

The Voice of Saint Anthony

March 2023

Saint Anthony's Greek Orthodox Church

Reverend Father Peter Stratos

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www.saint-anthonys.org

Sunday of Orthodoxy	5 March
Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas	12 March
Sunday of the Holy Cross	19 March
Annunciation of the Theotokos	25 March
Sunday of St. John Climacus	26 March

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Annunciation of the Theotokos
25 March

Deadline for April Newsletter is Saturday, 25 March
Please send to: newsletter_church@aol.com

Message from Father Peter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Καλή Τεσσαρακοστή! Blessed Lenten Season!

We have reached the liturgical season of “Great Lent,” a time for self-examination. It is the beautiful season when we have the opportunity to take a “personal inventory” of our Christian living. We endeavor to take a sincere and honest look at our inner self and our relationship with God. We take the time to see where we can improve, grow and enrich our spiritual life.

Lent is also a time to turn away from self indulgence, to follow and hold the Great Fast to the best of our ability. The purpose of fasting during Great Lent is to instill in Orthodox Christians an increased awareness of Christ’s presence and His importance in our lives. The Church Fathers taught the importance of fasting. However, they also taught that this discipline must be performed in conjunction with prayer. Consider this warning: fasting without prayer is considered “the fast of the demons” since the demons do not eat according to their incorporeal nature, and also they do not pray. St Nektarios of Aegina wrote the following about fasting and prayer: *“In the New Testament fasting is recommended as a means of preparing the mind and the heart for divine worship, for long prayer, for rising from the earthly, and for spiritualization.”*

Fasting and focusing on our prayer life, both privately and with our church family, strengthens us and thus we are better able to give our attention to works of mercy and charity for those less fortunate. We can live the compassion of Christ by visiting and praying for the sick. We can give time for helpful deeds and generosity to the poor. We can approach all the people we encounter daily in our lives with a joyful countenance and a loving manner: our families, our colleagues, our friends, our fellow parishioners, and those people we don’t really know. The more Christ is in our hearts, the easier this becomes. When we live in Christ, this way of living and being in the world comes naturally.

Finally, Great Lent is a time of joy! An opportunity for a “new beginning,” a cleansing of body and soul in preparation and anticipation of the “Feast of Feasts”—of Pascha!—the glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord! We should approach Great Lent with joy in our hearts for the Resurrection of our Lord.

During the last few years of Great Lent I encouraged each of us, man, woman, child, single persons, and families, to commit to praying the edifying prayer attributed to St. Ephraim the Syrian. Of all the Lenten hymns and prayers, this prayer can be termed the “Lenten Prayer.” In fact, many Christians around the world pray this prayer every day during Great Lent. We should join them again this year!

The prayer begins by asking God to take away various sins, replacing them with corresponding virtues. This is a very important part of Lent, as Lent is not a season solely focused on purging oneself of bad habits and sins. Great Lent is a time which should also bring each of us closer to virtuous living, good habits, kindness and all things pleasing to God.

St. Ephraim also asks God to help him see his own sins that he may turn away from sin. He asks God to help him refrain from judging his brothers and sisters. Lent is a time when we do not seek to change others, but only to change ourselves.

A few years ago we mailed a laminated copy of the “Lenten Prayer” to each household. It was a two sided prayer card with English on one side and Greek on the other. Hopefully you still have your prayer card. If not, you can find the Lenten prayer on the next page of this Newsletter. Please print it so you have a copy.

Message from Father Peter

Let us all pray the "Lenten Prayer" twice a day: at the beginning of our day when we rise in the morning, and at the conclusion of our day when we retire. As we recite this prayer, after each petition of the prayer make a prostration. Prostrations are a sign of repentance, of humility, of adoration and obedience to God. I pray that you have a fruitful and blessed Lenten Season.

In Christ,

Fr. Peter

LENTEN PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM

O Lord and Master of my life!
Take from me the spirit of sloth,
faintheartedness, lust of power,
and idle talk.
(prostration and +)

But give rather the spirit of
purity, humility, patience and
love to Your servant.
(prostration and +)

Yes, O Lord and King! Grant me
to see my own errors and not to
judge my brothers and sisters.
For You are blessed to ages of
ages. Amen.
(prostration and +)



Message from Father Peter



A Christian's guide for Great Lent



attend church services



set a daily prayer schedule, in the morning and the evening



read the Bible, the lives of the saints or other spiritual books



offer yourself time for reflection



observe the fasting rules during Lent



be patient and kind to those close to you and strangers



ask for forgiveness and forgive those who do you wrong



offer your time and talent to the community



be grateful for simple things



see the image of Christ in others

Message from Father Peter

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2023		
Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)		
SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 5th	 Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 12th	 The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare FEBRUARY 19th FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare FEBRUARY 26th FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! FORGIVENESS SUNDAY Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent MARCH 5th	 SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 12th	 ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent MARCH 19th	 VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS HALF WAY TO PASCHAI Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4th Sunday of Lent MARCH 26th	 ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent APRIL 2nd	 ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! APRIL 9th GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 GREAT AND HOLY WEEK ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 14th	 GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! APRIL 16th NO FASTING!	 BRIGHT WEEK HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

Message from Father Peter

“How many Saturdays of Souls are there?”

Clearing up some misconceptions...

Mourning for, remembering, and praying for the deceased does not stop when an Orthodox funeral service ends, but those who pass are commemorated through a series of memorials (40 days, six months, annually, etc.).

Yet many Orthodox are not aware that each day of the week carries a specific commemoration, and every **Saturday is the day in which we are called to remember all those who have passed before us**. Additionally, there are specific Saturdays in which the Church calls ALL the faithful together in specific commemoration of the memory and eternal repose of all who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection and for the forgiveness of all their sins.

These are known as the Saturdays of the Souls and are offered on TWO occasions:

Saturday before Judgment Sunday (*this year: Feb. 18, 2023*)

Saturday before Pentecost Sunday (*this year: June 3, 2023*)

in which the Divine services are structured in a specific way to pray for the deceased.



“But aren’t there FOUR Saturdays of Souls?”

This is a common misconception because it has become custom to offer the Memorial Prayers on the two Saturdays that follow the first Saturday of Souls, and have commonly referred to these Saturdays as the “2nd and 3rd Saturdays of Souls” when, in actuality:

The Saturday of Cheesefare (*this year: February 25, 2023*)

is a day the Church commemorates the **Memory of all the God-bearing Ascetics**.

The 1st Saturday of Great Lent (*this year: March 4, 2023*)

is the **Commemoration of the Miracle of Kolyva wrought by Saint Theodore**.

