



KOINONIA

NEWSLETTER OF
ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH
North Wildwood, NJ

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ST. DEMETRIOS YOUTH CELEBRATE THE CHRISTMAS SEASON



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thoughts from

FR. MICHAEL L. PASTRIKOS
PROTOPRESBYTER



HAPPY NEW YEAR 2025!!

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the Community a "HAPPY NEW YEAR" and may the New Year 2025 be fruitful, exciting, and challenging. Each New Year brings with it hope of new beginnings. I pray that the renewal and hope of the New Year will be remembered in each moment of the coming year and in all years to come. That every day, every moment, every breath will bring to you a constantly unfolding and infinite awakening to the beauty, joy, and love that resides in your deepest heart within which is the truth of who we are.

We can reminisce and look back in time on what happened to us last year. I'm sure there are positive as well as negative reactions concerning what we have experienced throughout last year's events. In 2025 New Year, we need to bring a joyous and fresh attitude to our daily activities. Forget all the errors and misfortunes that happened last year, and start anew, bringing the Lord Jesus Christ into the forefront of our lives. This is what is truly missing in our lives, the opportunity to grow in Christ.

We all have made mistakes in the past that has brought us to this point. I realize that during the Christmas Holidays we were all short of cash. We all had to make certain cuts and drawbacks in our financial situations to make do with what we were able to afford. But how do we turn things around? We have the power within ourselves to turn the struggles and pains around if we put our minds to it. I have always said that "Mind over Matter" really works. In this day and age, we face different challenges.

Let me ask this serious question. What percentage of your life is producing something of value to God? There is always room for evaluation and reassessment. We need to ask ourselves, how did last year go?

What do I want to do differently this year? What are the pros and cons? Look at the past year and see where you failed, and where you succeeded. Coming into a New Year is the right time for corrections. Sure we might fail what we set out to do, but if we fail to plan, then we plan to fail. If you're so sure of failure then

you're never going to find success. Failure is not the end. For the person who determines to learn from it, failure is a friend. If we need to succeed first we need to be right with God, and we need to correct our old ways and mistakes. God respects the person who, when he fails, gets up and starts fresh.

Many of us are busy and always in a hurry. We walk fast, we talk fast, and we eat fast. If we are to continue this routine we are also going to be sick faster. I hope that we have learned our lessons. I know I have, and we should always make better use of our precious time. In 365 days from now when this year is over, will we be looking back with joy or regret, or looking at the future with anticipation or with dread. I would like to quote the passage from Ephesians 5:15-17 which says: "Be careful then, how you live not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's Will is." One of my heroes in the Bible is Apostle Paul. Talk about failure! Through his whole life he was opposed, persecuted, shipwrecked, stoned and left for dead, deserted by trusted co-workers, slandered, and scorned. Do you think for one moment he had it great in his life? Trials and temptations were part of his life. He had many moments of failure, hardships, and tragedies in his life. Did he give up, NO! He overcame his mishaps and mistakes and picked himself up and continued on his spiritual journey towards God's Heavenly Kingdom. His life was committed not to worldly things but to spiritual fulfillment, something that we don't have today. We look closely to satisfy our earthly desire, and we overlook our spiritual responsibilities.

In closing, I'm going to give everyone a recipe to assist in reaching your goals. This year instead of making so many promises, just make one big one. Resolve in 2025 to "Live your Faith." Let it encompass everything you do, every aspect of your life. Look at your life in terms of "Stewardship". Spend time in daily prayer; come to church regularly and Worship Christ. Use your talents in many of the ministries that the church provides. Find your passion in service, exploring fasting, and teach your children or grandchildren. Give of your abundant treasure in thanksgiving to God, and for the work of the Gospel, in ways that are both sacrificial and meaningful. The opportunities are endless. Find a way to connect Christ and the Church to every aspect of your life. Do what our Lord tells us to do and "Live your Faith."

In Thanksgiving, let us make a positive resolution to pursue our lives in accordance with the Will of God, and put our spiritual household into order, not only during the coming year, but for the remainder of our lives.

Presbytera Dimitra and I, would like to wish everyone in the Community a Happy and Blessed New Year, and pray that through our Incarnate Lord may He bless and keep all of you healthy and wise, and let's make this New Year "The Year of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."



Epiphany of our Lord January 6

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



Introduction

The Feast of the Holy Theophany (Epiphany) of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated each year on January 6. The Feast commemorates the Baptism of Christ and the divine revelation of the Holy Trinity. At the Baptism of Christ, all three Persons of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—were made manifest. Thus, the name of the Feast is Epiphany, meaning manifestation, or Theophany, meaning manifestation of God.

Biblical Story

The story of the Nativity of Christ is The Biblical story of the Baptism of Christ is recorded in all four of the Gospels: Matthew 3, Mark 1:1-9, Luke 3:21-22, and John 1:31-34.

John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus and the one chosen by God to proclaim His coming, was preaching in the wilderness and was baptizing all who would respond to his message calling for repentance. As he was doing this, John was directing the people toward the one who would baptize them with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11).

The Scriptures tell us that Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. Initially, John would not do this, saying that Jesus should baptize him. Jesus said to John, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness (3:15). John consented and baptized Jesus.

When Jesus came up from the water, the heavens opened suddenly, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him. The Bible records that the Spirit descended like a dove and alighted on him. When this happened, a voice came from heaven and said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” This was the voice of God the Father.

Christ’s baptism in the Jordan was “theophany,” a manifestation of God to the world, because it was the beginning of our Lord’s public ministry. It was also a “theophany” in that the world was granted a revelation of the Holy Trinity. All three Persons were made manifest together: the Father testified from on high to the divine Sonship of Jesus; the Son received His Father’s testimony; and the Spirit was seen in the form of a dove, descending from the Father and resting upon the Son.

The theme of “manifestation” or “revelation” is also expressed in Scripture with the symbolism of light. In the hymn of the Feast we sing, “Christ has appeared and enlightened the world.” Thus, January 6 is also known as the Feast of Lights. The Church celebrates on this day the illumination of the world by the light of Christ.

Icon of the Feast

The Icon of the Feast of Theophany tells the story from the Gospels in images and color. On the left side of the icon we see John the Baptist who is dressed in camel’s hair and has the appearance of one who lives in the wilderness. His arms are outstretched, showing an attitude of prayer and reverence, but also directing others to Christ. With his right hand he is conducting the baptism.

In the center of the icon is Christ being baptized in the Jordan. He is standing in the water wearing a waistcloth, and with His right hand He is blessing the waters of the Jordan. Above His head is the Holy Spirit descending as a dove upon Him. At the top

of the icon, a semicircle depicts the opening of the Heavens and the voice of the Father.

On the right side of the icon angels are shown with their heads bowed in reverence to Christ. They are prepared to receive Him as He comes out of the water.

The Orthodox Celebration of the Feast of Epiphany

The celebration of this Feast of our Lord begins on January 5, a day known as the Forefeast of Theophany. Depending on the day of the week, this could be an evening service with Vespers followed by the Liturgy of Saint Basil or a morning service with Matins and the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. Following the service on January 5, the service of the Blessing of the Waters is conducted. Prior to the evening or morning service the Royal Hours with the Typika are said.

On January 6, the day of the Feast, the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is conducted preceded by Matins and followed by the second Blessing of the Waters.

The Blessing of the Waters is conducted in the church; however in many places throughout the world services are conducted near open bodies of water. As a sign of blessing as Christ blessed the Jordan, holy water is poured into the body of water. An associated tradition has been the tossing of a cross into the water to be retrieved by divers.

The holy water from the church is given to the faithful to consume and to use in blessing their homes. In the weeks following the Feast, clergy visit the homes of parishioners and conduct a service of blessing using the holy water that was blessed on the Feast of Theophany.

Scripture readings for the Feast are the following: At the Vespers/Divine Liturgy on January 5: 1 Corinthians 9:19-27; Luke 3:1-18. At the Divine Liturgy on January 6: Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7; Matthew 3:13-17.



Celebrating the Birth of Our Lord and Savior



The Christmas Eve service was followed by beautiful carols.



Feast Day of St. Nicholas in Atlantic City, NJ



*Fr. George Antoniou, Parish Priest; Fr. Michael Pastrikos, St. Demetrios;
Fr. George Liacopoulos, Egg Harbor Holy Trinity; Fr. Manuel Prastinakis,
Retired Clergy.*



St. Demetrios Youth



The St. Demetrios youth performed traditional Christmas carols (kalanta) in the homes of the parishioners.





St. Demetrios Happenings



The youth of St. Demetrios joyfully celebrated the magic of the Christmas season!





St. Demetrios Happenings



Max and Jennifer (Quaglia) Zeremenko were married at the St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in North Wildwood, N.J. on Friday, September 27, 2024. The sponsors were Justin Quaglia and Amanda Aguilera.



Congratulations to the wonderful couple. May the Lord continue to bless their marriage.

The St. Demetrios Ladies Philoptochos society enjoying an evening out together.



Father Michael welcomes visitors from Allenton, PA.

Father Michael with the Parish Council candidates - Archon Nicholas Konides, George Papageorgiou, George Tsaimis, George Mallous, and Archon Bill Mitchell.



Parish Council members voting during the elections.





The Blessings Of The Homes ~ Αγιασμός των Οικιών

Οι προσευχές της Ακολουθίας των Θεοφανείων μας προτρέπουν να αγιάσουμε τα σπίτια μας, και τους αγρούς μας, με τον Μεγάλο Αγιασμό προς ένδειξιν της πίστεώς μας, προς τον Πανάγαθο Θεό και των όσων αγαθών μας έχει χαρίσει και ακόμη για να έχουμε καλή και υγιή χρονιά. Παρακαλείστε όλοι να συνεχίσετε την παράδοση και να αγιάσετε τις οικίες σας με των Μεγάλο Αγιασμό που θα λάβετε από την Εκκλησία στις 6 Ιανουαρίου. Παρακαλείτε λοιπόν, όποιος επιθυμεί να αγιαστεί η οικία του από τον Πατέρα Μιχάλη να συμπληρώσει το παρακάτω έντυπο και να το επιστρέψει στο γραφείο της εκκλησίας. Παρακαλούμε να επικοινωνήσετε με τον Πάτερ μέσω τηλεφώνου ή ηλεκτρονικής διεύθυνσεως για να κανονίσετε τις λεπτομέριες. Σας ευχαριστούμε και Ευτηχισμένο το Νέο Έτος!

The prayers of the Epiphany Service indicate to the faithful to bless their homes with the Holy Water as an expression of faith to God that He grant them a prosperous and healthy New Year. Everyone is encouraged to continue this tradition and bless their home with the Holy Water that they receive from the Church on January 6th. Those parishioners who wish for Father Michael to visit their home so that it may be blessed, are asked to fill out the information below and return this form to the Church office. We also please ask you to contact Father Michael via telephone or email to make the necessary arrangements. Thank you and have a Happy New Year!

Name/Όνομα

Address/Διεύθυνση

Telephone Number/Αριθμός Τηλεφώνου

JANUARY 30

THE THREE HIERARCHS



The eleventh-century Christian appears to have been much more deeply concerned about his religion than the generations which preceded him and those which have followed. He enjoyed a greater freedom of expression than the predecessor who worshipped Jesus Christ at the peril of his life, and his life was not crowded with the

social changes brought on by the invention of the printing press and the machine age. Unencumbered by ideologies spawned in revolution and knowing only one Mother Church, his popular topic of conversation was religion, which invariably came down to a debate about who was the greatest figure in Christian history. These rather innocent and well-intended arguments, which by today's standards appear ill-considered, very often assumed serious proportions, to the point that a formal consideration was necessitated and resulted in the rather unusual celebration of three of our greatest theologians on the same day.

There are heroes galore in the Christian Church, any one of whom could be selected as a favorite, and of the favorites that cropped up in private or public discussion there were three that were most commonly mentioned. These three, who had the remarkable coincidence of serving the Lord in the fourth century, were St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom. The debates that began in the home or market-place soon spread into the Church and its councils and found their way into the upper echelons of the hierarchy, not out of proportion but out of an evolution of ideas wholly natural to the eleventh-century Christian structure.

With an absolute state rule there was little challenge for the brighter minds of the time in government, civil service, as a result of which the intellectuals as well as the dedicated found themselves

drawn to the Church. The tax collector commanded little respect, but the cleric was a man very highly esteemed, and it was to this spiritual servant that the average citizen turned for many services, some of which were outside his sphere of authority. It was quite natural then that a religious question would be brought to the priest and that the controversy would pyramid beyond him to the highest and most respected prelates.

Honored as “Doctors” of the Church, Sts. Basil, Gregory, and John were intellectual giants of equal stature, serving God and man with an equally high level of devotion and spirit. They were theologians and philosophers of the highest order, as well as gifted educators, orators, and spiritual leaders whose influence was such that seven hundred years after they appeared they were still so highly esteemed as to touch off a dispute as to who just might be greatest. After years of polemics, the burning issue reached a climactic conclusion in 1081, during the reign of Emperor Alexios, and then only by what would appear to be the result of divine intervention.

One of the most highly respected prelates of the day was Bishop John of Galatia, known throughout the Byzantine Empire for his considerable wisdom and spiritual integrity, a man who had refused to be drawn into an argument which by then divided the Christian community into three different camps in a sorry display of ill-advised but unavoidable dispute. Some of the greatest minds of the Church became involved in a matter that was spinning out of control and which posed a serious threat to the solidarity of the Faith.

Bishop John of Galatia received a vision in which the Three Hierarchs in question appeared to him to deplore the current disagreement and to ask him to step into the breach with an announcement of their visit and their admonition that the three were equal in the sight of God. Whoever disputed this would, therefore, dispute God. The elated Bishop John went to Constantinople to announce the divine visitation and the tumult was transformed to quiet accord when this relatively simple solution to what up until then had been an uncompromising strife was revealed. Almost overnight harmony was restored. A formal declaration of the equality of the three saints was issued and January 30 was designated as the feast day celebrating the equation of St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom.

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST



Depicting one of the greatest days of the Christian year we see in the icon of the “Epiphany,” the manifestation of God. Also known to us as “Theophany,” meaning “*God reveals Himself to us,*” we see the Holy Trinity clearly revealed for all humankind to know. The Icon of the Baptism of Jesus brings us visually and symbolically into the presence of the manifestation of God. In its presence, we know that God reveals Himself to us, and that through our own baptism, established in the Baptism of Christ, we are made new in the Lord.

Our Christian life begins with our own Baptism and Chrismation into the Orthodox Faith. Membership in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church is based on our participation in the Holy Mysteries of Baptism and Chrismation. Our membership in the Church, however, does not stop once we are baptized. It is the beginning of our life in Christ! It is the means by which we become citizens of the Heavenly Kingdom! Holy Baptism has enabled us to become partakers in the gift of salvation!

Our first STEWARDSHIP offering comes during our Baptism. In thanksgiving for the gift of new life in Christ, we make a personal sacrifice. The tonsuring of the hair is a symbol that we give a part of ourselves to God. This act of the newly baptized member of the Church is done freely and cheerfully. By this act we declare that we will not only offer a part of ourselves to God, but will commit our whole life to Him!

Every Orthodox Christian household must again consider the reason for having been baptized into Christ. When we acknowledge the gift of eternal life offered through Holy Baptism, there is no question as to why we must develop and grow as stewards of the Faith!

