

The Voice of Saint Anthony

DECEMBER 2018

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**Deadline for
January Newsletter is
Wednesday, 26 December**
Please send to:
frchris@saint-anthonys.org
newsletter_church@aol.com



Reverend Father Peter Stratos, Pastor

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PRIEST'S MESSAGE**HUMAN TRAFFICKING FORUM IN PASADENA
NOVEMBER 4, 2018****BY: PRESVYTERA AIDA STRATOS**

An Action and Educational Forum Against Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery was held on Sunday, November 4, 2018 at Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church in Pasadena, CA. This event was held with the blessings of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and with the support of His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco. Leading this effort was His Eminence Metropolitan Nikitas of the Dardanelles, Coordinator of the Patriarchal Task Force on Modern Slavery.

This event drew a Pan-Orthodox crowd as well as concerned citizens who took the opportunity to learn from professionals, from a variety of organizations, working to prevent and combat Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery while rescuing and protecting its victims. There were 300 people in attendance who actively engaged in presentations that were both informative but also provided a call to action as to how, both individually and collectively, people can make a difference in helping to address and eradicate this terrible plight befalling so many innocent people.

Several Orthodox clergy were present with their parishioners, as well as Metropolis Philoptochos President Jeannie Ranglas. The planning for this Forum was led by the United Orthodox Communities with the help of Saint Anthony proistamenos Rev. Father Peter Stratos and Assistant Priest Rev. Father Christopher Retelas. Father Christopher also served as the Master of Ceremonies for the afternoon event. The United Orthodox Communities is comprised of volunteers from Southern California Orthodox parishes. Support for this event was also provided by His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph from the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of America and His Grace Bishop Maxim from the Diocese of Western American of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

In addition to His Eminence Metropolitan Nikitas, presenters included Sheriff Jim McDonnell from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office, Lisa Coen, Deputy in Charge from the Human Trafficking Section of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and Susan Patterson, Director of Through God's Grace Ministry and author of *"How You Can Fight Human Trafficking"*.

The most moving testimony was offered by Tyesa Harvey who gave a powerful and inspirational personal witness of survival and victory from the dark world of human trafficking. She saved herself and her two young children from this horrendous and dangerous situation and encourages the belief that survivors are over-comers.

Several community organization were present and provided additional materials and contacts for all those interested in taking action: Bureau of Victim Services, CASA of Los Angeles, East LA Women's Center, Fair Trade LA, Five Acres, Journey Out, Men Standing Against Trafficking, Redeeming Love, San Gabriel Valley Human Trafficking Task Force, Saving Innocence, the Ekota Film - Theotokos Girls' Orphanage in India, Through God's Grace, Trafficking Victims Assistance Program Catholic Charities of Los Angeles and Women Against Child Trafficking.

In addition, the United Orthodox Communities Committee provided each attendee with a small take-home Program & Resource Guide with the online contact information for each of the these organizations & their representatives, as well as graphics, statistics, and additional facts about the global crisis of Human Trafficking.

PRIEST’S MESSAGE - CONTINUED

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING FORUM IN PASADENA
NOVEMBER 4, 2018**

BY: PRESVYTERA AIDA STRATOS

CONTINUED

At the conclusion of the presentations, participants had an opportunity to speak with the presenters and the many organizations present. This provided all those in attendance with the chance to connect with organizations and identify ways they could personally take action. United Orthodox Communities hopes that this will be the first of many such gatherings in the Metropolis of San Francisco and across our Archdiocese. The more people are educated and empowered about this pressing community and global crisis, the more connected we become with the warriors fighting on behalf of the most vulnerable, thereby making a greater impact as Orthodox Christians.

“The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco has made a serious commitment to join this effort and follow the direction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to eliminate this plague on humanity. It is up to us to heighten the awareness and take action so that all God’s people may live in peace and be freed of oppression.”

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Dear Members:

On November 17th, St. Anthony hosted the first annual *Remembering Yianni Gala* fundraiser for the St. George community of Downey in our Trinity Hall.

Metropolitan Gerasimos attended, along with Very Rev. John Constantine, Father Gary Kyriacou, Father Peter Stratos, and over 300 guests.

Chris Athanasoulis headed up the kitchen crew and many other St. Anthony members volunteered to help out with the event.

The event was a huge success and will be a great start toward raising the funds to build a gymnasium at the St. George Greek Orthodox Church to honor the memory of Yianni Koumoudouros.

Please make sure to attend the 49th Annual Philoptochos Fashion Show on Saturday, December 8th at the Langham Hotel. This is always an outstanding event and the proceeds will support several charities.

Also, plan on attending the St. Sophia Philoptochos Debutante Ball on January 20, 2019 at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. Several young women from St. Anthony will be debutantes this year.

I wish all of our St. Anthony families a blessed Christmas.

