

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE
PARISH OF ST. PARASKEVI, ST. BARBARA &
ST. JOHN THE MERCIFUL
22 Marsden Crescent, St Albans
Tel. 9367 2860

Parish Priest. Rev. Fr. Demosthenes Nicolaou: 0421 704 806
Email: frdemos@stparaskevi.org.au website: www.stparaskevi.org.au

PROGRAMME NOVEMBER 2019



The New Saints and Elders of the Church

The newly canonized saints of our church: St Paisos the Athonite, St Iakovos Tsalikis, St Porphyrios of Kavsohalivis and St Joseph the Hesycast.

PROGRAMME NOVEMBER 2019

Every Thursday Evening the program is as follows:

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

7.45: Bible study group (for all ages), led by Fr Demosthenis (church) and the St Ignatius children's group and choir (primary school age and up) in the hall

FRIDAY 1st NOVEMBER: **St David the Righteous of Euboea, Holy Unmercenaries Kosmas and Damian**, Matins and Divine Liturgy 7.30-10.00am

SUNDAY 3rd NOVEMBER: **5TH SUNDAY OF LUKE**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

FRIDAY 8th NOVEMBER: **Synaxis of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

SATURDAY 9th NOVEMBER: **Saint Nectarios the Wonderworker**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

SUNDAY 10th NOVEMBER: **Saint Arsenios the Cappadocian**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am.

MONDAY 11th NOVEMBER: **St Minas**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

Evening: Celebratory service of Vespers for St John the Merciful, presided by His Grace Bishop Ezekiel, 7.00-8.00pm.

TUESDAY 12th NOVEMBER: ST JOHN THE MERCIFUL, Festal Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.30am

WEDNESDAY 13th NOVEMBER: **St John Chrysostom**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

THURSDAY 14th NOVEMBER: **Apostle Philip, Gregory Palamas**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-9.30am

FASTING FOR CHRISTMAS BEGINS- *In preparation for the great feast of the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we abstain from eating meat and dairy products from the 15th of November until the 25th of December. Fish can be eaten (except on Wednesdays and Fridays) until the 17th December.*

SATURDAY 16th NOVEMBER: **Apostle and Evangelist Matthew**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-9.30am

SUNDAY 17th NOVEMBER: **9TH SUNDAY OF LUKE**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

THURSDAY 21st NOVEMBER: **ENTRY OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-10.00am

FRIDAY 22nd NOVEMBER: **St Iakovos Tsalikis**, Matins and Divine Liturgy at the church of Panagia Soumela, Keilor.

