

# The Voice of Saint Anthony

## April 2024

### Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

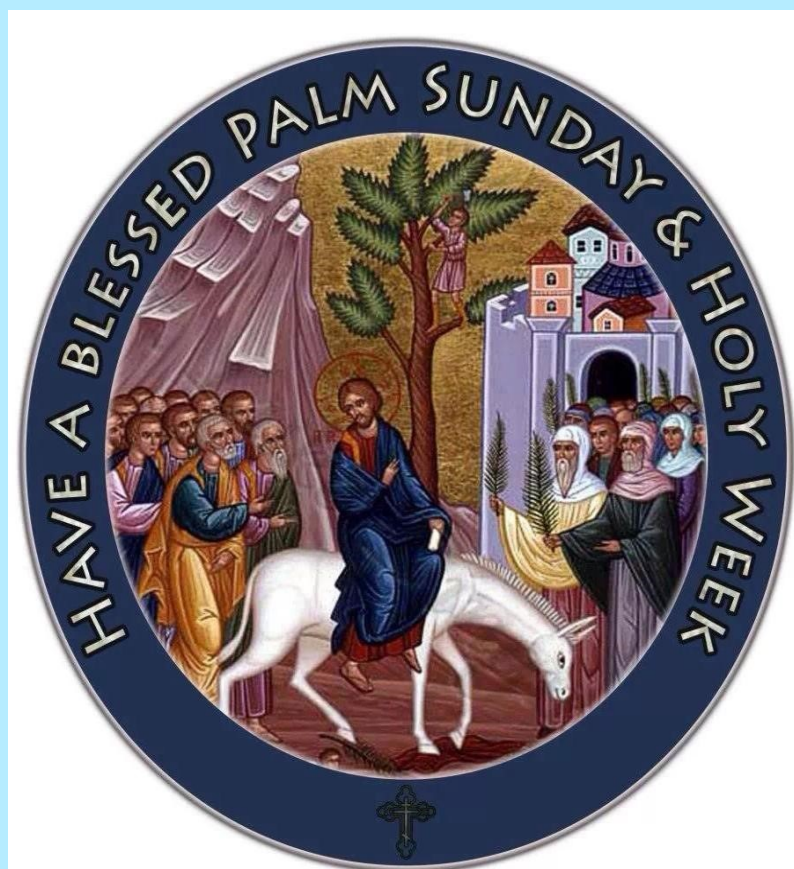
Reverend Father Peter Stratos

778 S. Rosemead Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107

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

Sunday of the Holy Cross	07 April
Sunday of St. John Climacus	14 April
Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt	21 April
Saturday of Lazarus	27 April
Palm Sunday	28 April
Holy Monday	29 April
Holy Tuesday	30 April

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**Palm Sunday**

**28 April**

**Deadline for May Newsletter is Thursday, 25 April**  
**Please send to: [newsletter\\_church@aol.com](mailto:newsletter_church@aol.com)**

## Message from Father Peter

*Dear Lord, we have promised to serve You to the end. Help us Lord, to understand the true meaning and spirit of "sacrifice" as we present our bodies, our minds, and our hearts for Your service. May Your Holy Cross always be our strength and inspiration. Amen.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Sunday April 7 we commemorate the Veneration of the Holy Cross. This special day marks the midpoint of Great Lent. It offers us a unique opportunity to pause and reflect. When our Lord carried His Cross to Golgotha, He paused at the midpoint of His excruciating climb, in order to regain His strength and refresh His spirit so that He could continue. We too, now, pause and think about how our Lenten journey is progressing. Are we disciplined with our prayer, fasting, study of scripture and almsgiving? If we have slipped, are we starting over with a renewed strength and are we trying to incorporate these disciplines again? As St John Chrysostom addresses us in his Paschal message, even those who have arrived at the 11th hour are welcome. All are welcome, and all are called by Christ, as we proceed towards Holy Week and the celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ.

A prayer from the Vesper Service for the Veneration of the Cross describes the great significance of Christ willingly accepting crucifixion so that we may be saved:

*"O Christ our God, You willingly accepted crucifixion that all humankind might be raised up to life. Out of love for us You took up the Cross; and with fingers covered with Your precious blood You signed our absolution like a King—granting us forgiveness of sins. O Lord, we are in danger of being separated from You by our sins. Have mercy on your people. Rise up by your almighty power and help us in our adversities that we may glorify You, together with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen."*

This Sunday, the Third Sunday of Lent, we celebrate the veneration of the precious and life giving Cross. It is presented to us on this day for refreshment and support, for remembrance of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and for encouragement. We are like those following a long and difficult path, who become tired, see a beautiful tree with many leaves, sit in its shadow and rest for a while. When rejuvenated, we continue on our journey. Additionally, during this season of fasting and spiritual labor, the life-giving Cross was set in our midst by the holy Fathers to give us comfort and spiritual strength, to make us ready and eager for the remaining journey.

May our Lord continue to strengthen us all through the power of His life-giving Cross.

*"Through Your Cross, O Christ, establish us firmly on the rock of faith and let not our minds be shaken by the adversary. For You alone are holy, now and forever. Amen."*

Matin Hymn from the Feast of the Veneration of the Cross.

Καλή Ανάσταση,

Fr. Peter



**APRIL 27 – MAY 5, 2024**

**Holy Week Schedule**

**SATURDAY OF LAZARUS – April 27**

Orthros ..... 9:00 a.m.  
 Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 a.m.  
 Breakfast

**PALM SUNDAY – April 28**

Orthros ..... 8:45 a.m.  
 Divine Liturgy (Luncheon to follow) ..... 10:00 a.m.  
 Service of the Bridegroom ..... 6:00 p.m.

**HOLY MONDAY – April 29**

Service of the Bridegroom ..... 6:00 p.m.

**HOLY TUESDAY – April 30**

Service of the Bridegroom (Hymn of Kassiani) ..... 6:00 p.m.

**HOLY WEDNESDAY – May 1**

Sacrament of Holy Unction ..... (earlier) 3:00 p.m.  
 Service of the Bridegroom ..... 6:00 p.m.

