

Message from FR. GEORGIOS OIKONOMOU, PROTOPRESBYTER

One year in St. Nicholas of Baltimore!

On December 1, 2022, I had the distinct honor of assuming duties as your new priest. Priest of a historic community, celebrating seventy years of its founding this year. Therefore, a whole year of walking together by the Grace of God and the blessing of our patron Saint. I have had the opportunity and honor to meet you. You opened the doors of your homes and - most importantly - of your hearts to me. You trusted me, you supported me, you embraced me. As if we had known each other for years and years before I met you. And you welcomed us not as strangers but as members of your family. You welcomed me and my family, Presvytera Anastasia, and our children, John, Stella, Gregory, Arsenios and Lukas. We celebrated all the feasts of our faith together. The Sundays, the feasts of our Christ, the feasts of our Virgin Mary, of the Saints. And it was all truly beautiful. The time passed quietly but also creatively. I had the opportunity to get to know and admire the multi-dimensional and multi-layered work done by all the organizations of the community. The Greek School, the Ladies Philoptochos, Diamonds, GOYA, Sunday School, Greek Golden Coins and the Panhellenic. A great, remarkable work, built on unchanging and unshakeable foundations.

These foundations are certainly the Orthodox Christian Faith and Hellenism. And the cornerstone is our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Our faith in Him, our love for the Holy Trinity, our worship of Him through the celebration of the Holy Sacraments and feasts of the church are the essential and main reasons why we are here. It was the inspiration for the foundation of this community seventy years ago, it is the reason for its existence to this day, and it is our eternal vision and orientation. Our community is a ship on the sea of God's mercy, captained by our Christ Himself, and we all sail together, fellow passengers of this noetic ship, towards the eternal and heavenly port of Paradise.

Your priest this year was always near you with love and all his strength to minister to you. To lead you closer to Christ, to reveal His face and the teaching of the Gospel to you. And I promise to continue this struggle humbly but with all my strength. That we may continue to rejoice in our communion, that we may move forward together, that we may share

the joys and sorrows, and that we may deserve this heavy responsibility that we have taken on with the blessing of the Church and of our spiritual father, Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey, the responsibility of your ministry, that we may shoulder it with the same responsibility and merit of all those who have struggled before us. Priests, Parish Councils and all the members of St. Nicholas, dead and living, who built this church and gave all their strength for its continued progress. May Almighty God richly bless the progress of our community and may we deserve to celebrate many more anniversaries of its foundation. All together, united, loved, healthy and strong.



This month, our community gloriously celebrates its patron Saint, such a great Hierarch, Saint Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra of Lycia, the Wonderworker. Let his intercessions be our help and let us prepare ourselves to celebrate the feast as beautifully as we can, all of us participating in the sacred services and helping according to our special gifts.

In closing, as we continue our journey towards the Holy and Sacred Christmas, I would like to wish wholeheartedly to each and every one of us individually that we all deserve with a pure heart to worship the Nativity of our Savior Jesus Christ. May we see the bright star of Bethlehem. To kneel like humble shepherds before the eternal God, who is in the cave with His ever-blessed Virgin Mother as the Child Neon. Let us praise Him together with the angels by singing "*Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth*".

*Peace, O God, grant to your world,
that wars may cease,
that mothers may cease to mourn their children.
Peace, O God, grant peace in our hearts.*

With paternal love in Christ,
Protopresbyter Georgios Oikonomou

Kainonia

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF
AMERICA METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY



Ένας χρόνος στον Άγιο Νικόλαο Βαλτιμόρης, εulογία Θεού!

Την πρώτη Δεκεμβρίου του 2022 είχα την εξαιρετική τιμή να αναλάβω καθήκοντα ως ο νέος σας ιερέας. Ιερέας μιας ιστορικής κοινότητας, που γιορτάζει φέτος τα εβδομήντα χρόνια από την ίδρυσή της. Έναν ολόκληρο χρόνο πορευτήκαμε μαζί με τη Χάρη του Θεού και την ευλογία του Αγίου μας. Μου δόθηκε η ευκαιρία και είχα την τιμή να σας γνωρίσω. Μου ανοίξατε τις πόρτες των σπιτιών σας και – το κυριότερο – των καρδιών σας. Με εμπιστευτήκατε, με στηρίζατε, με αγκαλιάσατε. Σαν να γνωριζόμασταν χρόνια και χρόνια, πριν να σας γνωρίσω. Και μας υποδεχτήκατε όχι σαν ξένους αλλά ως μέλη της οικογένειάς σας. Εμένα και την οικογένειά μου, την πρεσβυτέρα Αναστασία, και τα παιδιά μας, Ιωάννη, Στέλλα, Γρηγόρη, Αρσένιο και Λουκά. Γιορτάσαμε μαζί όλες τις γιορτές της πίστης μας. Τις Κυριακές, τις γιορτές του Χριστού μας, της Παναγίας μας, των Αγίων. Και ήταν όλα αληθινά όμορφα. Ο χρόνος κύλησε ήσυχα αλλά και δημιουργικά. Μου δόθηκε η ευκαιρία να γνωρίσω και να θαυμάσω το πολυδιάστατο και πολυεπίπεδο έργο, που γίνεται από όλους τους οργανισμούς της κοινότητας. Το Ελληνικό Σχολείο, τη Φιλόπτωχο Αδελφότητα Κυριών, τα Διαμάντια, τη Νεολαία, το Κατηχητικό Σχολείο, τα Ελληνικά Χρυσά Φλουριά και το Πανελλήνιο Χορευτικό Συγκρότημα. Ένα έργο σπουδαίο, αξιοσημείωτο και οικοδομημένο σε θεμέλια γερά και ασάλευτα.

Τα θεμέλια αυτά είναι οπωσδήποτε η Ορθόδοξη Χριστιανική Πίστη και ο Ελληνισμός. Και ακρογωνιαίος λίθος ο Ίδιος ο Χριστός μας. Η πίστη μας σε Αυτόν, η αγάπη μας στον Τριαδικό Θεό, η λατρεία Του με την τέλεση των ιερών μυστηρίων και εορτών της εκκλησίας είναι οι ουσιαστικοί και κύριοι λόγοι, που βρισκόμαστε εδώ. Ήταν η έμπνευση της ίδρυσης αυτής της κοινότητας, πριν εβδομήντα χρόνια, είναι ο λόγος της ύπαρξής της μέχρι σήμερα, αλλά και ο παντοτινός και αιώνιος οραματισμός και προσανατολισμός μας. Η κοινότητά μας είναι ένα καράβι στη θάλασσα του ελέους του Θεού, με καπετάνιο τον Ίδιο τον Χριστό μας, και συμπλέουμε όλοι μαζί, συνεπιβάτες αυτού του νοερού караβιού, προς το αιώνιο και ουράνιο λιμάνι του Παραδείσου.

Ο ιερέας σας αυτόν τον χρόνο βρίσκεται συνέχεια κοντά σας με αγάπη και όλες του τις δυνάμεις, για να σας διακονεί. Για να σας οδηγεί κοντά στον Χριστό, να σας φανερώνει το πρόσωπό Του και τη διδασκαλία του Ευαγγελίου. Και υπόσχομαι να συνεχίσω αυτόν τον αγώνα ταπεινά με με

όλες μου τις δυνάμεις. Για να συνεχίσουμε να χαιρόμαστε την κοινωνία μας, να προχωράμε μαζί, να μοιραζόμαστε τις χαρές και τις λύπες και να αξιωθούμε αυτή τη βαριά ευθύνη που αναλάβαμε με την ευχή της Εκκλησίας και του πνευματικού μας πατέρα, Μητροπολίτη Νέας Ιερσέης, κυρίου Αποστόλου, την ευθύνη της διακονίας σας, να την επωμιστούμε με ευθύνη και επάξια όλων όσων αγωνίστηκαν πριν από εμάς. Ιερών, Ενοριακών Συμβουλίων και όλων των μελών του Αγίου Νικολάου, κεκοιμημένων και ζώντων, που έχτισαν αυτή την εκκλησία και αγωνίστηκαν για τη συνεχή της πρόοδο. Είθε να ευλογήσει ο Πανάγαθος Θεός πλούσια την πορεία της κοινότητάς μας και να αξιωθούμε να γιορτάσουμε πολλές ακόμα επετείους από την ίδρυσή της. Όλοι μαζί, ενωμένοι, αγαπημένοι, γεροί και δυνατοί.

Τον μήνα αυτό, η εκκλησία μας πανηγυρίζει λαμπρά τον πολιούχο και προστάτη Άγιο της, έναν τόσο σπουδαίο Ιεράρχη, τον Άγιο Νικόλαο Αρχιεπίσκοπο Μύρων της Λυκίας, τον Θαυματουργό. Ας είναι βοήθειά μας και ας προετοιμαστούμε, για να γιορτάσουμε την πανήγυρη όσο πιο όμορφα μπορούμε, συμμετέχοντας όλοι στις ιερές ακολουθίες και βοηθώντας ανάλογα με τα ιδιαίτερα χαρίσματα, που έχουμε.

Κλείνοντας, καθώς συνεχίζουμε την πορεία μας προς τα Άγια και Ιερά Χριστούγεννα, ήθελα να ευχηθώ ολόψυχα στον καθένα και την καθεμία ξεχωριστά να αξιωθούμε όλοι με καθαρή καρδιά να προσκυνήσουμε τη Γέννηση του Σωτήρα μας Ιησού Χριστού. Να δούμε το ολόλαμπρο αστέρι της Βηθλεέμ. Να γονατίσουμε σαν τους ταπεινούς βοσκούς ενώπιον του προ αιώνων Θεού, που βρίσκεται στο σπήλαιο με την αιεπάρθενο Παναγία Μητέρα Του ως Παιδίον Νέον. Να τον δοξάσουμε μαζί με τους Αγγέλους ψάλλοντας το «**Δόξα εν υψίστοις Θεώ και επί γης ειρήνη**».

***Ειρήνη, Θεέ μου, χάρισε στον κόσμο Σου,
να πάψουν πια οι πόλεμοι,
να πάψουν μάνες να θρηνούνε τα παιδιά τους.
Ειρήνη, Θεέ μου, χάρισε και μέσα στις καρδιές μας.***

Καλά και Ευλογημένα Χριστούγεννα!

Με εν Χριστώ αγάπη,
Πρωτοπρεσβύτερος Γεώργιος Οικονόμου

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

PROTOPRESBYTER FR. GEORGIOS OIKONOMOU, PASTOR Tel: 410-633-5020 • Fax: 410-633-4352 • Cell: 443-422-4548

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KOINONIA DEADLINE

Please submit your article(s) to the Koinonia staff by the deadline stated below:

ISSUE MONTH: JANUARY 2023


SUBMISSIONS DUE: DECEMBER 20th

Please email your article(s) to: vkotsatou@stnicholasmd.org

Articles are due no later than the 20th of each month. If they are received after the deadline they will be published in the following month's issue.

All articles must be proofread and color corrected prior to submission.

Χρόνια Πολλά Καλές Γιορτές



Ετούτα τα Χριστούγεννα
Να' ναι τα καλύτερα σας
Ευχές και δώρα να σας βρουν
Και αγάπη στην καρδιά σας.

Δέντρο Χριστουγεννιάτικο
Με ευχές έχω στολίσει
Ο Νέος Χρόνος που θα 'ρθει
Χαρές να σας γεμίσει.

Ελπίδα, γέλιο και χαρά
Αγάπη και ευτυχία
Να φέρει Η Γέννηση Του Χριστού
Μα προπαντός υγεία.

Ο Νεογέννητος Χριστός
Να φέρει την γαλήνη
Φώτιση για τους ισχυρούς
Στον κόσμο μας γαλήνη.

Σας εύχομαι από καρδιάς
Της Γέννησης Το Αστέρι
Χρόνια Πολλά Χρόνια Καλά
Στο σπίτι σας να φέρει.

Με απέραντη αγάπη

Σταματία Ιερομόναχος
Πρόεδρος του Διοικητικού
Συμβουλίου Αγίου Νικολάου
Βαλτιμόρης

The Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Flesh

Courtesy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America - www.goarch.org



As the story is told by the Apostles, the Roman Empire was powerful. The Romans had conquered much of the then known world. Judea and Samaria, what we know today as Israel, were included in their conquests. Emperor Augustus ordered that a census be taken in all his lands. He needed to know how many people lived in the empire so he could tax them. Everyone had to go to the town of their family's origin to register for the census. This meant that Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. They were descendants of King David and Bethlehem was the City of David.

Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth and it was a great distance from Bethlehem. It was about 100 miles over very rugged roads. Moreover, Mary was expecting the baby

Now, that night the shepherds were out in the fields guarding their sheep. Suddenly, there was a bright light which startled the shepherds. The light was so bright that it turned the night into daylight. Of course, the shepherds were frightened. Nothing such as this had ever happened. Soon an angel appeared and calmed them. The angel said:

“Fear not for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior; which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger” (Luke 2:11-12).

Then a larger group of angels appeared. They praised and glorified God and sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men” (Luke 2:14). When the angels finished singing, they disappeared and the light began to fade. It became dimmer and dimmer until it was dark again. The shepherds were awed. They didn't know what to do. Finally, they decided to leave their flocks of sheep and go to Bethlehem. They decided that they wanted to see for themselves what the angels had told them. When they got to Bethlehem, they found Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus. They fell to their knees and adored Jesus.

