



KOINONIA



NEWSLETTER OF
ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH
North Wildwood, NJ

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NEW PHILOPTOCHOS BOARD



*St. Demetrios celebrates our newest
Philoptochos Board members. More on pg. 6.*



a letter from

FR. MICHAEL L. PASTRIKOS
PROTOPRESBYTER



TEACHING OUR CHILDREN ABOUT MEMORIAL PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED

Our Orthodox Christian faith takes death frankly and openly into account. Our Church calendar provides many occasions when we are asked to face up to the fact of death. Pascha is one occasion. Sunday is another. Every Sunday is a “little Pascha” on our Church calendar celebrating Christ’s victory over death. On our Church calendar every year there are special Memorial Saturdays or “Saturday of the Souls” which provide another opportunity for us to face up to death. On these Saturday’s the Divine Liturgy is celebrated and special prayers are offered for the deceased loved ones.

We pray for the dead especially on Saturday’s since it was on the Sabbath day that Christ lay dead in the tomb “resting from all His works” and “trampling down death by death”. Thus in the New Testament, Saturday became the proper day for remembering the dead and offering prayers for them.

From reading the above, one might ask this question? WHY DO WE PRAY FOR THE DEPARTED? Christianity is a religion of love. Praying for the dead is an expression of love. We ask God to remember our departed loved ones because we love them. Love relationships survive death and even transcend it. There is an inner need for a relationship with a loved one to continue to be expressed even after a love one has died. Often even more so after a loved one has died since physical communication is no longer possible. The Church encourages us to express our love for our departed brethren through the memorial services and prayers.

The anniversary of the death of a loved one is very painful. The Church helps us cope with this pain by encouraging us to have

memorial prayers offered in church for our departed loved ones on the anniversaries of their deaths. On the 40th day of one’s death, the church again gives us the opportunity to do something for our loved on. It helps express and resolve our grief.

Death may take our loved ones out of sight but it certainly does not take them out of mind, or out of heart. We continue to love them and think of them as we believe they continue to love and think of us. How can a mother forget a child who has passed over the life beyond? The same Christian love which led her to pray for that child when he/she lived will guide her to pray for them now. For in Christ all are alive.

It is also customary among Orthodox Christians to bring a tray of boiled wheat kernels to church for the memorial service. The wheat kernels express belief in everlasting life. Jesus said; ‘Unless a grain of wheat falls in the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies it bears much fruit.’ John 12 :24. Just as new life rises from the buried kernel of wheat, so we believe that the one buried will rise one day to a new life with God. The wheat kernels are covered with sugar, and raisins to express the bliss of eternal life with God in heaven.

The Holy Icon of the Resurrection symbolizes His radical descent into Hades to save all who have died. The Golden bars by His feet are the gates of Hades. The keys floating in the Abyss below symbolizes that he has entered and conquered both death and Hades. You may also note the skeletal figure who is chained up; that is Death! He has been bound and killed by Christ. Let’s remember the Resurrection Hymn that we chant during the Resurrection service- “Christ has trampled



down death by death.” Looking in the Icon we also see Christ holding hands with Adam and Eve- He is pulling them up from the Abyss symbolizing that His victory redeems all mankind-even back to the beginning of creation. To His left we see three Old Testament Saints, King David, and Solomon, two of His ancestors according to his fleshly nature. We also see John the Baptist who was His forerunner in both life and death. On the right side we have the New Testament, including the Apostles who are alive. The purpose is to show that Christ’s redemption transcends time and space. The blue shaped oval that surrounds Christ is called the Mandorla, it is the uncreated eternal light of Christ. This is not just simply a pretty bright light- it is the same light which filled the Apostles when they witnessed His Transfiguration on the Mountain of Tabor.



Saturday of Souls **March 9**

COURTESY OF THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA WWW.GOARCH.ORG



Reading

Through the Apostolic Constitutions (Book VIII, ch. 42), the Church of Christ has received the custom to make commemorations for the departed on the third, ninth, and fortieth days after their repose. Since many throughout the ages, because of an untimely death in a faraway place, or other adverse circumstances, have died without being deemed worthy of the appointed memorial services, the divine Fathers, being so moved in

their love for man, have decreed that a common memorial be made this day for all pious Orthodox Christians who have reposed from all ages past, so that those who did not have particular memorial services may be included in this common one for all. Also, the Church of Christ teaches us that alms should be given to the poor by the departed one's kinsmen as a memorial for him.

Besides this, since we make commemoration tomorrow of the Second Coming of Christ, and since the reposed have neither been judged, nor have received their complete recompense (Acts 17:31; II Peter 2:9; Heb. 11:39-40), the Church rightly commemorates the souls today, and trusting in the boundless mercy of God, she prays Him to have mercy on sinners. Furthermore, since the commemoration is for all the reposed together, it reminds

each of us of his own death, and arouses us to repentance.

Apolytikion of Saturday of Souls

Plagal of Fourth Tone

Only Creator who out of the depths of wisdom lovingly govern all things and upon all bestow what is accordingly best for them, give rest to the souls of Your servants, for they have placed their hope in You, our Author and Maker and God.

Kontakion of Saturday of Souls

Plagal of Fourth Tone

Give rest, O Christ, among the Saints to the souls of Your servants, where there is no pain, no sorrow, no grieving, but life everlasting.



SATURDAY OF THE SOULS

ΨΥΧΟΣΑΒΒΑΤΑ



The three Saturdays of the Souls will be on **March 9th**, **March 16th** and **March 23rd**. The Orthros will begin at 9:00 a.m. and the Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m. These Services are for those who have fallen asleep in the Lord. During these three Saturdays, the tradition of the Church is to send the names of your departed family members to be read and prayed for, and to bring *koliva* (boiled wheat) to the Church to be blessed. With our memorial prayers, we send them a spiritual message that we love them, remember them, and we pray for their eternal salvation. We ask that you write the names clearly and correctly. We ask you that you bring the *koliva* into Church **before** the Divine Liturgy begins, so as not to disrupt the order of the service. May God give rest to your departed family members and may their memory be eternal.

Εφέτος τα Ψυχοσάββατα θα είναι στις **9 Μαρτίου**, στις **16 και 23 Μαρτίου**. Ο Όρθρος θα αρχίσει στις 9:00 π.μ. και η Θεία Λειτουργία στις 9:30 π.μ. Οι Ακολουθίες αυτές γίνονται για τους απελθόντας εις τον Κύριον αδελφούς μας. Κατά τα Ψυχοσάββατα το έθιμο καλεί να φέρουμε στην Εκκλησία τα ονόματα των αγαπημένων μας αποβιωσάντων προσώπων, για να τα διαβάσουμε και να προσευχόμαστε για την ψυχή τους. Επίσης φέρνουμε *κόλλυβα* (βρασμένο σιτάρι) για να ευλογηθεί στην Εκκλησία. Σας παρακαλούμε να γράψετε τα ονόματα σωστά και ευανάγνωστα. Τέλος σας παρακαλούμε να φέρετε τα *κόλλυβα* **πριν** να αρχίσει η Θεία Λειτουργία, ούτως ώστε να μην διακόπτεται η Λειτουργία. Ο Θεός να τους αναπαύσει, αιωνία τους η μνήμη.

If you missed the First Saturday of Souls on **March 9th**, you have the opportunity to memorialize your departed ones on the next two Saturdays of Souls on **March 16th**, and **March 23rd**. Again please bring your bowl of koliva and your list of names to Church as early as possible.



Sunday of Orthodoxy March 24

COURTESY OF THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA WWW.GOARCH.ORG



Reading

For more than one hundred years the Church of Christ was troubled by the persecution of the Iconoclasts of evil belief, beginning in the reign of Leo the Isaurian (717-741) and ending in the reign of Theophilus (829-842). After Theophilus's death, his widow the Empress Theodora (celebrated Feb. 11), together with the Patriarch Methodius (June 14), established Orthodoxy

anew. This ever-memorable Queen venerated the icon of the Mother of God in the presence of the Patriarch Methodius and the other confessors and righteous

men, and openly cried out these holy words: "If anyone does not offer relative worship to the holy icons, not adoring them as though they were gods, but venerating them out of love as images of the archetype, let him be anathema."

Then with common prayer and fasting during the whole first week of the Forty-day Fast, she asked God's forgiveness for her husband. After this, on the first Sunday of the Fast, she and her son, Michael the Emperor, made a procession with all the clergy and people and restored the holy icons, and again adorned the Church of Christ with them. This is the holy deed that all we the Orthodox commemorate

today, and we call this radiant and venerable day the Sunday of Orthodoxy, that is, the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.

Apolytikion of Sunday of Orthodoxy

Second Tone

O Christ our God, begging forgiveness of our sins, we venerate Your Pure Image, O Good One. Of your own will you condescended to ascend upon the Cross in the flesh and deliver those You created from the bondage of the enemy. Wherefore, thankfully, we cry out, "When You came to save the world, Your filled all things with joy, O Our Savior."

Kontakion of Sunday of Orthodoxy

Plagal of Fourth Tone

The indescribable word of God became defined when He became incarnate of You O Theotokos. He restored our soiled image to what it was of old by joining it to His divine beauty. We confess salvation, and recount it in word and deed.



Annunciation of the Theotokos

March 25

COURTESY OF THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA WWW.GOARCH.ORG



Reading

Six months after John the Forerunner's conception, the Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth, a town of Galilee, unto Mary the Virgin, who had come forth from the Temple a mature maiden (see Nov. 21). According to the tradition handed down by the Fathers, she had been betrothed to Joseph four months. On coming to Joseph's house, the Archangel declared: "Rejoice, thou Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." After some consideration, and turmoil of soul, and fear because

of this greeting, the Virgin, when she had finally obtained full assurance concerning God's unsearchable condescension and the ineffable dispensation that was to take place through her, and believing that all things are possible to the Most High, answered in humility: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." And at this, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her all-blameless womb, and the Son and Word of God, Who existed before the ages, was conceived past speech and understanding,

and became flesh in her immaculate body (Luke 1:26-38).

Bearing in her womb the Uncontainable One, the blessed Virgin went with haste from Nazareth to the hill country of Judea, where Zacharias had his dwelling; for she desired to find Elizabeth her kinswoman and rejoice together with her, because, as she had learned from the Archangel, Elizabeth had conceived in her old age. Furthermore, she wished to tell her of the great things that the Mighty One had been well-pleased to bring to pass in her, and she greeted Elizabeth

and drew nigh to her. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, she felt her six-month-old babe, Saint John the Baptist, prophesied of the dawning of the spiritual Sun. Immediately, the aged Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and recognized her as the Mother of her Lord, and with a great voice blessed her and the Fruit that she held within herself. The Virgin also, moved by a supernatural rejoicing in the spirit, glorified her God and Savior, saying: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," and the rest, as the divine Luke hath recorded (1:39-55)

[Apolytikion of Annunciation of the Theotokos](#)

Fourth Tone

Today marks the crowning of our salvation and the revelation of the mystery before all ages. For the Son of God becomes the son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaims the grace. Wherefore, we also cry out with him, "Hail, O full of grace, the Lord is with you."

[Kontakion of Annunciation of the Theotokos](#)

Plagal of the Fourth Tone

To you, Theotokos, invincible Defender, having been delivered from peril, I, your city, dedicate the victory festival as a thank offering. In your irresistible might, keep me safe from all trials, that I may call out to you: "Hail, unwedded bride!"



Swearing in of the new Philoptochos Board



St. Demetrios congratulates our new Philoptochos Board:

Kostantina Bilios -President

Arigi Papaspanos -1st Vice President

Despoina Katsikaris -2nd Vice President

Maria Kellis - Treasurer

Bessie Giouros - Secretary





St. Demetrios Happenings



Congratulations to James Magee on his baptism into the Orthodox faith, and to his mother, Deborah Magee.





thoughts from

EVA LALLAS



THE GLORIOUS MARCH 25TH!

Each March we herald Spring with open arms when Nature is reinvigorated, a fresh start in the cycle of life. Not only is God's timing reviving our physical world but our very spirit as well.

On March 25th we celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation a day of paramount importance in our Orthodox Church because it extols the vital role of the Theotokos in the salvation of mankind. On that day God sent His messenger the Archangel Gabriel to deliver glad tidings to the Virgin Mary: the proclamation that she was God's chosen one to be the mother of His Son. This blessed day hails the beginning of the most precious earthly life that of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for we know that life on earth begins before the day of birth.

