



**Nativity of Our Lord Orthodox Church**

<http://nativityorthodox.com/>

8911 Weems Road  
Manassas, Virginia 20110

Fr. Nectarios Trevino  
[opriest@gmail.com](mailto:opriest@gmail.com)  
703.629.0414

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*Let all who enter our Holy Church heed the words of the Cherubic Hymn:  
"Let us now lay aside all earthy cares"*

*The reason why God has accorded us this present life is to give us a place for repentance.  
Were this not the case,  
a person who sinned would at once be deprived of this life.  
For otherwise of what use would it be to him?  
St. Gregory Palamas*

DAILY SCRIPTURE READING &  
LIVES OF THE SAINTS  
SAINTS AND FEASTS  
10th Sunday of Luke

The Holy Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes, and Eugephus  
Thomas the Righteous of Bithynia

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**Prayers & Readings**

**Prayer Before Reading Holy Scripture**

O Master Who loves mankind, illuminate our hearts with the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of our mind to understand the teachings of Your Gospel. Instill in us also the fear of Your blessed commandments, that we may overcome all carnal desires, entering upon a spiritual life and understanding and acting in all things according to Your holy will. For You are the enlightenment of our souls and bodies, O Christ God, and to You we give glory together with Your eternal Father and Your all-

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holy, gracious and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.

### **Epistle Reading**

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 6:10-17

Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

### **Gospel Reading**

The Gospel According to Luke 13:10-17

At that time, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your infirmity." And he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was made straight, and she praised God. But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be healed, and not on the sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" As he said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

#### 1. The Holy Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes and Eugephus

Both Menas and Hermogenes were born in Athens. They both lived in Byzantium, being held in great honor by the emperor and the people. Menas was known for his great learning and eloquence of speech and, although he acted outwardly as a pagan, he was a convinced Christian in his heart. Hermogenes was Eparch of Byzantium and acted as a pagan both inwardly and outwardly, but he was compassionate and performed many good deeds. When a dispute flared up between the Christians and the pagans in Alexandria, Emperor Maximin dispatched Menas to calm the disturbance and to root out the Christians from the city. Menas went and restored peace, but he declared himself a Christian and converted many pagans to the true Faith by his eloquence and many miracles. Hearing of this, the emperor sent Hermogenes to punish Menas and to smother Christianity. Hermogenes brought Menas to trial, cut off his feet and tongue, gouged out his eyes, and then cast him into prison. In prison, the Lord Jesus Himself appeared to Menas, healing and comforting His suffering servant. Seeing Menas miraculously healed, Hermogenes was baptized. He began to preach the powerful Christian Faith and was consecrated as Bishop of Alexandria. Then the enraged Maximin went to Alexandria himself and subjected Menas and Hermogenes to cruel tortures, which they courageously endured, helped by God's grace. Beholding the bravery of these soldiers of Christ and the miracles of God upon them, Eugephus, secretary and friend of St. Menas, appeared before the tribunal and cried out to the emperor's face: "I too am a Christian!" The

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emperor became enraged, drew his sword and beheaded St. EUGRAPHUS. Following this, the evil emperor ordered the executioner to behead St. MENAS and St. HERMOGENES. Their holy relics, thrown into the sea, miraculously floated to Constantinople, where the bishop, to whom this was revealed in a dream, solemnly met them and honorably buried them.

## 2. The Venerable Angelina and St. Jovan the Despot

Angelina was the daughter of the Albanian prince, George Skenderbeg, and the wife of Stefan, Despot of Serbia, who was the son of Despot George. She endured exile with her husband and shared with him all the bitterness of life in Serbia as well as in Albania and Italy. She raised her sons Maxim and Jovan in a truly Christian spirit. Following the death of her husband, she was tonsured a nun, devoting herself entirely to prayer, acts of charity and the building and restoring of holy churches. A faithful wife, an excellent mother and a perfect Christian, she in truth merited the title "Mother Angelina," as the people call her even now. Her miracle-working relics, together with those of her righteous husband Stefan and her devoted sons Maxim and Jovan, rest in the Monastery of Kru edol (although some of the relics were destroyed by the Turks). She entered into rest and took up her habitation in the Immortal Kingdom at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

## 3. The Holy Martyr Gemellus

Gemellus was an honorable citizen of Ancyra. When Emperor Julian the Apostate came to this city, Gemellus came before him and openly denounced him for his apostasy. For this, he was tortured and crucified in the year 361. While in pain on the Cross, he heard a voice from heaven saying: "Blessed are you, Gemellus!"