So, while **these other two Saturdays are not structured as proper “Saturdays of Souls,”** seeing that they are still days that our parishes come together for Liturgical worship, **and** that Saturday is the day of the week in which we are called to pray for the deceased, the Memorial Prayers can still be, and often are, offered on these two Saturdays as well.

***“With the Saints give rest, O Christ,
to the souls of Your servants
where there is no pain, nor sorrow,
nor suffering, but life everlasting.”***

Kontakion of the Saturday of Souls

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

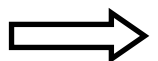
☐ Monthly at \$ _____/month

☐ Annually

Contact the Church office to set up easy recurring electronic payments

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

***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?

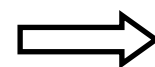
A: It costs approximately \$2,000/day to keep the church open. Most operating expenses are paid from stewardship. Some examples are mortgage, utilities, office staff and pastoral salaries, candles, permits, and facilities maintenance. Additional costs are directly related to church programs.

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 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

_____ 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



2023 PARISH COUNCIL

Joseph Akrotirianakis	President
Pete Gallanis	Co-Vice President
Perry Vidalakis	Co-Vice President
Tashia Vagenas	Secretary
Christian Balas	Treasurer

Tony Christopoulos
Tom Grafos
Louie Kades
Pete Katsafados
Liam McCann
Eleni Mitropoulos
Jim Pappas
Dino Vagenas
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

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	Jimmy Christos Ted Attalla
GOYA	Fr. Peter Stratos
GOYA Basketball	Anthia Lucas Pana Gelt
GOYA Volleyball	Anthia Lucas Pana Gelt
Greek Dance Groups	Phophi Magaziotis
Greek Festival	Christian Balas
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	Irene Albeck



Parish Council Happenings

Dear Members of our Community:

Get to know us!

Your church ushers are all members of the Parish Council. For the past month, Parish Council members who are on ushering duty have been wearing name badges, and we will continue to do so. If you do not know us by name, please feel free to introduce yourself, so we can get to know one another better.

Get to know each other!

Just prior to the COVID pandemic began, we were going to have another “**Get to Know Me**” Sunday. We are now again able to have this informal way for parishioners to get to know each other by name. Our goal in 2023 is to have a Get to Know Me Sunday every month. Great Lent is a great time to engage in this fellowship. Adhesive name badges will be provided. To participate, all you need to do is put on a name tag before entering the Parish Center following liturgy and, of course, introduce yourself to someone you don’t already know by name.

Upcoming General Assemblies

Our Spring General Assembly is tentatively scheduled for **Sunday, May 7**. In addition to our spring and year-end general assemblies this year, we plan to hold a special general assembly to report the status of the community’s real estate properties and to discuss potential future building projects.

Safety on our church grounds

You may have noticed that the vegetation along the Rosemead side of the hall has been trimmed back considerably. It may be a little shocking to see, but this has been done in order to discourage homeless persons from sleeping in the bushes on the church grounds. For the same reasons, outdoor electrical outlets on the grounds have been deactivated.

Wishes for Great Lent

Your Parish Council wishes all our parishioners a good and blessed Great Lent. May we all enjoy good health and an uplifting of our soul.

Καλή Σαρακοστή!

Sincerely,

Joe Akrotirianakis

Parish Council President



February was a busy month for our Sunday School students and teachers! We continued working on our iconography project, which is ready to present to our parish on Sunday of Orthodoxy. Our students and teachers put a great deal of effort and patience into this project and are eager to share the bounty of their faithful labor!

We will have an additional display on Palm Sunday in order to allow the work of our iconographers to really be recognized. More information to come on where to view the icons.

Great Lent is a special opportunity for our teachers to continue their work in helping students become more connected to their faith and the understand the importance and beauty behind the services, traditions, and significant Sundays of Lent. We look forward to a blessed Lent with our Sunday School students.

Myrofores/Myrhh Bearers

Mrs. Albeck leads this ministry with heart and soul and makes it a really special experience for the young ladies who participate. In addition to learning the hymn and participating in the Holy Friday service, they work together on a service project.

Girls ages 8 to 12 are welcome and encouraged to join this special ministry. Practice dates TBD. Sign up by April 1st. For further information and to sign up, contact Irene Albeck mcmg2a6@gmail.com

Godparent Sunday

Godparent Sunday will be on **Sunday, March 19th**. We encourage our Sunday School students to invite their godparents to attend Divine Liturgy and receive Holy Communion with them. Additionally, students who are now young adults can also use this opportunity to invite their godparents – the more the merrier!

Coffee Hour

Sunday School is hosting coffee hour for the month of April. A sign-up sheet will be sent out shortly, so keep an eye out and be sure to sign up for one of the following dates:

- April 2nd: Little Lambs, PK/TK, K/1st
- April 23rd: 2nd/3rd and 4th/5th grades
- April 30th: Middle School and High School

As always, we thank you for supporting our Sunday School Fellowship program.

Kali Sarakosti!
Sophia Syrengelas



Youth & Young Adults



St. Anthony G.O.Y.A. Basketball

The 49th season of G.O.Y.A. Basketball began in Sunday, February 26. Saint Anthony hosted St. John the Baptist from Anaheim. Home games for Saint Anthony will be played at Blair High School in Pasadena this season.

All teams played to best of their ability and we can be very proud of all our players. Junior Girls, Junior Boys as well as Senior Boys were all victorious. Senior Girls lost to St. John.

Following the games St. Anthony extended an invitation to the St. John community to join them at Momma's Brick House Pizza in South Pasadena, for an evening of food, fellowship and fun! Everyone enjoyed the evening and it gave our children an opportunity to socialize outside the basketball court. We will have 2 other opportunities to enjoy dinner after our games with St. Sophia and St. Nicholas. Please see the schedule below for dates, times and locations:

Sunday, March 5: @ Assumption Church Long Beach

5761 E. Colorado Street, Long Beach

2:00 Jr. Girls; 3:00 Jr. Boys; 4:00 Sr. Girls; 5:00 Sr. Boys

Saturday, March 11: @ St. George Downey

Legacy Church--8348 3rd Street, Downey

11:00 Jr. Girls; 12:00 Jr. Boys (NO SENIOR TEAMS)

Sunday, March 12: St. Sophia @ St. Anthony

Blair High School—1201 S. Marengo Ave., Pasadena

2:00 Jr. Girls; 3:00 Jr. Boys; 4:00 Sr. Girls; 5:00 Sr. Boys

Fellowship evening Momma's Brick Oven Pizza & Pasta following the last game
1007 Fair Oaks Ave., South Pasadena, 91030

