

SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 2021

FIRST SUNDAY IN GREAT LENT: SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

JAMES THE CONFESSOR; PHILEMON THE MARTYR

EPISTLE READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Apostolic Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews, Chapter 11, Verses 24-26; 32-40: Brethren, by faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets -- who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign enemies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated -- of whom the world was not worthy -- wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Ὁ Ἀπόστολος, Πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολῆς Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα, κεφ. 13, ἐδάφ. 24-26. 32-40.

GOSPEL READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Gospel Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint John, Chapter 1, Verses 43-51: At that time, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael, and he said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Ἡ σημερινὴ εὐαγγελικὴ περικοπὴ ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην, κεφ. 1, ἐδάφ. 43-51.

Today's *Apolytikion* (Dismissal Hymn) is that of Tone Eight (Plagal Four):

Descending from on high, O merciful Lord, for us did You endure three days in the tomb, that we may be released from the passions of this world, You who are our Resurrection and our Life, Lord, glory to You.

Ἐξ ὕψους κατήλθες, ὁ Εὐσπλαχνος, ταφήν κατεδέξω τριήμερον, ἵνα ἡμᾶς ἐλευθερώσης τῶν παθῶν, ἡ Ζωὴ καὶ ἡ Ἀνάστασις ἡμῶν, Κύριε, δόξα σοι.

INTRODUCTION TO ORTHODOXY CLASSES: These very popular classes are taking place on a weekly basis, remotely, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Alex Kozak. If you are new to the parish or you are considering being received into the Church through baptism and/or chrismation, as an adult, we invite you to speak with Alex about your wishes and the possibility of joining the Introduction to Orthodoxy class. Please contact him at <https://agkozak.com/intro>. Alex will extend an invite to the meetings, currently taking place via zoom.

TODAY'S MNEMOSYNA: Memorial services are being held today for the repose of the soul of our brother **Demetrios Dimitriou**, (40 day memorial); for the repose of the soul of our brother **Manuel Nuris**, (40 day memorial); for the repose of the soul of our sister **Theodora Kontou**, (6 month memorial); and of our brother **Nikolaos Kokalis**, (34 year memorial). Αἰωνία ἡ Μνήμη! Eternal Memory!

DIVINE LITURGY THIS WEEK: THURSDAY, MARCH 25: "It is the day of our salvation," as the *Apolytikon* for the feast proclaims. March 25 is the Feast of the Annunciation. It is the feast day of our parish. It is the first day of reopening to in-person worship (initially, limited to 40 persons), after a year, to the day, of being closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. March 25, 2021 also marks the 200th anniversary of Greek Independence. It is, as well, the Cathedral's 100th year, as we were established on May 17, 1921. (This took place at a banquet at the Fairmont Hotel; it was formalized at the first meeting of the Parish Council, on May 19, 1921.) This year's celebration will consist of the Divine Liturgy, which will be celebrated by **His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos**, beginning at 10 a.m. A doxology will follow. Because of the pandemic, there will be no meal or other fellowship hour following the services.

PARISH COUNCIL: The Parish Council will meet today, remotely, beginning at 12:30 p.m.

AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR YOUR 2021 STEWARDSHIP: Most of our Stewards have already sent in your Stewardship pledge cards for 2021, and we thank you. Your names will appear in our Honor Roll Stewards, in our April-May *Herald*. Meanwhile, we ask you to reach out to your children, age 18 and above, so that they may also declare their support for the ministries of the Cathedral by submitting their own Stewardship pledge card. A 2021 stewardship pledge card may be downloaded at <https://annunciation.org/pledge-card>.

LIGHT A VIRTUAL CANDLE: Thank you for lighting a virtual candle,, thus keeping hope alive. Whether you donate \$1 or \$1,000, your gift is one of faith. It helps keeps the Cathedral solvent during this universal upheaval. More importantly, it connects us to Him who is the Light of the World (John 8:12) and reminds us of our calling to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). To light your virtual candles, please visit our web site, www.annunciation.org, and click on the appropriate link, or enter <https://annunciation.org/candle> During the past year, Father Stephen has been lighting your candles in real time. Beginning March 25, and going forward, as we open to in person worship, Father Stephen will no longer be lighting the candles. They will be lit, instead, by a Parish Council member. Those attending services in person will be able to light their own candles at the *pangari*.

REOPENING OF OUR CHURCH FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP: As noted, we will reopen to in-person worship on March 25, and going forward, as indicated in our reopening guidelines. As in person worship is limited, we invite you to continue to participate in the Sunday services and special weekday services, remotely, through streaming. To do so, please visit our web site, www.annunciation.org, and click on the appropriate link.

PERMIT TO OPERATE THE GARAGE: Our permit to operate the garage has been signed. In turn, it was sent to our local police station, along with a copy of our lease with Golden Gate Parking, which will manage the lot for us. Mission Station will take the steps needed to acknowledge use of our lot in accordance with our conditional use permit. A follow up visit by the Fire Inspector was made; which is asking for a final ok from the Building department. Mission Station will then schedule a required hearing. It's been a challenging process, but we're almost there. Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ.

THE PANDEMIC HAS SLOWED US DOWN BUT NOT STOPPED

US. The pandemic has slowed down everything building-related. Nevertheless, things are moving along. Granite along the Valencia Street walls and the stone cap have been installed. The roofing and drainage issues have been addressed. The gates are now virtually complete. The lobby doors are in. Stonecraft is laying the remaining pavers. Meanwhile, our permit for use of the garage has been issued. Recently, the Architects have finalized the drawings, known as the bid set, for phase 2 (completion of the interior), for an estimated cost of \$3.8 million.... As a community, we've been through much, especially when we lost everything to the earthquake, back in 1989. But, we've bounced back. It wasn't easy, but we did it, because we have faith, we have hope, and we have unity. So, too, we will weather this pandemic and return to a so called "new normal," – i.e. a community where we may do things a little differently, but with the same strong faith in God. After all, it is for Him, in Him, and through Him that we continue to exist at all. Praise God for the Gift of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we are given the faith and the vision to rebuild His Church.



"The Church shall be a home for Orthodox Christians from every ethnic and national background. It shall be a house of prayer for all humankind, in which the Holy Name of our Triune God shall be extolled and all of creation sanctified."