



# KOINONIA

NEWSLETTER OF  
ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH  
North Wildwood, NJ

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## GREEK SCHOOL INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION



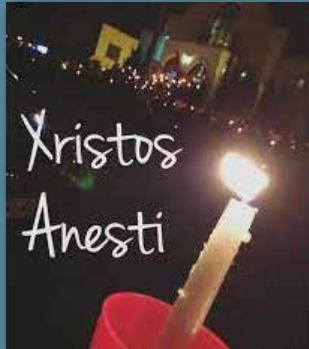
*The children of St. Demetrios Greek School celebrate March 25th with a traditional dance.*

*See more on pg. 11*



# a letter from

FR. MICHAEL L. PASTRIKOS  
PROTOPRESBYTER



## CHRIST IS RISEN!! TRULY HE IS RISEN!!

On behalf of the entire Community of St. Demetrios, I greet you with the words - CHRIST IS RISEN!

All through the Great Lenten Period and Holy Week, we relived the events of our Lord's Passions and Resurrection. It was so wonderful to see our church filled with our beautiful parishioners, visitors, and friends through the 40 day Lenten journey. I would like to take this great opportunity to thank all of our faithful parishioners who gave up their precious time to help out with all the events that the church went through during the Pascal season. Also to those who gave with their hearts and donated all the items that were needed throughout the Lenten Period and especially throughout the Holy Week services. Thank all of you who donated the beautiful flower arrangements, the Pascal Candle, the Easter Lilies, the Crucifixion and Resurrection Wreaths. Thank you to the Ladies Philoptochos society for decorating the amazing Epitaphio, as well as the young men of our parish who carried the Epitaphio through the streets of North Wildwood. These are unforgettable moments, and they should stay close to our hearts forever.

We gathered in the church throughout Holy Week to come to the climax and celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Through Holy Week we walked together through the pages of the New Testament. We witnessed together and watched as we re-enacted the Passions of our Lord. We were there at Bethany, when Jesus commanded Lazarus to come out from the tomb; we were there when Jesus came to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. How thousands of people came to greet Him and put down Palm branches along the road. How people cheered "Hosanna". We witnessed the betrayal of Judas in the Garden; we witnessed the beating and the suffering of our Lord in the hands of the Romans. We witnessed the hatred of the Jews towards Christ. After all Christ did for mankind especially to the Jews, they rewarded Him with Crucifixion. We witnessed together Christ nailed to the Cross. We witnessed His pain and suffering, when He cried out "I Thirst", My God My God why have you forsaken

Me? We listened to the words of Christ when He bowed His head and said: "It is Finished" and "Father into the hands I commit my Spirit". We watched as His body was taken from the Cross by Joseph of Arimatheas, and he put his body in the Tomb. All their hopes and dreams were buried with Him. Holy Friday and Holy Saturday, they mourned their Savior until finally on the First day of the Week, early in the morning as we Orthodox celebrate the First Resurrection on Holy Saturday morning. The women woke up early that morning and went to the tomb to anoint Christ's body, but when they arrived they found that the huge stone had already been rolled away. As an angel told them, "You're looking in the wrong place. If you're looking for Jesus among the dead, He is not dead He is alive, He is risen. This is what we celebrate today as Orthodox Christians, that truly Christ is Risen.

The 15th Chapter of 1 Corinthians is the great resurrection chapter. Verses 1-8 St. Paul writes: "Now brothers, I want to remind you of the Gospel I preached to you which you received and on which you have taken your stand". The question here is, "DO YOU BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED, AND ROSE FROM THE DEAD!" You might ask? Did anyone see Him after His death? Answer: Of course they did? The Myrrhbearing women who went to the Tomb and found it empty as scriptures says. He appeared to Peter and then to His 12 Disciples. He appeared to more than 500 brothers at the sametime before He ascended. He appeared to James, and He appeared to Cleopas and Nathaniel on the road to Emmaus. The list could go on and on but I will stop here, because I want to focus on something also very important.

When we say "Christ is Risen" these words must fill our hearts with joy and to affirm within ourselves that we believe in someone who as God and Man smashed the domain of death and showed us the path to salvation and eternal life. So if what we just read gives us the opportunity to truly believe that Christ died on the Cross for us so that we can have eternal life with Him, then if we follow Him we made the right decision and chose the path of Christ, leading us to a wonderful life that never ends. But this also means that if we accept this path there is a lot of faith and works to be done if we want to reach that goal that Christ set out for us. If you follow this recipe, you're on your way to eternal life with Christ.

We need to have Faith, Works, Love, Obedience, Sacramental life, Truth, Forgiveness, Bearing Fruit, Perseverance, and last we must Practice and be true doers of the Word of God. If you follow this recipe then you are on your way to a better life in this world and in the world to come.

In conclusion Let us worship Him, the Lord of Life and Death. The Lord who is Risen and who bestows Resurrection upon all creation. He is the "Bread of Life" who has come down from Heaven and who has given life to the world. Let us also glorify God with Thanksgiving and with great joy. Let us greet each other everyday with the Holy Kiss, repeating for the next 40 days until His Ascension: **"THAT CHRIST IS RISEN, AND THAT HE IS TRULY RISEN." Amen.**



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA  
ARCHEPISCOPAL & SYNODICAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 79/2024

**Archepiscopal & Synodical Encyclical  
for the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross**

April 7, 2024

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and entirety of the Christ-loving Plenitude of the Sacred Archdiocese of America:

*Καὶ τὰ φύλλα τοῦ Ξύλου εἰς θεραπείαν τῶν ἐθνῶν. (Ἀποκάλυψις 22:2)*  
*And the leaves of the Tree were for the healing of the Nations. (Revelation 22:2)*

Beloved sisters and brothers in Christ,

In the midway point of the Holy Lent, we arrive at the oasis of the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross. Now the Tree of the Cross overshadows us with its healing leaves and fruits, and the flowers with which we adorn It in the Divine Service reflect Its lively glory. The Cross, once an instrument of suffering and death, has become the Tree of Eternal Life, and we are invited to share in Its mission of redemption and salvation. It is because of this mission that the Holy Eparchial Synod has decided to that an Encyclical should be issued every year for Feast of the Veneration of the Holy Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord calls each and every one of us to pick up our own cross and follow Him, to walk the path of self-sacrificial love that led Him to Golgotha and to the Garden Tomb. This invitation is for every Christian, whether we have fully understand that call or not. Those who aspire to the Holy Priesthood through the laying on of hands often tell of hearing a distinct calling, which is named a “vocation.” They feel they are being summoned to serve Christ and His Church as clergy, and so they work with their local





priest and Hierarch, and find their way to our beloved Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology, to pursue studies that lead to ordination. We should all encourage this noble and indeed sacred pursuit, and fill Hellenic College and Holy Cross with candidates to serve the future generations of our Church in America.

In this season of the Great Lent, when our fasting is to be augmented by almsgiving, let us all strive to dedicate an offering to our beloved Theological School, and give tangible, financial support those who are answering the call of the Lord in their very specific mission. Those who choose to take up the cross of service in the Holy Priesthood – whether they are called to be Deacons, Presbyters, or Hierarchs – are called to a lifelong sacrifice of their will, and they surely merit our support and our appreciation.

Therefore, let us answer the call of the Lord today as best as we are able, and enter into the oasis of the Veneration of the Holy Cross. There, we will find refreshment and healing from the Tree of Eternal Life, and find the strength to continue our Lenten journey to the Great and Holy Pascha.

With paternal love in Christ,

+ELPIDOPHOROS  
Archbishop of America

Methodios Metropolitan of Boston

Alexios Metropolitan of Atlanta

Nicholas Metropolitan of Detroit

Savas Metropolitan of Pittsburgh

Gerasimos Metropolitan of San Francisco

Apostolos Metropolitan of New Jersey

Nathanael Metropolitan of Chicago



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ  
ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΟΔΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Αριθμ. Πρωτ. 79/2024

**Αρχιεπισκοπική Έγκυκλιος για την την Κυριακή της Σταυροπροσκυνήσεως.**

7 Απριλίου 2024

Πρὸς τοὺς Σεβασμιωτάτους καὶ Θεοφιλεστάτους Ἀρχιερεῖς, τοὺς Εὐλαβεστάτους Ἱερεῖς καὶ Διακόνους, τοὺς Μοναχοὺς καὶ τὶς Μοναχές, τοὺς Προέδρους καὶ τὰ Μέλη τῶν Κοινοτικῶν Συμβουλίων, τοὺς Ἐντιμολογιωτάτους Ἀρχοντες τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου, τὰ μέλη τῆς Ἡγεσίας τῶν 100, τὰ Ἡμερήσια καὶ Απογευματινὰ Σχολεῖα, τὶς Φιλοπτώχους Ἀδελφότητες, τὴ Νεολαία, τὶς Ἑλληνορθόδοξες Ὁργανώσεις καὶ ὁλόκληρο τὸ Χριστεπώνυμο πλήρωμα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀμερικῆς.

