

We hear in today's Holy Gospel, the first theme of Jesus' public preaching after His baptism by John in the Jordan: **REPENT**. Already the echoes of Great Lent are upon us. The first thing Jesus did was to call people to **CHANGE**, to turn their lives around, to undergo **METANOIA**. His coming meant a new order of things. No longer could people live in the same old way, with old attitudes, old ways of doing things. Christ's coming meant a total reversal of human nature such that man would prepare himself, in his daily words and actions, for the coming of the Kingdom of God. **Jesus speaks the same message to us today: change your lives, your ways of thinking and acting; live in conformity with your faith and not with the world's values and attitudes.** Again and again, Jesus calls out to us to *live from the inside out, rather than from the outside in.* We are free to accept His call to repentance or not. To accept it, ultimately means genuine happiness and peace of heart. To ignore that call means to live with disturbance of soul, with anxiety, and with the spiritual darkness of our own brokenness. What choice will you make?

EPISTLE Ephesians 4:7-14

BRETHREN, grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." (in saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

TODAY'S READER: STELLA COMINOS

GOSPEL Matthew 4: 12-17

AT THAT TIME, Jesus heard that John had been arrested, He withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth He went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Kontakion to St. Gregory of Nyssa
Rejoicing with the Angels and taking delight in the Divine Light, Gregory of Nyssa, the vigilant mind, the God inspired hierarch of the Church, and wisdom's revered hymnographer, intercedeth unceasingly for us all.



Kontakion of the Theophany
You appeared to the world today, and Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us. With fuller understanding we sing to You: "You came, You were made manifest, the unapproachable light."

PRAYER LIST: Antonia "Nitsa" Kempf, Connie Kanaris, Diana Lazar, George Markomanolakis, Argie Palaios, Katherine Panagakos, Priscilla Preuss, George Virvan, Sylvia Basdekas, George Speris, Mariah Smiley, Saxton, Doris Webb, the child Camille Feruzzi who is gravely ill, the child Heather Greene, Irene Pappas, Marty Levine, Lindsey Reijsoo, the child Ashley Lyvers, the child Alexis Ross, Thomas Jenkins, the child Joseph Saxon, Francine Bruggeman, Estrella Grandea Ocampo, Artie Constantinides, Stephanie Skanderis, Michael Giatzis, and Robert Shriver. **US ARMED FORCES:** (Col.) Fr. Alexander Webster, Rev. Fr. John Kalantzis, Lt. Nicholas Karnaze, Spc. Spiro Nino, John Xanthakos, Maj. Sydney Pennix, Colonel James Karas, and Gary Hogman (Iraq) and his wife Cindy.



THE FIRST MESSAGE OF JESUS: CHANGE YOURSELF

The spiritual term "metanoia" (μετάνοια) refers to spiritual conversion. But, more pointedly, to a *change of mind*. The word appears often in the Gospels. It is usually translated into English as "repent." We hear Jesus express it in today's passage from St. Matthew. In St. Mark's Gospel, likewise, it is a clear theme: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; **repent**, and believe in the good news." (καὶ λέγων ὅτι πεπλήρωται ὁ καιρὸς καὶ ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ: **μετανοεῖτε** καὶ πιστεῦτε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ) (Mark 1) Yet the kind of repentance Jesus refers to is not simply conversion but a **systemic and wholistic change** of the very heart of hearts of a person – a metaphysical transformation in light of the Kingdom's advance. This profound change of the person results in the suppression and eradication of sin (that which obscures the Divine Image) and, furthermore, promotes the nurturing of the virtues (love, kindness, patience, selflessness etc.) Metanoia is no less than a reorientation, a fundamental transformation of outlook, of an individual's vision of the world and of her/himself, and a new way of loving God and others In the words of a second-century text, The Shepherd of Hermas, it implies "great understanding," discernment. It involves, that is, not mere regret of past evil but a recognition by a person of a darkened vision of her/his own condition, in which sin, by separating her/him from the Divine Image, has reduced her/him to a divided, autonomous existence, depriving her/him of both her/his natural glory and freedom. "Repentance," says St. Basil the Great, "is salvation, but lack of understanding is the death of repentance." Repentance thereby acquires a different dimension to mere dwelling on human sinfulness, and becomes the realization of human insufficiency and limitation. **We are incomplete without God.** Metanoia is the critical element of *theosis* (becoming by grace what God is by nature). It requires us to honestly look deep into our hearts and lives to eradicate sin, to recognize what passions control us, and to make every effort to reorient ourselves to the Living God in Whose image we are made.

