



KOINONIA

NEWSLETTER OF
ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH
North Wildwood, NJ

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CONGRATULATIONS TO JOHN & BRENNA CARPENTER



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thoughts from

FR. MICHAEL L.
PASTRIKOS
PROTOPRESBYTER



July 4, 1776, commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. This is a historical day for our Country when the American Revolution began on July 2, 1776, when the Congress voted in favor of Independence. Two days later on July 4th, the delegates of 13 Colonies adopted the Declaration which was drafted by Thomas Jefferson. In honor of the historical day for our country, let us give thanks and debt of gratitude for the courageous men and women who fought all battles for the freedom of our nation. Let us thank them for their fight against our enemies and defending the freedom of Democracy that our nation was founded upon. So today with unified hearts and souls we celebrate the most glorious and special day, in which our minds and hearts are drawn to this significant event that has been introduced in hope and salvation. In the fight for independence, it was faith in God that engendered courage in the face of injustice, affirmed the priority of human dignity, and emboldened the effort for liberty as an essential quality of human life and potential. This is why today we honor our heroes of the past and our heroes of the present for their courage and love for their country.

In the above segment I gave you a little history of the 4th of July celebration, but to continue let us not forget what our country has gone through since the corona virus pandemic. It is sad to say that we did not have much happiness and joy, seeing that we lost over one million Americans from this dreadful virus. Even today we still hear about people suffering from this virus. They are now saying that we will experience another fifth wave from this disease and hundreds of Americans will continue to be infected as we go through the summer and fall months. We as Americans owe a debt of gratitude to our medical doctors, nurses, scientists, and pharmaceutical employees who are continuously on the frontlines battling with resources to produce different ways and means to keep us safe. Let us thank God for the blessings and gifts that He has given us throughout these trying and difficult times.

But today it seems like everyone is in a hurry. We are living in a secularized society where people are pre-occupied with personal and most of all material things. Does anyone watch the news, or get online with our computers and see what is really happening in the world that we live in? Look at what is happening in the country of Ukraine. Thousands of people are dying every day from the

bombings that have destroyed the cities and homes of those who lived there. Millions of people have also evacuated to different countries to save their families from death and destruction. People have lived for months in terror under bridges, bunkers, and factories without any water and food to sustain themselves. How many thousands of military personnel have lost their lives to defend their country? Families and their children have been displaced with not knowing their present status let alone their future. Their cities and homes have been destroyed and the future of Ukraine is unknown. This should not be happening in the 21st Century. What about the recent shootings in Texas where nineteen children and two teachers lost their lives? I cannot even think what the parents of those children are going through the pain and suffering of losing their children. How many families and houses have been affected from this tragic and senseless event? I hope and pray that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ blesses the souls of the little children that lost their lives and bring them into His arms and give them a more peaceful life in heaven above. And I also hope that He brings strength and comfort to the parents who have lost their little angels.

Do we ever hear of anything that is worthwhile? Are we happy with our lives, in the troubled world that we live in? But then I ask this question--Will we ever find peace and love in this world? In our daily life we too find ourselves in a dilemma. Sometimes we are filled with spiritual joys and sometimes with disappointments. Life is like a seesaw that goes down and then goes up again. We must realize and pray that in everything that we do, our Good Lord always keeps His eyes on us. This is the mystery of the Church. Christ is revealed in that unity between His love and us.

Let us not forget what Christ tells us; that we are the church, we are members of His Body, and together as brothers and sisters in Christ we share the joys and sorrows of each and everyone, to do everything for them just as Christ did for us. When we participate in the life of the Church, the Eucharist, weekly gatherings, and the Divine Liturgy, this is not a personal matter. It is a united journey that we take together on the same road towards our salvation. Today we are messengers of God's Word. We are now His Disciples upon this earth. As Christians we have a mission, and that is to proclaim the Orthodox Faith pure and undefiled.

In closing I hope and pray that all of you stay safe during the 4th of July celebration and may our Lord continue to bless you and your families with health, joy, and happiness.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER AND PLEASE BE CAREFUL.

thoughts from

FR. MICHAEL L.
PASTRIKOS
PROTOPRESBYTER



Στις 4 Ιουλίου 1776, αποφασίστηκε να εορτάζεται η Διακήρυξη της Ανεξαρτησίας. Είναι ιστορική ημέρα για τη χώρα μας που σημειώνει το ξεκίνημα της Αμερικανικής Επανάστασης, στις 2 Ιουλίου 1776, όταν το Κογκρέσο ψήφισε υπέρ της Ανεξαρτησίας. Δύο ημέρες αργότερα, στις 4 Ιουλίου, οι εκπρόσωποι των 13 Αποικιών ενέκριναν τη Διακήρυξη που συντάχθηκε από τον Thomas Jefferson. Τιμώντας αυτή την ιστορική ημέρα για τη χώρα μας, ας ευχαριστήσουμε και ας ευγνωμονούμε τους γενναίους εκείνους άνδρες και γυναίκες που έδωσαν τη ζωή τους και πολέμησαν για την ελευθερία του έθνους μας. Ας τους ευχαριστήσουμε για τον αγώνα τους ενάντια στους εχθρούς μας και για την υπεράσπιση της ελευθερίας της Δημοκρατίας στην οποία βασίστηκε το έθνος μας. Έτσι, σήμερα με ενωμένες καρδιές και ψυχές γιορτάζουμε την πιο ένδοξη και ξεχωριστή ημέρα, κατά την οποία το μυαλό και η καρδιά μας έλκονται από αυτό το σημαντικό γεγονός το οποίο εισήγαγε την ελπίδα και τη σωτηρία. Στον αγώνα για την ανεξαρτησία, η πίστη στον Θεό ήταν αυτή που γέννησε το θάρρος απέναντι στην αδικία, επιβεβαίωσε την προτεραιότητα της ανθρώπινης αξιοπρέπειας και ενθάρρυνε την προσπάθεια για ελευθερία ως βασική ποιότητα της ανθρώπινης ζωής και των δυνατοτήτων. Αυτός είναι ο λόγος που σήμερα τιμούμε τους ήρωές μας του παρελθόντος και του παρόντος, για το θάρρος και την αγάπη τους για την πατρίδα τους. Στη παραπάνω παράγραφο σας έδωσα μια σύντομη ιστορική περίληψη του εορτασμού της 4ης Ιουλίου, αλλά για να συνεχίσουμε, ας μην ξεχνάμε τι πέρασε η χώρα μας τα τελευταία δύομισι χρόνια με την πανδημία του κορωνοϊού. Είναι λυπηρό να λέμε ότι δεν είχαμε ευτυχία και χαρά, βλέποντας ότι χάσαμε πάνω από ένα εκατομμύριο Αμερικανούς από αυτόν τον τρομερό ιό.

Ακόμα και σήμερα εξακολουθούμε να ακούμε για ανθρώπους που υποφέρουν από αυτόν τον ιό. Διαδίδεται τώρα ότι θα βιώσουμε άλλο ένα πέμπτο κύμα αυτής της ασθένειας και εκατοντάδες Αμερικανοί θα συνεχίσουν να μολύνονται κατά τη διάρκεια των καλοκαιρινών και φθινοπωρινών μηνών. Ως Αμερικανοί οφείλουμε ευγνωμοσύνη στους γιατρούς, τις νοσοκόμες, τους επιστήμονες και τους φαρμακοποιούς μας που βρίσκονται συνεχώς στην πρώτη γραμμή για να δημιουργήσουν διαφορετικούς τρόπους και μέσα, ώστε να μας κρατήσουν ασφαλείς. Ας ευχαριστήσουμε τον Θεό για τις ευλογίες και τα δώρα που μας χάρισε σε αυτές τις δοκιμασίες και τους δύσκολους καιρούς.

Σήμερα ως φαίνεται όλοι βιάζονται. Ζούμε σε μια εφήμερη κοινωνία όπου ο κόσμος ασχολείται με προσωπικά και κυρίως με υλικά πράγματα. Παρακολουθεί κανείς τις ειδήσεις ή συνδέεται με τους υπολογιστές μας για να δει τι πραγματικά συμβαίνει ανά τον κόσμο

που ζούμε; Δείτε τι συμβαίνει στην Ουκρανία. Χιλιάδες άνθρωποι πεθαίνουν καθημερινά από τους βομβαρδισμούς που κατέστρεψαν τις πόλεις και τα σπίτια όσων ζούσαν εκεί. Εκατομμύρια άνθρωποι έχουν επίσης εκκενωθεί σε διαφορετικές χώρες για να σώσουν τις οικογένειές τους από τον θάνατο και την καταστροφή. Οι άνθρωποι έχουν ζήσει για μήνες με τρόπο κάτω από γέφυρες, αποθήκες και εργοστάσια χωρίς νερό και τροφή για να συντηρηθούν. Πόσες χιλιάδες στρατιωτικοί έχασαν τη ζωή τους για να υπερασπιστούν την πατρίδα τους; Οικογένειες και τα παιδιά τους έχουν εκτοπιστεί χωρίς να γνωρίζουν την παρούσα κατάστασή τους, πόσο μάλλον το μέλλον τους. Οι πόλεις και τα σπίτια τους καταστράφηκαν και το μέλλον της Ουκρανίας είναι άγνωστο. Αυτό δεν θα έπρεπε να συμβαίνει τον 21ο αιώνα. Τι συμβαίνει με τους πρόσφατους πυροβολισμούς στο Τέξας όπου έχασαν τη ζωή τους δεκαεπτά παιδιά και δύο δάσκαλοι. Δεν μπορώ καν να σκεφτώ τι περνούν οι γονείς αυτών των παιδιών από τον πόνο και την ταλαιπωρία που χάνουν τα παιδιά τους. Πόσες οικογένειες και σπίτια επηρεάστηκαν από αυτό το τραγικό και παράλογο γεγονός; Ελπίζω και προσεύχομαι ο Κύριος και Σωτήρας μας Ιησούς Χριστός να ευλογήσει τις ψυχές των μικρών παιδιών που έχασαν τη ζωή τους και να τα φέρει στην αγκαλιά Του, να τους χαρίσει μια πιο ειρηνική ζωή στον Παράδεισο. Επίσης ελπίζω να χαρίζει δύναμη και παρηγοριά στους γονείς που έχουν χάσει τα αγγελούδια τους.

