Holy Apostles
Greek Orthodox Church
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September 16, 2018:
Sunday after Holy Cross

St. Gregory Palamas on the Cross of Christ (Part 3)

The commandment ordains that we have to deny the body and take up our cross. People who live close to God still have their body, but they aren't particularly attached to it; they use it as a collaborator in necessary things, but when the time comes, they're prepared to give it up, as they would possessions and any other necessities. This is the word of the Cross and, as such it is a great and really divine mystery, whether it acted in the prophets before the crucifixion or today, after the crucifixion has occurred. How? Because superficially it appears to bring dishonor to those who demean and humble themselves in all things, in pain and agony, who avoid bodily pleasures, who give away their possessions, are themselves the cause of their own poverty. Through the power of God, however, this poverty, pain and dishonor begets eternal glory, inexpressible pleasure, limitless riches, both in this world and in the next. This, then, is the wisdom and power of God, to triumph through weakness, to raise up through humility and to enrich through poverty. It's not only the word and mystery of the Cross which is divine and to be venerated, but also a sign, because it's a holy seal, saving and venerable, sanctifying and perfecting the supernatural and ineffable good things which have been activated in the human race by God, the destruction of the curse and condemnation, remover of mortality and death, provider of eternal life and blessing, the tree of salvation, the royal sceptre the divine trophy against visible and invisible enemies, even if the supporters of heresies are insanely displeased by this. The Lord's Cross represents the whole dispensation of His.… **(Continued on the back)**

EPISTLE READING:
St. Paul's Second Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

GOSPEL READING:
The Gospel According to Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday School starts **TODAY**! Registration forms are in the church hall. Complete one per child, even siblings. A donation of $15 per child is appreciated.

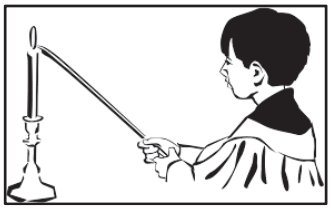
There are many lessons and activities planned which our teachers are anxious to share with our children. This year, once again, our Lord blessed us with a wonderful Sunday School Teaching Team! As Fr. George has mentioned many times, another response to God for His gracious love is the stewardship of our time, talents and possessions. Our Sunday School Teachers are called to use their God-given talents and time to educate our young people in our Orthodox Faith. Our teachers responded to this call generously, lovingly, gladly and humbly. We are, indeed, blessed with a wonderful Sunday School teaching group! Please pray for our teachers, encourage them, thank them, support them and work with them in building our children's relationship with God. Today, the Sunday following the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, our students will work on related activities and projects. Parents are welcome to visit our Sunday School spaces, meet with the teachers, discuss the curriculum and talk with us about opportunities to volunteer. We will be thrilled to chat with you and respond to any questions you may have. Ergini B. Martnishn (703-652-4426)

GOYA Meeting, TODAY after church
All teenagers are invited to join us upstairs for our first meeting of the year. Contact: Lia Economou (liaecon@comcast.net)

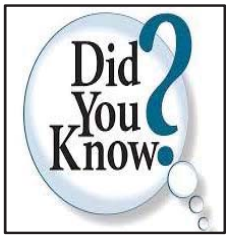
Philoptochos Happy Hour, Sept. 24th
6:30pm, Burton's Bar and Grill
RSVP to acphiloptochos@gmail.com by Sept. 21.
Philoptochos Meeting, October 7th
Immediately following Liturgy

PAREA (Our Company of Friends) Lunch, October 2nd
11:30am, Opa's Mezze Grill on Ashburn Village Blvd.
Please RSVP to Marina (703-349-1842).

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS



Altar Boy Blessing, Oct. 7th Following Liturgy
Our Altar Boys will take a special blessing and oath of service. Coffee Hour will be sponsored by their parents.