SEE: MATTHEW 3:13-17; MARK 1:9-11; JOHN 1:29-34; ROMANS 6:3-11;
COLOSSIANS 2:12

Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia

Saint Basil the Great was born about the end of the year 329 in Caesarea of Cappadocia, to a family renowned for their learning and holiness. His parents' names were Basil and Emily. His mother Emily (commemorated July 19) and his grandmother Macrina (Jan. 14) are Saints of the Church, together with all his brothers and sisters: Macrina, his elder sister (July 19), Gregory of Nyssa (Jan. 10), Peter of Sebastia (Jan. 9), and Naucratius. Basil studied in Constantinople under the sophist Libanius, then in Athens, where also he formed a friendship with the young Gregory, a fellow Cappadocian, later called "the Theologian."

Through the good influence of his sister Macrina (see July 19), he chose to embrace the ascetical life, abandoning his worldly career. He visited the monks in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia, and upon returning to Caesarea, he departed to a hermitage on the Iris River in Pontus, not far from Annesi, where his mother and his sister Macrina were already treading the path of the ascetical life; here he also wrote his ascetical homilies.

About the year 370, when the bishop of his country reposed, he was elected to succeed to his throne and was entrusted with the Church of Christ, which he tended for eight years, living in voluntary poverty and strict asceticism, having no other care than to defend holy Orthodoxy as a worthy successor of the Apostles. The Emperor Valens, and Modestus, the Eparch of the East, who were of one mind with the Arians, tried with threats of exile and of torments to bend the Saint to their own confession, because he was the bastion of Orthodoxy in all Cappadocia, and preserved it from heresy when Arianism was at its strongest. But he set all their malice

at naught, and in his willingness to give himself up to every suffering for the sake of the Faith, showed himself to be a martyr by volition. Modestus, amazed at Basil's fearlessness in his presence, said that no one had ever so spoken to him. "Perhaps," answered the Saint, "you have never met a bishop before."



The Emperor Valens himself was almost won over by Basil's dignity and wisdom. When Valens' son fell gravely sick, he asked Saint Basil to pray for him. The Saint promised that his son would be restated if Valens agreed to have him baptized by the Orthodox; Valens agreed, Basil prayed, and the son was restored. But afterwards the Emperor had him baptized by Arians, and the child died soon after. Later, Valens, persuaded by his counselors, decided to send the Saint into exile because he would not accept the Arians into communion; but his pen broke when he was signing the edict of banishment. He tried a second time and a third, but the same thing happened, so that the Emperor was

filled with dread, and tore up the document, and Basil was not banished. The truly great Basil, spent with extreme ascetical practices and continual labours, at the helm of the church, departed to the Lord on the 1st of January, in 379, at the age of forty-nine.

His writings are replete with wisdom and erudition, and rich are these gifts he set forth the doctrines concerning the mysteries both of the creation (see his Hexaemeron) and of the Holy Trinity (see On the Holy Spirit). Because of the majesty and keenness of his eloquence, he is honored as "the revealer of heavenly things" and "the Great."

Saint Basil is also celebrated on January 30th with Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint John Chrysostom.

On January 6th

Today the grace of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descended upon the waters.

Today the waters of the Jordan are transformed into healing by the coming of the Lord.

Today the transgressions of men are washed away by the waters of the Jordan.

Today Paradise has been opened and the Son of Righteousness shines down upon us.

Today we have been delivered from darkness and illuminated with the light of the knowledge of God.

Today the Master hastens toward baptism that He may lift man up to the heights.

Today the Master buries in the waters the sin of mortal man.

Today the Master receives testimony from on high, that He is the beloved Son.

Today the Master comes to sanctify the nature of the waters.

~Frinham Prayer

GUIDELINES FOR RESPECTFUL WORSHIP

Probably the most important duty that we each have as worshippers attending church services is to do all that is in our power to see that a proper decorum and atmosphere is maintained so that all of the congregation is able to pray sincerely, peacefully and meaningfully.

It is with this fact in mind that we have set forth the following guidelines:

Upon entering the Church, at all times, but especially during services an individual should remember that he or she is in the House of God. Reverence and good manners are required so as not to disturb those who are already engaged in prayer, but, even more importantly, as an expression of sincere faith and awareness of the presence of the Lord. No irrelevant conversations should take place, either in the Narthex or in any part of the Church.

According to actual church service procedures, each and every member of the congregation is required to be seated in the pews at the beginning of the service. It is only by leniency that anyone is allowed to enter the Church once the services have begun. Thus it behooves us not to take undue advantage of this leniency.

There are several parts of the service during which no one should be moving about.

Wherever a person happens to be at these moments, he or she should stop and stand reverently, until the proper time to proceed. These parts of the service are:

1. The Procession of the Priest and Altar Boys with the Gospel;
2. The reading of the Gospel;
3. The Cherubic Hymn and the Great Procession of the Priest and Altar Boys with the Holy Gifts;
4. The recitation of the Nicene Creed (in which the entire congregation should participate);
5. The prayers of offering "Take, eat..." and the prayers of the consecration of the Holy Gifts;
6. The Sermon;
7. Any special services (memorial services, processions, prayers).

One basic rule to follow is that, whenever the Priest is facing the people or outside of the altar, either with the censer or giving the blessing, everyone should stand wherever they are.

Please remember that the Parish Council members and the ushering staff are required to keep order during services, and all should follow their instructions at all times.

Thank you.

ΟΔΗΓΙΕΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΩΡΑΝ ΤΗΣ ΛΑΤΡΕΙΑΣ

Η ώρα της προσευχής και της λατρείας στην εκκλησία είναι το πιο σπουδαίο έργο που κάνουμε όλοι μαζί σαν Ορθόδοξοι Χριστιανοί, επομένως οφείλουμε όλοι να κάνουμε το παν για να επικρατεί τάξη, ήσυχία και κατάνυξη κατά την ιεραν ώρα της λατρείας, προ οικοδομής όλων των πιστών.

Προς τον σκοπόν αυτόν προσφέρουμε τίς οδηγίες που ακολουθούν, με την θερμήν παράκληση όπως τηρηθούν κατά το δυνατόν.

Είσοδος εις τον ναόν σημαίνει είσοδον εις τον οίκον του Θεού, και τούτο απαιτεί άφογον εξωτερικήν συμπεριφοράν στο λόγο, στη στάση, αλλά πιο πολυ στην εσωτερικήν μας κατάσταση που θα μας βοηθήσει να εισέλθουμε σε μια κατανυκτική ατμόσφαιρα και να συμβάλουμε εις την λατρείαν που καθιστά την παρουσίαν του Θεού ολο και πιο αισθητή.

Η παράδοση της Εκκλησίας απαιτεί το εκκλησίασμα να είναι παρόν απο την αρχήν της ακολουθίας. Είναι αταξία λοιπόν να μπαίνουμε στην εκκλησία μετα την έναρξη και αργά όπως επικρατεί απο αρκετούς. Μόνον κατα επιείκIAN επιτρέπεται ή είσοδος μετα την έναρξη της λατρείας, και επομένως οταν μπαίνουμε αργά πρέπει να είμαστε ακόμη πιο πολύ προσεκτικοί να μην ενοχλήσουμε τους άλλους αδελφούς που ήδη είναι στη θέση τους και προσεύχονται.

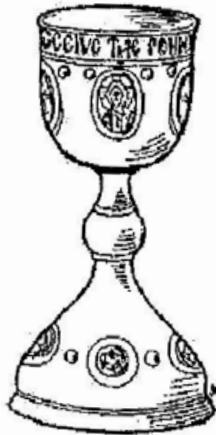
Κατα την διάρκειαν της Θείας Λειτουργίας είναι όρισμένα σημεία που δεν πρέπει να κινούμεθα. Θα σταθούμε με ευλάβεια προς στιγμήν και μετα θα πάμε στη θέση μας.

1. Στην μικρήν είσοδον του ιερέως με το Ιερόν Ευαγγέλιον
2. Κατα την ανάγνωσιν του Αποστόλου και του Ευαγγελίου
3. Στην μεγάλην είσοδον του ιερέως με τα Τίμια Δώρα
4. Στην απαγγελίαν του Πιστεύω, απο ολο το εκκλησίασμα
5. Κατα την διάρκειαν του καθαγιασμού των Τιμίων Δώρων, Λάβετε, Φάγετε ... κτλ.
6. Κατα την διάρκειαν του κηρύγματος
7. Κατα την διάρκειαν εκτάκτων ακολουθιών στο τέλος της Λειτουργίας μνημόσυνα, λιτανείες, κτλ.

Γενικά έχετε αυτόν τον κανόνα στον νούν σας. Όταν ο ιερεύς βλέπει προς τον λαόν, ευλογεί ή θυμιάζει τον λαόν όλοι οφείλουν να στέκοντε με προσοχή και ευλάβεια.

Τα μέλη του Κοινοτικού Συμβουλείου έχουν την ευθύνην της τάξεως κατα την ώρα της λατρείας. Δεχθήτε λοιπόν και ακολουθήσετε προσεκτικά οτι υποδείξεις σας κάνουν.

Σας ευχαριστούμε για την κατανόηση και την συνεργασίαν σας.





Liturgical Calendar

Sunday, January 5: Eve of Epiphany: Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am (Strict Fast)

Monday, January 6: Holy Epiphany Day: Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
The Blessing of the Great Waters will take place at the end of the Liturgy. Procession to the Ocean for the Throwing of the Blessed Cross.

Sunday, January 12: Sunday after Holy Epiphany: Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

Sunday, January 19: 12th Sunday of St. Luke: Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

Sunday, January 26: 15th Sunday of St. Luke (Zacchaeus): Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00

On the 6th of January we celebrate the Holy Baptism (Holy Epiphany) of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is a Major Feast Day of the Church. We must all make an effort to come to church on this day to worship and glorify our Lord. Blessing of the Great Waters will take place near the end of the Divine Liturgy.

•••• Attention Everyone****

If the weather is good we will also go outside on the (Great Wall) to do the Blessing of the Waters and also the Throwing of the Cross into the Ocean.

ON BEHALF OF THE PARISH COUNCIL, FR. MICHAEL, THE CHURCH STAFF, AND THE ENTIRE FAMILY OF ST. DEMETRIOS, WE WOULD LIKE TO WISH EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY A BLESSED AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR FILLED WITH MUCH LOVE, JOY, PEACE, AND HAPPINESS.





GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL

Prot. No. 442/2024

Archepiscopal Encyclical on the Feast of Christmas

December 25, 2024

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

And the [star] led the Magi to You, who worshipped You in faith; have mercy upon them and upon us.

(Troparion, Plagal of the Second Mode)

Beloved sisters and brothers in Christ,

This Christmas, let us manifest a special joy and appreciation that even secular society acknowledges the Birth of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is often difficult to keep the Feast of the Nativity as pure as we would like to, with the seemingly endless commercialization that surrounds it. Nevertheless, even with all the tinsel and sparkle, the Name of the Lord is spread abroad by the world's imperfect regard for Christmas. We can agree with Saint Paul who says: *Christ is preached! More in every way, whether by pretext or by truth. And at this, I rejoice! And I shall rejoice more!* (Philippians 1:18). We should also share in the same joy, because as inadequate as secular and commercial observances of Christmas may be, at least people are exposed to the name and narrative of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Magi (from whence the word “magician comes), who were led to worship the Newborn Babe of Bethlehem by a Star, were astrologers watching the heavens for signs and wonders. They were not Jewish, but rather Persian, likely Zoroastrians, an ancient religion founded by Zoroaster (Greek: Ζωροάστρης), six centuries before the Birth of our Savior. They found their way to Bethlehem by following an exceptional Star that had arisen in the western night sky — a Star that had been prophesied in ways we do not fully



understand. Their path to Christ may not have followed the Hebrew Prophets, but it still led them to Him.

There are so many in this world — Christian and non-Christian alike — whose connection to the Lord comes only through the Nativity and the many cultural traditions that have arisen around it. And perhaps, one day, like the Magi, a spiritual Star will arise in their hearts and lead them to the continuing Bethlehem, (which means the House of Bread), that is our Holy Orthodox Church.

This Christmas Season let us take joy and not begrudge the journey of others. Let us be willing to find an understanding and even an admiration for all those who — like the Magi — observe with some degree of faith and recognition the Birth of our Savior. For He was born in a cave and laid in a manger for the sake of every human being, and indeed, for all creation.

Χριστός Γεννᾶται! Δοξάσατε! Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

† ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America



ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ

Αριθμ. Πρωτ.: 442/2024

Ἀρχιεπισκοπικὴ Ἐγκύκλιος Χριστουγέννων.

25 Δεκεμβρίου 2024

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

«Καὶ Μάγους σοὶ προσήνεγκεν, ἐν πίστει προσκυνοῦντάς σε· μεθ' ὧν ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς»

(Τροπᾶριο τῶν ἀναγνωσμάτων τοῦ ἔσπερινοῦ τῶν Χριστουγέννων).

Προσφιλεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἀδελφές ἐν Χριστῷ,

Τὰ φετεινὰ Χριστούγεννα ἀποτελοῦν ἀκόμη μία εὐκαιρία νὰ δοξάσουμε τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Θεοῦ, διότι ἀκόμη καὶ ἡ κοσμικὴ κοινωνία ἐορτάζει τὴ γέννηση τοῦ σωτῆρος καὶ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Εἶναι ἀρκετὰ δύσκολο ἢ ἐορτὴ τῶν Χριστουγέννων νὰ μείνει ἀνέγγιχτη ἀπὸ τὴ φαινομενικὰ ἀτελείωτη ἐμπορευματοποίηση πού τὴ συνοδεύει. Ὅμως ἀκόμη καὶ μέσα ἀπὸ τὰ στολίδια καὶ τὰ φωτάκια, ἀκόμη καὶ μὲ αὐτὴ τὴν ἀτελὴ κατανόηση τοῦ κόσμου γιὰ τὰ Χριστούγεννα, τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου διαδίδεται, καθὼς καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος λέει πρὸς τοὺς Φιλιππησίους: «Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται! Καὶ ἐν παντὶ τρόπῳ, εἴτε προφάσει, εἴτε



ἀληθεία. Καὶ ἐν τούτῳ χαίρω. Ἀλλὰ καὶ χαρήσομα!» (1:18). Συμμετέχουμε λοιπὸν στὴ χαρὰ τοῦ ἀποστόλου Παύλου, διότι ὅσο ἀνεπαρκεῖς καὶ ἂν εἶναι οἱ κοσμικὲς ἐκδηλώσεις γιὰ τὶς ἐορτὲς τῶν Χριστουγέννων, τουλάχιστον οἱ ἄνθρωποι εὐαγγελίζονται μὲ τὸ ὄνομα καὶ τὴν ἀφήγηση τῆς γεννήσεως τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Οἱ Μάγοι, οἱ ὁποῖοι ὀδηγήθηκαν νὰ προσκυνήσουν τὸ νεογέννητο βρέφος στὴ Βηθλεέμ, ἀκολουθώντας τὸν ἀστέρα, ἦταν ἀστρολόγοι καὶ ἐρευνούσαν τὸν οὐρανὸ γιὰ σημεῖα, ἐξηγώντας τὰ μελλούμενα. Δὲν ἦταν Ἰουδαῖοι ἀλλὰ Πέρσες, πιθανότατα Ζωροάστρες, μιὰ θρησκεία πὺ ἴδρυσε ὁ Ζωροάστρης ἕξι αἰῶνες πρὶν τὴ γέννηση τοῦ Σωτῆρος μας. Βρῆκαν τὸ δρόμο γιὰ τὴ Βηθλεέμ, ἀκολουθώντας ἕνα ὑπέρολαμπρο ἀστέρι, πὺ ἀνέτειλε στὸ δυτικὸ νυχτερινὸ οὐρανὸ, μὲ ἕνα τρόπο πὺ ἀποκαλύφθηκε σὲ αὐτοὺς χωρὶς νὰ μποροῦμε νὰ τὸν κατανοήσουμε πλήρως. Ἡ πορεία αὐτὴ μπορεῖ νὰ μὴν ἦταν ἡ ἴδια μὲ αὐτὴ τῶν ἐβραίων προφητῶν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ὀδήγησε καὶ αὐτοὺς πρὸς τὸ Χριστό.

