

The Voice of Saint Anthony

January 2023

Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

Reverend Father Peter Stratos

778 S. Rosemead Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107

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

www.saint-anthonys.org

St. Basil	
Circumcision of Christ	Jan 1
Holy Epiphany	Jan 6
Synaxis - John the Baptist	Jan 7
St. Anthony the Great	Jan 17
Athanasios & Cyril	Jan 18
Euthymios the Great	Jan 20
Gregory the Theologian	Jan 25
Synaxis of Three Hierarchs	Jan 30



Holy Theophany / Epiphany

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Deadline for February Newsletter is Wednesday, 25 January
Please send to: newsletter_church@aol.com

Message from Father Peter

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Χριστός γεννάται! Δοξάσατε!

I pray for all of you, peace and joy amidst the beautiful season of the Nativity and Theophany of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ

Happy New Year!

Καλή Χρονια!



Message from Father Peter

Liturgy Schedule for January

Sunday, Jan. 1	SUNDAY BEFORE THEOPHANY Othros Divine Liturgy of St. Basil	8:45 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
Thursday, Jan. 5	THE FOREFEAST OF THE EPIPHANY (THEOPHANY) OF CHRIST AGHIASMOS (GREAT BLESSING OF THE WATERS) Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil	9:00 a.m.
Friday, Jan. 6	THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY (THEOPHANY) OF CHRIST AGHIASMOS (GREAT BLESSING OF THE WATERS) Othros Divine Liturgy St. John Chrysostom	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
Saturday, Jan. 7	SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST Othros Divine Liturgy	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.
Monday, Jan. 16	EVE OF THE FEAST OF ST. ANTHONY Great Vesper Service w/ Artoklasia Dinner will follow, hosted by Philoptochos	6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 17	FEAST OF ST. ANTHONY Othros Divine Liturgy	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.

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

SIGNATURE

DATE

[For office use only]

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

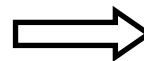
Annually

Contact the Church office to set up easy recurring electronic payments

-OR- set up your own recurring giving at saint-anthonys.churchgiving.com

***To fully cover our operating expenses, our goal is to**

have our average stewardship be \$2,000 or above per family



Stewardship



FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions about Stewardship:

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

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 *tithing* (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?

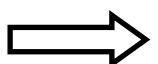
A: It costs approximately \$2,000/day to keep the church open. Most operating expenses are paid from stewardship. Some examples are mortgage, utilities, office staff and pastoral salaries, candles, permits, and facilities maintenance. Additional costs are directly related to church programs.

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 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 31st. 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

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

Parish Events

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Palm Sunday Luncheon | <input type="checkbox"/> Resurrection Magiritsa Dinner | <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Family Picnic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pasadena Golf Classic | <input type="checkbox"/> Saint Anthony Feast Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pasadena Greek Fest | | |

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

Presuytera Aida Stratos - High School

Vicki Kades – Photographer

Ministries at Saint Anthony continued

PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY



Executive Board

President

Judith Din

1st Vice President

Jeanne Karaionnoglou

2nd 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

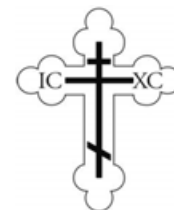
Irene Albeck and Stephanie Soewers

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, 10 January

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..





This month, our teachers and students were busy practicing songs for our Christmas program to share with our parish in celebration of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. We tried something new by presenting our community with our children singing beautiful Christmas carols and hymns and then ending with a sing-along. By the looks on everyone's faces and the sounds of their voices singing, it proved to be a merry success! Bravo to our youth for bringing us such joy this Christmas season! The songs and hymns presented are as follows:

Mrs. Irene & Mrs. Larissa's PK/TK: Away in the Manger

Mrs. Sophia & Miss Andrianna's K/1st: The Little Drummer Boy

Mrs. Theoni & Mrs. Jenni's 2nd/3rd: Silent Night

Mrs. Mary & Mrs. Athena's 4th/5th: Go Tell it on the Mountain

Mrs. Polly and Mr. Chris' Middle School class joined Presvytera Aida's High School students in singing Christmas Hymns. They learned the Katavasia and the Kontakion and we couldn't be more proud of them for singing these beautiful hymns and adding such a special touch to our program. Thank you to Michael Kontaxis for taking the time to teach our students the hymns.

A special thanks to Nick Kleissas and Andrianna Lareau for helping with the audio and music for our program!

As always, thank you parents and grandparents for bringing your children to church and Sunday School and for allowing them to participate in the Christmas program. There is no greater joy in the air at St. Anthony than seeing our church and hall filled with our beautiful children.

On behalf of St. Anthony Sunday School Fellowship teachers, we wish our St. Anthony community a blessed, happy, and healthy New Year! We'll see our students back in class on Sunday, January 8th!

