



# HOLY CROSS

## GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

859 First Street | Macon, Georgia 31201 | 478.621.0744 (office)  
[www.holycrossga.org](http://www.holycrossga.org) | Facebook: HolyCrossMaconGA

### Sunday, February 11, 2024

16<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew  
 St. Vlassios of Sebaste

Eothinon/Orthros Gospel: Third (Mark 16:9-20)

Mode of the Week: Third / Τρίτος

QR Codes (scan with smart phone for service texts)

Orthros



Divine Liturgy



### Upcoming Schedule

Today, February 11

9:15am Orthros  
 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew  
 Sunday School for the Youth following Holy Communion  
 Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy  
 Philoptochos Meeting in the Parish House  
 12:30pm  
 12:45pm Greek School (Youth)/Adult Bible Study

Friday, February 16

5:00pm Vespers for the Feast of St. Theodore the Recruit

Sunday, February 18

9:15am Orthros  
 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday of the Canaanite  
 Sunday School for the Youth following Holy Communion  
 Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy  
 Greek School (Adult)  
 12:45pm

Monday, February 19

President's Day—Office Closed

Tuesday, February 20

5:15pm Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday, February 21

5:45pm Vespers  
 6:30pm Adult Study Class: Orthodoxy 101 in the Library

Saturday, February 24

8:30am Holy Cross Community Event (Cantrell Center 5k)  
 4:00pm Byzantine Chant Class  
 5:00pm Great Vespers

Sunday, February 25

9:15am Orthros  
 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee  
 (beginning of the Triodion)  
 Sunday School for the Youth following Holy Communion  
 Three Year Memorial Service for Sophia Tsamolias at the end of the Liturgy  
 Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy  
 12:15pm Handmaidens/Altar Servers Meeting in the Church  
 12:45pm Youth Greek School / Adult Bible Study

Wednesday, February 28

4:45pm Adult Study Class: Orthodoxy 101 in the Library (and Zoom) - tentative time/date  
 5:45pm Vespers

Sunday, March 3

9:15am Orthros  
 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday of the Prodigal Son  
 Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy  
 12:45pm Adult Greek School

Wednesday, March 6

6:30pm Choir Practice (tentative time/date)

**Upcoming Epistle Readers:** (2/18) Pete Tsamolias, Cleo Bennette; (2/25) Pete Tsamolias, Sarah Drakopoulos

**Upcoming PC Member On-Duty:** (2/18) Natalia Saratsiotis; (2/25) Jim Lekas; (3/3) John Apostolou

**Upcoming Ushers:** (2/18) Eleni+Norm A.; (2/21) Cristina L.; (2/24) Melanie M.; (2/25) Cheryl+Erick S.

**Upcoming Video Operators:** (2/18) Gray Yates; (2/25) Cristina Lekas; (3/3) David Z.; (3/9) David N.; (3/10) Natalia

**Fellowship Hosts:** (2/18) Despina Passias; (2/25) Eleni Adams; (3/3) Rodica Cazacu; (3/10) Helen Vardy

### Our Parish Hymn of the Holy Cross of Christ:

Save, O Lord, save your people and bless Your inheritance. Give victory to those who battle evil and protect us all by Your Holy Cross.

Σώσον Κύριε τὸν λαόν σου καὶ εὐλόγησον τὴν κληρονομίαν σου, νίκας τοῖς βασιλεῦσι κατὰ βαρβάρων δωρούμενος καὶ τὸ σὸν φυλάττων διὰ τοῦ Σταυροῦ σου πολίτευμα.

**To our Visitors and Guests:** We extend a **warm welcome** to all worshipping with us today! While Holy Communion, following ancient practice, is reserved for Orthodox Christians, non-Orthodox may receive the blessed bread (antidoron) offered at the conclusion of the service.  
**Please join us in the Parish House after the Divine Liturgy for Coffee Fellowship!**

## Epistle Reading

*Ψάλατε τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν, ψάλατε, ψάλατε  
τῷ βασιλεῖ ἡμῶν, ψάλατε.  
Στίχ. Πάντα τὰ ἔθνη κροτήσατε χεῖρας,  
ἀλαλάξατε τῷ Θεῷ ἐν φωνῇ  
ἀγαλλιásiεως.*

+++

*Πρὸς Κορινθίους Β΄ Ἐπιστολῆς  
Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα.*

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Ἀδελφοί, συνεργοῦντες παρακαλοῦμεν, μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ Θεοῦ δεξασθαι ὑμᾶς. Λέγει γάρ· Καιρῷ δεκτῷ ἐπήκουσά σου καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι· ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος· ἰδοὺ νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας. Μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπὴν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ ἡ διακονία, ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ συνιστῶντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς Θεοῦ διάκονοι, ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, ἐν θλίψεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις, ἐν πληγαῖς, ἐν φυλακαῖς, ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις, ἐν κόποις, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, ἐν νηστείαις, ἐν ἀγνότητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν Πνεύματι ἀγίῳ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ, ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει Θεοῦ· διὰ τῶν ὄπλων τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας· ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς, ὡς ἀγνοούμενοι καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι, ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι, ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, ὡς πτωχοὶ πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες, ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες.

