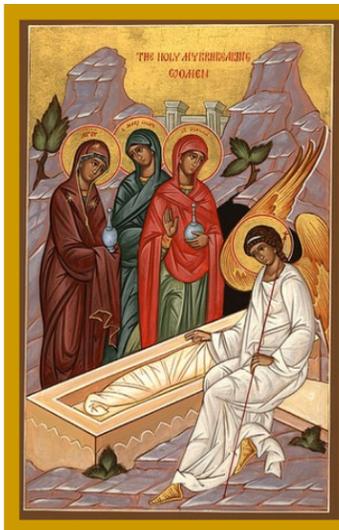


Scripture Readings

EPISTLE Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7 In those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "it is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochoros, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaos, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

GOSPEL Mark 15:43-47; 16:1-8 At that time, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James saw where he was laid. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Gospel Reflection: The Women as First Heralds



Today's Gospel reveals one of the many ironies we find in Sacred Scripture. The Apostles (but for one), whose bravado and boldness supported the Lord when he was alive, had vanished in the wake of the Crucifixion. Those who sought a place at his right hand in the Kingdom, abandoned him in his last moments. It is the Theotokos and the women, with St. John the Beloved, who were at the foot of the Cross, wrenched in grief and ministering to Jesus' lifeless body. Their fidelity to the Crucified Lord, and their quiet suffering, earned them the greatest privilege: to be the first to discover and announce the Resurrection of the Lord to their day and to all ages. It was to the women that the angel spoke. It was for the women that an intended anointing turned into the very foundation of the Gospel itself. Coming to the tomb to perform the Jewish burial rite, they instead gave witness to the dawn of the Christian dispensation. They who were always behind the scenes in the Lord's ministry now assumed a pivotal role in the miracle that life has conquered death, that sorrow gives way to unbridled joy, that the Crucified God is revealed as the Risen Lord of history. The holy myrrh-bearers brought to the world the announcement of a "different" Christ, and therefore of a different human person. It was a Christ whose body was

mysteriously transformed, whose spirit was deeply energized in the power of his Divinity, whose humanity was even unrecognizable at first - until he tenderly pronounced their names. The lesson for us is clear: being a Christian disciple involves remaining faithful to the Lord in hundreds of small ways: in quietude, unseen by others, abiding what suffering comes our way, responding to anything he asks of us, and knowing that in the end the Lord will triumph - and with him, so shall we. His Resurrection is our transformation. By it, we are changed, made different, and empowered in the Holy Spirit to announce, in the manner of our living, that Truly, the Lord is Risen!

The "Unexpected Joy" That the Holy Theotokos Brings



On May 1, the Holy Orthodox Church commemorates the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "Unexpected Joy." The icon shows a sinner on his knees, praying before an icon of the Theotokos and cleansing his soul through penitence. This sinner prayed every day to the Blessed Virgin, often repeating the Archangel's greeting: "Rejoice, O Virgin full of grace!" yet afterwards going out and sinning at will. Once, before routinely doing so, he turned to the holy image and fearfully saw the Holy Virgin standing live with her Divine Son in her arms. The Infant had wounds on His hands and feet, and blood was flowing from a wound in His side, just as it had been on the cross. The sinner fell to his knees and cried out: "O Mistress! Who did this?" The Theotokos answered softly: "You and other sinners. Over and over again, you crucify my Son by your sins." The sinner cried out: "Have mercy upon me!" Said the Mother of God: "You call me the mother of mercy, yet you offend me and bring me sorrow by your deeds." "No, Mistress!" the sinner cried out in fear. "May my malice not overcome your indescribable kindness and mercy! You

alone are the hope and safe haven of all sinners! Have mercy upon me, O benevolent Mother! Entreat your Son and my Creator on my behalf." Over and over, the Mother of God entreated her Son, reminding Him how She had nurtured Him at her breast, how She had suffered at His cross. But the Lord would not bend down to mercy. Then the Mother of God arose, put her Son down, and was ready to fall at His feet. "What do you wish to do, Mother?!" cried out the Son. She responded, "I shall remain lying at Your feet together with this sinner until You forgive him his sins." Then the Son said: "The law requires a son to venerate his mother, while justice demands that the giver of the law be himself obedient to the law. I am your Son, you are my mother; I am obliged to do you homage by fulfilling your request. Let it be as you wish! His sins are now forgiven for your sake!" The sinner arose, with trembling and joy kissed the most holy wounds of the Infant, and came to himself. When the vision ended, he felt within his heart both awe and joy. His soul exulted, and streams of tears ran down his face. He kissed the icon, filled with gratitude for having found repentance and forgiveness, and prayed that he be granted the gift to always see his sins and repent of them. His life changed completely, and remained God-pleasing to the end of his days. We learn from this icon how powerful an intercessor with her Risen Son is the Theotokos, who granted spiritual healing as an "Unexpected Joy" to the perennial sinner. Most Holy Theotokos, pray that our souls may be saved!