Imagine what must have transpired on that day...the fear that must have overcome the startled young maiden upon hearing the Archangel's announcement, questioning how this could be. She was assured, however, as the Archangel told her not to fear for she was the blessed one among women, chosen by God, the Theotokos, who would conceive the Son of God by the Holy Spirit and His name was to be Jesus. Our blessed Virgin Mary was very devout having been brought to the Temple at a very young age by her parents the faithful Joachim, a descendant of King David, and Anna. Our Panagia humbly accepted Gabriel's salutation with total faith, as our all-knowing God was certain that she would for she was of pure heart. She complied to give birth and assume the responsibility of raising the Son of God, the Theanthropo.

When members of some denominations consider the treatment of women by the Orthodox Church as demeaning since they cannot become ordained priests, one recalls the response of Father Romney of blessed memory, "To the contrary, women are revered by the Orthodox Church. After all, we ascribe the highest position of any human to that of a woman, the most holy Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, to whom we reverently pay homage."

She, the spacious Platytera with outstretched arms, the only woman in the holy altar, stands between heaven and earth; our intercessor who holds the divine infant. We pray to her to

intercede on our behalf, we cry out to her in our hour of need; we devote Services of Salutation during Great Lent to her and services commemorative of noteworthy events in her life: the Annunciation, the day of her birth September 8, the Day of Presentation when her parents brought her to the Temple November 21, the Day of Dormition August 15. Throughout Church history she has been the most loved, cherished, and lauded human. Thus, the 25th of March is the glorious day when the Son of God became the Son of the Virgin. The day when God once again showed His great love for us, His beloved creations, by sending His Son to walk among us, and through His teachings of LOVE could bring us closer to Him.

March 25, 1821—the day that Patras' Bishop Palaion Patron Germanos declared the Greek Revolution. It was not a coincidence that the Day of Annunciation was the day on which Greece began the final struggle to free herself and become an independent nation after more than 400 years of Ottoman tyranny. The Day of Annunciation was the inspiration to finish the fight in overthrowing the yoke of slavery.

During those bleak years it was the clergy and devout Christians who kept our faith and culture alive, kindling the Greek spirit in the secret schools under the threat of death; giving rise to the poem "Feggaraki Mou Lambro" which is probably the first poem a Greek youngster learns. In the fight for independence the hierarchs of the Church were those who led in battle along with the armed forces and were martyred. The atrocities continued even two weeks after the Day of Independence when the Ecumenical Patriarch Gregory V was hanged at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy of Pascha on April 10, 1821.

The fight for Greek independence was won by men and women who were selfless and had the courage of conviction; true leaders with strength and unwavering faith empowered by the Holy Spirit and emboldened by the grace of the Annunciation. Those dark years of enslavement fused Greece and Orthodoxy; they became one. As we know, once threatened a nation puts aside its internal differences and unites forming an unbelievable force against the enemy. The Greeks of 1821 were able to accomplish this against the heathen Muslim tyrants.

It behooves us, their heirs, to honor those heroes who sacrificed their very lives to hand us Orthodox Christianity the true religion, intertwined with a rich ethnic legacy. To venerate those to whom we owe so much we should perpetuate our good fortune by spreading the good news of Orthodoxy: by LIVING our Orthodox faith, by standing firm, and becoming active in defense of Christianity against the many attacks it faces even in today's secular world. We cannot remain complacent taking our treasured inheritance for granted because this can easily lead to its dilution, adulteration, and even its demise.

May the blessed Day of the Annunciation renew our awareness of the Holy Spirit within each of us, answering God's call to us and thus bring us closer to Him.

Χρόνια Πολλά 25 Μαρτίου!



ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX
CHURCH
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US ON
Godparent and Godchild Sunday
**WHEN: SUNDAY, MARCH 3RD,
2024**

**TIME: ORTHROS 9:00/DIVINE LITURGY
10:00**

Come celebrate this special day by attending church with your Godparents and your Godchildren and prepare yourselves to receive Holy Communion together.

There is no Sunday School on this day. The children should be in church with their Godparents.





Greek Corner

As we know our Greek culture is very rich as is the Greek language. Through the ages from ancient to modern times parables and sayings have survived and are often found in today's conversations. We offer several of these each month and invite you to submit those that are familiar to you.

Please send them to Father Michael:
frmichaelstdemetrios@gmail.com.

1). Άνθρωπος αγράμματος, ξύλο απελέκητο.

An uneducated man is like a piece of uncarved, rough wood.
 An educated person has been tended to; is knowledgeable, is polished.

2). Δέκα μέτρα και ένα κόφε.

Check your measurements ten times before you cut....in carpentry, sewing....be accurate, don't be in a hurry.

3). Υ πέτρα στόν τόπο της μαλιάζι.

Moss grows on the stone that stays in its place.
 Rolling Stones gather no moss. Stay put, don't flit from place to place.

4). Με όποιο δάσκαλο καθήσης, τέτοια γράμματα θα μάθης.

Whoever your teacher is, that's the type of knowledge you will learn.
 You should gain more knowledge if you are taught by an accredited teacher, or attend an accredited school.

5). Πές μου ποιόί είναι οι φίλοι σου και θα σου πω ποιός είσαι.

Tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you the kind of person you are.
 You are known by the company you keep.



HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

DEAR READERS,

WE HAVE BEEN PUBLISHING THE MONTHLY KOINONIA NEWSLETTER SINCE JUNE 2023 AND ARE ASKING FOR YOUR FEEDBACK. WE'D LIKE YOU TO TELL US IF YOU FIND THE CONTENTS INFORMATIVE; ARE THEY INTERESTING? WE VALUE YOUR INPUT AND WELCOME YOUR IDEAS.

PLEASE LET US KNOW BY SENDING YOUR RESPONSES TO THIS SURVEY TO FATHER MICHAEL: FRMICHAELSTDOMETRIOS@GMAIL
 THANK YOU.



St. Demetrios

NEW WEBSITE!



Check out St. Demetrios Church's new website for a variety of information, stewardship and donations, bulletins and newsletters, links, and more!

www.stdemetriosnewjersey.com

Sponsor a Coffee Hour

Attention All Parishioners:

We have resumed the coffee hour following the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. Please consider sponsoring a coffee hour in memory of a loved one, for the health of your family, or in honor of our St. Demetrios Church.

Please call the office at 609-522-0152 to schedule. Thank you.



upcoming events

JOY (AGES 8-10) | HOPE (AGES 3-7)
TWO SATURDAYS PER MONTH

PHILOPTOCHOS
1ST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH AFTER DIVINE LITURGY

GREEK SCHOOL
EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT FROM 4:30 - 7:30 P.M.

directory

PROTOPRESBYTER | FR. MICHAEL PASTRIKOS
CHURCH SECRETARY | TBD

PARISH COUNCIL:

PRESIDENT | NICHOLAS D. KONIDES
VICE PRESIDENT | DR. GEORGE KOUMARAS
TREASURER | THEODORE KATSIKARIS
SECRETARY | WILLIAM MITCHELL

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL:

KOSTA BILIOS
SPIRO KELLIS
GEORGE MALLOUS
GEORGE TSAMIS
GEORGE PAPAGEORGIOU

ATTORNEY: MARCUS KARAVAN, ESQ.

SUNDAY SCHOOL | SOPHIA KINIROPOULOS

GREEK SCHOOL | GEORGE PLAMANTOURAS

J.O.Y. | FR. MICHAEL PASTRIKOS

H.O.P.E. | FR. MICHAEL PASTRIKOS

PHILOPTOCHOS | DINA BILIOS

CHANTERS | FOTINI ANDY, RITA EFTHIMIOU, CATHY WOLFE

CHURCH: 1.609.522.0152

321 ST. DEMETRIOS AVE, NORTH WILDWOOD, NJ 08260

STDEMETRIOSNEWJERSEY.COM

ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR THE KOINONIA MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE 20TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR



Liturgical Calendar

March 3rd	17th Sunday of Luke (Sunday of the Prodigal Son) Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
March 9th	1st Saturday of the Souls Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
March 10th	Meatfare Sunday (Judgment Sunday) Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
March 16th	2nd Saturday of the Souls Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
March 17th	Cheesefare Sunday Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
March 18th	Kathara (Purified) Monday/Great Lent Begins Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
March 22nd	1st Salutations Friday 6:00 pm
March 23rd	3rd Saturday of the Souls Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
March 24th	Sunday of Orthodoxy/First Sunday of Lent Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
March 25th	Monday-Annunciation of the Theotokos/Greek Independence Day Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
March 29th	2nd Salutations Friday 6:00 pm
March 30th	Second Sunday of Lent Orthros 9:00 am/Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

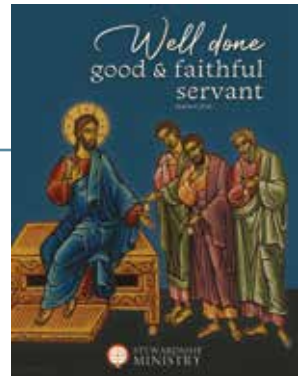
In memory - In honor

Please contact the church at 609-522-0152 or email frmichaelstdemetrios@gmail.com with your memorial information and donation.





stewardship letter



As we enter into another productive year, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. As a community we have a lot of work to do, the groundwork has been started, and we must work even harder to promote a better Christian environment for ourselves and our children. God has blessed our community with parishioners like you, who have supported the church throughout the years. But to continue this success that we have experienced, we need to focus on something very important. We need to understand what “STEWARDSHIP” means.

Our main concern in writing this letter is to have a better communication with the members of our St. Demetrios family. Somewhere down the line we have forgotten what it means to be a Good Standing Member of the Church. At the core of any Stewardship Program, the main characters and pillars of the church are the Stewards. A good steward is neither a miser nor a spendthrift person. A good steward is not one who economizes but one who is a good manager of what has been entrusted to him/her.

Some of us have forgotten what it means to be a Good Standing Member of the Church. As members of our St. Demetrios Parish, we have by our own choice undertaken a responsibility to become a good member of the Church. That means we must love it, care for it, be concerned about it, support it, and promote its Christian work and mission. How well we are going to accomplish these major tasks is solely up to all of us as Christian Stewards.

We have the opportunity and the responsibility to help our St. Demetrios Community grow. But we have “Steward’s that for years have never made any attempts to send in their Pledge Cards...We send out Stewardship information every three months to all our registered families, and along with that information, we also include a Pledge Card. It brings us to the question “WHY”. Most of our parishioners were raised in the parish of St. Demetrios. You went to Greek School, Sunday School, Joy, GOYA, Dance Groups, and etc. Talking to people in the parish, you hear stories about how proud they are to have grown up in the Church of St. Demetrios and that they also want their children to experience that same tradition that their parents felt growing up in the parish. Many of our young people, who are out of college, single, married and raising their families, are the groups that we need to communicate with, giving them the understanding that we truly need their help and support. Our young people need to step up to the plate and make their commitment to the church.

Remember when we give to God, we must give with the attitude of how much we can give...not with the attitude of how much should we give...or how much did John Doe give and so I will give. This is why it’s called (fair share), because, everyone is part of the puzzle and everyone is responsible for their share.



help us grow with **VANCO GIVING**

It's through your contributions that we are able to carry on important work both spiritually and in our community. Electronic Giving –is the way to go today. It is also a convenient, easy way to support St. Demetrios.

BY GIVING ELECTRONICALLY YOU CAN:

- Give anywhere, anytime from your computer, cell phone or tablet.
- Donate easily for special projects of the Church.
- Give towards your stewardship pledge or other donations such as memorial, endowment and others.
- Set up reoccurring or one time pledges and you will never need to worry if you have your check book or cash on you. VANCO will store your information.
- It is important to note that if you are using a credit card, you may be able to accumulate rewards by your provider.

Show your support and try E-Giving through our VANCO QR Code (located below). Or you can find this code on our website under the DONATE TAB www.stdemetriosnewjersey.com and even easier.... There is a button that states “click here” that will take you directly to the VANCO page. It is as simple as that.

To use the QR code- open your camera on your phone and hover over the code. The VANCO website will appear and then tap on it.

Thank you for all you do to support our St. Demetrios family throughout the year. May God bless you and keep you well and strong.





Stewardship News

Dear Parishioner,

We at Saint Demetrios are thankful to have you and your family here in our church. You are a vital part of our church community. **Unfortunately, the Parish is in great need of your financial help!!**

Your financial support provides the foundation for our parish ministries and our efforts in meeting the challenge of spreading Christ's Word and our Orthodox Faith.

Stewardship also means more than just making a monetary donation. Stewardship is an opportunity to examine our priorities and values, to express our thankfulness, to give of ourselves and to grow in grace. It allows us to participate in the vineyard of our Lord. Giving is not a substitute for commitment. It is an expression of your commitment.

