

May 21, 2023



THE IMAGE...

(Jn 12:45 & 14:9; Heb 1:3; Col 1:15)

www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Publication of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church, Poway, CA

6TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA—TONE 5
SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN
SAINTS CONSTANTINE & HELEN

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Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow Jesus Christ & manifest the Kingdom of God in the Liturgy of His Church. If this is your first time with us, give us a chance to get to know you and fill out a visitor card.

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A Word from the Holy Fathers

He who had just received sight and had been miraculously free from his old blindness was quicker to perceive truth than those who has been instructed by the law. See how through numerous and wise arguments he demonstrates the utter inferiority of the Pharisees' opinion.

St. Cyril of Alexandria

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**Include Something in the Bulletin or
Be Included in our Weekly
(NEWS@StJohnofDamascus.org)
E-mails**

E-mail info@stjohnofdamascus.org
with your request.



The Blind Man, regarding the whole of life as night, cried out to You, O Lord:
“Open my eyes, O Son of David, our Savior,
that with all people I too may hymn Your power!”
Litya from Great Vespers

Parish Life

Father's Café Wednesdays May 11 In-Person as well as via Zoom 10:30-11:30 (ish)

Our weekly gathering for prayer, reflection & simple fellowship is on Wednesdays. It is at 10:30am and is available for people to attend IN PERSON as well as via Zoom (see online calendar for the link).

This is an opportunity to sit and have a cup of coffee or tea (reg and decaf provided) and ask questions about the Faith or talk about whatever comes to mind (gardening, movies, history, etc.). We say a prayer, read a reflection and let the conversation (and coffee) flow.



Dates for 2023

MOVABLE FEASTS

Ascension	May 25
Pentecost	June 4

FASTS

Apostles Fast	June 12-28
Dormition Fast	August 1-14
Nativity Fast/Advent	Nov 15-Dec 24

FAST-FREE WEEKS

After Pentecost	June 4-10
After Christmas	Dec 25-Jan 4

Please Sign-up for Fellowship Hour

There are a number of Sundays that have openings for people to help with our Fellowship Meal after Liturgy.

We encourage groups of 4 to alleviate the cost of trying to feed our growing parish.

Simple meals are welcome!

If you have any questions speak with Linda Kedroff.



Purchase Gift Cards Through Our Scrip Coordinator & Help our Parish

Scrip gift cards raise money for St. John's Auxiliary. When you buy Scrip cards, the store makes a donation with NO extra expense. Use the cards for your regular monthly purchases or gifts for loved ones and support our parish's ministry. Cards are available for gas, groceries, Amazon, restaurants and many other stores.

See Carmen Brown after Liturgy for more information or to purchase your cards.



Come & Get It! Cabbage Rolls & Pierogies

The Auxiliary has been hard at work and we now get to benefit from their efforts AND support their ministry which supports our church.

Stuffed cabbage rolls and pierogies (huge variety) are available for sale. Speak to someone after Liturgy to pick up a dinner (or two) for this week!

Parish Life

TROPARIA

Resurrection — Tone 5

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

Ss Constantine & Helen — Tone 8

Your servant, Constantine, O Lord and only Lover of man, beheld the figure of the Cross in the heavens. Like Paul, not having received his call from men, but as an apostle among rulers set by Your hand over the royal city// he preserved lasting peace through the prayers of the Theotokos.

KONTAKIA

Ss Constantine & Helen — Tone 3

Today Constantine and his mother Helen reveal the precious Cross, the weapon of Orthodox Christians against their enemies// for it is manifest for us as a great and fearful sign in struggle.

Blind Man — Tone 4

I come to Thee, O Christ, blind from birth in my spiritual eyes, and call to Thee in repentance:// "Thou art the most radiant Light of those in darkness."

PROKEIMENON

Tone 8 — Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God! (Ps 75/76:11)

v: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel. (Ps 75/76:1)

Tone 8 (Ss Constantine & Helen) — Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth, / and their words to the ends of the universe. (Ps. 18:4)

ALLELUIA

Tone 8 — V. Look upon me and have mercy on me! (Ps.118:132a)

V. Guide my steps according to Your word! (Ps. 118:133a)

 Tone 1 — V. I have exalted one chosen out of My people. (Ps. 88:18b)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — Acts 16: 16-34

¹⁶ As we were going to prayer, it happened that we encountered a certain girl who had a spirit of divination and who produced much profit to her masters by fortune telling. ¹⁷ As she followed Paul and Silas, she cried out, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us a way of salvation!" ¹⁸ And she did this for many days. But Paul, becoming greatly annoyed, turned back and said to the spirit, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, I order you to come out of her!" And the spirit came out that very moment. ¹⁹ When her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas, and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. ²⁰ Having brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These Jewish men are causing unrest in our city! ²¹ They teach customs which are not lawful for us Romans to accept or observe!" ²² When the crowd also rose up against them, the magistrates had them stripped and flogged. ²³ After giving them a severe flogging, the magistrates had them thrown into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them securely. ²⁴ Having received such a command, he threw them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. ²⁵ But when it was about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly, there was a great earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once, all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were loosened. ²⁷ The jailer, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, began to draw his sword and he was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" ²⁹ Having asked for lights, the jailer rushed in and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ They answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household!" ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all those who were in his household.

