



HOLY CROSS

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Orthros, part 1



Orthros, part 2



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www.holycrossga.org | Facebook: HolyCrossMaconGA

Sunday, August 31, 2025

Twelfth Sunday of Matthew

Placement of the Holy Belt of the Theotokos

Eothinon/Orthros Gospel: First (Matthew 28:16-20)

Mode of the Week: Third / Τρίτος

QR Codes (scan with smart phone for service texts)

Divine Liturgy



Upcoming Schedule

Today, August 31

9:15am Orthros
10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Commemoration of the Holy Belt (Αγία Ζώνη) of the Theotokos
Blessing of the Fanouropita at the end of the Liturgy
Doxology to commemorate the Ecclesiastical New Year
Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy
12:45pm Bible Study/Youth Greek Dance

Monday, September 1

Ecclesiastical New Year / Labor Day / Office Closed

Thursday, September 4

10:30am Orthodox Book Study at Taste and See in Macon
5:30pm Vespers
6:30pm Introduction to the Orthodox Church Class in person and on Zoom

Saturday, September 6

4:00pm Byzantine Chant Class in the Chapel
5:00pm Great Vespers

Sunday, September 7

9:15am Orthros
10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday before Holy Cross
40-Day Memorial for Irene Ray at the end of the Liturgy
Coffee Fellowship after the Liturgy in the Parish House
12:30pm Altar Server Meeting
1:00pm Festival Grape Leaves Prep (Please bring a pair of scissors)
1:00pm Youth Greek Dance
6:00pm Great Vespers for the Nativity of the Theotokos

Monday, September 8

9:30am Orthros
10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Nativity of the Theotokos

Tuesday, September 9

5:00pm Divine Liturgy for the Synaxis of Saints Joachim and Anna

Wednesday, September 10

5:30pm Vespers
6:30pm Cross Dive Meeting

Thursday, September 11

10:30am Orthodox Book Study at Taste and See in Macon
6:30pm Introduction to the Orthodox Church Class in person and on Zoom

Saturday, September 13

12:00pm Great Vespers for the Elevation of the Holy Cross (at the church)
2:00pm 4th Annual Pan-Orthodox Cross Dive (Sandy Beach, Lake Tobo)

Sunday, September 14

9:15am Orthros
10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Elevation of the Holy Cross
Our Parish's Name Day
Procession of the Cross at the end of the Liturgy
Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy
12:45pm Bible Study

Upcoming Epistle Readers: (9/7) Pete Tsamolias, Rene Esquivel; (9/14) Aleca Hortman, Mike Cantrell
Upcoming PC Member On-Duty: (9/7) Sarah Drakopoulos (9/14) Chad Ridley (9/21) Natalia Saratsiotis (9/28) Gray
Upcoming Ushers: (9/4) Charles G; (9/6) Natalia S; (9/7) Sarah D, Haris S; (9/8) OPEN, (9/9) Nic P.
Upcoming Video Operators: (9/7) Joanna P.; (9/8+9/26) OPEN (9/14) Cristina; (9/21) David Z; (9/28) Natalia S.
Fellowship Hosts: (9/7) Denna, Chrissy & Donna; (9/14) Parish Council; (9/21) Mandi S.; (9/28) Mens Brotherhood

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 offered only to 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

Μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχὴ μου τὸν Κύριον, καὶ ἠγαλλίασε τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου.

Στίχ. Ὅτι ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπείνωσιν τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ· ἰδοὺ γάρ, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν μακαριοῦσί με πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί.

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Πρὸς Ἑβραίους Ἐπιστολῆς Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα.

