

ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL SUNDAY BULLETIN: DECEMBER 20, 2015

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY

IGNATIUS THE GOD-BEARER; PHILOGONIOS OF ANTIOCH

EPISTLE READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Apostolic Reading is from Saint Paul's Letter to the Hebrews, Chapter 11, Verses 9-10, 32-40. It is found on our books on pages 150-151.

Ὁ Ἀπόστολος, πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολῆς Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα, κεφ. 11, ἐδάφ. 9-10, 32-40: Ἀδελφοί, πίστει παρόκησεν Ἀβραάμ εἰς τὴν γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας ὡς ἄλλοτριαν, ἐν σκηναῖς κατοικήσας μετὰ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ τῶν συγκληρονόμων τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῆς αὐτῆς· ἐξεδέχετο γάρ τὴν τοὺς θεμελίους ἔχουσαν πόλιν, ἧς τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργὸς ὁ Θεός. Καὶ τί ἐτι λέγω; Ἐπιλείπει γάρ με διηγούμενον ὁ χρόνος περὶ Γεδεὼν, Βαράκ τε καὶ Σαμψὼν καὶ Ἰεφθάε, Δαυῖδ τε καὶ Σαμουὴλ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν, οἱ διὰ πίστεως κατηγωνίσαντο βασιλείας, εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην, ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν, ἔφραζαν στόματα λεόντων, ἔσβησαν δύναμιν πυρός, ἔφυγον στόματα μαχαίρας, ἐνεδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας, ἐγενήθησαν ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ, παρεμβολὰς ἔκλιναν ἄλλοτριῶν· ἔλαβον γυναῖκες ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τοὺς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν· ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν· ἕτεροι δὲ ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πείραν ἔλαβον, ἐτι δὲ δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς· ἐλιθάσθησαν, ἐπίστησαν, ἐπειράσθησαν, ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρας ἀπέθανον, περιήλθον ἐν μηλοταῖς, ἐν αἰγείοις δέρμασιν, ὑστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακουχούμενοι, ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιός ὁ κόσμος, ἐν ἐρημίαις πλανώμενοι καὶ ὄρεσι καὶ σπηλαίοις καὶ ταῖς ὄπαϊς τῆς γῆς. Καὶ οὗτοι πάντες μαρτυρηθέντες διὰ τῆς πίστεως οὐκ ἔκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν, τοῦ Θεοῦ περὶ ἡμῶν κρείττον τι προβλεψαμένου, ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσι.

GOSPEL READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Gospel Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 1, verses 1-25. It is found in our books, pages 311-317.

Ἡ σημερινή εὐαγγελικὴ περικοπὴ ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Ματθαῖον, κεφ. 1, ἐδάφ. 1-25. Εὐρίσκεται εἰς τὰ βιβλία μας, σελ. 310-316.

Introduction to Orthodoxy (*Sundays, 9.a.m., upstairs*). This class is especially intended for those who are thinking about converting to Orthodoxy and for family members and friends who would like to support them on their journey, but it is also open to people who are already Orthodox and who would like to deepen their understanding of their faith. We explore Christian theology and practice through reading selections of Scripture, the Church Fathers, the lives of the Saints, and other texts representative of the Orthodox worldview. These readings are the starting point for our discussions, which aim at clarifying doctrine and worship and helping us to discover (or rediscover), week after week, why we belong in the Church. If you are interested in attending the class, please contact **Alexandros Kozák** at orthodoxy-agkozak@sneakemail.com.

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

When the tidings of the Resurrection from the glorious angel was proclaimed unto the women disciples, and our ancestral sentence also had been abolished, to the Apostles with boasting did they proclaim that death is vanquished evermore, and Christ our God has risen from the dead, and granted to the world His great mercy.

Τὸ φαιδρὸν τῆς Ἀναστάσεως κήρυγμα ἐκ τοῦ Ἀγγέλου μαθοῦσαι αἱ τοῦ Κυρίου μαθήτριά, καὶ τὴν προγονικὴν ἀπόφασιν ἀπορρίψασαι, τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις καυχώμεναι ἔλεγον· Ἐσκύλευται ὁ θάνατος, ἠγέρθη Χριστὸς ὁ Θεός, δωρούμενος τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN SPANISH: Padre nuestro, que estás en los cielos, santificado sea tu nombre, venga tu Reino, hágase tu voluntad en la tierra como en el cielo; danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día; perdona nuestras deudas así como nosotros perdonamos a nuestros deudores; no nos dejes caer en la tentación, y líbranos del Mal.

