

# The Voice of Saint Anthony

## December 2022

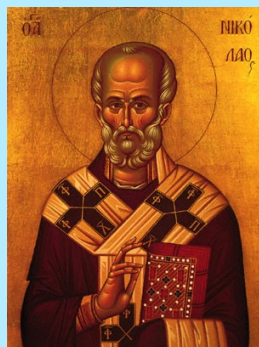
Deadline for January Newsletter is Tuesday, 27 December  
Please send to: [newsletter\\_church@aol.com](mailto:newsletter_church@aol.com)



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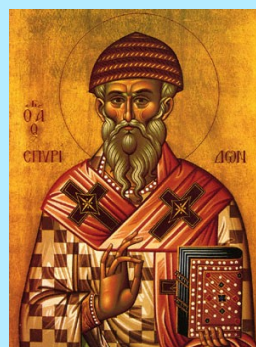
**St Barbara**  
**4 December**



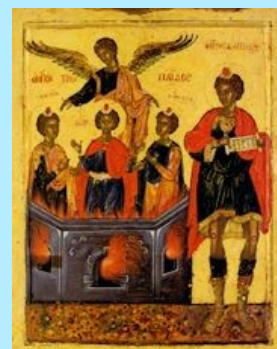
**St. Nicholas**  
**6 December**



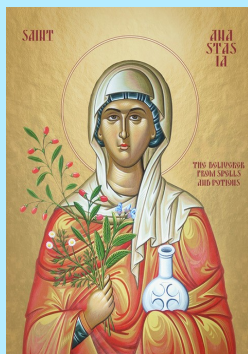
**Nativity of Christ**  
**25 December**



**St. Spyridon**  
**12 December**



**Prophet Daniel**  
**17 December**



**St. Anastasia**  
**22 December**



**St Stephen**  
**27 December**

## Message from Father Peter



### SAINT ANTHONY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Rev. Peter Stratos, Pastor

November 30, 2022 (Andrew the First-Called Apostle)

“Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.” (Proverbs 16:3)

It is with these words from Scripture that we set our sights on the upcoming calendar New Year. The exhortation here, is to commit our work fully to the Lord. We are not to be superficial in our commitment. We must maintain a delicate balance: trusting God as if everything depends on Him, while working as if everything depends on us. This commitment all begins with our Stewardship to God.

Stewardship can be described as our total commitment to God through the giving of our time, talents and treasures. In St. Paul’s 2nd Letter to the Corinthians we read these beautiful words: “So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9: 7) This is St. Paul’s landmark teaching of Christian Stewardship. Our attitude when we give is more important than the amount we give. We do not have to be embarrassed if we can give only a small gift. God is concerned about how we give from the resources we have. He is also concerned about how we offer our time and talents, as evidenced in the Parable of the Talents. (Matthew 25:14-30)

As we conclude this year and are about to enter 2023, we ask for your loving commitment again. We have enclosed your 2023 Stewardship Card with a return envelope. Please, prayerfully, complete and return your Stewardship Card as soon as possible. From past experience, we know that some parishioners will fulfill their financial commitment in a one lump-sum year-end donation in order to declare a tax-exempt contribution for this year’s tax return. We appreciate and are grateful for all donations monthly and year-end. We humbly ask that those who make their contribution in the year-end manner to also consider giving throughout the coming year. Expenses occur each month in our parish just as they occur in our households. Monthly contributions help our parish meet our financial obligations throughout the calendar year.

We also ask that you prayerfully complete your Stewardship Card with the contribution of your time and talents included. We are afforded ample opportunities to participate in the life of the Church and our parish community. Cheerful giving includes all aspects of Christian Stewardship.

We are very excited and look forward to a great year for our community. Thank you all for your continued love and generosity to the Saint Anthony Community. We remain strong because of each and everyone of you. Continue to pray to our Lord for strength, and heed the words of the Lord, “I have said this to you, that in Me you may have peace... be of good cheer.” (John 16:33)

Fr. Peter Stratos  
Proistamenos

Joseph Akrotirianakis  
Parish Council President



# Stewardship



## 2023 Stewardship Financial Commitment

*"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another,  
as good stewards of God's grace." (1 Peter 4:10)*

LAST NAME

FIRST NAME(S), PLEASE INCLUDE CHILDREN UNDER 18.

STREET ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PREFERRED PHONE

OTHER/SECOND PHONE

E-MAIL

[For office use only]

SIGNATURE

DATE

### ANNUAL GIVING LEVELS:

**\*ARCHANGEL: \$15,000 and up**

\$288/week OR \$1,250/month & up

**\*ANGEL: \$10,000 - \$14,999**

\$192-\$288/week OR \$833-\$1,249/month

**\*GUARDIAN: \$7,000 - \$9,999**

\$135-\$192/week OR \$583-\$833/month

**\*DISCIPLE: \$4,000 - \$6,999**

\$77-\$135/week OR \$333-\$583/month

**\*FAITHFUL: \$2,000 - \$3,999**

\$38-\$77/week OR \$167-\$333/month

**SUPPORTER: \$1,000 - \$1,999**

\$19-\$38/week OR \$83-\$167/month

**FRIEND: \$500 - \$999**

\$9.60-\$19/week OR \$42-\$83/month

**CONTRIBUTOR: \$499 & below**

\$9.60/week OR \$42/month & below

Review your stewardship commitment prayerfully, consider what you offer to the Church in comparison to monthly utility/service payments.