Ακούμε ποτέ κάτι που αξίζει τον κόπο; Είμαστε ευχαριστημένοι με τη ζωή μας, στον ταραγμένο κόσμο που ζούμε; Αλλά μετά διερωτώμαι -- Θα βρούμε ποτέ ειρήνη και αγάπη σε αυτόν τον κόσμο; Στην καθημερινότητά μας κι εμείς βρισκόμαστε σε δίλημμα. Άλλοτε γεμίζουμε με πνευματικές χαρές και άλλοτε με απογοητεύσεις. Η ζωή είναι σαν μια τραμπάλα που κατεβαίνει και μετά ανεβαίνει ξανά. Πρέπει να συνειδητοποιήσουμε και να προσευχηθούμε ότι σε ό,τι κάνουμε, ο Καλός μας Κύριος έχει πάντα τα μάτια Του στραμμένα πάνω μας. Αυτό είναι το μυστήριο της Εκκλησίας. Ο Χριστός αποκαλύπτεται ανάμεσα στους παρευρισκόμενους με την αγάπη Του για μας.

Ας μην ξεχνάμε αυτό που μας λέει ο Χριστός. Ότι είμαστε η εκκλησία, είμαστε μέλη του Σώματός Του, και μαζί ως αδέρφια και αδελφές εν Χριστώ μοιραζόμαστε τις χαρές και τις λύπες του καθενός και της καθεμιάς, πρέπει να κάνουμε τα πάντα για αυτούς, όπως έκανε ο Χριστός για εμάς. Όταν συμμετέχουμε στη ζωή της Εκκλησίας, στη Θεία Κοινωνία, στις εβδομαδιαίες συγκεντρώσεις και στη Θεία Λειτουργία, δεν είναι θέμα προσωπικό. Είναι ένα ενιαίο ταξίδι που κάνουμε όλοι μαζί ακολουθώντας τον ίδιο δρόμο προς τη σωτηρία μας. Σήμερα είμαστε απεσταλμένοι του Λόγου του Θεού. Τώρα είμαστε οι Μαθητές Του πάνω στη γη. Ως Χριστιανοί έχουμε μια αποστολή, και αυτή είναι να διακηρύξουμε την Ορθόδοξη Πίστη μας αγνή και αμόλυντη.

Κλείνοντας, ελπίζω και προσεύχομαι να παραμείνετε όλοι ασφαλείς κατά την εορτή της 4ης Ιουλίου και ο Κύριός μας να συνεχίσει να ευλογεί εσάς και τις οικογένειές σας με υγεία, χαρά και ευτυχία.

ΝΑ ΕΧΕΤΕ ΚΑΛΟ ΚΑΛΟΚΑΙΡΙ ΚΑΙ ΝΑ ΠΡΟΣΕΧΕΤΕ.



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 252/2025

Archepiscopal Encyclical on the Sunday of Father's Day (the Sunday of All Saints)

June 15, 2025

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

Πολλοὶ δὲ ἔσονται πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι καὶ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι. (κατὰ Ματθαῖον 19:30)
But many who are first shall be last, and the last first. (Matthew 19:30)

My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

With the observance of Father's Day on this Sunday of All Saints, we also take an opportunity to remember the spiritual fathers of our parishes across the country. The clergy who lead our communities, more often than not, put themselves last, as they endeavor to serve every member of the community and to ensure that everyone feels valued. But as the Lord says in the Gospel Reading for this Sunday, the "last shall be first."

Therefore, with encouragement and with boldness, I offer this exhortation to every community and every member of our Sacred Archdiocese, to be generous to the special collection of this Sunday. For all the funds gathered are to be dedicated to augment and champion the Clergy Pension Fund, which is a vital element of our clergy support system, and a sign that their sacrifices of material goods for the spiritual benefit of their flocks are



duly and truly recognized. Clergy rarely put themselves first, even when their parishioners insist. So here is a way that every member of our Church can demonstrate their appreciation for their spiritual fathers on Father's Day. Every donation is valuable and welcomed with thankfulness.

On this Sunday of All Saints, let us celebrate those who teach us about the Saints and strive to lead us in their ways of holiness. Let us remember our clergy, and take an interest in sustaining them in their sunset years. In this way, the first and the last will be joined together in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and in accordance with the will of God!

With much paternal love in Christ,

† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Αριθμ. Πρωτ.: 252/2025

Αρχιεπισκοπική Έγκύκλιος για την ημέρα του πατέρα.

15 Ιουνίου 2025

Πρὸς τοὺς Σεβασμιωτάτους καὶ Θεοφιλεστάτους Ἀρχιερεῖς, τοὺς Εὐλαβεστάτους Ἱερεῖς καὶ Διακόνους, τὶς Πρεσβυτέρους 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 Απογευματινὰ Σχολεῖα, τὶς Φιλοπτώχους Ἀδελφότητες, τὴ Νεολαία, τὶς Ἑλληνορθόδοξες Ὁργανώσεις καὶ ὁλόκληρο τὸ Χριστεπώνυμο πλήρωμα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Αρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀμερικῆς.

«Ἀποστολικῶν παραδόσεων, ἀκριβεῖς φύλακες γεγόνατε»
(Δοξαστικὸ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ ἑσπερινοῦ τῶν Ἀγ. Πατέρων).

Προσφιλεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἀδελφές ἐν Χριστῷ,

Κατὰ τὴν ἑορτὴ τῆς ἡμέρας τοῦ πατέρα, ἡ ὁποία ἐφέτος συμπίπτει μὲ τὴν Κυριακὴ τῶν Ἀγίων Πάντων, μᾶς δίνεται ἡ εὐκαιρία νὰ ἀναλογιστοῦμε καὶ τοὺς πνευματικοὺς πατέρες τῶν ἐνοριῶν μας σὲ ὅλη τὴ χώρα. Οἱ κληρικοί, οἱ ὁποῖοι ἡγοῦνται τῶν κοινοτήτων μας, τὶς περισσότερες φορές βάζουν τελευταίους τοὺς ἑαυτοὺς τους, καθὼς ἀγωνίζονται νὰ διακονήσουν κάθε μέλος τῆς κοινότητος, φροντίζοντας ὅλοι μας νὰ αἰσθανόμαστε ἀποδεκτοὶ καὶ ἀγαπημένοι. Ὅμως, ὅπως ὁ Κύριος λέγει στὸ Εὐαγγέλιο τῆς ἡμέρας: «οἱ ἔσχατοι ἔσονται πρῶτοι».

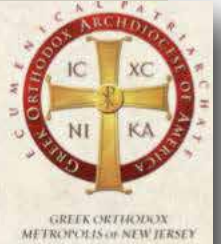


Γι' αυτό, μὲ παρηρησία, σᾶς ἐνθαρρύνω, ἀπευθύνοντας πατρικὴ προτροπὴ πρὸς κάθε κοινότητα καὶ πρὸς κάθε μέλος τῆς Ἱερᾶς μας Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς, νὰ σταθοῦμε γενναιόδωροι στὴν εἰδικὴ περιφορὰ δίσκου αὐτῆς τῆς Κυριακῆς. Διότι ὅλα τὰ ποσὰ ποὺ θὰ συγκεντρωθοῦν, θὰ ἀφιερωθοῦν στὴν ἐνίσχυση τοῦ Συνταξιοδοτικοῦ Ταμείου τῶν Κληρικῶν, τὸ ὁποῖο ἀποτελεῖ θεμελιῶδες στήριγμα γιὰ τὴν μέριμνα τῶν πνευματικῶν πατέρων μας καὶ ταυτοχρόνα ἐνδειξὴ ὅτι οἱ θυσίες τους ὑπὲρ τοῦ ποιμνίου καὶ ἡ αὐταπάρησή τους ἀναγνωρίζονται. Οἱ κληρικοὶ σπάνια φροντίζουν γιὰ τὸν ἑαυτό τους, ἀκόμη καὶ ὅταν τοὺς προτρέπουν οἱ πιστοί. Ἰδού, λοιπόν, μιὰ εὐκαιρία γιὰ ὅλα τὰ μέλη τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας, νὰ δείξουν ἔμπρακτα τὴν ἀγάπη καὶ τὴν ἐκτίμησή τους πρὸς τοὺς πνευματικούς τους πατέρες. Κάθε προσφορὰ εἶναι πολύτιμη καὶ γίνεται δεκτὴ μὲ εὐγνωμοσύνη.

