

Scripture Readings

EPISTLE Hebrews 11:33-40; 12:1-2 Brethren, all the saints through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

GOSPEL Matthew 10:32-33; 37-38; 19:27-30 The Lord said to his disciples, "Every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny him before my Father who is in heaven. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me." Then Peter said in reply, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. But many that are first will be last, and the last first."

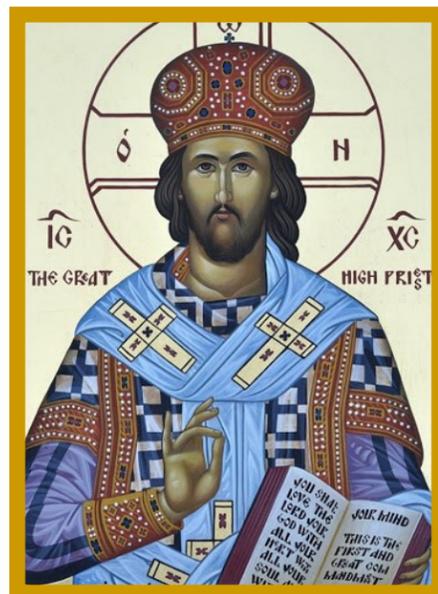
Resurrectional Apolytikion Plagal 4 (Mode 8)

From on high You descended, Most Merciful;
for us You condescended to a three-day burial to set us free from the
passions. O Lord, our Resurrection and our Life, glory to You!

Apolytikion of Saint George

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

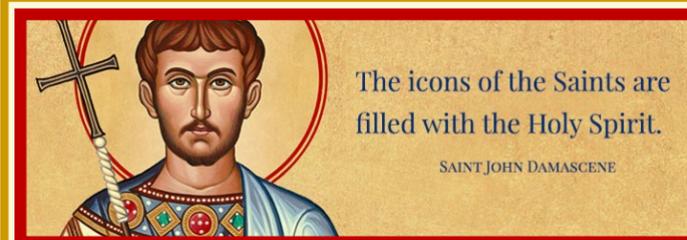
O Trophy-Bearer, Great Martyr George, who freed captives,
supported the poor, healed the sick, was a champion of kings,
intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved!



The Church of St. George joyfully welcomes His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America on his first pastoral visitation to our faith community. This past week, His Eminence marked the 2ndnd Anniversary of his Enthronement as Archpastor of the Greek Orthodox Church in America.

His visit is an honor for us as we work diligently to make the Good News of Christ known to our wider community and to the world. We pray for His Eminence that God give him many years of Archpastoral service and we recognize that he has already imparted the grace and gifts of the Holy Spirit to our God-saved Archdiocese. We ask Christ, the High Priest, to prosper the work of his hands and heart. Eis polla, eti Despota!

Gospel Reflection: For Saints Holiness is Wholeness and Healing



Often, we hear ourselves asking "Is there a truly good person left in this modern world?" As Orthodox Christians, with hope and tenacity in our hearts, we say "Yes! There are good, God-fearing people among us indeed!" There are in fact saints among us, living and reposed, doing what they do best; pointing to confused humans the clear way to intimacy with God. Let us first be clear about who is a saint. It is said that "holiness is whole-