Some Wise Men came from the East for they knew of the coming of Jesus. They had seen a star that told them that a new king had been born to the Jews. They followed the star and were looking for the child. At this time the governor of Judea was King Herod. He was a wicked man and was feared and hated by the people. When Herod heard about the Wise Men looking for the child, he invited them to his palace. Herod asked the Wise Men to find the child so that he, too, could worship Him. But Herod was lying. He did not want anyone to take his place. The Wise Men went on to look for Jesus. The Star led them to Jesus and Mary. When the

Introduction

The Feast of the Nativity of Jesus is one of the most joyful days of the Orthodox Church. It ranks next to the greatest holiday, the Resurrection of Jesus. The Feast of the Birth of Jesus is also known as the “Incarnation of Christ.” This means that Jesus became a man and came into the world to save us. We also refer to this joyous feast as Christmas.

Biblical Story

The story of the Nativity of Christ is beautifully told in the Holy Scriptures. The story is found in Matthew 1:18-25 and in Luke 2:1-20. No matter how often the Birth of Jesus is told, we realize that it is an important event.

and it was almost time for her to give birth. Bethlehem was a small town and there were many descendants of David who had come to register for the census. By the time Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem there was no place for them to stay. Joseph tried very hard to find a place to sleep that evening. There was no room at the inn. Finally, Joseph found a cave-like place where they could rest. This place was used by shepherds to protect their sheep in stormy weather. It was here that Mary gave birth to Jesus. The baby was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the straw in the manger.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25TH - Continued

Men found Jesus, they fell to their knees and worshipped Him. They gave Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The Wise Men left but did not return to Herod. They had a dream that warned them that Herod wanted to harm Jesus. Instead, they returned to their native country by a different route.

Icon of the Feast

The icon of the Nativity tells the story of Christ's birth from the Scriptures. It also shows that all creation is taking part in Christ's birth. The angels give thanks with their song; the heavens give the star; the Wise Men give their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The poor, humble shepherds give their praise and amazement; the earth gives the cave, and humanity gives the Virgin.

This Holy Icon is an icon with many scenes. First, it stresses the importance of the Theotokos, the Mother of Jesus. She is placed in the center and is the largest figure in the icon. In this icon, she is kneeling with crossed arms, looking at the Christ child. The three stars, denoting her virginity before, during, and after the Nativity, are on her garments. The Christ Child, in the center of the icon, is in swaddling clothes and is lying in the manger. In the background is the dark cave where He was born. In the cave are an ox and a donkey guarding the newborn Babe. Even though the Gospels say nothing of the cave, this information is from Holy Tradition. Neither do the Gospels speak of the ox and the donkey, but all icons of the Nativity include these animals. Including the animals in the icon fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 1:3, "The ox knows his master, and the donkey his master's crib; but Israel does not know me, and the people have not regarded me." The long ray of light from the star points directly to the cave. This ray comes from the star and travels to all parts of the world. It teaches that this bright star is an astronomical happening, and is a messenger from heaven announcing the birth of Jesus.

On the left hand side of the icon is another scene. The Wise Men, who were led by the star, are riding horses to bring their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to Jesus. The Wise Men are of various ages. One is without a beard. In those days, young

men did not wear beards. The other Wise Man has long hair and a long beard, which indicates that he is much older. These details teach that regardless of age and appearance, the Good News was given to each and everyone.

Opposite the Wise Men is the scene with the humble shepherds. An angel proclaims the glad tidings. A young shepherd plays a reed instrument. This scene reveals that the music of the humans was added to the hymn of the angels. Across from the shepherd's scene is the heavenly choir of angels. They are giving glory to God. The angels serve two purposes in the Nativity of Christ. They give glory to God and announce the good news to all mankind.

The background shows a very rugged terrain. This is not a true representation of the land in this area. Joseph could not find room in Bethlehem, so they went outside of Bethlehem to a cave. This rocky mountain formation only serves as a background for the event.

In the lower part of the icon are two more scenes. In the right hand corner are the two women Joseph brought to take care of the Christ child. They are bathing Him just as any baby is bathed. The humanity of Jesus is clearly shown in this setting.

Opposite the bathing of Jesus scene sits a sad and worried Joseph. He is not part of the central group the Christ Child and the Theotokos. Joseph is not the natural father. Joseph is troubled and despondent. There is an old man talking to Joseph. The old man is Satan. Satan can appear in many forms. Here he is as an old man who is tempting Joseph and disturbing him. Satan is telling Joseph that virgin birth is impossible. He's telling Joseph that he's a fool if he believes this. This story comes to us from Holy Tradition. The sad Joseph shows us not only his personal predicament but the dilemma of all mankind the difficulty of accepting that which is "beyond words or reason."

The tree, which is in the middle of the lower part of the icon, is a symbol of the Tree of Jesse. This tree refers to Isaiah 11:1-2, "But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. The spirit of the Lord shall

rest upon Him." King David was often mentioned as the son of Jesse and Jesus was from the House of David.

The Holy Icon of the Nativity reminds one to praise and glorify the Birth of Christ. The celebration of Christmas each year serves to remind each and everyone of us that Christ came for you and me.

The Orthodox Celebration of the Feast of the Nativity

As with Pascha, or Easter, the Feast of the Nativity begins with a period of preparation. It is preceded by a fast corresponding to Lent and lasting for forty days. The fast begins on November 15.

On the Sundays immediately before December 25, special commemorations emphasize the link between the Old Covenant and the New. On December 20 the Forefeast of the Nativity is commemorated, and the daily liturgical texts are directed toward the Feast itself. On Christmas Eve, services include the Great or Royal Hours, the Great Vespers, and the Liturgy of Saint Basil.

On Christmas Day the service commemorates the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, the adoration of the Shepherds, and the arrival of the Wise Men with their gifts. The service held on this day is the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.

The days following Christmas are associated with the Theotokos and Joseph. December 26 is the Synaxis of the Mother of God, and the first Sunday after the Feast commemorates "Joseph the Betrothed." December 29 commemorates the Massacre of the Innocents, and January 1 the Circumcision of our Lord. The Nativity season concludes on December 31, but the spirit of the festival extends to the celebration of Theophany (Epiphany), the feast commemorating the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan River. ■



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 325/2023

Archebiscopal Encyclical for Thanksgiving

November 23, 2023

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

Give thanks in everything, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.
(I Thessalonians 5:18)

Beloved sisters and brothers in Christ,

Our National Day of Thanksgiving arrives in a time when the world is in turmoil, and “wars and rumors of wars” (Matthew 24:6) cast a pall over the global community. It is often difficult to muster the intention to be thankful in such moments. But as the Apostle Paul reminds us in his first letter to the nascent Christian community in Thessaloniki, we fulfill the will of God by our gratitude. This does not mean that we are thankful for the miseries that afflict the world, but that even in such distressing and sad circumstances, we persist through them.

President Abraham Lincoln, in one of his precursor “Thanksgiving” proclamations (July 15, 1863), just days after the bloody victory at the Battle of Gettysburg, said: “It is meet and right to recognize and confess the presence of the Almighty Father, and the power of His hand, equally in these triumphs and in these sorrows.” In the midst of the brutal Civil War, Lincoln acknowledged the “presence” of God. And this is what giving thanks in all things really means.



The gratitude that is expressed in our Thanksgiving meals and gatherings is an acknowledgment of God's ultimate will in our lives. We pass through suffering in this world, but like the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ, we also pass-over to Resurrection. We can look around and give in to despair, or we can give thanks to God for His will that "all people should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4).

Therefore, my beloved Christians, on this Thanksgiving Day, let us look beyond to the truth of God's providential love for us, and offer Him the gratitude which can transform our world into His Kingdom.

With gratitude for each and every one of you
in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ,

† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America

Note: To be read in every parish of the Archdiocese on Sunday, November 19, 2023.



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ

ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Αριθμ. Πρωτ. 325/2023

Αρχιεπισκοπική Έγκύκλιος για την ημέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν.

23 Νοεμβρίου 2023

Πρὸς τοὺς Σεβασμιωτάτους καὶ Θεοφιλεστάτους Ἀρχιερεῖς, τοὺς Εὐλαβεστάτους Ἱερεῖς καὶ Διακόνους, τοὺς Μοναχοὺς καὶ τὶς Μοναχές, τοὺς Προέδρους καὶ τὰ Μέλη τῶν Κοινοτικῶν Συμβουλίων, τοὺς Ἐντιμολογιωτάτους Ἀρχόντες 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.

«Ἐν παντὶ εὐχαριστεῖτε· τοῦτο γὰρ θέλημα Θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς»
(Πρὸς Θεσσαλονικεῖς Α΄ 5:18).

Προσφιλεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἀδελφές ἐν Χριστῷ,

Ἡ ἡμέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν μᾶς βρῖσκει σὲ μία ἐποχή, ὅπου ὅλος ὁ κόσμος βρῖσκεται σὲ ἀναταραχὴ, μὲ «πολέμους καὶ ἀκοὰς πολέμων» (Ματθ. 24:6) νὰ βαραίνουν τὸ κλίμα στὶς σχέσεις μεταξὺ τῶν ἐθνῶν. Εἶναι ἀρκετὰ δύσκολο, ὑπὸ αὐτὲς τὶς συνθῆκες, νὰ βρεῖ κανεὶς τὴ δύναμη γιὰ νὰ ἀναπέμψῃ εὐχαριστίες. Ὅμως, ὅπως μᾶς ὑπενθυμίζει ὁ Ἀπόστολος Παῦλος στὴν πρώτη του ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς τὴν ἐκκολαπτόμενη τότε χριστιανικὴ κοινότητα τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης, τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκπληρώνεται μὲ εὐγνωμοσύνη καὶ εὐχαριστίες. Αὐτὸ δὲ σημαίνει ὅτι εὐχαριστοῦμε γιὰ τὶς δυστυχίες ποὺ πλήττουν τὸν κόσμο, ἀλλὰ ὅτι ἀκόμη καὶ τὶς πιὸ ἀντίξοες συνθῆκες ἐπιμένουμε νὰ τὶς ἀντιμετωπίζουμε εὐχαριστηριακά.

Ὁ Πρόεδρος Ἀβραὰμ Λίνκολν, σὲ μία ἀπὸ τὶς διακηρύξεις του γιὰ τὴν ἡμέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν, στὶς 15 Ἰουλίου 1863, λίγες ἡμέρες μετὰ ἀπὸ τὴν αἱματηρὴ νίκη στὴ μάχη τοῦ Γκέτισμπουργκ, ἀνέφερε: «εἶναι δίκαιο νὰ ὁμολογήσουμε τὴν παρουσία τοῦ οὐράνιου Πατέρα καὶ τὴ δύναμη τῆς δεξιᾶς Του στοὺς θριάμβους, ἀλλὰ καὶ στὶς θλίψεις». Ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ ἄγριου ἐμφυλίου πολέμου, ὁ Πρόεδρος Λίνκολν ἀναγνώρισε τὴν παρουσία τοῦ Θεοῦ. Αὐτὸ ἀκριβῶς ἀποτελεῖ ἓνα λαμπρὸ παράδειγμα εὐχαριστηριακῆς ἀντιμετώπισης τῶν πραγμάτων.



Ἡ εὐγνωμοσύνη, τὴν ὁποία ἐκφράζουμε μὲ τις συναθροίσεις καὶ τὸ δεῖπνο τῆς Ἡμέρας τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν εἶναι μία ἀναγνώριση τῆς θείας χάριτος στὴ ζωὴ μας. Ἀντιμετωπίζουμε πόνο καὶ βάσανα ἀπὸ τὴ στιγμή πού ἐρχόμαστε στὸν κόσμο, ἀλλὰ γευόμαστε τελικὰ τὴν ἀνάσταση, ὅπως μᾶς ἔδειξε ὁ Κύριός μας Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὁ ὁποῖος ἀναστήθηκε νικώντας τὸ θάνατο, ἀφοῦ γεύθηκε ὅμως πρῶτα ὁ ἴδιος τὸν πόνο καὶ τὴν πικρία τοῦ θανάτου. Θὰ μπορούσαμε νὰ ὑποκύψουμε στὴν ἀπόγνωση τοῦ πόνου μέσα στὸν κόσμο, ἀλλὰ προτιμότερο εἶναι νὰ ἐπιλέξουμε τὴν ἐλπίδα στὸ Θεὸ μετὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστιῶν, γιατί «αὐτὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν» (Πρὸς Τιμόθεον Α΄ 2:4).

Ἐπομένως, ἀγαπητοί μου χριστιανοί, αὐτὴ τὴν Ἡμέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν, ἅς ἀφουγκραστοῦμε τὴν προνοητικὴ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ πρὸς ὅλους μας, καὶ ἅς τοῦ προσφέρουμε εὐχαριστίες μετ' εὐγνωμοσύνης, οἱ ὁποῖες, νὰ εἴστε σίγουροι, μποροῦν νὰ μεταμορφώσουν τὸν κόσμο σὲ Βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Μὲ εὐγνωμοσύνη πρὸς καθέναν ἀπὸ ἐσᾶς καὶ μὲ τὴν ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγάπη,

† ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐλπιδοφόρος

Σημείωσις: Νὰ ἀναγνωσθεῖ σὲ ὅλες τις ἐνορίες τῆς Ἀμερικῆς τὴν Κυριακὴν, 19 Νοεμβρίου 2023.

