

## Scripture Readings

**EPISTLE Galatians 4:22-27** Brethren, Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, the son of the free woman through promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in travail; for the children of the desolate one are many more than the children of her that is married."

**GOSPEL Luke 13: 10-17** At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.



We are in need of wine and olive oil for use at the Altar. The wine used can be either Mavrodaphni or Commandaria St. John only. The olive oil ought to be of good quality. Please consider donating wine or oil for use in Divine worship to the glory of God, Many thanks for taking care of your Church. God bless you!



## Scripture Reflection: Law or Love — the Choice is Ours



Bowed and bent over for nearly two decades, the woman in today's Gospel passage is healed on the Sabbath by the Lord Jesus, the Divine Physician. The synagogue ruler cites Mosaic law forbidding manual labor on the Sabbath, to objects to Jesus' healing action. The Son of God rebukes the ruler and his people, emphasizing they would readily lead their animals to water for a drink on the Sabbath while depriving afflicted men and women of healing and wholeness. The lesson is clear: Christian discipleship is less about regulations and more about mercy and love. It is less about "religion" and more about living an active "faith." Discipleship speaks to the heart's capacity for compassion, rather than the prescriptions of a legal code. Jesus toppled the traditional Jewish understanding of Mosaic law by dismissing blind legalism to instead bestow the healing mercy of God, whom the law was meant to serve. This is one of the major emphases of St. Luke's Gospel - moving beyond public piety to instead embrace the call of mercy. Jesus' ministry builds upon the foundation of Mosaic law to introduce a new way, based upon love for our fellow men and women. The Evangelist also underscores that one is a disciple not by receiving mercy and compassion, but by offering mercy and compassion to others in need. Each of us must carefully watch that we do not fall into the same pious Pharisaic attitude as Jesus' critics. Recall the Book of Hosea 6:6: "For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Living as Orthodox Christians requires genuinely-felt mercy and love for others as the true nature of discipleship, so that our faith is not simply a matter of routine. It is so easy for us to fall into a religious trap that focuses on codes and external demonstrations, rather than on the living person of Jesus Christ, who reveals to us the merciful face of God. The Epistle to the Ephesians sets the context: life is a struggle against "principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age" who would have us focus on law rather than love, on punishment rather than compassion. Each of us is faced with the same choices in our daily life. How will we respond? Will we, like the Pharisees, shake our heads in judgment of others, or will we emulate Jesus, allowing others to touch our heart and inspire genuine Christian mercy?



**Wednesday,  
Dec. 12:  
Feast of St. Spyridon the  
Wonderworker  
Orthros 8:30 AM  
Divine Liturgy  
9:30 AM**

Our father among the saints, St. Spyridon the Wonderworker (270-348) was present at the First Ecumenical Council, where he formed a lasting friendship with St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. A peasant farmer and uneducated shepherd, Spyridon was married and had one daughter. After his wife died, he and his daughter entered monasticism. He later became the Bishop of Trimythous, in Cyprus, and lived in profound devotion. Through simplicity and deep commitment to God, he worked miracles throughout his life and became known as a great wonderworker with the gift of prescience. He called forth rain amidst drought, cast out demons with a single word, healed the sick and even raised people from the dead. Once when he was joined only by a deacon and readers in church at Vespers, the responses could be heard beautifully chanted by an unseen choir. Passers-by heard the rapturous sounds and saw through the windows what seemed like a large congregation. Entering the church, they found only Spyridon and his assistants. St. Spyridon lived most of his earthly life in Cyprus, where he was buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Trimythous. When the Saracens took the island in the 7th century, the Cypriots opened his grave to transfer his sacred bones to Constantinople. They found that his body had remained intact, while from the grave emanated a scent of basil, true signs of the sainthood he had shown during his lifetime. St. Spyridon is commonly referred to as Keeper of the City of Corfu, and is patron saint of the Greek island, where his relics are venerated by the faithful.

## Save, Have Mercy Upon, and Protect

His Eminence Metropolitan +Panteleimon; His Eminence Archbishop +Pavlos of Aleppo and His Eminence Mar +Gregorios Ioanna of Aleppo, who were kidnapped; Metropolitan +Kallistos of Diokleia, Anatoly Seraphim, Jessica, Georgia Mavromihalis, Robert West, Amanda Lawrence, Ourania Mantzouranis, Maria Kritzas, Cathy, Janie Pappas, Eleni Gourmani, Anne Savas, the child of God Trey Anderson, Dimitrios Papapostolou, Angela Apidououlos, the child of God Amelia Marghi, the child of God Seraphina Marie Vasilatos, Adib Marghi, Betty Jean Dubard, Aris Peterson, Nicholas Ellis, Katherine Ellis, Kelly, Jon Wood, Tom Dale, Joy Kizzie, Marie Burpeau, Bill Pastis, Evangelia Pantazakos, George Dizelos, Constantina Speris; Andrew Katson; Selena Pappas

## Divine Services for Nativity and Theophany

**Sunday, Dec. 23:** Sunday Before the Nativity, Orthros 8:45 AM Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom 10:00 AM

**Monday, Dec. 24:** Eve of the Nativity Orthros and Royal Hours 8:30 AM

**Monday, Dec. 24:** Eve of the Nativity Great Vespers followed by the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 7:00 PM

**Tuesday, Dec. 25:** The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Flesh Orthros 8:30 AM Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom 9:30 AM