Please return your completed commitment card to church by Jan. 31, 2023

Your card must be on file for you to be considered in 'Good Standing'

**In response to God's blessings, I/we pledge a 2023 offering of:**

**My Stewardship Commitment for 2023: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**I will fulfill and pay my pledge: (CHECK ONE)**

☐ Weekly at \$ \_\_\_\_\_/week

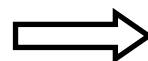
☐ Monthly at \$ \_\_\_\_\_/month

☐ Annually

Contact the Church office to set up easy recurring electronic payments

-OR- set up your own recurring giving at [saint-anthonys.churchgiving.com](http://saint-anthonys.churchgiving.com)

**\*To fully cover our operating expenses, our goal is to  
have our average stewardship be \$2,000 or above per family**



# Stewardship



*"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's grace." (1 Peter 4:10)*

## FAQs

### Frequently Asked Questions about Stewardship:

#### **Q: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "DUES" & "STEWARDSHIP"?**

A: Yes! Three or four generations ago, it was commonplace for families throughout our Archdiocese to pay their annual "dues" or required membership fee to be a member of their local parish. Over time it was clear that this was not the healthiest way of committing to a local church as giving remained stagnant and the authentic Christian commitment of sacrificial giving became an afterthought. (note: the annual "dues" of \$300-350 *back then* would equate to roughly \$2,500-\$3,000 *today*) Stewardship, however, offers us the chance to recognize our unique blessings from God, and to give back based on what we have received. Stewardship is management of another's property, and all our blessings and gifts we have been given ultimately belong to God. We are but his caretakers, his priests, his *stewards* on this earth.

#### **Q: HOW MUCH SHOULD I GIVE?**

A: The foundations of Christian stewardship is both from Scripture and the teachings of our Lord. You may have heard the term *titling* (the word *tithe* literally means *tenth* in Hebrew), and this refers to the biblical giving goal of 10% of your household income to your local church (*Lev. 27:30; Num. 18:25-28; Deut. 14:22-24; 2 Chron. 31:5-6*). Yet, we also hear from our Lord Jesus Christ that true giving is when we offer sacrificially "all that we have" (*Luke 21:4*), "store up your treasures in heaven" (*Matt. 6:20*), "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (*Acts 20:35*), "for God loves a cheerful giver" (*2 Cor. 9:7*). With this in mind, you are invited to prayerfully reflect on your own household income, and make your sacrificial offering based on what you receive. Consider also what you offer to Christ's Church in comparison to your monthly utility/service payments. (*"Am I giving my phone more than my Church?"*) Use the chart to the right as a guide.

Annual Income	2.5%	5%	10%	15%
\$20,000	\$500	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
\$50,000	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$7,500
\$75,000	\$1,875	\$3,750	\$7,500	\$11,250
\$100,000	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000
\$250,000	\$6,250	\$12,500	\$25,000	\$37,500

#### **Q: WHAT DOES MY STEWARDSHIP PAY FOR?**

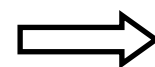
A: It costs approximately \$2,000/day to keep the church open. Most operating expenses are paid from stewardship. Some examples are mortgage, utilities, office staff and pastoral salaries, candles, permits, and facilities maintenance. Additional costs are directly related to church programs.

#### **Q: WHAT IS THE EASIEST WAY TO FULFILL MY PLEDGE?**

A: The easiest way is online! Pledging and paying online is fast and EASY and is the preferred method for many of our families. Simply go to our website [saint-anthonys.org](http://saint-anthonys.org) and click the DONATE button and this will take you to our online giving platform. Under "Regular" click the Make a Donation button, then click Create a Recurring Donation, enter your weekly/monthly/semi-annually amount and fill in the necessary information. You can always call the church office for assistance in setting up easy recurring giving payments. Paying your pledge can also be done by check, envelopes, or credit card payments, though these are not as convenient for you.

#### **Q: WHEN SHOULD I MAKE MY ANNUAL PLEDGE?**

A: We would ask you to turn in your pledge card by January 31<sup>st</sup>. Our church budget is based on our expected annual income and expenses. Forecasting stewardship in January helps meet our parish goals.





## Stewardship

**Q: I DON'T LIKE TO PAY MY PLEDGE UNTIL DECEMBER. SHOULD I STILL PLEDGE IN JANUARY?**

A: Yes. January pledging allows for effective fiscal budgeting. Pledge your annual amount, then pay weekly, monthly, semi-annually or annually.

**Q: WHY DO I HAVE TO UPDATE MY INFORMATION EVERY YEAR?**

A: We ask for updated information to provide you the opportunity to review your pledge for the upcoming year. As cost of living increases every year, so do our own parish expenses, and our giving to the church needs to adjust accordingly. We anticipate automatic online giving to become the standard in order to simplify the process.

**Q: DOESN'T THE GREEK FESTIVAL BRING IN MOST OF THE FUNDING FOR THE CHURCH?**

A: No. While the annual Pasadena Greek Fest is an important source of funding and support, it actually accounts for less than 15% of the total revenue brought in each year. Stewardship raises four times as much and is our primary source of funding for operating expenses. Ultimately, the goal is to have zero reliance on outside sources of funding, which would then make the Festival an outreach and community building opportunity, thus greatly alleviating the stress and dependency of this event.

**Q: I ALREADY PAY FOR GREEK DANCE, GREEK LANGUAGE SCHOOL, BASKETBALL, ETC. WHY DO I HAVE TO PAY STEWARDSHIP TOO?**

A: These programs operate independently from the church operating budget. The church provides the facility in addition to expenses enabling their operation and receives no money from these organizations. *It is also important to know that families participating in our children's ministries must be currently pledged stewards.*

**Q: IF I DONATE TO A MEMORIAL FUND, BUILDING FUND, FESTIVAL, OR EVENT, DOES THAT COUNT AS PART OF MY STEWARDSHIP?**

A: No. Your stewardship is represented entirely by your stated pledge.

**Q: IF I MAKE A NON-MONETARY DONATION TO THE CHURCH, CAN THIS REPRESENT MY STEWARDSHIP?**

A: No. Your stewardship pledge cannot be substituted for non-monetary donations. However, your various donations to the festival and the church are always greatly appreciated and are tax-deductible.

**Q: WHEN SHOULD MY CHILDREN BECOME STEWARDS?**

A: As the principles of stewardship is that of sacrificial giving from what we have received, everyone is encouraged to become a "cheerful giver" as soon as one begins to generate his/her own income.

**Q: WHAT IF I OR MY FAMILY EXPERIENCE A FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OR SEVERE CHANGE IN INCOME?**

A: Parishioners who are experiencing financial hardships and are unable to fulfill their stewardship obligation, but still want to be considered in "good standing", can always contact the church office, and you may always speak with one of our priests.