Sophia Syrengelas



Sunday School Christmas Pageant 18 December 2022



Pre K / TK



Kindergarten, 1st

Kindergarten & 1st



2nd & 3rd





4th & 5th



Middle School & High School



Group Photo

Youth & Young Adults



Christmas Caroling



Youth & Young Adults continued



Youth & Young Adults continued



Youth & Young Adults continued



Youth & Young Adults continued



Youth & Young Adults continued



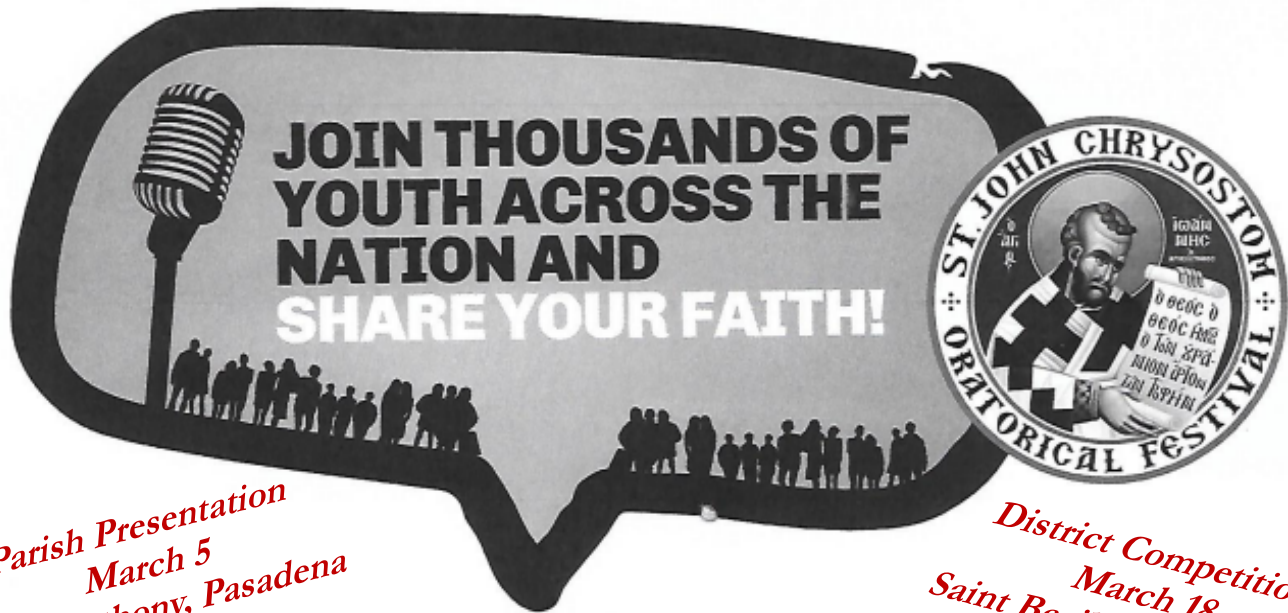
On December 21st, our GOYAns came together for a fun and festive evening with Christmas caroling and fellowship!

We started at the home of Ted and Penny Floutsis, where the Argueta family joined them in welcoming us. We then headed over to the home of Niko and Elena Tsianos, who were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Tsianos, George and Andrea Tsianos and their children, and the Spathopoulos family. Next up, was Father Peter and Presvytera Aida's house, which was an extra special treat for our GOYAns! Lastly, was the home Jimmy and Maria Kypreos, where the Masouris family and Sia Soris came together to welcome our carolers.

Our GOYAns sang *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, *Jingle Bells*, *Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer*, our church hymns, and even a Greek carol! Thank you to our St. Anthony Glendora parishioners who welcomed us with treats and donations to our GOYA ministry!

We ended the evening at the Syrengelas' house with dinner, a gift exchange, and a fun evening of Christmas fellowship!

Youth & Young Adults continued



*Parish Presentation
March 5
Saint Anthony, Pasadena*

*District Competition
March 18
Saint Basil, San Juan Capo*

2023 ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

Senior Division (Grades 10-12) • Junior Division (Grades 7-9)

AWARDS

National finalists are eligible to receive the following:

St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Scholarship: \$500 to \$2000

FAITH: An Endowment for Orthodoxy and Hellenism: to be announced

Finalists at any level are eligible to receive the following:

Chrysostom Scholarship to Hellenic College: \$2,500 up to \$30,000 per year

Parish Festival Date & Time: _____

Parish Chairperson: _____

Contact Information: _____

Find the topics, tips, manual & award information at:

www.religioused.goarch.org

Department of Religious Education (DRE), Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America



Youth & Young Adults continued

Participant Information

Please reproduce this page for the participants.

1. You must be of the Greek Orthodox Faith. To participate in the Junior Division you must be in grades 7-9. To participate in the Senior Division you must be in grades 10-12. **Your topic must be selected from the list of topics in the corresponding division.**
2. The speech must be original and delivered in English. Previously used material is not eligible. Quotations must be used effectively as supportive material, and sources must be identified.
3. No audio-visual material (slides, charts, etc.) may be used. The speech must be delivered from the lectern. The contents and/or delivery of the speech should not be dramatically presented.
4. A parent or teacher may serve as a "coach" in preparation and delivery, but the speech must reflect your own writing and speaking style.
5. A speaker can present his/her speech at only one parish oratorical festival.
6. Topics must be chosen from the official list compiled by the Department of Religious Education. The speech delivered at the parish level must be the same one given at the district, metropolis and national finals levels with only minor revisions (i.e., grammatical corrections, deleting a paragraph if speech is over time limit, correcting syntax).
7. Speech time limits for each division are:
 JUNIOR- minimum 3 minutes, maximum 4
 SENIOR - minimum 4 minutes, maximum 5

A 15-second grace period will be given to speakers whose talks run over or under time. Speeches that run over or under the 15-second grace period will lose 1 point for each additional five seconds.

8. A copy of the speech must be given to the chairperson before or during the orientation session. Your name, full address, phone number, email, and division (junior or senior) should appear in the upper right-hand corner, along with the name and location of your church. Place the title of your speech (taken from the official list of topics) right above the opening statement. Speakers who advance to the district, metropolis and national finals festivals must also present a copy to the chairperson at these events.
9. Speakers should dress in clothing that is professional and appropriate for Sunday church services.

Youth & Young Adults continued

JUNIOR DIVISION

(GRADES 7-9)



TOPIC 1

Orthodox tradition teaches that the saints remain spiritually active beyond their earthly life. Discuss how we ask the Saints to intercede and pray for us and why.

TOPIC 2

Orthodox Christians honor the Virgin Mary, the Most Holy Theotokos. What does the Orthodox Church believe about her and her role in our salvation?

TOPIC 3

The sacraments are the mysteries of the Church through which God gives us His grace by actions, words, and material objects (for example, oil, wine, and bread). Pick one sacrament and explain its meaning.

TOPIC 4

Jesus models and teaches humility throughout His life and ministry. Discuss the challenges of living according to Jesus' teachings in a society that does not necessarily emphasize humility.

TOPIC 5

Consider and discuss why and how icons are central to our faith and Orthodox practice.



Youth & Young Adults continued

SENIOR DIVISION

(GRADES 10-12)



TOPIC 1

The Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople is the highest seat and the Mother Church of Orthodox Christians. The Ecumenical Patriarch is the spiritual leader of 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. Discuss how the Patriarchate has been a symbol of unity, a source of missionary growth, an advocate of dialogue among Christians, and a defender of the historical Orthodox Faith.