Eternal Be Their Memory

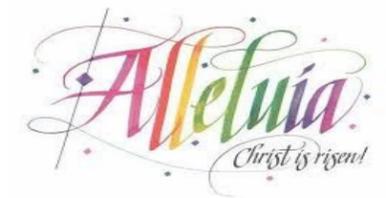
Sappho Vrahopoulou (40 Days)
Katherine Thoupos Strittmater (1 Year)
Richard Strittmater (9 Years)
Olga Kirimloglou (10 Years)
Efstratios (Stanley) Xenakis (13 Years)
Peter Thoupos (20 Years)
Alexandra Xenakis (30 Years)
Aristodemos Kirimloglou (36 Years)
Elpis Yartzian (40 Years)

May they rest in peace and rise in glory,
and may their memory be eternal!



40 Day Blessing

Given to the child of God, Anthony, son
of Kristen and Emmanuel Korson.
God grant him many years!



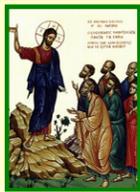
For Their Health and Salvation

His Eminence Metropolitan +Panteleimon; His Eminence Archbishop +Pavlos of Aleppo and His Eminence Mar +Gregorios Ioanna of Aleppo, who were kidnapped; persecuted Christians of the Middle East, Dino Bayz, Dimitrios Papapostolou, Angela Apidououlos, the child of God Amelia Marghi, the child of God Seraphina Marie Vasilatos, Adib Marghi, Sally Katson, George, Betty Jean Dubard, Aris Peterson, Nicholas Ellis, Katherine Ellis, Kelly, Jon Wood, Tom Dale, Joy Kizzie, Marie Burpeau, Bill Pastis, Evangelia Pantazakos, George Dizelos, George, Constantina Speris; Andrew Katson; Lynne; Selena Pappas, George, Andrianna, Michalis, Kosma, Yian-ni, Alfred Q., Staff Sergeant Nicholas Comas.

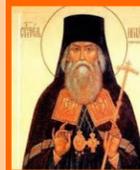


Prayer for the Intercession of the Holy Myrrhbearers

Lord Jesus Christ, how can we sinners dare to approach Thy life-bearing tomb as did Thy faithful disciple, Mary Magdalene and the other myrrhbearers, for we do not awaken early to behold Thy presence. How can we call Thee “Lord” as did Thomas, who believed in Thy sovereign divinity, for we do not seek to know Thee in the gladness of truth. Help us, O Eternal Christ, to roll away the stone from our heart that we may rise with Thee and rejoice with the apostles and myrrhbearers as they praise Thy Resurrection. May the fervent boldness of these holy women inspire us to persevere in our lives, to face whatever obstacles or hurdles may come, and to embrace Thy holy Resurrection as our own. May we, through their intercession, have the courage to announce your wondrous rising to all we meet — by our words, our actions, and our thoughts. Let us bring hope to one another in a time of fear, confusion, and increasing insensitivity to the dignity of human persons. Let us love one another for Thou hast first loved us. Grant us the wisdom and humility to sing with one mind, “Christ Is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!” Amen.



ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASS 2016-2017: “Modern Trials to Our Ancient Faith: The Challenges to Living Orthodoxy in America,” is offered every Sunday starting 11:30 AM in the Church library. Contact Michael Haldas at Michael.haldas@verizon.net for additional information.



ST. GEORGE BOOK STUDY GROUP: Meets on Thursdays at 10:30 AM and 7:00 PM in the Church library. Our first book is *On the Prayer of Jesus* by St. Ignatius Brianchaninov. It is an inspirational and simple text on the Jesus Prayer which has been used for centuries in the Orthodox Church. Join us for this open discussion of the Prayer of the Heart in our own lives. All are welcome.