Please note there are several ways to pledge: besides printing this form, our Stewardship Pledge forms are also in the Narthex, you may complete one and give it to Parish Council Secretary, William Mitchell. He can also be contacted at 609-425-4000. If you would like to mail your Stewardship Commitment, our mailing address is:

St. Demetrios
300 St Demetrios St
North Wildwood NJ 08260

If Stewardship payment has been made for 2023 please disregard this notice and except our gratitude.

Please respond out of faith and love and help keep our church vibrant for many years to come. **This is YOUR CHURCH! Please, if you have yet to send in your Stewardship, please do so now. Remember the Church is not just here when you need it! Its open every week! If we don't support the Church, who else will?**

Respectfully,
Fr. Michael & The Stewardship Committee

_____ Cut here _____

Please make checks payable to: Saint Demetrios Church

My Stewardship Commitment is \$ _____ Year _____

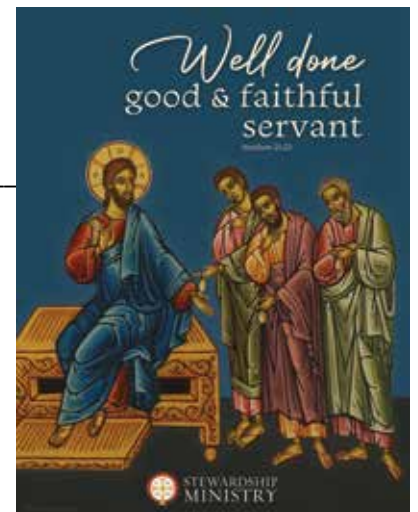
Single/Individual \$500.00

Family \$750.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Email** _____



SAINT DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

321 Saint Demetrios Street – North Wildwood, New Jersey 08260

PARISH REGISTRY INFORMATION FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

HOME PHONE _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

PLACE OF BIRTH _____

DATE OF ORTHODOX BAPTISM/CHRISMATION _____

PROFESSION/OCCUPATION _____

BUSINESS NAME & ADDRESS _____

BUSINESS PHONE _____

SPOUSE'S 1ST NAME & MAIDEN NAME _____

SPOUSE'S DATE OF BIRTH _____

SPOUSE'S PLACE OF BIRTH _____

DATE OF ORTHODOX BAPTISM/CHRISMATION _____

SPOUSE'S OCCUPATION _____

BUSINESS PHONE _____

DATE & PLACE OF ORTHODOX MARRIAGE _____

NAME OF PRIEST WHO DID MARRIAGE _____

CHILDREN'S NAMES & DATES OF BIRTH _____



PLEDGES FOR 2024

ΕΘΕΛΟΝΤΙΚΗ ΠΡΟΣΦΟΡΑ 2024

The following parishioners of St. Demetrios have, either in full or partially, remitted stewardship for 2024 (As of March 1, 2024):

Dr. George Koumaras
Alexadra Boulageris
John & Ellen Manetas
Ted & Despina Katsikaris
Peter & Vasiliki Kellis
Mauro & Angel Cammarano
Greg & Stephanie Labe
Andrew & Sophia Cammarano
Bill & Helen Mitchell
George Tsiartsionis
Michael & Christina Royer
Anastasios & Denise Karros
Louis & Ellie Squiccimiai
Ireni Karros
Fr. Michael & Presbyteria Demetria Pastrikos

Gerry & Elaine Ermentrout
Evanthia Boulageris
Ed & Kathy Thomas
Nick & Jennifer Konides
Stavanna Donahue
Scott and Marissa Hunsicker
Eleni Klingos
Peter & Bessie Lazos
Ted & Alexandra Nannas
Kosta & Roula Papaspanos
George & Beverly Mallous
John & Rini Holton
Anna Butler
Garry Padussis

Marcus Karavan
Fotini Andy
Bill Wallgren
Chris & Ann Kraras
Dean & Jennifer Kraras
Bernard & Tula Donahue
Ted Margarites
Demet & Eleni Anagnos
Sal & Vaia Zampirri
Melpo Daglis
Athena Mallous
Angelo & Bessie Giouros
James & Nikki Parson
George & Stella Papageorge

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful parishioners for taking the initiative to fill out their 2024 Stewardship Pledge Card. God bless all our families who really care about their Church and Community. May the Lord grant all of you a blessed month of March and bestow to you much health and happiness.

Protopresbyter Fr. Michael L. Pastrikos





Pilgrimage to The Holy Land

This is Part II of the series introduced last month of a journey to the Holy Land in the year 2010 led by Fr. Michael L. Pastrikos.

Our next stop was the town of Gethsemane to the church where the Tomb of the Virgin Mary is found. We moved on to the Chapel of the Ascension of our Lord which took place 40 days after His Glorious Resurrection where we saw the imprint of Jesus' right foot as He ascended to His Father. It is our tradition that the second coming will take place near this site. We boarded our motor coach to drive 5-1/2 miles to Bethlehem to Shepherd's Field where the angels proclaimed, "Glory to God in the Highest" announcing the Holy Birth. We moved on to the 1,500-year-old Church of the Nativity which was built at the direction of St. Helen. The entrance has been minimized to oblige all devout Christians to enter with humility. There, inside the Holy Grotto we venerated the Silver Star marking the place where our Lord was born. We were greeted by a Greek Orthodox priest who gave Father Michael the honor to hold a brief paraklesis service in the Grotto for the health and welfare of the group. The last stop was the Profit Elias Monastery where the remains of St. Simeon the Just are kept.

Day 2 Friday began with a trip to the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) which is considered to be the holiest place for the Jews. We moved on to the Kidron Valley where we visited the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu. This church marks the site where Peter denied Christ three times and the nearby House of Caiaphas the High Priest at that time. We proceeded to the Room of the Last Supper where Jesus ate His last meal with his Twelve Disciples. It is the same room which the disciples received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Then we walked to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher which is the holiest site for all Christians. This church was constructed in the 4th century at the direction of St. Helen, mother of St. Constantine. However, over the centuries the church was destroyed and rebuilt three times leaving only one-third of the original structure. As we entered the Church, we saw the outside column from which the Holy Fire was received by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem when the Armenians closed him out of the Sacred Tomb of Christ. Upon entering the church, we venerated the Anointing Stone where Jesus' body was prepared for burial. The mosaic above the Anointing Stone shows Jesus being taken down from the Cross, Jesus' body being prepared for burial and His body being placed into the Tomb. We then climbed the ancient stone stairs to Golgotha where Jesus was hung on the Cross for our Salvation. What a moving experience to be able to kneel down and touch the site where our Savior's Cross actual stood. We then proceeded down another staircase to the first floor to view the Sacred Tomb of Christ which is contained in the Aedicule. It is here where our Lord was laid after his crucifixion and resurrected after three days. We were led farther down a stone staircase to the Chapel of St. Helen where she is honored for finding the Holy Cross of our Lord.

The group then walked through the streets of the Christian Quarter to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, where the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III, welcomed our group from Baltimore and a group from South Carolina. The Patriarch presented a special gift to the visiting priests as well as an icon to members of both groups.

(Part III to be continued)



Aedicule (Tomb of Christ) in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher



Golgotha in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher



Fr. Michael L. Pastrikos praying at the site of the Nativity of our Lord.

By:
Tina Harris



ΣΤΟΝ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΜΟ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ

25 Μαρτίου

Υπό
Σεβασμιωτάτου Μητροπολίτου Αντινός
κ.κ. ΠΑΝΤΕΛΕΗΜΟΝΟΣ

Η προαιώνια βουλή του Θεού αποκαλύπτεται σήμερα. Αρχάγγελος Θεού στάλθηκε από τον ουρανό για να φέρει το χαρμόσυνο μήνυμα στην Αγνή και Παρθένα Κόρη της Ναζαρέτ, ότι ο Πλάστης και Ποιητής

του ουρανού και της γης θα γίνει άνθρωπος για να σώσει τον άνθρωπο. Παγκόσμια χαρά, σήμερα, διότι ο Αδάμ καινούργειται και η Εύα απελευθερώνεται από την πρώτη κατάρτα, που προξένησε η παράβαση και η παρακοή.

Ο Υιός του Θεού γίνεται υιός του ανθρώπου, για να κατανικήσει μέσα από την ανθρώπινη φύση τον Διάβολο. Ο άνθρωπος, που εξαπατήθηκε από τον ανθρωποκτόνο Διάβολο, τώρα πρέπει να τον νικήσει. Σήμερα, άγγελος από τον ουρανό λειτουργεί το θαύμα. Η παρθενική μήτρα δέχεται τον Θεό Λόγο. Το Πανάγιο Πνεύμα στέλνεται και ο Θεός Πατέρας ευδοκεί και στέλνει τον Μονογενή Του Υιό για την σωτηρία όλου του κόσμου. «Ούτω γαρ ηγάπησεν ο Θεός τον κόσμον, ώστε τον υιόν αυτού τον Μονογενή έδωκεν, ίνα πας ο πιστεύων εις αυτόν μη απόληται, αλλ' έχη ζωήν αιώνιον» (Ιωάν. 3:16). Σήμερα, το απ' αιώνος μυστήριο φανερώνεται και ο Υιός του Θεού γίνεται υιός της Παρθένου.

Ο Θεός με την πτώση του Αδάμ δεν εγκατέλειψε το πλάσμα Του να υποφέρει κάτω από την σκλαβιά της αμαρτίας και την τυραννία του θανάτου. Υπόσχεται, ότι ο απόγονος της Εύας που θα γεννηθεί από την Παρθένο, χωρίς σπορά ανδρός, θα συντρίψει την δύναμη του εχθρού. Αυτή η υπόσχεση ονομάζεται «Πρωτοευαγγέλιο», δηλαδή, είναι το πρώτο χαρμόσυνο μήνυμα που δέχθηκε το ανθρώπινο γένος μετά από την πτώση του. Ο Θεός υπόσχεται στον Αδάμ και του δίδει νέα ελπίδα, ότι η σωτηρία θα πραγματοποιηθεί όχι σύμφωνα με τους φυσικούς νόμους, αλλά εκ Πνεύματος Αγίου, Γι' αυτό «και το γεννώμενον άγιον κληθήσεται Υιός Θεού» (Λουκ. 1:35).

Ο Υιός του Θεού καταδέχθηκε να αναλάβει όλη την ανθρώπινη φύση. Ο τέλειος Θεός ενσαρκώνεται και γίνεται τέλειος



άνθρωπος, χωρίς αμαρτία. Ο Ιησούς Χριστός, ως Θεάνθρωπος, είναι ο τέλειος Θεός και ο τέλειος άνθρωπος με δύο τέλειες θελήσεις και φύσεις, θεία και ανθρωπίνη, ενωμένες αχωρίστως, αδιαιρέτως, ασυγχήτως στην μία Υπόσταση και στο ένα Πρόσωπο του Ιησού Χριστού. Ο Υιός του Θεού γίνεται υιός του ανθρώπου.

Ο Θεάνθρωπος Ιησούς Χριστός είναι ο δεύτερος Αδάμ και γεννιέται αληθώς από την Παρθένο Μαρία. Και, όπως ο πρώτος Αδάμ πλάσθηκε από τον Θεό από την αγνή γη, που δεν είχε μολυνθεί από την αμαρτία, έτσι και ο δεύτερος Αδάμ έπρεπε να γεννηθεί από παρθενική μήτρα, που ήταν άσπιλη, αμόλυντη και άφθορη από κάθε μόλυσμα αμαρτίας. Ο Παντογνώστης Θεός προείδε «προ των αιώνων» τη γέννηση της Παρθένου και, ότι αυτή θα ήταν το κατάλληλο σκεύος για να πραγματοποιήσει το θείο σχέδιο της σωτηρίας, και έτσι δίδει δεύτερη ευκαιρία στο ανθρώπινο γένος..

Η Θεοτόκος Μαρία κυριαρχεί στις προφητικές ρήσεις των Προφητών της Π. Διαθήκης. Κάτω από τα προφητικά ανιγμάτα ονομάζεται «*Ράβδος Ααρών η βλαστήσασα*», «*Κλίμαξ Ιακώβ*», «*Βάτος η φλεγόμενη και μη καιομένη*», «*Άνθος το αμάραντον η εκβλαστήσασα*» κ.τ.λ. Αποκορύφωμα όμως όλων των προφητειών ήταν η προφητεία του Προφήτου Ησαΐα, πού λέγει: «*Ιδού η Παρθένος εν γαστρί έξει και τέξεται υιόν και καλέσουσι το όνομα αυτού Εμμανουήλ*» (Ησ. 7:14). Η Θεοτόκος Μαρία είναι το μήνυμα της σωτηρίας, που προξένησε την μεγαλύτερη χαρά σ' όλους τους ανθρώπους.

