



Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church
THE WEEKLY CHURCH BULLETIN

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2019

Κυριακή 29η Δεκεμβρίου 2019
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΩΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΩΝ
Αποσ: Γαλατας 1:11-19
Ευαγγ: Ματθαίου 2:12-23

Sunday After the Nativity of our Lord
Today's Readings
Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19
Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23



THE NEW YEAR – ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY

Another New Year is on our doorstep, and it is normal that we give extra thought to the new time frame. We all make the customary New Year's resolutions, only to have them short-lived. To this, there could only be one answer, and this was spoken by the Lord: "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26:41) Our intentions may be honorable, but we so easily fall to the established routine of life, simply because we do not make the sufficient effort to move ourselves to follow the Christian course, which holds the fulfillment we all desire.

We hear people say that it is so often difficult to do the right thing, especially in a materialistic world where the competition is so great. It may be difficult, but not impossible. The Lord made no sugarcoated promises. He stated that, "the gate is narrow which leads unto life, whereas the gate is wide and the way is broad which leads unto destruction!" (Matthew 7:13-14)

One of the main problems in our life as Christians is that we do not give equal time to the needs of our soul. We often take extra pain to take care of our physical needs. And yet we just don't think very often about our spiritual needs.

We all seek happiness in life, but happiness does not mean the same thing to all people. People have to come to grips with themselves, and at the same time take life more seriously. When this happens, they will be convinced that happiness does not come from things that we may acquire. Happiness has its roots from deep within our soul. It has to source from the soul.

The proof of this is that as we mature and approach the golden years of life, we realize that the things that seemed so important in our youth are now only incidental, and the things we took for granted, in which we didn't place much importance, are the things that in the end become very precious to us.

Our Lord Jesus does not command us. But He is forever reaching out, inviting us to follow Him. He asks us to unburden our heavy hearts and to take up our cross and follow Him. When we have the Lord with us, and truly believe this, no earthly burden will be too heavy to bear. We have to truly understand the great privilege it is to be a Christian. To believe and grow in Christ is a life-long process. Flowers do not bloom in a day nor does fruit ripen on the trees in a week. In the same gradual way, we can ascend the ladder of a Christian life.

May this New Year give us the great opportunity to give true substance to our faith. The choice is ours, and if this does happen, then we can say as did St Paul, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor the present, nor the future, nor evil forces above or beneath, nor anything in creation shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is Christ our Lord."

ST. BASIL THE GREAT

Saint Basil the Great was born about the end of the year 329 in Caesarea of Cappadocia, to a family renowned for their learning and holiness. His parents' names were Basil and Emily. His mother Emily (commemorated July 19) and his grandmother Macrina (Jan. 14) are Saints of the Church, together with all his brothers and sisters: Macrina, his elder sister (July 19), Gregory of Nyssa (Jan. to), Peter of Sebastia (Jan. 9), and Naucratius. Basil studied in Constantinople under the sophist Libanius, then in Athens, where also he formed a friendship with the young Gregory, a fellow Cappadocian, later called "the Theologian." Through the good influence of his sister Macrina (see July 19), he chose to embrace the ascetical life, abandoning his worldly career. He visited the monks in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia, and upon returning to Caesarea, he departed to a hermitage on the Iris River in Pontus, not far from Annesi, where his mother and his sister Macrina were already treading the path of the ascetical life; here he also wrote his ascetical homilies.

About the year 370, when the bishop of his country reposed, he was elected to succeed to his throne and was entrusted with the Church of Christ, which he tended for eight years, living in voluntary poverty and strict asceticism, having no other care than to defend holy Orthodoxy as a worthy successor of the Apostles. The Emperor Valens, and Modestus, the Eparch of the East, who were of one mind with the Arians, tried with threats of exile and of torments to bend the Saint to their own confession, because he was the bastion of Orthodoxy in all Cappadocia, and preserved it from heresy when Arianism was at its strongest. But he set all their malice at nought, and in his willingness to give himself up to every suffering for the sake of the Faith, showed himself to be a martyr by volition. Modestus, amazed at Basil's fearlessness in his presence, said that no one had ever so spoken to him. "Perhaps," answered the Saint, "you have never met a bishop before." The Emperor Valens himself was almost won over by Basil's dignity and wisdom. When Valens' son fell gravely sick, he asked Saint Basil to pray for him. The Saint promised that his son would be restated if Valens agreed to have him baptized by the Orthodox; Valens agreed, Basil prayed, and the son was restored. But afterwards the Emperor had him baptized by Arians, and the child died soon after. Later, Valens, persuaded by his counsellors, decided to send the Saint into exile because he would not accept the Arians into communion; but his pen broke when he was signing the edict of banishment. He tried a second time and a third, but the same thing happened, so that the Emperor was filled with dread, and tore up the document, and Basil was not banished. The truly great Basil, spent with extreme ascetical practices and continual labours, at the helm of the church, departed to the Lord on the 1st of January, in 379. at the age of forty-nine.

