the earth and enlighten all of God's people. The spread of our faith should be near and precious to the heart of every Christian during the early years of our faith, the church leaders suffered for the faith of our Lord. The laity also suffered for this cause as well. This interest may show itself in personal preaching of the Gospel of Christ.

The Orthodox faith is also dear to us because it is the Faith of our Fathers. For the Gospel's sake and our Lord the Apostles endured much difficulty and strife. They experienced much pain and labored; martyrs, preachers, ascetics, and confessors suffered for it. Pastors and teachers fought for the faith. As we are charged with preserving the Orthodox faith, we are charged with preserving and adhering to the teachings of the Gospels. In ancient times, the prophet Elijah was a great worker for the glory of God. He complained that the Sons of Israel had abandoned the Testament of the Lord, leaning away from it towards the gods of the heathen. However, the Lord revealed to His prophet, that amongst the Israelites there were seven thousand people who have not knelt before Baal (3 Kings 19). In the contemporary era we live in, there are some true followers of Christ. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." (2 Timothy 2.19)

We do occasionally meet sons of the Church, who are obedient to Her directives, who honor and respect their pastors, love the Church of God, and the beauty of the exterior of the Church, who are eager to attend to its Divine Service and to lead a good and faithful life. Such faithful recognize their human failings and sincerely repent their sins. St. Paul compared the Church of Christ to a body, and the life of a body is shared by all the members. So it should be in the life of the Church also. "The whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Ephesians 4.16)

Brothers and sisters, we all must endeavor to spread the message of Orthodoxy. Historically, it was not only the clergy who have helped to spread Orthodoxy for it to be successful in its triumph over heresy. It has been the lay people who also played a vital role in this victory. The Apostolic Epistles often disclose the fact, that when the Apostles went to distant places to preach, the faithful often helped them with their prayers and their offerings. Saint Paul sought this help of the Christians especially.

Today, marks a victory for all people of God. Sunday of Orthodoxy, although a celebration of a historic event, it reminds us that we would not be able to begin our Lenten journey if our faith had not overcome the oppressive heresies that attempted to destroy us during those early centuries. The faith of our Fathers has prevailed. It has survived tyranny. Let us raise our icons proudly on this day and give God the glory!

Wishing you a blessed Lenten journey and one that leads you to the light of His Paschal resurrection, I remain

Prayerfully in His service,

+Fr. Michael

## Sunday of Orthodoxy



For more than one hundred years the Church of Christ was troubled by the persecution of the Iconoclasts of evil belief, beginning in the reign of Leo the Isaurian (717-741) and ending in the reign of Theophilus (829-842). After Theophilus's death, his widow the Empress Theodora (celebrated Feb. 11), together with the Patriarch Methodius (June 14), established Orthodoxy anew. This ever-memorable Queen venerated the icon of the Mother of God in the presence of the Patriarch Methodius and the other confessors and righteous men, and openly cried out these holy words: "If anyone does not offer relative worship to the holy icons, not adoring them as though they were gods, but venerating them out of love as images of the archetype, let him be anathema." Then with common prayer and fasting during the whole first week of the Forty-day Fast, she asked God's forgiveness for her husband. After this, on the first Sunday of the Fast, she and her son, Michael the Emperor, made a procession with all the clergy and people and restored the holy icons, and again adorned the Church of Christ with them. This is the holy deed that all we the Orthodox commemorate today, and we call this radiant and venerable day the Sunday of Orthodoxy, that is, the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.

**Holy Week Schedule for the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation for 2017**  
**Presiding Priest/Proistamenos: Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis**

**Saturday of Lazarus, April 8th:** Orthros 9 AM Divine Liturgy 10 AM  
(There will be a children's breakfast served following the Liturgy and this will be followed by the making of crosses from palms afterwards)

**Palm Sunday, April 9th:** Orthros 8:45 AM Divine Liturgy 9:45 AM

**Palm Sunday evening, April 9th:** Service of the Nymphios/Bridegroom matins  
6:30 PM

**Holy Monday, April 10th:** Service of the Bridegroom matins 7:30 PM

**Holy Tuesday, April 11th:** Service of the Bridegroom matins and Hymn of Kassiani 7:00  
PM

**Holy Wednesday morning, April 12:** Pre-sanctified Liturgy 9 AM  
(Annunciation Church)

**Holy Wednesday evening, April 12th:** Service of the Sacrament of Holy Unction  
7:00 PM (Annunciation Church), 3:00 PM (Holy Trinity Church, Binghamton)

**Holy Thursday morning, April 13th:** Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 9:00 AM

**Holy Thursday evening, April 13th:** Service of the Holy Passions of our Lord and  
the 12 Gospels 6:30 PM

**Holy Friday morning, April 14th:** Service of the Royal Hours 9:30 AM

All are invited to assist in the flower decoration of the Epitaphios at the conclusion of this service. Fr. Michael will provide written excuses for school absences for those children who spend the day at the church.