In Christ,
John Vidalakis



STEWARDSHIP

2018 STEWARDSHIP SUMMARY

OUR STEWARDSHIP GOAL: **\$425,000**

298 PLEDGES TOTALING: **\$368,300**

COLLECTED AS OF 10/26/18: **\$313,592**

AVERAGE PLEDGE GOAL: **\$1,500**

CURRENT AVERAGE PLEDGE: **\$1,236**

Breakdown Pledges		
Amount Pledge	# of Pledges	% of Pledges Breakdown
\$ 20 - \$299	47	16%
\$300 - \$499	41	14%
\$500 - \$799	70	23%
\$800 - \$999	13	4%
\$1,000 - \$1,499	55	18%
\$1,500 - \$1,999	22	7%
\$2,000 - \$3,999	33	11%
\$4,000 - \$5,999	10	3%
\$6,000 - \$7,999	2	1%
\$8,000 - \$9,999	0	0
\$10,000 - \$14,999	4	1%
\$15,000 - \$99,999	1	0.3%
TOTAL PLEDGES	298	100%

\$425,000
(Stewardship goal)

\$368,300 Pledged
(82% of goal)

\$313,592
Amount Collected
(62% of goal)



FROM THE LOFT

Participating in divine worship services as choir members is a sacred responsibility, not to be taken lightly. Choir members, as other church musicians, offer their God-given talents to the faith for a variety of reasons. For most, it is a part of their stewardship (the giving of their “time and talents.”) For others, it is something that is enjoyed and for still others, it is a social outlet.

In Orthodox services, choir members represent the laity, responding to the liturgical dialogues set by the priest. This places a sacred responsibility on them during our worship services. They are called to be knowledgeable not only of the hymns and responses but also about the correct order of events during the worship services. The choir is entrusted to be a participating part of the worship services and its members must respond to that trust accordingly.

Our group is made up of dedicated parishioners, young and old, with varying degrees of musical experience and numbering as many as twenty-five members.

We are all on an enjoyable “learning curve” and meet for rehearsal on **Thursday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 PM** in the choir loft of the church. We welcome your interest and participation in our group!

Jim Hronas
Choir Director

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

HOPE and JOY

HOPE (Hellenic Orthodox Primary Education) is the ministry for children grades K-2nd while JOY (Junior Orthodox Youth) is the ministry for children grades 3rd-5th grades. Here at Saint Anthony parish we combine HOPE and JOY.

The mission & goal of the Hope & Joy ministry is to lead our children into experiencing the Holy Orthodox Faith. Participating in the Hope and Joy ministry allows our children to build a strong bond with their Orthodox friends and lays out the foundation and tradition of our Orthodox faith through worship, fellowship and service. The bond they create now with each other and our Lord, Jesus Christ, will guide them and strengthen them throughout their lives. The Three Holy Youths (Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego) are the patron saints for all our ministry programs of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

All children grades K-5th are welcome to join whenever a meeting is scheduled. Traditionally a mini-camp experience is held during winter break..

Tentative Schedule:

Saturday, December 15, 10:00 AM-12:30 PM

Regular meetings will commence following FDF (Folk Dance Festival) 2019. Meetings will take place the first Sunday of the month and will begin 10 minutes after Church School ends. Meeting location — Rooms 1A and 1B.

March 4

April 1

May 6

June 3

July 1

August 5

September 2



YOUNG ADULT NEWS



St. Anthony's Bowling League News:

On October 2nd, the newly formed St. Anthony 's Bowling League began its first week of bowling with 24 confirmed bowlers forming 8 teams.

Bowlers range in age starting in their mid 20's and going up from there! The league will continue until early December. We cannot add any addition bowlers for this season, but we will be taking names for next season.

Until then, please try and come out to Bowling Square in Arcadia on **Tuesday's at 7 P.M.** to cheer for your favorite teams!

If you have further questions, contact **Pana Gelt** (626) 278-2808 or **Anthia Lucas** (626)274-6133

VIP NEWS

The VIPs collected donations at Church on two Sundays in November for the **Foothill Unity Center** to purchase turkeys, etc., for the holidays. They were able to collect \$777, which the VIPs elected to increase to \$1,000. Pictured in the photo is Alik Haralambos, George Treantafelles, Helen Treantafelles and Betty McWilliams, the Director of Foothill Unity Center in Monrovia, receiving the check. They were extremely grateful and gave the group a tour of their facility. The VIPs were all very impressed with the facility and the services this center offers to the community.



PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

The Philoptochos Society of Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church
Proudly Presents the 49th Annual Benefit Luncheon

Hark!



Saturday, the 8th of December

10:30 a.m. Boutique, Gifts & Santa's Kitchen

11:45 a.m. Luncheon, Fashion Show & Grand Awards

The Langham Huntington Hotel

1401 South Oak Knoll Avenue, Pasadena, California

Reservations Chrissa Mobayen stanthonybenefit@gmail.com

Dear Parish Family:

I am thankful and blessed to be surrounded by so many women devoted to the mission of Philoptochos. I am humbled by being nominated for the Agape award. Thank you to all who attended the September Philoptochos potluck dinner held in our beautiful center. I appreciate the warm wishes received from our parishioners. Thank you for the framed certificate and the icon of Mary and Martha. It is a reminder that Mary was a thinker, interested in ideas & Martha was a doer, a capable woman and an organizer. Philoptochos is interested in ideas and implementing those ideas.

