



HOLY CROSS

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Sunday of the Forefathers

Sts. Thyrsus, Leucius, and Callinicus the Martyrs

Eothinon/Orthros Gospel: Fifth (Luke 24:12-35)

Mode of the Week: Second / Δεύτερος

QR Codes (scan with smart phone for service texts)

Orthros, part 1



Orthros, part 2



Divine Liturgy



Upcoming Schedule

<i>Today, December 14</i>	9:15am Orthros 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday of the Forefathers Memorial Service for members of the Ghigeanu and Cazacu family at the end of the Liturgy Christmas Pageant presented by the Youth at the end of the Liturgy Coffee Fellowship after the Pageant in the Parish House 12:45pm Bible Study
<i>Wednesday, December 17</i>	6:30pm Choir Practice in the Church
<i>Sunday, December 21</i>	9:15am Orthros 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday before Nativity Sunday School for the Youth after Holy Communion Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy 1:00pm Youth Greek School
<i>Tuesday, December 23</i>	5:30pm Vespers for the Forefeast of the Nativity
<i>Wednesday, December 24</i>	8:30am Royal Hours and Great Vespers for Christmas 5:30pm Orthros for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ (Christmas) 6:30pm Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ (Christmas)
<i>December 25-26</i>	Office Closed for Christmas Holiday
<i>December 27-30</i>	Winter Youth Rally in Atlanta
<i>Sunday, December 28</i>	9:15am Orthros 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday after Nativity Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy 12:45pm Bible Study
<i>Tuesday, December 30</i>	6:30pm Introduction to the Orthodox Church Class (Zoom Only)
<i>Wednesday, December 31</i>	5:30pm Great Vespers honoring St. Basil the Great
<i>Thursday, January 1</i>	Office Closed for News Years Day 10:00am Orthros 11:00am Divine Liturgy on the Feast Day of St. Basil the Great
<i>Sunday, January 4</i>	9:15am Orthros 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday before Theophany Sunday School for the Youth after Holy Communion Blessing of the Vasilopita at the end of the Liturgy Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy
<i>Monday, January 5</i>	9:30am Great (Royal) Hours of Theophany 6:00pm Vespersal Liturgy of St. Basil and Blessing of the Waters

Upcoming Epistle Readers: (12/21) George + Isabelle Saratsiotis; (12/28) Pete Tsamolias, Charles Glotzbach
Upcoming PC Member On-Duty: (12/21) Chad Ridley; (12/28) Gray Yates; (1/4) Natalia S.; (1/11) Jim Lekas
Upcoming Ushers: (12/21) Erick + Cheryl; (12/23) Sarah; (12/24) AM-OPEN, PM-Charles, Nic (12/28) Nic, David Z
Upcoming Video Operators: (12/21) David Z.; (12/24AM) Daniel V.; (12/24PM) David Z.; (12/28) Gray, David N
Fellowship Hosts: (12/21) Chad Ridley; (12/28) Helen Vardy; (1/4) Philoptochos; (1/11) Georgia Saratsiotis

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

Εὐλογητὸς εἶ Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς τῶν
πατέρων ἡμῶν.

Στίχ. Ὅτι δίκαιος εἶ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν, οἷς
ἐποίησας ἡμῖν.

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Πρὸς Κολασσαεῖς Ἐπιστολῆς
Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα.

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Ἀδελφοί, ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς φανερωθῇ,
ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν, τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ
φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ. Νεκρώσατε
οὖν τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,
πορνείαν, ἀκαθαρσίαν, πάθος,
ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, καὶ τὴν
πλεονεξίαν, ἣτις ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρία,
δι' ἧς ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπὶ
τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας, ἐν οἷς καὶ
ὑμεῖς περιπατήσατέ ποτε, ὅτε ἐζῆτε
ἐν αὐτοῖς· νυνὶ δὲ ἀπόθεσθε καὶ
ὑμεῖς τὰ πάντα, ὀργὴν, θυμὸν,
κακίαν, βλασφημίαν, αἰσχρολογίαν
ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν· μὴ ψεύδεσθε
εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἀπεκδυσάμενοι τὸν
παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον σὺν ταῖς
πράξεσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν
νέον τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς
ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος
αὐτόν, ὅπου οὐκ ἔστι Ἕλλην καὶ
Ἰουδαῖος, περιτομὴ καὶ ἀκροβυστία,
βάρβαρος, Σκύθης, δοῦλος,
ἐλεύθερος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἐν
πᾶσι Χριστός.