*Sing praises to God; sing praises;  
sing praises to our King; sing praises.  
Verse: Oh, clap your hands, all you  
nations; shout to God with the voice  
of rejoicing. (Psalm 46)*

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*The reading is from Paul's Second  
Letter to the Corinthians. (6:1-10)*

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Brethren, working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

## The Holy Gospel Reading according to St. Matthew (25:14-30)

16<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Matthew

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἄνθρωπος τις ἀποδημῶν ἐκάλεσε τοὺς ἰδίους δούλους καὶ παρέδωκεν αὐτοῖς τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ᾧ μὲν ἔδωκε πέντε τάλαντα, ᾧ δὲ δύο, ᾧ δὲ ἓν, ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν δύναμιν, καὶ ἀπεδήμησεν εὐθέως. πορευθεὶς δὲ ὁ τὰ πέντε τάλαντα λαβὼν ἐργάσατο ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐποίησεν ἄλλα πέντε τάλαντα· ὡσαύτως καὶ ὁ τὰ δύο ἐκέρδησε καὶ αὐτὸς ἄλλα δύο. ὁ δὲ τὸ ἐν λαβὼν ἀπελθὼν ὄρυξεν ἐν τῇ γῆ καὶ ἀπέκρυψε τὸ ἀργύριον τοῦ κυρίου αὐτοῦ. μετὰ δὲ χρόνον πολὺν ἔρχεται ὁ κύριος τῶν δούλων ἐκείνων καὶ συναίρει μετ' αὐτῶν λόγον. καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ τὰ πέντε τάλαντα λαβὼν προσήνεγκεν ἄλλα πέντε τάλαντα λέγων· κύριε, πέντε τάλαντά μοι παρέδωκας· ἴδε ἄλλα πέντε τάλαντα ἐκέρδησα ἐπ' αὐτοῖς. ἔφη αὐτῷ ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ· εὖ, δοῦλε ἀγαθὲ καὶ πιστέ! ἐπὶ ὀλίγα ἦς πιστός, ἐπὶ πολλῶν σε καταστήσω· εἰσελθε εἰς τὴν χαρὰν τοῦ κυρίου σου. προσελθὼν δὲ καὶ ὁ τὰ δύο τάλαντα λαβὼν εἶπε· κύριε, δύο τάλαντά μοι παρέδωκας· ἴδε ἄλλα δύο τάλαντα ἐκέρδησα ἐπ' αὐτοῖς. ἔφη αὐτῷ ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ· εὖ, δοῦλε ἀγαθὲ καὶ πιστέ! ἐπὶ ὀλίγα ἦς πιστός, ἐπὶ πολλῶν σε καταστήσω· εἰσελθε εἰς τὴν χαρὰν τοῦ κυρίου σου. προσελθὼν δὲ καὶ ὁ τὸ ἐν τάλαντον εἰληφώς εἶπε· κύριε, ἔγνω σε ὅτι σκληρὸς εἶ ἄνθρωπος, θερίζων ὅπου οὐκ ἔσπειρας καὶ συνάγων ὅθεν οὐ διεσκόρπισας· καὶ φοβηθεὶς ἀπελθὼν ἔκρυψε τὸ τάλαντόν σου ἐν τῇ γῆ· ἴδε ἔχεις τὸ σόν. ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· πονηρὲ δοῦλε καὶ ὀκνηρέ! ἦδεις ὅτι θερίζω ὅπου οὐκ ἔσπειρα καὶ συνάγω ὅθεν οὐ διεσκόρπισα! ἔδει οὖν σε βαλεῖν τὸ ἀργύριόν μου τοῖς τραπεζίταις, καὶ ἐλθὼν ἐγὼ ἐκομισάμην ἂν τὸ ἐμὸν σὺν τόκῳ. ἄρατε οὖν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὸ τάλαντον καὶ δότε τῷ ἔχοντι τὰ δέκα τάλαντα· τῷ γὰρ ἔχοντι παντὶ δοθήσεται καὶ περισσευθήσεται· ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ μὴ ἔχοντος καὶ ὃ ἔχει ἀρθήσεται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. καὶ τὸν ἀχρεῖον δοῦλον ἐκβάλετε εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων. Ταῦτα λέγων ἐφώνει· ὁ ἔχων ὠτα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω.