5th SUNDAY OF LUKE

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
HOLY METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY
SAINT NICHOLAS
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF BALTIMORE

5th Sunday of Luke

Sunday Sermon by Father Georgios Oikonomou

We heard a great story in the holy gospel today, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. It is the story of the rich man and the poor man Lazarus. Jesus always taught us the truths of the Gospel with such stories, the parables, so that everyone would understand his teaching. Christ said that there was once a rich man who lived by showing off his wealth. He wore very expensive clothes, and every day he would arrange parties with many guests, who were entertained and enjoyed themselves. A poor man, whose name was Lazarus, would go and knock on his door and beg him to give him some food, but the rich man would turn him away. And he was forced to enter the house to get his fill, and when the entertainments were over, he would crawl on the floor under the table and try to cheat his hunger with the crumbs that fell from the table. The poor man was not only poor. He was also sick, and his body was full of sores and the dogs were trying to comfort him by licking his wounds.

One day these two people died. Like every man born on this earth. God's angels led Lazarus into the arms of Abraham. While the rich man was led to Hades and tormented. From where he was, he lifted up his eyes and saw Lazarus resting happily in Abraham's arms and said to Abraham. "Father, I am burning, please send Lazarus to cool me." But Abraham replied that Lazarus had been tormented all his life and was now being comforted, while he did not take advantage of the opportunity God gave him by sending Lazarus to his door daily, never did good, never showed love and compassion, and now enjoys the fruits of his deeds. And he also said, "besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us".

The rich man then asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his brothers on earth, that they might repent and not be led to hell, but Abraham replied that since they did not follow what the Bible said, even if a dead man who had been raised from the dead appeared before them, they would still not believe. In this stirring parable of Christ, we are taught that the way that leads to salvation, heaven and eternal life is the way of mercy and love. One way full of compassion for the poor, the sick, the helpless and of course charity. The rich man in the parable was not condemned because he was rich. But because he was hard-hearted and selfish. He wanted to show off his wealth with his expensive clothes, he made sure to entertain himself with dances, food, and company, and he closed his eyes to his hurting fellow man.



This parable of Christ spread to all of us a very important message. That there is eternal life. There is Heaven and Hell. One day we will all stand before the Righteous Judge, our God, and we will be judged according to our works of love or according to our cruelty and indifference. Let today's parable be a spiritual wake-up call. A spiritual alarm. And may it help to sweeten our hearts. To have more compassion for our brothers and sisters who need our help. Not to leave them on the floor trying to get their fill of our dinner crumbs but to invite them to our table. To give them clean clothes to wear. To hug them. And so, we can one day, the eternal and never-ending day, be embraced with them in heaven, flooded with the light of our Christ, the Holy Light of the Resurrection. Amen.

5th SUNDAY OF LUKE

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
HOLY METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY
SAINT NICHOLAS
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF BALTIMORE

5th Sunday of Luke

Sunday Sermon by Father Georgios Oikonomou

Ακούσαμε σήμερα στο ιερό ευαγγέλιο μία πολύ σπουδαία ιστορία. Είναι ιστορία του πλούσιου και του φτωχού Λαζάρου. Ο Χριστός μας δίδαξε πάντα τις αλήθειες του Ευαγγελίου με τέτοιες ιστορίες, τις παραβολές, για να καταλαβαίνουν όλοι τη διδασκαλία του. Διηγήθηκε λοιπόν ο Χριστός ότι υπήρχε κάποτε ένας πλούσιος άνθρωπος, που ζούσε κάνοντας επίδειξη του πλούτου του. Φορούσε πανάκριβα ρούχα, και διοργάνωνε κάθε μέρα τραπέζια με πολλούς καλεσμένους, που διασκεδάζαν και χαιρόνταν. Ένας φτωχός, που ονομαζόταν Λάζαρος, πήγαινε και του χτυπούσε την πόρτα και τον παρακαλούσε να του δώσει λίγο φαγητό αλλά ο πλούσιος τον έδιωχνε. Και αναγκαζόταν για να χορτάσει να μπαίνει στο σπίτι, όταν τέλειωναν οι διασκεδάσεις, σερνόταν στο πάτωμα κάτω από το τραπέζι και προσπαθούσε να ξεγελάσει την πείνα του με τα ψίχουλα που έπεσαν από το τραπέζι. Δεν ήταν μόνο φτωχός ο καημένος. Ήταν και άρρωστος και το σώμα του γεμάτο πληγές και τα σκυλιά προσπαθούσαν να τον παρηγορήσουν γλύφοντας τις πληγές του. Αυτοί οι δύο άνθρωποι πέθαναν. Όπως κάθε άνθρωπος που γεννιέται σε αυτή τη γη. Οι άγγελοι του Θεού οδήγησαν τον Λάζαρο στην αγκαλιά του Αβραάμ. Ενώ ο πλούσιος οδηγήθηκε στον Άδη και βασανιζόταν. Από εκεί που βρισκόταν σήκωσε τα μάτια του και είδε τον Λάζαρο να αναπαύεται χαρούμενος στην αγκαλιά του Αβραάμ και είπε στον Αβραάμ. «Πατέρα, καίγομαι, στείλε σε παρακαλώ τον Λάζαρο να με δροσίσει». Όμως ο Αβραάμ του απάντησε ότι ο Λάζαρος βασανίστηκε σε όλη τη ζωή του και τώρα παρηγοριέται, ενώ εκείνος δεν αξιοποίησε την ευκαιρία που του έδωσε ο Θεός στέλνοντας καθημερινά τον Λάζαρο στην πόρτα του, δεν έκανε ποτέ το καλό, δεν έδειξε αγάπη και συμπόνια και τώρα απολαμβάνει τους καρπούς των έργων του. Και είπε επίσης υπάρχει μεγάλο χάσμα, γκρεμός ανάμεσά μας, και κανείς δεν μπορεί να περάσει από τη μία μεριά στην άλλη. Ο πλούσιος ζήτησε τότε από τον Αβραάμ να στείλει τον Λάζαρο στα αδέρφια του στη γη, να μετανοήσουν εκείνοι και να μην οδηγηθούν στην κόλαση, αλλά ο Αβραάμ απάντησε ότι εφόσον δεν ακολουθούν όσα λέει η Αγία Γραφή, ακόμα και αν εμφανιστεί μπροστά τους νεκρός που αναστήθηκε πάλι δεν θα πιστέψουν.

Στη συγκλονιστική αυτή παραβολή του Χριστού διδασκόμαστε ότι ο δρόμος που οδηγεί στη σωτηρία, στον παράδεισο και την αιώνια ζωή είναι ο δρόμος του ελέους και της αγάπης. Η συμπάθεια προς τους φτωχούς, τους ασθενείς, τους ανήμπορους. Η ελεημοσύνη. Ο πλούσιος της παραβολής δεν καταδικάστηκε γιατί ήταν πλούσιος. Αλλά γιατί ήταν σκληρόκαρδος και εγωιστής. Ήθελε να κάνει επίδειξη του πλούτου με τα πανάκριβα ρούχα, φρόντιζε να διασκεδάξει με χορούς, φαγητά και παρέες και έκλεινε τα μάτια του στον πονεμένο συνάνθρωπο.

Η παραβολή αυτή του Χριστού μας απευθύνει σε όλους μας ένα πολύ σπουδαίο μήνυμα. Ότι υπάρχει αιώνια ζωή. Υπάρχει Παράδεισος και Κόλαση. Μια μέρα θα σταθούμε όλοι ενώπιον



του Δίκαιου Κριτή, του Θεού μας, και θα κριθούμε ανάλογα με τα έργα της αγάπης μας ή ανάλογα με την σκληρότητα και την αδιαφορία μας.

Ας είναι η σημερινή παραβολή ένα πνευματικό ξυπνητήρι. Ένας πνευματικός συναγεμός. Και να μας βοηθήσει να γλυκάνει η καρδιά μας. Να συμπονέσουμε περισσότερο τους αδελφούς μας που χρειάζονται τη βοήθεια μας. Να μην τους αφήνουμε στο πάτωμα και να προσπαθούν να χορτάσουν από τα ψίχουλα του δείπνου μας αλλά να τους προσκαλέσουμε στο τραπέζι μας. Να τους δώσουμε καθαρά ρούχα να φορέσουν. Να τους αγκαλιάσουμε. Και έτσι θα μπορέσουμε μια μέρα, την αιώνια και δίχως τέλος μέρα, να είμαστε αγκαλιασμένοι μαζί τους στον Παράδεισο, πλημμυρισμένοι με το φως του Χριστού μας, το Άγιο Φως της Ανάστασης. Αμήν.

8th SUNDAY OF LUKE

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
HOLY METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY
SAINT NICHOLAS
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF BALTIMORE

8th Sunday of Luke

Sunday Sermon by Father Georgios Oikonomou

The Gospel

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Today's Gospel story, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, is a parable, which contains in a concise way the meaning of the whole Gospel. The occasion for Christ to tell the parable was the question of a man who had devoted his life to the study of the law of God. Yet while he learned the law very well, he did not learn its true spirit. And he had so much pride that he did not hesitate to try to tempt Christ. Just as the devil tried to tempt Christ when he fasted for forty days on the mountain, so this lawyer asked Christ an evil question. "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Christ answered him with another question: "what is written in the law". And he answered that according to the law "you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself". Jesus told him that indeed, if he kept these commandments, he would inherit eternal life.

But he continued to ask with greater cunning, "Who is my neighbor?" And Jesus answered him with the following story. A man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho ran into robbers who robbed him, beat him, and left him half dead on the side of the road. Two clergymen who happened to be passing by that spot were indifferent and went on their way indifferently. But an alien, a Samaritan, took pity on the wounded man, knelt before him, washed his wounds

with oil and wine, he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. At the inn he gave money and the order that he should be cared for and healed, and promised to pay as much as was necessary to make the man well.

After Jesus told this stirring story he asked the lawyer "who is the neighbor". And he answered, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "If you therefore will inherit eternal life. "Go and do likewise."

Yet another parable of our Christ, which teaches that the key that opens the door of Paradise is love of one's fellow man. Unconditional love and love without limits. We are called to love our fellow man whether he is our relative or not. Whether he is a fellow human being or not. After all, every human being is a child of God, and all human beings are brothers and sisters to each other. Distant relatives, descendants of the forefather Adam.

In this parable there is also an even deeper meaning and a great symbolism. The Good Samaritan is Christ Himself. He sympathizes with the suffering man. He kneels beside him. He tends his wounds. The oil symbolizes God's mercy but also the holy oil of the Holy Unction. And the wine symbolizes the Blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross for the forgiveness of our sins and offered to all of us in the Mass. The aching wounded and traumatized person of modern times can find refuge and salvation in our Christ. He can receive the medicine of immortality in Holy Communion. And this grace that he receives by receiving Communion in Christ can be generously distributed to the world as love for his neighbor. Without limits, without conditions. Opening his hands as the crucified Lord opened them to hold the whole world. This is the one and only way that leads to eternal life.



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Τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκεῖνῳ, νομικός τις προσήλθε τῷ Ἰησοῦ πειράζων αὐτὸν καὶ λέγων· Διδάσκαλε, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; ὁ δὲ εἶπε πρὸς αὐτόν· Ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τί γέγραπται; πῶς ἀναγινώσκεις; ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· Ἀγαπήσεις Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου, καὶ τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν· εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ· Ὁρθῶς ἀπεκρίθης· τοῦτο ποιεῖ καὶ ζήσῃ· ὁ δὲ θέλων δικαιοῦν ἑαυτὸν εἶπε πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν· Καὶ τίς ἐστί μου πλησίον; ὑπολαβὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· Ἀνθρωπὸς τις κατέβαινεν ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ εἰς Ἱεριχῶν, καὶ λησταὶς περιέπεσεν· οἱ καὶ ἐκδύσαντες αὐτὸν καὶ πληγὰς ἐπιθέντες ἀπῆλθον ἀφέντες ἡμιθανῆ τυγχάνοντα, κατὰ συγκυρίαν δὲ ἱερεὺς τις κατέβαινεν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐκεῖνῃ, καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἀντιπαρήλθεν· ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ Λευΐτης γενόμενος κατὰ τὸν τόπον, ἑλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ἀντιπαρήλθε· Σαμαρεῖτης δὲ τις ὁδεύων ἦλθε κατ' αὐτόν, καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἐσπλαγχνίσθη, καὶ προσελθὼν κατέδησε τὰ τραύματα αὐτοῦ ἐπιχέων ἔλαιον καὶ οἶνον, ἐπιβιάσας δὲ αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ ἴδιον κτῆνος ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς πανδοχεῖον καὶ ἐπεμελήθη αὐτοῦ· καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν αὔριον ἐξελθὼν, ἐκβαλὼν δύο δηνάρια ἔδωκε τῷ πανδοχεῖ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἐπιμελήθητι αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὃ, τι ἂν προσδαπανήσης, ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ἐπανέρχεσθαί με ἀποδώσω σοι· τίς οὖν τούτων τῶν τριῶν πλησίον δοκεῖ σοι γεγονέναι τοῦ ἐμπροσθέντος εἰς τοὺς ληστὰς; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· Ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔλεος μετ' αὐτοῦ· εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Πορεύου καὶ σὺ ποιεῖ ὁμοίως.

Ἡ σημερινή ιστορία του Ευαγγελίου, αδελφοί μου, είναι μία παραβολή του Χριστού, η οποία περιέχει με συνοπτικό τρόπο το νόημα ολόκληρου του Ευαγγελίου. Αφορμή για να διηγηθῆ ο Χριστός την παραβολή ήταν η ερώτηση ενός ανθρώπου, ο οποίος είχε αφιερώσει τη ζωή του στη μελέτη του νόμου του Θεού. Ενώ ωστόσο ἔμαθε τον νόμο πολύ καλά, δεν ἔμαθε το αληθινό του πνεῦμα. Και εἶχε τόσο μεγάλη υπερηφάνεια, ὥστε δεν δίστασε να προσπαθῆσει να πειράξει τον Χριστό. Ὅπως ο διάβολος προσπάθησε να βάλει σε πειρασμό τον Χριστό, ὅταν ἐκεῖνος νήστεψε για σαράντα ἡμέρες στο ὄρος, ἔτσι και αὐτός ο νομικός ἔκανε μία πονηρὴ ερώτηση στον Χριστό. “Τι πρέπει να κάνω για να κληρονομήσω την αἰώνια ζωή”; Ὁ Χριστός του ἀπαντᾶ με μια ερώτηση: “τι γράφει ο νόμος”; Και ἐκεῖνος ἀπάντησε ὅτι σύμφωνα με τον νόμο πρέπει να ἀγαπήσει τον Θεό με ὅλη την καρδιά, την ψυχή, τη δύναμη και τον νου και τον πλησίον ὡς σεαυτόν. Ὁ Χριστός του εἶπε ὅτι ὄντως, ἀν τηρεῖ αὐτές τις ἐντολές, θα κληρονομήσει την αἰώνια ζωή.

Εκεῖνος ὁμως συνέχισε να ρωτᾶ με μεγαλύτερη πονηρία “ποιος εἶναι ο πλησίον”; Και ὁ Ἰησοῦς του ἀπάντησε με την παρακάτω ιστορία. Ἐνας ἄνθρωπος ταξιδεύοντας ἀπὸ την Ἱερουσαλὴμ πρὸς την Ἱεριχῶν ἔπεσε σε ληστὲς που τον ἔκλεψαν, τον χτύπησαν, και τον ἀφησαν μισοπεθαμένο στην ἀκρὴ του δρόμου. Δύο κληρικοί που ἔτυχε να περνᾶνε ἀπὸ ἐκεῖνο το σημεῖο ἕνας ἱερέας και ἕνας λευΐτης ἀδιαφόρησαν και συνέχισαν τον δρόμο τους. Μονάχα ἕνας ἀλλόφυλος που περνούσε ἀπὸ ἐκεῖ, ἕνας Σαμαρεῖτης, συμπόνεσε τον πληγωμένο ἄνθρωπο, γονάτισε μπροστὰ του, ἔπλυνε τις πληγές του με λάδι και

κρασί, τον φόρτωσε στο ζώο του και τον οδήγησε σε ἕνα Πανδοχεῖο φροντίζοντας για την ἀνάρρωσή του. Στο πανδοχεῖο ἔδωσε χρήματα και την ἐντολή να τον περιποιηθῶν και να τον γιατρέψουν και ὑποσχέθηκε ὅτι θα πληρώσει ὅσο χρειαστεῖ για να γίνει καλά ὁ ἄνθρωπος.

Αφὺ διηγήθηκε ὁ Χριστός αὐτῇ τη συγκλονιστικῇ ιστορία ρώτησε τον νομικό “ποιος εἶναι ὁ πλησίον”. Και ἐκεῖνος ἀπάντησε ἐκεῖνος που ἔδειξε ἔλεος. Και ὁ Ἰησοῦς του ἀπάντησε ὅτι ἀν ἐπιθυμεῖ να κληρονομήσει την αἰώνια ζωή να ἀγαπᾶ και ἐκεῖνος τον πλησίον με τον ἴδιο τρόπο.

Ακόμα μία παραβολή του Χριστοῦ μας, η οποία διδάσκει ὅτι το κλειδί που ἀνοίγει την πόρτα του Παραδείσου εἶναι η ἀγάπη στον συνάνθρωπο. Ἀγάπη χωρὶς ὄρους και ἀγάπη χωρὶς ὅρια. Καλούμαστε να ἀγαπάμε τον συνάνθρωπο εἴτε εἶναι συγγενῆς μας εἴτε ὄχι. Εἴτε εἶναι ὁμοεθνῆς εἴτε ὄχι. Ἀλλωστε κάθε ἄνθρωπος εἶναι παιδί του Θεοῦ και ὅλοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶμαστε ἀδέλφια μεταξύ μας. Μακρινοὶ συγγενεῖς, ἀπόγονοι του προπάτορα Ἀδάμ.

Στην παραβολή αὐτῇ ὑπάρχει και ἕνα ἀκόμα βαθύτερο νόημα και ἕνας σπουδαῖος συμβολισμός. Ὁ καλὸς Σαμαρεῖτης εἶναι ὁ Χριστός. Συμπάσχει με τον πονεμένο ἄνθρωπο. Γονατίζει δίπλα του. Περιποιεῖται τις πληγές του. Το λάδι συμβολίζει το ἔλεος του Θεοῦ ἀλλὰ και το ἁγιασμένο λάδι του Ἱεροῦ Ευχέλαιου. Και ὁ οἶνος συμβολίζει το Αἷμα του Χριστοῦ μας, που χύνεται πάνω στον Σταυρό για να συγχωρεθῶν οἱ ἀμαρτίες μας ἀλλὰ και προσφέρεται σε ὅλους μας στη Θεῖα Λειτουργία. Ὁ πονεμένος, πληγωμένος και γεμάτος τραύματα ἄνθρωπος της σύγχρονης ἐποχῆς μπορεῖ να βρεῖ καταφύγιο και σωτηρία κοντὰ στον Χριστό μας. Μπορεῖ να λάβει φάρμακο ἀθανασίας τη Θεῖα Κοινωνία. Και αὐτῇ τη χάρι που λαμβάνει κοινωνώντας τον Χριστό να τη σκορπίζει ἀπλόχερα στον κόσμο ὡς ἀγάπη στον πλησίον. Δίχως ὅρια, δίχως ὄρους. Ἀνοίγοντας τα χέρια, ὅπως τα ἀνοίξε ὁ Εσταυρωμένος Κύριος για να χωρέσει ὅλο τον κόσμο. Αὐτός εἶναι ὁ δρόμος που οδηγεῖ στην αἰώνια ζωή.



9th SUNDAY OF LUKE

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
HOLY METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY
SAINT NICHOLAS
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF BALTIMORE

9th Sunday of Luke

Sunday Sermon by Father Georgios Oikonomou

The Gospel

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

After the parable of the rich and poor Lazarus and the parable of the Good Samaritan, which we heard the two previous Sundays, today we heard another wonderful parable of Christ. The parable of the fool rich man. As short as it is, the meanings it teaches us are so great and precious.

Jesus said, "There was once a rich man, and one year he was blessed with such a great harvest that he found himself in a dilemma how to manage all that fruitfulness. Then he decided to tear down his storehouses, build bigger ones, store them there and say to himself: "Now you have goods for your entire life, eat, drink and be merry". But at the same time God said to him 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' And after he had finished the parable Jesus said "So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

As in the other gospel narratives of rich people, the problem in this parable is not wealth itself but lack of love. The rich man in the parable had the opportunity with his many incomes to thank and praise God for blessing the land and having abundant fruitfulness. And to share at least a part of it with the poor and with those who needed his help. But he was selfish. He thought only of himself. And instead of rejoicing in what he has, he reflects on what he will do with it. And he makes the most selfish and hard-hearted decision. To secure only his own future, to have a good time in the rest of his life eating, drinking, and having fun. But he had forgotten something he shouldn't have forgotten. He had forgotten that he was mortal.



At the very moment he was having these thoughts, God spoke to him and told him that he was going to die that night. And all of this would be left without heirs. And the worst of all? He would not be able to inherit eternal life and the door of Paradise would be closed to him, because his mind was always on earthly treasures and not on heavenly ones. He chose to live as if he were immortal when he was not. He did not keep God's commandment to love his neighbor. To have compassion for him. To be a good Samaritan for him.

This week we will celebrate Thanksgiving. And we also march towards the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is on these days that we usually become more generous. And of course, they are good occasions to thank God for all that He has given us. To be thankful to Him. And the best way to give thanks, after our participation in the Holy Eucharist, which is the supreme form of expressing thanks to God, is to look with compassion and love upon our fellow man. To embrace them. To share with them what our hearts tell us we can share. If we have two coats to give one, as Jesus said. After all, we too may one day find ourselves in the place of the poor man who needs help. As a beautiful hymn of our church emphasizes, "The wealthy have become poor and gone hungry, but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing." Let us take from today's parable the exhortation of our Christ, instead of treasuring for ourselves, let us see to it that we become rich in heaven. Amen.

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9th Sunday of Luke

Sunday Sermon by Father Georgios Oikonomou

Τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην· Ἄνθρωπου τινὸς πλουσίου εὐφόρησεν ἡ χώρα· καὶ διελογίζετο ἐν ἑαυτῷ λέγων· τί ποιήσω, ὅτι οὐκ ἔχω ποῦ συνάξω τοὺς καρπούς μου; καὶ εἶπε· τοῦτο ποιήσω· καθελῶ μου τὰς ἀποθήκας καὶ μείζονας οἰκοδομήσω, καὶ συνάξω ἐκεῖ πάντα τὰ γεννήματά μου καὶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ μου, καὶ ἔρῳ τῇ ψυχῇ μου· ψυχῇ, ἔχεις πολλὰ ἀγαθὰ κείμενα εἰς ἔτη πολλά· ἀναπαύου, φάγε, πίε, εὐφραίνου. εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Θεός· ἄφρον, ταύτη τῇ νυκτὶ τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἀπαιτοῦσιν ἀπὸ σοῦ· ἃ δὲ ἠτοίμασας τί νῦν ἔσται; οὕτως ὁ θεσσαυρίζων ἑαυτῷ καὶ μὴ εἰς Θεὸν πλουτῶν. Ταῦτα λέγων ἐφώνει· Ὁ ἔχων ὕψα ἀκούει, ἀκουέτω.

Υστερα από την παραβολή του πλουσίου και του φτωχού Λαζάρου και την παραβολή του καλού Σαμαρείτη, που ακούσαμε τις δύο προηγούμενες Κυριακές, ακούσαμε σήμερα ακόμα μία θαυμάσια παραβολή του Χριστού. Την παραβολή του άφρονος πλουσίου.

Όσο σύντομη είναι τόσο σπουδαία και πολύτιμα τα νοήματα που μας διδάσκει. Είπε ο Χριστός: Ήταν κάποτε ένας πλούσιος άνθρωπος και μια χρονιά ευλογήθηκε με τόσο μεγάλη σοδειά ώστε βρέθηκε σε δίλημμα πως να διαχειριστεί όλη αυτή την καρποφορία. Τότε αποφάσισε να γκρεμίσει τις αποθήκες του, να χτίσει μεγαλύτερες, να τα αποθηκεύσει εκεί και να πει στον εαυτό του: "τώρα έχεις αγαθά για όλη τη ζωή σου, τρώγε, πίνε και διασκεδάζε". Μα την ίδια στιγμή του είπε ο Θεός «Ανόητε, αυτή τη νύχτα θα πεθάνεις, όλα αυτά που ετοίμασες ποιος θα τα κληρονομήσει»; Και αφού ολοκλήρωσε την παραβολή ο Χριστός είπε στους ακροατές του «Αυτό παθαίνει όποιος θησαυρίζει για τον εαυτό του και δεν γίνεται πλούσιος ενώπιον του Θεού διά της αγάπης και της ελεημοσύνης.

Όπως και στις υπόλοιπες διηγήσεις του ευαγγελίου που αναφέρονται σε πλούσιους ανθρώπους, έτσι και σε αυτή την παραβολή το πρόβλημα στη χριστιανική ζωή δεν είναι ο πλούτος αλλά η έλλειψη αγάπης. Ο πλούσιος της παραβολής είχε την ευκαιρία με τα πολλά εισοδήματα που απέκτησε να ευχαριστήσει και να δοξάσει τον Θεό, ο Οποίος ευλόγησε τη γη και είχε πλούσια καρποφορία. Και τουλάχιστον ένα μέρος από αυτά να το μοιραστεί με τους φτωχούς και με όσους είχαν ανάγκη τη βοήθειά του. Αυτός όμως είναι απολύτως εγωιστής. Σκέφτεται μόνο τον εαυτό του. Ούτε καν τους συγγενείς του. Και αντί να χαιρέται με όσα έχει προβληματίζεται τι θα τα κάνει. Και παίρνει την πιο εγωιστική και σκληρόκαρδη απόφαση. Να εξασφαλίσει το δικό του μέλλον, να περνάει καλά στην υπόλοιπη ζωή του τρώγοντας, πίνοντας και διασκεδάζοντας. Είχε ξεχάσει όμως κάτι που δεν έπρεπε να το ξεχάσει. Είχε ξεχάσει ότι είναι θνητός.