With gratitude,
Irene Albeck

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS (CONTINUED)

CERTIFICATE of APPRECIATION

presented to

*St. Anthony Greek
Orthodox Church*

200+ HOURS SERVED

July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018

With gratitude for your extraordinary efforts and service to the clients of Union Station Homeless Services. Your generosity and commitment exemplify the legacy and spirit of service set forth by Union Station's founding volunteers, and your support has a positive impact on the lives of community members in need. On behalf of the staff and clients of Union Station Homeless Services, we salute your dedication working to improve our community.

Anne Miskey
ANNE MISKEY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Stephanie Harris
STEPHANIE HARRIS
SPECIAL PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

Union Station Homeless Services has recognized our community by issuing a Certificate of Appreciation to Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church for 200+ hours served between 1 July 2017 and 20 June 2018.

"With gratitude for your extraordinary efforts and service to the clients of Union Station Homeless Services. Your generosity and commitment exemplify the legacy and spirit of service set forth by Union Station's founding volunteers and your support has a positive impact on the lives of community members in need. On behalf of the staff and clients of Union Station Homeless Services, we salute your dedication working to improve our community."

Although Irene Albeck, Stephanie Soewers and many other Philoptochos members have coordinated the volunteers, many others in the Saint Anthony community have come together to serve meals on Wednesday nights.

MINISTRIES

Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

Reverend Father Peter Stratos

Reverend Father Christopher Retelas

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Rev. Fr. Peter Stratos	Pastor
John Vidalakis	President
Pete Gallanis	1 st Vice President
Mary Udria	2 nd Vice President
Tashia Vagenas	Secretary
Tony Christopoulos	Treasurer

Joseph Akrotirianakis

Philip 'Ted' Attalla

John Buzas

Roberto Crespo

Tom Grafos

Chris Ioannou

Jim Pappas

Sophia Syrengelas

Perry Vidalakis

Vince Zarian

CHOIR

Choir Director Jim Hronas

Sherese Akrotirianakis	Maria Hronas
Dean Athans	Elias Kalivas
Tina Athans	Stavrula Kiotas
George Babbes	Dr. Rodanthi Kitridou
Christina Becronis	Kathy Lucas
Tom Bouras	Liam McCann
Judie Christopoulos	Bess Mechalas
Leah Cokias	Elizabeth Moreno
Rebecca Courter	Iliana Orozco
Athena Dallas	Alexandra Patzakis
Maria Ganis	Gena Pegadiotes
Georgia Loutsos Grajeda	Katerina Petrossian
Aliki Haralambos	Litsa Stavropoulos
	Pres. Aida Stratos

CHANTERS

Patrick Lynch

Katerina Lynch

Demetrios Baliotis

Mike Abi-Farah

Please notify us of any misspellings or omissions.



OFFICE STAFF

Alma Vorgias – Office Administrator

Athena Serban – Events Coordinator (Trinity Ballroom)

CUSTODIAL STAFF

Carlos Sosa



CHURCH SCHOOL STAFF

Fotene Trigonis - Director

Anastasia Kalivas - Director

Irene Albeck - Preschool

Nikolitsa Vagenas - Preschool

Kathy Tsigkounis - Kindergarten & 1st

Kyriaki Tsigkounis - Kindergarten & 1st

Michael Nunez - 2nd & 3rd

Anna Nunez - 2nd & 3rd

Maria Prantzikou - 2nd & 3rd

John Vagenas - 4th & 5th

Maria Pappas - Middle School

Fotene Trigonis - Middle School

Anastasia Kalivas - High School



MINISTRIES (CONTINUED)

PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

Panagia Chapter Board 2017-2019

President

Maria Kypreos

1st Vice President

Elizabeth Skandale & Lisa Xanthos

2nd Vice President

Judith Din & Konstantina Paziouros

Corresponding Secretary

Tanya Christodoulelis & Maria Grover

Recording Secretary

Fontaine Achilles Malisos & Mary Dewar

Treasurer

Maria Kokoris

Assistant Treasurer

Katherine Skandale

Beautification

Presbytera Aida Stratos & Esther Vavoulis

Community Outreach

Mary Dewar, Stephanie Soewers & Presbytera Aida Stratos

Fellowship

Athena Dallas

Publicity / Webmaster

Terese Caire & Nicolette Fuerst

Scholarship

Irene Albeck & Judith Din

Sunshine and Visitation

Jeanne Karaianoglou

Union Station

Irene Albeck

Welfare

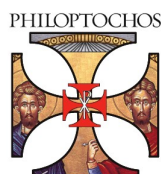
Presbytera Maria Mylonas

Advisor

Connie Becker

Spiritual Advisor

Father Peter Stratos



OTHER MINISTRIES

Acolytes Fr. Christopher Retelas

Bible Study Fr. Peter Stratos

Bookstore Jeremiah Courter

GOYA Fr. Christopher Retelas

GOYA Basketball Anthia Lucas
Pana Gelt

Greek Dance Groups Christine Pappas

Greek Festival John Vidalakis
Nick Demopulos
Julie Balas

Greek Language School Anastasia McClain

JOY/HOPE Irene Albeck

Moms & Tots Rebecca Courter

Myrrh Bearers Irene Albeck

Oratorical Festival Maria Grover

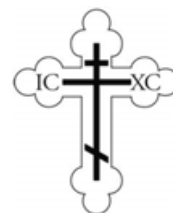
Pasadena Golf Classic Jimmy Christodoulelis
Roberto Crespo