Πολλοὶ ἄνθρωποι στὸν κόσμον, χριστιανοὶ καὶ μὴ, ἔχουν ἐπαφὴ μὲ τὸν Κύριο μόνο μέσα ἀπὸ τὰ Χριστούγεννα καὶ τὶς πολυάριθμες πολιτιστικὲς παραδόσεις πὺ ἔχουν ἀναπτυχθεῖ γιὰ αὐτὴν τὴ μεγάλη ἐορτὴ. Ἴσως κάποια μέρα, ὅπως στοὺς Μάγους, ἀνατελεῖ καὶ γιὰ αὐτοὺς κάποιο πνευματικὸ ἀστέρι πὺ θὰ τοὺς ὀδηγήσει στὴν αἰώνια Βηθλεέμ, ἡ ὁποία μεταφράζεται ὡς «ἡ οἰκία τοῦ ἄρτου» καὶ εἶναι ἡ Ἁγία Ὁρθόδοξη Ἐκκλησία μας.

Αὐτὰ τὰ Χριστούγεννα ἄς γευθοῦμε αὐτὴ τὴν ἀνυπέροβλητη χαρὰ χωρὶς νὰ κατακρίνουμε τὸ ταξίδι τῶν ἄλλων, πὺ ὅπως οἱ Μάγοι παρατηροῦν καὶ ἀναγνωρίζουν μὲ κάποια πίστη τὴ γέννηση τοῦ Σωτῆρος μας. Διότι γεννήθηκε στὸ σπήλαιον καὶ σπαργανώθηκε στὴ φάτνη γιὰ κάθε ἄνθρωπον καὶ γιὰ ὅλη τὴν κτίση!

Χριστὸς Γεννᾶται! Δοξάσατε!,

τὸ Ἀμερικὴν Ἀγιοδοφορεῖον



Prot. No. 828

PATRIARCHAL ENCYCLICAL
FOR CHRISTMAS

+ B A R T H O L O M E W
BY GOD'S MERCY ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE-NEW ROME
AND ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH
TO ALL THE PLENITUDE OF THE CHURCH
GRACE, MERCY AND PEACE
FROM THE SAVIOR CHRIST BORN IN BETHLEHEM

Most honorable brother hierarchs and blessed children in the Lord,

With the grace from above, we have once again this year arrived at the festal day of the Nativity in the flesh of God the Word, who came into the world and dwelt among us “out of his ineffable loving for humankind.” We honor with psalms and hymns as well as with inexpressible joy the great mystery of the Incarnation, which is “newer than everything new, the only new thing under the sun,”¹ through which the way is opened for us to deification by grace and the entire creation is renewed. Christmas is not the experience of emotions that “come rapidly and depart even more rapidly.” It is the existential participation in the whole event of Divine Economy. As testified by the Evangelist Matthew (ch. 1. 18–2.1-23), the leaders of the world sought to obliterate the divine infant from the outset. For us faithful, along with the cry that “Christ is born” in the feast of the incarnation of the Son and Word of God the Father, as well as the mournful bells of His passion, we also hear the cry that “Christ is risen,” the good news of the victory over death and expectation of the common resurrection.

The words “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace” are heard once more in a world filled with violence, social injustice and dissolution of human dignity. The stunning progress of science and technology does not reach the depth of the human soul, because human beings are always more than what science can comprehend or to which the advancement of technology aspires. The gap between heaven and earth in our human existence cannot be scientifically bridged.

Today there is much talk about “the metahuman” and praise of artificial intelligence. The dream of “the superhuman” is of course hardly new. The concept of “the metahuman” is based on technological progress and his equipment with means previously unimaginable to human experience and history, through which humankind will be able to transcend currently valid human measures. The Church is not technophobic. It approaches scientific knowledge as “a divinely granted gift to human beings,” without however overlooking or suppressing the

¹ John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, PG 94.984.



dangers of scientism. The Encyclical of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (Crete, 2016) also emphasizes the contribution of Christianity “to the healthy development of secular civilization,” since God “established human beings as stewards of sacred creation and His coworkers in the world.” Moreover, it also highlights: “The Orthodox Church sets against the ‘man-god’ of the contemporary world the ‘God-man’ as the ultimate measure of all things. “We do not speak of a man who has been deified, but of God who has become man (John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* iii, 2 PG 94.988).”²

The answer to the crucial question—namely, how can we preserve the “culture of personhood,” the respect for its sacredness and emphasis on its beauty, until the final “eighth day” in the face of the titanism and prometheanism of the technological culture, its evolution and transmutation, in the midst of anthropotheistic changes and exaggerations of humankind—has been given once for all in the mystery of Divine Humanity. God the Word became flesh, the “truth has come” and “the shadow has passed.” For human beings, speaking the truth will forevermore be associated with their relationship to God as the response to God’s descent toward them and as the expectation and encounter of the coming Lord of glory. This living faith supports the human struggle to respond to the contradictions and challenges of earthly life, to life “by bread” (Mt 4.4), to survival as well as social and cultural development. Nevertheless, nothing in our life can thrive without reference to God, without the horizon of “the fullness of life, the fullness of joy and the fullness of knowledge” of His Kingdom.³

Christmas is an opportunity for us to become conscious of the mystery of divine freedom and the great miracle of human freedom. Christ knocks on the door of the human heart, yet only human beings honored with such freedom are able to open that door. “Clearly, without Him, without Christ,” as the late Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, “man cannot do anything. But there is something that only man can do—namely, respond to God’s call and welcome Christ.”⁴

By saying “Yes” to this calling from above, Christ is revealed as “the true light” (Jn 1.9), “the way, the truth and the life” (Jn 14.6), the answer to the ultimate questions and pursuits of the intellect, to the desires of the heart and the hopes of humankind, but also to the “whence” and “whereto” of creation. We belong to Christ, in Whom all things are united. Christ is “the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Rev. 22.13). In His voluntary incarnation “for us men and for our salvation,” the Word of God “did not dwell in a single human being, but embraced human nature in its entirety with His hypostasis,”⁵ thereby establishing the common eternal destiny and unity of humanity. He does not liberate one people, but the entire race of humankind; He does not savingly divide only history, but renews the whole creation. Just as for history, so too for the universe, “before Christ” and “after Christ” holds definitively and determinately valid. Throughout its journey in the world, in history and

² *Encyclical*, § 10.

³ Alexander Schmemmann, *I believe* (Athens: Akritas Editions, 1991), 129 [from the Greek].

⁴ Georges Florovsky, *Creation and Redemption* (Thessaloniki: Pournaras Editions, 1983) [from the Greek].

⁵ Nicholas Cabasilas, *Nine Unpublished Homilies* (Thessaloniki, 1976), 108.



Αριθμ. Πρωτ. 870

ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΙΚΗ ΑΠΟΔΕΙΞΗ
ΓΙΑ ΤΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ

+ Β Α Ρ Θ Ο Λ Ο Μ Α Ι Ο Σ

ΕΛΕΩΙ ΘΕΟΥ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΕΩΣ – ΝΕΑΣ ΡΩΜΗΣ
ΚΑΙ ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΗΣ
ΣΕ ΟΛΟ ΤΟ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ
ΧΑΡΗ, ΕΛΕΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΡΗΝΗ
ΑΠΟ ΤΟΝ ΓΕΝΝΗΘΕΝΤΑ ΣΤΗ ΒΗΘΛΕΕΜ ΣΩΤΗΡΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟ

Τιμιώτατοι ἀδελφοὶ Ἱεράρχες καὶ τέκνα ἐν Κυρίῳ εὐλογημένα,

Μὲ ἄνωθεν εὐδοκία φθάσαμε καὶ ἐφέτος στὴν πανέορτη ἡμέρα τῆς κατὰ σάρκα Γεννήσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου, ποὺ ἦρθε στὴ γῆ καὶ συναναστράφηκε μαζί μας «δι' ἄφατον φιλανθρωπίαν». Τιμοῦμε μὲ ψαλμοὺς καὶ ὕμνους καὶ μὲ ἀνεκκλάλητη χαρὰ τὸ μέγα μυστήριό τῆς Ἐνανθρωπήσεως, τὸ «πιὸ καινούργιο ἀπὸ ὅλα τὰ καινούργια, τὸ μόνο καινούργιο στὸν κόσμο»¹, διὰ τοῦ ὁποῦ διανοίγεται στὸν ἄνθρωπο ἡ ὁδὸς τῆς κατὰ χάριν θέωσης καὶ ἀνακαινίζεται σύμπασα ἡ κτίσις. Τὰ Χριστοῦγεννα δὲν εἶναι βίωση συναισθηματισμῶν, οἱ ὁποῖοι «γρήγορα ἔρχονται καὶ ἀκόμη ταχύτερα παρέρχονται». Εἶναι ὑπαρξιακὴ μετοχὴ στὸ ὄλο γεγονός τῆς Θείας Οἰκονομίας, τοῦ σχεδίου τοῦ Θεοῦ γιὰ τὴ σωτηρία τοῦ κόσμου. Καθὼς μαρτυρεῖ ὁ Εὐαγγελιστὴς Ματθαῖος², ἡ ἡγεσία τοῦ κόσμου θέλησε ἀπὸ τὴν ἀρχὴ νὰ ἀφανίσει τὸ Θεῖο Βρέφος. Γιὰ τοὺς πιστοὺς, μαζί μὲ τὸ «Χριστὸς γεννᾶται» τῆς ἐορτῆς τῆς Σαρκώσεως τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ Λόγου τοῦ Θεοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τὶς πένθιμες καμπάνες τοῦ Πάθους, ἡχεῖ πάντοτε ταυτόχρονα καὶ τὸ «Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη», τὸ εὐάγγελο μῆνυμα τῆς νίκης κατὰ τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τῆς προσδοκίας τῆς κοινῆς ἀναστάσεως.

Τὸ «Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη» ἀκούγεται καὶ πάλι σὲ ἓνα κόσμο γεμᾶτο ἀπὸ βιαιότητες, κοινωνικὴ ἀδικία καὶ καταρράκωση τῆς ἀνθρώπινης ἀξιοπρέπειας. Ἡ ἐκπληκτικὴ πρόοδος τῆς ἐπιστήμης καὶ τῆς τεχνολογίας δὲν φθάνει στὸ βάθος τῆς ἀνθρώπινης ψυχῆς, ἀφοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἶναι πάντοτε περισσότερο ἀπὸ αὐτὸ ποὺ μπορεῖ νὰ συλλάβει ἢ ἐπιστήμη καὶ ἀπὸ αὐτὸ στὸ ὁποῖο ἀποβλέπει ἢ πρόοδος τῆς τεχνολογίας. Μέσα στὸ εἶναι τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δὲν γεφυρώνεται ἐπιστημονικὰ τὸ χάσμα μεταξὺ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς.

Σήμερα ἀκούγεται ὁ λόγος περὶ τοῦ «μετανθρώπου» καὶ ἐγκωμιάζεται ἡ τεχνητὴ νοημοσύνη. Βέβαια, τὸ ὄνειρο ἑνὸς «ὑπερανθρώπου» δὲν εἶναι καινοφανές. Ἡ ἰδέα τοῦ «μετανθρώπου» στηρίζεται στὴν τεχνολογικὴ πρόοδο καὶ στὸν ἐξοπλισμὸ του μὲ πρωτοφανῆ στὴν ἀνθρώπινη ἐμπειρία καὶ ἱστορία μέσα, διὰ τῶν ὁποίων θὰ μπορέσει νὰ ὑπερβῇ τὸ ἀνθρώπινο μέτρο ποὺ ἰσχύει μέχρι σήμερα. Ἡ Ἐκκλησία δὲν εἶναι τεχνοφοβικὴ.



Προσεγγίζει την επιστημονική γνώση ως «δῶρον τοῦ Θεοῦ στὸν ἄνθρωπο», χωρὶς ὅμως νὰ ἀγνοεῖ ἢ νὰ ἀποσιωπᾷ τοὺς κινδύνους τοῦ ἐπιστημονισμοῦ. Στὴν Ἐγκύκλιο τῆς Ἁγίας καὶ Μεγάλης Συνόδου τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας (Κρήτη, 2016), τονίζεται ἡ συμβολὴ τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ καὶ «στὴν ὑγιὴ ἀνάπτυξη τοῦ θύραθεν πολιτισμοῦ», ἀφοῦ ὁ Θεός «ἔθεσε τὸν ἄνθρωπο ὡς οἰκονόμο τῆς θείας δημιουργίας καὶ συνεργό Του στὸν κόσμο». Ἐν συνεχείᾳ, σημειώνεται μὲ ἔμφραση: «Ἡ Ὁρθόδοξη Ἐκκλησία, ἔναντι τοῦ συγχρόνου ἄνθρωποθεοῦ, προβάλλει τὸν Ἐάνθρωπο ὡς ἔσχατο μέτρο πάντων: Ἐν μιᾷ γὰρ ἄνθρωπο ποὺ ἀποθεώθηκε, ἀλλὰ γιὰ Θεὸ ποὺ ἐνανθρώπησε»³.

Ἡ ἀπάντηση στὸ κρίσιμο ἐρώτημα, πῶς θὰ διασωθεῖ ὁ «πολιτισμὸς τοῦ προσώπου», ὁ σεβασμὸς τῆς ἱερότητας καὶ ἡ ἀνάδειξη τῆς ὠραιότητάς του μέχρι τὴν ἔσχατη «ὄγδοη ἡμέρα», μὲ τὸν τιτανισμὸ καὶ τὸν προμηθεϊσμὸ τοῦ τεχνολογικοῦ πολιτισμοῦ, τῶν μετεξελίξεων καὶ τῶν μεταπτώσεών του, ἐν μέσῳ ἀνθρωποθεϊστικῶν μετανθρωπισμῶν ἢ ὑπερανθρωπισμῶν, δόθηκε ἅπαξ καὶ διὰ παντὸς στὸ μυστήριον τῆς Θεανθρωπίνότητας. Ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος ἔγινε σὰρκα, ἡ «ἀλήθεια ἦρθε» καὶ «ἔφυγε ἡ σκιά. Ἀπὸ τῶρα καὶ στὸ διηνεκὲς ἡ ἀλήθεια γιὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπο θὰ συνδέεται μὲ τὴν σχέση του μὲ τὸ Θεό, ὡς ἀπάντηση στὴν κάθοδο τοῦ Θεοῦ πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ὡς ἀναμονὴ καὶ ὑποδοχὴ τοῦ Κυρίου τῆς δόξης ποὺ ἔρχεται. Ἡ ζωντανὴ αὐτὴ πίστη στηρίζεται τὸν ἀγῶνα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου νὰ ἀνταποκριθεῖ σὲ ἀντιφάσεις καὶ τὶς προκλήσεις τῆς ἐπιγείας ζωῆς του, στὴ ζωὴ «μὲ τὸν ἄρτο», στὴν ἐπιβίωση καὶ τὴν κοινωνικὴ καὶ πολιτισμικὴ ἀνάπτυξη. Τίποτε ὅμως στὴ ζωὴ μας δὲν εὐδοκίμει χωρὶς ἀναφορὰ στὸ Θεό, μὲ ὀρίζοντα τὴν «πληρότητα ζωῆς, τὴν πληρότητα χαρᾶς καὶ τὴν πληρότητα γνώσεως» τῆς Βασιλείας Του.⁴

Τὰ Χριστούγεννα εἶναι εὐκαιρία γιὰ νὰ συνειδητοποιήσουμε τὸ μυστήριον τῆς ἐλευθερίας τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὸ μέγα θαῦμα τῆς ἐλευθερίας τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Ὁ Χριστὸς κρούει τὴν πόρτα τῆς ἀνθρώπινης καρδιάς, μπορεῖ ὅμως νὰ τὴν ἀνοίξει μόνο ὁ ἴδιος ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὁ ὁποῖος ἔχει τιμηθεῖ μὲ τὴν ἐλευθερία. «Ἀσφαλῶς, χωρὶς Αὐτόν, χωρὶς τὸν Χριστό», γράφει ὁ μακαριστὸς π. Γεωργίος Φλωρόφσκυ, «ὁ ἄνθρωπος δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ κάνει τίποτε. Κι ὅμως, ὑπάρχει κάτι ποὺ μόνο ἀπὸ τὸν ἄνθρωπο μπορεῖ νὰ γίνῃ – τὸ νὰ ἀνταποκριθεῖ στὴν κλήση τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ νὰ ἴδῃ τὸ Χριστό»⁵.