PARISH ACTIVITIES

50 PLUS: Yia Yia’s Attic is one of our annual festival’s great highlights May 5-7. Spring cleaning is a good time to collect sellable items that are in good shape. Please, no clothing, books, Christmas items, old electronics, or cassettes as they do not sell. Unsold items must be removed by truck. Thank you!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: Summer “Superhero” camp June 26-30, 9:00 AM-Noon, w/KOA extended day option. Register now at <https://stgeorge.org/education/vacation-bible-school> - VBS needs volunteers, who will receive 50% off camper registration. For information, please contact vbsfst.george@gmail.com

PHILOPTOCHOS: The 2017 Membership Drive continues. Stewardship/Membership Forms are available on our Bulletin Board. Finish the Church year by becoming a member of Philoptochos and becoming directly involved in reaching out to those in need.

GREEK PRESCHOOL: Registration is open for the 2017-2018 school year. Wide variety of classes (MON-FRI 8:30 AM-4:30 PM) offered for children 18 months-5 years of age. Classes are filling up, so please hurry! Visit <http://stgeorgegreekpreschool.com>

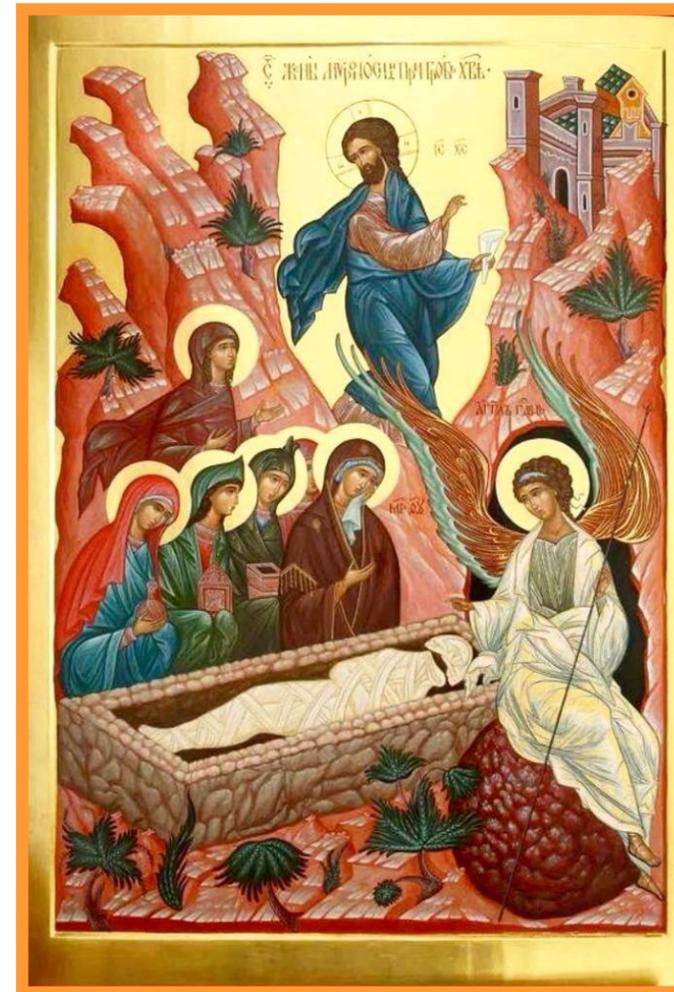
Kindly remember not to leave the Bulletin in the pews. Take it with you for prayer and reflection during the week and help keep the Sanctuary clean.



THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE

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FrAntokas@stgeorge.org

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SUNDAY OF THE HOLY MYRRHBEARERS

APRIL 30, 2017



Χριστός Ανέστη!
Άληθώς Ανέστη!

Ἀπολυτίκιον of Great and Holy Pascha

Christ is risen from the dead, by death, trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

Ἀπολυτίκιον of St. George

O Trophy-Bearer, Great Martyr George, who freed captives, supported the poor, healed the sick, was a champion of kings, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved!

Ἀπολυτίκιον

Ὡς τῶν αιχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτής, καὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ὑπερασπιστής, ἀσθενούντων ἰατρός, βασιλέων ὑπέρμαχος, Τροπαιοφόρε Μεγαλομάρτυς Γεώργιε, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.