



St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church -- Des Plaines, Illinois

the Forerunner

May - June 2016



Resurrection 2016

*By Fr. John Rallis
Protobresbyter*

“Who shall roll the stone from the tomb for us?”
These words of the holy women have their own mysterious meaning.

The tomb is our heart. The heart was once a temple, but it became a tomb. Christ enters it by means of the sacrament of Baptism, in order to dwell in us and work in us, the heart is consecrated as a temple to God. But, we steal from Christ the possibility to work in us and invigorate our “old man” which is wounded and mortified by our behavior. The temple of God turns into a dark tomb and a very large stone is rolled over its entrance, the enemies of God set a guard over the tomb making sure that the soul dies with no hope to be resurrected.

The stone is the soul’s illness by which all the other spiritual illnesses are guarded incurably and which the holy fathers call **INSENSIBILITY**, i.e. the deadening of spiritual feelings, the unseen death of the human soul with respect to spiritual things in a life that is flourishing with respect to material things. As

in a long physical illness the body becomes exhausted and withers away. The same thing happens to the human soul. Long-term slackness of life with continuous distractions, constant voluntary sins, forgetfulness of God and eternity, inattention or only superficial attention to the Gospel teachings removes from our spirit any inclination toward spiritual things and deadens it. The soul is directed toward material, temporal, vain and sinful things.

Everyone who wants to seriously investigate the state of his soul will see the illness of insensibility in it. For example, when we want to study the Word of God, we feel bored, everything we read seems hard to understand and strange, because we feel no affinity/attractiveness for the Word of God. When we rise for prayer, we feel dryness and coldness. We rush to finish, because we are estranged from God, we believe in God’s existence with a dead faith. Why have we forgotten eternity? Are we excluded from it? Doesn’t death stand before us face to face? Do we think that our earthly life is endless? We are deceived and distracted, not caring at all about what awaits us in the other world.

Continued on Page 2

theForerunner

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Schedule of Services

Saturday

Great Vespers 6:00 pm

Sunday

Orthros 8:30 am

Divine Liturgy

Main Church 9:45 am

Chapel 10:15 am

Weekday Liturgies

Orthros 8:00 am

Liturgy 9:00 am

All articles, ministry information, and
news for theForerunner can be sent to

**forerunner@stjohnthebaptistgoc.
org**

Resurrection 2016

Continued from Page 1

Why can we not get enough of idle talk, judgment of our neighbor, countless hours of empty amusements, but we do not want to dedicate even the tiniest bit of time to reviewing our own sins and lamenting over them? Because we have acquired an affinity for sin, for everything vain, because we have lost our affinity for all exercise that brings God-beloved virtues into us. Insensibility is rooted in the soul by the world which is at enmity with God and by the fallen angels at war with God, with the aid of our own free will. Insensibility grows and gathers strength through a life according to the principles of this world, when we follow our fallen reason and will, when we abandon service to God because we serve him carelessly.

Who shall roll the stone from the tomb for us? In order to conquer insensibility, a person must have a constant, patient, uninterrupted action against insensibility. He must have a pious and attentive life and in synergy with divine grace insensibility is destroyed. An angel of God, at God's command, comes down to help the laboring and troubled soul, rolls away the stone of hardness from the heart, fills the heart with compunction, announces to the soul the resurrection, the heart is pricked, the person feels mercy and compassion toward himself, toward his fallen state and his state of eternal death.

My Dearest Brothers and Sisters,

Our dedication of our life and all our strength and abilities to the service of God are not needed by God for Himself. They are needed by us. We bring them like myrrh to the Lord's tomb. We are foolish to think that it is possible to unite service of sin to service of God. It is spiritual schizophrenia.

Whoever enters into service of God from the very days of an unspoiled youth and remains in this service submits himself to the endless influence of the Holy Spirit, acquires an active knowledge of Christ's Resurrection and becomes a chosen by God preacher of the resurrection to his brothers and sisters. Whoever has become a slave to sin through ignorance or inclination, who has lost his connection to God, let him heal himself with repentance. Let us not put off our healing from day to day, so that death might not creep upon us and take us suddenly, unable of entering the habitations of unending rest.

