

Sunday, January 24, 2021

14th Sunday of Luke – Sunday of the Blind Man of Jericho

Xenia the Righteous, Deaconess of Rome; Vavylas the Holy Martyr;
Xenia of St. Petersburg, Fool for Christ

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)

8 – Εξ υψους κατηλθες ο Ευσπαλγνος/From on high You descended O Compassionate

134 – Του Σταυρου σου τον τυπον/The sign of the Cross in the sky

228 – Ο μητρην παρθενικην/You who sanctified by Your birth the Virgin's womb

READINGS: Orthros Gospel: John 21:14-25

Epistle: 1 Timothy 1:15-17

Gospel: Luke 18:35-43

(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: Nicki Droza & ALL Parish Council members and volunteers.

MEMORIALS

9 days Michael Fitousis	3 years Paraskevi Xidias
40 days Zoe Batalis	40 years Pantelis Xidias
40 days Evangelos Liadakis	43 years Kaliope Fitousis
3 years George Gagianas	54 years Nicolaos Fitousis

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!

SERVICE SCHEDULE: Monday, January 25th – *Paraklesis Service* – 6:30 p.m. in the Cathedral for the health and well-being of our members.

Saturday, January 30th – *Feast Day of the Three Hierarchs* – Orthros: 8:00 a.m. & Divine Liturgy: 9:00 a.m. in the Cathedral.

ΘΗΣΚΕΥΤΙΚΟΝ ΗΜΕΡΟΛΟΓΙΟΝ: Δευτερα, 25 Ιανουαριου – Παρακλησις – 6:30 μ.μ. στο Καθεδρικο.

Σαββατο, 30 Ιανουαριου – Οι Τρεις Ιεραρχαι – Ορθρος: 8:00 π.μ. και Θεια Λει – τουργια: 9:00 π.μ. στο Καθεδρικο.

TRADITION OF THE FEAST OF THE THREE HIERARCHS: There was a great quarrel among the faithful in regard to St. Basil, St. Gregory or St. Chrysostom as to which one was the greatest. Patriarch John resorted to fervent prayer to help find a solution. All three saints appeared to him in a dream and told him they were equal before God, and that each one of them had his own personality and genius. Thus a feast honoring all three of them together was established on January 30th originating in the year 1100 A.D.

THE HEALING OF THE BLIND BEGGAR: Jesus often urged people to go to God in prayer and persistently to bring their physical and spiritual needs before Him. “Ask,” He said, “and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7). It is true that we don’t always receive what we ask for. We must leave room for God to act in our lives according to His perfect will for us. But nevertheless we do receive: a physical or spiritual healing, an unexpected solution to a personal problem, a new opportunity for reconciliation with someone, renewed strength to face a distressful situation or some other blessing that we need. Jesus’ unfailing promise is that “**everyone who seeks will receive, and anyone who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks**” (Matthew 7:8).

A good example of spiritual alertness is provided by the blind beggar named Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus (Mark 10:46), whom Jesus met while coming to Jericho. Bartimaeus had heard of Jesus and His work from others and believed in His royal kingship. As Jesus came by, Bartimaeus eagerly seized on the only opportunity he would probably have in his life to speak to Jesus in person. The people tried to stop him from bothering Jesus, but he persisted until he got His attention.

Commenting on the healing of the blind beggar, St. John Chrysostom writes: “Therefore learn, my beloved, that though we be very vile and outcast, but yet we approach God with eagerness, even by ourselves we shall be able to bring about whatever we ask. Though God may delay the gift, though there may be many who seek to hold us back, let us not desist from asking. For in this way most of all we shall win God to our side.”

Homily 66 – Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew

Other Church Fathers point out that although Bartimaeus was physically blind, the eyes of his soul were illumined by God’s grace because he had believed what he had heard about Jesus. The saints also lift up Bartimaeus as an example of earnest and humble prayer. Each time we come to Christ in prayer, so they teach, we should come to Him as blind beggars and cry out to Him to receive new light day by day.

SAINT OF THE DAY – XENIA, DEACONESS OF ROME: She was baptized Eusebia in 5th century Rome. She secretly left home with her two maid servants so as not to be married but to dedicate her life to God. She changed her name to Xenia, which means “stranger”, considering herself in exile and poor for Jesus Christ. They had planned to live in Kos, but through prayer, they found a spiritual father, Paul, an abbot from Mylasa. He provided them a hermitage. Xenia built a church there dedicated to Stephen the first martyr, and the hermitage later became a convent for many. The humble Xenia would eat only dried bread either every three days or seven, depending on her level of spiritual warfare at that time. Her labors were done in secret and not for praise. She never strayed from her prayer rule that was always accompanied by tears. When her spiritual father, the abbot Paul, became the bishop, he elevated Xenia to the diaconate. She gathered the sisterhood on the day of her death and asked for them to pray for her. In the church where she died, a fragrance pervaded the place. A bright crown of stars with a cross within appeared in the daytime sky. It moved in procession with her relics and came to rest upon her relics when they were buried. The sick who touched her with faith were healed.