MEMORIALS

A Memorial Service will be offered today for **George Constantine Campbell (1 Year)**, requested by his daughter Barbara Campbell (Patrick) Potter, and his grandchildren Alexa and Christian; for **Helen Valanos (5 Years)**, requested by her husband Constantinos Valanos, John (Vasiliki) Valanos, George (Frederica) Valanos, and her grandchildren; and for **Savvas Koudellou (9 Years)**, requested by his children and grandchildren. May their memories be eternal!



OUR HOLY FATHER ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA

The son of two saints, Basil and Emmilia, young Gregory was raised by his older brother, St. Basil the Great, and his sister, Macrina, in modern-day Turkey. Gregory's success in his studies suggested great things were ahead for him. After becoming a professor of rhetoric, he was persuaded to devote his learning and efforts to the Church. By then married, Gregory went on to study for the priesthood and become ordained. He was elected Bishop of Nyssa (in Lower Armenia) in 372, a period of great tension over the Arian heresy, which denied the divinity of Christ. Briefly arrested after being falsely accused of embezzling Church funds, Gregory was restored to his see in 378, an act met with great joy by his people. It was after the death of his beloved brother, Basil, that Gregory really came into his own. He wrote with great effectiveness against Arianism and other questionable doctrines, gaining a reputation as a defender of orthodoxy. He was sent on missions to counter other heresies and held a position of prominence at the Council of Constantinople. His fine reputation stayed with him for the remainder of his life. Indeed, St. Gregory of Nyssa is seen not simply as a pillar of orthodoxy but as one of the great contributors to the mystical tradition in Christian spirituality and to monasticism itself.



PASTORAL VISITATIONS

Please inform the Church Office 301-469-7990 (ext 300) of any loved ones who are hospitalized or "shut-ins," so they may be visited and receive the grace of Holy Communion.

2010 CALENDARS ARE STILL AVAILABLE

The new Ecclesiastical Calendars for 2010 have arrived. **They will be available on Sundays following Divine Liturgy at a table in the Founders Hall.** You may pick up **ONE** calendar per family in order to make certain that every family in the parish has one.

FIFTY PLUS The first meeting of the New Year will be January 13, 2010 in the Founders Hall at 11:30am. Fr Nick will honor us with the cutting of the Vasilopita and singing the Greek Christmas Kalanta and the New Year Kalanta.

PARATHOSI DANCE TROUPE Please COME OUT and support the Parathosi Dance Senior Truope's participation in the 2010 Greek Folk Dance Festival of the Metropolis of New Jersey, on January 16 in Annapolis. Any questions may be referred to Elaine Romas (eromas@verizon.net) or Irene Tzamaras (itzamaras@comcast.net)

In February, **GOYA** will have a fundraising restaurant night at The Parthenon in Washington, DC. 20 percent of sales for the entire day will be donated to the ministry of St. George Goya for its outreach programs. The date will be announced soon. If you have any questions, please contact Demetri Tzamaras at dtzamaras@comcast.net.

FEED THE HUNGRY The next Feed the Hungry Sunday is **January 17**. We need drivers and cooks to help us out in preparing food for the shelters. Why not make New Year's resolution to directly help the homeless and hungry in Bethesda?

FAMILY LUNCHEON The 8th Annual Family Luncheon honoring all Godparents and benefitting Bediani Orphanage will be held Sunday, Feb. 7, after Divine Liturgy in the Grand hall. Reservations are required by Sunday, January 31. The Herald has reservation forms, or you may contact Eva Borsas at 301-515-2765 or at ilias_borsas@msn.com. Adults are \$12 and children under 12 are \$6. Children under three, no charge. Make your reservations today after Divine Liturgy or email akranias@hotmail.com

APOKRIATIKO GLENDI The St. George Greek School, in association with other youth organizations of the Parish, invites you to the Annual Apokriatiko Glendi to be held in the Grand Hall on February 12, 7pm to 11pm. Ticket sales will be every Sunday after services starting Sunday Jan 17. Ticket prices are \$12 (ages 7 and over) and \$8 (ages 6 and under). For information please contact Philios Angelides (703-450-7963). Tickets are selling fast and will not be sold at the door. Join us with your whole family and friends for another fun Apokria!" Deadline for ticket sales is Feb. 7

