

# Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

## July 26, 2009

**Epistle** Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-5 BRETHREN, before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; when we were children, we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

### Resurrectional Apolytikion

When the angelic powers appeared at Your grave, the soldiers guarding it feared and became as dead. And standing by the sepulcher was Mary who was seeking Your immaculate body. You devastated Hades, not afflicted by it. You went to meet the virgin, and granted eternal life. You resurrected from the dead. O Lord, glory to You.

### Apolytikion of the Church

The truth of your manner of life manifested you to our flock as a rule of faith and an icon of gentleness and a teacher of self-control. By humility, therefore, you acquired the things on high, and riches through poverty. Father Holy Hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ our God, entreating that our souls be saved.

### Kontakion

O Protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the creator most constant: O despise not the voices of those who have sinned; but be quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession and speed thou to make supplication, O thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

**Gospel** Matt. 9:27-35 At that time, as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to him. And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people.

### Wisdom from the Fathers

And then at last He for His part lays His hand upon them, saying, "According to your faith be it unto you." And this He does to confirm their faith, and to show that they are participators in the good work ...

**St. John Chrysostom, Homily 32 on Matthew 9 4th C.**

**Prayer List** Please remember the following people in your prayers: Gabriella and Viroel Andrews, Constantine Evangelinos, Faye Sekaros, Patrick Gutierrez, Mike Kapetan, Annette Kovalcheck, Angelica Stageman, Katina Eleni Hoffman, Robert Ashley, Sr.

### Thought for the Week

When mind and heart are united in prayer and the soul is wholly concentrated in a single desire for God, then the heart grows warm and the light of Christ begins to shine and fills the inward man with peace and joy. . . .

-St. Seraphim of Sarov *From Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church Prayer Book, Lowell, MA, compiled by Fr. Peter Gregory, January 1995.*

**We offer our deepest sympathy** to the family of Ann Valavanis whose funeral was at St. Nicholas July 22nd. May her memory be eternal.

# Parish News and Events ([www.stnickaa.org](http://www.stnickaa.org))

### Welcome Visitors!

Please fill out the form on the notepads in the pews and put it in the collection tray so we may welcome you to our Parish.

### Visitors Please Note

Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians. Visitors are welcome to receive the Antidoro (Blessed Bread), which is distributed at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Prosforo** needed for August 30, Sept. 6, and 27.

**Fellowship Hour** sponsor needed for Sunday August 9, 16 and 30th.

### CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP:

Everyone's Responsibility! If you have not made your pledge for 2009, please do so as soon as possible. If you need a pledge card, please call the office.

**CHECK OUT... THE BIG COMMUNITY HARVEST GARDEN TOUR** A display of Washtenaw County gardens that increase low-income people's access to fresh, local, nutritious foods. This is a self-guided tour.

**August 1, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.** Featuring: **The Gathering Farm at Food Gatherers, 1 Carrot Way, AA 48105;**

**The Growing Hope Urban Garden Center, 922 W. Michigan, Ypsi 48197; Arbordale Apartments Edible Avalon, 1010 Arbordale, AA 48103.**

The following Faith and Food Congregational Gardens **St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 3109 Scio Church, AA 48103; St. Andrew Episcopal Church, 306 N. Division, AA 48104; Messiah Temple Apostolic Church, 200 Harriet, Ypsi, 48198; Holy Faith Lutheran/Episcopal Church, 6299 Saline-AA Rd, Saline 48176.**

Stop at one or all of the sites in any order. Volunteers will show you around and tell you about their program. Learn gardening techniques such as building raised beds and fences and recruiting volunteers. All produce is donated to meal programs, food banks, and neighbors. For more information and maps to all the sites, contact: [FoodGatherers.org](http://FoodGatherers.org); [faithandfood@growinghope.net](mailto:faithandfood@growinghope.net) [GrowingHope.net](http://GrowingHope.net) 734-786-8401; [ProjectGrowGardens.org](http://ProjectGrowGardens.org)

The Big Community Harvest Garden Projects are funded by the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation/Pfizer Big Idea Grant. Come see what's growing on!

### Philoptochos Notes

Please enjoy the international coffee hour today after the Liturgy. Philoptochos celebrates the work of the International Orthodox Christian Charities, our Community Care Ministry for June, July and August. The IOCC ministers to people in need throughout the world by sharing with them God's gifts of food, shelter, economic self-sufficiency and hope. We thank you for your support of this wonderful expression of Christian love.

**The Bookstore Recommends** for summer reading: Patrick Leigh Fermor's books on *Mani* and *Roumeli*, based on his travels through Greece, have been called two of the best travel books of the century and *A Time of Gifts*, journey on foot from Holland to Constantinople is "among the most beautiful travel books in the language." Sofka Zinovieff's *Eurydice Street*, on the author's move to Greece, goes beneath the surface to convey not just customs, practices and descriptions of Greece but the psychological and feeling aspects of life in the Greek culture. These are just a few of our books on Greek history and culture.

### Modern Greek Studies

**8th Annual Platsis Symposium on the Greek Legacy** This year's Symposium on "Honor and Shame" will be held at the Biomedical Science Research Building on Central Campus, Sunday, September 13 at 2:00 p.m. Dr. Jill Dubisch, Regents' Professor of Anthropology at Northern Arizona University and Douglas Cairns, Professor of Classics and Archaeology in the School of History at the University of Edinburgh. This event is FREE and open to the public. Details to come in mid August.

### An Afternoon of Greek Songs, with Mezzo-soprano Penelope Bitzas and Pianist Pantelis Polychronidis

Songs by 19th and 20th century Greek composers including Greek Art Songs, modern arrangements of folk songs, "Aria Greca" and selections from Greek operetta and familiar favorites. This special recital will take place at the Stamps Auditorium, North Campus on Saturday, October 4 at 3 p.m. This event is FREE and open to the public. Details to come in early September.