Λέγοντας τὸ «Ναί» στὴν ἄνωθεν κλήση, ὁ Χριστὸς ἀποκαλύπτεται ὡς «τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν»⁶, ὡς «ἡ ὁδὸς, ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ»⁷, ὡς ἡ ἀπάντηση στὰ ἔσχατα ἐρωτήματα καὶ τὶς ἀναζητήσεις τοῦ μυαλοῦ, στοὺς καρδιακοὺς πόθους καὶ τὶς ἐλπίδες τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἀλλὰ καὶ στὰ ἐρωτήματα: «ἀπὸ ποῦ καὶ γιὰ ποῖο λόγο» τῆς δημιουργίας. Ἀνήκουμε στὸ Χριστό, σὲ

³ «Οὐκ ἄνθρωπον ἀποθεωθέντα λέγομεν, ἀλλὰ Θεὸν ἐνανθρωπήσαντα», (Ἰωάννου Δαμασκηνοῦ, Ἐκδοσις ἀκριβῆς τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως, Γ', 2 PG 94, 988), Ἐγκύκλιος, § 10.

⁴ «παρέδραμεν ἡ σκιά. Εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς τὸ ἀληθεύειν διὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον θὰ συνδέεται μὲ τὴν σχέσιν του μὲ τὸν Θεόν, ὡς ἀπάντησις εἰς τὴν κάθοδον τοῦ Θεοῦ πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ὡς ἀναμονὴ καὶ ὑπάντησις τοῦ ἐρχομένου Κυρίου τῆς δόξης. Ἡ ζωσα αὐτὴ πίστις στηρίζεται τὸν ἀγῶνα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου νὰ ἀνταποκριθῇ εἰς τὰς ἀντιφάσεις καὶ τὰς προκλήσεις τοῦ ἐπιγείου βίου του, εἰς τὴν «ἐπ' ἄρτω» ζωὴν⁴, εἰς τὴν ἐπιβίωσιν καὶ τὴν κοινωνικὴν καὶ πολιτισμικὴν ἀνάπτυξιν. Τίποτε ὅμως εἰς τὴν ζωὴν μας δὲν εὐδοκίμει ἄνευ ἀναφορᾶς εἰς τὸν Θεόν, μὲ ὀρίζοντα τὴν «πληρότητα ζωῆς, τὴν πληρότητα χαρᾶς καὶ τὴν πληρότητα γνώσεως» τῆς Βασιλείας Του». Ἀλεξάνδρου Σμέμαν, Πιστεύω, ἐκδ. Ἀκρίτα, Ἀθήνα 1991, σ. 129.

⁵ Γεωργίου Φλωρόφσκυ, Δημιουργία καὶ ἀπολύτρωση, ἐκδ. Πουρναρά, Θεσσαλονίκη 1983, σ. 17.

⁶ Ἰωάν. α', 9.

⁷ Ἰωάν. ιδ', 6.



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

CHRISTMAS 2024

Ἴδου ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἔξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν, καὶ καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ· ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον Μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός. Ματθ. 1:23

«Ὁ οὐρανός καὶ ἡ γῆ, σήμερον ἠνώθησαν, τεχθέντος τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Σήμερον Θεός ἐπὶ γῆς παραγένονε, καὶ ἄνθρωπος εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἀναβέβηκε». Ἴδου, ὁ ἐνανθρωπήσας Υἱός καὶ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὁ Σωτήρας τοῦ κόσμου ἀνάμεσά μας. Ὁ Θεός κατήλθε στή γῆ γιὰ νὰ ἀναβιβάσει στό ὕψος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τόν ἄνθρωπο. Ἦλθε ὁ Κύριος γιὰ νὰ θεραπεύσει τό μέγα τραῦμα, τόν ἄνθρωπο. Ἦλθε ὁ Κύριος γιὰ νὰ σώσει τόν ἄνθρωπο ἀπό τόν θάνατο, τήν ἁμαρτία καὶ τόν διάβολο. Ἦλθε ὁ Κύριος γιὰ νὰ φέρει τήν εἰρήνην τοῦ οὐρανοῦ στόν ταραγμένο κόσμο.

Μέ μετάνοια ἀληθινή, μέ ταπείνωση περισσή καὶ καθαρή καρδιά ἄς πορευθοῦμε καὶ ἐμεῖς ὅπως οἱ ποιμένες πρὸς τήν Βηθλεέμ γιὰ νὰ συναντήσουμε τόν τεχθέντα Κύριο. Ἄς προσεγγίσουμε τό μέγα μυστήριο τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ Κυρίου μέ τήν συμμετοχή μας στά μυστήρια τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας καὶ στή Χάρη τοῦ Θεοῦ. Καί ἄς προσευχηθοῦμε ἀπό καρδίας ὁ ἐν σπηλαίῳ γεννηθεὶς Κύριος νὰ καταπαύσει τούς δαιμονικούς πολέμους καὶ νὰ χαρίσει εἰρήνην στίς καρδιές τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

Καλὰ Χριστούγεννα καὶ εὐλογημένο τὸ νέον ἔτος 2025

“Behold, the virgin will conceive and bear a son, and they will call his name Emmanuel” (which means “God with us”). Matthew 1:23

“Heaven and Earth have been united today, now that Christ has been born. Today God has appeared on Earth, and Man has ascended to the Heavens.” Behold, the Incarnate Son and the Logos of God the Father, our Lord, Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world is in our midst. God has descended to Earth so that He may raise Man to the heights of Heaven. The Lord has come to heal Man of his great wound. The Lord has come to save Man from Sin, death, and the devil. The Lord has come to bring the peace of Heaven to a troubled and distressed world.

With true repentance, with abundant humility, and with a pure heart, let us journey, like the Wisemen of old, to Bethlehem so that we may greet our Newborn Jesus. Let us approach the great Mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord by participating in the Holy Sacraments of our Church, and in the joy of God. And let us pray with all our hearts that our Lord, who was born in a cave, may bring an end to demonic wars and grant peace to the hearts of all Mankind.

Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year 2024!

With Paternal Love and Blessings in Christ, the Newborn King,

Metropolitan Apostolos
APOSTOLOS
 Metropolitan of New Jersey



thoughts from

EVA LALLAS



St. Demetrios: Our Church

A new month... A new year! Αρχιμηλιά κ' Αρχιχροιά! A fresh start....All is calm as we bask in the joyful celebration of our Lord's birth. For us Orthodox Christians the celebration continues as we commemorate the Epiphany, the Theophania on January 6th. What a wonderful experience it must have been for those witnessing the divine revelation of the Holy Trinity! Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist in the River Jordan, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descending on Jesus, as the heavens above open and the voice of God is heard proclaiming "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased!"

This is the reason that our Church signifies this day as one of the most important days on the liturgical calendar; the Glory of God is revealed to us. This inspirational day in early January, decreed by the Holy Fathers, sets the pace for all the major feast days that our Church will commemorate throughout the year.

We, the members of every congregation, are the LIVING CHURCH of Christ. Our beautiful St. Demetrios building is the church, as are all sanctified structures in which parishioners gather to attend services. This is the building which calls us to worship and thank God. On Sunday morning at 10 o'clock no matter where we are we know that the liturgical service is beginning. Even if we find ourselves far from St. Demetrios, our heart tells us that we belong in church, hearing the Good News, celebrating the Eucharistic Liturgy, glorifying and worshipping God with our church family. What could be so important on Sunday mornings and during the vespers of high holy days as to draw us away from our church, away from honoring and thanking God as an Orthodox Christian community. Of course, we pray as individuals at home or wherever we find ourselves, but it pleases God more to see His children-His Body-united in prayer glorifying His name. Do we not realize that our fellow parishioners miss us when we are absent from among them?

The following comes from the late Father Menelaos Papageorgiou, Protopresbyteros, of the Greek Orthodox

Church "Zoodohos Peghe" in Martin's Ferry, Ohio which the author finds worthy of sharing with the readers of the Koinonia. *"I am your church. I am here because you built me. I am beautifully situated in your midst. In the center of your community I will be a cherished landmark to the thousands who come to my door over the years. You built me because you knew that your life would be incomplete and unfulfilled without me. I am your church. I am here not simply to adorn, but to serve. Your children and youth come to me to learn the ways of honesty, industry, morality and religion. Your brides and grooms come to my altar that their weddings may be hallowed and sweetened by divine blessings. I am your church. I comfort your sick and sorrowing. I bury your dead and offer rest and solace to the weary. I bring pardon and peace to those who are burdened with sin. My message of mercy brings new life. I am your church. My doors are open to all-rich and poor, bond and free. My pulpit rings out the message of good will to men, of peace and pardon and of a Savior's love to all. I teach you the ways of life and guide you on the road to heaven. I am your church. Come and worship with me; and I will serve you all your days on this earth and beyond."*

As you read Father Papageorgiou's meaning of the church, can't you hear our beloved St. Demetrios speaking to you? Can you imagine life without our church? I don't think any of us can. St. Demetrios offers us several avenues to nurture us spiritually, learning more about our Lord Jesus Christ and thus bringing us closer to Him. How do we respond?

As we begin the new year and make many resolutions to improve our personal lives, let us resolve not to overlook resolutions which will benefit our souls. Let us resolve to address our spiritual needs in preparation for our salvation by giving as much, if not more, thought and effort to our spiritual well-being as we do to our material needs.

Beginning this Sunday morning let us resolve to be IN church regularly; accepting the invitation of the Panaghia Platitera embracing us with outstretched arms, answering the welcoming call to worship of St. Demetrios.

Let us heed the words of Father Papageorgiou by taking an in-depth look at our beloved St. Demetrios; showing our appreciation for all that she offers us by supporting her; not only monetarily, but with our time and God-given talents so that she "will serve (us) all (our) days on this earth and beyond.

Wishing you a Blessed and Happy New Year!

On a lighter note the author thinks that you will enjoy "The Month After Christmas"

(Continued...)



HAPPY NEW YEAR



The Month After Christmas

'Twas the month after Christmas, and all
 Through the house
 Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.
 The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog
 I would taste
 At the holiday parties had gone to my waist.
 When I got on the scales there arose
 Such a number!
 When I walked to the store it was less a walk
 Than a lumber.
 I remembered the marvelous meals I'd prepared;
 The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rare,
 The wine and the rum balls, the bread
 And the cheese
 And the way I'd never said, "None
 For me please!"
 As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt
 And prepared once again to do battle with dirt—
 I said to myself, as only I can
 "You can't spend another winter disguised as a man!"
 So - - away with the last of the sour cream dip,
 Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip
 Every last bit of food that I like
 Must be banished
 Till all the additional ounces have vanished.
 I won't have a cookie - - not even a lick.
 I won't have hot biscuits, or cornbread, or pie,
 I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.
 I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore
 But isn't that what January is for?
 Unable to giggle, life's no longer a riot.
 Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!

~Author Unknown

GOOD QUOTES

God is under no obligation to give us what we expect.

All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone (with God).
—Blaise Pascal

God plus one believer is a majority.

When you feel like you're drowning in life, don't worry – your Savior, a Lifeguard walks on water.

Let nothing trouble you, let nothing frighten you
Everything passes, God never changes

Patience, Obtains all.

Whoever has God, wants for nothing. God alone is enough.

—Saint Teresa of Avila

When I am at peace within, I live among spiritual riches.

—Anonymous

Believe in the sun even if it isn't shining.
Believe in love even when alone.
Believe in God even when He is silent.

May the road rise to meet you, May the wind be always at your back; May the sun shine warm upon your face, The rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of His Hand and May God bless you.



ACTUAL ANNOUNCEMENTS TAKEN FROM CHURCH BULLETINS!

Don't let worry kill you - let the church help.

*Thursday night - Potluck Supper.
Prayer and medication to follow.*

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.



Greek Corner

As we know our Greek culture is very rich as is the Greek language. Through the ages from ancient to modern times parables and sayings have survived and are often found in today's conversations. We offer several of these each month and invite you to submit those that are familiar to you.

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

January 2025 marks the **FIRST** Anniversary of The Greek Corner!

We have not yet received any of your Greek sayings, parables, etc. Those that we have included are those that I recall and use in conversation, but I don't want to run out of them. So, please forward any that you are familiar with and send them to Father Michael: frmichaelstdemetrios@gmail.com.

Thank you.

1.). Ο καλός φίλος στην ανάγκη φαίνεται!

A friend in need is a friend indeed!

2.). Το σίδερο ζεστό κολάη!

Strike while the iron is hot!

3.). Όποιος βιάζεται, σκοντάφτει!

One who is in a hurry, stumbles!

Haste makes waste!

4.). Δέκα, δέκα τα λέγη!

He/she speaks 10 words at a time! Talks a lot! Motor mouth! Blabber mouth!

5.). Όποιος γυρίζει, μυρίζει! και όποιος κάθεται, βρωμάει!

One who makes the rounds, gets a whiff of everything! One who is idle stinks!

An active person gets to see and get a taste for what is available; he generally comes out ahead; making better choices when shopping, comparing products and prices!

One who is idle is limited in knowing what is available, in making choices.



Greek Orthodox
Metropolis of New Jersey

10th Anniversary Gala
in Honor of the Episcopal Ordination of
His Eminence
Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey

Monday, January 13, 2025
5:30 P.M. Cocktail Hour
6:30 P.M. Dinner

The Venetian
546 River Drive, Garfield, NJ 07026

Tickets.....\$160.00 per person

For more information contact the Metropolis at
908-301-0500 or Email 10thAnniversaryNJ@gmail.com

For Sponsorships, please complete and submit the
Sponsorship Form

All ticket purchases and sponsorships are due by January 3, 2025

Sponsorship Program Levels of Support

Sponsor.....	\$1,250
	2 Tickets for Dinner, Listing in Program
Supporter.....	\$2,500
	4 Tickets for Dinner, Listing in Program
Patron.....	\$5,000
	6 Tickets for Dinner, Listing in Program
Benefactor.....	\$10,000
	10 Tickets for Dinner, Listing in Program
Grand Benefactor.....	\$20,000
	10 Tickets for Dinner, Full Program Insert

All net proceeds from sponsorships and tickets for the 10th Anniversary Gala
will be restricted to solely benefit the Sacred Ministries of the Metropolis of New Jersey



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

December 4, 2024

To the Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy
 Esteemed Members of the Metropolis Council, Beloved Archons of the Order of St. Andrew,
 Dedicated Members of the Parish Councils and Philoptochos Society,
 Devout Faithful of the Greek Orthodox Communities of the Sacred Metropolis of New Jersey

Dear beloved Clergy and Faithful,

It is with much joy and enthusiasm that we are pleased to share with you all of the information for the upcoming 10th Anniversary Gala in Honor of the Ten-Year Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey, which will take place on Monday, January 13, 2025, at *The Venetian* in Garfield, New Jersey.

