

**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA  
HELLENIC COMMUNITY OF WA**



**PARISH & COMMUNITY OF STS CONSTANTINE & HELENE**

**PARISH NEWSLETTER**

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# **FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY, THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY**

**AUGUST 15**

The Feast of the Dormition of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary is celebrated on August 15 each year. The Feast commemorates the repose (dormition and in the Greek *kimisis*) or "falling-asleep" of the Mother of Jesus Christ, our Lord. The Feast also commemorates the translation or assumption into heaven of the body of the Theotokos.

The Holy Scriptures tell us that when our Lord was dying on the Cross, He saw His mother and His disciple John and said to the Virgin Mary, "Woman, behold your son!" and to John, "Behold your mother!" ([John 19:25-27](#)). From that hour, the Apostle took care of the Theotokos in his own home. Along with the biblical reference in Acts 1:14 that confirms that the Virgin Mary was with the Holy Apostles on the day of Pentecost, the tradition of the Church holds that she remained in the home of the Apostle John in Jerusalem, continuing a ministry in word and deed.

At the time of her death, the disciples of our Lord who were preaching throughout the world returned to Jerusalem to see the Theotokos. Except for the Apostle Thomas, all of them including the Apostle Paul were gathered together at her bedside. At the moment of her death, Jesus Christ himself descended and carried her soul into heaven.

Following her repose, the body of the Theotokos was taken in procession and laid in a tomb near the Garden of Gethsemane. When the Apostle Thomas arrived three days after her repose and desired to see her body, the tomb was found to be empty. The bodily assumption of the Theotokos was confirmed by the message of an angel and by her appearance to the Apostles.

This great Feast of the Church and the icon celebrates a fundamental teaching of our faith—the Resurrection of the body. In the case of the Theotokos, this has been accomplished by the divine will of God. Thus, this Feast is a feast of hope, hope in Resurrection and life eternal. Like those who gathered around the body of the Virgin Mary, we gather around our departed loved ones and commend their souls into the hands of Christ. As we remember those who have reposed in the faith before us and have passed

on into the communion of the Saints, we prepare ourselves to one day be received into the new life of the age to come.

We also affirm through this Feast as we journey toward our heavenly abode that the Mother of God intercedes for us. Through Christ she has become the mother of all of the children of God, embracing us with divine love.

The commemoration of the Dormition of the Theotokos and the preparation for the Feast begin on August 1 with a period of fasting. A strict fast is followed on most of the days with the exceptions of fish on the Feast of the Transfiguration (August 6).

On the weekdays before the Feast, Paraklesis (Supplication) services are held in most parishes. These consist of the Great Paraklesis and the Small Paraklesis, both services of supplication and prayer for the intercessions of the Theotokos.

The Feast of the Dormition is celebrated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom which is conducted on the morning of the Feast and preceded by a Matins (Orthros) service. A Great Vespers is conducted on the evening before the day of the Feast. Scripture readings for the Feast of the Dormition are the following: At Vespers: [Genesis 28:10-17](#); [Ezekiel 43:27-44:4](#); [Proverbs 9:1-11](#). At the Matins: [Luke 1:39-49, 56](#). At the Divine Liturgy: [Philippians 2:5-11](#); [Luke 10:38-42](#); [11:27-28](#).

### **Apolytikion**

In birth, you preserved your virginity; in death, you did not abandon the world, O Theotokos. As mother of life, you departed to the source of life, delivering our souls from death by your intercessions.

*(Source: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America)*

## **STS. CONSTANTINE AND HELENE SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**TIME: 10.00 – 11.00AM**

*(In the classroom adjacent to Fr Elpidios' office)*

*All Children Welcome to attend*

# Monastic Life at Pantanassa

## (Sydney, NSW)

*'The coenobitic life of the Monastery is a copy of the eternal assembly of worshippers based on the model of the endless doxology of the angels'*

*Elder Aimilianos of Simonos Petra*

At the centre of a monk's life at Pantanassa Monastery in Sydney, NSW, is common worship in the monastery's Katholikon (main Church). The Katholikon is in the centre of the entire Monastic complex. The liturgical day of a monk begins with Vespers at 3.30 pm. At this time, a monk is responsible for sounding the wooden talanton. He travels throughout the monastery's courtyard striking the talanton, calling the monks to the Katholikon, the ark of salvation.

After Vespers, the monks complete those duties that may have been left unfinished from earlier in the day. At 6.00 p.m. the monks are called to the refectory for a common meal. Apart from fish, monks in a traditional coenobitic monastery never eat meat. On fast days, however, (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) they have only one formal meal. During the meal the monks are reminded not to give undue attention to the food they partake of by the reading of an appropriate theological text.

At 7.00 pm the Small Compline service is read in the chapel. Monks then retire to their cells in order to rest and pray alone. At the heart of a monk's life is his encounter with God in his cell in the middle of the night. It is a monk's personal prayer that sets the tone for his spiritual life, and the life of the monastery itself.

