

**᾿GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE  
PARISH OF ST. PARASKEVI, ST. BARBARA &  
ST. JOHN THE MERCIFUL**

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**PROGRAMME JUNE 2016**



***Christ: The Good Shepherd***

*“The thief comes not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*”

*“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep.” (John 10:10-11)*

**WISDOM OF THE SAINTS...**

A man went into the forest to choose a tree from which to make roof-beams. And he saw two trees, one beside the other. One was smooth and tall, but had rotted away inside, and the other was rough on the outside and ugly, but its core was healthy. The man sighed, and said to himself: “What use is this tree to me if it is rotten inside and useless for beams? The other it is rough and ugly, is at least healthy on the inside and so, if I put a bit more effort into it, I can use it for roof-beams for my house.” And, without thinking any more about it, he chose that tree.

So will God choose between two men for His house, and will choose not the one who appears outwardly righteous, but the one whose heart is filled with God’s healthy righteousness.

*(St. Nikolai Velimirovich)*

“Our religion is perfectly and profoundly conceived. What is simple is also what is most precious. Accordingly, in your spiritual life engage in your daily contest simply, easily, and without force. The soul is sanctified and purified through the study of the Fathers, through the memorization of the psalms and of portions of Scripture, through the signing of hymns and through the repetition of the Jesus Prayer.

Devote your efforts, therefore, to these spiritual things and ignore all the other things.”

*(St. Porphyrios)*



## **PROGRAMME JUNE 2016**

***Every Thursday Evening the program is as follows:***

*6pm: The St Ignatius children's group and choir (primary school age and up)*

*7pm: Paraklesis service to the Theotokos (in English)*

*7.45: Bible study group (for all ages), led by Fr Demosthenis*

SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> JUNE:           **SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **APODOSIS OF PASCHA**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 8.00-10.00am

**Evening:** Vespers service of Holy Ascension, 6-7pm

THURSDAY 9<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **HOLY ASCENSION**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 8.00-10.00am

SATURDAY 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **APOSTLES BARTHOLOMEW AND BARNABAS, St Luke the Surgeon, Synaxis of the Holy Icon of the Axion Estin**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 8.00-10.00am

SUNDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **FATHERS OF THE FIRST COUNCIL**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

THURSDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **Evening: Divine Liturgy in English, 7.30-8.45pm**

SATURDAY 18<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **SATURDAY OF SOULS**, Matins, Divine Liturgy, and commemoration of the reposed, 7.30-10.00am

SUNDAY 19<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **HOLY PENTECOST**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

MONDAY 20<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **MONDAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 8.00-10.00am

### **THIS WEEK WE DO NOT FAST ON WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY**

FRIDAY 24<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **NATIVITY OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 8.00-10.00am

SUNDAY 26<sup>th</sup> JUNE:       **SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS**, Matins, Divine Liturgy, and commemoration of the reposed, 7.30-11.00am

**MONDAY 27<sup>th</sup> JUNE- THE FAST FOR THE APOSTLES BEGINS, FISH IS ALLOWED EXCEPT ON WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS**

WEDNESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> JUNE:   **APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 8.00-10.00am (***eating of fish permitted***)

THURSDAY 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE:   **SYNAXIS OF THE 12 APOSTLES**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 8.00-10.00am

*“Do not be surprised that you fall every day; do not give up, but stand your ground courageously. And assuredly the angel who guards you will honour your patience. While a wound is still fresh and warm it is easy to heal, but old, neglected and festering ones are hard to cure, and require for their care much treatment, cutting, plastering and cauterization. Many from long neglect become incurable. But with God all things are possible [Matthew 19:26].”*

+ St. John Climacus, Step 5.30, *Ladder of Divine Ascent*

## Kneeling Vespers of Pentecost — Prayer 1

O pure and blameless Lord, Who art without beginning, invisible and incomprehensible, unchangeable, immeasurable, and unbounded, Who art without evil and alone immortal, who dwellest in the unapproachable light, Maker of heaven and earth and the seas and all that was created therein, Who grantest to all their petitions before asking, to Thee we pray and of Thee we ask, O philanthropic Master, the Father of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the ever-virgin Mary, the noble Theotokos; Who first didst teach by word, and then gave testimony in deed while bearing the saving Passion, teaching us Thine unworthy, sinful, and miserable servants, to offer Thee our supplications with bent head and knee, for our sins and human ignorance.

