

# The Voice of Saint Anthony

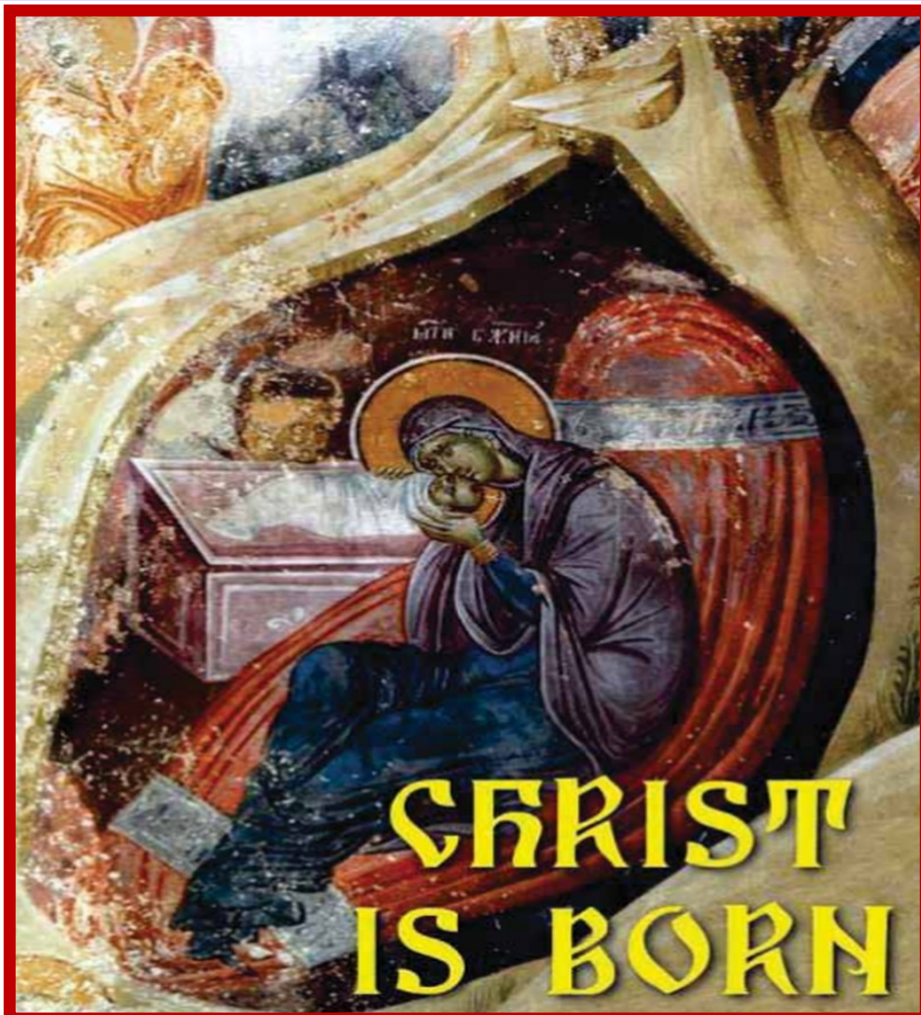
December 2021

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Deadline for  
January Newsletter is  
Monday, 27 December

Please send to:  
[newsletter\\_church@aol.com](mailto:newsletter_church@aol.com)



Reverend Father Peter Stratos, Pastor

778 S. Rosemead Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107

(626) 449-6943 Office (626) 449-6974 FAX

[www.saint-anthonys.org](http://www.saint-anthonys.org)

## PRIEST'S MESSAGE

Beloved Parishioners,

The Christmas season means preparations, buying gifts, decorating, family traditions, carols, baking, excitement and joy. The liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church anticipates Christmas for forty days. A Matins hymn sung for many weeks prior to Christmas continually reminds us with these joyful words that Christmas is for Christ.

*Christ is born!*

*Glorify Him!*

*Christ is come from heaven!*

*Receive Him!*

*Christ is on earth!*

*Be exalted!*

*All the earth sing to the Lord and all the people praise Him with joy!*

*For He has been glorified!*

Another hymn sung during the Liturgy throughout these weeks strikes a similar theme:

*Today the Virgin is on her way*

*To give birth to the pre-eternal Word*

*Rejoice, O inhabited earth, when you hear the good news!*

*With angels and shepherds, glorify Him*

*Who chose to appear as a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God.*

For many the Christmas season can, however, be a time of discouragement, anxiety, fatigue and unhappiness. Psychiatrists report that more Americans consult them during this season between Thanksgiving and the New Year than at any other time. Even persons who normally experience high levels of love, friendship, and personal joy in giving and receiving, experience periods of exhaustion, loneliness, irritability and depression. The Christmas season raises high expectations and for that reason it can be a season not jolly but melancholy.

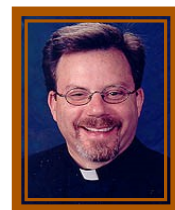
A Meditation for us all to reflect on and consider during this Christmas season:

*During the Christmas season God's love and His message of new hope, come to us through the beauty and peace of the incarnate Christ. Yet the good news of God's love may be entirely missed, and Christmas may be an unfulfilled dream, amidst the hectic bustle of cleaning, shopping, writing, calling, decorating, baking and visiting. The basic reason for an unfulfilled Christmas is that we focus on ourselves. We work on how to please each other, how to feel good and how to secure happiness with all the things we regard necessary. Yet only Christ can give us a true Christmas. Only His presence in our hearts can bring happiness, peace, joy, warmth and security. Cling to Christ more closely during the Christmas season. Take time to pray and to establish your spiritual and practical priorities. Let Christ come with you from home to school, from kitchen to shops, from Church to the office.*

Praying that you all experience a blessed Christmas season.

