

February 9, 2025



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

33RD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—TONE 8

**LEAVETAKING OF THE MEETING OF THE
LORD IN THE TEMPLE**

SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN & THE PHARISEE

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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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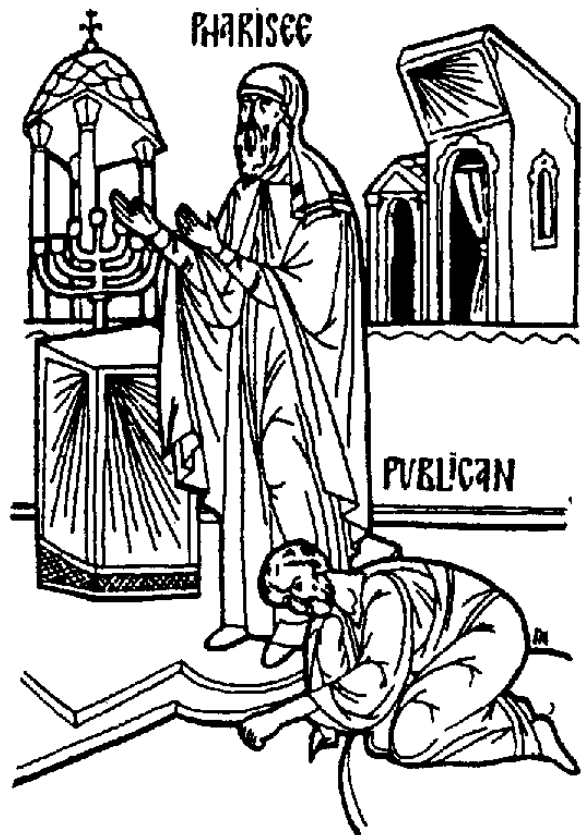
A Word from the Holy Fathers

Now, it is a custom in Scripture to call the Christ of God, salvation, as Simeon says: "Now let your servant depart in peace, O Lord, because my eyes have seen your salvation." Therefore let us subject ourselves to God, because from Him is salvation. He explains what salvation is. It is not some mere active force, which provides us with a certain grace for deliverance from weakness and for the good health of our body. What then is salvation? "For He is my God and my Savior: he is my protector, I shall be moved no more." The Son, Who is from God, is our God.
St. Basil the Great

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**Include Something in the Bulletin or
Be Included in our Weekly E-mails**

E-mail info@stjohnofdamascus.org



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

Parish Life

Parish Annual Meeting 2/16 Nominations for Parish Council, Lay Representative & Auditors

Our annual meeting is coming up on February 16.
We will be electing

- 4 people for positions on the Parish Council
- a Lay Representative for our Diocesan Assembly and All-American Council (Phoenix, AZ July 14-18)
- 2 Auditors for 2025

If you would like to be nominated to run for any of these positions please see Fr Michael or any member of the current Parish Council.



List of Current Voting Members Posted

In preparation for our upcoming annual parish meeting February 16, the list of voting members (those parishioners who have submitted pledge forms for 2025) has been posted in both the church narthex and in the church hall.

If your name is not on there, please submit your pledge form ASAP.



2025 Wall Calendars Available (with Feasts, Fasts, Scriptures Readings)

The wall calendars for 2025 have arrived and are available in the narthex in the back of the church. \$10 is the suggested donation.

Chili Sale!

Pick-Up is Sunday Feb 9th after Liturgy.

Donation: \$25

All Sales Proceeds and Donations will benefit St. Tikhon's Monastery.



Auxiliary Meeting Today!

The Auxiliary will be meeting tomorrow after Liturgy to review their projects and goals for the year.

The Auxiliary is looking for new members to help with these. Please consider being a part of this faithful ministry and take part!



House Blessings

Following the feast of Theophany until the beginning of Great Lent (Jan. 7 - Mar. 1) Fr. Michael will be blessing homes.

Please contact Fr. Michael to arrange a date and time.



Monthly Memorial Saturday February 22

This month's memorial for our beloved departed will be in connection with the Soul Saturday Divine Liturgy on February 22.

Please submit the names of your loved ones BEFORE the beginning of the service.

Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Resurrection—Tone 8

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!
You accepted the three day burial to free us from
our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

Feast —Tone 1

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!
From you shone the Sun of Righteousness,
^Christ our God,
enlightening those who sat in darkness.
Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,
you accepted in your arms the ^Redeemer of our
souls,//
Who grants us the Resurrection!

KONTAKIA

Publican & Pharisee—Tone 4

Let us flee from the pride of the Pharisee!
Let us learn humility from the Publican's tears!
Let us cry to our Savior:
"Have mercy on us,//
O only merciful One!"

