

Sunday, December 13, 2020

11th Sunday of Luke – Sunday of the Holy Forefathers

Herman the Wonderworker of Alaska & First Saint of America; The Holy Martyrs Eustratius, Auxentius, Eugene, Mardarius & Orestes of Greater Armenia; Lucia the Virgin-Martyr, and Gabriel the Priest-Martyr, Archbishop of Serbia

WORSHIP SCHEDULE TODAY: Orthros: 8:00 a.m. & Divine Liturgy: 9:00 a.m.

The church will be opened to the first 200 parishioners who have phoned into the church this past week and registered to attend worship (please review church protocols). This service will be live streamed and found on our Ss. Constantine and Helen Facebook Page and You Tube Channel.

HYMNS FOR THE DAY: (Found in red hymnal book)

- # 2 – Οτε κατηλθες προς τον θανατον/When You descended into the realm of death
- # 69 – Εν πιστει τους Προπατορος εδικαιωσας/In faith the Forefathers have You justified
- # 134 – Του Σταυρου σου τον τυπον/The sign of the Cross in the sky
- # 221 – Η Παρθενος σημερον/The Virgin comes today

READINGS: Orthros Gospel: Luke 24:13-35.

Epistle: Colossians 3:4-11.

Gospel: Luke 14:16-24.

(For further information go to Archdiocese website at: goarch.org or The Metropolis of Chicago website at: chicago.goarch.org.)

THE NICENE CREED & LORD'S PRAYER are found on pages 52-54 and 71 of your blue service book. Everyone is encouraged to recite them out loud in both Greek & English.

PRE & POST-COMMUNION PRAYERS: The Pre-Communion prayers are found on pages 76-80 in your blue service book. The first four will be read in Greek and the next four in English. **Please recite them out loud as a congregation.** The Post-Communion prayers are found on pages 98-100 in Greek and pages 101-102 in English. These should be read by those who have received Holy Communion when they return to their seats.

COUNCIL DUTY: Chris Paramantgis & ALL Parish Council members and volunteers.

MEMORIALS

9 days	Harilaos (Harry) Karahalios	9 yrs.	Linda Cominos
40 days	Joseph Skora	12 yrs.	Dimitrios Nuses
40 days	Ekaterini Giatras	17 yrs.	Flora Dounoukos
9 mon.	Chris Vlahos	40 yrs.	Miltiades Dounoukos
8 yrs.	Demetra (Tula) Chakos	40 yrs.	Andreas Ekonomou

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

SERVICE SCHEDULE: Tuesday, December 15th – *St. Eleutherios the Priest Martyr* – Orthros: 8:00 a.m. & Divine Liturgy: 9:00 a.m. in the Cathedral.

ΦΗΣΕΥΤΙΚΟΝ ΗΜΕΡΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ: Τριτη, 15 Δεκεμβριου – *Ελευθεριου ιερομαρτυρος* – Ορθρος: 8:00 π.μ. και Θεια Λειτουργια 9:00 π.μ. στο Καθεδρικο.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING: In the hustle and bustle of these pre-Christmas days, let us not forget our gift to the Church. May our gifts to God's House reflect our deep gratitude to Him for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us.

Christmas Offering envelopes have been mailed to all our parishioners. Please give generously so that we may help reduce the deficit caused by the COVID-19 pandemic!

AT THIS TIME OF YEAR when our minds are especially occupied with the thoughts of gifts, may we take time to realize that we have the Greatest Gift of all to share with the world: the Message of Life, Peace and Joy available through our Lord Jesus Christ.

PARISH COUNCIL OPENINGS: There are two open seats available for the Parish Council for the rest of 2020-2021 term. Any parishioner 18 years or older in good standing with the church (canonically & financially) is welcomed to submit their name, co-sponsored by two parishioners, to Fr. Ted at the church office. We have been asking for months for our parishioners to help, and yet no one has responded! Please, for the love of our Lord and His Holy Church, won't someone give of their time and talent?

SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE: Registration for the November Faith Box is ongoing. Sign up at tinyurl.com/novfaithbox.

Each month, families will have the opportunity to register to receive a box packed with activities, readings, discussion questions and games for the whole family! Families can pick up their box after church on Sunday or during the week and complete the different elements at their own pace. That way, everybody can have a few no-stress, faith-centered family nights each month focused on a particular Christian virtue. Just open the box, and the work is done! Contact Fr. Dimitri if you have any questions or suggestions.

THE PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE will take place this morning, December 13th, from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 noon. Stop by the Gold Room and check out the various baked goods and sweets that Philoptochos has prepared. By purchasing some of these delicious treats, you support the philanthropic efforts of our Philoptochos.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Thursday, December 17th, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. For details, contact Fr. Dimitri at the church office.

