



Sunday Bulletin July 8, 2018
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

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



Epistle Reading

Prokeimenon. Plagal First Mode. Psalm 11.7,1.

You, O Lord, shall keep us and preserve us.

Verse: Save me, O Lord, for the godly man has failed.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 12:6-14

Brethren, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 9:1-8

At that time, getting into a boat Jesus crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" he then said to the paralytic -- "Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

Message from Fr. Michael....

Dearly Beloved faithful:

The paralytic man of today's Gospel was lying, tormented by his infirmity. The Lord had compassion on him and said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." The pallet was his bed. Immediately the man was cured, stood up, and walked. The Lord has come to us to help us relinquish our sinful life, and to allow us to walk with Him in a new sinless life. We are no longer to cling to those things in life which impede our spiritual progress. The skeptics around the Lord thought He was blaspheming by His action. Little did those skeptics know that they were in the presence of God!

Brothers and sisters, we are to look to the Lord for help and abandon the materialistic things in this world which have paralyzed us. We are to be free of such paralysis only if we look to the Author of Life for help....our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are to give up those things in life which paralyze us and lead us down a sinful path in life. We are to be "whole" only by giving up worldly materialistic things. We are to lay up treasures in Heaven for ourselves through having a faith directed life. Let us exchange the pallet that we lay on or the crutches that we walk with for the Light of our Lord! The Lord's Resurrection light, which we see every Sunday during the consecration of the Holy Gifts, during the Divine Liturgy, will illuminate the path that we are to walk on...the path that will lead us to Him for all eternity. Additionally, we are not to be skeptics of the Lord's powers of healing and saving Grace. We can only be freed from evil through the Lord.

We will only be freed of our sinful bonds when we have given up the materialistic things, bad habits, vain talk, pride, anger, profanity, gluttony, selfishness, etc. The Lord has come to free us of our fetters of sin! Are we willing to heed His calling? Christ has come to free us from the Evil One. We are now able to walk in His Light through the mercy He has shown us. I pray that we give up the shackles of sinful infirmity and follow our Lord! When the bonds of sin have been lifted, only then will we be truly free.

In His service, prayerfully I remain without spiritual paralysis

Your humble servant,

+Fr. Michael

Saints and Feasts Commemorated

The Holy Great Martyr Procopius

The holy Martyr Procopius was born of a pious father named Christopher, but his mother Theodosia was an idolater. After Christopher's death, she presented Neanias - for this was the Saint's name before - to Diocletian, who was at Antioch in Syria. Diocletian made him Duke of Alexandria, and sent him there to punish the Christians. On the way to Alexandria, our Lord spoke to Neanias as once He had to Saul, and turned this new persecutor to faith in Him. Neanias turned back to Scythopolis, and preached Christ. He was betrayed by his own mother, and was arrested and tormented in Caesarea of Palestine. While he was in prison, the Lord appeared to him again and gave him the new name of Procopius (which is derived from the Greek word meaning "progress, advancement"). He was brought out of prison and taken to worship the idols, but at his prayer, the idols fell; many then believed in Christ and suffered martyrdom, among them certain soldiers, twelve women of senatorial rank, and the Saint's own mother, Theodosia. Saint Procopius, after further torments and imprisonment, was beheaded about the year 290.



Apolytikion for Great Martyr Procopius in the Fourth Mode

Thy Martyr, O Lord, in his courageous contest for Thee received the prize of the crowns of incorruption and life from Thee, our immortal God. For since he possessed Thy strength, he cast down the tyrants and wholly destroyed the demons' strengthless presumption. O Christ God, by his prayers, save our souls, since Thou art merciful.

Theophilus the Myrrhbearer of Pantokrator Monastery



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.

Wisdom of the Fathers

He puts an end to the woman's fear ... He sets her right, in respect of her thinking to be hid ... He exhibits her faith to all, so as to provoke the rest also to emulation ...

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 31 on Matthew 9, 4th Century

In this case indeed He discloses also another sign, and that no small one, of His own Godhead, and of His equality in honor with the Father. For whereas they said, "To unbind sins pertains to God only," He not only unbinds sins, but also before this He makes another kind of display in a thing which pertained to God only; the publishing the secrets in the heart. For neither had they uttered what they were thinking.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 29 on Matthew 9, 4th Century

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 the Parish Council President or a member of the council. ***Deadline for suggestions for the bulletin is 12:00 noon on Thursday.***