Αὐτὴ τὴν Κυριακὴ τῶν Ἀγίων Πάντων, ἃς τιμήσουμε ἐκείνους ποὺ μᾶς διδάσκουν τὴν ὁδὸ τῶν ἀγίων καὶ ποὺ μᾶς καθοδηγοῦν μὲ ἄσκηση καὶ ταπείνωση σὲ ὁδὸ ἀγιότητας. Ἄς θυμηθοῦμε τοὺς κληρικούς μας καὶ ἃς ἀναλάβουμε μέριμνα γιὰ τὴν στήριξή τους κατὰ τὰ τελευταῖα χρόνια τῆς ζωῆς τους. Κατὰ τὸν τρόπο αὐτό, οἱ πρῶτοι καὶ οἱ ἔσχατοι θὰ συναριθμηθοῦν ἐν κοινωνίᾳ Πνεύματος Ἁγίου καὶ σύμφωνα μὲ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Μετὰ πατρικῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγάπης,

† ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐλπιδοφόρος



**Patriarchal Great Doxology
Welcoming His All Holiness
Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I
on His Apostolic Visit to the United States
Save the Date**

**Wednesday, September 17, 2025 - 10:00 A.M.
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey
St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church, Falls Church, Virginia**



St. Paraskevi, St. Panteleimon, and St. Irene Chrysovalantou

July 26



Saint Paraskevi, who was from a certain village near Rome, was born to pious parents, Agatho and Politia. Since she was born on a Friday (in Greek, Paraskevi), she was given this name, which means “preparation” or “preparedness” (compare Matthew 27:62, Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, and John 19:31, where ‘Friday’ is called “the day of the preparation”). From childhood she was instructed in the sacred letters and devoted herself to the study of the divine Scriptures, while leading a monastic life and guiding many to the Faith of Christ. During the reign of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, she was apprehended because she was a Christian and was urged to worship the idols, but she answered with the words of Jeremias: “Let the gods that have not made heaven and the earth perish from off the earth” (Jeremiah 10:11). Because of this she endured exceedingly painful torments, and was beheaded in the year 140. The faithful pray to her for the healing of eye ailments.

July 27



Saint Panteleimon, who had Nicomedia as his homeland, was the son of Eustorgius and Eubula. His father was an idolater, but his mother was a Christian from her ancestors. It was through her that he was instructed in piety, and still later, he was catechized in the Faith of Christ by Saint Hermolaus (see July 26) and baptized by him. Being proficient in the physician’s vocation, he practiced it in a philanthropic manner, healing every illness more by the grace of Christ than by medicines. Thus, although his parents had named him Pantoleon (“in all things a lion”), because of the compassion he showed for the souls and bodies of all, he was worthily renamed Panteleimon, meaning “all-merciful.”

On one occasion, when he restored the sight of a certain blind man by calling on the Divine Name, he enlightened also the eyes of this man’s soul to the knowledge of the truth. This also became the cause for the martyrdom of him who had been blind, since when he was asked by whom and in what manner his eyes had been opened, in imitation of that blind man of the Gospel he confessed with boldness both who the physician was and the manner of his healing. For this he was put to death immediately. Panteleimon was arrested also, and having endured many wounds, he was finally beheaded in the year 305, during the reign of Maximian.

Saint Panteleimon is one of the Holy Unmercenarys, and is held in special honor among them, even as Saint George is among the Martyrs.

July 28



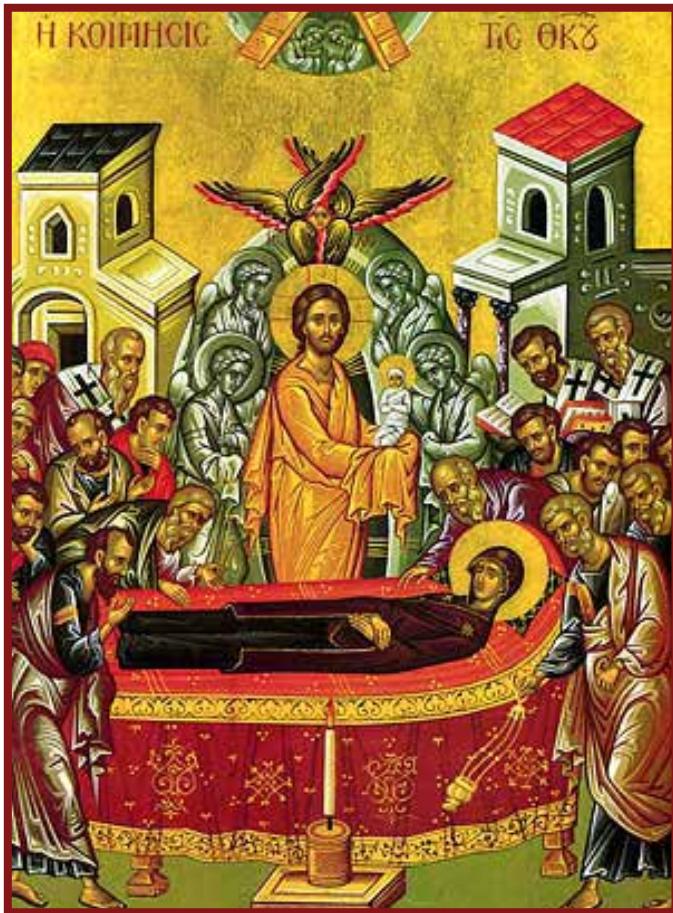
Saint Irene, who was from Cappadocia, flourished in the ninth century. Because of her great beauty and virtue, she was brought to Constantinople as a prospective bride for the young Emperor Michael (842-867); however, as Saint Joannicius the Great foretold, it was God’s will that she assume the monastic habit instead. She shone forth in great ascetical labours, and suffered many attacks from the demons; while yet a novice, she attained to the practice of Saint Arsenius the Great, of praying the whole night long with arms stretched out towards Heaven (see May 8). God showed forth great signs and wonders in her, and she became the Abbess of the Convent of Chrysovalantou. She was granted the gift of clairvoyance and knew the thoughts of all that came to her. She appeared in a vision to the king and rebuked him for unjustly imprisoning a nobleman who had been falsely accused. Through a sailor from Patmos to whom he had appeared, Saint John the Evangelist sent her fragrant and wondrous apples from Paradise. She reposed at the age of 103, still retaining the youthful beauty of her countenance. After her repose, marvelous healings beyond number have been wrought by her to the present day.



Dormition of the Theotokos

August 15

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



Along with the biblical reference in Acts 1:14 that confirms that the Virgin Mary was with the Holy Apostles on the day of Pentecost, the tradition of the Church holds that she remained in the home of the Apostle John in Jerusalem, continuing a ministry in word and deed.

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

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

Icon of the Feast

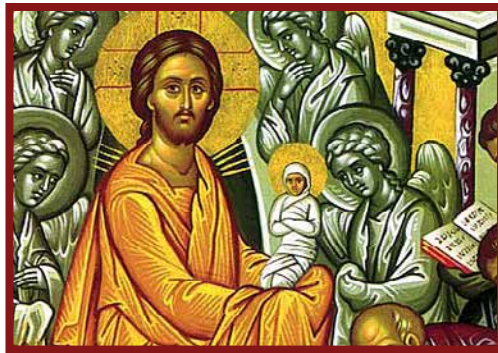
The Icon of the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos shows her on her deathbed surrounded by the Apostles. Christ is standing in the center (1.) looking at His mother. He is holding a small child clothed in white representing the soul of the Virgin Mary. With His golden garments, the angels above His head, and the mandorla surrounding Him, Christ is depicted in His divine glory.

Introduction

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

Biblical Story

The Holy Scriptures tell us that when our Lord was dying on the Cross, He saw His mother and His disciple John and said to the Virgin Mary, “Woman, behold your son!” and to John, “Behold your mother!” (John 19:25-27). From that hour, the Apostle took care of the Theotokos in his own home.



1. Christ, appearing in His Glory, stands in the center of the icon cradling the soul of His Mother, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.

The posture of the Apostles direct attention toward the Theotokos (2.). On the right Saint Peter censes the body of the Theotokos. On the left Saint Paul (3.) bows low in honor of her.

Dormition of the Theotokos cont.



2. The Apostles bow their heads in reverence to the Theotokos as Saint Peter (right) censens her body (detail).

5. The Theotokos lies in the center of the icon surrounded by the Apostles and a candle in front of her bed (detail).



Together with the Apostles are several bishops (4.) and women. The bishops traditionally represented are James, the brother of the Lord, Timothy, Heirotheus, and Dionysius the Areopagite. They are shown wearing episcopal vestments. The women are members of the church in Jerusalem.

3. The Apostle Paul bows in honor of the Theotokos (detail).



4. Also in attendance to pray for the Theotokos were several Bishops (detail).



In front of the bed of the Theotokos is a candle (5.) that helps to form a central axis in the icon. Above the candle is the body of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary. Standing over His mother is Christ holding her most pure soul. Above Christ the gates of heaven stand open, ready to receive the Mother of God.

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

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

Orthodox Christian Celebration of the Feast of the Dormition

The commemoration of the Dormition of the Theotokos and the preparation for the Feast begin on August 1 with a period of fasting. A strict fast is followed on most of the days (no meat, dairy, oil, or wine), with the exceptions of fish on the Feast of the Transfiguration (August 6) and the day of the Dormition. Oil and Wine are allowed on Saturdays and Sundays.

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

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



St. Demetrios Happenings



St. Demetrios welcomed visitors from Cleveland, OH and Philadelphia, PA.



Visitors to our parish enjoyed the day with the church parishioners.



Congratulations to John and Brenna Carpenter! They were married by His Eminence Archbishop Michael at the St. Philips Antiochian Orthodox Church.



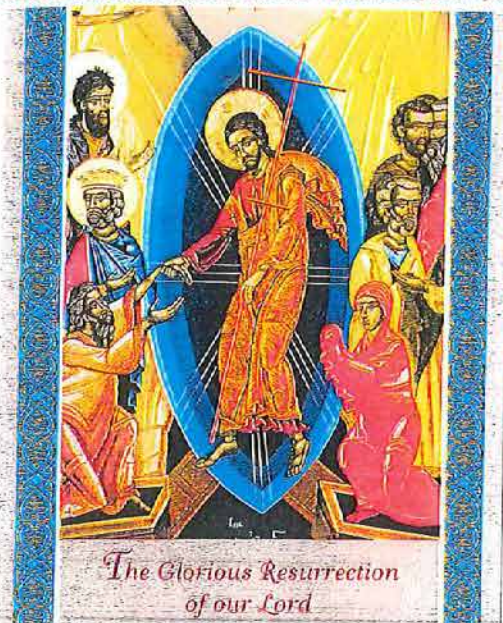


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IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO OUR PARISHIONERS

AS EXPLAINED AT OUR GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARCH 16, OUR COMMUNITY CENTER HAS A BADLY LEAKING ROOF WHEN EXPERIENCING HEAVY RAINS. THIS SITUATION CAN CREATE POTENTIALLY UNSAFE AND DANGEROUS CONDITIONS AND NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED QUICKLY. WE RECEIVED BIDS FOR THE ROOF REPAIRS FROM THREE RESPONSIBLE LOCAL FIRMS AND CHOSE THE LOWEST BID OF \$47,875.00 FROM MANNY CONSTRUCTION CO., AN INSURED, BONDED LOCAL COMPANY. AS WE DO NOT HAVE AVAILABLE FUNDS, WE WILL TAKE A SHORT TERM LOAN FROM CREST SAVINGS BANK WEALTH MANAGEMENT DIVISION WHERE WE HAVE AN INVESTMENT ACCOUNT OF APPROX. \$54,000.00. WE CAN BORROW HALF OF THAT AMOUNT(\$27,000) TO START THE PROJECT. WE HAVE INITIATED A FUND RAISER. LED BY OUR PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS, WITH THE HOPES THAT OUR PARISHIONERS AND FRIENDS WILL RESPOND WITH GENEROSITY AND LOVE IN THEIR HEARTS FOR OUR BELOVED ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH. THIS FUND WILL ALLOW US TO COMPLETE THE WORK AND, HOPEFULLY PAY OFF THE LOAN QUICKLY.

IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT PRESIDENT NICK KONIDES AT 609-425-0179 OR SECRETARY BILL MITCHELL AT 609-425-4000. THANK YOU.



St. Demetrios Roof Fundraiser

***THANK YOU to our generous Donors
for the Roof Repair Special Fund***

as of 6/15/25

\$24,950.00



1. Marybeth-our neighbor
2. Angelo & Bessie Giouros
3. Irene Karros
4. Fr. Michael Pastrikos
5. Ted Margarites
6. Melpo Daglis
7. Bill & Helen Mitchell
8. John & Ellen Manetas
9. Fr. Steven Vlahos
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17. Anna Karavangelos
18. George & Stella Papageorge
19. Dr. Yianni & Anna Augoustides
20. Rita Handley
21. Tony & Eleni Koutsimiris
22. Bernie & Penny Saab
23. George Mallous
24. Nick & Jennifer Konides
25. Philoptochos Society
26. Peter & Bessie Lazos
27. Antonio & Maria Pardalios
28. Ellie Stavropoulos
29. David & Kathy Wolfe
30. Dr. Evgenia & David Gray
31. Eva Lallas
32. Steven & Michelle Murianka
33. Gerry & Elaine Ermentrout
34. Markos & Ann Pittoulis
35. Stefanos & Sophia Kiniropoulos
36. Ted & Alexandra Nannas



Liturgical Calendar

JULY & AUGUST 2025 LITURGICAL PROGRAM

SUNDAY JULY 6 4TH SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 AM

SUNDAY JULY 13 HOLY FATHERS OF THE 4TH ECUMENICAL SYNOD ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 AM

SUNDAY JULY 20 6TH SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 AM

SUNDAY JULY 27 7TH SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 AM

AUGUST LITURGICAL

FRIDAY AUGUST 1 PARAKLESIS SERVICE TO THE VIRGIN MARY 6:00 PM

SUNDAY AUGUST 3 8TH SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 AM

FRIDAY AUGUST 8 PARAKLESIS SERVICE TO THE VIRGIN MARY 6:00 PM

SUNDAY AUGUST 10 9TH SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 AM

THURSDAY AUGUST 14 GREAT VESPER SERVICE FOR THE FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN MARY. 6:00 PM

FRIDAY AUGUST 15TH THE GREAT FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE VIRGIN MARY ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30

SUNDAY AUGUST 17 10TH SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30

SUNDAY AUGUST 24 11TH SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 AM

BECAUSE FR. MICHAEL WILL NOT BE HERE ON ST. FANOURIOS DAY, HE WILL BLESS THE FANOUPITTES ON SUNDAY AUGUST 24TH

SUNDAY AUGUST 31 12TH SUNDAY OF ST. MATTHEW ORTHROS 8:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY 9:30 AM

In memory - In honor

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





thoughts from

EVA LALLAS



SOME WISE THOUGHTS OF DIRECTION

Summertime is in full force and the heat wave in the mid-Atlantic region has arrived with a vengeance!... temperatures topping 100 degrees with no relief in sight...perhaps the high humidity will create some needed rain or showers.

During these months of relaxation and breaks away from life's routine the author thinks they may provide many a time for planning about their next venture, the next stage in their life: ...perhaps extended academic studies, perhaps a change in vocation, perhaps a new interest to pursue, perhaps embarking on a new life with the chosen loved one creating a family for the future,...perhaps a little of all these dreams combined....looking ahead toward a bright future!

On a personal level, it may be worthwhile for you to consider and give some thought to the following perspectives, life's lessons - - - bits of wisdom, as you approach, plan, stand at a crossroad in looking ahead to positive outcomes that life may have in store for you:

CHANGE: Change isn't scary - - it's growth. And growth is the essence of life.

DESTINY: You decide your own direction, so make your journey one you'd want to read about.

CONFIDENCE: Believe in yourself and you'll always be on solid ground, no matter where you are.

OPPORTUNITY: If you want to stand out from the crowd, make your own opportunities.

FOCUS: Set your sights on your potential, not your problems. You'll be amazed at what you see.

DETERMINATION: Even the tallest mountain is conquered one step at a time.

DEDICATION: Always give your ideas time to take hold. Keep your dreams alive.

PERSEVERANCE: Barely hanging on and ahead by a mile both mean that you're in the game.

TEAMWORK: Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

REFLECTION: If you're searching for the key to success, look inside yourself.

SUCCESS: Always bear in mind that your own resolution to success is more important than any other one thing.

EXCELLENCE: There's no ceiling in life. You can soar as high as you're willing to try.

Nothing is impossible, the word itself says, "I'm possible"! If you can dream it, you can do it!

GOOD LUCK!
ENJOY YOUR SUMMER IN
BEAUTIFUL WILDWOOD!



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.

1). Και οι τύχοι αυτιά έχουν!

Be quiet, the walls have ears! ...it's a secret!

2). Όσα δεν τα φτάνει η αλεπού, τα κάνουν κρεμαστάρια!

Whatever the fox can't reach, it calls them hangers! (From Aesop's fable)

3.). Οποιος έχει πολύ πιπέρι, βάση και στα λάχανα!

Whoever has an abundance of pepper uses it on cabbage.

Usually pepper is not the condiment for cabbage.

Make use of what you have too much of, whether it is appropriate, in good taste or not.

4.). Έφαγα τον πόσιμο να σε βρώ!

