



THE GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL  
OF THE ANNUNCIATION

BALTIMORE, MD 21201

**Sunday, December 17, 2023**  
**11TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW**



**Rev. Fr. Anastasios P. Bourantas**

Protopresbyter Presiding Priest

[fr.anastasios@annunciationbaltimore.org](mailto:fr.anastasios@annunciationbaltimore.org)

**Rev. Fr. John Bullock**

Presbyter

[fr.john@annunciationbaltimore.org](mailto:fr.john@annunciationbaltimore.org)

**Cathedral Office**

410-727-1831 [assistant@annunciationbaltimore.org](mailto:assistant@annunciationbaltimore.org)

**SAINT OF THE DAY**

**Daniel the Prophet & the Three Holy Youths Ananias, Azarias, and Misail**



The Holy Youths Ananias ("God is gracious"), Azarias ("whom God helps"), and Misael ("Who is what God is?") were from the tribe of Judah and were companions of the Holy Prophet Daniel. They were taken as captives into Babylon with the other Jews by King Nebuchadnezzar. The youths were chosen to serve in the king's palace with Daniel and were renamed Shadrach ("royal"), Abednego ("servant of Nego"), and Meshach ("guest"). They were thrown into a fiery furnace when they refused to worship the golden idol set up by Nebuchadnezzar, but the Angel of the Lord preserved them unharmed amidst the flames, and they sang a hymn of praise to God, which is found in the 7th and 8th Odes of the Psalter. And coming forth therefrom, without even the smell of the fire on their clothes, they prefigured in themselves the Virgin's incorrupt giving of birth; for she, on receiving

the Fire of the Godhead within her womb, was not burned, but remained virgin, even as she was before giving birth. Therefore the Church celebrates the Three Youths and Daniel on this day, the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, since they prefigured and proclaimed His Incarnation. Furthermore, they were of the tribe of Judah, wherefrom, Christ sprang forth according to the flesh. The story of Daniel and the Three Youths is recorded in the book of Daniel.

**TODAY**

- **The sacramental wine** is donated by the family of Aphrodite (Dottie) Panos on the occasion of her 98th birthday. May God continue to bless her with good health.
- **The Nativity Pageant** featuring our Sunday School will take place today following the Divine Liturgy.
- **The Sanctuary Christmas Tree** was donated by Kousouris Brothers Produce in loving memory of its founders, Louis & Peter Kousouris and Jack Marmaras.
- **We want to thank** Eleni Roros, Nikki Monios, Ernie Rafailides, Melissa Hogle, Stephanie Smith, Steve Kousouris, Anastasia Lambropoulos, and John Hall for decorating the tree and interior of the Cathedral, and Manuel Matsos who decorated the stage. The poinsettias that adorn the solea are a gift from our parishioners. A complete listing of donors will be in the January newsletter.
- **Philoptochos Christmas Baked Goods** - Many thanks to those who supported this year's baked goods sale. Pre-orders can be picked up in the Mentis Room following services. Available items will be sold in the Fr. Constantine Monios Social Hall Lobby. Merry Christmas!
- **GOYA Vasilopita Fundraiser** - If you placed an order, remember that pickup is today, following Divine Liturgy in the GOYA Room.
- Please join the Philoptochos in the Father Constantine Monios Social Hall following the Christmas Pageant for **Coffee Hour**.
- **If you are visiting the Cathedral**, please introduce yourself to Fr. Anastasios Bourantas at the end of the Liturgy.

**WEEKLY CALENDAR**

See all events at:

[annunciationbaltimore.org/  
calendar](http://annunciationbaltimore.org/calendar)

**LITURGICAL**

- **Mon, 12/18**
  - 8:30am - Orthros and Divine Liturgy for St. Sebastian
- **Wed, 12/20**
  - 8:30am - Orthros and Divine Liturgy for St. Ignatius
  - 6:00pm - Paraklesis
- **Fri, 12/22**
  - 8:30am - Great Hours
- **Sun, 12/24 (Sunday Before Nativity)**
  - 8:00am - Orthros
  - 9:30am - Divine Liturgy
  - 5:00pm - Vespers for Nativity

**COMMUNITY**

- **Thur, 12/21**
  - 10:30am - Building & Maintenance Committee Meeting
- **Sun, 12/24**
  - 5:00pm - AA and Al-Anon Meeting

