

May 25, 2025



# THE IMAGE...

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

[www.stjohnofdamascus.org](http://www.stjohnofdamascus.org)

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

6TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA — TONE 5

SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN

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## Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow  
Jesus Christ and 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.

Please join us for our fellowship meal  
following the service

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## From the Holy Fathers

Truth is not a thought, not a word, not a  
relationship between things, not a law.

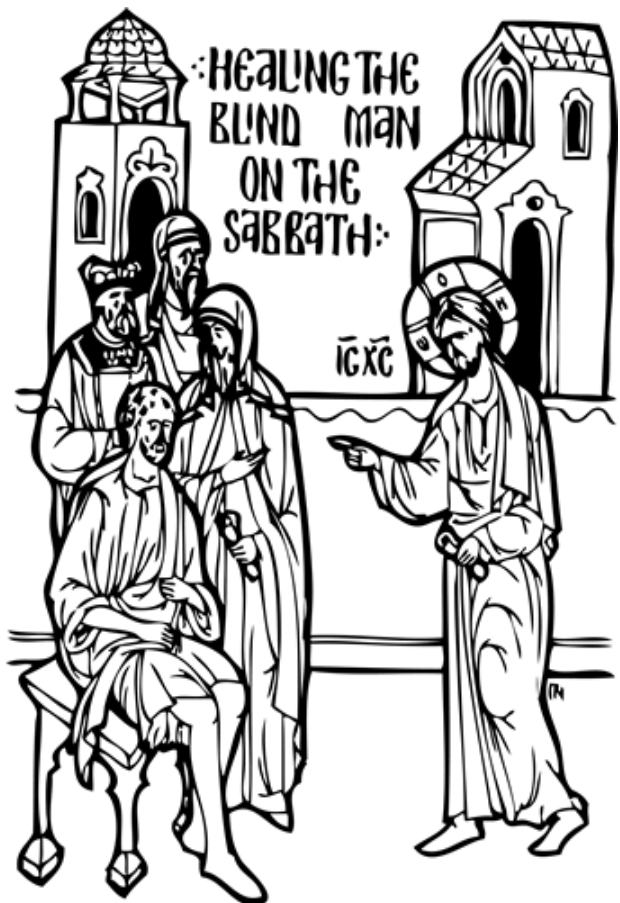
Truth is a Person. It is a Being which  
exceeds all beings and gives life to all. If  
you seek truth with love and for the sake of  
love, she will reveal the light of His face to  
you inasmuch as you are able to bear it  
without being burned.

—St Nicholas of Serbia

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Include Something in the Bulletin or  
Receive our Weekly Parish E-mails

E-mail [info@stjohnofdamascus.org](mailto:info@stjohnofdamascus.org)  
with your request.



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

## Parish Life

### **Parish Family Photo "Directory" Photos to Begin to be Taken in June**

Our bulletin board "Parish Family Directory" is ready to take its next step.

Beginning in June, Elena Stafford will be approaching people to have their pictures taken to be posted on the blue bulletin board in the church hall. The photos will also have the names of the people in them so that folks have a resource to put names to the faces" as our community continues to grow.

If you have a photo you would rather have used, please speak to Elena about sending it to her so we can have it printed in the format we will be using.



*The above picture of a photo directory is taken from St Nicholas Orthodox in Portland, OR. A number of parishes in our Diocese as well as around the country are doing similar things to address the quick growth in their communities.*

### **Adult Ed: Forgiveness Tuesdays 7-8:30pm — 4 Sessions**

Our next Adult Education class is a 4-session class on Tuesday nights from 7-8:30pm.

At the request of our members we will be describing the Church's understanding of Forgiveness



### **Volunteers Needed w/ Ministries**

Our Electronic Sign Ministry and Counting Ministries are in need of 1 or 2 more volunteers each as well.

If you are interested in helping see Fr Michael



### **DECORATING FOR HOLY PENTECOST BRING IN YOUR HOUSE PLANTS & CUTTINGS!**

**SATURDAY 6/7, 4:30PM**

For our celebration of the great feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost we decorate our temple in green. The temple is adorned with branches & other greenery to make it as green as Pascha was white.

Please consider whether you have any house plants at home (also small trees & bushes in containers 3, 4 or even 5 ft tall) that you would be willing to lend to the church for a few weeks. We will make sure they are watered. Also, we will be filling the church vases and decorating with cuttings from plants, trees, etc. from people's yards.

Plants can be brought as early as the Sunday before (6/1) or during the week. Cuttings should be brought on Saturday (6/7). We will begin decorating at 4:30pm.

The goal is make our temple a glimpse of the garden in paradise where Adam & Eve walked with God in Communion with Him and His creation.

