



Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org

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January 14, 2018; Leavetaking of the Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

With these profound and holy words, the incarnate Word began His preaching to fallen mankind. Outwardly, such simple teaching! But one must understand it with his very life: then these short and simple words which are contained in all of the Gospel will be revealed. Just as the holy Apostle Paul, when preaching the Gospel, which he did throughout almost all the known world, said that he testified “both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21). Brethren! In order to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ repentance is needed; in order to remain in this salvific faith, repentance is needed; in order to be successful in it, repentance is needed; in order to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, repentance is needed. All of this is clearly set forth in the Holy Scripture. Holy Scripture teaches us that “God sent His Son into the world ... that the world through Him might be saved,” that “he that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already,” “That light (Christ) is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hates the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.” (John 3: 17-20) To those afflicted by the passion of vainglory the Scripture witnesses: “How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?” (John 5:44). Those bound by the passion of greed did not only not believe the Lord, but they even derided Him when He preached to them the important and most holy teaching concerning the remembrance of eternity, and the arranging of earthly matters in accordance to the immortality appointed for man. (Luke 16: 14) Those attracted to the evil passion of envy did not only not believe in the Lord, but they also conspired to kill Him, and they accomplished this. All those infected with vain and sinful vices, according to the unerring testimony of the Gospel, are cut off from participating in the spiritual wedding of the Son of God, making themselves unworthy of blessed union with Him (Matt. 22:5). “You cannot serve God and Mammon!” (Luke 16:14); you cannot serve two masters, God and sin! “Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! Repent, and believe in the Gospel (Mark 1:15). However, one who has believed in Christ, and has decided to continually prove his faith, by his actions, is also in need of repentance. What do you think, brethren; what is the first fruit of living faith? What is the first fruit of fulfilling the commandments of Christ? I will give you the answer of St. Simeon the New Theologian, who acquired his knowledge of truth through his holy experience. He said: “The careful fulfillment of the commandments of Christ teaches a man his own infirmities.” Exactly! As soon as one who believes in Christ begins to fulfill the all-holy commandments of the Gospel, or also, **(Continued on inside pg.)**



EPISTLE READING : St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:7-13

BRETHREN, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (in saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for

the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

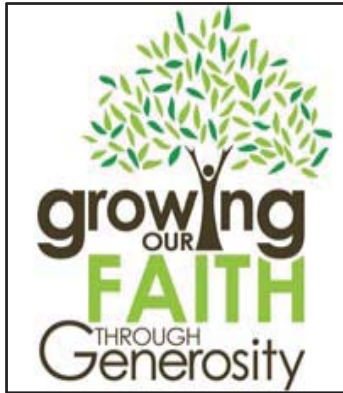
GOSPEL READING : The Gospel According to Matthew 4:12-17

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."



(Cover Message Cont..) to perform the works of renewed nature, his fallen nature is instantly revealed to him, which had been hidden from sight until then, and it enters into a sustained battle with the Gospel. The life of one who struggles for Christ is filled with unseen falls. He involuntarily confesses with the Apostle: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am!" (Acts 7: 22-24). From such an observation of oneself, blessed poverty of spirit is engendered within a Christian, rational, spiritual mourning appears, and a broken and humble heart is established, which God will not destroy (Ps. 50: 20). In living according to the Gospel, there appears in a man, as if naturally, the repentance commanded by the Gospel. Therefore, repentance is necessary not only in order to believe in Christ; it is necessary in order to have a living faith in Christ. "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." There remains to be explained: why is there such a close connection between the words of the Lord calling us to repent, and the announcing of the nearness of the Kingdom of heaven? Why is there not presented between them a kind of intermediate struggle, an intermediate condition? The reason is that our Lord Jesus Christ is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) --- He has accomplished everything for our salvation. He has reconciled us with God; He has prepared and acquired for us the Heavenly Kingdom ..(Continued on the back pg.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS: January 14, 2018



It's a brand new year and time to fill out your 2018 Stewardship pledge card! Your pledge is critical to the daily health and future of our church. Not only does your Stewardship pay our rent and bills, but it allows for future planning and growth. Parishioners with a pledge and current payment also enjoy being members in good standing, with voting rights at events such as General Assemblies and Parish Council elections. If you have any questions or would like to pledge via email, please contact me at ron.baldinger@gmail.com.