*Blessed are You, O Lord God of
our fathers.*

*Verse: For You are righteous in
all You did for us.*

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*The reading is from Paul's Letter
to the Colossians. (3:4-11)*

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Brethren, when Christ who is our
life appears, then you also will
appear with him in glory. Put to
death therefore what is earthly in
you: fornication, impurity,
passion, evil desire, and
covetousness, which is idolatry.
On account of these the wrath of
God is coming upon the sons of
disobedience. In these you once
walked, when you lived in them.
But now put them all away;
anger, wrath, malice, slander,
and foul talk from your mouth.
Do not lie to one another, seeing
that you have put off the old
nature with its practices and have
put on the new nature, which is
being renewed in knowledge after
the image of its creator. Here
there cannot be Greek and Jew,
circumcised and uncircumcised,
barbarian, Scythian, slave, free
man, but Christ is all, and in all.

The Holy Gospel Reading according to St. Luke (14:16-24)

Sunday of the Forefathers

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν
ταύτην· Ἄνθρωπός τις ἐποίησε
δεῖπνον μέγα καὶ ἐκάλεσε πολλούς·
καὶ ἀπέστειλε τὸν δοῦλον αὐτοῦ τῇ
ᾠρᾷ τοῦ δείπνου εἰπεῖν τοῖς
κεκλημένοις· ἔρχεσθε, ὅτι ἤδη
ἔτοιμά ἐστι πάντα. καὶ ἤρξαντο ἀπὸ
μᾶς παραιτεῖσθαι πάντες. ὁ πρῶτος
εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἀγρὸν ἠγόρασα, καὶ ἔχω
ἀνάγκην ἐξελθεῖν καὶ ἰδεῖν αὐτόν·
ἔρωτῶ σε, ἔχε με παρητημένον. καὶ
ἕτερος εἶπε· ζεύγη βοῶν ἠγόρασα
πέντε, καὶ πορεύομαι δοκιμάσαι
αὐτά· ἔρωτῶ σε, ἔχε με
παρητημένον. καὶ ἕτερος εἶπε·
γυναῖκα ἔγημα, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐ
δύναμαι ἐλθεῖν. καὶ παραγενόμενος
ὁ δοῦλος ἐκεῖνος ἀπήγγειλε τῷ
κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ ταῦτα. τότε ὀργισθεὶς ὁ
οἰκοδεσπότης εἶπε τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ·
ἔξελθε ταχέως εἰς τὰς πλατείας καὶ
ρύμας τῆς πόλεως, καὶ τοὺς πτωχοὺς
καὶ ἀναπήρους καὶ χωλοὺς καὶ
τυφλοὺς εἰσάγαγε ὧδε. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ
δοῦλος· κύριε, γέγονεν ὡς ἐπέταξας,
καὶ ἔτι τόπος ἐστί. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ κύριος
πρὸς τὸν δοῦλον· ἔξελθε εἰς τὰς
ὁδοὺς καὶ φραγμοὺς καὶ ἀνάγκασον
εἰσελθεῖν, ἵνα γεμισθῇ ὁ οἶκος μου.
λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς τῶν
ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων τῶν κεκλημένων
γεύσεται μου τοῦ δείπνου. Πολλοὶ
γάρ εἰσι κλητοί, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἐκλεκτοί.

The Lord said this parable: “A
man once gave a great banquet,
and invited many; and at the time
of the banquet he sent his servant
to say to those who had been
invited, ‘Come; for all is now
ready.’ But they all alike began to
make excuses. The first said to
him, ‘I have bought a field, and I
go out and see it; I pray you, have
me excused.’ And another said, ‘I
have bought five yoke of oxen, and
I must go to examine them; I pray
you, have me excused.’ And
another said, ‘I have married a
wife, and therefore I cannot come.’
So the servant came and reported
this to his master. Then the
householder in anger said to his
servant, ‘Go out quickly to the
streets and lanes of the city, and
bring in the poor and maimed and
blind and lame.’ And the servant
said, ‘Sir, what you commanded
has been done, and there is still
room.’ And the master said to the
servant, ‘Go out to the highways
and hedges, and compel people to
come in, that my house may be
filled. For I tell you, none of those
men who were invited shall taste
my banquet. For many are called,
but few are chosen.”

