

The Weekly Messenger – May 21, 2023

St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church

237 North 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 215-563-0979

Father Kakhaber Kurtanidze (Father Kai) 484-843-4209 fr.kai@stjcaoc.org

Website: <https://stjcaoc.org/> Email address: info@stjcaoc.org

Epistle: Acts 26:1-5, 12-20 Gospel: John 10:1-9

***CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!
KRISHTI U NGJALL! VERTET U NGJALL!***

Upcoming Events:

May 25th Ascension - Liturgy on **THURSDAY May 24th, 6:00 pm**

May 28th Memorial Petro & Olga Gjidede

Monday, May 29th Father Kai will bless graves at Fernwood Cemetery @ 10:00 am

June 4th 3-yr Memorial Evelyn Margerison June 11th 5-year Memorial Michael Theokary

Commemorations for the Departed: Archbishop Nikon, the victims in Ukraine, Newly Departed Evangeline Prifti, Robert Dardaris, Milovan, Nina Melito (4 yrs.), Taso Gjidede (4 yrs.), Elida Xhoxhi (6 yrs.), Deacon Stephen Stefani & those servicemen & women who have fallen asleep in the Lord in the service of their country.

Commemorations for the Living: Archbishop Mark, Locum Tenens of the Albanian Archdiocese, Archimandrite Nikodhim, Bishop Elect of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese, Father Joseph Ciarciaglino, the people in Ukraine, Newborn Sophia Jishkariani, Mirna El Khatib, Davit and Maya Jiskariani, Newborn Zigmunt Cosmo Krygier, Kristin Cosmo, Stephan Krygier, Newborn Margaret Anne, Brittany & Sean McCloskey, Peter, Nancy, Roxane & Christina Ghicondey, Newly illuminated Cindy Agatha, Jim Bendo, Reader Chris Manosis, Julius, Stephanos Sarris, Virginia Daka, Marie Portway (Nancy Ghicondey's Mother) and the men and women serving in the Armed Forces. *If you have a name to add to the Commemorations for the departed or the living, please email info@stjcaoc.org*

Coffee Hour Sponsor: The 2023 Sign-up sheet is posted in the side vestibule or sign up on our website: [COFFEE HOUR](#) **We need sponsors in JULY, AUGUST**

May 21st Diane Lescas in honor of Dino's Nameday

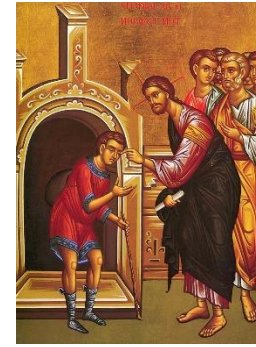
May 28th Zhaneta Beli in memory of her grandparents Petro & Olga Gjidede

June 4th Greta Dilo in memory of Evelyn Margerison

June 11th Andonetta Theokary in Memory of Michael

June 18th NO SPONSOR **June 25th** Dimitri-Cosmo family in memory of Steven

Memorial Day Grave Blessing at Fernwood Cemetery: Father Kai will be at Fernwood Cemetery on Monday, May 29, 2023 @ 10:00 am, at the "upper portion" of the cemetery. He will then proceed to the other section to bless the graves. Father Kai will also go to other cemeteries. Please email fr.kai@stjcaoc.org or call Father Kai 484-843-4209 if you would like him to bless a grave at another cemetery.



The Blind Man The sixth Sunday commemorates the healing of the man blind from birth (Jn 9). We are identified with that man who came to see and to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. The Lord has anointed our eyes with his own divine hands and washed them with the waters of our baptism (Jn 9.6–11).

Jesus used clay of spittle and told the man to wash in the waters of Siloam. He did so because it was the Sabbath day on which spitting, clay-making and washing were strictly forbidden. By breaking these ritual laws of the Jews, Jesus showed that He is indeed the Lord of the Sabbath, and, as such, that He is equal to God the Father Who alone, according to Jewish tradition, works on the Sabbath day in running His world.

There is scandal over the healing of the blind man on the Sabbath day. He is separated from the synagogue because of his faith in Christ. The entire Church follows this man in his fate, knowing that it is those who do not see Jesus as the Lord who are really blind and still in their sins (Jn 9.41). The others have the light of life and can see and know the Son of God, for "you have seen Him, and it is He who speaks to you" (Jn 9.37).

Ascension May 25th Jesus did not live with His disciples after His resurrection as He had before His death. Filled with the glory of His divinity, He appeared at different times and places to His people, assuring them that it was He, truly alive in His risen and glorified body.

On the fortieth day after His passover, Jesus ascended into heaven to be glorified on the right hand of God (Acts 1.9–11; Mk 16.19; Lk 24.51). The ascension of Christ is His final physical departure from this world after the resurrection. It is the formal completion of His mission in this world as the Messianic Saviour. It is His glorious return to the Father Who had sent Him into the world to accomplish the work that He had given him to do (Jn 17.4–5).

The Church's celebration of the ascension, as all such festal celebrations, is not merely the remembrance of an event in Christ's life. Indeed, the ascension itself is not to be understood as though it were simply the supernatural event of a man floating up and away into the skies. The holy scripture stresses Christ's physical departure and His glorification with God the Father, together with the great joy which His disciples had as they received the promise of the Holy Spirit Who was to come to assure the Lord's presence with them, enabling them to be His witnesses to the ends of earth (Lk 24.48–53; Acts 1.8–11; Mt 28.20; Mk 16.16–14).

In the Church the believers in Christ celebrate these very same realities with the conviction that it is for them and for all men that Christ's departure from this world has taken place. The Lord leaves in order to be glorified with God the Father and to glorify us with himself. He goes in order to "prepare a place" for and to take us also into the blessedness of God's presence. He goes to open the way for all flesh into the "heavenly sanctuary . . . the Holy Place not made by hands" (see Hebrews 8–10). He goes in order send the Holy Spirit, Who proceeds from the Father to bear witness to Him and His gospel in the world, making Him powerfully present in the lives of disciples.