I devoured the world to find you!

I looked high and low, and hunted everywhere for you!...(and I finally found you!)

5.). Στάλα, στάλα γεμίζει το ποτήρι! Ορ φασούλι, φασούλι γέμιση το σακούλι!

Drop by drop the glass is filled!

Little by little, the job get done!

Or one bean at a time fills the sack!

(Father Michael's favorite, referring to fund raising when each of us pitches in to attain the goal!)

Let's take a look at a few more common American Phrases:

1.) Watch your p's and q's!

Be careful, be exact when you're measuring pints and quarts!

Be exact in your measuring in all that you do; don't cheat the customer!

2.) Willy-Nilly!

Doing or approaching something haphazardly!

Not caring about how you do your work.

3.) "The best laid plans of mice and men" - From the poet Robert Burns

No matter how specifically you may plan your day, your activities, things may not turn out as expected!

Don't be surprised if the end results of your meticulous plans, do not materialize!

4.) Red sky at night, sailors' delight!

The red sunset usually indicates a sunny, clear tomorrow,

that those who work or travel by sea look forward to.

5.) Kick the can; pass the buck.

Delay what should be taken care of now to a future time. (Somehow hoping that it will magically get done)

Have someone else take your responsibility.

Not being accountable for your actions.



PARAKLESIS TO THE VIRGIN MARY

Throughout our Church History, no woman has been more loved, more lauded and more cherished than the Blessed Virgin Mary. She herself foretold it: “For blessed, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.” (Luke 1:48) In beautiful poetic-hymnography, which is characteristic of Byzantine Chant in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Theotokos, the Mother of God is honored and esteemed for her unique role in the salvation of the human race. Through her, the Word of God became flesh and the Infinite became, as it were finite. Humanity took on divine presence and Divinity took on humanity. The Theotokos is the vehicle, par excellence of humility and obedience and thus a supreme example of redeemed mankind.

As the Mother of our Lord, she is our greatest ally and our most fervent intercessor, “for...the prayer of the righteous has great power in its effects. “James (5:16) During the Paraklesis Service, we ask the Most Holy Theotokos to save us just as those drowning reach out to those on dry land. Let us then seek with confidence the help and intercession of the Mother of Light. Mary, the Mother of our Lord.

Let us also honor the Mother of our Lord, as many others before us have, by coming and participating in the Paraklesis Services, so that we can all praise the Mother of our Lord with Hymn and song.

KOIMISIS----- AUGUST 1-15

PRAYER FOR THE LIVING: LET US PRAY FOR GRACE, LIFE, PEACE, HEALTH, SALVATION, PROTECTION, FORGIVENESS AND REMISSION OF THE SINS OF THESE THY SERVANTS. (PLEASE WRITE ONLY THE NAMES OF THE LIVING)

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



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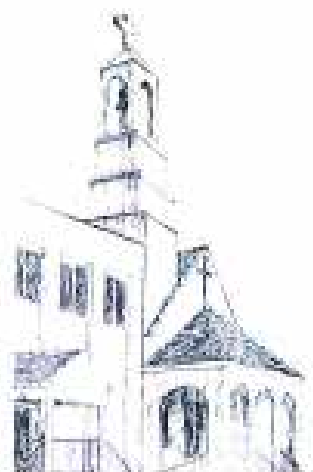
**Saturday, August 23
11am - 9pm**

**Sunday, August 24
12pm - 6pm**

***All Proceeds benefit our Beloved
St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church***

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Metropolis of New Jersey Annual Holy Cross Celebration

Celebrated by His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey

Sunday, September 28, 2025

- **8:00 AM Orthros and Hierarchical Divine Liturgy:
St. George Greek Orthodox Church 1033 W. Park Avenue Ocean, NJ**
- **Blessing of the Waters and Youth Dive for the Cross following the
Divine Liturgy: Deal Beach - 111 Ocean Ave., Deal, NJ**
- **Fellowship Picnic to follow for all at St. George Church in
Ocean, NJ**





America the Beautiful Hymn Lyrics

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!

America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

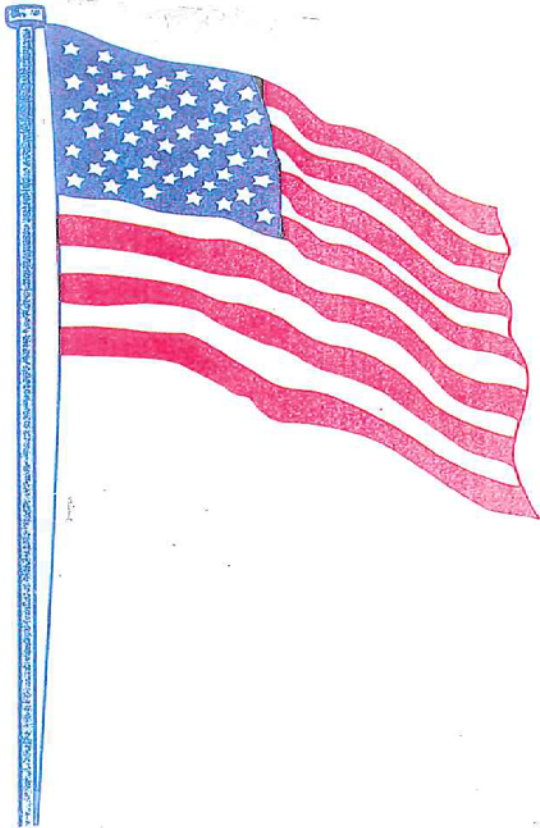
O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassion'd stress
A thorough fare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness.

America! America!
God mend thine ev'ry flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

O beautiful for heroes prov'd
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life.

America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness,

God bless America, Land that I love, Stand beside her and guide her through the night with the light from above. From the Mountains, to the Prairies, to the Oceans white with foam! God bless America, my home sweet home, God bless America my home sweet home.



*Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the
perilous flight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly
streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?*

-- Francis Scott Key

Fourth of July – Independence Day

The Fourth of July—also known as Independence Day or July 4th—has been a federal holiday in the United States since 1941, but the tradition of Independence Day celebrations goes back to the 18th century and the [American Revolution](#). On July 2nd, 1776, the [Continental Congress](#) voted in favor of independence, and two days later delegates from the [13 colonies](#) adopted the Declaration of Independence, a historic document drafted by [Thomas Jefferson](#). From 1776 to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American independence, with festivities ranging from [fireworks](#), parades and concerts to more casual family gatherings and barbecues. The Fourth of July 2023 is on Tuesday, July 4.



History of Independence Day

When the initial battles in the [Revolutionary War](#) broke out in April 1775, few colonists desired complete independence from Great Britain, and those who did were considered radical.

By the middle of the following year, however, many more colonists had come to favor independence, thanks to growing hostility against Britain and the spread of revolutionary sentiments such as those expressed in the bestselling pamphlet "[Common Sense](#)," published by [Thomas Paine](#) in early 1776.

On June 7, when the [Continental Congress](#) met at the [Pennsylvania](#) State House (later Independence Hall) in Philadelphia, the [Virginia](#) delegate Richard Henry Lee introduced a motion calling for the colonies' independence.

Amid heated debate, Congress postponed the vote on Lee's resolution, but appointed a five-man committee—including [Thomas Jefferson](#) of Virginia, [John Adams](#) of [Massachusetts](#), Roger Sherman of [Connecticut](#), [Benjamin Franklin](#) of Pennsylvania and Robert R. Livingston of [New York](#)—to draft a [formal statement justifying the break with Great Britain](#).

Did you know? John Adams believed that July 2nd was the correct date on which to celebrate the birth of American independence, and would reportedly turn down invitations to appear at July 4th events in protest. Adams and Thomas Jefferson both died on July 4, 1826—the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

On July 2nd, the Continental Congress voted in favor of Lee's resolution for independence in a near-unanimous vote (the New York delegation abstained, but later voted affirmatively). On that day, John Adams wrote to his wife Abigail that July 2 "will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival" and that the celebration should include "Pomp and Parade...Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other."

On July 4th, the Continental Congress formally adopted the [Declaration of Independence](#), which had been written largely by Jefferson. Though the vote for



actual independence took place on July 2nd, from then on the 4th became the day that was celebrated as the birth of American independence.

Early Fourth of July Celebrations and Traditions

In the pre-Revolutionary years, colonists had held annual celebrations of the king's birthday, which traditionally included the ringing of bells, bonfires, processions and speechmaking. By contrast, during the summer of 1776 some colonists celebrated the birth of independence by holding mock funerals for King [George III](#) as a way of symbolizing the end of the monarchy's hold on America and the triumph of liberty.

Festivities including concerts, bonfires, parades and the firing of cannons and muskets usually accompanied the first public readings of the Declaration of Independence, beginning immediately after its adoption. Philadelphia held the first annual commemoration of independence on July 4, 1777, while Congress was still occupied with the ongoing war.

[George Washington](#) issued double rations of rum to all his soldiers to mark the anniversary of independence in 1778, and in 1781, several months before the key American victory at the [Battle of Yorktown](#), Massachusetts became the first state to make July 4th an official state holiday.

