

### Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Plagal Second Mode

When the angelic powers appeared at Your tomb, the soldiers guarding it feared and became as dead. And standing by the sepulcher was Mary, who was seeking Your immaculate body. Unassailed by Hades, You divested it of spoils. Then You met the Virgin. You granted life. O Lord, risen from the dead, glory to You!

### Memorial Hymn

Remember, O Lord, as You are good, Your servants, and forgive every sin they have committed in this life. For no one is sinless except You, Who have power to grant rest to those who have fallen asleep.

### Apolytikion of the Church in the Fourth Mode

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, after You filled the Disciples with joy, by promising to send them the Holy Spirit, and You blessed them and established their faith, that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

Ἀνελήφθης ἐν δόξῃ, Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, χαροποιήσας τοὺς Μαθητάς, τῇ ἐπαγγελίᾳ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος· βεβαιωθέντων αὐτῶν διὰ τῆς εὐλογίας, ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ λυτρωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου.

### Apolytikion of St. Katherine (Protectress of our Chapel)

Let us praise and extol the all-lauded Bride of Christ,\* the Protectress of Sinai, divine Saint Katherine,\* as the one who gives aid and her assistance to us;\* for she brilliantly suppressed the impious orators,\*with the sword of the Spirit.\* And being crowned as a martyr,\* she asks that all receive the great mercy.

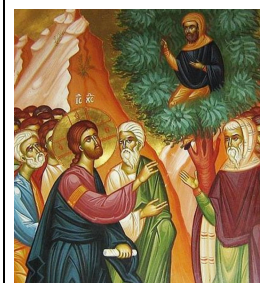
### Seasonal Kontakion in the First Mode

You sanctified the womb of the Virgin by Your birth, and by Your presentation You blessed the hands of Symeon, when You came, and You saved us, O Christ our God. Now we pray You give peace to Your world at war, and let love for Your people prevail in all, O only benevolent Lord.

### The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy 4:9-15.

Timothy, my son, the saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and suffer reproach, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things. Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Till I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress.

### The Gospel of Luke 19:1-10



At that time, Jesus was passing through Jericho. And there was a man named Zacchaios; he was a chief collector, and rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaios, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it they all murmured, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." And Zacchaios stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost."

+ OUT OF RESPECT FOR THE ICONS PRINTED ON THE BULLETIN, PLEASE RECYCLE RATHER THAN DISCARD IN THE GARBAGE +

# Ascension of Our Lord Greek Orthodox Church



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## WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN January 26 – February 2, 2025

**WELCOME TO THE ASCENSION PARISH!** Your presence has brought us much joy! We hope your visit is memorable and meaningful in every way. Our doors and hearts are always open to you. Please join us for fellowship following the Divine Liturgy and visit with Fr. Sotiri and with members of the Parish Council. They will answer questions and provide you with information regarding Ascension's ministries and vibrant parish life.

**COMMUNION GUIDELINES:** To partake of Holy Communion, one must be a Baptized/Chrismated Orthodox Christian and be in good standing with the church. Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and regular participation in Holy Confession are welcome to receive communion. One should also be present at the Liturgy before the Scripture readings. Please follow the directions of the ushers during Holy Communion, and, also please allow the Sunday Church School staff and students to commune first so they can make their way to class and promptly begin their lessons. Thank you.

### Spiritual Reflection

*"The encounter between Jesus and Zacchaeus conveys an important lesson, teaching us not to judge others by stereotypes regarding their job, class, race, color, ethnic background, or moral reputation. Each person is created in the image of God and is of infinite worth. Each person ought to be treated with respect, dignity, and compassion as a human being."*

Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos, Metropolis of Boston

## Weekly Calendar

<b>Sunday</b> 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	<b>January 26</b> Orthros Divine Liturgy Sunday Church School <b>Memorials</b> Andreas Yiannaris (40 days); Androniki Papayiannis (1 yr): Elayne Pappas (7 yrs).  Coffee Fellowship hosted by Faye Kopplin, Jessica Hallam & Maria Karalis 40-Day Blessing: Son of Theresa & Marc Manos Sunday Church School Teachers' Meeting (Conference Room) Dive for the Cross, Highland Park Rec Center Sanctity of Life Prayer Service, Reception & Panel @ All Saints Antiochian Church, Chicago	<b>15<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Luke   Zacchaios Sunday</b>
11:30 a.m. 3 p.m. 6:30 p.m.		
<b>Monday</b> 6:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	<b>January 27</b> Jr. GOYA GOYA	
<b>Tuesday</b> 5 p.m.	<b>January 28</b> Greek School	
<b>Wednesday</b> 6 a.m. 6:30 p.m.	<b>January 29</b> Encounter the Word Great Vespers for the Three Hierarchs, St. John the Baptist, Des Plaines	
<b>Thursday</b> 8 a.m. 9 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 5 p.m. 6:15 p.m. 7:45 p.m.	<b>January 30</b> Orthros Divine Liturgy Ascending in Orthodoxy Adult Greek School Open House for 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester Adult Greek School: Beginners/Advanced Beginners Adult Greek School: Intermediate/Advanced	<b>Three Hierarchs</b>
<b>Saturday</b> 10:30 am. 3 p.m.	<b>February 1</b> Adult Baptism: Brian Modelski   <i>Sponsor: Maggie Kotsonis</i> Baptism: Nova Seraphina, daughter of Chris & Rachel Green <i>Sponsor: Maria Malamis</i> Byzantine Chant Class Vespers Youth Sledding @ Century Park Sled Hill, Vernon Hills	
3:30 p.m. 5 p.m. 6:30 p.m.		
<b>Sunday</b> 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	<b>February 2</b> Orthros Divine Liturgy	<b>Meeting of the Lord Youth Sunday</b>

Catechumens found on pages 23-25 in the Divine Liturgy book audibly. While it has been our practice to read them inaudibly, His Eminence's guidance invites us to collectively lift our voices to God in prayer for those preparing to join the Body of Christ. A catechumen (Greek: κατηχούμενος) is one who is receiving instruction in the Christian faith in preparation for Chrismation or Baptism. His Eminence's directive, however, calls us to broaden our understanding of this term to also include seekers and inquirers who are drawn to Christ and His Church. Through these petitions and our own parish hospitality, let us recommit ourselves to welcome, embrace and pray for those who step through the doors of our church as newcomers seeking spiritual nourishment.

+ **ADULT GREEK SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE:** Interested in learning more about Ascension's Greek School program for Adults/Adolescents? Please join us this Thursday at 5 p.m. in the conference room for our open house where we will be showcasing the elements of this enriching language and culture program for beginning, intermediate and advanced Adults/Adolescents. For more information, visit our webpage or email [maria@hotmail.com](mailto:maria@hotmail.com). Second Semester begins on February 20th. Please register by February 2nd.

+ **NEW IN OUR BOOKSTORE—Let's Cook!** A very limited number of cookbooks are still available in our Ascension Bookstore beginning today. Copies are \$35 at the bookstore, payable by cash or check ONLY, while they last. Proceeds will benefit the Ascension Iconography Fund. Still need to pick up your paid copies? Please contact Mary Ellen Esser at [esserfamily@msn.com](mailto:esserfamily@msn.com).

## STEWARDSHIP 2025

The theme of the 2025 Stewardship Campaign is, "Your own from Your own." Everything that has been given to us in this life by God, we give back as an offering to God. Let us draw together as a parish family to demonstrate our gratitude and lovingly serve God by supporting Ascension. Stewardship is the lifeblood of our Parish. To date, we thank the 170 families that have pledged \$330,086 as well as generously offer their time and talents to this Parish! As of this week, we are at 51% of our 2025 stewardship target of \$650,000. (Please be aware that Stewardship doesn't automatically renew annually. We ask that you recommit your annual stewardship of time, talent and treasures by completing the online 2025 Stewardship Pledge form.) If you have any questions, please contact the office.