**SAVE THE DATE**

1/7 -  
CUTTING OF THE  
VASILOPITA  
(ST. BASIL BREAD)

1/13 & 14 -  
FDF DANCE  
COMPETITION

**Holiday Bulletin**  
**Deadline: The deadline to submit articles for Sunday, December 24, 2023 and Sunday, December 31, 2023 will be Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at noon. The office will have limited hours during the Christmas Week.**

### YOUTH

- **Greek School Registration remains open for Adults. It is never too late to sign up for Greek School.** Register at: <https://forms.gle/Jh1SkcoU4bGi4djL6>. Classes are on Friday evenings.
- **Please consider supporting our Youth Ministries** by making a donation in the labeled wooden collection box.

### COMMUNITY

- **Women's Guild Christmas Shopping,** The Women's Guild Christmas Boutique will be open Sunday, 12/17 following the Christmas Pageant in the lobby of the Father Constantine Monios Social Hall for any last minute gifts or decorations. Choose from unique Greek novelty items, fresh wreaths, decorated trees and one of a kind creations. 100% of the proceeds support the Women's Guild's mission for beautification of the Cathedral and Church complex. Cash, check, CC and e-pay options are accepted.



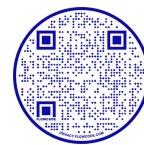
### PHILOPTOCHOS

- **“Christmas Shopping with a Purpose”** offers items from two of the charities that our Philoptochos chapter assists – Baltimore’s own “Hon’s Honey” and Atlantic City’s “MudGirls Studio”. Both organizations assist women by providing them opportunities to lift themselves from poverty and life on the street with meaningful skills, a sense of self-respect and accomplishment, and employment. A variety of honey products/gifts and Christmas ornaments are available for purchase on **Sunday, December 17** in the lobby of the Father Constantine Monios Social Hall. All monies collected will be directed back to these charities. Contact [jprevas@aol.com](mailto:jprevas@aol.com) or [rhoulaevie@yahoo.com](mailto:rhoulaevie@yahoo.com) with any questions that you may have.
- **Philoptochos Apron Sale fundraiser** continues and benefits the Philoxenia House Elevator Project. Each Apron is \$35. Use link: <https://forms.gle/mE87BULB6uKQdSC17> or Scan QR code to place your order. Contact Rhoula Monios at [rhoulaevie@yahoo.com](mailto:rhoulaevie@yahoo.com) for more information.
- **The Philoptochos has resources available** to those who require social services assistance. All requests are confidential and can be submitted to [philoptochos@annunciationbaltimore.org](mailto:philoptochos@annunciationbaltimore.org) or to Fr. Anastasios [Fr.Anastasios@annunciationbaltimore.org](mailto:Fr.Anastasios@annunciationbaltimore.org) or leave a message requesting a return call with the church office.



### YOUNG ADULT

- **Annunciation Young Adult League seeks to connect Orthodox Christians in Baltimore ages 18-35 through social, spiritual, and service themed events. Fill out form** @ <https://forms.gle/Td7sseHhJYp5PAxYA>, scan the QR code or or text YOUNGANNUN to 84576 to receive text/email updates on future events. For more news & updates, follow us on Instagram (@annunbmoreyal), join our Facebook group (Annunciation YAL of Baltimore), or email Alexi Vlahoyiannis, YAL President, [yal@annunaiitonbaltimore.org](mailto:yal@annunaiitonbaltimore.org).
- **OCF – Orthodox Christian Fellowship** is a campus ministry to help students connect with other Orthodox Christians, navigate their time through school, and stay connected to the Church. Contact Fr. John for more info.



### BOOKSTORE

- **Attention Young Shoppers! (18 years old and younger)** The Bookstore has gifts for Mom, Dad, Yiayia, Papou, Godparents, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles and friends for 30% off for the last two Sundays before Christmas! For all other gift-givers: Greek cookbooks and all home decor items will be 15% off! We will be unpacking a new shipment from Greece early Sunday morning!! Take a look at what the Bookstore and Logos Gift Shop has for you and St. Nicholas.