Youth & Young Adults continued

Sunday, March 19: St. Nicholas @ St. Anthony

Blair High School—1201 S. Marengo Ave., Pasadena

2:00 Jr. Girls; 3:00 Jr. Boys; 4:00 Sr. Girls; 5:00 Sr. Boys

Fellowship evening Momma's Brick Oven Pizza & Pasta following the last game

1007 Fair Oaks Ave., South Pasadena, 91030

Sunday, March 26: @ St. Basil

San Juan Capistrano Community Center

25925 Camino Del Avion, San Juan Capistrano

(NO JUNIOR GIRLS TEAM) 3:00 Jr. Boys; 4:00 Sr. Girls; 5:00 Sr. Boys

Sunday, April 2: @ St. Katherine

722 Knob Hill Avenue, Redondo Beach

2:00 Jr. Girls; 3:00 Jr. Boys; 4:00 Sr. Girls; 5:00 Sr. Boys

Saturday, April 22: @ St. Sophia

Quarter Finals—Jr. Girls; Jr. Boys; Sr. Girls

Times TBA

Sunday, April 23: @ St. Nicholas

Quarter Finals—Sr. Boys

Saturday, April 29: Semi Finals @ St. Sophia

Sunday, April 30: Finals @ St. Sophia

Banquet and Awards to Follow St. Sophia

We look forward to seeing everyone come out to support our youth at their games!



Youth & Young Adults continued



Youth & Young Adults continued

Food and Fellowship after the Goya basketball game—St. Anthony and St John!



Youth & Young Adults continued



Good buddies: John Ioannou,
Yanni Kades and Niko Lareau.
Happy Birthday Yanni!



The Gittings family



Junior girls:

Left: Faye Koulos, Maria Syrengelis, Penny Halias (St. John)
Right: Kostadina Ioannou

Fellowship with
St Anthony and St John parents!



Youth & Young Adults continued



JOY AND HOPE BASKETBALL

Our 8 to 11-year-old children enjoyed playing basketball against St. John's JOY and HOPE aged children. They played before the start of the Jr. Girls game about 1:00 P.M. on Sunday, February 26.

We would like to invite any children in this age group to come out and participate. Sunday, March 5, Assumption Church in Long Beach has extended an invitation to play. There will be other games for these children to play. If you are interested in having your child participate please contact:

Sophia Syrengelis: (626) 641-0335

Email: sophiajammie@gmail.com



Youth & Young Adults continued



Youth & Young Adults continued

Junior Girls



Youth & Young Adults continued



Youth & Young Adults continued

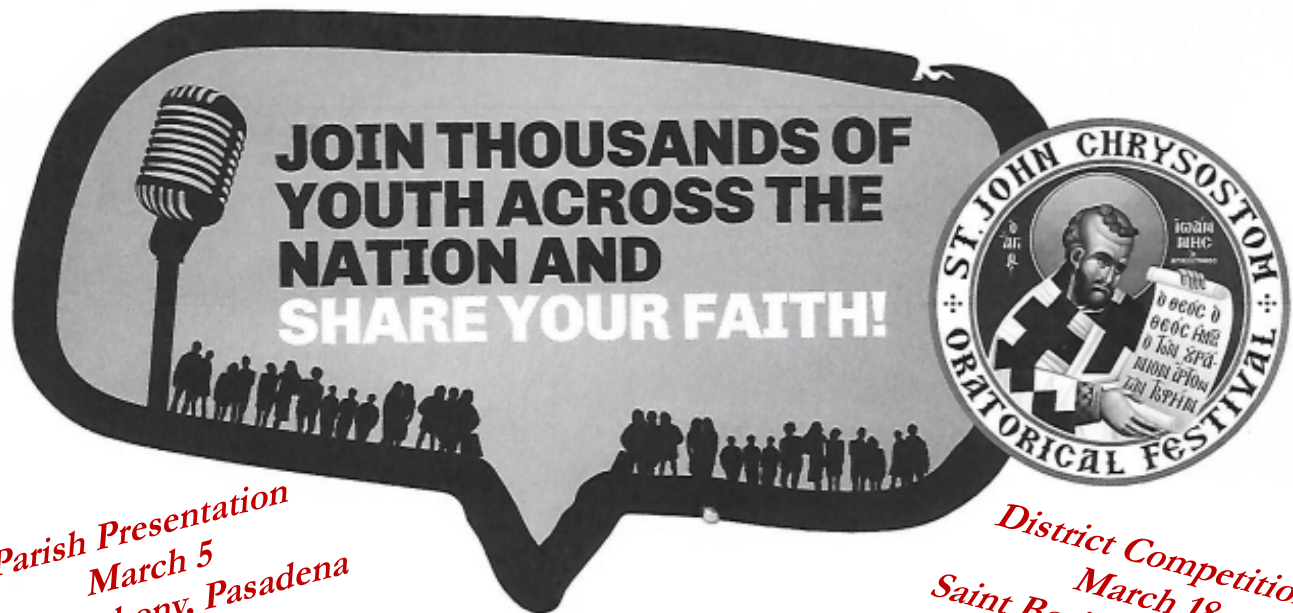
Junior Boys



Youth & Young Adults continued



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?



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: Chicken - \$75, Rolls - \$15, Dessert - \$17, and Beverages - \$40.

