



KOINONIA

NEWSLETTER OF
ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH
North Wildwood, NJ

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XRISTOS ANESTI!! CHRIST IS RISEN!!



*Sunday Service of
Pascha. The reading of
the Gospels in different
languages.*

See more on pg. 11





a letter from

FR. MICHAEL L. PASTRIKOS
PROTOPRESBYTER



The topic of my message is a message of hope. I pray that when you read this article it can give everyone an understanding why we are here living on this Earth. This Earth that we live in is made up of many different People, Nations, Customs, and Traditions. In a few words, WE ARE A MELTING POT, living side by side of each other, and in reality most of us don't know our next door neighbor.

I will tell you a story that describes what we as humans are, one way or another.

There was a very lost, wicked, and rebellious man who decided it would be good for business if he went down to the church and joined it. He was an adulterer, an alcoholic, and had never been a member of a church in his life. But when he went down to place membership, he gave public testimony to the church that there was no sin in his life, and that he had grown up in the church, and they readily accepted him as a member.

When he went home he told his wife what he had done, and his wife, a very Godly lady, exploded. She condemned him for being a hypocrite, and demanded that he go back to the church the next week and confess what he really was. Well, God used his wife to really break him, and he took it to heart.

The next Sunday he went back to church, walked down to the front again, and this time confessed to the

church all his sins. He told them that he was dishonest, and alcoholic, an adulterer, and that he was truly sorry. After all that, the people of the church revoked his membership on the spot. He walked out of the church that day scratching his head and muttered to himself: "These church folks are really strange. I told a lie and they took me in; and when I told the truth they kicked me out."

Sometimes, I ask myself the same question - Why couldn't this man after all he went through in life, come up to the plate and tell his story the way it happened the first time? Because we live in a society that can't accept the truth. We live in a storybook society where everything is perfect, because that's what we want - TO LIVE IN A PERFECT WORLD, OR A MAKE-BELIEVE WORLD. Everybody sees life the way they want to see it. Since you are reading this article, let me ask you some questions: Do you always tell the truth at all times? Don't we all have a skeleton in our closets? Don't we all want to forget the past and walk away from it? Do you ever look at people who don't go to church, and think you are better than they are because you go to church? Because of your position and status, do you look down on other people, thinking that you are better than they are? Do you ever look at people who divorced, and think that you are better than they are because you are not?

I promise you, everyone one of you will find yourself somewhere in this story, because at one time or another, all of us are guilty of trying to impress God.

The message that God gives us today is that He offers us a new life and a new beginning. But to reach that point we need to look at ourselves and re-evaluate what we have done wrong in the past and correct it. Throughout history we have plenty examples of the great leaders of the church who lived there lives in sinfulness. We all know the story of St. Paul, what he was before he walked away from his sinful past. He persecuted and killed Christians. But as soon he accepted Christ, he became the greatest apostle of the church. If we look at Noah, Abraham, & Moses, all



a letter from

FR. MICHAEL L. PASTRIKOS
PROTOPRESBYTER

CONTINUED...

three of them walked away from their past. And what did they become, the Giants of the faith. If your life is filled with the examples I gave above then you need to change your lifestyle.

If your decision that you are presently making does not require any faith at all, you are not walking towards God. The answer to this story is to find God, but how do we do this when this world is filled with hatred, jealousy, and bitterness.

People today crave for new things. New phones, new cars, homes, clothing, and etc. We are in an economic recession because of our wants and needs. We try to put the blame on others, but in reality we play a major role in the destruction of our economy. It's about time that we take full responsibility for our actions. So, the key word here is "CHANGE." The question is "CAN WE CHANGE?"

The answer is "YES WE CAN." I am not taking a political stand here in repeating the words that some politicians use for their own personal gains. When I say that "WE CAN" I really mean it. When you have faith, you can conquer anything that you put your mind to. I have always believed in the three positive words, "MIND OVER MATTER." The first thing we should all learn from this is that it isn't important how we see ourselves, but only how God sees us. We don't have to boast, or show off our faith to people, let God be the Judge. Just remember the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, that should give you the insight of what impresses God.

Man has made great improvements over the centuries. We have learned so much in just a short time. We have made great strides in education, science, technology, etc. Yet life has not been better. Life is made easy but not better. We live with the same worries and fears, we worry about not having enough, when there are people in the world who barely receive a piece of bread to eat everyday.

We fear being diagnosed with cancer of some kind; we have relationship problems, at school, at home, at work, even among our close friends. We have more broken families today than ever before. We have a growing number of suicides and divorces, and violence is on the rise not on a downfall. I ask you this question? Has life really improved, even though we have great technology. Why? Because man has fallen away from God. Remember this, If you truly want a good life----get back with Christ. This is the answer to all our problems. We are so blinded by the examples of the world that we can't see in front of us what our destination will be. At this moment, most of us are heading in the wrong direction. We are not guiding our children in the ways of the Lord. We are heading towards a spiritual disaster. Always remember, "God's Way" is not always "Man's Way".....





GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

PASCHA 2024

My dear spiritual children,

Christ is Risen! Daily, we notice the suffering world around us breaking out into quarrels, disputes, wars and, with baseless disobedience, they bring on sudden wars. The fear of death blackens the skies of our life, tightens our hearts and fills our souls with stress. However, behold, in the middle of the night of the passions of this world, the brave myrrh bearing women arise, early in the morning, and they announce to those in darkness and the shadow of death that Christ is Risen and Hades is destroyed. Death no longer governs us. Through the Cross, joy came to all of the world. No one can take away the joy of the Resurrection of Christ the Savior from the hearts of the faithful Orthodox Christians.

From my heart, I pray that the light of the Resurrection of our Lord shine in our hearts and may it transform our existence, in Christ, constantly. May it enlighten our darkened minds, so that our thoughts, our words and our actions be full of grace and truth, so that hope returns to the hearts of mankind and that the never-setting light of the Resurrection of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ, enlighten all of the world. Amen.

With paternal love and blessings in the Risen Lord,

Met. Apostolos of NJ

† APOSTOLOS
Metropolitan of New Jersey





GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

ΠΑΣΧΑ 2024

Τέκνα ἐν Κυρίῳ ἀγαπητά,

Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη! Καθημερινὰ παρατηροῦμε στὸν ταλαίπωρο κόσμον μας νὰ ξεσποῦν διαμάχες, ἔριδες, πόλεμοι καὶ μετὰ θράσους ἀπύθμενον νὰ ἐξαγγέλονται ἐπερχόμενοι πόλεμοι. Ὁ φόβος τοῦ θανάτου μαυρίζει τοὺς οὐρανούς τῆς ζωῆς μας, περισφίγγει τὴν καρδιά μας, γεμίζει ἀγωνία τὴν ψυχή μας. Ἀλλ' ἰδοὺ ἐν τῷ μέσῳ τῆς νυκτός τῶν παθῶν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ὀρθρίζουν, ὀρθρου βαθέος, οἱ θαρραλέες μυροφόρες γυναῖκες καὶ ἐξαγγέλουν τοῖς ἐν σκότει καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου καθημένοις ὅτι Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη καὶ Ἄδης ἐσκυλεύθη. Θάνατος ἡμᾶς οὐκέτι κυριεύει. Διὰ τοῦ Σταυροῦ ἦλθε χαρὰ ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ. Τὴν χαρὰ τῆς Ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Σωτῆρος Χριστοῦ κανεῖς δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ ἀφαιρέσει ἀπὸ τὶς καρδιές τῶν πιστῶν καὶ ὀρθοδόξων χριστιανῶν.

Ἀπὸ καρδίας εὐχομαι τό φῶς τῆς Ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Κυρίου νὰ καταυγάξει τὶς καρδιές μας καὶ νὰ μεταμορφώνει ἐν Χριστῷ διαρκῶς τὴν ὑπαρξή μας. Νὰ φωτίζει τὸν ἐσκοτισμένο νοῦ μας ὥστε οἱ σκέψεις, οἱ λόγοι καὶ οἱ πράξεις μας νὰ εἶναι πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας γιὰ νὰ ἐπιστρέψει στὶς καρδιές τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἡ ἐλπίδα καὶ ὁλόκληρη ἡ οἰκουμένη νὰ φωτιστεῖ ἀπὸ τὸ ἀνέσπερο φῶς τῆς Ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἀμήν.