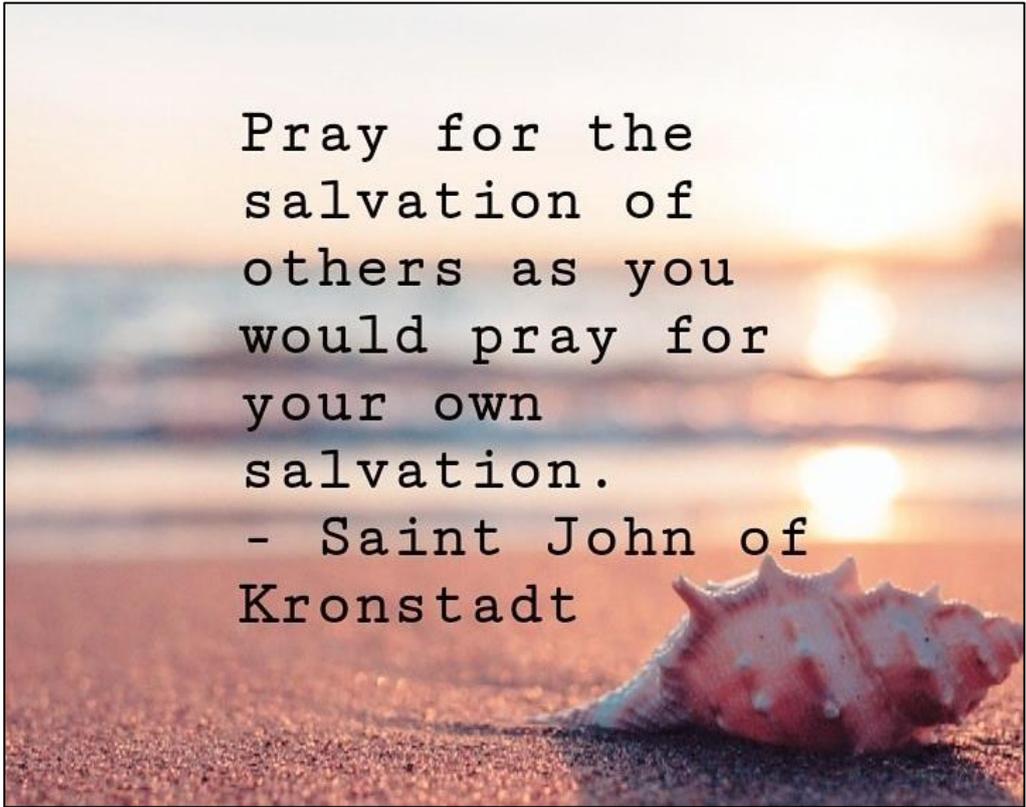
SUNDAY 24th NOVEMBER: **13TH SUNDAY OF LUKE**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-11.00am

MONDAY 25th NOVEMBER: **St Catherine the Great Martyr**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-9.30am

TUESDAY 26th NOVEMBER: **Saint Stylianos**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, 7.30-9.30am

THURSDAY 28th NOVEMBER: **Evening (PM)** ENGLISH Divine Liturgy, 7.00-8.45pm

SATURDAY 30th NOVEMBER: **Apostle Andrew the First Called**, Matins and Divine Liturgy, AT THE PARISH OF SAINT ANDREW IN SUNSHINE, 7.30-11.00am



Pray for the
salvation of
others as you
would pray for
your own
salvation.
- Saint John of
Kronstadt

The Holy and Great Martyr Catherine of Alexandria



The Holy Great Martyr Catherine was the daughter of Constus, the governor of Alexandrian Egypt during the reign of the emperor Maximian (305-313). Living in the capital, the center of Hellenistic knowledge, and possessed of a rare beauty and intellect, Catherine received an excellent education, studying the works of the greatest philosophers and teachers of antiquity. Young men from the most worthy families of the empire sought the hand of the beautiful Catherine, but she was not interested in any of

them. She told her parents that she would enter into marriage only with someone who surpassed her in nobility, wealth, comeliness and wisdom.

Catherine's mother, a secret Christian, sent her to her own spiritual Father, a saintly Elder living in a cave outside the city, for advice. After listening to Catherine, the Elder said that he knew of a Youth who surpassed her in everything. "His countenance is more radiant than the shining of the sun, and all of creation is governed by His wisdom. His riches are given to all the nations of the world, yet they never diminish. His compassion is unequalled."

This description of the Heavenly Bridegroom produced in the soul of the holy maiden an ardent desire to see Him. "If you do as I tell you," said the monk, "you will gaze upon the countenance of this illustrious man." In parting, the Elder handed Catherine an icon of the Theotokos with the divine

Child Jesus on Her arm and told her to pray with faith to the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of the Heavenly Bridegroom, and She would hear Catherine and grant her heart's desire.

Catherine prayed all night and was permitted to see the Most Holy Virgin, Who said Her Divine Son, "Behold Thy handmaiden Catherine, how fair and virtuous she is." But the Child turned His face away from her saying, "No, she is ugly and unbelieving. She is a foolish pauper, and I cannot bear to look at her until she forsakes her impiety."

