



St. Elias the Prophet

Greek Orthodox Church

October 2009

Newsletter

St. Elias the Prophet Greek Orthodox Church, 46 Calle Electra, Santa Fe, NM 87508
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Orthodoxy is life; one cannot talk about it, one must live it.

Archpastoral Reflections

We continue our reflections on the theme “**Gather My People to My Home**” by focusing on the challenging task of gathering those who are struggling with deep and serious questions about life and God. In previous reflections we have addressed our calling to gather both “disconnected” Orthodox Christians and the unchurched. This month we turn to the needs of persons whose spiritual well-being may be challenged by an unfulfilling quest for meaning or whose intellect or life experiences have raised tremendous questions or doubts regarding the purpose and direction of life.

Human beings have pondered questions about the meaning of life and the existence of God for millennia. In our own Hellenic tradition, we can examine the works of ancient philosophers, which reveal great efforts in the pursuit of knowledge, an inner desire for truth, and countless theories on origins, the nature and function of the universe, and the purpose of life. Others have arrived at the same questions and with the hope for answers through great tragedy and suffering. The eventuality of physical death, the upheaval created by war, the pain of disease and poverty, and the demoralizing injustices in human communities and relationships have led many to seek something “greater” that offers or leads to a blessed life, peace, comfort, and truth.

People continue to ask questions and struggle in pursuit of the answers. Did the world just happen, and are we a product of chance? What is my purpose in life? How can I be happy and have peace about who I am? Does God exist, and if so, does he really care about me and my inner conflicts? Why is there so much suffering in the world? Will all of this just end in death and destruction, or is there something better? These and many more questions reflect both the breadth of our intellect and our quest to know, understand, and to find answers not just for the sake of knowledge, but for our well-being and ultimate destiny.

As Orthodox Christians we have found many of the answers to life’s questions in our relationship with God and in our involvement in the Church. This is what makes the Church our home. Our lives in the kingdom of God and our participation in the community of believers connects us directly with the One who, with meaning and purpose, brought all things into existence, created us in His image and likeness and is guiding us toward fulfillment in life and being. Further, it is through God’s loving presence in our lives and through the Holy Sacraments, the Holy Scriptures, the teachings, and traditions of the Church that we know, understand, and experience the truth about life and relationships, the effects of sin and evil, and the necessity of faith, hope, and love as genuine and true expressions of our humanity. It is also in our relationship with God that we find meaning and purpose in our transformation from death to life. Certainly, He guides us in understanding our great potential for creativity, thought, virtue, and knowledge; but all of this is part of becoming what He created us to be: holy people living in loving and full communion with Him and each other.

Our challenge as Orthodox Christians is communicating the blessedness of this life and faith to those with serious questions about life and meaning or to those who are struggling spiritually with deep doubts about God and His role in their lives. How can we meet this challenge and overcome the barriers that are keeping souls from finding their home in the Church? How do we prepare to answer the serious questions that challenge the very being of many who are in need of the grace of God?

First, we must love and not condemn. As stated above, questions about faith and our existence have been a part of our humanity from the beginning. We have been created with an ability to ask these questions and to seek answers. Thus, our task as Orthodox Christians is to help others find the answers that lead to life and fulfillment. The Apostle Paul did not condemn the philosophers of Athens when he preached to them (Acts 17). He affirmed their intellectual and spiritual search for higher things and presented the Gospel in a manner that addressed many of their questions. Our Lord lovingly received Nicodemus and patiently answered his questions when he was seeking to understand Jesus’ teachings concerning spiritual rebirth and eternal life (John 3).

Second, in following the example of our Lord, we must be responsive and patient. We should not reject others if their questions are not answered or their crisis is unresolved. Many struggle with great questions about life and meaning for long periods of time. Answers provided by our faith and relationship with God are not always readily accepted. The task of gathering people to God’s home in the Church will take time and sacrifice on our part. We must be willing to listen to their questions, concerns, and struggles, continuously offer prayers for their salvation and spiritual well-being, and rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit to lead them home.

[Continued below]

Dates to Remember

1 October: Adult Education – 6::30pm in the Hall
2 – 4 October: St. George, Albuquerque, Grecian Festival
6 – 10 October: Fr. Demetri is in Denver
11 October: Parish Council Meeting following Liturgy
15 October: Adult Education – 6::30pm in the Hall
22 October: Adult Education – 6::30pm in the Hall
29 October: Adult Education – 6::30pm in the Hall

Website!

Visit our website for more information on what's happening at St. Elias: www.stelias.nm.goarch.org.

St. Elias Online Bookstore

We have opened an online bookstore in association with the Orthodox Marketplace. Go to our website, <http://www.stelias.nm.goarch.org>, and click on the link to the St. Elias Bookstore. You can shop on line for books, icons, gifts, cards, and many other things. St. Elias will receive a 10% commission on each purchase at our store.

St. Elizabeth's Shelter

Let's not forget those who are less fortunate than us. There will be a basket on the table at the entrance to the Church for monetary donations to St. Elizabeth's Shelter. All donations will be used to buy food to feed the residents of the shelter. Thank you for your understanding and your generosity.