Όλες οι προφητείες ελέχθησαν πριν πολλούς αιώνες και πραγματοποιήθηκαν στο πρόσωπο της Αγνής Κόρης της Ναζαρέτ. Η Θεοτόκος Μαρία είναι το πιο σημαντικό

πρόσωπο του ανθρωπίνου γένους, γιατί με τις αρετές της, τις οποίες προείδε ο Θεός, προορίστηκε να γίνει η Μητέρα του Υιού του Θεού.

Ο Θεός, που έπλασε τον άνθρωπο χωρίς την βοήθεια του ανθρώπου, δεν μπορεί να σώσει τον άνθρωπο χωρίς την βοήθεια του ανθρώπου. Ο Θεός σέβεται την ελευθερία του ανθρώπου. Χρειάζεται την συνεργασία του πλάσματος Του για να σώσει το ανθρώπινο γένος.

Στον Ευαγγελισμό της Θεοτόκου δεν έχουμε κάποια παραβίαση ή εξαναγκασμό του Θεού πάνω στον άνθρωπο. Η Θεοτόκος Μαρία δέχεται να γίνει Μητέρα του Υιού του Θεού, δέχεται το σχέδιο του Θεού, με πλήρη ελευθερία, πίστη, αφοσίωση, αγάπη και τέλεια υπακοή. Η υπακοή της Θεοτόκου Μαρίας θεράπευσε την παρακοή της Εύας. Η πίστη Της θεράπευσε την δυσπιστία της Εύας και η ταπείνωσή Της θεράπευσε την κενοδοξία της προμήτορος. Η σωτηρία του ανθρώπου πραγματοποιήθηκε από τον Θεάνθρωπο Ιησού Χριστό, γιατί η Θεοτόκος Μαρία υποτάχθηκε ταπεινά και ελευθέρα στο θείο Θέλημα.

Η Μαρία, η Αειπάρθενος Κόρη, ονομάζεται και καθομολογείται από τους Ορθοδόξους, ότι είναι πράγματι Μητέρα του Θεού, Παναγία και Θεοτόκος. Υπερέχει σε αγιότητα όχι μόνον όλους τους αγίους, αλλά και αυτά τα αγγελικά Τάγματα.

Σήμερα, γιορτάζουμε την παγκόσμια χαρά, τον Ευαγγελισμό της Θεοτόκου. Η γιορτή αυτή θα πρέπει να φέρει στη ψυχή μας το προσωπικό μήνυμα της σωτηρίας. Η προσωπικότητα της Θεοτόκου και οι αμέτρητες αρετές Της θα πρέπει να γίνουν αφορμή, ώστε ο κάθε Ορθόδοξος πιστός να μιμηθεί τις αρετές και την ζωή της Θεοτόκου Μαρίας. Μ' αυτό τον

τρόπο θα ευχαριστήσουμε τη Μητέρα του Θεού και η γιορτή του Ευαγγελισμού θα είναι μια θεάρεστη γιορτή της δικής μας αναγέννησης και σωτηρίας. Αμήν.

Annunciation

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Annunciation** (anglicised from the Latin Vulgate Luke 1:36-39 section title: *Annuntiatio nativitatis Christi*), also referred to as the **Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary** or **Annunciation of the Lord**, is the Christian celebration of the announcement by the angel Gabriel to Virgin Mary, that she would conceive and become the mother of Jesus the Son of God. Gabriel told Mary to name her son Jesus, meaning "Savior". Many Christians observe this event with the Feast of the Annunciation on 25 March, nine full months before Christmas. According to Luke 1:26, the Annunciation to Mary occurred "in the sixth month" of Elisabeth's pregnancy with the child later called John the Baptist.

Approximating the northern vernal equinox, the date of the Annunciation also marked the New Year in many places, including England, where it is called Lady Day. Both the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches hold that the Annunciation took place at Nazareth, but differ as to the precise location. The Church of the Annunciation marks the site preferred by the former, while the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation marks that preferred by the latter.

The Annunciation has been a key topic in Christian art in general, as well as in Roman

Catholic Marian art, particularly during the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

The Annunciation in the Bible : In the Bible, the Annunciation is narrated in the book of Luke, Luke 1:26-38. A separate annunciation, which is more brief but in the same vein as the one in Luke, is given to Joseph in Matthew 1:18-21.

Eastern traditions : In Eastern Christianity Mary is referred to as Theotokos (Θεοτόκος="God-bearer"). The traditional Troparion (hymn for the day) of the Annunciation which goes back to Saint Athanasius of Alexandria is:

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the twelve Great Feasts of the church year. As the action initiating the Incarnation of Christ, Annunciation has such an important place in Eastern theology that the Festal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom is always celebrated on March 25, regardless of what day it falls on—even if it falls on Pascha (Easter Sunday) itself, a coincidence which is called Kyriopascha. The only time the Divine Liturgy may be celebrated on Great and Holy Friday is if it falls on March 25. Due to this, the rubrics regarding the celebration of the feast are the most complicated of all in Eastern liturgics. The Annunciation is called *Euangelismos* (Evangelism) in Greek, literally meaning "spreading the Good News".

St. Ephraim the Syrian taught that the date of the conception of Jesus Christ fell on 10 Nisan on the Hebrew Calendar, the day in which the passover lamb was selected according to Exodus 12. Some years 10 Nisan falls on March 25, which is the traditional date for the Feast of the Annunciation and is an official holiday in Lebanon.

In the Catholic Church, Anglican, and Lutheran liturgical calendars, the feast is moved if necessary to prevent it from falling during Holy Week or Easter Week or on a Sunday. To avoid a Sunday before Holy Week, the next day (March 26) would be observed instead. In years such as 2008 when March 25 falls during Holy Week or Easter Week, the Annunciation is moved to the Monday after Octave of Easter, which is the Sunday after Easter.^[51]

It might be thought that with a very early Easter, the feast of St Joseph would be displaced from 19 March to the Monday after Easter week, thus displacing the Annunciation to the Tuesday. However, in the Roman Catholic calendar, if the Feast of St Joseph, normally falling on March 19, must also be moved as a consequence of Easter falling on one of its earliest possible dates, it is moved to an earlier rather than a later date. This will normally be the Saturday before Holy Week. (This change was announced by the Congregation for Divine Worship in *Notitiae* March–April, 2006 (475-476, page 96).) In the Church of England, it is moved to the Tuesday after Easter Week, following the Annunciation on the Monday, which is of higher rank and takes precedence.

The Eastern churches (Eastern Orthodox, Oriental and Eastern Catholic) do not move the feast of the Annunciation under any circumstance. They have special combined liturgies for those years when the Annunciation coincides with another feast. In these churches, even on Good Friday a Divine Liturgy is celebrated when it coincides with the Annunciation. One of the most frequent accusations brought against New Calendarism is the fact that in the New Calendar churches (which celebrate the Annunciation according to the New Calendar, but Easter according to the

Old Calendar), these special Liturgies can never be celebrated any more, since the Annunciation is always long before Holy Week on the New Calendar. The Old Calendarists believe that this impoverishes the liturgical and spiritual life of the Church.

The date is close to the vernal equinox, as Christmas is to the winter solstice; because of this the Annunciation and Christmas were two of the four "Quarter days" in medieval and early modern England, which marked the divisions of the fiscal year (the other two were Midsummer Day, or the Nativity of St. John the Baptist—June 24—and Michaelmas, the feast day of St. Michael, on September 29).

When the calendar system of Anno Domini was first introduced by Dionysius Exiguus in AD 525, he assigned the beginning of the new year to March 25, since according to Catholic theology, the era of grace began with the Incarnation of Christ.

The first certain mentions of the feast are in a canon, of the Council of Toledo (656), where it is described as celebrated throughout the church, and another of the Council of Constantinople "in Trullo" (692), forbidding the celebration of any festivals during Lent, excepting the Lord's Day (Sunday) and the Feast of the Annunciation. An earlier origin has been claimed for it on the ground that it is mentioned in various works of which the earliest surviving manuscripts are later and may have been added to.^[6] A Synod of Worcester, England (1240), forbade all servile work on this feast day. See further Lady Day.

Message from Fr. Michael L. Pastrikos, Protopresbyter***The Lenten Season is a Perfect Opportunity to Rediscover Our Relationship with Christ***

Let us begin the Lenten time with delight... let us fast from passions as we fast from food, taking pleasure in the good works of the Spirit, that we may be granted to see the Holy Passion of Christ our God and the Holy Pascha, spiritually rejoicing.

The season of great lent is the time of preparation for the feast of the resurrection of Christ. During this period we are reminded to focus on fasting, prayer, meditation, almsgiving, and most of all on Jesus Christ and our spiritual journey with Him. It is also a time of reconciliation and repentance. It is a season of self examination and a time to take spiritual inventory of our inner life. Repentance is very important in the life of a Christian. In Math: 4:17 it says (Repent) were the first words of Christ when He began preaching. It is our repentance that God desires, not our remorse. We sorrow for our sins, but we do so in the joy of God's mercy.

All Orthodox Christians are called to make a special spiritual effort to rediscover their relationship with Christ and get back to the narrow path that leads to salvation. A special word must be said about fasting during lent. Let's not forget that (fasting) is an essential element of the Christian Life. Christ fasted and taught men how to fast. So why does our society, try to dilute the words of Christ and His practice of fasting. In one of my previous newsletters, I wrote and I quote (Once you take that step to follow Christ then you must follow Him with all your heart and soul to the end of your life).

Christ said in John 14:23 - "If a man loves me, he must keep my words". In this verse there is no competitive spirit, there is no personal interpretation it simply states, It's either your (Hot) with Christ or you are (Cold) with Christ. Let's not try to justify our sinful life if we are not following Christ in the right way. If the Church says we need to fast, then we need to fast. There is no getting around it. If you have a medical problem that would keep anyone from fasting then you do what your Doctor tells you. But if you're healthy we

should all learn to fast, and pray, just like the ascetic fathers did through their Spiritual journey to Christ.

The Orthodox rules for Lenten fasting are the monastic rules. No meat is allowed after Meat fare Sunday, and any eggs or dairy products after Cheese fare Sunday. I would also like to add that no source of entertainment should be allowed during the Lenten period. These rules exist not as a Pharisaic "burden to hard to bear" Luke 11:46 but as an ideal to be striven for, not as an end in themselves, but as a means to spiritual perfection crowned in love. There is nothing wrong in teaching ourselves and our children the proper way to fast.

An athlete does not become an expert in his first exercise or practice. He or she needs to work on that constantly if you want to have good results. Same with fasting, prayer, and meditation, it takes time to learn to adapt to what the church is asking from us to do. In the Monday Vespers of the first week of lent, it states- "Let us fast with a fast pleasing to the Lord. This is the true fast: the casting off of evil, the bridling of the tongue, the cutting off the anger, the cessation of lusts, evil talking, lies and cursing.

This is what we need to do in order to enjoy what the Great Lenten Period offers to all of us. Another thing to remember about fasting- we need not to boast or show pride from our fasting. We need not to judge others if they fast or don't fast. We should fast in secret, so that God would see and bless us openly with a holy life. Another important thing for all Orthodox Christians to do is to prepare ourselves during the many Eucharistic services that we have during lent to receive as frequent as we can Holy Communion.

The special services during Lent are as follows. The Presanctified Liturgies which are celebrated throughout the Great Lent period and Holy Week. We have Holy Wednesday and Holy Thursday morning. We have Holy Saturday morning and of course the Holy Resurrection ser

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

The Lenten Season is a Perfect Opportunity to Rediscover Our Relationship with Christ

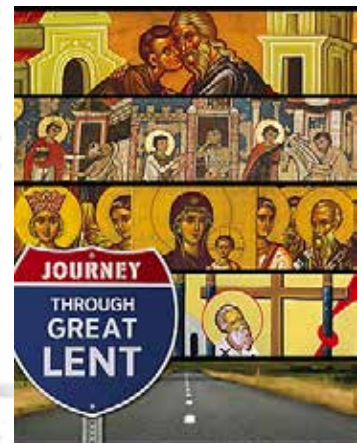
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

vice at midnight. The Lenten Season is a perfect opportunity to rediscover our relationship with Christ by receiving the Sacrament of Confession. Remember, Repentance is the beginning and also the condition of a true Christian life. To become more fully human, we have to face our failures, and our sinful actions against our Creator.