ness." Yet there is more hope in honest brokenness than there is in the pretense of false wholeness. Saints are those who once were, and today are, honestly broken and genuinely imperfect. They do not affect pretense or false piety, or attempt to deny their own distance from God. They do not walk among their neighbors as if "all is together." Being a saint does not mean being morally perfect, for morality is not the goal of true sanctity, however important it may be. Soren Kierkegaard, the philosopher and father of existentialism, and a fervent Christian believer, argued against that unyielding mindset: "God creates out of nothing. Wonderful, you say. Yes, to be sure, but he does what is still more wonderful: he makes saints out of sinners." In His Divine soul-craft, God reaches into our hearts - most times unaware to us - to remake, re-orient, and transform us, making saints out of sinners. We still carry the burden of ancestral sin within us, and we do stumble and grow weak. But in His unending love and mercy, God lifts us up and quietly walks behind us, knowing there will be yet another fall. This is the vocation of the saint. In living a simple and ascetic life, and flourishing through the stages of spiritual growth, the human person does not primarily become morally good, but does become cured, healed, and made whole again. Metropolitan Hierotheos of the Church of Greece expressed it this way: "The meaning of sanctity is not humanistic or moralistic, but theological. Saints are those who have been spiritually cured. Their hearts have been purified and they have reached illumination of the mind and glorification. They are the real - the active - members of the Body of Christ." In today's passage of the Holy Gospel, Jesus explains the ascetical work we must do to advance our spiritual healing and come closer to God, the root of all holiness. First, we must witness our faith and confess Christ before all people. (Matt. 10:32-33) This form of authentic martyrdom means ignoring the cynicism of the modern world and its outright dismissal of religious belief. It means using the spiritual tools given us by the Church to secure our healing of soul: prayer, Bible reading, reception of the Holy Mysteries, and doing good filled with mercy and compassion for others. These are healing instruments and the Lord tells us boldly (v.33) that He will not acknowledge us before the Father if we do not acknowledge Him before the world. Second, we need to place Christ and our love for Him before anyone or anything else that we love. (v.37) Spiritual healing means subjecting our egos to living for God rather than for ourselves. He is the first priority, not a mere or casual afterthought. It is a hard saying to hear that we must love Christ more than our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, wives, and husbands! That, however, is Christ's word. To be made whole, we must put the love of Christ first in our lives, above all else. Third, the work of our spiritual healing, the soul-craft of holiness in us, is always done in the shadow of the Cross. Yes, it is tough, and it is demanding, and it is not without pain. It is difficult and uncomfortable to change old ideas and behaviors. We fight against adopting a new way. We may even prefer to remain in a world of moral imperfection rather than advance to a life-giving spiritual healing. Moments before he was martyred in T.S. Eliot's play "Murder in the Cathedral," Archbishop Thomas Becket mused to himself: "A Christian martyrdom is never an accident, for saints are not made by accident." Saints, Holy Ones, are never made by accident. They are made according to the size and generosity of their heart. How much are they willing to endure the pain of God's Suffering Servant? Sainthood is in all our futures if only we understand and live out the conviction that to be holy is to be whole and healed, to live a Christ-centered life, to endure the struggles of coming nearer and nearer to God in Christ. We are not called to be perfect in this life. We are simply called to be faithful. God willing, one day there may be an icon of you hanging in this Holy Temple. May God make it so! Amen.

Grant Eternal Rest, O Lord!

Mihail Hristodoulakis (3 years)

May he rest in peace and rise in glory and may his
memory be eternal!



The Apostle's Fast Begins Tomorrow, June 28



On Monday evening, June 28, at 6:00 PM we will we celebrate Great Vespers for the Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul at our sister parish, Sts. Peter and Paul in Frederick. On Tuesday, June 29, we will join St. Peter and Paul's for Orthros and Divine Liturgy at 9:00 AM, in Frederick. Also, on June 29, we will join our sister parish, Holy Apostles, in Loudon County, Virginia, for a Vigil at 6:00 PM celebrating the Synaxis of the Apostles on June 30.

Save and Protect, O Lord, These Thy Servants

His Eminence Metropolitan Panteleimon of Antinoes, His Eminence Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, Abbess Christophora, Anatoly Seraphim, Megan, Patrick, Paul, Doris, Shelika, Nicole,

PARISH MINISTRIES

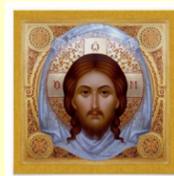
BIBLE STUDY: The Spring session of Bible Study has begun and is held on Thursdays at 10:30 AM and 7:00 PM. The subject of our study is be the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. Sessions are on ZOOM. All are welcome to join this important study! Please bring your Bibles to each session.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Every Monday at noon, fifteen-minute reflections live-streamed through the Orthodox Christian Network at <https://www.facebook.com/MyOCN/>.