TOPIC 2

During times of crisis, our faith is tested. How are Orthodox Christians taught to understand and manage pain and suffering?

TOPIC 3

The Christian message in C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* has influenced many believers of Christ. How has another work of fiction inspired people to seek Jesus Christ?

TOPIC 4

We have lived through a pandemic and emerged with deep societal divides. How can our faith in Christ heal us and take us forward together?

TOPIC 5

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ both transforms the relationship between God and humanity and alters the course of history. How would you explain its significance to someone who has not heard about it or is unsure if God exists?



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



PRIZES

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

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 partnered once again with Friends In Deed making possible “Christmas For The Kids”, a gift giving event for underprivileged children in our community. Thank you to all our generous donors who participated in the event and provided gifts for these children.



Liz, Stephanie, and Judith prepare the donated gifts for delivery.



Liz and Stephanie deliver the gifts to Friends In Deed in Pasadena.



Thank you to everyone who helped fulfill the children's Christmas wish list.

Philoptochos continued

Philoptochos Christmas Party

All attendees gathered on December 14th to enjoy a delicious dinner and desserts, good fellowship, and Christmas cheer. The festivities also included a fun and entertaining ornament gift exchange game.

Thank you to our First Vice President, Jeanne Karaioannoglou, for organizing this wonderful event.



Philoptochos continued



Philoptochos continued

Annual Christmas Benefit 2022

Thank you to everyone who made our 53rd Annual Christmas Benefit, *Let There Be Peace*, a tremendous success! This year's event was a luncheon and fashion show featuring Macy's clothing line. It was held at The Langham Huntington Hotel in Pasadena on Saturday, December 3.

Over 450 guests enjoyed entertainment by the Pasadena Civic Ballet and Bank of Harmony. The Christmas Boutique, Santa's Kitchen and gift vendors provided a delightful shopping experience for all. The Ukraine Relief Projects, funded by IOCC was the charity selected to receive proceeds from this year's event. By partnering with IOCC, our Philoptochos is able to provide assistance to the people in war-torn Ukraine and neighboring countries.

Special thanks to Judith Din, Philoptochos President of Panagia Chapter, who chaired this event.



Philoptochos continued



COFFEE HOUR FELLOWSHIP



Host a Coffee Hour and celebrate a Birthday, Anniversary, Name Day, Graduation, Loved One, as a Family Activity or for any reason!

Every Sunday following the Divine Liturgy, coffee hour in the Parish Hall provides an opportunity to visit with fellow parishioners and to greet new Parish members. By offering to host a Coffee Hour Fellowship, you are assisting in providing a delicious snack while we spend time with our church family.

Hosting is as easy as 1-2-3:

1. **Sign-up on the poster located in the Parish Hall or Church Office.** To be included in the bulletin, notify the Church Office by the Wednesday prior to the date chosen at 626.449.6943 or by email office@saint-anthonys.org

For Memorials, you must notify the Church Office by the Wednesday prior to the date chosen at 626.449.6943 or by email office@saint-anthonys.org
2. **Bring snacks for 75 adults and kids** – Suggestions include: assorted Bagels, Muffins, Cakes, Cookies, Mini Deli Sandwiches, Cheese & Crackers, Olives, Dolmades, Hummus, Tzatziki, Pita, Raw Vegetables, Fruit, Salads, Oatmeal or anything you prefer
3. **Bring food items plated on serving trays/bowls and ready to serve by 10:30am on your chosen day.** (Serving tables and coffee/water station are set up by 10:00am)

That's it! Your fellow parishioners will be grateful for the snack and fellowship.

Philoptochos provides the coffee, sugar, creamer, paper plates, plastic utensils and napkins or you may choose to donate these items to help offset the cost.

For questions, please call or email Tanya Christodoulelis at 626.379.2304 or tanyachristos@yahoo.com.

All cash donations made during Coffee Hour go toward the Church Altar Fund to provide the items needed throughout the year for the altar.

Philoptochos continued

Upcoming Community Happenings

Vasilopita Celebration - Sunday, January 8. Philoptochos will host the Vasilopita celebration in the church hall following Divine Liturgy.

Great Vespers Dinner - Monday, January 16. Philoptochos along with the Parish Council will host a dinner following the Great Vespers.

Upcoming Meetings

January Board Meeting - Wednesday, January 11 at 7:00 PM in church hall

2023 Philoptochos Membership

We encourage everyone 18 and over to join Philoptochos. A ministry that promotes charitable, benevolent, and philanthropic outreach. Please look for more details on the upcoming 2023 membership drive. We would love for you to be a part of this wonderful organization.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: St. Anthony Philoptochos
Instagram: stanthonlyphiloptochos

VIPs

We had another successful meeting and Christmas luncheon in December. We are looking forward to electing a new Board in January and planning an eventful 2023.

Calling all VIPs to join us. Our meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 10:30a.m. in the Trinity Ballroom.

Wishing all a Healthy and Happy New Year.



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
Tel: 562-862-6461

Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis...

Christ is Born ! Glorify Him !

I will never forget Christmas I spent with a priest (Fr. Costa) from Africa. The year was 1999. Christmas was on a Saturday that year. When I brought Fr. Costa to our town in Connecticut, it was December 23. We went to the local mall to buy Fr. Costa some things. Most of his belongings had gotten lost during his trip from Africa to the United States, where he was studying at our Seminary in Boston. We went to buy Fr. Costa some essentials like a Bible, a watch, a sweater, etc. As you can imagine, the mall was completely jammed. Traffic was terrible. Everyone seemed angry and stressed out. To someone who had never been in a mall, Fr. Costa couldn't understand all the stress two days before our feast of great joy, the Nativity of Christ. I tried to explain to him how stressful it is to shop for gifts when the clock is counting down and it is only two shopping days until Christmas. I explained how people shop for months for the perfect gift, and for some people, the obligatory gift, and for others who are hard to shop for, the impossible gift.