**HOLY THURSDAY – May 2**

Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil ..... 9:00 a.m.  
 The Service of the Holy Passion (12 Gospels) ..... 6:00 p.m.

**HOLY FRIDAY – May 3**

The Descent from the Cross ..... 3:00 p.m.  
 The Graveside Lamentations ..... 6:00 p.m.

**HOLY SATURDAY – May 4**

Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil ..... 9:00 a.m.  
 Vigil for the Holy Resurrection ..... 11:00 p.m.  
 “Come Receive the Light” – The Resurrection Service & Divine Liturgy ..... 11:45 p.m.  
 Mageiritsa Dinner follows. All faithful are cordially invited to partake.

**PASCHA/EASTER SUNDAY – May 5**

The Agape Vespers Service ..... 12:00 Noon

# OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2024

*Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)*

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week <b>FEBRUARY 25th</b>	 <i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> <b>Publican and the Pharisee</b> 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 <b>MARCH 3rd</b>	 <b>The Prodigal Son Returns!</b> 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 <b>MARCH 10th</b> FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 <b>The Last Judgement</b> 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 <b>MARCH 17th</b> FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 <b>Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise!</b> <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> 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 <b>MARCH 24th</b>	 <i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> <b>SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY</b> 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 <b>MARCH 31st</b>	 <b>ST GREGORY PALAMAS</b> 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 <b>APRIL 7th</b>	 <b>VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS</b> <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHAI</i> 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 <b>APRIL 14th</b>	 <b>ST JOHN of the LADDER</b> 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 <b>APRIL 21st</b>	 <b>ST MARY of EGYPT</b> 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! <b>APRIL 28th</b> GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 <i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> <b>ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM</b> 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 <b>MAY 3rd</b>	 <b>GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY</b> <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! <b>MAY 5th</b> NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> <b>HOLY PASCHAI (CHRIST IS RISEN!)</b> Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

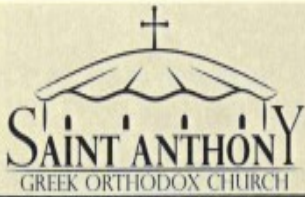
**CHURCH  
should be the reason  
you miss everything  
else. Not everything  
else the reason you  
miss CHURCH.**

**Note:** Please make every effort to arrive for services a little early. If you happen to arrive late, please observe the following moments in the Divine Liturgy when you should not enter the Nave but wait quietly in the Narthex. You may enter after these moments have completed:

- ◆ The Priest censing
- ◆ The Small Entrance
- ◆ The Great Entrance
  - ◆ Epistle Reading
  - ◆ Gospel Reading
    - ◆ The Homily
- ◆ Consecration of the Gifts
  - ◆ The Lord's Prayer

**SEEK CHRIST TODAY! OPEN YOUR HEART TO HIM TODAY! AND USE YOUR WORDS CAREFULLY TODAY,  
BECAUSE THERE IS POWER IN WORDS AND JUST ONE WORD CAN MAKE OR BREAK SOMEONE.**

Stewardship



2024 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)

2024

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]

ST. ANTHONY GIVING LEVELS:

CONTRIBUTOR: \$499 & below
\$9.60/week OR \$42/month & below

FRIEND: \$500 - \$999

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

\* ARCHANGEL: \$15,000 and up

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

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

Please return your completed commitment card to church by January 31, 2024

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

In response to God’s blessings, I/we pledge a 2024 offering of:

My Total Commitment for 2024: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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 per family or above



# 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 \_\_\_\_\_

**Seek Christ TODAY!**  
**Open your heart to Him TODAY!**  
**And use your words carefully today,**  
**because there is power in words**  
**and just one word**  
**can make or break someone.**

# Ministries



## 2024 PARISH COUNCIL

Perry Vidalakis	President
Pete Gallanis	1st Vice President
Joe Akrotirianakis	2nd Vice President
Tashia Vagenas	Secretary
Christian Balas	Treasurer
Tony Christopoulos	Assistant Treasurer

- 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

Sophia Syrengelas - Director

Little Lambs:  
Teresa Argueta

PK, TK, & Kindergarten:  
Irene Albeck, Larissa Maslen, Jenni Nassos

Kindergarten, First & Second:  
Sophia Syrengelas & Andrianna Lareau

Third, Fourth, & Fifth:  
Mary Udria & Athena Serban

Middle School:  
Polly Vagenas & Chris Syrengelas

High School:  
Presuytera Aida Stratos



**PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY**



**Executive Board**

**President**

Judith Din

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

Jeanne Karaionnoglou

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

Helen Skandale and Lisa Xanthos

**Corresponding Secretary**

Mary Udria and Irene Albeck

**Recording Secretary**

Mary Dewar

**Treasurer**

Connie Becker

**Assistant Treasurer**

Maria Grover

**Advisor**

Maria Kypreos

**Spiritual Advisor**

Father Peter Stratos

**Board of Directors**

**Beautification**

Maria Kokoris

Maria Hronas

**Community Outreach**

Fontaine Malisos

Liz Skandale

**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

**Union Station**

Irene Albeck

**Operation Classroom**

Nicolette Fuerst and Jennifer Webster

**ADDITIONAL MINISTRIES**

Acolytes

Pres Aida Stratos

Bible Study

Fr. Peter Stratos

Bookstore

Noah Johnson

Golf Tournament

Jimmy Christos

GOYA

Anthia Drulias Lucas  
Maria Katsas Gittings  
Polly Vagenas

GOYA Basketball

Pana Gelt

GOYA Volleyball

Anthia Lucas  
Pana Gelt

Greek Dance Groups

Nikole Zoumberakis

Greek Festival

Christian Balas

Greek Language

Anastasia McClain

JOY/HOPE

Irene Albeck

Myrrh Bearers

Irene Albeck

Oratorical Festival

Pres Aida Stratos

Prayer Shawls

Maria Kypreos

Psalter Group

Fr. Peter Stratos

Vacation Bible School

Sophia Syrengelas  
Mary Udria

VIPs

Irene Albeck



## Parish Council Report

### Oratorical Festival

Congratulations to two of our Sunday School students **Yianni Kades** and **Kyri Vidalakis** who advanced to the next round of the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival. All who participated did a wonderful job delivering their speeches. Yianni and Kyri will move on to compete at the regional level on Saturday, April 6th in San Diego.