In Christ,

Fr. Peter



## MINISTRIES

Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church  
Reverend Father Peter Stratos

### 2021 PARISH COUNCIL

Joseph Akrotirianakis	President
Pete Gallanis	Vice President
Tashia Vagenas	Secretary
Tony Christopoulos	Treasurer

Christian Balas  
Tom Grafos  
Christos Ioannou  
Pete Katsafados  
Liam McCann  
James Pappas  
Patricia Paziouros  
Perry Vidalakis  
Vincent Zarian  
Nikole Zoumberakis



### CHOIR

Jim Hronas, Choir Director

Sherese Akrotirianakis	Stavrula Kiotas
Dean Athans	Rodanthi Kitridou
Tina Athans	Kathy Lucas
George Babbes	Claire Marotta
Christina Becronis	Liam McCann
Tom Bouras	Bess Mechalas
Judie Christopoulos	Elizabeth Moreno
Leah Cokias	Iliana Orozco
Jennifer Dobrinen	Alexandra Patzakis
Maria Ganis	Gena Pegadiotes
Georgia Grajeda	Katerina Petrossian
Aliki Haralambos	Nicole Schulman
Maria Hronas	+Litsa Stavropoulos
Elias Kalivas	Pres. Aida Stratos

### CHANTERS

Jim Hronas  
Liam McCann  
Pres Aida Stratos

### READERS

Nicholas Kokoris  
Rebecca Russo



### OFFICE STAFF

Alma Vorgias – Office Administrator



### CUSTODIAL STAFF

Carlos Sosa



### SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF

Teresa Argueta—Little Lambs, Pre-PreK  
Irene Albeck, Eleni & Maria Wojcik - Pre K/TK  
Sophia Syrengelas - Kindergarten, 1st  
Theoni Katsafados, Vicki Kades - 2nd, 3rd  
Maria Kypreos - 4th, 5th  
Polly Vagenas, Chris Syrengelas - 6th, 7th, 8th  
Presvytera Aida Stratos - High School



## MINISTRIES (continued)

### PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

#### Panagia Chapter Board 2021

#### Executive Board

##### **President**

Judith Din

##### **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**

Jeanne Karaionnoglou

##### **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

Helen Skandale and Lisa Xanthos

##### **Corresponding Secretary**

Mary Udria and Irene Albeck

##### **Recording Secretary**

Mary Dewar

##### **Treasurer**

Connie Becker

##### **Assistant Treasurer**

Maria Grover

##### **Advisor**

Maria Kypreos

##### **Spiritual Advisor**

Father Peter Stratos

#### Board of Directors

##### **Beautification**

Maria Kokoris

##### **Community Outreach**

Fontaine Malisos, Liz Skandale, Stephanie Soewers

##### **Fellowship**

Tanya Christodoulelis and Maria Kypreos

##### **Publicity**

Christine Pappas

##### **Scholarship**

Presbytera Aida Statros and Irene Albeck

##### **Social Media/Webmaster**

Sophia Syrengelas

##### **Sunshine and Visitation**

Fontaine Malisos, Liz Skandale, Stephanie Soewers

##### **Union Station**

Irene Albeck and Stephanie Soewers

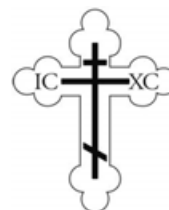
##### **Operation Classroom**

Nicolette Fuerst and Jennifer Webster



### ADDITIONAL MINISTRIES

Acolytes	Fr. Peter Stratos
Bible Study	Fr. Peter Stratos
Bookstore	Noah Johnson
GOYA	Fr. Peter Stratos
GOYA Basketball	Anthia Lucas Pana Gelt
Greek Dance Groups	Phophi Magaziotis
Greek Festival	TBD
Greek Language	Anastasia McClain
JOY/HOPE	Irene Albeck
Myrrh Bearers	Irene Albeck
Oratorical Festival	TBD
Golf Classic	Golf Committee
Vacation Bible School	Sophia Syrengelas Mary Udria
VIPs	Helen Treantafelles





## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

### Next Parish Council Meeting Tuesday, December 14th

*We pray you are staying healthy by wearing your mask, social distancing, washing your hands often, and praying.*

*Let us take a moment to say thank you to all essential workers: first responders, doctors, nurses, health care workers, and researchers who despite facing direct exposure to COVID 19 and the Delta Variant, continue to do their job of helping others. Let's also thank those who are volunteering to help get the vaccine to as many people as possible. Please continue to pray for them.*

For those of you who are attending live-stream services,  
and miss receiving Holy Communion because you are unable  
to attend an indoor liturgy in person..

Drink some Holy Water  
when the priest approaches with the Chalice...  
If you don't have any on hand, call the church office..



## NEWS FROM THE LOFT



Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον, τὸν προαιώνιον Λόγον, ἐν Σπηλαίῳ ἔρχεται, ἀποτεκεῖν ἀπορρήτως. Χόρευε ἡ οἰκουμένη ἀκουτισθεῖσα, δόξασον μετὰ Ἀγγέλων καὶ τῶν Ποιμένων, βουληθέντα ἐποφθῆναι, Παιδίον νέον, τὸν πρὸ αἰώνων Θεόν.

*On this day the Virgin Maid goes to the grotto to give birth to the pre-eternal Word in an ineffable manner. Dance for joy, all the inhabited earth, on hearing. Glorify along with Angels and with the shepherds Him who willed that He appear as a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God*

**Have a very Merry and Blessed Christmas  
From Our Choir Family to You**

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

### Children's Sunday School



Over the summer, our Sunday School teachers met with Father Peter to discuss how to approach bringing our kids back together and how to rebuild our program after so much time spent apart. In addition to discussing safety protocols, curriculum, and teaching strategies, the underlying theme that all of us kept coming back to was fellowship and fun. We simply wanted to bring the kids together and rebuild the sense of community that is so special to St. Anthony. It was important to us that we welcomed our kids back into the classrooms with open arms, enthusiasm, and a sense of eagerness to learn about our faith.

Three months into our program, it's safe to say that our teachers have accomplished this and so much more. We can hear the kids talking and laughing as they come upstairs and they enter our classrooms with smiles on their faces. While in class, they contribute to the learning by participating in discussion, asking important questions, and expressing their love for their faith. We have watched old friends rekindle and new friendships form. Each Sunday spent with our students is a true gift and we are incredibly grateful to have the opportunity to grow in our faith right alongside them.

Thank you to all the parents and grandparents for helping us create a fun, nurturing, and welcoming environment for our youth, as they learn about their faith each Sunday. Please contact Sophia Syrengelas for information regarding our program ([sophiajammie@gmail.com](mailto:sophiajammie@gmail.com)).

I know I speak on behalf of our entire community when I thank our dedicated teachers who faithfully give their time and talents to our children. We have an incredibly creative, knowledgeable, and faithful team of teachers and volunteers who are the heart of our program. We will be highlighting these servants of our faith each month so that our community can learn more about them.

Thank you,  
Sophia Syrengelas



**SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS (continued)****Irene Albeck**

I was born in Trinidad, Colorado and lived part time in Las Vegas and New Mexico. I started to teach Sunday school when I was in my early twenties with Sophie Sellas. May her memory be eternal as my mentor. Mrs. Sellas was instrumental in organizing Sunday school for Orthodox children, especially at Saint Elias in San Bernardino. I taught Sunday school at Saint Elias, Saint Nicholas in San Jose and here at Saint Anthony.