Prayer Shawls Aliko Haralambos

Vacation Bible School Sophia Syrengelas
Mary Udria

VIPs Helen Treantafelles

Young Adults Mike Abi Farah



COMMUNITY NEWS



ORTHODOXY 101

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT:

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH?

JESUS CHRIST?

THE HOLY TRINITY?

SALVATION?

HEAVEN AND HELL?

HIERARCHY?

THE SAINTS?

THE CHURCH FATHERS?

SPIRITUALITY AND PRAYER?

THE BIBLE?

THE SACRAMENTS?

This class will welcome those who desire to learn more about the Orthodox Faith, wishing to enhance and enrich their understanding of, and life within, the timeless Orthodox Church.

Monday nights

7:00-8:00pm

starting October 1st - December 17th

St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church
Upstairs classrooms 2 E/F, with Fr. Chris Retelas



WHEN WAS YOUR CHURCH FOUNDED?

Name	Year it was founded	Founder
Saddleack church	1982	Rick Warren
Harvest Christian	1972	Greg Laurie
Calvary Chapel	1965	Chuck Smith
Four-square Gospel	1917	Almee McPherson
Christian Science	1879	Mary Baker Eddy
Jehovah's Witnesses	1874	Charles Russel
Salvation Army	1865	William Booth
Mormons	1830	Joseph Smith
Disciples of Christ	1827	Thomas Campbell
United Bretheren	1800	Philip Otterbein
Episcopalian	1789	Samuel Seabury
Methodist Episcopal	1739	John Wesley
Baptist	1609	John Smyth
Congregationalist	1582	Robert Brown
Presbyterian	1560	John Knox
Calvinist	1555	John Calvin
Anglican	1534	Henry VIII
Lutheran	1517	Martin Luther
Roman Catholic	1054	Leo IX
Orthodox Church	33	Jesus Christ

THE TIME OF ADVENT

He Who Comes

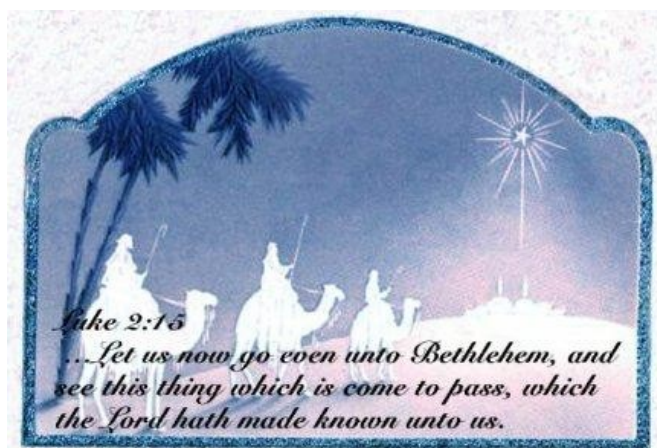
The central idea of **Advent** is that it is the '*coming*' of the Lord Jesus. One might perhaps feel that this term '*coming*' is purely symbolic, for in fact Christ comes to us at all times, and even lives in us. Nevertheless, this approach and this presence of Christ, both of which are eternal, take on a special character at Advent; they somehow acquire an 'intensity'. A special grace of the '*coming*' of the Lord is offered us. The Lord Jesus is already present to us but the grace of Advent allows us a more vivid, and quite new, awareness of this presence. Jesus is near us and in us. All the same, He makes Himself known to us, during this period, as 'He Who comes', that is to say He makes Himself known as wanting to be with us, and as if adapting us better to His intimacy.

Christian prayer during the time of Advent might be summed up in one word: '*Come*'. It is the '*come, Lord Jesus*' with which the Book of Revelation ends. If we utter this call for help with sincerity and fervor, it becomes a true asceticism and it is the hope & anticipation of the Lord in fact, that fill an increasing place in our soul. Each day of Advent, this '*Come!*' fills us more and is said with greater power, so that it drives away those thoughts, images and passions which are incompatible with the coming of Christ. This '*Come!*' purifies and enflames us. It should give our prayer a special meaning. May we utter this call less and less imperfectly, on each successive day of Advent.

We have already said that the term '*coming*' points here to an intensification, the becoming objective of an approach and a presence which themselves, are eternal. Our prayer at Advent, '*Come*', could therefore be interpreted thus: 'Oh, let me be aware of Thy presence in me – May the whole world feel Thy presence'.