BLESSINGS TO ALL, AS WE CELEBRATE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST: In a world increasingly characterized by violence, we hear the message of hope: that "God is with us." This is what the name "Emmanuel" means. And, God is with us not in the sense that we hope there is an eternal constant amid all the uncertainty, but God is with us because He became one of us. He who "suspended the earth in the midst of the waters" (as we recall on Great and Holy Friday), took on flesh, lived and dwelled among us, died for us, and was raised from the dead, for us. By doing this, He abolished death and opened for us the door of Paradise and the promise of eternal life, even as He expresses His will through the Apostle Paul: He "wants all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). The message of Christmas is an ennobling message: it elevates creation above the fray of strife and promises life everlasting, because "God is with us." And, "if God is with us," (again St. Paul assures us), "who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31). Blessings, therefore, to all, this Christmas and throughout the New Year.

On Christmas Eve morning, the Great Hours of the Nativity will be recited, beginning at 9 a.m., followed by the Vespereal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, at 10 a.m. On Christmas morning, the Orthros will begin at 9 a.m., followed by the Divine Liturgy at 10 a.m. His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco will celebrate the Divine Liturgy. We invite you to worship with us, as we glorify God in the highest, and hear the message of the angels, the message of "peace on earth, good will among all people."

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM THIS MORNING: At the conclusion of this morning's Divine Liturgy, will have our Christmas program by our Sunday School children, right here in the Chapel. This will be followed by a luncheon, to be prepared by our Sunday School parents. You are all invited. The Parish Council will also meet, in the second floor conference room. Because of the program and the luncheon, the meeting of the Parish Council will begin at 1p.m., rather than at 12:30 p.m.

ELECTED TO PARISH COUNCIL: Last Sunday, **Philippos Athanasiades, Katina Kostoulas, Ph. D., Nicholas Svetcoff, and James D. Vorrises** were elected to the Parish Council for a two-year term, 2016-2017. Because there are eight (8) vacancies on the Parish Council this year (of the fifteen (15) elected members, seven (7) are elected one year and eight (8) are elected the following year, to two-year terms; this year eight (8) were to be elected), and only four (4) qualified, the remaining four (4) will be elected when the Parish Council convenes on Sunday, January 3 to elect officers for 2016. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy that day, the four (4) members who were elected last Sunday will take their affirmation of office. We also thank **Phil and Annette Chiappari and Bill Tonas**, who conducted last Sunday's elections.

LAST SUNDAY'S MEETING OF PARENTS WITH GOYA-AGE CHILDREN (13 to 18 years of age): Thank you to those parents who met last Sunday to consider: 1) articulation of a vision for the Annunciation Cathedral 2) immediate programmatic needs for GOYA, and 3) consideration of volunteer/paid non-parent Youth Worker. A date for parents and children to meet in January was also considered, as were events for our youth, as we go forward. Thank you, parents, for your continued vigilance on behalf of our children.

GREEK SCHOOL, SUNDAY SCHOOL ON CHRISTMAS BREAK: Greek School will resume Saturday, January 9 and Sunday School will resume Sunday, January 3.

ALMOST THERE: We are completely done with metal stud framing and exterior Densglass (the yellow panels you see on the outside). Plywood and wood blocking are now complete on all tile roof areas, as well as the domes. Waterproofing is now being completed. Window installation, lath, and plaster will follow. The exterior of the building will then be virtually complete.

What a thrill as we watch this magnificent structure evolve: it represents everything we are and everything we believe as Greek Orthodox Christians. It is also a symbol of the faith that our own generation has cultivated, and what we hope to leave behind, to inspire the generations to come.

We've noted on a number of occasions that we have raised \$6 million towards this project, with another \$4.7 to go. And we have explained how much has been spent and on what. Additionally, we have projected a timetable for completion of the project—late summer of 2016; this includes the normal functioning of the garage. At that point, we are planning to hold a **Gala event**, to celebrate a great accomplishment, as we turn to Phase two (the completion of the interior). **Save the date: Saturday, November 5 for the Gala.** (Additional information to follow.) Work on the interior, including appointments and iconography, should take another year or so. We hope to be able to consecrate the new Cathedral in 2017 or 2018, as we get ready to celebrate the community's 100th anniversary. All this, of course, will depend upon your prayers and continued support.

May God bless our undertaking, for God is the one who spoke to Moses, then, and who speaks to us, today, saying: *"Build me a Sanctuary, and I will appear among you."* (Translated from the Septuagint: *Καὶ ποιήσεις μοι ἁγίασμα, καὶ ὀφθήσομαι ἐν ὑμῖν*). (Exodus 25:8). May we prove worthy of the trust God has in us 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."

(Ecumenical Patriarch
Bartholomew, Ground breaking,
November 6, 1997)