



Sunday Bulletin April 21, 2024 Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

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

XX

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 Hebrews 9:11-14

BRETHREN, when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Gospel Reading Mark 10:32-45

At that time, Jesus took his twelve disciples, and he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise." And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant of James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Message from Fr. Michael...

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

I pray that you are enduring the self sacrifices and an ascetic mind set as we continue on our journey through the desert of Great Lent. Today, as we commemorate the life of St. Mary of Egypt, a woman that knew whom Zosimas was from afar, who knew God's will for Zosimas to fulfill one last wish of hers that she would have the Holy Mysteries the following year, we recognize that she was a woman who, when she prayed, levitated. We have difficulty lifting up our eyes to heaven, and she was one who stood in the heavens when she prayed. She walked upon water as if on dry land. In the shadow of her humility, she called herself a miserable sinner. For many years, she struggled after she repented for her sinful lifestyle of earlier years. She had lived a life loose, sinful living and depravity. When Mary repented, she understood something that we would benefit in understanding: Labor. The key to the Christian life is laboring in Christ. The church understands this. St. Mary the sinful woman, who had been a prostitute, was a repentant of whom our Savior later said, "The harlots and the tax-collectors are coming into heaven before you", when speaking to the Pharisee. The Lord went into the home of the Pharisee and a prostitute comes in, and anointed the feet of our Lord with her tears, and with ointment. This was done as a labor of love. Because previously she had been forgiven It *changed* her. She was thankful from the depths of her heart. This is what motivated her to anoint His feet - love.

Without labor we cannot be saved. St Mary of Egypt realized what God had done for her, and what the Mother of God had done, by praying to her Son, and helping her. We are to be inspired by her divine example and labor for the glory of God. This is the key to the Christian life. This is why the Church presents this woman, as great among women. St. Mary of Egypt, was great among the saints. We must stop and reflect that she had been given the same tools that we had been given. The church spoke of St. Mary of Egypt as an *angel*. She had gone above the flesh, and this was contrary to the way previously she had lived.

The Christian life is simple. All we have to do is labor in Christian love. In order to understand what laboring for love in the Lord is, we must understand that it is realizing on what God has done for us, and we are to act upon it. May we continue to labor in love as we serve our fellow Christians.

Prayerfully with contrition of heart serving and laboring in Christian love, before His Holy Altar, I remain

Your humble servant,

+Fr. Michael

Saints and Feasts Commemorated

Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt



The memory of this Saint is celebrated on April 1, where her life is recorded. Since the end of the holy Forty Days is drawing nigh, it has been appointed for this day also, so that if we think it hard to practice a little abstinence forty days, we might be roused by the heroism of her who fasted in the wilderness forty-seven years; and also that the great loving-kindness of God, and His readiness to receive the repentant, might be demonstrated in very deed.

The Holy Hieromartyr Januarius and Those With Him

These Martyrs contested for piety's sake in Campania of Italy, during the reign of Diocletian (284-305), when Timothy was Proconsul. Saint Januarius was the Bishop of Benevento in Campania; he was arrested and taken to Nola, where he was cast into a burning furnace, from which he came forth unharmed; at Puteoli, together with Proculus, Sosius, and Faustus the deacons, Desiderius, reader of the Church of Benevento, and Eurychius and Acutius, nobles from Puteoli, he was cast to wild beasts, which as they came near the Saints, fell affectionately at their feet. Finally they were all beheaded, about the year 305.

Our Holy Father Maximian, Patriarch of Constantinople

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

40 Day Blessing Today

Prior to the distribution of Holy Communion today, we will have a 40 day blessing for Lila Kashou McKenna and the Churching of Celine Marie McKenna (daughter of Lila and Farel McKenna). Congratulations to the McKenna and Kashou families.

GRECIAN FESTIVAL FOOD PREPARATION

The next gathering for food preparation will be on April 24, 2024 for the making of Pastichio. Please contact Jimmy Anastos if you are interested in helping.

Tsoureki Fundraiser

Tsourekia (Paschal breads) procured from Holy Protection Monastery were donated by Harry and Katy Gianakouros. These loaves are available for purchase and all proceeds will go to our church. We thank you, in advance, for your generosity.