After the Revolutionary War, Americans continued to commemorate Independence Day every year, in celebrations that allowed the new nation's emerging political leaders to address citizens and create a feeling of unity. By the last decade of the 18th century, the two major political parties—the [Federalist Party](#) and Democratic-Republicans—that had arisen began holding separate Fourth of July celebrations in many large cities.

Fourth of July Fireworks

The [first fireworks](#) were used as early as 200 BC. The tradition of setting off [fireworks on the 4 of July](#) began in Philadelphia on July 4, 1777, during the first organized celebration of Independence Day. Ship's cannon fired a 13-gun salute in honor of the [13 colonies](#). The *Pennsylvania Evening Post* reported: "at night there was a grand exhibition of fireworks (which began and concluded with thirteen rockets) on the



Commons, and the city was beautifully illuminated." That same night, the [Sons of Liberty](#) set off fireworks over Boston Common.

Fourth of July Becomes a Federal Holiday

The tradition of patriotic celebration became even more widespread after the [War of 1812](#), in which the United States again faced Great Britain. In 1870, the U.S. Congress made July 4th a federal holiday; in 1941, the provision was expanded to grant a paid holiday to all federal employees.

Over the years, the political importance of the holiday would decline, but Independence Day remained an important national holiday and a symbol of patriotism.

Falling in mid-summer, the Fourth of July has since the late 19th century become a major focus of leisure activities and a common occasion for family get-togethers, often involving fireworks and outdoor barbecues. The most common symbol of the holiday is the American flag, and a common musical accompaniment is "[The Star-Spangled Banner](#)," the national anthem of the United States.



In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Lord Almighty creator of mankind and author of peace, as we are mindful of the cost paid for the liberty we possess. Today we honor our Veterans worthy men and women who gave their best when they were called upon to serve and protect their country. We should be proud that we are Americans and that we live in the true land of liberty. We should also acknowledge our pride in our nation and in the men and women who serve the United States of America in good times and bad. Today we pause for all who have served our nation. We would not have the many opportunities and freedom that we enjoy today without their selfless service and sacrifice.

We also humbly ask Lord for the healing for all Veterans who have been wounded in both body and soul. We also pray for the young men and women who are coming home with injured bodies and traumatized spirits. We also pray for them when they cannot pray. We ask humbly for you to end all wars and bring peace to the whole world. Bless our soldiers who served and are serving in their combative posts.

May those who lost their life, may they have rest in peace and may their memory be eternal.



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.



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



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!





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.





Support Our Church's Mission Through eGiving



- Give anytime, anywhere using your computer, tablet or mobile phone
- Make regular church offerings without writing a check or preparing envelopes
- Give in the moment with a fast, one-time donation
- Schedule recurring contributions so they arrive even when you can't attend services
- Pay for events and activities using your debit/credit card or banking information

If you would like to give electronically, visit our website or contact the church office.

GivePlus Powered By Vanco Payment Solutions



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 2024 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 _____

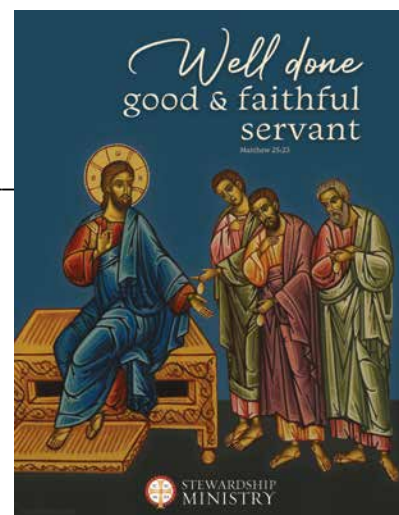
Single/Individual \$500.00

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 _____



Stewardship News

Evan & Mary Avgerinos Markos & Ann Pittoulis Gary & Donna Padussis
Peter & Margot Chlectos Dean & Jennifer Kraras Christ Kraras
Mauro & Angel Cammarano Bernard & Tula Donahue Stavanna Donahue
Scott & Marisa Hunsicker Drew & Sophie Cammarano Greg & Steph Labe
Steve & Michelle Murianka Ted & Despina Katsikaras Melpo Daglis
George & Stella Papageorge Peter & Bessie Lazos Jerry & Marinna Kolaitis
Ted & Alexandra Nannas Nick & Kathy Kantios David & Kathy Wolfe
Bill & Helen Mitchell Lester & Eleni Katsanis Bill Wallgren
Stavros & Eleni Antonakakis Antonio Kolovos Yianni & Anna Augoustides
Paul & Olga Zografakis Nick & Jennifer Konides George & Beverly Mallous
George & Tula Tsiamis Kosta & Roula Papaspanos Glyka Papaspanos
Sal & Vaia Zampiri Fr. Michael & Dimitra Pastrokos Melissa Bennett
Gerald & Elaine Ermentrout Marios & Maria Phili Ethel Kallos
Bill & Irene Sheets George Tsiartsionis Stelios & Tina Papaioannou
Emmanuel & Evanthea Fournaris Presbyteria Katina Pantelis
Alexandra Boulageris Evanthea Boulageris Athena Mallous
Carl Gogats Angelo & Bessie Giouros Irene Karros Anna Butler
Louis & Ellis Squicimara John & Rini Holton Anastasios & Denise Karros
Ted Margarites Ellie Stavropoulos Bill & Eleni Stamatacos
Mr/Mrs Marcos Pittoulis Peter & Vasiliki Kellis Catherine Kardas
Calvin & Maria Jordan Emmanouil & Efthymia Kantzios

*Thank you to our
faithful stewards!*



Article Authored By Fr. Thomas Fitzgerald

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do the Orthodox Worship as they do, not changing it with the times as other churches have?

It's because this is how worship was conducted in the first century Church and how history records Christians continued to worship for centuries afterward. Orthodoxy holds fast to what it has received throughout its existence as something received from Christ through the Apostles. At its heart is the very life of the faith. The idea that the Church should fundamentally change its worship according to the tastes and culture of the world is foreign to us.

Why do you pray to saints?

To be accurate, we pray with the saints, not to them. Much the same as you would ask your friends, family or other Christians to pray for you, we ask the saints to intercede on our behalf. We don't pray to the saints "instead" of to God, just as any Christian does not ask his fellow Christians to pray for him instead of going directly to God with his concerns. Rather, we enlist Saints, along with the rest of the Church, to pray to God to hear us and have mercy on us. No saint would ever get between anyone and God. Rather, they always pray for us to God so that we can become one with Him just as they did.

Why are there icons everywhere?

Icons are in some sense our "family album". In the same way that many people keep photo albums to help them remember people and events, we keep the icons to remind us of people and events. They adorn the walls of our worship spaces. Most Orthodox Christians also have an icon corner in their home.

Why do you mention Mary so much?

As the one who gave birth to God Himself in the flesh, we hold her in high reverence and respect. It only makes sense that we should love someone who literally held God inside her for nine months. She also shows us the way to become one with her divine Son—humility, love and obedience to Him. Why is she so important? Mary stands witness that Jesus Christ is fully human, even while being fully God. The early Christians made a point of inserting into the Nicene Creed (AD 325) the statement that Christ was "incarnate... of the Virgin Mary" to ensure there was no confusion on this matter.



Do you believe the Eucharist is REALLY the body and blood of Christ?

The Eucharist is truly the body and blood of our Lord. But this can be apprehended only by spiritual sight, what the early Christians called the nous—the eyes of the soul. Without this spiritual insight, we could not understand the mystery of the Eucharist.



What do the Orthodox think about the Bible? What about Sola Scriptura?

Much of the content of Orthodox worship services consists of readings from the Scriptures, especially the Psalms. Readings from the Gospel occur at most services, along with regular readings from the Epistles. There are not now, nor have there ever been, any restrictions on the laity with regard to reading the Scriptures—they are, and always have been, encouraged to read them. As for Sola Scriptura, we believe that the Scriptures are the “canon”—the measuring stick—which must be applied to all doctrine, but it is not the only source doctrine. In other words, not all doctrine is found in the Scriptures, but no Orthodox doctrine contradicts the Scriptures.

Why is this so?

It's because the Orthodox Church actually produced the Bible. The Church also lived Christian life to the fullest for centuries before the canon of the New Testament was even recognizable (AD 367). As such, the Bible is always understood within the life of the Church, not above or apart from it. The Bible is the Church's book.

How do Orthodox Christians view other Christian churches?

As Orthodox Christians we believe that the Holy Orthodox Church preserves the fullness and completeness of the teaching of Jesus Christ and His Apostles. Western Christian churches, Protestant and Roman Catholic, have departed from some of the fullness of the truth. This does not mean that they have ceased to be Christian, but it does mean that they have lost some of the Apostolic teaching of the Church. We hope that our witness to the completeness of the ancient teachings of Christianity will help others to discover what they have lost and to seek it again.

Aren't all Christians really part of the same invisible church?

Why do the Orthodox believe their church is “the Church” which preserves the fullness of the Christian Faith?