LITERARY LUNCHEON On Feb. 20, 2010, The Philologists of St. George will be hosting their first Literary Luncheon, "In their Own Words". The program will feature George Tenet, George Pelecanos, Stefan Fatsis, and Nick Katsoris - four successful Greek-American authors who will speak about the influence their heritage had on their craft. The luncheon will be held at The Bethesda Country Club and doors will open at 11:30 am. Tickets are \$60. Sponsorships are also available. For further information, please go to Philologists.org or call Catherine Sarlis at 301-469-7990. What a great way to support one of the many ministries of St. George.

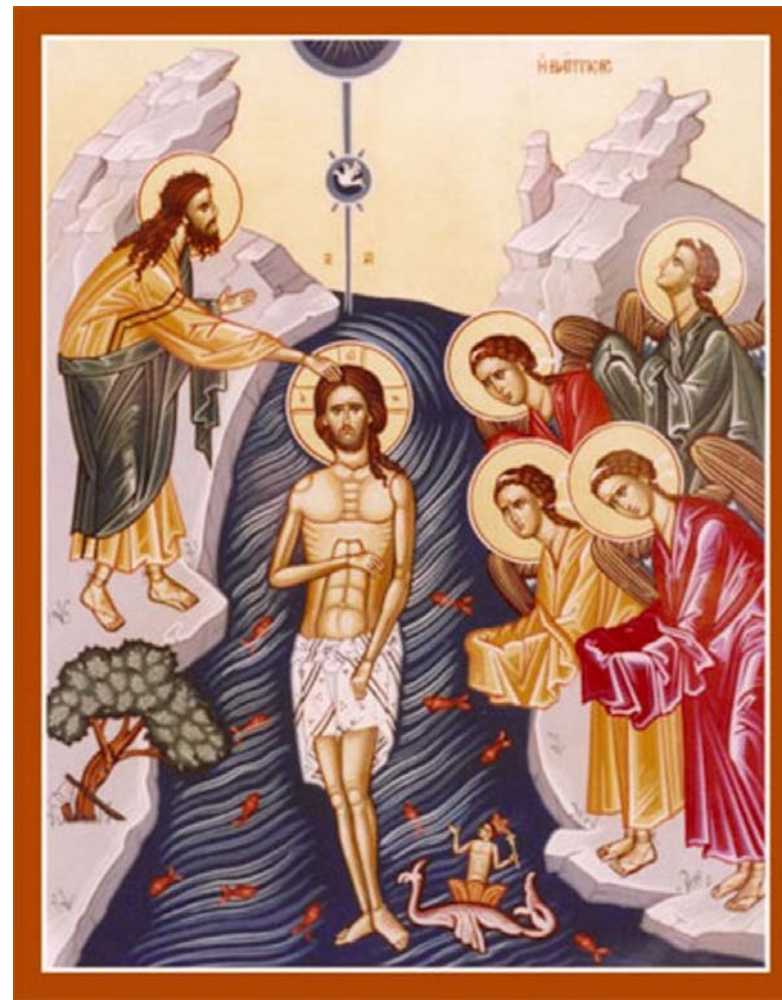
STEWARDSHIP LUNCHEON A luncheon honoring the Stewards of the Year for 2009 will be held on Sunday, January 31, after Divine Liturgy. This years honorees include Harriet Aposporos, Nomy Koumas, and Chris and Debbie Zourdos. Please join us for this important event to honor this years Stewards of the Year.

Please remember when giving a stewardship offering by check to indicate STEWARDSHIP 2010. If you have not submitted a pledge card for 2010, please do so as soon as possible and return it with your first offering for the new year. Many thanks!

THE SUNDAY AFTER THE THEOPHANY

ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA

JANUARY 10, 2010



THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT GEORGE

7701 Bradley Blvd., Bethesda, Maryland 20817

Office 301-469-7990 + Fax 301-469-5945

www.stgeorge.org

Proistamenos: Rev. Fr. Dimitrios J. Antokas

Email: FrAntokas@stgeorge.org

Rev. Fr. George Khitiri

Email: FrGeorge@stgeorge.org

Rev. Fr. Nicholas Despotides, Emeritus