*Fact: With our congregation at roughly 300 families, to fully cover our operating expenses our goal is to have average stewardship be \$2,000 per family or above. Right now, 83% of our stewards are under that goal.*

## Stewardship



### Commitment of Time and Talents



Families should mark "H" for husband, "W" for wife, "C" for Children.

#### Council of Ministries

_____ Acolytes	_____ Kouvouklion	_____ Stewardship Committee
_____ Bible Studies	_____ Little Lambs	_____ Studies in the Faith
_____ Bookstore	_____ Myrrh Bearers	_____ Sunday School
_____ GOYA Basketball	_____ OCF (Orthodox Christian	_____ Vacation Bible School
_____ GOYA/Jr. GOYA	_____ Fellowship)	_____ VIPs
_____ Greek Dance	_____ Office Volunteers	_____ Volleyball Tournament
_____ Greek Language School	_____ St. John Chrysostom	_____ Welcoming Committee
_____ JOY/HOPE	_____ Oratorical Festival	_____ Other

#### Parish Events

_____ Palm Sunday Luncheon	_____ Resurrection Magiritsa	_____ Summer Family Picnic
_____ Pasadena Golf Classic	_____ Dinner	_____ Other
_____ Pasadena Greek Fest	_____ Saint Anthony Feast Day	

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_



## Ministries at Saint Anthony



### 2022 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  
Helen Mitropoulos  
James Pappas  
Patricia Paziouros  
Perry Vidalakis  
Vincent Zarian  
Nikole Zoumberakis

### OFFICE STAFF

Alma Vorgias – Office Administrator



### CUSTODIAL STAFF

Carlos Sosa



### CHANTERS

Michael Kontaxis  
Liam McCann

### READERS

Nicholas Kokoris  
Rebecca Russo



### SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF

Teresa Argueta – Little Lambs, Pre-PreK

Irene Albeck, Larissa Maslen – Pre K/TK

Sophia Syrengelas – Kindergarten, 1st  
Adrianna Lareau – Kindergarten, 1st

Theoni Katsafados – 2nd, 3rd  
Vicki Kades, Jenni Nassos – 2nd, 3rd

Mary Udria, Athena Serban – 4th, 5th  
Kyriaki Tsigounis, Maria Kypreos – 4th, 5th

Polly Vagenas, Chris Syrengelas – 6th, 7th, 8th

Presvytera Aida Stratos – High School

Vicki Kades – Photographer

# Ministries at Saint Anthony continued

## PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

### 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

Maria Hronas

#### **Community Outreach**

Fontaine Malisos, Liz Skandale

Stephanie Soewers

#### **Fellowship**

Tanya Christodoulelis

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
Golf Classic	TBD
GOYA	Fr. Peter Stratos
GOYA Basketball	Anthia Lucas Pana Gelt
GOYA Volleyball	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
Prayer Shawls	Maria Kypreos
Psalter Group	Fr. Peter Stratos
Vacation Bible School	Sophia Syrengelas Mary Udria
VIPs	Helen Treantafelles





## Parish Council

### Next Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday, December 13

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/Omicron Variants, 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.

**As a reminder, the Corona Virus has not "gone away" and is still very much with us.**

**If you are not feeling well, please stay home and away from others.**

**If you think that you may have been exposed or infected please consider wearing your mask when you go out or go to public indoor gatherings.**

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..





Our devoted teachers have been hard at work planning fun, meaningful, and informative lessons to insure our students continue to learn and grow in their faith each week. We completed our unit on *Things We See, Hear, and Do in Church* with a field trip to our church. Father Peter gave us a lesson on the sacred vessels and Holy Communion. The students were excited to see the sacred vessels up close. We learned about their significance and usage in the Divine Liturgy. It is our hope that these experiences will deepen our students' understanding of our faith and ultimately engage them to be active participants in Liturgy.

During the month of December, we will be preparing for our Christmas Pageant and learning about prayer and the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. We invite our fellow parishioners to join us in the ballroom on Sunday, **December 18th** at 12:00 pm for our pageant.

Please note that we will not have classes on December 25th and January 1st due to the holidays. Classes will resume on Sunday, January 8th with the first session of our all-grade iconography unit. We are planning for a fun, hands-on, and informative unit on iconography and hope to see our students in class each week as we prepare icons for a special presentation to our community. More information to come!

On behalf of our Sunday School teachers, we wish our students, their families, and the entire Saint Anthony community a wonderful Christmas! May you all experience the joy, wonder, and beauty of this special Nativity season.

Sophia Syrengelas  
[sophiajammie@gmail.com](mailto:sophiajammie@gmail.com)

*Please see photos on following 2 pages*













## Youth & Young Adults



### St. Anthony G.O.Y.A. News

St. Anthony GOYA has hit the ground running since September. November seems to have come and gone so quickly!

On November 13, prior to attending Sunday School, Father Peter gave the GOYA officers the Oath of Office in church. This was the first time for our GOYA and it made being elected even more special.

Following Sunday School, GOYA members were treated to lunch by the Katsas/Gittings family. A short business meeting was held after which members broke into small groups to create structures from marshmallows and toothpicks. The creativity was so overwhelming that judges could not pick a winner!

While their children were meeting, GOYA parents met with Anthia Lucas to discuss how they could help keep our GOYA thriving and active. Parent enthusiasm was strong and invigorating!

Sunday, **December 4**, GOYA will have their December meeting. After their meeting they will decorate the Christmas trees in the Trinity Ball Room.

There will be Christmas Caroling later in the month and they will be doing a toy drive for underprivileged children for their service project.

Parents please be reminded that all 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to participate in St. Anthony's GOYA!

## Youth & Young Adults continued

### GOYA Officers receive Oath of Office





## Youth & Young Adults continued

Goya November meeting



Goyan's broke into small groups to create structures using marshmallows and toothpicks.



Sunday Funday



## Youth & Young Adults continued



### GREEK ORTHODOX BASKETBALL LEAGUE

GOBL Season 49 Presents:

2023 Season Kick-Off Event -- Saturday, January 7, 12 P.M.

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, Northridge

All 12-19 year olds invited!

Please mark your calendars to attend this first time event.  
Sign-up by scanning the barcode on the flyer next page!

#### St. Anthony 2023 Basketball Schedule

Game 1:	Sunday, February 26	Home Game versus St. John
Game 2:	Sunday, March 5	Away Game versus Assumption
Game 3:	Saturday, March 11	Away Game versus St. George
Game 4:	Sunday, March 12	Home Game versus St. Sophia
Game 5:	Sunday, March 19	Home Game versus St. Nicholas
Game 6:	Sunday, March 26	Away Game versus St. Basil
Game 7:	Sunday, April 2	Away Game versus St. Katherine

Play-offs to begin on Saturday, April 22!

St. Anthony is hoping to again play their home games at San Marino High School. Our GOYA is very fortunate to have new basketball uniforms that were donated by the Livanos/Jones family!



## Youth & Young Adults continued

### **GREEK ORTHODOX BASKETBALL LEAGUE**

**G.O.B.L.**

**2023 SEASON KICK-OFF**

# IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME!

**SATURDAY  
JAN 7**

**12 PM**

**GAMES**

3-POINT SHOOTING  
FREE THROW SHOOTING  
RUNNING LINES THE FASTEST  
JUMPING COMPETITION



**PRIZES**

**ST. NICHOLAS GYM**

9501 BALBOA BLVD., NORTHRIDGE, CA 91325

### AGENDA

- *Commisioner and Rep Introductions*
- Guest Speakers
- Coach/Parent/Player Meeting
- Rules/Codes Of Conduct Q and A
- Competitions and Prizes
- Burgers, Subs, and Drinks



**SCAN THE QR CODE AND REGISTER BY DECEMBER 31**

## Youth & Young Adults continued

# FDF 2023



Dear FDF participants and friends,

We're excited to announce that the 46th Annual Greek Orthodox and Choral Festival (FDF) is returning to Phoenix, Arizona!

**Please join us on February 16-19, 2023 at the Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel.**

Hotel rooms with FDF rates and information about how to book your reservations will be available soon. We will give advance notice of when hotel reservation will be open.

Watch for further information and updates about FDF 2023, including hotel information and more.

We're looking forward to seeing you all in Arizona for another memorable year!

Your FDF Board of Trustees



## Philoptochos

### Good Works

#### *Union Station Homeless Service (USHS)*

Philoptochos is continuing the monthly commitment to USHS by preparing a hardy, nutritious dinner made possible through the generosity of our donors. USHS has requested packaged dessert (cookies), single serve beverages (10 oz.), and single serve bottles of milk. You may continue to volunteer by donating towards the purchase of individual packaged items.

The estimated costs are: rolls - \$16.50, cookies - \$27.50, beverage - \$48.60, and milk - \$10.80.

We invite you to consider helping us feed the needy by making a contribution towards this work.

Thank you to all our donors for their support.

**Please make checks out to: *Philoptochos of Saint Anthony*. Please write USHS on the memo line.**

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

#### **For further information, please contact:**

Sophia Angelos	sangelos2000@gmail.com	626-795-0848 (home)
Stephanie Soewers	szanglis@gmail.com	818-209-5026 (cell)
Irene Albeck	mcmg2a@aol.com	626-792-8122

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



## Philoptochos 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 continued



Stephanie and Mary delivered 15 turkeys to Friends In Deed in Pasadena, for the Thanksgiving holiday



Thank you to everyone who donated canned food for the PCC Lancer Pantry Thanksgiving Food Drive. It was a huge success! They were very happy and very appreciative for all of our donations! Thank you to GOYA for partnering with us!

## Philoptochos continued

### Community Happenings

#### *Coffee Hour*

The Weekly Parish Coffee Hour has returned. Philoptochos is looking for individuals, groups or families to host Sunday coffee hours after the liturgy. Please, look for sign-up information in the church hall or foyer.

For further information, please contact:

Tanya Christodoulelis  
(626) 579-2304

Maria Kypreos  
(626) 272-2720

#### *Annual Christmas Benefit 2022*

It's here! "**Let There Be Peace**", our 53rd annual benefit luncheon, will be held Saturday, December 3rd at The Langham Huntington Hotel in Pasadena. This year's exciting event will include a fashion, the Christmas Boutique, Santa's Kitchen, holiday entertainment, and Grand Awards. Doors open early at 10:00 a.m., and the luncheon will begin at 11:30 am. We suggest carpooling with your friends to this event.

There are many ways to support this charitable event by becoming a **Star Donor** or participating in the **Grand Awards**. Visit <https://stanthonybenefit.square.site> for the details.

#### *Santa's Kitchen:*

Santa's Kitchen is still taking Prepaid Orders for Vasilopita bread until December 9.

Visit <https://stanthonybenefit.square.site> to place an order.

Order pick-up will be in the parish hall on December 18 after liturgy.

#### *Upcoming Meetings*

Philoptochos Festive Christmas Party – Wednesday, **December 14** at 6:30 PM in church hall. Details forthcoming regarding dinner and more.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: St. Anthony Philoptochos  
Instagram: stanthonyphiloptochos

## VIPs

Our VIP November Meeting and Fellowship Festive Feast was very well attended and enjoyed by all. The rain even held off until we were finished.



The VIPs are going to have another **Meeting and Festive Christmas Feast** on **Tuesday, December 13th, 10:30 a.m.** in the Trinity Ballroom. Please join us.

Wishing everyone a Blessed Christmas.



*Helen Treantafelles*  
VIP President  
htreantafelles@yahoo.com

### Organization of Respected Adults St George ORA CHAPTER The Trophy Bearers

Join Us For Lunch/Meeting



January 12, 2023  
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM



St. George Greek Orthodox Church Hall  
10830 Downey Ave, Downey CA 90241

To RSVP  
Email: [office@stgeorgedowney.org](mailto:office@stgeorgedowney.org)  
Tel: 562-862-6461



## Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis...

