





PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

PROGRAM FOR 20—26 OCTOBER 2019

SUNDAY 20 OCTOBER	6th SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 8: 26-39 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
<div> SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at the time of Holy Communion until Church dismissal. We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.</div>	
MONDAY 21 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8.45am Service of Holy Unction• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall.
TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00pm Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group will meet in our Church Hall.
WEDNESDAY 23 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos followed by Bible Study
THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30—8.30pm <div> TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP (Ages 13-19) In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church <i>* ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME *</i></div>• 7.30pm Young Adults and Married Couples Bible Study Group at St. Vasilios, in the Church Coffee Room.
SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER St Demetrios, Great-Martyr	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER	GOSPEL READING: Luke 8: 41-56 EPISTLE READING: 2Corinthians 11: 31-33—12: 1-9



Telephone Contact Numbers

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Fr Athanasios and
Fr Ephraim
are available at the Church
every Monday to Friday
between 4.00 and 6.00pm
for Holy Confession and
any spiritual need.

Those who come
close to people in
pain, naturally draw
near to God,
because God is
always by the side
of His children who
are in pain.

~ ~ ~
Saint Paisios

VOICE OF THE HOLY FATHERS

Those who withdraw themselves from Christ are deprived of divine enlightenment,
for like fools they forsake sun-drenched places so as to retire to the shade.

Hence, it is natural for them to be cold and fall spiritually ill.

God has endowed us all with gifts, but not all of us utilize them for the salvation of our souls
and the salvation of our fellow men.

Instead, most of us, most of the time, use them to the detriment of others and ourselves.

St. Paisios of Mount Athos

ST. DEMETRIOS
Homily of His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

Beloved Children in the Lord,

Grace and peace be with you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we invoke every paternal and patriarchal blessing upon this holy community here in Merrick that bears the name of Saint Demetrios the Great Martyr and Myrrh-Streamer. What a joy it is to be here with so many of the faithful, and to wish all of you “*Chronia Polla*” on this eve of the feast – your patronal feast – and especially to those who share the name of our great intercessor and wonderworking protector. Most especially do we extend these festal greetings to our beloved brother Archbishop Demetrios of America. Many years to you, Your Eminence!

Beloved, the power of a prayer is not to be measured by its length. The most powerful prayer may also be the most brief. Few but fervent were the words of Saint Nestor: Ο Θεός του Δημητρίου, Βοηθεί μοι. “God of Demetrios, help me.” Yet through the power of these simple words, evil was vanquished, tyranny was frustrated, faith was vindicated, and not one, but two saints for the Kingdom of God were revealed.

The Lord promised that those who speak in faith might command even a mountain to be taken up and cast aside (Matthew 17:20, Mark 11:23). Such was the faith that Saint Demetrios instilled in young Nestor. From his prison cell the Great Martyr spoke words of blessing and encouragement, words of strength and confidence. And in the stadium it was proved that “the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether” (cf. Psalm 18:10 [19:9]), when a mountain—that is to say, *a mountain of a man*—the murderous Lyaios, was taken up and cast aside to destruction.

Lyaios was a barbarian in every sense of the word. By birth he was of tribe of the Vandals, and fittingly so, for as a wrestler he made it his sport to *vandalize* the image of God in his fellow man in the arena. A second Goliath was he: a bloodthirsty titan with fierce eyes and a thunderous voice with which he uttered vile insults upon the Christians and their God. Many were the men that Lyaios cast down to their deaths upon the points of upraised spears planted round about the wrestling platform in a terrifying display of brutality and strength.

But young Nestor was not terrified. He did not waver at the sight of the giant. He did not tremble at the sound of his blasphemies. He remained steadfast, remembering the boldness of his intercessor in the prison. In that same holy boldness Nestor prayed: “God of Demetrios, help me.” He wrestled with Lyaios and prevailed, casting the monster himself on the spear-points that had been fixed for his opponents.

The power of a prayer is not to be measured by its length in words, but by the mountains that it moves. In his own strength, small Nestor could never have triumphed; but with the God of Demetrios, all things are possible (cf. Matthew 19:26). For all the promises of God are “Yes” in Jesus Christ, and in Him “Amen” to the glory of God (cf. 2 Corinthians 1:20).

This was the *phronema*, the mindset, of Saint Nestor who sought the blessing to fight. This was the mindset of Saint Demetrios who sought grace from on high for the soldier of Christ. This must be our mindset as well.

For in our time we too face a mountain to be moved. We wrestle with our own Lyaios, which is likewise a murderer and a blasphemer and a vandal of God’s good creation.

We encounter this vicious monster in the pollutants that contaminate our drinking water; in the hazardous wastes that filter into our soil; in foul exhaust that clouds our atmosphere; in harmful chemicals introduced into the food chain by modern methods of agriculture.

We encounter this murderous giant in the form of demographic clusters of birth defects and childhood cancers, especially among the poorest members of the human family. We encounter this malignant vandal wherever we find beaches blackened by oil spills, rotting stumps in a clear-cut forest, or choking dust clouds from abandoned strip-mines.

Above all, we encounter vile Lyaios for ourselves in the enormity of human indifference: indifference to the environment, indifference to the effects of our actions upon our fellow man, and indifference to the consequences of our choices upon future generations. It is this indifference first and foremost that must be grappled with and cast out. This thoughtlessness that so mightily holds sway over human minds and hearts is what spawns the sins of overconsumption and waste, mismanagement of resources and ecological abuse. This carelessness is itself a murderer, first of others, and finally of ourselves.

How shall we prevail? In the face of indifference and greed, in the face of established practices and entrenched habits, in the face of vested interests and corporate war chests, how shall the few and the weak prevail over the great and mighty? By the prayer of faith. Saint Nestor prayed in faith and prevailed. Saint Demetrios prayed in faith and prevailed, and still prevails in his wonderworking power to this day. Truly did the Apostle John write: “Whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4).

And so on this eve of the Feast of Saint Demetrios the Great Martyr and Myrrh-Streamer, I ask you, beloved, to join together your fervent hearts, free of all doubt and indifference, and to pray: Ο Θεός του Δημητρίου, Βοηθεί ημιν. “God of Demetrios, help us.”

God of Demetrios, help us to contend for the wellbeing of the world!

God of Demetrios, help us to cast out the darkness of indifference!

God of Demetrios, help us through the gift of Your Spirit to bring renewal to all creation!

Beloved, may the God of Demetrios grant you all to be powerful in prayer in everything which bears fruit in His unending Kingdom. Amen.