2009 Parish Council

Kerry Tramontanas Parish Council President, Niki Constantaras Vice President, Anastasia Stevens Secretary, Eva Kurtz Treasurer, Mary O'Brien Assistant Treasurer, Irene Krokos, and Diane Tintor.

Coffee Hours and Prospora

There will be a sign up sheet in the hall for volunteers to bake Prospora for the Divine Liturgies in August and September, and to host the coffee hours. Please sign up for whatever you can do in August and September. Please remember that the coffee hours do not need to be fancy nor do they have to be lunch. The whole point of the coffee hour is fellowship not food.

Adult Education Sessions

We are continuing a series of Adult Education classes to help us learn more about our faith. The classes are being held each Thursday at 6:30pm in the Church Hall. Everyone is invited to participate. We will begin reading *The Orthodox Way* by Metropolitan Kallistos Ware.

Stewardship

The 2008 budget called for stewardship proceeds of \$63,500, and we came very close to meeting it. As of 28 December we have pledges totaling \$56,902.00, and payments of \$62,761.39. The 2009 budget calls for an increase in stewardship income to \$65,224. We can do it if we our minds to it.

Everyone should have received a pledge card in the mail. Please fill it out and mail it in, or leave it in the basket when you come to church. If you have not received a pledge card, please let us know and we will send you one, or pick one up in church. Remember, pledges don't have to be paid at once. It's often easier to pay a little each week or each month than pay one large lump sum.

Everyone needs to raise their stewardship pledge to meet the needs of the community. Please think about a substantial raise so that we can do the good work that the Lord has called us to do.

As of 27 August we have received pledges totaling \$40,170.00 and payment totaling \$48,382.00. We can do better!

Parish Council News

The September Parish Council minutes will be published next month..

2009-2010 Planner Available

The desk calendar for the ecclesiastical year of 2009-2010 is available for \$13.95 at the St. Elias Online Bookstore. Published each year by the Department of Youth Ministry, it begins on 1 September 2009 and ends on 31 August 2010. It provides daily Bible readings and the saints commemorated each day of the year. If you would like a copy of the Planner, but do not have access to the internet, please see Fr. Demetri who will order one for you.

Thank You

My sincerest thanks to those of you who expressed your condolences on the passing of my sister's husband. Your kind words and prayers were a great help in dealing with our grief.

+Fr. Demetri

Thank you to everyone who helped make our fall yard sale a success. We raised about \$1,000.00.

Travels with Father

Fr. Demetri will be away from the Parish from Tuesday, 6 October, through Saturday, 10 October, so that he can conduct the business he was unable to do last month. There will be no Great Vespers on Saturday, 10 October, but Sunday services will be celebrated as usual.

Prosphora and Coffee

October:

Sunday, 4th: 2nd Sunday of Luke

Prosphoron and Coffee: Mac Ennis

Sunday, 11th: 4th Sunday of Luke

Prosphoron and Coffee: Anastasia Stevens

Sunday, 18th: St. Luke the Evangelist

Prosphoron: ? Coffee: ?

Friday, 23rd: St. Iakovos the Apostle

Prosphoron: ?

Sunday, 25th: 6th Sunday of Luke

Prosphoron and Coffee: Eugenia Parry

Monday, 26th: St. Demetrios the Great Martyr

Prosphoron: Fr. Demetri

November:

Sunday, 1st: 5th Sunday of Luke

Prosphoron: ? Coffee: ?

Sunday, 8th: 7th Sunday of Luke

Prosphoron: ? Coffee: ?

Monday, 9th: St. Nectarios

Prosphoron: ?

Friday, 13th: St. John Chrysostom

Prosphoron: ?

Saturday, 14th: St. Philip the Apostle

Prosphoron: ?

Sunday, 15th: 8th Sunday of Luke

Prosphoron: ? Coffee: ?

Saturday, 21st: Entrance of the Theotokos

Prosphoron: ?

Sunday, 22nd: 9th Sunday of Luke

Prosphoron: ? Coffee: ?

Wednesday, 25th: St. Katherine the Great Martyr

Prosphoron: ?

Sunday, 29th: 13th Sunday of Luke

Prosphoron: ? Coffee: ?

Sunday Bulletins and Announcements

In order that everyone be notified of announcements, and receive the weekly Sunday Bulletin, we need your email addresses. If you have not received the Sunday Bulletins by email and want to be included in the listserv and receive the bulletins and be included in the parish email directory, send your email address to frdemetri@zianet.com. Fr. Demetri is the only one with access to the listserv and to the email directory.

Albertson`s Community Partners

The new cards are available at the Church. They can be picked up during any scheduled service, or contact Fr. Demetri for other arrangements.

Present the card when purchasing groceries at any Albertson's, and St. Elias will receive a percentage of the purchase price. This is an excellent way to give back to the community while doing essential shopping.

