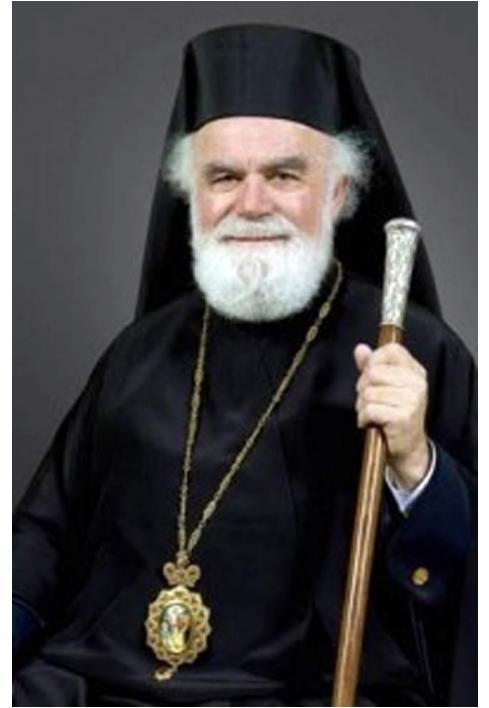


My Beloved Ones,

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ! Christ is Risen!

We here at the Metropolis have offered Divine Liturgy every day of Bright Week. The liturgies of Bright Week are a continuation of and equal to the Sunday of the Resurrection, as we chant the same hymns of Easter Sunday.

Now we are approaching the first Sunday after Pascha, which is the Sunday of St. Thomas, and a special one at that. Not only will we celebrate Christ's miraculous appearance to the Disciples—a proof of His Resurrection—this Sunday is also a commemoration of the feast of St. George. St. George's feast is April 23rd, but because he is a very glorious example for us, the Church in its wisdom decided that when the date of Pascha falls after the 23rd of April, the commemoration of St. George will be moved to Bright Monday. However, because the date of this year's Pascha fell earlier in April, we not only have the opportunity to offer hymns to St. George on the day of his feast—this year, it will take place on a Sunday!



St. George was a courageous saint who lived near the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th centuries. He was tortured in many different ways during the persecutions of the Emperor Diocletian, but because of his strong faith, he was not afraid to profess his belief in Jesus Christ—nor did the tortures have any effect; and because of this, many were brought to Christ.

Tradition tells us that those pagans who saw how he continued to live, believed that St. George was using some kind of magic, and so they asked both St. George and a pagan magician named Athanasios to resurrect a person who had been entombed for 300 years! Of course, in praying to Jesus Christ, a miracle took place: the dead man was resurrected, and both he and Athanasios, fell at St. George's feet and confessed their faith in St. George's God. Immediately thereafter, Diocletian ordered Athanasios, the resurrected man, and St. George to all be beheaded.

Of course, St. George continues to perform miracles in today's society. As he was from Palestine, and buried in the Palestinian city of Lydda, many of the churches dedicated to St. George are full of Palestinian Muslims, who know his story well, and they pray to him to receive assistance. St. George is the patron saint of many places including England and, the Church of Georgia, as well as our very own Cathedral in Greenville. I hope and pray that our community will receive help and strength, as they pray for the intercessions of their patron saint, St. George.

+ALEXIOS

Metropolitan of Atlanta