**«Καὶ τὰ φύλλα τοῦ ξύλου εἰς θεραπείαν τῶν ἐθνῶν» (Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰωάννου 22:2).**

Προσφιλεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἀδελφές ἐν Χριστῷ,

Στὸ μέσον τῆς Ἀγίας καὶ Μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστῆς, ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας ἔχει τοποθετήσει τὴν ὁαση τῆς Κυριακῆς τῆς Σταυροπροσκυνήσεως. Σήμερα τὸ ξύλο τοῦ Σταυροῦ μᾶς ἐπισκιάζει μὲ τὰ θεραπευτικά του φύλλα καὶ τοὺς καρπούς, ἐνῶ τὰ ἄνθη μὲ τὰ ὅποια τὸ προσκυνοῦμε στὶς ἱερὲς ἀκολουθίες ἀντανακλοῦν τὴν ζῶσα δόξα του. Ὁ σταυρός, ἀπὸ ὄργανο βασανισμοῦ καὶ θανάτου, γίνεται τὸ δένδρο τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς. Καλούμαστε σήμερα νὰ μετᾶσχουμε σὲ αὐτὴ τὴν πορεία λύτρωσης καὶ σωτηρίας ποὺ μᾶς δείχνει ὁ ζωοποιὸς Σταυρός. Αὐτὸς εἶναι καὶ ὁ λόγος γιὰ τὸν ὅποιο ἡ Ἱερὰ Ἐπαρχιακὴ Σύνοδος ἀποφάσισε νὰ ἐκδίδει κάθε χρόνο Ἐγκύκλιο, κατὰ τὴν Κυριακὴ τῆς Προσκυνήσεως τοῦ Τιμίου καὶ ζωοποιοῦ Σταυροῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Ὁ Κύριος προσκαλεῖ τὸν καθέναν ἀπὸ ἐμᾶς, «νὰ ἄρει τὸ σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ νὰ τὸν ἀκολουθήσει». Νὰ βαδίσουμε δηλαδὴ στὸ ἴδιο μονοπάτι τῆς ἀγάπης καὶ τῆς θυσίας ποὺ βάδισε ὁ ἴδιος πρὸς τὸ Γολγοθᾶ καὶ τὸν τάφο. Ἡ πρόσκληση αὐτὴ ἀπευθύνεται πρὸς κάθε χριστιανό, εἴτε ἔχουμε ἀντιληφθεῖ αὐτὴ τὴν κλήση εἴτε ὄχι. Μία ἰδιαίτερη «κλήση» νιώθουν ὅσοι ποθοῦν τὴν ἱερωσύνη διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν. Νιώθουν νὰ προσκαλοῦνται νὰ ὑπηρετήσουν τὸ Χριστὸ καὶ τὴν Ἐκκλησία του ὡς κληρικοί. Ἐτσι, ἀφοῦ συμβουλευτοῦν τὸν ἱερέα τῆς ἐνορίας τους καὶ τὸν ἱεράρχη τους, κατευθύνονται πρὸς τὸ ἀγαπημένο μας Ἑλληνικὸ Κολλέγιο καὶ τὴ Θεολογικὴ Σχολὴ τοῦ Τιμίου



Σταυροῦ, γιὰ νὰ κάνουν τὶς σπουδὲς ποὺ ὀδηγοῦν στὴ χειροτονία. Εἶναι ἀδήριτη ἀνάγκη νὰ ἐνθαρρύνουμε ὅλοι μας τὸν εὐγενῆ αὐτὸ στόχο καὶ νὰ γεμίσουμε τὸ Ἑλληνικὸ Κολλέγιο καὶ τὴν Θεολογικὴ Σχολὴ τοῦ Τιμίου Σταυροῦ μὲ ὑποψηφίους κληρικούς ποὺ θὰ διακονήσουν τὶς ἐπόμενες γεννεές τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας στὴν Ἀμερική.

Κατὰ τὴν περίοδο τῆς Μ. Τεσσαρακοστῆς, ὅπου ἡ νηστεία μας ἐξυψώνεται μὲ τὴν ἐλεημοσύνη, ἃς προσπαθήσουμε ὅλοι μας νὰ κάνουμε μία προσφορὰ στὴν ἀγαπημένη μας Θεολογικὴ Σχολή, δίδοντας ἀπτὴ οἰκονομικὴ ὑποστήριξη σὲ ὅσους ἀνταποκρίνονται στὴν ἱερατικὴ κλήση τοῦ Κυρίου. Αὐτοὶ ποὺ ἀνέλαβαν νὰ ἄρουν τὸν σταυρὸ τῆς διακονίας ὡς κληρικοί, εἴτε ὡς διάκονοι, ὡς πρεσβύτεροι ἢ ὡς ἀρχιερεῖς, καλοῦνται διὰ βίου νὰ θυσιάσουν τὸ προσωπικὸ τους θέλημα καὶ σίγουρα ἀξίζουν τὴν ὑποστήριξη καὶ τὴν ἐκτίμησή μας.

Ἄς ἀνταπακριθοῦμε λοιπὸν σήμερα θετικὰ στὸ κάλεσμα τοῦ Κυρίου κατὰ δύναμιν ὁ καθένας, γιὰ νὰ εἰσέλθουμε καὶ νὰ δροσισθοῦμε στὴν ὁδὸ τῆς προσκυνήσεως τοῦ Τιμίου Σταυροῦ. Ἐκεῖ θὰ βροῦμε τὴν ἀναψυχὴ καὶ τὴν θεραπεία ποὺ πηγάζει ἀπὸ τὸ Δένδρο τῆς Αἰωνίου Ζωῆς, ἀλλὰ καὶ δύναμη νὰ συνεχίσουμε τὸ πνευματικὸ μας ταξίδι τῆς Μ. Τεσσαρακοστῆς πρὸς τὸ Ἅγιο Πάσχα.

Μετὰ πατρικῶν εὐχῶν καὶ τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγάπης,

*† ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐλπιδοφόρος*

† ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐλπιδοφόρος

† ὁ Βοστώνης Μεθόδιος

† ὁ Ἀτλάντας Ἀλέξιος

† ὁ Νιτιτρόϊτ Νικόλαος

† ὁ Πιττσβούργου Σάββας

† ὁ Ἁγίου Φραγκίσκου Γεράσιμος

† ὁ Νέας Ἱερσέης Απόστολος

† ὁ Σικάγου Ναθαναήλ



# Reflections on why we believe that there is a God and there is Eternal Life after Death

**Question?** How do we know that God is who He says He is? If we look at the Disciples of the Lord, they were normal fishermen doing what they do every day. They had their families, their work, they had their homes- in fact everything was going very well for them. But then, how does a person give up all these things to follow a person who they don't even know. They met Him for the first time. This is a very good question? I will give all of you who are reading this article a simple answer. This man that they met," WAS JESUS CHRIST" in all His Divine and Human natures. The Disciples upon meeting Christ must have felt His overwhelming power to attract men to Him. No one leaves his job, his family, his wife, and his children to follow someone that they don't know and trust. It has nothing to do with trust, but they were "CHOSEN BY GOD." That is the simple answer, and one by one they all accepted to follow Him.