I conclude with the Vesper Hymn that summarizes our intent and reminds us of our goal in life. "Let us set our joy upon the

season of the fast and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat. Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh, and as we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion. Rejoicing in the virtues of the spirit, may we persevere with love, and so be counted worthy to see the solemn Passion of Christ our God and with great spiritual gladness to behold His Holy Passover (Pascha).

May you have a blessed Great Lenten Season and may our Lord truly open your eyes to your future life in Christ.



Μήνυμα απο τον Πατέρα Μιχαήλ Α. Πασιρικό, Πρωτοπρεσβύτερο

Η Εποχή της Σαρακοστής Είναι μια Τέλεια Ευκαιρία για να Ξαναβρούμε τη Σχέση μας με τον Χριστό.

Ας ξεκινήσουμε τη Τεσσαρακοστή με το αίσθημα της απόλαυσης ... ας νηστεύουμε από τα πάθη μας όπως νηστεύουμε και από το φαγητό, λαμβάνοντας ευχαρίστηση από τα καλά έργα του Πνεύματος, που πρέπει να πράξουμε, για να δούμε τα Άγια Πάθη του Χριστού και Θεού μας όπως και το Άγιο Πάσχα, με πνευματική ανάταση.

Η εποχή της Μεγάλης Σαρακοστής είναι η περίοδος της προετοιμασίας για την εορτή της Ανάστασης του Χριστού. Κατά τη διάρκεια αυτής της περιόδου μας υπενθυμίζεται ότι πρέπει να επικεντρωθούμε στη νηστεία, προσευχή, πνευματική περισυλλογή, την ελεημοσύνη, και πάνω απ' όλα στον Ιησού Χριστό και στο πνευματικό ταξίδι μας μαζί Του. Είναι επίσης εποχή συμφιλίωσης και μετάνοιας. Είναι η εποχή της αυτοεξέτασης και η εποχή να κάνουμε την πνευματική απογραφή της ψυχής μας.

Η μετάνοια είναι πολύ σημαντική στη ζωή ενός χριστιανού. Στο κατά Ματθαίο: 4:17 αναφέρει (Μετανοείτε) ήταν τα πρώτα λόγια του Χριστού, όταν Εκείνος άρχισε να κηρύττει. Η μετάνοια μας είναι αυτό που ο Θεός επιθυμεί, όχι οι τύψεις μας. Λυπόμαστε για τις αμαρτίες μας, αλλά το κάνουμε για να χαρούμε το έλεος του Θεού. Όλοι οι Ορθόδοξοι Χριστιανοί καλούνται να κάνουν μια ιδιαίτερη πνευματική προσπάθεια για να ξαναβρούν τη σχέση τους με τον Χριστό και να ξαναακολουθήσουν στο στενό μονοπάτι που οδηγεί στη σωτηρία.

Μια ιδιαίτερη λέξη πρέπει να αναφερθεί για τη νηστεία της Σαρακοστής. Ας μην ξεχνάμε ότι η νηστεία, αποτελεί το βασικό στοιχείο της χριστιανικής ζωής. Ο Χριστός νήστευε και δίδαξε τους ανθρώπους πως να νηστεύουν. Γιατί λοιπόν η κοινωνία μας, προσπαθεί να σβήσει τα λόγια του Χριστού και της άσκησης Του στη νηστεία; Σε ένα από τα προηγούμενα μηνύματά μου, έγραψα και παραθέτω (όταν πάρετε αυτό το μονοπάτι, να ακολουθήσετε τον Χριστό, τότε θα πρέπει να Τον ακολουθήσετε με όλη την καρδιά και την ψυχή σας, μέχρι το τέλος της ζωής σας). Ο Χριστός είπε στο κατά Ιωάννη 14:23 - "Αν κάποιος με αγαπά, θα πρέπει να κρατήσει τα λόγια μου». Σε αυτό το στίχο δεν υπάρχει ανταγωνιστικό πνεύμα, δεν υπάρχει καμία προσωπική ερμηνεία, απλά δηλώνει, είτε πιστεύεις με όλη σου την καρδιά στο Χριστό ή δεν πιστεύεις στον Χριστό.

Ας μην προσπαθούμε να δικαιολογήσουμε την αμαρτωλή ζωή μας, αν δεν ακολουθούμε το Χριστό με το σωστό τρόπο. Αν η Εκκλησία λέει ότι πρέπει να νηστεύουμε, τότε θα πρέπει να νηστεύουμε. Δεν υπάρχει καμία άλλη εναλλακτική λύση. Εάν έχουμε πρόβλημα υγείας και δεν μπορούμε να νηστεύουμε, τότε στη περίπτωση αυτή, θα κάνουμε ό,τι μας πει ο γιατρός. Αλλά αν είμαστε υγιείς θα πρέπει όλοι να μάθουμε να νηστεύουμε, και να προσευχόμαστε, όπως ακριβώς έκαναν και οι ασκητές πατέρες μέσω του πνευματικού ταξιδιού τους στο Χριστό.

Οι ορθόδοξοι κανόνες νηστείας είναι οι μοναστικοί κανόνες. Δεν επιτρέπεται το κρέας μετά την Κυριακή της Απόκριας, και αυγά ή γαλακτοκομικά προϊόντα μετά την Κυριακή της Τυρινής. Θα ήθελα επίσης να προσθέσω ότι δεν επιτρέπεται κατά τη διάρκεια της Σαρακοστής καμία πηγή ψυχαγωγίας. Οι κανόνες αυτοί δεν υπάρχουν, όπως αναφέρεται στο κατά Λουκά 11:46 προς Φαρισαίους. "βαρύ και

δύσκολο να ακολουθηθεί" αλλά ως ιδανικό που θα αγωνιστείτε γι' αυτό, όχι ως δεδομένο, αλλά ως μέσο για την πνευματική τελειότητα που στέφεται με την αγάπη. Δεν υπάρχει τίποτα λάθος στο να διδάξουμε τα παιδιά μας το σωστό τρόπο νηστείας.

Ένας αθλητής δεν γίνεται εξπέρ με τη πρώτη άσκηση ή την πρακτική του. Αυτός ή αυτή θα πρέπει να δουλέψουν εντατικά και συνέχεια σε αυτό, αν θέλει να έχει καλά αποτελέσματα. Ακριβώς το ίδιο με τη νηστεία, τη προσευχή και τη πνευματική περισυλλογή, χρειάζεται χρόνος για να μάθουμε να προσαρμοζόμαστε με αυτό που η Εκκλησία ζητά από εμάς να κάνουμε. Στον Εσπερινό της Δευτέρας, της πρώτης εβδομάδας της Σαρακοστής, αναφέρεται- "Ας νηστεύσουμε με τη νηστεία που ευχαριστεί τον Κύριο. Αυτή είναι η αληθινή νηστεία: η απομάκρυνση από το κακό, η εγκράτεια της γλώσσας, η εγκράτεια του θυμού, η εγκράτεια των επιθυμιών, να μην βραστηθούμε, να μην λέμε ψέματα και να μην καταριόμαστε. Αυτά είναι που πρέπει να κάνουμε για να απολαύσουμε ό,τι προσφέρει η Μεγάλη Περίοδος της Σαρακοστής σε όλους μας. Ένα άλλο πράγμα που πρέπει να θυμόμαστε σχετικά με τη νηστεία- δεν χρειάζεται να το διαφημίζουμε ή να υπερηφανευόμαστε για τη νηστεία μας.

Δεν χρειάζεται να κρίνουμε τους άλλους αν νηστεύουν ή δεν νηστεύουν. Πρέπει να νηστεύουμε με μυστικό τρόπο, έτσι ώστε ο Θεός να το δει και να μας ευλογήσει. Ένα άλλο σημαντικό πράγμα για όλους τους Ορθόδοξους Χριστιανούς είναι να προετοιμαστούμε κατάλληλα να λάβουμε Θεία Κοινωνία όσο πιο συχνά μπορούμε κατά τη διάρκεια των πολλών Ακολουθιών που έχουμε τη περίοδο της νηστείας. Οι ειδικές αυτές Ακολουθίες κατά τη διάρκεια της Σαρακοστής έχουν ως εξής. Οι Προηγιασμένες Λειτουργίες οι οποίες εορτάζονται καθ' όλη την Μεγάλη Τεσσαρακοστή και τη Μεγάλη Εβδομάδα.

Έχουμε τη Μεγάλη Τετάρτη και την Μεγάλη Πέμπτη το πρωί. Έχουμε το Μεγάλο Σάββατο το πρωί και φυσικά την Ακολουθία της Ανάστασης τα μεσάνυχτα. Η εποχή της Σαρακοστής είναι μια τέλεια ευκαιρία για να ξαναβρούμε τη σχέση μας με τον Χριστό, μέσω του Μυστηρίου της Εξομολόγησης. Να θυμάστε ότι μετάνοια είναι η αρχή μιας αληθινής χριστιανικής ζωής. Για να επαναποκτήσουμε την ανθρωπιά μας, πρέπει να αντιμετωπίσουμε τις αποτυχίες μας, και τις αμαρτωλές μας πράξεις κατά του Δημιουργού μας.

Κλείνω με τον Εσπερινό Ύμνο που συνοψίζει την πρόθεσή μας και μας θυμίζει τον στόχο μας στη ζωή. "Ας χαρούμε την εποχή της νηστείας και να προετοιμαστούμε για την πνευματική μάχη. Ας καθαρίσουμε την ψυχή μας και τη σάρκα μας, και όπως νηστεύουμε από το φαγητό, ας απέχουμε και από κάθε άλλο πάθος. Ας χαρούμε τις αρετές του πνεύματος, ας επιμένουμε με αγάπη, και έτσι να αξιωθούμε να δούμε τα Άγια Πάθη του Χριστού και Θεού μας, και με μεγάλη πνευματική χαρά να εορτάσουμε το Άγιο Πάσχα.

Εύχομαι να έχετε μια ευλογημένη Μεγάλη Τεσσαρακοστή και ο Κύριός μας να σας οδηγήσει πραγματικά σε μια μελλοντική ζωή εν Χριστώ.

REPENTANCE & CONFESSION



Repentance has its roots in the apostles. In the Book of Acts the Apostle Peter says, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:37-38)

When we fall away from God, we have removed ourselves from His communion – with Him and with other Christians. We have excommunicated ourselves. To re-enter communion with God is the on-going activity of all Christians. We fall away daily in some way or another. No one is exempt.

Often, when children play in competitive games, one will call out "that's a do over!" Haven't we all wished for that chance to undo the past and start over? Repentance offers us this new beginning.

We are telling God that we have changed our mind about our past direction and want to be back in communion with Him. The Greek word for repentance, *metanoia*, implies a very deep change in the way we see ourselves, our world, and our relationship to God.

To change our mind in repentance is the starting point in our Lenten journey. We leave behind regret as we move toward hope. Repentance is not a single action but an attitude, a frame of mind.

Think back over your life of things which you regret having said or done – hurtful, inconsiderate, selfish, deceitful. Think also of those things which you have done which may not have directly affected others, but which you know to be wrong according to the teachings of the Church. Bring them to mind as if they were occurring right now. Think of how it would have been if you had acted differently. Take this regret and turn it into repentance. Acknowledge that you have offended another person or the Church, and in doing so you have offended God.

If we are to be forgiven by God, He requires of us that we also forgive one another. For many of us, this is the most difficult aspect of repentance and confession. Yet we say it each time we pray the Lord's prayer, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Just as God's love for us is personal, so must ours be for Him. As the Christian grows from child to adult, his or her personal response to God becomes crucial. This personal response is the act of confession.



GUIDELINES FOR FASTING

The fast for the forty days of Lent is indicated below, though many are not able to hold to the strict fast. We offer the following guidelines to be considered prayerfully with the guidance of your spiritual father and in consideration of any medical condition or dietary requirements.

STRICT FAST

No Meat, Fish, Milk, Dairy Products, Oil, or Oil Products

PALM SUNDAY

Fish, Oil & Wine permitted

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION/MARCH 25TH

March 25th - all day: Fish, Oil & Wine Permitted

Shellfish are permitted throughout Great Lent

Resource Note: The Orthodox Daily Planner and Resource Guide published by the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries offers daily guidance in fasting, scripture readings, feast days and more.

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ON FASTING

Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works.

If you see a poor man, take pity on him.

If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all the members of our bodies.

Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.

Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.

Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful.

Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip.

Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes,

but bite and devour our brothers?

May He who came to the world to save sinners strengthen us to complete the fast with humility, have mercy on us and save us.