### CULTURE

- The **Hellenic Heritage Museum of Maryland** thanks Everyone for their support as we continue to welcome visitors and suggests that a Museum Membership appear on your holiday gift list. Membership forms are available when you visit the museum most Sundays after church services, through the website [www.HELLENICHERITAGEMD.ORG](http://www.HELLENICHERITAGEMD.ORG), or by appointment. Please contact Fotini Baltatzis [tinabaltatzis@gmail.com](mailto:tinabaltatzis@gmail.com) / 410-823-0139 or Harry C. Maistros [harry.maistros@comcast.net](mailto:harry.maistros@comcast.net) / 410-467-1836.

### STEWARDSHIP

- **Stewardship Update:** To effectively manage our budget, the Parish Council relies on the commitments made through your pledge. We encourage all to satisfy their 2023 pledge by year end. Also, please be mindful to formalize a commitment by making a pledge and fulfilling it for 2024.
- **The Day Sponsor Steward Program** offers individuals a personal milestone that directly supports our parish and her ministries. You may choose a meaningful day throughout the year, whether it is a special occasion or a tribute to a loved one in memory or honor. Please consider the Day Sponsor Steward Program by becoming a **Day Sponsor Steward** (\$3500 annual pledge) or the new **Half-day Sponsor Steward** (\$1750 annual pledge).
- **2024 Stewardship commitment link:** <https://forms.gle/v3TXkYJkFWD63TW48>. Hard copies are also available on the "Welcome" table in the church lobby. Our financial security is dependent upon Stewardship. Please carefully consider your 2024 pledge.

### PASTORAL

- **Please note** that only baptized, Christmated Orthodox Christians in good standing may receive the Sacraments of Holy Communion (and Holy Unction when offered). If you have any questions, please reach out to Fr. Anastasios.
- **In order to protect our icons and liturgical items**, please blot any lip products before venerating icons or coming up for Holy Communion.
- **If you know of a parishioner who lives in an assisted-living home or is physically unable to attend services**, please contact the Church Office to schedule a visit from Fr. Anastasios or Fr. John.
- **If you wish to have a home or business blessed** please contact the church office to request a time for Fr. Anastasios to visit.

### GIVING

- **Online Donations** can be made through our website. Click the DONATE button in the upper right corner. We are grateful for your continued stewardship!
- **For candles and tray donations**, you can also donate by text message, just text the dollar amount to (833) 934-2637 and follow the prompts.
  - Note: TextToTray can only be used for candles and tray donations.
  - We are also grateful for donations made by check.

### DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

- **Cathedral Updates** – To receive Bulletins and other updates via email, visit <https://annunciationbaltimore.flocknote.com> and enter your contact information.
- **Text Alerts** - To receive ministries updates via text, text the ministry keyword below to phone number 84576:
  - **Hope/Joy** → **HopeJoy**
  - **GOYA** → **GOYA**
  - **YAL** → **YOUNGANNUN**
  - **Men's Fellowship** → **MensFellowship**



**Scheduling - To all ministry, organization and committee leaders and members: Please contact the Church Office before you schedule all on-site and off-site meetings, activities and events to ensure that there are no conflicts for meeting space and that the meetings/events appear on the church calendar.**

If you would like to have information included in the Sunday Bulletin, please send your text and/or flyer to [assistant@annunciationbaltimore.org](mailto:assistant@annunciationbaltimore.org) by Wednesday at Noon.

For the January/February Newsletter, send to [newsletter@annunciationbaltimore.org](mailto:newsletter@annunciationbaltimore.org) by December 15th.



## **TODAY'S ENTRANCE HYMNS & READINGS**

### **Resurrectional Apolytikion**

Let the heavens sing for joy, and let everything on earth be glad. For with His Arm the Lord has worked power. He trampled death under foot by means of death; and He became the firstborn of the dead. From the maw of Hades has He delivered us; and has granted the world His great mercy.

Εὐφραινέσθω τὰ οὐράνια, ἀγαλλιάσθω τὰ ἐπίγεια, ὅτι ἐποίησε κράτος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ, ὁ Κύριος· ἐπάτησε τῷ θανάτῳ τὸν θάνατον· πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν ἐγένετο· ἐκ κοιλίας ᾄδου ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς, καὶ παρέσχε τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

### **Apolytikion for the Forefathers**

By faith You justified the Forefathers, having through them betrothed to yourself the Church that came out of the nations. The saints are boasting in glory; for the glorious fruit, the Virgin who without seed gave birth to You, is from their progeny. At their entreaties, O Christ our God, save our souls.