³³ Late as it was, the jailer washed their wounds and was immediately baptized, he and his entire household. ³⁴ He took them into his house and set food before them. He was filled with joy for believing in God, along with his entire household.

Epistle — Acts 26: 1-5, 12-20

26 Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak for yourself." Then Paul held up his hand and made his defense. ² "I consider myself blessed, King Agrippa, that today, I am able to make my defense before you in response to all the accusations of the Jews, ³ especially because you are an expert in all the customs and debates which take place among the Jews. Therefore, I beg you to hear me patiently.

⁴ Indeed, all the Jews know about my way of life from my youth, which was from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem. ⁵ Since they have known me from the beginning, they could testify that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.

¹² Then, as I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission from the chief priests, ¹³ at noon, O king, I saw on the way a light from the sky. It was brighter than the sun and shone around me and those who were traveling with me. ¹⁴ We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads!'

¹⁵ I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' He replied, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting!' ¹⁶ Now arise and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you as a servant and a witness both of what you have seen and of what I will reveal to you. ¹⁷ I will rescue you from the [Jewish] people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸ to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, and receive remission of sins as well as an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

¹⁹ Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ²⁰ but I proclaimed this to the people of Damascus first, and Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea. Then I also proclaimed it to the Gentiles—that they should repent, turn to God, and do works worthy of [their] repentance.

Gospel — John 9: 1-38

9 As Jesus was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who has sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

³ Jesus answered, “Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but [it was] in order that the works of God might be revealed in him. ⁴ I must do the works of the one who sent me while it is day. The night is coming, when no one can work.

⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground, made mud with the saliva and anointed the blind man’s eyes with the mud. ⁷ He then said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means “Sent”). And so, the man went away, washed, and came back seeing. ⁸ At this, the neighbors and those who saw that he had been blind before said, “Is this not the man who sat and begged?” ⁹ Others were saying, “It is he!” Still others were saying, “He looks like him.”

The man said, “I am he!” ¹⁰ Therefore, the people asked him, “How were your eyes opened?”

¹¹ He answered, “A man called Jesus made mud, anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash.’ And so, I went away and washed, and I received sight.”

¹² Then they asked him, “Where is he?” The man replied, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ It was a Sabbath when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Again, the Pharisees also asked the man how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes, I washed, and I see!”

¹⁶ At this, some of the Pharisees said, “This man

is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them. ¹⁷ They asked the blind man again, “What do you say about him, since he opened your eyes?”

He said, “He is a prophet!”

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe [the report] about this man, that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of this man who had received his sight. ¹⁹ They asked the parents, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”

²⁰ His parents answered them, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind.

²¹ But how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. He is of age. Ask him! He will speak for himself.” ²² His parents said this because they feared the Jews;

for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone would confess Jesus as Christ, that person would be expelled from the synagogue.

²³ Therefore, his parents said, “He is of age. Ask him!”

²⁴ And so, they called the man who had been blind a second time, and they told him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner!”

²⁵ At this, the man answered, “I do not know if he is a sinner. One thing I do know: that though I was blind, now I see!”

²⁶ Again, they asked him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

²⁷ He answered them, “I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You do not also want to become his disciples, do you?”

²⁸ They insulted him and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses; but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”

³⁰ The man answered them, “How amazing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ Now we know that God does not listen to sinners; but he will listen to

Today's Worship—Scripture Readings

anyone who is God-fearing and who does his will. ³² Since the world began, it has never been heard of that anyone opened the eyes of someone born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

³⁴ They answered him, "You were born completely in sins, and do you teach us?" And they threw him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown the man out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"

³⁶ The man answered, "And who is he, Sir, that I may believe in him?"

³⁷ And Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking with you."

³⁸ Then the man said, "Sir, I believe!" and he expressed adoration to Jesus.

Gospel — John 10: 1-9

10 "Amen, amen, I tell you; whoever does not enter by the gate into the sheep fold, but climbs up some other way is a thief and a robber. ² But the one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. The shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ And whenever he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will by no means follow a stranger, but flee from him because they do not recognize the voice of strangers." ⁶ Jesus spoke this parable to them, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷ Jesus therefore said to them again, "Amen, amen, I tell you; I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate! Anyone who enters in by me will be saved, and go in and out, and will find pasture.