His writings are replete with wisdom and erudition, and rich are these gifts he set forth the doctrines concerning the mysteries both of the creation (see his Hexaemeron) and of the Holy Trinity (see On the Holy Spirit). Because of the majesty and keenness of his eloquence, he is honoured as "the revealer of heavenly things" and "the Great."

KORAES SCHOOL NEWS

Ευτυχισμένο το νέο έτος! Koraes Student Council thanks everyone who donated to the One Warm Coat drive, the canned food drive and Toys for Tots. It truly was a collective effort that worked together to provide many items to those in need. The Christmas Program that highlighted all students was a joyous occasion that celebrated the reason for the season. We are so grateful to so many groups of people and individuals that made the event a huge success. Our KPTA continues to be supportive in all that they have done for the students of Koraes. Thank you for your generous spirit and for your prayers for our beloved school!

Beth Lind, Principal

Ο π. Αθανάσιος, ό π. Χρήστος,
ό Πρόεδρος καί τά μέλη
του Διοικητηκοῦ
Συμβουλίου,
τό προσωπικό τῆς ἐκκλησίας
καί του σχολείου ἐπί τῆ
ἐναρξη τοῦ νέου ἔτους
εὐχονται στά μέλη καί σέ
όλους τούς πιστούς τήν
εὐλογία καί τή χαρά τοῦ
Θεοῦ, ὑγεία καί εἰρηνή στό
καθένα καί στά σπίτια τους

**ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΠΟΛΛΑ καί
ΕΥΤΥΧΕΣ ΤΟ ΝΕΟ ΕΤΟΣ**

Τετάρτη 1η Ἰανουαρίου
ΠΕΡΙΤΟΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
ΜΝΗΜΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΩΤΟΧΡΟΝΙΑ

ῶρα 9:30 π.μ. - 11:15 π.μ.
Δοξολογία ἐπί τῆ ἐνάρξει τοῦ
Νεοῦ Ἐτους
Θεία Λειτουργία
Κοπή τῆς Βασιλόπιτας

Παρασκευή 3η Ἰανουαρίου -
Βασιλικές Ὁρες
ῶρα 8:00 π.μ.

Κυριακή 5η Ἰανουαρίου -
ΠΑΡΑΜΟΝΗ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΕΙΩΝ
ῶρα 8:00 π.μ. Ορθρος καί
Θεία Λειτουργία
ΑΓΙΑΣΜΟΣ
ΗΜΕΡΑ ΑΥΡΕΤΗΡΑΣ ΝΗΣΤΕΙΑΣ

Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΟΣ Ο ΜΕΓΑΣ



Ο Μέγας αυτός πατέρας και διδάσκαλος της Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας γεννήθηκε το 330 μ.Χ., στη Νεοκαισάρεια του Πόντου στο χωριό Άνησα και μεγάλωσε στην Καισάρεια της Καππαδοκίας. Τα δε εγκυκλοπαιδικά λεξικά αναφέρουν σαν πατρίδα του Μ. Βασιλείου την Καισαρεία της Καππαδοκίας. Οι γονείς του Βασίλειος (και αυτός), που καταγόταν από την

Νεοκαισάρεια του Πόντου και Εμμέλεια, που καταγόταν από την Καππαδοκία, αν και κατά κόσμον ευγενείς και πλούσιοι, είχαν συγχρόνως και ακμαιότατο χριστιανικό φρόνημα. Αυτοί μάλιστα έθεσαν και τις πρώτες -καθοριστικής σημασίας- πνευματικές βάσεις του Αγίου.

Στους αγώνες του κατά του Αρειανισμού αναδείχτηκε αδαμάντινος, ούτε κολακειές βασιλικές του Ουάλεντα (364 - 378 μ.Χ.), που πήγε αυτοπροσώπως στην Καισαρεία για να τον μετατρέψει στον Αρειανισμό, ούτε οι απειλές του Μόδεστου μπόρεσαν να κάμψουν το ορθόδοξο φρόνημα του Αγίου. Υπεράσπισε με θάρρος την Ορθοδοξία, καταπλήσσοντας τον βασιλιά και τους Αρειανούς. Ακόμα, αγωνίστηκε κατά της ηθικής σήψεως και επέφερε σοφές μεταρρυθμίσεις στο μοναχισμό.

