March 3, 2024

Sunday of the Prodigal Son
Orthros 8:45/Liturgy 9:30 AM.

Epistle Reading

Gospel Reading
The Reading is from Luke 15:11-32.

Memorial
3 month - Mark Tripoli
6 month – Alex Kolokythas

Trisagion
James & Maria Conduras
14 years - Apostolos Apostolou

May their memory be eternal. Αιώνια η Μνήμη!

WEEKDAY SERVICES - Καθημερινές Λειτουργίες:
Paraklesis to the Panagia Gorgoipikoos - Every Thursday at 6 PM.
Saturday of Souls - 3/9, 16 & 23, Orthros 8:30/Liturgy 9 AM.
HYMNS OF THE DAY

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Plagal Second Mode

O Christ, the angelic powers appeared at Your tomb, the guards were as dead, and Mary stood by the sepulcher, seeking Your sacred body. You destroyed Hades yet remained untouched by it. You encountered the Virgin and through her, bestowed Life. Glory to You who has risen from the dead!

Ἀγγελικαὶ Δυνάμεις ἐπὶ τὸ μνῆμά σου, καὶ οἱ φυλάσσοντες ἀπενεκρώθησαν, καὶ ἵστατο Μαρία ἐν τῷ τάφῳ, ζητοῦσα τὸ ᾠριστόν σου σῶμα. Ἐσκύλευσας τὸν Ἀδήν, μὴ πειρασθεὶς ύπ' αὐτοῦ, ὑπήνησας τῇ Παρθένῳ, δωρούμενος τὴν ζωήν, ὁ ἀναστὰς ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

Seasonal Kontakion in the Third Mode

O Father, foolishly I ran away from Your glory, and in sin, squandered the riches You gave me. Wherefore, I cry out to You with the voice of the Prodigal, "I have sinned before You Compassionate Father. Receive me in repentance and take me as one of Your hired servants."

Τῆς πατρώας, δόξης σου, ἀποσκιρτήσας ἀφρόνως, ἐν κακοῖς ἐσκόρπισα, ὅν μοι παρέδωκας πλοῦτον· ὅθεν σοι τὴν τοῦ Ἀσώτου, φωνὴν κραυγάζω· Ἡμαρτον ἐνώπιόν σου Πάτερ οἰκτίρμον, δέξαι με μετανοοῦντα, καὶ ποίησόν με, ὡς ἕνα τῶν μισθίων σου.

Receiving Holy Communion - We welcome to this celebration of the Divine Liturgy those Christians who are from other Christian Denominations and who are not fully united with us. Sadly, it is a consequence of the divisions in Christianity that we cannot extend to you an invitation to receive Holy Communion. Orthodox Christians believe that the Eucharist is the work or action of the celebrating Community signifying a oneness of faith, life, and worship of the believing Community. Reception of Holy Communion by Christians not fully united with us would imply a oneness which does not yet exist, and for which we must pray. However, all present are welcome to partake of the Antidoro (blessed bread) which is distributed at the end of the Liturgy.
The reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 6:12-20.

Brethren, "all things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food" -- and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall become one flesh." But he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body and in your spirit which belong to God.
The Reading is from Luke 15:11-32

The Lord said this parable: "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his belly with the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"
πορεύσομαι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ έρω αὐτῷ· πάτερ, ἦμαρτον εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐνώπιόν σου, καὶ άξιος εἰμὶ νεκρὸς καὶ άξιος κληθῆναι υἱός σου. ὁ δὲ εἶπε· ἔσται· ὁ οὖν πατὴρ αὐτοῦ ἐξελθὼν παρεκάλει αὐτόν. ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπε τῷ πατρί· ἢδει τοσαῦτα ἔτη δουλεύω σοι καὶ οὐδέποτε ἐντολήν σου παρῆλθον, καὶ ἐμοὶ οὐδέποτε ἔδωκας ἔριφον ἵνα μετὰ τῶν φίλων μου εὐφρανθῶ· ὁτὲ δὲ ὁ υἱός σου οὗτος, ὁ καταφαγών σου τὸν βίον μετὰ πορνῶν, ἦλθεν, ἐθύσας αὐτῷ τὸν μόσχον τὸν σιτευτόν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· τέκνον, σὺ πάντα τὰ ἐμὰ σά ἐστιν· εὐφρανθῆναι δὲ καὶ χαρῆναι έδει, ὅτι ὁ ἀδελφός σου νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἀνέζησε, καὶ ἀπολωλὼς ἦν καὶ εὑρέθη.
RETURN TO THE FATHER

The gospel parable of the Prodigal is the most excellent theological essay on the manner of God's "adoption" of people, the "gospel’s gospel". A man has two sons. The youngest son violates the institutions, challenges his father's authority, and essentially denies his own existence, since he asks for use of his share of the property, as if his father were dead. But this piece, cut off from the whole of the truth of the father's life cannot live, cannot bear fruit. This piece, when we take it dynastically, arbitrarily, as and when we want, does not lead us to life, but to despair and destruction.

