



Sunday Bulletin November 26, 2023
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 Fourth Mode. Psalm 75.11,1.**

**Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them.**

**Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.**

**The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:1-7**

Brethren, I, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

### **Gospel Reading      Luke 18:18-27**

At that time, a ruler came to Jesus and asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.' " And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" But he said, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

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

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

I pray that you and your family had a recent wonderful Thanksgiving celebration. In the Holy Gospel reading today, we heard the story of a rich man asking the Lord about inheriting eternal life. During the time that Jesus walked the earth, a wealthy Jew was often wealthy because he had worked with the oppressive Romans often at the cost of his own people. We heard that he adhered to the commandments yet he betrayed his own people. His obedience to the Law of Moses was a superficial obedience and was not a deep spiritual connection and not one with love. He displayed a false piety which served to distract others from his unpius ways. He learned that "to inherit life" he must sell his possessions, "and give to the poor" and become a follower of Jesus. He turned away in sorrow "for he was very rich" and could not fathom doing this. He was condemned for his love of worldly things. The rich man placed greater value on his earthy treasures than those he should lay up for himself in the Kingdom of Heaven. He was so consumed with his love of wealth that he was truly lost. He was willing to give up eternal salvation in order to hold on to his worldly possessions. It seemed as though he loved his possessions more than he loved God. Although the rich man did ask, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

St. Clement wrote that this was a trick by the rich man to try to "convict Christ of introducing laws of His own and of dishonoring the commandments spoken by the most wise Moses" (Commentary on Luke, Homily 122, quoted in ACCS, NT, vol III: Luke, p., 283) The rich man was not looking to establish a friendship with our Lord. The rich man was fooling no one but himself. He was actually poisoning his own soul through his own misunderstanding. Salvation, i.e. inheritance of eternal life, joy, and peace could have been granted to him and all he had to do was to follow Christ. If he understood and adhered to a life of self-denial, then he would have moved away from the temporal or worldly things and sought refuge with those things which are everlasting.

Brothers and sisters, are we leading a life of misguidedness? Are we too concerned about what we could acquire on Black Friday shopping in the stores or through shopping online? Are we too busy complaining about the workings of our church without trying to help God's Church? Do we sit back and let others labor for God while we do nothing to keep God's Church lovingly united? Do we point our finger at others while not realizing that there are three fingers pointing right back at us? St. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians:8-12: "If there be a ready mind, it is accepted according to what a man has and not according to what he has not" Are we as the rich man who walks sad due to not being ready for joy? We are not that type of person! For that type of person prefers to carry the weight of his own sin rather than acquiring the freedom that is gained from taking up the Cross and following our loving Lord, Jesus.

May we lay up treasures in Heaven as our prayers ascend as one, I remain

In His service,

+Fr. Michael

# Saints and Feasts Commemorated

## 13th Sunday of Luke

### Alypius the Stylite of Adrianopolis



Thou becamest a pillar of patience and didst emulate the Forefathers, O righteous one: Job in his sufferings, Joseph in temptations, and the life of the bodiless while in the body, O Alypius, our righteous Father, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

### Nikon Metanoieite

Saint Nikon, the son of a certain noble, was from Armenia. Forsaking his parents and homeland, he passed throughout the parts of the East, crying to all men, "Repent ye," because of which he received this name. Finally, he came to Lacedaemonia of the Peloponnesus, where he built a church in honour of Christ our Saviour. After having dwelt there many years in solitude, and having converted many from paganism, he departed to the Lord about the end of the ninth century.

**FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS**...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Demetrios Pappastratis (father of George Pappastratis), Angelo Romas Persa Nizamis, Mity Ganim, Ted Simon, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. 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.

### **ATTENTION ALL YOUTH WORKERS**

Whether it be teaching our youth to Greek dance or conducting Sunday School or Greek lessons or working with our Youth of our Parish IN ANY CAPACITY, The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit have mandated that everyone working with the Youth must complete a background check and online Youth Safety training through Sterling. Please contact the Metropolis of Detroit and speak with the Metropolis Youth Director about details at (248) 823-2411. Please go on the [YouthSafetyPlatform.goarch.org](http://YouthSafetyPlatform.goarch.org) website and register.

### **SCHEDULE OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES FOR 2023 CHRISTMAS SEASON**

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION WILL BE HELD SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2023 at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone in financial good standing with the Church is encouraged to vote.

Sunday, December 17th  
Orthros 9:00 am  
Divine Liturgy 10:00 am  
Christmas Sunday School Children's Pageant to follow

Sunday before Christmas (Forefeast of the Nativity): Sunday, December 24th  
Orthros 9:00 am  
Divine Liturgy 10:00 am (Liturgy of St. Basil)

Monday, December 25th: The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)  
Orthros 9:00 am  
Divine Liturgy 10:00 am (Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom)

Sunday, December 31st, 2023: The eve of the Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord and the eve of the feast day of St. Basil the Great  
Orthros 9:00 am  
Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10:00 am

(These feasts will be celebrated by anticipation on this date as there will be NO services on Monday, January 1st, 2024). Oath of office will be administered to Parish Council members.

Saturday, January 6th, 2024: 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

Spiritual delight is not enjoyment found in things that exists outside the soul.

### **St. Isaac of Syria**

Unknown, 7th century

Love of money is the worship of idols, a daughter of unbelief, an excuse for infirmities, a foreboder of old age, a harbinger of drought, a herald of hunger.

### **St. John Climacus**

The Ladder of Divine Ascent, Step 16:2,7 and Step 17:1, 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.*