We celebrated a beautiful Divine Liturgy on Friday evening, December 24, and another Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning, December 25. We got in the car to go to church on Sunday, December 26 at 7:30am and there was bumper-to-bumper traffic on the main street in my town. Fr. Costa said something that still makes me laugh to this day. He said, "Father Stavros, what great Christians you have here in Connecticut. They went to church Friday, they went to church Saturday and they are so eager to go back on Sunday that they are jamming the streets at 7:30 a.m. the morning after Christmas." I said, "No Father, the church will be empty today." He responded, "Well, where are people going at this hour of the day?" And I answered, "They are going to the mall, to return their gifts." He said "What?! Didn't you say that they stress out about buying gifts for months? I haven't even digested Christmas dinner and all of these people are taking their gifts back!" Later that afternoon, we went for a walk around my neighborhood. A neighbor was throwing out his Christmas tree. Fr. Costa joyfully greeted him with "Merry Christmas!" The man answered "Christmas is over!" Fr. Costa said, "No, Christmas has just begun, we celebrate for 12 days."

How we've come to celebrate Christmas as a culture is pretty sad. We usher the season in the day after Halloween. The build-up to Christmas is a combination of stress (gift shopping, decorating, writing cards, wrapping, cooking), debauchery (a seemingly endless stream of parties) and gluttony (sweets and pastries everywhere you look). Even last week, I heard people saying "can you believe Christmas is already here?" To which I thought "yes, I can, I've been preparing for it for 40 days." Once Christmas actually arrives, there is almost a collective relief, rather than joy, that it has come. And the day after Christmas, many people toss their trees and even more return their gifts, a combination of ingratitude for what we've received from others and ingratitude for what we've received from Christ. It's like Christmas is over and we are on to the next thing. And perhaps there isn't much to celebrate if we haven't done anything to spiritually prepare for Christmas.



Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis...

The message of today is simple—Savor your gifts, don't be so quick to return them. We are talking about four kinds of gifts.

First - the gifts you received for Christmas from others. Many people actually put thought into gifts they give to people, intending for them to keep those gifts and hopefully enjoy them. We shouldn't be so quick to return what has been given to us.

Second - the greatest Christmas gift we receive is Christ, coming into the world, so that in the words of St. Athanasios, "God became a man, so that man can become like God." Christ came into the world to show us the way back to the Father. We shouldn't be so quick to forget this gift, or ignore it, or even trade it for something else.

Third - Each of us has been given intangible gifts by God, in the form of unique talents and skills and also in the form of life itself. Today is a gift. We shouldn't be so quick to ignore or take for granted our gifts. We shouldn't be ungrateful about them either. We should embrace today with joy and utilize our gifts with joy and with purpose—they are from God Himself. We shouldn't always be wishing we had different gifts or constantly comparing ourselves with others and what they have.

Fourth - The last and greatest gift is the gift of salvation that Christ offers to everyone through His Cross and Resurrection. We shouldn't be so quick to dismiss this gift. It seems that most people exchange this gift for something else. They exchange the opportunity for eternal life with an attitude of "you only live once" and getting whatever we can out of this life.

The verse from I Timothy 4:14 is very to the point: *"Do not neglect the gift you have."* That goes for gifts we received this Christmas, the gift of Christ this Christmas, the gifts and talents and life we've received from God and the gift of eternal life that can only come from God.

Lord, thank You for the gifts I received this Christmas.

Thank You for the thoughtfulness of people who remembered me.

Help me to appreciate all the gifts I receive, whether they are presents on Christmas, or the simple gift of a new day that You give me every day.

Help me not be so quick to return or reject any gift, especially the gifts that are from You.

Amen.

Savor your gifts..

Don't be so quick to return them!

Did You Know?

The "12 Days of Christmas" is the period from Christmas (Dec. 25) to Epiphany (Jan. 6) – not, as some mistakenly believe, the 12 days *before* Christmas. In traditional Christianity, this season is one great celebration of the appearance of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh.

What is New in the Community?



Vasilopita

Saint Basil's Bread

Orthodox Christians bake vasilopita for January 1st, New Year's Day. St. Basil hid gold coins in loaves of bread and gave them to the poor. Today, we make vasilopita to thank God for all of our blessings and to remember and emulate St. Basil's kindness. A coin is wrapped and placed in the bread before it is baked. The person who finds the coin in their slice of bread is considered to be especially blessed for the New Year.

CUTTING THE VASILOPITA

Make the sign of the cross over the bread, saying:
"In the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, Amen."

This is the correct order:

- ◆ The first piece is for Christ
- ◆ The next piece is for the Virgin Mary
- ◆ The next piece is cut for St Basil
- ◆ The next piece is cut for the needy.
- ◆ Pieces of Vasilopita are now cut for members of the family, from eldest to youngest starting with the head of the house
- ◆ Include those who are absent.

What is New in the Community?

All Southern California Communities invited and encouraged to attend

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2023**

2:00PM

Southern California

THEOPHANY

*Dive for the Cross
and Blessing of the waters*

Blessing of the Waters and Dive for the Cross to take place at Mother's Beach
5839 E Appian Way Long Beach, CA 90802

DIVERS NEEDED

**ALL YOUTH AGES
12-18**

[CLICK HERE
REGISTRATION
FORM](#)



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO



Hosted by
ASSUMPTION
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
MORE INFO CONTACT :
www.assumptionlb.org



What is New in the Community? continued

We are back !

Saint Sophia 2023 Easter Picnic !

Celebrating the 110th Anniversary
of the first formal
Greek Orthodox Easter picnic
in Los Angeles !

Let the tradition continue !
Sunday, April 16th

Brookside Park
Pasadena



What is New in the Community? continued

In December, the St. Anthony community celebrated the 99th birthday of a long-time parishioner, **Helen Reese**. During coffee hour she was presented with a cake and flowers, and the entire congregation sang Happy Birthday. She was surprised and touched by the love the community showed her on her special day.

At our Panagiri, Helen danced with the Greek dance group. She really stole the show with her enthusiasm and energy. The audience loved watching her dance.

Helen is a true entertainer. She plays the piano and accordion. If you are lucky, you might even see her at a community center playing for the senior citizens.



What is New in the Community? continued



Happy 99th Birthday Helen !!

What is New in the Community? continued

Saint Anthony Bowling League News Winter / Spring Season 2023



The St. Anthony Bowling League will begin Winter/Spring season on Wednesday, January 18, 7:00 P.M, at Bowlero Lanes in Pasadena, and we will continue for 12 weeks, through Wednesday, April 5.

We are anticipating 30 returning bowlers. If anyone is interested in bowling, we will be creating a waiting list. In order to keep our team numbers even, we need to add 6 bowlers/2 teams.

Please call or email if you would like to be a regular or substitute. You can also be a spectator !

Please contact Anthia Drulias-Lucas.

ADLJSLO2@YAHOO.COM

626.274.6133 call/text

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 Tsalakis



Family
Wellness
Ministry
Unit of the
Diocese of San Francisco



YOUTH &
YOUNG ADULT
MINISTRIES

Register online:

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

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

The Sign of the Cross

The Sign of the Cross is one of Christianity's most ancient customs. It is a sign of blessing and commitment to the Crucified Lord. A simple custom, it is a statement of Christian faith which incorporates the entire body. Like many ancient customs, it has been done in a variety of ways over the centuries.

Current Orthodox Christian practice, used by all since the 17th century, involves combining the thumb, pointer and middle finger while placing the ring finger and the pinky against the palm. The unity of the three fingers represents the unity of the undivided Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three persons but one God. The two fingers pressed against the palm represent the two natures of Christ: human and divine. It indicates our belief in Jesus, who is both fully God and fully human.

Our motion, of course, recalls the cross: forehead, stomach, right shoulder and left shoulder, but also the God who is Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

As one moves through the sign, one recites the following:

At the forehead, "In the name of the Father"

At the navel, "and of the Son"

And across the shoulders, "and of the Holy Spirit, Amen."

It is as if to say "I love you Lord with all of my mind (forehead), with all my soul (navel), with all my strength (right shoulder) and with all my heart (left shoulder)"

Done at various times as a sign of reverence, it is traditionally made:

before kissing an icon or the Gospel book

during the Liturgy

whenever the Holy Trinity or the Virgin Mary is mentioned

before and after the Gospel is read

when lighting candles

and during the Creed

In short, few actions are so simple and yet symbolize so much of our Christian life.



What is New in the Community? continued

The Voice of Saint Anthony January 2023

Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

Reverend Father Peter Stratos
778 S. Rosemead Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107
(626) 449-6943 Office (626) 449-6974 FAX
www.saint-anthonys.org

St. Basil	
Circumcision of Christ	Jan 1
Holy Epiphany	Jan 6
Synaxis - John the Baptist	Jan 7
St. Anthony the Great	Jan 17
Athanasios & Cyril	Jan 18
Euthymios the Great	Jan 20
Gregory the Theologian	Jan 25
Synaxis of Three Hierarchs	Jan 30



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Deadline for February Newsletter is Wednesday, 25 January
Please send to: 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

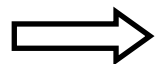
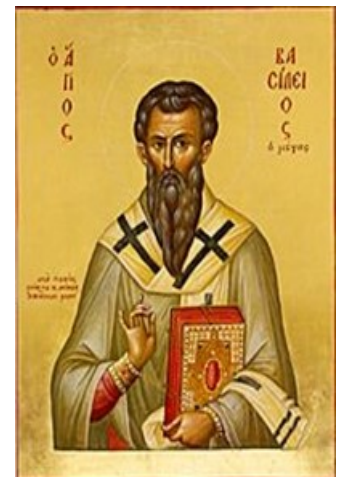
Feasts and Saints for this month

Saint Basil the Great & the Circumcision of Christ

1 January

Saint Basil the Great was born about the end of the year 329 in Caesarea of Cappadocia, to a family renowned for their learning and holiness. His parents' names were Basil and Emily. His mother Emily and his grandmother Macrina are Saints of the Church, together with all his brothers and sisters. Basil studied in Constantinople under the sophist Libanius, then in Athens, where also he formed a friendship with the young Gregory, a fellow Cappadocian, later called "the Theologian." Through the good influence of his sister Macrina, he chose to embrace the ascetical life, abandoning his worldly career. He visited the monks in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia, and upon returning to Caesarea, he departed to a hermitage on the Iris River in Pontus, not far from Annesi, where his mother and his sister Macrina were already treading the path of the ascetical life; here he also wrote his ascetical homilies.

About the year 370, when the bishop of his country reposed, he was elected to succeed to his throne and was entrusted with the Church of Christ, which he tended for eight years, living in voluntary poverty and strict asceticism, having no other care than to defend holy Orthodoxy as a worthy successor of the Apostles. The Emperor Valens, and Modestus, the Eparch of the East, who were of one mind with the Arians, tried with threats of exile and of torments to bend the Saint to their own confession, because he was the bastion of Orthodoxy in all Cappadocia, and preserved it from heresy when Arianism was at its strongest. But he set all their malice useless, and in his willingness to give himself up to every suffering for the sake of the Faith, showed himself to be a martyr by volition. Modestus, amazed at Basil's fearlessness in his presence, said that no one had ever so spoken to him. "Perhaps," answered the Saint, "you have never met a bishop before." The Emperor Valens himself was almost won over by Basil's dignity and wisdom. When Valens' son fell gravely sick, he asked Saint Basil to pray for him. The Saint promised that his son would be restored if Valens agreed to have him baptized by the Orthodox; Valens agreed, Basil prayed, and the son was restored. But afterwards the Emperor had him baptized by Arians, and the child died soon after. Later, Valens, persuaded by his counsellors, decided to send the Saint into exile because he would not accept the Arians into communion; but his pen broke when he was signing the edict of banishment.



Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Saint Basil - continued

He tried a second time and a third, but the same thing happened, so that the Emperor was filled with dread, and tore up the document, and Basil was not banished. The truly great Basil, spent with extreme ascetical practices and continual labors, at the helm of the church, departed to the Lord on the 1st of January, in 379. at the age of forty-nine.

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

The Circumcision of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated on the first day of the New Year, eight days after the celebration of our Lord's Birth. The Church also remembers our Lord's circumcision and His receiving the name Jesus, which means Savior. So on the eighth day after His Nativity, our Lord Jesus Christ was circumcised in accordance with the Old Testament Law. All male infants underwent circumcision as a sign of God's Covenant with the holy Forefather Abraham and his descendants (Genesis 17:10-14, Leviticus 12:3)

After this ritual the Divine Infant was given the name Jesus, as the Archangel Gabriel declared on the day of the Annunciation to the Most Holy Theotokos (Luke 1:31-33, 2:21). The Fathers of the Church explain that the Lord, the Creator of the Law, underwent circumcision in order to give people an example of how faithfully the divine ordinances ought to be fulfilled.

The Lord was circumcised so that later no one would doubt that He had truly assumed human flesh, and that His Incarnation was not merely an illusion, as certain heretics taught.

In the New Testament, the ritual of circumcision gave way to the Mystery of Baptism, which it prefigured (Colossians 2:11-12). Accounts of the Feast of the Circumcision of the Lord continue in the Eastern Church right up through the fourth century. The Canon of the Feast was written by Saint Stephen of the Saint Sava Monastery.

In addition to circumcision, which the Lord accepted as a sign of God's Covenant with mankind, He also received the Name Jesus (Savior) on the eighth day after His Nativity as an indication of His service, the work of the salvation of the world (Matthew 1:21; Mark 9:38-39, Mark 16:17; Luke 10:17; Acts 3:6, 16; Phil 2:9-10). These two events, the Lord's Circumcision and Naming, remind Christians that they have entered into a New Covenant with God and "*are circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ*" (Colossians 2:11). The very name "Christian" is a sign of mankind's entrance into a New Covenant with God.

Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Holy Theophany/Epiphany

6 January

About the beginning of our Lord's thirtieth year, John the Forerunner, who was some six months older than Our Savior according to the flesh, and had lived in the wilderness since his childhood, received a command from God and came into the parts of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins. Then our Savior also came from Galilee to the Jordan, and sought and received baptism though He was the Master and John was but a servant. Whereupon, there came to pass those marvelous deeds, great and beyond nature: the Heavens were opened, the Spirit descended in the form of a dove upon Him that was being baptized and the voice was heard from the Heavens hearing witness that this was the beloved Son of God, now baptized as a man (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:1-22).



From these events the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the great mystery of the Trinity were demonstrated. It is also from this that the present feast is called "Theophany," that is, the divine manifestation, God's appearance among men. On this venerable day the sacred mystery of Christian baptism was inaugurated; henceforth also began the saving preaching of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

Synaxis of John the Baptist

7 January

Today, the day after Epiphany, we celebrate the Synaxis in honor of the most sacred Forerunner, since he ministered at the Mystery of the Divine Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ, on January 6th.



Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Saint Anthony

17 January

The Father of monks, was born in Egypt in 251 of pious parents who departed this life while he was yet young. On hearing the words of the Gospel: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and give to the poor" (Matt. 19:21), he immediately put it into action. Distributing to the poor all he had, and fleeing from all the turmoil of the world, he departed to the desert. The manifold temptations he endured continually for the span of twenty years are incredible. His ascetic struggles by day and by night, whereby he mortified the uprisings of the passions and attained to the height of dispassion, surpass the bounds of nature; and the report of his deeds of virtue drew such a multitude to follow him that the desert was transformed into a city, while he became, so to speak, the governor, lawgiver, and master-trainer of all the citizens of this newly-formed city.

The cities of the world also enjoyed the fruit of his virtue. When the Christians were being persecuted and put to death under Maximinus in 312, he hastened to their aid and consolation. When the Church was troubled by the Arians, he went with zeal to Alexandria in 335 and struggled against them in behalf of Orthodoxy. During this time, by the grace of his words, he also turned many unbelievers to Christ.

Saint Anthony began his ascetic life outside his village of Coma in Upper Egypt, studying the ways of the ascetics and holy men there, and perfecting himself in the virtues of each until he surpassed them all. Desiring to increase his labors, he departed into the desert, and finding an abandoned fortress in the mountain, he made his dwelling in it, training himself in extreme fasting, unceasing prayer, and fierce conflicts with the demons. Here he remained for about twenty years. Saint Athanasius the Great, who knew him personally and wrote his life, says that he came forth from that fortress "initiated in the mysteries and filled with the Spirit of God."

Afterwards, because of the press of the faithful, who deprived him of his solitude, he was enlightened by God to journey with certain Bedouins, until he came to a mountain in the desert near the Red Sea, where he passed the remaining part of his life.

Saint Athanasius says of him that "his countenance had a great and wonderful grace. This gift also he had from the Savior. For if he were present in a great company of monks, and any one who did not know him previously wished to see him, immediately coming forward he passed by the rest, and hurried to Anthony, as though attracted by his appearance. Yet neither in height nor breadth was he conspicuous above others, but in the serenity of his manner and the purity of his soul."

So becoming an example of virtue and a rule for monastics, he reposed on January 17 in the year 356, having lived altogether some 105 years.



Feasts and Saints for this month continued

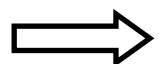
Saints Athanasios & Cyril

18 January

In the half-century after the First Ecumenical Council held in Nicea in 325, if there was one man whom the Arians feared and hated more intensely than any other, as being able to lay bare the whole error of their teaching, and to marshal, even from exile or hiding, the beleaguered forces of the Orthodox, it was **Saint Athanasios the Great**. This blazing lamp of Orthodoxy, which imperial power and heretics' plots could not quench when he shone upon the lampstand, nor find when he was hid by the people and monks of Egypt, was born in Alexandria about the year 296. He received an excellent training in Greek letters and especially in the sacred Scriptures, of which he shows an exceptional knowledge in his writings. Even as a young man he had a remarkable depth of theological understanding; he was only about twenty years old when he wrote his treatise, "The Incarnation."

Saint Alexander, the Archbishop of Alexandria, brought him up in piety, ordained him his deacon, and after deposing Arius for his blasphemy against the Divinity of the Son of God, took Athanasios to the First Council in Nicea in 325. Saint Athanasios was to spend the remainder of his life laboring in defense of this Holy Council. In 326, before his death, Alexander appointed Athanasios his successor.