### Greek School

On Sunday, March 24th, the Greek School had a wonderful Greek Independence Day Celebration, which was also a fish lunch fundraiser. We should all be very proud of our Greek School which does a wonderful job of instruction in the Greek language. If you are not part of this program, please consider joining for yourself or for your children.

### GOYA Basketball

Our four GOYA basketball teams continue to do very well. This past Sunday all four teams won their games against St. John in Anaheim and all in attendance had a great time. I encourage everyone to come out and support our teams.

### GOYA Basketball T-Shirts

The new fan t-shirts are in! I've passed out most of them to people who pre-ordered. If you have not received your pre-order, please contact me. We may do a second order of the t-shirts if there is enough interest, so if you did not pre-order and would like a t-shirt, please contact me or Alma, in the church office.

### Sunday of Orthodoxy

Father Peter led a wonderful procession around the church with our Sunday School children holding their holy icons, in celebration of this blessed Sunday which commemorates the return of the holy icons in the churches and the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.

### Godparent's Sunday

A reminder that Godparent Sunday is the third Sunday of Lent: Sunday, April 7th. Please plan to attend church with your godchildren. Spend some quality time with them on this day.

Best,

Perry Vidalakis

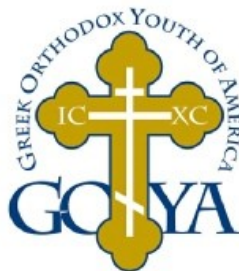
SUNDAY SCHOOL



"Let the  
little children  
come to me ...."

MATTHEW 19:14

## Youth & Young Adults



We apologize for the scheduling conflict of Field Day on Saturday March 23rd and hope to reschedule for the month of June!

Check out our Instagram account: [@stanthonysgoya](https://www.instagram.com/stanthonysgoya)

Any questions, please email us: [goya@saint-anthonys.org](mailto:goya@saint-anthonys.org)

To sign up for GOYA, please hit this QR code:



GOYA Sign up

### ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS:

Philoptochos of Saint Anthony Scholarship Applications are now available. Please contact Presvytera Aida ([presaida7@gmail.com](mailto:presaida7@gmail.com)) or the Church Office for your application. Deadline for submission is **Friday, April 26, 2024**.



## GOYA Basketball News

Saint Anthony GOYA will be in their final week of regular competition on Sunday, April 7. This will be followed by the Quarter and Semi-Finals on Saturday and Sunday, April 13 & 14 at Cabrillo High School in Long Beach. The Finals will be held on Sunday, April 21, at Saint Sophia Cathedral.

As of March 24th the results for our St. Anthony teams through five weeks of competition are:

Junior Girls	3 wins	2 losses
Junior Boys	2 wins	3 losses
Senior Girls	3 wins	1 loss
Senior Boys	2 wins	1 loss

Those of you who have been fortunate to attend games have witnessed some very thrilling events. A special highlight in week 1 saw our Senior boy, Jack Fuerst put up an almost impossible buzzer-beating, game-winning shot, that just cleared the corner of the backboard and drained the net for the win over Saint Sophia, 55-54.

Results of the finals will be featured in the May bulletin...stay tuned!

See our teams next 2 pages!



**Junior Girls  
vs  
Assumption**



**Junior Boys  
vs  
Assumption**



**Senior Girls  
vs  
Assumption**



**Senior Boys  
vs  
Assumption**

## St. Anthony G.O.Y.A. Basketball Schedule 2024

### Sunday, April 7:

@ St. Nicholas

9501 Balboa Blvd., Northridge

2:00 Jr. Girls

3:00 Jr. Boys

4:00 Sr. Girls

5:00 Sr. Boys

### Saturday, April 13:

Quarter Finals - Cabrillo High

2001 Santa Fe Ave., Long Beach

### Sunday, April 14:

Semi-Finals = Cabrillo High

### Sunday, April 21:

Finals/Banquet/Awards - St. Sophia

Questions contact:

Pana Gelt 626-278-2808

Anthia Drulias Lucas 626-274-6133

**Go Saint Anthony GOYA !!!**

## GOYA Volleyball Tournament

Over the past 50+ years St. Anthony GOYA has proudly hosted and sponsored the Volleyball Tournament for the GOYAns of Southern California. Through many ups and downs over the years trying to find venues to accommodate a Round Robin tournament, we are happy to announce that the GOYA Volleyball Tournament will return on, Saturday, May 11, at Victory Park in Pasadena! We would like to thank Pete Galanis for assisting with obtaining this venue for the youth of Southern California. This will include an entire day of Volleyball, dinner at our Trinity Ball Room, awards and dancing!



SAVE THE DATE!  
**GOYA VOLLEYBALL  
TOURNAMENT**

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2024  
VICTORY PARK, PASADENA

FROM 8:30AM TO 4:30PM  
MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION

5:30PM DINNER, AWARDS, AND DANCING IN  
TRINITY BALLROOM @ ST. ANTHONY'S GREEK  
ORTHODOX CHURCH, PASADENA

HOSTED BY ST. ANTHONY'S



## St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

This year we had three wonderful speakers in the Senior Division: **Yianni Kades**, **Daniel Metry** and **Kyri Vidalakis**. These three young men spoke with great faith and feeling on their chosen topics. We thank them and congratulate them for their excellent speeches.

After intense deliberation and very tight scoring, the two finalists who will represent our community at the District Oratorical Festival on April 6, at St. Spyridon in San Diego were selected.

Congratulations to our to advancing speakers: **Yianni Kades** and **Kyri Vidalakis**.

We would like to thank our judges for their dedication and thoughtful deliberations: **Christianna Kontaxis**, **Liam McCann** and **Maria Pappas**. They brought their knowledge of the faith, experience in the Oratorical Festival and public speaking to their deliberations, and we are very grateful to them. Thank you to our essential Timekeeper, **Alexander Soewers**, who helped our speakers stay within the time limit guidelines. Thank you to **Tanya Grafos**, **Poly Vagenas** and **Zoe Vidalakis** for providing our Sunday School students with a pizza lunch to celebrate and encourage our Oratorical Speakers, and make sure they were well fed before their speeches. Finally, thank you to all the family, friends and fellow classmates who came to hear our speakers.



### FDF 2024

Pictured below is His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos, Rev Fr. Peter Stratos and the St. Anthony Filarakia Dancers and Directors.

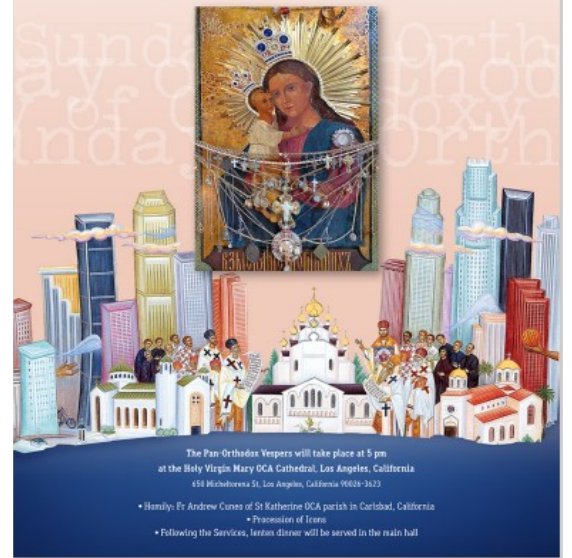


## Sunday of Orthodoxy Pan-Orthodox Celebration

March 23, Saturday - Los Angeles, CA

Join our Hierarchs for this Celebration

His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco,  
His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin of the Diocese of the West, Orthodox Church of America,  
His Grace, Bishop Maxim of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Western America,  
Bishop Ioannis of Phocaea of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco,  
together with Deacons, Clergy and members of their respective flocks



The Pan-Orthodox Vespers will take place at 5 pm  
at the Holy Virgin Mary OCA Cathedral, Los Angeles, California  
655 Michoudena St, Los Angeles, California 90029-3623

- Homily: Fr Andrew Cuneo of St Katherine OCA parish in Carlsbad, California
- Procession of Icons
- Following the Services, lemon dessert will be served in the main hall

### Sunday of Orthodoxy Pan Orthodox Great Vespers



# 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, Beverages - \$40.

We are also in need of donations to help offset our costs of large aluminum pans with lids.

We invite you to help 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:**

Irene Albeck [mcmg2a@aol.com](mailto:mcmg2a@aol.com)

Vangie Dupas [vangiedupas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vangiedupas@sbcglobal.net)

Christina Kades [christinekades@gmail.com](mailto:christinekades@gmail.com)

*"You shall open wide your hand to your brother,  
to the needy and to the poor, in your land."*

Deuteronomy 15:11



## Community Happenings

### **Healing in the Orthodox Church “The Medicine of Immortality” – February General Meeting**

An evening with Deacon Dr. Euthym Kontaxis of St. George Church, Palm Desert, was held on Wednesday, February 28.

Deacon Euthym, Director of Emergency Services at Eisenhower M.C. for over 25 years, spoke to St. Anthony philoptochos and parishioners about how our faith integrates with healing. His talk highlighted how the spiritual approach to illness has a profound effect on the outcome. He shared many real life examples over his 30-year plus experience in medicine. Everyone enjoyed his wonderful and moving presentation and Q&A session.




***Attention High School Seniors*** – Philoptochos of Saint Anthony Scholarship Applications are now available. Contact Presbytera Aida Stratos at [presaida7@gmail.com](mailto:presaida7@gmail.com) or the Church office for your 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 27 and Sunday, April 28, after liturgy until 1:00pm both days.**

To place an order online go to <https://stanthonyphiloptochos.square.site>

To place an order by mail, please complete the order form on the next page. 

## Philoptochos Easter Bake Sale

**\*\*\*Proceeds benefit Kids 'n' Cancer, a San Francisco Metropolis Philoptochos Ministry, providing children with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses and their families with a stay at Camp AGAPE.\*\*\***

**Pre-Paid Orders Must be Received by Wednesday, April 17, 2024**

**ORDERS AVAILABLE FOR PICKUP ONLY:**

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

**SATURDAY, APRIL 27 and SUNDAY, APRIL 28 (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://stanthonypiloptochos.square.site>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**ORDER TOTAL**                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_



## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.**

## Upcoming Philoptochos Meetings

**2024 Christmas Benefit Planning Meeting** – Tuesday, April 9 at 7:00 PM in the church hall. We invite you to come help us plan our largest fundraiser of the year. This year's event will be held on Saturday, December 7, 2024 at The Langham Huntington Hotel.

**March Board Meeting** – Tuesday, April 9 at 7:00 PM

**General Assembly Meeting** – Date To Be Determined. Further details to come.

## Upcoming Metropolis & National Events

### **Kids 'N Cancer – Agape: A Celebration of Love**

A luncheon will be held on Sunday April 14, 2024 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 are on sale today and seating is limited – don't miss out! Event details at: [www.sfphiloptochos.org](http://www.sfphiloptochos.org)

**National Philoptochos Convention** June 30-July 4, 2024 at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina. Event details at: <https://philoptochosconvention.ufairs.com/>

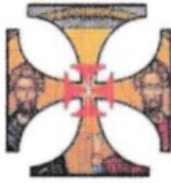


FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: St. Anthony Philoptochos

Instagram: stanthonypiloptochos



2024 Philoptochos Membership

**PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY OF  
SAINT ANTHONY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

778 South Rosemead Boulevard • Pasadena, California 91107

March 8, 2024

*"Lord, When Did We See You Hungry and Feed You, Or Thirsty and Give You Drink? When Did We See You a Stranger and Take You In, Or Naked and Clothe You? When Did We See You Sick or In Prison and Come to You?... Inasmuch As You Did It to One of The Least Of These My Brethren, You Did It to Me." Matthew 25 37:40*

Dear St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Ladies,

Welcome to our new Membership Year! If you are a current member, it is time to renew your membership for 2024. If you are not a member, we would love for you to join us!

Did you know that Philoptochos was established over **90 years** ago by Archbishop Athenagoras as the philanthropic arm of the Greek Orthodox Church of America? In those 90 years, our mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers have been instrumental in making the Greek Orthodox Ladies' Philoptochos Society one of the largest women's philanthropic religious organizations in the United States.

We encourage every woman in our parish, 18 years or older, to become a member of Philoptochos and fulfill our philanthropic mission to help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, those with disabilities and victims of disasters. Men are welcome to join as Associate members. When we combine our strengths and skills, great things happen!

As we embark on a new year, we want to share with you our charitable accomplishments. Please see the reverse side to see the many charities we support locally, nationally and through our San Francisco Metropolis. Our 2023 Christmas Benefit Luncheon chose to support Forever Kids' Case for Character program. Forever Kids' Case for Character program was started to help provide kids in foster care hope for a brighter future and a place to which they can always connect, no matter where in life they may be.


In 2021, National Philoptochos disbursed close to \$1,800,000 to those in need. Last year, our Panagia Chapter donated more than \$45,000 to charities and those in need.

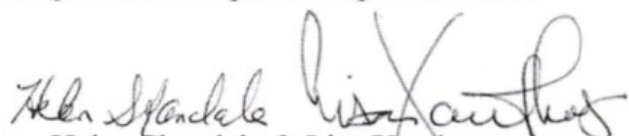
Please, renew or join by mail: enclose your registration form and a check payable to St. Anthony Philoptochos, St. Anthony Philoptochos, 778 S. Rosemead Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107.

To process online, go to <https://stanthonyphiloptochos.square.site> and scroll down to Annual Membership Dues.

We thank those of you who have been members, for your many years of support and devotion and, to all prospective new members, we hope you will join us in our philanthropic endeavors.

Yours in Christ,

  
Judith Din Antsos  
President

  
Helen Skandale & Lisa Xanthos  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Presidents

*The following charities are supported by St. Anthony Philoptochos:*

***Chapter Charities***

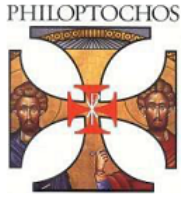
CAST, Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking  
 City of Hope  
 Forever Kids  
 Friends in Deed  
 Foothill Unity Center  
 Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology Seminarians  
 Kids 'n' Cancer/Camp Agape  
 Operation Classroom  
 Pasadena City College Lancer Pantry  
 Pasadena Unified School District/Foster Care Children  
 Project Mexico Orphanage  
 Social Services/Emergency assistance to individuals within our community  
 Scholarships for College Bound Students  
 Ukraine Relief Fund of the International Orthodox Christian Charities  
 Union Station Homeless Services

***San Francisco Metropolis Philoptochos Programs & Charities***

Bishop Anthony Student Aid Endowment Fund [BAPSAEF]  
 Emergency Relief Fund/Social Welfare  
 Kids n' Cancer/Camp Agape  
 Saint Nicholas Ranch  
 Support a Seminarian  
 Women's Health & Wellness

***National Philoptochos Programs & Charities***

Academy of Saint Basil  
 Autism Assistance Fund  
 Cancer Fund  
 Children Medical Fund  
 Ecumenical Patriarchate  
 Emergency Fund  
 General Medical Fund  
 Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology  
 International Orthodox Christian Charities [IOCC]  
 National Sisterhood of Presbyteres Benevolent Fund  
 Operation Classroom  
 Orthodox Christian Fellowship  
 Orthodox Christian Mission Center & Support a Mission Priest  
 Retired Clergy & Widowed Presbyteres Benevolent Fund  
 Saint Photios Shrine  
 Saint Nicholas Shrine  
 Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Founders Fund  
 Social Services  
 United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF]



PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY OF SAINT ANTHONY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH PANAGIA CHAPTER

PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership selection options: 2024 Philoptochos Membership, 2024 Associate Membership (Men / Non-Voting), and Date field.

Personal information fields: Last Name, First Name, Spouse Name, M.I.

Street Address field

City, State, and Zip fields

Home Phone and Cell Phone fields

Email field

Notices will be sent via email. If you prefer your notices mailed, please, let us know by checking here [checkbox]

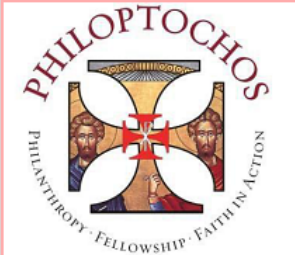
St. Anthony's Philoptochos Stewardship (membership dues). Select amount below:

Stewardship amount selection: \$50, \$75, \$100, \$125, Other

Each \$50 stewardship supports National Philoptochos (\$15), San Francisco Metropolis (\$15) and St. Anthony Philoptochos obligations and projects (\$20). Payment method: Check, Credit Card, Cash

I am interested in helping with the following:

Volunteer activity selection: Feeding the Hungry, Delivering Meals to Parishioners, Homebound Visitations, Telephone Tree, Hosting Fellowship, Baking & Cooking, Fundraising, Social Media, Marketing, Website Designer, Other Talents, Specify



2024 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

Each year the Saint Anthony Chapter Philoptochos Society awards scholarships to qualified graduating High School Seniors. Please review the Rules & Regulations below and the Application form on the next page..



## PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY OF SAINT ANTHONY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

778 South Rosemead Boulevard • Pasadena, California • 91107 • 626.449.6943

### PHILOPTOCHOS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD - 2024 RULES & REGULATIONS

1. The parents of the applicant (or the applicant him or herself) must be members in good standing of Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church for at least one year preceding the date of the scholarship application.
2. A parent of the applicant must be a member of Philoptochos Society of Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church, Panagia Chapter.
3. Applicant must be planning to continue their education for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. Education goal may be a four-year institute, technical or career training program.
4. The applicant must have a minimum 3.0 GPA.
5. Applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:
  - a. Academic achievement/and or merit
  - b. Church and participation in Saint Anthony youth activities
  - c. Community service and/or leadership qualities.
  - d. Citizenship
6. Applicants must:
  - a. Complete and submit all required application documents by **Friday, April 26, 2024**. Documents may be submitted by conventional mail or through email.
  - b. Arrange for his or her current academic transcript to be mailed from the academic institution to the church office (Attention: Philoptochos Scholarship Committee);
  - c. Submit an autobiographical essay, approximately 300 words double spaced, 12-point font size, stating influences on the applicant's life and addresses future goals;
  - d. Submit two (2) letters of recommendation, one of which must be from a high school counselor or teacher;
  - e. Report for a personal interview if requested by the Scholarship Committee.
  - f. Attach a recent photo of themselves to the application form.
7. The Philoptochos Society of Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church is not obligated to grant any scholarships in a given year. The Scholarship Committee and Father Peter will carefully review all applications. The Committee's decision shall be final.
8. Scholarship recipients will be notified by mail. Scholarships will be presented personally at the annual June Philoptochos General Meeting.

All information in this application will be held in strict confidence.



**PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY OF  
SAINT ANTHONY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

778 South Rosemead Boulevard • Pasadena, California • 91107 • 626.449.6943

**PHILOPTOCHOS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD APPLICATION – 2024**

APPLICANT INFORMATION	
Name	
Date of birth	Phone
Current Address	
Email	
High School Attended	
School Address	
Dates Attended	GPA
Please list extracurricular activities you have participated in while In school:	
Please list activities you have participated in while attending Saint Anthony:	
FAMILY INFORMATION	
Parents' Names	
Names of Siblings	
SIGNATURE	
<i>I VERIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE IS TRUE AND CORRECT.</i>	
Applicant's Signature	Date

**APPLICANT, PLEASE ATTACH A RECENT PHOTO OF YOURSELF TO THIS APPLICATION.**

Completed applications may be submitted to the church office or a scholarship committee member. (Attention: Philoptochos Scholarship Committee) by **April 26, 2024**

## VIPs

As a fitting start to our Lenten journey, the VIPs opted to have our March meeting on Clean Monday, March 18th in the Community Center. With close to forty members in attendance for the conduct of business and fellowship, this was a beautiful way to start this special time of the ecclesiastical year.

Our plans were finalized for the March 21st outing to the San Antonio winery for a luncheon and tour. Discussions were also held for an upcoming trip to the Santa Barbara Monastery located in Santa Paula, California. The trip to this American Orthodox monastery is now unfortunately postponed until October due to mudslides from the recent heavy rains which have closed the most convenient routes.

The VIPs will co-sponsor the after-liturgy coffee hour with the Sunday School on April 7th which is Godparent Sunday. Additionally, a bake sale is planned in early April with details to be provided in the near future.

With the completion of the business meeting, Happy Birthday wishes were conferred upon our three March celebrants in attendance today; Staurula Kiotas, Cecilia Barriga and Judie Christopoulos. MANY HAPPY RETURNS LADIES!! A luncheon featuring numerous Lenten selections was enjoyed by everyone.

On Thursday, March 21st, a group of 23 members carpoled to the planned outing at the San Antonio Winery. A delicious luncheon was enjoyed at the fine restaurant on the premises which featured everything from breakfast and sandwiches to a large selection of pasta dishes. Following lunch, we were given a private tour starting with a brief video of the original owners speaking about the beginning of their business in 1917 until the present - four generations of the Riboli family. The tour ended at the outstanding gift shop stocked with fabulous gifts and wines - a truly special excursion for our VIPs in attendance.





Community News & more...

# Saint Sophia EASTER PICNIC

CELEBRATING THE 112TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE FIRST FORMAL GREEK ORTHODOX  
EASTER PICNIC IN LOS ANGELES

**SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2024 1PM - 7PM**

\*Please Note: Entrance gate to picnic will not open until 1 pm\*

- ✓ Fabulous Foods and Desserts will be available for purchase
- ✓ Souvlaki, gyros, feta fries, Greek salad and more
- ✓ Baklava, Galatoboureko, Karidopita, Kourambiedes, Melomakarona, Koulourakia and Tsourekia
- ✓ Beer, Wine, Soft Drinks, Coffee, Water
- ✓ **CREDIT & DEBIT CARDS ONLY**
- ✓ Free Parking and Picnic Tables.
- ✓ For health and safety, NO PETS are allowed in the park



### ENTRY FEE

Adults (13 & older) \$15  
Children 12 & under FREE

### EASTER BUNNY!

The Easter Bunny will be there from 2 pm to 3 pm with toys for the kids!

### BROOKSIDE PARK PASADENA

360 N Arroyo Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91103

### MORE INFORMATION

Stephanie Caiopoulos Lubian  
easterpicnic@aol.com

*Celebrate the Resurrection!*



# Save the Dates

**2024**  
 PASADENA GOLF CLASSIC  
 BROOKSIDE GOLF COURSE  
**June 7th**

## Festival Flashback



Email Vicki @ [vkades@gmail.com](mailto:vkades@gmail.com) to be part of the committee and make 2024 better than ever!!

WE'RE HIRING

# JOIN OUR 2024 SUMMER CAMP STAFF!

CABIN COUNSELORS - PROGRAM STAFF - LEADERSHIP TEAM

LIFEGUARDS - MEDICAL STAFF - PHOTOGRAPHERS - VIDEOGRAPHERS

[WWW.GOSFYOUTH.ORG](http://WWW.GOSFYOUTH.ORG)







## 2024 SUMMER CAMP DATES:

SESSION 1: JULY 7 - 13

SESSION 2: JULY 14 - 20

SESSION 3: JULY 21 - 27

[WWW.GOSFYOUTH.ORG](http://WWW.GOSFYOUTH.ORG)

METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO  
**SUMMERCAMP**  
AT SAINT NICHOLAS RANCH

## METROPOLIS SUMMER CAMP 2024

All Youth ages 8-18 from across our Metropolis are invited to attend our Metropolis Summer Camp this July at St. Nicholas Ranch & Retreat Center in Dunlap, CA. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet new friends, reunite with old friends, and learn more about our faith. Online camper registration is open, and spots are quickly filling up. The Metropolis is also looking for dynamic and faithful young adults, ages 19 or older, to serve as part of the camp staff. They are also in need of medical and lifeguard staff, so please encourage anyone to apply who you know would be an outstanding addition to the Metropolis Staff.

