



PANAGIA PANTOVASILISSA
HOLY MOTHER QUEEN OF ALL
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

A COMMUNITY FOR ALL

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The Light of God Shines, Even Amidst the Clouds

By: Fr. William



I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Genesis 9: 13–15

It has been three very, very long months since our last bulletin. We have seen a strange new disease stalk the land and lead to an unprecedented shutdown of the world around us. We have seen a catastrophic economic collapse borne of these events that has touched each one of us in some way, shape, or form. And we have seen virulent, and sometimes violent, civil discord erupt alongside these other disasters. In the midst of this maelstrom, we might be excused for our temptation to see the world as a place of darkness, and to wonder whether the Light of Christ has been extinguished. We might be excused for wondering whether it is possible for the world to bounce back from all that we have seen.

My brothers and sisters, I tell you this, and I tell you truly: The world is already bouncing back. We see it in the faces of those around us, where after an unprecedented collapse of worldly wealth, we are beginning to get back to work. We see it in the life of our Church, where after months of services celebrated in the absence of the congregation, we are finally able to gather together again. It is true that neither the civil nor the ecclesiastical world looks precisely as it did before. It is true that it might take us some time to return to a sense of normalcy, and that things might never be quite the same as they were before. But one thing is certain: We will endure. And we will do so as long as our focus is directed to the God who created us in his image, rather than the creations which exist around us. If we rely on worldly wealth for our salvation in this life, we will find that

our salvation is not something we can carry with us into the next. If we rely on our God in this life, nothing shall separate us from Him either here or in the hereafter.

The clouds are always there, my friends. It shall ever be thus while we sojourn in this life. Yet from the cracks and corners of these clouds emerges the light of the promise of the covenant which we have been called to keep with our Creator. This is a light which we already perceive, albeit dimly, in this life. Indeed, it is a light which we are called to spread to those in darkness. May you never despair. And may the image of Christ shine forth from your heart with such radiance that you become a lamp leading all of those around you towards that God in whom we are all called to dwell together!



With every prayer for the beloved faithful of our parish family, and seeking the intercession of the Theotokos, for her protection, I remain,

Fr. William

President's Notes

By: Delores Minor

It has been almost 3 1/2 months since we have been able to worship fully together as a church community in person. Yes, we are fortunate that technology is allowing us to maintain a connection to our church and with each other through Sunday Divine Liturgy streamings and weekly interviews/Orthodoxy 101 lessons/Q & A with Father. However, I am sure most of us are missing that in person connection of gathering weekly and participating in the Divine Liturgy as a church family.

I hope that each of you continues to find a way to connect with your fellow parishioners. You can do this by tuning in to the streaming options. Or you can simply give a fellow GOC member a phone call; check on each other; brighten someone's day!

It has been uplifting that since we have started our Phase I reopening on June 21, 2020, we have had a few newly located to the Lexington area, attend our Sunday service. I am eager to show them how inviting and friendly our community is when we eventually can return to some sense of normalcy. While that may be later rather than sooner, I hope that all of you continue your relationship with your church.

For those of you able to attend the Sunday services, and if you haven't yet, it does provide a small sense of routine and allows one to center oneself for the upcoming week. Simply follow Father William's sign up instructions which he sends out via email at the beginning of each week. Our Parish Council is here for you and will gladly assist in any way that we safely can. I will light a candle for all of you and pray that our isolation as a church community does not last for months to come.



"I'll Help You All The Way Home."

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Pastoral Notes

SIGN UPS FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP

Each Monday, a sign-up email is sent out to the entire community, along with the instructions for registering for in person worship. We have to do it this way in order to demonstrate that we are abiding by all the guidelines, as well as to be prepared to assist with potential contact tracing. Due to the serious nature of this situation, no exceptions to the directives can be made. If you are not receiving the emails, please contact Fr. William and indicate that you wish to be placed on the contact list.

VISITS FOR VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS

It is our official guidance, during Phase One, that those in demographics especially vulnerable to COVID-19 refrain from signing up for in-person worship. Yet even when we cannot come to Church, the Church can come to us! The Priest is always happy to bring communion to and visit with those who are unable to make it to Church. If you are unable to attend, and would like to receive a pastoral visit, please contact Fr. William *directly*. Please note that, due to privacy concerns, the Priest cannot receive requests from a third party.

FACEBOOK STREAMING

During Phase One, all services will be streamed, along with other educational programming, through our Facebook page. If you have not already liked the page, I encourage you to do so. In the future, while we will not always stream *all* of our services indefinitely, we are going to continue to always stream *some* content.

Phase One Reopening:

Holy Mother Queen of All Rises to the Challenge

We have recently reopened our worship services on a limited basis to those who sign up, in accordance with the directives of our Metropolis and relevant civil decrees. It has not been without its challenges, but our devoted Parish Council, together with the faithful, have risen to each one with a faith and fortitude becoming their status as children of the One True God. It has been my honour to serve with all of you, and it has been a great joy to finally be able to welcome you back into God's temple. Truly: It has been too long!