Μετά πατρικῆς ἀγάπης καὶ ἀναστασίμων εὐχῶν,

Ο ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΗΣ

Νέας Ἱερσέης Ἀποστόλος

† Ὁ Νέας Ἱερσέης Ἀπόστολος



Holy Pentecost June 23

COURTESY OF THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

WWW.GOARCH.ORG

After the Saviour's Ascension into the Heavens, the eleven Apostles and the rest of His disciples, the God-loving women who followed after Him from the beginning, His Mother, the most holy Virgin Mary, and His brethren—all together about 120 souls returned from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem. Entering into the house where they gathered, they went into the upper room, and there they persevered in prayer and supplication, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit, as their Divine Teacher had promised them. In the meanwhile, they chose Matthias, who was elected to take the place of Judas among the Apostles.

Thus, on this day, the seventh Sunday of Pascha, the tenth day after the Ascension and the fiftieth day after Pascha, at the third hour of the day from the rising of the sun, there suddenly came a sound from Heaven, as when a mighty wind blows, and it filled the whole house where the Apostles and the rest with them were gathered. Immediately after the sound, there appeared tongues of fire that divided and rested upon the head of each one. Filled with the Spirit, all those present began speaking not in their native tongue, but in other tongues and dialects, as the Holy Spirit instructed them.

The multitudes that had come together from various places for the feast, most of whom were Jews by race and religion, were called Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and so forth, according to the places where they dwelt. Though they spoke many different tongues, they were present in Jerusalem by divine dispensation. When they heard that sound that came down from Heaven to the place where the disciples of Christ were gathered, all ran together to learn what had taken place. But they were confounded when they came and heard the Apostles speaking in their own tongues. Marvelling at this, they said one to another, "Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how

hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" But others, because of their foolishness and excess of evil, mocked the wonder and said that the Apostles were drunken.

Then Peter stood up with the eleven, and raising his voice, spoke to all the people, proving that that which had taken place was not drunkenness, but the fulfilment of God's promise that had been spoken by the Prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that I shall pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy" (Joel 2:28), and he preached Jesus of Nazareth unto them, proving in many ways that He is Christ the Lord, Whom the Jews crucified but God raised from the dead. On hearing Peter's teaching, many were smitten with compunction and received the word. Thus, they were baptized, and on that day about three thousand souls were added to the Faith of Christ.

Such, therefore, are the reasons for today's feast: the coming of the All-holy Spirit into the world, the completion of the Lord Jesus Christ's promise, and the fulfilment of the hope of the sacred disciples, which we celebrate today. This is the final feast of the great mystery and dispensation of God's incarnation. On this last, and great, and saving day of Pentecost, the Apostles of the Saviour, who were unlearned fishermen, made wise now of a sudden by the Holy Spirit, clearly and with divine authority spoke the heavenly doctrines. They became heralds of the truth and teachers of the whole world. On this day they were ordained and began their apostleship, of which the salvation of those three thousand souls in one day was the comely and marvellous first fruit.

Some erroneously hold that Pentecost is the "birthday of the Church." But this is not true, for the teaching of the holy Fathers is that the Church existed before all other things. In the second vision of



The Shepherd of Hermas we read: "Now brethren, a revelation was made unto me in my sleep by a youth of exceeding fair form, who said to me, 'Whom thinkest thou the aged woman, from whom thou receivedst the book, to be?' I say, 'The Sibyl.' 'Thou art wrong,' saith he, 'she is not.' 'Who then is she?' I say, 'The Church,' saith he. I said unto him, 'Wherefore then is she aged?' 'Because,' saith he, 'she was created before all things; therefore is she aged, and for her sake the world was framed.'" Saint Gregory the Theologian also speaks of "the Church of Christ ... both before Christ and after Christ" (PG 35:1108-9). Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus writes, "The Catholic Church, which exists from the ages, is revealed most clearly in the incarnate advent of Christ" (PG 42:640). Saint John Damascene observes, "The Holy Catholic Church of God, therefore, is the assembly of the holy Fathers, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, and Martyrs who have been from the very beginning, to whom were added all the nations who believed with one accord" (PG 96, 1357c). According to Saint Gregory the Theologian, "The Prophets established the Church, the Apostles conjoined it, and the Evangelists set it in order" (PG 35, 589 A). The Church existed from the creation of the



Holy Pentecost

CONTINUED...

Angels, for the Angels came into existence before the creation of the world, and they have always been members of the Church. Saint Clement, Bishop of Rome, says in his second epistle to the Corinthians, the Church “was created before the sun and moon”; and a little further on, “The Church existeth not now for the first time, but hath been from the beginning” (II Cor. 14).

That which came to pass at Pentecost, then, was the ordination of the Apostles, the commencement of the apostolic preaching to the nations, and the inauguration of the priesthood of the new Israel. Saint Cyril of Alexandria says that “Our Lord Jesus Christ herein ordained the instructors and teachers of the world and the stewards of His divine Mysteries ... showing together with the dignity of Apostleship, the incomparable glory of the authority given them ... Revealing them to be splendid with the great dignity of the Apostleship and showing them forth as both stewards and priests of the divine altars . . . they became fit to initiate others through the enlightening guidance of the Holy Spirit” (PG 74, 708-712). Saint Gregory Palamas says, “Now, therefore ... the Holy Spirit descended ... showing the Disciples to be supernal luminaries ... and the distributed grace of the Divine Spirit came through the ordination of the Apostles upon their successors” (Homily 24, 10). And Saint Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem, writes, “After the visitation of the Comforter, the Apostles became high priests” (PG 87, 3981B). Therefore, together with the baptism of the Holy Spirit which came upon them who were present in the upper chamber, which the Lord had foretold as recorded in the Acts, “ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence” (Acts 1:5), the Apostles were also appointed and raised to the high priestly rank, according to Saint John Chrysostom (PG 60, 21). On this day commenced the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by which we become “partakers of the Divine Nature” (II Peter

1:4). For before Pentecost, it is said of the Apostles and disciples only that they abode in “prayer and supplication” (Acts 1:14); it is only after the coming of the Holy Spirit that they persevered in the “breaking of bread,” that is, the communion of the Holy Mysteries—and in prayer” (Acts 2:42).

The feast of holy Pentecost, therefore, determined the beginning of the priesthood of grace, not the beginning of the Church. Henceforth, the Apostles proclaimed the good tidings “in country and town,” preaching and baptizing and appointing shepherds, imparting the priesthood to them whom they judged were worthy to minister, as Saint Clement writes in his first Epistle to the Corinthians (I Cor. 42).

Apolytikion of Pentecost

Plagal of the Fourth Tone

Blessed are You, O Christ our God, who made fishermen all-wise, sending upon them the Holy Spirit and, through them, netting the world. O Loving One, glory to You.

Kontakion of Pentecost

Plagal of the Fourth Tone

When the Most High came down and confounded tongues of men (Babel), He divided the Nations. When He dispensed the Tongues of Fire, He called all to unity, and with one voice we glorify the Most Holy Spirit.

In memory - In honor

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





Sunday of All Saints

COURTESY OF THE ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

WWW.GOARCH.ORG

Honouring the friends of God with much reverence, the Prophet-King David says, "But to me, exceedingly honourable are Thy friends, O Lord" (Ps. 138:16). And the divine Apostle, recounting the achievements of the Saints, and setting forth their memorial as an example that we might turn away from earthly things and from sin, and emulate their patience and courage in the struggles for virtue, says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every burden, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

This commemoration began as the Sunday (Synaxis) of All Martyrs; to them were added all the ranks of Saints who bore witness (the meaning of "Martyr" in Greek) to Christ in manifold ways, even if occasion did not require the shedding of their blood.

Therefore, guided by the teaching of the Divine Scriptures and Apostolic Tradition, we the pious honour all the Saints, the friends of God, for they are keepers of

God's commandments, shining examples of virtue, and benefactors of mankind. Of course, we honour the known Saints especially on their own day of the year, as is evident in the Menologion. But since many Saints are unknown, and their number has increased with time, and will continue to increase until the end of time, the Church has appointed that once a year a common commemoration be made of all the Saints. This is the feast that we celebrate today. It is the harvest of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world; it is the "much fruit" brought forth by that "Grain of wheat that fell into the earth and died" (John 12:24); it is the glorification of the Saints as "the foundation of the Church, the perfection of the Gospel, they who fulfilled in deed the sayings of the Saviour" (Sunday of All Saints, Doxasticon of Vespers).