Catherine returned again to the Elder deeply saddened, and told him what she had seen in the dream. He lovingly received her, instructed her in the faith of Christ, admonished her to preserve her purity and integrity and to pray unceasingly. She then received the Mystery of holy Baptism from him. Again Saint Catherine had a vision of the Most Holy Theotokos with Her Child. Now the Lord looked tenderly at her and gave her a beautiful ring, a wondrous token of her betrothal to the Heavenly Bridegroom (This ring is still on her hand).

At that time the emperor Maximian was in Alexandria for a pagan festival. Therefore, the celebration was especially splendid and crowded. The cries of the sacrificial animals, the smoke and the smell of the sacrifices, the endless blazing of fires, and the bustling crowds at the arenas defiled the city of Alexandria. Human victims also were brought, the confessors of Christ, those who would not deny Him under torture. They were condemned to death in the fire. The saint's love for the Christian martyrs and her fervent desire to ease their sufferings compelled Catherine to speak to the pagan priest and to the emperor Maximian.

Introducing herself, the saint confessed her faith in the One True God and with wisdom exposed the errors of the pagans. The beauty of the maiden captivated the emperor. In order to convince her and to show the superiority of pagan wisdom, the emperor ordered fifty of the most learned philosophers and rhetoricians of the Empire to dispute with her, but the saint got the better of the wise men, so that they came to believe in Christ themselves. Saint Catherine made the Sign of the Cross

over the martyrs, and they bravely accepted death for Christ and were burned alive by order of the emperor.

Maximian, no longer hoping to convince the saint, tried to entice her with the promise of riches and fame. Receiving an angry refusal, the emperor gave orders to subject the saint to terrible tortures and then throw her in prison. The Empress Augusta, who had heard much about the saint, wanted to see her. She prevailed upon the military commander Porphyrius to accompany her to the prison with a detachment of soldiers. The empress was impressed by the strong spirit of Saint Catherine, whose face was radiant with divine grace. The holy martyr explained the Christian teaching to them, and they were converted to Christ.

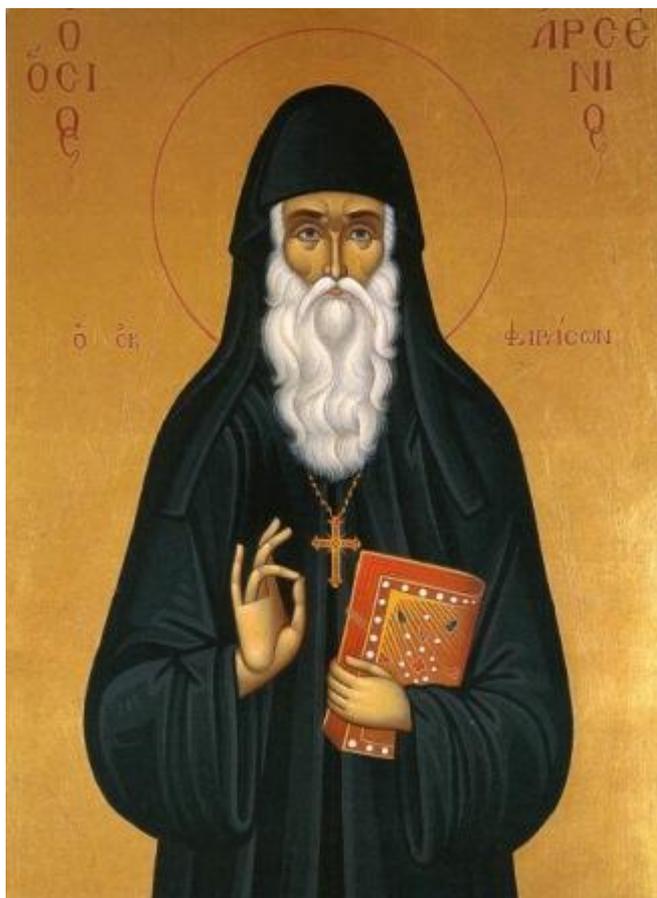
On the following day they again brought the martyr to the judgment court where, under the threat of being broken on the wheel, they urged that she renounce the Christian Faith and offer sacrifice to the gods. The saint steadfastly confessed Christ and she herself approached the wheels; but an angel smashed the instruments of execution, which shattered into pieces with many pagans standing nearby.