For more information on either of these presentations contact: [berlykim@umich.edu](mailto:berlykim@umich.edu)



## St. Markella — July 22

St. Markella lived in the village of Volissos, Chios in the middle of the fourteenth century. Her parents were Christians, and among the wealthiest citizens of Volissos. Her mother died when she was young, so her father, the mayor of the village, saw to her education.

St. Markella had been trained by her mother to be respectful and devout, and to guard her purity. She avoided associations with other girls who were more outgoing so that she would not come to spiritual harm through such company. Her goal was to attain the Kingdom of Heaven, and to become a bride of Christ.

St. Markella increased in virtue as she grew older, fasting, praying, and attending church services. She tried to keep the commandments and to lead others to God. She loved and respected her father, and comforted him in his grief over her mother's death. She told him she would take care of him in his old age and would not abandon him.

As an adult, St. Markella was loved by everyone for her beauty and for her spiritual gifts. The devil tried to lure her into sin by placing evil thoughts in her mind. However, St. Markella resisted these temptations and so the devil turned away from a direct confrontation with her. Instead, he incited her father with an unnatural desire for his daughter. The unfortunate man had spent a long time struggling against his lust, but finally gave into it.

One day, her father openly declared the nature of his feelings for her. Horrified, Markella tried to avoid him as much as she could.

One day, a shepherd was tending his sheep near the beach, and led them into the shade of a tree to avoid the hot July sun. Just as he was about to lie down, he heard a noise and looked up. He saw a young woman with a torn dress running down the hill. She hid in a nearby bush, ignoring its thorns.

The shepherd wondered who was chasing her, and how she had come to this spot. He then heard the sound of a horse approaching, and recognized the mayor of the village. He asked the shepherd if he had seen his daughter, Markella. The shepherd said that he had not seen her, but pointed to her hiding place with his finger.

The mayor ordered Markella to come out of the bush, but she refused. He then set fire to the bush in order to force her out. She emerged and ran toward the rocky shore, calling out to the Mother of God for help.

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Markella continued to run, even though blood was flowing from her face and hands. Feeling a sharp pain in her leg, she saw that she had been shot with an arrow. She paused to pull it out, then began to run once more. She scrambled over the rocks, staining them with her blood. Hearing her father getting closer, she prayed that the earth would open up and swallow her.

Markella sank to her knees, her strength gone. A miracle took place. The rock split open and received her body up to the waist. Her father drew near with wild-eyed joy shouting, "I have caught you. Now where will you go?"

Drawing his sword, he began to butcher his helpless daughter, cutting off pieces of her body. Finally, he seized her by the hair and cut off her head, throwing it into the sea. The sea suddenly became stormy, and large waves crashed to the shore near her father's feet. Thinking that the sea was going to drown him because of his crime, he turned and fled. His ultimate fate has not been recorded.

Pious Christians built a church on the spot where St. Markella hid in the bush and the spot where she was killed became known as "The Martyrdom of St. Markella". The rock that opened to receive her is still there and appears to be a large stone that broke off from a mountain and rolled into the sea. Soil from the mountain covers the spot on the side facing the land. On the side facing the ocean is a small hole, about the size of a finger. Healing water flows from the opening, which cures every illness of the faithful. The water is clear, but some of the nearby rocks have been stained with a reddish-yellow color. According to tradition, the lower extremities of St. Markella's body are still concealed in the rock.

The most astonishing thing about the rock is not the warmth of the water, nor the discoloration of the other rocks, but what happens when a priest performs the Blessing of Water. Steam rises up from the water near the rock, and the entire area is covered with a mist. The sea returns to normal as soon as the service is over. Many miracles have occurred at the spot, and pilgrims flock there from all over the world.

*With Permission "The Orthodox Church in America — www.oca.org."*

**Note:** In our time, St. Markella is prayed to particularly by women with breast cancer and other women's diseases.

# THE SUNDAY BULLETIN July 26, 2009

**Orthros**  
9:00 AM

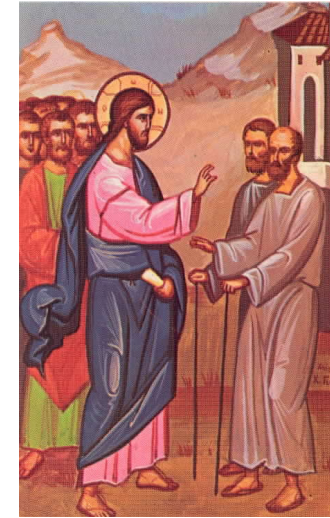
**Divine Liturgy**  
10:00 AM

**Epistle Reading**  
Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-5

**Gospel Reading**  
Matt. 9:27-35

**Creed**  
English

**Greeters August 2**  
Perry Katsikas



**Psaltis**  
Zannis Res

**Choir**  
Dr. Jon Wardner

**Prosforo**  
Pliakas Family

**Fellowship Hour**  
Philoptochos

**Greeters, July 26**  
Sylvia Kleanthous  
Anna Bairactaris

## SEVENTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

### UP-COMING EVENTS

**Monday, July 27**

10:00 a.m. Bible Study  
7:30 p.m. Bible Study

**Tuesday, July 28**

7:30 p.m. YAL

**Friday, July 31**

**St. Markella**  
10:00 a.m. Orthros & Divine Liturgy

**MAKE SURE TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE: [www.stnickaa.org](http://www.stnickaa.org)**  
**Submissions for the Sunday bulletin must be sent to:**  
**[kate@stnickaa.org](mailto:kate@stnickaa.org) by 10 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to publication.**

**SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
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