### 2024 SUMMER CAMP DATES

Session 1: July 7 - 13

Session 2: July 14 - 20

Session 3: July 21 - 27

### CAMPER AGES

The youngest campers are 8 years old (or entering 3rd grade in Fall 2024) and the oldest are 18 years old (or will be graduating High School in Spring 2024).

### SESSION 1 - SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BUS

If you are from Southern California and will be attending Session 1, there will be a bus that will be stopping at 3 parishes along the way to St. Nicholas Ranch.

More information: <<https://gosfyouth.org/summer-camp#/socalbussession1>>

### SUMMER CAMP STAFF

We cannot put on summer camp without our incredible staff! We are looking for young adults who are 19 years of age or older. Applications are open until March 10. Please encourage young adults to apply by using this link: <<https://gosfyouth.org/summer-camp#/staff-applications>>

### MEDICAL STAFF

We are always in need of medical staff while at camp. If you are a licensed medical professional or know someone who is, please encourage them to contact me directly at this email or apply on our website: <<https://gosfyouth.org/summer-camp#/medical-staff-application>>. We especially love having MD's, NP's, and RN's!

### AMAZON WISH LIST

Help us keep down the cost of camp by making a donation from our Amazon Wish List using this link: <<https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/3KIOBRA2F95R8>>.

With Love in Christ,

Johanna Duterte Carter  
Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries  
Metropolis Camp Director  
Metropolis Youth Safety Administrator (MYSA)

Cell: (408) 712-7658<<tel:%28408%29%20712-7658>>  
Email: [JDuterte@sanfran.goarch.org](mailto:JDuterte@sanfran.goarch.org)<<mailto:JDuterte@sanfran.goarch.org>>  
Website: [www.gosfyouth.org](http://www.gosfyouth.org)<<http://www.gosfyouth.org>>  
Youth Safety Link: [youthsafetyplatform.goarch.org](http://youthsafetyplatform.goarch.org)

## St. Anthony Bowling League



One of the best kept secrets at St. Anthony is our bowling league ministry. We meet on Thursday evenings from the fall through the spring at Bowlero Lanes in Pasadena!

As we approach the beginning of Spring our bowlers are in the 10<sup>th</sup> week of a 12-week season. We currently have 27 bowlers composing of 9 teams of 3. Our bowlers include many of our St. Anthony family members and their friends.

Next month we will post our final scores as this season concludes on Thursday, April 11.

## How NOT to fast during Great Lent!



# The Voice of Saint Anthony

January 2024

## Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

Reverend Father Peter Stratos

778 S. Rosemead Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107

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

Circumcision of Christ/ Saint Basil	1 January
Holy Theophany/ Epiphany	6 January
Saint John the Baptist	7 January
St. Anthony the Great	17 January
Gregory the Theologian	25 January
Three Hierarchs	30 January



### Saint Anthony the Great

17 January

- Priest's Message
- Stewardship
- Ministries
- Parish Council
- Sunday School
- Youth/Young Adults
- Philoptochos
- VIPs
- Community News, etc.
- Monthly Lesson
- Saints of the Month
- Orthodox Calendar

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

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

626.449.6943

## Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis

### ON FORGIVENESS...

*Then Peter came up and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven."*

Matthew 18:21-22

*But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to those who keep His covenant and remember to do His commandments.*

Psalms 103:17-18

The biggest weight I carry in my soul is the weight of past failure. Whether I failed another person or failed myself, in either case I have failed God. As we get older, the résumé of our successes gets longer and so does the list of our failures. On the day of my ordination, I had not failed any parishioner. I had never had a parishioner up to that point. Now twenty-six years in, I have failed many parishioners. I have burned friendships, there are people who dislike me, people who avoid me, people I dislike and people who I avoid. I suppose there are a lot of people in the secular world who don't care what others think of them. Politicians on both sides come to mind. But this isn't about what others think of themselves. It's about what we think of ourselves.

The greatest weight we carry cannot be quantified on a scale. This is not weight we can remove with diet & exercise. The greatest weight we carry is the burden of sin and shame. And the most effective way to lose that weight is through a beautiful thing called *forgiveness*.

Frederick Buechner, a well-known author and Presbyterian minister, offered one of the best quotes on forgiveness that I have ever read:

*When somebody you've wronged forgives you, you're spared the dull and self-diminishing throb of a guilty conscience. When you forgive somebody who has wronged you, you're spared the dismal corrosion of bitterness and wounded pride. For both parties, forgiveness means the freedom again to be at peace inside their own skins and to be glad in each other's presence.*

The opposite of this quote holds true as well. When we have wronged someone and are unforgiven, there is a dull and self-diminishing throb of shame and sadness, and for some, a guilty conscience. When we are unable to forgive someone, it corrodes our own souls. Lack of forgiveness diminishes, and often extinguishes relationships.

Forgiveness doesn't necessarily mean we have to trust someone again, or confide in someone, or even be friends with them. However, in relationships that matter, in marriages, in families, in close friendships and in work environments, forgiveness is essential. I have served in my parish for twenty years. There have been hundreds of families that have belonged to this parish during my time here. If I wronged each family one time per year for twenty years, that would add up to an astronomical amount of sins, thousands upon thousands of them. One sin against each of one thousand parishioners times twenty years would be twenty thousand sins. The weight of that, without forgiveness, would be crushing. The shame of all that sin would be unbearable. There is no way I would make it in a parish for any amount of time without forgiveness.



Let's talk for a moment about the relationships that have been severed by sin. Some of those are unredeemable. To release someone from the burden of sin actually gives you freedom. Some of these relationships probably are redeemable but stubborn pride on both sides has put a wall there. A gesture of forgiveness by one party might salvage something good that was lost.

