



# ST. MARY ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

A PARISH OF THE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE

OF NORTH AMERICA

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PARISH WEB PAGE ∞ [www.stmaryorthodox.com](http://www.stmaryorthodox.com) ∞

## CLERGY

His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH, Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of all North America

His Grace Bishop THOMAS, Auxiliary Bishop of Charleston, Oakland & the Mid-Atlantic

Very Rev. Fr. George Alberts, Pastor

Very Rev. Fr. Dr. David Hester, Pastor Emeritus ✕ Very Rev. Fr. Herbert Nahas, Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Deacon Joseph Clark (Temporarily Attached)

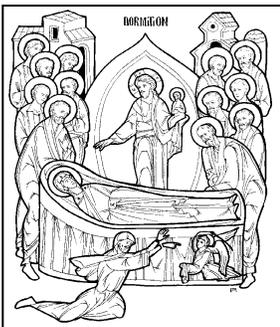
Subdeacon William Obeid + Subdeacon N.D. Namey + Subdeacon John Moses Jr. + Subdeacon Marshall Goodge

**WELCOME** to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. We are the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Christian Church whose roots trace directly back to the first century Antioch, the city in which the disciples of Jesus Christ were first called Christians (Acts 11:26).

The Orthodox Church is the oldest and second-largest Christian group in the world. We are called by God, our Creator, to worship and follow Him and to proclaim to the world His message of love, peace and salvation.

God loves all mankind and desires that all human beings should believe in Him, know Him, abide in Him, and receive eternal life from Him. To accomplish this God Himself came into the world as a man in Jesus Christ --- becoming man that we might become like God. The Parishioners of St. Mary Parish welcome you and are pleased that you have decided to worship Almighty God with our Parish family today. We encourage you to learn about our Orthodox faith and our Parish if you are not yet Orthodox.

Although the non-Orthodox may not receive Holy Communion, which may only be given to the Orthodox faithful, we invite you to come forward at the close of the Liturgy to receive a blessing from the Priest and blessed bread. Please also come downstairs to the Parish Hall join us for our fellowship hour.



Our Patronal Feast is the DORMITION (FALLING-ASLEEP) OF THE THEOTOKOS, which is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church and is celebrated each year on August 15. The Theotokos, the Virgin Mary, was “blessed amongst women,” and she was chosen “to bear the Savior of our souls.” Orthodox Christians consider her to be the Queen of all the saints and angels. Knowing she is eternally present at the throne of God interceding for mankind, we pray for her love, guidance, and protection.



**PARISH LIFE AT ST. MARY**

***MARCH IS LADIES MONTH IN THE ARCHDIOCESE***

**THIS WEEK**

Mon. March 25 ~ The Feast of the Annunciation  
Matins at 9:00 am & Divine  
Liturgy at 10:00  
Great Compline at 6:00 pm

Wed. March 27 - Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at 6:00  
followed by Potluck Dinner &  
Ask Abouna

Thur. March 28 Spaghetti Dinner 4:00 - 6:00

Fri. March 29 Akathist Service at 6:00 pm

Sat. March 30 Confessions from 4:30 - 5:00 &  
Vespers at 5:00

Sun. March 31 Adoration of the Holy Cross ~  
Matins at 8:50 & Divine Liturgy  
at 10:00

**UPCOMING LENTEN & SPECIAL EVENTS**

Mon. April 1 ~ Great Compline at 6:00 pm

Wed. April 3 ~ Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at 6:00  
followed by Potluck Dinner &  
Ask Abouna

Fri. April 5 ~ Akathist Service at 6:00 pm

**COMMEMORATIONS**

✦ **Today** Holy Bread & Bulletin offered in loving memory of Phyllis Namey by Kate & Sbdcn Norman Namey for the 5 year Anniversary of her repose and also Holy Bread and Bulletin are offered in loving memory of Mildred Broody by Corinne Censulla

**LENTEN SERVICES AT  
ST. MARY**

The holy season of Great Lent is a time of preparation for Orthodox Christians. The forty days leading up to Pascha call for a concentration on repentance, confession and renewal through increased activity in worship, prayer, fasting, confession, and almsgiving.

We prepare ourselves through additional prayerful services on the Monday, Wednesday and Friday Evenings of Great Lent, except the first week of Lent during which we have services every night of the week. All of the evening services will begin at 6 p.m.

We enjoy a special additional event each Wednesday through Lent when we host a PotLuck Lenten Dinner with an ASK ABOUNA Session afterwards.

**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**

Before the transgression, Adam shared in divine illumination and brilliance. He was clothed in the true robe of glory and was not naked, nor was he ugly in his nakedness, but was truly unspeakably better adorned than those who wear diadems embellished with much gold and precious stones. When our human nature was stripped of this divine illumination and radiance as a result of the ugly transgression, the Word of God had mercy on this nature and in His compassion took it upon Himself. On Mount Tabor He showed it clothed once more to His chosen disciples (cf. Lk. 9:28-37), proving to all what we had once been, and what those of us who believed in Him and attained to perfection in Him would be through Him in the age to come. You will find that the earnest of this perfection of those who live according to Christ is openly given here and now to God's saints. They reap, so to speak, the good of the age to come. – St. Gregory Palamas

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2019 SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT: ST. GREGORY PALAMAS & FOREFEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION  
VENERABLE ZACHARIAH THE RECLUSE AND ARTEMON, BISHOP OF SELEUCIA; NEW-HIEROMARTYR PARTHENIOS, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPE

**\*\*DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT\*\***

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE TWO

When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hell with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE FOUR

Today the preludes of universal joy move us to sing the prefestal hymn; for behold, Gabriel cometh, bringing the good tidings to the Virgin, and shall cry to her: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace; the Lord is with thee.