Την στιγμή εκείνη που έκανε αυτές τις σκέψεις του μίλησε ο Θεός και του είπε ότι εκείνη τη νύχτα επρόκειτο να πεθάνει. Και όλα αυτά θα έμεναν χωρίς κληρονόμους. Και το χειρότερο από όλα;



Ο ίδιος δεν θα μπορούσε να κληρονομήσει την αιώνια ζωή και η πόρτα του Παραδείσου θα ήταν κλειστή για αυτόν, γιατί ο νους του ήταν πάντα στους επίγειους θησαυρούς και όχι στους ουράνιους. Διάλεξε να ζήσει σαν να ήτανε αθάνατος ενώ δεν ήταν. Δεν τήρησε την εντολή του Θεού να αγαπάει τον πλησίον. Να τον συμπονά. Να γίνεται για εκείνον καλός Σαμαρείτης.

Την εβδομάδα αυτή, αδελφοί μου, θα γιορτάσουμε την ημέρα των Ευχαριστιών. Και επίσης πορευόμαστε προς τη γιορτή της Γέννησης του Χριστού μας. Είναι αυτές τις ημέρες που γινόμαστε συνήθως πιο γενναιόδωροι. Είναι οπωσδήποτε καλές αφορμές να ευχαριστούμε τον Θεό για όλα όσα μας έχει χαρίσει. Να εκφράσουμε την ευγνωμοσύνη μας. Και ο καλύτερος τρόπος ευχαριστίας, ύστερα από τη συμμετοχή μας στη Θεία Ευχαριστία, που είναι η κορυφαία μορφή και ο σπουδαιότερος τρόπος έκφρασης ευχαριστίας στον Θεό, είναι να κοιτάζουμε με ευσπλαχνία και αγάπη τον συνάνθρωπο. Να τον αγκαλιάσουμε. Να μοιραστούμε μαζί του όσα μας λείει η καρδιά μας ότι μπορούμε να μοιραστούμε. Αν έχουμε δύο χιτώνες να δώσουμε τον ένα, όπως είπε ο Χριστός.

Άλλωστε μπορεί μια μέρα και εμείς να βρεθούμε στη θέση του φτωχού που χρειάζεται βοήθεια. Όπως τονίζει ένας πολύ όμορφος ύμνος της εκκλησίας μας "πλούσιοι έπτώχευσαν και έπεινασαν, οί δὲ ἐκζητούντες τὸν Κύριον οὐκ ἐλαττωθήσονται παντός ἀγαθοῦ".

Ας κρατήσουμε ως πολύτιμο και ακριβό δίδαγμα από τη σημερινή παραβολή την προτροπή του Χριστού μας, αντί να θησαυρίζουμε για τον εαυτό μας, ας φροντίζουμε να πλουτίζουμε στους ουρανούς με αγάπη και έλεος προς τον πλησίον. Αμήν.

Με αφορμή την «Ημέρα των Ευχαριστιών» αφού πρώτα συζητήσαμε μέσα στην τάξη το θέμα, ζήτησα από τα παιδιά να μου γράψουν σε 2 γραμμές σε ποιον θα ήθελαν να πουν ευχαριστώ και γιατί.
Οι απαντήσεις τους ακολουθούν.



Γ' τάξη

«Ευχαριστώ τον Χριστούλη γιατί μου έδωσε τη ζωή» Μαρίνα Λ.
«Ευχαριστώ που είμαι υγιής, ευχαριστώ τους γονείς που με προσέχουν και τους νονούς μου γιατί αν συμβεί ποτέ κάτι στους γονείς μου θα είναι εκεί για εμένα» Μαρία Κ.
«Ευχαριστώ για τη μαμά μου και τον μπαμπά μου γιατί με αγαπάνε» Μαρινάσια Κ.
«Ευχαριστώ για την οικογένεια μου, την αδερφή μου και την νονά μου, είναι όλοι καλοί και αστείοι» Νικήτας Κ.
«Ευχαριστώ για τον αδερφό μου γιατί με φροντίζει» Αναστάσης Ντ.
«Ευχαριστώ για την οικογένεια μου και τους φίλους μου, όπως ο Παναγιώτης και ο Νικήτας» Δημήτρης Φ.
«Ευχαριστώ τη μαμά μου και τον μπαμπά μου που κάνουν πολλά πράγματα για εμένα και μου προσφέρουν φαγητό» Χρυσουλα Ν.
«Ευχαριστώ για την τροφή που έχω και που είμαι ζωντανός» Γιάννης Κ.
«Ευχαριστώ την οικογένεια μου γιατί με κάνουν χαρούμενο και με αγαπάνε» Παναγιώτης Γ.
«Θα έλεγα ευχαριστώ στην οικογένεια μου επειδή με προσέχουν» Λεωνίδας Τσου.
«Θα έλεγα ευχαριστώ σε εμένα γιατί είμαι καλή, στην Μαρία γιατί είναι καλή και στην Βασιλεία γιατί είναι καλή» Χρυσοβαλάντου Γ.
«Είμαι ευγνώμων για την οικογένεια μου επειδή κάποια παιδιά δεν έχουν οικογένεια. Κάποια παιδιά έχουν υιοθετηθεί ή έχουν διωχθεί και δεν έχουν το δικό τους σπίτι. Δεν έχουν φαγητό ή νερό. Είμαι ευγνώμων λοιπόν και για το φαγητό και το νερό που έχω» Βασιλεία Ι.
«Θα ήθελα να ευχαριστήσω τους γονείς μου για όλα τα ταξίδια και τις εκδρομές που πηγαίνουμε και την αδερφή μου που είναι από τις καλύτερες μου φίλες» Λεωνίδας Τσα.

Δ' τάξη

«Ευχαριστώ τη μαμά μου και τον μπαμπά μου για το σπίτι και το φαγητό που μου προσφέρουν» Μελίνα Π.
«Ευχαριστώ τη μαμά μου και τον μπαμπά μου που με φροντίζουν» Αντώνης Ι.
«Θέλω να πω ευχαριστώ στην μαμά μου και στον μπαμπά μου γιατί μας φροντίζουν» Γιώργης Ι.
«Είμαι ευγνώμων για τη μαμά μου και τον μπαμπά μου γιατί μου δίνουν όλα όσα πρέπει να μάθω» Φραγκίσκος Κ.

Είναι πολύ σημαντικό να ακούμε όσα έχουν να μας πουν τα παιδιά και να τα λαμβάνουμε σοβαρά υπόψη. Ως γονείς αλλά και ως εκπαιδευτικοί προσπαθούμε να δώσουμε στα παιδιά μας ένα όμορφο περιβάλλον μέσα στο οποίο το καθένα από αυτά να μπορεί να ανθίσει μοναδικά και ξεχωριστά!
Το «Ευχαριστώ» τους είναι το πιο σπουδαίο από όλα τα ευχαριστώ του κόσμου.

Παρασκευή Κοτσάτου
Η δασκάλα της Γ' και Δ' Τάξης

On the occasion of “Thanksgiving Day”, after first discussing the topic in class, I asked the children to write me in 2 lines who they would like to say thank you to and why. Their answers follow.



3rd Grade

“I thank Christoulis for giving me life” Marina L.

“Thank you for being healthy, thank you to my parents for taking care of me and my godparents because if something ever happens to my parents they will be there for me” Maria K.

“Thank you for my mom and dad because they love me” Marinasia K.

“Thanks for my family, my sister and my godmother, they are all nice and funny” Nikitas K.

“Thank you for my brother because he takes care of me” Anastasis D.

“Thank you for my family and my friends, like Panagiotis and Nikitas” Dimitris F.

“Thank you to my mom and dad who do many things for me and offer me food” Chrysoula N.

“Thank you for the food I have and for being alive” Yiannis K.

“I thank my family because they make me happy and love me” Panagiotis G.

“I would say thank you to my family for taking care of me” Leonidas Tsou.

“I would say thank you to me because I am good, to Maria because she is good and to Basilia because she is good” Chrysovalantou G.

“I’m thankful for my family because some kids don’t have family. Some children have been adopted or persecuted and do not have a home of their own. They have no food or water. So I am grateful for the food and what water I have” Vasilias I.

“I would like to thank my parents for all the trips and excursions we go on and my sister who is one of my best friends” Leonidas Tsou.

4th Grade

“Thank you to my mom and dad for the house and the food they offer me” Melina P.

“Thank you to my mom and dad for taking care of me” Antonis I.

“I want to say thank you to my mom and dad because they take care of us” Giorgis I.

“I am thankful for my mom and dad because they give me everything I need to learn” Francis K.

It is very important to listen to what children have to say and take them seriously. As parents and as educators we try to give our children a beautiful environment in which each of them can flourish uniquely and individually!

Their “Thank you” is the greatest of all thanks in the world.

Paraskevi Kotsatou

Teacher of 3rd and 4th Grade

GREEK SCHOOL



Congratulations to all St. Nicholas Greek School students for the amazing OXI Day Celebration.

Συγχαρητήρια στα παιδιά του Ελληνικού μας σχολείου για την τόσο όμορφη γιορτή που παρουσίασαν, τιμώντας την εθνική επέτειο της 28ης Οκτωβρίου.

Ζήτω η 28η Οκτωβρίου! Ζήτω η Ελλάδα!

MEMORIALS

In memory of John N. Polites
Mrs. Margo Smyrnioudis Holden

In memory of Julie Tsakalos
Christ Angelopoulos
Olga and Chuck Paterakis

In memory of Maria Kornias
Christ Angelopoulos
Christina Bachman

In memory of Georgia Kepreos
Christ Angelopoulos
Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Theoharis

In memory of Markella Forakis
Christ Angelopoulos
Ms. Despina Cornias

*In memory of Lambros
and Athina Neofitou*
Margo Neofitou Kouliatsos

In memory of Anna Aravidis
Mr. and Mrs. George Perdikakis

In memory of George Katsimpiris
Nichola Katsimpiris-Wallace and Family

In memory of Alexios and Maria Skinas
Vasiliki and Alexios Shinas

*In memory of George and
Evangeline Soulikas*
Olga and Chuck Paterakis

*In memory of Andrew
and Andy Tsakalos*
Olga and Chuck Paterakis



PHILOPTOCHOS

We pray that everyone had a safe and healthy Thanksgiving!

In November we celebrated our Patron Saints Kosmas and Damian with dinner and guest speaker Mrs. Sophia Vasilios. Thank you, Sophia, showing that with God and Faith one can have the courage and strength to cope with what every life brings our way. You were an inspiration to all. Thank you to everyone who attended and those that prepared and donated towards the evening's dinner.

We would like to thank everyone for the donations of nonperishable items which were donated to the Johns Hopkins Bayview Food Pantry. Philoptochos also helped six families with Thanksgiving meals and will be doing the same for Christmas. If you know of any families that are in need, please contact Mrs. Evagelia Saliaris 410-592-8345 or Mrs. Nora Kefalas 410-979-6656. The identity of the families is strictly confidential. January 7th – 18th we will be collecting New Blankets, hats, scarfs, gloves, and socks. Please bring your donations to church!

Philoptochos along with the community will be hosting the reception for the Saint Nicholas Vespers and the Day of Saint Nicholas. We look forward to welcoming everyone as we celebrate our 70th Anniversary!

Join us for our annual Holiday Celebration on Monday, December 11th at The Greektown Square and Event Center 6:00 p.m. Donation \$35 includes Appetizers, Deserts/soft drinks / coffee. You can bring your own alcohol or wine. For tickets or information please contact Mrs. Yiota Kousantonis 410-979-8034 or Zoe Perdikakis 410-908-1556.

Our next General meeting will be held on Monday, December 4th at 6:00 p.m. in the large social hall of the church. Cocktails and Appetizers will be served.

Wishing everyone a Blessed and Merry Christmas! Peter 1:8-9 "Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls."

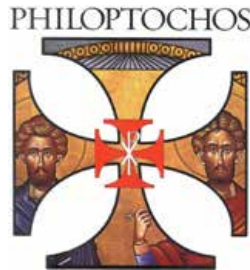
DONATIONS:

*Mrs. Eleni Pikounis in memory of her husband Manoli Pikounis
Mrs. Despina Glykiades in memory of her husband John Glykiades
May their memory be eternal!*

Mrs. Joanna Forakis for Philoptochos Missions

Προσευχόμαστε όλοι να είχατε μια ασφαλή και υγιή Ημέρα των Ευχαριστιών!

Τον Νοέμβριο εορτάσαμε τους Πολιούχους μας Κοσμά και Δαμιανό με δείπνο και προσκεκλημένη ομιλήτρια την κ. Σοφία Βασιλείου. Ευχαριστούμε Σοφία, που δείχνεις ότι με τον Θεό και την Πίστη μπορεί κανείς να έχει το θάρρος και τη δύναμη να ανταπεξέλθει σε αυτό που κάθε ζωή μας φέρνει στο δρόμο μας. Ήσουν έμπνευση για όλους. Ευχαριστούμε όλους όσους παρευρέθηκαν και όσους ετοίμασαν και πρόσφεραν για το δείπνο της βραδιάς.