The Lord said this parable: "A man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.'" As he said these things he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

# HOLY CROSS

## GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Theodore Ehmer

Προϊστάμενος/Presiding Priest

E-mail: frtheodore@holycrossga.org

Cell: 770.256.0290

Office Days: Tuesday through Friday; call or email Fr. for appointment

Holy Confession: call or email Fr. to schedule

### Bulletin for the week of February 11, 2024

**Ushers on Duty:** Cristina and Jim Lekas

**Video:** David Zoumberis **Altar Servers:** All Adult/Youth Servers

**Epistle Readers:** Kostas Iakovidis (Greek); Panos Drakopoulos (Eng.)

**Fellowship Host (Thank You!):** Cleo Bennette

**PC Member On-Duty:** Gray Yates



### Today our Holy Orthodox Church commemorates:

- + The Holy Priest-Martyr Vlassios (Blaise) of Sebaste; two children and seven women martyred with him (+316)

*Saint Blaise was Bishop of Sebastia. Divine grace, through which he healed the diseases of men and beasts, and especially of infants, made his name famous. He contested for the Faith under Licinius in the year 316. Saint Blaise is invoked for the healing of throat ailments.*

- + Our Devout Mother Theodora the Empress (+867)

*As for the renowned Empress Theodora, she was from Paphlagonia and was the daughter of a certain Marinus, the commander of a military regiment. While being the wife of the Emperor Theophilus, the last of the Iconoclasts, she adorned the royal diadem with her virtue and piety; as long as her husband Theophilus lived, she privately venerated icons, despite his displeasure. After his death, she restored the holy icons to public veneration; this is commemorated on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the First Sunday of the Great Fast. She governed the Empire wisely for fifteen years, since her son Michael was not yet of age. But in 857 she forsook her royal power and entered a certain convent in Constantinople called Gastria, where she finished the course of her life in holiness and reposed in the Lord. Her sacred incorrupt remains are found in Corfu, in the Church of the Most Holy Theotokos of the Cave, in the capital city of the island (see also Dec. 12).*

- + The Holy New Martyr George the Serbian (+1515)

*St. George was a Serb from the town of Kratovo. He was a goldsmith by trade and, in his heart and soul, was a convinced and a devout Christian. He was born in Kratovo and later moved to Sofia. George was eighteen years old when the Turks tried to convert him to Islam. George remained firm as a diamond in his faith. The Turks tortured him cruelly and then finally burned him at the stake. He suffered and was martyred for the faith of Christ on February 11, 1515, in Sofia, Bulgaria, during the reign of Sultan Selim and was glorified with unfading glory in the heavens.*

*Through the intercessions of Your Saints, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.*

### Variable Hymns of the Day in the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom (pg. 8 in the Small Book/pg. 37 in the Hymnal):

- *Weekly Resurrectional Hymn (Ευφραίνεσθω τα οὐράνια, Third Mode):*

Let the heavens be glad. Let the earth rejoice exceedingly. For the Lord has shown strength with his arm. He trampled death by death. He became the first-born of the dead. Out of the belly of Hades, He has rescued us, and to the world He has granted the great mercy. (Sung before and after the Small Entrance. Greek text found in large hymnal on pg. 106)

- *Hymn of St. Blaise (Και τρόπων μέτοχος, Fourth Mode):*

Becoming a partner with the Apostles in way of life and successor to their thrones, O God-inspired Saint, in the active life you found an entrance to contemplation. Hence you rightly expounded the word of truth, and you shed your blood in struggling for the faith, O Hieromartyr Blaise, Intercede with Christ our God, beseeching Him to save our souls.

- *Hymn of the Holy Cross (Σώσον Κύριε, First Mode):*

Save, O Lord, save your people and bless Your inheritance. Give victory to those who battle evil and protect us all by Your Holy Cross.

- *The Normal Kontakion (Προστασία των Χριστιανών, Second Mode):*

OProtection of Christians that never fails, intercession with the Creator that never fails, we sinners beg you, do not ignore the voices of our prayers. O good Lady, we implore you, quickly come unto our aid, when we cry out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who protect now and ever those who honor you. (Greek text found in large hymnal on pg. 224)