## Today's Worship — Hymns

### 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.

### KONTAKIA

#### Blind Man —Tone 4

I come to You, O Christ, blind from birth  
in my spiritual eyes,  
and call to You in repentance:  
“You are the most radiant Light of those in  
darkness.”

#### Pascha—Tone 8

You descended into the tomb, O Immortal,  
You destroyed the power of death.  
In victory You arose, O Christ God,  
proclaiming: “Rejoice!” to the Myrrhbearing  
Women,  
granting peace to Your Apostles,  
and bestowing resurrection on the fallen.

### PROKEIMENON

**Tone 8** (Resurrection) — 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)*



### 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)

## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

### Epistle — Acts 16:16-34

<sup>16</sup> Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. <sup>17</sup> This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation."

<sup>18</sup> And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.

<sup>19</sup> But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. <sup>20</sup> And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; <sup>21</sup> and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe. <sup>22</sup> Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods.

<sup>23</sup> And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely.

<sup>24</sup> Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

<sup>25</sup> But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. <sup>26</sup> Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. <sup>27</sup> And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.

<sup>28</sup> But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." <sup>29</sup> Then he called for a light, ran in, and

fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.

<sup>30</sup> And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

<sup>31</sup> So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." <sup>32</sup> Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. <sup>33</sup> And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. <sup>34</sup> Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.



### Gospel — John 9:1-38

<sup>1</sup> Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. <sup>4</sup> I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

<sup>6</sup> When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. <sup>7</sup> And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, *Sent*). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. <sup>8</sup> Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" <sup>9</sup> Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he."

<sup>10</sup> Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" <sup>11</sup> He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed

## Today's Worship — Scripture Readings

my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." <sup>12</sup> Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

<sup>13</sup> They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. <sup>14</sup> Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

<sup>16</sup> Therefore 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. <sup>17</sup> They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

<sup>18</sup> But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. <sup>19</sup> And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

<sup>20</sup> His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; <sup>21</sup> but by what means 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."

<sup>22</sup> His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.

<sup>23</sup> Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." <sup>24</sup> So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner." <sup>25</sup> He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."

<sup>26</sup> Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

<sup>27</sup> He answered them, "I told you already, and

you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" <sup>28</sup> Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. <sup>29</sup> We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from."

<sup>30</sup> The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! <sup>31</sup> Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. <sup>32</sup> Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."

<sup>34</sup> They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out. <sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" <sup>36</sup> He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" <sup>37</sup> And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." <sup>38</sup> Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.



**THE MAN BORN BLIND**  
**METROPOLITAN ANTHONY BLOOM**

Before his meeting with Christ the blind man had never seen anything. Everything was dark, he had to guess at things, to explore them by touch, to use his imagination. He had no clear authentic image of things. Then he met Christ, and Christ opened his eyes. And what was the first thing this man saw? The face of Christ, His gaze; the face of God become man, the divine gaze full of attentive, compassionate love resting on him, on him alone out of the whole crowd. Straight away he came face to face with the living God and encountered the miracle which so astonishes us: that God can focus His attention on each one of us — as on the lost sheep — and not see the crowd but see the one and only person. After that the man probably surveyed everything around him, and what he had known by description, by hearsay, became reality — "now I see".



It happens at the present time also; it can happen to each one of us. Like the man born blind we live most of our lives on alms, we sit like beggars at the roadside holding out a hand in the hope that someone will notice, if not us at least our hand, and give us something to sustain us for the next few hours at any rate. Such sustenance comes for us in the form of a friendly gaze resting upon us, a word spoken to us, a kindness done to us. But all this still leaves us by the roadside, blind and begging for help.

When Christ was passing another blind man, Bartimaeus, that one did not wait for the Saviour to come up to him and ask him if he wanted to be saved, if he wanted his sight. As soon as he sensed that something unusual was happening in the noisy crowd, and in answer to his question was told who was passing by, he began to shout for help. True, people tried to stop him; true, a slight doubt may have crept into his mind, was it worth shouting, calling for help, would the Lord hear, would he respond to such a trifling need as his? He went on clamoring for help because his suffering was so great, his need was so desperate. He was prepared to push past the people, fight his way through the crowd in order to reach God and be heard by Him.

If only we could realize how blind we are. If only we could realize that our knowledge of life, not only eternal, divine life, but earthly life, depends almost entirely on hearsay, that the life around us is dim and ghostly because we are blind, or (like the other blind man in the Gospel, not immediately cured by Christ) see things in a mist. If only we could remember what the Saviour tells us about the beauty and the glory of both eternal and earthly life and not be satisfied with our blindness, how earnestly would we try to detain Christ, so that He might pierce us with His gaze and speak His sovereign, healing, life-giving word to us. Then indeed we might see the astonishing beauty of Christ's face, the fathomless beauty of the divine gaze resting upon us with mercy and compassion and tenderness. We use our eyes so easily, but we see little, and that superficially. Let us seek the vision that can be ours only, when our hearts become bright and pure. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God; and in the brilliance of God's presence we might see each other, each one either illuminated by God's love, shining with the glory of eternal life, or else wounded, darkened, expecting from us not just alms but the surrender of our whole life through love in order that he might receive sight, that to him also the Kingdom of Heaven might already be revealed on earth.