*Every good endowment and perfect gift is from Above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

James 1:17

For the weeks that precede Christmas I want to focus on the subject of gifts. Gifts are becoming synonymous with stress. There is stress as the “shopping days left” countdown shows fewer and fewer days. There is stress to fight traffic at the mall. And for those who prefer on-line shopping, there is the stress of hoping that what we pick out really looks like the ad. Add to this the rising prices of gifts and hoping people even like the gifts we get them and gift-giving just stresses most of us out, including me.

The gift of Christmas is the gift of Jesus Christ coming into the world, the Creator coming to live with the creation, the wall of separation between man and God coming down, and the door to salvation opening up. We’ve lost sight of these gifts in a world that either ridicules them or doesn’t think about them, or worships anything other than that of our Lord. For this Christmas, I want to focus on Him, and how we can gift Him to one another.

Everything that is good has its origin from God. Everything that is bad has its origin from a world that is fallen. The fallen world has people who make bad decisions, disasters in nature (like hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.) as well as a state of imperfection (imperfect air, imperfect water, imperfect gene pools) that can seemingly strike anyone at any time.

We all like when good things happen to us. And we don’t like it when bad things happen. In fact, we resent it, we think it’s unfair. When something good happens, we’ve become conditioned to think that we are almost entitled for good things to happen. Instead of considering gifts to be blessings, we consider them entitlements. Instead of seeing bad things as challenges or maybe even setbacks, they become cause for anger.

The world is losing sight of God as the giver of the good gifts as well as being the one who helps us in the challenging times. Rather, we tend to blame God for the shortcomings and congratulate ourselves for the good things.

In beginning to discuss gifts, it would be helpful to **see gifts as blessings from God. And it would be helpful to see good things not as entitlements, but as gifts.** For instance, if you woke up today, that’s a gift. We should thank God for the day He has gifted us. If you are reading this message, it is a result of many blessings—you are alive, you had parents who took you to school, teachers who taught you how to read, engineers who put together the device from which you are reading, money you earned by using a God-giving talent to buy the device, etc. Our ability to read a simple message is a result of many good things that have happened in a certain sequence, and the origin of all of it is God. That doesn’t mean we are puppets on a string and that God is our puppet-master. It means that God provides gifts and means and that we use these gifts to create other gifts and possibilities with them.





## Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis...

As we read in James 1:17, *“every good endowment and perfect gift is from Above, coming down from the Father of lights.”* In this season of gift-giving, instead of being stressed about what we will get for others and what they might get for us, we should recognize first and foremost that the people around us are gifts in themselves, rather than obligations or boxes to check. The gifts we buy are created by people who use their talents to create clothes, pots and pans, technological devices, toys and whatever other things we are going to buy. The cars that will carry us to the stores and the technology that allows us to buy things on line are gifts. And when people get gifts for us, it is because they consider us gifts to them. The season of gifts should be a season of joy. We are surrounded by the handiwork of God, used by us, His children, to bring joy to one another. This is what should be the spirit of the season, rather than a spirit of stress and commercialism.

In my humble opinion, the best gifts are the gifts that money cannot buy – well, with the exception of toys that little kids want. The best gifts are the things that come directly from God—the gift of time. If time is indeed a blessing from God, sharing that blessing of time with someone else is a gift. If people are a blessing from God—our families, our friends—then spending time with family and friends is a gift. And expressing our thanks and our joy to our family and friends is a great way to express what a blessing they are for us. Saying it is important – writing it down is timeless, and is a gift that keeps on giving. Rather than stressing out about the perfect family picture for a Christmas card, perhaps spend time writing short heartfelt messages to those who are gifts in your life.

Whatever you do regarding gifts this next month, remember that every good gift does not originate in a catalogue or commercial – It comes from God Himself.

*Lord, thank You for the gift of Your Son Jesus Christ, Who came down from heaven to earth to live with us and to show us the path back to Paradise. Thank You for the gift of life that enables me to make this journey. Thank You for another year You have gifted me, to experience this season once again. Thank You for the people with whom I will make this journey—family and friends. Help me to keep my focus on the true reason for the season, and to keep my focus when it comes to gifts of You, as the provider of every good and perfect one. Guide me to celebrate this year with more focus and purpose, whether it is celebrating the Gift of Your Nativity, or the gift of those around me who will share in this year’s journey. Amen.*

Let’s work this Nativity season to change our perspective on gifts –  
first, the greatest gift of this season is the gift of Jesus Christ  
second, that every good and perfect gift is from Above  
third, the gift of others is gift enough, because there is no better gift to give others than time with them, and expressing our joyful sentiments about them to them.

# What is New in the Community?

## STUDIES IN THE FAITH

Winter Session 2022: November 14 – December 19

The winter session will be divided into 6 evening classes

Mondays – 6:30pm – 7:30pm

For those interested in learning more about the Greek Orthodox Church, these informative zoom classes will serve as an excellent introduction to Orthodoxy. They will also provide an inspiring enrichment and review for practicing Orthodox Christians.

For more information please email Fr. Peter. [frpeter@saint-anthonys.org](mailto:frpeter@saint-anthonys.org)

Introductory Session – Monday November 14

A guide to the Season of Advent

Second Session – Monday November 21

Spiritual Preparation

Third Session – Monday November 28

Searching the Scriptures part 1

Fourth Session – Monday December 5

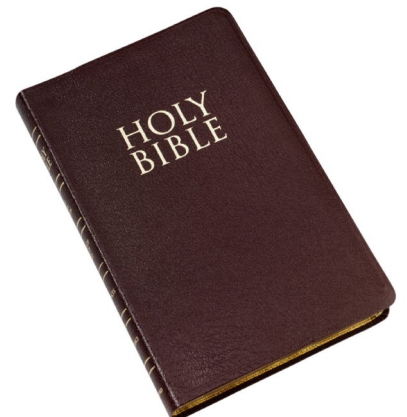
Searching the Scriptures part 2 (THE KATAVASIAS)

Fifth Session – Monday December 12

The Icon of the Nativity

Sixth Session – Monday December 19

The Incarnation





## What is New in the Community? continued



### Saint Anthony 2022 Community Christmas Card

With the start of the Nativity Fast our Church has officially entered the Christmas Season. During this special time of year, we turn our hearts and minds to the Nativity of Christ and we reflect on what this means for us. Of course, we have the opportunity to give thanksgiving to God by offering a gift to our church in our participating in the annual St. Anthony's Community Christmas Card. This beautiful Nativity card is being made available to the entire community, as it has been done in the past. Let our prayers turn to unity with Christ our God, who was born in a cave and lay in a manger for our salvation.