The healing of old illnesses does not happen so quickly and conveniently. There is a reason why God's mercy grants us time for repentance. Time is needed to erase sinful impressions; time is needed for us to be marked by the impressions of the Holy Spirit; time is needed to be cleansed; time is needed to be clothed with the garments of virtue.

Christ is resurrected in the person who is prepared for it, and the tomb-the heart-again becomes a temple of God. Arise, O Lord, save, O my God, in Thy mysterious and yet essential Resurrection is my salvation. Χριστός Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen!

** On spiritual deadness by St. Ignatii Brianchinov*



Passions

By Jim Kandilas

“Do not swerve to the right or left, but travel on the royal road....”*

Do not despair, endure your tribulations courageously.

Engage in a struggle to cultivate the virtues and combat the passions.

And with happy thoughts blot out your depressions.

Chase away evil thoughts, which sicken your soul.

Let your virtues warm your cold-shivering heart.

God will deliver your soul from suffering of hell.

And He will show you the gentle way to the eternal bliss trail.

Fight against the cunning tyrant and murderer of souls.

Stop serving the shameful master of passions.

Guard your soul from all ruinous temptations.

And put to flight the hordes of poisonous tribulations.

Turn your racing thoughts at home, at work, in church, away.

Concentrate and direct your plans toward the eternal life.

Pray to God with tears when you recall the love of passions.

And find a sweet rest from all life’s futile quest and tensions.

Collect yourself inwardly with God’s help by prayer.

Look for abandonment of all created passions.

Descent into the depths of your heart and find your passions.

Be vigilant over your heart and God will remove the snares of destructions.

* Prov. 4.27



Κλωνισμός της Ψυχής

Δημήτρης Κάνδηλας

“Διεστραμεμενοι οδοί, το μίσος, το ψεύδος, ο δόλος...,ο φθόνος...”

Ο Άγιος Γρηγόριος ο Παλαμας αναφέρει ότι, αξιώνουν τον άνθρωποι “ της θείας αποστροφής.” Και σκοτιίζουν την ψυχή και καθιστούν.αδιαβατο τον δρόμο της επιστροφής.

Κλωνίζεται η σχέση με τον πλησίον μας όταν κυριαρχεί το μίσος.

Η καρδιά έχει σκληρύνει και απομακρύνει την προς τον πλησίον αγάπη.

Θεωρούμε τον εαυτόν μας ανώτερον και επιτιθεμεθα εναντίον του άλλου, Εκτοξευοντας ανελέητα τα βέλη του μίσους κατα του αντιπάλου.

Τα σκοτεινά σύννεφα του μίσους καλύπτουν τον ουρανό της αγάπης.

Το μίσος απόρροια μεγάλης εμπάθειας, αμαυρίζει την ψυχή μας.

Κτυπούμε, συκοφαντούμε, και κατηγορούμε τους συνανθρώπους μας.

Ο εγωισμός, η ζήλεια, ο φθόνος, πλέκουν με δόλια σχέδια τους τρόπους μας.

Ας καθαρίσουμε τον εαυτό μας εσωτερικά απο τα πάθη.

Να συνειδητοποιήσουμε ότι εγκαταλείπουμε τα αγαθά του Θεου.

Και να προσεγγίσουμε τον Θεον με προσευχη, εξομολογηση και θεία κοινωνία.

Για να απολαυσομε τα αγαθά που θα μας δώσει η αιώνια Βασιλεια



St. John the Baptist “Guardian Angel” Icon

Throughout our many years, the community of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church of Des Plaines has had a continued focus on the children of our community. Through the efforts of all of our schools - Sunday School, Greek School, Day School - and through the building of our Educational Center and Guardian Angel Chapel (and its “adornment” though iconography), we continue this focus with the introduction of the magnificent icon of the Guardian Angel. Following are responses to frequently asked questions about this icon:

Where will this icon be placed? It will be placed within the foyer of the Guardian Angel Chapel (before you enter, to your left).