Professionally, I taught for 47 years - ten years of regular classes and thirty seven years of high school special education.

I have a son Mark Gregory, a daughter Mary and a son-in-law Juan. I have two wonderful grandsons, Niko and Dylan. My husband, Donald passed away in 1991 from pancreatic cancer. I enjoy movies, country, folk and fifties music, and most recently playing rummikub with friends.

My proudest moments are witnessing parents and children growing strong in their Greek Orthodox faith.

**Larissa Maslen**

I love working alongside Mrs Albeck with your children in the PK/TK Sunday School class.

My family has been a member of St Anthony's for about 9 years. My husband Mark volunteers in the kitchen and Gabriella participates in many church activities.

I was born and raised Russian Orthodox and attended church in Boston, MA. I obtained my undergrad at Northeastern University in Biology with a minor in chemistry and I have my MBA. I work as the Sr Director of Quality for Gilead Sciences and currently support their manufacturing plants in San Dimas and La Verne.

In my free time I love to be outside gardening, hiking, biking and going to the beach.

**Eleni and Maria Wojcik**

Eleni (21 years old) and Maria (17 years old) live in Arcadia, CA and have been members of the community at Saint Anthony's Greek Orthodox Church nearly their entire lives.

Eleni is a student at California State University, Long Beach majoring in Marine Biology.

Maria is a senior at La Salle College Preparatory in Pasadena, CA. She is pursuing a career as an athletic trainer.

During their free time, Eleni and Maria love watching movies, spending time with family and friends, going to the beach, and cooking. Maria is a very talented baker (her chocolate chip cookies are to die for) and she loves to sew, knit, and crochet.

Eleni and Maria have been brought up in the Greek Orthodox Church, and their faith is a big part of who they are. As young Orthodox Christians, Maria and Eleni understand the importance of young children having a relationship with God and the Church. As Sunday School teachers and continuing members of the youth organizations at Saint Anthony's, they hope to guide the children in activities and stories that will help them grow in their faith as they have.



## *SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS (continued)*

**Some words from our Pre-K/TK students about their teachers and Sunday School...**

I like going into the big church!

-Demos

I love her because she reads to us  
We learn about God because of her  
And we color, do fun projects, and do our winter program

-Georgia

I love my teachers. I love everything!

-Tommy

My Sunday School teachers are the best. They are so kind and I have so much fun.  
Mrs. Albeck has the biggest heart in the world.

-Zachary

My Sunday School teachers are nice and I love the snacks they give.

-Julia

**Save the Date for our Christmas Pageant!**

**Sunday, December 19th**

**Our Sunday School students will be performing a special Christmas pageant in church after Divine Liturgy.**

**Sunday School will host coffee hour immediately following the pageant.**

## YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT NEWS

### GOYA

We had a thankful celebration this past Sunday November 21st. GOYAN's held annual elections and started making plans for the upcoming year! Congratulations to our President, Andriana L., Vice President Taia B. and Secretary Niko V.!!! Thank you to Vicki Kades as well for organizing this group of great young people!



### GOYA Basketball 2022

**ATTENTION GIRLS ages 12-21 AND BOYS ages 12-19.**

Plans are underway for the 2022 GOYA Basketball season!

The games will begin **Sunday, February 27!** Please email us as soon as possible to let us know if your children will be playing.

We need to know how many teams we will have so gyms can be reserved for games and practices. We also need parents to get involved and help with finding gyms, keeping track of the uniforms and scorekeeping at the games.

**Please let us know if your children will be playing!**

Pana Gelt                      pgelt3@gmail.com

Patricia Paziouros      ppaziouros@yahoo.com



YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT NEWS

GOYA (continued)





## YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT NEWS (continued)



### FDF Is Coming Back!

Please join us for the 45th Annual Greek Orthodox Folk Dance and Choral Festival (FDF), President's Weekend, **February 17-20, 2022**, in Phoenix, Arizona at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel.

The FDF team intends to run the weekend event in its traditional format, while acknowledging that flexibility and on-site arrangements may need to be adjusted based on any CDC or state guideline updates. Stay tuned for more news about FDF 2022 in the coming weeks!

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### Help Our Graduates Stay Connected to the Church

Thousands of our Orthodox youth graduate from High School and go away to schools across our country. While blessed with unprecedented educational opportunities, at the same time, many face difficult challenges in the environment of the college campus. The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco wants to help maintain their connection to the Church! Complete the Online Form or visit [www.gosfyouth.org](http://www.gosfyouth.org). The Metropolis will make sure that an Orthodox Priest in a community near your student's college connects with your loved one. For more information, please see flyer on next page.

A flyer for a Christmas series. At the top, there are green holly leaves and red berries. On the left, a small bird ornament hangs. On the right, a Santa Claus ornament hangs. The title "Christmas 'Unwrapped'" is in a large, black, cursive font. Below it, the text "A fast-paced three-part mini series on the theology, history, and traditions of the Christmas season with Father Angelo Maginas" is in a black, sans-serif font. Below that, the text "Monday evenings 7:30-8:30 pm via Zoom Nov 29, Dec 6, Dec 13" is in a black, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text "Register at: Orthodoxyou.com/Register" is in a black, sans-serif font. In the bottom left corner, there are wrapped gifts, one with a red ribbon and a tag that says "The Jesse Tree".

**Christmas "Unwrapped"**

A fast-paced three-part mini series  
on the theology, history,  
and traditions of the Christmas season  
with Father Angelo Maginas

Monday evenings  
7:30-8:30 pm via Zoom  
Nov 29, Dec 6, Dec 13

Register at:  
[Orthodoxyou.com/Register](http://Orthodoxyou.com/Register)



## YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT NEWS (continued)

# CONNECTING COLLEGE STUDENTS TO THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

Do you have a son, daughter, or grandchild graduating from High School who will be leaving home for the first time to attend college, or are they already in college living away from home?

Thousands of our Orthodox youth graduate from High School every year and go away to schools across our country. Our college students are blessed with unprecedented educational opportunities, but, at the same time, they face many difficult challenges in the environment of the college campus. Would you like to keep your loved ones connected to the Church while they study?