Let's take another option or example: Andrew the first called Disciple, what did he see in this stranger. Peter who was somewhat the strongest of all the disciples, why did he follow Christ? Because when you see and hear of His teachings, His miracles, how can you not believe in God? When the disciples witnessed these events, they knew for a fact that Christ was not just a normal man. He had Godly powers, and His preaching was all about love. So let's take the examples of the disciples, we don't have to go any further. They followed Him to their death. Would you leave everything behind especially your own flesh and blood to follow a person to your own death? I would doubt that very much. But they did (Why)? Because they had proof that He was the Messiah that the Old Testament and Prophecies were writing about. In His 33 years of Ministry on this earth Jesus taught, preached, that the Kingdom of God is at hand, and that we should repent for our sins and be baptized

in Christ. There is so much history and truth that God does exist. We should all research and feel in our hearts that Christ is our true God and Savior. Let's take the examples of His miracles. He healed paralytics, Lepers, demoniacs, He raised Lazarus and others from their deaths. He fed the 5,000 people with 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread. He was crucified in front of hundreds of people including His disciples and all the people who followed to His death and yet He arose from death. After His death He went down to Hades and brought up those who heard His preaching and be-



lieved. We see that in the Icon of the Resurrection where He takes the hands of Adam and Eve and raises them up with Him. He proved to His disciples in the Upper Room, that He did truly resurrect, He proved it to Mary Madeline and others who went to the empty tomb. After 8 days Christ came back to Thomas to show him that He truly arose from His death. He also came back to them on Pentecost. He showed Himself to over 500 people after His death. How much more proof do we need to say that Christ is alive and His kingdom is open to all of us when we leave this earth.

Can you also imagine when Christ took Peter, James, and John to the Mountain of Tabor during His Transfiguration? Are you serious and you still don't believe?? Isn't that enough proving that God does exist?

How much more proof does anyone need? There are thousands of writings in the Old Testament that proves that Christ does exist. How many devout Christians who have died because they followed Christ without even seeing Him. Who would give up their life enduring tortures, prison, beatings, thrown to Lions, and being beheaded just for the name of Christ? How many Christians who died by the sword, died by hanging, died by crucifixion, died in prison form tortures and they didn't see Christ but believed in Him. WHO DOES THAT! How can I plainly put this in writing, and still have critics that don't believe and are atheistic in their beliefs and they don't even have an inch of proof that Jesus Christ is not God.

How can 2 thousand years go by with billions of Christians who believe in Christ not be true. This is not a fad, or a made up story that comes and goes. This is real- Jesus Christ does exist and He is our True God and Savior. Let's take another example, if we take the "SAINTS" of the Church. Look what they have provided throughout the centuries expressing their faith and teachings for Jesus Christ.

Why would thousands of Saints leave everything from this world to join Monasteries all over the world demonstrating their faith and depriving themselves of the earthly riches and pleasures, and a good life, to live a life of isolation, and poverty? What changes a person to accept that kind of life to live their entire life solely for Jesus Christ? The thousands of stories in history of people who were healed from rare diseases, even today miracles still exist in this world that we live in. How do miracles happen? (Is it magic)? Of course not? It's people that have faith in Christ, and that's how miracles happen. It's through their faith they receive their healing, and through the blessings of our Almighty God and Father Jesus Christ.



# Holy Friday May 3

COURTESY OF THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA [WWW.GOARCH.ORG](http://WWW.GOARCH.ORG)



## Reading

When Friday dawned, Christ was sent bound from Caiaphas to Pontius Pilate, who was then Governor of Judea. Pilate interrogated Him in many ways, and once and again acknowledged that He was innocent, but to please the Jews, he later passed the sentence of death against Him. After scourging the Lord of all as though He were a runaway slave, he surrendered Him to be crucified.

Thus the Lord Jesus was handed over to the soldiers, was stripped of His garments, was clothed in a purple robe, was crowned with a wreath of thorns, had a reed placed in His hand as though it were a sceptre, was bowed before in

mockery, was spat upon, and was buffeted in the face and on the head. Then they again clothed Him in His own garments, and bearing the cross, He came to Golgotha, a place of condemnation, and there, about the third hour, He was crucified between two thieves. Although both blasphemed Him at the first, the thief at His right hand repented, and said: "Remember me, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom," to which our Saviour answered, "Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." As He hung upon the Cross, He was blasphemed by those who were passing by, was mocked by the high priests,

and by the soldiers was given vinegar to drink mixed with gall. About the ninth hour, He cried out with a loud voice, saying, "It is finished." And the Lamb of God "Which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) expired on the day when the moon was full, and at the hour when, according to the Law, was slain the Passover lamb, which was established as a type of Him in the time of Moses.

Even lifeless creation mourned the death of the Master, and it trembled and was altered out of fear. Yet, even though the Maker of creation was already dead, they pierced Him in His immaculate side, and forthwith came there out Blood and Water. Finally, at about the

setting of the sun, Joseph of Arimathea came with Nicodemus (both of them had been secret disciples of Jesus), and they took down the all-holy Body of the Teacher from the Cross and anointed it with aromatic spices, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. When they had buried Him in a new tomb, they rolled a great stone over its entrance.

Such are the dread and saving sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ commemorated today, and in remembrance of them, we have received the Apostolic commandment that a fast be observed every Friday.

## Apolytikion of Holy Friday Plagal Of The First Tone

As the glorious disciples, in the washing of the feet, were enlightened, the profane Judas, ravaged by greed, was benighted. And to the lawless judges he surrenders You the just judge. Consider, you who love money, the one who hanged himself for the sake of it. Shun the insatiate heart that could dare such a deed against the Teacher. Lord, benevolent above all humans, glory to You.

## Kontakion of Holy Friday Plagal Of The Fourth Tone

Come, let us all praise Him Who was crucified for us. Mary beheld Him on the Tree and said, "Though You endure even the Cross, You are my Son and my God."



# Great and Holy Pascha May 5

COURTESY OF THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA [WWW.GOARCH.ORG](http://WWW.GOARCH.ORG)



## Reading

Mary Magdalene, and the other women who were present at the burial of our Saviour on Friday evening, returned from Golgotha to the city and prepared fragrant spices and myrrh, so that they might anoint the body of Jesus. On the morrow, because of the law which forbids work on the day of the Sabbath, they rested for the whole day. But at early dawn on the Sunday that followed, almost thirty-six hours since the death of the Life-giving Redeemer, they came to the sepulchre with the spices to anoint His body. While they were considering the difficulty of rolling away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, there was a fearful earthquake; and an Angel, whose countenance shone

like lightning and whose garment was white as snow, rolled away the stone and sat upon it. The guards that were there became as dead from fear and took to flight. The women, however, went into the sepulchre, but did not find the Lord's body. Instead, they saw two other Angels in the form of youths clothed in white, who told them that the Saviour was risen, and they sent forth the women, who ran to proclaim to the disciples these gladsome tidings. Then Peter and John arrived, having learned from Mary Magdalene what had come to pass, and when they entered the tomb, they found only the winding sheets. Therefore, they

returned again to the city with joy, as heralds now of the supernatural Resurrection of Christ, Who in truth was seen alive by the disciples on this day on five occasions.

Our Lord, then, was crucified, died, and was buried on Friday, before the setting of the sun, which was the first of His "three days" in the grave; observing the mystical Sabbath, that "seventh day" in which it is said that the Lord "rested from all His works" (Gen. 2:2-3), He passed all of Saturday in the grave; and He arose "while it was yet dark, very early in the morning" on Sunday, the third day, which, according to the Hebrew reckoning, began after sunset on Saturday.

As we celebrate today this joyous Resurrection, we greet and embrace one another in Christ, thereby demonstrating our Saviour's victory over death and corruption, and the destruction of our ancient enmity with God, and His reconciliation toward us, and our inheritance of life everlasting. The feast itself is called Pascha, which is derived from the Hebrew word which means "passover"; because Christ, Who suffered and arose, has made us to pass over from the curse of Adam and slavery to the devil and death unto our primal freedom and blessedness. In addition, this day of this particular week, which is the first of all the rest, is dedicated to the honour of the Lord; in honour and remembrance of the Resurrection, the Apostles transferred to this day the rest from labour that was formerly assigned to the Sabbath of the ancient Law.

## Apolytikion of Great and Holy Pascha Plagal Of The First Tone

Christ is risen from the dead, by death, trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

## Kontakion of Great and Holy Pascha Plagal Of The Fourth Tone

Though You went down into the tomb, You destroyed Hades' power, and You rose the victor, Christ God, saying to the myrrh-bearing women, "Hail!" and granting peace to Your disciples, You who raise up the fallen.



