

SUNDAY, APRIL 4, 2021

THIRD SUNDAY IN GREAT LENT: SUNDAY OF THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

ST. GEORGE OF MOUNT MALEON

EPISTLE READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Apostolic Reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews, Chapter 4, Verses 14-16, Chapter 5, Verses 1-6: BRETHREN, since we have a high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee"; as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek."

Ὁ Ἀπόστολος, Πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολῆς Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα, κεφ. 4, ἐδάφ. 14-16, κεφ. 5, ἐδάφ. 1-6.

GOSPEL READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Gospel Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, Chapter 8, Verses 34-38, Chapter 9, Verse 1: The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

Ἡ σημερινὴ εὐαγγελικὴ περικοπὴ ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Μάρκον, κεφ. 8, ἐδάφ. 34-38, κεφ. 9, ἐδάφ. 1.

Today's Apolytikion (Dismissal Hymn) is that of Tone Two:

When You descended to the realm of death, You as life immortal rendered to Hades a mortal blow by Your all-radiant Divinity. And, when You, from infernal depths and the darkness below did raise the dead, all the hosts of heaven's powers did proclaim and cry out: O life-giving Christ and our God, we give glory [to You].

Ὅτε κατήλθες πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, ἡ ζωὴ ἢ ἀθάνατος, τότε τὸν Ἄδην ἐνέκρωσας τῇ ἀστραπῇ τῆς Θεότητος· ὅτε δὲ καὶ τοὺς τεθνεώτας ἐκ τῶν καταχθονίων ἀνέστησας, πᾶσαι αἱ Δυνάμεις τῶν ἐπουρανίων ἐκραύγαζον· Ζωοδότα, Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, 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.

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 next *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. As of March 25, and going forward, now that we are 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: After being closed for a year, the Cathedral has now been reopened to in person worship. For the time being, in person worship is limited to no more than 40 persons. Registration is required. In order to register, please visit our web site, www.annunciation.org, and click on the appropriate link. Strict protocols are being observed, as mandated by the CDC, state and local health officials, and our Metropolis. These include the wearing of masks throughout the service, social distancing, and handwashing. There is no kissing of icons. *Antidoron* is not available during Holy Communion; it is distributed at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, by means of tongs. There is no fellowship hour following the services. Meanwhile, we continue to stream the services on Sundays and for Holy Week and Pascha. The schedule of services was mailed with the reopening guidelines. They are also found on the calendar, located at the bottom right hand side of our web site, www.annunciation.org.

PERMIT TO OPERATE THE GARAGE: The 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 but the Fire Inspector did not sign off as yet: the Department of Building Inspection has questions about some of the open permits. When everything is finalized, Mission Station will then schedule a required hearing. It's been a challenging and frustrating process for us, but we're almost there. Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ.

YOUTH GET-TOGETHERS: This past Friday, the heads of our various youth ministries met to discuss the new on line registration process for youth programs at the Cathedral. Please be on the lookout as this new form is circulated to sign your child for any and all youth ministries they may be interested in.

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."