



HOLY CROSS

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

Sunday, December 28, 2025

Sunday after the Nativity of Christ
 Holy 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia

Eothinon/Orthros Gospel: Seventh (John 20:1-10)

Mode of the Week: Fourth / Τέταρτος

QR Codes (scan with smart phone for service texts)

Orthros, part 1



Orthros, part 2



Divine Liturgy



Upcoming Schedule

<i>Today, 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 Vespers of St. Basil and Blessing of the Waters on the Eve of Theophany
<i>Tuesday, January 6</i>	9:30am Orthros 10:30am Divine Liturgy for the Feast Day of Theophany (Epiphany) Great Blessing of the Waters at the end of the Liturgy
<i>Wednesday, January 7</i>	5:30pm Divine Liturgy for the Feast Day of Saint John the Baptist 6:30pm Introduction to the Orthodox Church Class (In-Person/Zoom)
<i>Thursday, January 8</i>	10:00am Orthodox Book Study at Taste & See
<i>Saturday, January 10</i>	4:00pm Byzantine Chant Class 5:00pm Great Vespers 6:30pm Festival Wrap-Up Meeting with All Chairmen
<i>Sunday, January 11</i>	9:15am Orthros 10:30am Divine Liturgy on the Sunday after Theophany Sunday School for the Youth after Holy Communion Coffee Fellowship in the Parish House after the Liturgy 12:45pm Bible Study 1:00pm Youth Greek School
<i>Wednesday, January 14</i>	5:30pm Vespers 6:30pm Introduction to the Orthodox Church Class
<i>Thursday, January 15</i>	10:00am Orthodox Book Study at Taste & See
Upcoming Epistle Readers: (1/4) Chad Ridley, Carter Zoumberis; (1/11) Helen Troupos, Beth Zoumberis Upcoming PC Member On-Duty: (1/4) Natalia S.; (1/11) Jim Lekas; (1/18) Maria Spicer; (1/25) Asst. Treasurer Upcoming Ushers: (12/31) Eleni; (1/1) Charles G.; (1/4) Sarah D, Joanna P; (1/5a) Charles G; (1/5p) Haris S. Upcoming Video Operators: (12/28) Gray, David N; (12/31) Norm; (1/1) David Z; (1/4+5) Natalia; (1/6) Cristina L. Fellowship Hosts: (1/4) Philoptochos; (1/11) Georgia Saratsiotis; (1/18) Danai Esquivel; (1/25) Haris Sorovigas	

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

Θαυμαστός ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ.

Στίχ. Ἐν ἐκκλησίαις εὐλογεῖτε τὸν Θεόν.

+++

Πρὸς Γαλάτας Ἐπιστολῆς Παύλου τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα.

+++

Ἀδελφοί, γνωρίζω ὑμῖν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι κατὰ ἄνθρωπον· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτὸ οὔτε ἐδιδάχθην, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἠκούσατε γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀναστροφήν ποτε ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ, ὅτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἐδίωκον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ἐπόρθουν αὐτήν, καὶ προέκοπτον ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ ὑπὲρ πολλοὺς συνηλικιώτας ἐν τῷ γένει μου, περισσοτέρως ζηλωτῆς ὑπάρχων τῶν πατρικῶν μου παραδόσεων. Ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι, οὐδὲ ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους, ἀλλὰ ἀπῆλθον εἰς Ἀραβίαν, καὶ πάλιν ὑπέστρεψα εἰς Δαμασκόν. Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Πέτρον, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε· ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ Κυρίου.

God is wondrous in His saints.

Verse: Bless God in the churches.

+++

The reading is from Paul's Letter to the Galatians. (1:11-19)

+++

Brethren, I would have you know that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when God who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

The Holy Gospel Reading according to St. Matthew (2:13-23)