Θα θέλαμε να ευχαριστήσουμε όλους για τις δωρεές μη ευπαθών ειδών που δωρίστηκαν στο Johns Hopkins Bayview Food Pantry. Η Φιλόπτωχος βοήθησε επίσης έξι οικογένειες στα γεύματα των Ευχαριστιών και θα κάνει το ίδιο και για τα Χριστούγεννα. Εάν γνωρίζετε κάποιες οικογένειες

που έχουν ανάγκη, επικοινωνήστε με την κα Ευαγγελία Σαλιάρη 410-592-8345 ή την κα Νόρα Κεφάλα 410-979-6656. Η ταυτότητα των οικογενειών είναι αυστηρά εμπιστευτική. Από 7 έως 18 Ιανουαρίου θα συλλέξουμε Νέες Κουβέρτες, καπέλα, κασκόλ, γάντια και κάλτσες. Παρακαλούμε να φέρετε τις δωρεές σας στην εκκλησία!

Η Φιλόπτωχος μαζί με την κοινότητα θα παραθέσει την δεξίωση για τον Εσπερινό του Αγίου Νικολάου και την εορτή του Αγίου Νικολάου. Ανυπομονούμε να καλωσορίσουμε όλους καθώς γιορτάζουμε την 70η επέτειό μας!

Ελάτε μαζί μας στον ετήσιο εορτασμό των διακοπών μας τη Δευτέρα 11 Δεκεμβρίου στην πλατεία The Greektown και στο Event Center στις 6:00 μ.μ. Η δωρεά \$35 θα περιλαμβάνει ορεκτικά, επιδόρπια/αναψυκτικά/καφέ. Μπορείτε να φέρετε το δικό σας αλκοόλ ή κρασί. Για εισιτήρια ή πληροφορίες επικοινωνήστε με την κα Πώτα Κουσαντώνη 410-979-8034 ή την κα Ζωή Περδικάκη 410-908-1556.

Η επόμενη Γενική μας Συνέλευση θα πραγματοποιηθεί τη Δευτέρα 4 Δεκεμβρίου στις 6:00 μ.μ. στη μεγάλη Κοινοτική Αίθουσα της Εκκλησίας. Θα προσφερθούν κοκτέιλ και ορεκτικά.

Ευχόμαστε σε όλους Ευλογημένα και Καλά Χριστούγεννα! Πέτρου 1:8-9 «Αν και δεν τον έχετε δει, τον αγαπάτε. Αν και δεν τον βλέπετε τώρα, πιστεύετε σε αυτόν και χαίρεστε με χαρά ανέκφραστη και γεμάτη δόξα, αποκτώντας το αποτέλεσμα της πίστης σας, τη σωτηρία των ψυχών σας».

ΔΩΡΕΕΣ:

**Η κυρία Ελένη Πικούνη στη μνήμη του συζύγου της,
Μανώλη Πικούνη
Η κυρία Δέσποινα Γλυκιάδη στη μνήμη του συζύγου της,
Γιάννη Γλυκιάδη
Ας είναι αιωνία η μνήμη τους!**

Η κ. Ιωάννα Φοράκη για τις Αποστολές της Φιλοπτώχου.



NOW HIRING TEACHERS AND AIDES!

ST. NICHOLAS BILINGUAL EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

Hello BEEC Friends and Families,

The Saint Nicholas Bilingual Early Education Center provides a safe, nurturing, home away from home learning center. We accept children from 6 weeks till 5 years of age. **BEEC is hiring part-time and full-time aides to assist our teachers at the Center.** If you or anyone you know is interested, please call the Center at 410-633-5020 extension 4 or message us on Facebook.

We hosted our annual Thanksgiving Potluck for our BEEC families in Plateia. The families bring and present food from their own culture. It is nice to taste food from different nationalities.

Also, the Center is collecting new, unwrapped toys to be donated to Toys for Tots. If you would like to donate, please drop your donations off at the Center. The BEEC children are very busy this month. We are preparing for the Christmas celebration. Our little ones are working diligently to learn Christmas songs for our Christmas Program. And this month would not be completed without a visit from Santa to take pictures and give gifts to the students!

All of us at the BEEC want to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!

Michelle Abuel
Director of BEEC



Διγλωσσος Βρεφονηπιακός Σταθμός Αγίου Νικολάου,

Ο Διγλωσσος Βρεφονηπιακός Σταθμός Αγίου Νικολάου παρέχει ένα ασφαλές περιβάλλον, ένα σπίτι μακριά από το σπίτι, ένα σπίτι μάθησης. Δεχόμαστε παιδιά ηλικίας 6 εβδομάδων έως 5 ετών. **Ο σταθμός μας ψάχνει να προσλάβει βοηθούς δασκάλων μερικής και πλήρους απασχόλησης.** Αν έχετε ερωτήσεις ή χρειάζοσαστε περισσότερες πληροφορίες, επικοινωνήστε με το σταθμό μας στο τηλέφωνο 410-633-5020, γραμμή 4 ή στείλτε μας μήνυμα στο Facebook.

Φιλοξενήσαμε την ετήσια Ημέρα των Ευχαριστιών για τις οικογένειές μας του σταθμού μας στην Πλατεία. Οι οικογένειες έφεραν και παρουσίασαν φαγητά από τη δική τους κουλτούρα. Είναι ωραίο που δοκιμάσαμε φαγητά από διαφορετικές εθνικότητες. Το Δεκέμβριο, ο σταθμός θα διοργανώσει συλλογή καινούργιων, αχρησιμοποίητων παιχνιδιών, για να διατεθούν προς δωρεά στον οργανισμό Toys for

Tots. Αν επιθυμείτε να δωρίσετε, παρακαλείστε να αφήσετε τις δωρεές σας στο σταθμό.

Οι μαθητές και το προσωπικό μας ετοιμάζονται επίσης για τη γιορτή των Χριστουγέννων, δουλεύοντας να προετοιμάσουν το Χριστουγεννιάτικο Πρόγραμμα. Φυσικά, η γιορτή των Χριστουγέννων δε θα ήταν επιτυχής, χωρίς την επίσκεψη του Άγιου Βασίλη για να βγάλει φωτογραφίες και να μοιράσει δώρα στα παιδιά! **Από την οικογένεια του Διγλωσσου Βρεφονηπιακού Σταθμού του Αγίου Νικολάου θα θέλαμε να σας ευχηθούμε Καλά Χριστούγεννα και Ευτυχισμένο το Καινούργιο Έτος.**

Michelle Abuel
Υποδιευθύντρια του BEEC





St. Nicholas eGiving Stewardship

One Less Thing
to think about



eGiving Benefits

- Easy set up
- One-time/recurring payment options
- Confidential & secure
- Track easily for tax purposes

How it Works

- Go to: stnicholasmd.org/give
- Select fund(s)
- Create your profile
- Select amount, payment method & frequency
- Complete donation
- THAT'S IT! Simple.

Thank you for your generosity!

Give yourself *One Less Thing* to think about
stnicholasmd.org/give

Or download the mobile app!

VANCO



MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE CARD ΚΑΡΤΑ ΕΘΕΛΟΝΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΣΦΟΡΑΣ

“WELL DONE GOOD & FAITHFUL SERVANT”

“ΕΥ, ΔΟΥΛΕ ΑΓΑΘΕ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΕ”

2024 SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH CONFIDENTIAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CARD
2024 ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΗ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ –ΚΑΡΤΑ ΑΠΟΡΡΗΤΗΣ ΕΘΕΛΟΝΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΣΦΟΡΑΣ ΜΕΛΩΝ

In gratitude for God's blessings I/we make the following commitment to the ministries of St. Nicholas Church:
Σαν έκφραση ευγνωμοσύνης μου για τις ευλογίες που έχω λάβει από τον Θεό, δεσμεύομαι με την ακόλουθη οικονομική και εθελοντική μου προσφορά προς την Εκκλησία του Αγίου Νικολάου:

\$ _____ (Weekly / Monthly / Quarterly / Yearly)
\$ _____ (Εβδομαδιαίως / Μηνιαίως / Ανά Τρίμηνο / Ετησίως)

TOTAL ANNUAL PLEDGE FOR 2024 :\$ _____
Συνολικό ποσό προσφοράς για το 2024 :\$ _____

Come and See God work through your talents, skills, and experience, as well as your financial support.
Your offering to Christ and His Church can do as much as you empower it to do.

We give to Christ and His Church not according to our means but according to our love for Him.
Γίνετε μάρτυρες του έργου του Θεού! Δώστε από το ταλέντο με το οποίο σας έχει προικίσει, με τις ικανότητες, τις εμπειρίες, την οικονομική σας ευχέρεια. Η προσφορά μας στον Χριστό και την Εκκλησία Του ας βασιστεί στην αγάπη μας προς Αυτόν, όχι στην οικονομική μας δυνατότητα.

Planned Giving _____ Please send me information on making a planned gift to the Church.
Δωρεά που σχεδιάζω _____ Παρακαλώ στείλτε μου πληροφορίες σχετικά με τον τρόπο που μπορώ να δωρίσω.

Print Full Name/ Γράψτε με κεφαλαία γράμματα το επίθετό σας

Signature/ Υπογραφή

Date/ Ημερομηνία

| | |
|---|---|
| Name / Όνομα | Date of Birth / Ημερομ. Γεννήσεως |
| Name of Spouse / Όνομα συζύγου | Date of Birth / Ημερομ. Γεννήσεως |
| Occupation / Επάγγελμα | |
| Occupation / Επάγγελμα (Spouse) | |
| Street Address / Πλεόθυση | |
| City / πόλη | Zip Code / ταχ. τομέας |
| Home Phone / Σταθερό τηλέφωνο σπιτιού | |
| Mobile Phone / Κινητό τηλέφωνο | Mobile Phone / Κινητό τηλέφωνο (Spouse) |
| Email Address / Ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση | |
| Email Address of Spouse / Ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση συζύγου | |
| Communication Preferences / Προτιμήσεις επικοινωνίας | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mail / Ταχυδρομείο <input type="checkbox"/> Email / Ηλεκτρονική <input type="checkbox"/> Text / Μήνυμα | |
| Dependent Children's Names and Birthdates / Ονόματα παιδιών και ημερομηνία γεννήσεώς τους | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Introducing Auto Pay Set It and Forget It!

Take the work out of giving! Set up automatic offerings and pledges right from your computer or tablet that will seamlessly reoccur every week, month, quarter, or year.

If you would like to give electronically, visit our website www.stnicholasmd.org/give or download the GivePlus mobile app. If you have any questions, contact the church office at 410-633-5020.



**ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΗ ΣΤΟΝ
ΑΥΤΟΜΑΤΟ ΤΡΟΠΟ
ΠΛΗΡΩΜΗΣ
ΡΥΘΜΙΣΤΕ ΤΟ ΚΑΙ ...
ΞΕΧΑΣΤΕ ΤΟ!**

Δεν χρειάζεται να θυμάστε να στείλετε τη προσφορά σας. Ρυθμίστε την αυτόματη δωρεά και την εθελοντική σας προσφορά απευθείας από τον υπολογιστή σας ή το tablet σας που θα επαναλαμβάνεται ανελλιπώς κάθε εβδομάδα, μήνα τριμήνο ή έτος.

Εάν επιθυμείτε να στείλετε τη δωρεά σας ηλεκτρονικά, επισκεφθείτε την ιστοσελίδα μας www.stnicholasmd.org/give ή κατεβάστε την εφαρμογή GivePlus mobile. Εάν έχετε απορίες, επικοινωνήστε με το Γραφείο της Εκκλησίας στο τηλέφωνο 410-633-5020.

SPONSOR A COFFEE HOUR

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. Nicholas Church.

Please call the office at **410-633-5020** to schedule.



Thank you for your support!



HELP US GROW THROUGH E-GIVING



It's through your contributions that we're able to carry on important work both spiritually and in our community.

Electronic giving is a convenient, easy way to support St. Nicholas.

By giving electronically, you can:

- Give anywhere, anytime from your computer, smartphone or tablet.
- Donate easily for special projects.
- Set up recurring offerings and pledges and never worry about bringing your checkbook or cash again.

Show your support and try one of our e-Giving options. If you would like to give electronically, visit our website www.stnicholasmd.org or download the GivePlus mobile app.

Thank you for all you do to support our St. Nicholas family throughout the year!



NOTICE:

All organizations must review their upcoming events with Paraskevi Kotsatou (410-633-5020) who will add the event to the official church calendar on the bulletin board across from Father Georgios' office.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Sunday Coffee Hour
Sponsored by
St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church



Coffee & Assorted Cookies

Includes setup, cleanup, paper goods
\$200

Coffee Service Only

Includes setup, cleanup, paper goods
\$120

Fruit Tray

\$40

Spanakopita

100 pieces
\$75

Tyropita

100 pieces
\$75

Tray of Cheese, Olives & Crackers

\$100

Sandwiches

Tuna, Shrimp or Chicken
\$2 per piece



Greektown Square & Event Center

700 S. Quail Street | Baltimore, MD 21224

tel: 410-633-5020 tel: 410-633-3131 | fax: 410-631-2706

email: info@greektownsquare.com



Greek Dishes For Pick Up
Sponsored by
St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

Pre-orders required Wednesday prior | Cooked or frozen

Dolmades

1/2 Tray (50 pieces)

\$50

Spanakopites

35 square pieces

\$40

Tiropites

35 square pieces

\$40

Pastitsio

1/2 Tray

\$55

Mousaka

1/2 Tray

\$60

Lamb Shank w/ Orzo

5 Orders

\$100



Greektown Square & Event Center

700 S. Quail Street | Baltimore, MD 21224

tel: 410-633-5020 tel: 410-633-3131 | fax: 410-631-2706

email: info@greektownsquare.com

Makaria Menu

Sponsored by

St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

Appetizer Choices

Cheese Pies (*included*)
Spinach Pies (*included*)
Fried Calamari (*add \$2.00pp*)

Choices of salad (1)

Garden Salad, Greek Salad, Village Salad, Caesar Salad

Choices of Entree

Choice of two sides, Roll & Butter (*included*)

31pp

Flounder (broiled/fried)
Shrimp Creole
Cod Fish (broiled/fried)

39pp

Two (2) Jumbo Lump Crab Cakes
Choice of Fish and One (1) Jumbo Lump Crab Cake

Sides (2 choices)

Greek Style Lemon Potatoes, Roasted Red Skin Potatoes, Kritharakie(orzo),
white rice, fresh cut vegetables, string beans Greek style

Beverages (items included)

Red or White Wine, Coffee and Tea, Sodas, Water
Also available - Paximadia

Bar Options

Mixed Drinks \$6
Domestic Beer \$6
Imported Beer \$6
Mixed Drinks and Beer Available at Per Drink Charge



Greektown Square & Event Center

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email: info@greektownsquare.com



COMMUNITY & CHRISTMAS CARD Poinsettias for the Church

Please help us to decorate our beautiful church for the upcoming Christmas season by donating **\$25.00** toward the purchase of a poinsettia plant.