In 325, Arius had been condemned by the Council of Nicea; yet through his hypocritical confession of Orthodox belief, Saint Constantine the Great was persuaded by Arius's supporters that he should be received back into the communion of the Church. But Athanasios, knowing well the perverseness of his mind, and the disease of heresy lurking in his heart, refused communion with Arius. The heresiarch's followers then began framing false charges against Athanasios. Finally Saint Constantine the Great, misled by grave charges of the Saint's misconduct (which were completely false), had him exiled to Tiberius (Treves) in Gaul in 336. When Saint Constantine was succeeded by his three sons Constantine II, Constans, and Constantius, in 337, Saint Athanasios returned to Alexandria in triumph. But his enemies found an ally in Constantius, Emperor of the East, and he spent a second exile in Rome. It was ended when Constans prevailed with threats upon his brother Constantius to restore Athanasios. For ten years Saint Athanasios strengthened Orthodoxy throughout Egypt, visiting the whole country and encouraging all: clergy, monastics, and lay folk, being loved by all as a father.



Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Saints Athanasios & Cyril, continued...

When Julian the Apostate succeeded Constantius in 361, Athanasios returned again, but only for a few months. Because Athanasios had converted many pagans, and the priests of the idols in Egypt wrote to Julian that if Athanasios remained, idolatry would perish in Egypt, the heathen Emperor ordered not Athanasios's exile, but his death. Athanasios took a ship up the Nile. When he learned that his imperial pursuers were following him, he had his men turn back, and as his boat passed that of his pursuers, they asked him if he had seen Athanasios. "He is not far," he answered. After returning to Alexandria for a while, he fled again until Julian's death in 363. Saint Athanasios suffered his fifth and last exile under Valens in 365, which only lasted four months because Valens, fearing a sedition among the Egyptians for their beloved Archbishop, revoked his edict in February, 366.

The great Athanasios passed the remaining seven years of his life in peace. Of his fifty-seven years as Patriarch, he had spent some seventeen in exiles. Shining from the height of his throne like a radiant evening star, and enlightening the Orthodox with the brilliance of his words for yet a little while, this much-suffering champion inclined toward the sunset of his life, and in the year 373 took his rest from his lengthy sufferings, but not before another luminary of the truth -- Basil the Great -- had risen in the East, being consecrated Archbishop of Caesarea in 370.

Besides all of his other achievements, Saint Athanasios wrote the life of Saint Anthony the Great, with whom he spent time in his youth; ordained Saint Frumentius first Bishop of Ethiopia; and in his Paschal Encyclical for the year 367 set forth the books of the Old and New Testaments accepted by the Church as canonical.

Saint Cyril was also from Alexandria, born about the year 376. He was the nephew of Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who also instructed the Saint in his youth. Having first spent much time with the monks in Nitria, he later became the successor to his uncle's throne in 412. In 429, when Cyril heard tidings of the teachings of the new Patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius, he began attempting through private letters to bring Nestorius to renounce his heretical teaching about the Incarnation. When the heresiarch did not repent, Saint Cyril, together with Pope Celestine of Rome, led the Orthodox opposition to his error. Saint Cyril presided over the Third Ecumenical Council of the 200 Holy Fathers in the year 431, who gathered in Ephesus under Saint Theodosius the Younger. At this Council, by his most wise words, he put to shame and convicted the impious doctrine of Nestorius, who, although he was in town, refused to appear before Cyril. Saint Cyril, besides overthrowing the error of Nestorius, has left to the Church full commentaries on the Gospels of Luke and John. Having shepherded the Church of Christ for thirty-two years, he reposed in 444.

Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Euthymios the Great

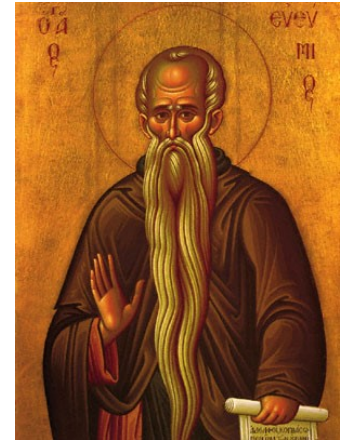
20 January

This Saint, who was from Melitene in Armenia, was the son of pious parents named Paul and Dionysia. He was born about 377. Since his mother had been barren, he was named Euthymius, which means "good cheer" or "joy"- for this is what his parents experienced at his birth.

He studied under Eutroius, the Bishop of Melitene, by whom he was ordained and entrusted with the care of the monasteries of Melitene. Then, after he had come to Palestine about the year 406, he became the leader of a multitude of monks. Through him, a great tribe of Arabs was turned to piety, when he healed the ailing son of their leader Aspebetos.

Aspebetos was baptized with all his people; he took the Christian name of Peter, and was later consecrated Bishop for his tribe, being called "Bishop of the Tents." Saint Euthymius also fought against the Nestorians, Eutychians, and Manichaeans. When Eudocia, the widow of Saint Theodosius the Younger, had made her dwelling in Palestine, and had fallen into the heresy of the Monophysites which was championed in Palestine by a certain Theodosius, she sent envoys to Saint Symeon the Stylite in Syria, asking him his opinion of Eutyches and the Council of Chalcedon which had condemned him.

Saint Symeon, praising the holiness and Orthodoxy of Saint Euthymius near whom she dwelt, sent her to him to be delivered from her error. He became the divine oracle of the Church, or rather, "*the vessel of divine utterance*," as a certain historian writes. He was the instructor and elder of Saint Sabbas the Sanctified. Having lived for ninety-six years, he reposed in 473, on January 20.



Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Saint Gregory the Theologian

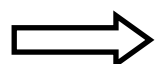
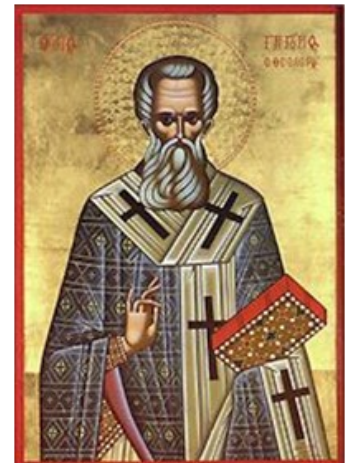
25 January

This great Father and Teacher of the Church was born in 329 in Arianzus, a village of the second district of Cappadocia, not far from Nazianzus. His father, who later became Bishop of Nazianzus, was named Gregory and his mother was named Nonna ; both are among the Saints, and so are his brother Caesarius and his sister Gorgona . At first he studied in Caesarea of Palestine, then in Alexandria, and finally in Athens. As he was sailing from Alexandria to Athens, a violent sea storm put in peril not only his life but also his salvation, since he had not yet been baptized. With tears and fervor he besought God to spare him, vowing to dedicate his whole self to Him, and the tempest gave way to calm.