# Palm Sunday



## Metropolis Clergy Laity







# Greek Independence Day Celebration



*Chalice donation by  
Donnie and Helen Augerinos  
in memory of  
Mrs. Anastasia Karavangelos.  
May her memory be eternal.*







# St. Demetrios Happenings



*Congratulations to Jack Cavenas on his April 20, 2024 Chrismation. His Godparents are Bill and Helen Mitchell, and he received the name Ioannis.*



*The youth of St. Demetrios enjoyed the St. Lazarus Children's Breakfast donated by the Marvis Diner.*



*Three Coast Guard Cadets who graduated from their boot camp experience. While at the Cadet Academy, they never missed a Sunday Church service. Congratulations to all three of them and may our Lord continue to bless them and protect them in their future endeavors.*



*Bill Mitchell,  
Secretary of the  
Parish Council*



*Nick Konides, President  
of the Parish Council*





# thoughts from

EVA LALLAS



## MAY'S BLESSINGS

This year May brings us additional joy as we celebrate and witness the most sacred day on the Christian calendar, **PASCHA** the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! His promise of eternal life to all who believe in Him and follow His teachings fulfills us as we glorify Him and proclaim **ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΥ!!!** Wishing you a Blessed Easter!

Of course, we know that in May we celebrate motherhood and honor our mothers in a special way - - - - **MOTHER'S DAY!** This holiday was officially established in America in 1914 and has now become a traditional tribute in many countries. Actually every day should be Mother's Day in reverence to the lady to whom, along with our fathers, we owe so much.

Our mothers, whether physically bringing us into the world or not, are those who traditionally have had the most influence in raising and caring for us, nurturing us, and preserving our culture from generation to generation. They have shared their life experiences with us, along with what they had in turn learned from their families, church, and formal education; affirming all that our Orthodox Church teaches.

Together with our dads, our mothers have ingrained in us the Ten Commandments and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Moms have taught us our first prayers and the appreciation of the wonders of God's creation through Bible Stories and bedtime readings. In reality, the home that our parents provide for us is our initial church and schoolroom. This is where we are taught

the importance of attending church services and where our Orthodox faith is reinforced.

Mothers are a key factor in molding our character by word and example, installing in us traits of gratitude, honesty, respect, and above all the deep love for God, family, and our fellow man. Fads come and go but genteel behavior, good manners, and words such as "thank you" and "please" that our mothers etched in our very being from an early age never go out of style. Was it not our Mom who taught us to greet each day and each other with a pleasant "Good Day" especially at the completion of each church service? For in doing so we are greeting God, glorifying, and thanking Him who dwells in each of us. Did not our mother tell us that such a heartfelt greeting and smile should radiate from us expressing our joy in having celebrated the Holy Eucharist and shared God's love?

Recently the word "mentor" has become rather popular and perhaps overused but it certainly applies to our mothers for they are always by our side with our best interest at heart; protecting us, advising us, guiding us along the way, or correcting us, always with undying love. Our laws may dictate that parental responsibility ends after adolescence but a mother's concern and love for her children is endless. Do we realize how much our mothers have sacrificed for us on a daily basis or even a valued career? In paraphrasing the saying, "The hand that rocks the cradle forms the nation" we can say that we owe much of what we are to our mothers; they are our foundation and it is they who often hold a key to our future as well.

Along with the tangible gifts with which we shower our mother on Mother's Day, we can shower her throughout the year with thoughts of love for her: frequently calling or contacting her simply to ask "How are you today? I was thinking of you and just wanted to talk. Let's get together", etc. We can honor our mother showing our love and appreciation by upholding the many values and traditions that she taught us, living a Christian life, thanking God for all the mothers in the world, and keeping them in our prayers.

## HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!



## 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](mailto:frmichaelstdemetrios@gmail.com).

1.) **Έβγαλε τα παπούτσια του και μπήκε μέσα!**

He removed his shoes and walked right in!

All preparations had already been made by others. He didn't need to do anything, but accept the accolades....(and be appreciative!)

2.) **Χάρη του βασιλικού, ποτίζετε η γλάστρα.**

Because of the basil, the flower pot also gets watered.

Because I favor you, I will also befriend your friends and they will benefit, whether I know them or not.

3.) **Οχι Γιάννης, Γιαννάκης!**

Not John, John, Jr.

There's really no difference in the topic or item that we're discussing, they are one and the same.  
 "A rose by any other name is still a rose!"

4.) **Το πολύ το "Κυrie Ελέησον" το βαριέτε και ο Παπάς!**

Even the beautiful "Kirie Eleison" when repeated too often is boring even to the priest!

Don't overdo a good phrase, saying; don't be repetitive because it becomes boring and less effective.

5.) **Η ομορφιά στο πιάτο δεν μπένη!**

Someone's beauty isn't as valued as preparing meals. Perhaps often said of promising brides.

"Can she bake an apple pie, Billy Boy, Billy Boy?"



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](mailto:FRMICHAELSTDOMETRIOS@GMAIL)  
 THANK YOU.



# Liturgical Calendar

SUNDAY, MAY 5	SUNDAY OF HOLY PASCHA (HOLY EASTER) THE AGAPE VESPER SERVICE OF LOVE 11:00 AM THE READING OF THE GOSPELS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES
SUNDAY, MAY 12	SUNDAY OF ST THOMAS - (MOTHERS DAY) ORTHROS 9:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 AM
SUNDAY MAY 19	SUNDAY OF THE MYRRHBEARING WOMEN ORTHROS 9:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 10:00
SUNDAY MAY 26	SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC ORTHROS 9:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 AM



## HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY !!!

On behalf of the Parish Council, Fr. Michael and the entire family of St. Demetrios, we would like to wish all of our Mother's in the Community a "Happy Mother's Day."

All that we have achieved in this life, we owe it to our Mother's. They have taught us our values, morals, manners, heritage, and most importantly, our faith. Aside from the many sacrifices that our mothers have made for us, along with the unconditional love and care they give, they are the ones who first express the message of the Gospel to us. Along with the innumerable roles that our mothers play in our lives, they are also "Apostles." If we are Christian today, it is because our mothers took us to church to receive Holy Communion, taught us how to do our cross and pray, and first introduced us to God. St. Nectarios teaches us that the key to the success of the Three Hierarchs' academic and spiritual greatness were their mother's advice and guidance.. Aside from their schooling, it was their mothers who instilled in them the love for God and virtues. St. Nectarios goes on to say that the mother's everywhere provide the key to the psychological and spiritual make up of a child. They are the greatest teachers and they always provide love and compassion to their children. Let us take this opportunity to especially reflect on the immense impact and importance our mothers have on our lives. We must honor and love them every day of our lives, as our mother's, educators, Apostles, and the finest example of God's love. Even the church gives all mother's the great gratitude for their invaluable service to Christianity, and we today convey our deepest love and respect for them. God bless all the Mothers of our community and of the world for their love, dedication, and guidance that made us who we are today. To those Mothers who are no longer with us, May their memory be eternal. HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY.

## In memory - In honor

Please contact the church at 609-522-0152 or email [frmichaelstdemetrios@gmail.com](mailto:frmichaelstdemetrios@gmail.com) with your memorial information and donation.





# 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](http://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  
1<sup>ST</sup> 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

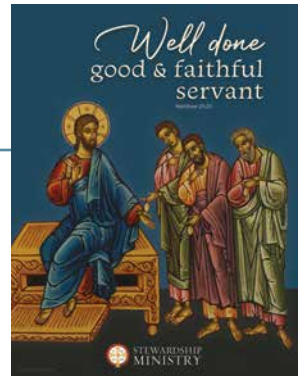
[STDEMETRIOSNEWJERSEY.COM](http://STDEMETRIOSNEWJERSEY.COM)

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





# 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](http://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 \_\_\_\_\_

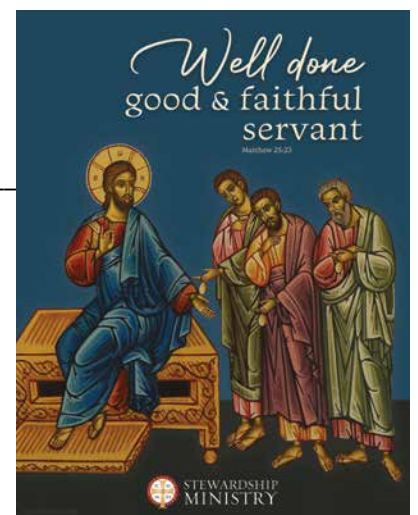
Single/Individual \$500.00

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 &amp; ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE'S 1<sup>ST</sup> NAME & MAIDEN NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE'S DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE'S PLACE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF ORTHODOX BAPTISM/CHRISMATION \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE'S OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE &amp; PLACE OF ORTHODOX MARRIAGE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PRIEST WHO DID MARRIAGE \_\_\_\_\_

