



## Parish Information Bulletin

### Program for 14—20 July 2024

#### 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.

SUNDAY 14 JULY	<b>HOLY FATHERS OF THE 4TH COUNCIL, Matthew 5: 14-19</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li></ul>
<b>2024 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES</b> (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) <b>Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal.</b> 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.	
MONDAY 15 JULY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9.00am Service of Holy Unction</li><li>10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall</li></ul>
WEDNESDAY 17 JULY <i>St Marina, Great Martyr</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li><li>5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos</li></ul>
★ Please note that our Thursday <b>TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS</b> will be having a short winter break. Recommendation date will be advertised in our Bulletin.	
SATURDAY 20 JULY <i>Glorious Prophet Elijah the Thisbe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li></ul>
SUNDAY 21 JULY	<b>GOSPEL READING: Matthew 8: 5-13</b> <b>EPISTLE READING: Romans 6: 18-23</b>

#### St Marina, Great Martyr Apolytikion

O Glorious Marina, once betrothed to the Logos, you relinquished all worldly concerns  
and brilliantly gave struggle as a virginal beauty.

You soundly trounced the invisible enemy who appeared to you, O Champion,  
and you are now the world's wellspring of healing grace.

#### Kontakion

Adorned with the beauty of Purity, O Virgin, crowned with the stigmata of martyrdom;  
stained with the blood of your struggles; and brilliantly radiant with healing wonders,  
piously, O Marina, you received the trophy of victory for your struggles.

#### Holy Prophet Elias

*"The glorious Elias, incarnate messenger of God, pillar of Prophets and forerunner of the second coming of Christ,  
sent grace from on high to Elisha that he might cure sickness and cleanse lepers.*

*Overflowing with healing for all those who honor him."*

*~Troparion to Prophet Elias~*

Prophet Elias (Elijah) was a hero of faithfulness to God in Israel and a courageous prophet. Achab (Ahab), seventh King of Israel, (875-854 BC), influenced by his pagan wife Jezebel, had forgotten the true God and returned to paganism. Elias reproached the king for his idolatry and killed the priests of Baal. He fled to the mountains because of Jezebel's anger. God appeared to him there, and a crow brought him bread for food. At the time of Josaphat, King of Israel (874-850 BC), Elias was taken up in a chariot of fire in the presence of his disciple Eliseus (Elisha). The prophet Malachias had said: "Behold, I will send you Elias the Prophet, before the coming and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." (Mal. 4:5) The prophet refers to the second coming of the Lord, at the end of the world.

## You Are the Light of the World

Published by **Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis**

*Jesus said to His Disciples, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."*

*Matthew 5: 14-19 (Gospel on Sunday of the Holy Fathers of Fourth Ecumenical Council)*

When someone asks you about your religious affiliation, you most likely will tell them that you are an Orthodox Christian. Perhaps you might even give them the name of the church to which you are a member. In today's Gospel lesson, Jesus challenges His followers to adopt an even more specific identity. He tells us, that we "are the light of the world."

Being a Christian is a lot more than attending church on Sunday mornings. Certainly this is part of what it means to be a Christian. But during the rest of the week, we have another role that is even more important – to be a light to the world, to share the light of Christ with the world.

Jesus gives us two examples of what it means to be a light in the world. He tells us that "a city on a hill cannot be hidden." In other words, the true Christian is like a city on a hill – our Christianity is visible for all to see. Secondly, Jesus tells us that we do not light a lamp and then put it under a bushel, but we put it on a stand so that our house can be lit. We are not supposed to keep our Christianity, our Light of Christ, hidden. We are supposed to show it for all to see. We are supposed to demonstrate it through works and we are supposed to TALK about it with other people.

Jesus encourages us to let our light "so shine before men that they may see (our) good works and give glory to (our) Father who is in heaven." (5:16) The Christian life is not just about being good and doing good works. It's about being the light of Christ in the world. The good works we do should not be ends to themselves or a means to bring credit to ourselves. The good works should give glory to God and serve as a witness to Him. This is the ideal.

If we really are the city on the hill and lights of Christ in the world, more of the world will come to Christ. As I wrote yesterday, it's the "stupid controversies" that hold us back. It is probably also a fundamental misunderstanding that Christians are not just consumers of the Good News but we are supposed to be bringing others to Christ.

There is most definitely a teaching and evangelism element to Christianity and it belongs not only to the clergy but to every member of the Body of Christ. The first thing God created was Light. Christ is revealed as the Light "that shines in the darkness," and that the darkness cannot overcome the Light. (John 1:5) We are called upon to be "Lights" to the world, to let His light shine through us so that others may come to know Christ through us.

On Pascha, we celebrate the Resurrection by lighting candles. This act reminds us not only that the Light of Christ cannot be overcome by darkness, but that we carry this Light within us everywhere we go. It's not the physical candle that makes us alight with Christ, but the fire which burns in our hearts and souls. Today's Gospel is a reminder to keep that Light strong and to share it. If your Light is flickering, you can strengthen it at any time through prayer, worship, confession, and encouragement from other Christians. So let us use what is available to us to keep our Lights burning strongly and let us share the Light with others, not only by what we say but most especially by what we do.

*When the choir of Holy Fathers convened from every corner of the civilized world, they decreed into dogma the single essence and nature of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. And the mystery of theology they clearly handed down to the Church. Let us the faithful call them blessed, and extolling them let us say: O divine battalion, heavy artillery of theologians of the Lord's army; luminaries that shine brightly in the noetic firmament; the mystical Zion's unassailable towers; the sweet-scented flowers of Paradise; the solid gold mouthpieces of the Logos; the glory of Chalcedon and the splendor of the universe. Intercede insistently on behalf of our souls. As we all celebrate today the Holy Fathers' memory, O all-compassionate Master, we ask You at their entreaty to save Your people and Your flock from any harm of heresy, O Lord, and account us worthy to glorify You, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit.*

*(Doxastikon of Orthros, Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, Trans. by Fr. Seraphim Dedes)*

Be a Light in the world today!

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