Wherefore, O most merciful and philanthropic Lord, hear us on whatever day we call upon Thee, and especially on this day of Pentecost, whereon, after our Lord Jesus Christ had ascended into heaven and sat on Thy right hand, O God and Father, He sent down the Holy Spirit to his Disciples, the holy Apostles, Who alighted on each of them and filled them all with His inexhaustible and divine grace; and they did speak in strange tongues, prophesying Thy great deeds. Hear us who beseech Thee, and remember us, wretched and condemned. Deliver us from the (sinful) captivity of our souls by Thy loving intercession. Accept us, who kneel down before Thee and cry out: we have sinned. From birth, from the womb of our mother – we are Thine, O Lord – Thou art our God. But as our life passes in vanity, we have therefore been stripped of thine aid, and have become silent. Yet do we trust in Thy compassion and cry unto Thee. Remember not the sins of our youth and ignorance; cleanse us of our secret sins. Reject us not in our old age, and forsake us not when our strength fails. Before we return to the earth, prepare us to return to Thee. Measure our lawlessness with a measure of Thy generosity, and erect against our many transgressions a bottomless abyss of these generousities.

Look down from the height of Thy holiness upon Thy people who stand and await from Thee abundant mercy. Visit us with Thy goodness and deliver us from the force of Satan and preserve our life with Thy holy and solemn laws. Commit Thy people unto a faithful guardian angel. Gather us all unto Thy kingdom. Forgive those who put their trust in Thee, relinquish us and

them from sin. Purify us by the operation of Thy Holy Spirit and remove from us the wiles of the adversary.

Blessed art Thou, Lord, Almighty Master, who illuminest the day with the light of the sun and the night with the glow of the moon, Who hast made us worthy to pass the course of the day and draw near to the onset of the night; hear our petitions and those of all Thy people. Forgive us all our sins, both voluntary and involuntary, and accept our evening supplications and send down the multitude of Thy mercies and compassions upon Thy people. Protect us with Thy holy angels. Arm us with the weapons of Thy truth. Envelop us with Thy righteousness. Preserve us by Thy power, and deliver us from every oppression and from every conspiracy of the cunning one. Grant us that this evening and the approaching night and all the days of our life may be perfect, holy, peaceful, sinless, without doubt and vain imaginings, by the intercessions of the holy Theotokos and all the saints who have done Thy will from the beginning of time.

### **Through The Grace and Mercy Of God...**

The thief who received the kingdom of heaven, though not as the reward of virtue, is a true witness to the fact that salvation is ours through the grace and mercy of God.

All of our holy fathers knew this and all with one accord teach that perfection in holiness can be achieved only through humility.

Humility, in its turn, can be achieved only through faith, fear of God, gentleness and the shedding of all possessions.

It is by means of these that we attain perfect love, through the grace and compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory through all the ages. Amen.

+ St. John Cassian,

### St. Ephraim the Syrian: If he was not flesh . . . And if he was not God . . .

The facts themselves bear witness and his divine acts of power teach those who doubt that he is true God, and his sufferings show that he is true man. And if those who are feeble in understanding are not fully assured, they will pay the penalty on his dread day.

If he was not flesh, why was Mary introduced at all? And if he was not God, whom was Gabriel calling Lord?

If he was not flesh, who was lying in the manger? And if he was not God, whom did the Angels come down and glorify?

If he was not flesh, who was wrapped in swaddling clothes? And if he was not God, whom did the shepherds worship?

