



Sunday Bulletin December 9, 2018
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

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Proistamenos

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## **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. Grave Mode. Psalm 63.11,1.**  
**The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord.**  
**Verse: Oh God, hear my cry.**

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:22-27**

Brethren, Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, the son of the free woman through promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in travail; for the children of the desolate one are many more than the children of her that is married."

## **Gospel Reading Luke 13:10-17**

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

### ***Message from Fr. Michael....***

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

First and foremost, thank you for coming to church today! In today's Holy Gospel reading, we heard that the Lord was rebuked by the synagogue leader. We heard the foolish words of the synagogue leader. We note that there is no time prescribed for mercy. All time is for mercy. God grants us an understanding of the workings of the world. And we know when we should show mercy. There is no time when man should put some law ahead of showing mercy.

As the woman was bent, crippled, and deformed, she could not straighten herself up. There is a great meaning to that condition that the woman had. There was a great meaning in the Lord healing her on the Sabbath day. Our Lord was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath, and this was a habit of His. We preach on the Sabbath as many holy things as we can. We need to continually be feeding ourselves with holiness. It is unfortunate that we do not spend the entire day speaking of holy things.

The purpose of the weekend and our gathering together on Saturday and Sunday is to glorify God and worship Him. We hope that by partaking of His mysteries, we will achieve enlightenment. Such an experience also allows us to taste something of the sweetness of the Church's theology. Our worship services are inspired by the Holy Spirit. If we listen carefully and pray, we can hear God breathing on us: we can hear God in His services. Saturday and Sunday are indeed dedicated to our remembrance of Him. It is sad that we do not take the time to remember the Lord every day. We become distracted by the pleasures of life and the worldly cares. If we endeavour to give God attention on Saturday and Sunday, He will enlighten us. When we break bread together, we will be empowered to taste of the heavenly bread. God straightens us up with His teachings. We are cured then of our infirmity. We must be willing to commit to the struggle. It is through such struggle that we will be cured and saved. It is not enough just to receive Holy Communion if we have not struggled. To derive any any benefit from this heavenly food, we must have struggled. Struggle involves attending church services regularly, reading the Holy Bible regularly, and practicing denial of self by denial of worldly pleasures. During our struggle, God will help us.

Some of our brethren grow old and fat and they are wicked. Some are young and die in virtue. Some struggle and never seem to be able to overcome the problems of life. Others seem to have a relatively easy time of it. God knows for each of us what our position in life should be for the best way of attaining salvation. But this woman was bent and crooked, so the crookedness indicates that she was suffering because of her sins. She suffered for eighteen years. And she came to the temple, and she was hoping to be cured.

The idea that Christ gives us spiritual food and about true defilement is the same principle about whether or not one should heal on the Sabbath day. One should indeed heal on the Sabbath day! One should heal on any day. One should show mercy on any day. We are not to be hypocrites. Hypocrisy is sinful.

We must confess it. We must be rid of it. In fact, society is full of hypocrisy and runs on hypocrisy. It is a lie. It is trying to look like something we are not. It is not being genuine. We must, in the eyes of God, be genuine to ourselves and to Him. We must not make false promises.

Let us not be hypocrites. Let us ask God to enlighten us. We must be willing to fall down before Christ and ask for His forgiveness. Only then, dear brothers and sisters, may we be straightened up and saved.

May we continue to break bread together, share the common struggle, and give God the glory!

Prayerfully, I remain

In His service,  
+Fr. Michael

## **The Conception by St. Anna of the Most Holy Theotokos**



According to the ancient tradition of the Church, since Saint Anna, the Ancestor of God, was barren, she and her husband Joachim remained without children until old age. Therefore, sorrowing over their childlessness, they besought God with a promise that, if He were to grant them the fruit of the womb, they would offer their offspring to Him as a gift. And God, hearkening to their supplication, informed them through an Angel concerning the birth of the Virgin. And thus, through God's promise, Anna conceived according to the laws of nature, and was deemed worthy to become the

mother of the Mother of our Lord (see also Sept. 8).

### **Apolytikion of Conception of the Theotokos**

**Fourth Tone** Against all hope, the bonds of barrenness are loosed today. For, God has hearkened unto Joachim and Anna clearly promising that they would bear a godly maiden. He who commanded the angel to cry out to her, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you," will be born of her, the infinite One Himself, becoming man.

***So great an evil is envy. For not against strangers only, but even against our own, is it ever warring.***

**St. John Chrysostom**

Homily 40 on Matthew 12, 4th Century

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Lilly Kashou, Issam Kashou, 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.

**Today**, at the conclusion of Divine Services, we will have a JOY/HOPE meeting during the coffee/fellowship hour. Please join Presbyteria Kim for this fun event.

**Our annual Christmas pageant** will be performed by our beloved Sunday School children next Sunday, December 16, 2018 at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. Children will be visited by Mr. Chris Kringle after the pageant. Children, who are enrolled in Sunday School and younger will be receiving a small gift which will be distributed by Santa Claus.

There will be NO Sunday School classes on the following dates:

Sunday, December 16, 2018 (*DUE TO THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT*)  
Sunday, December 23 & Sunday, December 30

### **Christmas Season Services**

Saturday, December 22, 2018  
Divine Liturgy 10:15 am (Holy Trinity Church)

Sunday, December 23, 2018  
Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am (Annunciation Church)

Monday, December 24, 2018 - Christmas Eve  
Orthros 8 pm Divine Liturgy for Christmas 9:15 pm (Annunciation Church)

Tuesday, December 25, 2018 - Christmas Day  
No services (Christmas services will be celebrated on Christmas Eve)

Tuesday, January 1, 2019 - New Year's Day  
Feast of St. Basil the Great and the Circumcision of the Lord  
Orthros 9 am Divine Liturgy 10 am (Annunciation Church)

Saturday, January 5, 2019 - Eve of Theophany of our Lord  
Vespertal Liturgy of St. Basil 9 am (Annunciation Church)

Sunday, January 6, 2019 - Theophany of our Lord  
Orthros 9 am Divine Liturgy 10 am (Annunciation Church)  
Great Blessing of the Waters at the conclusion of the Liturgy  
Cutting and raffling off of the Vasilopita during the coffee hour fellowship