In this celebration, then, we reverently honour and call blessed all the Righteous, the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Shepherds, Teachers, and Holy Monastics, both men and women alike, known and unknown, who have been added to the choirs of the Saints and shall be added, from the time of Adam until the



end of the world, who have been perfected in piety and have glorified God by their holy lives. All these, as well as the orders of the Angels, and especially our most holy Lady and Queen, the Ever-virgin Theotokos Mary, do we honour today, setting their life before us as an example of virtue, and entreating them to intercede in our behalf with God, Whose grace and boundless mercy be with us all. Amen.

Liturgical Calendar

Sunday, June 2	Sunday of the Samaritan Woman Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Sunday, June 9	Sunday of the Blindman Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Sunday, June 16	Sunday of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Synod Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Saturday, June 22	Saturday of the Souls Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Sunday, June 23	Sunday of Pentecost Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Sunday June 30	Sunday of All Saints Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am



a message from

NICHOLAS D. KONIDES
PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support to our Church and Community since the beginning of the year. All our events have been a tremendous success because of all your untiring efforts. To all of you I offer my sincere appreciation.

As we move into the busy summer season and the warm weather we look forward to welcoming back all our summer residents, who support our Church and participate in our Sunday services.

As always, we face some building maintenance issues that we need your help with. The following are projects that we need to undertake to insure that our buildings will stay in good repair.

Replacement of the main roof of our Community Center

Replacement of the front windows of the Community Center

Repair of the exterior plaster of both the Church and the Community Center

Power wash and painting of the exterior of the buildings

Repair of the exterior lighting to include the Cross of the buildings

Replacement of the St Demetrios Icon located in the exterior marque

Re-surfacing the stones in our parking area and in the rear of the buildings

The cleaning and resealing of the stained-glass windows of the Church

If anyone is interested in undertaking or donating to any of the projects listed above, please contact Fr. Michael or myself. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Wishing all of you a very healthy and prosperous summer.

With loving wishes,

Nicholas D. Konides

Parish Council President



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 143/2024

Archepiscopal Encyclical on the National Sisterhood of Presvyteres Sunday

June 2, 2024

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, Presvyteres and Diakonisses, 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:

Come! See a man who told me everything I have ever done! Could this be the Christ?
(John 4:29)

My beloved sisters and brothers in Christ,

Christ is Risen!

The fact that this year's National Sisterhood of Presvyteres Sunday falls on the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman is most auspicious, indeed. For in the narrative of Saint Photini, who was ultimately martyred for her faith with her companions, we behold a wisdom-holder of the highest order, even though her beginnings were less than ideal — certainly far less than those wondrous women of our Church who are the spouses of our clergy.

The Presvyteres of our Church are wisdom-holders, ones whose contribution to the life of our parishes is truly indispensable. Many possess deep theological education, and all have the profound experiential knowledge of seeing the parish from a panoramic perspective, i.e., from the point of view of the minister and those ministered unto. The offerings of our Presvyteres to our communities are invaluable; for they manifest a perspective that is inherent in the Church through the Panagia and countless women Saints, but is sometimes diminished on account of the clergy. Together with all their sisters in the parishes, who assume roles from the Parish Council to the philanthropies of Philoptochos, our Presvyteres call the entire Body of the Faithful to see God's activities and energies in persons, places and events, as they query along with Saint Photini, "Could this be the Christ?"



Therefore, let us listen with attention and respect to our Presvyteres, and benefit from the well-gained wisdom that they hold. Let us hold them in honor on this National Sisterhood of Presvyteres Sunday, thankful for their many and diverse contributions to the life of our Church.

With paternal love in the Risen Lord,

† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Αριθμ. Πρωτ. 143/2024

**Αρχιεπισκοπική Έγκύκλιος για την Κυριακή της Ἐθνικῆς Ἀδελφότητος τῶν
Πρεσβυτερῶν.**

2 Ιουνίου 2024

Πρὸς τοὺς Σεβασμιωτάτους καὶ Θεοφιλεστάτους Ἀρχιερεῖς, τοὺς Εὐλαβεστάτους Ἱερεῖς καὶ Διακόνους, τὶς Πρεσβύτερες καὶ τὶς Διακόνισσες, 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 Ἀπογευματινὰ Σχολεῖα, τὶς Φιλοπτώχους Ἀδελφότητες, τὴ Νεολαία, τὶς Ἑλληνορθόδοξες Ὄργανώσεις καὶ ὁλόκληρο τὸ Χριστεπώνυμο πλήρωμα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Αρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀμερικῆς.

«Δεῦτε ἴδετε ἄνθρωπον ὃς εἶπέ μοι πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησα· μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός»;
(κατὰ Ἰωάννην 4:29)

Προσφιλεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἀδελφές ἐν Χριστῷ,

Χριστὸς ἀνέστη!

Τὸ γεγονός ὅτι ἡ Κυριακὴ ἡ ἀφιερωμένη στὴν Ἐθνικὴ Ἀδελφότητα τῶν Πρεσβυτέρων συμπίπτει ἐφέτος μὲ τὴν Κυριακὴ τῆς Σαμαρείτιδος εἶναι πράγματι ἐξαιρετικό. Διότι ἡ διήγηση τῆς Σαμαρείτιδος, ἡ ὁποία μαρτύρησε ἐν τέλει γιὰ τὸ Χριστὸ μαζὶ μὲ τοὺς συντρόφους της, ἀποτελεῖ μία ὑψηλὴ θεολογικὴ ἀποκάλυψη σὲ αὐτὴ, ὡς δοχεῖο τῆς Σοφίας, ἃν καὶ ὁ βίος της, στὰ ἀρχικὰ στάδια τουλάχιστον, ἀπεῖχε πολὺ ἀπὸ τὸ θαυμάσιο βίον τῶν γυναικῶν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας, οἱ ὁποῖες εἶναι σύζυγοι τῶν κληρικῶν μας.

Οἱ πρεσβύτερες τῆς ἐκκλησίας μας, εἶναι τὰ δοχεῖα ἐκεῖνα τῆς σοφίας τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, τῶν ὁποίων ἡ συνεισφορὰ στὴ ζωὴ τῶν ἐνοριῶν μας εἶναι δυσαναπλήρωτη. Πολλὲς κατέχουν εὐρεῖα θεολογικὴ παιδεία, ἐνῶ ὅλες διαθέτουν βαθιὰ βιωματικὴ γνώση, ὥστε νὰ βλέπουν τὴ λειτουργία τῆς ἐνορίας σφαιρικὰ, τόσο δηλαδὴ ἀπὸ τὴ σκοπιὰ τοῦ λειτουργοῦ, ὅσο καὶ ἀπὸ αὐτὴ τοῦ πιστοῦ. Ἡ προσφορὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων στὶς κοινότητές μας εἶναι ἀνεκτίμητη καὶ διακριτικὴ, ἀφήνοντας



νὰ προβληθεῖ μάλλον τὸ ἔργο τῶν συζύγων τους, συνεχίζοντας μία παράδοση, ποὺ ξεκινάει ἀπὸ τὴν Παναγία μας καὶ ὅλες τὶς ἁγίες γυναῖκες τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, μέχρι καὶ σήμερα. Αὐτὲς μαζί με τὶς ἄλλες γυναῖκες τῆς ἐκκλησίας μας, οἱ ὁποῖες διακονοῦν εἴτε ὡς μέλη τῶν κοινοτικῶν συμβουλίων, εἴτε ὡς μέλη τῆς Φιλοπτώχου Ἀδελφότητος, εἴτε σὲ ἄλλες διακονίες ποὺ τοὺς ἀναθέτει ἡ Ἐκκλησία, καλοῦν τοὺς πιστοὺς σὲ μία διαρκῆ ἀναζήτηση τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀκτίστων ἐνεργειῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ, σὲ πρόσωπα, σὲ μέρη ἢ σὲ γεγονότα, ἐρωτώντας μαζί με τὴν ἁγία Φωτεινή: «μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός»;

Ἐπομένως, ἃς ἀκοῦμε τὶς συμβουλές τῶν πρεσβυτέρων μας με προσοχὴ καὶ σεβασμό, ἐπωφελοῦμενοι ἀπὸ τὴ γνήσια σοφία τους καὶ ἃς τὶς τιμήσουμε, εἰδικὰ αὐτὴ τὴν Κυριακὴ τῆς Ἐθνικῆς Ἀδελφότητος τῶν Πρεσβυτέρων, εὐγνώμονες γιὰ τὴν μεγάλη καὶ πολυσχιδῇ συνεισφορά τους στὴ ζωὴ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας.