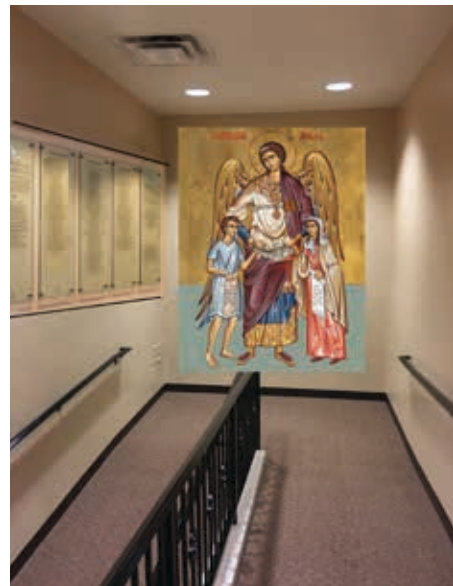
Why is the parish commissioning the writing of this icon? As we are aware, each of us is assigned a Guardian Angel on the day of our baptism. The Guardian Angel icon will provide a vivid reminder for the children (and for each of us) as we enter the chapel, that our Guardian Angel is with us and will be with us throughout our lives.

What opportunities will it provide? From a spiritual standpoint, the icon’s presence will allow us to ask for intercessory prayers for our children, grandchildren, godchildren, and all the children of the community. It will also allow us to show our gratitude for the many blessings of these children through commemoration on the walls directly next to the icon itself.

How can we participate? Through a donation of \$100 per child, your child’s (or grandchild’s or godchild’s) baptismal name can be placed upon the wall, based upon the year of their baptism.

When will the icon be finished? We anticipate the icon to be finished by the end of this year. The final icon may differ slightly from the example shown.

When can I make a contribution and submit the names of the children close to me? Immediately. This will help the committee to plan for the initial wall space that will begin this blessed project, which will continue into our future.



Rendering of the Guardian Angel icon, to be placed in the prearthex of the Chapel.

Please contact the church office directly with any further questions and to participate in this blessed project!



Holy Week in Photos — Saint John the



Baptist Greek Orthodox Church — 2016



May and June Feast Days

by Marguerite Gribogiannis and Mary Meletsis
Library Ministry

We celebrate the following saints in May and June.

May 21 - Saints Constantine and Helen

Constantine was the Emperor of the Roman Empire in the 4th century. He issued the famous "Edict of Milan" which gave religious freedom to all Christians. His mother, Helen visited and built many Churches in the Holy Land. Among the famous shrines built by St. Helen were the: (1) Church of the Holy Sepulchre (built over the tomb of Christ); (2) Church of the Ascension on Mt. Oliver; (3) Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem; (4) a monastery on Mt. Sinai; (5) Church of Calvary; (6) Church of the Holy Cross (where St. Helen found the True Cross of Christ. The title of "Isapostles" which means equal to the Apostles has been given to St. Constantine and St. Helen because of their many contributions to the Christian Faith.

May 23 - Saint Michael the Confessor

He lived during the seventh century A.D. and became Bishop of Synada in Asia Minor during the reign of Emperor Leo the Armenian. Leo demanded the destruction of all icons in Christian homes and Churches. Michael refused to burn the icons of the Church and tried to persuade the Emperor to give up his persecution of Christians who refused to destroy icons. Michael was exiled to a remote area in the East for over 50 years and died on May 23. His remains are entombed within the oldest monastery on Mt. Athos, called "Agia Lavra".

May 26 - Saint Alexander , neomartyr of Salonika

In his youth, he had renounced his faith in Christ and became a Moslem. After some time, he regretted this decision and returned to his Christian Faith. The speech

delivered by St. Alexander, confessing his Faith in Christ, has been recorded in the Church books as one of the finest literary masterpieces ever delivered by a member of the Christian religion. He confessed, "I wish to return to the light of Christ which has driven away all darkness from my mind and soul. I was born a Christian and now I am ready to die as a Christian." St. Alexander was executed on May 26 after his famous "Confession of Faith".