He Who comes, or rather, He Whose presence of which we desire to be more conscious, can appear to us under differing aspects during Advent. Advent is a time of awaiting the light which will shine forth. The celebration of Jesus' birth coincides with the victory of light over darkness in the physical world – from Christmas on, daylight lengthens. In the same way, our interior darkness will be dispelled by the coming of Him who is the Light of the world. The Byzantine Advent above all looks to Epiphany, 'the feast of lights', whereas the Roman Advent concentrates especially on Christmas, the feast of the coming of the Lord in our flesh. In order to prepare for this victory of light we must, during Advent, open ourselves more and more to the light 'which lighteth every man that cometh into the world'. We must examine ourselves under this inner light and let this light, 'which is in our deepest self', guide our daily actions. We must live in an atmosphere of gentleness, truth and sincerity.

Advent also has an important eschatological significance. It reminds us of the Second Coming at the end of time and of the transitory nature of the things of this world. But eschatology (the soul in its relation to death, heaven & hell) is only fruitful if we interiorize it and let its implication affect our personal life. The glory of the Second Coming must first be prefigured by the coming of Jesus into the individual and by the day breaking through our own dark night.



THE CHRISTMAS FAST—ADVENT

Why do we fast before Christmas?

Question

I was wondering: why do we fast before Christmas? Also, what foods do we normally fast from during the Christmas fast?

Answer

We fast before the Great Feast of Christmas in order to prepare ourselves for the celebration of our Lord's birth. As in the case of Great Lent before Easter, the Christmas Fast is

about preparation, during which we focus on the coming of the Savior by fasting, prayer, and acts of charity towards others. By fasting, we "shift our focus" from ourselves to others, spending less time worrying about what to eat, when to eat, how much to eat, and so on in order to use our time for increased prayer and caring for the poor. We learn through fasting that we can gain control over things that we sometimes allow to control us—and for many people, food is a controlling factor in their lives. A symptom of this is that we now live in a society in which an entire TV network is devoted to food! However, while fasting from food is important, we must also remember that fasting is about developing purity of heart. During the Christmas Fast we are also challenged to fast from sin, from gossip, from jealousy, from anger, and from all those other things which, while well within our control, we all too often allow to dominate us and our relationships.

During the pre-Christmas season when—in our materialistic culture dominated by consumerism—we are constantly told by advertising media that we should buy, buy, buy so that on Christmas day we can get, get, get, hundreds of millions of Orthodox Christians around the world are taught by this period of fasting that Christmas is a time for re-focusing on Christ, a time for self-discipline and compassionate service and outreach to those in need.

During the Christmas Fast, we are called upon to refrain from meat, dairy, fish, wine, and olive oil and challenged, within this framework, to fast to the best of our ability, and to do so consistently, for Christ does not see fasting as an option, but as a "must." In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:16), the Lord Jesus says, "WHEN you fast, do not be like the hypocrites," not "IF you fast" or "IF YOU CHOOSE to fast." Fasting is not an option in the Christian life.

Finally, it seems quite odd that in our society—a society in which people gladly and freely spend huge sums of money for diets, most of which recommend that one refrain from red meats and dairy products—fasting is not more widely embraced. How odd that a Jenny Craig consultant or diet guru or physician will tell us to refrain from eating meat or cheese or butter and we will gladly embrace—and pay large sums of money for—his or her advice, while when the Church offers the same advice at no cost we tend to balk, as if we were being asked to do the impossible.

**The Christmas Fast (Advent) begins on November 15th!
As you are preparing for Christmas,
please note the following guidelines for fasting:**

Days	The Tradition of the Church specifies the following	
Sunday Monday Tuesday Thursday Saturday	Abstinence of: Meat & Meat Products, Dairy Products	No Abstinence of: Fish, Shellfish, Vegetables & Vegetable Products, Olive Oil, Fruit, Wine
Wednesday Friday	Abstinence of: Meat & Meat Products, Dairy Products, Fish, Olive Oil, Wine	No Abstinence of: Shellfish, Vegetables & Vegetable Products, Fruit

NOTE: During the Christmas Fast, from Dec. 18 to Dec. 24 inclusive, the Fast becomes stricter with no meat, dairy products or fish. We may eat olive oil and wine this week except on Wednesday and Friday and December 24 (but if December 24 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, wine and oil are eaten).

Dairy Products: eggs, butter, milk, cheese, etc.

Shellfish: oysters, shrimp, scallops, etc.

Fish: sardines, tuna, trout, salmon, bass, etc.

Wine: fermented, brewed, distilled or any other form of alcoholic beverages.

SAINTS OF THE MONTH

Saint Barbara

4 December

Saint Barbara was from Heliopolis of Phoenicia and lived during the reign of Maximian. She was the daughter of a certain idolater named Dioscorus. When Barbara came of age, she was enlightened in her pure heart and secretly believed in the Holy Trinity. About this time Dioscorus began building a bath-house; before it was finished he was required to go away to attend to certain matters and in his absence Barbara directed the workmen to build a third window in addition to the two her Father had commanded. She also inscribed the sign of the Cross with her finger upon the marble of the bath-house, leaving the saving sign cut as deeply into the marble as if it had been done with an iron tool. (When the Synaxarion of Saint Barbara was written, the marble of the bath-house and the cross inscribed by Saint Barbara were still preserved and many healings were worked there.) When Dioscorus returned, he asked why the third window had been added; Barbara began to declare to him the mystery of the Trinity. Because she refused to renounce her faith, Dioscorus tortured Barbara inhumanely and after subjecting her to many sufferings he beheaded her with his own hands, in the year 290.