Feast—Tone 1

By Your Nativity You sanctified the Virgin's
womb
and blessed Simeon's hands, ^O Christ God.
Now You have come and saved us through love.
Grant peace to all Orthodox Christians,//
O only Lover of Man!

PROKEIMENA

Tone 8 (Resurrection) - Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God! (Ps. 75:10a)

V. In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel. (Ps. 75:1)

Tone 3 (Song of the Theotokos) -My soul magnifies the Lord, / and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. (Lk. 1:46-47)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Epistle — 2 Timothy 3: 10-15

¹⁰ You, however, have paid close attention to my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, steadfastness, ¹¹ persecutions, and sufferings. You know what happened to me at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. I endured those persecutions and the Lord delivered me out of them all! ¹² Yes, all those who desire to lead godly lives in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. ¹³ But wicked impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others, being themselves deceived. ¹⁴ As for you, remain in what you have learned, which is what you firmly believe, knowing from whom you have learned them. ¹⁵ From infancy, you have known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.

Epistle — Hebrews 7:7-17

⁷ Now nobody will question that the lesser is blessed by the greater. ⁸ Here, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. ⁹ We can say that through Abraham even Levi (who would [later] receive tithes), had paid tithes, ¹⁰ for he was still 'in the body' of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him. ¹¹ Now if perfection had come through the Levitical priesthood (under which the people received the law), what further need would there be for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek and not that of Aaron? ¹² And as the priesthood is being changed, there is also, by necessity, a change in the law as well. ¹³ So our Lord, of whom these things were said, belongs to another tribe, one from which no one has served at the altar. ¹⁴ It is clear indeed that our Lord came from the tribe of Judah, about which Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. ¹⁵ This is even more obvious if after the likeness of Melchizedek, another priest was to rise, ¹⁶ one who was not made in virtue of a law of physical descent but according to the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For he testifies:
You are a priest forever,
according to the order of Melchizedek.

ALLELUIA

Tone 8 — V. Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! (Ps. 94:1)

V. Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise! (Ps. 94:2)

Tone 8 -- V. Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation! (Luke 2:29)

Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

Gospel — Luke 18: 10-14

¹⁰ “Two men went up into the temple to pray; one was a Pharisee, and the other was a Publican.

¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed like this: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of men, dishonest, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I earn.’ ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far aside, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven. Instead, he beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man, rather than the other, went down to his house justified. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Gospel — Luke 2: 22-40

²² And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, Joseph and Mary brought him up to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord. ²³ (For it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”). ²⁴ [They also brought him] to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

²⁵ Behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and [the] Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s anointed. ²⁷ He came in the Spirit into the temple. The parents brought in the child Jesus in order to do according to the custom of the law concerning him. ²⁸ Then Simeon took Jesus in his arms and blessed God, saying,

²⁹ Now you let your servant depart in peace,
Master,

according to your word,

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared before the face of
all peoples;

³² a light to enlighten the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.

³³ Joseph and his mother were wondering at the things which were spoken concerning him.

³⁴ Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother,

Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel,
and as a sign which is spoken against.

³⁵ Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul,
so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

³⁶ There was a certain Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher (she was of a great age, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity, ³⁷ and she had been a widow for about eighty-four years), who did not depart from the temple, offering divine service with fastings and petitions night and day.

³⁸ Coming up at that very hour, she gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Jesus to all those who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child was growing, and was becoming strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

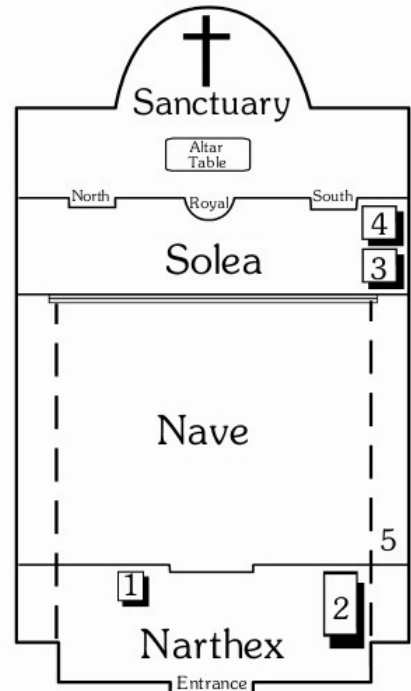
The Church & the Church Temple

In the Orthodox Church the liturgy, or worship, of the Church is understood to be participating in the heavenly worship that eternally takes place before the very throne of God. Visions of this worship are can be found throughout the Holy Scriptures including (but not exclusive to) the prophecies of Daniel & Ezekiel and the book of Revelation. God's revelation to Moses describing how to build the Tabernacle which later led to the building of the great temple in Jerusalem is consist to this vision of worship.

The Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection & Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ fulfills and clarifies this vision—thus the sacrificial aspect of worship is fulfilled in our Crucified Lord Who rose from the dead, destroying death by death. The Holy of Holies is no longer the place that only one can go and but once a year with a sacrifice of blood. Now it is the place from where God repeatedly comes and descends to reach out to us through the Sacraments & His Word in the Gospels. The curtain of the temple was torn in two and now, rather than being forever separate from an unknowable God, God Himself comes through the curtain to offer to us the gift of eternal life through participation in the Lord's Supper. While those who have been baptized in Christ and have received holy Chrismation are now temples of the Holy Spirit, the structure of our church temple reminds us of what that means ("holiness befits Thy house, forevermore") and Who this God is that dwells within us. He is the God Who has revealed Himself to us, but remains "inexpressible, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible, everexisting, eternally the same" (anaphora of St. John Chrysostom).

The interior of the Orthodox Church building is particularly styled to give the experience of the unity of all things in God. It is not constructed to reproduce the upper room of the Last Supper, nor simply to be a meeting hall for men whose life exists solely within the bounds of this earth. The church building is patterned after the image of God's Kingdom in the **Book of Revelation**. Before us is the altar table on which Christ is enthroned, both as the Word of God in the Gospels and as the Lamb of God in the Eucharistic sacrifice. Around the table are the angels and saints, the servants of the Word and the Lamb who glorify him - and through him, God the Father - in the perpetual adoration inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The faithful Christians on earth who already belong to that holy assembly – "**...fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...**" (*Ephesians 2:19*) – enter into the eternal worship of God's Kingdom in the Church. Thus, in Orthodox practice the vestibule symbolizes this world. The nave is the place of the Church understood as the assembly and people of God. The altar area, called the sanctuary, the holy place, or even the throne stands for the heavens.



Blessing of Homes

According to the Orthodox Christian Faith, the family is considered to be a “small church” and the family table is the “home altar” where the people gather each day to receive their “daily bread” from God with thanksgiving in the Name of Christ. Thus, during the Theophany season, the priest, who is the father of the great “family of God,” the Church community, comes to each of the “small churches” bringing the blessings of God the Father and all of the brothers and sisters in Christ.

The sanctification of the home takes place not only by the words of prayer, but by the sprinkling with the blessed water which stands for the new creation of the Kingdom of God in which God Himself “fills all things with Himself” including even the smallest particles of material existence.

The priest asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. All pray together for the good of the living and the departed of the family, and of all who live and have lived in the house. All sing together the great hymn of salvation that Christ, the Son of the Father by the grace of the Holy Spirit, “has revealed Himself and has enlightened the world.” This the house itself, together with the living persons of the family, is “filled with all the fullness of God.”

Preparing for your house blessing

When the priest comes to bless the family and its house it is not something to worry about. The priest comes to bless a house that is lived in, not one that has to be in Better Homes and Gardens. There are some basics that are normally observed:

- • A lighted candle, an icon and a wide bowl for the blessed water should be placed on the main table in the house.
- • All radios, televisions, video games, mp3 players etc. should be turned off. Phones should be on silent.
- • All who are present in the house should come together and stand by the table until the end of service.
- • Those who are able should join in the singing of the hymns and responses of the services.
- • The first names of those for whom special prayers are to be offered, including, of course, all members of the family and those living in the house, should be clearly printed on a sheet of paper, with the clear distinction between the living and the departed.

Taken and revised from the Introduction to the Great Blessing of Water by Fr. Thomas Hopko.

Following the feast of Theophany until the beginning of Great Lent

(Jan. 6-Mar2) Fr. Michael will be blessing homes.

Please contact Fr. Michael to arrange a date and time.



LOOKING AHEAD

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

Monday January 6-March 1

Annual House Blessings—Contact Fr Michael to Schedule

February 10-14

Fast Free Week

Monday February 10

6:00pm—Adult Ed: Orthodox Christianity 101

Tuesday February 11

7:00pm — Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday February 12

10:30am — Father's Café (in person in hall or via Zoom)

7:00pm — Adult Ed: Our OCA and the Current "Moment"

Sunday February 16

After Divine Liturgy—Parish Annual Meeting

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

Many Years!

Birthdays

Timothy Anderson 2/9
Mark Sladack 2/10

Wedding Anniversaries

Kyra & Joshua Toth 2/15

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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Web: www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Email: info@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 674-1931

Priest: V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

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

Attached Clergy: V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired, Rev. John Robinson, Retired & Pdn. George Shumaik

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