## 4. The Venerable Thomas Defourkinos [of Bithynia]

Thomas was a great ascetic, a conqueror of demons, and a seer. Emperor Leo the Wise wrote him a letter, and he replied without even opening it. He entered into rest in the Lord in great old age in the ninth century.

### HYMN OF PRAISE

#### The Venerable Angelina

The God-pleaser, holy Angelina,  
Holy in marriage and also as a nun,  
Patient in suffering, merciful in doing good,  
Full of sorrow for another's sorrow-  
She looked to God, her Comforter,  
And was calmed by the Cross of Christ the Savior.  
She was a comfort to her husband, an example to her children;  
And the children of the holy mother became saints.  
Whoever invokes the name of Mother Angelina  
Will see all his suffering quickly fade away.  
In a time of gloom, when the empire collapsed,  
When many harmed their souls by sin,  
When the darkness of the Turks encompassed the land,  
Angelina saved the souls of the Serbs

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By pointing to heaven with her finger and her spirit,  
Consoling them with Christ, healing them by the Cross.  
And now she hastens to every aching soul,  
And with greater power she both heals and consoles.  
Whoever invokes the name of Mother Angelina,  
Will see all his suffering quickly fade away.

#### REFLECTION

In innumerable ways the Living Lord knows when to show mercy and when to chastise, when to deliver the faithful from temptations, when to turn unbelievers into believers, and when to punish incorrigible persecutors of the Faith. When the evil Maximin slew the wonderful martyrs of Christ, Menas, Hermogenes, and Euphrasius, he boarded a boat with his retinue and set sail from Alexandria for Byzantium. But suddenly he was blinded, being blind beforehand in soul and mind, and began to complain to those among his retinue of invisible hands that were harshly striking him. Shortly after that he died wickedly, just as he had lived. At the time of St. Ambrose the following incident occurred: The heretical Empress Justina had persuaded Euthymius, a landowner from Milan, to somehow seize the bishop, whom she hated, and to take him somewhere far away into exile. Euthymius prepared a cart and settled in a house near the church so that he could more easily catch sight of Ambrose alone and carry him off in the cart. And precisely on the day when he had arranged and prepared everything to seize Ambrose, an imperial order arrived that Euthymius immediately be exiled because of some crime. That day, the soldiers came, bound the malicious one, and took him off into exile in the very cart that he had prepared for Ambrose's banishment. On another occasion, an Arian entered the church where St. Ambrose was celebrating, with the intention of hearing from his mouth something for which Ambrose could be denounced. Looking around, this heretic saw God's saint instructing the people and beheld a shining angel alongside him, whispering words in his ear. Being greatly frightened by this, he became ashamed of himself, rejected the heresy and returned to Orthodoxy.

#### CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the deluge of the world (Genesis 7):

1. How there was a flood of corruption in the world before the water flooded the world;
2. How the long-suffering God permitted the flood because of the sins of mankind, and how the water flooded the entire earth.

#### HOMILY

on Abraham

*I ... am but dust and ashes* (Genesis 18:27).

These are the words that the righteous Abraham spoke of himself. Brethren, ridiculous are those people who pride themselves on their association with worldly princes and noblemen and begin to think highly of themselves. Abraham was found worthy to converse with the Eternal and Almighty King. Nevertheless, he remained unwavering in his humility, calling himself dust and ashes. Who was this Abraham, that he was found worthy of so much of God's favor in his lifetime and praise after his death, from the Apostle (Galatians 3, Hebrews 11), and even from the Lord Christ Himself (Luke 16:22, John 8:39)? He was a peasant who possessed all the virtues, living always according to the Law of God, a man with a firm faith in God, a lover of justice, hospitable, compassionate, courageous, obedient, pure and humble. However, Abraham is especially glorified for his faith, a powerful faith. Abraham was one