If so, please complete the form below and mail it to the Metropolis Office in San Francisco. The Metropolis of San Francisco Youth Director, Johanna Duterte, will make sure that an Orthodox Priest and community near your student's college connects with your loved one.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student's Home Parish, City, State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student's Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of College \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expected Graduation Date \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student's Address while at school \_\_\_\_\_  
 Will your student have a car while at school? \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Patron Saint \_\_\_\_\_  
 Do you know which parish your student will attend while at school? If so, which one? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Your relationship to Student \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Home Parish, City, State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Your Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Questions? Contact Johanna Duterte, our Metropolis Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries.  
 Email: [JDuterte@sanfran.goarch.org](mailto:JDuterte@sanfran.goarch.org) Phone: (415) 753-3075 Fax: (415) 753-1165 Website: [www.gosfyouth.org](http://www.gosfyouth.org)



YOUTH &  
YOUNG ADULT  
MINISTRIES

**PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM BACK TO:**  
 Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco  
 Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries  
 245 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94103



**YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT NEWS (continued)****Mission Statement**

The mission of HOPE, & JOY is to strengthen your child's relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, through service to the church and community.

HOPE & JOY provides an opportunity for children (HOPE) (4-6) and JOY (7- 10) to meet, socialize and interact with one another. This experience will help them learn the importance of being a steward of the church. These two youth ministries are designed to promote bonding between the child and the faith and promote the tenets of Greek Orthodox Christianity.

Parents are encouraged to attend and assist in both ministries. Meetings will be held ten minutes after the conclusion of Sunday School. Lunch/snacks to be determined.

Tentative list of meeting dates, activities and service projects thru May 2022:

**December 12** - bring/donate a new ball of any kind to a school Christmas celebration w/ Sunday School

**January 9** - random acts of kindness New Year/Vasilopita

**February 13** - valentines for our VIPs Valentine

**March 14** - make or purchase kites for flying Kites

**April 10** - HOPE & JOY parent Bible challenge

**May 8** - make koliva and honor those who have served in the military – 'We Remember'

Dates and times are subject to change



## *YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT NEWS (continued)*



A beautiful sunny day made for sharing faith, fun and fellowship for our Hellenic Orthodox Promising Explorers (HOPE 41/2 to 7) and Junior Orthodox Youth (JOY 8-10).

We began lunch with a blessing for the food we were about to enjoy. Following lunch Dr. Elleni Koulos Ioannou joined us to discuss kindness. What is kindness and how can we as individuals demonstrate kindness and compassion? Everyone was attentive and participated sharing their thoughts by citing examples in our daily lives.

It was a great day to play outside. The group had a choice of playing kickball on the dirt area or remaining inside and completing an art activity. Kickball was girls versus the boys and the girls won. It was suggested that the umpire (Mrs. Albeck) needed to reevaluate calls made. Oh well, we all had fun and enjoyed being a team.

Those who chose not to play kickball completed an art activity with some great ideas about kindness. Check the upstairs bulletin board for their creativity.

Many thanks to Athena Serban and Mary Udria for preparing lunch, and Nicoletta Masouris for organizing cleanup with the parents who stepped in to help assure that the children were happy and safe.

Tentatively the next meeting will be **December 12**. We will be making graham cracker (gingerbread) houses. **December 19** will be our Fellowship Sunday School Christmas pageant. Every child 4 1/2 is encouraged to join us.

If you have not received emails or notifications please contact Mrs. Albeck at [mcmg2a@aol.com](mailto:mcmg2a@aol.com). Any parent or friend who would like to share a special interest with HOPE & JOY please contact me.



## YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT NEWS (continued)

# Hope & Joy





## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

**Santa's Kitchen Pre-Order Pickup** - Reminder to pickup your Santa's Kitchen pre-orders (except Vasilopita) on *Sunday, December 5 from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM*. Vasilopita orders will be ready for pickup on *Sunday, December 19 from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM*.

### Good Works

Our chapter will once again participate in the Friends In Deed "Christmas for the Kids" event. Please look for information in upcoming church bulletins as to how you can help bring joy to an underprivileged child this Christmas.

We also will be donating filled Christmas stockings to the teens at Trinity Homes.



Tim Niestler of Friends In Deed food bank in Pasadena received 20 turkeys from Philoptochos.

### Church Community Happenings

**Christmas Eve Fellowship with Cookies and Cider** - *Friday, December 24*, following Divine Liturgy (approximately 5pm) in the church hall. Bring a platter of your favorite Christmas Cookies to share. Cider will be provided.

**Weekly Parish Coffee Hour** starting back up in 2022 - we are looking for individuals/families to host weekly coffee hours after liturgy. Please look for the signup poster in the hall or foyer.

**Vasilopita Celebration** - *Sunday, January 9*. Philoptochos will host the Vasilopita Celebration in the church hall following Divine Liturgy.

**Great Vespers Dinner** - *Sunday, January 16*. Philoptochos will host a dinner following the Great Vesper

## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS (continued)

### Upcoming Meetings

December Board Meeting - *Wednesday, December 8 at 7:00 PM* in church hall

Philoptochos Member and Guest Christmas Party - *Wednesday, December 15 at 6:00 PM* in Trinity Ballroom. Details to come.

There will be no December General Meeting.

January Board Meeting - *Wednesday, January 12 at 7:00 PM* in church hall

January General Meeting - *Wednesday, January 26 at 7:00 PM*. Details to come.

### Upcoming Chapter Events

This Saturday, we will hold the 52nd annual Christmas benefit, *LET'S CELEBRATE*, at Le Méridien Hotel in Arcadia. This year's **sold out** event will be a luncheon hosted in the Grandstand Ballroom and will include the Christmas Boutique, Santa's Kitchen, and gift vendors along with holiday entertainment and raffle. Charities supported by this year's event are CAST (Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking) in Los Angeles, Friends In Deed in Pasadena, and other Philoptochos charities.

There is still time to support this charitable event by participating in the Grand Awards raffle. Visit <https://stanthonybenefit.square.site> for details.

### Upcoming Metropolis Events

LIGHT THE PATH, a virtual celebration, will be held on *Saturday, December 11, 2021 at 11:00 AM*. This important and inspiring event will support Philoptochos's Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment Fund, which provides assistance to students and seminarians enrolled at Hellenic College and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology as well as their families. Go to <https://donate.onecause.com/light-the-path-2021> for more details and to register in advance to receive your Zoom login information.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: St. Anthony Philoptochos  
Instagram: stanthonyphiloptochos

*PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS (continued)*



**"CHRISTMAS FOR THE KIDS"**

***PHILOPTOCHOS & FRIENDS IN DEED***

Thank you for supporting underprivileged children in our community by partnering with Philoptochos and participating in the Friends In Deed gift-giving drive.

The children have provided a wish list of gifts. There is no minimum or maximum amount of gifts or gift cards being requested.

