

Ecumenical Patriarchate
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey
ASCENSION

Greek Orthodox Church
FAIRVIEW - NEW JERSEY
Weekly Bulletin
Sunday, September 19, 2021
Sunday After Holy Cross



Οικουμενικόν Πατριαρχεῖον
Ιερὰ Μητρόπολις Νέας Ιερσέης
Ελληνική Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία
ΘΕΙΑΣ ΑΝΑΛΗΨΕΩΣ
ΦΕΡΒΙΟΥ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ
ΕΒΔΟΜΑΔΙΑΙΟ ΔΕΛΤΙΟ
ΕΝΗΜΕΡΩΣΗΣ

Rev. Christos L. Pappas, Protopresbyter



**Light a Candle & Say a Prayer at
Ascension Church, Fairview, NJ**

*"I am the light of the world;
he who follows me will not walk in darkness
but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)*

To light a candle, please click the link below
and after you select the candle(s)
that you would like us to light and before pressing the
"Place Order" button,
please submit the names of your loved ones,
those who are alive and/or those
who have departed this life.
Your candles will be lit at the next Liturgy or service.
Thank you and God bless!

<http://ascensionfairviewnj.square.site/>

*To pay Membership, Greek School Tuition
and all other offerings use:*

https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithe/give-one-time/305721?widget=1

ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΩΝ

Κυριακή, 19 Σεπτεμβρίου, 2021

Μετά της Υψώσεως

8:30 π.μ. – 11:30 π.μ. Όρθρος, Θ. Λειτουργία

Τρίτη, 21 Σεπτεμβρίου, 2021

7:00 μ.μ. Συνεδρίαση Εκκλησιαστικού Συμβουλίου

Τετάρτη, 22 Σεπτεμβρίου, 2021

4:30 μ.μ. – 6:30 μ.μ. Ελληνικό Σχολείο

Πέμπτη, 23 Σεπτεμβρίου, 2021

Σόλληψις Προδρόμου, Ξανθίπη και Πολυξένη

9:00 π.μ. – Όρθρος, Θ. Λειτουργία

7:00 μ.μ. Γενική Συνεδρίαση της Φιλοπτώχου

Παρασκευή, 24 Σεπτεμβρίου, 2021

Θέκλα Ισαπόστολος

9:00 π.μ. – Όρθρος, Θ. Λειτουργία

4:30 μ.μ. – 6:30 μ.μ. Ελληνικό Σχολείο

Κυριακή, 26 Σεπτεμβρίου, 2021

Η Μετάστασις του Ιωάννου του Θεολόγου

8:30 π.μ. – 11:30 π.μ. Όρθρος, Θ. Λειτουργία

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday, September 19, 2021

Sunday after Holy Cross

8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Orthros, Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

7:00 p.m.- Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

4:30 p.m.- 6:30 p.m. Greek School

Thursday, September 23, 2021

Conception of John the Baptist, Xanthippe & Polyxene

9:00 a.m.- Orthros, Divine Liturgy

7:00 p.m. Philoptochos General Meeting

Friday, September 24, 2021

Thekla the Equal -to-the-Apostles

9:00 a.m.- Orthros, Divine Liturgy

4:30 p.m.- 6:30 p.m. Greek School

Sunday, September 26, 2021

Falling Asleep of St. John the Theologian

8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m., Orthros, Divine Liturgy

**Prokeimenon. Mode 4.
Psalm 103.24,1**

O Lord, how manifold are your works. You have made all
things in wisdom.

Verse: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified. But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then an agent of sin? Certainly not! But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Προκείμενον. Ἦχος δ'.
ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 103.24,1

Ὡς ἐμεγαλύνθη τὰ ἔργα σου Κύριε, πάντα ἐν σοφίᾳ ἐποίησας.
Στίχ. Εὐλόγει ἡ ψυχὴ μου τὸν Κύριον.

Πρὸς Γαλάτας 2:16-20 τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα

Ἀδελφοί, εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου· διότι οὐ δικαιωθήσεται ἐξ ἔργων νόμου πᾶσα σὰρξ. Εἰ δέ, ζητοῦντες δικαιωθῆναι ἐν Χριστῷ, εὐρέθημεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἁμαρτωλοί, ἄρα Χριστὸς ἁμαρτίας διάκονος; Μὴ γένοιτο. Εἰ γὰρ ἃ κατέλυσα, ταῦτα πάλιν οἰκοδομῶ, παραβάτην ἑμαυτὸν συνίστημι. Ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω. Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι· ζῶ δέ, οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός· ὃ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ.