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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 December 14, 2025

Ushers on Duty: Sarah Drakopoulos, Haris Sorovigas

Video: David Z.

Altar Servers: All Adult/Youth Servers

Epistle Readers: Haris Sorovigas (Greek); Carter Zoumberis (English)

Fellowship Host (Thank You!): Rodica Cazacu

PC Member On-Duty: Sarah Drakopoulos



Today our Holy Orthodox Church commemorates:

- + Sunday of the Forefathers (Κυριακή των Αγίων Προπατόρων)

On the Sunday that occurs on or immediately after the eleventh of this month, we commemorate Christ's forefathers according to the flesh, both those that came before the Law, and those that lived after the giving of the Law.

Special commemoration is made of the Patriarch Abraham, to whom the promise was first given, when God said to him, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18). This promise was given some two thousand years before Christ, when Abraham was seventy-five years of age. God called him and commanded him to forsake his country, parents, and kinsmen, and to depart to the land of the Canaanites. When he arrived there, God told him, "I will give this land to thy seed" (Gen. 12:7); for this cause, that land was called the "Promised Land," which later became the country of the Hebrew people, and which is also called Palestine by the historians. There, after the passage of twenty-four years, Abraham received God's law concerning circumcision. In the one hundredth year of his life, when Sarah was in her ninetieth year, they became the parents of Isaac. Having lived 175 years altogether, he reposed in peace, a venerable elder full of days.

- + The Holy Martyrs Thyrsus (Θύρσος), Leucius (Λεύκιος), and Callinicus (Καλλινίκος) of Asia Minor (+250)

- + The Holy Martyrs Philemon (Φιλήμων), Apollionos (Απολλώνιος), Arrianos (Αρριανός) of Alexandria, and those with them (+305)

- + The Four Guards who contested together with St. Arrianos (+305)

- + The Holy Martyr Hypatius (Υπάτιος) and 36 Martyrs with him from the Thebaid in Egypt

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 (Ότε κατήλθες, Second Mode):

When You descended unto Death, O Lord, You who are immortal Life put Hades to death, by the lightning of Your divinity. And when You raised the dead from the netherworld, all the hosts of heaven sang aloud to You, "O Christ God, Giver of life, glory to You!" (Greek Text found in hymnal on pg. 102)

- Hymn of the Forefathers (Εν πίστει τους Προπάτορας, Second Mode):

By faith You justified the Forefathers, having through them betrothed to yourself the Church that came out of the nations. The saints are boasting in glory; for the glorious fruit, the Virgin who without seed gave birth to You, is from their progeny. At their entreaties, O Christ our God, save our souls. (Greek text found in Hymnal on pg. 186)

- 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. (Greek text found on the back of the bulletin)

- Hymn of the Memorial Service (Μνήσθητι, Κύριε, Plagal of the Fourth Mode):

Remember, O Lord, as You are good, Your servants, and forgive every sin they have committed in this life. For no one is sinless except You, Who has power to grant rest to those who have fallen asleep.

- The Kontakion of the Nativity of Christ (Η Παρθένος σήμερον τον προαιώνιον Λόγον, Third Mode):

On this day the Virgin Maid * goes to the grotto to give birth * to the pre-eternal Word * in an ineffable manner. * Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. * Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds * Him who willed that He appear as * a newborn Child, * the pre-eternal God. (Greek Text found in Hymnal on pg. 240)

Guidance, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

This Week's Daily Commemorations,

Fasting Guidance and Scripture Readings:

Sunday, December 14: Sts. Thyrsus and those with him
Wine + Oil

Luke 24:12-35; Colossians 3:4-11; Luke 14:16-24

Monday, December 15: St. Eleutherios the Hieromartyr
Wine + Oil

II Timothy 1:8-18; Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-5

Tuesday, December 16: Prophet Haggai
Strict Fast

II Timothy 3:16-17; 4:1-4; Mark 8:22-26

Wednesday, December 17: Prophet Daniel
Wine + Oil

Hebrews 11:33-40; 12:1-2; Mark 8:30-34

Thursday, December 18: St. Sebastian the Martyr
Strict Fast

Titus 1:5-14; Mark 9:10-15

Friday, December 19: St. Boniface the Martyr
Strict Fast

Titus 1:15-16; 2:1-10; Mark 9:33-41

Saturday, December 20: St. Ignatius the God-bearer
Wine + Oil

Galatians 3:8-12; Luke 13:19-29

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, Carolina, Maria, Laurie, Lindsey, Randy, Marina, Effie, Christina, Ashley, Brian, Bessie, Katerina, Karl, Colin, Mitch, Rinne, Michael, Christian, Paul, Lucas, 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, Gabriel, Bradaen, Teri, Barbara, Taylor, Elizabeth, Rich, Penny

Prayers for those recently reposed:

Bonnie (+November 14), Delia (+November 19), George (+December 3), Debbie (+December 6)

Prayers for expecting mothers:

Amanda, Emily, Maggie, Kémie

Prayers for Military Personnel and Their Families:

Benjamin George Davis, Joseph Fajloun, Kyle Glotzbach, Robert Ice, Aleksander Zajac

Prayers for our Catechumens and Inquirers into the Orthodox Church:

Adam, Alexander, Amanda, Aryn, Avery, Billy, Bobbie, Cherish, Dakota, Daniel, Darryl, Ecaterina, Gavin, Hannah, Jessica, John, Kyle, Macayla, Maegan, Max, Mary Emma, Nate, Noah, Ron, Sarah, 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:

Saint John of Kronstadt writes about the reality of our humanity and how we all fall short—yet to trust in our Lord's mercy and with that for the other, as well: "Never confuse the person, formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him, because evil is but a chance misfortune, illness, a devilish reverie. But the very essence of the person is the image of God, and this remains in him despite every disfigurement."

Upcoming Celebrations This Week

Name Days—Chronia Polla, Many Years!

December 14: Holly Economopoulos, Danaï Esquivel, Danae Michalakis, David Needham
December 15: Eleftheria Trettel
December 18: Metropolitan Sevastianos

Birthdays—Happy Birthday!

December 14: Erick Schwartzkopf
December 17: Kathye Patras
December 18: Guy Holland, Lilly Anne Syribeys

Anniversaries—Congratulations!
None in the Records

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

Announcements:

* **Father Theodore** along will be out of town for vacation with family tomorrow, December 15th until the following Monday, December 22nd. Father John Brown will be filling in next Sunday. Please make every effort to attend Liturgy and fellowship afterwards. If you have any pastoral needs, please contact Father Theophan at 478-538-8161.

* **2026 Stewardship Cards** were blessed last Sunday. If you were unable to turn your card in, there is still time to make your commitment for 2026. If you have misplaced your card, you can locate an extra one in the Narthex or online.

* **Congratulations** to those who were elected for the 2026-2027 Parish Council. Those members are: Jim Lekas, Kathye Patras, Maria Spicer and David Zoumberis. We also thank Nic Poulos and Haris Sorovigas for running for the Council. We were very blessed to have six worthy candidates this year!

* If you would like to participate in the **Christmas Poinsettias**, please scan the QR Code to submit your name. The dedicated names will be in the remaining bulletins for December. The deadline to participate is TOMORROW, December 15th. For more information, contact Cristina Lekas.



* Join us after the Divine Liturgy today for the Annual **Nativity Pageant**. All youth participating in the pageant are asked to make their way in the Family Room in the Narthex after Communion.

* The next **Introduction to the Orthodox Church** class will take place **Tuesday, December 30 at 6:30pm on Zoom ONLY**. The topic for the next session will be our Orthodox understanding of the Holy Fathers of the Church.

* A huge thank you from the **Festival Chairmen** for your help last Sunday preparing the back building. The phrase "many hands make light work" came to life! Please mark your calendars for the Spring Fling that will be held on May 2nd.

***Philoptochos** is currently collecting items for the clinic at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School. This is part of a national Philoptochos initiative-Operation Classroom. Please place your donations in the box located in the Narthex. Thank you for your support! The following items are needed: Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen (for ages 2-11), Pepto Bismol, Triple Antibiotic Ointment, Orajel, Alcohol Pads, Cotton Balls, 3 oz Water Cups, Sandwich and Gallon Sized Ziploc Bags.