CHILDREN'S NAMES &amp; DATES OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Pilgrimage to The Holy Land

*PART IV and final article of the Pilgrimage to the Holy Land which appeared in the October, 2010 issue of the St. Nicholas KOINONIA.*

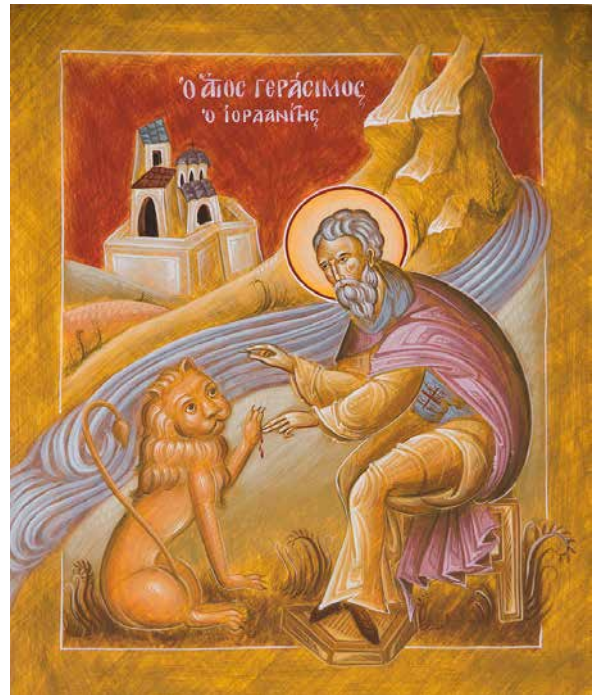
**Day 5 Monday** — While most group members were sleeping, five brave members of our group gathered at 1:30 a.m. to climb Mount Sinai to witness the magnificent sunrise. The remaining members attended the early Divine Liturgy service in the ancient Basilica of the Transfiguration within the monastery. After the service, we were invited to venerate the holy relics of Saint Catherine and given a silver ring in remembrance of her dream of receiving a ring from Jesus as His bride. When Saint Catherine awoke, she found a ring on her finger! We also visited the monastery's world-renowned museum. After greeting the exhilarated Mount Sinai climbers, the group departed for the return trip to Israel. We were reunited with our guide Raed Makhoul who took us to a mall in Eilat to enjoy a meal at McDonald's! We continued on to Mount Tabor to visit the Church of the Transfiguration. From there we could see the Valley of Armageddon where the Book of Revelation tells us the last battle between good and evil will take place. We then checked into our hotel in Tiberias for dinner and rest.

**Day 6 Tuesday** — Our first stop of the day was the Monastery of St. Gerasimos Iordanitis, which is one of the oldest monasteries in the world founded in 455 A.D. It is said that the Virgin Mary, Joseph and Jesus rested there during their flight to Egypt. St. Gerasimos is known for removing a thorn from the paw of a lion which became his lifelong companion. Upon the death of St. Gerasimos, the lion stayed by his side until its own death. Moving on to Nazareth, we visited the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation where we drank water from the same well that Mary drew water daily. We also visited the house of Joseph where he was told by the Angel to not be afraid to take the Virgin Mary as his wife. This was the same house where Jesus lived the first 30 years of His life. That evening we had the pleasure of meeting Raed's mother, brother Fr. Theodosios and his Presbytera.

**Day 7 Wednesday** — The day began with a scenic boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. The boat crew honored us by flying the American flag and playing the American and Greek national anthems. Upon landing at Tabgha, we visited the pastoral setting of the Mount of the Beatitudes where Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount. We travelled further to visit the Church of the Multiplication of the Fishes and Loaves (Heptaglion). Capernaum was our next stop where Jesus performed many of His miracles. There we saw the house where Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law and the synagogue where He taught regularly. Then we went on to Yardenit on the River Jordan, the



*Icon of Mt. Sinai Jesus*



*Icon of St. Gerasimos Iordanitis*

*Continued on pg. 22*

*By:  
Tina Harris*



# Pilgrimage to The Holy Land

*Continued from pg. 21...*

baptismal site of many Christians. Here, we had the honor of being rededicated by Fr. Michael in the same waters that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist.

*By:  
Tina Harris*

**Day 8 Thursday** — Sadly, we reached the last day of our spiritual pilgrimage. Our final stop was at the site of the Wedding at Cana where our Lord performed His first miracle of changing water into wine. Two of the original stone water jars still exist. Arriving in Tel Aviv, we ate our farewell dinner and continued on to the airport for our evening flight back home.

**Two months later**—Raed Makhoul came to Baltimore for a heartwarming reunion with Fr. Michael and the tour group. After attending Divine Liturgy on Sunday, August 22, 2010, Raed presented a breathtaking slide show and enlightening narration about the Holy Land.

The members of the pilgrimage thanked the Lord for blessing us during our journey and thanked Fr. Michael for organizing and leading the group on this unforgettable trip. It was truly a blessing!

***With much love and respect to Father Michael,***  
Tina Harris



*Yardenit on the Jordan River*



*Reunion of the Holy Land group with their tour guide Raed*





## QUESTION & ANSWER: WHAT IS THE CHURCH?



**Answer:** The Church is a journey that begins here on earth and ends in Heaven. This means that the church is here on earth and in Heaven. In our Divine Liturgy the Priest in one of the petitions says, “For this City and every City and Country and for the faithful who live in them” This supplication was made not only for the people but also for the material things in the world. Because the Church knows that human beings here on earth are connected with the material world. Every human being has his/her own place in the world, and the church also is everywhere. Where the Divine Liturgy is celebrated there is the Church. What we call the “Parish” it is a very ancient institution with the church as its spiritual center. The Parish Church is where, in the name of the authorized Bishop, the authorized Priest performs the Divine Liturgy. The Parish therefore is the church. We say as Christians that our homes are on this

earth, but the Church is not of the earth, but she exists on earth and journeys towards Heaven.

The Hope of all Christians here on earth is to live a Christian life, and to fight the good fight, which is a hope that is found in Heaven. But to reach that plateau, we need to fortify ourselves with the armor of Christ and His Church to battle the satanic influences that we challenge and face every day of our lives.

It is not easy to live a Christian life on this earth because there are so many obstacles to bear, but the Church gives us the opportunity to achieve our spiritual goals in life. So the Church is here and it's the temporary residence of the Christians upon the earth. The Parish is not just a part of the Church, but the whole church, in as much as the church is “the Body of Christ” and is not divided, but complete in all its part. This is the work of the Church - in this present world and its ministry to the mystery of salvation which the church continues on her journey. Let us bring before our eyes the picture of Jesus Christ, as He was going up to Jerusalem with His disciples. It is the journey of the Church in the course of history that leads men and creation towards the resurrection. Every Divine Liturgy is a step that not only brings closer, but puts us

inside of the Light and Joy of the resurrection. Neither in space nor in time is there any distance in the Divine Liturgy. The Church did not separate time, nor space, nor place. Every time in some place, or time, the Divine Liturgy is celebrated where the entire Church is present, the earth and Heaven, all the time, the past and the future, become the present time.



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# Do we trust God - Then Where is Your Faith?

In Luke 8:22 - Jesus asked, "Where is your Faith?" I truly believe that this is the same question the Lord would like to ask us today? "Where is your Faith."

Where or what do you put your trust in? In yourself, or in your own wisdom and strength. Do you put your trust in your Career, or do you put your trust in your Family. It is well known and researched that NO human being can live without faith in someone or something. If we take a Christian or a non Christian person, they both have faith but the difference between the two is the object of their faith. And this is what we are going to focus on in this article. (The Object of Faith). In Hebrews 11: 6 it states: And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. In today's society many people would rather believe the advertisements they see or hear. They take the word of someone else and most of the time they believe that it is true. (Gossip) or (Human knowledge. They believe everything that is written in magazines, newspapers, and television, not knowing that all those who write these things are not always right because they see things in their own opinion and perspectives. We face many challenges in our lives and we go through many stormy situations but there are ways to overcome them. If we look back over 2,000 years ago when Jesus Christ came to the Jordan River to be baptized by John the Baptist, the waters of the Jordan as soon as Christ came out of the waters, they completely did a U turn meaning that instead of the water flowing in the same direction miraculously they changed and the waters turned the opposite way. (This I personally know and witnessed when I traveled to the Holy Lands and saw where Jesus was baptized). The waters completely changed their course and not only did they change their course, but from clear water they turned into muddy waters. How does that happen and Why this change. Since I am one this issue, I would like to ask you this question? Has anyone reading this article made a U-turn in their lives. Has anyone made a change for the positive from leading a negative and sinful life? We have many examples of people in the Bible who made this U-turn in their lives.

