**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2018**

**EPISTLE READING:** This morning’s Apostolic reading is from St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians, Chapter 4, Verses 22-47: Brethren, Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, the son of the free woman through promise. Now this is an allegory: these are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written, “Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in travail; for the children of the desolate one are many more than the children of her that is married.”

**INTRODUCTION TO ORTHODOXY:**

Our mother. For it is written, “Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in travail; for the children of the desolate one are many more than the children of her that is married.”

**GOSPEL READING OF THE DAY:** This morning’s Gospel Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 8, Verses 16-21. It is found in our books on pages 261-262.

**Hymnody: This morning’s Apostolic hymn is that of Tone Three: Let all things above in heaven rejoice, and let all things below on earth be glad. With all the might and strength of His arm, an eternal deed the Lord did perform. Beneath His feet, He has trampled down death by death, and first and last and shout, you who are not in travail; for the children of the desolate one are many more than the children of her that is married.”

**CONCEPTION OF THE THEOTOKOS BY ST. ANNA**

**PARKING:** Until our parking component is up and running (following final inspections and the engagement of a third-party operator, in accordance with the terms of our conditional use permit) the valet will park our cars. We do simply drop off and pick up our cars at the entrance. We do not go down into the garage ourselves. For this service, we will pay $5 per car, to cover the cost of the attendants. The Cathedral will no longer subsidize parking in the lot behind the Cathedral.

**ELEVEN (11) RUNNING FOR PARISH COUNCIL:** The following individuals are running for Parish Council. Their names were either placed in nomination on the October 28, 2018 Parish Assembly, or else they are self-nominated. The eleven are: George Ambabiotakis Ambus, D.D.S., Peter Panagiotis Cazanis, Alexandros Kozak, Christopher Kyratzou, Esq., John Lampros, Vassiliki Moulas, Dean Nikolazak, Manoli Natsis, James (Jim) Rakos, Christopher (Chris) Ramos, and Nick Rally. There are seven places on the Parish Council, for a two-year term, beginning January 1, 2019. Parish Council elections will take place next Sunday, December 16.

**SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH THROUGH STEWARDSHIP:** Recently, you received a packet containing a Stewardship pledge card for 2019, a return envelope, and a brochure with additional information about Stewardship. Please make your support for 2019 a priority, by completing and returning your 2019 Stewardship pledge card prior to December 31 of the present year. We can’t thank you enough for your continued support, nor can we stress how important your participation is, as a member of the Annunciation Cathedral family. Your Stewardship support makes possible the very existence of this parish, and its ability to offer Liturgical services, educational, & philanthropic programs.

**VASILLOPITA/CRAB FEED:** Though it’s only November, our parish Vasilopita and also the Crab Feed, both sponsored by our Cathedral Ladies Philoptochos, are just around the corner. The Vasilopita will take place Sunday, January 6 (on Holy Theophany), while the Crab Feed will take place Friday, January 25.
DON'T YOU JUST LOVE THE COURYARD? We utilized the courtyard for the first time during this year’s Festival. When everything was picked up, we noticed the grime all over the courtyard. However, the pavers were all cleaned immediately afterwards, in preparation for other outdoor events, like our recent Young Adults dinner. We have a little way to go to wind down this phase of construction: the fountain, gates, doors, etc.) This takes time, especially in this challenging building climate. Let’s stay positive. Consider what you have accomplished so far. As with Moses, we hear God speaking to us: "Build me a Sanctuary, and I will appear among you." (from the Septuagint: Καὶ ποιήσεις µοι ἁγίασµα, καὶ ὀφθήσοµαι ἐν ὑµῖν.) (Exodus 25:8). This takes vision; it also takes determination and faith. You are doing something extraordinary: you are building His sanctuary, a sacred space, right the heart of one of the world’s premier cities. Here, the Orthodox Christian faith is poised to proclaim the Gospel message of salvation to a whole new generation of worshipers!

“The Church shall be a home for Orthodox Christians from every ethnic and national background. It shall be a house of prayer for all humankind, in which the Holy Name of our Triune God shall be extolled and all of creation sanctified.”