Enclosed with this letter please find the informative Gala Flyer for the ticket sales, as well as the details for the various levels of Sponsorships for this highly anticipated event. Please know that all proceeds from the 10th Anniversary Gala, as per the wishes of His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos, will be designated to assisting with the sacred Ministries of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey.

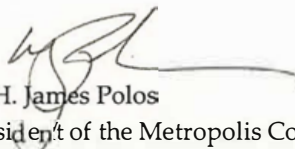
Please know that for Group/parish tickets, parishes are asked to collect the money from their parishioners for the ticket sales, fill out the enclosed Table Seating Form, and send one check for all the parish's tickets to the Metropolis (the same way that we do for the Honoree/Ambassador Banquets).

Additionally, please find enclosed the 10th Anniversary Gala Sponsorship Form. All Sponsorship forms are to be completed and sent together with payment to the Metropolis Headquarters, marked *Attn: 10th Anniversary Sponsorship*.

All checks are to be made payable to the "Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey – Ministry," with "10th Anniversary Gala" in the memo line. For additional information please contact the Metropolis at 908-301-0500 or email 10thAnniversarynj@gmail.com

Please know that all tickets must be purchased and all sponsorships submitted to the Metropolis by **Friday, January 3, 2025**. We thank you in advance with your assistance and participation in this auspicious occasion and we wish all of you a most blessed and Merry Christmas.

† Archim. Philotheos Tomczewski!
 + Archim. Philotheos Tomczewski
 Vicar of Northern New Jersey
 Co-Chairman of the 10th Anniversary Banquet


 Archon H. James Polos
 Vice-President of the Metropolis Council &
 Chairman of the 10th Anniversary Banquet



10th Anniversary Gala

In Honor of the 10th Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey

SPONSORSHIP FORM

Checks are to be made payable to the "Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey - Ministry" and sent together with this form to the Metropolis of New Jersey, Attn: 10th Anniversary Sponsorship, 215 E. Grove Street, Westfield, NJ 07090 For more information contact 908-301-0500 or 10thAnniversarynj@gmail.com. All Sponsorships must be submitted by Friday, January 3, 2025.

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

All Sponsorships Include a Listing in the Commemorative Program Booklet

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor
\$1,250.00
+ 2 Tickets | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter
\$2,500.00
+ 4 Tickets | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron
\$5,000.00
+ 6 tickets | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor
\$10,000.00
+ 10 Tickets. | <input type="checkbox"/> Grand Benefactor
\$20,000.00
+ 10 Tickets &
Full Program Insert |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

SPONSOR INFORMATION

Individual, Parish or Organization Name (As you wish to be listed in the Program Booklet)

Parish Name

Parish City & State

Sponsor Contact Phone #

Sponsor Contact Email

TABLE FORM

Please fill out the full names of individuals using the tickets included with the Sponsorship Level

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____



**10th Anniversary Gala
In Honor of the Episcopal Ordination of
His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey**

Monday, January 13, 2025

The Venetian, Garfield NJ

Name of Parish/Group _____

City/State _____

Tables of 10-12

1. _____ 7. _____

2. _____ 8. _____

3. _____ 9. _____

4. _____ 10. _____

5. _____ 11. _____

6. _____ 12. _____

Number of guests _____ @ \$160/person Total Due: _____ Check # _____

Date received by Metropolis of New Jersey _____

All attendees must be listed on this form. This form, with the appropriate fee, payable to the "**Metropolis of New Jersey-Ministry**", should be submitted to:

Metropolis of New Jersey
215 East Grove Street
Westfield, NJ 07090

By **Friday, January 3, 2025**. No tickets will be sold at the door.



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

December 9, 2024

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy,
 Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Sisterhoods and the PTO/PTA,
 Directors/Principals and Teachers of the Afternoon Greek Schools of the
 Delaware Valley Region of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

I pray that my letter finds all of you well. It is with much joy and excitement that I write to Inform you that the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey will once again be celebrating Greek Letters and the Feast Day of the Three Hierarchs, St. Basil the Great, St. John Chrysostom and St. Gregory the Theologian, the Ecumenical Teachers of our Holy Orthodox Faith and profound supporters of Education.

Therefore, please know that the Metropolis Three Hierarchs/Greek Letters Celebration for the Delaware Valley Region will take place on SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2025, AT 4:00 PM AT THE ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH IN UPPER DARBY, PENNSYLANIVA. The beautiful program will include the students of the area Greek Schools, as they narrate various poems, sing songs, and Greek dance with great pride. Please know that all the Greek Schools of the Delaware Valley Region are invited to participate in this wonderful event, and I ask that the parish Greek schools please confirm your participation in this event by contacting the parish at 610-352-7212.

In addition, I ask that all those wishing to attend this beautiful celebration please R.S.V.P. by contacting the St. Demetrios parish office at 610-352-7212, no later than Friday, January 17, 2025 so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Praying that our loving Lord continues to bless you and all the devout faithful of our sacred Metropolis with every good and perfect gift from above, I remain

With paternal love and blessings,

F. Metropolitan Agostolo
 † APOSTOLOS
 Metropolitan of New Jersey



**His Eminence
Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey
Cordially invites all the dedicated Faithful
of the Delaware Valley Region to the Annual**

Greek Letters Day Celebration

Honoring the Three Hierarchs of our Orthodox Church



St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil the Great & St. Gregory the Theologian

Sunday, January 26, 2025 at 4:00 pm

St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church

229 Powell Lane, Upper Darby, PA 19082

**Please RSVP to the Parish Office at 610-352-7212
by January 17, 2025**



Ο Σεβασμιώτατος Μητροπολίτης Νέας Ιερσέης
κ. ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ

Σας προσκαλεί να συνεορτάσουμε
«Την Εορτή των Τριών Ιεραρχών
και την Ημέρα των Ελληνικών Γραμμάτων»



Κυριακή 26 Ιανουαρίου 2025, ώρα 4:00 μ.μ.

**Ιερός Ναός Αγίου Δημητρίου
229 Powell Lane, Upper Darby, PA 19082**

Παρακαλούμε RSVP στο γραφείο του Ναού
(610-352-7212) έως τις 17 Ιανουαρίου 2025



The Priesthood of the Laity

Parish Ministry Team Program



It seems that everyone is in a hurry these days. The pressures of today's society are unlike anything the Church has had to contend with. We are living in a secularized society where persons are preoccupied with material things. This preoccupation is manifested in a great emphasis given to making a living, taking the kids to any one of a hundred activities, vacations, and the accumulation of material possessions. Although God desires that our needs be met...

- ♦ "For your heavenly Father knows that you need these things." Matthew 6:32

He also commands that we...

- ♦ "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Matthew 6:33

But in today's society, there is serious competition for time, diminishing the opportunities faithful Christians have to work for God and the upbuilding of His Church.

To many, the concept of "priesthood of the laity" and the "ministry of the laity" is strange and confusing. Often, when confronted with the concept that the laity are a "royal priesthood" and compelled to seek a ministry in the church they respond with the following question:

The "priesthood of the laity"? But isn't "ministry" the duty of the priest?"

With time allotted for service to the Church dwindling as a result of our busy age, it has become a "habit" to rely on our priest to take care of all of the needs of the Church, from serving the Divine Liturgy to changing light bulbs. The answer to this question can be found clearly expressed in the Holy Scripture. Taking one step at a time, consider the following:

Who are the Orthodox Christian laity, as defined by the Holy Scripture?

"You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light . . ." (1 Peter 2:9)

"For we are God's fellow workers . . ." (1 Corinthians 3:9)

"But whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:43-45)

If we are a "royal priesthood", "God's fellow workers", and a "servant of all", what does God give us to work with if we are to fulfill these roles?

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all." (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

We now understand our role, and that we are given gifts of the Spirit which enable us to work for the common good ("the profit of all").

Now, what are we expected to do with this understanding?

"Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it". (Colossians 4:17)

Only now can we understand what work God wants us to do for the love of Him and our neighbors.

We must take these words seriously because our Lord is **speaking to us**. Our Lord is giving us an important instruction: **we cannot remain idle and serve Him at the same time** (". . . *faith without works is dead* . . ." James 2:20). The ministry of the laity is real, and a calling that is for every Orthodox Christian. The Parish Ministry Team Program is an effective way to organize parish efforts in addressing needs. But more importantly, it provides the needed opportunities for each person to "fulfill their ministry".

Who is teaching our children their moral and ethical values?

by Archpriest Joseph Purpura

As a parent of four children, three of whom are teenagers, I witness the multitude of moral and ethical values that they are constantly presented. I am also amazed just how much at odds those values often are with each other. There are the moral and ethical values imparted to them from television and the theater. There are the moral and ethical values that their peers expect of them, which depending on the group (i.e. sports, academic decathlon team, chess team, theater group, church youth group, etc.) often in and of themselves vary. There are, also, their music, the Internet their schoolteachers and the school environment as a whole, where one would expect high values to be imparted.

Recently, my tenth grader's class held what was called "Awareness Week" where the "Myth of Masculinity" and "Gay and Lesbians: Awareness and Acceptance" were two of the main topics. At this point I began wondering who is setting moral and ethical agenda for our

young people, and I asked where and what is the responsibility of the Church and parents in this process. I well remember one of my seminary professors saying that he and his wife got through the teen years of their children by "talking with their children, and talking and talking." Recent studies tell us that the average parent spends about two minutes each day in meaningful conversation with their teenagers. Telling your child to clean his room, empty the garbage, go to bed, get up, brush your teeth, go to school, don't count as meaningful conversation, according to the authors of the study. Two minutes a day, no matter how meaningful, may not be enough to compete with the multitude of other moral and ethical values being presented to our youth. We need to spend a meaningful amount of time with our children to really know what is going on in their lives, what they are thinking and what outside influences are forming their moral and ethical values.



In memory - In honor

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



ICONOGRAPHY—A Lost Art

When was the last time you considered taking your family vacation at a monastery?

- ◆ No plush accommodations or modern conveniences,
- ◆ No shopping, golf or swimming pool... and
- ◆ Most importantly, will the food fare consist of anything more than bread and water?

TALK ABOUT FASTING or do you call this personal deprivation?

Dawn Shaheen, wife of Nicholas H. Shaheen, took this journey, comforted by knowing that whatever this experience provided, it would be totally spiritual and enriching. The Ladies of St. George experienced her journey through her presentation given to the Ladies at the March meeting.

Dawn, along with her sisters ventured to Mount Carmel, in Niagara Falls to attend a one week class in Iconography conducted by Phil Zimmerman, a well known iconographer.

HOW DO WE KNOW THE AUTHENTICITY OF ICONS?

- ◆ St. Luke the Evangelist is thought to be the first iconographer. The icon of St. Luke depicts him writing an icon of The Virgin and Christ, while his hands are guided by an angel.
- ◆ In Christ's last moments, St. Veronica gave Christ her veil to wipe His blood and sweat. When he handed the veil back to her, the image of his face appeared on it. This is what we refer to as the Shroud of Christ.

Over the years a remarkable consistency has been maintained of sacred icons, maintaining these sanctified writings through the years.

ICON OF ST. THERESE

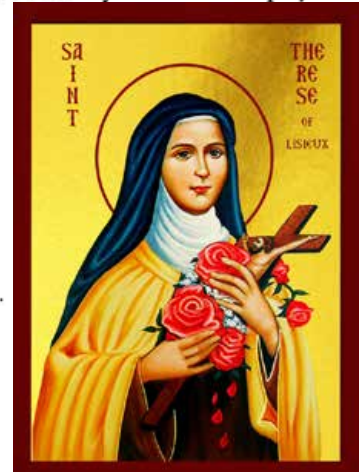
For simplicity of the class, Phil chose St. Therese as the icon for instruction. St. Therese entered the convent when she was 15 years old, taking the name St. Therese of the child Jesus. She died of tuberculosis at 24 years old. During the final years of her life, she wrote a book of her memoirs titled "The Story of a Soul". She is referred to as "The Little Flower" and dedicated her life to silent prayer, being canonized a saint in 1925. Her relics were at Mount Carmel Monastery, so each student received her blessing on their unwritten icon before they began.



THE WONDEROUS EXPERIENCE OF WRITING

The basis of writing an icon is prayerfulness, inner peace and concentration. Each day of class Byzantine music played in the background. Although the steps seem simple, the process is not:

1. The wood was treated with a substance called gesso, to provide a smooth finish that will accept paint. This process took two weeks to prepare, therefore it was done prior to class.
2. The line drawing of the image is transferred to the wood throughout the painting of the icon.
3. All paint was pre-measured and formulated to get the right shade.
4. Outlining, shading and highlighting were a constant exercise, layering many hues of color to create the rich effect.
5. Finally, 24 karat Gold leaf is used for the halo, outlined in a fine red paint, using a precision tool. The process tedious and unnerving... one slip could ruin the icon.



SYMBOLISM WITHIN ICONS

Without words, iconography relies on symbolism to express the deep meaning behind each Saint. Next time you study an icon, look for these symbols:

- ◆ VIRGIN MARY—has three stars, one on her forehead and each shoulder. These represent her perpetual virginity, before, during and after birth.
- ◆ CHRIST—has at least two forelocks which symbolize the divine and human nature's of Christ. Occasionally a third forelock is present, representing the Trinity.

The Ladies group learned a great deal from Dawn and her pictures of the process of writing an icon. After hearing her experience and learning so much, a deeper appreciation and story is told by the icons that adorn our church and home.

By the way... the monastery's food was delicious, and the cold, uncomfortable and inconvenient accommodations of the monastery became INSIGNIFICANT, as the warmth of the Holy Spirit filled the week. Blessings to you Dawn, for sharing this personal experience with our Ladies.



A JOURNEY OF FAITH
To Thessaloniki, Mt. Athos and Constantinople
Led by His Eminence Apostolos of New Jersey
February 21-March 3, 2025: 11 Days / 9 Nights



Thessaloniki & Mt. Athos: See the most important religious sites in Northern Greece. Visit Greece's second largest city, Thessaloniki. Attend Liturgy at the Cathedral of St. Demetrios, visit the Monastery of St. John the Theologian in Souroti to venerate the grave of St. Paissios and visit the awe inspiring Meteora Monasteries. Men will depart for the Holy Mountain for two nights and the women will enjoy a visit to Ormylia Monastery and a visit to a museum in Thessaloniki.

Constantinople: Visit the important Greek Orthodox sites: the Ecumenical Patriarchate and St George Cathedral, Agia Sophia, Panagia Vlacherna where the "Te Ypermahou" was first chanted, Chora and Baloukli Monastery - Zoodochos Peghe. Also, visit the Underground Cisterns. Shop at the exciting Grand Bazaar! Enjoy a birthday banquet for His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew as well as a private audience with the Patriarch (subject to confirmation).

SPACE IS LIMITED and on a FIRST-COME BASIS

RATE: Per person double occupancy \$4700* & single occupancy \$5635*

*Rates include the air tax/fuel of approximately \$475 which is not guaranteed until ticketing a month prior to departure. Rate above reflects a 4% check discount which does not apply if payment is made any other way. Due to Aegean Airlines group reservations policy, the air fare between Thessaloniki and Istanbul is not guaranteed and may be subject to fare increases depending on when you make your reservation to join the group. An air supplement may apply.

Deposit of \$800 due by November 20, 2024 or late booking fee of \$50 per person will apply.

YOUR TOUR WILL INCLUDE:

- *Round-trip airfare on Turkish Airlines: EWR / IST / Thessaloniki & IST / EWR & Aegean Airlines: Thessaloniki / ATH / IST
- *Private arrival and departure transfers in a deluxe air conditioned motorcoach with English speaking escort
- *7 1/2 days of private sightseeing for men & 6 days for the women. All entrance fees are included.
- *Women: 6 nts first class hotel in Thessaloniki at the Electra Palace or similar including daily breakfast, all taxes and service fees.
- *Men: 4 nts first class accommodation in Thessaloniki at the Electra Palace or similar including daily breakfast, all taxes and service fees & 2 nts accommodation on the Holy Mountain including meals and transportation on the Holy Mountain & roundtrip private ferries
- *All: 3 nts first class accommodation in Constantinople at the Divan Istanbul Hotel or similar including daily breakfast, all taxes & service fees.
- *1 welcome dinner in Thessaloniki, 1 dinner in Constantinople & a banquet for His. All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew
- *Private audience with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (subject to confirmation)

Cloud Tours Inc. 37-21 78th Street Jackson Heights, NY 11372
Tel: 718-721-3808 Fax: 718-795-4356 Email: stephen@cloudtours.com



**A JOURNEY OF FAITH
TO THESSALONIKI, MT. ATHOS & CONSTANTINOPLE
Led by His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey
February 21 – March 3, 2025: 11 Days / 9 Nights**

I am requesting services for _____ people. **The exact name on the passport (s) is/are:**

Address: _____

Daytime Tel: _____ Evening Tel: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____ Special Requests: Meals (Diabetic, vegetarian etc.): _____

Rooming with: _____ Wheelchair: Yes ___ No ___ Star Alliance number: _____

SELECT BETWEEN OPTIONS I, II:

OPTION I: Select either double or single occupancy inclusive of air: JFK / IST / Thessaloniki & Thessaloniki / IST & IST / EWR

Per person double occupancy \$4700* x 2 \$ _____

Single occupancy \$5635 * x 1 \$ _____

***Air tax/fuel of approximately \$475 is include in the above prices and not guaranteed until ticketed and subject to change**

OPTION II: LAND ONLY: Select either double or single occupancy. (Transatlantic flights not included. Flights Thessaloniki to IST via Athens are included).

Land only rate per person double occupancy \$3875* x 2 \$ _____

Land only rate single occupancy \$4810* x 1 \$ _____

Departure/Arrival transfers may not be included in Land Only rates

ALL OPTIONS: Please add: Gratuities per person (not optional) \$ 185 x \$ _____

Delivery of documents (not optional)\$ 30 x 1\$ 30.00

***Rates reflect a 4% check discount which does not apply if payment is made in any other way. Due to Aegean Airlines group reservations policy, the air fare between Thessaloniki and Istanbul is not guaranteed and may be subject to fare increases depending on when you make your reservation to join the group. An air supplement may apply.**

TRAVEL PROTECTION IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING TRAVEL PROTECTION VISIT THE BELOW LINK FOR PLANS AND PREMIUMS

www.travelexinsurance.com/index.aspx?location=32-0603&go=bp

Travel protection is recommended. If you pay for it with your deposit, pre-existing medical conditions are covered

Please mail this reservation form, a copy of your passport and a deposit of \$800 per person payable to Cloud Tours Inc.

SPACE IS LIMITED! RESERVE NOW! DEADLINE: November 20, 2024 or late booking fee, \$50 applies

TOUR INCLUDES:

*Round-trip airfare on Turkish Airlines: EWR / IST / Thessaloniki & IST / EWR & Aegean Airlines: Thessaloniki / ATH / IST

*Private arrival and departure transfers in a deluxe air conditioned motorcoach with English speaking escort

*7 1/2 days of private sightseeing for men & 6 days for the women. All entrance fees as per itinerary are included.

*Women: 6 nts first class hotel in Thessaloniki at the Electra Palace or similar including daily breakfast, all taxes and service fees.

*Men: 4 nts first class accommodation in Thessaloniki at the Electra Palace or similar including daily breakfast, all taxes and service fees &

2 nts accommodation on the Holy Mountain including meals and transportation on the Holy Mountain & roundtrip private ferries

*All: 3 nts first class accommodation in Constantinople at the Divan Istanbul Hotel or similar includ. daily breakfast, all taxes & service fees.

*1 welcome dinner in Thessaloniki, 1 dinner in Constantinople & a banquet for His. All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

*Private audience with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (subject to confirmation)

CONDITIONS: Confirmation is subject to receipt of deposit with reservation form no later than Nov. 22 to guarantee your seat. Deposits received Nov. 23 and later are subject to a \$50 late booking fee & applicable air surcharges. Final balance due Dec, 27, 2024. **Air taxes / fuel surcharges are not guaranteed unless ticketed. Ticketing must occur for the group at the same time.** A minimum of 25 people required or additional costs will apply. **Cancellation fees:** Once deposit is received, an administration fee of \$200 per person applies in cases of all cancellations. Additional fees for cancellations received between Nov 23, 2024-Jan 2, 2025, \$800 per person and between Jan 3- Jan 21, 75% of the tour price and between Jan 22, 2025 to day of departure, non-refundable. No refund for no-shows or unused portions of tour. Additional cancellation fees may be imposed by suppliers subject to date of cancellation. Should the group cancel for any reason, including political strife, Cloud Tours reserves the right to charge \$150 per person administration fee, **Travel protection is recommended & must be paid with deposit to waive the pre-existing medical conditions exclusion. Travel protection is nonrefundable. You may request a copy of the Description of Coverage, prior to purchase, which includes the terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions.** This plan provides insurance coverage for your trip that applies only during the covered trip. You may have coverage from other sources that provides you with similar benefits but may be subject to different restrictions depending upon your other coverages. You may wish to compare the terms of this policy with your existing life, health, home and automobile policies. If you have any questions about your current coverage, call your insurer, insurance agent or broker. The purchase of this plan is not required in order to purchase any other travel product or service offered to you by your travel retailer". Cloud Tours reserves the right to deny service to any person based upon its discretion and/or the particular needs or circumstances of a given group.

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Tel: 718 721 3808 Fax: 718 795 4356 Email: stephen@cloudtours.com**



St. Demetrios WEBSITE!



Check out St. Demetrios Church’s new website for a variety of information, stewardship and donations, bulletins and newsletters, links, and more!

www.stdemetriosnewjersey.com

Sponsor a Coffee Hour

Attention All Parishioners:

We have resumed the coffee hour following the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. Please consider sponsoring a coffee hour in memory of a loved one, for the health of your family, or in honor of our St. Demetrios Church.



Please call the office at 609-522-0152 to schedule. Thank you.

upcoming events

JOY (AGES 8-10) | HOPE (AGES 3-7)
TWO SATURDAYS PER MONTH

PHILOPTOCHOS
1ST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH AFTER DIVINE LITURGY

GREEK SCHOOL
EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT FROM 4:30 - 7:30 P.M.

directory

PROTOPRESBYTER | FR. MICHAEL PASTRIKOS

CHURCH SECRETARY | TBD

PARISH COUNCIL:

PRESIDENT | NICHOLAS D. KONIDES

VICE PRESIDENT | DR. GEORGE KOUMARAS

TREASURER | THEODORE KATSIKARIS

SECRETARY | WILLIAM MITCHELL

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL:

KOSTA BILIOS

SPIRO KELLIS

GEORGE MALLOUS

GEORGE TSAMIS

GEORGE PAPAGEORGIU

SUNDAY SCHOOL | SOPHIA KINIROPOULOS

GREEK SCHOOL | GEORGE PLAMANTOURAS

J.O.Y. | FR. MICHAEL PASTRIKOS

H.O.P.E. | FR. MICHAEL PASTRIKOS

PHILOPTOCHOS | DINA BILIOS

CHANTERS | FOTINI ANDY, RITA EFTHIMIOU, CATHY WOLFE

CHURCH: 1.609.522.0152

321 ST. DEMETRIOS AVE, NORTH WILDWOOD, NJ 08260

STDEMETRIOSNEWJERSEY.COM

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



donation opportunity

The Parish Council would like to bring to your attention the Golden Leaf Giving Tree. Very few have participated in this memorable way to create **a lifetime tribute for generations to see and enjoy**. Please take the time to view this lovely Giving Tree and consider displaying your family's name, a remembrance of a loved one or an achievement. We would like to see the tree grow with more care and love!

Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church's Golden Leaf Giving Tree

Saint Demetrios Church is selling golden leaves and bronze stones on the Giving Tree as a fundraiser to help maintain its various expenses. It is a wonderful and memorable way of displaying your family's name, remembering a loved one, or commemorating a person's achievements.

Every leaf or stone purchased will be presented for a lifetime for all generations to see and enjoy.

For more information, please feel free to speak with one of our Church board members. Thank you in advance for your continued support.



SAINT DEMETRIOS' GIVING TREE

GOLDEN LEAF..... \$500.00

SMALL BRONZE STONE.....\$1500.00
(5 1/2 INCH X 3 1/2 INCH)

LARGE BRONZE STONE\$3000.00
(7 1/2 INCH X 5 INCH)



stewardship news

Pledges for 2024 ~ Εθελοντική Προσφορά 2024

MR/MRS ANAGNOS DEMET & ELENI
 MRS ANDY FOTINI
 DR/MRS AUGOUSTIDES YIANNI & ANNA MARIA
 MR/MRS ANTONAKAKIS STAVROS & ELENI
 MRS BENNETT MELISSA
 MRS BOULAGERIS ALEXANDRA
 MRS BOULAGERIS EVANTHIA
 MRS BUTLER ANNA
 MR/MRS CAMMARANO ANDREW & SOPHIA
 MR/MRS CAMMARANO MAURO & ANGELA
 DRS CARPENTER JEFFREY & JUDY
 MR/MRS CHLETOS PETER & MARGOT
 MR/MRS CRAVER CHESTER & ATHENA
 MRS CVETKOWSKI
 MRS DAGLIS MELPO
 MR/MRS DECTIS PETER & JULIE
 MR DONAHUE BERNARD & PATRICIA
 MRS DONAHUE STAVANNA
 MRS EFTHIMIOU ELEFThERIA
 MR/MRS ERMENTROUT GERALD & ELAINE
 MR/MRS FOURNARIS EMMANUEL & EVIE
 MR/MRS GIOUROS EVANGELOS & BESSIE
 MR GOGATS CARL
 MR/MRS HOLTON JOHN & KATERINI
 MR/MRS HUNSICKER SCOTT & MARISA
 MRS KALLOS ETHEL
 MRS KARAVANGELES ANASTASIA
 MRS KARAVANGELOS ANNA
 MR/MRS KARAVANGELOS GEORGE & ANNA
 MRS KARROS IRENE
 MR/MRS KARROS ANASTASIOS & DENISE
 DR/MRS KATSANIS LESTER & ELENI
 MR/MRS KATSIKARIS THEODORE & DESPINA
 MR/MRS KELLIS PETER & VASSO
 MR/MRS KELLIS SPIRO & MARIA
 MRS KLINGOS ELENI
 MR/MRS KOLAITIS JERRY & MARINNA
 MR/MRS KONIDES NICHOLAS & JENNIFER
 MS KONIDES NICOLE
 MS KONIDES SOPHIA
 MRS KOUMARAS ALYSSA
 MR KOUMARAS CHRISTOPHER

DR/MRS KOUMARAS GEORGE & MARIA
 MR/MRS KOUTSIMIRIS ANTONIOS & ELENI
 MR/MRS KRARAS CHISTOS & ANN
 MR/MRS KRARAS DEAN & JENNIFER
 MR/MRS LABE GREG & STEPHANIE
 MR/MRS LOMAS RAYMOND & KRISTEN
 MR/MRS LAZOS PETER & VASILIKI
 MRS MALLOUS ATHENA
 MRS MALLOUS SAMANTHA
 MR/MRS MALLOUS GEORGE & BEVERLY
 MR/MRS MANETAS JOHN & ELLEN
 MR/MRS MCSHAFFRY STEVEN & MARIA
 MR/MRS MERCADO LUIS & DEMETRIA
 MR/MRS MITCHELL WILLIAM & HELEN
 MR/MRS MURIANKA STEPHEN & MICHELLE
 MR/MRS NANNAS TED & ALEXANDRA
 MS ORGINOS IRENE
 MS ORGINOS HELEN
 MR/MRS PADUSSIS GARRY & DONNA
 FR. PASTRIKOS MICHAEL & PRESVYTERA DEMETRA
 PRESVYTERA PANTELIS KATINA
 MR/MRS PADUSSIS GARY & DONNA
 MRS PAPADOPOULOS ANGELA
 MR/MRS PAPAGEORGE GEORGE & STELLA
 MR/MRS PAPAIOANNOU STELIOS & TINA
 MR/MRS PAPASPANOS KOSTAS & ROULA
 MR/MRS PARSON JAMES & NIKKI
 MRS PAVLOU HELEN
 MR/MRS PAPAGEORGIOU TONY & VETTA
 MR/MRS PARDALIOS ANTONIOS & MARIA
 MR/MRS ROYER MICHAEL & CHRISTINA
 MR/MRS SAKOULAS JOHN & ELIZABETH
 MR/MRS SHEETS WILLIAM & IRENE
 MR/MRS SQUICCIMAIA LOUIS & ELLIE
 MR/MRS STAMATACOS VASILIOS & ELENI
 MRS STAVROPOULOS ELLIE
 MR/MRS THOMAS EDWARD & KATHY
 MR/MRS TRAFICANTE CHRIS & ROSE
 MR/MRS TSIAMIS GEORGE & DIMITRA
 MR/MRS TSIARTSIONIS GEORGE & ALEKA
 MR WALLGREN WILLIAM
 MR/MRS WOLFE DAVID & KATHY

TOTAL STEWARDSHIP FOR 2024: \$75,050



help us grow with VANCO GIVING

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

Electronic Giving –is the way to go today. It is also a convenient, easy way to support St. Demetrios.

● ● ● BY GIVING ELECTRONICALLY YOU CAN: ● ● ●

- Give anywhere, anytime from your computer, cell phone or tablet.
- Donate easily for special projects of the Church.
- Give towards your stewardship pledge or other donations such as memorial, endowment and others.
- Set up reoccurring or one time pledges and you will never need to worry if you have your check book or cash on you. VANCO will store your information.
- It is important to note that if you are using a credit card, you may be able to accumulate rewards by your provider.

Show your support and try E-Giving through our VANCO QR Code (located below). Or you can find this code on our website under the DONATE TAB www.stdemetriosnewjersey.com and even easier.... There is a button that states “click here” that will take you directly to the VANCO page. It is as simple as that.

To use the QR code- open your camera on your phone and hover over the code. The VANCO website will appear and then tap on it.

Thank you for all you do to support our St. Demetrios family throughout the year. May God bless you and keep you well and strong.