The Gospel According to Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

The Lord said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life? For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Μάρκον 8:34-38, 9:1 Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος· Εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἔλθειν, ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀκολουθείτω μοι. ὃς γὰρ ἂν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σῶσαι, ἀπολέσει αὐτήν· ὃς δ' ἂν ἀπολέσῃ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, οὗτος σώσει αὐτήν. τί γὰρ ὠφελήσει ἄνθρωπον ἐὰν κερδήσῃ τὸν κόσμον ὅλον, καὶ ζημιωθῇ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ; ἢ τί δώσει ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ; ὃς γὰρ ἐὰν ἐπαισχυνηθῇ με καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ τῇ μοιχαλίδι καὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπαισχυνηθήσεται αὐτὸν ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἁγίων. Καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰσὶ τινες τῶν ὧδε ἐστηκότων, οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου ἕως ἂν ἴδωσι τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει.

**Ο Άγιος Ευστάθιος και η συνοδεία του,
Θεοπίστη η σύζυγος του, Αγάπιος και Θεόπιστος τα
παιδιά του εορτάζουν 20 Σεπτεμβρίου**



Ο Άγιος Ευστάθιος ήταν αξιωματικός περίβλεπτος στη Ρώμη και στη χριστιανική πίστη προσήλθε με θαυμαστό τρόπο. Όταν κάποτε κυνηγούσε ένα ελάφι, είδε στα κερατά του να φέρει σταυρό και άκουσε μία φωνή που τον καλούσε στην ορθή πίστη. Έτσι πίστεψε και βαπτίστηκε με το όνομα Ευστάθιος από Πλακίδας που ονομαζόταν πριν, καθώς επίσης και η γυναίκα του Τατιανή σε Θεοπίστη, αλλά και τα δυο τους παιδιά Αγάπιος και Θεόπιστος.

Όταν ο αυτοκράτωρ Τραϊανός έμαθε ότι ασπάσθηκε το χριστιανισμό, του αφαίρεσε τον ανώτερο στρατιωτικό βαθμό που είχε και τον εξόρισε με όλη του την οικογένεια. Κατά την πορεία

όμως, τον χώρισαν από τη σύζυγο του Θεοπίστη και τα δύο του παιδιά, το Θεόπιστο και τον Αγάπιο. Το γεγονός αυτό, πίκρανε πολύ τον Ευστάθιο.

Μετά από χρόνια, όταν ο Τραϊανός περιήλθε σε μεγάλη πολεμική δυσχέρεια, θυμήθηκε τον ικανότατο αξιωματικό του Ευστάθιο. Τον επανέφερε λοιπόν στην υπηρεσία, και ο Ευστάθιος με τη γενναιότητα αλλά και τη στρατηγική που τον διέκρινε συνετέλεσε κατά πολύ στην νίκη. Στο δρόμο μάλιστα, βρήκε την οικογένειά του και ένοιωσε μεγάλη χαρά.

Ο διάδοχος, όμως, του Τραϊανού, Αδριανός, απαίτησε από τον Ευστάθιο να παραστεί στις θυσίες των ειδωλολατρικών θεών. Ο Άγιος Ευστάθιος, βέβαια, αρνήθηκε, με αποτέλεσμα να βασανιστεί αυτός και η οικογένειά του. Αλλά η αγάπη τους στο Χριστό ενδυνάμωνε την ψυχή τους στα βασανιστήρια, ενθουμούμενοι μάλιστα τους θείους λόγους, που λένε: «Μακάριος άνθρωπος ὅς ὑπομένει πειρασμὸν ὅτι δόκιμος γενόμενος λήψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς, ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο ὁ Κύριος τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν» (Επιστολή Ιακώβου, α' 12). Πανευτυχής, δηλαδή, είναι ο άνθρωπος που βαστάει με υπομονή τη δοκιμασία των θλίψεων. Διότι έτσι γίνεται σταθερός και δοκιμασμένος, για να πάρει το λαμπρό και ένδοξο στεφάνι της αιώνιας ζωής, που υποσχέθηκε ο Κύριος σ' αυτούς που Τον αγαπούν.

Τελικά, ο Ευστάθιος με την οικογένειά του μαρτύρησαν μέσα σε χάλκινο πυρακτωμένο βόδι (117 μ.Χ.).

Greatmartyr Eustáthios Placidas, with his wife and children, of Rome

Before his Baptism, the Holy Great Martyr Eustáthios was named Plakidas (Πλακίδας). He was a Roman General in the reigns of Emperors Titus (79-81) and Trajan (98-117). Even before he came to know Christ, Plakidas devoted himself to charitable endeavors, helping the poor and destitute. Therefore, the Lord did not allow this virtuous pagan to continue in the darkness of idolatry.