Μετὰ πολλῆς πατρικῆς ἐν Κυρίῳ ἀναστάντι ἀγάπης

+ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐλπιδοφόρος



St. Demetrios Holy Week



St. Demetrios celebration of Holy Week and Great and Holy Pascha.

Below - Sunday Service of Pascha. The reading of the Gospels in different languages.



St. Demetrios Happenings



Fr. Deacon Dr. Luke Carpenter was honored by the St. Demetrios Parish in North Wildwood, New Jersey on Sunday, May 26th, 2024. For the last 25 years Fr. Deacon Luke Carpenter vacations with his family and for the last four years since his Diaconate ordination serves the parish. He is well loved by everyone in the Community. The Carpenter family are also great benefactors of the Church.



Father Michael took a photo of the Tuesday lunch group enjoying a delicious meal at the Boulevard Diner in Dundalk, Maryland. The group has been meeting on Tuesdays for years.

The Ladies Philoptochos Society selected Mrs. Irene Sheets to honor during our Mother's Day celebration. Philoptochos representatives, Roula Papaspanos and Helen Mitchell, presented Mrs. Sheets with the award.



St. Demetrios Happenings



St. Demetrios Annual Picnic at the Cape May Country Park and Zoo on Monday, May 6th.





Greek School Graduation



St. Demetrios celebrated Greek School graduation on Sunday, May 19th. Best wishes to all our students!



thoughts from

EVA LALLAS

OPEN LETTER TO THE PARISHIONERS OF ST. DEMETRIOS

I am foregoing the format of my monthly article because I am inspired to address YOU, the parishioner of St. Demetrios. It is true that I knew nothing of St. Demetrios and your loving Christian spirit prior to April 2023 when Father Michael Pastrokos came to your church. At that time I learned that YOU warmly embraced and welcomed Father and Presvytera Toula with President Nick Konides who assured Father that the parishioners extend their full cooperation and support whatever is needed for the mission of the church to be accomplished.

Once Father launched "Koinonia," the monthly newsletter of the church in June 2023, and an updated website I could read about the happenings at St. Demetrios: the involvement of youngsters on Saturdays whether learning about the religious articles used during Liturgy or during funtime and social interaction in the afternoon; the formation of the dance group; the sacraments of baptism/confirmation of several young adults who have espoused Orthodoxy; visits with the business owners of Wildwood; the gala event held right before the beginning of Great Lent, etc. All of this spear-headed by the "retired" priest on weekends.

These activities could only be accomplished by the acceptance and participation of the loving members of St. Demetrios, the supportive parish council, the

hard working members of the Philoptohos, the ever mindful parents who make it possible for their children to participate, and, of course, the financial backing needed for these successes. In addition, I am sure that there are other individuals and groups who are involved of whom I am not aware.

As promised by Nick, the community has fully supported and are appreciative of Father Michael's dedicated service in raising the St. Demetrios Church to greater heights to the glory of God. It appears to me that the meeting of the loving, receptive family of St. Demetrios and the energetic, innovative Father Michael was brought about by God's Grace so that His Word would be amplified.

I witnessed the St. Demetrios parishioners in action on Bright Monday May 6th during the community picnic at the Cape May Zoo. Prior to that day I had only known of your wonderful community based on what I had heard or read in the "Koinonia." Several of us from Baltimore accepted your invitation to attend the picnic and were richly rewarded by a very pleasant, although too brief, visit of fellowship. The freshly prepared tasty foods (the best souvlaki) were topped only by your enthusiastic welcome! The St. Demetrios family lives the genuine Greek spirit of philoxenia; you exude the warmth of Christian friendship! This must be how you greet and welcome visitors to church liturgies throughout the year encouraging them to return and worship God with you.

We thank you for a joyful afternoon in getting to know you and see that St. Demetrios will continue to thrive and spread the good Word of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. God willing it is our hope that we will join you again in worship at your beautiful St. Demetrios Church.

Continued next page...



thoughts from

EVA LALLAS

Continued...

How could I allow June to pass without acknowledging the important holiday of Father's Day.

"Dad," "Daddy," "Μπαμπά," "Μπαμπάκα," "Pop," "Papa," "Father" all refer to the man who not only gave us life, but to the man who along with Mom raised and nurtured us.

God has entrusted him with the awesome responsibility of caring for us. I was often reminded by my late mother of an observation I had made at about age seven. Having attended two weddings of family friends each couple sometime later announced the birth of their baby. My comment to Mom, "Isn't God wonderful! He always makes sure that each baby has a mother and a father!" Yes, our fathers are God's blessed gift to every person.

Most often our Dad, as the head of the traditional family is the bread winner, the unsung hero who spends most of his waking hours working tirelessly to provide us not only with the necessities of life, but also the many "extras" we enjoy. Concerned fathers not only care for their own, but often step in to assume the responsibility of their extended family who had the misfortune of losing their Dad by offering support and guidance.

Although Father's Day will be celebrated on June 16th our Dads deserve expressions of love, appreciation, and daily prayer. For those fathers who are no longer

with us, we offer prayers and honor their memory. We should strive to live exemplary lives thus reflecting honor on the family name, our father's name.

At St. Demetrios we are blessed to have Father Michael our spiritual father who loves Christ deeply and works diligently to promote the involvement of each parishioner in the expanded activities of the church. As we celebrate Father's Day let's start the day by attending church with our Dads offering prayers of thanks, including prayers for Father Michael as he continues his mission of bringing us closer to Jesus.

Happy Father's Day to Father Michael and all the men of St. Demetrios!





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.) Το φάρι από το κεφάλι βρωμάει !

The fish smells, rots from the head down

The leader of an organization - CEO, captain, etc. is the responsible one for its failure...the rest follows.

2.) Τό γιαλί όταν ραγίσει, δεν ξανάκολλάει!

When a glass cracks or breaks, it cannot be glued in place again!

When there is a rift or break-up between individuals or groups, the former union or deal cannot be fully mended. It's never the way it was.

3.) Εσένα τά λέει η πεθερά, νά τ'ακούη η νύφη !

The mother-in-law is telling you (advice, criticism), so that the daughter-in-law hears and takes heed!
 Avoiding telling someone directly what you intend to say by referring your comments, suggestions, complaints to someone else in hopes that the intended one will hear and get the message.

4.) Το γοργό καί χάρη !

Haste has its benefit! Taking action early is beneficial. Don't be tardy.
 "Strike while the iron is hot!" "The early bird gets the worm!"

5.) Το σημερινό μου μυαλό, νά τό είχα χθές!

I wish I had today's brain yesterday!
 "If I knew today, what I knew yesterday!"



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 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

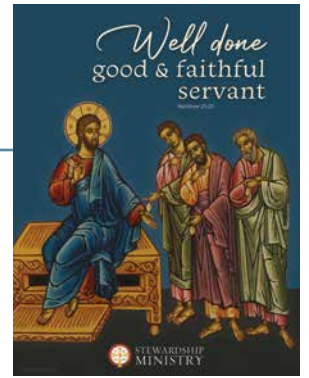
321 ST. DEMETRIOS AVE, NORTH WILDWOOD, NJ 08260

STDEMETRIOSNEWJERSEY.COM

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



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 “Stewards 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 _____

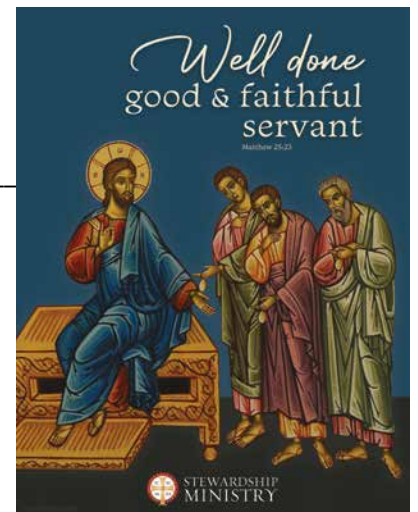
Single/Individual \$500.00

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 _____



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!