Stewardship News

Dear Parishioner,

We at Saint Demetrios are thankful to have you and your family here in our church. You are a vital part of our church community. **Unfortunately, the Parish is in great need of your financial help!!**

Your financial support provides the foundation for our parish ministries and our efforts in meeting the challenge of spreading Christ’s Word and our Orthodox Faith.

Stewardship also means more than just making a monetary donation. Stewardship is an opportunity to examine our priorities and values, to express our thankfulness, to give of ourselves and to grow in grace. It allows us to participate in the vineyard of our Lord. Giving is not a substitute for commitment. It is an expression of your commitment.

Please note there are several ways to pledge: besides printing this form, our Stewardship Pledge forms are also in the Narthex, you may complete one and give it to Parish Council Secretary, William Mitchell. He can also be contacted at 609-425-4000. If you would like to mail your Stewardship Commitment, our mailing address is:

St. Demetrios
300 St Demetrios St
North Wildwood NJ 08260

If Stewardship payment has been made for 2023 please disregard this notice and except our gratitude.

Please respond out of faith and love and help keep our church vibrant for many years to come. **This is YOUR CHURCH! Please, if you have yet to send in your Stewardship, please do so now. Remember the Church is not just here when you need it! Its open every week! If we don’t support the Church, who else will?**

Respectfully,
Fr. Michael & The Stewardship Committee

_____ Cut here _____

Please make checks payable to: Saint Demetrios Church

My Stewardship Commitment is \$ _____ Year _____

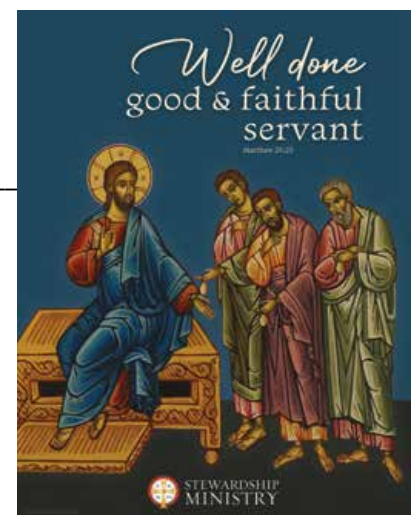
Single/Individual \$500.00

Family \$750.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email _____





SAINT DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

321 Saint Demetrios Street – North Wildwood, New Jersey 08260

PARISH REGISTRY INFORMATION FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

HOME PHONE _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

PLACE OF BIRTH _____

DATE OF ORTHODOX BAPTISM/CHRISMATION _____

PROFESSION/OCCUPATION _____

BUSINESS NAME & ADDRESS _____

BUSINESS PHONE _____

SPOUSE'S 1ST NAME & MAIDEN NAME _____

SPOUSE'S DATE OF BIRTH _____

SPOUSE'S PLACE OF BIRTH _____

DATE OF ORTHODOX BAPTISM/CHRISMATION _____

SPOUSE'S OCCUPATION _____

BUSINESS PHONE _____

DATE & PLACE OF ORTHODOX MARRIAGE _____

NAME OF PRIEST WHO DID MARRIAGE _____

CHILDREN'S NAMES & DATES OF BIRTH _____



THE GOOD FIGHT



It's the season! Football season! I confess I am a football fan, mainly high school and Pro football, Hooray! Hooray! I was wondering recently while enjoying a great Pro football game with my favorite team playing (Pittsburgh Steelers of course), with a packed stadium, what is the drawing power of this sport, as any popular sport, for that (like soccer in Europe?) Yes there is the pageantry, the glitz, the excitement, but there is more than that, I think. I wonder if the main attraction is its conflict and contest. Think about it. The players are acting out the hidden dreams of our struggle, our conflict is with good and evil. Think about this for a moment, the team you are cheering for is "good" while the opposition is "bad" and "evil". Though this is mostly unconscious, it is the drawing power of all contests and we identify with it because of our struggle with good and evil.

St. Paul uses this image of contest and struggle, "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 2:1). "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (Timothy 4:7).

When it comes down to it, dear brethren, even our God uses the language of contest and struggle: "Do not think that I come to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword!" (Matthew: 10:34). Is this the Jesus who preaches love, mercy, pardon and peace? Yes, it truly is, but Jesus' love, mercy, pardon and peace are effected on the foundation of commitment to do good, which is our commitment to God. To live this commitment is to be engaged in the struggle, in the combat between good and evil and we need the "sword" of the Holy Spirit to fight this battle.

The warfare is basically internal for it is in our hearts where we meet and engage the enemy. The struggle is a spiritual battle as the saints and the Fathers have repeatedly written. But the internal combat with evil is expressed in how we treat, care for and extend mercy and forgive our neighbor, or our fellow man, for if we are truly struggling to do God's will, His love will be born and radiate in our hearts and LOVE always seeks outward expression. The outer expression of caring without love in the heart, born out of the struggle, is a show and inner love without outward expression will soon wither and dry out.

We are called daily by Christ to the service of love and the good fight against evil. This war we wage may not be with material weapons and against a visible enemy, but is truly a real war. It is a war for our salvation and the salvation of those we love and care for. We are called to put on the armor of Christ and to practice love and peace by fighting against all that is selfish and evil within us. We will lose the battle if and when we use angry words, display an ugly temper, being immoral and unethical, refuse to forgive and seek revenge in words and actions. Contempt for others, arrogance, fault finding, always complaining and judging others reveals a loser. And the worst defeat of all is not to care, not to engage in the battle, being a pacifist, and to seek the easy road for our selfish comfort and ease.

The next time you enjoy a football game, a soccer game, or any other sport that you like, ask yourself how the struggle with good and evil within you is progressing, are you utilizing the armor and weapons Christ has given you, are you running the race with perseverance and fighting the good fight for God and your eternal salvation, or are you just simply running away?



IF THEY ONLY HAD KNOWN!

In 1798, a man went to the front desk of the finest hotel in Baltimore and asked if he could have a room for the evening. He was dirty and disheveled; he looked like a farmer who had just come in from working in his fields. The manager instantly decided that this was not the type of person that should be staying in his elegant establishment. He lied to the man, telling him there were no rooms available. Imagine the manager's shock when a co-worker told him that "peasant" was Thomas Jefferson, the Vice President of the United States at the time — a man whose first love was farming. It is said that the hotel manager never quite got over his great blunder, and that he would constantly lament: "If only I had known it was the Vice President. I would have given him our finest room."

As we celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ, one of the intriguing aspects of the Christmas Story is that somehow,

no one had room for Joseph and Mary as the time for her delivery drew near. After the fact, the innkeepers who rejected them probably echoed the words of the Baltimore hotel manager: "If we only knew that the Baby about to be born was the Messiah. We would have found room for Him."

As Christ went about doing His chosen work, many others joined the ranks of the Bethlehem innkeepers and failed to find room for Him in their lives and failed to recognize Who He was. Christ's ministry wasn't terribly successful. The world had no use for Him until it was crystal-clear that He was the Son of God.

We certainly should know Him, and we certainly should find room for Him in our lives. Our lives must be centered on Him, for He came into the world for our sake, and for the sake of our salvation. This is His gift to us. Our gift to Him must be our unending love.

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in U.S.A.

♦♦♦♦♦ ARE YOU A GOOD LISTENER? ♦♦♦♦♦

At one time or another, we are all guilty of having "selective hearing." Children approach their parents, eager to share an experience or seek advice. A husband comes home and tries to relate to his wife some difficulty he encountered at work that day. A friend calls another, looking for a sympathetic ear. In cases like this, and in far too many of life's situations, it seems that we humans have this unfortunate ability to "tune out" those with whom we are speaking. We "HEAR" them, but aren't really "LISTENING."

Our Lord said on numerous occasions: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt 11:15) One could argue that what He really meant was "He who has ears to hear, let him LISTEN," for Christ goes on to tell us: "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Mark 4:24) It is imperative then for a good Christian to be a GOOD LISTENER. To do so, our Savior gives us words of guidance: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." (Matt 7:12) When we have problems & difficulties - when we have questions to ask or burdens to be lessened - don't we expect the undivided attention of the person to whom we are speaking? Of course, we do! Others expect the same of us as well. A good listener must be patient, sincere & compassionate. It must be said as well that being a good listener also means knowing when to remain silent! Those who seek our ear do not always need our advice - they merely want our silent reassurance that all will be well. Countless lives have been saved from suicide & numerous scarred souls have been healed through the simple act of COMPASSIONATE LISTENING. Rest assured, hearing is not nearly enough!

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in U.S.A.

THE MYSTERY OF THE HOLY TRINITY

WE BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, WHO EXISTS IN THREE PERSONS: FATHER, SON & HOLY SPIRIT. This is one of the basic dogmas of our Holy Orthodox Church. As children, we accept this readily with our simplistic, yet pure faith. As adults, however, this "3 in 1" concept is often a source of confusion and misunderstanding.

St. Cyril, the famous Apostle of the Slavs, attempted to explain the Holy Trinity in this manner: "Do you see in the heavens the sun and how from it light is begotten and warmth proceeds? God the Father is like the sun, without beginning or end. From Him is eternally begotten God the Son, like the light from the sun. Just as there comes warmth together with light from the sun, the Holy Spirit proceeds. Each one is distinguished separately. There are not three suns, but one in the heavens. So it is with the Holy Trinity: there are three Persons, but God is One and Indivisible."

The Orthodox Church teaches that all three Persons have the same divine dignity. They are different only in that GOD THE FATHER is not begotten and does not proceed from anyone; GOD THE SON is begotten of God the Father, and the HOLY SPIRIT proceeds from the Father. All eternally abide with one another in unceasing love and make up one Being. Confused? Perhaps the words of Blessed Augustine, the great Church Father of the West, are all we need to understand: "You will see the Trinity if you look with the eyes of love." Yes, we can know the Mystery of the Holy Trinity much better if we use our heart rather than our mind!

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey Litho in U.S.A.

Οἱ Ἅγιοι Πατέρες γιά τήν Ἐλεημοσύνη (σταχυολόγηση)



• Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης Χρυσόστομος († 13η Νοεμβρίου)

Ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη δόθηκε ἀπό τόν Θεό ὡς ἐντολή τῆς ἀγάπης. Καλή εἶναι ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη, μέ τήν ὁποία φαίνεται πῶς διασκορπίζεται ὁ πλοῦτος, στή πραγματικότητα ὅμως συγκεντρώνεται, γιατί, ὅπως ἕνας ἀγρότης πού δίδει στή γῆ καί στή συνέχεια συλλέγει σπόρους, ἔτσι καί ἡ ἐλεημο-

σύνη, φαίνεται πῶς προσφέρεται στους ἄλλους, ἐνώ πραγματικά ἀποκτᾷ κῦτός πού ἔδωσε. Τό μέγεθος τῆς ἐλεημοσύνης δέν ἐκτιμᾶται ἀνάλογα μέ τά χρήματα, ἀλλά μέ τή θέληση αὐτοῦ πού προσφέρει... Ἡ γενναιοδωρία δέν ἐκτιμᾶται ἀνάλογα μέ τό μέγεθος τῆς δωρεᾶς, ἀλλά ἀνάλογα μέ τή διάσταση πού ἔχει τό δῶρο σέ σχέση μέ τόν πλοῦτο τοῦ δωρητῆ. **Βασιλίστα τῶν ἀρετῶν εἶναι ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη**, ἡ ὁποία, ὡς καλύτερο μέσο, ἀνοίγει γρήγορα τίς πόρτες τοῦ Οὐρανοῦ γιά τούς εὐσπλαχνικούς.

Ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη εἶναι μητέρα τῆς ἀγάπης, αὐτή εἶναι φάρμακο γιά τά ἁμαρτήματά μας, κάθαρση γιά τήν ἀκαθαρσία τῆς ψυχῆς μας, κλίμακα στηριγμένη στόν Οὐρανό, αὐτή συνδέει τό Σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

• Ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ὁ Θεολόγος († 25η Ἰανουαρίου)

Ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη εἶναι μεγαλύτερη ἀπό ὅλες τίς πράξεις, ἐπειδή σέ μικρή τιμή ἀποκτᾶμε τήν Βασιλεία τῶν Οὐρανῶν, γιά μικρά προσωρινά λγαθὰ λαμβάνουμε αἰώνια δόξα.

• Ἅγιος Νεκτάριος Πενταπόλεως († 9η Νοεμβρίου)

Ὁ ἐλεήμονας δέν κλείνει τά αὐτιά του μπροστά στίς εὐχές τῶν φτωχῶν, ἀλλά βιάζεται νά τούς βοηθήσει. Ὅταν προσφέρει σ' αὐτόν πού εἶναι σέ δυστύχημα, δίδει μέ ἀγάπη καί συμπάθεια, καί ὅταν δίδει στόν φτωχό, τό πρόσωπό του λάμπει, ἐπειδή ἡ καρδιά του χαίρεται γιά τήν ἐλεημοσύνη. Καί ὁ ἐλεήμονας εἶναι ἀγαπημένος ἀπό τόν Θεό καί σώζεται στήν ἡμέρα τοῦ κινδύνου, διότι ὁ Θεός ἀγαπάει ἐκεῖνον πού δίδει μέ χαρά. Ὁ ἐλεήμονας κάνει ἐλεημοσύνη κρυφά, ἐπειδή ἡ καρδιά του ὁδηγεῖται ἀπό τήν ἀγάπη πρὸς τόν πλησίον καί ὄχι ἀπό τήν ἐπιθυμία γιά φήμη. Αὐτός δέν χαίρεται γιά τήν πολυτέλεια, ἀλλά γιά τήν φιλανθρωπία του. Ἐπειδή κῦτός ζεῖ μέ ἀγάπη πρὸς τόν πλησίον καί ἡ ἀγάπη του ἐκφράζεται μέσα ἀπό τήν ἀγάπη πρὸς τόν πλησίον.

Ὁ ἐλεήμονας δέχεται τόν θλιμμένο, δέν ἀποστρέφει τά μάτια του ἀπό κῦτόν πού εἶναι σέ δυστύχημα, οὔτε τό πρόσωπό του ἀπό τούς φτωχοῦς... Στόν πεινασμένο προσφέρει δικό του ψωμί, δίδει στους διψῶντες, σκεπάζει τούς φτωχοῦς, ντύνει τούς γυμνοῦς, βοηθᾷ τούς πάσχοντες, ἐπισκεπτεται τούς φυλακισμένους καί φιλοξενεῖ τούς ξένους. Μοιράζεται γενναίω-

14

δωρα, ἐλπίζοντας στόν Κύριο καί ἔτσι ἀποκτᾷ πλοῦτο στόν Οὐρανό. Ὁ ἐλεήμονας εἶναι σάν καρποφόρο ελαιόδεντρο στόν οἶκο τοῦ Θεοῦ, ποτέ δέν μένει χωρῆς ἐλπίδα στόν Θεό, ἀλλά πάντα ἀνθίζει, καί μοιάζει μέ αἰώνια ἀνθισμένο δέντρο καί, μέ ζήλο γιά τή γονιμότητά του, σέ ἄλλους καί σέ κάθε στιγμή δωρίζει ἀφθονή ἐλεημοσύνη. Μακάριος εἶναι ὁ ἐλεήμονας, ὅτι αὐτός θά κληρονομήσει τήν Βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ, τήν ἐτοιμασμένη ἀπό τήν ἀρχή τοῦ κόσμου. Ὁ Κύριος λέει στους ἐλεήμονες: «δεῦτε οἱ εὐλογημένοι τοῦ πατρὸς μου, κληρονομήσατε τήν ἡτοιμασμένην ὑμῖν βασιλείαν ἀπό καταβολῆς κόσμου, ἐπεινάσα γάρ, καί ἐδώκατέ μοι φαγεῖν, ἐδίψησα, καί ἐποτίσατέ με, ξένος ἦμην, καί σννηγάγετέ με, γυμνός, καί περιεβάλετέ με, ἡσθένησα, καί ἐπεσκεψασθέ με, ἐν φυλακῇ ἦμην, καί ἤλθετε πρὸς με» (Ματθ. 25, 34-36).