Recycling for St. Elias

We have an opportunity to raise money for our community by recycling toner cartridges and inkjet cartridges. When it's time to get a new cartridge, please bring the used one to church, in its packing if possible, and we will recycle it. Every bit that we recycle means more funds for our church. Please help with this free and painless way to raise money and protect the environment.

Wanted: Weather-beaten Adobe Blocks

Roy Wroth is looking for weather-beaten adobe blocks or bricks to use in lining sections of the church grounds. If you have access to anything he may be interested in, please contact him at 660-9476.

Archpastoral Reflections (cont.)

Finally, we must also be aware of our strengths and limitations when offering faith and love to those seeking purpose and meaning. Often, our greatest strength is in friendship, acts of kindness, and ministry in the name of Christ when a need arises. Through our words and actions we can show others that they are valued and loved by God, even when they are in the midst of great struggles and doubt. We also need to know that there are other resources to assist us.

These may include seeking the counsel of our parish priest, encouraging the person to visit with the priest, discussing serious questions in a parish Bible study or reading group, and engaging with our faith at deeper spiritual and intellectual levels through reading the lives and works of Saints and theologians of the Church. In all of this, we must rely upon the guidance and grace of God to lead us in a manner that will help our fellow-men experience the presence of God and the ineffable joy of being gathered in God's Home.

† DEMETRIOS
Archbishop of America

St. George Festival

St. George Greek Orthodox Church is holding its annual Grecian Festival on Friday through Sunday, 2 October through 4 October. Please try to attend and support our sister parish.



**Liturgical Calendar
October 2009**

**Εορτολόγιον
Οκτωβρίου 2009**

Sat	3	Great Vespers – 6:00pm	Σαβ	3	Μέγας Εσπερινός – 6:00μμ
Sun	4	Second Sunday of Luke St. Hierotheos, Bishop of Athens Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	Κυρ	4	ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ Β΄ ΤΟΥ ΛΟΥΚΑ Τοῦ Ἁγ. Ἱεροθέου, Ἐπισκόπου Ἀθηνῶν Ορθρος 9:00πμ Θεία Λειτουργία 10:00πμ
Sun	11	Fourth Sunday of Luke The Holy Fathers of the 7 th Ecumenical Council. St. Philip the Apostle and Deacon, St. Theophanes the Confessor, Sts. Zenaidos and Philonilla the Martyrs, Sts. Nectarios, Arsakios, Sisinius, and Philotheos Patriarchs of Constantinople Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	Κυρ	11	ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ Δ΄ ΤΟΥ ΛΟΥΚΑ Τῶν Ἁγ. Πατέρων τῆς Ζ΄ Οἰκουμενικῆς Συνόδου. Τοῦ Ἁγ. Ἀποστόλου καὶ Διακόνου Φιλίππου, τοῦ Ὁσ. Θεοφάνους τοῦ Ὁμολογητοῦ, τῶν Ἁγ. Μαρτύρων Ζηναΐδος καὶ Φιλονίλλης, τῶν Ἁγ. Νεκταρίου, Ἀρσακίου, Σισινίου καὶ Φιλοθέου τοῦ Κοκκίνου, Πατριαρχῶν Κωνσταντινουπόλεως .Ορθρος 9:00πμ Θεία Λειτουργία 10:00πμ
Sat	17	Great Vespers – 6:00pm	Σαβ	17	Μέγας Εσπερινός – 6:00μμ
Sun	18	St. Luke the Evangelist Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	Κυρ	18	Τοῦ Ἁγίου Εὐαγγελιστοῦ Λουκᾶ .Ορθρος 9:00πμ Θεία Λειτουργία 10:00πμ
Thu	22	Great Vespers – 7:00pm	Πεμ	22	Μέγας Εσπερινός – 7:00μμ
Fri	23	St. Iakovos the Brother of the Lord Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	Παρ	23	Τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἀποστόλου Ἰακώβου τοῦ Ἀδελφοθέου. Ορθρος 8:00πμ Θεία Λειτουργία 9:00πμ
Sat	24	Great Vespers – 6:00pm	Σαβ	24	Μέγας Εσπερινός – 6:00μμ
Sun	25	Sixth Sunday of Luke Sts. Marcianos and Martyrios the Martyrs. St. Tabitha Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am Great Vespers – 7:00pm	Κυρ	25	ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΣΤ΄ ΤΟΥ ΛΟΥΚΑ Τῶν Ἁγ. Μαρτύρων Μαρκιανοῦ καὶ Μαρτυρίου, τῆς Ἁγίας Ταβιθᾶς. Ορθρος 9:00πμ Θεία Λειτουργία 10:00πμ Μέγας Εσπερινός – 7:00μμ
Mon	26	St. Demetrios the Great Martyr Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 10:00am	Δευ	26	Τοῦ Ἁγίου Μεγαλομάρτυρος Δημητρίου .Ορθρος 9:00πμ Θεία Λειτουργία 10:00πμ
Sat	31	Great Vespers – 6:00pm	Σαβ	31	Μέγας Εσπερινός – 6:00μμ