SAYINGS OF THE SAINTS: The fear of God makes a person wise. What is the fear of God? Not that one should be afraid of God, but to be afraid to sadden someone, to harm someone, to do them no wrong, and to not make accusations. This is wisdom. After all this, God will illumine you as to what to do in your life. *–St. Sophia of Kleisoura*

CHUCKLE: A priest waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him in front of the service station. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump. “Father,” said the young man, “I’m sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip.” The priest chuckled, “I know what you mean. It’s the same in my business.”

**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.
- At the time for Holy Communion, 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).

- At the conclusion of services, 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: When it comes to making decisions on stewardship, a very common question that we ask ourselves is: *"What should we do?"* People have been asking this question for quite some time. Even the people who came to see John the Baptist asked this question while he was preparing the way for the Lord. People from all walks of life asked *"What should we do?"*

John told them to be responsible with the gifts that God had given them. Be gracious to others in need. Give as you have been blessed. Be content with what you have, and do not be anxious about what you desire or think you need. Do not accuse others falsely for your benefit. God knows what you need, and He always provides. (Luke 3:10-15)

"What should we do?"

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 that 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! Help us reach our goal of raising \$800,000 to cover our Cathedral's operating expenses. This can be accomplished if we can average \$1500 a pledge per family.

Also, as we are starting a new year, please make sure your 2020 pledge is current or paid in full. To date, there is still over \$16,000 in unpaid stewardship pledges for 2020. This unpaid amount adds to the deficit that our parish has each and every year. Please pay the amount you promised to God and His Church. Your support and cooperation in this matter is always deeply appreciated.

EVERY PARISHIONER of a Greek Orthodox parish, 18 years and 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>

THOUGHT: If you insist on standing still, stand aside; others may be going somewhere.

FOR PONDERING: God loves you whether you like it or not. Like it, and it is heaven; hate it, and it is hell.

VASILOPITA CELEBRATION UPDATE: THANK YOU to all who participated in our St. Helen's Philoptochos Vasilopita Celebration last Sunday. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, our celebration was scaled back some with limited attendance for the Cutting of the Vasilopita and no luncheon. A little under \$5,000 was raised to benefit St. Basil's Academy. Great job, Philoptochos!!! Also, our Outreach Ministry was blessed to find the coin! May they continue to receive the blessings of the Lord as they assist those in need of housing, clothing and other essentials for daily living. Again, thank you one and all for your generosity!

BIBLE STUDY: Bible Study will be held via Zoom this Tuesday, January 26th, 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 YouTube. For specific details, contact Fr. Dimitri.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: Thursday, January 28th, 7:00 p.m. All Parish Council members are requested to be in attendance. The Oath of office will be given to our new members and topics of importance for the life and well-being of our parish will be discussed.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE: Registration for the January Faith Box is now open. Sign up at tinyurl.com/janfaithbox.

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, at the monthly Youth Night, 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.

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE: Along with our usual needs of canned goods, boxed foods, and cleaning items, we are in need of personal hygiene products. Instead of our regular parishioner crew working the food pantry, 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.

JC'S CLOSET IS BACK: On Friday, January 29th, we will be having our Outreach Project of JC's Closet return to the Gold Room. However, due to COVID, it will be back with limits and restrictions. If you are able to donate, we are currently ONLY accepting NEW & PACKAGED underwear and socks, new or clean, gently used coats for men, women and children (all sizes), new or clean, gently used sweatpants for men and women only (sizes large to 3XL). At this time, we are unable to accept other items due to limited storage and restrictions. If you are uncomfortable shopping due to COVID, Target or Walmart gift cards would be appreciated. Thank you!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Godparent Sunday – Sunday, February 7th

Triodion begins – Sunday, February 21st

Saturday of Souls – March 6th, 13th & 20th

Great Lent begins – Monday, March 15th

Palm Sunday – Sunday, April 25th

Orthodox Easter (Pascha) – Sunday, May 2nd

Ss. Constantine & Helen Vespers – Thursday, May 20th

Ss. Constantine & Helen Feast Day – Friday, May 21st

Grecian Festival – Friday, Saturday & Sunday, July 9th, 10th & 11th

Memorials will not be celebrated on the following Sundays in 2021: March 21st, April 4th & 25th, May 2nd & 9th, June 20th, August 15th, and November 21st