You can select a child's name from our table located at the front of church on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Please place unwrapped gifts in a gift bag with the child's name attached and return to church by Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. If possible, please include a gift receipt.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Soewers at 818-209-5026, [szanglis@gmail.com](mailto:szanglis@gmail.com) or Liz Skandale at 626-695-3423, [lizie22@aol.com](mailto:lizie22@aol.com)

We are grateful for your support.

Merry Christmas!

**PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS (continued)****UNION STATION HOMELESS SERVICES**

**Irene Albeck** and **Noula Serban** have resumed preparing meals for **Union Station** the first Wednesday of the month. The meals have to be delivered in individual servings during CoViD; hence, the monthly cost has increased. Donations of heavy duty plates, napkins, paper towels or store bought cookies would be very much appreciated.

Please contact **Irene Albeck - 626.792.8122** to make arrangements for items to be picked up if you care to donate.

Philoptochos continues to support our local food bank, **Friends In Deed**, with a monthly donation.

**PLEASE NOTE**

**Non-food donations** can be delivered to our **Administrative Office**

825 E. Orange Grove Blvd. Pasadena, CA 91104

Monday-Friday between 9:00am-4:30pm.

**All food donations** (perishable and non-perishable) can be delivered to the **Adult Center**

412 S. Raymond Ave. Pasadena, CA 91105.

The Adult Center is open for donations from 8:00am-2:30pm.

**IN-KIND DONATION NEEDS**

Adult Diapers

Baby diapers and baby formula

Clorox or Lysol Wipes

Disinfectant Spray

Laundry basket and laundry soap

Laundry pods and quarters

New pillows and blankets

New and gently used books

Puzzles, activity books for adults and children

Personal and feminine products

**KITCHEN NEEDS**

BBQ sauce

Corn cooking oil

Flour tortillas to make burritos

Frozen burritos

Frozen hash brown patties

Individual coffee packets

Individual creamer packets

Individual sugar packets

Microwaveable dinners

Sliced American cheese

Teriyaki glaze



**PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS (continued)**

***“You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.”***  
**Deuteronomy 15:11**

***“Lord when did we see you hungry and feed you? The King will answer and say to you, inasmuch as did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”*** Matthew 25:40, 41

**Union Station Homeless Services**

We have dispensed with people volunteering to serve at the facility, however we continue our monthly commitment to prepare a hardy, nutritious dinner meal. We have generous donors to cover the meals. USHS has requested packaged dessert (cookies), single serve beverages (10 oz.) and single serve bottles of milk. You may continue to volunteer by donating toward purchasing individual packaged items. The following is an estimated cost: rolls-\$16.50, cookies, \$27.50, beverage, \$48.60, and milk, \$10.80.

**Please make checks out to: *Philoptochos of Saint Anthony***

***In memo box write: USHS***

Thank you for being a part of the solution to homelessness.

***“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”*** Hebrews 13:16

**Contact:**

Sophia Angelos	<a href="mailto:sangelos2000@gmail.com">sangelos2000@gmail.com</a>	626-795-0848 (home)
Stephanie Soewers	<a href="mailto:szanglis@gmail.com">szanglis@gmail.com</a>	818-209-5026 (cell)
Irene Albeck	<a href="mailto:mcmg2a@aol.com">mcmg2a@aol.com</a>	626-792-8122



## VIP NEWS

The VIPs were excited to finally get together last month for coffee at the Trinity Ballroom. We expected about 10 members, but happily there were 23 members present.

Everyone shared their experiences over the past year. We also collected donations to be given to Foothill Unity Center.

We plan on getting together again on Tuesday, December 14th for a meeting followed by lunch to be prepared by some of our members.

If you are interested in joining the VIPs, please contact me.

Wishing everyone a Blessed Christmas.

*It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of our dear member Dimitri Damilatis, beloved husband of Helen. He passed away in November.*

*Funeral arrangements are pending and will be announced by the church office in the near future.*

*May his memory be eternal*

Helen Treantafelles  
VIP President  
626.339.1338 or 626.688.2196



## CHURCH HISTORY

### History of Saint Anthony Church 1954-2004

*Written by: Andrew N. Demopoulos, 1959 Parish Council President  
and Nicholas Demopoulos +  
submitted to newsletter by Anthia Drulias Lucas*

#### Building the Community (1960-1971)

With the unexpected departure of Father Dan Zeatas in February 1960, the young community that worked so hard to start a parish and buy a church property, now found itself without a priest. Stepping in at this difficult time was Father Anastasius Bandy, a Greek Orthodox priest who was teaching classics at the University of California at Riverside. For six months the beloved Father Bandy served Saint Anthony Church as interim priest, accepting his salary as pastor only to return all of it back into the collection tray passed around at the end of the Divine Liturgy. In June 1960 Father Spiro Pieratos was transferred from Hopewell, Virginia and appointed to Saint Anthony's as a full-time priest.

Within the first year of the doors being opened for worship, paid membership and Sunday attendance at St. Anthon's nearly tripled. The sudden swell of new church members, especially parents with young children, forced a discussion on a possible means of expansion for St. Anthony's. Between 1960 and 1963 Saint Anthony's leadership debated whether to build a sorely needed new church to replace the current one, which was too small for the growing community, or to build Sunday School classrooms to accommodate the spiritual needs of the growing numbers of Greek Orthodox children. Putting the spiritual needs of the children first, Saint Anthony's community broke ground for the Hellenic Cultural Center on January 17, 1965.

Building plans for the Hellenic Cultural Center called for the first floor to consist of a reception hall for the growing numbers of baptisms and weddings taking place at the church, thus, dedicating the entire second floor to Sunday School classrooms. The parish President and General Contractor James Hagelis served as the Hellenic Cultural Center's builder with Leon Argyros inspecting the construction site twice daily for the duration of the construction. On April 30, 1966, the beautifully completed Hellenic Cultural Center was celebrated with an opening banquet. Within days of its completion the Hellenic Cultural Center would be overflowing with young Greek Orthodox children.

Dan Bozikis served our Sunday School for 18 years as the community of Saint Anthony struggled to establish itself. Later Dorothea Hartford developed courses of study for all grade levels and expanded the program. For the past twenty years+, Irene Albeck has worked tirelessly as director, developing new programs, expanding the curriculum, and enthusiastically working with students, teacher and parents. Initially, the Mr. and Mrs. Club was formed by parents to financially support the Sunday School. Happily for all, a sense of community was strengthened and lifelong friendships were formed.

## *CHURCH HISTORY (continued)*

About 1968, in the very same Sunday School classrooms, a group of Saint Anthony's young people led by John Tarazi, formed the first Saint Anthony Youth Group. Under the direction of Mr. Tarazi the newly formed youth group established its bylaws, elected offices and decided they would meet twice monthly. Each subsequent youth meeting included a religious message, an educational presentation and a social outing following every meeting. The youth group also assembled monthly to wash the church windows and maintain the church grounds. Within months Saint Anthony had one of the largest and best run Greek Orthodox youth programs in California.