Saint Nicholas

6 December

This Saint lived during the reign of Saint Constantine the Great, and reposed in 330. As a young man, he desired to espouse the solitary life. He made a pilgrimage to the holy city Jerusalem, where he found a place to withdraw to devote himself to prayer. It was made known to him, however, that this was not the will of God for him, but that he should return to his homeland to be a cause of salvation for many. He returned to Myra, and was ordained bishop. He became known for his abundant mercy, providing for the poor and needy, and delivering those who had been unjustly accused. No less was he known for his zeal for the truth. He was present at the First Ecumenical Council of 318 and in 325 at Nicaea ; upon hearing the blasphemies that Arius brazenly uttered against the Son of God, Saint Nicholas struck him on the face. Since the canons of the Church forbid the clergy to strike any man at all, his fellow bishops were in perplexity as to what disciplinary action was to be taken against this hierarch whom all revered. In the night, our Lord Jesus Christ and our Lady Theotokos appeared to certain bishops, informing them that no action was to be taken against him, since he had acted not out of passion, but extreme love and piety. The Dismissal Hymn for holy hierarchs, *The truth of things hath revealed thee to thy flock ...* was written originally for Saint Nicholas. He is the patron of all travelers and of sea-farers in particular. He is one of the best known and best loved Saints of all time.

Saint Spyridon

12 December

Spyridon, the God-bearing Father of the Church, the great defender of Corfu and the boast of all the Orthodox, had Cyprus as his homeland. He was simple in manner and humble of heart, and was a shepherd of sheep. When he was joined to a wife, he begat of her a daughter whom they named Irene. After his wife's departure from this life, he was appointed Bishop of Trimythos and thus became also a shepherd of rational sheep. When the First Ecumenical Council was assembled in Nicaea, he also was present and by means of his most simple words stopped the mouths of the Arians who were wise in their own conceit. By the divine grace which dwelt in him, he wrought such great wonders that he received the surname 'Wonderworker.' So it is that, having tended his flock piously and in a manner pleasing to God, he reposed in the Lord in the year 350, leaving to his country his sacred relics as a consolation and source of healing for the faithful.

About the middle of the seventh century, because of the incursions made by the barbarians at that time, his sacred relics were taken to Constantinople, where they remained, being honored by the emperors themselves. But before the fall of Constantinople, which took place on May 29, 1453, a certain priest named George Kalokhairetes, the parish priest of the church where the Saint's sacred relics, as well as those of Saint Theodora the Empress, were kept, took them away due to the impending peril. Travelling by way of Serbia, he came as far as Arta in Epirus, a region in Western Greece opposite to the isle of Corfu. From there, while the misfortunes of the Christian people were increasing with every day, he passed over to Corfu in the year 1460. The relics of Saint Theodora were given to the people of Corfu but those of Saint Spyridon remain, according to the rights of inheritance, the most precious treasure of the priest's own descendants and they continue to be a staff for the faithful in Orthodoxy and a supernatural wonder for those who behold him; for even after the passage of 1,500 years, they have remained incorrupt, and even the flexibility of his flesh has been preserved. Truly wondrous is God in His Saints!

SAINTS OF THE MONTH (CONTINUED)

Prophet Daniel

17 December

The Prophet Daniel and the Three Children were all descended from the royal tribe of Judah. In the year 599 before Christ, in the reign of Joachim, who was also called Jechonias (I Chron. 3:16, and II Chron. 36:8), these righteous children were led away as captives into Babylon together with the other Jews by Nabuchodonosor. He singled them out from among the other captives to serve him, and renamed them thus: Daniel was named Baltazar; Ananias was named Sedrach; Misail was named Misach; and Azarias was named Abednago. They were reared in the royal court and taught the wisdom of the Chaldeans; after the passage of three years, they surpassed all the Chaldean sages (Daniel 1).