One day, while hunting in a forest, he saw a remarkable stag which stopped now and then to stare at him. Plakidas pursued it on horseback, but could not catch up. The stag jumped over a chasm and stood on the other side facing him. Suddenly, Plakidas saw a radiant Cross between its antlers. The General was astonished to hear a voice coming from the Cross saying, “Why do you pursue me, Plakidas?”

“Who are You, Master?” asked Plakidas. The voice replied, “I am Jesus Christ, Whom you do not know, but by your good deeds, you honor me. I have appeared here on this creature for your sake, to draw you into the net of my love for mankind. It is not fitting that one as righteous as you should worship idols and remain ignorant of the truth. It was to save mankind that I came into the world.”

Plakidas cried out, “Lord, I believe that You are the God of Heaven and earth, the Creator of all things. Master, teach me what I should do.”

Again the Lord replied, “Go to the bishop of your country and receive Baptism from him, and he will instruct you.”

Plakidas returned home and joyfully recounted everything to his wife Tatiana. She in turn told him of a strange dream she had the evening

before, in which she had been told, “Tomorrow you, your husband and your sons shall come to me and know that I am the true God.” The couple then proceeded to do as they had been told.

They hastened to the Christian bishop, who baptized all their family, and then communed them with the Holy Mysteries. Plakidas was renamed Eustáthios, his wife was called Theopistē, and their children, Agapios and Theopistos.

On the following day, Saint Eustáthios went to the place of his miraculous conversion and there he gave thanks to the Lord for having called him to the path of salvation.

Saint Eustáthios received another a miraculous revelation. The Lord Himself predicted his impending tribulations: “Eustáthios, you shall suffer many misfortunes, as did Job, but in the end you will conquer the devil.”

Soon Saint Eustáthios was afflicted with misfortune: all of his servants died of the plague, and his cattle perished. Brought to ruin, but not despairing in spirit, Saint Eustáthios and his family secretly abandoned their home, to live in poverty unknown, humble, and poor.

They went to Egypt to board a ship bound for Jerusalem. During the voyage the Saint experienced more sorrow. Captivated by Theopistē's beauty, the ship owner cruelly set Eustáthios and his children ashore, keeping the wife for himself.

With great sadness the Saint continued on his way, and new calamity befell him. Coming to a tempestuous river, he went to carry his two sons across in turn. When he brought the first one across, the other was

seized by a lion and was carried off into the wilderness. As he turned back to shore, a wolf dragged the other child into the forest.

Saint Eustáthios wept bitterly, but he realized that Divine Providence had sent him these misfortunes in order to test his endurance and devotion to God. Saint Eustáthios prepared himself for even more sorrows, knowing that one who endures temptations and has been tested will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him (James 1:12).

In the village of Badessos he found work and spent five years in ceaseless toil. Saint Eustáthios did not know at the time that by God's mercy, shepherds and farmers had rescued his sons, and they were living near him. He was also unaware that the impudent shipowner had been struck down with a terrible disease and died, leaving Saint Theopistē untouched. She lived in peace and freedom at the place where the ship landed. During this time it had become difficult for Emperor Trajan to raise an army for Rome to deal with a rebellion, for the soldiers refused to go into battle without Plakidas. They advised Trajan to send men out to all the cities to search for him. Antiochos and Akakios, who were friends of Plakidas, sought him in various places. Finally, they arrived in the village where Saint Eustáthios lived. The soldiers found him, but they did not recognize him. They began telling him about the person they sought, asking for his help and promising him a large reward. Saint Eustáthios recognized his friends right away, but he did not disclose his identity to them.

Borrowing money from one of his friends, he prepared a meal for his visitors. As they looked at him, they noticed that he resembled their

former commander. When they saw a scar on his shoulder from a deep wound made by a sword, they realized that it was their friend who stood before them. They embraced him with tears and told him why they had been looking for him.

Saint Eustáthios returned to Rome with them and was restored to his former rank. Many new recruits were drafted into the army from all over the Empire. He did not know that the two young soldiers who served him, and whom he loved for their skill and daring, were actually his own sons. They did not realize that they were serving under the command of their own father, nor that they were brothers by birth.

While on campaign, the army led by Eustáthios halted at a certain place. One night, the brothers were talking in their tent. The elder spoke about his life, how he had lost his mother and brother, and how he had been parted from his father. The younger brother then realized that the other man was his own brother, and revealed how he had been rescued from the wolf. A woman overheard their conversation, since their tent was pitched right next to her house, and she realized that these were her sons. Without identifying herself to them, but not wishing to be separated from them, she went to their general, Saint Eustáthios, and asked that he take her to Rome with him. She said she had been a prisoner, and wanted to go home. Then she came to recognize the general as her husband, and with tears she told him about herself, and about the two soldiers who were their sons. Thus, through God's great mercy, the entire family was reunited.