**Thursday, Dec. 27:** Feast of St. Stephen the Protomartyr, Orthros 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 9:30 AM

**Sunday, Dec. 30:** Sunday After the Nativity Orthros 8:45 AM Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

**Tuesday, Jan. 1:** The Circumcision of the Lord/ St. Basil the Great, Orthros 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom 9:30 AM

**Saturday, Jan. 5:** Eve of the Theophany, Orthros, Royal Hours 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom 9:30 AM

**Sunday, Jan. 6:** The Theophany of the Lord, Orthros 8:45 AM, Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great followed by Great the Great Blessing of Water 10:00 AM

**Monday, Jan. 7:** Feast of the Synaxis of St. John the Forerunner and Baptist Orthros 8:30 AM, Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom 9:30 AM

## SPIRITUAL LIFE AND LEARNING

2018-2019 BIBLE STUDY: "The Gospel of St. John: Beholding the Glory" This year's Scripture study fo-cuses on the fourth Gospel, composed by St. John the Theologian. Join us every Thursday at 10:30 AM or 7:00 PM in the Church library to explore the depths of the Gospel written by "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2018-2019: "The Shared Experience of the Orthodox Christian Faith." Our faith is not about ideas or concepts, rules and regulations, but our relationship and daily connectedness with Jesus Christ. Starting after Divine Liturgy in the Church Library, through the Orthodox Christian Network's live Facebook stream, the class reaches thousands in the United States, Canada, and dozens of countries worldwide. Enjoy the archives at <http://myocn.net/orthodox-christianvideo-programs/adult-study-classes/>

ADULT INQUIRY CLASS: For adults interested in joining the Orthodox Church. Through discussion, speakers, and personal sharing, adults will be preparing to receive Baptism or Chrismation. Sessions will be held at 7:30 PM on Wednesdays (except Nov. 21) in the Church Library. Contact Fr. Dimitrios for more information or to sign up at 301-469-7990.

## PARISH ACTIVITIES

GOYA PIZZA FUNDRAISER: TODAY \$15 for a large pizza. To guarantee a pizza, we are now accepting pre-orders. Pizza will also be sold by the slice during coffee hour after the Divine Liturgy. Use the following link to order your pizza: <https://stgeorge.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/275/responses/new>

VISITORS OF MERCY NEEDED: During this holy season of preparation for the Nativity, the Church reaches out with fraternal love and care to the sick, the aged and those shut-in their homes and hospitals. Father Dimitrios is seeking volunteers to assist him in visiting these people and delivering a Christmas gift of the Good News that Christ God is with us even in our troubles. Please consider becoming a visitor of mercy. Contact Fr. Dimitrios directly at 301-469-7990 or [frantokas@stgeorge.org](mailto:frantokas@stgeorge.org) What better way to share your Christian love and the true meaning of the Christmas feast we are all blessed to celebrate!

50 PLUS: Annual Christmas Pot Luck Party, Wednesday, Dec. 12 at 11:30 AM. Achilles Papaefthimiou will again entertain us with his lively music. All are welcome. Please come with your favorite dish to share.

PHILOPTOCHOS: Annual Christmas Social, Sunday, Dec. 16, from 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM at Mykonos Restaurant, 121 Congressional Lane in Rockville, MD. Cost is \$40 per person, for three-course meal; cash bar available. Philoptochos will match dollar for dollar all donations, to support our Christmas Outreach project for the Gaithersburg Community Holiday Gift Giving Coalition (gift bags or \$15 gift cards for children of families in need). Please register by Dec. 9 at the coffee hour table following Divine Liturgy or at [Stgphiloptochos1019@gmail.com](mailto:Stgphiloptochos1019@gmail.com)

50 PLUS: Annual Christmas Bake Sale, Sunday, Dec. 23 following Divine Liturgy. We offer baklava, meomakarona, kourambiethes and koulourakia. Please place your order as soon as possible so we may know how many desserts to prepare. All proceeds are directed to the St. George kitchen renovation project. Place your orders on line by Dec. 12 or contact Maria Kopsidas at (240) 421-9909 for information.

PHILOPTOCHOS: The St. George Christmas Ornament is available for purchase at \$25 each during the coffee hour following Divine Liturgy, or at [Stgphiloptochos1019@gmail.com](mailto:Stgphiloptochos1019@gmail.com)

ORTHODOX YOUTH MISSION TEAM: St. George young adults and adult leaders are forming an Orthodox Youth Mission Team to participate July 7-13, 2019 in the Appalachian Service Project, working with families in this very poor region of the United States to help make their homes "warmer, safer and drier." Registration deadline will be in December – contact Athena Kaiser for information at 240-498-0870 or [avkmail@verizon.net](mailto:avkmail@verizon.net)



# THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE



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Jesus Healing the Bent Woman

## TENTH SUNDAY OF ST. LUKE THE CONCEPTION OF THE THEOTOKOS DECEMBER 9, 2018

### Resurrection Apolytikion Tone 3

Come rejoice all ye Heavens and be glad all ye on earth. For by His power the Lord created might. By His Death He conquered death; for He became the first born of the dead. From the depths of Hades, He delivered us; and He granted to mankind His great mercy.

### Apolytikion 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!

Ὡς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ἐλευθερωτῆς, καὶ τῶν πτωχῶν ὑπερασπιστῆς, ἀσθενούντων ἰατρός, βασιλέων ὑπέρμαχος, Τροπαιοφόρε Μεγαλομάρτυς Γεώργιε, πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.