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

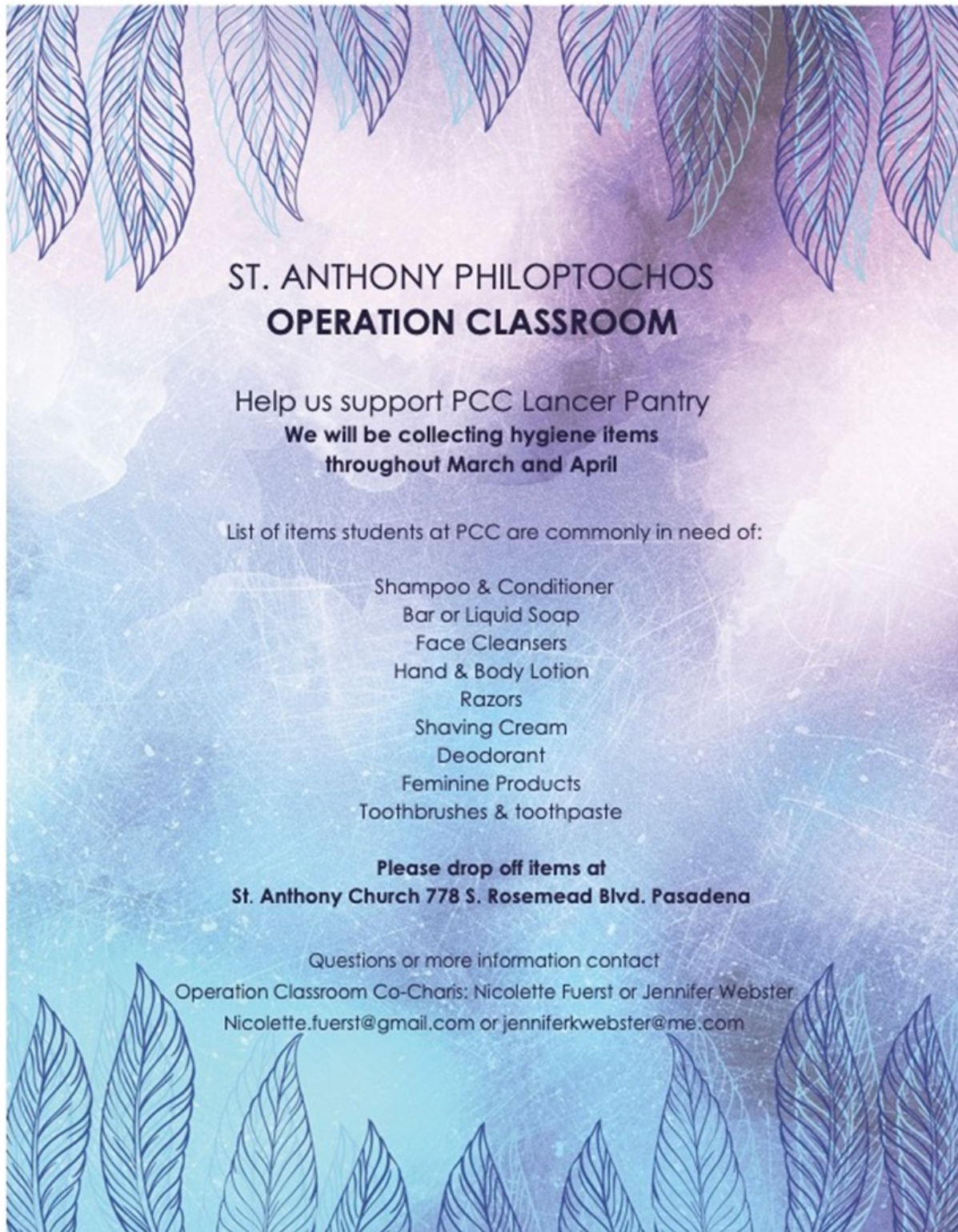
**“You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.”
Deuteronomy 15:11**



Philoptochos continued

Operation Classroom

Pasadena City College Lancer Pantry needs personal hygiene items. Philoptochos will be collecting these items throughout March and April. There will be plastic bins inside the entryway of the hall to place your donations. Travel and regular sizes accepted.



**ST. ANTHONY PHILOPTOCHOS
OPERATION CLASSROOM**

Help us support PCC Lancer Pantry
**We will be collecting hygiene items
throughout March and April**

List of items students at PCC are commonly in need of:

- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Bar or Liquid Soap
- Face Cleansers
- Hand & Body Lotion
- Razors
- Shaving Cream
- Deodorant
- Feminine Products
- Toothbrushes & toothpaste

**Please drop off items at
St. Anthony Church 778 S. Rosemead Blvd. Pasadena**

Questions or more information contact
Operation Classroom Co-Charis: Nicolette Fuerst or Jennifer Webster
Nicolette.fuerst@gmail.com or jenniferkwebster@me.com

Philoptochos continued

Community Happenings

Our Heart Health – February General Meeting

Given February is heart month, Philoptochos members and church community attended an instructive presentation on Heart Health. Dr. Chris Christodoulou, cardiologist and St. Anthony parishioner, gave us a presentation on heart health, diet, prevention, and testing.

Attention High School Seniors – Philoptochos of Saint Anthony scholarship applications are now available. Contact Presvytera Aida Stratos (presaida7@gmail.com) for information or an application.

Philoptochos Easter Bake Sale

Philoptochos Easter Bake Sale Delectable Greek pastries and our special signature treats are now available to order. All proceeds will benefit Kids 'n' Cancer's – Camp Agape, a Philoptochos ministry dedicated to providing support to children afflicted with cancer and their families.

Orders will be available for pickup only on Saturday, April 8 and Sunday, April 9, after liturgy until 1:00 PM both days.

To place an order online go to the website: <https://stanthonypiloptochos.square.site>

To place an order by mail, please complete the order form on page 35 of this newsletter.

Upcoming Meetings

March Board Meeting – Wednesday, March 14 at 7:00 PM in church hall

March General Meeting – Tuesday, March 21 at 6:30 PM in church hall. Come decorate a beautiful red paper-mache egg for Easter. \$25 per person. Appetizers will be served.

Upcoming Metropolis Events

Kids 'N Cancer – Agape: A Celebration of Love

A luncheon will be held on Sunday May 7, 2023 at 2:00 PM at the Newport Beach Country Club. This annual event helps raise awareness for the ministry of providing support for children afflicted with cancer and their families. This event is a beautiful, fun-filled afternoon giving those attending the opportunity to participate in fundraising, to meet Camp Agape families, and to enjoy fellowship.

Tickets will go on sale this spring. Seating is limited so don't miss out!

Event details forthcoming at: www.sfphiloptochos.org

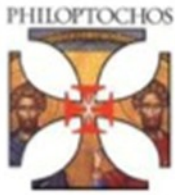
2023 Philoptochos Membership

Our 2023 Membership Drive has begun and we invite you to join us in our important work. We encourage all women, 18 years and older to join Philoptochos. Men and non-Orthodox women may also join as associate members. Your participation in this ministry can make a difference in so many lives.

To renew or join by mail send your check (payable to St. Anthony Philoptochos Society) to St. Anthony Philoptochos Society, 778 South Rosemead Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107 or pay online: <https://stanthonypiloptochos.square.site> Each \$50 stewardship supports the National Philoptochos, the San Francisco Metropolis and St. Anthony Philoptochos obligations and projects.

Thank you for your continued support and for helping make a difference in our community.