May 3, 2024

Dear friends,

I want to express my deepest gratitude for the incredible honor bestowed upon me by the membership of Saint Demetrius Orthodox Church. The evening was truly unforgettable, filled with cherished moments and the warmth of community that I will always treasure.

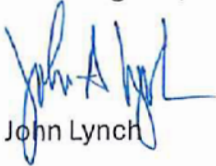
Your kindness and generosity were overwhelming, and I am humbled beyond words. The night was made even more special by the presence of good friends, delicious food, and the joy of traditional Greek dancing.

One of the highlights of the evening was witnessing our children, the future leaders of our community, take the stage with pride to showcase their dancing skills. It was a beautiful reminder of the importance of preserving the Greek culture and heritage in the Wildwoods. Vicki and I are excited to pay your kindness forward, by offering a VIP trip for the dance team with a trip to Washington, DC.

I am a firm believer that God puts the RIGHT people in the RIGHT place at the RIGHT time for the RIGHT reason. It is a philosophy that guides me in everything I do, and I am grateful for the opportunity to share it with all of you.

Thank you once again for this incredible honor. May God bless us all.

Warm regards,



John Lynch



P.O. Box 1322, Wildwood, NJ 08260

Pastoral Thoughts

No one will be able to meet Christ on the Journey to Pascha unless they are walking the right path. Having the right frame of mind for this journey is indispensable to its success. Someone planning to visit an island must first understand that he must either take a plane or a boat and not a bus or a train. But a right **mental** attitude is not **enough**. It is not sufficient to know with firm mind that to reach the island you have to fly or take a boat, but one has to act accordingly. It won't do to "know" you have to take a boat and not to buy a ticket for the train.

Christ is "one" person even though there are several ways that people can reach Him. Our meeting with Christ will depend on the degree that the Christ we are seeking is the real Christ. The correct belief of "who" and "what" is Christ is absolutely necessary to our "beginning" of our journey to meet Him, and this "beginning" must be followed with a "living" in which our whole being participates.

All too often, with our thoughts and words we refer to Christ, but our lives refer to an all together different Christ. We can describe with words our God as a loving father who "emptied Himself" and became man for us, His children, while at the same time to be tormented by feelings of guilt over our sins and by fear of the punishment that will be imposed upon us unmercifully. We might say with words that only the grace of God saves us while simultaneously basing our salvation on **good works**. The person who follows the right path for a meeting with the Risen Christ must now be assured that this journey is based on a correct belief about who this Christ is that we want to meet.

Man cannot meet Christ so long as Satan is in his heart as Jesus says, "this generation (Satan and his demons) cannot pass away without prayer and fasting." (Matthew 17:21) Prayer and fasting are the means by which man will clean his heart to meet Christ there. Prayer is not a request for gifts, it is not a means whereby we transform God into a servant and demand that He speedily satisfy our desires. It is almost a blasphemy for one to tell God what to give because when we do this we suggest that we know something that God doesn't, and that we are smarter than He. When we do this we truly don't believe in God. Real prayer is for man to ask for nothing other than God Himself, "...the Kingdom of God and His righteousness..." and all other things that we really need will be given to us without asking. (Matt.6:33)

Real prayer is an expression of love that seeks only the object of our love. Such a prayer is prayed, "...with sighs too deep for words." (Romans.8:26) When we seek with warm prayer, the resurrected Christ will appear before us just as He appeared before Mary and the eleven disciples "while the doors were shut." He will appear in all His glory to us if we will be as were His disciples, "...constantly devoting themselves to prayer..."

I ask you, therefore, dear faithful, to please continue your devotion, your vigilance, your prayers, and your attendance, to say the least, to the various spiritual services that our Church has scheduled for the remainder of the Great Lent period. And to open our hearts and our lives to our most Loving and forgiving Lord, for but the glorious Resurrection is only a few weeks away. Let us be prepared correctly spiritually and physically for that.

Pastoral Thoughts *Translated into Greek*

Κανείς δεν θα δυνηθεί ν' ανταμωθεί με τον Χριστό καθ'οδό προς το Άγιο Πάσχα, αν δεν διανύσει τον ορθό δρόμο. Η επιτυχία του ταξιδιού του εξαρτάται από την πνευματική του ετοιμότητα. Ένας που σκοπεύει να επισκεφθεί κάποιο νησί, πρέπει να αντιληφθεί πρώτα πως πρέπει να πάρει αεροπλάνο ή πλοίο και όχι αυτοκίνητο ή τρένο! Αλλά η σωστή πνευματική διάθεση δεν είναι αρκετή προϋπόθεση! Δεν είναι αρκετό να γνωρίζεις πως για να φθάσεις σ' ένα νησί θα πρέπει να ταξιδέψεις με πλοίο ή αεροπλάνο. Θα πρέπει να ενεργήσεις ανάλογα.

Ο Χριστός είναι ένα και μοναδικό «πρόσωπο», άνκαι μπορούμε να τον πλησιάσουμε με διαφορετικούς τρόπους. Η συνάντησή μας με τον Χριστό εξαρτάται από το πόσο ο Χριστός που αναζητούμε είναι ο πραγματικός Χριστός. Αναγκαία προϋπόθεση στην αναζήτηση του Χριστού είναι η κατανόηση μας ως προς το «ποιός» και «τί» είναι ο Χριστός που αναζητούμε και αυτή η «αρχή» θα πρέπει ν' ακολουθείται με ένα τέτοιο τρόπο ζωής όπου όλο το είναι μας λαμβάνει ενεργό μέρος.

Συχνά στις σκέψεις μας και τα λεγόμενα μας αναφερόμαστε στον Χριστό, αλλά αυτός ο Χριστός είναι ένας όλως διόλου διαφορετικός Χριστός.. Μπορούμε να χαρακτηρίζουμε τον Θεό σαν ένα Ελεήμονα Πατέρα που κατέβηκε σαν άνθρωπος στη γη για μας τα παιδιά Του, ενώ συγχρόνως ταλαιπωρούμεθα από ενοχή για τις αμαρτίες μας και από το φόβο της τιμωρίας. Ενώ λέμε πως η σωτηρία μας εξαρτάται από την μεγαλοψυχία του Θεού, συγχρόνως βασιζόμαστε στις αγαθοεργικές μας πράξεις για την σωτηρία μας.

Ο Χριστιανός που ακολουθεί τον σωστό δρόμο για την συνάντησή του με τον Αναστημένο Χριστό πρέπει να είναι βέβαιος πως αυτό το ταξίδι είναι βασισμένο στην

ορθή κατανόηση του Χριστού που θέλει ν' ανταμώσει.

Κανείς δεν μπορεί ν' ανταμώσει τον Χριστό αν έχει τον Σατανά στην καρδιά του, όπως μας λέει ο ίδιος ο Χριστός, «αυτή η γενεά (ο Σατανάς με τα δαιμόνια του) δεν θα εξαφανιστεί χωρίς την προσευχή και την νηστεία.» (Ματθαίος 17:21) Η προσευχή και η νηστεία είναι τα μέσα με τα οποία ο άνθρωπος θα εξαγνίσει την ψυχή του για ν' ανταμώσει τον Χριστό. Η προσευχή δεν είναι παράκληση για δώρα, ούτε πρέπει να έχει σαν σκοπό την ικανοποίηση των επιθυμιών μας. Είναι σχεδόν ιεροσυλία να εισηγηθούμε προς τον Θεό τί θα πρέπει να μας δώσει, γιατί αυτό σημαίνει πως θεωρούμε τον εαυτό μας εξυπνότερο απ' Εκείνον! Η πραγματική προσευχή δεν πρέπει να έχει άλλο σκοπό από την αναζήτηση του Θεού. «Η Βασιλεία του Θεού, η δικαιοσύνη Του...» και ότι άλλο έχουμε ανάγκη θα μας παραχωρηθούν χωρίς να το έχουμε ζητήσει. (Ματθαίος 6:33)

Η πραγματική προσευχή είναι έκφραση αγάπης με την οποία αναζητούμε το αντικείμενο της λατρείας μας. Μια τέτοια προσευχή γίνεται, «... με βαθείς αναστεναγμούς...» (Ρωμ. 8:26). Όταν αναζητούμε με θερμή προσευχή, ο Αναστημένος Χριστός θα παρουσιαστεί και σε μας, όπως παρουσιάστηκε στην Μαρία και τους ένδεκα μαθητές, «ενώ οι θύρες ήταν κλειστές.» Θα παρουσιαστεί μπροστά μας με όλη Του την δόξα, εάν είμαστε κι εμείς, όπως οι μαθητές Του, «...αφοσιωμένοι στην προσευχή...»