Where you ever in a wrong place at the wrong time, and your life has become a mess because of that? Have you ever been on the road and at one point you felt you were lost. Making wrong choices and taking wrong directions is a part of life. There is nothing progressive about being stubborn and pigheaded and refusing to admit that you made a mistake.

When the Prodigal Son, repented for his mistake he didn't just sit there and feel sorry for himself. He immediately changed the direction of his life. Remember what he said: "will rise and go to my Father. When Moses threw his staff into the Red Sea and the waters were separated, didn't God change the course of life for the Jews. Of Course He Did. If we open to the Old Testament in the book of Numbers chapter 21, we read that the Judaic people were under the guidance and leadership of Moses, when they left Egypt to find that land of honey they were traveling in the wilderness for 40 years. They had nothing, but God did not abandon them. He fed them prime meat; He gave them Manna instead of bread. They should have been proud of God and worshipped Him faithfully, but did they do that? No! Instead they started to curse Him, and went against Him. This is the thank you they gave to Him. We see this story going on and even to our Lord's Crucifixion, did anything really change? If we look to our Society today, does it change from the Judaic Society? Do we really thank God for all the blessings, and gifts that He has given us? Do we truly believe in Him and worship Him. Let's not let history repeat itself.

Everyone, whether Christian or not, will face some form of challenges during his or her lifetime. But how you deal with the storm is of crucial importance. But very often our response to the problems of life is not that of faith but "Fear".

Fear is the natural reaction we have when we feel we are losing control, and when things are not moving according to plan. It's no difficult to change our way of life even if we have been through the stormy issues of life. We can make that change (TODAY) if we really want to. Remember what Christ said to the paralytic. "PICK UP YOUR PALLOT AND WALK" and that's what he did. He never feared anything after his healing on that day. We should take that same example and change our ways of thinking and get back to Christ.







Ladies Philoptochos Society "Soterios" Chapter 1037

Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church  
321 Saint Demetrios Avenue, North Wildwood, New Jersey 08260

March 6, 2024

President  
Konstantina Bilios  
113B Seaview Court  
N. Wildwood, NJ 08260

Vice President  
Arigi Papaspanos  
118 W. Jefferson Avenue  
Wildwood Crest, NJ  
08260

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President  
Despoina Katsikaris  
102 Hawthorne Drive  
Rio Grande, NJ 08242

Treasurer  
Maria Kellis  
4 Bottle Creek Drive  
Cape May, NJ 08204

Secretary  
Bessie Gioutros  
14 Cedar Meadow Drive  
C.M.C.H., NJ 08210

Dearest Friends and Family:

Greetings to you all and we hope this letter finds you well.

Please support our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual EASTER CARD fundraiser. To partake in this fundraiser, please send a \$25 donation to our church at the address above and also include the section below with your information.

Also, please keep in mind, that all proceeds from our endeavors go to help those in need. We are very proud of our small chapter, who along with the supportive aid from donors like yourselves, we have been able to assist numerous charities, families and individuals locally and nationally for so many years.

WE THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR CONTINUED PATRONAGE

MAY GOD BLESS YOU

Please make your check payable to  
"Ladies Philoptochos of St. Demetrios G.O. Church"

Deadline is April 21, 2024

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NAME(S) TO BE PRINTED ON CARD:

---

YOUR ADDRESS:

---



# Solving Our Problems

The words of our Lord Jesus Christ remind us of the prediction of the Last Days. These words still ring true today. **“You will always have the poor, but you will not always have Me.”**

(John 12:8)

When you look around at the people who attend Church on Sunday, WHAT DO YOU SEE? Do you see impressive people dressed in fine clothes who have it all together, do you see hurting people in need of comfort, troubled people in need of peace, or sick people who need healing?

There are many different kinds of people who come to Church who really need the Word of God to help them solve their problems. Please don't get so distracted in life trying to solve problems of others when you yourself are having major problems that are facing you. Don't sit around asking “Why?” Use the gifts and abilities that God has given to you. Roll up your sleeves and stay busy with your tasks and God will help you if you help yourself. God will add to your strength His Great Strength. Don't expect God to be limited in helping you solve your problems in the conventional manner. Don't limit God to your preconceived ideas about how he is going to solve your problem.

The Lord has ways of doing things you have never dreamed of. That is why the Bible says, “Nothing is impossible for God” -Luke 1:37. So, this means there is a choice to make? That's a question we may need to answer as well. WHAT DO YOU WANT IN LIFE? I believe the first step to achieving something is to work hard and want it. We have to show Christ that we care about ourselves, and we care for our spiritual upbringing. Knowledge is not picked from a tree. Knowledge is something that we grow with and gain. As Christians we need to determine what we really want, and as God's people learn to say with the Apostle Paul “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens.” In our Society today, people don't need a gabfest when they're facing big problems. What they really need is help! Who cares as much about why people are hurting as the fact that they are truly hurting. You don't always have the neat

explanations as to why problems occur. Don't waste your time like we always do in the blame game when you need to be more involved in working out solutions no matter how difficult the problem might seem to be. Don't get caught up like others do in pursuit of answering the question “Why?” Why did God let this happen? If we knew every “Why” question, then we would be God's ourselves. When you're facing big problems, instead of complaining that your problem exists, it might help to light a candle instead of cursing the darkness.

In life, there are many disappointments, and accomplishments, in anything that we do we need to make a choice. Do we want to be disappointed? Or do we want to accomplish something in our lives. To be honest with you, there are people in our society that given the opportunity for healing, or straighten out their

life, might actually choose not to accept because at this moment in time they are free of some sympathy by complaining about their problems or sickness. They can manipulate people by being sick, or punish themselves if they feel guilty.

When Jesus asked all those who wanted to be healed, He didn't say “You are healed”, He said, “Do you want to get well?” or “Do you truly believe in Me?” or “Because of your faith you are healed.” The Church is always an

oasis to comfort the needs of her people. Because we believe that when two or more are gathered together in the church “Christ is Truly in our Midst” The church is where everyone finds refuge and comfort. The church is there for the Young the Elderly, the Sick, the Lame, the Blind, the Rich and the Poor. When we attend Church, we always try to wear our best clothes and put on our best smiles. Everybody looks happy, so we assume everything is okay. But in reality we need to look beyond the facade with people who have assorted problems and are hurting spiritually and physically. There are also people in church with smaller problems such as an unresponsive spouse, a boring job, a poor grade, personality clashes, the lonely, the dying, the discouraged, the exhausted on and on the stories go, but they can all be found here in the church.





# 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!

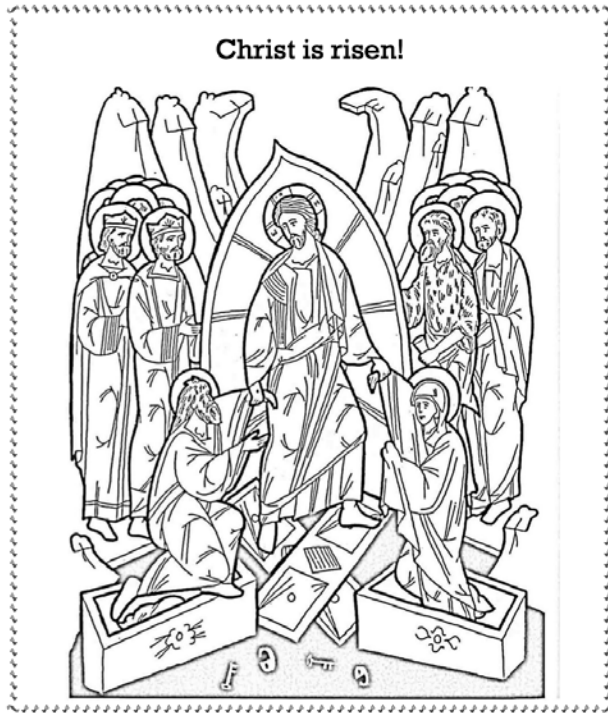




# Children's Corner

More available on [stdemetriosnewjersey.com!](http://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](http://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, May 5, 2024

Volume 12, Issue 18

A Ministry of the  
Orthodox Christian Network

### All the nations

**Have you ever heard something in another language...and you didn't know what it meant? Maybe you wondered what somebody was saying, but nobody even told you. Maybe it wasn't so important after all.**



You know what today is! Today is Pascha (Easter). Today, at church, we hear the good news—the best news! We hear how our Lord, Jesus Christ, rose from the dead. We hear how He is still with us. Long ago, Jesus's followers wrote this good news down so people could read it and know about it. Jesus told His followers to go to all the nations, yes, to go all over the world. God wants the whole world to know the good news—that Christ rose from the dead! He wants the whole world to know about Him. He wants the whole world to know how we can grow close to Him.