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE: The Meijer Simply Give program is from October 25th to January 2nd, 2021, with the double match day Saturday, December 12th. Meijer will double match the \$10 donation, meaning they will donate an additional \$20. This means our pantry will receive a total of \$30 for every \$10 a customer donates on those days.

THE PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS PARTY/MEETING scheduled for Monday, December 14th has been canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE: The only true way to value Christmas for Orthodox faithful is through prayer and receiving the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist (Holy Communion), and this celebration should be observed by the entire family. Following worship is when we may all come together and focus on the holiday celebration.

This year, worship services for the Feast Day of the Nativity of our Lord will be as follows:

The Royal Hours for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord will be chanted on Christmas Eve morning, Thursday, December 24th, 9:00 a.m. in the chapel (no Holy Communion offered).

The Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil will be celebrated on Christmas Eve evening, Thursday, December 24th, at 6:30 p.m. in the Cathedral.

On Christmas Day, Friday, December 25th, Orthros will be chanted at 8:00 a.m., followed immediately by the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom at 9:00 a.m. also in the Cathedral.

Holy Communion will be offered at the Vespers Liturgy and the Liturgy on Christmas Day. To prepare for Holy Communion on Christmas Eve: partake of a light lunch around noon and begin a total fast (no food, drink or smoking) afterwards. Read the prayers of Holy Communion and ask for forgiveness from God and each other.

Please come and join us (remember to register to attend the Christmas worship services to the church office before Wednesday, December 23rd, 2:00 p.m.) on both December 24th and 25th and share God's message of hope, peace, and love as we celebrate the Birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**ATTENTION FAITHFUL MEMBERS OF SAINTS
CONSTANTINE AND HELEN CATHEDRAL**

**OUTLINE OF SAFETY PROTOCOLS
BEFORE ATTENDING CHURCH**

- The church (or areas used for worship) will be sanitized before each service.
- The church will only be allowed to hold as many people (200) as can maintain social distancing (6 feet distance).
- Due to the limited seating available, every person who is planning on attending worship services will need to register through the church office (219-769-2481) between 11am–1pm, Monday through Friday. Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis. This will allow us to ensure that we can accommodate everyone. Those who come to church without registering will not be allowed to enter.
- According to the directives of the Metropolis of Chicago, the high-risk population and those caring for them should not attend services. Our parish will be using a system of self-reporting. We will not be verifying your age or medical history at the door.
- Those who have tested positive for COVID-19, or who are in the same household as someone positive for COVID-19, or who are feeling sick should not attend services.
- Worship Services will continue to be lived streamed on our Cathedral's Facebook Page and You Tube Channel for those who cannot or may not feel safe to attend.

COMING TO CHURCH

- Every person attending worship will need to check in upon arrival at the designated area in the Exo-Narthex. There will be a brief screening process (verbal questions and a temperature check) at the sign-in table.
- Every attendee will need to wear masks (you must provide your own mask) at all times while they are in the physical area of worship, except when receiving Holy Communion. The only exception will children under the age of 2.
- Use non-contact greetings (waving, a bowing of the head) with fellow parishioners instead of the traditional hugging, kissing or shaking of hands. Social distancing must be maintained. No walking about the church proper to greet, talk or visit with one another.

IN THE CHURCH

- There will be hand sanitizer stations at the entry of the church, at the candle stands, at the entry into the Nave, and at the Solea.
- There will be no veneration (kissing) of icons, sacred objects, or the priest's hand.
- Parish Council members will distribute candles for the faithful to light, as well as place the 3-hour votives and 5-day red votives in there designated areas of the church. After lighting candles you will be asked to sanitize your hands before entering the Nave of the church.
- No paper bulletins, monthly newsletters or other items will be distributed to those attending worship.
- Due to the need to socially distance, a Parish Council member or a designated usher will escort you to your seat. Please do not insist on sitting in "your spot," as the Parish Council's only concern will be in maintaining social distancing to maximize safety.
- Every other pew will be available for seating with six feet in between each worshiper. People living in the same household can sit together.
- There will be no liturgical books in the pews.
- Holy Communion will be distributed at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. The Parish Council will direct people to approach the Chalice and observe social distancing. Sanitize your hands before approaching the Chalice (sanitizer stations will be available on the Solea).

- After receiving Holy Communion, families will depart directly from the side doors and go to their cars to return home. Please do not congregate in the parking lot.
- The church and other worship areas will be sanitized again after services conclude.

**Please remember: It is YOUR CHOICE whether to ATTEND CHURCH or not.
It is YOUR CHOICE whether to RECEIVE Holy Communion or not.
DO NOT BE JUDGMENTAL of those who do or don't.**

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY: Please take a few minutes to review your 2021 Stewardship Commitment in support of our Parish Ministries. We have taught the importance of including the entire family in your stewardship pledge. Including everyone underscores the importance of the Stewardship Program and everyone plays a significant role. Discussing the Program will teach everyone about stewardship and the importance of their participation.