In 1971, veteran youth group advisor Dr. Michael Patzakis founded the Pan-Orthodox Athletic League which brought competitive sports activities to California's Greek Orthodox youth programs for the first time. He also went on to become the cofounder of the Southern California GOYA Basketball League several years later. Today this program includes more participants than in any other Greek Orthodox youth group in the state. Following all youth sponsored activities at Saint Anthony's, Dr. Patzkis made sure prayer services were held, followed by a spaghetti dinner and a social dance (which sometimes included up to four hundred young people), giving Saint Anthony's the reputation as the friendliest Greek Orthodox Church in Southern California.

In the early 1960s, the idea of a fundraiser, which proved to be successful in a parish in Akron, Ohio, was brought to the attention of the Parish Council. In 1965 three members of the parish council were appointed to explore the idea; they were Louis Tripodes, Jack Tripodes and Frank Rhodes. The committee of three with the help of the Parish Council and other dedicated members of the community, brought the idea to fruition. In 1967, the "Pentahiliariko" was born. The concept of the "Pente" with the hor d'oeuvres, the shower of champagne, the calling of names, the board of lights (built by Jack Tripodes) has remained the same until today (as of 2004). Two years later George Skandale convinced Saint Anthony's community to expand the annual Philoptochos Bazaar into a larger and much more profitable two-day Greek Festival. Little did anyone know that both fundraising events were about to help finance the most ambitious expansion project in the history of Saint Anthony Church.

*Next month: "Building A New Church"*



## CHURCH HISTORY (continued)



### Burning of the Old Church Mortgage

In the foreground, *left to right*: Louis Tripodes throws mortgage of first Pasadena church into fire as James Hagelis looks on.



### Church Services held in the Hellenic Cultural Center

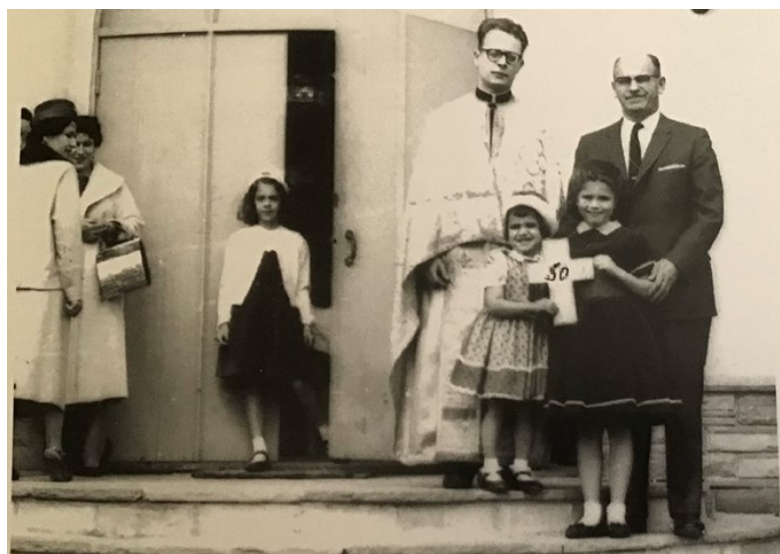
*Left to right*: Father Spiro Pieratos, Nicholas Milatos (*psaltis*), Bishop Demetrios and Father Anastasius Bandy.



### A Dream Come True

Pasadena Greeks pictured with the plans and model of the new Byzantine Church. Their vision and dreams were soon to be realized.

*Left to right*: James Hagelis, Louis Tripodes, George Mavredakis, Leon Argyros, Father Spiro Pieratos, and Frank Rhodes.



### The 50th Sunday School Students

Tina Karagias and Theodora Diamond were the 50th students to enroll in St. Anthony's rapidly growing Sunday School. They are pictured with Father Spiro Pieratos and Leon Argyros.

## CHURCH HISTORY (continued)



*Sunday School Christmas Pageant (circa 1961)*

*Front Row, left to right: John Mavredakis, Jim Xanthos, Diane Reilley (Virgin Mary), boy unknown. Middle Row: Sophia Palamiotes, girl unknown, Lexann Christy, girl unknown, David Ward. Back Row: Maria Palamiotes, Stephanie Nichols, Marcia Mavredakis, Paula Nichols.*

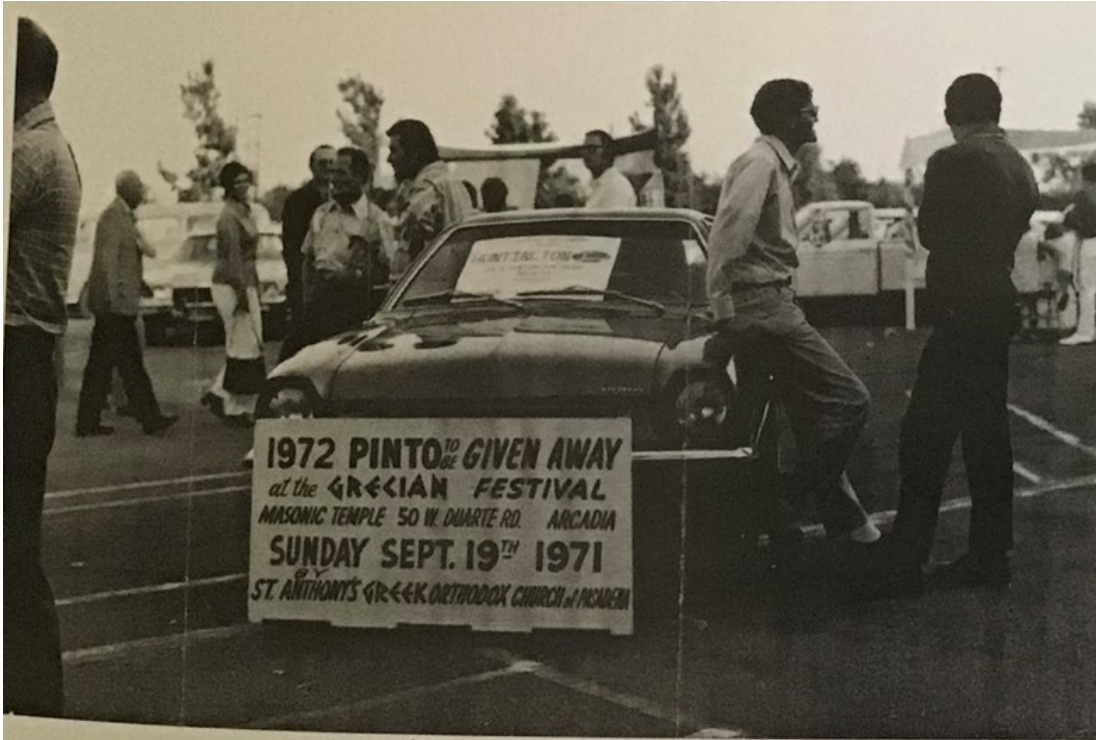


*New Hellenic Cultural Center Completed*

Guests enjoy a banquet celebrating the Grand Opening of the beautiful new Hellenic Cultural Center on April 30, 1966.