Σας ζητώ, λοιπόν, αγαπητοί πιστοί, να συνεχίσετε την αφοσίωση σας στην προσευχή όπως και την παρουσία σας στις διάφορες λειτουργίες της Εκκλησίας μας για το υπόλοιπο της Μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστής και ν' ανοίξετε τις καρδιές σας προς τον Πολυεύσπλαχνο Κύριο, ενώ πλησιάζει η ημέρα της Ανάστασής. Ας προετοιμαστούμε ψυχικά και σωματικά.

Pastoral Thoughts

Best Day Of My Life!

Today, when I awoke, I suddenly realized that this is the best day of my life, ever! There were times when I wondered if I would make it to today; but I did! And because I did I'm going to celebrate!

Today, I'm going to celebrate what an unbelievable life I have had so far: the accomplishments, the many blessings, and, yes even the hardships because they have served to make me stronger. I will go through this day with a happy heart. I will marvel at God's seemingly simple gifts: the morning dew, the sun, the clouds, the trees, the



flowers, the birds. Today, none of these miraculous creations will escape my notice.

Today, I will share my excitement for life with other people. I'll make someone smile. I'll go out of my way to perform an unexpected act of kindness for someone I don't even know. Today, I'll give a sincere compliment to someone who seems down. I'll tell a child how special he is, and I'll tell someone I love just how deeply I care for her and how much she means to me.



Today is the day I quit worrying about what I don't have and start being grateful for all the wonderful things God has already given me. I'll remember that to worry is just a waste of time because my faith in God and his Divine

Plan ensures everything will be just fine.

And tonight, before I go to bed, I'll go outside and raise my eyes to the heavens. I will stand in awe at the beauty of the stars and the moon, and I will praise God for these magnificent treasures.



As the day ends and I lay my head down on my pillow, I will thank the Almighty for the best day of my life. And I will sleep the sleep of a contented child, excited with expectation because I know tomorrow is going to be the best day of my life, ever!

HEALTHY BODY AND MIND

ARE PLANT MILKS RIGHT FOR YOU?



Noticed the growing number of beverages in your grocery store's dairy case? These "milks" don't contain dairy at all; instead, they are made from plant foods such as coconut, almonds, cashews, oats, soy and rice. We're often told that dairy products are the best source of calcium and vitamin D, which support strong bones and healthy teeth. So why all these new options?

For some, the answer simply comes down to personal preference. However, there are also considerable health concerns driving this nondairy trend. An estimated 30 million American adults cannot digest lactose, the natural sugar found in dairy products. These people experience gas, diarrhea or bloating after consuming cow's milk. And approximately 6 million Americans - predominantly children - are allergic to cow's milk, a condition that can require emergency medical treatment. The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine asserts that the saturated fat found in cow's milk can increase the risk of heart disease and certain cancers. Additionally, based on ethical and environmental concerns, some Americans opt to avoid animal products in favor of a vegan lifestyle.

However, other people simply prefer the taste, creaminess and versatility of cow's milk. Like plant milk, it comes in a variety of flavors and fat contents. Lactose-free options and supplemental enzymes are also available for those who are lactose intolerant. These are easy to find at convenience and grocery stores. They can also be a more economical choice, with some plant milks costing twice as much.

Regardless of which milk you prefer, it is always important to read labels. Plant milks are made by soaking the chosen nut, bean or grain, grinding that material with water, and then adding flavorings, nutrients and often sugar. This means some milks are high in sugar, or lack the amounts of calcium, vitamin D, protein and vitamin B12 that make dairy so valuable. Look for plant milk that is fortified with at least 250 mg calcium and 2.5 mcg vitamin D. Also, choose unsweetened options, preferably with less than 12 grams of sugar per cup.

NOT ALWAYS "GREEN"

Scores of everyday cleaning products—even so-called green products—emit hazardous volatile organic compounds (VOCs), according to an Environmental Working Group study published in the journal *Chemosphere*.

As HealthDay reports, the study looked at multipurpose cleaners, glass cleaners and air fresheners. Researchers detected 530 unique VOCs, including 193 that could damage the respiratory system, increase cancer risk, and/or increase risk of developmental and reproductive problems.

Products labeled "green" were found to emit about half as many VOCs, and fragrance-free options emitted nearly eight times fewer VOCs than conventional cleaners.

According to the study, VOCs have been associated with a higher incidence of several breathing-related conditions.

"Those in the cleaning industry have a 50% higher asthma risk," HealthDay reports. "They also have a 43% higher risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD. Women who do this work also have a greater risk of lung cancer."

In addition, higher use of certain indoor cleaners appears to affect fetuses and infants, and is associated with a greater risk of asthma and wheezing in childhood.



\$ A FOCUS ON FINANCES \$

HAVE "THE TALK" ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING, FINANCES



Earlier this morning, I wrote a check to my mom's memory care center.

That may not seem a big deal, but it's a testament to both her insistence on having some tough conversations over the years and the grit it took to follow through and get stuff done.

I mention this because the holidays usually bring families together and are an ideal time to let your loved ones know where you stand on various estate-planning issues. This might be hard to do, but I can vouch for the importance of making things run as smooth as possible in difficult times.

You know your family better than I do, but here are five things I think they'd benefit by hearing from you this year:

YOUR PLAN

You probably know what you want to happen if you are incapacitated or die, and I hope you've put it in writing. Legal documents may include wills, trusts, powers of attorney and living wills. You'll also want to ensure your assets are titled and, where appropriate, include beneficiary designations in line with your overall wishes. A qualified estate-planning attorney can help you build the plan, but it's up to you to share it.

WHO YOU WANT DOING WHAT

Whether you're naming an agent to make decisions for you in the event you can't, selecting an executor or successor trustee to manage things when you're gone, or choosing someone for something as mundane as taking care of your pets, you've got a reason and rationale for picking who you pick. Get it out there to set expectations and prevent conflict.



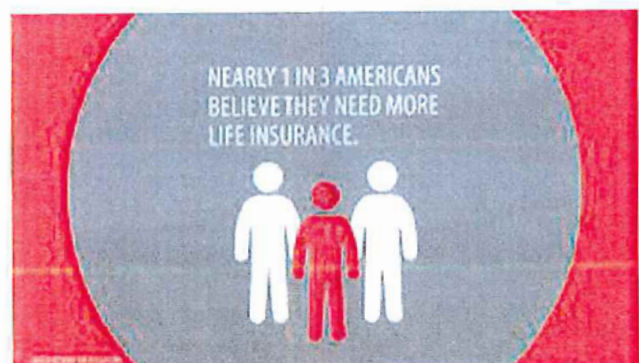
YOUR TEAM AND CONTACTS

Have a letter of instruction documenting your key contacts (attorneys, accountants), providers (banks, brokerages, insurance companies) and social media account details in a single document or notebook. If not, get it done. Include the details of any special programs or services for which you're eligible. Perhaps you've gone through the VA pre-need burial eligibility process and have documentation showing it. Let those who will need the info know where it's kept.

YOUR INSURANCE

Your life, disability, long-term care and health insurance have direct or indirect effects on your day-to-day finances as well as your estate plan. Do you have any gaps or concerns when it comes to insurance? Maybe you have long-term care or life insurance that has become too expensive but could still provide valuable protection. Getting it out in the open could invite solutions that benefit the entire family.

Your special instructions This is an opportunity to share details on a wide variety of topics, such as preferred burial location, cremation, type of service and obituary details. Don't let my lack of imagination limit yours.