June 11 - Miraculous Icon of The Blessed Virgin Mary Axion Esti

Axion Esti means it is worthy to bless Thee, the Virgin. We commemorate the miracle which took place over 1000 years ago, on June 11. Originally the Axion Esti hymn was sung with the words, "Thee that art, more honorable than the cherubim". As a group of monks were conducting an all night vigil before the icons of the Blessed Virgin Mary, they suddenly noticed a monk whom they did not recognize. This monk began to chant the hymn with the words, "Axion Esti so Alethos Makarizin Se Tin Theotokon" which means, "It is very meet to Bless thee, Theotokos the ever blessed and most pure Virgin and Mother of God". The monk was actually the Archangel Gabriel and these additional words were to the hymn we are familiar with today.

June 29 - Saints Peter and Paul

St. Peter is regarded as the leader of the Twelve Disciples of Jesus. Over the course of his missionary journeys, Peter founded the Church. St. Paul is considered the greatest of missionaries. The accounts of his missionary journeys form an important part of the New Testament letters. Almost half of the 27 books of the New Testament were written by St. Paul.

Reference: Poulos, George Rev., Lives of the Saints and Major Feastdays, 1974.

Library Ministry calls for assistance



The St. John the Baptist Church Library is looking for assistance in cataloging the holdings and reordering books lost during the Hurricane Ike flood.

Please contact:

Mary Meletsis Marguerite Gribogiannis
Meletsis@sbcglobal.net mail4margeg@yahoo.com
and/or 847-298-4187

Please help this ministry which serves to enlighten individuals, families and children about our Orthodox Faith.

GUARDIAN ANGEL ORTHODOX DAY SCHOOL
PRESENTS

THE LION THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

A MUSICAL
ADAPTED FROM
C.S. LEWIS'
BELOVED CHILDREN'S
CLASSIC



THURSDAY
MAY 19TH, 2016
REFRESHMENTS AT 6:30PM
SHOW AT 7:00 PM

IN THE
GREAT HALL AT
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
2350 EAST DEMPSTER STREET
DES PLAINES, IL 60016



Prayer List

For any prayer concern (salvation, health, employment, stress and anxieties, etc.) please send baptismal names only to

stjohn@stjohnthebaptistgoc.org

We may not be able to help others materially or medically, but God does hear our prayers and always asks us to pray for each other and so build up the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16).

For health and stability in the work place:

Angelo, Chrysanthy and family, Chris, Helen, and family, Mary Ellen and family, James and family, Eudoxia, Paraskevi, Maria, Panagiotis, Hristos

For guidance: Ekaterini, Renee, John, Angela

For high blood pressure: Theodora

For peace: Maria, Karen, Ropalo, Stavroula, Christoforos

To let go of anger: Petros, Ioannis, Angela, John, Angela, Georgia, Ioannis, Evagelia

For health: Christos, Penelope, Theofani, Basilios

For healing of an illness: Helen, Mary Ellen, Angeline, Mary, Bill, Katherine, George, Athanasios, Tom, Makrina, Eric, Scott, Veronika, Nicoletta, Nicholas, Helen, George, Judy, Elaine, Nicoletta, Anastasios, Aristidis, Mary Ellen, Mary, and Ioanna

For spiritual edification: Michael, James, Helen, Cynthia, Lillian.

For spiritual guidance: Veronika, Alexander, John, Ioannis, Evagelia

For faith and hope: Evagelia

For good health and recovery from illness: Christopher

For general well-being: Tom, Anne, Helen, Lillian, Katherine, Mary, Lillian, Carol, Angeline, Mary, Chris, Frank, Anna

For health and well-being: Dennis, Mary, Lilly, Philip, Carol, Judy, Anne, and Helen, Dimitri, Georgia, Christina

For heart health: Stiljan

For illness and surgery: Judy, Mary Ellen, Phillip, Carol, Johnny, Alexandra, Austin, Panayiota, Mary, Makrina, George, Judy, Mary, Joan
For health: Judy, Anne, Chrysanthy, Helen, Mary, Iosefia, Dean, Sophie, Stafford, Theodora, Ekaterini