JESUS' INSTRUCTIONS ON FASTING

"Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."

Gospel of Matthew Chapter 6:16-18

PRAYER

Have no anxiety about anything, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding will keep your hearts and your minds in Jesus Christ.

(St. Paul's letter to the Philippians)



One key to a more fulfilling life is prayer. For Orthodox Christians, the aim of prayer is to enter into conversation with God. Prayer is sometimes referred to as dialogue with God. Often it is a waiting on God in silence. In the church it is defined as the lifting of the mind and heart to God, and also as walking in the presence of God. We turn our mind and thoughts toward Him. We mentally gaze

at Him and speak with Him in reverence, fear, and hope. At times we speak to Him with words and at other times we stand in reverent silence, saying nothing, but being aware of His presence. In this dialogue with God we praise Him and thank Him. We ask Him for what we need. Our mind and our heart are opened to Him. Prayer is not only repeating words, it is trust in God that he hears and directs us in His Way involving spiritual growth and development.

THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

Read each week-day during Great Lent

Lord and Master of my life, take away from me the will to be lazy and to be sad; the desire to get ahead of other people and to boast and brag. Give me instead, a pure and humble spirit, the will to be patient with other people and to love them. Let me realize my own mistakes and keep me from judging the things other people do. For You are blessed now and for evermore.

Amen.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the treasury of blessings and Giver of life: come and abide in us. Cleanse us from all impurity, and save our souls, O Gracious Lord.

HOLY COMMUNION

The Sacrament of Holy Communion—the Eucharist—which literally means "Thanksgiving," is the Mystery whereby the bread and wine of offering are changed, actually, not symbolically, into the very Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The Eucharist is in the very center of the Church's life, and from it flows the prayer of believers in a sacrifice of entreaty for the peace of the world, for all those who ask for help, and for all men and women "The Eucharist unites us in the most intimate fashion with the Lord; it nourishes our soul and body, and aids our strengthening, increase, and growth in spiritual life. According to the promise of the Gospel, "He that eats this bread will live forever." (The Gospel of John 6:58)



The cup which holds the wine that becomes the blood of Christ is the chalice, the cup of salvation. When we kneel during the liturgy, we pray with the priest that God the Holy Spirit may change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus. This means that when we receive Holy Communion, Jesus comes to live in us.

How do we prepare to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus? We pray. We should have love in our hearts for all people. We should ask forgiveness from God and from our parents, brothers, and sisters, and from anyone we may have hurt.

When we come before the priest for Communion, we make the sign of the cross, tell the priest our baptismal name, hold the Communion cloth under our chin, and open our mouth wide. After receiving, we wipe our lips with the Communion cloth, make the sign of the cross, and hand the Communion cloth to the person next to us.

Once we have received Communion, we must remember that we have become one with Christ and with all those who received Communion with us. Christ now lives in all of us. We are all living icons of Jesus. It is by loving one another that we love Jesus. After receiving Communion our bodies become holy chalices. God lives in us.

Jesus wants to use our hands, which have now become His hands, to help those in need. When we receive Communion, we become members of Christ's Body, the Church. This means that Jesus has no eyes but our eyes, no feet but our feet to do His work in the world today. What kind, thoughtful act will you do for Jesus today?

From *Let's Take a Walk Through Our Orthodox Church* by Fr. Anthony M. Coniaris / Light & Life Publishing

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE

In private study, when a Christian profitably reads the Bible, receiving inspiration and strength from it, family members, friends, relatives and even acquaintances will inevitably notice the difference. Any person who comes into contact with such a Christian cannot but notice the growing peace, love and inner assurance – the spirit of Christ – in that Christian, and will frequently ask (if not ask, certainly think) what gives that person such strength and radiance. God will provide many opportunities to the growing Christian for sharing with others his or her experience with the Bible. What better witness for the truth of the Christian faith than a solid Christian life nourished by Holy Scripture and radiating true Christian love at home, at Church and at work? The Christian's own life becomes a kind of gospel, a living Bible, in which other people observe, read and experience the truths of God in action.

From *Bread for Life*, by Father Theodore Stylianopoulos
Department of Religious Education

Suggestions for family Bible reading:

Set aside a regular time for daily reading preferably in the evening at the supper table when the whole family is together. When the children are young, mom or dad can do the reading. When the children grow older, they may share in the reading. Reading to children is one of life's greatest joys. Children treasure it.

- > Don't read too much or too fast. One chapter a day is sufficient. Let what you read sink in slowly. If the children are young, read from a Bible story book-one that has pictures which you can show the children.
- > Start with the biographies of Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John).
- > Read with the faith and the expectation that God will really and truly speak to you through what you read.
- > Don't worry about the passages you do not understand. Concentrate on what you do understand. The more you read, the more you will understand. One passage explains another.
- > Each day memorize at least one verse that grips you. Say it out loud as a family three or four times. Encourage your children to fall asleep with this verse on their lips.
- > Get a modern translation. The Revised Standard translation or the one by J. B. Phillips or the translation in paperback "Good News for Modern Man."
- > As you read, try to have an icon of Jesus before you if you are reading the Gospels; one of St. Paul if you are reading his epistles, etc. This will help you realize who it is who is speaking to you.

from *Making God Real in the Orthodox Home*
by Fr. Anthony M. Coniaris / Light & Life Publishing



OUR LENTEN JOURNEY PREPARING FOR THE PASSION & RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD



Great Lent is a time for self-examination and self-denial – a time for taking control of our lives and our bodies. The purpose of the fast is to give us a greater awareness of our dependence on God. It is a time to improve ourselves and our relationship with God.

Lent is a time for greater works of mercy and charity for those less fortunate than us. It is a time for visitation of the sick and assistance to the poor, and generally a more joyful relationship with those who are close to us – our family and friends.

Most of all, Lent is a time of joy and a new beginning. We cleanse ourselves – mind, body and soul – through the physical and spiritual fast, keeping a Christian attitude in all that we do. All this is done to prepare us for the Great Feast of Pascha – the Resurrection of Christ.

This brochure has been compiled to assist you on your Lenten Journey, guiding you in fasting, prayer, repentance & confession, Bible reading and in receiving Holy Communion.

May God bless you and guide you, and may you reach your Paschal destination with the joy of renewed faith in Christ.



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Pastoral Thoughts

"KEEP YOUR FORK"



A woman was diagnosed with a terminal illness and given three months to live. She asked her pastor to come to her home to discuss her final wishes. She told him which songs she wanted sung at her funeral and what scriptures to read and which outfit she wanted to be buried in.

Then she said, "One more thing. I want to be buried with a fork in my hand."

The pastor was surprised. The woman explained, "In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, 'Keep your fork.' It was my favorite time, because I knew something better was coming, like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie... something wonderful! So, I want people to see me there in the casket with a fork in my hand and wonder, 'What's with the fork?' Then, I want you to tell them, 'Keep your fork, because the best is yet to come!'"

The pastor's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he bid the woman goodbye. He realized that she had a better grasp of heaven than he did and knew something better was coming.

At the funeral, when people asked him why she was holding a fork, the pastor told them of the conversation he'd had with the woman before she died. He said he could not stop thinking about the fork and knew they probably would not be thinking about it, either. He was right.

"Keep your fork. The best is yet to come!"

ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ

Η 25^η ΜΑΡΤΙΟΥ, 1821 ΕΙΝΑΙ Η ΗΜΕΡΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΑΝΕΞΑΡΤΗΣΙΑΣ

Δρ. Κώστας Γ. Φούντζουλας

Ο αγώνας των σκλαβωμένων Ελλήνων εναντίον των σκληρών και ανελέητων Οθωμανών Τούρκων, άρχισε επίσημα την 25^η Μαρτίου στην Μονή της Αγίας Λαύρας στα Καλάβρυτα. Ο επίσκοπος Παλαιών Πατρών Γερμανός ύψωσε το λάβαρο της επανάστασης και ευλόγησε τα όπλα των καπεταναίων των επαναστατημένων Ελλήνων. Η έναρξη της επανάστασης συνέπεσε με τον Ευαγγελισμό της Θεοτόκου, μία από τις ιερότερες ημέρες της Ορθοδοξίας. Όμως η επανάσταση των Ελλήνων ή ο ξεσηκωμός του Γένους, όπως αλλιώς είναι γνωστή, είχε αρχίσει την επόμενη ημέρα από της πτώσεως της Κωνσταντινούπολης, 29 Μαΐου 1453, και συνεχίζεται μέχρι τις ημέρες μας. Συγκεκριμένα περίπου 20 αποτυχημένες προσπάθειες προηγήθηκαν της επανάστασης της 25^{ης} Μαρτίου του 1821. Μέσα στα επόμενα 7 χρόνια το 25% των σκλαβωμένων Ελλήνων είχε απελευθερωθεί.

Η πτώση της Κωνσταντινούπολης το 1453 εσήμανε το τέλος της Ανατολικής Ρωμαϊκής Αυτοκρατορίας, φωνητή ως Βυζαντινή Αυτοκρατορία, και την αντικατάστασή της υπό της βαρβάρου και απολιτίστου Οθωμανικής αυτοκρατορίας. Πολλοί Χριστιανοί για να σώσουν το κεφάλι τους και να προστατέουν της οικογένειες τους εξισλαμίσθηκαν (όπως συνέβη με τους Μουσουλμάνους της Βοσνίας).

Κατά την διάρκεια των 400 χρόνων Οθωμανικής κατοχής η παντελής έλλειψη εκπαίδευσης εδημιούργησε Έλληνες προληπτικούς και αμόρφωτους, επιλήσιμους της γλώσσας των και της ιστορίας των. Η ίδια πολιτική εφαρμόζεται σήμερα στους Κούρδους! συστηματική απαγωγή των αρσενικών παιδιών των Χριστιανικών πληθυσμών (παιδομάζωμα), τα οποία εχρησιμοποιήθηκαν δια τον σχηματισμό των απανθρώπων Γεντισάρων, πιστών μόνο στον Σουλτάνο περιορισμένη θρησκευτική ελευθερία είτε δοθεί μόνο στις μειονότητες που είχαν αποδεχθεί τον Σουλτάνο σαν αρχηγό τους και πλήρωναν τους φόρους τους εκκλησίες μετετράπηκαν σε μουσουλμανικά τεμένη (τζαμιά) και εικόνες κατεστρέφοντο (συνήθως τους αφαιρούντο τα μάτια, όπως συμβαίνει εξ' άλλου και σήμερα στο κατεχόμενο, τμήμα της Κύπρου).

Η αντίσταση των σκλαβωμένων Ελλήνων στην καταπίεση, έλλειψη εκπαίδευσης και ελευθερίας χαρακτηρίζεται από τις συνεχείς εξεγέρσεις εναντίον των Τούρκων (Κλέφτες και οι Αρματωλοί) από την μάθηση στοιχειώδους αναγνώσεως και γραφής στα Κρυφά Σχολεία (σε αντιδιαστολή οι υπόλοιποι Ευρωπαίοι δια μέσου της ανακάλυψης των δημοτυχημάτων των αρχαίων Ελλήνων είχαν αρχίσει την αναγέννησή τους μετα απο έναν πολύχρονο Μεσαίωνα) από την υπενθύμιση του ενδόξου παρελθόντος των και της συνεισφοράς των προγόνων των στον κόσμο μέσω των ερεπίων των αρχαίων ναίων και θεάτρων διατηρώντας έτσι την εθνική ταυτότητα τους ζωντανή απο την επιτυχία τους ως εφοπλιστών και εμπόρων (οικονομικοί τομείς όπου οι Τούρκοι δεν είχαν επιτύχει),

μεταφέροντας κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο στην Ελλάδα τις Ευρωπαϊκές ιδέες για δημοκρατία και ελευθερία και ταυτοχρόνως μεταφέροντας τον αγώνα των Ελλήνων για ανεξαρτησία και ανθρωπινή αξιοπρέπεια στους Ευρωπαίους—η συνεισφορά των εμπορικών στόλων των Σπετσών, Ύδρας και Χίου ήταν αποφασιστικής σπουδαιότητας στην επιτυχή έκβαση της επανάστασης



Ο αγώνας των Ελλήνων για ανεξαρτησία συντονίζετο από το εξωτερικό. Οι Έλληνες της Διασποράς ήταν οι στρατηγικοί σχεδιαστές και οικονομικοί παράγοντες της επανάστασης (Φιλική Εταιρεία, Ιερός Λόχος, Υψηλάντης, Κοραής, Καποδίστριας και πολλοί άλλοι) προκάλεσαν το ενδιαφέρον των Ευρωπαίων και Αμερικανών διανοουμένων και Φιλελλήνων (Λόρδος Βύρων, Δρ. Σαμουήλ Χάουσι και Δανιήλ Γουέστερ κ.α.)