The Orthodox Church was established by the Apostles, vanquished the early heresies of Gnosticism and Arianism, proclaimed the canon of Scripture (i.e., defined what books belong in the Bible), and defined the great Christian doctrines relating to the Trinity and the divine and human natures of Christ. Orthodox Church history can be traced from Jesus Himself, directly to modern times without interruption. It is impossible to claim that the Church is invisible. Were the churches established by the Apostles invisible? Did the formation of the Bible take place outside of history? Were not the ancient heresies defeated in history by the historical Church? The truth is, then, that the Church is visible, it has a history, and that history is identical to the Orthodox Church as it has existed down through the centuries.



What do Orthodox Christians believe is the purpose of life?

Simply put, we believe the purpose of life is for men and women to be united to God, now, and for all ages to come. We believe that through our union with God, we are enabled to grow into true humanity. Jesus Christ shows us what that true humanity is: a humanity freed of its self-centeredness and self-seeking, and thereby enabled to truly love God and all that He created (including the crown of His creation- all human beings). We believe it is our destiny to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, and the grace of God bestowed through the Sacraments (Mysteries), to attain the true humanity that we lost through our fall into sin.

Are non-Orthodox Christians welcome to attend an Orthodox Church service?

Absolutely! We are overjoyed when someone joins us for worship and experiences the beauty of the Orthodox Tradition. Because the services are somewhat different than Protestant or Roman Catholic service, it is probably a good idea to contact the priest of the parish you wish to visit and tell him you intend to join them for worship. He will see that someone from the parish greets you and helps you find your way through the Service Book.

Can a non-Orthodox Christian receive Communion in the Orthodox Church?

Unfortunately, No. The Holy Orthodox Church, in keeping with the ancient Tradition of Christianity, believes that Holy Communion is a family meal, shared between those who are under the supervision of the same Bishop, or another Bishop with whom he is in Communion. Simply put, this means that Orthodox Christians practice Inter-Communion with other Orthodox Christians (as all Orthodox Bishops are in Communion with one another), but not with Protestants or Roman Catholics whose church leaders are not in Communion with Orthodox Bishops.



\$ A FOCUS ON FINANCES \$

FIVE REASONS TO PAY OFF YOUR MORTGAGE

What's old is new, I thought recently while browsing mortgage interest rates. Our first mortgage was 7.75% in the early '90s, not much different from today's rates. I'm often asked by clients, "Should we pay off our mortgage or invest?" My view has changed. This can be seen as primarily a math question: "How can we make our money work the hardest?"

Sitting on a 2.75% mortgage like we have today, I'd look at the effective cost of the loan, factoring in any tax benefits, and compare that to the type of investment return I could expect if I chose to save or invest the available funds. In this environment, it would be hard to make a case to direct extra money toward paying off our sub-3% mortgage. However, I'm not sure I like that conclusion.

With that context, let's look at five reasons you might buck the math and focus your efforts on paying down or off your mortgage:

YOU'RE BUYING PEACE OF MIND.

For most families, a mortgage represents their biggest liability. If you are looking at reimagining work or even retirement, a budget that does not include a mortgage payment may help you live your dream.

GET RID OF PMI OR MIP.

To me, the word "insurance" means protection and peace of mind. However, with mortgage insurance, it's just an extra expense with no benefit (other than allowing you to get the loan in the first place). Check the rules regarding your specific loan, but making additional payments to principal could put you in a position to eliminate this fruitless expense.

YOUR MORTGAGE STANDS BETWEEN YOU AND A CLEAN SLATE

If your mortgage is your only liability, deploying your



available cash flow or cash to knock it down could make sense. High-interest credit-card debt or even higher-interest installment loans could be a better target, but if your mortgage is all that's standing between you and being debt-free, I can see how that would be compelling.

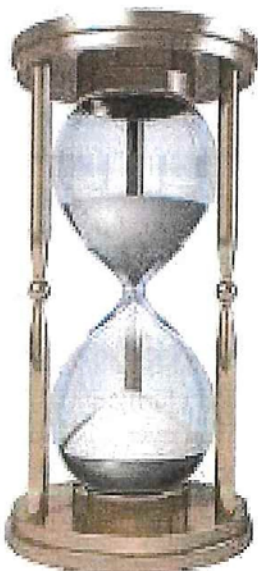
THE BUDGET BENEFITS ARE SUBSTANTIAL

As I noted, your mortgage is likely your biggest monthly outlay. No mortgage would free up a lot of money, on a month-to-month basis, to use elsewhere: travel, transportation, family, or just insulation.

YOU HAVE A GOOD STASH OF CASH

If you don't have a robust cash reserve/emergency fund, that might be a better place for your available resources than prepaying your mortgage. The good news is, in today's interest-rate environment, you'll be handsomely rewarded, especially in the context of paying off a low-interest-rate mortgage. The cash would allow you to make your home payment or meet other obligations if, for example, you lost your job. If you have the "cash stash" box checked, moving forward with a plan to pay down your mortgage could be appealing.

On the whole, the mortgage math is important, but it's not the only factor that matters.





A BREAK IN YOUR DAY

If at first you don't succeed, look in the trash for the instructions.

My wife sat me down and told me how important Valentine's Day is to her. She must have something really awesome planned for us.

What do you call a miniature porcupine that steals money from people? A hedge fund hog.

"You seem to be in some distress," the judge said to the witness. "Is anything the matter?"

"Well, your honor," the witness replied, "I swore to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, but every time I try, a lawyer objects!"

A teacher said to one of her students, "It's clear you haven't studied your geography. What's your excuse?"

"Well," the student replied, "my dad says the world is changing every day. So I decided to wait until it settles down."

Asked about his self-made fortune, a multimillionaire gave full credit to his wife.

"In what ways did she help in your success?" the interviewer pressed.

"If you want the whole truth," the mogul replied, "I was curious to find out if there was any income she couldn't live beyond."

"Some guy broke into our house last week. He didn't even take the TV. He just took the remote control. Now he drives by and changes channels on us." - Brian Kiley

Don't stand around doing nothing. People will think you're the boss.

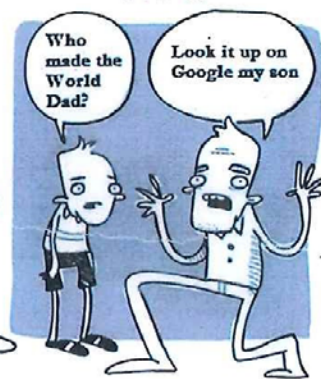
What tells you a pirate has fallen for modern technology? The iPatch.

A retired man who volunteered to entertain patients in hospitals and nursing homes went for a visit and took his portable keyboard along. He told some jokes and sang some funny songs at their bedsides. When he finished, he told the group, "I hope you get

BEFORE



NOW



better."

An elderly man quipped, "I hope you get better, too."

The cable repairman was on my street and stopped to ask me the time. I told him it was between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.

The office printer's color started to look a little off, so the manager called the local repair shop. To his surprise, the clerk said that it would cost \$50 but recommended he try reading the manual and cleaning it himself.

"Does your boss know you discourage business that way?" the manager replied in astonishment.

"It was his idea," the clerk replied. "We make more on repairs than cleaning if the owner tries to do it himself first."

An officers' mess was talking about rifle shooting. "I'll bet anyone here," said a young lieutenant, "that I can fire 20 shots at 200 yards and call each shot correctly without waiting for the marker. I'll stake a box of cigars that I can."

"Done!" a major cried.

The entire mess was there the next day to watch the experiment tried. The lieutenant fired, then calmly announced, "Miss." A second shot: "Miss." A third: "Miss."

"Hold on!" the major protested. "What are you doing? You're not aiming for the target at all!"

"Of course not," the lieutenant admitted. "I'm aiming for those cigars." And he got them.



EATING FOR A HEALTHY HEART



People of a certain age may vividly recall when the predominant diet advice was that all fat was bad, eggs were out, and any kind of carb could spell calamity. Meanwhile, plenty of red meat and butter were healthy, as long as you imbibed sufficient amounts of red wine.

Dietary trends come and go, and the best way to make sense of eating to keep your heart healthy is, in Dr. Michael Miedema's words, to "stick to the science."

Dr. Miedema, Director of the [Nolan Family Center for Cardiovascular Health](#), says, "Nutrition is truly the foundation of cardiovascular health. Unfortunately," he adds, "it's also one of the most confusing."

The confusion can be compounded by what Dr. Miedema calls the "marketing, anecdotes and food fads" that surround us on television, in print, and our social media feeds.

Talking to a doctor or a registered dietitian can help clear some of the noise. Most people receive a nutrition consultation following a heart event such as a heart attack or stent placement, but people with healthy hearts can definitely benefit from what science tells us about food, nutrition, and its impact on keeping our bodies nourished and healthy. And the best news is that nobody has to feel deprived, ever.

There is a critical shift in the nutrition narrative from one of exclusion to inclusion. The goal is to select foods to meet our nutritional requirements while maintaining a healthy weight and retaining the pleasure of eating.