Your family is also invited to join the Community Christmas Card for a donation of **\$25.00**. Please specify your choice and enclose your donation with this form.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Community Christmas Card (# _____) \$ _____ *Deadline 12/6*

Please indicate how you wish your family name to appear on the Christmas card _____

Poinsettias (# _____) \$ _____ *Deadline 12/18*



**Thank you for
your support!**

EVENTS



THE UNITED CHIAN
SOCIETIES OF BALTIMORE

HOLIDAY BUS TRIP TO ATLANTIC CITY

INCLUDING CIRQUE MUSICA HOLIDAY
WONDERLAND SHOW

Sunday, December 10, 2023

Cost: \$110/person incl. bus, ticket to show &
\$15 credit from Tropicana Casino

Reservation and payment must be made by Nov. 5, 2023 - no refunds

Meeting time: 8:00AM at 701 Ponca St. (Plateia)

Departure: 8:30AM Return: 8:30 PM

For tickets and
information, contact:

Vasso Koumoudis: 443-844-0802
Angela Sfakianoudis: 410-812-3287



RHODIAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND
PRESENTS ITS ANNUAL

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Holiday Crafts & More

Saturday December 16, 2023
from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
at
St. Nicholas Large Social Hall
520 South Ponca Street

Children will enjoy breakfast,
a craft and a visit with Santa.
Free to Children up to age 12.

Sponsored by Rhodian Society of Maryland
"Diagoras"

RSVP to diagoras3@msn.com



Christmas Cheer

Ladies Philoptochos Society of Saint Nicholas

Invites you to the

"Annual Christmas Cheer"

When: December 11, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Where: Greentown Square & Event Center

700 S Quail St. Baltimore, MD 21224

Donation: \$35.00

Includes: Appetizers, desserts, soft drinks and coffee

Bring your own alcohol

All Proceeds to Benefit Philoptochos Missions

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METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY



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Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey*

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**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREE
LIGHTING &
OPEN HOUSE**

on

**Tuesday, December 12, 2023
6:00 – 9:00pm**

*At the
Metropolis Headquarters
215 E. Grove Street
Westfield, NJ 07090*

Greektown Square & Event Center

Presents

Sunday Feb 11th

@ 6:30pm EST

(doors open at 5:30pm)



SUPER BOWL

To book a table text Sofia 240.375.5464 or Eva 717.969.0016

STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

ST. NICHOLAS STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023 (11-1-2022 – 10-31-2023)

PLEDGED: \$98,000.00 RECEIVED: \$98,805.00 RECEIVED NOT-PLEDGED: \$100,220.83

TOTAL FISCAL YEAR RECEIVED: \$199,025.83 # PLEDGES: 402 Contributors

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Agapios, Diamantis | Cornias, Despina | Giakoumakis, Marianna | Karoutsos, George |
| Agapios, Maria | Cornias, Harry | Giannas, Stylianos | Kastanakis, Evangelia |
| Ahepa Lord Baltimore #364 | Cornias, Kalliopi | Giorgakis, Maria | Kastanakis, Michael |
| Akalestos, Emmanuel | Cornias, Larry | Gluszcz, Christine | Kastellorizios, Konstantinos |
| Alafassos, Spiro | Cornias, Mark | Glykiadis, Despina | Katsaros, Emanuel |
| Alexandrou, John | Cornias, Michael | Glykiadis, Konstantinos | Katsaros, Michael |
| Alexandrou, Niki | Cornias, Nicholas | Glytsis, Filippou | Katsas, Stavros |
| Alourdas, Kiriaki | Cossis, Amalia | Gyftopoulos, Sofia | Katsimpiris Wallace, Nichola |
| Anastasiades, Demos | Curtis, John | Halikias, Anastasia | Katsoulis, Athanasios |
| Angelopoulos, Chris | Dardamanis, Eva | Halikias, Anna | Kattavenos, Michael |
| Angelos, Irene | Dendrinis, Evangelia | Halkias, Fotini | Kazos, Maria |
| Angelos, John | Diacogiannis, Michael | Handakas, Paul | Kefalas, Mike |
| Apesos, Antigoni | Diakantonis, Nickolaos | Harris, Athena | Kimos, James |
| Apostolou, Dimitrios | Dimas, Dena | Hatziefthimiou, Anastasia | Klosteridis, Elaine |
| Aravidis, Nickolas | Diniotis, Anastasia | Hatzigeorgalis, Antonios | Klosteridis, Michael |
| Argetakis, Andronikos | Douskas, Dimitra | Hatzigeorgalis, Nicholaos | Klosteridis, Paraskevi |
| Argirakis, Pantelis | Douskas, Konstantinos | Hazarides, Melli | Kolaitis, Dimitrios |
| Argiropoulos, William | Douskas, Vasiliki | Hiotis, Michael | Koliadis, Emmanuel |
| Argyarakis, Despina | Efthimiou, Spiros | Home, Funeral | Kolotos, Dora |
| Athanasidou, Antonios | Eleftheriou, John | Houvardas, Minas | Konstantinou, John |
| Athos, Janet | Eliopoulos, Anna | Ieromonahos, Dimitrios | Konstantopoulos, Alexander |
| Atsalis, Gus | Eliou, Ernest | Ieromonahos, Stamatia | Kontogeorgakis, Christos |
| Atsidis, Ioannis | Fakas, James | Iliadis, Mary | Kornias, George |
| Avgerinos, Despina | Fakas, Vasilios | Johns, Aspasia | Korologos, Louis |
| Avgerinos, Phaedra | Filipidis, Effie | Kafouros, Demetrios | Korologos, Tsambika |
| Avgerinos, Sophia | Filipidis, Nicholas | Kafouros, Zaharoula | Kosmas, Demetrios |
| Bakalis, John | Filippakis, Filippou | Kaikis, Clemis | Kostakis, George |
| Balatsoukas, Konstantina | Filippou, Maria | Kaitis, Angela | Kostakis, Lemonia |
| Basil, George | Foniadakis, Chrisoula | Kalambihis, Maria | Kostas, Eleni |
| Benetos, Ioannis | Forakis, George | Kaliakoudas, Sofia | Kostos, John |
| Bisbikis, Helen | Forakis, Michael | Kaminaris, Demetrios | Kotzias, Chris |
| Bisbikis, Pete | Forakis, Stamati | Kamos, Anthie | Koukides, Georgios |
| Bisiotis, Dimitrios | Fotinos, Gerasimos | Kapetanakos, Elias | Koukides, Harry |
| Black, Mark | Fotinos, James | Kapetanakos, Soulla | Koukides, John |
| Bonolis, Catherine | Fotinos, Michael | Kaputsos, Marshall | Koukides, Konstantinos |
| Bouyoukas, John | Fotopoulos, Georgia | Kaputsos, Sylvia | Koulatsos, Anastasia |
| Britzolakis, Georgios | Foukas, Pavlos | Karabelas, Ioanna | Koumoudis, Vasiliki |
| Bunce, Chrisovalandou | Frangakis, Katherine | Karabelas, Pete | Kouroupis, Steve |
| Cardiges, Nicholas | Frangakis, Sofoula | Karagiannis, Carla | Kourtesis, Adrienne |
| Chagetas, Angela | Frangos, John | Karagiannis, Maria | Koutelis, Adamantios |
| Chalkias, Ioannis | Friedlander, Amy | Karagiannopoulos, Susan | Koutsantonis, Demetrios |
| Charalambopoulos, Aspasia | Galiatsatos, Gerasimos | Karamanlidis, Kyriakos | Koutsantonis, John |
| Charalambopoulos, Yianni | Gavrilis, John | Karamihalis, Eleftheria | Koutsouris, Stylianos |
| Chrissomallis, Metaxia | Gazonas, George | Karamihalis, George | Kovaleski, Timothy |
| Chrissomallis, Sophie | Georgakakou, Vasiliki | Karamihalis, Theologos | Kovios, Pete |
| Christ, Philip | Georgalas, Michael | Karanikolis, Nikos | Kron, Christopher |
| Christakou, Stavroula | Georgas, George | Kardiasmenos, Metaxia | Lagadinos, Katerina |
| Cornias, Arezina | Georgas, Savas | Karlos, Peter | Laiakis, Dimitrios |

STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

Lallas, Eva
 Lambrow, Stephanie
 Larentzos, James
 Laskaridis, Nikolaos
 Lentis, Minas
 Lerakis, Dimitra
 Lerakis, Marianna
 Lericos, Irene
 Likakis, Pericles
 Loizou, Chris
 Lykos, Fotis
 Makris, John
 Makris Colandrea, Anna
 Manolitsis, Ismini
 Manousakis, Evaggelos
 Maragos, Petros
 Matsangos, Argyro
 Matthews, Ann
 Maurakis, James
 Mavromoustakos, Eleftherios
 Mavromoustakos, George
 Mavronis, Michael
 Mavronis, Nicholas
 Mavroulis, Alexandros
 Mavroulis, Eva
 Mavroulis, Photis
 Mayer, Francis
 Melissaratos, Aristides
 Micklos, Christine
 Mihail, Nikolaos
 Miller, Mary
 Millett, Earl
 Millon, Edwards
 Milonas, Kimon
 Mimaros, Stavros
 Minadakis, Antonios
 Minas, Rose
 Mitchem, Jos
 Mochan, Daniel
 Moniodis, Flora
 Moniodis, Michael
 Moskonas, Vasiliki
 Moskos, Thomas
 Myaris, John
 Nezis, Nicholas
 Nicolarakis, George
 Nikoletos, Anna
 Nistazos, George
 Nistazos, Nickolas
 Nychis, George
 Nychis, Vasilios
 O'Drudy, Tricia
 Ohno, Maria
 Oikonomou, Fr. Georgios

Olympian, Olympos
 Orfanidis, Vasilias
 Orfanos, Anthony
 Orfanos, Michael
 Palas, Katina
 Panagodimos, Panagiotis
 Pandelidis, Demetrios
 Pandelidis, Elissavet
 Pantelides, Gabriel
 Pantoulis, Nancy
 Papadimitriou, George
 Papadopoulou, Anastasios
 Papadopoulou, Efstathios
 Papadopoulou, Haralassos
 Papalexopoulos, Christianna
 Papatthakis, Matthew
 Papavasiliou, Virginia
 Paragios, Popi
 Paralis, Kon/Nos
 Paros, Maria
 Parthemos, Angelika
 Parthemos, Kaliop
 Pasiak, Vicky Mouhtouris
 Pateris, John
 Pateris, Nicanor
 Patras, Stephen
 Peach, Antonia
 Pearce, Anthony
 Pelekakis, Nicole
 Philippou, Kalliopi
 Philippou, Philip
 Pikounis, Adrew
 Pikounis, Eleni
 Pikounis, George
 Pikounis, John
 Pikounis, Kalliop
 Polikandriotis, Nicholas
 Politis, Minas
 Polychronis, Aristides
 Polychronis, Vasilias
 Posluszny, Daphne
 Posluszny, Jeffrey
 Poulimenakos, Eleni
 Prassinak, Demetrios
 Prassinak, James
 Proakis, Koula
 Psichis, Dula
 Pulianak, Despina
 Qirjako, Bona
 Ramos, Demetri
 Ramos, Joanna
 Redmiles, Sophia
 Reese, Kalyopi
 Reppas, Paraskevi

Reppas, Soterios
 Richardson, Denise
 Rigopoulos, Mary Ann
 Roberts, Brian
 Rologas, Stavros
 Roros, Arieta
 Roros, Dimitrios
 Roros, John
 Roros, Kyriaki
 Roros, Stavros
 Roufas, Vasilis
 Roussos, Anthony
 Roxanis, Dean
 Roxanis, John
 Roxanis, Steven
 Sakelakakis, Stavroula
 Sakellis, Michael
 Sakpazis, Ioannis
 Saliaris, Panagiotis
 Salmeron, Alex
 Salpeas, Maria
 Samaras, Peter
 Sarioglou, Anastasia
 Sarioglou, Kerassa
 Sarlanis, Kiriako
 Sazaklis, Antonios
 Schaefer, Stephanie
 Serafis, Mary
 Sfakianoudis, John
 Sfakianoudis, Vasilis
 Sfriou, Antonia
 Sigambris, Irene
 Sisamis, Pothiti
 Siskos, Stefanos
 Skandalis, George
 Skevofilax, Emmanuel
 Skordalos, Vasilios
 Smoudianis, John
 Sotirchos, Elias
 Souranis, Maritsa
 Souranis, Michael
 Souranis, Paraskevi
 Souranis, Stanley
 Spenser, Erik
 Stakias, Michael
 Stakias, Stelios
 Stakias, Zdiera, Nitsa
 Stamatopoulos, Nicolas
 Stamidis, Angela
 Stamidis, Sophia
 Stavlas, Jerry
 Stavrakis, Demetrios
 Stewart, John
 Syropoulos, Amalia