Ἐν πίστει τοὺς Προπάτορας ἐδικαίωσας, τὴν ἐξ Ἑθνῶν δι' αὐτῶν προμνηστευσάμενος Ἐκκλησίαν. Καυχῶνται ἐν δόξῃ οἱ Ἅγιοι, ὅτι ἐκ σπέρματος αὐτῶν, ὑπάρχει καρπὸς εὐκλείης, ἡ ἀσπὸρως τεκοῦσά σε. Ταῖς αὐτῶν ἱκεσίαις, Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός, σῶσον τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

### **Apolytikion of the Parish**

Today is the summary of our salvation, and the revelation of the age-old mystery. For the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel announces the good news of grace. Therefore, let us join him, and cry aloud to the Theotokos: "Rejoice, Maiden full of grace! The Lord is with you."

Σήμερον τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν τὸ κεφάλαιον, καὶ τοῦ ἀπ' αἰῶνος μυστηρίου ἡ φανέρωσις· ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, Υἱὸς τῆς Παρθένου γίνεται, καὶ Γαβριὴλ τὴν χάριν εὐαγγελίζεται. Διὸ καὶ ἡμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ τῇ Θεοτόκῳ βοήσωμεν· Χαῖρε Κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ Κύριος μετὰ σοῦ.

### **Kontakion**

On this day the Virgin Maid \* goes to the grotto to give birth \* to the pre-eternal Word \* in an ineffable manner. \* Dance for joy, O earth on hearing the gladsome tidings. \* Glorify along with Angels and with shepherds \* Him who willed that He appear as \* a newborn Child, \* the pre-eternal God.

Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον, τὸν προαιώνιον Λόγον, ἐν Σπηλαίῳ ἔρχεται, ἀποτεκεῖν ἀπορρήτως. Χόρευε ἡ οἰκουμένη ἀκουτισθεῖσα, δόξασον μετὰ Ἀγγέλων καὶ τῶν Ποιμένων, βουληθέντα ἐποφθῆναι, Παιδίον νέον, τὸν πρὸ αἰώνων Θεόν.

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## **EPISTLE (COLOSSIANS 3:4-11)**

Brethren, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

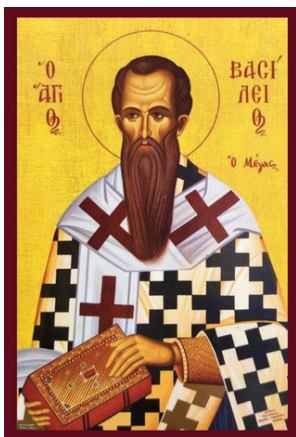
Ἀδελφοί, ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς φανερωθῇ, ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν, τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ. Νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνείαν, ἀκαθαρσίαν, πάθος, ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, καὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν ἣτις ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρία, δι' ἧς ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας· ἐν οἷς καὶ ὑμεῖς περιεπατήσατέ ποτε ὅτε ἐζήτε ἐν αὐτοῖς. Νυνὶ δὲ ἀπόθεσθε καὶ ὑμεῖς τὰ πάντα, ὀργήν, θυμόν, κακίαν, βλασφημίαν, αἰσχρολογίαν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν· μὴ ψεύδεσθε εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἀπεκδυσάμενοι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον σὺν ταῖς πράξεσιν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν, ὅπου οὐκ ἔνι Ἕλλην καὶ Ἰουδαῖος, περιτομὴ καὶ ἀκροβυστία, βάρβαρος, Σκύθης, δοῦλος, ἐλεύθερος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσι Χριστός.

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## **GOSPEL (LUKE 14:16-24)**

The Lord said this parable: "A man once gave a great banquet, and invited many; and at the time of the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for all is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I go out and see it; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must go to examine them; I pray you, have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported this to his master. Then the householder in anger said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and maimed and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and there is still room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. For many are called, but few are chosen.'"