**Should you wish to participate and have your name(s) listed in the Community Christmas Card, please complete and mail the form below to the church office by Sunday December 11, 2022**



**YES! I/We would like to participate in this year's Community Christmas Card!**

**Enclosed is my offering of:** ☐ \$50   ☐ \$75   ☐ \$100   ☐ \$200   ☐ \$\_\_\_\_\_

***Please print clearly*** how you would like your name(s) to appear on the  
2022 St. Anthony Community Christmas Card:

Checks can be made out to: St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church  
Mail to: 778 S. Rosemead Blvd. Pasadena, CA 91107-5613  
or [email-alma@saint-anthonys.org](mailto:email-alma@saint-anthonys.org) or call the church office (626) 449-6943  
to pay by Credit Card.

*\*St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church is a 501(c)3 non-profit. All donations are tax-deductible*

## What is New in the Community? continued

### Preparing for Christmas...

The two Sundays preceding Christmas are, for Orthodox Christians, preparatory Sundays for the celebration of the birth of Christ. Two Sundays before Christmas (**December 11th**), we remember the Old Testament patriarchs, prophets and other righteous men and women – those whom we call the forefathers of our Christian faith. On the Sunday before Christmas (**December 18th**) we remember the ancestors of Christ, those who appear in the genealogies recorded in Luke and Matthew's Gospels. Both of these Sundays accent the theme of preparation: how God worked great signs and wonders through special witnesses, preparing for the sending of His Son into the world in accordance with His *oikonomia*, His plan for the healing and salvation of the world.

All of these righteous men and women responded to the call of God, served Him with devotion and many of them fervently anticipated and prophesied concerning the coming of the Messiah. We are called by the Church in her worship on these two Sundays not merely to remember these Old Testament righteous and their witness but to become witnesses ourselves as we seek to respond to God's call to us now.

The songs and hymns of the liturgical services for the Sunday of the forefathers sing of Noah, Samson, Barak, Nathan, Eleazar, Job, Samuel, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Elijah, Daniel and all the prophets. We also sing of the holy women made "strong in the days of old by the might of Your strength, O Lord: Hannah, Judith and Deborah; Hulda, Jael, Esther and Sarah; Miriam the sister of Moses and Rachel, Rebecca and Ruth, the noble minded ones." We sing, in a word, of all the righteous of the Old Testament, men and women, Jews and Gentiles, who found life in the one, true and living God. God's holy people live for Him alone, for the living God and for His Word.

Their reason for being is to praise God not only in words but in deeds and so to truly live and not merely exist. For there is a great difference between existing and living. **Many people exist – very few really live. Only those who seek God have life.** Only those who delight in His commandments and rejoice in accomplishing His will, pass beyond mere existence and actually find life. As the Psalmist says: *"Seek God and your soul shall live"* (Psalm 69:32).

The gospel reading for the Liturgy on the Sunday before Christmas is "the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" taken from St. Matthew's gospel. This genealogy lists the generations of people from Abraham to David, to the Babylonian captivity of the people of Israel, to the birth of Jesus. It is a "select" genealogy, ending in the appearance of "Joseph, the husband of Mary, whom Jesus, who is called the Christ, was born" (Matthew 1:16).

There are several reasons for presenting the genealogy of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke on the Sunday before Christmas, chief among which is the affirmation that Jesus, being in truth the Word of God, has come "in the flesh" as a real human being for the salvation of all. We celebrate the human ancestry of Jesus in order to show how completely the Lord has identified with the human race, with men and women of flesh and blood, with us. For among the ancestors of Jesus are Jews and Gentiles, kings and prostitutes, saints and sinners – all of humanity at its best and its worst – all a part of the family tree of "the Word made flesh" (John 1:14). Jesus Christ, the Son, Word and Icon of God is physically and spiritually formed in the body of Mary so that He might be formed in us as well (Galatians 4:19). Christmas is Christ in us and we in Christ; God with us and we with God. And this is what Christmas is all about: the eternal Word of God, Who created the universe and sent bright galaxies spinning off into the darkness of space, is born in Bethlehem, held in His mother's arms and laid in a manger that we might be graced with salvation and eternal life!

Taken from –  
**The Winter Pascha** – by Father Tom Hopko  
 and  
**A Year of the Lord** – by Father Ted Stylianopoulos



## What is New in the Community? continued

### Saint Anthony Bowling League News Summer / Fall Season 2022



The St. Anthony Bowling League concluded their Summer / Fall Season on Wednesday, November 16. Prize money was awarded to each team based on their number of wins.

Final standings were as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	30 wins	George Dupas, Katherine Boukidis, Evan Boukidis
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	24 wins	Syrus Mobayen, Parvis Mobayen, Patti Pearson Chris Conley, Alice Jacquez, Frank Boyd Ted Dupas, Maria Conley, Rick Nassif
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	23.5 wins	Andrea Lappas, Lee Anton, Alexandra Katsas
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	21 wins	Chrissa Mobayen, Bill Summers, Kathy Summers Sophia Angelos, Peter Bissias, Joyce Nichols
5 <sup>th</sup> Place	20 wins	Pana Gelt, Paris Livanos, Trisha Johnston
6 <sup>th</sup> Place	18 wins	Jim Horaites, Anthia Lucas, Jim Nichols
7 <sup>th</sup> Place	12.5 wins	Nicoleta Masouris, Vlasi Masouris, Mihai Serban

We will begin the Winter/Spring Season after the new year. If anyone is interested in participating, please contact Anthia Lucas (626) 274-6133.

Bowlers would like to thank our 'bowling boosters', Virginia Lappas, Vivian Mauredakis, Nicole Shulman and Samantha Malisos for their support!