Οι σκλαβωμένοι Έλληνες της κυρίως Ελλάδος εσημάτισαν επαναστατικά στρατιωτικά σώμα

τα και εσήκωσαν το μεγαλύτερο βάρος της εξεγέρσεως εναντίον των Οθωμανών Τούρκων. Κολοκοτρώνης, Καραϊσκάκης, Παπφλέσσας, Ανδρουτσός, Μπότσαρης, Μπουμπουλίνα και Μιαούλης είναι ονόματα μερικών ηρώων και στρατιωτικών ηγετών του αγώνα υπέφεραν τις περισσότερες συνέπειες του αγώνα (καταστροφή των Ψαρών και της Χίου) απέδειξαν στους σκλαβωμένους κατοίκους της Χερσονήσου του Αίμου (Βαλκάνια) ότι ο πολυάριθμος Οθωμανικός στρατός δεν ήταν ανίκητος κατέφεραν με την αυτοθυσία τους και τον ηρωισμό τους (Σούλι, Μανιάκι, Αλαμάνια, Μεσολόγγι) σημαντικές νίκες κατα των Τούρκων, απελευθερώνοντας έτσι μέσα σε 2 χρόνια την Αττική, Πελοπόννησο και Στερεά Ελλάδα, τα οποία απετέλεσαν το 1823 το πρώτο ελεύθερο Ελληνικό κράτος ανάγκασαν τους συμμάχους να νικήσουν τον Τουρκικό στόλο στο Ναβαρίνο το 1828, επιταχύνοντας έτσι την πτώση της Οθωμανικής αυτοκρατορίας.

Οι Έλληνες είχαν χαρακτηριστεί από τους Αυστριακούς ιδιαίτερα σαν επαναστάτες ή τρομοκράτες με τα σημερινά δεδομένα. Παρ' όλα ταύτα ο αγώνας τους ενέπνευσε πολλούς Φιλέλληνες, οι οποίοι έδωσαν την ζωή τους για τον δίκαιο αγώνα τους. Αξιοσημείωτο είναι ότι υπήρχαν Φιλέλληνες απ' όλη την Ευρώπη πλην της Αυστρίας και της Τσαρικής Ρωσίας.

Ο αγώνας των Ελλήνων δια Ανεξαρτησία τελικώς επέφερε την πτώση της Οθωμανικής Αυτοκρατορίας τη απελευθέρωση των σκλαβωμένων Βαλκανίων (Χερσονήσος του Αίμου) απο τον Οθωμανικό ζυγό—Οι Έλληνες ήταν οι μόνοι που επολέμησαν τους Οθωμανούς Τούρκους στα Βαλκάνια, κάτι που οι Τούρκοι δεν εληφρόνησαν ποτέ, και την δημιουργία του συγχρόνου Ελληνικού Κράτους, το οποίο είναι μιά όασις ειρήνης, δημοκρατίας και σταθερότητας, όχι μόνο στα Βαλκάνια αλλά και στην ευρύτερη περιοχή της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου.

ΖΗΤΩ Η 25Η ΜΑΡΤΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ 1821!!!

K O I N O N I A

THE 25TH OF MARCH, 1821 IS THE GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

By Dr. Costas G. Fountzoulas

The struggle of the enslaved Greeks against their ruthless rulers, the Ottoman Turks, officially started on the 25th of March 1821 in the monastery of Hagia Lavra, Kalavryta. Germanos,



the Annunciation of the Theotokos. Unofficially though, the revolution of the Hellenes against the Ottoman Turks started one day after the fall of Constantinople on the 29th of May 1453, and continues until today. However, about 20 actual unsuccessful uprisings took place before the 1821 revolution that managed to liberate about 25% of the Hellenes residing in the Ottoman empire.

The culturally superior Hellenic world, as represented by the Eastern Roman Empire, also known as Byzantine Empire, in 1453, fell to the nomadic Asian Turk, and further failed to civilize and assimilate this new conqueror as it had previously done with the Romans. The Moslem Turk adopted the material part of the Byzantines but not its Hellenic intellectual and cultural heritage. Under penalty of death, no Turk could be Christianized but many Christians, for their survival, converted to Islam. Thus, the probability that many of today's Turks are descended from the Greeks is high.

During the 400 years of Ottoman occupation complete lack of schooling resulted in illiterate, superstitious and ignorant



Hellenes (especially in their culture, history and language). Interestingly, the same Turkish policy continues today with the Kurds! systematic abduction of Christian children forming the infamous and cruel Jenisaries, faithful only to Sultan

? moderate religious freedom was granted to those minorities who accepted the Sultan as their despotic leader and paid their taxes churches were turned into mosques and icons were destroyed (usually by poking out the eyes of the depicted saints, as it is happening in the conquered north part of Cyprus today, at the end of the 20th century).

However, the Hellenes living in the occupied Hellas reacted to the oppression, lack of education and freedom by continuous uprisings against their Ottoman overlords (kleftes and armatoloi were a continuous headache for the Turks) obtaining elementary education in the Hidden Schools (for reading and writing only), formed and covertly operated by the church (at the same time the Europeans, through the discovery of Hellenic classics, began the renaissance, after many centuries of darkness) always being reminded of their glorious past and the contribution of their an-

cestors to the world by the surrounding ruins of ancient temples, theaters and stadia; thus keeping their historical identity alive becoming successful international ship owners and merchants (Turks were not very successful as sea merchants, thus bringing the European ideas of democracy and freedom back to the enslaved Hellenes and at the same time informing the Europeans of their struggle (AGON) for independence and human dignity—the contributions of the fleet of Spetses, Hydra and Chios were of extreme importance to the success of the revolution).

The struggle of the Hellenes for independence was coordinated from abroad. The Hellenes of Diaspora were the strategic and financial brains behind the revolution (Secret Society of Friends [Filiki Eteria], Sacred Band [Ieros Lohos], Ypsilandis, Koraes, Kapodistrias and many others raised the interest of the European and American intellectuals and Phil-Hellenes (Lord Byron, Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, and Daniel Webster to name a few).

The Hellenes of mainland Hellas formed military groups and carried out most of the burden of the fighting against the Ottoman Turks in Hellas; Kolokotronis, Karaiskakis, Papaflessas, Androutsos, Botsaris, Bouboulina, and Miaoulis were some of the heroes and military leaders suffered most of the consequences of their revolution against the Turks (burning of Chios and Psara) proved to the enslaved peoples of the Balkans (Aemos peninsula) that the Ottoman army was not invincible through their determination and self-sacrifice (Souli, Alamana, Messologi, Maniaki) they achieved significant victories over the Turks, thus liberating within 2 years Attica, Peloponnese and Sterea Ellas, which comprised in 1823 the first free Hellenic State forced the allied victory at the battle of Navarino, 1828, thus accelerating the demise of the Ottoman Empire.

The Holy Alliance, comprised of Austria, Russia, England, France, and Germany, tried to put an end to the revolution. The revolting Hellenes had been characterized, mainly by the Austrians, as agitators or terrorists using today's language. However, their fight for independence inspired many Europeans Phil-Hellenes, who gave their life for their righteous struggle. It is worth mentioning that there were Phil-Hellenes from every European nation except Austria and Czarist Russia (however, the Ieros Lohos (Sacred Band) was formed in Russia).

The struggle of the Hellenes for Independence eventually resulted in the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the liberation of the enslaved Balkans (Haemus Peninsula) from the Ottoman yoke—it is also worth mentioning that the only people in the Balkans who fought against the Ottoman Turks were the Hellenes, something never forgotten by the contemporary Turks, and the creation of the contemporary Hellas State, an oasis of peace, democracy and stability, not only in the Balkans but in the Eastern Mediterranean as well.

LONG LIVE THE 25TH OF MARCH 1821 !!!



\$tewardship or Stewardship?

A Reflection on Orthodox Christian Stewardship
by Father Harry Pappas



Unfortunately, when most of us hear or read the word “Stewardship,” we instinctively think of it spelled as “\$tewardship,” a code word for giving money to church. It may be politely asked for. It may be clothed in pious language. It may be linked to giving of time and talents. But, in the end, stewardship still means, for most of us: “I must give some of my money so that we can operate the church.”

However, we may have not yet learned to spell this key word as “Stewardship.” The Bible from beginning to end identifies what we now call stewardship as *a way of life centered on God*. And for Christians, this means discipleship centered on *Jesus Christ as Crucified and Risen Lord*. The cross thus dramatically signifies both our identity as *disciples of Christ* and our calling to *a life of sacrificial giving* directed toward God, others, and all creation.

Many people know how to raise money. There are professional experts who work full time. There are more opinions and ideas than parishes know what to do with. And, in fact, raising funds has become a favorite American pastime for public and private schools, political parties, charitable organizations, and legions of athletic and recreational activities. Who needs another fund-raising campaign when we are already inundated with them!

But while there are legions of experts, opinions, and efforts, how many of us are genuinely committed to Christ and the Church and have learned a sound teaching about stewardship based upon Holy Scripture?

In the Old Testament, our Hebrew ancestors based their very existence upon what God had first done for them: through the promises given to the patriarch Abraham, the sacred covenant at Sinai given through Moses, and messianic kingship through David. Since God was their Creator, Savior, and King, ancient Israel worshiped him regularly and on special feast days. They considered the very land upon which they lived as a precious gift from God, and not the result of their own hard work or of their pious virtue. This meant that all products of their livelihood ultimately belonged to God. The biblical tithe (10%) meant that the first and best portion of these material assets were to be returned to God for support of the sanctuary or temple, the ordained ministers, and various human needs (including charity). The rest (90%) was not to be used as each person decided, but rather according to the will of God through each person’s family, home, and vocation. Further, as emphasized by the prophets like Amos and Isaiah, the people of God were to seek justice and righteousness in all their relationships –through business, commerce, legal courts, government, and society. In particular, ancient Israel was to protect, support, and advocate for the poor, oppressed, and weakest members of society.

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ affirmed this Old Testament stewardship as a way of life based upon God’s gracious salvation and his natural gifts through creation. He clearly approved of worship, of tithing, of seeking justice and righteousness in all

human relationships, and of service especially to the poor, oppressed, and needy. However, Jesus went way beyond these in offering himself as the perfect steward of God's gracious gifts by his voluntary suffering and death on a cross. In this event, he exemplified that true sacrifice for the sake of others has absolutely no limits. The one who truly loves God and passionately seeks the truth is called to die to self, take up the cross of unjust suffering, and be prepared to live and even die for others, especially those who are hardened in sin and blinded by ingratitude.

In the Church, everyone is called to be a disciple of Christ. This involves conversion – an inward turning of mind and heart toward Christ – and a conscious and deliberate commitment to follow the Lord, no matter what the cost. And true Christian stewardship springs very naturally from such faith and obedience, since it recognizes God as the origin of life, the giver of salvation, and the source of all blessings, visible and invisible. The deeper the conversion and commitment to Christ, the deeper the thanksgiving for these spiritual and material gifts that we have received, and the greater the readiness to use them to show our love for God and those around us.

Jesus Christ sets the true standard of Christian stewardship by which we can measure ourselves. Our stewardship of the good news of salvation should be shown in the following ways:

- *Creation* - joyful appreciation for the wonder and beauty of nature; protection and preservation of the environment; bringing the gifts of creation to the Church for blessing (altar bread, wine, fruits, oil, incense, etc.); development of the material world through holy work (physical labor, professions, arts and sciences); respect for and protection of the sanctity of human life from conception to death.
- *Vocation* - fulfillment of our God-given calling in life as married or single people, adult or child, working or retired, clergy or laity, to extend the love and truth of God in Christ to those around us.
- *Church* - becoming active participants in working out our salvation as members of the Orthodox Church through the Christian nurture of children, regular worship and fellowship; spiritual formation through on-going education; service to one another and to the poor, sick, and needy; cooperating to make our parish a vibrant source of faith and work; and supporting Metropolitan, Archdiocesan, and international ministries that link us to the worldwide Church.

In a culture that frequently encourages us to focus on ourselves, Jesus Christ challenges us to reorient our priorities according to the Kingdom of God breaking into this world. The antidote to greed and selfishness, even when it is masked by religious piety, is genuine repentance and conversion toward Christian stewardship as a new way of living. And what joy there is now for those who turn toward God, learning and living as stewards of the manifold grace that has been offered to us through Christ in the Church!