Soon thereafter, the rebellion was crushed, and Saint Eustáthios returned to Rome with honor and glory. Emperor Trajan had died in the

meantime, and his successor Hadrian (117-138) wanted to celebrate the victory with a solemn sacrifice to their "gods." To everyone's amazement, Saint Eustáthios did not go to the pagan temple. The Emperor ordered them to find him and bring him to the temple.

"Why don't you want to worship the gods?" the Emperor inquired. "You, above all others, should offer thanks to them. Not only did they preserve you in war and grant you victory, but they also helped you to find your wife and children." Saint Eustáthios replied: "I am a Christian and I glorify and give thanks to Christ, and I offer sacrifice to Him. I owe my life to Him. I do not know or believe in any other God."

Outraged, the Emperor ordered him to remove his military belt and brought Eustáthios and his family before him. They did not succeed in persuading the steadfast confessors of Christ to offer sacrifice to idols. The Saint's family was sentenced to be torn to pieces by wild beasts, but the animals would not touch the holy martyrs. Then the cruel Emperor ordered that they be thrown alive into a red-hot brass bull, and Saint Eustáthios, his wife Theopistē, and their sons Agapios and Theopistos suffered martyrdom. Before being placed inside the bull, Saint Eustathios prayed, "Grant, O Lord, Thy grace to our relics, and grant a place in Thy Kingdom to all who call upon us, Though they call upon us when in danger on a river, or on the sea, we entreat Thee to come to their aid." Three days later, they opened the brass bull, and the bodies of the holy martyrs were found unscathed. Not one hair of their heads was singed, and their faces shone with an unearthly beauty. Many who witnessed this miracle came to believe in Christ. Some pious Christians buried the bodies of the Saints with all honor and reverence.

Saint John the Baptist

The saints of the church, who are alive in Christ, are not only models whose lives and devotion to God we should strive to emulate, but also are intercessors to God. Individual faithful and parish communities are called upon to take a patron saint, in the tradition of the Holy Orthodox Church. Early churches were built at the site of the graves of many of the Holy Martyrs. These communities were dedicated with the name of the martyr, and he or she was called upon by the community who worshiped there to act as an intercessor and protector for the faithful. Churches today place relics of the saints inside the Altar table as well as in places for veneration in the church in remembrance of these holy men and women in our lives.

About Saint John

St. John was the son of the Prophet Zacharias and Elizabeth, who was a kinswoman of the Virgin Mary. St. John is known as the "Forerunner" and "Baptist." He is known as the Forerunner because he preceded Christ and taught repentance, which prepared men for Jesus' teaching and His ministry. He even recognized Christ as the Messiah as early as when they were both still in their mothers' wombs. According to Holy Tradition, the Virgin Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth and when they embraced John leapt in his mother's womb, which is considered his first acknowledgment of Christ as Messiah.

After his birth, St. John's father Zacharias was murdered in the temple. He and his mother fled to the desert and he was raised there. Thus he lived as an ascetic from the earliest part of his life. He ate plants and roots and wore rough clothing. When he grew, he baptized people in

the Jordan, teaching repentance, but also saying that someone greater would come after him and baptize with the Holy Spirit.

St. John always spoke the Truth and because Herod did not appreciate his criticism, he was imprisoned. Later he was beheaded, as the result of a promise Herod gave to his step-daughter to give her anything she asked. The daughter was convinced by her mother to ask for John's head on a platter. Our parish celebrates the feast of St. John's Beheading as our patronal feast day. It is a strict fast day in recognition of the way in which he died, but it is also a joyous feast day because John's life was such a luminous example for monastics, martyrs and all Christians to follow him.



*Η Σύλληψις Τιμίου Προδρόμου & Βαπτιστού Ιωάννου
εορτάζεται 23 Σεπτεμβρίου*

Έτσι προφήτευσε ο προφήτης Ησαΐας για τον Πρόδρομο του Κυρίου, Ιωάννη: «Φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν Κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ». (Ησαΐας μ', 3).