## Guidance, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

### This Week's Daily

#### Scripture Readings and Fasting Guidance:

**Sunday (2/11—No Fasting):** Mark 16:9-20; II Corinthians 6:1-10; Matthew 25:14-30

**Monday (2/12—No Fasting):** James 2:14-26; Mark 10:46-52

**Tuesday (2/13—No Fasting):** James 3:1-10; Mark 11:11-23

**Wednesday (2/14—Strict Fast):** James 3:11-18, 4:1-6; Mark 11:22-26

**Thursday (2/15—No Fasting):** Philemon 1:1-25; Mark 11:27-33

**Friday (2/16—Strict Fast):** I Peter 1:1-25, 2:1-10; Mark 12:1-12

**Saturday (2/17—St. Theodore the Recruit—No Fasting):** II Timothy 2:1-10; Luke 20:46-47, 21:1-4

### Prayer Requests:

Fr. Symeon (mission priest supported by our parish), Panteleimon, Michael, Kassiani, Michael, Dimitrios, Georgia, Pavlos, Maria, Betty, Irene, Valerie, Dianna, Keith, Jeannie, Dawn, Kenneth, Hermione, Emmanuel, Mary, Kay, Helen, Nikki, Mena, Austin, Kiley, Garrett, Carolina, Maria, Laurie, Lindsey, Randy, Marina, Effie, Christina, Ashley, Foster, Peggy, Lynn, Dimitri, Stelianos, Brian, Vassilios, Bessie, Katerina, Link, Bill, Virginia, Karl, Colin, Mitch, Rinne, Michael

### Prayers for those recently reposed:

#### Prayers for expecting mothers:

Julie G., Hannah K., Julieta L., Muryah S.

### Prayers for Military Personnel and Their Families:

Aubriana Butchko, Kyle Glotzbach, Robert Ice, Aaron Vrahiotes, Aleksander Zajac

### Prayers for our Catechumens and Inquirers into the Orthodox Church:

Bobbie, CJ, Ethan, Jace, James, Jessica, Malachi, Nate, Schyler and pray for those who are seeking Christ and His Church!

### Weekly Wisdom of the Fathers:

**St. Peter of Damascus** on the necessity of patience in the spiritual life (from the Philokalia): "For to sin, even in the case of those who are most righteous, is easy, while repentance is not easy for everyone because death is near; and even before death comes there is despair. It is good, then, not to fall; or, if we fall, to rise again. And should we fall, we should not despair and so estrange ourselves from the Lord's love. For if He so chooses, He can deal mercifully with our weakness. Only we should not cut ourselves off from Him or feel oppressed when constrained by His commandments, nor should we lose heart when we fall short of our goal. Rather, let us learn that a thousand years in the sight of the Lord are but a single day, and a single day is as a thousand years (cf. Ps. 90:4). Let us be neither hasty nor tardy, and let us be always ready to make a new start. If you fall, rise up. If you fall again, rise up again. Only do not abandon your Physician, lest you be condemned as worse than blaspheming the spirit because of your despair. Wait on Him, and He will be merciful, either reforming you, or sending you trials, or through some other provision of which you are ignorant."

### Upcoming Celebrations This Week

#### Name Days—Chronia Polla, Many Years!

February 17: Father Theodore

#### Birthdays—Happy Birthday!

February 11: Ron Sprouse

February 13: John Stauroulakis

February 14: Justin Lane

#### Anniversaries—Congratulations!

February 11: Sophia and Alek Zajac

February 12: Cheryl and George Stefanis

February 14: Eleni and Norm Adams

(If you have a celebration that did not make it into the bulletin, please e-mail Fr. Theodore!)

### Announcements:

\* **YOUTH:** Rock Climbing at Macon Rocks on Sunday, February 25 after Youth Greek School!

\* **Philoptochos:** There will be an important general meeting that will take place after the Divine Liturgy TODAY. Please plan on being present if you are a member of Philoptochos (or would like to be!)

\*There is no Intro to Orthodoxy (Orthodoxy 101) class this week. The class will resume next week on Wednesday, January 21.

\*As a reminder, the **Bookstore** is open on Wednesday afternoons from 3:00 to 5:00. The Church is also open for lighting candles/prayer at the same time.

\*The **Spring Fling** will be held next month on Saturday, March 9th from 11am-7pm. Please save the date—especially young adults/not-so-young adults!

\* **Holy Cross Parish Outing:** please save the date for the upcoming event on Saturday, February 24: the Cantrell Center 5k.

\* **Greek Dancing** for the youth and young adults will resume on Sunday, March 3rd and will take place once a month! If you did not have a chance to contribute towards the traditional costumes over the last couple of Sundays, one can still contribute online by the normal means (Venmo, PayPal, etc) with the notation "Greek Dance."

\* **FESTIVAL YARD SIGNS** have been ordered. We were able to order extra signs. These signs will be used each year (the dates will be removable). If you did not order a sign but would still like one, please contact Natalia Saratsiotis. The cost for each sign is \$17 (or you can round up to \$20).

\* Please keep an eye out for an email which will be sent soon regarding **Great Lent/Holy Week/Pascha** and ways that one can assist with the many opportunities that the Church places before us during this blessed season. This is a beautiful way to participate and give back to our Holy Cross Church. Thank you in advance!

\* **Spring General Assembly** will take place after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, March 10.