## CHURCH HISTORY (continued)



*Greek Festival in 1971*

Festival takes place at the Masonic Temple and a Ford Pinto is given away.



*Saint Anthony's Youth (circa mid 70s)*

Dr Michael Patzakis, (left, second row) youth group advisor, and Georgia Vournas (third from right, front row) seated with a group of young people at a sporting event.



## CHURCH HISTORY (continued)



*Junior Boys Basketball Team (circa 1978)*

*Front row, left to right: Pete Mechalas, Stan G. Pegadiotes, John Vagenas, Dean Trigonis. Back row: Peter Vagenas, Ted Regopoulos, Michael Vournas, Peter Pappas, Alex Trigonis. Coaches: Ted Vournas and Bill Watters.*



*Ladies in Greek Costume (circa late 70's)*

*Left to right: Athena Dallas, Dorothea Hartford, Joan Kaplanis, and George Gianopoulos advertise for the annual Greek Festival held at Santa Anita Race Track.*



*25th of March Greek School Program (circa 1978)*

*Front row, left to right: Alex P. Pappas, Dimitri Chames, Nicholas Demopoulos, unknown, unknown. Back row: unknown, Anthony Christopoulos, Steven Alfieris, unknown, Lee Trigonis, Alex P. Pappas, James Pappas, John Koudanis.*



**COMMUNITY NEWS**

## Saint Anthony 2021 Fall Bowling Results



The members of the Saint Anthony Bowling League concluded the 2021 Fall Bowling Season on Wednesday November 17. It was a great season after a year of and a half of waiting for the bowling alley to reopen. All participants enjoyed the 11-week season and were surprised how quickly it ended.

### Results of this season are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place:** Team 2: Jim Nichols, Maria Conley, Chrissa Mobayen  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Place:** Team 4: Andrea Lappas, Lee Anton, Marianne Nichols  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Place:** Team 1: Mihai Serban, Nicholeta and Vlasi Masouris  
**4<sup>th</sup> Place:** Team 7: Jim Xanthos, Sophia Angelos, Ted Dupas  
**5<sup>th</sup> Place:** Team 6: Pana Gelt, Steven Miller/Tricia Johnston, Syrus Mobayen  
**6<sup>th</sup> Place:** Team 5: Joyce Nichols, Jim Horaites, Chris Conley  
**7<sup>th</sup> Place:** Team 3: Anthia Lucas, Peter Bissias, Alice Jacques

We would also like to thank our non-Greek friends for helping us complete our teams as well as the Conley Family from St. Paul in Irvine for joining us! Special thanks for our devoted fans, Virginia Lappas and Vivian Mavredakis.

The next season of bowling will resume this Winter around the middle of January 2022. Please consider joining and know that no skill is needed. If you need to miss a week it is not a problem. Bowling night is on Wednesday's, and is an 11-week season. The Winter/Spring league will conclude around the end of March or beginning of April!

It's all about fun and fellowship!



**COMMUNITY NEWS** (continued)**Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis...**

***I give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart.***

***Psalm 9:1***

***In all things I have shown you by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said "It is more blessed to give than to receive."***

***Acts 20:35***

On December 6 we celebrate the feast of St. Nicholas, the saint on whom the tradition of Santa Claus is based. St. Nicholas lived in the fourth century. He took part in the First Ecumenical Council in Nicea in 325 A.D., which was one of the most important events in the history of the Church as this Council gave us the Creed as well as which books would comprise the Holy Bible. St. Nicholas was first a priest and later a Bishop and was an important leader in the Church.

However, what he is most remembered for is his spirit of generosity. St. Nicholas is remembered for giving. He was born to wealthy parents and was orphaned as a child and raised by his uncle. He spent his life divesting himself of his wealth. He would secretly go and give gifts or money to children who were orphans like him, to disadvantaged families, to widows and to the poor. And this is from where the tradition of Santa Claus comes - Santa Claus gives gifts to children, the same way that St. Nicholas was giving gifts to children.

St. Nicholas/Santa Claus provides an example of what it means to GIVE. Most of us don't understand the concept of giving. Giving is offering something without any expectation of a return, a reward or recognition. When we expect something in return, we are really exchanging, not giving.

It would be more accurate to say that at Christmas we mainly exchange gifts, rather than giving them. Because virtually everyone expects to receive gifts. Few just give and expect to receive nothing in return. There is nothing wrong with exchanging gifts. In fact, this is a beautiful tradition at Christmas. However, many times we are disappointed in what we receive. We think to ourselves, "Wait, I bought this for you, and I only got this in return!" This is not the spirit of giving for sure.

At times of the year other than Christmas we should practice true giving rather than exchanging. If we donate something but want our name on it, then we are really exchanging money for recognition. If we offer something expecting a reward, then we are exchanging money for reward. To truly "give" is to offer expecting nothing in return.

When receiving something, we should always offer gratitude. However, when we give something, even if no one says thank you, we should still be willing to give. So, make a habit of giving without expectation, and then you will truly be giving.

St. Nicholas ended his life with virtually no material possessions but with a bounty of spiritual riches. Ironically, we receive the Kingdom of God by giving of what we have to help others, without expectation of reward. The only reward we really need is the eternal reward that comes from the Lord. May He see what we do in secret and may He reward us richly for it.

*Lord, thank You for the many gifts You offer so freely to me. Help me to offer freely and joyfully as well. Help me to give without expectation of reward or recognition. Help me to have the spirit of Saint Nicholas, to see those who need help, and to have a heart of compassion which inspires me to share with those around me. Through the intercessions of Saint Nicholas, guide me to a greater understanding of what it means to give. Amen.*

Make a gesture of giving something today (your time, a gift, etc.) without expectation of reward.



**COMMUNITY NEWS** (continued)



**The AHEPA Christmas Party**

Friday, December 10, 2021 at North Woods Inn at 7247 Rosemead Blvd., San Gabriel.