Camp Annunciation Holy Friday Program begins with decorating the Epitaphios followed by a light Lenten lunch at 12 noon. All are encouraged to bring and share a dish to pass that conforms with the fast of Holy Friday. A JOY/HOPE meeting will be at 1 PM. All adults and children are invited to attend.

**Holy Friday afternoon, April 14th:** Service of Great Vespers of the Apokathelosis (The un-nailing of our Lord from the cross) 3 PM

**Holy Friday evening, April 14th:** Service of the Lamentations matins  
6:30 PM

**Holy Saturday morning, April 15th:** Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (The First Resurrection of our Lord raising Adam and Eve from the dead) 10 AM

**Holy Saturday night, April 15th/April 16th:** Matins of the Pascha 11:00 PM

'O Come and Receive Ye the Light...' 11:45 PM

Reading of the Gospel of the Resurrection of our Lord 12 AM midnight  
followed by the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

**Easter Sunday (Pascha), April 16th:** Vespers service of Agape (Annunciation Church)  
(The Gospel will be read in multiple languages. Please see Fr. Michael if you are interested in reading the Gospel in ANY other language besides Greek and English)  
11 AM

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, and Presbyteria Magdalena Michalopoulos. 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.

Our General Assembly has been rescheduled for Sunday, March 19th, following the Divine Liturgy, in our fellowship hall. Please join us!

The men and women of our community are invited to participate and assist in making dolmathes for our upcoming Grecian Festival on Friday, March 10th and Saturday, March 11th beginning at 9 am. Please join us!

There will be a JOY/HOPE meeting on Sunday, March 11, 2017 during the coffee hour. See you there.

**SPECIAL SERVICES AND SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES FOR MARCH 2017**  
All are invited!!!

**Sunday, March 5, 2017:** Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers at 4 pm at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 214 Court Street, Binghamton, NY

Reception to follow in the Holy Trinity Church Hall

**Friday, March 10, 2017:** The Second Salutations to the Theotokos at 7:00 pm. The Bible Study Group will meet at the conclusion of this service in the Parish Council Office (approx. 8:15 pm).

**Friday, March 17, 2017:** The Third Salutations to the Theotokos at 7:00 pm. The Bible Study Group will meet at the conclusion of this service in the Parish Council Office (approx. 8:15 pm).

**Saturday, March 18, 2017:** GOYAN Retreat at Holy Spirit Greek Orthodox Church in Rochester, NY (see Fr. Michael for details).

**Friday, March 24, 2017:** Great Vespers on the Eve of the Annunciation of the Theotokos (The Forefeast of the Annunciation) at 7:00 pm

Refreshments and Coffee Hour Fellowship to follow. This is the eve of the Patron Feast day of our Church. All are invited!

**Saturday, March 25, 2017:** The Feast of the Annunciation

Orthros 8:45 am

Divine Liturgy 9:45 am

Greek Independence Day Celebration: Ceremony of Raising of the Greek Flag and Doxology

Light luncheon and Coffee Hour Fellowship to follow Divine Services

Dear Reverend Fathers and GOYA Advisors:

Attention parents of GOYANS, this is the notification we received from the Metropolis of Detroit, please register your child and if you wish to be a chaperone for this event, you must register yourself as well or you will not be permitted to attend.

**Registration is NOW OPEN for the 2017 Upstate NY GOYA Lenten Retreat!**

All GOYANS in the Upstate NY area are invited to attend this annual regional Metropolis event!

**Saturday, March 18, 2017 Holy Spirit Church - Rochester, NY 9 am - 7 pm**  
**ALL PARTICIPANTS (Youth, Parents, and Chaperones) must register online by**  
**March 11, 2017 at [www.detroit.goarch.org/nygoya](http://www.detroit.goarch.org/nygoya)**

Visit the website to register for the event. You may also download the official flyer AND the Retreat Info and Schedule. This event is FREE for all participants. However, we are asking for donations of non-perishable food items OR new winter items (more information in the Retreat Info Packet). Please direct questions to [youth@detroit.goarch.org](mailto:youth@detroit.goarch.org). SEE YOU THERE!

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.