## Our Life in Christ

### ON THE ASCENSION

Jesus did not live with His disciples after His resurrection as He had before His death. Filled with the glory of His divinity, He appeared at different times and places to His people, assuring them that it was He, truly alive in His risen and glorified body.

*To them He presented Himself alive after His passion by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days, and speaking of the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:3).*

On the fortieth day after His passover, Jesus ascended into heaven to be glorified on the right hand of God (Acts 1:9–11; Mk 16:19; Lk 24:51). The ascension of Christ is His final physical departure from this world after the resurrection. It is the formal completion of His mission in this world as the Messianic Saviour. It is His glorious return to the Father Who had sent Him into the world to accomplish the work that He had given him to do (Jn 17:4–5).

*... and lifting His hands He blessed them. While blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy (Lk 24:51–52).*

The Church's celebration of the ascension, as all such festal celebrations, is not merely the remembrance of an event in Christ's life. Indeed, the ascension itself is not to be understood as though it were simply the supernatural event of a man floating up and away into the skies. The holy scripture stresses Christ's physical departure and His glorification with God the Father, together with the great joy which His disciples had as they received the promise of the Holy Spirit Who was to come to assure the Lord's presence with them, enabling them to be His witnesses to the ends of earth (Lk 24:48–53; Acts 1:8–11; Mt 28:20; Mk 16:16–14).

In the Church the believers in Christ celebrate these very same realities with the conviction that it is for them and for all men that Christ's departure from this world has taken place. The Lord leaves in order to be glorified with God the Father and to glorify us with himself. He goes in order to "prepare a place" for and to take us also into the blessedness of God's presence. He goes to open the way for all flesh into the "heavenly sanctuary ... the Holy Place not made by hands" (see Hebrews 8–10). He goes in order send the Holy Spirit, Who proceeds from the Father to bear witness to Him and His gospel in the world, making Him powerfully present in the lives of disciples.

*Source: The Orthodox Faith, vol. II*

*Thou hast ascended in glory O Christ our God, granting joy to Thy disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Through the blessing they were assured that Thou art the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world! (Troparion).*

*When Thou didst fulfill the dispensation for our sake, and didst unite earth to heaven, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, not being parted from those who love Thee, but remaining with them and crying: I am with you and no one will be against you! (Kontakion).*



## LOOKING AHEAD

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

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### **Tuesday — May 27**

7:00pm — Adult Ed: Forgiveness

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### **Wednesday — May 28**

10:30am — Father's Café

6:00pm — Great Vespers w/ Litya for Ascension

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### **Thursday — May 29 Ascension**

8:30am—Hours

9:00am — Festal Divine Liturgy

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### **Sunday — June 1**

4:00pm — Wedding of Jasmine & Mark

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### **Tuesday — June 3**

7:00pm — Adult Ed: Forgiveness

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### **Wednesday — June 4**

10:30am — Father's Café

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### **Saturday — June 7**

4:30pm — Decorate Church for Pentecost

6:00pm — Vigil for Holy Pentecost

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### **June 9-27**

Fr Michael on Vacation

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### **Saturday — June 14**

9:00am-12:00pm — Prep for Fathers' Day Brunch

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### **Sunday — June 15**

After Divine Liturgy — Fathers' Day Brunch

## Many Years!

All loving founders as well as former and current members, friends, and benefactors of  
St John of Damascus Church on its 50th Anniversary

### *Name Day*

Victoria Pluta, Viorica (Victoria) Rădulescu, Carole (Victoria) Shumaik, Grace (Victoria) Cooper,  
Viktoriya Markwick 5/25

### *Birthday*

Daria Muzanova, Maia Bishaev	5/26
Protodeacon George Shumaik	5/28
John Thayer	5/30
Gary (Paul) Jollie, Stacy (Anastasia) Seitz	5/31

## PARISH CONTACT INFO:

**Church:** 16903 Espola Rd Poway — **Mailing Address:** PO Box 28291 San Diego, CA 92198

**Web:** [www.stjohnofdamsacus.org](http://www.stjohnofdamsacus.org)

**Email:** [info@stjohnofdamsacus.org](mailto:info@stjohnofdamsacus.org) — **Phone:** (858) 674-1931

**Priest:** V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

**Email:** [powaypadre@stjohnofdamsacus.org](mailto:powaypadre@stjohnofdamsacus.org) — **Phone:** (858) 717-2172

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

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