At Athens Saint Gregory was later joined by Saint Basil the Great, whom he already knew; but now their acquaintanceship grew into a lifelong brotherly love. Another fellow student of theirs in Athens was the young Prince Julian, who later as Emperor was called the Apostate because he denied Christ and did all in his power to restore paganism. Even in Athens, before Julian had thrown off the mask of piety; Saint Gregory saw what an unsettled mind he had, and said, "What an evil the Roman State is nourishing"

After their studies at Athens, Gregory became Basil's fellow ascetic, living the monastic life together with him for a time in the hermitages of Pontus. His father ordained him presbyter of the Church of Nazianzus, and Saint Basil consecrated him Bishop of Sasima, which was in the archdiocese of Caesarea. This consecration was a source of great sorrow to Gregory, and a cause of misunderstanding between him and Basil; but his love for Basil remained unchanged, as can be plainly seen from his Funeral Oration on Saint Basil .

About the Year 379, Saint Gregory came to the assistance of the Church of Constantinople, which had already been troubled for forty years by the Arians; by his supremely wise words and many labors he freed it from the corruption of heresy, and was elected Archbishop of that city by the Second Ecumenical Council, which assembled there in 381, and condemned Macedonius, Archbishop of Constantinople, the enemy of the Holy Spirit.



Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Saint Gregory the Theologian - continued

When Saint Gregory came to Constantinople, the Arians had taken all the churches and he was forced to serve in a house chapel dedicated to Saint Anastasia the Martyr. From there he began to preach his famous five sermons on the Trinity, called the Triadica. When he left Constantinople two years later, the Arians did not have one church left to them in the city. Saint Meletius of Antioch, who was presiding over the Second Ecumenical Council, died in the course of it, and Saint Gregory was chosen in his stead; there he distinguished himself in his expositions of dogmatic theology.

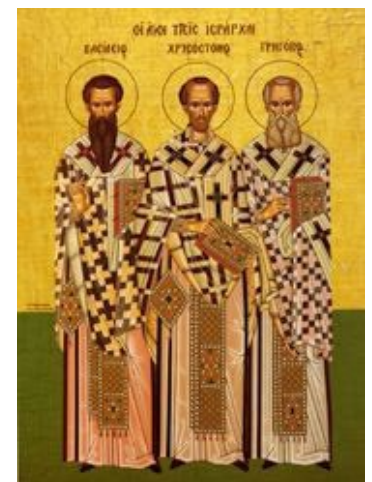
Having governed the Church until 382, he delivered his farewell speech - the Syntacterion, in which he demonstrated the Divinity of the Son - before 150 bishops and the Emperor Theodosius the Great; in this speech he requested, and received from all, permission to retire from the see of Constantinople. He returned to Nazianzus, where he lived to the end of his life, and reposed in the Lord in 391, having lived some sixty-two years.

His extant writings, both prose and poems in every type of metre, demonstrate his lofty eloquence and his wondrous breadth of learning. In the beauty of his writings, he is considered to have surpassed the Greek writers of antiquity, and because of his God-inspired theological thought, he received the surname "Theologian." Although he is sometimes called Gregory of Nazianzus, this title belongs properly to his father; he himself is known by the Church only as Gregory the Theologian. He is especially called "Trinitarian Theologian," since in virtually every homily he refers to the Trinity and the one essence and nature of the Godhead.

Synaxis of the Three Hierarchs












30 January

This common feast of these three teachers was instituted a little before the year 1100, during the reign of the Emperor Alexis I Comnenus, because of a dispute and strife that arose among the notable and virtuous men of that time. Some of them preferred **Basil**, while others preferred **Gregory**, and yet others preferred **John Chrysostom**, quarreling among themselves over which of the three was the greatest. Furthermore, each party, in order to distinguish itself from the others, assumed the name of its preferred Saint; hence, they called themselves Basilians, Gregorians, or Johannites. Desiring to bring an end to the contention, the three Saints appeared together to the saintly John Mauropous, a monk who had been ordained Bishop of Euchaita, a city of Asia Minor. They revealed to him that the glory they have at the throne of God is equal, and told him to compose a common service for the three of them, which he did with great skill and beauty.



Orthodox Calendar

January 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Saint Basil Circumcision of Christ 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	2	3	4 7pm Philoptochos Union Station Outreach	5  Forefeast of Epiphany 9am Agiasmos Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil	6 Theophany Epiphany 9am Agiasmos / Orthos 10am Divine Lit.	7 Synaxis of Saint John the Baptist 9am Orthos 10am Divine Lit.
8 Sunday after Epiphany 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream Vasilopita Parish Council Oath	9	10 7pm Parish Council Meeting	11  7pm Philoptochos Board Meeting	12	13 	14
15 12th Sunday of Luke 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	16 Eve of the Feast of Saint Anthony 6pm Vespers, Artoklasia and Dinner	17 Feast of Saint Anthony 9am Orthos 10am Divine Lit.	18  Saints Athanasios and Cyril	19	20  Euthymios the Great	21
22 15th Sunday of Luke 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	23	24	25  Saint Gregory the Theologian 7pm Philoptochos General Meeting	26	27 	28 Greek Dance Glendi
29 Sunday of Canaanite 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	30 The Three Hierarch 9am Orthos 10am Divine Lit.	31				
		Strict Fast Refrain from Meat, Fish, Wine, Oil, Dairy & Eggs 	Fish, Wine & Oil Allowed 	Wine and Oil Allowed 	Dairy, Eggs, & Fish Allowed: Refrain from Meat 	Fast Free

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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.



"IF YOU CANNOT FIND CHRIST
IN THE BEGGAR AT THE CHURCH DOOR,
YOU WILL NOT FIND HIM IN THE CHALICE."
- ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