The Love of the Father

However, the father does not object or reject his son's request, as he was entitled to. On the contrary, he gives him the required part of the property, which he asks for. The father's love goes further than his son's rebellion is able to go. For this reason, he does not teach him with words. Now he must allow him to wander, to suffer, to personally experience the falsehood and the meaningless deceptions. The issue is not for the father to keep his son by force close to him, but to give him the possibility to create the presuppositions, so that he himself would come to him. The whole life of the Christian is formed mystically with the cooperation of God’s Grace and man’s will and with the real acceptance of the life of Christ. But this cooperation is entirely based on man's free decision to accept the Grace of God as an accomplice.

Life Away From God

And the prodigal leaves. He goes to live in a foreign country, where everything is spent without being renewed. But after a while, he remains alone. His friends stayed with him as long as his wealth lasted. He begins to experience decline and impoverishment. And when he goes to ask for help, they push him lower. They send him out to pasture pigs, to shepherd the passions. He is not simply breaking the law, but he falls into a permanent state of lawlessness.

The trials that he undergoes, become a cause for him to bring back the good memory of the father, a memory which he had previously killed. So he begins to come to himself, to self-criticize. With one Word, the son repents, and his repentance is the starting point for him to be led from despair to salvation, from physical and spiritual death to the physical and spiritual life.

Return

And the prodigal takes the return road back. Before he even arrives home, the father, who lived the mystery of waiting, sees him from afar and runs. Without telling him anything, he falls completely into his embrace and hugs and kisses him. The father’s acceptance of the son proves in practice to be complete and unconditional. Because he was always with his child. What we should pay attention to is that the first word of his confession is not "forgive me", but "father". It is the name of the father that rises from the depths of his being and gives him the courage to hope. That is why the prodigal does not propose a solution for his future, but entrusts himself entirely to his father.

Our Return

We don't know how much of a relationship each of us has with the father and the youngest son. But
what we all know, is that we can return to our Father and to our sacred homeland, because He is life, the validation of our dignity, the rediscovery of our humanity. It is enough that holy humility chastens us, and God's mercy surrounds us.

_We Welcome all who worship with us today._

Memorials

3 month - Mark Tripoli
6 month – Alex Kolokythas

Trisagion

14 year - Apostolos Apostolou
James & Maria Conduras

*May their memory be eternal. Αιώνια η Μνήμη!*

Coffee Fellowship is open to be sponsored.

If you would like to sponsor a Coffee Fellowship, please contact the Office.

**Announcements**

Next GOYA Meeting - Wednesday, March 13th.

_The National Hellenic Society's Heritage Greece Program is a complementary, 2-week cultural immersion_ odyssey for accomplished Greek American college students who share their experiences with a peer group of exceptional students from the American College of Greece (ACG) in Athens, Greece or the American College of Thessaloniki (ACT) in Thessaloniki, Greece. The Heritage Greece Program® goal is to connect the participants with their faith, heritage, roots, and Greek identity. For more information visit: National Hellenic Society | Heritage Greece

_Criteria for Eligibility:_

- Enrolled college/university students aged 18-26 (undergraduate/graduate)
- Hellenic descent
- Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0
- Preference for 1st time visitors to Greece (non-mandatory criteria)
2023-2024 Capital Improvement Campaign Fund

- $150,000
- $75,000
- $0

Church Capital Improvement Campaign update. To date we have raised $43,000 of the $150,000 we need to raise for much needed improvements to our Church. We used approved monies from the operations account for the parking lot improvement but need to repay the operations account once we have raised the money. Thank you to those that have donated! If you would like to donate please visit the Church website, click on Donate, then Capital Improvement Campaign.
Purchase Your Tickets on our Website. Use the drop down “Menu”, purchase in Taxiarchae Store.