Δηλαδή, φωνὴ ἀνθρώπου, που φωνάζει στὴν ἐρήμο καὶ λέει: «Ετοιμάστε τὸ δρόμο, ἀπ' ὅπου θὰ ἐλθεῖ ὁ Κύριος σὲ σὰς. Κάνετε ἴσιους καὶ ομαλούς τοὺς δρόμους, ἀπὸ τοὺς ὁποίους θὰ περάσει». Ξεριζώστε, δηλαδή, ἀπὸ τὶς ψυχές σας τὰ ἀγκάθια τῶν αμαρτωλῶν παθῶν καὶ ρίξτε μακριὰ τὰ λιθάρια τοῦ εγωισμοῦ καὶ τῆς πώρωσης καὶ καθαρίστε με μετάνοια τὸ εσωτερικό σας, γιὰ νὰ δεχθεῖ τὸν Κύριο. Ἡ φωνὴ αὐτὴ, που ἦταν ὁ Ἰωάννης, γεννήθηκε με θαυμαστό τρόπο.

Ὁ Πατέρας τοῦ Ζαχαρίας ἦταν Ἱερέας. Τὴν ὥρα τοῦ θυμιάματος μέσα στο θυσιαστήριο, εἶδε ἄγγελο Κυρίου, που τοῦ ἀνήγγειλε, ὅτι θὰ ἀποκτοῦσε γιο καὶ θὰ ὀνομαζόταν Ἰωάννης. Ὁ Ζαχαρίας σκίρτησε ἀπὸ χαρὰ, ἀλλὰ δυσπίστησε. Ἡ γυναίκα τοῦ ἦταν στείρα καὶ γριά, πὼς θὰ γινόταν αὐτὸ που ἀκούγε; Τότε ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ εἶπε ὅτι γιὰ νὰ τιμωρηθεῖ ἡ δυσπιστία τοῦ, μέχρι νὰ πραγματοποιηθεῖ ἡ βουλὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ, αὐτὸς θὰ ἔμενε κωφάλαλος. Πράγματι, ἡ Ελισάβετ συνέλαβε, καὶ μετὰ ἐννιά μῆνες ἔκανε γιο. Μετὰ οκτὼ ἡμέρες, στὴν περιτομὴ τοῦ παιδιοῦ, οἱ συγγενεῖς θέλησαν νὰ τοῦ δώσουν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατέρα τοῦ, Ζαχαρία. Ὅμως, ὁ Ζαχαρίας, ἔγραψε ἐπάνω σὲ πινακίδιο τὸ ὄνομα Ἰωάννης. Ἀμέσως δε, λύθηκε ἡ γλῶσσα τοῦ, καὶ ἡ χαρὰ γιὰ ὅλους ἦταν μεγάλη.



Εορτολόγιο 23 Σεπτεμβρίου: Όσιες Ξανθίπη και Πολυξένη

Η Ξανθίπη και η Πολυξένη ήταν αδερφές που κατάγονταν από την Ισπανία. Έζησαν στα χρόνια του ρωμαίου αυτοκράτορα Κλαύδιου (41-54) και ασπάστηκαν το χριστιανισμό. Η μνήμη τους τιμάται από την εκκλησία στις 23 Σεπτεμβρίου. Την ημέρα αυτή γιορτάζουν όσες φέρουν το όνομα Ξανθίπη και Πολυξένη.

Η Ξανθίπη ήταν σύζυγος του Πρόβου, που ήταν άρχοντας της χώρας, και μαθήτευσε κοντά στον Απόστολο Παύλο. Η αδερφή της Πολυξένη απήχθη από κάποιον, που ήθελε να τη διαφθείρει, στην Ελλάδα, όπου γνώρισε το χριστιανισμό από τον Απόστολο Φίλιππο.

Acts of Xanthippe, Polyxena, and Rebecca

The *Acts of Xanthippe, Polyxena, and Rebecca* is a work of [New Testament apocrypha](#) dating from the third or fourth century.

Regarding its place in literature, twentieth-century classicist scholar [Moses Hadas](#) writes: "Christians learned not only from pagan preachers but also from pagan romancers. The perfectly orthodox *Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena* ... has all the thrilling kidnappings, deliveries, and surprises of the typical [Greek romance](#)".

The tale is set in the time of [Nero](#) and consists of essentially two almost completely separate stories: the tale of Xanthippe and the tale of Polyxena. Although a third woman named [Rebecca](#) is included in the title, she doesn't figure as a major character. The liturgical feast of these figures is Sept. 23.^[1]

The Tale of Xanthippe

Having briefly witnessed [Paul](#) preach in [Rome](#), a servant returns to [Spain](#) and falls sick due to wishing to have heard Paul properly. The master's wife, Xanthippe, overhears the servant explaining this, so she speaks privately with the servant, which causes statues of the household gods to fall down. Xanthippe thereupon proceeds to [fast](#), pray, lose sleep, and enter into [celibacy](#), gradually wasting away.