Syropoulos, Nicholas
 Taratsides, Athena
 Taratsides, George
 Tasker, Kalomira
 Tetteris, Rhodea
 Themelis, John
 Themelis, Stella
 Theoharis, Emmanuel
 Triantafilos, Costas
 Trintis, Thorina
 Tripoulas, Marilena
 Tsakalakis, Julie
 Tsakalakis, Steven
 Tsakalakis, Jeanette
 Tsakalakis, Rose
 Tsampos, Christina
 Tsampos, George
 Tsampos, Michael
 Tsapakidis, Nikolaos
 Tsapakidis, Theoharis
 Tsapalakis, Stefanos
 Tsapalakis, Theodore
 Tse, Nektaria
 Tserkis, George
 Tsimilakis, Grigorios
 Tsirois, Evdokia
 United Chian Society Of
 Baltimore, ORGANIZATION
 Valilis, Evangelia
 Vasilakopoulos, Anastasia
 Vasilakopoulos, Irene
 Vasilarakis, Emmanuel
 Vasilarakis, Pantelis
 Vasiliadis, Antonios
 Vasiliadis, Minus
 Vasilios, Frank
 Vatakis, Tessie
 Vavakas, Kiki
 Venetis, Dimitrios
 Verenakis, Maria
 Verenakis, Michael
 Vizaniaris, Evangeline
 Vourgarakis, Harry
 Voxakis, Samantha
 Xouri, Sofia
 Yeakim, Angela
 Yianakis, Katina
 Yianakis, Steve
 Zervos, Christine

STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

ST. NICHOLAS STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024(11-1-2023 – 10-31-2023)

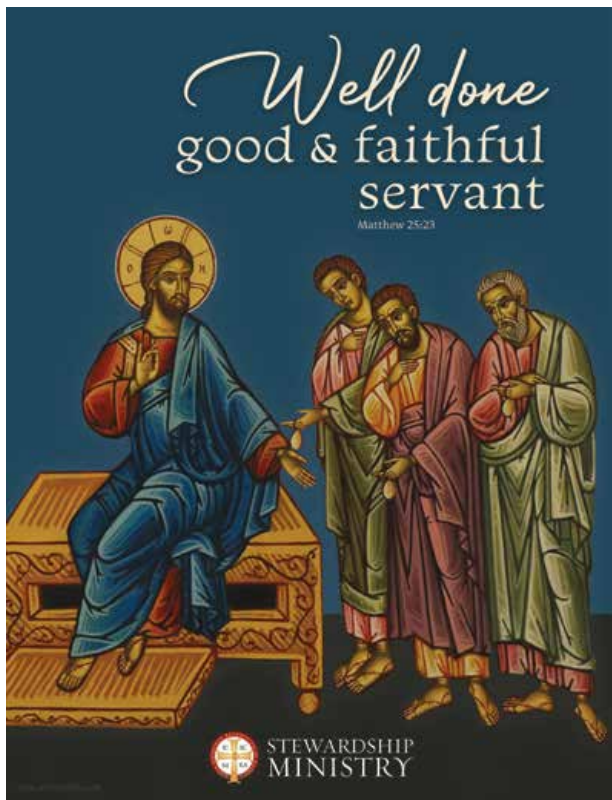
PLEGDED: \$22,770.00 RECEIVED: \$10,600.00 RECEIVED NOT-PLEGDED : \$5,477.00

TOTAL FISCAL YEAR RECEIVED: \$16,077.00 # PLEDGES: 44 Contributors

Angelos, John
Aravidis, Nickolas
Avgerinos, Phaedra
Bonolis, Catherine
Cardiges, Nicholas
Cossis, Amalia
Eliopoulos, Anna
Georgalas, Michael
Ieromonahos, Stamatia
Iliadis, Mary
Johns, Aspasia
Karavedas, Viola
Kastellorizios, Lisa
Kimos, James
Kourtesis, Adrienne

Kron, Christopher
Maragos, Petros
Mitchem, Jos
O'Drudy, Tricia
Ohno, Maria
Papadopoulos, Anastasios
Papalexopoulos, Christianna
Papavasiliou, Virginia
Paragios, Popi
Paterakis, Olga
Pateris, Nicanor
Petrinolis, Georgios
Polychronis, Aristides
Prassinis, James
Redmiles, Sophia

Salpeas, Maria
Serafis, Mary
Skandalis, George
Stamidis, Angela
Stewart, Rita
Tetteris, Rhodea
Themelis, John
Tsapakidis, Theoharis
Tsapalas, Stefanos
Tsapalas, Theodore
Tsipouras, Ilias
Tsironis, Evdokia
Valilis, Panagiotis
Vasilakopoulos, Irene



PLEASE REMEMBER
TO COMPLETE YOUR
STEWARDSHIP
PLEDGE FOR 2024!

FINANCIALS

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Church and Greek School January - October 2023

| | Actual | Budget | over (under) Budget |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Income | | | |
| 4000 Stewardship | 160,785.83 | 168,710.00 | (7,924.17) |
| 4010 Greek School Registration | 56,258.25 | 46,785.00 | 9,473.25 |
| 4020 Sales - Candles | 74,971.00 | 77,895.00 | (2,924.00) |
| Other Income | 47,639.32 | 95,040.00 | (47,400.68) |
| Total Income | 339,654.40 | 388,430.00 | (48,775.60) |
| Total Cost of Goods Sold | 31,294.81 | 30,925.00 | 369.81 |
| Gross Profit | 308,359.59 | 357,505.00 | (49,145.41) |
| Expenses | | | |
| Total CAPITAL COSTS (CHURCH) | 8,444.39 | 11,520.00 | (3,075.61) |
| Total GENERAL & ADMINISTRATION | 224,075.35 | 205,129.50 | 18,945.85 |
| Total OCCUPANCY COSTS | 71,422.74 | 65,195.00 | 6,227.74 |
| Total PAYROLL EXPENSES | 239,323.43 | 244,729.00 | (5,405.57) |
| Total YOUTH AND EDUCATIONAL | 0.00 | 3,000.00 | 0.00 |
| Total Expenses | 543,265.91 | 529,573.50 | 13,692.41 |
| Net Operating Income | (234,906.32) | (172,068.50) | (62,837.82) |
| Other Revenue | | | |
| ERTC (Net, less Paychex fee) | 37,499.88 | 0.00 | 37,499.88 |
| Total Other Revenue | \$ 37,499.88 | \$ 0.00 | \$ 37,499.88 |
| Net Other Revenue | \$ 37,499.88 | \$ 0.00 | \$ 37,499.88 |
| Net Revenue | (197,406.44) | (172,068.50) | (25,337.94) |

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 4815 Eastern AVE Mortgage Principal Payments | \$ 5,874.99 |
| OVERALL CHURCH SURPLUS (LOSS) (Operating and Mortgage) | (\$203,281.43) |

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Greek School (PC Ref. Only) January - October 2023

| | Actual | Budget | over (under) Budget |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Income | | | |
| 4010 Greek School Registration | 56,258.25 | 46,785.00 | 9,473.25 |
| Total Income | 56,258.25 | 46,785.00 | 9,473.25 |
| Cost of Goods Sold | | | |
| COST OF GOODS SOLD | | | |
| Total 5012 Greek School Expense | 13,810.57 | 12,800.00 | 1,010.57 |
| Total COST OF GOODS SOLD | 13,810.57 | 12,800.00 | 1,010.57 |
| Total Cost of Goods Sold | 13,810.57 | 12,800.00 | 1,010.57 |
| Gross Profit | 42,447.68 | 33,985.00 | 8,462.68 |
| Expenses | | | |
| GENERAL & ADMINISTRATION | | | |
| 6170 Credit Card Processing Fee | 408.49 | 0.00 | 408.49 |
| Total GENERAL & ADMINISTRATION | \$ 408.49 | \$ 0.00 | \$ 408.49 |
| PAYROLL EXPENSES | | | |
| 6020 Greek School Teachers Payroll | 31,913.50 | 24,745.00 | 7,168.50 |
| 6051 Payroll Taxes (Greek School) | 3,095.94 | 2,060.00 | 1,035.94 |
| Total PAYROLL EXPENSES | \$ 35,009.44 | \$ 26,805.00 | \$ 8,204.44 |
| Total Expenses | 35,417.93 | 26,805.00 | 8,612.93 |
| Net Operating Income | 7,029.75 | 7,180.00 | (150.25) |

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Learning Center January - October 2023

| | Actual | Budget | over (under) Budget | |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------|
| Income | | | | |
| 4011 Learning Center Income | 913,686.75 | 1,002,280.00 | (88,593.25) | |
| Total 4011 Learning Center Income | 913,686.75 | 1,002,280.00 | (88,593.25) | 91.16% |
| Total Income | 913,686.75 | 1,002,280.00 | (88,593.25) | |
| Gross Profit | 913,686.75 | 1,002,280.00 | (88,593.25) | |
| Expenses | | | | |
| LEARNING CENTER | | | | |
| Total Payroll Expense (L.C.) | 561,258.67 | 681,786.00 | (120,527.33) | 82.32% |
| Total Food and Classroom Supplies (L.C.) | 28,748.51 | 95,365.00 | (66,616.49) | 30.15% |
| Total Admin and Office Expenses (L.C.) | 42,495.99 | 60,180.00 | (17,684.01) | 70.61% |
| Total Occupancy Expenses/Cap Improvements (L.C.) | 61,078.54 | 50,695.00 | 10,383.54 | 120.48% |
| Total LEARNING CENTER | 693,581.71 | 888,026.00 | (194,444.29) | |
| Total Expenses | 693,581.71 | 888,026.00 | (194,444.29) | |
| Net Operating Income | 220,105.04 | 114,254.00 | 105,851.04 | 192.65% |

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Plateia January - October 2023

| | Actual | Budget | over (under) Budget |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Income | | | |
| 4140 Plateia Income (Onsite) | 205,280.00 | 252,500.00 | (47,220.00) |
| Total Income | 205,280.00 | 252,500.00 | (47,220.00) |
| Cost of Goods Sold | | | |
| COST OF GOODS SOLD | | | |
| Total Plateia CGS Expenses | 63,610.68 | 89,210.00 | (25,599.32) |
| Total COST OF GOODS SOLD | 63,610.68 | 89,210.00 | (25,599.32) |
| Total Cost of Goods Sold | 63,610.68 | 89,210.00 | (25,599.32) |
| Gross Profit | 141,669.32 | 163,290.00 | (21,620.68) |
| Expenses | | | |
| PLATEIA EXPENSES | | | |
| Total Occupancy Expenses (Plateia) | 110,492.13 | 94,129.00 | 16,363.13 |
| Total Payroll Expenses (Plateia) | 13,752.30 | 17,432.00 | (3,679.70) |
| Total Admin Expenses (Plateia) | 19,123.98 | 18,090.00 | 1,033.98 |
| Total Bus Dev/Marketing Expenses (Plateia) | 12,741.30 | 14,550.00 | (1,808.70) |
| Total PLATEIA EXPENSES | 156,109.71 | 144,201.00 | 11,908.71 |
| Total Expenses | 156,109.71 | 144,201.00 | 11,908.71 |
| Net Operating Income | (14,440.39) | 19,089.00 | (33,529.39) |

LITURGICAL CALENDAR - DECEMBER

Sunday, December 3: 13th Sunday of Luke:

Orthros: 8:30 am. Divine Liturgy: 9:45 am

Tuesday, December 5: St. Nicholas Name Day: Great Vesper Service 7:00 pm

Wednesday, December 6: St. Nicholas Name Day:

Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 09:45 am

Saturday, December 9: The Conception by St. Anna of the Most Holy Theotokos

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 am

Sunday, December 10: 10th Sunday of Luke:

Orthros: 8:30 am. Divine Liturgy: 9:45 am

Tuesday, December 12: Spyridon the Wonderworker of Trymithous:

Divine Liturgy: 9:00 am

Friday, December 15: Eleutherios the Holy Martyr: Divine Liturgy: 9:00 am

Sunday, December 17: 11th Sunday of Luke:

Orthros: 8:30 am. Divine Liturgy: 9:45 am

Wednesday, December 20: The Sacrament of Holy Unction: 6:30 pm

Friday, December 22: Service of the Great Hours: 9:00 am

Sunday, December 24: Sunday before the Nativity:

Orthros: 8:30 am. Divine Liturgy: 9:45 am

Christmas Eve Service – Great Vesper Service: 7:00 pm

Monday, December 25: The Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:

Orthros 8:45 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

Sunday, December 31: Sunday after the Nativity:

Orthros: 8:30 am. Divine Liturgy: 9:45 am