Fr. Harry Pappas serves as Proestamenos of St. Mary's (Kimisis) Greek Orthodox Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



DEPARTMENT OF STEWARDSHIP AND PASTORAL RESOURCES

Further Stewardship information can be found in the Stewardship section of the Archdiocesan website goarch.org.



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QUESTION & ANSWER:

WHAT IS OUR TRUE PURPOSE IN LIFE??

This is a story about a man called Serapion. He was an Egyptian Hermit who was filled with the gift of philanthropy. He was seen many times to be dressed just in a white sheet because he gave all of his clothes to the needy people. This is why he was called (the sheet man) in Greek "Sindonios). During that time Serapion was sold in slavery to an idolotrist actor for 20 pieces of silver. From the first day Serapion dedicated his life to his master and his family. He worked very hard and his everyday meal was bread and water. Even though we would think that he was mistreated, Serapion was always thankful for what he received. Serapion believed that while he worked it was an honor for him to pray to God while he did his chores. The words from Scripture never left his mind or his lips.

Serapion had a purpose in life and that purpose was to bring this idolistic family to see the Light of Christianity. Through his prayers he did reach that goal. The family saw his true belief and faith, and with that example, the whole family accepted Christianity through Baptism. After that phase the family left their occupation and began a new life, a life in Christ.

One day the master told Serapion that he would give him his freedom because of what he did to his family to bring them closer to God. That moment joy came to his heart but after Serapion received his freedom he told his master thank you but then he told him that he would gladly volunteer to be a slave in other household so he could show them the way to the Lord. So he went away and became a slave to another family with the thought of bringing them also to see the light of Christ. It is told that he brought the second family also back to God.

So this is the story of Serapion who gave his life for the sake of others. This is a wonderful story of a man who could have led his life in a different direction, but chose to endure a hard and thankless life to be an example to others.

We talk about purpose, Serapion had a purpose in his life and he fulfilled it. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was so certain of His purpose, that He predicted when and how He would die. We acknowledge what Jesus' purpose was, but now we have to define "WHAT OUR PURPOSE IS". If we truly accept what Christ has done for us, what are we giving back in return? Every year, the Church gives us an opportunity to change our ways in life. That's why the celebration of Pascha comes to us every year reminding us, that if we encountered mistakes during the year, we have the opportunity to mend our ways, ask forgiveness, just like Christ did on the Cross, and receive His full compassion and remission of our sins, in order to straighten out our lives.

Look what the months of March, April, & May bring to us every year. They give us the time to reflect on what is truly our purpose in life. If we call ourselves Christian, then our purpose in life should be to follow in the footsteps of Christ. If we take the example of Serapion his purpose was to bring as many people to Christ. That should also be our purpose in life, but first, we must prepare ourselves in the ways of the Lord, before we can begin to bring people to the Light of Christ. We must get rid of the old baggage that has hindered our lives for so long and realize that all God wants from us is a simple relationship and a true friendship with Him. God wants to be involved in our lives in a big way. He wants us to bare our problems, our sorrows and our joys to Him. He wants to be a part of our everyday life because when we think of Him we are on the right track. When we don't think of Him, then we are heading down to the path of destruction. So let's not forget what the word "Pascha" really means, it is

the right road to salvation. Serapion chose the right road to salvation, the Question here is? WHICH ROAD ARE WE GOING TO CHOOSE FOR OUR SALVATION? This is a decision that we will all have to make someday.

I realize that we are now in the heart of the Great Lenten Period, and our spiritual journey through Holy Week is coming very quickly. We will once again be witnessing His Passions, His Crucifixion, His Resurrection, and finally His Ascension. The Holy Pascha celebrates the promise of life in the face of death. Let us ask our Lord, to bring peace to our souls and forgiveness. Let's make this "Pascha" a special Day for behold, through the Cross, joy has come to the whole world. May you have a Blessed Pascha.



church NEWS

All our local and seasonal members and visitors are invited to register and enroll in our parish for the 2024 membership and join in weekly worship and to support our parish “Stewardship Program” and ministries. The annual minimum enrollment offering is \$750 per family, and \$500 for single people. Please complete the parish membership registry forms that are available in the Narthex. Families that are in arrears are invited to reinstate their membership and participation in our parish life and ministries.

donation opportunity

The Parish Council would like to bring to your attention the Golden Leaf Giving Tree. Very few have participated in this memorable way to create ***a lifetime tribute for generations to see and enjoy***. Please take the time to view this lovely Giving Tree and consider displaying your family’s name, a remembrance of a loved one or an achievement. We would like to see the tree grow with more care and love!



SIGHTS & SOUNDS

2024 YOUTH ARTS FESTIVAL

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION

Saturday, April 13, 2024

St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church

229 Powell Lane, Upper Darby, PA 19082



SIGHTS & SOUNDS 2024 YOUTH ARTS FESTIVAL TIMELINE

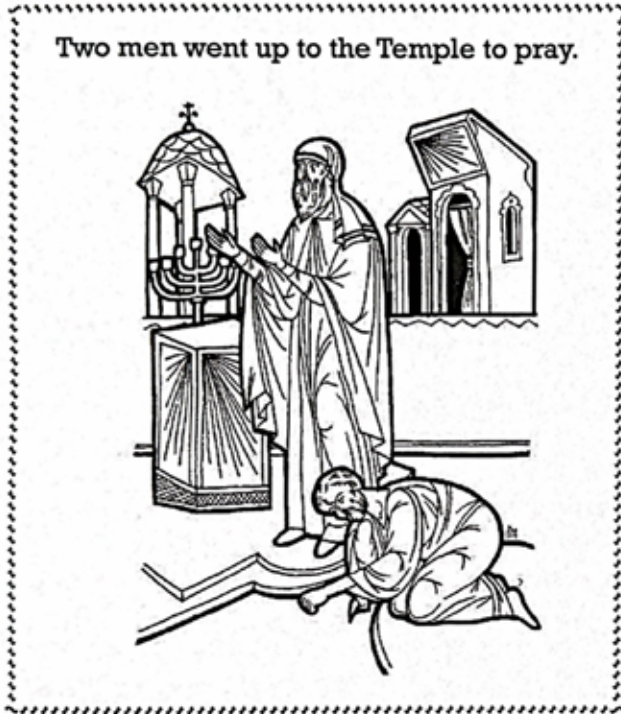
For boxes with **, advisors need to set internal deadlines earlier than the final dates listed in the *Advisor Packet*.

January 2, 2024	Approximately 15 weeks before the event: Registration forms and packets distributed to advisors of each parish. Packet includes rules, requirements, categories of participation and deadlines. Each parish is requested to submit names of two (2) GOYA Advisors who are designated as official parish contacts.
**	Deadline for Parish Registration Forms & Fees for all participants. Submit to: St. Thomas Greek Orthodox Church ATTN: Iliana Giouvannoulis / Sights & Sounds Registration 229 Powell Lane Upper Darby, PA 19082
**	Deadline for submission of Literary entries. All entries must be submitted to your own Advisor/Parish priest for review, then postmarked and mailed by this date to Literature Committee: St. Luke Greek Orthodox Church ATTN: Chrissy Katsapis / S+S Literature Committee 35 N. Malin Road, Broomall, PA 19008
March 21, 2024	Deadline for submission of "SOUNDS" SPREADSHEET —submit online to: DVYCSightsandSounds@gmail.com (Spreadsheet to be provided)
March 28, 2024	Deadline to submit "Memory Book" forms and payment to Memory Book Committee: St. George Greek Orthodox Church ATTN: John Galiatsatos / S+S Memory Book 30 E. Forge Road, Media, PA 19063
**	All "SIGHTS" entries properly labeled MUST be delivered to St. Demetrios, Upper Darby, PA. Advisors should deliver only items that have been <u>pre-approved by parish priests</u> . ONLY bring items that meet all rules for category; authenticity; appropriate and acceptable content; correctly matted or mounted, etc. IF SIGHTS ARE NOT PROPERLY LABELED, THEY WILL NOT BE DISPLAYED OR JUDGED.
April 4, 2024	Deadline for submission of "SIGHTS" SPREADSHEET —submit online to: DVYCSightsandSounds@gmail.com (Spreadsheet to be provided)
April 4, 2024	1st draft of 'SOUNDS' schedule will be distributed at DVYC meeting at St. Demetrios, Upper Darby, PA.
April 8, 2024	Deadline/final notice to withdraw from 'SOUND' entries.
April 9, 2024	1) Delivery of CAKE entries to St. Demetrios. Deliveries will be accepted all day up until 7:00 pm. Other times may be arranged by special appointment. 2) Final 'SOUNDS' schedule will be distributed. 3) "SIGHTS" display set up at St. Demetrios
April 10, 2024	Judging of the 'SIGHTS' categories will take place. The annual Judges Reception will be held at 7:00pm for all Clergy, Parish Council Presidents and Youth Commission members at St. Demetrios, Upper Darby, PA
April 13, 2024	DVYC SIGHTS AND SOUNDS 2023 – St. Demetrios, Upper Darby, PA

Children's Corner

More available on stdemetriosnewjersey.com!

Courtesy of Presvytera Alexandra Houck



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2024 Alexandra Houck. Email is [orthodoxchildrensword\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:orthodoxchildrensword(at)gmail.com). Find it each week at myocn.net.

The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

Sunday, February 25, 2024 Volume 12, Issue 8

A Ministry of the Orthodox Christian Network

Be proud?

Has anybody ever told you to "be proud"? Sometimes people tell us to be proud of something we have or something we've done. When you win a medal or a trophy, somebody might tell you to "be proud of yourself." But is being proud a good thing?



Let's try to work for the real trophy!

In today's Gospel reading, we hear about two men. One of them was very proud of himself. He's the one who told God all the great things he had done. He had fasted and prayed. He had given money to the poor. He's the one who talked and talked, all proud of himself. The other man didn't say anything like that. He just asked, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" Do you know? The Gospel tells us to be like that second man—the one who was so humble.

Sometimes we hear one thing at church, and then we hear another thing everywhere else, don't we? In the Bible and at church and maybe at home, we hear how we should be humble. We hear how we should say, "Lord, have mercy!" But everywhere else, people tell us to be proud. They tell us, "You're the best!" They might tell us to show off! Let's remember this story from the Bible. Let's remember that God wants us to be like the second man, not the first man. And you can even remember one more thing: Even Jesus, our Lord God, was humble too!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Bishop
- Brooklyn
- Gospel
- Humility
- Missionary
- Pharisee
- Prayer
- Prideful
- Publican
- Raphael
- Temple

N T T H L P A T L G U P H P S
Y E B P K G A B B E Y A H C L
L M M Y N P L Q Z R A A C X I
K P Q O C U J I A T R H W A K
O L W G C B G N H I X N P V Z
O E P K Z L O A S X T X G A X
R G R G Q I T E M B I J G J R
B T G S S C E Y T I L I M U H
M M L S X A U F R G I X P U I
D T I Y F N I C M G O R X F K
F M L U F E D I R P A S I S A
B I S H O P F P Z Y M P P S M
U V R C V Z G D E C U K Z E W
B M W S X Z I R A Q G K D R L
K Z N M M Y O L L T D Y P V S

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

The saint on the right is Saint Raphael. Can you find the church he is holding?

This shows that Saint Raphael helped build up the Orthodox Church here in our own country.



THE SAINT FROM BROOKLYN SAINT RAPHAEL



St. Raphael of Brooklyn

Have you ever been to New York City? Did you know we have an American saint from Brooklyn?

St. Raphael was born in Lebanon, and when he became a priest, the tsar in Russia sent him to America to take care of the Orthodox here. In 1904, St. Raphael became the very first person to become a bishop in America.

As a bishop, St. Raphael worked hard to serve the Church. He started 30 Orthodox churches here! He opened the cathedral in New York called St. Nicholas Cathedral. He also helped start a monastery in Pennsylvania—St. Tikhon's Monastery.



Now, when you travel throughout America, you can always find an Orthodox church to visit. But when St. Raphael lived in this country, that wasn't true! He traveled all the way across the country and visited 30 different cities between New York and San Francisco, California. Many of the Orthodox people living in this country did not have a church to go to. He baptized lots of people, married them, and served Liturgy wherever he went.

We remember St. Raphael of Brooklyn because he did so much to start the Orthodox Church here in America.

We celebrate Saint Raphael on Tuesday, February 27th (OC: March 12th).



APOKRIATIKO GLENDI GREEK MARDI GRAS

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2024
6PM

HONORING JOHN LYNCH

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CGS: VIRGINIA (2 SESSIONS)

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