Ss Constantine & Helen

Our Life in Christ—The Ascension of our Lord



In the Ascension resides the meaning and the fullness of Christ's Resurrection.

The Lord did not rise in order to return again to the fleshly order of life, so as to live again and commune with the disciples and the multitudes by means of preaching and miracles. Now he does not even stay with them, but only "appears" to them during the forty days, from time to time, and always in a miraculous and mysterious manner. "He was not always with them now, as He was before the Resurrection," comments St John Chrysostom. "He came and again disappeared, thus leading them on to higher conceptions. He no longer permitted them to continue in their former relationship toward Him, but took effectual measures to secure these two objects: That the fact of His Resurrection should be believed, and that He Himself should be ever after apprehended to be greater than man." There was something new and unusual in His person (cf. John 21:1-14). As St John Chrysostom says, "It was not an open presence, but a certain testimony of the fact that He was present." That is why the disciples were confused and frightened. Christ arose not in the same way as those who were restored to life before Him. Theirs was a resurrection for a time, and they returned to life in the same body, which was subject to death and corruption - returned to the previous mode of life. But Christ arose for ever, unto eternity. He arose in a body of glory, immortal and incorruptible. He arose, never to die, for "He clothed the mortal in the splendor of incorruption." His glorified Body was already exempt from the fleshly order of existence. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:42-44). This mysterious transformation of human bodies, of which St Paul was speaking in the case of our Lord, had been accomplished in three days. Christ's work on earth was accomplished. He had suffered, was dead and buried, and now rose to a higher mode of existence. By His Resurrection He abolished and destroyed death, abolished the law of corruption, "and raised with Himself the whole race of Adam." Christ has risen, and now "no dead are left in the grave" (cf. The Easter Sermon of St John Chrysostom). And now He ascends to the Father, yet He does not "go away," but abides with the faithful for ever (cf. The Kontakion of Ascension). For He raises the very earth with Him to heaven, and even higher than any heaven. God's power, in the phrase of St John Chrysostom, "manifests itself not only in the Resurrection, but in something much stronger." For "He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19).

And with Christ, man's nature ascends also.

"We who seemed unworthy of the earth, are now raised to heaven," says St John Chrysostom. "We who were unworthy of earthly dominion have been raised to the Kingdom on high, have ascended higher than heaven, have come to occupy the King's throne, and the same nature from which the angels guarded Paradise, stopped not until it ascended to the throne of the Lord." By His Ascension the Lord not only opened to man the entrance to heaven, not only appeared before the face of God on our behalf and for our sake, but likewise "transferred man" to the high places. "He honored them He loved by putting them close to the Father." God quickened and raised us together with Christ, as St Paul says, "and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephes. 2:6). Heaven received the inhabitants of the earth. "The First fruits of them that slept" sits now on high, and in Him all creation is summed up and bound together. "The earth rejoices in mystery, and the heavens are filled with joy."



LOOKING AHEAD

*The following are services & parish events **IN ADDITION** to the usual weekend services (Sat 6pm & Sun 8:30am).*

Monday May 22

6:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Monday May 29

6:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Wednesday May 24—Eve of Ascension

10:30am — Father's Café In Person in Church Hall & via Zoom (see online calendar for link)

6:00pm — Great Vespers & Litya for Ascension

Wednesday May 31

10:30am — Father's Café In Person in Church Hall & via Zoom (see online calendar for link)

Saturday June 3

5:00pm — Decorate Church for Pentecost

6:00pm — Vigil

Thursday May 25—Ascension of our Lord

8:30:am — 3rd Hour & Festal Divine Liturgy

Sunday June 4

After Divine Liturgy — Vespers of Pentecost
Church School—Meet & Treats w/ Fr Michael

Sunday May 28

After Divine Liturgy — Monthly Memorial Service for May

For more dates & links please visit our website: www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar

Confessions are held on Saturdays after Great Vespers or by appointment with Fr Michael.

Many Years!

Name Days

Elena Sullivan, Erik (Constantine) Worth 5/21
Victoria Pluta, Carole (Victoria) Shumaik, Viorica (Victoria) Radulescu, Grace (Victoria) Cooper 5/25

Birthdays

Levan Darjania, Jacob Samuel Gammo 5/24
Dasha Bishaev, Maya Bishaev 5/26
Grayson Henry 5/27

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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Priest: V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

Email: powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 717-2172

Attached Clergy: V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired & Dn. George Shumaik

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA