

THE MESSENGER

ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

NOVEMBER 2011

MISSION STATEMENT

To bring all children, youth and young adults closer to Christ and His Church through religious education, fellowship and various other events on a parish and national level.

DATES TO REMEMBER!

GREAT VESPERS FOR ST. NEKTARIOS

November 9th

REMEMBRANCE DAY

November 11th

YOUTH SUNDAY

November 27th

YOUTH SUNDAY 2011—

SEARCHING FOR TRUTH IN TODAY'S WORLD

On November 25th, the Orthodox Church honors the memory of St. Katherine the Great Martyr, who died for Christ in the third century. After coming to the Faith when she was a teenager, she preached the Gospel to all who would listen. As Orthodox Christians, we see the examples of *truth, knowledge* and *trust in God* throughout her life.

Throughout our lives, we are always searching for the Truth. We try to find it in the media and textbooks. Yet, no matter what we engage ourselves in, there will always be a void if we try to find Truth within the confines of our secular society. It is as if we are searching in the desert for water, but only seeing an oasis. The famous question of, "What is truth?" will always remain unanswered if we choose to ignore the most important aspect of our lives: the part of our lives which takes us "from death to life and from the earth to heaven." In the final analysis, *Truth* is accepting Christ, as Jesus is The Truth *par excellence*. With His Truth, He illumines every person who comes to the Faith. Saint Katherine the Great Martyr learned about the Truth and was not afraid to stand up for it. The Truth she had was more important than life, because it was "no longer her that was living, but Christ living in her."



The Truth of Faith can only be known to us, though, by gaining *knowledge*. This knowledge begins from the moment we are baptized. Attending a Youth Group and Sunday School helps us grow in Faith, make new friendships and learn who Christ is in a whole new way.

Yet, just as people who do not have Truth will have a "pseudo-truth", those who do not acquire this knowledge of Faith will have "pseudo-knowledge". They will become as Adam and Eve, thinking they can "become a god without God." So many acts of violence happen in our society today because we do not know who God is and how much He loves us. The various problems of drugs, shootings, murders and other such vices can usually be traced back to the fact that the perpetrators did not know that God loved them. Only in God can we find rest. He said it Himself: "**Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**" The knowledge of God gives us peace of mind, gives us rest, gives us illumination in knowing that He is our loving Father and we are His children.

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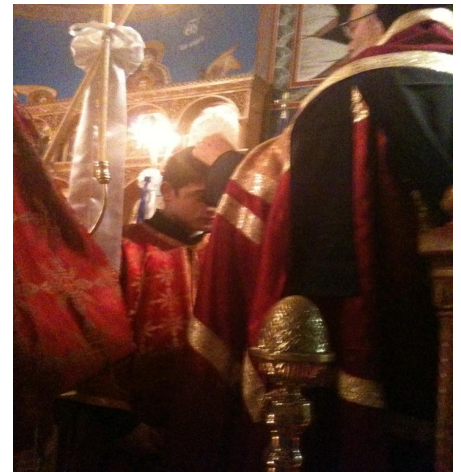


Celebrating our Patron Saint - St. Demetrios Day (October 25-26)

On October 26th every year, the Orthodox Church celebrates the memory of St. Demetrios the Great Martyr. He is honoured every year for his witnessing Christ to the pagans of his time. His memory is honoured all throughout the world, especially in the city of his martyrdom (Thessaloniki) and at our Church (as our Church is dedicated to him).

On the eve of the feast, **Tuesday, October 25th**, our Church had Great Vespers presided by His Eminence Metropolitan Archbishop Sotirios of Toronto (Canada), assisted by the clergy of Toronto and vicinity. The Church was filled to capacity. During the Great Vespers, two of our Altar Boys—Dimitre Pavlidis and Phillip Giontsis—were tonsured as readers by His Eminence. May they always be worthy of the honour the Church has given them! **Αξιοι!** At the end of Great Vespers, His Eminence preached about the meaning of the feast today. Portions of his sermon can be found on the *YouTube* channel of our Church, [StDemetriosToronto](#).

On the morning of **Wednesday, October 26th**, festal Matins was held, followed by the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy for the feast of St. Demetrios. His Eminence celebrated the Divine Liturgy, assisted by Rev. Fr. Konstantinos Pavlidis and Rev. Fr. Bohdan Hladio. At the end of the Divine Liturgy, a doxology for the liberation of Thessaloniki from the Ottoman yoke was held (historically, this event took place on October 26th, 1912). **Αγιε Δημητρυε, πρεσβευε υπερ ημων!**



Faithful attending the Vespers service His Eminence preaching to the faithful During the Tonsuring Service

Α PRAYER FOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

O God of Spirits and of all flesh, You have trampled upon death and have abolished the power of the devil, giving life to Your world. For your departed servants, those who have perished in wars and we call to mind on Remembrance Day, give rest to their souls in a place of light, in a place of repose, in a place of refreshment, where there is no pain, sorrow, and suffering. As a good and loving God, forgive every sin they have committed in thought, word, or deed, for there is no one who lives and sins not. You alone are without sin. Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your word is the Truth. For You are the resurrection, the life, and the repose of Your departed servants, Christ our God, and to You we give glory, with Your eternal Father and your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages.



YOUTH SUNDAY 2011 (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



Being faithful and knowledgeable Christians, we come to one of the most difficult aspects of our calling: *having trust in God*. At the times our faith in God is tested, we are at a crossroads: we can either accept Him and His love, or forsake Him. We can embrace Him or reject Him. For youth today, it happens so many times: from relationships, to pressures at home and school, to peer pressure and the negative influences in society. It is a difficult time to be a youth or young adult. No matter what "prescription" one can give them, the only medicine that will have a healing effect is Christ. He is the guide in our journey throughout life. He will carry us when we have no more strength to walk. He will help us in our difficulties, and rejoice together with us when we overcome them. The same happened with Saint Katherine: Although she was faced with torture and death, she never lost her faith. Rather, she was even stronger in her resolve to love her Lord, Redeemer and Savior.

Beloved in the Lord: St. Katherine the Great Martyr should serve as an example for our Youth of one witnessing for Truth, of one who acquired the "higher knowledge" of God, and placed her trust in Him. As we celebrate *Youth Sunday* this month, let us emulate her example, having her as a true "athlete for Christ". Let us remember that, despite all the difficulties she faced, she is now adorned with the crown of glory that is given by our Lord. May we all follow her example of faith, and ask the Thrice-Holy God to grant us every blessing from Above, for our Youth and their families, for our communities, and for the entire world.

~ Tim Prattas

STAY CONNECTED WITH US ONLINE AT WWW.LIVINGORTHODOXY.COM!

Since late September 2011, our Church's Sunday School and *Re-Catechism* group has an online presence with our new website, *LivingOrthodoxy*. Our desire is to help Christians go back and experience the vibrant fire of the ancient faith of the Apostles.

Scripture tells us that we must fan the flames of our faith. For us to do so, we need to search the Scriptures, study the tradition of our Faith and experience a mystical union with Jesus Christ. All of us at St. Demetrios Church invite you to discover the riches of the Orthodox Church and the joy of knowing Jesus Christ.

On our site, you'll find information about the Orthodox Church, Re-Catechism, Sunday School, News and Events, contact information and much more!



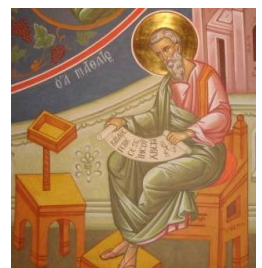
LivingOrthodoxy

Where the
Good News Is!

WHAT DOES JESUS SAY... ABOUT SINNERS AND RIGHTEOUS?

At that time, as Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and He said to him, "Follow Me." And he rose and followed Him. And as he sat at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when He heard it, He said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

~ Matthew 9:9-13 (Gospel Reading for the feast of St. Matthew the Evangelist)





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The third Greek Orthodox Church in Toronto, St. Demetrios Church was founded in 1962. Since then, our Church has been the spiritual home of thousands of Orthodox faithful from Toronto and vicinity. Our Church is a constituent member of the Greek Community of Toronto [www.greekcommunity.org] and under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (Canada) [www.gocanada.org]. The Religious Education programs have been attended by many children, youth and young adults. Our tireless staff works to promote the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Parish Priest

Religious Education Director

Young Adult League Leaders

Parish Council President

Philoptochos President

Greek Bible Study

Re-Catechism

(English Orthodox
Discussion Group)

Rev. Fr. Konstantinos Pavlidis

Mr. Basile Polidoulis

Mrs. Vicki Vokas, Mr. Niko Sotiropoulos

Mr. Argyrios Haros

Mrs. Theodora Koutsoubou

Mr. Basile Polidoulis

Mrs. Fotini Kapsalis

Mr. John Kapsalis

Mr. Chrysostom Makropoulos

Mr. Tim Prattas

Re-Catechism 5 The Orthodox Family



THIS MONTH'S SESSIONS

Tuesday, November 1st, 2011

*Individuals and their place in the Church:
Singles, Divorcees and Widows*

Tuesday, November 15th, 2011

*Lady Gaga in a Christian House:
Secularism in the Orthodox Family*

Tuesday, November 29th, 2011

*Your Spiritual Family:
Godparents, Godchildren and more*

** Every Session begins at 7:00 p.m.

COME AND JOIN US!

For more information, e-mail us at ...

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