PARISH ACTIVITIES

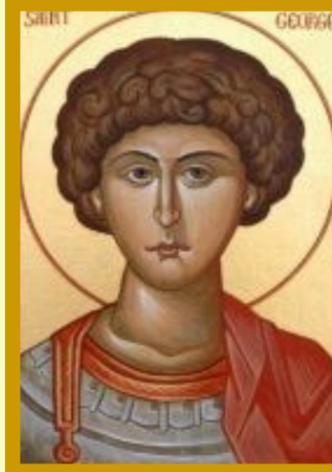
LIGHT A CANDLE: Please make wax and red glass candle offerings and tray offerings at <https://stgeorge.org/livestream/> - thank you for your continued love and generous support!

ST. GEORGE MISSION TEAM: To help children in need in Greece, we are purchasing book bags, packing them with school supplies, and working with International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) for delivery this summer. We will hold a car wash fundraiser on July 18 to support this and other summer projects. Please consider participating and be part of an organization that puts your Orthodox faith to work. Students can earn service hours. For information, contact Athena Kaiser at avmail@verizon.net or call/text at (240) 498-0870.



PRAYER TO ALL SAINTS

How shining and splendid are your gifts, O Lord. which you give us for our eternal well-being. Your glory shines radiantly in your saints, O God — in the honor and noble victory of the martyrs. The white-robed company follow you, bright with their abundant faith; They scorned the wicked words of those with this world's power. For you they sustained fierce beatings, chains, and torments, they were drained by cruel punishments. They bore their holy witness to you who were grounded deep within their hearts; they were sustained by patience and constancy. Endowed with your everlasting grace, may we rejoice forever with the Holy Apostles, august Martyrs, the Holy Prophets, the Angels and Archangels, the Venerable Fathers and Hierarchs of the Church, the Venerable and God-pleasing Monastics, the Blessed and the Just in our bright fatherland. O Christ, in your goodness, grant to us the gracious heavenly realms of eternal life. For unto you are due all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen!



THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE

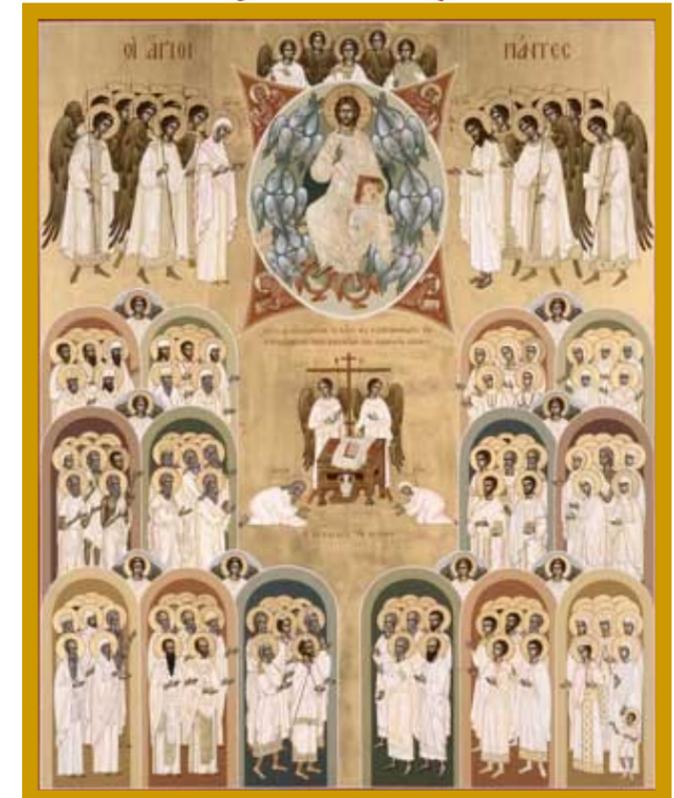
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FEAST OF ALL SAINTS

St. Joanna the Myrrhbearer



**HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY
AND PRIESTLY ORDINATION CELEBRATED**

BY HIS EMINENCE

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS
OF AMERICA**

June 27, 2021

EIS POLLA ETI, DESPOTA!