Philoptochos continued



PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY OF SAINT ANTHONY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH PANAGIA CHAPTER

PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP FORM

☐ 2023 Philoptochos Membership
 ☐ 2023 Associate Membership (Men / Non-Voting)
 Date _____

Last Name	First Name	Spouse Name	M.I.
Street Address			
City	State	Zip	
Home Phone		Cell Phone	
Email			
Notices will be sent via email. If you prefer your notices mailed, please, let us know by checking here <input type="checkbox"/>			
St. Anthony's Philoptochos Stewardship (membership dues). Select amount below: <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 <input type="checkbox"/> Other			
Each \$50 stewardship supports National Philoptochos (\$15), San Francisco Metropolis (\$15) and St. Anthony Philoptochos obligations and projects (\$20). ___ Check ___ Credit Card ___ Cash			
I am interested in helping with the following:			
___ Feeding the Hungry	___ Hosting Fellowship	___ Marketing	
___ Delivering Meals to Parishioners	___ Baking & Cooking	___ Website Designer	
___ Homebound Visitations	___ Fundraising	___ Other Talents	
___ Telephone Tree	___ Social Media	___ Specify	



2023 PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Your continued generosity allows Philoptochos to provide financial assistance and outreach to those in need. We invite you to renew your membership or become a new member as we endeavor to do our philanthropic work. Join us as we strive to fulfill the word of Christ.

".. whatever you did for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did for me" - Matthew 25:30

PLEASE RENEW OR JOIN BY MAIL (Check payable to: Saint Anthony Philoptochos Society)

Mail your check along with this form to:

Saint Anthony Philoptochos Society, Attention: Membership
778 South Rosemead Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107

or pay online at <https://stanthonypiloptochos.square.site>
Scroll down to "Annual Membership Dues"

For more information or questions, please contact Lisa Xanthos (626) 222-4374 or Helen Skandale (818) 618-4963

Philoptochos continued

Philoptochos Easter Bake Sale

Proceeds to benefit Kids' n' Cancer-Camp Agape

Pre-Paid Orders Must Be Received by Sunday, April 2, 2023

ORDERS AVAILABLE FOR PICKUP ONLY:

St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church, 778 South Rosemead Blvd., Pasadena

SATURDAY, APRIL 8 and SUNDAY, APRIL 9 (after Liturgy until 1:00 PM-both days)

Place prepaid order by:

- **MAIL** – Fill out Order Form below (check payable to St. Anthony Philoptochos and mail to: St. Anthony Philoptochos, Kids 'n' Cancer Bake Sale, 778 S. Rosemead Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107 or
- **ONLINE** – <https://stanthonyphiloptochos.square.site>

Name: _____ Cell/Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ E-mail: _____

ITEMS		COST	QUANTITY	\$ TOTAL
	Tsoureki (1 loaf) Traditional sweet Greek Easter Bread.	\$20	_____	\$ _____
	Koulourakia (bag of 12) Butter-based cookies with sweet delicate flavor topped with egg glaze and toasted sesame seeds.	\$10	_____	\$ _____
	Koulourakia, Chocolate Dipped (box of 6) Butter-based with sweet delicate flavor dipped in dark chocolate (Limited Quantity).	\$8	_____	\$ _____
	Kourabiethes (box of 12) Shortbread butter cookies without nuts covered in powdered sugar.	\$20	_____	\$ _____
	Chick Oreos, Chocolate Dipped (1 chick per pkg) 3 chocolate dipped Oreo cookies shaped into one colorful chick.	\$6	_____	\$ _____
	Easter Oreos, Chocolate Dipped (2 per pkg) Oreo cookies dipped in colorful chocolate and covered with candy sprinkles.	\$4	_____	\$ _____
	Dyed Red Eggs (1 dozen)	\$10	_____	\$ _____

ORDER TOTAL \$ _____

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.

VIPs

Last month's gathering of the VIPs took place on Valentine's Day, February 14th. After a short period of socialization, our new president Irene Albeck gaveled in the business meeting which began at 11:00 AM.

A heartfelt "Thanks" was offered to Helen Treantafelles for her years of service as president of the ministry; and Irene then welcomed the new slate of officers as they begin their term in office. It was also announced that Tom Grafos will be the designated Parish Council liaison to the VIPs, and we are thankful for his involvement and support of our group.

New members in attendance at this meeting included Donna Del Rio, Maria Kokoris, Maria Kypreos, Rose Linardos and Alma Vorgias. February birthday greetings were extended to Sapfo Ananiades, Carolyn Kolokotronis, Helen Treantafelles, and Alma Vorgias.

With the Covid-19 pandemic now less of a major concern in our lives thanks to available protective vaccines and adherence to common sense public health guidelines, the VIPs (Very Important People) look forward to becoming even more of an instrumental and engaged ministry of our parish by sharing our faith, ideas, friendships and communications with one another. We anticipate the resumption of several local outings as well as an occasional long distance day trip. For the local field trips, we will welcome volunteer drivers willing to help with transportation. Transportation for our long distance day trips will involve hiring a bus company. Ideas for activities after our monthly gatherings may include board games, short walks, guided physical activities, or just enjoying each other's companionship.

At the conclusion of the day's business meeting, Father Peter came into the hall to bless the luncheon provided by Helen and George Treantafelles as a Thank You to the previous officers for their support, and to celebrate Helen's birthday.

The next VIP meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 14th** (a fast day) at 10:30 AM.

We look forward to future upcoming parish events:

- ♦ A screening of the award-winning documentary "The New Greek Americans: 1960 – 2018" in the church hall after coffee hour on **Sunday, March 12**.
- ♦ Fellowship/coffee hour-luncheon open to the entire parish celebrating the 90th birthday of Mrs. Eleni Christodoulelis hosted by the Christodoulelis family on **Sunday, March 19th**.
- ♦ The Greek School March 25th Greek Independence Day program, **Sunday, March 26th**.
- ♦ The 21st annual St. Anthony Golf Tournament to be held on **Friday May 5th**.
- ♦ The return of Saint Anthony GreekFest on **September 29th, 30th and October 1st**.

Irene Albeck
VIP President

Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis...

A Lesson from Father Stauros..

There are lots of people who want their experience of religion to be like the slogan for Burger King—"Your way, right away." In fact, there are now 38,000 (and growing) Christian denominations (not church communities, but church denominations, 38,000 expressions of Christianity) that were founded on the idea of "protest" (that's where the word "Protestant" comes from), that perhaps what their ideas were didn't align with their denomination so they went out and created a new denomination that would reflect their ideas.

Even in our own Orthodox Church, there are differences of opinion on how strict versus relaxed we should be on certain things like fasting. In my humble opinion, the Orthodox Church sets a high bar for how we are to live and what we believe.

Christ set a high bar for His followers when He said things like *"If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me"* (Matthew 19:21); and *"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."* (Matthew 10:27).

