



72 YEARS

MAY 2026

Saint  
Nicholas Greek  
Orthodox Church  
Baltimore, MD



# Koinonia

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## CELEBRATING HOLY PASCHA



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# MESSAGE FROM THE PROTOPRESBYTER

Message from **FR. MICHAEL L. PASTRIKOS, PROTOPRESBYTER**



On behalf of the entire Community of St. Nicholas I greet you with these joyous words;

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

“This is the Day of Resurrection! Let us be illumined by the feast! Pascha! The Pascha of the Lord! From death unto life, and from earth unto Heaven, Christ our God has led us, as we sing the hymn of victory:

*Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!”*

As we enter the month of May, let’s not forget what just happened in the month of April. All through Holy Week beginning with the Raising of Lazarus, then the feast of Palm Sunday, the Lord’s Passions, Crucifixion, and Resurrection were wonderful experiences to relive the events of what took place during that time 2,000 years ago. Why can’t we keep that Palm Sunday feeling always in our regular Sunday experiences when we come to Church? Thousands of our Parishioners filled the pews, the Atrium, and most of our people stood outside waiting for all these events to take place throughout Holy Week. Why does that feeling have to change? Why is it that when Pascha is over, we forget about what Christ did for us on the Cross? Why is it that many of our Parishioners scatter and don’t return to the Church until Pascha comes again. This is something that I will never understand why?

It brought chills and tears to my eyes during those memorable moments. The raising of Lazarus, Palm Sunday Morning and Evening, the Bridegroom services, Holy Unction, the Last Supper experience with His disciples, the washing of the disciples feet, the many tortures that He suffered, Crucifixion, the Burial, and last the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. How can anyone forget those events?

Every year we make a certain amount of progress during Lent. Why is it that after Pascha it is very easy to slide back into old routines, or be less disciplined in some way and that progress can seem to vanish away? To all those people that have a memory loss after Pascha, Wake Up and smell the coffee!

Every year the Lord gives us a chance to change our ways of life, and to become a better Christian with a better sense of understanding of why we need to keep ourselves closer to Christ so we can emulate a little part of what He did for us. Christ died for us because He truly cares about us and loves us. He didn’t want His children to suffer a death without meaning. He wanted all of us to inherit eternal life, and that is why He gave up His life so we can live a better life with Him in Heaven.

What I discovered is that the road I’m following continues on and that our work still goes on and that God still has use for us. Let’s not forget what happened after the Crucifixion of Christ. The disciples were afraid, they gathered in the Upper Room after the eighth day and Christ came into the

room. I could just imagine seeing the faces of all the disciples when they saw Christ coming through the door even though it was bolted shut. Wouldn’t you have loved being there, to see their facial expressions? To the disciples it was a moment of surprise. They were amazed at the sight of Christ. Their Teacher or Rabbi was alive again. They were so happy to see Him but Why? Because they realized that everything that Christ taught them became a reality. Everything started to come back to them. The Miracles, Teachings, The healings of the Paralytics, the demon-possessed, the Lame, Blind, and Deaf that He healed throughout His 3 year Ministry. So it’s essential to get back up and get back out there even as the disciples did. They couldn’t stay in the Upper Room forever. Neither did they find that they could go back to their old way of life, fishing on the Sea of Galilee.

God had touched them, and called them to a new life and nothing would ever be the same again in their lives. We have been given a chance to begin our new life in Christ. We have the opportunity to change just like the Apostles did. Does anyone think that after the Crucifixion of our Lord that the Apostles didn’t feel empty, and disgusted? They probably felt that their lives were over. That they also were defeated. After all what they went through with Christ, why did it have to end like this? But Christ knew what He had to do to inspire His disciples and to make them feel good again about their future roles that they would have to play in the future plans of the Church.

We too today, have been given the same invitation to continue the journey with Christ as His Apostles, sent out into the world to share the joy and peace of this new life. So if we choose to follow this life, that path will lead us to a wonderful life that never ends. But this also means that there is a lot of work to be done if we want to reach that goal.

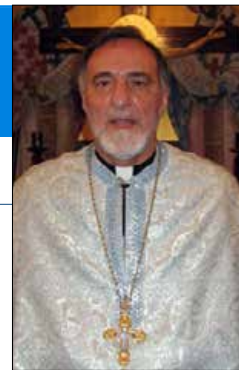
Allow me to give everyone the recipe for how we must complete this important task. There are 14 ingredients we must put into action throughout our earthly lives that will lead us toward God’s Heavenly Kingdom:

**FAITH, LOVE, SELF DENIAL, PEACEMAKING, SACRAMENTAL LIFE, OBEDIENCE, FASTING, PRAYER, SERVANTHOOD, TRUTH, FORGIVENESS, BEARING FRUIT, PERSEVERANCE, AND THE LAST ONE IS PRACTICING YOUR FAITH.**

This is what God expects from all of us in order to reach our final destination “The Kingdom of Heaven”. If you make these steps a personal priority, then you are a candidate to receive the reward that God has promised to His children.

*May our Resurrected Lord continue to bless you and to guide you as you follow the path and the journey to Heaven above.*

# MESSAGE FROM THE PROTOPRESBYTER



## Message from **FR. MICHAEL L. PASTRIKOS**, PROTOPRESBYTER

Εκ μέρους της ευρύτερης Κοινότητας του Αγίου Νικολάου σας χαιρετώ με το χαρμόσυνο μήνυμα:

### **ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!! ΑΛΗΘΩΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!!**

“Ημέρα Ανάστασης! Ας φωτιστούμε από την εορτή! Πάσχα! Πάσχα Κυρίου! Από τον θάνατο στη ζωή και από τη γη στον ουρανό, μας οδήγησε ο Χριστός, ο Θεός μας! Ψάλλοντας το άσμα της νίκης:

### **Χριστός ανέστη εκ νεκρών, θανάτω θάνατον πατήσας και τοις εν τοις μνήμασι ζώην χαρισάμενος.**

Καθώς εισερχόμαστε στον μήνα Μάιο, μην ξεχνάμε τι συνέβη τον Απρίλιο που μόλις πέρασε. Όλη τη Μεγάλη Εβδομάδα ξεκινώντας με την Ανάσταση του Λαζάρου, μετά την εορτή της Κυριακής των Βαΐων, τα Πάθη του Κυρίου, τη Σταύρωση και την Ανάσταση. Ήταν μια θαυμάσια εμπειρία να ξαναζήσουμε τα γεγονότα που συνέβησαν εκείνη την εποχή πριν από 2.000 χρόνια. Γιατί δεν μπορούμε να κρατήσουμε για πάντα το συναίσθημα της Κυριακής των Βαΐων, στο κανονικό μας εκκλησιασμό της Κυριακής, όταν ερχόμαστε στην Εκκλησία; Χιλιάδες ενορίτες μας γέμισαν τα καθίσματα, την αίθουσα Υποδοχής, και οι περισσότεροι από τους ανθρώπους μας βρισκόταν έξω αναμένοντας όλα αυτά τα γεγονότα να πραγματοποιηθούν καθ' όλη τη Μεγάλη Εβδομάδα. Γιατί πρέπει να αλλάξει αυτό το συναίσθημα; Γιατί όταν τελειώσει το Πάσχα, ξεχνάμε τι έκανε ο Χριστός για μας πάνω στον Σταυρό; Γιατί πολλοί από τους ενορίτες μας διασκορπίζονται και δεν επιστρέφουν στην Εκκλησία μέχρι να έρθει πάλι το Πάσχα; Αυτό είναι κάτι που ποτέ δεν θα καταλάβω, γιατί;

Έφεραν ανατριχίλα και γέμισαν δάκρυα τα μάτια μου κατά τη διάρκεια αυτών των αξέχαστων στιγμών. Η Ανάσταση του Λαζάρου, η Κυριακή των Βαΐων το πρωί και το βράδυ, οι Ακολουθίες του Νημίου, το Ευχέλαιο, η εμπειρία του Μυστικού Δείπνου με τους μαθητές Του, το πλύσιμο των ποδιών των μαθητών, τα πολλά βασανιστήρια που υπέστη, η Σταύρωση, η Ταφή και τελευταία η Ανάσταση του Κυρίου μας Ιησού Χριστού. Πώς μπορεί κανείς να ξεχάσει αυτά τα γεγονότα;

Κάθε χρόνο σημειώνεται κάποια πρόοδος κατά τη διάρκεια της Σαρακοστής. Γιατί μετά το Πάσχα είναι τόσο εύκολο να γλιστρήσει κανείς πίσω στις παλιές του συνήθειες ή να είναι λιγότερο πειθαρχημένος κατά κάποιο τρόπο, και να είναι ολοφάνερο ότι η πρόοδος εξαφανίζεται; Για όλους εκείνους που έχουν απώλεια μνήμης μετά το Πάσχα, ξυπνήστε.

Κάθε χρόνο ο Κύριος μας δίνει την ευκαιρία να αλλάξουμε το τρόπο ζωής μας και να γίνουμε καλύτεροι Χριστιανοί με καλύτερη αίσθηση κατανόησης ότι πρέπει να παραμείνουμε πιο κοντά στον Χριστό, ώστε να μπορούμε να θυσιάσουμε ένα μικρό μέρος αυτών που έκανε για εμάς. Ο Χριστός πέθανε για μας διότι πραγματικά ενδιαφέρεται για εμάς και μας αγαπά. Δεν ήθελε τα παιδιά Του να υποφέρουν το θάνατο χωρίς προσπάθεια. Ήθελε όλοι μας να κληρονομήσουμε την αιώνια ζωή και γι' αυτό εγκατέλειψε τη ζωή Του, ώστε να μπορούμε να ζήσουμε μια καλύτερη ζωή μαζί Του στον Ουρανό. Αυτό που ανακάλυψα είναι ότι ο δρόμος που ακολουθώ συνεχίζεται, και ότι το έργο μας συνεχίζεται, και ότι ο Θεός έχει έργα μας. Ας μην ξεχνάμε τι συνέβη μετά τη Σταύρωση του Χριστού. Οι μαθητές φοβήθηκαν, συγκεντρώθηκαν στο Αίθριο μετά την όγδοη ημέρα, όταν ο Χριστός εισήλθε στο δωμάτιο. Ας

μπορούσα μόνο με τη φαντασία μου να δω τα πρόσωπα των Αποστόλων όταν είδαν το Χριστό να εισέρχεται από τη πόρτα, παρόλο που ήταν καλά κλειδωμένη.

Δεν θα επιθυμούσατε να βρίσκεστε εκεί, να δείτε τις εκφράσεις του προσώπου τους; Για τους μαθητές ήταν μια στιγμή έκπληξης. Ήταν έκπληκτοι με το βλέμμα του Χριστού. Ο Δάσκαλος ή ο Ραββίνος ήταν πάλι ζωντανός. Ήταν τόσο χαρούμενοι που τον είδαν, αλλά γιατί; Διότι συνειδητοποίησαν ότι όλα όσα τους δίδαξε ο Χριστός έγιναν πραγματικότητα. Όλα άρχισαν να επιστρέφουν στο μυαλό τους: θαύματα, διδασκαλίες, θεραπείες των παραλύτων, Τυφλοί και Κωφοί που θεράπευσε κατά τη διάρκεια τριών χρόνων της Αποστολής Του.

Επομένως, είναι σημαντικό να επιστρέψουμε, να επιστρέψουμε εκεί, όπως έκαναν και οι Απόστολοι. Δεν μπορούσαν να παραμείνουν στο Αίθριο για πάντα. Ούτε διαπίστωσαν ότι θα μπορούσαν να επιστρέψουν στον παλιό τρόπο ζωής τους, ψαρεύοντας στη Θάλασσα της Γαλιλαίας. Ο Θεός τους είχε αγγίξει και τους κάλεσε σε μια νέα ζωή, τίποτα πια δεν θα ήταν και πάλι το ίδιο στη ζωή τους. Μας δόθηκε η ευκαιρία να ξεκινήσουμε μια νέα ζωή με το Χριστό. Έχουμε την ευκαιρία να αλλάξουμε όπως ακριβώς έκαναν οι Απόστολοι. Πιστεύει κανείς ότι μετά τη Σταύρωση του Κυρίου μας οι Απόστολοι δεν αισθάνθηκαν άδειοι και αηδιασμένοι; Ίσως αισθάνθηκαν ότι η ζωή τους τελείωσε. Ότι επίσης ηττήθηκαν. Μετά από όλα αυτά που πέρασαν με τον Χριστό, γιατί έπρεπε να τελειώσει έτσι; Αλλά ο Χριστός ήξερε τι έπρεπε να κάνει για να εμπνεύσει στους μαθητές Του και να τους κάνει να νιώθουν και πάλι καλά για τους μελλοντικούς τους ρόλους, που θα έπρεπε να παίζουν στα μελλοντικά σχέδια της Εκκλησίας.

Έτσι και σε μας σήμερα, μας δόθηκε η ίδια πρόσκληση να συνεχίσουμε το ταξίδι με τον Χριστό όπως στους Αποστόλους Του, που ταξίδεψαν στον κόσμο για να μοιραστούν τη χαρά και την ειρήνη αυτής της νέας ζωής. Έτσι, αν επιλέξουμε να ακολουθήσουμε αυτή τη ζωή, αυτό το μονοπάτι, που θα μας οδηγήσει σε μια υπέροχη ζωή, που δεν τελειώνει ποτέ. Αλλά αυτό σημαίνει επίσης ότι πρέπει να δουλέψουμε πολύ εάν θέλουμε να επιτύχουμε αυτόν τον στόχο.

Επιτρέψτε μου να δώσω σε όλους τη συνταγή με τι τρόπο πρέπει να ολοκληρώσουμε αυτό το σημαντικό καθήκον. Υπάρχουν 14 συστατικά που πρέπει να θέσουμε σε εφαρμογή κατά τη διάρκεια της επίγειας ζωής μας, τα οποία θα μας οδηγήσουν στην Ουράνια Βασιλεία του Θεού.

### **ΠΙΣΤΗ, ΑΓΑΠΗ, ΑΥΤΑΠΑΡΝΗΣΗ, ΕΝΙΣΧΥΣΗ, ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΑΚΗ ΖΩΗ, ΥΠΑΚΟΗ, ΝΗΣΤΕΙΑ, ΠΡΟΣΕΥΧΗ, ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ, ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ, ΣΥΓΧΩΡΕΣΗ, ΦΡΟΝΤΙΔΑ, ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΤΕΛΕΥΤΑΙΟ ΕΞΑΣΚΗΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΗΣ.**

Αυτά περιμένει ο Θεός από όλους μας για να φτάσουμε στον τελικό μας προορισμό “Τη Βασιλεία των Ουρανών”. Εάν κάνετε αυτά τα βήματα προσωπική σας προτεραιότητα, τότε θα είστε υπονήριος να λάβετε την ανταμοιβή που ο Θεός έχει υποσχεθεί στα παιδιά Του.

*Εύχομαι ο Ανάστατος Κύριος μας συνεχίζει να σας ελογεί και να σας καθοδηγεί καθώς ακολουθείτε το μονοπάτι για το ταξίδι πάνω στον Ουρανό.*

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Parishioners and Friends of our church,

As we approach the end of another school year and just before the arrival of the summer holidays, we always feel the need to take a brief look back at our journey and to recognize the significant effort made by all of us, always aiming for the best for our entire Greek community.

Our Parish Council, together with the invaluable support of our Protopresbyter, Father Michael, works with consistency, responsibility, and the sole vision of preserving and advancing our Church. With a spirit of cooperation and love for our Patron Saint, Saint Nicholas, we strive daily to respond to the needs of our parishioners and to ensure a vibrant and active spiritual center of Hellenism and Christianity.

Special mention should be made of the commendable teachers of our Greek School, who, with dedication, passion, and genuine love, pass on to our children the language, history, and values of our homeland. Their work is invaluable and serves as a foundation for preserving our cultural identity for future generations.

We are already in the final stretch of the school year. Our students are preparing for the Greek Language Certification exams from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, an important milestone that reflects their progress and efforts throughout their school years. This will be followed by the final exams of the Greek School and the customary end-of-year celebration on Wednesday, May 27, where we will all come together to celebrate the achievements of our children, who are the future of our parish!

In closing, I personally, together with the members of the Parish Council, would like to invite all of you to support our Church festival through your volunteer efforts, your presence, and your participation, as it constitutes, is a major source of support for our expenses.

Preparations have already begun, and I am confident that, as every year, together we will succeed, because we must not forget that everyone's contribution is valuable and strengthens the work and unity of our community.

**"Strength lies in unity" and we will prove once again that TOGETHER WE CAN ALL SUCCEED!!!**

Thank you from the bottom of my heart, and I am grateful to belong to the family of our Church.

Wishing you health and blessings in your life.

With respect and love,  
Stamatia Ieromonahos  
President of the Parish Council  
St. Nicholas Church of Baltimore

Αγαπημένοι μας ενορίτες και φίλοι της εκκλησίας μας.

Καθώς πλησιάζουμε στο τέλος μιας ακόμη σχολικής χρονιάς και λίγο πριν τον ερχομό των καλοκαιρινών διακοπών, αισθανόμαστε πάντοτε την ανάγκη να κάνουμε έναν σύντομο απολογισμό της πορείας μας και να αναγνωρίσουμε τη σημαντική προσπάθεια που καταβάλλεται από όλους μας με σκοπό πάντα το καλύτερο για την ελληνική κοινότητα μας.



Το Εκκλησιαστικό μας Συμβούλιο μαζί με την πολύτιμη υποστήριξη του Πρωτοπρεσβύτερου μας Πάτερ Μιχαήλ εργάζεται με συνέπεια, υπευθυνότητα και με μοναδικό όραμα τη διατήρηση και την πρόοδο της Εκκλησίας μας. Με συλλογικό πνεύμα και αγάπη για Τον Πολιούχο Μας Άγιο Νικόλαο επιδιώκουμε καθημερινά να ανταποκρινόμαστε στις ανάγκες των ενοριτών μας και να διασφαλίσουμε ένα ζωντανό και ενεργό πνευματικό κέντρο ελληνοισμού και χριστιανισμού.

Ιδιαίτερη μνεία αξίζει στις αξιέπαινες εκπαιδευτικούς μας του Ελληνικού Σχολείου μας, οι οποίες με αφοσίωση, μεράκι και αληθινή αγάπη μεταδίδουν στα παιδιά μας τη γλώσσα, την ιστορία και τις αξίες της πατρίδας μας.

Το έργο τους είναι ανεκτίμητο και αποτελεί θεμέλιο για τη διατήρηση της πολιτιστικής μας ταυτότητας στις επόμενες γενιές. Βρισκόμαστε ήδη στην τελική ευθεία της σχολικής χρονιάς. Οι μαθητές μας προετοιμάζονται για τις εξετάσεις Πιστοποίησης Ελληνομάθειας από το Αριστοτέλειο Πανεπιστήμιο Θεσσαλονίκης, μια σημαντική στιγμή που αντανακλά την πρόδο τους και τις προσπάθειές τους καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια των σχολικών τους χρόνων.

Στη συνέχεια, θα ακολουθήσουν οι τελικές εξετάσεις του ελληνικού σχολείου και η καθιερωμένη γιορτή λήξης την Τέταρτη, 27 Μαΐου, όπου όλοι μαζί θα γιορτάσουμε τα επιτεύγματα των παιδιών μας που είναι το μέλλον της ενορίας μας!

Κλείνοντας, προσωπικά εγώ μαζί με τα μέλη του Εκκλησιαστικού Συμβουλίου θα θέλαμε να σας προσκαλέσουμε όλους μαζί να στηρίξετε με την εθελοντική σας προσφορά, την παρουσία και τη συμμετοχή σας στο φεστιβάλ της Εκκλησίας μας γιατί αποτελεί όπως γνωρίζετε μεγάλο κομμάτι στήριξης των εξόδων μας.

Έχουν ξεκινήσει οι προετοιμασίες και είμαι σίγουρη όπως κάθε χρόνο όλοι μαζί θα τα καταφέρουμε γιατί δεν πρέπει να ξεχνάμε ότι η συμβολή όλων μας είναι πολύτιμη και ενισχύει το έργο και τη να ενότητα της κοινότητάς μας.

Η ισχύς εν τη ενώσει και θα το αποδείξουμε για μια ακόμη φορά ότι **ΌΛΟΙ ΜΑΖΙ ΜΠΟΡΟΥΜΕ!!!**

Σας ευχαριστώ από καρδιάς και είμαι ευγνώμων που ανήκω και εγώ στην οικογένεια της εκκλησίας μας.

Υγεία και ευλογία στην ζωή σας.

Με εκτίμηση και αγάπη,  
Σταματία Ιερομονάχου  
Πρόεδρος του Εκκλησιαστικού Συμβουλίου  
Αγίου Νικολάου Βαλτιμόρης

# CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

**PROTOPRESBYTER FR. MICHAEL PASTRIKOS, PASTOR** Tel - 410-633-5020 • Fax - 410-633-4352

## CHURCH SECRETARY

KOSTALAS-LENTIS  
**FINANCIAL SECRETARY**  
AMALIA SYROPOULOS-KOSTRIVAS

## PARISH COUNCIL

PRESIDENT – STAMATIA IEROMONAHOS  
VICE PRESIDENT – JOHN KOROLOGOS  
TREASURER – ASPASIA CHARALAMBOPOULOS  
ASSISTANT TREASURER – GEORGE STAMOULIS  
RECORDING SECRETARY – MARITA KAZOS

## BOARD MEMBERS:

ATHANASIOS KARAFLOS  
JIMMY KOSMAS  
DIMITRI PAPAVALSILEIOU  
NICANOR PATERIS  
JOEY VONAKIS

## PHILOTOCHOS

PRESIDENT - MARIA KARAGIANNIS  
1ST VICE PRESIDENT - IRENE VASILEIOS  
2ND VICE PRESIDENT - RENEE THEMELIS  
TREASURER - STELLA KOUKIDES  
ASSISTANT TREASURER - NORA KEFALAS  
SECRETARY - PANAGIOTA KOUTSANTONIS  
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY - EVA NYCHIS  
ADVISOR - MARIA GIORGAKIS

## BOARD MEMBERS -

KATINA FOTINOS, MARIA KOUTSOURI, PATTY  
MICKLOS, ZOE PERDIKAKIS, ELENI PIKOUNIS,  
EVAGELIA SALIARIS, TSAMBIKA TRIANTAFILOS,  
CHRISTINE ZERVOS

## HELLENIC GOLDEN COINS

VASSO KOUMOUDIS, DIRECTOR  
FOULA PARAGIOS & VASILI PHILIPPOU,  
DANCE INSTRUCTORS

## PAN-HELLENIC BOARD MEMBERS

METAXIA KARDIASSMENOS -  
HONORARY MEMBER  
EFFIE KARAMBELAS - DANCE TEACHER  
FOTEINI ARGIROPOULOS - POC

## DIAMONDS

SOFIA XOURI - PRESIDENT  
MOSKOULA KOUKIDIS - VICE-PRESIDENT  
ANASTASIA VASILAKOPOULOS - SECRETARY  
EVALALLAS- TREASURER

## BOARD MEMBERS

ROZA CORNIAS  
SOULA KAPETANAKOS

## G.O.Y.A. ADVISORS

EMILY SYROPOULOS  
PENNY ALAFASSOS  
HARIKLIA NEZIS  
ALEXANDRA KAROUTSOS  
MARIA FILIPPOU  
FOTINI FOUKAS

## G.O.Y.A. COACHES

GIRL'S COACHES -  
JOHN CHRISOMALLIS  
GENEVIEVE ZDZIERA  
HARIKLIA NEZIS

## BOY'S COACHES -

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AGAPI MOSXONA MINADAKIS  
1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE - SEVI FROUMIS VLACHOU, YVVONI GALETAKI  
2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE - SEVI FROUMIS VLACHOU, YVVONI GALETAKI  
3<sup>RD</sup> & 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE - PARASKEVI KOTSATOU ARGETAKI  
5<sup>TH</sup> & 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE - KELLY PEROS VASILIADES  
AL ELLINOMATHEIA COORDINATOR -  
PARASKEVI KOTSATOU ARGETAKI  
A2, B1 ELLINOMATHEIA COORDINATOR -  
KELLY PEROS VASILIADES  
B2 ELLINOMATHEIA COORDINATOR -  
PARASKEVI KOTSATOU ARGETAKI  
TMHMA ENHLIKWN - YVVONI GALETAKI  
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## IMPORTANT NOTICE -

## KOINONIA DEADLINE

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

**ISSUE MONTH - JUNE 2026**

**SUBMISSIONS DUE - MAY 20<sup>th</sup>**

*Please email your article(s) to - [ekostas@stnicholasmd.org](mailto:ekostas@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.*

# HOLY ASCENSION - MAY 21

*Courtesy of the Orthodox Archdiocese of America*

[www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)

The Lord Jesus passed forty days on earth after His Resurrection from the dead, appearing continually in various places to His disciples, with whom He also spoke, ate, and drank, thereby further demonstrating His Resurrection. On this Thursday, the fortieth day after Pascha, He appeared again in Jerusalem. After He had first spoken to the disciples about many things, He gave them His last commandment, that is, that they go forth and proclaim His Name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. But He also commanded them that for the present, they were not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there together until they receive power from on high, when the Holy Spirit would come upon them.

Saying these things, He led them to the Mount of Olives, and raising His hands, He blessed them; and saying again the words of the Father's blessing, He was parted from them and taken up. Immediately a cloud of light, a proof of His majesty, received Him. Sitting thereon as though on a royal chariot, He was taken up into Heaven, and after a short time was concealed from the sight of the disciples, who remained where they were with their eyes fixed on Him. At this point, two Angels in the form of men in white raiment appeared to them and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, Who is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven" (Acts 1:11). These words, in a complete and concise manner, declare what is taught in the Symbol of Faith concerning the Son and Word of God. Therefore, having so fulfilled all His dispensation for us, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended in glory into Heaven, and sat at the right hand of God the Father. As for His sacred disciples, they returned from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, rejoicing because Christ had promised to send them the Holy Spirit.

It should be noted that the Mount of Olives is a Sabbath's day journey from Jerusalem, that is, the distance a Jew was permitted to walk on the day of the Sabbath. Ecumenius writes, "A Sabbath day's journey is one mile in length, as Clement says in his fifth Stromatis; it is two thousand cubits, as the Interpretation of the Acts states." They draw this conclusion from the fact that, while they were in the wilderness, the Israelites of old kept within this distance from the Holy Tabernacle, whither they walked on the Sabbath day to worship God.



## Apolytikion of Holy Ascension Fourth Tone

O Christ our God, You ascended in Glory and gladdened Your disciples by the promise of the Holy Spirit. Your blessing assured them that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

## Kontakion of Holy Ascension Plagal Of The Second Tone

O Christ our God, upon fulfilling Your dispensation for our sake, You ascended in Glory, uniting the earthly with the heavenly. You were never separate but remained inseparable, and cried out to those who love You, "I am with you and no one is against you."

# CONSTANTINE AND HELEN, EQUAL-TO-THE APOSTLES - MAY 21

*Courtesy of the Orthodox  
Archdiocese of America*

[www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)

This great and renowned sovereign of the Christians was the son of Constantius Chlorus (the ruler of the westernmost parts of the Roman empire), and of the blessed Helen. He was born in 272, in (according to some authorities) Naissus of Dardania, a city on the Hellespont. In 306, when his father died, he was proclaimed successor to his throne. In 312, on learning that Maxentius and Maximinus had joined forces against him, he marched into Italy, where, while at the head of his troops, he saw in the sky after midday, beneath the sun, a radiant pillar in the form of a cross with the words: "By this shalt thou conquer." The following night, our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream and declared to him the power of the Cross and its significance. When he arose in the morning, he immediately ordered that a labarum be made (which is a banner or standard of victory over the enemy) in the form of a cross, and he inscribed on it the Name of Jesus Christ. On the 28th Of October, he attacked and mightily conquered Maxentius, who drowned in the Tiber River while fleeing. The following day, Constantine entered Rome in triumph and was proclaimed Emperor of the West by the Senate, while Licinius, his brother-in-law, ruled in the East. But out of malice, Licinius later persecuted the Christians. Constantine fought him once and again, and utterly destroyed him in 324, and in this manner he became monarch over the West and the East. Under him and because of him all the persecutions against the Church ceased. Christianity triumphed and idolatry was overthrown. In 325 he gathered the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, which he himself personally addressed. In 324, in the ancient city of Byzantium, he laid the foundations of the new capital of his realm, and solemnly inaugurated it on May 11, 330, naming it after himself, Constantinople. Since the throne of the imperial rule was transferred thither from Rome, it was named New Rome, the inhabitants of its domain were called Romans, and it was considered the continuation of the Roman Empire. Falling ill near Nicomedia, he requested to receive divine Baptism, according to Eusebius (The Life of Constantine. Book IV, 61-62), and also according to Socrates and Sozomen; and when he had been deemed



worthy of the Holy Mysteries, he reposed in 337, on May 21 or 22, the day of Pentecost, having lived sixty-five years, of which he ruled for thirty-one years. His remains were transferred to Constantinople and were deposited in the Church of the Holy Apostles, which had been built by him (see Homily XXVI on Second Corinthians by Saint John Chrysostom).

As for his holy mother Helen, after her son had made the Faith of Christ triumphant throughout the Roman Empire, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem and found the Holy Cross on which our Lord was crucified (see Sept. 13 and 14). After this, Saint Helen, in

her zeal to glorify Christ, erected churches in Jerusalem at the sites of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, in Bethlehem at the cave where our Saviour was born, another on the Mount of Olives whence He ascended into Heaven, and many others throughout the Holy Land, Cyprus, and elsewhere. She was proclaimed Augusta, her image was stamped upon golden coins, and two cities were named Helenopolis after her in Bithynia and in Palestine. Having been thus glorified for her piety, she departed to the Lord being about eighty years of age, according to some in the year 330, according to others, in 336.

## **Apolytikion of Constantine and Helen** Plagal of the Fourth Tone

He beheld the image of Your Cross in the Heavens and, as Paul, he too did not receive the call from men. Your Apostle among Kings placed the care of the Royal City in Your hands. Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O only Loving Lord, keep it ever in peace.

## **Kontakion of Constantine and Helen** Third Tone

Today, Constantine with his mother Helen present the Cross, the most precious wood. It shames unbelievers. It is a weapon of faithful kings against their adversaries. A great sign has come forth for us which is awesome in battle.



## Holy Pentecost

Courtesy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
[www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)

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

Thus, on this day, the seventh Sunday of Pascha, the tenth day after the Ascension and the fiftieth day after Pascha, at the third hour of the day from the rising of the sun, there suddenly came a sound from Heaven, as when a mighty

wind blows, and it filled the whole house where the Apostles and the rest with them were gathered. Immediately after the sound, there appeared tongues of fire that divided and rested upon the head of each one. Filled with the Spirit, all those present began speaking not in their native tongue, but in other tongues and dialects, as the Holy Spirit instructed them.

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

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

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

of the whole world. On this day they were ordained and began their apostleship, of which the salvation of those three thousand souls in one day was the comely and marvellous first fruit.

Some erroneously hold that Pentecost is the “birthday of the Church.” But this is not true, for the teaching of the holy Fathers is that the Church existed before all other things. In the second vision of The Shepherd of Hermas we read: “Now brethren, a revelation was made unto me in my sleep by a youth of exceeding fair form, who said to me, ‘Whom thinkest thou the aged woman, from whom thou receivedst the book, to be?’ I say, ‘The Sibyl.’ ‘Thou art wrong,’ saith he, ‘she is not.’ ‘Who then is she?’ I say, ‘The Church,’ saith he. I said unto him, ‘Wherefore then is she aged?’ ‘Because,’ saith he, ‘she was created before all things; therefore is she aged, and for her sake the world was framed.’” Saint Gregory the Theologian also speaks of “the Church of Christ ... both before Christ and after Christ” (PG 35:1108-9). Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus writes, “The Catholic Church, which exists from the ages, is revealed most clearly in the incarnate advent of Christ” (PG 42:640). Saint John Damascene observes, “The Holy Catholic Church of God, therefore, is the assembly of the holy Fathers, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, and Martyrs who have been from the very beginning, to whom were added all the nations who believed with one accord” (PG 96, 1357c). According to Saint Gregory the Theologian, “The Prophets established the Church, the Apostles conjoined it, and the Evangelists set it in order” (PG 35, 589 A). The Church existed from the creation of the Angels, for the Angels came into existence before the creation of the world, and they have always been members of the Church. Saint Clement, Bishop of Rome, says in his second epistle to the Corinthians, the Church “was created before the sun and moon”; and a little further on, “The Church existeth not now for the first time, but hath been from the beginning” (II Cor. 14).

That which came to pass at Pentecost, then, was the ordination of the Apostles, the commencement of the apostolic preaching to the nations, and the inauguration of the priesthood of the new Israel. Saint Cyril of Alexandria says that “Our Lord Jesus Christ herein ordained the instructors and teachers of the world and the stewards of His divine Mysteries ... showing together with the dignity of Apostleship, the incomparable glory of the authority given them ... Revealing them to be splendid with the great dignity of the Apostleship and showing them forth as both

stewards and priests of the divine altars . . . they became fit to initiate others through the enlightening guidance of the Holy Spirit” (PG 74, 708-712). Saint Gregory Palamas says, “Now, therefore ... the Holy Spirit descended ... showing the Disciples to be supernal luminaries ... and the distributed grace of the Divine Spirit came through the ordination of the Apostles upon their successors” (Homily 24, 10). And Saint Sophronius, Bishop of Jerusalem, writes, “After the visitation of the Comforter, the Apostles became high priests” (PG 87, 3981B). Therefore, together with the baptism of the Holy Spirit which came upon them who were present in the upper chamber, which the Lord had foretold as recorded in the Acts, “ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence” (Acts 1:5), the Apostles were also appointed and raised to the high priestly rank, according to Saint John Chrysostom (PG 60, 21). On this day commenced the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by which we become “partakers of the Divine Nature” (II Peter 1:4). For before Pentecost, it is said of the Apostles and disciples only that they abode in “prayer and supplication” (Acts 1:14); it is only after the coming of the Holy Spirit that they persevered in the “breaking of bread,” that is, the communion of the Holy Mysteries—and in prayer” (Acts 2:42).

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

## **Apolytikion of Pentecost**

Plagal of the Fourth Tone

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

## **Kontakion of Pentecost**

Plagal of the Fourth Tone

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



### HONORING MOTHERS

May allows us to celebrate mothers in a special way – Mother’s Day. This holiday was established in America and has now become a traditional tribute in many other countries. Actually, every day should be Mother’s Day in reverence to the lady to whom, along with our fathers, so much is owed.

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

Moms have taught us our first prayers and the appreciation of the wonders of God’s creation through Bible stories and bedtime readings. In reality, the home that our parents provide for us is our initial church and schoolroom. This is where we are taught the importance of attending church services and where our Orthodox Faith is reinforced.

Mothers have been a key factor in molding our character by word and example, instilling in us

traits of gratitude, honesty, respect and above all the deep love for God, family and our fellow man. Fads and fashions come and go but the genteel behavior of good manners and words such as “thank you” and “please” that our mothers etched in our very being from an early age never go out of style.

Was it not our mother who taught us to greet each day and each other with a pleasant “Good Day,” especially after each church service? For in doing so, we are greeting God, glorifying and thanking Him who dwells in each of us. Did not our mother tell us that such a heartfelt greeting and smile should radiate from us expressing our joy in having celebrated The Holy Eucharist and shared God’s love?

Recently, the word “mentor” has become rather popular and perhaps overused, but it certainly applies to our mothers for they are always by our side with our best interest at heart, protecting us, advising us, guiding us along the way, or correcting us; always with undying love.

In paraphrasing the saying: “The hand that rocks the cradle forms the nation” we can say that we owe much of what we are to our mothers; they are our foundation and it is they who hold the key to our future as well.

Along with the gifts with which we shower our mother on Mother’s Day, we can also honor her – showing our love and appreciation by upholding the many values and traditions that she taught us, by living a Christian life, and by thanking God for all the mothers of the world and keeping them in our prayers.

*Happy Mother’s Day  
to all the wonderful Mothers!*

By: Eva Lallas



## ΤΙΜΩΝΤΑΣ ΤΗΝ ΜΗΤΕΡΑ

Τον Μάιο μας δίνεται η ευκαιρία να εορτάσουμε τις μητέρες όλου του κόσμου με έναν ιδιαίτερο τρόπο, με την ΕΟΡΤΗ ΤΗΣ ΜΗΤΕΡΑΣ. Η εορτή αυτή ξεκίνησε από την Αμερική και σήμερα έχει πάρει τη μορφή παραδοσιακού φόρου τιμής σε πολλές άλλες χώρες. Στην πραγματικότητα, θα έπρεπε κάθε ημέρα να είναι Ημέρα της Μητέρας, εις ένδειξη σεβασμού στην «κυρία» που, μαζί με τον πατέρα μας, οφείλουμε τόσα πολλά.

Οι μητέρες μας, είτε μας έφεραν σε αυτόν τον κόσμο είτε όχι, είναι εκείνες που παραδοσιακά έχουν την ευθύνη να μας μεγαλώσουν, να μας φροντίσουν, να μας γαλουχήσουν και να διαιωνίσουν την παράδοση από γενιά σε γενιά. Μοιράζονται τις εμπειρίες της ζωής τους μαζί μας, μαζί με όλα όσα έχουν μάθει από τις οικογένειές τους, την εκκλησία τους και την εκπαίδευσή τους, επιβεβαιώνοντας όλα τα διδάγματα της Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας μας.