Having beheld this wonder, the Empress Augusta and the imperial courtier Porphyrius with 200 soldiers confessed their faith in Christ in front of everyone, and they were beheaded. Maximian again tried to entice the holy martyr, proposing marriage to her, and again he was refused. Saint Catherine firmly confessed her fidelity to the heavenly Bridegroom Christ, and with a prayer to Him she herself lay her head on the block beneath the executioner's sword.

The relics of Saint Catherine were taken by the angels to Mount Sinai. In the sixth century, the venerable head and left hand of the holy martyr were found through a revelation and transferred with honor to a newly-constructed church of the Sinai monastery, built by the holy Emperor Justinian (November 14). Saint Catherine is called upon for relief and assistance during a difficult childbirth. Pilgrims to her monastery on Mt Sinai are given souvenir rings as a remembrance of their visit.

WHO IS OUR VENERABLE FATHER ARSENIOS OF CAPPADOCIA, THE WONDERWORKER?

Cappadocia (in eastern Turkey) is virtually devoid of Christians now, but in 1840, when St Arsenios was born there, there were still vital Orthodox communities. St Arsenios became a monk and was sent to his native town, Farasa, to serve the people. He pastored his Greek Orthodox flock amidst extremely difficult conditions. Under the harsh yoke of the Turks, the Greek people of Farasa formed an oasis of Orthodox Christianity. They sought refuge in holy St. Arsenios, who was their teacher, their spiritual father, and the healer of their souls and bodies. His reputation as a healer was so great that not only Greek Christians but also Turkish Muslims came to him for healing. Many times, his village was threatened with violence from marauding Turks, but each time it was preserved in a miraculous way by St Arsenios.



He lived in a small cell with an earthen floor, fasted often and was in the habit of shutting himself in his cell for at least two whole days every week to devote himself entirely to prayer.

St Arsenios predicted the expulsion of the Greeks from Asia Minor before it happened and organized his flock for departure. When the expulsion order came in 1924, the aged Saint led his faithful on a 400-mile journey across Turkey on foot. He had foretold that he would only

live forty days after reaching Greece, and this came to pass. His last words were "The soul, the soul, take care of it more

than the flesh, which will return to earth and be eaten by worms!" Two days later, on November 10, 1924, he died in peace at the age of eighty-three. He was officially declared a Saint by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1986.

St. Arsenios was the spiritual father of the late St. Paisios' family. He baptised St. Paisios as an infant. Throughout his life Elder Paisios had great love and reverence for the memory of St. Arsenios, and it was out of this love that he compiled the book "Saint Arsenios the Cappadocian" which provides us with the details of his life. Accounts of these miraculous events were documented by the St. Paisios from eyewitnesses, and they testify to how powerfully God works through His holy ones, and to how lovingly He cares for and protects His children amidst adversity.

Since 1970, many apparitions and miracles have occurred near his holy relics, which reside in the Monastery of Souroti near Thessalonica. The relic of St. Arsenios has also been known to heal those who have cancer and to grant children to infertile couples.

QUOTES OF ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

- *Happiness can only be achieved by looking inward & learning to enjoy whatever life has and this requires transforming greed into gratitude.*
- *Be ashamed when you sin, don't be ashamed when you repent [To repent means to have a change of heart and mind. It is not simply a feeling of sorrow, but a psycho/spiritual growth away from evil/death and a turning to God/life]. Sin is the wound and repentance is the medicine. Sin is followed by shame; repentance is followed by boldness [Boldness means to beg God for undeserved mercy]. Satan has overturned this order and given boldness to sin and shame to repentance.*
- *When you are weary of praying, and do not receive, consider how often you have heard a poor man calling, and have not listened to him.*