Did you know, Sept. 14th was the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross which is an opportunity to relish the full glory of the Cross as a source of light, hope and victory for Christ's people. Help us continue to spread the light of the Cross throughout Loudoun and beyond by **making a donation to our Capital Campaign** for a permanent church campus in Ashburn.

Registration forms will be available soon for Greek School and Ellinomatheia classes which start in October. Vasilia Ravaris, Greek School, (vasilia@live.com). Athanasia Dacey, Ellinomatheia, (sdacey@comcast.net).

GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION: Holy Communion is offered in the Orthodox Church only to those individuals baptized and Chrismated (Confirmed) in the Orthodox Faith. To participate in Holy Communion one must be in good standing with the Church spiritually (for example, married people must have had their marriage blessed in the Church; and, all must be without grave sin on their hearts). For all Orthodox Christians, the proper preparation for Holy Communion must be observed: that is, examination of conscience, confession, reading the prayers for Holy Communion, and the proper fasting and abstinence prior to Holy Communion. If you have any further questions about this, please speak with our Parish Priest. Women should remove all lipstick when approaching for Holy Communion. Please allow our Sunday School teachers and students to approach first. Thank you.

Weekly Feature: Regular Participation in the Church

"Of Thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of Thy Mystery to Thine enemies, neither like Judas will I give Thee a kiss; but like the thief will I confess Thee: Remember me, O Lord in Thy Kingdom."

All Orthodox Christians are required to approach the Holy Chalice "in the fear of God, with faith and love." We can accomplish this only by careful preparation, spiritual discipline and adherence to the teachings of the Church. Following is list of conditions necessary to approaching the Chalice worthily:

- ❖Regular participation in the Church's liturgical worship.
- ❖Regular practice of a rule of personal prayer.
- ❖Regular practice of fasting (Wednesdays and Fridays) and abstinence.
- ❖Regular reading of the Bible and spiritual writings.
- ❖Regular participation in the Sacrament of Confession.
- ❖Regular giving and receiving of forgiveness of sins with all the people in our lives.
- ❖Regular sharing of our time, energies, and possessions with others.

Constant effort to do our daily work as well as we can, to God's glory, for the good of people, and constant striving not to sin in the smallest way in the routine activities of our everyday life and personal relationships.

TEENS! Have questions about our faith? Need help navigating the pressures of teen life? Come to our **GOYA meeting TODAY** and learn about the various tools we will explore (supported by our Archdiocese) to guide you in today's challenging world.

(Cover Message Cont.) bodily presence and contains the whole of the mystery contained therein. It extends to the ends of the earth, embracing everything above, below, around and between. They have not understood that the Lord's Cross discloses the entire dispensation of His coming in the flesh, and contains within it the whole mystery of this dispensation. Extending in all directions, it embraces everything above, below, around and between. The Lord Himself, when He was going to ascend the Cross, openly referred to it as His lifting up and His glory [John 3.14-15]. And He announced that in His coming and manifestation in the future, this sign of the Son of man would come with great power and glory [Matthew 24.30]. Saint Paul writes to the Colossians: 'And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it' (2, 13-15). Inclining our hearts as well as bending our knees, come , 'let us worship', with David the psalmist and prophet, 'at the place where His feet stood' (Psalm 132.7 Septuagint), where His all-embracing hands were outspread and His life-giving body was stretched out for our sake. As we venerate and greet the Cross with faith, let us draw the abundant sanctification flowing from it and retain it. Then, at the sublimely glorious future advent of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, as we see Him come in glory, we shall rejoice and skip for joy for ever, having attained to a place on His right hand, to the glory of the Son of God crucified in the flesh for us. To Whom belongs all glory, together with His Father without beginning and the all-holy, good and life- giving Spirit, now and for ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen

Help us support the life of the church! Turn in your 2018 Stewardship Pledge card. Parishioners with a pledge and current payment help support our Ministries and enjoy being members in good standing with voting rights. If you're unsure if we have your pledge card, please contact Ron Baldinger, Stewardship Chair: ron.baldinger@gmail.com.