Paul is led by [God](#) to come to Xanthippe but, when she expresses a desire to be [baptized](#), her husband throws Paul out and locks Xanthippe up. Xanthippe then prays that her husband will fall asleep at dinner, which he does, so she is able to escape the house by bribing the porter. On her way to Paul, Xanthippe is attacked by [demons](#) wielding [fire](#) and [lightning](#), from which she is saved by a vision of [Jesus](#) (as a beautiful youth) and Paul finding her.

Paul then takes her indoors where she is baptised and given the [Eucharist](#). Returning home, Xanthippe has a vision and collapses. Her husband soon awakes and, having had a dream, asks some wise men for an interpretation. They declare that the dream reveals the struggle between [Satan](#) and [Christ](#) and advise that the husband be baptized. When they look in on his wife Xanthippe, expecting her to be near death, they discover her singing praises to Jesus. This impresses the wise men to the extent that they have Xanthippe take them to Paul. All of this induces her husband to likewise convert.

The Tale of Polyxena

Xanthippe's younger sister, Polyxena, later has a dream in which she is swallowed by a dragon but then rescued by a beautiful youth. Xanthippe thinks this means that Satan will win Polyxena unless she is immediately baptized. But Polyxena's initial attempts to secure baptism fail and she is abducted in the night by an enemy of Polyxena's boyfriend and put on a ship to [Babylonia](#).

The winds, however, force the ship to approach one bearing the [apostle Peter](#), who had been directed by a vision. But demons prevent them meeting. The ship, instead, goes off course to Greece, where the [apostle Philip](#) has come. Having been directed by a vision, Philip rescues Polyxena. When his thirty servants, armed with a cross, go to meet the abductor's army of 8,000, they slay 5,000 soldiers before the remainder flee. But Polyxena has meanwhile fled in fear. She ends up lost and unintentionally walks into the empty den of a lioness. When the lioness returns, Polyxena begs the animal not to eat her before she is baptized.

So the lioness leads her east out of the woods to a road and then goes back to her den. The [apostle Andrew](#) coincidentally walks past and Polyxena asks for baptism. So they find a well and rescue Rebecca, a Jewish slave held captive there. Then both are baptized when the lioness returns and asks Andrew to perform the task.

Later, after Andrew departs, the women briefly gain the company of an ordinary Christian driving a cart but lose it when they are abducted by a passing [prefect](#). Rebecca later manages to escape and flee to an old woman's house (and disappears from the story). Meanwhile, Polyxena begs the prefect's servants to preserve her virginity; so they tell the prefect that she is ill. The prefect's son, a convert to Christianity after witnessing [Paul's effect on Thecla](#), disguises her in his clothing and sends her to the shore to catch a ship. But a villainous servant overhears and reports them. They are captured and thrown to a lioness in the arena. But the lioness turns out to be the one previously encountered and does no harm. As a result, the entire city takes this to be proof of the truth of Christianity and so convert en-masse. The narrator reveals himself as Onesimus, a sailor who has received a vision telling him to go to a certain part of Greece and pick up both Polyxena and the prefect's son. However, after his arrival, a storm keeps everyone there for seven days. So Lucius, who is on board, teaches Christianity to the entire city. The prefect then gratefully supplies provisions to the ship and it leaves. Then it comes to rest on an island. The fierce inhabitants there attack but are defeated, though Polyxena fearfully dives into the sea and has to be rescued. Eventually all arrive back in Spain and meet Paul. When Polyxena's abductor returns, Paul converts him as well.

Thekla the Protomartyr



The Holy Protomartyr and Equal of the Apostles Thekla was born in the city of Iconium. She was the daughter of rich and illustrious parents, and she was distinguished by extraordinary beauty. At eighteen years of age they betrothed her to an eminent youth. But after she heard the preaching of the holy Apostle Paul about the Savior, Saint Thekla with all her heart came to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and she steadfastly resolved not to enter into marriage, but rather to devote all her life to preaching the Gospel.