If he was not flesh, whom did Joseph circumcise? And if he was not God, in whose honour did the star speed through the heavens?

If he was not flesh, whom did Mary suckle? And if he was not God, to whom did the Magi offer gifts?

If he was not flesh, whom did Symeon carry in his arms? And if he was not God, to whom did he say, "Let me depart in peace"?

If he was not flesh, whom did Joseph take and flee into Egypt? And if he was not God, in whom were words "Out of Egypt I have called my Son" fulfilled?

If he was not flesh, whom did John baptise? And if he was not God, to whom did the Father from heaven say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased"?

If he was not flesh, who fasted and hungered in the desert? And if he was not God, whom did the Angels come down and serve?

If he was not flesh, who was invited to the wedding in Cana of Galilee? And if he was not God, who turned the water into wine?

If he was not flesh, in whose hands were the loaves? And if he was not God, who satisfied crowds and thousands in the desert, not counting women and children, from five loaves and two fishes?

If he was not flesh, who fell asleep in the boat? And if he was not God, who rebuked the winds and the sea?

If he was not flesh, with whom did Simon the Pharisee eat? And if he was not God, who pardoned the offences of the sinful woman?

If he was not flesh, who sat by the well, worn out by the journey? And if he was not God, who gave living water to the woman of Samaria and reprehended her because she had had five husbands?

If he was not flesh, who wore human garments? And if he was not God, who did acts of power and wonders?

If he was not flesh, who spat on the ground and made clay? And if he was not God, who through the clay compelled the eyes to see?

If he was not flesh, who wept at Lazarus' grave? And if he was not God, who by his command brought out one four days dead?

If he was not flesh, who sat on the foal? And if he was not God, whom did the crowds go out to meet with glory?

If he was not flesh, whom did the Jews arrest? And if he was not God, who gave an order to the earth and threw them onto their faces.

If he was not flesh, who was struck with a blow? And if he was not God, who cured the ear that had been cut off by Peter and restored it to its place?

If he was not flesh, who received spittings on his face? And if he was not God, who breathed the Holy Spirit into the faces of his Apostles?

If he was not flesh, who stood before Pilate at the judgement seat? And if he was not God, who made Pilate's wife afraid by a dream?

If he was not flesh, whose garments did the soldiers strip off and divide? And if he was not God, how was the sun darkened at the cross?

If he was not flesh, who was hung on the cross? And if he was not God, who shook the earth from its foundations?

If he was not flesh, whose hands and feet were transfixed by nails? And if he was not God, how was the veil of the temple rent, the rocks broken and the graves opened?

If he was not flesh, who cried out, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me"? And if he was not God, who said "Father, forgive them"?

If he was not flesh, who was hung on a cross with the thieves? And if he was not God, how did he say to the thief, "Today you will be with me in Paradise"?

If he was not flesh, to whom did they offer vinegar and gall? And if he was not God, on hearing whose voice did Hades tremble?

If he was not flesh, whose side did the lance pierce, and blood and water came out? And if he was not God, who smashed to gates of Hades and tear apart its bonds? And at whose command did the imprisoned dead come out?

If he was not flesh, whom did the Apostles see in the upper room? And if he was not God, how did he enter when the doors were shut?

If he was not flesh, the marks of the nails and the lance in whose hands and side did Thomas handle? And if he was not God, to whom did he cry out, "My Lord and my God"?

If he was not flesh, who ate by the sea of Tiberias? And if he was not God, at whose command was the net filled?

If he was not flesh, whom did the Apostles and Angels see being taken up into heaven? And if he was not God, to whom was heaven opened, whom did the Powers worship in fear and whom did the Father invite to "Sit at my right hand". As David said, "The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, etc."

If he was not God and man, our salvation is a lie, and the words of the Prophets are lies. But the Prophets spoke the truth, and their testimonies were not lies. The Holy Spirit spoke through them what they had been commanded.