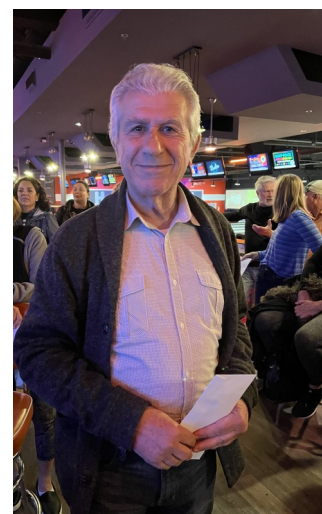
# What is New in the Community? continued



Virginia Lappas, Vivian Maverdakis,  
Paris Livanos and Sophia Angelos



Bowling Group Photo



Parvis Mobayen



First Place team:  
Evan, George and Katherine



George Dupas picking up his trophy  
for high game of 200



Bowling booster cousins



Vlasi Masouris holding his winnings



Pana Gelt, Jim Nichols, Anthia Lucas,  
Frank Boyd and Chris Conley



# What is New in the Community? continued

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco Family Wellness Ministry  
and the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries  
invite you to journey with us through



## Eight Dates

**Essential Conversations for a Lifetime of Love**

by John and Julie Gottman, PhD.

held bi-monthly on Thursday evenings via Zoom

Each session is designed by our Family Wellness Ministry team to engage couples in essential conversations.

**Topics include:** Trust and Commitment, Addressing Conflict, Sex and Intimacy, Work and Money, Family, Fun and Adventure, Growth and Spirituality, Hopes and Dreams



**2022 – 2023 Eight Dates will be held Thursdays at 6:30 pm (Pacific) via Zoom**

**Oct. 13 • Oct. 27 • Nov. 3 • Nov. 17**

**Dec. 1 • Dec. 15 • Jan. 5 • Jan. 19 • Feb. 2**



*"This series transformed our marriage and got us talking and connecting again."-- Jenn & Stavros*

*"Over the last two years, over 400 couples participated in our Eight Dates program and we've received countless positive comments of how this experience strengthened their relationships." - Presvytera Pat Tsagalakis*



Family  
Wellness  
Ministry  
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco



YOUTH &  
YOUNG ADULT  
MINISTRIES

**Register online:**

**[www.familywellnessministry.org/eight-dates](http://www.familywellnessministry.org/eight-dates)**



## What is New in the Community? continued



The Prayer Shawl Ministry is up and running again!

The need is immediate.

If you are a knitter or a crocheter, please contact:  
Maria Kypreos (626) 272-2720 or [makypreos@gmail.com](mailto:makypreos@gmail.com)

We will provide you with the yarn and instructions.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

### "How to Pray Properly"

Here is a of a number of points for the Christian to keep in mind concerning prayer:

When you pray you meet the holy God in person. In order to succeed in your life of prayer, try sincerely to make your conscience clear in relation to God, your neighbor and earthly possessions.

Nevertheless, do not hesitate to approach God in prayer, however bad you may feel yourself to be; all our sins are but a drop compared to the ocean of God's love.

Begin your prayers humbly every day as if you were doing it for the first time; prayer does not accumulate interest, the Fathers say.

Tune your mind to the sense of the presence of God and say the prayer unhurriedly, paying attention to every word; otherwise your prayer will be flung to the winds. When you notice that your thoughts have gone astray, simply bring them back to the words of the prayer without being disconcerted.

Repeat the Jesus Prayer in its longer or shorter form, whichever way feels better at the time:

*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner!*

*Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us! or, Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me*

When you are alone, sometimes recite the prayer aloud, and sometimes silently in your mind.

When you are praying do not form any mental image of God, heaven or anything else; imagination, according to the Fathers, is a coarse mental faculty which is not suited to prayer.

Pay no attention to impure or blasphemous thoughts or images that may appear while you are praying; they are not your own but come from the evil spirit and will disappear if you take no notice of them.

## What is New in the Community? continued

### "How to Pray Properly" continued

Do not try to find the place of your heart by any special methods; this is suitable only for those who live in the stillness of complete solitude; fix your attention on the words of the prayer, and your heart will come along in its own time.

We must force ourselves to pray throughout our lives; it is just this struggle to which Christ refers when He says that the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and men of violence take it by force. (Matthew 11:12)

The only feeling for which one should consciously strive in prayer is that of contrition and unworthiness; other feelings are gifts of God's grace which He grants to us according to the measure of our humility.

Beware of taking credit for the fruits of prayer, such as concentration, emotion, tears. Often God in His mercy permits us at first to taste the sweetness of prayer, but then leaves us on our own in order to test our faithfulness and to show us what we are, without the help of His grace.

You can also recite the Jesus Prayer in church during a service and then all that you hear and see is like oil for the flame of your inner prayer. During the Eucharist, however, it is better to concentrate on the words of common prayer. According to the Fathers, the most important communion with God is Holy Communion, and the Jesus Prayer comes next.

Every day read a chapter of the Bible and one from the writings of the Fathers concerning prayer. Such reading is important in a time when living models and guides are lacking.

Adopt a suitable rule of prayer and stick to it like a close friend; yet do not allow it to enslave you.

Lastly, the most important thing to remember: Keep your heart free from hatred, envy and condemning thoughts, so that God may hear your prayer. Forgive everyone so that God may forgive you, and be merciful to all, so that God may have mercy on you. It is with good reason that the Fathers say: Your neighbor is your salvation.



**LORD**  
**Hear Our Prayers**

## What is New in the Community? continued



Connecting our Metropolis of San Francisco Graduates to a local Orthodox Church when they leave for College or University.

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. As the Metropolis of San Francisco Youth Director, I would like to make sure that an Orthodox Priest and community near your student's college connects with your loved one.

In addition, many college campuses across the country have an Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) ministry. For more information please visit their website: <http://www.ocf.net/>

Our Metropolis Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries also offers many opportunities throughout the year for Orthodox young adults & college students to gather, enjoy fellowship, and continue to learn about the faith! There are three Young Adult Retreats, a Young Adult Camping Trip, many Young Adult Pilgrimages, and a Young Adult Christmas Reception!