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἄνθρωπός τις ἐποίησε δεῖπνον μέγα, καὶ ἐκάλεσε πολλούς· καὶ ἀπέστειλε τὸν δοῦλον αὐτοῦ τῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦ δείπνου εἰπεῖν τοῖς κεκλημένοις· Ἐρχεσθε, ὅτι ἤδη ἔτοιμά ἐστι πάντα. καὶ ἤρξαντο ἀπὸ μιᾶς παραιτεῖσθαι πάντες, ὁ πρῶτος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἀγρὸν ἠγόρασα, καὶ ἔχω ἀνάγκην ἐξελθεῖν καὶ ἰδεῖν αὐτόν· ἐρωτῶ σε, ἔχε με παρητημένον. καὶ ἕτερος εἶπε· ζεύγη βοῶν ἠγόρασα πέντε, καὶ πορεύομαι δοκιμάσαι αὐτά· ἐρωτῶ σε, ἔχε με παρητημένον. καὶ ἕτερος εἶπε· γυναῖκα ἔγημα, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐ δύναμαι ἐλθεῖν. καὶ παραγενόμενος ὁ δοῦλος ἐκεῖνος ἀπήγγειλε τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ ταῦτα. τότε ὀργισθεὶς ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης εἶπε τῷ δούλῳ αὐτοῦ· ἔξελθε ταχέως εἰς τὰς πλατείας καὶ ῥύμας τῆς πόλεως, καὶ τοὺς πτωχοὺς καὶ ἀναπήρους καὶ χωλοὺς καὶ τυφλοὺς εἰσάγαγε ὧδε. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ δοῦλος· κύριε, γέγονεν ὡς ἐπέταξας, καὶ ἔτι τόπος ἐστί. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος πρὸς τὸν δοῦλον· Ἐξελθε εἰς τὰς ὁδοὺς καὶ φραγμοὺς καὶ ἀνάγκασον εἰσελθεῖν, ἵνα γεμισθῇ ὁ οἶκός μου. λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐκείνων τῶν κεκλημένων γεύσεται μου τοῦ δείπνου. Πολλοὶ γάρ εἰσι κλητοί, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἐκλεκτοί.



*His Eminence  
Metropolitan Apostolos  
of New Jersey*

*Cordially Invites you to the  
**ANNUAL**  
**METROPOLIS of NEW JERSEY**  
**VASILOPITA CELEBRATION***

*Tuesday, January 9, 2024  
6:00 – 9:00pm*

*hosted by:*

*St. George Greek Orthodox Church  
1101 River Road  
Piscataway, NJ 08854*



GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL OF THE  
ANNUNCIATION

# UPCOMING SERVICE SCHEDULE

Saturday, 12/9

8:30am - Orthros & Liturgy for  
Conception of the Theotokos

Sunday, 12/10

8:00am - Orthros & Liturgy

Tuesday, 12/12

8:30am - Orthros & Liturgy for St.  
Spyridon

Wednesday, 12/13

6:00pm - Paraklesis

Friday, 12/15

8:30pm - Orthros & Liturgy for St.  
Eleftherios

Saturday, 12/16

8:00am - Orthros & Liturgy for  
Prophet Haggi

Sunday, 12/17

8:00am - Orthros & Liturgy

Monday, 12/18

8:30am - Orthros & Liturgy for St.  
Sebastian

Wednesday, 12/20

8:30am - Orthros & Liturgy for St.  
Ignatius  
6:00pm - Paraklesis

Friday, 12/22

8:30am - Great Hours

Sunday, 12/24

8:00am - Orthros & Liturgy  
5:00pm - Vespers for Nativity

Monday, 12/25

8:30am - Orthros & Liturgy for  
Nativity

Wednesday, 12/27

8:30pm - Orthros & Liturgy for St.  
Stephen  
6:00pm - Paraklesis

Sunday, 12/31

8:00am - Orthros & Liturgy

Monday, 1/1

8:30am - Orthros & Liturgy for  
Circumcision of our Lord and St. Basil

Friday, 1/5

8:30am - Great Hours  
9:30am - Vespereal Liturgy

Saturday, 1/6

8:30am - Orthros & Liturgy for  
Theophany

Sunday, 1/7

8:00am - Orthros, Liturgy, and  
Cutting of the Vasilopita