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Ἀδελφοί, εἶχεν ἡ πρώτη σκηνὴ δικαιώματα λατρείας τό τε Ἅγιον κοσμικόν· σκηνὴ γὰρ κατεσκευάσθη ἡ πρώτη, ἐν ἣ ἡ τε λυχνία καὶ ἡ τράπεζα καὶ ἡ πρόθεσις τῶν ἄρτων, ἣτις λέγεται Ἅγια. μετὰ δὲ τὸ δεύτερον καταπέτασμα σκηνὴ ἡ λεγομένη Ἅγια Ἀγίων, χρυσοῦν ἔχουσα θυμιατήριον καὶ τὴν κιβωτὸν τῆς διαθήκης περικεκαλυμμένην πάντοθεν χρυσίῳ, ἐν ἣ στάμνος χρυσῆ ἔχουσα τὸ μάννα καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος Ἀαρὼν ἡ βλαστήσασα καὶ αἱ πλάκες τῆς διαθήκης, ὑπεράνω δὲ αὐτῆς Χερουβὶμ δόξης κατασκιάζοντα τὸ ἱλαστήριον· περὶ ὧν οὐκ ἔστι νῦν λέγειν κατὰ μέρος. Τούτων δὲ οὕτω κατεσκευασμένων εἰς μὲν τὴν πρώτην σκηνὴν διὰ παντὸς εἰσίασιν οἱ ἱερεῖς τὰς λατρείας ἐπιτελοῦντες, εἰς δὲ τὴν δευτέραν ἅπαξ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ μόνος ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς, οὐ χωρὶς αἵματος, ὃ προσφέρει ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τῶν τοῦ λαοῦ ἀγνοημάτων.

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Verse: For he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

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The reading is from Paul's Letter to the Hebrews. (9:1-7)

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Brethren, the first tent had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. For a tent was prepared, the first one, in which were the lamp stand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the sins committed unintentionally by the people.

The Holy Gospel Reading according to St. Matthew (19:16-26)

Twelfth Sunday of Matthew

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, νεανίσκος τις προσῆλθε τῷ Ἰησοῦ γονυπετῶν αὐτῷ καὶ λέγων· Διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, τί ἀγαθὸν ποιήσω ἵνα ἔχω ζωὴν αἰώνιον; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός. εἰ δὲ θέλεις εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν, τήρησον τὰς ἐντολάς. λέγει αὐτῷ· ποίας; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπε· τὸ οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις, οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις, τίμα τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα, καὶ ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν. λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ νεανίσκος· πάντα ταῦτα ἐφυλαξάμην ἐκ νεότητός μου· τί ἔτι ὑστερῶ; ἔφη αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· εἰ θέλεις τέλειος εἶναι, ὑπάγε πώλησόν σου τὰ ὑπάρχοντα καὶ δὸς πτωχοῖς, καὶ ἔξεις θησαυρὸν ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ δεῦρο ἀκολούθει μοι. ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ νεανίσκος τὸν λόγον ἀπῆλθε λυπούμενος· ἦν γὰρ ἔχων κτήματα πολλά. Ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπε τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι δυσκόλως πλούσιος εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν. πάλιν δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, εὐκοπώτερόν ἐστι κάμηλον διὰ τρυπήματος ῥαφίδος διελθεῖν ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν. ἀκούσαντες δὲ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἐξεπλήσσοντο σφόδρα λέγοντες· τίς ἄρα δύναται σωθῆναι; ἐμβλέψας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· παρὰ ἀνθρώποις τοῦτο ἀδύνατόν ἐστι, παρὰ δὲ Θεῷ πάντα δυνατά ἐστι.

At that time, a young man came up to Jesus, kneeling and saying, “Good Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?” And he said to him, “Why do you call me good? One there is who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” He said to him, “Which?” And Jesus said, “You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” The young man said to him, “All these I have observed from my youth; what do I still lack?” Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” When the disciples heard this they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

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GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Theodore Ehmer

Προϊστάμενος/Presiding Priest

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

Holy Confession: call or email Fr. to schedule

Bulletin for the week of August 31, 2025

Ushers on Duty: John Apostolou, Maria Spicer

Video: Gray Y./David N. **Altar Servers:** All Adult/Youth Servers

Epistle Readers: Aleca Hortman (Greek); Nicholas True (English)

Fellowship Host (Thank You!): Philoptochos

PC Member On-Duty: Maria Spicer



Today our Holy Orthodox Church commemorates:

- + Placement of the Holy Belt (Αγία Ζώνη) of the Most Holy Theotokos in Chalkoprateia in Constantinople