Stewardship is an opportunity to examine our priorities and values, to express our thankfulness, to give of ourselves, and to grow in grace. It allows us to participate in the work of God. Be prepared to make your Pledge for 2021 to help us reach our goal of raising \$800,000.

Also, as we are coming to a close for this year, please make sure your 2020 pledge is current or paid in full. To date there is still over \$45,000 in unpaid stewardship pledges for 2020. Your support and cooperation in this matter is deeply appreciated.

STEWARDSHIP CREED: True stewardship...Christian giving of time, talents, and treasure is focused on the call of Christ to commit myself to prayer, to work, and to give so that my Church and I may live. I thank God for whatever talents that I possess and come forward to offer them in fellowship to the Church. When my needs are the greatest, the Church is here. I believe that through Christ, the Church gives hope, peace and guidance. Thus, I am ready to commit voluntarily and gratefully: effort, time, talents, and treasure to strengthen my Church's continuing existence. In giving with gratefulness, dignity, equity and peace of mind, I achieve true STEWARDSHIP. **"It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful"** (1 Corinthians 4:2).

EVERY PARISHIONER of a Greek Orthodox parish, 18 years an older, single or married according to Archdiocese regulations should be a supporting member, a steward, of a parish. Everyone should contribute their fair share to the financial support to their parish. We all need to have the willingness to make a commitment of faith and to "go on record" as being a believer and a supporter of God's work through His Church. Since the Coronavirus Pandemic hit, the income of our parish has been cut by 90% (loss of revenue from worship services, especially Holy Week and Easter, no Annual Summer Greek Fest, no banquet rentals, just to name some). To make giving easier for all our faithful, we have established an online program called [Tithe.ly/give](https://tithe.ly/give). This will allow those who have internet accessibility to continue to make offerings for stewardship payments, candles, Helping Hand, Food Pantry and other donations that help cover the costs of operating our parish with just a click of your computer keys. Look below and check out the link listed. It is a profession of faith when we all work together and help our church to better plan for its various financial needs and expenditures. Thank you!

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=1385847>

BIBLE FUN FACTS FOR THOSE YOUNG IN MIND, BODY & HEART: Do you ever get worried about things that keep changing? You're getting older; having more responsibilities? Well, no matter what change comes into your life, just remember one thing will never change—Jesus' love for you. No matter what happens, you will always have a special UNCHANGING friend in Jesus. Such faith does not disappoint. If Christians in the past attained the eternal Kingdom through faith, so can we! Remember, **"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever"** (Hebrews 13:8).

TODAY IS THE LAST DAY OF OUR PHILANTHROPY DRIVE! Each year, our Cathedral continues to advance the cause of outreach programs to our local community. Due to the COVID pandemic, our donations are down a great deal. We as individuals and as a church have the capabilities to continue making a difference in the lives of others. Acts of love, mercy, and compassion really help those who are in need move toward physical, emotional, and spiritual wholeness in such a broken world. Here's how we can help:

Love & Care Drive: We will be collecting mittens, gloves, hats, and scarfs for the needy children of our area. Let us show others our love and care by bringing in something warm to wear. Donated items may be brought to the church office from Sunday, November 1st to Sunday, December 13th.

Kids 4 Kids Toy Drive: We will begin collecting new toys for the disadvantaged children and teens in our local area from Sunday, November 1st to Sunday, December 13th. Once again, we are requesting new, clean, non-violent toys. Please **NO** Stuffed Animals. The toys may be brought on Sundays and placed in the bin which is located at the entrance of the Cathedral or dropped off at the church office during the week.

Food Pantry: At this time, the Food Pantry will remain open on Fridays from 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. However, instead of our regular parishioner crew working it, volunteers from the Ross Township office will. Anyone 18-40 without any medical conditions who would like to volunteer during these times is asked to contact Karen Petalas at the Township Office or Patty Makarounas through the church office.

BOOKSTORE NEWS: Visit our Cathedral Books Store, Monday-Friday, between 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. for some Christmas shopping. Items available such as Christmas CD's, ornaments, Christmas cards, as well as a new selection of books, icons and other items. Children's books make excellent gifts and stocking stuffers. A wide variety of specially priced books will bring lasting joy to many on your gift list!

YOUTH SERVICE PROJECTS: During the Advent season, our Youth Groups usually do service projects to assist families that are in need. This year because of COVID, things will be a little different. Instead of going to Build-A-Bear as a group, our advisors will go and make the sure the bears for needy children will be ordered, made and distributed. Also, donations of gift cards and other items for shelter families are being collected for Christmas by our advisors to be distributed accordingly. If you would like to be of assistance, please contact Kaliope Barajas at 219-331-9229.