An Open Letter

Dear Dad,

There are so many things I'd like
To tell you face to face;
I either lack the word or fail
To find the time or place.
But in this special letter, Dad,
You'll find, at least, in part,
The feelings that the passing years
Have left within my heart.

The memories of childhood days
And all that you have done,
To make our home a happy place
And growing up such fun!
I still recall the walks we took,

The games we often played;
Those confidential chats we had
While resting in the shade.

This letter comes to thank you, Dad,
For needed words of praise;
The counsel and the guidance, too,
That shaped my grown-up days.
No words of mine can tell you, Dad,
The things I really feel;
But must know my love for you
Is lasting, warm and real.

You made my world a better place,
And through the coming years;
I'll keep these memories of you
As cherished souvenirs!

Your grateful son
Author Unknown



Διά την Έορτή του Πατέρα

Ο Πατέρας και τα δύο παιδιά του

Πατέρας είχε δυο παιδιά,
'πό μάννα όρφανεμένα,
μέ κόπους και μέ καρτεριά,
τά 'χε, ό φτωχός, αναθρεμμένα.
Και τώρα αυτός έγίρασε,
κουράστηκε' ή καρδιά του.
Βαρειά δέ σάν άσθένησε
φωνάζει τά παιδιά του
-Προτού τό πνεύμα παραδώσω,
τι θέλετε, δ,τ' έχω νά σάς δώσω.
Οί γυιοί του δίπλα κάθισαν
στήν νεκρική του κλίνη,
τά μάτια των έδάκρυσαν
πού μόνους τούς άφήνει.
'Ο ένας γυιός, μέ φιλαυτία,
ζητούσε γιά κληρονομία,
σπίτι, χωράφια νά του δώσει,
πρίν την ψυχή του παραδώσει.
Κι' ό άλλος γυιός μέ σεβασμό,
τό χέρι του φιλούσε...
μέ πόνο και καύμό,
τόν θερμopαρακαλούσε:
-Πατέρα, την εύχούλα σου
θέλω γιά νά μου δώσεις,
πρίν την άγνή ψυχούλα σου
στόν Πλάστη παραδώσεις.
Τίποι' άλλο δέν ζητώ
άπό πατέρα σεβαστό...
Κι' ό γέρος τό χέρι του έθεσε
πάνω στην κεφαλή του,
ροδώνσε την εύχή του
κι' εύτυχισμένος έψπνευσε!...

Letter to Dad

There are so many things I'd like
To tell you face to face;
I either lack the words or fail
To find the time and place.
But in this special letter, Dad,
You'll find, at least in part,
The feelings that the passing years
Have left within my heart.

The memories of childhood days
And all that you have done,
To make our home a happy place
And growing up such fun!
I still recall the walks we took,
The games we often played;
Those confidential chats we had
While resting in the shade.

This letter comes to thank you, and,
For needed words of praise;
The counsel and the guidance, too,
That shaped my grown-up days.
No words of mine can tell you, Dad,
The things I really feel;
But you must know my love for you
Is lasting, warm and real.

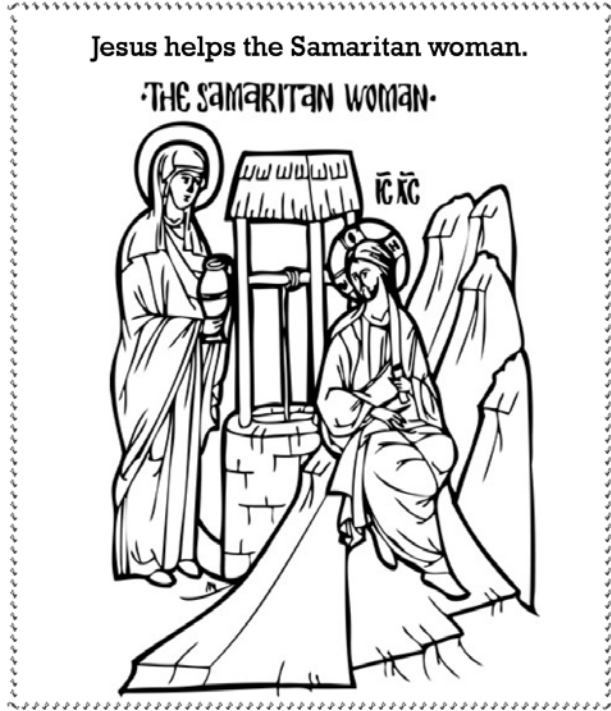
You made my world a better place,
And through the coming years;
I'll keep these memories of you
As cherished souvenirs.

Author Unknown

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 [orthodoxchildrensward\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:orthodoxchildrensward(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, June 2, 2024

Volume 12, Issue 22

A Ministry of the
Orthodox Christian Network



God is on our side!

Have you ever been in trouble?

Sometimes when we've done something wrong, we know we're going to hear about it from our teacher or our parents. Sometimes we might even try to hide, so we don't get in trouble!

In today's Gospel reading, we hear about a woman who did some bad things in her life. When she talked with Jesus, she didn't *tell* him she did something wrong. He just *knew* it! He already knew all about her. Maybe she thought, "I'm in trouble now!"



Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman

But then, Jesus told this woman more about God. He told her how she can worship Him. Instead of telling her how wrong she was, Jesus showed her how He cared about her. He wanted her to come closer to God! He wanted to save her!

In another part in the Bible are some great words. We hear, "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him." That means that God didn't send Jesus here to tell us we're in trouble! God sent Him to save us. Just like for this woman in the story today, God wants to bring us closer to Him!

Sometimes it might seem like we're always doing something wrong, but our Lord is on our side. He wants to save us!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Confessor
- Defend
- Gospel
- Icons
- Living Water
- Nikephoros
- Patriarch
- Salvation
- Samaritan
- Trouble
- Well

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

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

Saint Nikephoros was the patriarch, and a bishop. That's why in his icon, he carries a Gospel, because bishops teach the faith.

But Saint Nikephoros also knew that along with the Gospel, icons were another way we teach our holy Orthodox faith!



FIGHTING FOR ICONS

SAINT NIKEPHOROS THE CONFESSOR

Do you love icons so much that

you would fight for them? If you saw somebody putting them down and stomping on them, would you fight for them?

Well, Saint Nikephoros did! Saint Nikephoros was born many years ago, in the year 758. At that time the emperors seemed to go back and forth between loving icons or hating them. For a few years the people would have an emperor or empress who protected icons, and then for a few years they would have a ruler who hated them and wanted them all destroyed!



Saint Nikephoros wrote three great works to explain why the Church must have icons! Later on, Nikephoros became the Patriarch of Constantinople, but unfortunately the emperor at the time was a terrible icon-hater. He hated icons so much that he punished people who defended them! Saint Nikephoros fought for icons, even though the emperor sent people to secretly attack and kill him. This didn't happen, but finally the emperor sent the holy saint away into exile, where he was forced to live away from his church flock. That way, the emperor wouldn't have to listen to his warnings and advice!

Saint Nikephoros died in exile, but our Church remembers his courage and how he loved icons so much that he fought for them!

We celebrate Saint Nikephoros today, Sunday, June 2nd (OC: June 15th).

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Concerning the use of One's Tongue

A quaint, old Jewish story tells of a king who gave his jester the following difficult command. "Go out and buy the very best thing in the world". Moreover, a very short time later, the returned and presented the king with a package.

Unwrapping the package, the king noted that it contained a tongue. He thus carefully thought about the contents of this package, and finally praised the jester for having chosen so wisely saying: "Indeed, the tongue is the best thing in the world."

A short time passed, and the king once again summoned the jester, and gave him an equally difficult assignment. "Now, good servant," said the king. "I would like you to go out and search for the worst thing in the world. And when you find it, bring it back to me as you did before."

Hearing this, the jester obeyed his master and soon returned with another package. Unwrapping the package, the king again found another tongue. And again the king stopped for a moment and pensively considered the contents of this package, finally saying: "Indeed, good and wise servant, the tongue is the worst thing in the world."

The point behind this story is simple. With out tongues we can praise or curse. In short, the gift of speech can contribute greatly toward man's glory or lend greatly toward his demise. As such, it is no wonder that the ancients feared those who were articulate more than those who possessed great physical prowess.