## Sunday Volunteers

**Prosphoro Bakers:** Sofie Caronis & Maria Karalis  
**Epistle Reader:** Nick Papastratakos  
**Greeters:** Anna & Rick Duros  
**Ushers:** **UIC:** Frank Kazas, Doug Hugdahl, Kathy Demas, Vicki Betsios, Chris Chatzidakis, Bruce Carlson

## Prayer Requests

**PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR PERSONAL PRAYERS the servants of God:** Eleni, George, Anastasia, Stella, Mitchell, Joanne, Panagiotis, Christina, Dee, Helen, Sophia, Connie, Katerini, James, Theresa, Peter, Anna, Alexander, Anthony, Magdalena, Maggie, Panagiotis, Paraschos, Chris, Don, Justin, Ignacio, Finn, Kevin, Theodore, Mary, Madison, Trinity, Evangelos, John, Rick, Robert, Tom, Georgia, Kristi, Rob, Maureen, Antonia, Christina, Constantine, Irene, Iliana, John, Carolyn, Mary, Maria, Patrick, John, Panagiota, Luci, Stephanos, Leonidas, Vasiliki, Nikki, Anastasios, Stacey, Adriane, Eleni, Helen, George, Gregory, Irene, Artemis, Efstathia, Maria, Vasilios

+ **PASTORAL NEEDS, HOSPITAL CALLS, NURSING/REHAB AND HOME-BOUND PARISHIONERS:** If you have a pastoral need or emergency and would like to speak to Fr. Sotiri, or know of someone who would like to schedule a pastoral visit, please contact Father via the office.

+ **NEW DIRECTIVE ON LITURGICAL PRACTICE** By directive from His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael, beginning next week, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will read the Petitions and Prayers for

## Announcements

+ **TODAY: WALK-INS WELCOME TO OUR DIVE FOR THE CROSS EVENT** from 3 – 5 p.m. at the Highland Park Rec Center, 1207 Park Avenue, Highland Park. Diving is reserved for K-12th graders and is \$15 per diver. Divers should bring a swimsuit and towel. Parents or guardians must be present. Questions? Reach out to Eleni Kouretsos at [ekouretsos@gmail.com](mailto:ekouretsos@gmail.com); or John Anton at [janton@ascensiongoc.com](mailto:janton@ascensiongoc.com). Don't miss this very fun event!

+ **THIS EVENING: SANCTITY OF LIFE PRAYER SERVICE.** Fr. Sotiri was invited by the Orthodox Christian Clergy Association (OCCA) to serve as one of the guest homilists at this year's annual Pan-Orthodox Sanctity of Life Prayer Service, which begins at 6:30 p.m. this evening at All Saints Antiochian Church in Chicago. Please see flyer for more info, and if you are available to attend, please join us.

+ **NEXT SUNDAY IS YOUTH SUNDAY!** Mark your calendars for this special day when we celebrate all the youth of our parish and the vibrancy they bring to our community through our many ministries. Our youth will be serving in many capacities in church that day, and we will enjoy an extended celebratory coffee fellowship in their honor. We are also excited to welcome our keynote speaker: Dr. John Fotopoulos, Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, IN. Please plan to join us on this special celebratory day and offer our full attentiveness to Dr. Fotopoulos, who will be delivering his homily right after the Gospel.

+ **THIS WEDNESDAY: A VISIT FROM BISHOP OF BUKOBA & WESTERN TANZANIA** Join the Metropolis faithful this Wednesday, January 29 for Great Vespers at 6:30 pm for The Three Hierarchs at St. John the Baptist Church, Des Plaines. Following services, His Grace Bishop Chrysostomos of Bukoba and Western Tanzania will offer a reflection about his Diocese and experiences.