Thereafter, Daniel, being still a lad, interpreted a mysterious image seen by Nabuchodonosor in a dream, It was an image that was composed of different metals, but was shattered and ground to dust by a certain stone which had been hewn out of a mountain without the hand of man. This vision clearly portrayed through the mountain the height of the Virgin's holiness and the power of the Holy Spirit which overshadowed her. Through the image of the Stone, Christ was portrayed, Who was seedlessly born of her, and Who by His coming as the God-man would shatter and destroy all the kingdoms of the world, which were portrayed through the image; and He would raise them who believe in Him, into His Heavenly Kingdom, which is eternal and everlasting. Thereupon, he signified in prophecy the time of His appearance in the Jordan, the beginning of His preaching of the Gospel, the time of His saving Passion, and the cessation of the worship according to the Mosaic Law. He portrayed most excellently the majestic and dread image of His second coming, presenting by means of words, as with living colors, the fiery throne which shall be set, the Eternal Judge Who shall sit thereon, the river of fire that shall flow forth before Him, the calling to account before the impartial judgment seat, the opened books of each ones deeds, the thousands upon thousands of them who minister to Him, and the ten thousands of them who stand in His presence. Daniel (whose name means "God is judge") was called "man of desires" by the Angels that appeared, because he courageously disdained every desire of the body, even the very bread that is necessary for nourishment. Furthermore, he received this name because, in his longing for the freedom of those of his tribe and his desire to know their future condition, he ceased not supplicating God, fasting and bending the knee three times a day. Because of this prayer, he was cast into the den of lions, after he had been accused by his enemies as a transgressor of the decree issued through the proclamation of the king, that no one should worship or ask for anything from God or from men for thirty days, but only from the king. But having stopped the mouths of the lions by divine might and appearing among them as though he were a shepherd of sheep, Daniel showed the impious, the might of godliness.

As for the Three Children, Ananias ("Yah is gracious"), Misail ("Who is what God is?) and Azarias ("Yah is keeper").. since they refused to offer adoration to Nabuchodonosor's image, they were cast into the furnace of fire. They were preserved unharmed amidst the flames, even their hair was untouched, by the descent of the Angel of the Lord, that is, the Son of God. Walking about in the furnace, as though in the midst of dew, they sang the universal hymn of praise to God, which is found in the Seventh and Eighth Odes of the Holy Psalter. And coming forth there from, without even the smell of the fire on their clothes (Daniel 3), they prefigured in themselves the Virgin's incorrupt giving of birth; for she, on receiving the Fire of the Godhead within her womb, was not burned, but remained virgin, even as she was before giving birth.

Therefore the Church celebrates the Three Children and Daniel on this day, on the Sunday of the Forefathers, and on the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, since they prefigured and proclaimed His Incarnation. Furthermore, they were of the tribe of Judah, wherefrom, Christ sprang forth according to the flesh. The holy Three Children completed their lives full of days. As for the Prophet Daniel, he lived until the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia, whom he also petitioned that his nation be allowed to return to Jerusalem and that the Temple be raised up again. His request was granted. He reposed in Peace, having lived about eighty-eight years. His prophetic book, which is divided into twelve chapters, is ranked fourth among the greater Prophets.

SAINTS OF THE MONTH (CONTINUED)**Anastasia****22 December**

This Saint, the daughter of Praepextatus and Fausta, was from Rome and was a most comely, wealthy and virtuous maiden. It was her mother who instructed her in the Faith of Christ. The Saint was joined to a man named Publius Patricius, who was prodigal in life and impious in disposition, but she was widowed after a short time. Henceforth, she went about secretly to the dwellings of the poor and the prisons where the Martyrs of Christ were, and brought them whatever was needed for their daily subsistence. She washed their wounds, loosed them from their fetters and consoled them in their anguish.

Because the Saint, through her intercessions, has healed many from the ill effects of spells, potions, poisons, and other harmful substances, she has received the name "Deliverer from Potions." Since the fame of her deeds had spread about, she was arrested by Diocletian's minions and after enduring many torments she was put to death by fire in the year 290.

Nativity of Christ**25 December**

The incomprehensible and inexplicable Nativity of Christ came to pass when Herod the Great was reigning in Judea; the latter was an Ascalonite on his father's side and an Idumean on his mother's. He was in every way foreign to the royal line of David; rather, he had received his authority from the Roman emperors and had ruled tyrannically over the Jewish people for some thirty-three years. The tribe of Judah, which had reigned of old, was deprived of its rights and stripped of all rule and authority. Such was the condition of the Jews when the awaited Messiah was born and truly thus was fulfilled the prophecy which the Patriarch Jacob had spoken 1,807 years before: *"A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him and he is the expectation of the nations"* (Genesis 49:10).

Thus, our Savior was born in Bethlehem, a city of Judea. Joseph had come from Nazareth of Galilee, taking Mary his betrothed, who was great with child. According to the decree issued in those days by the Emperor Augustus, they must be registered in the census of those subject to Rome. Therefore, when the time came for the Virgin to give birth, and since because of the great multitude there was no place in the inn, the Virgin's circumstance constrained them to enter a cave which was near Bethlehem. Having as shelter a stable of irrational beasts, she gave birth there and swaddled the Infant and laid Him in the manger (Luke 2:1-7). From this, the tradition has come down to us that when Christ was born He lay between two animals, an ox and an ass, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: *"Between two living creatures shalt Thou be known"* (Abbacum 3:2). *"The ox knoweth his owner & the ass his master's crib"* (Esaias 1: 3).