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hundred years old when God told him that his wife, barren until then, would bear a son, and he believed. And even before Sarah had given birth to Isaac, God said to Abraham: I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth (Genesis 13:16). Abraham believed and doubted not. And when an only son was born to Abraham, God commanded him, as a test, to offer his only son as a sacrifice. Abraham was prepared to do this, had God not turned him from it at the last moment. How complete was this wonderful man's faith and obedience to God! Therefore God blessed him and made him glorious on earth and in heaven. Brethren, blessed are they who, without hesitation, believe in God and fulfill His holy commandments. The blessing of God will accompany them in both worlds.

O our Blessed Creator, bless us sinners also and number us among Thine elect, who have a share with Abraham in Thy Kingdom.

To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

### **Post-Communion Prayer**

Prayer Of Saint Basil

I thank you, Christ and Master our God, King of the ages and Creator of all things, for all the good gifts you have given me, and especially for the participation in your pure and life-giving mysteries. I, therefore, pray to you, good and loving Lord: keep me under your protection and under the shadow of your wings. Grant that to my last breath I may with a pure conscience partake worthily of your gifts for the forgiveness of sins and for eternal life. For you are the bread of life, the source of holiness, the giver of all good things, and to you we give glory, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

### **Sixth Hour Prayers**

O You Who on the sixth day and hour nailed to the cross the sin which rebellious Adam committed in Paradise, Tear asunder also the bond of our iniquities, O Christ our God, and save us.

### **Prayer of St. Basil**

God, Lord of hosts and Maker of all creation, who in Your great compassion and mercy sent down Your Only-Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the redemption of mankind and by His precious Cross destroyed the record of our sins, triumphing over the source and power of darkness: O Lord and Lover of mankind, accept also the thanksgiving and fervent prayers of us sinners. Deliver us from every dark and harmful transgression and from all the visible and invisible enemies that seek to destroy us. Nail our flesh to the fear of You, and do not incline our hearts to deceitful words or thoughts, but wound our souls with love for You, that always looking to You, guided by Your light, and seeing You, the eternal and ineffable Light, we may give You unceasing praise and thanksgiving: to the Father without beginning, with Your Only-Begotten Son and Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

*O LORD, SAVE THY PEOPLE AND BLESS THINE INHERITANCE.  
GRANT VICTORY OVER THEIR ENEMIES TO ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS,  
AND PROTECT THY PEOPLE WITH THY CROSS.*

### **DIVINE LITURGIES**

Wednesday – 10:00 A.M.

Spanish Liturgy – Saturday – 6:30 P.M.

Sunday Matins – 8:50 A.M.

Sunday English Divine Liturgy – 10:00 A.M.

### **VESPERS**

Saturday – 5:00 P.M.

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**CONFESSIONS**

Monday-Friday, 4:00-6:00 P.M.

By appointment

Before Sunday Divine Liturgy (during Matins)

**ORTHODOX WORKER MEALS**

FRIDAYS – 11:30 A.M TO 1:00

P.M

*Either the demons tempt us themselves or they equip those who do not fear the Lord to act against us: themselves, when we are alone, away from others, just as they tempted the Lord in the desert; through others, when we associate with them, as they tempted the Lord through the Pharisees. It is for us to look to our model and beat them back on both fronts.*

*St. Maximus the Confessor*

Α Ω

For all that we have –

That so many nations and people do not have...

We should all say...

**GOD BLESS AMERICA**

**&**

**GOD BLESS HIS GRACE BISHOP GREGORY**

Α Ω

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# MIND THE SPIRITUAL GAP!

WHEN DID YOU LAST  
INITIATE THE HOLY MYSTERY  
OF REPENTANCE?

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IF YOU WANT TO KNOW  
WHAT IS OCCURRING IN  
GOD'S CHURCH, ATTEND AND  
PARTICIPATE IN HIS CHURCH.

**“Only two kinds of men publicly admit to doing evil: those who repent of their deeds and are willing to accept the consequences for having acted wrongly, and those who are comfortable with their conduct and believe that no serious consequences will come from divulging it”**