We will have a great menu of your choice of New York Steak, Top Sirloin Steak, Icelandic Filet of Cod or Broiled Mahi Mahi, with two salads, cheese bread, rice pilaf, baked potatoes, and dessert for only \$55. No host cocktails at 7:00pm, dinner at 7:30pm. parking is free.

We are excited to announce the return of the popular gift exchange led by Virginia Lappas! This is an optional \$10+ gift exchange after dinner, neutral gift, wrapped, with no names.

Everyone in the Greek community is invited. Please either make checks payable to: Pasadena AHEPA or pay by Zelle on your bank's smart phone app or website, enter [ahepa373@gmail.com](mailto:ahepa373@gmail.com) as the recipient. If mailing a check, please send to: Dean Tripodes, 1351 San Marino Avenue, San Marino, CA 91108. We appreciate pre-payment so we can plan our table seating.

## COMMUNITY NEWS (continued)

### The Voice of Saint Anthony

**JANUARY 2021**
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Deadline for  
February Newsletter is  
Monday, 25 January  
Please send to:  
[newsletter\\_church@aol.com](mailto:newsletter_church@aol.com)



Reverend Father Peter Stratos, Pastor

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*If you would like the monthly newsletter mailed to your home each month, please contact the Church office.*

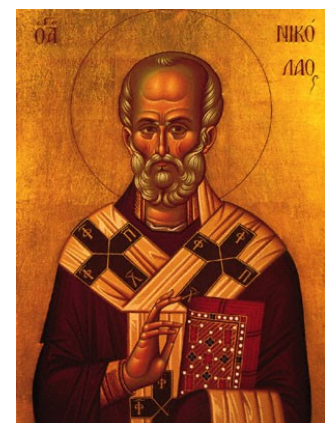
**626.449.6943**

**FEASTS & 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.





## ***FEASTS & SAINTS OF THE MONTH (continued)***

### **The Conception of the Holy Theotokos**

#### **9 December**

According to the ancient tradition of the Church, since Saint Anna, the Ancestor of God, was barren, she and her husband Joachim remained without children until old age. Therefore, sorrowing over their childlessness, they besought God with a promise that, if He were to grant them the fruit of the womb, they would offer their offspring to Him as a gift. And God, hearkening to their supplication, informed them through an Angel concerning the birth of the Virgin. And thus, through God's promise, Anna conceived according to the laws of nature, and was deemed worthy to become the mother of the Mother of our Lord .



### **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 Trimythus 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 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!



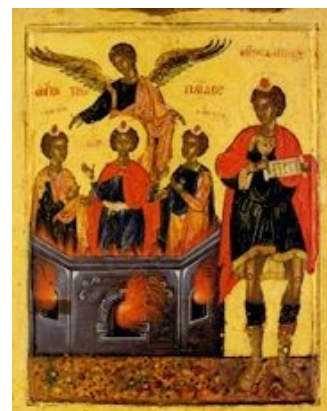
***FEASTS & SAINTS OF THE MONTH (continued)*****Prophet Daniel****17 December**

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, 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, signifying the prophecy.

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. He also 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.



**FEASTS & SAINTS OF THE MONTH (continued)****Prophet Daniel**  
**Continued...**

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.

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**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.





## FEASTS & SAINTS OF THE MONTH (continued)

### 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 an ox and ass, that 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)*



**FEASTS & 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)



# Orthodox Calendar

## December 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			 1 <b>Nativity Fast continues</b> 7pm Union Station Philoptochos Outreach	 2	 3	 4 <b>St. Barbara the Great Martyr</b>
 5 <b>10th Sunday of Luke</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 11am Sunday School 12pm Special Gen. Ass <b>Indoor &amp; Live-stream</b>	 6 <b>St. Nicholas the Wonderworker</b> 9am Liturgy at St. Nicholas Chapel, Rose Hills, Whittier	 7	 8	 9 <b>Conception of the Holy Theotokos</b>	 10	 11
 12 <b>11th Sunday of Luke St. Spyridon</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 11am Sunday School <b>Indoor &amp; Live-stream</b>	 13	 14 7pm Parish Council Meeting	 15 7pm Philoptochos Board Meeting	 16	 17 <b>Daniel and the Three Holy Youths</b>	 18
 19 <b>Sunday before Nativity</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 11am Sunday School <b>Indoor &amp; Live-stream</b>	 20	 21	 22 <b>Anastasia the Great Martyr</b>	 23	 24 <b>Christmas Eve</b> 3pm Orthros 4pm Divine Liturgy 5pm Philoptochos Cookies and Cider Fellowship in Trinity Ballroom	<b>The Nativity of Jesus Christ</b> 8am Orthros 9am Divine Liturgy
26 <b>Sunday after Nativity</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 11am Sunday School <b>Indoor &amp; Live-stream</b>	27 <b>St. Stephen the first martyr</b>	28	29	30	31	
		<b>Strict Fast</b> Refrain from meat, fish, wine, oil, dairy & eggs	Fish, Oil & Wine Allowed 	Wine and Oil Allowed 	Dairy, Eggs, & Fish Allowed; Refrain from Meat 	Fast Free



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## Feast of the Nativity Of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ December 25

Glory to God in the highest! And on earth, peace, goodwill toward men!

+ All generations are represented in the wise men who travel to bring their gifts to God: the young (beardless), the grown (black-bearded), and the elderly (white-bearded).



+ The Virgin Mother is seen reclining—she has just endured real childbirth.  
+ The cave foreshadows the tomb wherein Christ will open eternal life to all.  
+ His swaddling prefigures His graveclothes.  
+ Even the animals offer Him gifts of awe and the simple warmth of their breath.



+ Midwives are shown bathing the Child, providing care that all newborns need, to emphasize His humanity.  
+ Though not mentioned in the Gospels, according to the tradition of the time, two midwives would attend a childbirth.  
+ St. Joseph the Betrothed would likely have arranged for this.



+ Countless angels are shown doing the many works that we are all called to do as God's creation.  
+ These works include worshipping God, offering their service, singing hymns of praise, and announcing the Good News of His birth.



+ Humble shepherds respond to the angel's words and to the star showing the way.  
+ They come through the barren wilderness...a reminder of the inhospitable world as it has been since man was expelled from Paradise.



+ St. Joseph the Betrothed is seen at a distance from the central image of the Panagia and her Child, reinforcing that he is not the father of the Newborn.  
+ He faces out into the darkness, troubled with doubts about Christ's Virgin Birth.  
+ In some icons, he is shown listening to an old, bent man representing the Evil One, who makes these troubling suggestions.