+ **NOTHING BUT NET!** Love basketball? Come enjoy a family night out at a basketball game! Ascension families are invited to our "Slam Dunk" Family Outing on February 8 at 7 PM at NOW Arena (Hoffman Estates), where we will watch the Windy City Bulls take on the Maine Celtics on their Greek Heritage Night. Tickets are \$30 and come with free parking, courtside seats, and a Greek Heritage Winter Hat. Make sure you beat the buzzer: limited tickets available! Questions? Contact John Anton at [janton@ascensiongoc.com](mailto:janton@ascensiongoc.com).

+ **PHILOPTOCHOS UPDATES**

- Gather your family, your friends, your neighbors and join us for a fun family event at this year's **APOKREATIKO GLENDI** on Sunday, February 23, 2025, at the Concorde Banquets in Kildeer. See reservation form for details. **TODAY, January 26 is the last day for Early Bird prices!** Please note: a reservation cannot be finalized until payment is received. Unfortunately, reservations cannot be taken at the door. Questions may be directed to Jayne Chatzidakis at [chrishatch@aol.com](mailto:chrishatch@aol.com) / 847.636.7741 or Luba Manos at [LMFINEART@hotmail.com](mailto:LMFINEART@hotmail.com). Stop by to make a reservation at Coffee Hour! Sponsorship Opportunities are available!
- **LENTEN BREADS & SPREADS Volunteers Needed.** It's that time of year when bakers and helpers are needed as Philoptochos works to prepare items for our **March 2nd Lenten Breads and Spreads Sale**. We will be baking on Wednesday, February 26 and Thursday, February 27 starting at 9am each day in the church kitchen. We invite you to come and help or come and learn! Either way, we promise you will have fun and enjoy the para. If interested, please contact Sophia Metropoulos at (847) 989-2549.
- **JANUARY SNAPSHOT OF SUPPORT: St. Basil Academy, Social Services Fund, Cancer and Other Major Illnesses Fund, and Lake County Sherriff Child's Advocacy Fund.**

+ **PARISH GAME NIGHT – MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR FEBRUARY 15!** Our entire parish family is invited to an evening of guaranteed laughs, great food and fun and interactive games hosted by event emcee Jim Jensen, of Jensen Entertainment. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. in our Anagnos Fellowship Hall and includes a delicious "bar food" dinner donated by Spiro Maglaras of Prairie House Tavern in Buffalo Grove. Don't miss out – last year was a blast and a great way to meet & socialize with our fun and lively congregation! \$25/person (Sorry kiddos, this one is a night out for the Adults.)

+ **SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:** The deadline for submitting applications to the **PanHellenic Foundation is this Friday, January 31<sup>st</sup>**. Visit [www.panhellenicsf.org/apply](http://www.panhellenicsf.org/apply). **AHEPA is currently offering LOCAL AND NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP** opportunities for current high school seniors and college/graduate students. Applications are open until mid and late March. For more information, visit <https://ahepadistrict13.org/district-13-education-scholarship> (LOCAL PROGRAM) and/or <https://ahepa.org/education/> (NATIONAL)

## DID YOU KNOW?

The New Testament we have today didn't fall from the sky, but was the result of hundreds of years of the living tradition of the Church. After Pentecost, there was no "New Testament," and only the Old Testament we know today was considered Scripture. As New Testament writings like St. Paul's letters first emerged, they were initially read locally in response to specific church issues and gradually gained wider acceptance. 2 Peter is one of the first references to St. Paul's letters as "Scripture." Over time, various Church fathers acknowledged a New Testament canon (list of books) of various lengths and contents, but controversy around some books and their authority persisted: Was the author an apostle or connected to one? Was the book accepted by the Church at large? Was the book consistent with Church teaching? The pressures of heretical movements also challenged the Church to establish a canon aligned with Orthodox doctrine. Some texts that were excluded at first eventually became canonical, while some writings with great popularity were never canonized. One Church council in 363 AD stated only the Old Testament and 26 books of the New Testament (but not Revelation) could be read in churches. It wasn't until St. Athanasios' Paschal Epistle of 367 that a list of 27 books was named that would formally become what we now consider the New Testament canon.