GOYA – Our next meeting is **Friday, January 19th at church at 7pm.** Father George will lead our discussion on “New Year’s Resolutions from an Orthodox Perspective.” Contact Lia Economou, GOYA Advisor, with questions: liaecon@comcast.net.

PHILOPTOCHOS – Our membership drive continues in **January**. Our membership dues are \$50.00. We look forward to a new year filled with many activities, including volunteering at the Taste of Greece in February.



Join Philoptochos for our first happy hour for the new year on **Monday, January 29th at 6:30pm at Burton's Grill and Bar in Sterling!** We look forward to spending an evening together. **RSVP to Alexis Cleveland (apcphiloptochos@gmail.com) by Monday, January 22nd.**

Godparent/Godchild Sunday is February 4th – Please make every effort to call your Godparent/Godchild, plan and prepare to attend church together and receive Holy Communion on this day dedicated to Godparents and Godchildren. This is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect!



PAREA (Our Company of Friends!) – Thank you to all who joined our January PAREA and the cutting of the Vasilopita. The 'flouri' fell on PAREA's piece! Our February PAREA will take place at **Olive Garden**, (45970 Waterview Plaza, Sterling, VA 20165 - tel: 571-434-0713), on **Tuesday,**

February 6th at 11:30am. Please let Marina know if you will be joining us! (Tel: 703-349-1842). Looking forward to seeing you! Marina



AHEPA Chapter 542 – On **Sat. February 10th from 6-9pm.** AHEPA members and their families are sure to enjoy a fun filled evening bowling and playing at the arcades at Bowlero in Leesburg, immersive entertainment at its best at this retro-awesome venue at the Village at Leesburg.

To become an AHEPA member, apply on our website today, www.ahepa542.org, and subscribe to the online calendar for real time event updates.

TASTE OF GREECE

FEBRUARY 16-18, 2018

Join us for the Taste of Greece at the Ashburn Firehouse on President's Day weekend! Go to our website for the TOG flyer to share with your family and friends. Like our page on Facebook to receive updates, and invite your friends to the page to help it grow!



In the month of February, Philoptochos is sponsoring a clothing drive for the the children of Loudoun County through Mobile Hope of Loudoun. We will be collecting: **NEW socks for boys and girls, NEW tee shirts for boys, NEW underwear for boys and girls.** Please drop off your items in the box by the Philoptochos bookstore in the church hall starting next month.

Sofia Panagopoulos took the exams of Ellinomatheia on level 1(A1 for children 8-12 years old) in May 2017 and has passed with Excellent! The Hellenic Society of Prometheas of the Greater Metropolitan Area will honor students of this area that have earned the certificates of attainment in the Greek Language at a special ceremony, on **Saturday, 1/27/2018 at 7pm at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Bethesda, MD.** Please, join the Panagopoulos family and Athanasia Dacey(Director of Ellinomatheia program at Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church) as we celebrate a special day for one of our own students as she reaches a milestone in her learning of the Greek language! Everyone is invited!

Weekday Liturgical Schedule for January 2018

Wed. Jan. 17 St. Anthony the Great 8:15 AM, Orthros. 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy

Thur. Jan. 25 St. Gregory the Theologian 8:15 AM, Orthros. 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy

Tues. Jan. 30 The Three Hierarchs 8:15 AM, Orthros. 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy

Thank you to our GOYA teenage group for sponsoring today's coffee hour!



(Cover Message Cont...) We, mankind, have been presented with one work in the matter of our salvation: the work of accepting salvation, given to us by God free and complete, the work of repentance. The Heavenly Kingdom and the Heavenly King are ineffably close to us --- incomparably closer than we imagine. "Behold, I stand at the door" of the heart of man, exclaims this King, and I knock at it with My all-holy and almighty Word: "if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me (Rev. 3:20). The opening of the doors of the heart to the Heavenly King is accomplished—with repentance. "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (St. Ignatius Brianchaninov)