The Placing of the Venerable Belt of the Most Holy Theotokos in a church of Constantinople's Chalkoprateia district took place during the reign of the emperor Theodosius the Younger. Before this the holy relic, entrusted to the Apostle Thomas by the Mother of God Herself, was kept by pious Christians at Jerusalem after Her Dormition. During the reign of Emperor Leo the Wise (886-911), his wife Zoe was afflicted with an unclean spirit, and he prayed that God would heal her. The empress had a vision that she would be healed of her infirmity if the Belt of the Mother of God were placed upon her. The emperor then asked the Patriarch to open the coffer. The Patriarch removed the seal and opened the coffer in which the relic was kept, and the Belt of the Mother of God appeared completely whole and undamaged by time. The Patriarch placed the Belt on the sick empress, and immediately she was freed from her infirmity. They sang hymns of thanksgiving to the Most Holy Theotokos, then they placed the venerable Belt back into the coffer and resealed it. In commemoration of the miraculous occurrence and the twofold Placing of the venerable Belt, the Feast of the Placing of the Venerable Belt of the Most Holy Theotokos was established. Parts of the holy Belt are in the Vatopedi monastery on Mt. Athos, in Trier monastery.

- + The Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage

Saint Cyprian was born of pagan parents in Carthage of Roman Africa about the year 190. An eloquent teacher of rhetoric, he was converted and baptized late in life, and his conversion from a proud man of learning to a humble servant of Christ was complete; he sold his great possessions and gave them to the poor, and because of his zeal and virtue, was ordained presbyter in 247, then Bishop of Carthage in 248. He was especially steadfast in defending the sanctity and uniqueness of the Baptism of the Church of Christ against the confusion of those who would allow some validity to the ministrations of heretics; his writings continue to guide the Church even in our own day. Having survived the persecution of Decius about the year 250, he was beheaded in confession of the Faith during the persecution of Valerian in 258.

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 (page 8 in the Pew Book):

- *Weekly Resurrectional Hymn (Ευφραινέσθω 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 hymnal on pg. 106)*

- *Hymn of the Holy Belt (Θεοτόκε αειπάρθενε, Plagal Fourth Mode):*

Ever-virgin Theotokos, the shelter of mankind, you have given to your City as a protective wall the clothing and garment that you wore on your immaculate body. By your seedless childbirth, they have remained incorrupt. For in you both nature and time are made novel. Therefore we implore you, grant peace to your commonwealth, and great mercy to 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 Kontakion of the Holy Belt (Τὴν Θεοδόχον γαστέρα σου, Plagal Second Mode):*

The precious garment that you wore about your body that hosted God, O all-blessed Theotokos, truly is power unassailable for your City and a treasure whose blessings are perpetual, O only Ever-virgin who bore a child.

Guidance, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

This Week's Daily

Scripture Readings and Fasting Guidance:

Sunday, August 31: Holy Belt of the Theotokos—No Fasting:

Matthew 28: 16-20; Hebrews 9:1-7; Matthew 19:16-26

Monday, September 1: Ecclesiastical New Year—

No Fasting:

I Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 4:16-22

Tuesday, September 2: St. Mammias the Martyr—No Fasting:

Romans 8:28-39; Mark 3:13-21

Wednesday, September 3: St. Anthimos of Nicomedia—

Strict Fast:

II Corinthians 9:12-15; 10:1-7; Mark 3:20-27

Thursday, September 4: St. Babylas the Martyr—No Fasting:

II Corinthians 10:7-18; Mark 3:28-35

Friday, September 5: Zacharias the Prophet—Strict Fast:

II Corinthians 11:5-21; Matthew 23:29-39

Saturday, September 6: Miracle of the Archangel Gabriel at Colassai—No Fasting:

Hebrews 2:2-10; Luke 10:16-21

Prayer Requests for Health of Soul and Body:

Metropolitan Alexios, Fr. Symeon (mission priest supported by our parish), Fr. Mike, Panteleimon, Kassiani, Dimitri, Georgia, Maria, Valerie, Dianna, Jeannie, Dawn, Kenneth, Mary, Kay, Helen, Nikki, Austin, Kiley, Garrett, Carolina, Maria, Laurie, Lindsey, Randy, Marina, Effie, Christina, Ashley, Brian, Bessie, Katerina, Karl, Colin, Mitch, Rinne, Michael, Christian, Paul, Lucas, Leo, Nicholas, Kevin, Andy, Karen, Vera, Adam, Debbie, Alberto, Sadith, Richelle, Marion, Paul, George, Christina, Kristen, Diane, Lydia, Virgil, Lucy, George, John, Pauline, Woody, Bill, Nicholas, Mandy, Benjamin, Brenda