Sunday after Nativity

Ἀναχωρησάντων τῶν μάγων, ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος Κυρίου φαίνεται κατ' ὄναρ τῷ Ἰωσήφ λέγων· ἐγερθεὶς παράλαβε τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ φεῦγε εἰς Αἴγυπτον, καὶ ἴσθι ἐκεῖ ἕως ἂν εἶπω σοι· μέλλει γὰρ Ἡρώδης ζητεῖν τὸ παιδίον τοῦ ἀπολέσαι αὐτό. Ὁ δὲ ἐγερθεὶς παρέλαβε τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ νυκτὸς καὶ ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον, καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖ ἕως τῆς τελευτῆς Ἡρώδου, ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος· ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐκάλεσα τὸν υἱόν μου. Τότε Ἡρώδης ἰδὼν ὅτι ἐνεπαίχθη ὑπὸ τῶν μάγων, ἐθυμώθη λίαν, καὶ ἀποστείλας ἀνείλε πάντας τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς ἐν Βηθλεὲμ καὶ ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ὀρίοις αὐτῆς ἀπὸ διετοῦς καὶ κατωτέρω, κατὰ τὸν χρόνον ὃν ἠκρίβωσε παρὰ τῶν μάγων. τότε ἐπληρώθη τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ Ἱερεμίου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος· φωνὴ ἐν Ῥαμᾷ ἠκούσθη, θρήνος καὶ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὄδυρμος πολὺς· Ῥαχὴλ κλαίουσα τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς, καὶ οὐκ ἤθελε παρακληθῆναι, ὅτι οὐκ εἰσίν. Τελευτήσαντος δὲ τοῦ Ἡρώδου ἰδοὺ ἄγγελος Κυρίου κατ' ὄναρ φαίνεται τῷ Ἰωσήφ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ λέγων· ἐγερθεὶς παράλαβε τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ πορεύου εἰς γῆν Ἰσραὴλ· τεθνήκασι γὰρ οἱ ζητοῦντες τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ παιδίου. Ὁ δὲ ἐγερθεὶς παρέλαβε τὸ παιδίον καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς γῆν Ἰσραὴλ. ἀκούσας δὲ ὅτι Ἀρχέλαος βασιλεύει ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἀντὶ Ἡρώδου τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ, ἐφοβήθη ἐκεῖ ἀπελθεῖν· χρηματισθεὶς δὲ κατ' ὄναρ ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὰ μέρη τῆς Γαλιλαίας, καὶ ἐλθὼν κατώκησεν εἰς πόλιν λεγομένην Ναζαρέτ, ὅπως πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν ὅτι Ναζωραῖος κληθήσεται.

When the magi had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the magi, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the magi. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

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 December 28, 2025

Ushers on Duty: Nic Poulos & David Zoumberis

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

Epistle Readers: Pete Tsamolias (Greek); Charles Glotzbach (English)

Fellowship Host (Thank You!): Helen Vardy

PC Member On-Duty: Gray Yates



Today our Holy Orthodox Church commemorates:

+ Sunday after the Nativity: The Holy and Righteous Ancestors of God: Joseph (Ἰωσήφ ο Μνηστήρας) the Betrothed; James (Ἰάκωβος), the Brother of the Lord; and David (Δαβίδ) the Prophet and King

On the Sunday that falls on or immediately after the twentieth of this month, we make commemoration of Saints Joseph, the Betrothed of the Virgin; David, the Prophet and King; and James, the Brother of God. When there is no Sunday within this period, we celebrate this commemoration on the 26th.

+ The Holy 20,000 Martyrs in Nicomedia including the Holy Martyrs Indos (Ἰνδης), Gorgon (Γοργόνιος), Peter (Πέτρος), Zeno (Ζήνων), Mardonios (Μαρδόνιος), Dorotheos (Δωρόθεος) the Courtier, Theophilos (Θεόφιλος) the Deacon, Mygdonios (Μυγδόνιος), Glycerius (Γλυκερίος) the Priest, and Domna (Δόμνα) (+303)

All these Saints, some 20,000 in number, were burned alive in the year 303, while they were gathered in church. This came to pass during the reign of Diocletian and Maximian. According to the Synaxarion, this took place on the day of Christ's Nativity. Eusebius says that, of the Christians then living in Nicomedia, all were slain by imperial decree - some by the sword, and others by fire, and that, because of their divine and inexpressible ardour, both men and women cast themselves into the fire. Besides those burned in church, the following, who were slain in the same Persecution, are commemorated today, Indus, Gorgonius, and Peter were cast into the sea; Glycerius the Presbyter and Mardonius were burned; Dorotheus the Prefect and Zeno were beheaded; Theophilus the Deacon was stoned; Mygdonius was buried alive; and Domna, who had been a priestess of the idols, believed in Christ, and was baptized, was beheaded and cast into the fire.

