



Sunday Bulletin November 20, 2022
Greek Orthodox Church of the
Annunciation

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

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## **Epistle Reading**

**Prokeimenon. Plagal Second Mode. Psalm 27.9,1.**  
**O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.**  
**Verse: To you, O Lord, I have cried, O my God.**

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:4-10**

Brethren, God who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God: not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

## **Gospel Reading**

**Luke 12:16-21**

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

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

Dearly Beloved Faithful in the Lord:

On Monday, November 21st, is the feast of the entrance of the Theotokos into the Jerusalem Temple. She was escorted by her parents, Joachim and Anna to be raised among the virgins in service to the Lord. This was a rather common occurrence in those days. Many parents brought their children, especially the first born, to the temple to introduce them to God.

On that day, however, the child was led to the "Holy of Holies." This was one of the Temple's three main courts, the other two being the court of the people and the court of the priests. Only the High Priest alone was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, the Temple's mystical inner chamber, once a year. Yet according to tradition, Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, receives Mary, takes her by the hand, and guides her to the most sacred part of the Temple.

Thus Mary herself is to become the living sanctuary of Jesus, as she would bear Him in her stainless womb. Mary enters the Temple to prepare herself to carry the body of Christ. She, herself, is the Temple of the Living God. Mary is the "Heavenly Tabernacle" according to the feast's Kontakion. The Word of God becomes flesh in her womb and dwells among us. To bring us to salvation, God assumed human form, which was achieved through the Virgin Mary. Believers consequently proclaim, "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you." This feast celebrates that we, too, are Temples of God. Each individual is the Lord's house. He lives and dwells in and among us. "...For we are the temple of the living God; as God said: 'I will live with them and move among them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people.'" (II Corinthians 6: 6)

The scene found in most icons depicting this blessed event takes place in the inner court of the Temple. Joachim and Anna escort the child, Mary, to the steps, where Zacharias stands. Mary stretches her hand to the priest, who reaches to receive it and guide her to the Holy of Holies. She is reflected as a child only in stature, as she has a profound wisdom and purity. The figures of the high priest and the holy family are at the forefront of the image, as the presentation to the Temple is the main event. In some icons of the Entrance of the Theotokos, the Virgin Mary is portrayed in the upper left corner, seated in the Temple's Holy of Holies.

Beloved brothers and sisters, we must have the same innocent faith that the Theotokos child had when she came to the temple with innocence and an open heart. Consider today our day of presentation to the Holy Temple of God, and that today is the first day of the rest of our lives dedicated to God. We, too, come to this Holy dwelling place to be like the Theotokos and be brought to salvation. On behalf of the Parish Council, the chanters, choir, Altar servers, and Sunday School staff and students, and myself, we wish you and your families and blessed Thanksgiving holiday!

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, and the intercession of the Theotokos, Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon us and save us, I remain

In His service, prayerfully yours,  
+Fr. Michael

## Saints and Feasts Commemorated

### Gregory the Righteous of Decapolis



Saint Gregory who was from Irenopolis of the Decapolis of Asia Minor, was the son of Sergius and Mary. He became a monk as a young man, and after struggling for many years in virtue and prayer under obedience to a wise spiritual father, he was informed by revelation that it was the will of God for him to live, like the Patriarch Abraham, with no certain dwelling, moving from place to place. His journeyings took him to Ephesus, Constantinople, Corinth, Rome, Sicily, Thessalonica, and again to Constantinople, where, after many labours in defence of Orthodoxy against Iconoclasm, he reposed in peace in the first half of the ninth century. He had two disciples, one of whom was Saint Joseph the Hymnographer (see Apr. 3), who wrote the Menaion service for Saint Gregory, his father in Christ.

### 9th Sunday of Luke

### Proclus, Archbishop of Constantinople

Saint Proclus lived during the reign of Saint Theodosius the Younger. A disciple and scribe of Saint John Chrysostom, he was ordained Bishop of Cyzicus about the year 426, but because the people there unlawfully elected another bishop before his arrival, he remained in Constantinople. In 429, Nestorius, who had been Archbishop of Constantinople for about a year, and had already begun his blasphemous teaching that it is wrong to call the holy Virgin "Theotokos," invited Bishop Proclus to give a sermon on one of the feasts of our Lady, which he did, openly defending in Nestorius' presence the name "Theotokos," that is, "Mother of God." Saint Proclus was elevated to the throne of Archbishop of Constantinople in 434. It was he who persuaded Emperor Theodosius the Younger and his holy sister Pulcheria to have the most sacred relics of his godly teacher Saint John Chrysostom brought back from Comana, and triumphantly received them upon their return to the imperial city (see Jan. 27 and Nov. 13). He reposed in peace in 447.

## **MEMORIAL SERVICE**

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy today, we will have a 40 Day Memorial Service for Steve (Efstratios) Anastos. May his memory be eternal! Our prayers and best wishes go out to his entire family. Coffee Hour fellowship is being sponsored by his family.

## **SCHEDULE OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES FOR 2022 CHRISTMAS SEASON**

- Sunday before the Nativity of the Lord - December 18, 2022  
Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am  
Sunday School Childrens' Christmas Pageant to follow
- Saturday, December 24th - Christmas Eve: Vesperal Liturgy at 6:30 pm
- Sunday of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) - December 25th  
Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
- Sunday, January 1st, 2023 - Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord and the feast day of St. Basil the Great  
Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10:00 am
- Friday, January 6th, 2023 - Feast of Holy Theophany  
Orthros 8:45 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am  
The Great Blessing of the Waters is to be celebrated at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on this day.

## **Wisdom of the Fathers**

I cannot be silent about the story of Hesychius the Horebite. He passed his life in complete negligence, without paying the least attention to his soul. Then he became extremely ill, and for an hour he left his body.

### **St. John Climacus**

Ladder of Divine Ascent. Step 6: On Remembrance of Death, 6th Century

And when he came to himself, he begged us all to leave him immediately. And he built up the door of his cell, and he stayed in it for twelve years without ever uttering a word to anyone, and without eating anything but bread and water.

### **St. John Climacus**

Ladder of Divine Ascent. Step 6: On Remembrance of Death, 6th 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.*