



Parish Information Bulletin

Program for 27 OCTOBER —2 NOVEMBER 2024

SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER	7TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 8: 41-56 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
2024 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 10.30am 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.	
MONDAY 28 OCTOBER <i>Holy Protection of the Theotokos</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall
WEDNESDAY 30 OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.00pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos• 7.00pm Divine Liturgy in ENGLISH
THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER	★ TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP (In Church Hall upstairs behind Church) ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME <i>In Church Coffee Room on side of the Church</i>
FRIDAY 1 NOVEMBER <i>Holy Unmercenaries</i> <i>Saints Kosmas and Damian,</i> <i>Osios David of Evia</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER	GOSPEL READING: Luke 16: 19-31 EPISTLE READING: 2 Corinthians 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.

The Feast Day of the Protection of the All-Holy Theotokos

The feast of the Holy Protection of the All Holy Theotokos is known throughout the Orthodox world, It is celebrated on October 1st and in the Church of Greece on October 28th, to commemorate the protection of Greece during World War II.

Let us entreat also our All Holy Lady with the words of the hymnographer:

Cover us, Lady, Queen of the world,
With the Grace of Your Protection, the mighty one,
And save from dangers and painful circumstances Those who honour You devotedly.

May the Holy Protection of our All holy Lady cover, safeguard and protect all of us, and grant peace to the world. Amen.



Holy Unmercenaries Saints Kosmas and Damian, 1 November Apolytikion

O holy Unmercenaries and Wonderworkers, visit our infirmities. Freely have you received, freely give unto us.



Apolytikion of St. David the Righteous of Euboea, 1 November Apolytikion

A great boast of Euboea were you proved to be, the all-glorious, David the divine, as a holy descendent of virtue, and a most-true defender of Christ, and equal to all the Righteous. Therefore Righteous Father, entreat Christ God, to grant us great mercy.

Jairus' Daughter

I want to take these few minutes of the sermon this morning to reflect with you on death and dying. Certainly the Gospel lesson of the death of the 12 year old girl forces us to think about death – that insatiable monster who eventually consumes as many children as we are able to produce.

I know some of you have been recently confronted with the death of someone close to you. I know some of you have questions regarding what happens to the soul after death. Perhaps some of you have even faced up to your own mortality. In any case, I want to look at today's Gospel lesson, to offer you some observations on death and how we can joyfully and fearlessly face our strongest enemy.

You remember the Gospel today, a father totally distraught by the illness and impending death of his 12 year old daughter comes to Jesus to seek Christ's help. Certainly we have here a model for us all – in any time of need or stress, bring your concerns to the Lord Jesus Christ, He will come with you, just as he walked with Jairus. But just as they are walking toward home, *"someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, 'Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher.' But when Jesus heard it, He answered him, saying, 'Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well.'"* (Luke 8:49-50)

I think we hear similar comments from many people today. "She's dead, why bother with a funeral, just cremate her and be done with it." "She's dead, no one can help her now. Why do you have memorial services and prayers for the dead?" "Why trouble the Lord any more about the dead?" That is what Jairus' friends were telling him. Jairus no doubt, didn't know what to think. He wanted to believe in Jesus, but if his daughter was dead, what was the use?

Jesus encouraged Jairus. Jesus comforted Jairus and gave him hope with those words, "Don't be afraid, only believe and she will be made well." That is our response to death. We believe God loves us and works for our good. It is OK to believe in the God who takes care of the dead. It is OK to pray for those already dead, because the scripture everywhere testifies to us that they are alive in Christ. They are asleep in the Lord, but it is a gentle sleep from which Christ awakes them. They do not cease to exist, but rest in God. When Christ confronted death in his friend Lazarus, in Jairus' daughter, in the widow of Nain's son, he awoke the dead as if they were only asleep. He easily overcame the finality of death. In Christ's story of the poor man Lazarus who dies and goes to heaven, in Christ's teaching that God is the God of the living Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the book of Revelation, the souls of the dead praying before Christ, all are proof to us that Christ is Lord of the Living and the dead, and whether we live or whether we die, if we are believers, we remain alive in Christ who is Lord of the living and the dead. As St. Paul tells the Romans, not even death separates us from Christ's love for us.

Yes, those who believe in and follow Jesus remain alive in him even though they die in this world. Yes, it is good and right to continue to pray for them, in our love for them, because they are not separated from Christ, but are alive in him. It is no bother to the Lord for us to offer their names up in prayer.

"When He came into the house, He permitted no one to go in except Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the girl. Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, 'Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping.' And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead."

Please note, Jesus treats death as a sleep, a temporary condition, which life is not snuffed out, but in which the soul is at rest. St. Basil the Great said that for us faithful, death is the blessed rest that God has promised us from our labors, and we can enter it joyfully and not fearfully, because of God's love.

Believe and trust in God, the dead are asleep for a while, but Christ will call them back to life as easily as he called that little girl. He will call you, he will awake your mother, grandfather, daughter, friend. So do not be afraid of death.

St. John of Kronstadt says it is those who make idols of their lives, of their food, of their money and possessions and egos who find death so hard to accept. When we overcome these thoughts through repentance and the spiritual life, we find we can trust Christ, and not weep or fear death. In Christ, we overcome death with eternal life.

"But He put them all out, took her by the hand and called, saying, 'Little girl, arise.' Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but He charged them to tell no one what had happened." (8:54-56)

Nothing is impossible for the Lord Jesus Christ. He even overcomes the sting and finality of death. So my brothers and sisters, be of good courage. Do not fear death nor be embittered by the death of those you love. God loves them, as He loves you. Christ died for them as he died for you in order that they and you might have eternal life.

The resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come is a small miracle when we compare it with the miracle of God saving us from sin. Ephesians 2:5: *"even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)."* There is the true miracle of God. That God can revive a dead body and give it life again is the same miracle as God creating the world. But that God can by an act of grace forgive us our rebellious sinfulness and heal our souls and give life to one who is dead because of sin, that is a truly impossible miracle. What is impossible with men, is possible for God, and all who believe in him.