• Ὁ Ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ὁ Παλαμᾶς († 14η Νοεμβρίου)

Μιλώντας γιά τήν ἀνεξικακία καί τήν συμπάθεια, λέγει:

Τό καλό τῆς ἐλεημοσύνης εἶναι διπλό, καί τό μέν ἓνα εἶναι ἡ μετάδοση στέγης, σκέπης, τροφῆς πρὸς ἐκεῖνους, πού ἔχουν ἀνάγκη· τό δέ ἄλλο εἶναι μακροθυμία καί ἀνεξικακία καί συμπάθεια πρὸς ὄσους πταίουν. Ὁ Υἱός τοῦ Θεοῦ, πού ἔγινε γιά χάρη μας ἄνθρωπος καί καταδέχτηκε νά εἶναι δάσκαλός μας, μᾶς λέγει: «νά δίδῃς σέ ὁποιον σοῦ ζητεῖ καί νά μὴν ἀποστραφῆς ὁποιον θέλει νά δανεισθῆ ἀπό ἐσένα».

• Ὁ Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης τῆς Κρονατόνης († 20ῆ Δεκεμβρίου)

Ἐρμηνεύοντας τούς μακαρισμούς, λέγει:

Ἡ ἐλεημοσύνη πρέπει νά χαρακτηρίζεται τόν χριστιανό, ἐπειδή αὐτός εἶναι μέλος τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τῆς ὁποίας μέλη εἶναι ὅλοι οἱ χριστιανοί, πού μαζί Του συγκροτοῦν ἓνα Σῶμα. Καθῶς ὅμως ὑπάρχουν καί πολλά ἀδύναμα μέλη αὐτοῦ τοῦ Σώματος ἢ ἄλλα πού δοκιμάζονται ἀπό πολλές στερησεις καί ἀνάγκες, δέν ὑπάρχει τίποτε πῶς φυσικό καί δίκαιο ἀπό τό νά νοιώθουμε συμπάθεια γιά τό μέλος πού δοκιμάζεται καί ἔχει ἀνάγκη, καί νά τό βοηθοῦμε ὁ καθένας ἀνάλογα μέ τήν δύναμή του.

Πολλά εἶναι ἐκεῖνα, πού μποροῦν νά μᾶς παρακινήσουν, γιά νά ἐφαρμόσουμε τήν ἐντολή τῆς ἐλεημοσύνης. Ὑπάρχει ἡ ἄπειρη ἀγάπη καί τό ἄπειρο ἔλεος τοῦ Θεοῦ πρὸς τούς ἀνθρώπους. Ὑπάρχει ἡ σαφής καί ξεκάθαρη εὐαγγελική ἐντολή. Ὑπάρχει τό παράδειγμα τοῦ Κυρίου μας. Εἴμαστε μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ σώματός Του. Νά προσθέσεις σέ ὅλα αὐτά καί τήν αἴσθηση τῆς εὐσπλαχνίας, πού εἶναι ἔμφυτη στόν ἄνθρωπο. Αὐτή ἀναγκάζει ἀκόμα καί ἕναν ἄγριο ἄνθρωπο, πολύ δέ περισσότερο τόν χριστιανό, νά νιώσει συμπάθεια γιά κάποιον πού ὑποφέρει.

FUNNY ONE-LINERS BY BILLY CONNOLLY

Never trust a man who, when left alone in a room with a tea cosy, doesn't try it on.

Marriage is a wonderful invention. Then again, so is a bicycle repair kit. ~

My definition of an intellectual is someone who can listen to the William Tell Overture without thinking of the Lone Ranger.

Who discovered we could get milk from cows, and what did he think he was doing at the time?

I've always wanted to go to Switzerland to see what the army does with those wee red knives.

I don't know why I should have to learn algebra. I'm never likely to go there.

If Jesus was a Jew, how come he has a Mexican first name?

A lot of people say it's a lack of vocabulary that makes you swear. Rubbish. I know thousands of words, but I still prefer f***.

What always staggers me is that when people blow their noses, they always look into their hankies to see what came out. What do they expect to find?

When people say, "It's always the last place you look,". Of course, it is. Why would you keep looking after you've found it?

HEALTHY BODY AND MIND

BUILD UP YOUR NUTRIENT DEFENSES

THE MOST NUTRIENT-DENSE FOODS



Vitamin and mineral deficiencies are common and can have a profound effect on overall health and well-being. For example, 1 billion people worldwide and 42% of Americans don't get enough vitamin D.

Deficiencies can result from poor dietary choices, such as in processed foods and not enough fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Those on vegan and vegetarian diets are also at risk for low amounts of certain nutrients.

Lifestyle factors contribute, including chronic stress, excessive alcohol consumption and smoking. Age-related changes, too, affect the body's ability to absorb and utilize vitamins and minerals, making older adults more susceptible.

Here are some common deficiencies and symptoms:

Vitamin D deficiency can lead to osteoporosis and increased fracture risk. It's also crucial for immune health; a 2022 study found those with a vitamin D deficiency were more likely to develop a severe or critical case of COVID-19.

Causes: Limited sun exposure, dark skin, aging
Symptoms: Bone pain, muscle weakness, fatigue
Sources: Sunlight, fatty fish, fortified dairy products and supplements

Magnesium supports muscle and nerve function, as well as bone health.

Causes: Poor diet, gastrointestinal diseases, excessive alcohol consumption

Symptoms: Muscle cramps, fatigue, irregular heart rhythms.

Sources: Nuts, seeds, whole grains, leafy green vegetables, legumes

Vitamin B12 is crucial for nerve function and red blood cell production.

Causes: Poor absorption due to age, GI issues, a diet lacking in animal products

Symptoms: Fatigue, weakness, anemia, memory problems, neurological issues

Sources: Meat, dairy, eggs, fortified cereals (Those on plant-based diets should take B12 supplements.)

Folate (vitamin B9) is critical for numerous bodily functions, particularly cell function and tissue growth. Folate is especially important during periods of rapid growth, such as infancy.

Causes: Poor diet, increased needs in pregnancy.

Symptoms: Anemia, fatigue, irritability

Sources: Leafy greens, legumes, nuts, fortified grains

Calcium is essential for bone and dental health. Adequate amounts of vitamins D3 and K2 are also necessary for the transport and absorption of calcium into the bones.

Causes: Inadequate diet

Symptoms: Muscle cramps, brittle bones, back pain, dental problems.

Sources: Dairy, leafy green vegetables, fortified plant-based milks.

Iron is necessary for hemoglobin production. Women with heavy periods, pregnant women and those with GI disorders are at higher risk.

Causes: Blood loss, pregnancy, poor diet

Symptoms: Fatigue, weakness, pale skin, shortness of breath, and in severe cases iron-deficiency anemia
Sources: Red meat, poultry, fish, lentils, beans, fortified cereals (Vitamin C can enhance iron absorption from plant-based sources.)

Vitamin A plays a key role in maintaining vision, supporting immune function and promoting skin health. It exists in two primary forms: preformed vitamin A (retinol) and provitamin A carotenoids (such as beta-carotene), which the body can convert into vitamin A.

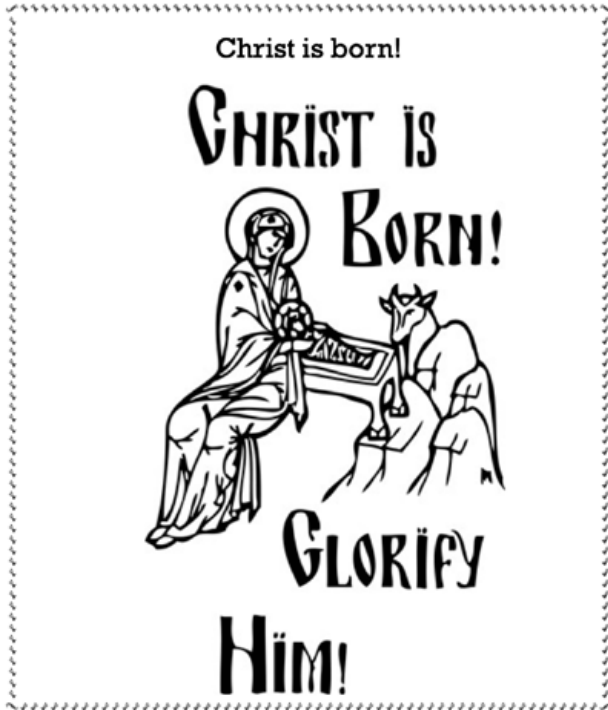
Causes: Poor diet

Symptoms: Night blindness, dry skin, vision trouble
Sources: Liver, fish, dairy, beta-carotene-rich vegetables such as carrots and sweet potatoes.

Children's Corner

More available on stdemetriosnewjersey.com!

Courtesy of Presvytera Alexandra Houck



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2024 Alexandra Houck. Email is [orthodoxchildrensward\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:orthodoxchildrensward(at)gmail.com). Find it each week at myoon.net.

The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

Sunday, December 29, 2024

Volume 12, Issue 52

A Ministry of the
Orthodox Christian Network

God reveals His Son to us!

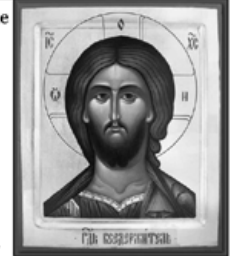
Have you ever found a word in the Bible that you don't understand? Sometimes grown-ups even have to find out what a word means.

In the epistle reading today, Saint Paul tells us where the gospel, the good news, came from. "For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ." Do you know what the word "revelation" means? A revelation means something that is revealed, something that is shown.

Saint Paul means that God showed him something. God showed him the way with Jesus Christ.

Later on, Saint Paul says that God "was pleased to reveal his Son to me." God showed Jesus to him. God showed him the way to our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Did you know that God can reveal His Son to us too? God shows us His Son, Jesus Christ, when we read the Bible. He shows us His Son when we go to church and receive Holy Communion. He shows us His Son when we pray to Him, together with our friends at church, or when we pray alone. Let's ask God to reveal His Son to us, so we can be more like our Lord, Jesus Christ!



WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Bible
- Christ is born
- Communion
- David
- King
- Nativity
- Prophet
- Revelation
- Salvation
- Shepherd

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

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

In most icons, you see King David with a crown and a scroll with words from the book of Psalms.

But here, you see him with a lyre (like a harp) instrument. That's because he played it for King Saul!

HOLY PROPHET DAVID

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM?

Have you ever read a biography? Let's say you learned about a president. You might find out where he went to school, what he did before he became president, and then what he did as president. Biographies are interesting because we like to find out how somebody grew to be a great person.

But today we celebrate a saint who has one of the most interesting biographies of all! David was a shepherd. He sang and played the harp too. He killed the great Goliath with his slingshot. He worked for King Saul and became his friend. Then David even became king himself! He didn't always do the right thing, but he asked God to forgive him and he became close again with God.

We can read about King David in the Bible, and we can pray with the beautiful psalms (songs) that he wrote in the Bible. We hear these words in our church services too! We call David a prophet, because the psalms tell us things that God wanted His people to hear.

We celebrate David today because he was a relative of Christ, and of course we celebrated His birth just a few days ago!

We celebrate St. David today, the Sunday after Christmas.



Save the Date

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey



Music & Dance Festival
Philadelphia: February 14-16, 2025

*President's Day Weekend (February 14 – 16, 2025) at the
Sheraton Hotel - Downtown Philadelphia.*

Categories include:

- *Greek Folk Dancing
(JOY, GOYA and Young Adult Groups)*
- &
- *Parish Youth and Young Adult Liturgical Choirs*

Registration Packets will be coming shortly



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**Learning about
His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew**



IN CELEBRATION OF ARCHON SUNDAY

archons.org/sprouts





Notices



DVYC
SKI & SNOW TUBING TRIP

**SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 1, 2025**

[PURCHASE LIFT TICKETS AND RENTALS HERE](#)
[PURCHASE SNOW TUBING TICKETS HERE](#)

**TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE ONLINE
TICKETS ARE LIMITED AND THEY MAY SELL OUT**

**CAMELBACK RESORT
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TANNERSVILLE, PA 18372**

DVYC GROUP PICTURE: NOON AT TRAILS END PUB & GRILLE



CAMP GOOD SHEPHERD

Maryland
June 15 - 21, 2025

Virginia
July 6-12, 2025

New Jersey
July 13 - 19, 2025

Registration Opens February 2025

More Information
<https://www.nj.goarch.org/camp-good-shepherd>
908-301-0500



Are you a high school junior or senior?

Fill Your Summer With What Counts

CROSSROAD INSTITUTE

EXPLORE WHAT'S NEXT

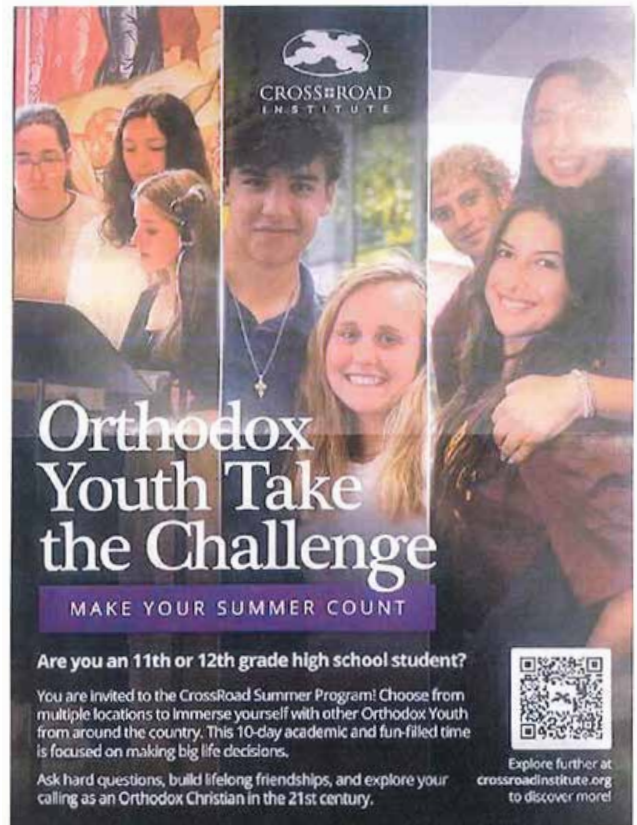
Application Deadlines
Priority: January 21, 2025
Regular: February 18, 2025

Four Sessions
Session 1 | Boston June 7-17
Session 2 | Boston June 21-July 1
Session 3 | New York July 5-15
Session 4 | SoCal July 20-30

CrossRoad is a ten-day immersive summer program designed for YOU as you prepare to make big life decisions and start new adventures.

By connecting with the Orthodox Christian theological and spiritual tradition in a deep and meaningful way, you will find a place to form authentic and lifelong friendships, ask hard questions, and explore what it means to be an Orthodox Christian in the 21st century.

APPLY TODAY:
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CROSSROAD INSTITUTE

Orthodox Youth Take the Challenge

MAKE YOUR SUMMER COUNT

Are you an 11th or 12th grade high school student?

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Ask hard questions, build lifelong friendships, and explore your calling as an Orthodox Christian in the 21st century.

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