For more information, please visit our website for the Metropolis Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministries: <http://gosfyouth.org/youngadults/>



With Love in Christ,

Fr. Gary Kyriacou  
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco  
Pastor of Youth & Young Adult Ministries  
Email: [FrGary@sanfran.goarch.org](mailto:FrGary@sanfran.goarch.org)

Johanna Duterte Carter  
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco  
Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries  
Email: [JDuterte@sanfran.goarch.org](mailto:JDuterte@sanfran.goarch.org)



## What is New in the Community? continued

### STUDENT'S CONTACT INFORMATION

Student's Name\*

Student's date of birth (Example: June 12, 2003)

Gender

Female

Male

Student's Patron Saint (Saint they were named after at their baptism)

Student's home parish, city, and state.

Student's College (Include the city and state)\*

Expected graduation date (Example: May 2025)

Major (area of study)

Student's email\*

Student's cell phone

Student's address while at school (Street Name, City, State, Zip)

Do you know which parish your student will attend while at school? If so, please list the parish name, city, and state.

Will the student have a car while at school?

Yes

Maybe

No

Other

### YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Your Name\*

Your relation to the student\*

Your home parish, city, and state

Your email\*

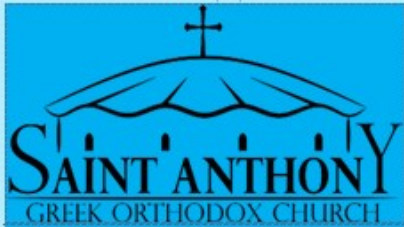
Your phone number

Your home address (Street Name, City, State, Zip)


## What is New in the Community? continued

### The Voice of Saint Anthony

January 2022



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)



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*Saint Anthony the Great*  
*January 17*

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

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

**626.449.6943**

## Feasts and Saints for this month

### Saint Barbara

#### 4 December

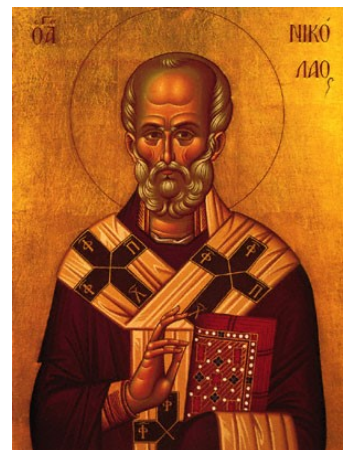
Saint Barbara was from Heliopolis of Phoenicia and lived during the reign of Maximian. She was the daughter of a certain idolater named Dioscorus. When Barbara came of age, she was enlightened in her pure heart and secretly believed in the Holy Trinity. About this time Dioscorus began building a bath-house; 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 and Saints for this 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 and Saints for this 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 and Saints for this month 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.

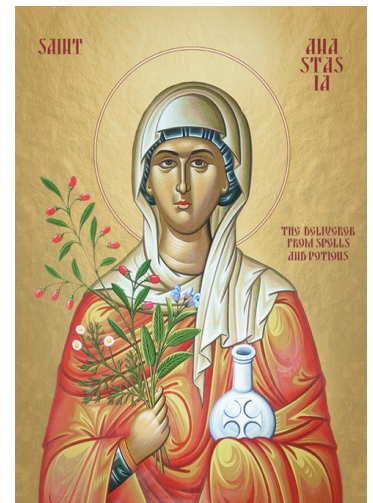
Therefore the Church celebrates the Three Children and Daniel on this day, on the Sunday of the Forefathers, and on the Sunday before the Nativity of Christ, since they prefigured and proclaimed His Incarnation. Furthermore, they were of the tribe of Judah, wherefrom, Christ sprang forth according to 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.

### 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 and Saints for this 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" (Isaiah 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 and Saints for this 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 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				 1	 2	 3 Philoptochos Luncheon
 4 <b>10th Sunday of Luke</b> <b>Barbara -Great Martyr</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream GOYA Funday Parish Council elections	 5	 6 <b>Nicholas the Wonderworker</b> 9am Orthros 10am Divine Lit.	 7 7pm Philoptochos Union Station Outreach	 8	 9 <b>Conception of the Holy Theotokos</b>	 10
 11 <b>11th Sunday of Luke</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	 12 <b>Spyridon the Wonderworker</b> 9am Orthros 10am Divine Lit.	 13 7pm Parish Council Meeting	 14 Philoptochos Christmas Party	 15 Greek School	 16	 17 <b>Daniel and the Three Holy Youths</b>
 18 <b>Sunday before Nativity</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	 19	 20	 21	 22 <b>Anastasia Great Martyr</b>	 23	 24 <b>Christmas Eve Liturgy</b> 9am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
25 <b>Holy Nativity</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil Indoor & Live-stream	26	27 <b>Stephen First Martyr</b>	28 7pm Philoptochos General Meeting	29	30	31 New Years Eve
		<b>Strict Fast</b> Refrain from Meat, Fish, Wine, Oil, Dairy & Eggs 	<b>Fish, Wine &amp; Oil Allowed</b> 	<b>Wine and Oil Allowed</b> 	<b>Dairy, Eggs, &amp; Fish Allowed: Refrain from Meat</b> 	<b>Fast Free</b>



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December 2022

POSTAGE  
STAMP

TIME SENSITIVE

*To generations of our descendants yet unknown to you, who some day in the dim and distant future will read this account of the dramatic history of the Hellenic community, we who have written this account not only on paper, but in the blood, sweat and tears of our daily lives make this statement:*

*We have built this community with its hopes and its fears, and its land and its buildings because we believe, as did our forefathers, in the soul's immortality, and its eventual union with God.*

*We believe that whether or not we have amassed a great deal of personal wealth or fame, it matters little, since we could not take that with us. What does matter is how we have discharged our obligation to pass on to you the faith and ideals that have sustained us through our lives... and we venture the hope that as you read these lines, you may breathe a prayer that what we have done here may have found favor in the eyes of God.*

**Want to keep Christ in Christmas?**

Feed the hungry, clothe the  
naked, forgive the guilty,  
welcome the unwanted, care  
for the ill, love your enemies,  
and do unto others as you  
would have done unto you.