Η δε υπόλοιπη ποιμαντορική δράση του, υπήρξε απaráμιλλη, κτίζοντας την περίφημη «Βασιλειάδα», συγκρότημα με ευαγή Ιδρύματα, όπως φτωχοκομείο, ορφανοτροφείο, γηροκομείο, ξενοδοχείο και νοσοκομείο κ.ά., όπου βρήκαν τροφή και περίθαλψη χιλιάδες πάσχοντες κάθε ηλικίας, γένους και φυλής.

Ο Μέγας Βασίλειος έχει πλούσιο και σημαντικό συγγραφικό έργο. Τα κυριότερα έργα του είναι οι 9 ομιλίες στην Εξαήμερο, ομιλίες στους Ψαλμούς, πολλές και διάφορες άλλες ομιλίες, ασκητικά έργα και επιστολές. Εκτός των άλλων έργων του, έγραψε και Θεία Λειτουργία, που, μετά την επικράτηση αυτής της συντομότερης του Αγ.Ιωάννου του Χρυσοστόμου, τελείται 10 φορές το χρόνο: την 1η Ιανουαρίου (όπου γιορτάζεται η μνήμη του), τις πρώτες πέντε Κυριακές της Μ.Τεσσαρακοστής, τις παραμονές των Χριστουγέννων και των Θεοφανείων, την Μ. Πέμπτη και το Μ. Σάββατο.

Στα πενήντα του χρόνια ο Μέγας Βασίλειος, εξαιτίας της ασθενικής κράσεώς του και της αυστηρής ασκητικής ζωής του (ορισμένες πηγές λένε από βαριά αρρώστια του ήπατος ή των νεφρών), την 1η Ιανουαρίου του 378 μ.Χ. ή κατ' άλλους το 379 με 380 μ.Χ., εγκαταλείπει το φθαρτό και μάταιο αυτό κόσμο, αφήνοντας παρακαταθήκη και Ιερή κληρονομιά στην ανθρωπότητα ένα τεράστιο πνευματικό έργο.

ACTIVITIES OF THE WEEK

Wednesday, January 1: New Year's Day

*Feastday of the naming of Christ and
St. Basil the Great*

9:30 – 11:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Cutting of Vasilopita

Friday, January 3:

8:00 a.m. Royal Hours

Sunday, January 5:

Eve of Theophany (Strict Fast Day)

8:00 -11:15 a.m. Orthros / Divine Liturgy
Blessing of the Waters

FASTING NOT REQUIRED

Those who strive and struggle are rewarded,
therefore fasting is not required beginning
December 25th through January 4th,
however, Sunday January 5th
is a STRICT FAST DAY

OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2020 Offering Envelopes are available in the
church office for those who are interested.

2019 STEWARDSHIP

As the year is quickly coming to a close, we would
like to take this opportunity to THANK Our Parish
Families for all that you do for our beloved Saints
Constantine and Helen Church and Koraes School!

If you have not contributed your 2019
Stewardship, please do so prior to the year end.
Please be advised that our 2020 STEWARDSHIP
CAMPAIGN will begin in January.

However, those parishioners wishing to submit
their 2020 Stewardship prior to the end of the
calendar year-for tax purposes-may do so by
mailing contributions to the Church office and
noting 2020 Stewardship on the memo line or
simply go to

<http://www.stconstantinehelen.org>

*For those with recurring online payments, please
remember to change your contributions to
'2020 Stewardship' in January*

MEMORIALS

6 month	Konstantinos Kolovos
1 Year	Charalambos Stavrakos
1 Year	Chrysoula Vaselopoulos
2 Years	Elizabeth (Betty) Janis
18 Years	Alex J. Giannakopoulos
25 Years	Helen Giannakopoulos

† May their memory be eternal †

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Today's coffee fellowship is hosted by
Mrs. Koula Pitsis
All are welcome!

The 59th Anniversary Celebration of the
"Cutting of the Vasilopita"

Will be held on
Sunday, January 12, 2020
At 6:00 p.m.

With the blessings of
His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael
The Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos Board
Invites you to join them for a most
Memorable evening at the parish of
St. George Greek Orthodox Church
2701 N. Sheffield – Chicago, IL

Fr. Tom, Fr. Chris, together with
Mr. Demetrios Stavrou, President,
Mr. Steven Argires, Chairman of the Board,
all the members of the Parish Council and
the Church and School personnel,
wish to extend to each and everyone
a very Happy New Year filled with God's blessings.



See you...

...Next Sunday