Today, at church, we hear this good news in lots of different languages. We hear the good news in so many languages, because we know that God wants everybody to know about it. Today, you might hear the gospel (the good news) in 5 or 10 or even 15 languages. But do you know how many languages the good news has been written down in? More than 1,500 languages! This good news is so important, that we Christians want everybody to know about it. Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!

### WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

Celebration  
Christ is risen  
Good news  
Isaiah  
Joyful  
Languages  
Nations  
Pascha  
Prophet

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

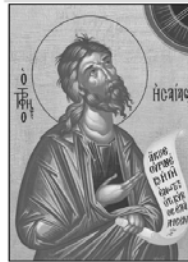
### WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

In the Resurrection icon, do you know who Christ is pulling up? It's Adam and Eve!

We saw the other icon of Adam and Eve on the day before Lent started! They did the wrong thing, but God forgave them!



### SAINT ISAIAH THE PROPHET



**Have you ever given somebody a message? Maybe your parents told you to tell your teacher something. Or maybe you told a friend to tell another friend something.**

God asked people to give messages for Him too! These special people were called prophets. The Prophet Isaiah lived 700 years before Christ lived. God wanted Isaiah to tell the people some things for him. At that time, the people were worshiping false gods, called idols. God wanted the people to turn back to Him, and Prophet Isaiah gave the people the message.

We read the words of the Prophet Isaiah around Christmas time, because he told how a woman (Mary) would have a baby without an earthly father. We read the words of the Prophet Isaiah during Holy Week, because he told how the Savior would be hurt for our sins.

And each time before we have Holy Communion, we sing with the choir the words of the Prophet Isaiah, because he tells about the angels in heaven. They say, "Holy, holy holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."

So the holy Prophet Isaiah gave God's messages that we still hear today!

We celebrate the prophet Isaiah on Thurs, May 9th (OC: May 22nd).

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## A BREAK IN YOUR DAY

My poor knowledge of Greek mythology has always been my Achilles' elbow.

A boy in a toy store selected a miniature car, took it to the register and gave the cashier paper

money from a board game.

The cashier commented, "This money isn't real. "That's ok," the boy replied. "Neither is the car."

A company owner was asked how she motivated her employees to be on time.

She smiled and replied, "It's simple. I have 30 employees and 29 free parking spaces. One is paid parking.

A friend of mine went bald years ago but still carries an old comb. He can't part with it.

A man swallowed his glass eye and rushed to a stomach specialist. "I've looked into a lot of stomachs in my days," the doctor said, "but this is the first one that ever looked back."

We've all heard that a million monkeys banging on a million typewriters will eventually reproduce the entire works of Shakespeare. Thanks to the internet, we know this isn't true.

Two guys are out drinking when one of them falls off his bar stool onto the floor. "One thing about Fred," his buddy says to the bartender. "He knows when to stop."

Did you hear the one about the roof? Never mind. It's over your head.

A girl burst into her brother's bedroom and shook him awake. "Come quick!" she cried. "There's a mouse squeaking under my bed!"

Her brother yawned, "What do you want me to do, oil it?"

"Let's get married and have kids so instead of a lazy Saturday morning we can panic because a sports uniform didn't get put in the dryer."

—Simon C. Holland

Lawyer: Officer, what led you to believe the defendant was under the influence?

Witness: Because he was argumentative, and he couldn't pronounce his words.

Lawyer: Did you blow your horn or anything?

Witness: After the accident?

Lawyer: Before the accident.

Witness: Sure, I played for ten years. I even went to school for it.

Lawyer: You don't know what it was, and you didn't know what it looked like, but can you describe it?

Officer: Yes, I can.

Lawyer: And you check your radar unit frequently?

Officer: Yes, I do.

Lawyer: And was your radar unit functioning correctly at the time you had the plaintiff on radar?

Officer: Yes, it was malfunctioning correctly.

Lawyer: Do you drink when you're on duty?

Witness: I don't drink when I'm on duty, unless I come on duty drunk.

Attorney: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

Witness: Yes.

Attorney: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

Witness: I forget.

Attorney: You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

I ate a doughnut without sprinkles. Diets are hard.

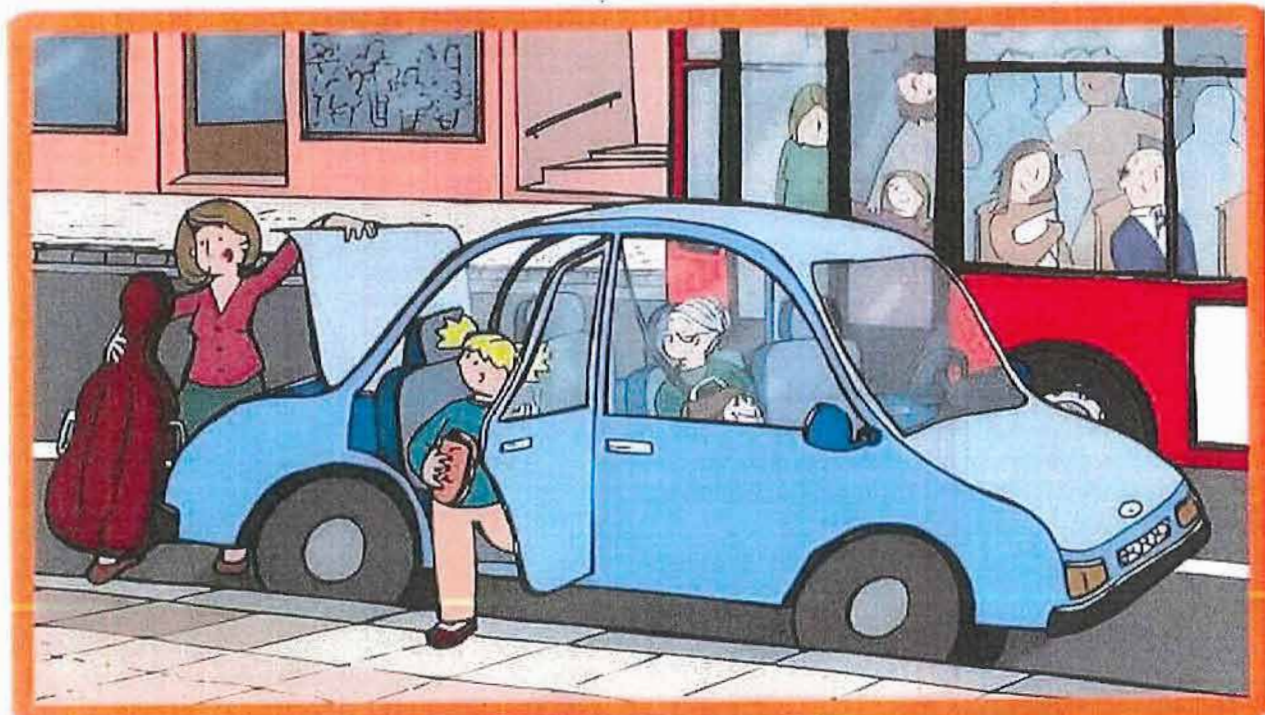
Hear the one about the cooking school's valedictorian? She passed her final exam with flying crullas.







# *Exercise Your Brain!* Can You Spot the Differences Between These Two Pictures?



✠ RCA Epistle Newsletter: March, 2024 Issue, Page 8 ✠



## HEALTHY BODY AND MIND

### A PRIMER ON INTERMITTENT FASTING

	THE 16:8 DIET						
	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
MIDNIGHT							
4 AM	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST
8 AM							
12 PM	First meal	First meal	First meal	First meal	First meal	First meal	First meal
4 PM	Last meal by 4 PM	Last meal by 4 PM	Last meal by 4 PM	Last meal by 4 PM	Last meal by 4 PM	Last meal by 4 PM	Last meal by 4 PM
8 PM							
MIDNIGHT	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST	FAST

Intermittent fasting is growing in popularity. For those unfamiliar with the practice, intermittent fasting is when a person purposefully fasts for most of the day and takes in calories only within a specific block of time. Typically the fast lasts between 12 and 16 hours.