GREEK FOOD - CASH BAR - DESSERTS - RAFFLES

AHEPA LEONIDAS CHAPTER 77 PRESENTS:

GREEK NIGHT

PROCEEDS BENEFIT OUR WINTER COAT DRIVE WITH BROOME COUNTY SCHOOLS

MAY 11TH, 2024
7:00 PM - 12:00 AM

THE RIVERDALE BANQUET HALL
2901 WATSON BLVD, ENDWELL, NY
FOR TICKETS: Call Alex Kermidas (607-427-1149)

PRICE:
\$50/person
\$40/student
Table of 10 for \$450



SCAN ME

Bring a NEW childrens jacket and receive entry to basket raffles!

ENTERTAINMENT BY : HARRY ATHANASIOU & THE ASTERIA GREEK BAND



ATTENTION ALL YOUTH VOLUNTEERS AND WORKERS: Please note that if you have not yet completed the Archdiocese Youth Safety training program online and the background check you are in noncompliance with the Archdiocese requirement. It is MANDATORY that this be completed immediately. Anyone who does not complete the program and the background check will be prevented from participating in any youth programs and youth activities in our parish. This includes Greek dancing program, Sunday school, and Greek school. YOU MAY NOT PARTICIPATE IN THESE PROGRAMS UNTIL THIS REQUIREMENT IS COMPLETED. This is a requirement that ALL churches are required to follow with no exceptions!

Holy Week Schedule for the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation for 2024

Saturday of Lazarus, April 27, 2024: (Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Binghamton) Divine Liturgy 10 am

Palm Sunday, April 28, 2024: Orthros 9 am, Divine Liturgy 10 am

Palm Sunday evening, April 28, 2024: Service of the Nymphios/Bridegroom matins 5:00 pm

Holy Monday, April 29, 2024: Service of the Nymphios/Bridegroom matins 7:30 pm

Holy Tuesday, April 30, 2024: Service of the Nymphios/Bridegroom matins 6:00 pm

Holy Wednesday, May 1st, 2024: Service of the Sacrament of Holy Unction 6:00 pm

Holy Thursday morning, May 2nd, 2024: Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 9:30 am

Holy Thursday evening, May 2nd, 2024: Service of the Holy Passions of our Lord 12 Gospels 6:00 pm

Holy Friday morning, May 3rd, 2024: Service of the Royal Hours 9:00 am (All are invited to assist in the flower decoration of the Epitaphios at the conclusion of this service)

Holy Friday afternoon, May 3rd, 2024: Service of Great Vespers of the Apokathelosis (The un-nailing of our Lord from the cross) 3 pm

Holy Friday evening, May 3rd, 2024: Service of the Lamentations matins 6:00 pm

Holy Saturday morning, May 4th, 2024: Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (The First Resurrection of our Lord raising Adam and Eve from the dead) 9:30 am

Holy Saturday night, May 4th, 2024: Matins of the Pascha 11:00 pm 'O Come and Receive The Unwaning Light' 11:45 pm Divine Liturgy of Pascha 12 midnight

Agape Great Vespers of Pascha (Easter Sunday) May 5, 2024 at 10:30 am

Wisdom of the Fathers

Before He humbled Himself, only the angels knew him. After He humbled Himself, all human nature knew Him. You see how His humbling of Himself did not make Him have less but produced countless benefits, countless deeds of virtue, and made His glory shine forth with greater brightness? God wants for nothing and has need of nothing. Yet, when He humbled Himself, He produced such great good, increased His household, and extended His kingdom. Why, then, are you afraid that you will become less if you humble yourself?

St. John Chrysostom

On the Incomprehensible Nature of God. 8.46-47. Taken from: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Vol: Mark. Intervarsity Press, 2005, p. 143.

But let no man be troubled at the apostles being in such an imperfect state. For not yet was the cross accomplished, not yet the grace of the Spirit given. But if thou wouldst learn their virtue, notice them after these things, and thou wilt see them superior to every passion.

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 65 on Matthew 20, 2,3,4,6. B#54, pp.399-401,403., 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.