



# ST. JAMES ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## Bulletin for February 4, 2018 (1/22)

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### UPCOMING SERVICES

#### Tuesday, January 30

St. Anthony the Great (see pg. 2)

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

#### Sunday, February 4

Sunday of the Prodigal Son (see pg. 3)

8:00 am Matins

10:30 am Divine Liturgy

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### FASTING SCHEDULE

Jan 29 - Feb 4 Fast Free Week

Feb. 11th Meatfare Sunday

Feb. 18th Cheesefare Sunday

Feb. 19th Great Lent Begins

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### LOOKING AHEAD

April 1st Palm Sunday

April 6th Holy Friday

April 7th Annunciation

April 8th Pascha

### **Parish Council Meeting - Feb. 7, 2018**

If you have any suggestions or questions, feel free to contact any board member.

### **General Parish Meeting - Feb. 11, 2018**

Immediately after liturgy, the Budget Forecast for 2018 to be present by the 2018 Board of Trustees. Please do your very best to stay in the church and listen to the latest updates about the church and meet the new Board Members.

### **Epiphany Home Blessings by Fr. Jeries**

If you would like your home blessed by Fr. Jeries with Holy Water, Please fill out the form on page 4, or contact Hanan Aboujudom at (408) 578-4441.

### **Message From The Treasurer**

Church tax letters for 2017 donations will be available by the beginning of February. If you want your tax letter earlier, please send a request to the Treasurer Samer Aboujudom by email at [saboujudom@aol.com](mailto:saboujudom@aol.com).

### **Matching Donation**

Many companies offer matching gift programs to encourage employees to contribute to charitable organizations. Some provide matching funds to support employee volunteer hours. Please find out if your company will match your donations to St. James Church.

### **Scrip Program**

A large variety of scrip (gift) cards are available at the church hall following the liturgy. We have Amazon, Gas, Visa cards, your favorite restaurants and much more! By purchasing scrip cards, our church will receive a percentage or kick-back from the company. Please help your church by supporting the scrip program.

### **Crab Feed**

Due to the high demand and low inventory of crab, the board members have decided to postpone the crab feed for a later date. Please check back soon for more details.

## Venerable and God-bearing Father St. Anthony the Great - 1/30 (1/17)

Saint Anthony the Great is known as the Father of monasticism, and the long ascetical sermon in *The Life of St Anthony* by St Athanasius, could be called the first monastic Rule.

He was born in Egypt in the village of Coma, near the desert of the Thebaid, in the year 251. His parents were pious Christians of illustrious lineage. Anthony was a serious child and was respectful and obedient to his parents. He loved to attend church services, and he listened to the Holy Scripture so attentively, that he remembered what he heard all his life.

When St Anthony was about twenty years old, he lost his parents, but he was responsible for the care of his younger sister. Going to church about six months later, the youth reflected on how the faithful, in the Acts of the Apostles (4:35), sold their possessions and gave the proceeds to the Apostles for the needy.

Then he entered the church and heard the Gospel passage where Christ speaks to the rich young man: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come follow Me" (Mt.19:21).

Anthony felt that these words applied to him. Therefore, he sold the property that he received after the death of his parents, then distributed the money to the poor, and left his sister in the care of pious virgins in a convent.

Leaving his parental home, St Anthony began his ascetical life in a hut not far from his village. By working with his hands, he was able to earn his livelihood and also alms for the poor. Sometimes, the holy youth also visited other ascetics living in the area, and from each he sought direction and benefit.

He turned to one particular ascetic for guidance in the spiritual life. In this period of his life St Anthony endured terrible temptations from the devil. The Enemy of the race of man troubled the young ascetic with thoughts of his former life, doubts about his

chosen path, concern for his sister, and he tempted Anthony with lewd thoughts and carnal feelings. But the saint extinguished that fire by meditating on Christ and by thinking of eternal punishment, thereby overcoming the devil.

Realizing that the devil would undoubtedly attack him in another manner, St Anthony prayed and intensified his efforts. Anthony prayed that the Lord would show him the path of salvation. And he was granted a vision. The ascetic beheld a man, who by turns alternately finished a prayer, and then began to



work. This was an angel, which the Lord had sent to instruct His chosen one. St Anthony tried to accustom himself to a stricter way of life. He partook of food only after sunset, he spent all night praying until dawn. Soon he slept only every third day. But the devil would not cease his tricks, and trying to scare the monk, he appeared under the guise of monstrous phantoms. The saint however protected himself with the Life-Creating Cross. Finally the Enemy appeared to him in the guise of a frightful looking black child, and hypocritically declaring himself beaten, he thought he could tempt the

saint into vanity and pride. The saint, however, vanquished the Enemy with prayer.

## St. Euthymius the Great - 2/2 (1/20)

The great Euthymios was a doctor of souls, training and encouraging each one, and none of the brethren drew back from confessing his thoughts to him. He, with his plentiful experience, taught them to resist every single alien thought, saying, "Brethren, strive for what brought you out here, and do not neglect your own salvation. You must at all times stay sober and awake. As Scripture says, 'Keep awake, and pray not to enter into temptation' (Matt. 26:41). Above all recognize this: those who renounce this life must not have a wish of their own but in the first place acquire humility and obedience. They must always await and



***St. Euthymios the Great***

and ponder the hour of death and the dread day of judgment, fear the threat of eternal fire and desire the glory of the kingdom of heaven."

Again he used to say, "In addition to keeping watch on the thoughts within, monks, especially young ones, ought to practice bodily labor, remembering the words of the Apostle, 'We labor day and night so as not to be a burden on anyone' (1 Thess. 2:9), and 'These hands ministered to me and to those with me' (Acts 20:34). While those in the world endure labor and hardship in order to support wives and children from their work, pay the first-fruits to God, do good according to their power and in addition be charged taxes, it is absurd if we are not even to meet the needs of the body from manual labor but to stay idle and immobile, reaping the toil of others, especially when the Apostle orders the idle not even to eat" (2 Thess. 3:10).

This was the teaching which our father Euthymios enlightened the community.

He also gave instructions that no one was to talk in church during the time of office, nor in the refectory while the brethren were eating. He was also displeased whenever he saw a brother in the cenobium, especially a young one, trying to surpass the community in abstinence. "Correct

abstinence," he said, "is to take only just enough at meal-times, while guarding the heart and making secret warfare against hidden passions; the weapons of the monk are meditation, discernment, self-control and godly obedience." This and similar teaching inspired and stimulated the brethren to bear fruit worthy of their calling.

## **Sunday of the Prodigal Son - February 4, 2018**

That younger son reminds us of the struggle of society at this time to be successful. In many ways we have a spiritual famine in this country at the moment. Because of that spiritual famine in some ways we have ended up like the younger son living with the pigs in the piggery. We could think of the instances of drug and alcohol abuse, all the fraud and stealing in the workplace, murders and violence, marital infidelity, all the rows and tensions between people. Because of these and so many other things we could say we are like the younger son living with the pigs in need of returning to our Father. So let us return, we won't find happiness with the pigs. Happiness is to be found within, not outside of ourselves.

In the parable we are given a most beautiful description of our Father. He is outside of the house waiting for the younger son to return. And when he does return, his father ran to him, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly and he brings him in and throws a party for him. When we return to God He throws a party for us. Not only does he come out of the house once, but he comes out a second time to try to persuade the elder son to come in. Our Father comes out to welcome each of us to His party. The most beautiful line in the parable is what the father says to the elder son, "all I have is yours". Our Father says to us, "All I have is yours". This is a most beautiful promise and invitation. After reading this parable we also have a choice to make, will we stay outside or will we go in to enjoy the Father's party.

Far away hills look green, there are many attractions in life, there are many voices saying to us 'Follow me' or 'Follow your desires and you will find happiness.' But the best offer of happiness is from God our Father, "all I have is yours". God our Father is outside the door waiting for us to come to Him. When we return He runs to us, clasps us in His arms and invites us into the party. For during Lent we might try to make an effort to answer that invitation from our Father, "all I have is yours". At every Divine Liturgy we receive the same invitation from Jesus, "This is my Body which is broken for you...this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you...". Let us go into the house and enjoy God's party.

## EPIPHANY HOME BLESSING

I would like to be scheduled to have Fr. Jeries come and bless my home with Holy Water:

\_\_\_\_\_ Morning      \_\_\_\_\_ Evening      \_\_\_\_\_ Weekday      \_\_\_\_\_ Weekend

Other (Please specify):

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**Name:**

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**Address:**

---

**Phone Number:**

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Please help limit Fr. Jeries' visits to 30 minutes maximum.

Fr. Jeries would appreciate it if all home blessings are done before February 19th (the beginning of Great Lent).

Please fill out this form and give to Hanan Aboujudom or give her a call to schedule a time at (408) 578-4441.

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