Each day at 4.30 am, the monks return to the Katholikon to celebrate the Midnight Office, Matins and the First Hour. On main feast-days and Sundays the Divine Liturgy is also celebrated. Following morning service each of the fathers attends to their various monastic duties. At midday a common meal is shared and the monks then return to their cells for a period of contemplation and quiet. This reflects the normal daily life of a monk.

*'A humble man is never rushed, hasty, or agitated. At all times he remains calm.'*

*Saint Isaac the Syrian*

**(Source: <http://www.pantanassamonastery.org/monastic-life.html>)**

## **Week Day Divine Liturgies**

Mon	15 August	Dormition of the Theotokos (8-11am)
Mon	29 August	Beheading of St John the Baptist (Strict Fast) (8-10am)
Thur	01 Sep	Beginning of the Church Year (Agiasmo) (8-10am)
Thur	08 Sep	Nativity of the Theotokos (8-10am)
Wed	14 Sep	Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Strict Fast) (8-10.30am)

## **Annual Leave**

Fr Elpidios will be in Greece on Annual Leave from **Monday 22 August** until **Monday 26 September**.

Fr Kosmas Damianides and Deacon John Athanasiou will be conducting the Sunday Services at the Church of Sts Constantine & Helene.

Weekday services (listed above) will be conducted by Fr Kosmas.

During these five weeks if anyone from the parish requires to liaise with a priest then please call:

**Fr Kosmas on 0433 010 542**

OR

**Fr Emmanuel Stamatiou on 0419 961 313**

## **PARISH NEWS**

### ***Infant Baptisms***

The following parents recently christened their children at the church of Sts Constantine and Helene:

Nicholas Litis and Bianca (nee) Singerozam. The child received the name **Mihail**. The godfather was Ioannis Marsell .

Ricky Pena and Maria (nee) Christodoulakis. The child received the name **Antonios**. The godmother was Alexia Christodoulakis .

### ***Adult Baptisms***

Shirley Yu was recently baptised in the Greek Orthodox Church and received the name **Eve**. The godmother was Aphroditis Nicholson.

### ***Marriages***

Congratulations to the following newly weds who were recently married at the Church of Sts Constantine and Helene:

- Nick Fatouros and Maria (nee) Hatgivasiliou. The bestman was Victor Bilessuris.
- Nickolas Kontorinis and Kylie (nee) Luca. The bestman was George Kontorinis.
- David Johns and Phynea (nee) Papalazaros. The *koumbara* was Anastasia Doudakis.
- Konstantinos (Ben) Pazolli and Eve Shirley (nee) Yu. The bestman was Mark Pazolli.

### ***Funerals***

Our deepest sympathy to the families of the following people who recently reposed in the Lord. May God grant eternal rest to their souls.

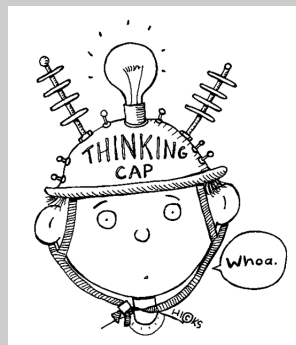
- Kyriakos (Jack) Kyros aged 90
- Aristeia Litis aged 88
- Selena Passaris aged 52
- Lilly Said aged 85

**Are you interested in helping us make  
our Church Candles?**



**If yes, then please contact Fr Elpidios  
at [p.karalis@bigpond.com](mailto:p.karalis@bigpond.com)**

**Do you have any questions relating to  
our Orthodox faith?**



**If yes, then feel free to email us your  
question at [p.karalis@bigpond.com](mailto:p.karalis@bigpond.com)**

## **SAYINGS BY ABBA AMMONAS**

*St Ammonas' life is especially interesting and inspirational for us because of his victory over anger, a passion with which he struggled for many years. Abba Ammonas was a disciple of St. Anthony the Great and later became a bishop. He was also an outstanding expert on the Scriptures and left this world in the beginning of the fifth century.*

- “I have spent fourteen years in Scetis asking God night and day to grant me the victory over anger.”
- Abba Ammonas was asked, "What is the ‘narrow and hard way?’" (Matthew 7:14). He replied, "The ‘narrow and hard way’ is this, to control your thoughts, and to strip yourself of your own will, for the sake of God. This is also the meaning of the sentence, ‘Lo, we have left everything and followed you.’" (Matthew 19:27)
- Abba Ammonas said "Go, make your thoughts like those of the evildoers who are in prison. For they are always asking when the magistrate will come, awaiting him in anxiety. Even so the monk ought to give himself at all times to accusing his own soul, saying, ‘Unhappy wretch that I am. How shall I stand before the judgement seat of Christ? What shall I say in my defence?’ If you give yourself continually to this, you may be saved."

(Source: <http://www.pantanassamonastery.org/home-2.html>)

### **Church Database**

The Sts Constantine and Helene Church Database has approximately 780 email addresses. If you would like to join the Sts Constantine & Helene Church Database then email your name and email address to [p.karalis@bigpond.com](mailto:p.karalis@bigpond.com). This will allow you to be kept updated with the various activities taking place in the parish as well as receiving an electronic copy of the Church bulletin.