#### THE HISTORY

Our hunter-gatherer ancestors didn't have the modern luxuries of grocery stores, refrigerators or easy access to food. As a result, humans have evolved to be able to function without food for extended periods of time. Fasting has also been practiced for centuries for religious or spiritual reasons.

#### THE BENEFITS

According to the National Institute on Aging, fasting improves biomarkers of disease, reduces oxidative stress, and preserves learning and memory functioning. High insulin levels are often the culprit for diabetes and obesity. Between meals, insulin levels will go down and fat cells can then release stored sugars to be used as energy. We lose weight and improve our health if insulin levels fall. The idea of intermittent fasting is to allow the levels to go down far and long enough that we begin to burn off our fat stores.

#### THE TIMING

Our metabolisms have adapted to a daytime-

food, nighttime-sleep schedule. Late-night eating is linked to a higher risk of obesity and diabetes. While studies show fasting to be effective, it's often hard for people to follow. It's important to find a schedule that works with your lifestyle for it to be effective and sustainable, especially when combined with a plant-based diet. Many find eating between noon and 8 p.m. works best.

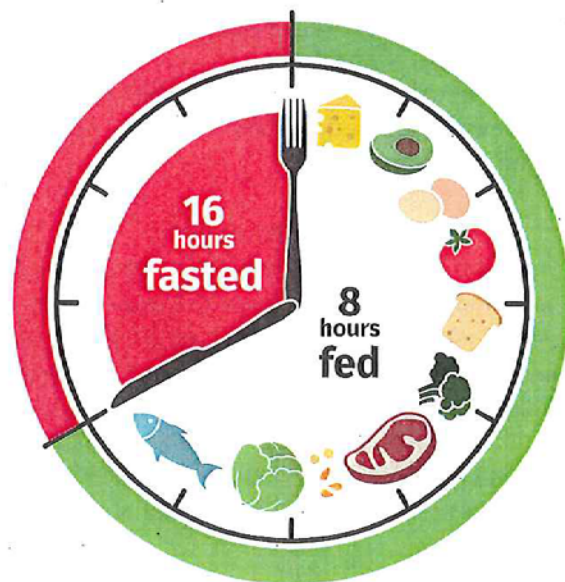
#### THE START

If you usually eat breakfast, this may be a challenge for you. In time, your body will adapt and the feelings of hunger will subside. When fasting, you can have caffeine, which acts as an appetite suppressant. Stay away from creamers, sugar, or other calories in your coffee or tea; those calories will break your fast. Stick to an all-natural, zero-calorie sweetener like stevia or monk fruit.



#### THE SECRET

Drink plenty of water. Often when we feel hungry, our body is confusing it with thirst. Consuming water first thing in the morning will help alleviate hunger pangs and flush out your system from overnight.





## Saint Demetrios

### Annual Picnic

at the  
Cape May Country  
Park and Zoo

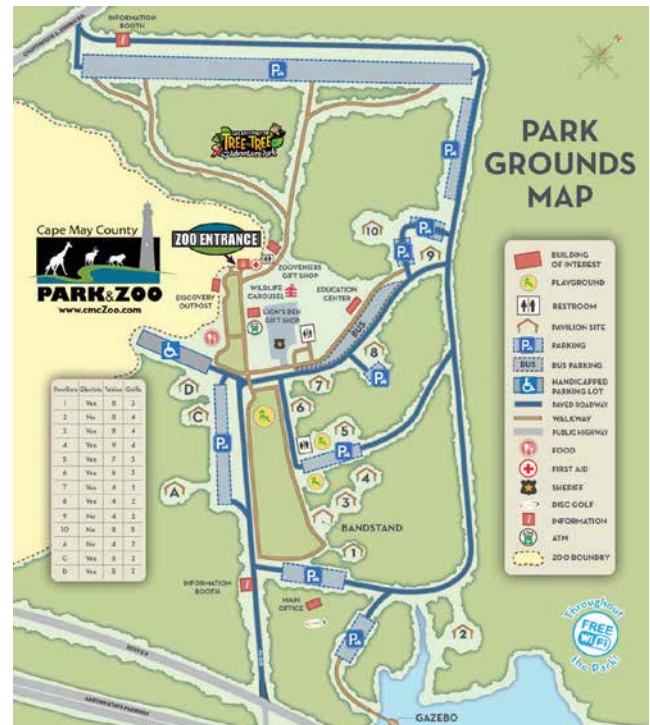
Monday May 6<sup>th</sup> 2024

Pavilion 5

12:00pm-6:00pm

Come join us for an afternoon of fun  
at our lovely Park and Zoo for all our  
members, friends and families.

Music Food and Drink  
await!



#### Directions

##### DIRECTIONS TO THE CAPE MAY COUNTY PARK & ZOO

##### Physical Address:

Cape May County Park and Zoo  
707 Route 9 North  
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

##### Mailing Address:

Cape May County Park and Zoo  
4 Moore Road, DN 801  
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

##### GPS Information:

707 Route 9 North, Cape May Court House, Middle Township, NJ 08210  
Latitude - N 39 06.098  
Longitude - W 74 48.611  
Decimal Degrees  
Latitude - 39.10163  
Longitude - -74.810181  
Degrees, Minutes & Seconds  
Latitude - N39 06 05  
Longitude - W74 48 36

##### Driving Directions:

From the South:  
Take the Garden State Parkway to exit 11, turn left onto Crest Haven Road.  
The entrance to the Park & Zoo is straight ahead.

From the North:  
Take the Garden State Parkway to exit 11, turn right onto Crest Haven Road.  
The entrance to the Park & Zoo is straight ahead.

From the West or Northwest:  
Take Route 55 South to Route 47 South. Then take Route 83 East to Route 9 South.  
The Park & Zoo entrance will be 5 miles ahead on the right at Zoo Rd.





THE DVYC INVITES YOU TO

## DVYC BEACH BLAST

ONE LAST HURRAH BEFORE THE SUMMER STARTS

**JUNE 15TH, 2024**  
**10:00 AM - 4:00 PM**  
**NORTH WILDWOOD BEACH**

LATE LUNCH/DINNER AT  
 ST. DEMETRIOS  
 PROVIDED BY THE DVYC

RSVP TO AGNOULA MARGANTONIS  
 AMARGANTONIS@HOTMAIL.COM

## Camp Good Shepherd

Experience the Best Week of Your Summer!

**CGS: MARYLAND**

June 16-22, 2024  
 Ages 8-18  
 Camp Wo-Me-To  
 1200 Knopp Rd, Jarrettsville, MD 21084  
 Registration Fee: \$600 (Early Bird Discount until May 1, then \$675)

**CGS: NEW JERSEY**

June 23-29, 2024  
 Ages 8-18  
 Camp Linwood MacDonald  
 1 Flatbrook Rd, Sandyton, NJ 07826  
 Registration Fee: \$525

**CGS: VIRGINIA (2 SESSIONS)**

Week 1: July 7-13 (Completed 5th Grade - 8th Grade)  
 Week 2: July 14-20 (Completed 9th Grade - 12th Grade)  
 Camp Planktonk  
 1586 Stampers Bay Rd Box 435, Hartfield, VA 23071  
 Registration Fee: \$500

**REGISTER TODAY!**

[HTTP://APP.CAMPDOC.COM/REGISTER/CGSN](http://app.campdoc.com/register/cgsn)

MORE INFORMATION [HTTPS://WWW.NJ.GOARCH.ORG/CAMP-GOOD-SHEPHERD](https://www.nj.goarch.org/camp-good-shepherd)

## CAMP GOOD SHEPHERD

### JOIN OUR STAFF!

**STAFF APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN!**

Chesapeake  
**15-22 JUNE 2024**

New Jersey  
**22-29 JUNE 2024**

Virginia  
**6-20 JULY 2024**

**Are You...**

- ✓ Looking to grow your Faith?
- ✓ Hoping to make meaningful relationships?
- ✓ Seeking to boost your resume?

**Registration Link: Scan or Click Below**

**More Information:** <https://www.nj.goarch.org/camp-good-shepherd>