The goal of the Christian life is to come as close to the bar as possible. Christ did not set a low bar, not for Himself, not for us. He gave EVERYTHING for us, because what more can a person give than HIS OWN LIFE?!

Thus, the church sets a high bar for us, and we are supposed to strive to get as close to it as we can. The best way to approach this, I think, is to imagine if we wanted the dirt in a garden to be very fine, with no rocks in it. On first glance over the garden, we would take the big rocks out, then the small ones, and eventually we would take handfuls of dirt and sift them, taking out even the smallest particles, until all the dirt in the garden is very fine, with no rocks or even clumps in it. Can we grow plants in a garden full of rocks? Probably not. Can we grow plants in dirt that hasn't been finely sifted? Probably. Will the plants grow better in finely sifted dirt? Definitely. In our Christian walk, we make sure we have some standards, that we participate to some degree in all the disciplines of Orthodoxy — prayer, worship, Scripture reading, fasting, charity, etc. We are not expected to have our spiritual lives like fine dirt, especially if we are still removing the big rocks, i.e. just getting started.

Let's examine things like prayer and fasting. There is no ideal amount of time to spend on prayer. We are supposed to *"pray constantly."* (1 Thessalonians 5:17) So what about five minutes in the morning and five minutes in the evening? Ten? Is two enough? The ideal is that we live with a prayerful demeanor at all times, honoring and respecting the Lord and the commandments, loving God and loving our neighbor. What if a person is very devoted to prayer but never serves other people? We can't pray and then forget charity, just like we can't be charitable and never pray.

Fasting, as I've written many times, is supposed to be more about discipline than deprivation. There are reasons for how and when to fast. If I told someone, "fast from social media and eat whatever you want," there would be many people who would object, saying that fasting has to do with food and we can't change those rules. There would probably be people on the other side of the argument who would applaud this, thinking we should modify certain things to keep up with the times in which we are living.

Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis...

The idea of fasting is pretty important to an Orthodox Christian. Same thing with prayer, worship, Scripture reading, Tradition, charity, and stewardship. We can't really say "I'm Orthodox but I'm not okay with these things." If we are going to be Orthodox, we are supposed to conform our lives to Orthodoxy, not the other way around. That being said, most of us (maybe all of us) will never reach the high bar. However, we should not lower the bar. We should continue to strive for the high bar.

If you've never fasted before, I don't recommend strict fasting. If you've never prayed before, I don't recommend reading the Compline every night. Not because these things aren't good – they are very good. But we have to build a discipline with these things, we have to create new habits with these things, and this takes time. That's why I personally prefer to bring people into the faith somewhat slowly, and then as people learn, to challenge them to do something in a more disciplined, committed way. For the person who has never tried fasting, try fasting from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays this upcoming Lent. If that is not a problem, try adding a third day each week, and eventually fast from meat throughout the whole Lent. If one has already mastered this, we then go to eliminating fish, then dairy, then wine, then oil, until eventually one is maintaining the strict fast. Same thing with prayer—start with a few minutes a day, and the work up to longer and more frequent prayer times.

We can't be Orthodox without prayer and fasting, without worship, without Holy Communion, without confession, etc. We can, however, start with all the disciplines of the church and move to a deeper level over time. We don't get to pick and choose what we are going to do. We have the "why", the "what" and the "how" of what we are doing. What is left is the journey to understand the "why" more deeply, to do the "what" more purposefully and to do the "how" with greater discipline and consistency. Thankfully, we have our lives to figure this out, and a great time to do this each year is during the upcoming Lenten journey.

The thing that makes Orthodoxy attractive, and I've heard this from people who have come into our church from other denominations, is that we aren't changing everything, that we are still grounded in so many things, and people are looking for something that is grounded and solid. They have become tired of "my way, right away" and are eager to embrace God's way, working towards that high bar, rather than lowering it.

Lord, thank You for the gift of faith, and a church in which to express the faith.

No church is perfect, no Christian is perfect, only You are perfect.

Even though I am imperfect and I will never be perfect, until the day I enter Your Kingdom (if Your grace will allow me), accept me, sinful and imperfect as I am, as I seek to learn more deeply about You.

Help me to be more committed to You, and to be more disciplined in how I represent You as a Christian.

Thank You for those who teach me.

Help me to be a good student of the faith, so that I can be an Apostle – one who spreads the faith.

Amen.

Whatever you do, do it with love, and with the idea that you can do it better, more deeply, and with greater commitment.

What is New in the Community?

“Praying Through the Psalter”



I am so excited to start a Pan Orthodox “Praying through the Psalter” group during the Lenten Season. It has been on my heart for many years to gather Orthodox men and women together for a time of prayer and reading of the scriptures, especially during Lent.

Join us via Zoom, during the Lenten season as members of several Orthodox Parishes pray through the Psalms (Psalter) in preparation for Pascha.

The Psalms (Psalter) were written more than 5,000 years ago as songs of prayer and praise to the God of the Universe and are prayed daily by monks and nuns.

Our purpose each week is to gather together as prayerful Orthodox Christians to pray the Psalms (Psalter). My hope is you will experience an hour of spiritual rest and peace each week as you pray through the verses. When we pray God’s scripture we know we will not only learn more about God Himself but also His love for us and His promises to us. Since there are 20 Kathismas, or sections within the Psalter, and only 9 weeks that we are meeting, you will also have the opportunity during the week to pray through the Psalms at home.

Join us as we practice Praying Through the Psalter, praying for our Parishes, and learning how to incorporate the Psalter into our daily lives.

We will meet for one hour on **Tuesdays at 7pm**, beginning **February 7** for 9 weeks, ending April 4. Open to all church members.

To sign up and receive the Zoom link and packet, please contact Jennifer Dobrinen:
jenniferdobrinen@yahoo.com
559-326-4747.



What is New in the Community? continued

Saint Anthony Bowling League News Winter / Spring Season 2023



The St. Anthony bowling league began the Winter/Spring session on January 18, 2023, at Bowlero Lanes in Pasadena. We have now reached the half way point of our season with the highest number of teams – 12 3-person teams, 36 bowlers!

The St. Anthony Bowling ministry has united many new and old friends who have been enjoying fun and fellowship for the past 7+ years. We are so happy to have such a wide range of bowlers, from friends and those from other Greek Orthodox parishes.

Bowling will continue until April 6. We encourage all to come out and enjoy an evening of bowling and/or spectating.

Anthia Drulias-Lucas

ADLJSLO2@YAHOO.COM

626.274.6133 call/text

What is New in the Community? continued



**THE HELLENIC LIBRARY
PRESENTS A MUSICAL EVENT**

Like Old Cinema



Join us for a trip down memory lane with unforgettable
melodies, songs, dancing, video, backstage incidents
Narrated, presented by actor and biographer
Makis Delaportas

SAT MARCH 4, AT 5 PM
SUN MARCH 5, AT 5 PM

WILLIAM & JANE BRISTOL CIVIC AUDITORIUM
16600 CIVIC CENTER DR, BELLFLOWER CA 90706

RECEPTION: ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH HALL
10830 DOWNEY AVE, DOWNEY CA 90241
\$35 DONATION



**HELLENIC LIBRARY
OF SO CAL**





HELLENIC REPUBLIC
CONSULATE GENERAL OF GREECE
IN LOS ANGELES

**SPECIAL APPEARANCE
KONSTANTINA**



**WITH ANGELIKI BAZIGOU, GIORGOS ARVANITIDIS, JOHN FOTOPOULOS,
DIMITRIS MAHLIS, & PETER DENEFF**

**TICKETS RESERVATION: (562) 305-2356
PHILPTREVEZAS@YAHOO.COM**

What is New in the Community? continued

ST. ANTHONY'S PARISH AND THE GREEK HERITAGE SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

INVITE YOU TO A SCREENING OF THE ACCLAIMED DOCUMENTARY

THE NEW GREEK AMERICANS 1960-2018



Hosted and Narrated by Academy Award Winner: OLYMPIA DUKAKIS



SUNDAY, MARCH 12th - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING COFFEE HOUR

St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church, 778 S. Rosemead Blvd. Pasadena, CA 91107

DONATIONS WELCOME

What is New in the Community? continued

Saint Sophia 2023 Easter Picnic is back !



**Let the tradition continue!
Let us celebrate the Resurrection
together!**

**Celebrating the 110th Anniversary of the first formal
Greek Orthodox Easter Picnic in Los Angeles**

Sunday, April 16th

1 pm - 7 pm

Brookside Park, Pasadena

Fabulous Foods and Desserts will be available for purchase..

**Chicken Souvlakia, Lamb Souvlakia, Gyros, Feta Fries
and more....**

**Baklava, Galatoboureko, Karidopita, Kourambiedes,
Melomakarona, Koulourakia and Tsourekia**

Beer, Wine, Soft Drinks, Coffee, Water

**Free Parking and
picnic Tables**

Admission:

Adults \$15

Children 12 & under FREE !!

Credit cards accepted at the admission gate, and food booths

Please Note...

Entrance gate to picnic will not open until 1pm.

For health and safety, NO PETS allowed in the park..

**Greek Music
and Dancing
Activities for
the Kids**



**Questions ??
Please contact
Stephanie Caiopoulos Lubian
easterpicnic@aol.com**



What is New in the Community? continued

St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church
21st ANNUAL PASADENA GOLF CLASSIC

BROOKSIDE GOLF COURSE, PASADENA

Friday, MAY 5, 2023

www.pasadenagolfclassic.com



Save the Date

Please join us for a festive day of golf dinner and fellowship. All proceeds will benefit our building fund for the senior center.

There are many ways for you to support this year's charitable event. If you aren't a golfer join us for our all day Taverna on the Green for mezethes and Jimmy Kypreos' famous souvla.

At night sign up for dinner complete with silent auction and one of a kind live auction items.

If you absolutely can't make it please make a tax deductible donation directly to the church office. Our community volunteers are the key reason for our success.

Please call Jimmy Christodoulelis @ 626-379-2302 for information on how you can participate. We will also have registration tables setup during coffee hour in the next few weeks.

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.

What is New in the Community? continued

"How to Pray Properly" continued

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.

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



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

Saint Anthony Parish Center Capital Campaign Donor Plaque 2007-2012

The Saint Anthony Community initiated a major Capital Campaign 15 years ago to raise the funds to build our beautiful Parish Center that was dedicated on June 2, 2012. Many generous faithful stepped forward to pledge in order to make this dream a reality. We promised that a commemorative plaque would one day be created to honor the generosity of these individuals. We are now finally endeavoring to fulfill this promise.

We intend to list everyone as we did in the Dedication Album. Please review this list on the next page. We will be sharing this page in monthly newsletters and several weekly bulletins up through Easter to be sure that if any corrections are needed, they can be addressed before the plaque is manufactured. We recognize that far too many of our loved ones have since passed away, but we will only be marking those in memoriam who left us before June 2012. The plaque will reflect that point in time of June 2, 2012.

If you feel any other changes are needed, please contact
Steve Pappas stevenpappas2@gmail.com

What is New in the Community? continued

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN DONORS

VIRGINIA & PETER ADAMOPOULOS	ELENI & MATTHEW GALLAGHER	PETER PATZAKIS
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NICOLETTE & JAY FUERST	SUSAN & MICHAEL PATZAKIS	CHRISTINA & MICHAEL ZOUMAS

What is New in the Community? continued


The Voice of Saint Anthony

January 2023

Saint AnthonyY 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

Sunday of Orthodoxy

5 March

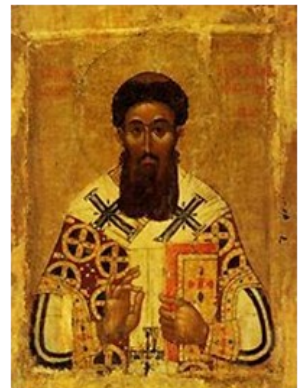
For more than one hundred years the Church of Christ was troubled by the persecution of the Iconoclasts of evil belief, beginning in the reign of Leo the Isaurian (717-741) and ending in the reign of Theophilus (829-842). After Theophilus's death, his widow the Empress Theodora (celebrated February 11), together with the Patriarch Methodius (June 14), established Orthodoxy anew. This ever-memorable Queen venerated the icon of the Mother of God in the presence of the Patriarch Methodius and the other confessors and righteous men, and openly cried out these holy words: "If anyone does not offer relative worship to the holy icons, not adoring them as though they were gods, but venerating them out of love as images of the archetype, let him be anathema." Then with common prayer and fasting during the whole first week of the Forty-day Fast, she asked God's forgiveness for her husband. After this, on the first Sunday of the Fast, she and her son, Michael the Emperor, made a procession with all the clergy and people and restored the holy icons, and again adorned the Church of Christ with them. This is the holy deed that all we the Orthodox commemorate today, and we call this radiant and venerable day the Sunday of Orthodoxy, that is, the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.



Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

12 March

This divine Father, who was from Asia Minor, was from childhood reared in the royal court of Constantinople, where he was instructed in both religious and secular wisdom. Later, while still a youth, he left the imperial court and struggled in asceticism on Mount Athos, and in the Skete at Beroea. He spent some time in Thessalonica being treated for an illness that came from his harsh manner of life. He was present in Constantinople at the Council that was convened in 1341 against Barlaam of Calabria, and at the Council of 1347 against Acindynus, who was of like mind with Barlaam; Barlaam and Acindynus claimed that the grace of God is created. At both these Councils, the Saint contended courageously for the true dogmas of the Church of Christ, teaching in particular that divine grace is not created, but is the uncreated energies of God which are poured forth throughout creation: otherwise it would be impossible, if grace were created, for man to have genuine communion with the uncreated God. In 1347 he was appointed Metropolitan of Thessalonica.



Feasts and Saints for this month

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas—continued

He tended his flock in an apostolic manner for some twelve years, and wrote many books and treatises on the most exalted doctrines of our Faith; and having lived for a total of sixty-three years, he reposed in the Lord in 1359.

His holy relics are kept in the Cathedral of Thessalonica. A full service was composed for his feast day by the Patriarch Philotheus in 1368, when it was established that his feast be celebrated on this day. Since works without right faith avail nothing, we set Orthodoxy of faith as the foundation of all that we accomplish during the Fast, by celebrating the Triumph of Orthodoxy the Sunday before, and the great defender of the teachings of the Holy Fathers on this day.

Sunday of the Holy Cross

19 March

With the help of God, we have almost reached the middle of the course of the Fast, where our strength has been worn down through abstinence, and the full difficulty of the labor set before us becomes apparent. Therefore our holy Mother, the Church of Christ, now brings to our help the all-holy Cross, the joy of the world, the strength of the faithful, the staff of the just, and the hope of sinners, so that by venerating it reverently, we might receive strength and grace to complete the divine struggle of the Fast.



Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Annunciation of the Theotokos

25 March

Six months after John the Forerunner's conception, the Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth, a town of Galilee, unto Mary the Virgin, who had come forth from the Temple a mature maiden (see Nov. 21). According to the tradition handed down by the Fathers, she had been betrothed to Joseph four months.

On coming to Joseph's house, the Archangel declared: *"Rejoice, thou Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."* After some consideration, and turmoil of soul, and fear because of this greeting, the Virgin, when she had finally obtained full assurance concerning God's unsearchable condescension and the ineffable dispensation that was to take place through her, and believing that all things are possible to the Most High, answered in humility: *"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy Word."*

And at this, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her all-blameless womb, and the Son and Word of God, Who existed before the ages, was conceived and became flesh in her immaculate body (Luke 1:26-38).

Bearing in her womb the Uncontainable One, the blessed Virgin went with haste from Nazareth to the hill country of Judea, where Zacharias had his dwelling; for she desired to find Elizabeth her kinswoman and rejoice together with her, because, as she had learned from the Archangel, Elizabeth had conceived in her old age. Furthermore, she wished to tell her of the great things that the Mighty One had been well-pleased to bring to pass in her, and she greeted Elizabeth and drew nigh to her. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, she felt her six-month-old babe, jump in her womb.

Saint John the Baptist, prophesied of the dawning of the spiritual Son. Immediately, the aged Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and recognized her as the Mother of her Lord. The Virgin also, moved by a supernatural rejoicing in the spirit, glorified her God and Savior, saying: "

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour,"

Luke 1:39-55

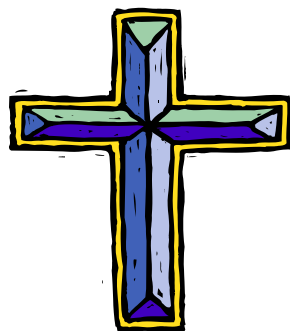


Feasts and Saints for this month continued

Sunday of St John Calmicus




































26 March

The memory of this Saint is celebrated on March 30, where his biography may be found. He is celebrated today because his book, **The Ladder of Divine Ascent**, is a sure guide to the ascetic life, written by a great man of prayer experienced in all forms of the monastic polity; it teaches the seeker after salvation how to lay a sound foundation for his struggles, how to detect and war against each of the passions, how to avoid the snares laid by the demons, and how to rise from the rudimental virtues to the heights of Godlike love and humility. It is held in such high esteem that it is universally read in its entirety in monasteries during the Great Fast.



Orthodox Calendar

March 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			 1 Pre-Sanctified Lit 6pm 7pm Philoptochos Union Station Outreach	 2 4pm Greek School	 3 Salutations to the Holy Theotokos 6pm	 4 3rd Saturday of Souls 9am Orthos 10am Divine Lit.
 5 Sunday of Orthodoxy 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream 11:30 Parish Oratorical 2pm Basketball w/LB	 6 4:30 Greek School 6:30pm Studies in the Faith	 7	 8 Pre-Sanctified Lit 6pm	 9 4pm Greek School	 10 4pm Greek Dance Salutations to the Holy Theotokos 6pm	 11 11am Basketball with Downey
 12 Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream 12:30 Film Documentary 2pm Basketball w/LA	 13 4:30 Greek School 6:30pm Studies in the Faith	 14 10:30am VIPs Mtg. 7pm Philoptochos Board Meeting 7pm Parish Council Meeting	 15 Pre-Sanctified Lit 6pm	 16 4pm Greek School	 17 Salutations to the Holy Theotokos 6pm	 18 District Oratorical St. Basil San Juan Capo
 19 Sunday of Holy Cross 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream 2pm Basketball with Northridge 2pm—Cretan Meeting	 20 4:30 Greek School 6:30pm Studies in the Faith	 21 7pm Philoptochos General Meeting	 22 Pre-Sanctified Lit 6pm	 23 4pm Greek School	 24 Vespers for Annunciation 6pm	 25 Annunciation 9am Orthos 10am Divine Lit.
 26 Sunday of St. John Climacus 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream Greek School Program 3pm Basketball w/SJC	 27 4:30 Greek School 6:30pm Studies in the Faith	 28	 29 Pre-Sanctified Lit 6pm	 30 4pm Greek School	 31 Akathist Hymn 6pm	
		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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Greek Orthodox Community
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We're on the Web!
www.saint-anthonys.org

TIME SENSITIVE

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STAMP

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.

Forgive one another



"Peter came and asked Jesus, 'Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?' And Jesus replied, 'No, not seven times, but seventy times seven times.'"
Matthew 18:21-22

"Bear with one another and if any of you has a grievance against someone else, forgive one another. Forgive them, just as the Lord has forgiven you."
Colossians 3:13