WEBSITE UPDATE: If you haven't looked lately at our Cathedral website, www.ssconstantineandhelen.org, you should. It has had a new makeover and allows the viewer to gather information about our parish, as well as Metropolis and Archdiocese ministries and programs at a touch of a finger. We would like to thank Presvytera Kathy Pappas and Fr. Dimitri Burikas for their time and efforts in putting this together for our parish. We still are in need of a webmaster to update and keep our information current. If there is anyone interested in volunteering their time and talent for this ministry, please contact Fr. Dimitri through the church office.

SEXTON NEEDED: The position of church sexton is still open. Anyone wishing to submit their name for this paid position is asked to see Fr. Ted.

ZHTEITAI NEΩKOΠOΣ: Μηπως υπαρχει ανθρωπος στην Κοινότητα μας που θα ηθελε να εργασθη ως νεωκορος στην Εκκλησια μας; Αν ναι, παρακαλουμεν να τηλεφωνησετε στο γραφειο της Εκκλησιας και να μιλησετε με το Πατερα Θεοδωρο.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Bible Study will begin again on Zoom starting Tuesday, January 12th, 7:00 p.m. Fr. Dimitri will lead the discussion on the topic of the Gospel according to St. John. Everyone is welcomed to tune in live and review it afterwards on Facebook or You Tube. For specific details, contact Fr. Dimitri.

THOUGHT: When the Church stops doing, it starts dying.

WHO ARE THE FOREFATHERS? According to the hymns of the Feast day of the Forefathers, the following persons are mentioned:

1. Persons of the earliest biblical period – Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah, Enoch and others;
2. The Patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jacob's twelve sons known as the Twelve Patriarchs;
3. Women such as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Miriam, Deborah, Esther, Ruth, Judith and others;
4. All the prophets such as Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, Malachi and others down to John the Baptist;
5. Special figures in the Old Testament such as Melchizedek, Job, David and others;
6. The three young men – Sahdrach, Meshach and Abednego – rescued by God from Nebuchadnezzar's blazing furnace.

THE SIN OF BUSYNESS: In today's Gospel lesson, the Lord tells a parable about busy people. "A man," He said, "gave a banquet and sent out invitations." In other words, what God offers us in the Gospel is comparable to a great banquet. Christianity, above all, is not a command but an offer; not a demand but a gift. One by one those who were invited to the banquet offered their excuse for not being able to come. They were all too busy. What Jesus is saying here is that man can become so busy making a living that he can forget to make a life. God can be crowded out so easily by the trivial and the frivolous. The things that matter most are at the mercy of the things that matter least. He is telling us also that important duties in life that keep us from God are not duties at all but sins.

SAINT OF THE DAY: ST. HERMAN OF ALASKA: Saint Herman (his name is a variant of Germanus) was born near Moscow in 1756. In his youth he became a monk, first at the Saint Sergius Hermitage near Saint Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland; while he dwelt there, the most holy Mother of God appeared to him, healing him of a grave illness. Afterwards he entered Valaam Monastery on Valiant Island in Lake Ladoga; he often withdrew into the wilderness to pray for days at a time. In 1794, answering a call for missionaries to preach the Gospel to the Aleuts, he came to the New World with the first Orthodox mission to Alaska. He settled on Spruce Island, which he called New Valaam, and here he persevered, even in the face of many grievous afflictions mostly at the hands of his own countrymen in the loving service of God and of his neighbor. Besides his many toils for the sake of the Aleuts, he subdued his flesh with great asceticism, wearing chains, sleeping little, fasting and praying much. He brought many people to Christ by the example of his life, his teaching, and his kindness and sanctity, and was granted the grace of working miracles and of prophetic insight. Since he was not a priest, Angels descended at the Theophany to bless the waters in the bay; Saint Herman used this holy water to heal the sick. Because of his untiring missionary labors, which were crowned by God with the salvation of countless souls, he is called the Enlightener of the Aleuts, and has likewise been renowned as a wonderworker since his repose in 1837.

CHURCH FATHERS SPEAK: You do not understand how the saints in heaven can hear us when we pray to them? How do the rays of the sun descend from heaven to us, lighting the whole earth, and everything on it? The saints are in the spiritual world as the rays of the sun in the material world. God is the eternal life-giving sun, and the saints are the rays of the sun. As the eyes of the Lord are constantly looking upon earth, and those upon earth, so also the eyes of the saints cannot but follow the provident gaze of the Lord.

– St. John of Kronstadt

FROM GOD'S WORD: Yes we can have a white Christmas. "Come now, and let us reason together." Says the Lord, "although your sins are like crimson, I shall make them white like snow..." (Isaiah 1:18).

CHUCKLE: There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk. "Only the Ten Commandments," answered the lady.