APOLYTIKION FOR ST. GREGORY PALAMAS IN TONE EIGHT

O Star of Orthodoxy, support of the Church and its teacher, O comeliness of ascetics, and incontestable champion of those who speak in theology, Gregory the wonder-worker, the pride of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, implore thou constantly for the salvation of our souls.

APOLYTIKION OF THE DORMITION

In giving birth thou didst keep thy virginity and thy repose thou didst not forsake the world O Theotokos, for thou art the mother of life and thou didst pass over into life. And through thine intercessions from death thou dost redeem our souls.

KONTAKION OF THE FOREFEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE FOUR

At the great Archangel's voice, \* O Theotokos, \* the All-holy Spirit came \* upon thee and thou didst conceive \* Him that is one in essence and throne \* with God the Father, O Adam's recovery.

✠ THE EPISTLE ✠

*O Lord, Thou wilt preserve us and keep us from this generation.*

*Save me, O Lord, for the godly man hath disappeared.*

THE READING FROM THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE HEBREWS. (1:10-2:3)

“In the beginning, Thou, O Lord, didst found the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands; they will perish, but Thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle Thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years will never end.” But to what angel has He ever said, “Sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a stool for thy feet”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation? Therefore, we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message, declared by angels, was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard Him.

## ✠ THE GOSPEL ✠

### THE READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK. (2:1-12)

At that time, when Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that He was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and He was preaching the Word to them. And they came, bringing to Jesus a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now, some of the scribes were sitting there, reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in His spirit that they thus reasoned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you reason thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" – He said to the paralytic – "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all. So that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

## THE SYNAXARION

On March 24 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we celebrate the Forefeast of the Annunciation to the Theotokos, and we commemorate Venerable Father Zachariah the recluse and Artemon, bishop of Seleucia; and New-hieromartyr Parthenios, patriarch of Constantinople.

On this same day, the Second Sunday of the Fast, we make remembrance of our father among the saints, Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica.

*The Spring of Light now leadeth to light unwaning  
The Light's own truly great and resplendent herald.*

This divine father was born in Asia and was brought up from infancy in the royal palace of Constantinople. When he was of age, Gregory left the palace and gave himself to asceticism on Mount Athos. He eventually moved to Thessalonica to seek cure for the diseases he contracted because of his asceticism and piety. In 1349, he was elevated to the episcopacy, tending to his people in an Apostolic fashion for 13 years. He is glorified as an ascetic, a theologian, a hierarch and a miracle-worker, who forsook a prominent, secular lifestyle to take up his cross and follow Christ. The Most-Holy Theotokos, St. John the Theologian, St. Demetrius, St. Anthony the Great, St. John Chrysostom and angels of God appeared to him at different times.

*Through his intercessions, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us. Amen.*

## THE SYNAXARION FOR THE ANNUNCIATION

On March 25 in the Holy Orthodox Church we celebrate the Annunciation to our Most Holy Lady the Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary.

*The Angel announced as Son to the Virgin, the Great Angel of the Father's great counsel.  
On the twenty-fifth the Angel spake of joy unto Mary.*

When the All-Holy Virgin was entering her fifteenth year, after having spent eleven years of living and serving in the Temple of Jerusalem, the priests informed her that, according to the Law, she could not remain in the Temple but must be betrothed and enter into marriage. The All-Holy Virgin surprised the priests when she told them that she had dedicated her life to God and that she desired to remain a virgin until death. Then, Zacharias, the high priest and father of the Forerunner, under the inspiration of God,

betrothed the Virgin Mary to Joseph of Nazareth to preserve her virginity and to care for her. When the fullness of time had come, as prophesied by Daniel the Prophet, and when God was pleased to fulfill His promise to the banished Adam and to the Prophets, the Archangel Gabriel appeared in the chamber of the All-Holy Virgin. As some priestly writers wrote, precisely at that same moment when she held open the book of the Prophet Isaiah and was contemplating his great prophecy: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son! (7:13)” Gabriel appeared in all of his angelic brightness and saluted her: “Rejoice, highly favored one! The Lord is with thee,” and the rest in order as it is written in the Gospel of Luke. This annunciation and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Virgin, leading to the incarnation of our Lord, began the salvation of mankind and restoration of all creation.

*Through the intercessions of the Most Holy Theotokos and of all Thy Saints, O Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.*

*WE CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS TOMORROW WITH MATINS AT 9:00 AM AND LITURGY AT 10:00 AM*

The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary is celebrated on March 25 each year. The Feast commemorates the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would become incarnate and enter into this world through her womb.

The biblical story of the Feast of the Annunciation is found in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke (1:26-39). The Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary, who was living in Nazareth, and said to her, “Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you.” Mary was perplexed and wondered what kind of greeting this was.

The angel told her not to be afraid, for she had found favor with God. He said, “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

Mary responded to the angel by asking how this could happen since she had no husband. The angel told her that the Holy Spirit and the power of God would come upon her, and that the child to be born of her would be called holy, the “Son of God.”

The angel then proceeded to tell the Virgin Mary that her cousin Elizabeth had conceived a son in her old age (John the Baptist), and affirmed that with God nothing is impossible.

In faith and obedience to the will of God, Mary replied to the angel, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be according to your word.” Upon her response, the angel departed.

It is on the Feast of the Annunciation, that Orthodox Christians commemorate both the divine initiative of God, whereby He took on flesh from the Virgin for our salvation, and the human response, whereby Mary freely accepted the vocation offered to her. He elected to become man, and He desired to do this with the willing agreement of her whom He chose as His mother. Mary could have refused, for she was not a passive instrument, but an active participant with a free and positive part to play in God’s plan for our salvation. Thus, when on this and other feasts the Orthodox Church honors the Theotokos, the Mother of God, it is not just because God chose her but also because she herself chose to follow His will.