For illness and survival of world circumstances: Mary Ellen, Jennie, Helen, George/family, Judy, Christ, Mary

For forgiveness: John, Angela, Ioannis, Evagelia

For battling cancer: Stavros, Dimitri, Helen

Registry of Sacraments



Funerals

March 28:

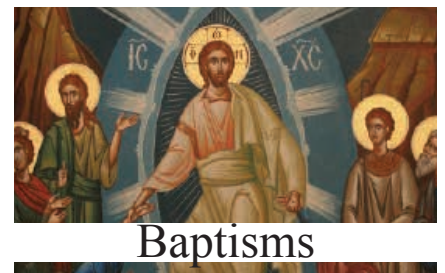
Avgi (Aurora) Michalacos

April 12:

Elias D. Kouzoukas

April 25:

Panagiotis (Takis) B. Coumas



Baptisms

March 5th Evagelia

Parents: John & Dakota Papadogiannis
Sponsors: Dimitrios & Helen Skoulikaris

March 6th: Maria

Parents: Chris & Katerina Bitsiaras
Sponsor: Chris Syregelas

PYTHAGORAS GREEK SCHOOL PRE-REGISTRATION FOR 2016-17



TIME TO ACT:

1. Pre-registration for the school year 2016-17 has begun
2. Students registered before June 30, 2016 receive a special discount
3. Additional discounts for Stewards of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

**PYTHAGORAS GREEK SCHOOL
PROGRAMS DETAILS:**

A. Saturday Program- Greek as a Second language

- Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Pre-K to 9th grade

B. GSL program – Greek as a foreign language

- Wednesdays from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Levels: Pre-K, K, 1-4

For additional information and inquiries contact:
Georgia Katsis – Pythagoras Greek School Director
georgia.katsis@gmail.com