Saint Thekla's mother was opposed to her daughter's plans and insisted that she marry her betrothed. Saint Thekla's fiancé also complained to the prefect of the city about the Apostle Paul, accusing him of turning his bride against him. The prefect locked up Saint Paul in prison. During the night Saint Thekla secretly ran away from her house, and she bribed the prison guards, giving them all her gold ornaments, and so made her way into the prison to the prisoner. For three days she sat at the feet of the Apostle Paul, listening to his fatherly precepts. Thekla's disappearance was discovered, and servants were sent out everywhere looking for her. Finally, they found her in the prison and

brought her home by force. At his trial Saint Paul was sentenced to banishment from the city. Again they urged Saint Thekla to consent to the marriage, but she would not change her mind. Neither the tears of her mother, nor her wrath, nor the threats of the prefect could separate Saint Thekla from her love for the Heavenly Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. Her mother in a insane rage demanded from the judges a death sentence against her unyielding daughter, and Saint Thekla was sentenced to be burned. Without flinching, the holy martyr went into the fire and made the Sign of the Cross over herself. At this moment the Savior appeared to her, blessing her present deed, and inexpressible joy filled her holy soul. The flames of the fire shot up high, but the martyr was surrounded by a light and the flames did not touch her. Thunder boomed, and a strong downpour of rain and hail extinguished the fire. The torturers scattered in fear. Saint Thekla, kept safe by the Lord, left the city and with the help of a certain Christian youth, searched for the Apostle Paul. The holy apostle and his companions, among whom was Saint Barnabas, were hidden in a cave not far from the city, praying fervently, that the Lord would strengthen Saint Thekla in her sufferings. After this, Saint Thekla went with them preaching the Gospel in Antioch. In this city she was pursued by a certain dignitary named Alexander, who was captivated by her beauty. Saint Thekla refused his offer of marriage, and so she was condemned to death for being a Christian. Twice they set loose hungry wild animals upon her, but they would not touch the holy virgin. Instead, they lay down meekly and licked her feet.

The Providence of God preserved the holy martyr unharmed through all her torments. Finally, they tied her to two oxen and began to chase her with red-hot rods, but the strong cords broke asunder like cobwebs, and the oxen ran off, leaving Saint Thekla unharmed. The people began shouting, “Great is the God of the Christians!” The prefect himself became terrified, realizing that the holy martyr was being kept safe by the Almighty God, Whom she served. He then gave orders to set free the servant of God Thekla.

With the blessing of the Apostle Paul, Saint Thekla then settled in a desolate region of Isaurian Seleucia and dwelt there for many years, constantly preaching the Word of God and healing the sick through her prayer. Saint Thekla converted many pagans to Christ, and the Church appropriately names her as “Equal- to-the-Apostles.” Even a pagan priest, trying to assault her purity and punished for his impudence, was brought by her to holy Baptism. More than once the Enemy of the race of man tried to destroy Saint Thekla through people blinded by sin, but the power of God always preserved this faithful servant of Christ.

When Saint Thekla was already a ninety-year-old woman, pagan sorcerers became incensed at her for treating the sick for free. They were unable to comprehend that the saint was healing the sick by the power of the grace of Christ, and they presumed that the virgin-goddess Artemis was her special helper. Envious of Saint Thekla, they sent their followers to defile her. When they came near her, Saint Thekla cried out for help to Christ the Savior, and a rock split open and hid the holy virgin, the bride of Christ. Thus did Saint Thekla offer up her holy soul to the Lord.

The holy Church glorifies the Protomartyr Thekla as “ the glory of women and guide for the suffering, opening up the way through every torment.” From of old many churches were dedicated to her, one of which was built at Constantinople by the holy Equal of the Apostles Constantine (May 21). The Protomartyr Thekla, a prayerful intercessor for ascetics, is also invoked during the tonsure of women into monasticism.



Ἡ Ἁγία Θέκλα, ἡ Πρωτομάρτυρας καὶ Ἰσαπόστολος, καταγόταν ἀπὸ τὸ Ἰκόνιο, τῆς Μικρᾶς Ἀσίας. Ἡ μητέρα τῆς ἦταν ἡ Θεόκλεια, ἡ ὁποία καταγόταν ἀπὸ ευγενὴ καὶ ἐπιφανὴ οἰκογένεια καὶ ἦταν εἰδωλολάτρισσα, ὅπως καὶ ἡ Θέκλα. Σὲ ηλικία 18 χρόνων ἡ Ἁγία Θέκλα ἀρραβωνιάστηκε με κάποιον ποντὸν ἐλεγκτὴν Ὀσμύρη, ἀλλὰ ὁ γάμος τοὺς ματαιώθηκε, γιὰτὶ ἡ Θέκλα ἐγένετο χριστιανὴ λόγῳ τοῦ κηρύγματος τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Παύλου. Ἡ Ἁγία γινώρισε τὸν Ἀπόστολο Παῦλο στὸ σπίτι τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς οἰκογενειάρχου Ὀνησιφόρου, ὅπου ἐκεῖ τὸν ἀκούσε νὰ κηρύττει τὸ λόγο τοῦ Θεοῦ. ΓΙΑ ΤΡΙΕΙΣ ΗΜΕΡΕΣ ἡ Ἁγία οὔτε ἐφαγε, οὔτε πῆγε στὸ σπίτι τῆς ἀκούγοντας τὸ θεῖο κήρυγμα τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Παύλου. Ὅταν ἡ μητέρα καὶ ὁ μνηστήρας τῆς ἐμαθὰν γιὰ