Prayers for those recently reposed:

Irene (+July 26), Rick (+July 31), Charles (+August 23)

Prayers for expecting mothers:

Antigone, Betty, Heather (baby Shepherd born 8/25), Julieta, Kalie

Prayers for Military Personnel and Their Families:

Aubriana Butchko, Benjamin George Davis, Kyle Glotzbach, Robert Ice, Aleksander Zajac

Prayers for our Catechumens and Inquirers into the Orthodox Church:

Alexander, Bobbie, Dakota, Daniel, Ecaterina, Gavin, Hannah, Jessica, Julian, Kyle, Macayla, Max, Mary Emma, Nate, Ron, Sophia, Susan, Sydney, Tammy, Tristan and pray for those who are seeking Christ and His Church!

Weekly Wisdom of the Fathers and Mothers of our Holy Orthodox Church:

The Holy Hymnography of the Church as it honors the beginning of the new Ecclesiastical Year (September 1) with hymns such as the following: “Your kingdom, O Christ God, is a kingdom of all the ages, and Your dominion is from generation to generation. You made all things in wisdom, fixing both times and seasons. Therefore we thank You for all and in all, and we shout to You: Bless the crown of the year with Your goodness, and grant that without condemnation we may call out to You, “Glory to You, O Lord!”

“O Fashioner of all creation, who made seasons and years by Your own authority, bless the crown of the year with Your goodness, O Lord, and preserve our rulers and Your city in peace, at the intercession of the Theotokos, and save us.”

Upcoming Celebrations This Week

Name Days—Chronia Polla, Many Years!

September 1: Antigone Michalakakis, Susan Sanders

Birthdays—Happy Birthday!

August 31: Jon Greene

September 1: Betty Maxwell

September 3: Basil Ehmer, Nicholas Lawrence

September 5: Bob McCluskey

Anniversaries—Congratulations!

August 31: Marianna & Dragos Filimon

September 1: Paulina & James Stone

September 3: Stacey & Henry Goss

September 6: Lisa & David Needham

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

Announcements:

* **Thank you to those who prepared a Fanouropita** on this day honoring St. Fanourios. Philoptochos will have a collection to support the Youth Ministries locally and of the Metropolis.

* The next **Introduction to the Orthodox Church** class will take place this **Thursday, September 4 at 6:30pm in person and on Zoom.** The topic will be our Orthodox Christian understanding of the Holy Icons. If you would like a recording of the previous session or be included on the email list for the class, please contact Father Theodore.

* The **Orthodox Book Study** will continue Thursday, September 4 at the Taste and See coffee shop in Downtown Macon at 10:30am. We are reading the book *For the Life of the World* by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, of blessed memory. Please plan on joining on Thursday mornings!

* **FESTIVAL INFO (OCTOBER 24-26):** Have you taken off for Friday, October 24th yet? **Raffle Tickets** are available! We are asking each family to sell 5 books. Contact Natalia for tickets. **Festival Apparel** is now on sale! Samples are located in the Bookstore (sizes and colors). Use the QR Code to be directed to our Festival Page where you can find links to the Festival Apparel. Please save the date for **Grape Leaves Prep** will be after Liturgy next Sunday. Please bring a pair of scissors and plan to stay. We will be assembling **Dolmades** on Sept. 20th. **Pastry Prep** will be on October 11th and 18th. We will also need help unloading the truck with pastries on one of the days of Sept. 24-26 (will know closer to time). Thank you!

* **REGISTER TODAY** for the 4th Annual Pan-Orthodox **CROSS DIVE** that will be held Saturday, September 13th. All high school students are invited to participate while all parishioners are invited to attend and enjoy the day. There will be food, fun, laughter, and of course, the Blessing of the Waters along with the Cross Dive. Go to this link: <https://forms.gle/b3yPtC7KtUdyru5K9> or scan the QR Code. Cross Dive Apparel and Sponsorship opportunities are available through registration. If you need any assistance with registering or have a need to be able to attend, please contact Natalia.

* There will be an **Altar Server Workshop/Meeting** after Liturgy/Coffee Hour next Sunday, September 7. Please plan on attending if you serve in the Holy Altar.

* There will be an **Epistle Reader Meeting** taking place immediately after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, September 28. Please plan on staying for this meeting if you are an Epistle Reader (or would like to be!)