The internet and cookbooks abound with recipes – like this one for [Vegan Oatmeal Banana Muffins](#), from Minneapolis Heart Institute staff– that illustrate the five key themes of healthful eating, as Dr. Miedema explains in a video called "Heart Healthy Eating" one of many in the [Nolan Family Center for Cardiovascular Health library of current heart topics](#).

THE 5 KEY THEMES OF HEALTHFUL EATING

Eat mostly plants. A plant-forward diet can be varied, interesting and nutritious. Focus on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds, legumes and beans. Minimize animal products such as meat and high fat dairy.

Don't fear fat. Gone are the days when all fat was bad fat. Science tells us some kinds of fat actually protect against heart disease. Olive oil, nuts and seeds, avocados and more – generally, those known as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats – taste good and help promote health. These are the predominant types of fat in the highly buzzed about (and researched) 'Mediterranean Diet.' Aim for two fish meals weekly, particularly fatty fish, for their excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids.

Eat fewer highly processed foods. This is one area where recent buzz is on the mark. Processed foods – cold cuts, commercial baked goods, frozen pizzas and other packaged entrees, and so on – are loaded with sodium, added sugars, and multisyllabic ingredients that aren't good for us.

Limit added sugars. The number one source of added sugars in the American diet is soda. Cutting out soft drinks, at about 10 teaspoons of sugar in a 12 oz can, can make a difference in one's health. The office candy dish is another hazard to avoid.

Prioritize food over supplements. Food is usually a better source of nutrients than supplements, which are often not worth the cost. A varied diet rich in fruits and vegetables of many colors provides many of the vitamins, minerals, and micronutrients our bodies need.

Americans love to talk about food. Each year a new conversation starts about must-have foods to help lose weight, prevent disease or improve health and longevity. Remember, nutrition is a science and not an opinion. It can be very confusing—and headlines too often inflame fear of certain foods and glorify others.

A better approach is to eat well over a lifetime with a variety of foods from all food groups. With a little reframing, we can love what we eat – and our food will reward us with healthy bodies, healthy hearts, and potentially longer lives.

HEALTHY BODY AND MIND SELF-CARE AT HOME

Even as states lift restrictions in the wake of COVID-19, Americans whose age or health conditions put them at particular risk may choose to stay close to home. While doing so, don't neglect your psychological well-being.

Take care of yourself first, then take care of the others around you. If you have what you need, you will be better able to provide for what loved ones and others might need. Encourage those around you to do the same.

Make a to-do list for every day. The goals must be reasonable and attainable. Routines promote time management and help lower anxiety and worry.

Stick to your schedule as much as possible. Create achievable due dates for yourself, and stick to them as much as possible.

Take small breaks throughout your day. Do something different during these times.

Get your news from the most reliable sources available. Check at least two sources when trying to glean the facts. Trust, then verify.

Be careful about excesses of any kind. Too much news, TV, coffee, etc., should be avoided. Find other activities worth doing. What about art, music, writing - anything else that gives you a sense of satisfaction? When faced with difficulties, it is hard to justify such behaviors to ourselves. But doing so may help you be more effective in other, more tedious things you have to do. If you have extra time, try learning a new skill.

Find a way to talk to other people. Make use of Skype, Facebook, FaceTime, Zoom, telephone and other forms of staying in touch - whatever works for you. Even casual connections help you feel involved and vital.

New routines may be necessary. Make them realistic and, where children or grandchildren are concerned, child-friendly. Routines should be predictable and structured, to help deal with uncertainties and stress.

Whether or not a second wave of coronavirus occurs, it's worth preparing for a future pandemic or similar circumstance:

Develop a personal and family plan. Write down

what you need now and what you will likely need to get through this situation and ones that may occur in the future.

Preparation at all levels. The purchase of food, water, necessities, toiletries, etc., should be ongoing to avoid the hoarding that often occurs during man-made or natural crises.

Develop a mindset of survival. Avoid adopting the attitudes of most people: "It probably won't happen to me," "it won't be that bad," or "even if it is that bad, there is nothing I can do about it anyway." These are simply not true.

Put together a "go-bag." Include items you may need for yourself and those close to you. Plan for circumstances that require you to leave your home and those that may require you to shelter in place. Plan a bag for each member of your family, including your animals, and keep them stocked and up to date.

SAFE DEFROSTING

Once frozen food gets warmer than 40 degrees, it's in the "danger zone" where bacteria multiply quickly. As outer areas thaw, they reach that stage before other parts of the food - and can spoil it.



The fridge is the safest way to thaw your food, keeping it at 40 degrees or below throughout the defrosting process. Ground meat and chicken breasts usually take a full day, while a frozen turkey needs 24 hours for every five pounds.

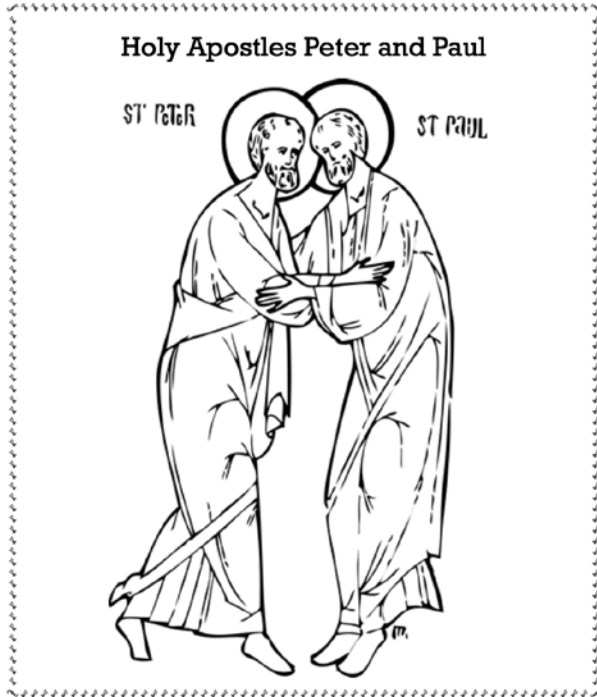
While hot water thaws food quickly, it also raises the temperature past the 40-degree mark. But cold water is safe. Fill the kitchen sink, put the food in a leak-proof bag and change the water every 30 minutes. The cold-water option thaws a pound of meat in an hour.

Never thaw food in a dishwasher, garage, basement or on the back porch. The microwave is safe, though the food doesn't always thaw evenly. Don't use a slow cooker, and don't start a slow cooker with frozen meat or poultry. Pressure cookers heat quickly enough to be safe.

Children's Corner

More available on stdemetriosnewjersey.com!

Courtesy of Presvytera Alexandra Houck



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian kids. Copyright 2025 Alexandra Houck. Email is [orthodoxchildrensword\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:orthodoxchildrensword(at)gmail.com). Find it each week at orthodoxchildrensword.org.

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 29, 2025

Volume 13, Issue 26

What should I wear?

Have you ever wondered

what you were going to wear? Maybe you spent some time, looking through your drawers or in your closet. As you get older, maybe you will spend even longer thinking about it. Did you know that the average woman spends 16 minutes every morning deciding what to wear? That's a lot of time worrying about our clothes!



But the Bible tells us today, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" Our Lord tells us in the Bible today, "Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you too."

We hear that God wants us to think about what's on the inside of us, not the outside of us. He wants us to think about how we can grow closer to Him, how we can love God more, how we can love our brothers and sisters and our parents more. God wants us to think about how we can help each other more and to do nice things for each other. So, the next time you are deciding what to wear, remember that our Lord wants us to think about the inside, not the outside. Then you can spend those 16 minutes (or more) on something better!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Apostles
- Archaeologist
- Bible
- Charity
- Church
- Epistles
- Feastday
- Kingdom
- Paul
- Peter
- Scripture
- Superstar
- Worry

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

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

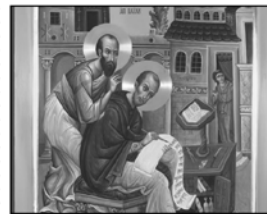
How old are our pictures of Saint Paul?

Did you know archaeologists have found pictures of this great saint from 1,700 years ago?



SAINT PAUL

THE GREAT APOSTLE



We have all heard of superstars, haven't we? A superstar is somebody who is super famous, maybe an actor who has been in a bunch of movies or an athlete who has helped his team win a ton of games.

But in our Church we have the right kind of stars, and these are the saints. We know about these stars because they have done great things for the Christian Church. They are examples to us!

Well, today we celebrate two real superstars of our church, Saints Peter and Paul. We know so much about Saint Paul because he wrote some of the books of the Bible. In the Acts of the Apostles (in the Bible), we hear about how he helped build up the Christian Church.

A few hundred years after Saint Paul lived, Saint John Chrysostom wrote about how great this superstar saint really was. He wrote, "Paul has shown us what man really is." Saint John wrote about how Saint Paul always tried harder and harder to do what God wanted him to do. Even when things were bad for him, Saint Paul thanked God for it. He knew that Christ had already won the big victory for us! The best way to learn more about this superstar saint is to read the Bible. And that is exactly the advice Saint John Chrysostom would give us, too!

We celebrate Saint Paul today, June 29th (OC: July 12th).

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