+ Our Devout Father Simon (Σίμων) the Myrr-Streamer, founder of the Simonopetra Monastery on Mount Athos (+1287)

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):

- *Hymn of Christmas (Ἡ Γέννησις σου, Fourth Mode):*

Your nativity, O Christ our God, has caused the light of knowledge to rise upon the world. For therein the worshippers of the stars were by a star instructed to worship You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You as Orient from on high. Glory to You, O Lord. (*Sung before the Small Entrance and after the Resurrectional Hymn. Greek Text found in hymnal on pg. 198*)

- *Weekly Resurrectional Hymn (Το φαίδρον, Fourth Mode):*

When the women disciples of the Lord heard the Angel joyously proclaim the resurrection, they cast aside the ancestral verdict, and boasting in glory they said to the Apostles, "Death has been despoiled! Christ God has risen, granting the great mercy to the world!" (*Greek Text found in hymnal on pg. 110*)

- *Hymn of the Ancestors of God (Ευαγγελίζου Ἰωσήφ, Second Mode):*

Annunciate the miracles to David the ancestor of God, O Joseph. You saw the Virgin pregnant. You glorified with the shepherds. You worshipped with the Magi. And you were warned by an Angel. Entreat Christ God 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. (*Greek text found on the back of the bulletin*)

- *The Kontakion of the Nativity of Christ (Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον, Third Mode):*

On this day the Virgin gives * birth to the Super-essential. * To the Unapproachable, * earth is providing the grotto. * Angels sing and with the shepherds offer up glory. * Following a star the Magi are still proceeding. * He was born for our salvation, a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God. (*Greek Text found in Hymnal on pg. 244*)

Guidance, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

This Week's Daily Commemorations,

Fasting Guidance and Scripture Readings:
Sunday, December 28: 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia
No Fasting

John 20:1-10; Galatians 1:11-19; Matthew 2:13-23
Monday, December 29: Holy Innocents slain by Herod
No Fasting

Hebrews 2:11-19; Matthew 2:13-23
Tuesday, December 30: St. Anysia of Thessaloniki
No Fasting

Hebrews 9:8-23; Mark 11:11-23
Wednesday, December 31: St. Melania the Younger
No Fasting

Hebrews 10:1-18; Mark 11:22-26
Thursday, January 1: St. Basil the Great
No Fasting

John 10:1-9; Colossians 2:8-12; Luke 2:20-21, 40-52
Friday, January 2: St. Seraphim of Sarov
No Fasting

Hebrews 5:4-10; John 3:1-15
Saturday, January 3: St. Genevieve of Paris
No Fasting

I Timothy 3:13-16; 4:1-5; Matthew 3:1-6

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, Barbara, Taylor, Elizabeth, Rich, Penny, Brian

Prayers for those recently reposed:

Delia (+November 19), George (+December 3),
Debbie (+December 6), Teri (+December 23)

Prayers for expecting mothers:

Amanda, 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:

St. Basil the Great (commemorated this week on January 1) with a good reminder for us as we have just celebrated Christmas and the presents and all: "When someone steals another's clothes, we call them a thief. Should we not give the same name to one who could clothe the naked and does not? The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry; the coat unused in your closet belongs to the one who needs it; the shoes rotting in your closet belong to the one who has no shoes; the

money which you hoard up belongs to the poor."

Upcoming Celebrations This Week

Name Days—Chronia Polla, Many Years!

December 28: David Lee Bradford, David Needham
December 31: Melanie Moya

January 1: Bessie Andros, Basil Ehmer, Vasile Iftime, Betty Maxwell, Bill Vasilopoulos, Kiki Vasilopoulos, Carter Zoumberis
January 2: Sebastian Seraphim Wolfe
January 3: Jennifer Kangas

Birthdays—Happy Birthday!

December 31: Susan McCluskey
January 2: Demetri Kostakis
January 3: Lukas Esquivel, Cristina Lekas, Max Wheeler

Anniversaries—Congratulations!

December 30: Hannah & Demetri Kostakis
January 3: Father Theodore & Presvytera Stacey Ehmer

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

Announcements:

* **2026 Stewardship Cards** were blessed a couple of Sundays ago. 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.

* 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 Christian understanding of the Holy Fathers of the Church.

* There will be a **Festival Wrap-Up Meeting** held on Saturday, January 10th after Great Vespers. If you are a chair of a booth or any other area, please plan to attend. Please let David Zoumberis know by next Sunday, January 4th if you are able to attend so we can properly plan for dinner.

* **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.

* Philoptochos will also be hosting the **Blessing of the Vasilopites** on the Sunday following the Feast of St. Basil, which will be Sunday, January 4. Please consider making a Vasilopita and bringing it to Church to share with our Holy Cross Family. Philoptochos will also have a collection on this day to support the St. Basil Orphanage.

* Be on the lookout for the sign-up (email to be sent this week) for the **House Blessings** that will be taking place as per tradition after the Feast of Theophany on January 6. There will be sign-ups for dates and times throughout the months of January and February.

Happy New Year! Καλή Χρονιά!