τις νέες συνήθειες της Θέκλας, προκειμένου να την καθηλώσουν στην ειδωλολατρία κανόνισαν να φυλακιστεί ο Παύλος. Φυσικά η Αγία δεν πτοήθηκε, αλλά αντίθετα πήγε κρυφά και τον συνάντησε στη φυλακή για να ακούσει τα μελίσρρυτα λόγια του Παύλου και για να μαθαίνει για το Χριστιανισμό. Ακολούθως οι διώκτες έριξαν τη Θέκλα στη φωτιά χωρίς ωστόσο να καεί αφού την εσκέπε ο Θεός, αλλά κατάφεραν να δώξουν τον Απόστολο Παύλο. Όταν η Αγία έμεινε ελεύθερη έψαξε τον Απόστολο Παύλο, τον οποίο εντόπισε μέσα σ' ένα τάφο μαζί με τον Ονησιφόρο. Αποφάσισε να ακολουθήσει τον Παύλο και έφτασαν στην Αντιόχεια, αλλά εκεί η ομορφιά της την έκανε να υποφέρει τα πάνδεινα. Παρόλα αυτά τίποτα δεν μπορούσε να πτοήσει τη θεϊκά εμπνευσμένη Θέκλα. Ο κόσμος σάστισε αφού κανένα θηρίο δεν την κατασπάραξε όσες φορές και αν επιχείρησαν να την θανατώσουν. Μετά την πάροδο του χρόνου η Αγία Θέκλα πήγε στα Μύρα της Λυκίας, από όπου μετά την παρακίνηση του Αποστόλου Παύλου επέστρεψε στο Ικόνιο για να κηρύξει εκεί το Ευαγγέλιο. Στη συνέχεια κατέφυγε σε ένα βουνό κοντά στη Σελευκεία, όπου ασκήτεψε και εν ονόματι του Ιησού Χριστού θεράπευε πολλούς αρρώστους. Η δράση της όμως ενόχλησε πολλούς ιατρούς της Σελευκείας και απέστειλαν πληρωμένους νέους να βιάσουν την παρθένο πιστεύοντας έτσι ότι η Αγία θα χάσει τη δύναμή της. Η Αγία Θέκλα δεν φοβήθηκε καθόλου όταν τους είδε. Σήκωσε τα χέρια της και προσευχήθηκε για τη σωτηρία της και ως εκ θαύματος μια πέτρα σχίστηκε γι' αυτήν για να εισέλθει μέσα. Εκεί αναπαύτηκε για πάντα κοντά στον Θεό, σε ηλικία 90 χρόνων. Η εκκλησία μας εορτάζει την μνήμη της Αγίας Πρωτομάρτυρας και Ισαποστόλου Θέκλας την 24η Σεπτεμβρίου.

Metropolis of New Jersey
Northern New Jersey Greek Orthodox Youth Committee

Mr. & Miss GOYA Pageant 2021



GREEK ORTHODOX
METROPOLIS of NEW JERSEY

Sunday, October 10, 2021 from 4:00-9:00pm

The Hanover Manor

16 Eagle Rock Ave, East Hanover, NJ

**Tickets: \$60.00 Adults
\$40.00 Youth (under 18)**

ALL RESERVATIONS IN ADVANCE – NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR

**Proceeds to benefit the Northern NJ Greek Orthodox
Youth Scholarship Foundation**

See your GOYA Youth Advisors for Reservations/Information
Questions? Email us @ GOYAPageant@gmail.com

Ascension Greek Orthodox Church
101 Anderson Ave. Fairview New Jersey
201-945-6448, Fax 201-945-6463

email: info@ascensionfairview.org website

Visit our website: www.AscensionFairview.org

Like us on Facebook:

"Ascension Greek Orthodox Church"

Want to be added to our email list? Contact us:
info@ascensionfairview.org

THE WEEKLY BULLETIN

SUNDAY, September 19th, 2021

Sunday After Holy Cross

ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ, 19 Σεπτεμβρίου, 2021
Μετά της Υψώσεως

MEMORIAL SERVICES

ΜΝΗΜΟΣΥΝΑ

3 χρόνια: Ελένη Κατέχη

3 years: Eleni Katechis

4 χρόνια: Γεωργία Ζουμά

4 years: Georgia Zoumas

10 χρόνια: Νικόλαος Βαλάσης

10 years: Nikolaos Valasis