Six Week Calendar • May 15 - June 25, 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 15 8:30am Orthros 9:15am Sunday School (Last Day) 9:45am Divine Liturgy (Main Church) SUNDAY OF MYRRHBEARERS Pachomios the Great Martyr, Achillios Bishop of Larissa	May 16 7:00pm Jr. Olympics Volleyball Practice Theodoros the Sanctified, Martyr Peter of Blachernae	May 17 9:30am HOPE 6:00pm Metropolis Philoptochos Mtg. 7:00pm Iconography Meeting 7:00pm Jr. GOYA Andronikos & Junia the Martyr, Nectarius of Varlaam	May 18 9:45am Martha & Mary 5:00pm GSL 7:00pm GAODS School Board Meeting 7:00pm Jr. Olympics Basketball Practice 8:15pm V-ball Practice Peter, Dionysius, Andrew, Paul, Julian the Martyr	May 19 6:30pm GAODS Spring Recital: <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> Patrikios Bishop of Proussa, Memnon the Wonderworker	May 20 YAL Trip/Pilgrimage to San Francisco 7:00pm Great Vespers at Sts. Constantine & Helen Thallelaios & Companions, Mark the Hermit	May 21 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 9:00am Greek School 6:00pm Great Vespers Constantine & Helen, Equal-to-the Apostles, Pachomios the New Martyr
May 22 8:30am Orthros 9:45am Divine Liturgy (Main Church) SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC Basiliskos Bishop of Comana, Demetrius and Paul of Tripoli	May 23 7:00pm Jr. Olympics Volleyball Practice Michael Bishop of Synada, Mary the Myrrh-bearer	May 24 9:30am HOPE 5:00pm Great Vespers 7:00pm GOYA 7:00pm Parish Council Meeting Symeon the Stylite, Vincent of Lerins	May 25 8am Orthros 9am Divine Liturgy 5pm GSL 7pm Family Synaxis 7pm Jr. Olympics Basketball Practice 7pm Martha & Mary House Meeting 7pm Metropolis Camp Meeting 8:15pm V-ball Practice MID-PENTECOST, Third Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist	May 26 6:30pm Jr. Olympics Pep Rally Carpos & Alphaeus of the 70, Alexandros of Thessaloniki	May 27 Hieromartyr Helladios, John the Russian of Evia	May 28 8:00am Jr. Olympics 6:00pm Great Vespers Eutyches Bishop of Melitene, Nikitas Bishop of Chalcedon
May 29 8:30am Orthros 9:45am Divine Liturgy (Main Church) SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN Theodosia of Tyre, Theodosia of Constantinople	May 30 Church & School Building Closed Isaakios Founder of the Monastery of Dalmatos, Emmelia mother Basil the Great	May 31 9:30am HOPE 6:00pm Philoptochos Board Meeting 7:00pm Jr. GOYA 7:00pm Philoptochos General Meeting Hermias the Martyr at Comana, Eusebius and Haralambos	Jun 1 5:00pm GSL Last Day Justin the Martyr, Pyrrhos the Hieromartyr	Jun 2 11:00am PreSchool End of the Year Program Nikephoros Patriarch of Constantinople, Erasmios of Ochrid	Jun 3 Martyrs Lucillian & Paula, Athanasios the Wonderworker	Jun 4 9:00am Greek School Last Day 6:00pm Great Vespers Metrophanes Patriarch of Constantinople, Mary & Martha
Jun 5 8:30am Orthros 9:45am Divine Liturgy (Main Church) Pastichio Sale 1:30pm Greek Dance SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN	Jun 6 Hilarion of Dalmatos Monastery, Attalos the Wonderworker	Jun 7 9:30am HOPE 6:00pm Orthros 7:00pm Divine Liturgy Theodotos Bishop of Ankyra, Righteous Panagis Basias	Jun 8 5:30pm GSL Graduation 7:00pm Great Vespers at Ascension APODOSIS OF PASCHA, Relics Theodore Commander, Kalliope the Martyr	Jun 9 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 6:30pm GAODS 6th Grade Graduation HOLY ASCENSION, 3 Virgin-martyrs of Chios	Jun 10 11:00am GAODS Field Day & Last Day Alexander & Antonina, Martyrs Timothy Bishop of Proussa	Jun 11 11:00am Greek School End of the Year Program 6:00pm Great Vespers Bartholomew and Barnabas, Revelation of the Axion Estin
Jun 12 8:30am Orthros 9:45am Divine Liturgy (Main Church) Graduate Sunday FATHERS OF FIRST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL	Jun 13 Akylina the Martyr of Syria, Eulogios Patriarch of Antioch	Jun 14 Elisha the Prophet, Methodios Patriarch of Constantinople	Jun 15 Amos the Prophet, Righteous Jerome, Augustine Bishop of Hippo	Jun 16 Tychon the Wonderworker, 40 Martyrs of Rome	Jun 17 Isaurus Companions of Athens, Manuel, Sabel & Ishmael	Jun 18 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 6:00pm Great Vespers Leontios Hypatios & Theodoulos the Martyrs of Syria
Jun 19 8:30am Orthros 9:45am Divine Liturgy (Main Church) HOLY PENTECOST Jude the Apostle, Martyr Zosima	Jun 20 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy Methodios Bishop of Olympus, Kallistos I Patriarch of Constantinople	Jun 21 7:00pm Parish Council Meeting Julian the Martyr of Tarsus, Terentios Bishop of Iconium	Jun 22 7:00pm Metropolis Camp Meeting Eusebius of Samosata, Zenon & his servant Zenas	Jun 23 5:00pm Great Vespers Agrippina the Martyr of Rome, Aristocleus, Demetrius, Athanasius	Jun 24 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy NATIVITY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST, Elizabeth Mother of Forerunner	Jun 25 6:00pm Great Vespers Prokopios the New Martyr, Righteous Febronia

Strict Fast Days

Oil & Wine are permitted

Fish is permitted



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Fr. John, Fr. Athanasios, and the altar boys

the Forerunner

May - June 2016

What's Inside

Pastoral Letter by Fr. John Rallis.	1&2
Poetry by Jim Kandilas	3
Guardian Angel Icon	4
Images from Palm Sunday.	5
Holy Week at St. John the Baptist	6-7
May and June Feast Days	8
GAODS presents Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe.	9
Prayer List	10
Registry of Sacraments	10
Six Week Calendar	11