Μαζί με τους πατέρες και τις μητέρες μας, έχουμε εμποτιστεί με τις Δέκα Εντολές και τα διδάγματα του Ιησού Χριστού, του Σωτήρα μας. Οι μητέρες μας μας έμαθαν τις πρώτες προσευχές μας και μας edίδαξαν την εκτίμηση του θαύματος του Θεού, τη δημιουργία του κόσμου, μέσω των Ευαγγελικών Περικοπών και των ιστοριών που μας διάβαζαν πριν κοιμηθούμε. Στην πραγματικότητα, το σπίτι που μας παρέχουν οι γονείς μας είναι η πρώτη εκκλησία και η πρώτη αίθουσα διδασκαλίας. Εκεί είναι που μας πρωτοδιδάσκουν την ανάγκη να ερχόμαστε στην εκκλησία και εκεί είναι που ενδυναμώνεται η Ορθόδοξη Πίστη μας.

Οι μητέρες είναι ο βασικός παράγοντας της διάπλασης του χαρακτήρα μας με λόγια και παραδείγματα, εμποτίζοντας σιγά-σιγά μέσα μας τα χαρακτηριστικά

γνωρίσματα της ευγνωμοσύνης, της εντιμότητας, του σεβασμού και πάνω απ' όλα της αγάπης προς τον Θεό, την οικογένεια και τον συνάνθρωπό μας. Οι παροδικές μανίες και οι νεωτερισμοί έρχονται και παρέρχονται, αλλά η εκλεπτυσμένη συμπεριφορά των καλών τρόπων και λόγων, όπως «σας ευχαριστώ» και «παρακαλώ», που οι μητέρες μας εχάραξαν στην ψυχή μας από την πολύ νεαρή ηλικία μας, ποτέ δεν παρέρχονται.

Δεν ήταν η μητέρα μας που μας έμαθε να χαιρετούμε κάθε ημέρα ο ένας τον άλλον με ένα ευχάριστο «καλημέρα», ειδικά μετά το τέλος κάθε Θείας Λειτουργίας; Είναι σαν να χαιρετούμε τον Θεό, δοξάζοντας και ευχαριστώντας Τον. Δεν μας edίδαξε η μητέρα μας ότι ένας τέτοιος εγκάρδιος χαιρετισμός με χαμόγελο θα πρέπει να αντανακλάται από εμάς, εκφράζοντας τη χαρά μας που εορτάσαμε τη Θεία Λειτουργία και μοιραστήκαμε την αγάπη του Θεού;

Τελευταία, η λέξη «σύμβουλος» έχει μάλλον γίνει δημοφιλής και ίσως παρά χρησιμοποιείται, αλλά αναφέρεται βεβαίως και στη μητέρα μας, που πάντα είναι στο πλευρό μας με πολλή φροντίδα και αγάπη, προστατεύοντάς μας, συμβουλευοντάς μας, οδηγώντας τα βήματά μας ή διορθώνοντάς μας. Πάντα με άσβεστη αγάπη.

Παραφράζοντας την παροιμία «όσο πιο δυνατά κουνά το λίκνο φτιάχνει το έθνος», μπορούμε να πούμε ότι οφείλουμε το τι είμαστε στις μητέρες μας. Είναι το θεμέλιο και είναι επίσης εκείνες που κρατούν το κλειδί του μέλλοντός μας.

Μαζί με τα δώρα που προσφέρουμε στη μητέρα μας την Ημέρα της Μητέρας, μπορούμε επίσης να της δείξουμε την αγάπη μας και την εκτίμησή μας, ακολουθώντας τις πολλαπλές αξίες και παραδόσεις που μας edίδαξε, με το να ζούμε μια Χριστιανική ζωή, ευχαριστώντας τον Θεό για όλες τις μητέρες ανά τον κόσμο και να προσευχόμαστε γι' αυτές.

***Χρόνια Πολλά σε Όλες τις Μητέρες!***

Υπό της Ευαγγελίας Λαλά



# Greek Corner

In addition, I am adding “The Greek Corner” which is the outcome of phrases frequently used during conversations with Father Michael. They are sayings, parables, idioms with variations that address and express life situations or specific persons and have been common throughout the Greek world for many generations. In fact, such messages are universal. You are encouraged to inform us of some that are familiar to you. Please send them to - [el817@yahoo.com](mailto:el817@yahoo.com)

## 1.) Τελεία και παύλα!

Once and for all! It's over! End of conversation. Finis! I have no more to say on the subject!

## 2.) Κάνη το βάρη πεπόνι!

Ignores others; ignores the situation; is unaware; disassociates oneself. Acts like he doesn't care.

## 3.) Υπομονή που σκάζει γάιδαρο!!

His patience would outlast a donkey.

Donkeys are known to be very stubborn. Perhaps it means that they are patient???



## 4.) Το πανί από την ούγια φαίνεται!

You can tell the quality (of a bolt) of fabric from the selvage.

The selvage gives the strength, quality of the goods without examining the entire piece.

You can tell much about the quality of a person, his character, who he really is, simply by observing him in a few actions....perhaps unrelated, insignificant actions.

## 5.) Ρώτησαν τον λύκο, <<Γιατι είναι ο λαιμός σου τόσο κοντρός;>>

<<Γιατί κάνω την δουλειά μου μοναχός!>>

The wolf was asked why his neck was so large (well fed).

He answered, “Because I conduct my business by myself!”

When there are no partners to split the profits, the person in charge reaps all the income.

Dear reader, Here are a few more common American sayings, phrases for you to enjoy:

1.) **On your dime - at your expense... You're footing the bill.**

2.) **Right on the money - exact point! Precise! Turning on a dime!  
Within very narrow limits!**

3.) **(Handle with) kid gloves! Handle carefully, be polite!  
In Greek “Με το γάντι.” May mean: To a tee! Perfection, upper crust!**

4.) **Bite your tongue - avoid saying something that you really want to say.**

5.) **A dime a dozen - very common, cheap  
In Greek - “δέκα στον παρά!” - cheap - 10 for a buck!**

# SATURDAY OF LAZARUS AND EASTER EGG HUNT



# GOYA PALM CROSS MAKING



# GREEK SCHOOL KOULOURAKIA MAKING



# PALM SUNDAY



# His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey - HOLY TUESDAY



## A SOLEMN AND JOYOUS EVENING WITH HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN APOSTOLOS

*Holy Tuesday night, our St. Nicholas Church was filled with prayerful reverence as we celebrated the third Bridegroom (Nymphios) service.*



*On this evening, we were deeply honored to welcome His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey, who presided over the Service of the Nymphios alongside Father Michael. The evening was elevated by the outstanding chanters, including our own chanter, Zacharias, who*



*led some of the hymns with great devotion. A particularly poignant moment was the chanting of the Hymn of Kassiani. The soul-stirring Hymn of Kassiani was beautifully chanted by Athanasios, who travels with His Eminence on his Archpastoral visits throughout the Metropolis.*



*The evening concluded with a moment of profound joy. In recognition of a lifetime of spiritual labor, His Eminence Apostolos bestowed a gold cross upon Father Michael, Honoring his 50 years of faithful service to the Holy Priesthood.*

*On behalf of Fr. Michael Pastrokos, the Parish Council President Stamatia Ieromonahos, together with the Parish Council, they expressed their heartfelt thanks to all our parishioners, the students of our Greek School, and our youth (GOYA) our altar servers and chanters who attended and/or participated in this devout service. Everyone gathered to offer a warm welcome to His Eminence upon his arrival, and our students and GOYANS greeted His Eminence with beautiful bouquets.*



*Finally, we express our sincere gratitude to the Ladies Philoptochos Society for the lovely reception and light refreshments offered to His Eminence and his entourage following the service.*

# THURSDAY EVENING SERVICE OF THE HOLY PASSION



# HOLY FRIDAY





GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA  
ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 132/2026

Archiepiscopal Encyclical on the Great and Holy Pascha, 2026

April 12, 2026

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-named Plenitude of the Holy Archdiocese of America

*Yesterday I was buried with You, O Christ; today I arise with You in Your Resurrection*

....

*(Canon of Pascha, Ode Three)*

Beloved Sisters and Brothers in the Risen Christ,

Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!

The difference in the Triduum (Gk. Τριήμερον) – the Three Days from the Death in the Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ to His Glorious Resurrection – may truly be the greatest span of time in the history of the world. It cannot be reckoned in mere seconds, minutes, or hours. It extends from the very beginning of time itself, and stretches all the way to the ages of ages. It is the Eternal Now that, as the Canon of Pascha reminds us, is also a timeframe into which we fit, in which we belong in virtue of our Baptism. As Saint Paul challenges the Christians at Rome: “Or do you not understand that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus, have been baptized into His death?” (Romans 6:3) [Gk. Ἡ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν;]

And so, on the Night of the Holy Pascha, we sing in a first-person voice which includes everyone: “Yesterday I was buried with You, O Christ...” We are part of the story; we are living in the historical reality of the Death and Burial of our Lord. Our Baptisms may have occurred as infants, or as children, or as adults – in far-off churches and lands. It makes no difference. Our destiny has been forecast by our Immersion in the Waters of Re-Birth. In Holy Week, we embrace that moment anew and cry out, “Yesterday!”

But we do not remain in the past. We also affirm and sing: “... today I arise with You in Your Resurrection!” Here is the bridge between Earth and Heaven, between yesterday and the everlasting tomorrow, between the infinite space and timespan separating Creator and Created. This is our Eternal Now, when, as Saint Paul says, we can seize this day in order to “walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). It is the hour of our transformation by grace into the persons we were created to be. Therefore, beloved Christians, let us embrace the mystical moment offered to us in this Holy *Kairos*, and raise our voices to the skies, as we proclaim:

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

Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθῶς Ανέστη! Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

+ELPIDOPHOROS  
Archbishop of America



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ  
ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Αριθμ. Πρωτ.: 152/2026

Αρχιεπισκοπική Έγκυκλιος για το Άγιο Πάσχα.

12 Απριλίου 2026

Προς τους Σεβασμιωτάτους και Θεοφιλεστάτους Αρχιερείς, τους  
Ευλαβεστάτους Έπiscopους και Διακόνους, τις Προσβυτέρους και τις Διακόνισσες, τους  
Μοναχούς και τις Μοναχές, τους Προϊδρυτές και τα Μέλη των Κοινοτικών  
Συμβουλίων, τους Εντιμολογεστάτους Αρχιεπίσκοπους του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου,  
τα μέλη της Ήγασίας των 100, τα Πνευματικά και Απογευματινά Σχολεία, τις  
Φιλοπτώχους Αδελφότητες, τη Ναιμαλία, τις Έλληνορθόδοξες Οργανώσεις και  
ολόκληρο το Χριστιανόπνομο πληρωμα της Ίερης Αρχιεπισκοπής Αμερικής.

*«Χθές συνεθαπτόμην σοι Χριστέ συνεγείραμαι σήμερον ἀναστάντι σοι»  
(Ὡδή γ' του Πάχα).*

Προσφιλείς ἀδελφοί και ἀδελφές ἐν τῷ ἀναστάντι Χριστῷ,

Χριστός Ἀνάστη!

Εκείνη ἡ χρονική περίοδος τῶν τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἀπὸ τὸ σαρκικό θάνατο του  
Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μέχρι τὴν ἐνδοξὴ ἀνάστασή του. Θα λέγαμε ὅτι εἶναι ἡ  
σπουδαιότερη χρονική περίοδος στήν ἱστορία τοῦ κόσμου. Δέν μπορεί νά μετρηθεῖ μέ  
δευτερόλεπτα, λεπτά ἢ ὥρες. Εκτείνεται ἀπὸ τὴν ἀρχὴ τῶν αἰῶνων ἀπὸ ἀπειρητῆ στήν  
αιωνιότητα. Ὅπως μᾶς υπενθυμίζει ὁ Κανὼν τοῦ Πάχα, εἶναι ἐκείνο τὸ αἰῶνια  
τονίζει και ὁ ἀπόστολος τῶν ἔθνων Παῦλος πρὸς τοὺς χριστιανούς τῆς Ρώμης: «ἢ  
ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημιν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ  
ἐβαπτίσθημεν;» (Ρωμ. 6, 3).

Γιὰ αὐτὸ και τὴ νύχτα τοῦ Πάχα φάλλομε σὲ πρόσωπο,  
ἀγκαλιαζόντας ὅλη τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα: «Χθές συνεθαπτόμην σοι Χριστέ!» Εἴμαστε  
μέρος τῆς ἱστορίας, εἴσομε τὴν ἱστορική πραγματικότητα τοῦ θανάτου και τῆς ταφῆς  
τοῦ Κυρίου. Μετέχομε στήν ταφή του με τὸ βάπτισμα ὡς βρέφη, ὡς παιδιὰ ἢ  
ἐνήλικες, σὲ ἀπόμακρες ἐκκλησίες ἢ μεγάλες κοινότητες. Δέν ἔχει σημασία πὸς και  
πὸς βαπτιστήκαμε. Σημασία ἔχει ὅτι ἡ ζωὴ μας ἀλλάξει «διὰ τῆς καταδύσεως στὰ  
ὕδατα τῆς παλιγγενεσίας». Κατὰ τὴν Μεγάλῃ Ἐβδομάδα ἀνανεώνομε αὐτὴν τὴ  
στιγμὴ τῆς βάπτισης και ἀναφωνοῦμε: «Χθὲς ἔγινε αὐτό!»

Ὅμως δέν παραμύνομε σὸ παρελθόν. Ἐπιβεβαιώνομε και φάλλομε:  
«συνεγείραμαι σήμερον ἀναστάντι σοι». Ἐδῶ βρισκεται ἡ γέφυρα μεταξὺ γῆς και  
οὐρανοῦ, μεταξὺ τοῦ «χθές» και τοῦ διαρκούς «αὔριο», μεταξὺ τοῦ ἀχρονου και  
πανταχοῦ παροντα δημιουργοῦ μέ τὸ ἐν χῶρῳ και χρόνῳ δημιουργημά του. Αὐτὸ  
εἶναι τὸ αἰῶνιο *τώρα*, γιὰ τὸ ὅποιο μᾶς μιλάει ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος καλώντας μας  
να «περιπατήσομε ἐν κινήσει ζωῆς» (Ρωμ. 6, 4). Αὐτὴ εἶναι ἡ στιγμὴ κατὰ τὴν  
ὅποια μι ταυροφονοῦμαστε διὰ τῆς χάριτος σὲ πρόσωπο, ὅπως ἀρχικά πλαστήκαμε  
ἀπὸ τὸ δημιουργό. Γιὰ αὐτὸ ἀγαπητοὶ χριστιανοί, ὡς δροῦσομε τῆς εὐκαιρίας και  
κατὰ τὴ μυστική και ἁγία αὐτὴ περίοδο νά ὑψώσομε τὰ χεῖρα μας στὸν οὐρανό  
ἀναφωνοῦντας:

*Χριστός ἀνάστη ἐκ νεκρῶν, θανάτω θάνατον πατήσας, και τοῖς ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι  
ζωὴν χαρισάμενος!*

Χριστός ἀνάστη.

*Ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐπίσκοπος*

† Ὁ Ἀμερικῆς Ἐπίσκοπος

# HOLY SATURDAY MORNING



# HOLY SATURDAY EVENING



*Easter  
Sunday  
readers of  
the Gospel  
in different  
languages*



# THE TRIUMPH OF LIGHT

## THE TRIUMPH OF LIGHT: FROM THE FIRST RESURRECTION TO THE AGAPE VESPERS

Holy Saturday - morning and evening services, and Agape Vespers., Our final journey today takes us from the defeat of death to the glory of His Resurrection!

### **Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!**

Our forty-day journey has come to an end—or perhaps it has opened the door to a new beginning. As we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, we are renewed in faith and filled with the light that no darkness can overcome

### **HOLY SATURDAY MORNING: THE FIRST RESURRECTION**

On Holy Saturday morning, the church was filled once again for the service of the **First Resurrection**. Following the Gospel reading, the quiet solemnity of the sanctuary erupted into a joyous symphony: bells rang out, and the traditional banging of the pews echoed throughout the nave, mimicking the earthquake that shattered the gates of Hades. Father Michael, with a basket of bay leaves, tossed them into the air as he came down the aisles and out into the atrium, where even more faithful were waiting. He chanted the triumphant words, “**Anasta, o Theos, krinon tin gin...**” (Arise, O God, judge the earth!), signaling the moment the mourning of Holy Week officially broke, and the victory of life began.

**Why do we use the Bay Leaves?** In the Greek tradition, these are called Daphnes. Since the time of the ancient Olympics, they have been the crown of a winner. Here, they crown Christ as the Victor over death.

### **THE MIDNIGHT RESURRECTION (ANASTASI)**

Later that night, as the faithful filled the church once again, all the lights were turned off to

symbolize the sealed tomb. **The Royal Doors** (Oraia Pyli / Ὁραία Πύλη) were slid open. The darkness of the tomb was finally pierced. Father Michael emerged from the Holy Altar holding a single, radiant flame and chanting:

**“Come receive the Light from the unwaning Light!”**

As this new light was passed from person to person in a beautiful display of unity, the darkness vanished. The light of Jesus became contagious, illuminating the hearts of everyone present. At Father’s direction, the faithful proceeded outside to the street so the ceremony could be seen and heard by all. After Father Michael read the Gospel, he led the faithful in chanting with one voice:

**‘Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!’**

It was a breathtaking sight as hundreds of candles were raised into the night sky, with everyone making the sign of the cross. A little further down from the church, fireworks could be seen and heard, their bright colors and thunderous booms echoing the explosive joy of the Resurrection.”

### **THE CONQUEST OF HADES (ARATE PYLAS)**

The celebration continued as we moved from the outdoors back toward the church. Father Michael and a parish member re-enacted the ancient “**Arate Pylas**” tradition. The doors were held shut to represent the gates of Hades, and a dialogue ensued as Father demanded entry.

With a final, triumphant strike against the doors, the “gates” were thrown open, symbolizing Christ’s conquest over death. We re-entered the church—now a paradise of light—for the Divine Liturgy.

*Continued next page*

*Continued...*

At the conclusion of the service in the early hours of Sunday, Father Michael greeted the faithful and handed each person a **red egg**, symbolizing the sealed tomb and the precious blood of Christ.

### **SUNDAY MORNING: THE AGAPE VESPERS**

On Sunday morning, the **Agape Service** (Vespers of Love) continued the message of the Resurrection. To proclaim that Christ is Risen to all nations, the Gospel was read in several languages, reflecting the universal reach of His victory.

At the end of the service, Father Michael once again distributed red eggs to those in attendance. In a moving moment, Father expressed his astonishment that in his many years serving this parish, this was the first time every single egg had been given out, leaving none behind. It was a beautiful testament to a community overflowing with life, faith, and the eternal hope of the Resurrection.

Why do Orthodox Christians use red eggs? The use of red eggs is one of the most beloved and ancient traditions in the Orthodox Church. It is rich in both theological symbolism and sacred tradition.

The primary reasons why red eggs are used:

#### **1. The egg itself is a powerful symbol of the Tomb of Christ.**

- **The Shell:** Represents the sealed, stone tomb where Jesus was laid.
- **The Life Within:** Just as a chick eventually breaks through the shell to emerge into life, Christ broke the bonds of death to emerge from the tomb. It is a symbol of potential and new life hidden within a seemingly “dead” object.

#### **2. The Symbolism of the Color Red**

- Red is the color of **life, sacrifice, and victory.**
- **The Blood of Christ:** Primarily, the red dye represents the precious blood of Jesus shed on the Cross for the salvation of the world.

#### **3. The Tradition of Mary Magdalene**

- According to Holy Tradition, the origin of the red egg is linked to **St. Mary Magdalene.**
- After the Ascension, Mary Magdalene went to Rome to preach the Gospel. She gained an audience with the Emperor Tiberius. Holding a plain white egg in her hand, she proclaimed, “**Christ is Risen!**”
- The Emperor mocked her, saying that a human could no more rise from the dead than the egg in her hand could turn red. Immediately, the egg turned a brilliant crimson.

#### **4. The Custom of “Tsougrisma” (Cracking)**

- The tradition of “clinking” or “cracking” the eggs against one another (Tsougrisma) is not just a game; it is a liturgical re-enactment.
- When the shells crack, it symbolizes the **shattering of the gates of Hades** and the opening of the tomb.
- As the eggs are cracked, the faithful exchange the Paschal greeting: “*Christ is Risen!*” with the response “*Truly He is Risen!*”

**Christ is Risen!  
Truly He is Risen**

# Ο ΘΡΙΑΜΒΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΦΩΤΟΣ

## Ο ΘΡΙΑΜΒΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΦΩΤΟΣ: ΑΠΟ ΤΗΝ ΠΡΩΤΗ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΗ ΣΤΟΝ ΕΣΠΕΡΙΝΟ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΑΠΗΣ

Το αποψινό τελευταίο ταξίδι μάς οδηγεί από την ήττα του θανάτου στη δόξα της Αναστάσεώς Του!

**Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!**

Η πορεία των σαράντα ημερών έφτασε στο τέλος της—ή μήπως πρόκειται για μια νέα αρχή; Καθώς γιορτάζουμε την Ανάσταση του Κυρίου μας Ιησού Χριστού, ανανεωνόμαστε στην πίστη και πλημμυρίζουμε από το φως που κανένα σκοτάδι δεν μπορεί να νικήσει.

**Πρωί Μεγάλου Σαββάτου: Η Πρώτη Ανάσταση**

**ΠΡΩΙ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟΥ: Η ΠΡΩΤΗ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΗ**

Το πρωί του Μεγάλου Σαββάτου, η εκκλησία γέμισε και πάλι για την ακολουθία της **Πρώτης Ανάστασης**. Μετά την ανάγνωση του Ευαγγελίου, η κατάνυξη του ναού μετατράπηκε σε μια έκρηξη χαράς: οι καμπάνες χτυπούσαν χαρμόσυνα και τα παραδοσιακά χτυπήματα στα στασίδια αντηχούσαν παντού, αναπαριστώντας τον σεισμό που συνέτριψε τις πύλες του Άδη. Ο π. Μιχαήλ πήρε το πανέρι με τις δάφνες, ραίνοντας τον αέρα καθώς περιήλθε τον ναό και το αίθριο, όπου περίμεναν πολλοί πιστοί. Έψαλλε με δύναμη το «**Ανάστα, ο Θεός, κρίνων την γην...**», σηματοδοτώντας τη στιγμή που το πένθος της Μεγάλης Εβδομάδας τελειώνει και ξεκινά η νίκη.

Γιατί χρησιμοποιούμε φύλλα δάφνης; Στην ελληνική παράδοση, αυτά ονομάζονται Δάφνες. Από την εποχή των αρχαίων Ολυμπιακών Αγώνων, αποτελούσαν το στεφάνι του νικητή. Εδώ, στεφανώνουν τον Χριστό ως Νικητή του θανάτου.

**Η ΠΑΝΝΑΧΙΔΑ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΕΩΣ**

Αργότερα το ίδιο βράδυ, καθώς οι πιστοί γέμισαν και πάλι την εκκλησία, όλα τα φώτα έσβησαν συμβολίζοντας τον σφραγισμένο τάφο. Η **Ωραία**

**Πύλη** άνοιξε διάπλατα. Το σκοτάδι του τάφου νικήθηκε οριστικά. Ο π. Μιχαήλ εξήλθε από το Ιερό Βήμα κρατώντας μια μοναδική, λαμπερή φλόγα και ψάλλοντας: «**Δεύτε λάβετε φως εκ του ανεσπέρου φωτός!**»

Καθώς το νέο αυτό φως μεταδιδόταν από άνθρωπο σε άνθρωπο σε μια υπέροχη εκδήλωση ενότητας, το σκοτάδι εξαφανίστηκε. Το φως του Ιησού έγινε μεταδοτικό, φωτίζοντας τις καρδιές όλων των παρευρισκομένων.

Με την καθοδήγηση του Πατέρα, οι πιστοί εξήλθαν από τον ναό στον δρόμο, ώστε η τελετή να είναι ορατή και να ακουστεί από όλους. Μετά την ανάγνωση του Ευαγγελίου από τον π. Μιχαήλ, ο ίδιος καθοδήγησε τους πιστούς να ψάλουν με μια φωνή:

**«Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη.....!»**

Ήταν ένα συγκλονιστικό θέαμα καθώς εκατοντάδες λαμπάδες υψώθηκαν στον νυχτερινό ουρανό, με όλους να κάνουν το σημείο του σταυρού. Λίγο πιο πέρα από την εκκλησία, πυροτεχνήματα φώτιζαν τον ουρανό, με τους κρότους τους να αντηχούν την εκρηκτική χαρά της Αναστάσεως.»

**ΕΙΣΟΔΟΣ ΣΤΟΝ ΠΑΡΑΔΕΙΣΟ (ΑΡΑΤΕ ΠΥΛΑΣ)**

Η γιορτή συνεχίστηκε καθώς επιστρέψαμε στον ναό. Ο π. Μιχαήλ και ένα μέλος της ενορίας αναπαρέστησαν την αρχαία παράδοση του «**Αρατε Πύλας**».

Οι πόρτες παρέμεναν κλειστές, συμβολίζοντας τις πύλες του Άδη, και ακολούθησε ο διάλογος όπου ο Πατέρας προστάζει την είσοδο. Με ένα τελικό, θριαμβευτικό χτύπημα, οι πύλες άνοιξαν διάπλατα, συμβολίζοντας τη νίκη του Χριστού. Εισήλθαμε ξανά στον ναό—που πλέον αντιπροσώπευε τον Παράδεισο—για τη Θεία Λειτουργία. Στο τέλος, ο π. Μιχαήλ μοίρασε σε όλους από ένα **κόκκινο**

*Continued...*

**αυγό**, σύμβολο του τάφου και του Τιμίου Αίματος του Χριστού.

## **ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΣΧΑ: Ο ΕΣΠΕΡΙΝΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΑΠΗΣ**

Το πρωί της Κυριακής, ο εορτασμός συνεχίστηκε με τον **Εσπερινό της Αγάπης**. Για να διακηρυχθεί το μήνυμα της Αναστάσεως σε όλα τα έθνη, το Ευαγγέλιο διαβάστηκε σε πολλές γλώσσες. Για άλλη μια φορά, ο π. Μιχαήλ μοίρασε κόκκινα αυγά στους παρευρισκόμενους. Σε μια συγκινητική στιγμή, ο Πατέρας εξέφρασε την έκπληξή του στα τόσα χρόνια διακονίας του εδώ στον Άγιο Νικόλαο, ήταν η πρώτη φορά που δόθηκαν όλα τα αυγά, χωρίς να περισσέψει ούτε ένα—ένα αληθινό σημάδι μιας κοινότητας γεμάτης ζωή, πίστη και την αιώνια ελπίδα της Αναστάσεως.

### **Γιατί οι Ορθόδοξοι Χριστιανοί χρησιμοποιούν κόκκινα αυγά;**

Η χρήση των κόκκινων αυγών είναι μια από τις πιο αγαπημένες και αρχαίες παραδόσεις της Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας. Είναι πλούσια σε θεολογικό συμβολισμό και ιερή παράδοση.

Οικύριοι λόγιοι για τους οποίους χρησιμοποιούνται τα κόκκινα αυγά είναι οι εξής:

#### **1. Το ίδιο το αυγό είναι ένα ισχυρό σύμβολο του Τάφου του Χριστού.**

- **Το Τσόφλι:** Αντιπροσωπεύει τον σφραγισμένο, πέτρινο τάφο όπου τοποθετήθηκε ο Ιησούς.
- **Η Ζωή Μέσα:** Όπως ένα πουλάκι σπάει τελικά το τσόφλι για να βγει στη ζωή, έτσι και ο Χριστός έσπασε τα δεσμά του θανάτου για να εξέλθει από τον τάφο. Είναι ένα σύμβολο προοπτικής και νέας ζωής που κρύβεται μέσα σε ένα φαινομενικά «νεκρό» αντικείμενο.

#### **2. Ο συμβολισμός του κόκκινου χρώματος**

- Το κόκκινο είναι το χρώμα της ζωής, της θυσίας και της νίκης.
- **Το Αίμα του Χριστού:** Πρωτίστως, η κόκκινη βαφή αντιπροσωπεύει το Τιμίο Αίμα του Ιησού που χύθηκε στον Σταυρό για τη σωτηρία του κόσμου.

#### **3. Η Παράδοση της Μαρίας Μαγδαληνής**

- Σύμφωνα με την Ιερή Παράδοση, η προέλευση του κόκκινου αυγού συνδέεται με την Αγία Μαρία τη Μαγδαληνή.
- Μετά την Ανάληψη, η Μαρία η Μαγδαληνή πήγε στη Ρώμη για να κηρύξει το Ευαγγέλιο. Έλαβε ακρόαση από τον Αυτοκράτορα Τιβέριο. Κρατώντας ένα απλό λευκό αυγό στο χέρι της, διακήρυξε: «**Χριστός Ανέστη!**»
- Ο Αυτοκράτορας τη χλεύασε, λέγοντας ότι ένας άνθρωπος δεν θα μπορούσε να αναστηθεί από τους νεκρούς περισσότερο από ό,τι το αυγό στο χέρι της θα μπορούσε να γίνει κόκκινο. Αμέσως, το αυγό βάφτηκε με ένα λαμπρό πορφυρό χρώμα.

#### **4. Το έθιμο του «Τσουγκρίσματος»**

- Η παράδοση του τσουγκρίσματος των αυγών μεταξύ των πιστών δεν είναι απλώς ένα παιχνίδι· είναι μια λειτουργική αναπαράσταση.
- Όταν τα τσόφλια σπάνε, συμβολίζουν τη συντριβή των πυλών του Άδη και το άνοιγμα του τάφου.
- Καθώς τα αυγά τσουγκρίζουν, οι πιστοί ανταλλάσσουν τον αναστάσιμο χαιρετισμό: «**Χριστός Ανέστη!**» με την απόκριση «**Αληθώς Ανέστη!**»

**ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!  
ΑΛΗΘΩΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!**



## A Special Tribute to Our Spiritual Father

We wish to express our profound gratitude to **Father Michael L. Pastrikos**, who guided us through the journey of Great Lent and Holy Week with tireless devotion. Through his leadership, he brought us to a deeper understanding of our faith and a closer relationship with our Lord, Jesus Christ.

While we as parishioners are blessed with the freedom to sit and find rest during these lengthy services, Father Michael remained steadfastly on his feet, presiding over every moment with grace and focus. We recognize the physical and spiritual toll of such an undertaking and are deeply moved by his commitment to his flock.

May God grant him continued strength and health, and may He preserve him to serve our Lord and this congregation for many more blessed years.

**AXIOS!**

*Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!*

+ + + + +

**Ένας Ιδιαίτερος Φόρος Τιμής στον Πνευματικό μας Πατέρα**

Εκφράζουμε τη βαθιά μας ευγνωμοσύνη προς τον π. **Μιχαήλ Παστρικό**, ο οποίος μας καθοδήγησε στο ταξίδι της Μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστής και της Μεγάλης Εβδομάδας με αμείωτη αφοσίωση. Με την πνευματική του καθοδήγηση, μας οδήγησε σε μια βαθύτερη κατανόηση της πίστης μας και σε μια πιο στενή σχέση με τον Κύριο ημών Ιησού Χριστό.

Ενώ εμείς, ως ενορίτες, έχουμε την ευλογία να καθόμαστε και να ξεκουραζόμαστε κατά τη διάρκεια αυτών των μακρών ακολουθιών, ο π. Μιχαήλ παρέμενε ακούραστα όρθιος, προεξάρχοντας σε κάθε στιγμή με χάρη και απόλυτη προσήλωση. Αναγνωρίζουμε τη σωματική και πνευματική προσπάθεια που απαιτείται και είμαστε βαθιά συγκινημένοι από την αφοσίωσή του στο ποίμνιό του.

Είθε ο Θεός να του χαρίζει δύναμη και υγεία, και να τον διατηρεί για πολλά ακόμη ευλογημένα χρόνια στην υπηρεσία του Κυρίου και της κοινότητάς μας.

**ΑΕΙΟΣ!**

**Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!**



# A MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE FROM ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH



## Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

On behalf of Father Michael L. Patrikos, the Parish Council, our dedicated staff, and the entire St. Nicholas family, we wish you all the joy of the Resurrected Christ.

Our church was a beacon of beauty throughout the forty days of Great Lent and Holy Week. This spiritual journey was made possible by your devotion, participation, and generosity. We extend our deepest thanks to everyone who offered donations for our liturgical needs and the stunning floral arrangements that beautified our various services.

### With heartfelt appreciation, we recognize:



- **Our Sacred Space:** A special thank you to the beloved parishioner who meticulously prepared and donated the purple cloth for the Iconostasio, and to the Ladies Philoptochos Society along with all the volunteers who spent countless hours decorating the church and the Kouvouklion.



- **Our Youth & Education:** We thank the Greek School PTA for their tireless work in organizing events for our children, ensuring our youth remain connected to our faith. A special shout-out to our **GOYANS** and all who helped them craft the beautiful Palm crosses that were blessed and distributed on Palm Sunday.



- **Our Liturgical Life:** We are grateful to our Parish Council for their long hours of service, our Chanters for their soul-stirring hymns, and specifically our young adults who chanted the “Aspile” and “Dos Imin” so beautifully. We also extend our thanks to the Readers who proclaimed the Gospel in various languages during the Agape Service.



- **Our Altar & Traditions:** We take great pride in our Altar servers—both young and old—who served with such reverence throughout all the services, especially during Holy Week. We also thank the young men who carried the Epitaphio with such devotion, and the families who prepared the traditional red Paschal eggs for Holy Saturday.

- **Our Fellowship:** A big thank you to our kitchen crew for the wonderful Palm Sunday Fish Luncheon and the delicious Lamb dinner that nourished us following the Resurrection service.

To the many volunteers whose names are too numerous to list but whose impact was felt in every service and event—thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

May our Resurrected Lord bless you and your families with abundant health, joy, and peace.

**Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!**



## Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!

Εκ μέρους του π. Μιχαήλ Παστρικού, του Ενοριακού Συμβουλίου, του προσωπικού και ολόκληρης της οικογένειας του Αγίου Νικολάου, σας εύχομαστε τη χαρά του Αναστάσιου Χριστού.

Η εκκλησία μας ήταν ένας φάρος ομορφιάς καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της Μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστής και της Μεγάλης Εβδομάδας. Αυτό το πνευματικό ταξίδι έγινε πραγματικότητα χάρη στη δική σας ευσέβεια και γενναιοδωρία. Εκφράζουμε τις θερμές μας ευχαριστίες σε όλους όσους προσέφεραν δωρεές για τις λειτουργικές μας ανάγκες και τους υπέροχους ανθοστολισμούς που κόσμησαν τις ακολουθίες μας.



## Με ιδιαίτερη ευγνωμοσύνη, αναγνωρίζουμε:

- **Την Ευπρέπεια του Ναού:** Ένα ιδιαίτερο ευχαριστώ σε ένα αγαπημένο ενοριτή που ετοίμασε και δώρισε τα μωβ υφάσματα για το Εικονοστάσιο, καθώς και στη Φιλόπτωχο Αδελφότητα και όλους τους εθελοντές που αφιέρωσαν αμέτρητες ώρες για τον στολισμό του Ναού και του Κουβουκλίου.
- **Τη Νεολαία και την Παιδεία:** Ευχαριστούμε το ΡΤΑ του Ελληνικού Σχολείου για την ακούραστη προσφορά του στη διοργάνωση εκδηλώσεων για τα παιδιά μας. Θερμά συγχαρητήρια στη νεολαία μας (GOYA) και σε όλους όσους βοήθησαν στην κατασκευή των πανέμορφων σταυρών από βέργια, που ευλογήθηκαν και μοιράστηκαν στους πιστούς την Κυριακή των Βαΐων.
- **Τη Λειτουργική Ζωή:** Ευχαριστούμε το Ενοριακό Συμβούλιο για τις ώρες προσφοράς του, τους Ψάλτες μας για τους κατασκευαστικούς ύμνους, και ιδιαίτερα τους νέους μας που έψαλλαν τόσο όμορφα το «Άσπιλε» και το «Δος ημίν». Εκφράζουμε επίσης τις ευχαριστίες μας στους Αναγνώστες που διάβασαν το Ευαγγέλιο σε διάφορες γλώσσες κατά την Ακολουθία της Αγάπης.
- **Το Ιερό και τις Παραδόσεις:** Είμαστε υπερήφανοι για τους Ιερόπαιδες και τους διακονητές του Ιερού μας— νέους και μεγαλύτερους—οι οποίοι υπηρέτησαν με τόση ευλάβεια κατά τη διάρκεια όλων των ακολουθιών, και ιδιαίτερα τη Μεγάλη Εβδομάδα. Ευχαριστούμε επίσης τους νέους που μετέφεραν τον Επιτάφιο με τόση αφοσίωση, καθώς και τις οικογένειες που ετοίμασαν τα παραδοσιακά κόκκινα πασχαλινά αυγά για το Μεγάλο Σάββατο.
- **Τη Φιλοξενία:** Ένα μεγάλο ευχαριστώ στην ομάδα της κουζίνας για το γεύμα των Βαΐων και το πασχαλινό δείπνο που απολαύσαμε μετά την Ανάσταση.

Στους πολλούς εθελοντές, των οποίων τα ονόματα είναι πάρα πολλά για να απαριθμηθούν, αλλά η προσφορά τους ήταν εμφανής σε κάθε ακολουθία—σας ευχαριστούμε από τα βάθη της καρδιάς μας.

Είθε ο Αναστάς Κύριος να ευλογεί εσάς και τις οικογένειές σας με υγεία, χαρά και ειρήνη.

**Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!**



## STEWARDSHIP

*Dear Parishioner:*

*Christ is Risen..... Truly He is Risen.....*

*The Holy Week Services this year were wonderful. It was great to see the thousands of people coming to the Church throughout the Holy Week experience. As Orthodox Christians, we should be proud that we have honored and kept our Holy Traditions alive and well. If we are going to continue to keep our Church strong and alive we have to understand that the machine behind her success is our Stewardship Program. Without the financial help and support of our parishioners, we can't do anything. Stewardship is a challenge, and we must join our efforts together as a family, and we need the input of everyone to succeed in this enormous challenge that's ahead of us. We constantly hear our Lord say, become guardians of your brothers, or you will have to justify for your works to God. Which means, that we have to have accountability for our actions. If we are to follow the Commandments of God, then we are responsible to live out our lives, and be responsible for the good or bad things that we do and never try to justify ourselves. You don't have to be intelligent to understand the economic difficulties of this world. Today we have Churches, Institutions, and other Charitable Organizations, that are suffering financially. These Institutions survive only with the donations from the people. We are all suffering financially, and we are trying to do the very best especially under these circumstances, to break down the dollar to meet our necessities. We all have to make sacrifices, we all have to watch our pennies, and even though we are going through this crisis, we should never forget our stewardship obligation to the Church. Small or large, we cannot forget the House of our Lord.*

*Many of us though think very differently. Instead of combining our efforts together to share the expenses, we tend to let other people carry the burden and responsibilities. Some of us, think that the money that goes to the Church grows on trees. They think that by coming to the Church and lighting their candle, that will pay for all of the Church's expenses. They have a lot to learn.... Whenever we need the church for something the church will always be there for us. But on the other hand, if we don't support our Church financially, then we might have a problem keeping the doors of the Church open.*

*So far, thanks to our wonderful and dear supporters of our Stewardship Program, our Church is still alive and well. A few months ago we sent out the Stewardship Pledge cards, and to our surprise only half of our members sent in their commitment. What has happened to the other half? It is so simple, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to fill out a Pledge card. You don't have to be a millionaire, all you have to do, is fill out the information, and put a donation that comes from the heart where it says \$ amount: \_\_\_\_\_. We have reached the month of May, and at this moment we have not received pledge cards from hundreds of our parishioners. The Stewardship Committee, would like to know if anyone has a financial problem, to please make an appointment with Fr. Michael, and he will try to take care of your needs. We are a Church, the House of God, we do not turn anyone away.*

*In closing, I hope that with the Spirit of our Resurrected Lord, that we can see a new beginning in our lives. We must direct our thought and focus on the important things that we undertake in our daily routine. The Church should be a focal point in our lives, and we should try with all our hearts and efforts to support her ministry.*

*Please take a moment of your precious time and fill out the Stewardship Pledge card, and send it back to the Church office as soon as possible. Thank You & May God Bless. Christos Anesti. Christ is Risen.*

*Αγαπητέ ενοριτή: Χριστός Ανέστη..... Αληθώς ο Κύριος .....*

Οι Ιερές Ακολουθίες της Μεγάλης Εβδομάδας φέτος ήταν θαυμάσιες. Ήταν υπέροχο να βλέπω τους χιλιάδες ανθρώπους να έρχονται στην Εκκλησία κατά τη διάρκεια της Μεγάλης Εβδομάδας. Ως Ορθόδοξοι Χριστιανοί, θα πρέπει να είμαστε περήφανοι που τιμάμε και κρατάμε ζωντανές και αυτούσιες τις Ιερές μας Παραδόσεις. Εάν επιθυμούμε να κρατήσουμε την Εκκλησία μας ζωντανή, πρέπει να αντιληφθούμε ότι ο μηχανισμός πίσω από την επιτυχία της είναι το Πρόγραμμα Συνδρομής των Ενοριτών μας. Χωρίς την οικονομική βοήθεια και στήριξη των ενοριτών μας δεν μπορούμε να κάνουμε τίποτα. Αυτό είναι σαφώς μια μεγάλη πρόκληση, γι' αυτό θα πρέπει να ενώσουμε τις δυνάμεις μας ως μια οικογένεια. Χρειαζόμαστε τη συμβολή όλων για να ανταπεξέλθουμε σ' αυτήν την τεράστια πρόκληση που βρίσκεται μπροστά μας. Να βρίσκεσαι συνεχώς εδώ, λέει ο Κύριός, να γίνεσαι προστάτης των αδελφών σου, διαφορετικά θα πρέπει να απολογηθείς για τα έργα σου ενώπιον του Θεού. Που σημαίνει ότι πρέπει να έχουμε ευθύνη για τις πράξεις μας. Αν πρόκειται να ακολουθήσουμε τις Εντολές του Θεού, τότε είμαστε υπεύθυνοι να ζήσουμε τη ζωή μας και να είμαστε υπεύθυνοι για τα καλά ή τα κακά πράγματα που κάνουμε και ποτέ δεν προσπαθούμε να δικαιολογήσουμε τον εαυτό μας. Δεν χρειάζεται να είναι κανείς ιδιαίτερα έξυπνος για να κατανοεί τις οικονομικές δυσκολίες αυτού του κόσμου. Σήμερα έχουμε Εκκλησίες, Ιδρύματα και άλλους Φιλανθρωπικούς Οργανισμούς, που υποφέρουν οικονομικά. Αυτά τα Ιδρύματα επιβιώνουν μόνο με τις δωρεές του λαού. Όλοι υποφέρουμε οικονομικά, και προσπαθούμε να κάνουμε το καλύτερο, -ειδικά κάτω από αυτές τις συνθήκες-, να μοιράσουμε το δολάριο για να καλύψουμε τις ανάγκες μας. Όλοι πρέπει να κάνουμε θυσίες, όλοι πρέπει να προσέχουμε τις δεκάρες μας! Παρόλο που βιώνουμε από αυτή την κρίση, δεν πρέπει ποτέ να ξεχνάμε την υποχρέωση μας ως ενορίτες για την συνδρομή στην Εκκλησία. Μικροί και μεγάλοι, δεν γίνεται να ξεχνάμε τον Οίκο του Κυρίου μας.

Πολλοί από εμάς όμως σκεφτόμαστε πολύ διαφορετικά. Αντί συνολικά να προσπαθούμε να μοιραστούμε τα έξοδα, τείνουμε να αφήνουμε άλλους ανθρώπους να φέρουν το βάρος και τις ευθύνες. Κάποιοι νομίζουμε ότι τα χρήματα που πάνε στην Εκκλησία φυτρώνουν στα δέντρα. Νομίζουν ότι με το να έρθουν στην Εκκλησία και να ανάψουν το κερί τους, θα πληρώσουν όλα τα έξοδα της Εκκλησίας. Έχουν ακόμα πολλά να μάθουν... Όποτε χρειαζόμαστε την εκκλησία για κάτι, η εκκλησία θα είναι πάντα εκεί για εμάς. Αλλά από την άλλη, αν δεν στηρίζουμε οικονομικά την Εκκλησία μας, τότε μπορεί να έχουμε πρόβλημα να κρατήσουμε τις πόρτες της Εκκλησίας ανοιχτές.

Μέχρι στιγμής, χάρη στους υπέροχους και αγαπητούς μας υποστηρικτές του Προγράμματός μας, η Εκκλησία μας είναι ακόμα ζωντανή. Πριν από λίγους μήνες στείλαμε τις κάρτες Stewardship Pledge, και προς έκπληξή μας μόνο το ήμισυ των συμμετεχόντων μας τακτοποίησαν τη συνδρομή τους. Τι έχει συμβεί με το άλλο μισό; Είναι τόσο απλό, δεν χρειάζεται να είσαι επιστήμονας πυραύλων για να συμπληρώσεις μια κάρτα Pledge. Δεν χρειάζεται να είστε εκατομμυριούχος, το μόνο που έχετε να κάνετε, είναι να συμπληρώσετε τις πληροφορίες και να κάνετε μια δωρεά που προέρχεται από την καρδιάόπου λέει\_\$ ποσό:\_\_\_\_\_. Φτάσαμε στο μήνα Μάιο και αυτή τη στιγμή δεν έχουμε παραλάβει κάρτες από εκατοντάδες ενορίτες μας. Η Επιτροπή των Συνδρομών, θα ήθελε να γνωρίζει τι έγινε με τις κάρτες που δεν έλαβε! Εάν κάποιος αντιμετωπίζει οικονομικό πρόβλημα, να κλείσει ραντεβού με τον π. Μιχαήλ, και θα προσπαθήσει να φροντίσει τις ανάγκες σας. Είμαστε Εκκλησία, Οίκος του Θεού, δεν απομακρύνουμε κανέναν.

Κλείνοντας, ελπίζω ότι με το Πνεύμα του Αναστάντος Κυρίου μας, να δούμε μια νέα αρχή στη ζωή μας. Πρέπει να κατευθύνουμε τη σκέψη μας και να επικεντρωθούμε στα σημαντικά πράγματα που αναλαμβάνουμε στην καθημερινότητά μας. Η Εκκλησία πρέπει να είναι κομβικό σημείο στη ζωή μας και πρέπει να προσπαθήσουμε με όλη μας την καρδιά και τις προσπάθειές μας να υποστηρίξουμε τη διακονία της.

Παρακαλούμε αφιερώστε μια στιγμή από τον πολύτιμο χρόνο σας και συμπληρώστε την κάρτα της Συνδρομής σας και στείλτε την πίσω στο γραφείο της Εκκλησίας το συντομότερο δυνατό. Ευχαριστώ & Είθε ο Θεός να ευλογεί.  
Χριστός Ανέστη.

## ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER

There are some churches that are vibrant and growing, while others always seem to be discouraged and struggling. What lies at the heart of this success or failure? This difference of success or failure, can in large measure be attributed to what we call "Attitude". If the people of a church build up and encourage each other, if they hasten to praise and emphasize the positive, the whole community is filled with optimism and a feeling of affirmation. But in those churches where negativity and criticism are quick to surface, discouragement and failure are sure to follow. We should always take the example of a team that plays together. If we help each other and if we support each other then this team will be successful.

The secret here is to cheer on the team players knowing that each player has a role to play in the team's success. We who are here at St. Nicholas, we have a true team spirit. We always praise and cheer the player who does his / her job well no matter how insignificant the contribution is. And when we win our victories, it doesn't belong to one player but it belongs to everyone in the community. Our victories do not belong to any individual no matter how great his/her skills are. There are lessons for each of us in that team's example. If we want to be champions then we need to take an attitude check. Are we critical of our church leaders or of those who are in authority over us? Do we complain about the job someone is doing in the church, while remaining unwilling to accept responsibility for our own? Do we have a negative and complaining spirit? If so, it is time to change and to begin offering encouragement and support to our leaders, and the praise that helps build one another up.

*We need to remember the wonderful advice of St. Paul who asked us "to encourage one another and to help one another." (1 Thess. 5:11)*

He wanted us to remember that Christian people seek to build people up, and not to tear them down. We need to take this advice and use it in our daily lives. If you praise and build someone else up for their contribution, then someone else will praise you for your commitment and support. If we turn against each other and bring confusion, disappointment to one another, then what have we accomplished? "Nothing"! So remember " Better is the person who has sinned, if he knows he has sinned and repents, than a person who has not sinned and thinks himself righteous."

### ΕΝΘΑΡΡΥΝΣΗ ΤΟΥ ΕΝΟΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΑΛΛΟΝ

Υπάρχουν κάποιες εκκλησίες που σφίζουν ζωής και ανάπτυξης, ενώ άλλες πάντοτε φαίνεται να αποθαρρύνονται και να αγωνίζονται. Τι βρίσκεται στο επίκεντρο αυτής της επιτυχίας ή της αποτυχίας; Αυτή η διαφορά επιτυχίας ή αποτυχίας μπορεί σε μεγάλο βαθμό να αποδοθεί σε

αυτό που ονομάζουμε " Διάθεση". Αν οι άνθρωποι μιας εκκλησίας δημιουργούν και ενθαρρύνουν ο ένας τον άλλον, αν επιστεύσουν να επαινέσουν και να τονίσουν το καλό, τότε ολόκληρη η κοινότητα γεμίζει με αισιοδοξία και αίσθημα επιβεβαίωσης. Αλλά σε αυτές τις εκκλησίες, όπου το αρνητικό πνεύμα και η κριτική έρχονται άμεσα στην επιφάνεια, είναι σίγουρο ότι θα ακολουθήσουν την αποθάρρυνση και την αποτυχία. Πρέπει πάντα να παίρνουμε το παράδειγμα μιας ομάδας που παίζει μαζί. Εάν βοηθούμε ο ένας τον άλλον και αν υποστηρίζουμε ο ένας τον άλλον τότε αυτή η ομάδα θα είναι επιτυχημένη.

Το μυστικό εδώ είναι να επευφημούν τους παίκτες της ομάδας, γνωρίζοντας ότι κάθε παίκτης έχει ένα ρόλο να διαδραματίσει στην επιτυχία της ομάδας. Εμείς εδώ στον Αγίο Νικόλαο, έχουμε ένα πραγματικό και αληθινό ομαδικό πνεύμα. Πάντα επαινούμε και συγχαίρουμε τον παίκτη που κάνει καλά την δουλειά του, ανεξάρτητα από το πόσο ασήμαντη είναι η συμβολή του. Και όταν κερδίζουμε τις νίκες μας, αυτές δεν ανήκουν σε έναν μεμονωμένο παίκτη, αλλά ανήκουν σε όλους στην Κοινότητα. Οι νίκες μας δεν ανήκουν σε ένα άτομο ανεξάρτητα από το πόσο σπουδαίες είναι οι ικανότητές του. Υπάρχουν μαθήματα για κάθε ένα από εμάς στο παράδειγμα της εν λόγω ομάδας. Αν θέλουμε να είμαστε πρωταθλητές, τότε πρέπει να κάνουμε τον έλεγχο της Διάθεσης. Είμαστε επικριτικοί προς τους ηγέτες της εκκλησίας μας, ή εκείνων που είναι στην εξουσία; Παραπονιόμαστε για τη δουλειά που κάνει κάποιος στην εκκλησία, παραμένοντας απρόθυμοι να αναλάβουμε την ευθύνη για τη δική μας εργασία; Διαμαρτυρόμαστε και είμαστε αρνητικοί; Αν ναι, ήρθε η ώρα να αλλάξουμε και να αρχίσουμε να προσφέρουμε ενθάρρυνση και στήριξη στους ηγέτες μας, ο έπαινος βοηθά στην ενθάρρυνση του ενός προς τον άλλο.

**Πρέπει να θυμηθούμε την υπέροχη συμβουλή του Αποστόλου Παύλου ο οποίος μας ζήτησε "να ενθαρρύνουμε ο ένας τον άλλο και να βοηθάμε ο ένας τον άλλον." (1 Θεσ. 5:11)**

Ήθελε να θυμόμαστε ότι οι χριστιανοί προσπαθούν να εξυψώνουν τους ανθρώπους, και όχι να τους γκρεμίζουν. Πρέπει να λάβουμε αυτή τη συμβουλή και να την χρησιμοποιήσουμε στην καθημερινότητά μας. Αν παινέσουμε και εξυψώσουμε κάποιον άλλο για τη συμβολή του, τότε κάποιος άλλος θα μας επαινέσει για την αφοσίωση και την υποστήριξή μας. Αν γυρίσουμε εναντίον του άλλου και φέρουμε σύγχυση και απογοήτευση ο ένας στον άλλο, τότε τι έχουμε καταφέρει; "Τίποτα"! Έτσι να θυμάστε "Καλύτερο είναι το άτομο που έχει αμαρτήσει, αν ξέρει ότι έχει αμαρτήσει και μετανοήσει, από ό, τι ένα άτομο που δεν έχει αμαρτήσει και σκέφτεται τον εαυτό δίκαιο."

# Lifestyle Renewal

by Archbishop Demetrios

Courtesy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
[www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)

As we continue our series of reflections on the topic of renewal, we encounter a specific area that is in certain need of constant renewal. This is the area of our everyday life, of the manner by which we lead our lives. Practically, this is the issue of what is called “lifestyle.” In this case a pertinent, two-fold question arises, “What is our lifestyle, and how can it be renewed?”

Today, we are presented with many choices that we can make in terms of how we may lead our lives and define our lifestyle.

In many respects, we are engulfed by social influences and socially constructed value systems that pressure us. For example, there are lifestyles centered around and determined by the desire to acquire, by all means, as much money and property as is possible, or even impossible. Here, greed is the dominant motivation behind this lifestyle.

There are lifestyles characterized by the pursuit of personal power. Here, we concern ourselves with anything in terms of social position, physical condition, the usage of force and even violence, or any other element that contributes to the increase of power and dominion over others. These are the basic characteristics of lifestyles focused on acquiring control by force and power.

There are also lifestyles oriented towards pleasure as the basic principle and supreme value for human beings. This lifestyle frequently involves acts of corruption, immorality, and, ultimately, a slavery to one’s senses and to their immediate and absolute satisfaction.

In view of the above mentioned lifestyles, where do we stand? Is our lifestyle a mixture, to a certain degree, of lifestyles based on greed, power, and pleasure; with the addition of some Christian elements that, when all is considered, cannot constitute determining values that guide our lives? This is a question worth serious consideration.

In addressing this and other related questions pertaining to lifestyle, it is essential to stress that the model lifestyle

for us to emulate as Orthodox Christians is offered by Jesus Christ, the Apostles, the Saints, and the Martyrs. Upon closer examination, the Christian lifestyle is characterized by three central characteristics.

The first of these characteristics is a deep and genuine love for God. This is manifested by freely submitting to following the will of God. It is also exhibited through the genuine worship of God. The second of these characteristics is a profound love for our fellow human beings. This is demonstrated by the rendering of assistance to those who are in need and by recognizing the importance of promoting peaceful relationships among others. A third characteristic of the Christian lifestyle is the

projection of the Truth of God. This is done through a genuine witness to the Holy Gospel through the vocal proclamation of God’s Word, and through the inclusion of the message of the Gospel in everyday conversations with others.

The adoption of the Christian lifestyle is by no means an easy task, due to the various societal influences and pressures previously mentioned. As difficult as it may be to live an authentic

Christian lifestyle, however, we may take great comfort in knowing that we are always assisted by the grace of God, by the sacraments of the Church, and by the fellowship of the Holy Spirit as we strive to be more and more like Christ, His Apostles, the Saints, and the Martyrs.

Finally, the development of a truly Orthodox Christian lifestyle is never a task that is complete; rather, it is an ongoing metamorphosis of mind that requires our state of being in constant renewal. Here, the words of Saint Paul to the Romans continue to speak with striking relevance to the realities of our contemporary society, and they artfully serve as a fitting conclusion to the core intent of this brief reflection: “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2). This is a beautiful, precise, and eloquent call describing the challenges and responsibilities of living the Christian lifestyle. We can, and we should, embrace these words as we work toward the ongoing renewal of our own lifestyles.





*Congratulations to the Saint Nicholas GOYA Girl's A team on their win at the Saint Demetrios Tournament - 44-0.*

*Our Girl's A team ended their season undefeated!!*

*A special thank you to Father Michael for always cheering them on!*





## PTA OFFICERS & MEMBERS

<b>President</b>	Alexandra Forakis
<b>Vice President</b>	Maria Ieromonahos
<b>Treasurer</b>	Alexandra Karoutsos
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Angela Yeakim
<b>Corresponding Secretary</b>	Stella Fotinos
<b>Members</b>	Angela Tserkis Anna Ieromonahos Dimitra Douskas Lia Dimas Maria Lykos Moshoula Tsamouras Sofia Vasiliadis Sophia Politis Tsambika Korologos



Monday, May 11th at 5:30 pm

Monday, May 4th Protomagia Celebration  
Wednesday, May 27th End of Year Program  
TBD 6th Grade Dinner  
June 11th -14th Kids Zone at Greek Festival



Happy  
Mothers  
Day



FROM  
SAINT NICHOLAS  
CHURCH



## SAINT NICHOLAS BILINGUAL EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

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.

In April, we celebrated Easter with a visit from the Easter bunny and an egg hunt. The children enjoyed searching and finding the eggs that our Easter bunny left for them.

This month the children will learn how to plant flowers and care for them. They will watch them grow and present their flowers to their mothers for Mother's Day. The children will also learn about the life cycle of a butterfly. We will have live caterpillars in our classrooms and they will teach us about the miracle of metamorphosis.

Το Δίγλωσσο Κέντρο Προσχολικής Αγωγής Αγίου Νικολάου παρέχει ένα ασφαλές, φροντιστικό, κέντρο μάθησης μακριά από το σπίτι. Δεχόμαστε παιδιά από 6 εβδομάδων έως 5 ετών. Το BEEC προσλαμβάνει βοηθούς μερικής και πλήρους απασχόλησης για να βοηθήσουν τους δασκάλους μας στο Κέντρο. Εάν εσείς ή κάποιος που γνωρίζετε ενδιαφέρεται, καλέστε το Κέντρο στο 410-633-5020 εσωτερικό 4 ή στείλτε μας μήνυμα στο Facebook.

Τον Απρίλιο, γιορτάσαμε το Πάσχα με μια επίσκεψη από το λαγουδάκι του Πάσχα και ένα κυνήγι αυγών. Τα παιδιά απόλαυσαν την αναζήτηση και την εύρεση των αυγών που άφησε το λαγουδάκι του Πάσχα γι' αυτά.

Αυτόν τον μήνα τα παιδιά θα μάθουν πώς να φυτεύουν λουλούδια και να τα φροντίζουν. Θα τα παρακολουθήσουν να μεγαλώνουν και θα δώσουν τα λουλούδια τους στις μητέρες τους για την Ημέρα της Μητέρας. Τα παιδιά θα μάθουν επίσης για τον κύκλο ζωής μιας πεταλούδας. Θα έχουμε ζωντανές κάμπιες στις τάξεις μας και θα μας διδάξουν για το θαύμα της μεταμόρφωσης.



# PHILOTOCHOS

## Christos Anesti! Christ has risen!

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”* 1 Peter 1:3

We would like to thank everyone who donated to the flowers to decorate the Epitaphio your donations were appreciated. Proceeds received paid for the flowers, and the balance will be used for our social service cases. God Bless you and your families!

Scholarship Application's for the Linda Skandalis Memorial Scholarship, Triantafilos/Lambros Memorial Scholarship, and the Philoptochos Scholarships may be obtained in the church office. All applications must be completed and submitted no later than Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup> and will be awarded in church on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>.

The last Philoptochos General Meeting for this year will be held on Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00p.m. in the large church social hall. Everyone is welcome! Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> Mother's Day Philoptochos honoring of the Mother or Mothers of the Year. We would like to wish all the Moms of our community a very Blessed and Happy Mother's Day.

Join us for our Annual Spring Event on Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at Libertore's Ristorante, 5055 Honeygo Center Drive, Perry Hall, Maryland Donation \$50.00 includes Buffet Dinner and Dessert Cash Bar, Proceeds benefit Philoptochos Missions. For information or tickets please contact Eva Nychis 443-812-0346 or Renee Themelis 410-790-2775.

### DONATIONS:

Garifilia Conway

### *In memory of Demetrios Koutsantonis:*

From Maria Karagianni, Michael and Nora Kefalas, Zoe and George Perdikakis and Demetrios and Christine Zervos

*In memory of Emanuel Pikounis:* From Eleni Pikounis

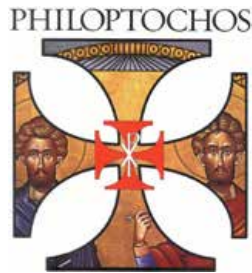
### PHILOXENIA HOUSE DONATIONS:

Nancy Anastasiades

## Χρήστο Ανέστη! Χριστός Ανέστη!

*«Δόξα τω Θεώ και Πατέρα του Κυρίου ημών Ιησού Χριστού, ο οποίος εν τω μέγα έλεός αυτού μάς έδωσε νέαν γέννησιν εις ζώσαν ελπίδα δια της αναστάσεως του Ιησού Χριστού εκ νεκρών»* Α' Πέτρου 1:3

Θα θέλαμε να ευχαριστήσουμε όλους όσους συνεισέφεραν για την διακόσμηση του Επιταφίου. Οι δωρεές σας εκτιμήθηκαν.



Τα έσοδα που ελήφθησαν χρησίμευσαν για την αγορά των λουλουδιών και το υπόλοιπο θα χρησιμοποιηθεί για τις κοινωνικές μας δράσεις. Ο Θεός να ευλογεί εσάς και τις οικογένειές σας!

Οι αιτήσεις για την υποτροφία στη μνήμη της Λίντα Σκανδάλη, την υποτροφία στη μνήμη του Τριαντάφυλλου/Λάμπρου και τις υποτροφίες Φιλοπτώχου μπορούν να ληφθούν από το γραφείο της εκκλησίας. Όλες οι αιτήσεις πρέπει να συμπληρωθούν και να υποβληθούν το αργότερο μέχρι την Τετάρτη 29 Απριλίου και θα απονεμηθούν στην εκκλησία την Κυριακή 17 Μαΐου.

Η τελευταία Γενική Συνέλευση της Φιλοπτώχου για φέτος θα πραγματοποιηθεί τη Δευτέρα 4 Μαΐου στις 6:00 μ.μ. στη μεγάλη αίθουσα εκδηλώσεων της εκκλησίας. Όλοι είναι ευπρόσδεκτοι! Κυριακή 10 Μαΐου, Ημέρα της Μητέρας, η Φιλοπτώχος τιμά τη Μητέρα ή τις Μητέρες της Χρονιάς. Θα θέλαμε να ευχηθούμε σε όλες τις Μητέρες της κοινότητάς μας μια πολύ Ευλογημένη και Χαρούμενη Ημέρα της Μητέρας.

Ελάτε μαζί μας στην Ετήσια Εαρινή μας Εκδήλωση την Τετάρτη 13 Μαΐου στο Libertore's Ristorante, 5055 Honeygo Center Drive, Perry Hall, Maryland. Δωρεά 50,00 \$ περιλαμβάνει δείπνο σε μπουφέ και μπαρ με επιδόρπια. Τα έσοδα θα διατεθούν για τις Ιεραποστολές της Φιλοπτώχου. Για πληροφορίες ή εισιτήρια, επικοινωνήστε με την Εύα Νύχη στο 443-812-0346 ή με την Ρενέ Θέμελις στο 410-790-2775.

### ΔΩΡΕΕΣ:

Γαριφίλια Κόνγγουει

### *Στη μνήμη του Δημητρίου Κουτσαντώνη:*

Από τη Μαρία Καραγιάννη, τον Μιχαήλ και τη Νόρα Κεφαλά, τη Ζωή και τον Γιώργο Περδικάκη και τον Δημήτριο και την Χριστίνα Ζερβό

*Στη μνήμη του Εμανουήλ Πικούνη:* Από την Ελένη Πικούνη

### ΔΩΡΕΕΣ PHILOXENIA HOUSE:

Νάνου Αναστασιάδη

# MEMORIAL DONATIONS

***In Memory of Irimi Athanailea***  
Evelyn and Constantine Kimos

***In Memory of Patricia Anna Birry***  
Mr. & Mrs. John & Katina Palas

***In Memory of Seva Cook***  
Mr. Chris Angelopoulos

***In Memory of Antonios, Kalliopi  
and Nicholas Cornias***  
Mr. & Mrs. Tony & Maria Pearce

***In Memory of Stella Eleftheriou***  
Mr. & Mrs. Tony & Maria Pearce

***In Memory of Kostantinos and  
Markella Forakis***  
Mr. & Mrs. Tony & Maria Pearce

***In Memory of Konstantinos and  
Flora Karais***  
Mr. & Mrs. Lucas Papavasiliou  
Mr. Tom Katsikides  
Mr. & Mrs Larry & Kyriala Cornias

***In Memory of Vasiliki Klosteridou***  
Mr. & Mr. Sotiri & Vasso Koumoudis

***In Memory of Kalliope A. Kornias***  
Effie, Maria & Nikoletta Filipidis

***In Memory of Demetrios Koustantonis***  
Mrs. Arezina Cornias  
Mr. Spero Demetrides  
Mr. & Mrs. Mike & LEMONIA Stakias  
Agatha & Evagelia Douros  
Ms. Sylvia Rice  
Mr. & Mrs. Harry & Maria Kyriakacos  
Ms. Harriet M. Pappas  
Mrs. Anastasia Vasilakopoulos  
Mrs. Sia Kyriakos  
Ms. Morgan Showalter  
Mrs. Sophia Kastanaras  
Mrs. Mary Ann Rigopoulos  
Mr. & Mrs. Tony & Maria Pearce  
Mr. & Mrs. John & Katina Palas

***In Memory of Mary Pearce***  
Mr. & Mrs. Tony & Maria Pearce

***In Memory of Kaliopé Pikounis***  
Mr. & Mrs. Sotiri & Vasso Koumoudis

***In Memory of Athanasios Reglas***  
Mrs. Markella Karantzas Reglas

***In Memory of Christina Sariganis***  
Mr. & Mrs. Glenn & Angelique Hooper

***In Memory of Athanassios and  
Anastasia Sarioglou***  
Mr. & Mrs. Fotis & Ekaterini Araviakis

***In Memory of Toula Serdenes***  
Mrs. Sophie Chrissomallis  
Ladies Philoptochos Society of Saint  
Nicholas  
Mrs. Maria Karagianis  
Mrs. Mary Antonas  
Mrs. Hariklia Karagianis  
Mrs. Andromachi Foukas  
Mr. Chris Angelopoulos  
Mrs. Metaxia Chrissomallis  
Mrs. Stella Plagianakos

***In Memory of Angelos Vassilopoulos***  
Mrs. Christina Rologas  
Mr. Stavros Rologas  
Mr. & Mrs. Fotis & Ekaterini Araviakis



## NOTICE:

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

Thank you for your cooperation.

## 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 Saint 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](http://www.stnicholasmd.org) or download the GivePlus mobile app.



Thank you for all you do to support our Saint Nicholas family!

# SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

## 2026 Koutsonouris Scholarship Application

Any student whose family is a member in Good Standing with the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 520 South Ponca Street, Baltimore, MD 21224, and is a High School Senior continuing his/her education at either a 4 Year or 2 Year College will be eligible to apply for this scholarship award. Please provide a copy of the Acceptance Letter with the Registrar Seal of the University or College in a sealed envelope.

The Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church will award the Scholarship from the Koutsonouris Memorial Scholarship Program to a student of the Saint Nicholas Community. The following criteria will be used in the selecting the winner:

1. Financial Need
2. Good Character
3. Academics
4. Leadership in Schools
5. Service to Our Church Community

The following items must be enclosed in one envelope in order for the application to be processed and accepted:

1. Fully Completed Application
2. Official Copy of the most recent High School or College Transcripts
3. Recent photograph of the candidate
4. Short Essay (No longer than 300 words) explaining your plan of study, ambition, and career goals.
5. Document proving that you are of Greek Descent.

**Completed Applications should be Postmarked no later than May 4th ,2026.**

Applications should be mailed to the following address:

Argie Maurakis  
P.O Box 86  
Bena, VA 23018

The recipient will be notified by May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026. The recipient must be present to be awarded at the end of the Divine Liturgy on **Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026** Each recipient is eligible to receive this scholarship only one time. Candidates without online access can get a copy of the Application in the Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Office.

The form can be downloaded from:

- [www.stnicholasmd.org](http://www.stnicholasmd.org)
- Church Life
- College Scholarship Programs

# NOTICES / EVENTS

**CAMP GOOD SHEPHERD 2026**

Virginia July 5-11 | Maryland July 12-18 | New Jersey July 12-18

**Registration Opens February 2026!**

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

We are happy to announce that, once again, we will offer scholarships for Camp Good Shepherd! Our hope is that all youth who wish to attend CGS will have that chance - regardless of any financial limitations.

How can a prospective camper apply for a scholarship? They should discuss their need for a scholarship with their parish priest who will contact me to share the names of his parishioners in need of a scholarship. He will also provide the contact information for a parent of the camper. I will review and then provide a code for them to register for camp.

The final deadline for CGS scholarships this year will be May 15, 2026, but requests will be reviewed and offered as they are received.

Fr Symeon Williams  
 Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries  
 Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

**JOY & HOPE**

**LEARNING TO LIVE BOLDLY IN CHRIST THROUGH THE WITNESS OF SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELEN**

**Sunday, May 24th**  
 Greek School Classrooms (Immediately following Service)

Join us for a special JOY & HOPE gathering as we celebrate the Feast of Saints Constantine and Helen, reflecting on their faith and lasting impact on the Church.

**THIS MEANINGFUL AND ENGAGING EVENT WILL HELP CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT:**

- SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELEN AND THEIR ROLE IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
- THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUE CROSS AND ITS IMPORTANCE
- HOW THEIR LIVES HELPED SHAPE THE EARLY CHURCH
- TRUSTING GOD AND BOLDLY LIVING OUT OUR FAITH

**For More Info Contact:**  
 Eva Mavroulis  
 717-969-0016

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses... let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."  
 Hebrews 12:1

**JULY 1-5 2026**  
**CLEVELAND, OH**

Join hundreds of young adults for a weekend full of faith & fellowship!

*Rise & Build: Claim Your Calling!*

Featuring:  
 Engaging speakers - Interactive service project  
 Themed evening events - Free time in Cleveland

**Register Now!**  
[clergyiaity.org/yalconference](http://clergyiaity.org/yalconference)

IG/FB @yalnationalconference  
 Questions? Email us at [yal@goarch.org](mailto:yal@goarch.org).

# FESTIVAL RAFFLE TICKET LETTER



METROPOLIS  
OF NEW JERSEY

## SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

520 SOUTH PONCA STREET, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21224

May, 2026

Dear Parishioners and Friends of Saint Nicholas Church,

With the grace of God, our Saint Nicholas church will be hosting our legendary annual Greek Folk Festival once again this year. Organizers are already busy preparing for the big Glendi! The festival will be held from Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>.

The festival is one of our church's biggest fundraisers. The funds raised are critical for the operation of our beloved Saint Nicholas Church. Your past support of Saint Nicholas, and our festival, has been crucial in keeping our church open and continuing to thrive. We again ask you to consider supporting our festival in any way that you can. One way to support the festival is by purchasing raffle tickets.

Following the success of last year's transition, the Parish Council and Festival Committee are **continuing with the updated raffle format** to ensure it remains accessible to everyone. This year's raffle will again feature a single grand prize: two (2) round-trip airfare tickets to Greece or \$3,000.00 in cash. By maintaining the ticket price at just \$10, we make it easier for all of us to share this opportunity with friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers

Enclosed you will find your raffle tickets. We are asking for your support in selling as many tickets as possible to make this year's raffle fundraiser a success. Buy as many as you can and sell the rest to family and friends. Please let us know if you would like more raffle tickets!

**Your ticket stub(s) and payment should be returned to the church office no later than May 31<sup>st</sup>. The drawing will be held on Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 pm at the Plateia.**

*We remain deeply grateful for your steadfast support of both our festival and raffle throughout the years. We look forward to your continued participation this year as we work together to make our community's celebration a success.*

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Fr, Michael L. PASTRIKOS  
Protopresbyter

Stamatia Ieromonahos  
Parish Council President

Spiro Alafassos  
Greek Folk Festival Chairperson

Eleni Kostalas-Lentis  
Raffle Chairperson

*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. -Galatians 6:9*

# FESTIVAL RAFFLE TICKET LETTER



ΜΕΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ  
OF NEW JERSEY

## SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

520 SOUTH PONCA STREET, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21224

Μάιος 2026

Αγαπητοί Ενορίτες και φίλοι του Αγίου Νικολάου,

Με τη χάρη του Θεού, ο ναός μας του Αγίου Νικολάου θα φιλοξενήσει και φέτος το θρυλικό ετήσιο Ελληνικό Λαϊκό Φεστιβάλ μας. Οι διοργανωτές είναι ήδη απασχολημένοι με την προετοιμασία για το μεγάλο Γλέντι μας! Το φεστιβάλ θα διεξαχθεί από την Πέμπτη 11 Ιουνίου έως την Κυριακή 14 Ιουνίου.

Το φεστιβάλ είναι ένας από τους μεγαλύτερους εράνους της Εκκλησίας μας. Τα χρήματα που συγκεντρώνονται κάθε χρόνο είναι απαραίτητα για τη λειτουργία της αγαπημένης μας Εκκλησίας του Αγίου Νικολάου. Η προηγούμενη υποστήριξή σας στον Άγιο Νικόλαο και στο φεστιβάλ μας, ήταν καθοριστικής σημασίας για να κρατήσουμε την Εκκλησία μας ανοιχτή και να συνεχίσουμε να ευδοκιμούμε. Σας ζητάμε και πάλι να σκεφτείτε το ενδεχόμενο να στηρίξετε το φεστιβάλ μας με όποιον τρόπο μπορείτε. Ένας τρόπος για να το κάνετε, είναι η αγορά εισιτηρίων για κλήρωση.

Το Ενοριακό Συμβούλιο και η Επιτροπή του Φεστιβάλ, **μετά την επιτυχία της περσινής αλλαγής**, συνεχίζουν και φέτος τη νέα μορφή της λαχειοφόρου αγοράς μας, ώστε να είναι πιο προσίτη σε όλους. Το φετινό μας έπαθλο θα είναι και πάλι μία επιλογή: Δύο (2) εισιτήρια μετ' επιστροφής για την Ελλάδα ή \$3.000,00 σε μετρητά, με το κόστος του λαχνού να παραμένει στα \$10. Αυτή η προσίτη τιμή διευκολύνει όλους μας να προωθήσουμε τους λαχνούς σε φίλους, συγγενείς, γείτονες και συναδέλφους.

Στο φάκελο, θα βρείτε τα εισιτήρια της κλήρωσης. Ζητάμε την υποστήριξή σας για την πώληση όσο το δυνατόν περισσότερων εισιτηρίων, ώστε να πετύχει ο έρανος της λοταρίας φέτος. Αγοράστε όσα περισσότερα μπορείτε και πουλήστε τα υπόλοιπα στην οικογένεια και τους φίλους σας. Ενημερώστε μας, αν θέλετε περισσότερα εισιτήρια για κλήρωση!

**Τα αποκόμματα του εισιτηρίου σας και η πληρωμή σας θα πρέπει να επιστραφούν στο γραφείο της Εκκλησίας το αργότερο στις 31 Μαΐου. Η κλήρωση θα πραγματοποιηθεί την Κυριακή 14 Ιουνίου στις 21:00. στην Πλατεία.**

*Παραμένουμε βαθιά ευγνώμονες για τη συνεχή υποστήριξή σας τόσο στο φεστιβάλ όσο και στη λαχειοφόρο αγορά μας όλα αυτά τα χρόνια. Προσδοκούμε στη συμμετοχή σας και φέτος, ώστε να εξασφαλίσουμε μαζί την επιτυχία της κοινότητάς μας.*

Με αγάπη,

Πρωτ. π. Μιχαήλ Α. Παστρικός

Σταματία Ιερομονάχου, Πρόεδρος  
Ενοριακού Συμβουλίου

Σπύρος Αλαφάσσοσ,  
Υπεύθυνος Ελληνικού Φεστιβάλ

Ελένη Κώσταλα-Λέντη,  
Υπεύθυνη Λαχειοφόρου Αγοράς

*Ας μην κουραζόμαστε να κάνουμε το καλό, γιατί την κατάλληλη στιγμή, θα θερίσουμε μια σοδειά αν δεν τα παρατήσουμε. -Γαλάτες 6:9*

# B'More Greek!

**FOUR DAYS OF NON-STOP GREEK FOOD,  
MUSIC, DANCING & FUN!**



## SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK FOLK FESTIVAL

THU

FRI

SAT

SUN

**JUNE 11, 12, 13, 14**

**GreekTown Square & Events Center**

**701 Ponca Street / Baltimore, MD 21224**

**KIDS'  
ZONE**  
FEATURING  
**ARTS &  
CRAFTS**

REGIONAL GREEK  
DANCE TROUPE  
PERFORMANCES

**GREEK BEER  
GREEK WINES**

EAT, DRINK, &  
**DANCE  
UNDER THE  
STARS**

FUN FOR ALL  
**FREE  
ADMISSION**

HOMEMADE DESSERTS  
**BAKLAVA  
LOUKOUMADES**

**FIRE ROASTED  
LAMB**  
SOUVLAKI & GYRO

...AND MUCH MORE

**GreekFolkFestival.com**

**Free Admission & Parking 410-633-5020**

# 2026 FESTIVAL AD BOOK FORM

## SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK FOLK FESTIVAL

Check if same ad as 2025

### 2026 - June 11-14

### AD PLACEMENT ORDER FORM

*Support St. Nicholas Church by purchasing your ad space now!  
Don't forget weddings, baptisms, engagements, graduations, memorials*

- \$400 - Full Page - 6" x 9"
- \$200 - Half Page - 6" x 4.5"
- \$125 - Quarter Page - 3" x 4.5"
- \$600 - Back Cover
- \$600 - Inside Front Cover
- \$500 - Inside Back Cover

**DEADLINE: FRIDAY, MAY 15<sup>th</sup>**

Completed forms and ads must be received  
by 5/15/26 or placement cannot be  
guaranteed in the ad book

(Jpg or pdf format, Minimum resolution - 150 ppi)

Artwork to [adrienne@kosaridesign.com](mailto:adrienne@kosaridesign.com)

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Submission date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / 2026

**NOTE:** Please e-mail this form to [saintnicholasfestival@gmail.com](mailto:saintnicholasfestival@gmail.com) and submit artwork to [adrienne@kosaridesign.com](mailto:adrienne@kosaridesign.com) by **Friday, May 15**. Ads that do not fit the measurements above will be resized. No bleed edge required. Please check box at top of form if same ad as 2025.

**PAYMENT:** Please send your form and check made out to: **St. Nicholas Greek Folk Festival 2026 Ad Book**, 520 South Ponca Street, Baltimore, MD 21224. For payment questions please contact Emily at **443-462-1292**.

**ONLINE PAYMENT:** <https://stnicholasmd.org/donate>  
SELECT "Festival Ad Book"  
SELECT Ad size(s) and "Continue" for the payment page



# Save the Date

## The Golden Jubilee for Father Michael L. Pastrikos

**The 50th Anniversary of Father Michael's ordination into the Holy Priesthood.**

We invite you to mark your calendars  
for a historic milestone in the life of Fr. Michael.

**50 Years a Priest - 19 years our Spiritual Leader and Advisor.**

Since his ordination on December 4, 1976, Father Michael has served the Lord  
with tireless love and spiritual grace.

Since 2007, he has served St. Nicholas Church.

Let us gather to celebrate his Golden Jubilee  
And his commitment to our community.

To honor his five decades of faithful service, love, and unwavering dedication,

### A Parish Luncheon Celebration

will be held on:

**Sunday, December 6, 2026**  
**Greektown Square & Event Center**

*Immediately following the Divine Liturgy*

Please plan to join us as we honor  
Father Michael's many years of  
Service and Spiritual leadership.

More details to follow.



# Save the Date

Το Χρυσό Ιωβηλαίο του Πρωτοπρεσβυτέρου  
**Μιχαήλ Α. Παστρικού**

**Την 50ή Επέτειο της χειροτονίας του Πατρός Μιχαήλ στην Αγία Ιεροσύνη.**

Σας προσκαλούμε να σημειώσετε στο ημερολόγιό σας  
για ένα ιστορικό σταθμό για τον Πατήρ Μιχαήλ

**50 Έτη Ιεροσύνης — 19 Έτη ο Πνευματικός μας Πατέρας και Σύμβουλος.**

Από τη χειροτονία του στις 4 Δεκεμβρίου 1976, ο Πατήρ Μιχαήλ υπηρετεί τον Κύριο  
με ακούραστη αγάπη και πνευματική χάρη.  
Από το 2007, διακονεί την Εκκλησία του Αγίου Νικολάου.

Ας συγκεντρωθούμε για να γιορτάσουμε το Χρυσό του Ιωβηλαίο και τη βαθιά του αφοσίωση στην κοινότητά  
μας. Για να τιμήσουμε τις πέντε δεκαετίες πίστης διακονίας, αγάπης και ακλόνητης αφοσίωσης στον Κύριο  
και στην κοινότητα του Αγίου Νικολάου.  
Σας προσκαλούμε σε:

**Ενοριακό Γεύμα την:**  
**Κυριακή, 6 Δεκεμβρίου 2026**  
**Greektown Square & Event Center**

*Αμέσως μετά τη Θεία Λειτουργία.*

Σας προσκαλούμε να τιμήσετε  
με την παρουσία σας την πολυετή διακονία και  
την πνευματική ηγεσία του Πατρός Μιχαήλ.

Θα ακολουθήσουν  
περισσότερες λεπτομέρειες.





**2027**  
**NEW YEAR**  
*Celebration Party*

**SAVE THE DATE!!!!**

THURSDAY

**31**

DECEMBER

**Greektown Square &  
Event Center**

**Details to Follow!**

## The myrrh-bearing women



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian kids. Copyright 2026 Alexandra Houck. Email is orthodoxchildrensward (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at orthodoxchildrensward.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, April 26, 2026

Volume 14, Issue 17

## Very important jobs

**Do you have a special job you do** around the house? Maybe cleaning up the table after dinner, or picking up toys, or vacuuming the carpet? Maybe you do a job that is just for you, and other family members have other jobs just for them.



In today's epistle reading, we hear about the very special jobs that the apostles had. We hear how the apostles were busy telling people about God, and about our Lord. They had an important job to spread the good news of our Lord's resurrection.

But at the same time, the apostles also had another job to do, and that was to help the poor, giving them food and what they needed. They were so busy, that they couldn't do it all! That's why they gave some other people this special job. They picked seven men who loved God and were full of wisdom—the first deacons! These first seven deacons helped the poor and gave them what they needed. Then the apostles could keep doing their very important job too—spreading the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We all have special jobs to do, even at church. Let's remember what the apostles did, and remember that each one is important!

## WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Anoint
- Apostles
- Brave
- Feeding
- Georgia
- Joseph
- Myrrh
- Preach
- Risen
- Serve
- Tamara
- Widows

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

## WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

Saint Mary Magdalene was one of the myrrh-bearing women.

Do you see her bottle of myrrh? We remember what she did for Jesus when we see her icon.



## SAINT TAMARA

### HOLY QUEEN OF GEORGIA

**How close are you to being 12 years old?** Can you imagine being queen or king at age 12? Today, we celebrate a saint who ruled her country as a child, along with her father. Then, when she was only 18, she became queen and ruled the country of Georgia all by herself.



Saint Tamara lived 900 years ago, but the people of Georgia still remember her as a perfect heroine of their country.

She was brave.—At that time, there were lots of attacks on her country, and Tamara always prayed to God to help her and to show her what to do.

She was prayerful.—During the day, everybody saw Tamara as a queen. But at night, Tamara would spend hours in prayer.

She helped the poor.—Once, Saint Tamara was getting ready with all her fancy clothes, and she heard there was somebody begging outside the gates. Well, she was too slow to help him, and he wasn't there when she came out. Tamara felt really awful about this, and she tried extra hard to help the poor after this.

She loved the Church.—Tamara knew she had a big responsibility! She kept the Orthodox faith going strong in her country, building churches, helping priests, and also protecting Georgia from other religions. The Georgian people still remember her for it.

We remember St. Tamara on May 1st and on Myrrh-bearers Sunday (today).

© Alexandra Houck 2026



## 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](http://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](http://stnicholasmd.org/give)**  
Or download the mobile app!

**VANCO**



## MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE CARD ΚΑΡΤΑ ΕΘΕΛΟΝΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΣΦΟΡΑΣ

### RISE AND BUILD

### ΑΝΑΣΤΩΜΕΝ ΚΑΙ ΟΙΚΟΔΟΜΗΣΩΜΕΝ

#### 2026 SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH CONFIDENTIAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CARD 2026 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 2026 :\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Συνολικό ποσό προσφοράς για το 2026 :\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

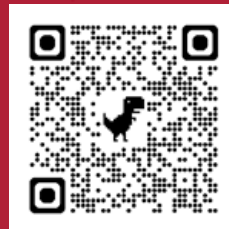
Date/ Ημερομηνία

Name / Όνομα	Date of Birth / Ημερομ. Γεννήσεως
Name of Spouse / Όνομα συζύγου	Date of Birth / Ημερομ. Γεννήσεως
Occupation / Επάγγελμα	
Occupation / Επάγγελμα (Spouse)	
Street Address / Ιλιεύθυνση	
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](http://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, τρίμηνο ή έτος.

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



Make life-long memories

### The School

Founded in 1904, the American Farm School of Thessaloniki is not your average school. "Challenging," "Experiential," "Unique," "Residential," "Hands-on," "Green," "Traditional," "Life-changing," are a few adjectives alumni have used to describe the institution. Building on tradition of preparing stewards of the land and future leaders, the AFS was one of the first schools worldwide established with a required community service component, and our residential campus has allowed this philosophy to become a way of life.

Greek Summer has been offered to U.S. and international high school students since 1970.



### The Program

Embark on an unforgettable four-week life journey. You will see the very best of Greece while learning hands-on how to play a role in protecting our environment; you'll change young lives through a service project in a local village, and make lifelong friends along the way.

Colleges today seek to learn about the depth of a student's character, commitment to others, and genuine involvement in social change. They seek leaders and risk-takers ready to give of themselves - while finding themselves through their own personal journey. You can do all that while having the time of your life!

Experience a home-stay with a family in a local village and take part in a community service project. Climb Mount Olympus. Explore ancient and contemporary Greece. Visit historic villages and cities.

The program helps you develop your cross-cultural skills, empathy, and confidence to learn and thrive in new environments. Greek Summer can be the beginning of your unique Odyssey!

Build strong relationships & redefine your world



### The Staff

Staff are committed educators focused on providing compelling learning experiences. They encourage participants to engage in thoughtful introspection and reflection in order to maximize personal growth. Their knowledge of local culture and extensive training ensure that health and safety are top priorities.



Understand a new culture by living it



## To Apply

Greek Summer runs from late June to the end of July. Dates and deadlines are subject to change and are posted on [www.afsgreeksummer.com](http://www.afsgreeksummer.com).

Applications are available on the website. There is a rolling admissions process so early application is recommended.

Students who are in high school are eligible.

American Farm School, P.O. Box 60097  
Thessaloniki 57001 Greece  
[greeksummer@afs.edu.gr](mailto:greeksummer@afs.edu.gr)  
[www.afsgreeksummer.com](http://www.afsgreeksummer.com)

Facebook: [afsgreeksummer](https://www.facebook.com/afsgreeksummer)  
Instagram: [afsgreeksummer](https://www.instagram.com/afsgreeksummer)

American Farm School  
U.S. Office New York  
T. 212-463-8434





# STUDY IN GREECE

Where knowledge began – and your future takes shape

## Our Mission

- Promote Greece as an international study and research destination
- Support students exploring academic opportunities in Greece
- Coordinate study abroad and exchange initiatives
- Foster partnerships between Greek and international institutions
- Engage Diaspora communities in meaningful academic collaboration

## Why Greece Today?



### Academic Excellence

High-quality programs across disciplines, increasingly offered in English.



### Accessibility & Affordability

A strong educational tradition within a financially accessible framework.



### A Unique Global Position

At the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, Greece offers students perspective, connectivity, and international orientation.

Studying in Greece is not only an academic choice – It is a way to experience contemporary Greece while remaining connected to its enduring legacy.

[studyingreece.edu.gr](http://studyingreece.edu.gr)

# @SiG

Your One-Stop Gateway to Greek Universities



## Everything in One Place

From first search to final submission, @SiG functions as a single entry point to Greek higher education.

@SiG (Apply to Study in Greece) is the centralized digital platform developed by Study in Greece. It brings the entire application journey into one coordinated environment, making access to Greek universities simple, structured, and direct.



### Create Your Profile

Present your academic background, achievements, and language qualifications.

01



### Explore Programs

Browse and compare programs offered by Greek universities and identify the right academic path.

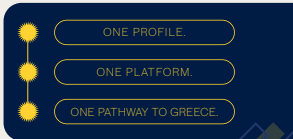
02



### Submit Your Application

Upload your documents and apply directly through the platform, all within the same environment.

03



## A Shared Mission

Together, Study in Greece and @SiG create a unified national gateway that:

- Connects the Diaspora with Greek universities
- Simplifies access to accredited programs
- Strengthens academic ties across borders
- Encourages global Hellenism through education



American Hellenic Institute Foundation  
College Student Foreign Policy Study Trip  
Washington, DC • Greece • Cyprus

## INFORMATION GUIDE –2026

The American Hellenic Institute Foundation (AHIF) College Student Foreign Policy Study Trip to Washington, DC, Cyprus, and Greece offers Greek and Cypriot American college students a focused, three-week immersion in U.S. foreign policy and regional security issues in the Eastern Mediterranean. Participants engage directly with policymakers, government officials, military leaders, academics, and business leaders, with the program led by AHIF President Nick Larigakis.

## Program Overview

### Washington, D.C.

The program begins in Washington, D.C., prior to departure for Cyprus. In the nation's capital, participants will attend briefings and meetings with U.S. government officials and leading institutions, including representatives from the U.S. Department of State, Members of Congress, the embassies of Greece and the Republic of Cyprus, think tanks, academic institutions, and other policy experts.

### Republic of Cyprus

The second segment of the trip takes place in the Republic of Cyprus. Participants will begin meeting with foreign government officials, business leaders, and international organizations, while also gaining exposure to the U.S. military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. This includes learning about joint training programs and engaging with members of the Cyprus National Guard.

### Greece

The final segment of the program takes place in Greece, where participants will continue meetings with foreign government leaders, businesses, and international organizations. Students will further explore U.S.–Greece military cooperation, including visits related to operations at Souda Bay in Crete.

The program will conclude in Athens with a farewell dinner, during which participants will reflect on their experiences and discuss their future academic and professional aspirations.

## Career Impact

Past participants have leveraged this once-in-a-lifetime experience to secure internships and employment, develop academic research projects, and launch careers in foreign policy, international law, diplomacy, and global business

## Eligibility

The program is open to **full-time undergraduate and graduate Greek and Cypriot American students** with a **minimum 3.00 cumulative GPA**. Applicants with strong interest in U.S. foreign policy related to Greece, the Republic of Cyprus, and the Eastern Mediterranean would benefit from this program.

Enrollment is limited and subject to acceptance by the program review committee. Applications are reviewed on a **rolling basis beginning January 2026**; those received after **March 31, 2026** will be considered on a space-available basis.

## For Additional Information and Application:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/655fa6ca49cc6b0b64bd658b/t/696a5987c6d92e5ba90264c6/1768577415826/2026+Application+Form+AHIF+College+Student+Foreign+Policy+Trip.pdf>



# NOTICE

## † Sunday Coffee Hour Sponsored by St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church



**Coffee & Assorted Cookies - \$200**  
Includes setup, cleanup, paper goods

**Coffee Service Only - \$120**  
Includes setup, cleanup, paper goods

**Fruit Tray - \$40**

**Spanakopita - \$75**  
100 pieces

**Tyropita - \$75**  
100 pieces

**Tray of Cheese, Olives & Crackers - \$100**

**Sandwiches - \$2 per piece**  
Tuna, Shrimp or Chicken

For orders please call 410-633-5020 or visit the  
St Nicholas Office at 520 Ponca St



# Sunday Coffee Hour & Makaria Menus

## † 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 (1)**  
Roll & Butter (included)

**Package #1 - \$31pp**  
Salmon (broiled/grilled)  
Shrimp Creole  
Shrimp Orzo  
Cod Fish (broiled/fried)

**Package #2 - \$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,  
Kritharaki(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 \$10

tel church: 410-633-5020  
tel venue: 410-633-3131

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- EXTENSIVE MENU OPTIONS TO SUIT YOUR TASTE AND MATCH YOUR BUDGET
- BAR PACKAGE OPTIONS
- PRIVATE BRIDAL READY ROOM
- DISCOUNT LODGING AT NEARBY HOTELS
- FREE PARKING

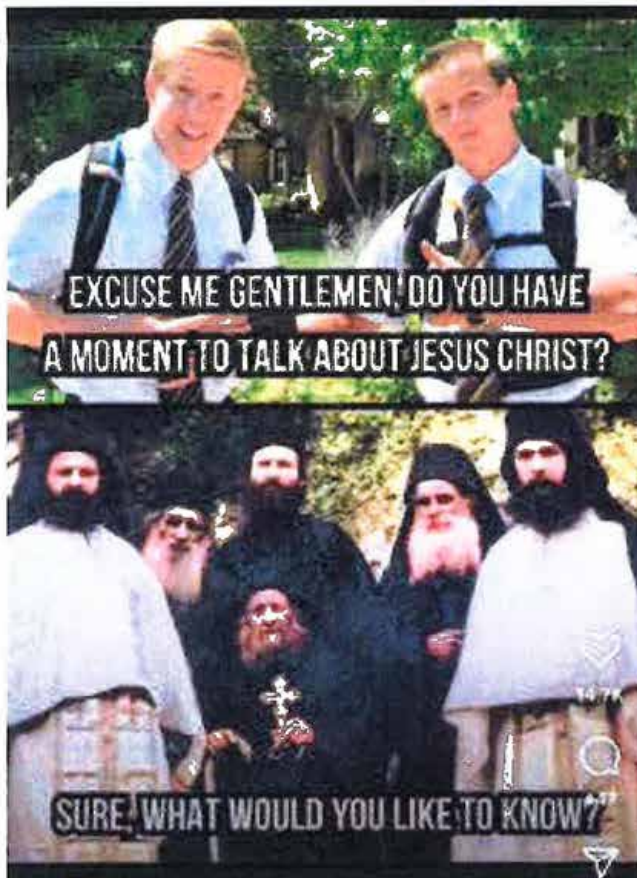


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BISHOP'S CORNER

Submitted by His Grace,  
Demetrios of Mokissos (Retired)

I was watching a show for about 10 minutes, and this lady was listing all of these great things to do for fun. Then I realized that it's one of the religious channels, and she was reading a list of sins.



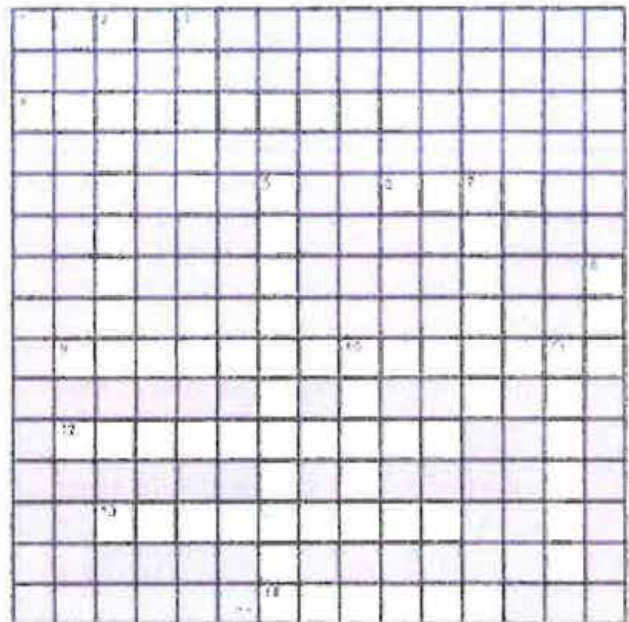
Exercise  
Your Brain!



BIBLICAL CROSSWORD PUZZLE

See how much you know without looking it up

LUKE 1



ACROSS

1. What was Mary to call her son?
4. Where did John live until he appeared publicly to Israel?
6. What name did Zachariah write in the tablet?
9. Who was standing at the right side of the Altar?
12. What will Zachariah's son be filled with?
13. Who's the wife of Zachariah?
14. On what day did they come to circumcise the child?

DOWN

2. The people would be given what through the forgiveness of their sins?
3. What was Zachariah unable to do when he came out from the temple?
5. What did Zachariah prophesise that our feet would be guided into what?
7. According to Mary's song who has been lifted up?
9. Who did Gabriel tell Mary she had found favour with?
10. How many months did Mary stay with Elizabeth?
11. Who were brought down from their thrones?

(ANSWERS ON PAGE 9)

## \$ A FOCUS ON FINANCES \$

### MAKE DEBT WORK FOR YOU, NOT AGAINST YOU

When used wisely, debt can open doors to homeownership, education and financial flexibility. Mismanaged, it can weigh you down and derail your finances. The key is to see debt as a tool to be used responsibly.

#### NOT ALL DEBT IS EQUAL

So-called good debt can be an investment in your future. Mortgages, student loans and small business loans are in this category when managed thoughtfully. These types of debt typically offer lower interest rates and may offer tax advantages and create long-term value.

#### BAD DEBT

Bad Debt usually refers to high-interest obligations like credit card balances or payday loans. This type of debt can quickly spiral out of control if not paid off in a timely manner, quickly eroding your financial health.

Last fall, TransUnion reported that the average U.S. consumer carries over \$6,000 in credit card debt, with an average annual percentage rate (APR) over 20%. That's a clear indicator that a lot of folks aren't on track with responsible credit use. Buck that trend with these four moves:

#### BORROW WHAT YOU CAN COMFORTABLY AFFORD TO REPAY

Before taking on debt, be sure it will fit into what I'll call your "cash flow comfort zone." In other words, will timely payments be an issue? You can calculate



your debt-to-income (DTI) ratio, which compares your total monthly debt payments to your monthly income. A DTI below 36% is generally considered healthy, but no one knows your money situation like you do. Perhaps you're supporting adult children through a difficult time. Something like that won't show up in a DTI calculation, but it could affect your ability to make payments.

#### PAY MORE THAN THE MINIMUM

Minimum payments may keep creditors off your back, but they do little to tackle principal balances, especially on high-interest debt rates. Paying extra each month accelerates your payoff timeline and saves you significant money in interest. For example, paying an additional \$50 a month on a \$5,000 credit card balance with a 20% APR can shave years off your repayments and save thousands.

#### PRIORITIZE HIGH-INTEREST DEBT

Use the avalanche method - paying off debts with the highest interest rates first while making lower payments on others. This strategy minimizes overall interest costs and helps you achieve financial freedom faster. Alternatively, the snowball method focuses on paying off the smallest debts first for psychological wins. Choose the approach that motivates you most.

#### DON'T LET A POINTS RACE GET YOU SIDETRACKED

Travel or rewards points are part of credit card issuers' marketing budgets for a reason: They inspire us to use the card. And while there's nothing wrong with taking advantage of these programs, don't let the quest for the next trip or reward lead to financial irresponsibility.

## HEALTHY BODY AND MIND

### THESE FIVE LIFESTYLE CHANGES CAN HELP CONTROL BLOOD PRESSURE

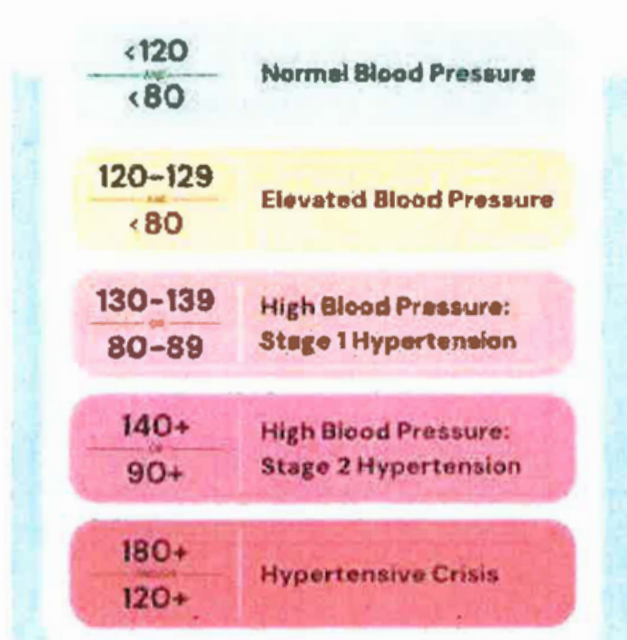
Nearly 50% of Americans have high blood pressure, according to the American Heart Association (AHA). Willie Lawrence Jr., chief medical officer for the Cardiac and Vascular Interventional Group in Dallas and an AHA member, suggests these five lifestyle interventions, saying they can make a difference even for those already taking medication:

#### FOLLOW THE DASH DIET

This eating plan emphasizes fruits, vegetables, legumes and low-fat dairy products, and is low in sweets, snacks, meats, and saturated and total fats. In a trial comparing dietary approaches to blood pressure management, the DASH Diet was shown to decrease blood pressure in hypertensive patients by a fair amount. Reduce sodium intake

This step helps lower blood pressure by decreasing fluid retention and blood volume. Try to limit sodium to less than 2,300 mg/day. "You will see a greater benefit if you keep it below 1,500 mg/day," which is about 3/4 of a teaspoon, Lawrence says.

### Blood Pressure Chart



#### LOSE WEIGHT

Trials such as the Framingham Heart Study and the Nurses' Health Study have clearly established obesity as a contributing factor to hypertension in men and women.

#### EXERCISE

Dynamic aerobic exercise—walking, cycling, swimming and other activities that stress the cardiovascular system—significantly improves cardiovascular health and is shown to lower blood pressure, according to Lawrence. "One study that combined data from multiple medical trials showed that aerobic exercise lowered systolic blood pressure in hypertensive patients by 7 mmHg," he notes.

#### LIMIT ALCOHOL INTAKE

Limiting yourself to one to two drinks per day can lead to small decreases in blood pressure. In 2016, a Lancet study showed that people who drank more than two drinks per day saw a decrease in their blood pressure when they lowered their alcohol intake.

For those struggling with high blood pressure, Lawrence says, multiple strategies can help meet target goals and lower the risk of long-term complications.

### HOW TO NIP SPRING ALLERGIES IN THE BUD

According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), about 26% of adults and 19% of children find their noses running, their eyes itching and their chests tightening when spring comes and pollen fills the air. AAFA's annual Allergy Capitals report offers some tips to help reduce these reactions:

Leave your shoes at the door so you don't track pollen inside.

Shower before going to bed to remove pollen and keep it off your bedding.

Limit contact with pets that spend a lot of time outdoors.

Keep fresh air out by keeping windows closed during peak pollen times. Use central air conditioning or air cleaners with AAFA-certified or HEPA filters.

Clean bedding, floors and fabric furniture once a week, and blinds, curtains and washable rugs at least once a month.

Start taking allergy medication two weeks before pollen season begins, allowing it to build up in your system.

Look for pollen counts and forecasts on local weather stations or websites like pollen.aaaai.org.



## A BREAK IN YOUR DAY NUMBERS

If God had wanted us to use the metric system, he would have chosen TEN disciples.

I believe five out of four people have trouble with fractions.

If it's zero degrees outside today and it's supposed to be twice as cold tomorrow, how cold is it going to be?

You know what seems odd to me? Numbers that aren't divisible by two.

-- Steven Wright

President Bush's morning security briefing is wrapping up. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is concluding his part and says, "Finally, three Brazilian soldiers were killed yesterday near Baghdad."

"OH MY GOD!" shrieks Bush, and he buries his head in his hands for a seemingly interminable 30 seconds. Stunned at the unexpected display of emotion, the President's staff sits speechless, not sure how to react.

Finally, Bush looks up and asks Rumsfeld, "How many is a brazillion?"

Did you hear about the teacher who was arrested trying to board an airplane with a compass, a protractor and a calculator?

He was charged with carrying weapons of math instruction.

Shopping Math: A man will pay \$2 for a \$1 item he needs. A woman will pay \$1 for a \$2 item that she doesn't need.

### DEEP THOUGHTS ... BY JACK HANDEY

Instead of having 'answers' on a math test, they should just call them 'impressions' and if you got a different 'impression' so what, can't we all be brothers?

The ark lands after The Flood. Noah lets all the animals out. He says, "Go and multiply." Several

months pass. Noah decides to check up on the animals. All are doing fine except a pair of snakes. "What's the problem?" says Noah.

"Cut down some trees and let us live there," say the snakes. Noah follows their advice. Several more weeks pass. Noah checks on the snakes again. Lots of little snakes, everybody is happy.

Noah asks, "Want to tell me how the trees helped?"

"Certainly", say the snakes. "We're adders, and we need logs to multiply."

Did you hear about the geometer who went to the beach to catch the rays and became a tangent?

Math teachers are now being asked not to teach negative numbers. It's another step to build student self esteem and keep them thinking positively!

-- David Letterman

My geometry teacher was sometimes acute, and sometimes obtuse, but always, he was right.

Is it possible to cut a prime rib with a steak knife or is a prime rib divisible only by itself and by the number one?

A mathematician once was asked in his class: "What is mathematics good for?"

He replied: "This question makes me sick. Like when you show somebody the Grand Canyon for the first time, and he asks you,

'What's it good for?' What would you do?

Why, you would kick the guy off the cliff."

There are three kinds of mathematicians -- those who can count and those who can't.

There are two groups of people in the world; those who believe that the world can be divided into two groups of people, and those who don't.

There are two groups of people in the world: Those who can be categorized into one of two groups of people, and those who can't.

There are 10 groups of people in the world: those who understand binary, and those who don't.



# FINANCIALS

## Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Church and Greek School

January - March 2026

**PRELIMINARY**

	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget
<b>Income</b>			
4000 Stewardship	75,049.00	66,075.00	8,974.00
4010 Greek School Registration	13,529.75	5,195.00	8,334.75
4020 Sales - Candles	21,738.51	18,600.00	3,138.51
Other Income	29,756.23	19,980.00	9,776.23
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>140,073.49</b>	<b>109,850.00</b>	<b>30,223.49</b>
Total Cost of Goods Sold	10,711.58	24,385.00	(13,673.42)
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>129,361.91</b>	<b>85,465.00</b>	<b>43,896.91</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Total CAPITAL COSTS (CHURCH)	2,458.00	1,920.00	538.00
Total GENERAL & ADMINISTRATION	58,358.51	65,063.00	(6,704.49)
Total OCCUPANCY COSTS	35,614.51	30,700.00	4,914.51
Total PAYROLL EXPENSES	101,422.99	89,300.00	#REF!
Total YOUTH AND EDUCATIONAL	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>197,854.01</b>	<b>186,983.00</b>	<b>10,871.01</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>(68,492.10)</b>	<b>(101,518.00)</b>	<b>33,025.90</b>

## Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Learning Center

January - March 2026

**PRELIMINARY**

	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget
<b>Income</b>			
4011 Learning Center Income	380,273.29	371,205.00	9,068.29
<b>Total 4011 Learning Center Income</b>	<b>380,273.29</b>	<b>371,205.00</b>	<b>9,068.29</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>380,273.29</b>	<b>371,205.00</b>	<b>9,068.29</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>380,273.29</b>	<b>371,205.00</b>	<b>9,068.29</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>LEARNING CENTER</b>			
Admin and Office Expenses	27,144.46	24,242.50	2,901.96
Classroom and Operational Expenses	5,572.22	13,145.00	(7,572.78)
Occupancy Expenses	38,805.22	28,270.00	10,535.22
Payroll Expenses	297,606.17	272,305.00	25,301.17
<b>Total LEARNING CENTER</b>	<b>369,128.07</b>	<b>337,962.50</b>	<b>31,165.57</b>
VACANT BUILDING EXPENSES - 4815 Eastern Ave	218.10	8,175.00	(7,956.90)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>369,346.17</b>	<b>346,137.50</b>	<b>23,208.67</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>10,927.12</b>	<b>25,067.50</b>	<b>(14,140.38)</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>			
State and Local Grants	-	-	-
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Other Revenue</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>10,927.12</b>	<b>25,067.50</b>	<b>(14,140.38)</b>

# FINANCIALS

## Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Plateia

January - March 2026

**PRELIMINARY**

	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget
<b>Income</b>			
<b>4140 Plateia Income (Onsite)</b>	48,519.26	26,100.00	22,419.26
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>48,519.26</b>	<b>26,100.00</b>	<b>22,419.26</b>
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>			
<b>COST OF GOODS SOLD</b>			
<b>Total Plateia CGS Expenses</b>	<b>11,465.58</b>	<b>8,700.00</b>	<b>2,765.58</b>
<b>Total COST OF GOODS SOLD</b>	<b>11,465.58</b>	<b>8,700.00</b>	<b>2,765.58</b>
<b>Total Cost of Goods Sold</b>	<b>11,465.58</b>	<b>8,700.00</b>	<b>2,765.58</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>37,053.68</b>	<b>17,400.00</b>	<b>19,653.68</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>PLATEIA EXPENSES</b>			
<b>Total Occupancy Expenses (Plateia)</b>	36,666.83	39,585.00	(2,918.17)
<b>Total Payroll Expenses (Plateia)</b>	3,077.32	-	3,077.32
<b>Total Admin Expenses (Plateia)</b>	2,134.75	4,065.00	(1,930.25)
<b>Total Bus Dev/Marketing Expenses (Plateia)</b>	215.00	2,250.00	(2,035.00)
<b>Total PLATEIA EXPENSES</b>	<b>42,093.90</b>	<b>45,900.00</b>	<b>(3,806.10)</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>42,093.90</b>	<b>45,900.00</b>	<b>(3,806.10)</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>(5,040.22)</b>	<b>(28,500.00)</b>	<b>23,459.78</b>

## LITURGICAL CALENDAR - MAY

- Sunday, May 3: Sunday of the Paralytic Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
- Sunday, May 10: Sunday of the Samaritan Woman Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am  
*Happy Mother's Day from Father Michael and Saint Nicholas Church*
- Sunday, May 17: Sunday of the Blindman Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45m
- Thursday, May 21: Holy Ascension / Sts. Constantine and Helen Orthros 8:30 am D. Lit. 9:30 am
- Sunday, May 24: Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council Orthros 8:30 am D. Lit 9:45 am
- Monday, May 25: Memorial Day at the Cemetery for all the departed in Christ. 10:am
- Saturday, May 30: Saturday of the Souls: Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
- Sunday, May 31 Holy Pentecost Sunday Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am

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- 2) Enter [stnicholasbaltimore@listserv.goarch.org](mailto:stnicholasbaltimore@listserv.goarch.org) as the To address. If this address does not work, you may need to use [STserv@stnicholasbaltimore@listserv.goarch.org](mailto:STserv@stnicholasbaltimore@listserv.goarch.org). Older list serve accounts were configured with the STserv address.
- 3) Enter "subscribe" *stnicholasbaltimore* in the body of your message where *stnicholasbaltimore* is the name of the list you are subscribing to.
- 4) Leave the subject of the message blank. If your mail program requires text in the subject field, enter random characters.
- 5) Send the email; you will receive a confirmation if you successfully subscribed.