But while the earth gave the new-born Savior such a humble reception, Heaven on high celebrated majestically His world-saving coming. A wondrous star, shining with uncommon brightness and following a strange course, led Magi from the East to Bethlehem, to worship the new-born King. Certain shepherds who were in the area of Bethlehem, who kept watch while tending their sheep, were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light and they saw before them an Angel who proclaimed to them the good tidings of the Lord's joyous Nativity. And straightway, together with this Angel, they beheld and heard a whole host of the Heavenly Powers praising God and saying: *"Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men"* (Luke 2:8-14).

SAINTS OF THE MONTH (CONTINUED)

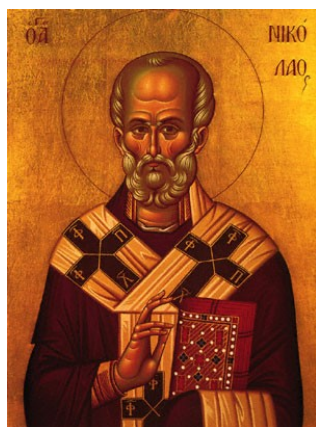
Saint Stephen

27 December

Saint Stephen was a Jew by race and, as some say, a disciple of Gamaliel, the teacher of the Law mentioned in Acts 5:34 and 22:3. He was the first of the seven deacons whom the Apostles established in Jerusalem to care for the poor and to distribute alms to them. Being a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, he performed great signs and wonders among the people. While disputing with the Jews concerning Jesus and wisely refuting their every contradiction, so that no one was able to withstand the wisdom and the spirit whereby he spoke, he was slandered as a blasphemer and was dragged off to the Sanhedrin of the elders. There with boldness he proved from the divine Scriptures the coming of the Just One (Jesus), of Whom they had become the betrayers and murderers and he reproved their faithless and hardheartedness. And finally, gazing into Heaven and beholding the divine glory, he said: *"Lo, I see the Heavens opened and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God."* But when they heard this, they stopped up their ears, and with anger cast him out of the city and stoned him, while he was calling out and saying, *"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."* Then, imitating the long-suffering of the Master, he bent his knees and prayed in a loud voice for them that were stoning him, and he said, *"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,"* And saying this, he fell asleep, thus becoming the first among the Martyrs of the Church of Christ. (Acts 6 & 7)



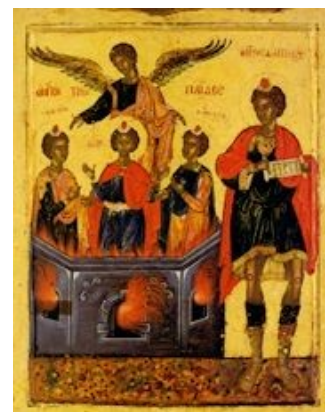
Saint Barbara



Saint Nicholas



Saint Spyridon



Prophet Daniel
and the Three Youths



Anastasia






























Nativity of Jesus Christ



Saint Stephen

Orthodox Calendar

DECEMBER 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						 1
 2 14th Sunday of Luke 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 11am Church School 11:30 PC Elections 1pm Greek Dance	 3 4pm Greek School 7pm Orthodoxy 101	 4 St. Barbara 5pm Greek Dance 6:30pm Greek Dance 7pm Bowling League-Arcadia	 5 7pm Union Station Philoptochos	 6 St. Nicholas 9am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Rose Hills Chapel 9am Santa's Kitchen 7pm Choir Rehearsal	 7 4pm Greek School 7pm AHEPA Christmas Party at North Woods Inn	 8 10:30am Philoptochos Christmas Fashion Show
 9 10th Sunday of Luke 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 11am Church School 1pm Greek Dance	 10 4pm Greek School 7pm Orthodoxy 101	 11 10am VIPs 5pm Greek Dance 6:30 Greek Dance 7pm PC Meeting	 12 St. Spyridon 9am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 7:15 Philoptochos Board Meeting	 13 7pm Choir Rehearsal	 14 4pm Greek School	 15
 16 11th Sunday of Luke 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 11am Church School 1pm Greek Dance	 17 Daniel & 3 Holy Youths 4pm Greek School 7pm Orthodoxy 101	 18 5pm Greek Dance 6:30 Greek Dance	 19	 20 7pm Choir Rehearsal	 21 4pm Greek School 6:30pm Greek School Christmas Party	 22 Anastasia Great Martyr
 23 Sunday before Nativity 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy NO Church School 12pm Greek School Christmas Carols 1pm Greek Dance	 24 6pm Vespers of the Nativity of our Lord NO Greek School	25 Holy Nativity of Christ our Lord 8am Orthros 9am Divine Liturgy 	26 7pm Philoptochos General Meeting	27 St. Stephen 7pm Choir Rehearsal	28 NO Greek School	29
30 Sunday after Nativity 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy NO Church School 1pm Greek Dance	31 6pm Vespers Liturgy for St. Basil New Year's Eve Glendi NO Greek School	Strict Fast 	Fish Allowed 	Wine and Oil Allowed 	Dairy, Eggs, and Fish Allowed 	Fast Free

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December 2018

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During this season
of hope and joy,
let's remember to
pray for those
who are lost, lonely,
poor, brokenhearted,
homeless, hungry,
sick, grieving,
neglected
and abused.

Amen!