DEADLINE TO PURCHASE TICKETS IS TODAY
SUNDAY, MARCH 3RD

The Taxiarchae Church and St. Sava Cathedral invite you to an evening of music, dance, food & fun

March 9, 2024 7 pm – 11 pm

Greek music by The Makredes Ensemble
Serbian music by - DJ
Enjoy Greek and Serbian Cuisine

Admission: $60
Kids 12 and under - free
MUST RSVP by February 24, 2024
Taxiarchae 25 Bigelow Ave, Watertown, MA 02472
Join us for March Joy
Junior Orthodox Youth
Ages 5 to 12
T-shirt Decorating
FRIDAY, MARCH 8TH
5-7 PM
PIZZA AND A TREAT
WILL BE PROVIDED
You must RSVP to ckourkoulis@goarchangels.org by March 1st to ensure availability and participation

Family Ministries
A Family Friendly Event
PAINTING PARTY
FRIDAY, MARCH 15TH
5-7 PM
This Spring we will be participating in Watertown Yard Art
Please bring a good sized rock to paint
Pizza and a treat will be provided
You must RSVP by 3/8 to ckourkoulis@goarchangels.org to ensure availability and participation
Taxiarchae Oratorical Date: April 21, at the conclusion of the Liturgy

Parish Chairperson: Costas Karageorgis

Contact Information: Ckarageorgis@goarchangel.com

Please contact Costas or Fr. Nenes if interested.

JOIN THOUSANDS OF YOUTH ACROSS THE NATION AND SHARE YOUR FAITH!

2024 ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL
Junior Division (Grades 7-9) | Senior Division (Grades 10-12)

AWARDS
National finalists are eligible to receive the following
- St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Scholarship: $500 to $2,000
- FAITH: An Endowment for Orthodoxy and Hellenism: to be announced

SCHOLARSHIPS
Finalists at any level are eligible to receive the following
- Chrysostom Scholarship to Hellenic College: $2,800 up to $30,000 per year

LOCAL INFORMATION
Parish Festival Date & Time: ________________________________
Parish Chairperson: _______________________________________
Contact Information: ________________________________________

Find topics, tips, manual, & award info at
www.religioused.goarch.org
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Department of Religious Education (DRE)
"Save the Day"
AHEPA Day Luncheon
Sunday, May 19th
Immediately following the Liturgy in Metaxas Hall.
Food, Music, & Prize. More info to come.

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YOUTH MINISTRIES

Youth Ministries are collecting "Gently Used" Prom Dresses for the Belle Ball program! Donate Prom Dresses to Local Students in Need.

*Deadline for donations - Thursday, March 28th.*

Please leave your donations on the COAT RACK in the LOBBY.

Thank you.

Collecting Prom Dresses ONLY!
Watertown Savings Bank
Customer Choice Awards

Please vote Taxiarchae as your favorite Local Non-profit!

With your help, we can receive $100,000.

WSB is now doing all the voting online. (No more paper ballots).

If you need help voting, please go to any WSB Branch and they will guide you through the process.
Youth Ministry

Ongoing FOOD DRIVE - Collecting for the Watertown Food Pantry

Your donation of food items can be put on the table, located in the Lobby. We will deliver them to the Watertown Food Pantry every Tuesday.

Thank you for helping your local community!

ESPECIALLY NEEDED - CANS OF TUNA & BREAKFAST CEREAL.
As always, the Food Pantry is still in need of school snacks.

LOVE DOES NOT HURT.
INCREASED STATISTICS ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE
HTTPS://WWW.NEJM.ORG/DOI/FULL/10.1056/NEJMP2024046

A pandemic within a pandemic: There are more cases of violence in the home than ever before. This means more families living in crisis.

We are collecting for monthly drop-offs each second Monday of the month, beginning with December 14th.

Items requested are:
Sanitary napkins
Shampoo
Vaseline
Cocoa butter
Baby shampoo
Baby lotion
Deodorant
Tooth brushes
Tooth paste

With any questions, please contact Christina Kourkoulis at CKourkoulis@goarchangels.org

RECOGNIZE. REPORT. PREVENT.

FINEX HOUSE
+Finex House
PO Box 300670
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
https://www.finexhouse.org
MAIDS OF ATHENA
ALPHA EPSILON ALPHA

YOU ARE INVITED TO:

THE 3RD ANNUAL SPRING SEMI FORMAL

WHEN:
Saturday April 6th,
7 pm - 11 pm

WHERE:
Hellenic
Cultural Center
of Watertown
25 Bigelow Ave

MUSIC BY:
The Salonica Boys

OPEN TO ALL:
Highschool & College Students

$20 ENTRY FEE
Taxiarchae Hellenic Cultural Center

Planning a party or reception? Our beautiful venues are now updated and ready for any & all of your event needs, up to 500 people.

For information and assistance in planning your future event, please call Irene Apostolou Cobb at the Church Office at 617-924-8182 or email: functionmanager@goarchangels.com

DREAM IT AND IT CAN COME TRUE!
YOUR EVENT CAN BE EVERYTHING YOU WISHED.