Indeed! The tongue has tremendous destructive power. It can cast vicious rumors and evil half truths about that cripple and destroy. With the tongue wars begin, reputations are destroyed, emotional wounds are made that are hard to heal.

Like a venomous snake, it might well be suggested that the tongue carries venom that kills. Make no mistake about it, words kill: They kill love, they kill joy, they kill peace, they kill trust, they kill healthy ambition and a good name. And yes, they can kill Christian families, Christian friendship and even Christian communities.

It is thus, no wonder, that when we speak about others in a malicious manner; when we encourage rumors, gossip, and half-truths, we grieve our God. For through such activity, we separate ourselves from God and His Grace. That is why Saint Paul wrote to the Ephesians saying, "Let no evil talk come out your mouths ... but only such as is good and edifying ... Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you ... be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving, as God in Christ forgave you."

Pray, therefore, each day, that Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, gives you the strength to follow Him. For therein you will find the law of love, and the needed Christian self-control to hold back the malicious remark, the harsh answer and harmful rumors; therein you will be graced with the need insight to use your tongue to God's glory and your salvation.

He who loses gold or silver can find more to replace it, but he who loses time cannot find more.

Apophthegmata Patrum

Riches Do Not Lead to Happiness

One of the greatest proofs that money does not bring happiness is the heiress, Christina Onassis, who said, "Happiness does not depend on money. Our family is the best proof of that."

Anthony DeMello tells the story of "The Contented Fisherman":

The rich industrialist from the North was horrified to find the Southern fisherman lying lazily beside his boat, smoking a pipe.

"Why aren't you fishing?" said the industrialist.

"Because I have caught enough fish for the day," said the fisherman.

"Why don't you catch more than you need?" said the industrialist.

"What would I do with it?" asked the fisherman.

"You could earn more money," was the reply. "With that you could have a motor fixed to your boat. Then you could go into deeper waters and catch more fish. Then you would make enough to buy nylon nets. These would bring you more fish and more money. Soon you would have enough money to own two boats . . . maybe even a fleet of boats. Then you would be a rich man like me."

"What would I do then?" asked the fisherman.

"Then you could sit down and enjoy life," said the industrialist.

Show Me!

A pagan king once told a rabbi that unless he could produce his God in court, his head would roll in the streets.

The rabbi said, "Sure, O great King — but first come out into the sunshine. I want to show you something."

The king went along. "Take a look at the sun," said the rabbi. The king tried to look but could not. "I can't look at the sun," he said. "It hurts my eyes."

"Well, how in heaven's name do you expect to see God face to face," the rabbi asked, "if you can't even look at the sun, which is only one of the many things God has made?"

God is our sun in more ways than one. He sheds light on the mysteries of life. He is the source of energy for us. He makes life and growth possible. But as in the story of the rabbi, God is much too bright for man to look at face to face. Even the angels cover their eyes with their wings in His presence. In His infinite love God did something about his dazzling brightness: He became man in Jesus thereby toning down His great splendor so that we might be able to see Him face to face and behold "his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (John 1:14). "I am the light of the world," said Jesus, "he who follows me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." He who follows Jesus today has the light of life. He does not wander in the darkness of confusion. He knows what life is all about. He knows what to expect beyond the grave. He has an inner flame that transfigures his face and his life, for he has living within him the God who is "Light of Light."

Church Fathers Speak

Before I return to the earth, Lord, let my heart return to you. — Orthodox Prayer

The Subject is "Funny"

Funny how a \$20 bill "looks" so big when you take it to church, but so small when you take it to the mall.

Funny how long it takes to serve God for an hour, but how quickly a team plays 60 minutes of basketball.

Funny how we can't think of anything to say when we pray, but don't have difficulty thinking of things to talk about to a friend.

Funny how we get thrilled when a baseball game goes into extra innings, but we complain when a sermon is longer than the regular time.

Funny how people want to get a front seat at any game or concert, but scramble to get a back seat at church.

Funny how hard it is for people to learn a simple gospel well enough to tell others, but how simple it is for the same people to understand and repeat gossip.

Funny how we believe what the newspaper says, but question what the Bible says.

Funny how everyone wants to go to heaven, provided they do not have to believe, or to say, or to do anything.

Funny how you can send a thousand jokes through e-mail, and they spread like wild, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing.

"But I have called you friends"

Friendships are special relationships. We confide in our friends . . . we trust them with our innermost secrets and we trust them with our very lives. We share our joys and our sorrows with them. We know we can always turn to them in time of need, and we are always available to help out if the situation is reversed.

Anyone with a TRUE friend is, indeed a fortunate person. It is no wonder, then that Christ speaks about friends in a very beautiful manner in His Farewell Discourse to His Apostles on the Night of His Passion. "But I have called you friends, for all things I heard from My Father, I have made known to You." (John 15:15) What an honor it was for them to be referred to by Jesus as His "Friends!"

Yes, Christ would always be their Master, but because of

Funny how we are rarely late to work, but always late to church.

Funny how we call God our Father and Jesus our Brother, but find it hard to introduce them to our family.

Funny how small our sins seem, but how big their "sins" are.

Funny how we demand justice for others, but expect mercy from God.

Funny how we are so quick to take directions from a total stranger when we are lost, but are hesitant to take God's direction for our lives.

Funny how people want God to answer their prayers, but refuse to listen to His counsel.

Funny how we sing about Heaven, but don't think there is a Hell.

Funny how it is all right to blame God for evil and suffering in the world, but it is not necessary to thank Him for what is good and pleasant.

Funny how when something goes wrong, we cry, "Lord, why me?" but when something goes right, we think, "Hey, it must be me!"

Or wait — maybe all this isn't so "funny" after all.

—Unknown Author

their great love for Him and their willingness to obey Him, an unbreakable bond was formed between them. It is important for us to note that we, too, can be numbered among God's friends; and He tells us exactly what we must do if we want to foster this type of relationship with Him. "You are my friends if you do whatever I command you." (John 15:14) Being a friend of God requires commitment and dedication. Being His friend calls for sacrifice on our part. Being His friend may even cause us to lose the friendship of others, who are not willing or not able to commend their lives totally to the Lord.

Be assured, however, that if we are loyal friends of Christ, then like the Apostles and all of the saints, we, too, will share in the eternal glory of the kingdom of Heaven.

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America



National
YAL CONFERENCE
San Diego, California | July 3-7, 2024
U N I F Y

4TH OF JULY WEEKEND
THE WESTIN SAN DIEGO
GASLAMP QUARTER

EXPERIENCE AND PARTICIPATE IN THE 47TH BIENNIAL CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS,
Q&A WITH HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS OF AMERICA, DIAKONIA PROJECT WITH THE
NATIONAL PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY, BIG BAY BOOM FIREWORKS SHOW, DINNER BOAT CRUISE, YAL
GLENDI, INSPIRING SPEAKERS AND CONVOS, YAL BEACHSIDE AFTERNOON AND MUCH MORE!

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Register Today!



Camp Good Shepherd
Experience the Best Week of Your Summer!

CGS: MARYLAND
June 16-22, 2024
Ages 8-18
Camp We-Mo-To
1200 Koopie 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, Sandyston, NJ 07826
Registration Fee: \$625

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
1985 Stumpers Bay Rd Box 435, Hartfield, VA 23071
Registration Fee: \$500

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47TH BIENNIAL CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS AND NATIONAL PHILOPTOCHOS BIENNIAL CONVENTION TO TAKE PLACE FROM JUNE 30 TO JULY 4, 2024

Archbishop Elpidophoros of America announced that the 47th Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress and the National Philoptochos Biennial Convention will take place simultaneously from June 30 to July 4, 2024, in San Diego, California.

The Metropolis of San Francisco will serve as host, under the leadership of Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco.

The theme of the Clergy-Laity Congress will be "In Christ, We Are One" based on Romans 12:4-5.

The Clergy-Laity Congress is an important event in the life of the church, most critically as we continue to discuss and explore the ways in which the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and indeed every parish can meet the needs of our ever-changing world, and how we can focus on expanding our Orthodox presence in America. And we need each voice there to be heard.

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](https://www.nj.goarch.org/camp-good-shepherd)