In relationships that matter, forgiveness is what allows them to continue. Take a marriage of 25 years. If each spouse sins once a week against the other—an unkind word, a moment of anger, just common things — 52 weeks a year times 25 years, that's 1,300 sins. And that's if there is only ONE sin a week. No relationship would hold up under the weight of that much sin. That's why it is essential to forgive as we go, to learn from mistakes, but to release one another from the weight of sin and failure.

Forgiveness and repentance work hand in hand. Forgiveness involves asking someone to overlook a mistake, and overlooking someone else's mistake. Repentance means working hard to make sure the mistake doesn't happen again, even though it often does. Thus, we are continually in need of this cycle of forgiveness and repentance, whether it is with another person or with God. This cycle is not just done one time.

I want to share three quotes from Scripture on forgiveness:

The first is Psalm 130:3-4:

*If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.*

Every time we sin against someone, we are sinning against God. If I have committed one sin a week against my wife, one sin a week against my son, and one sin a year against every parishioner—perhaps that is a manageable number of sins against people, but the total number of sins against God would be enormous, even unquantifiable. If God marked our iniquities, no one could stand before Him. Just like if we mark every iniquity against one another, we'd have no relationships.

Second, we read in Psalm 103:17-18:

*But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to those who keep His covenant and remember to do His commandments.*

This means that the mercy of God is without ending. His capacity to forgive is never exceeded by our sins that need forgiveness.

Third, in Matthew 18:21-22, we read:

*"Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven."*

That's a lot of forgiveness, nearly five hundred times. Seven is seen as a number of completion in the Bible, and seventy times what is complete is basically an infinite number. If God has an infinite capacity to forgive, He is telling us that we should have an infinite capacity to forgive as well.

There is a difference between saying "I'm sorry" and "forgive me." It's like the difference between saying "I'm a little short on money" and "Can I have ten dollars?" If someone says "I'm a little short on money," the other person might just shrug their shoulders. But when a person asks "Can I have \$10," it forces the other one to participate with an answer - either "Yes" or "No". "I'm sorry" might result in a shoulder shrug or a "Don't worry about it" response.

Asking for forgiveness, actually saying the words “Can you forgive me?” requires the other person to answer “Yes, I forgive you,” or “No, but here’s the path to forgiveness.” And hopefully there is one. Notice I said *forgiveness*, not *restoration* necessarily. Of course in relationships that matter, forgiveness needs to mean restoration

There is a gesture in the Divine Liturgy, which was part of the ancient church but in modern days is restricted only to the clergy when multiple priests are celebrating, and that is the kiss of peace. Part of this gesture is that each priest grabs the hand of the other and kisses it, which requires both to bow to the other at the same time. Metaphorically speaking, this is how forgiveness ideally happens, when two people bow to the other at the same time. Imagine in a marriage, or with a child, or with a close friend, if periodically you paused and bowed to the other and kissed their hand, asking for forgiveness. Imagine if you did it at the same time.

Finally, on a personal note, I need forgiveness. There are people who read this message who I consider friends; people I have wronged through these writings; people who I have wronged in our day-to-day interactions. There are people who perhaps read these messages who I have wronged and we are no longer interacting. There are people who no longer read these messages because I have wronged them. The weight of carrying these sins, the feeling of needing forgiveness, the feeling of shame associated with sin, is a heavy weight that I carry not only through my life, but I carry it especially to the altar. I’m not perfect. Far from it. If God were to mark my iniquities, forget it.

Saint Paul writes in I Corinthians 9:25-27:

*Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Well, I do not run aimlessly, I do not box as one beating the air; but I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.*

Saint Paul sets a high bar here. Honestly, in the busy-ness and confusion of the world, I sometimes forget about the imperishable wreath. I do run seemingly without aim, and I lack self-control in many things. The added stress of all of this is going to the altar and preaching about things that I’m struggling to do - to ostensibly represent Christ even though I often fail to act in a Christ-like way. The weight of this shame becomes more crushing the older I get. It is harder and harder to go to the altar with its weight around me. Yes, I go to confession and own up before God for my sins. But even this doesn’t seem to take the weight of shame I feel when I’ve wronged another human being, especially the ones who matter. So, for what it’s worth, please forgive me, for anything I have done, anything I have failed to do, and anything I should have done. And if you are someone who I see on a regular basis, please allow me the opportunity to ask that in person.

We all have the need to be forgiven.

We all have the capacity to forgive.

**ON CONFESSION...**

*But now thus says the Lord, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are Mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior." Isaiah 43:1-3*

God does not want us to live in shame He wants us to live with joy, to feel a sense of freedom and hope. That is why the church offers us the sacrament of confession, to get rid of shame and to reclaim hope. If you've never been to confession, or it's been a while, I encourage you to make an appointment with your priest, so that you can rid yourself of shame and reclaim joy.

The best way to think of confession is to imagine your life as a book, filled with all the things you have done in your life history. There will be joyful things, challenging things, sad things, and some shameful things. The weight of sin wears on us, it weighs us down. Confession provides a way in this life to shed the weight of guilt and failure. It provides a way to own up to things we've done before God in this life, so that we won't have to own up for them at the last judgment. It gives us a way to get direction and counsel on how to change bad habits. It gives us a way to tear the pages of shame out of our book of life and to replace them with pages of repentance, ways to correct things we've done to hopefully avoid doing them in the future. I'm frequently asked what is the thing I like most about being an Orthodox Christian. And I answer "confession," not because I enjoy going to confession, but because I'm just glad we have the opportunity to shed sin, shame and guilt as we go, rather than having it accumulate for a lifetime. However I get nervous just like everyone else, because no one likes admitting their sins and shortcomings.

If you have never been to confession before or it's been a long time, the best way to approach the sacrament is to address things that are in the far past that you feel ashamed of. I often tell middle-aged people who have never gone to confession, just look back at your life and take out the big ticket items—if you drank too much in college, just say I drank too much in college - no need for specific details. Many people will have drinking, drugs, and promiscuity in their past. They aren't a present problem. Thus, own up to these things from the past, be as specific as you need to be, and then you move on from this. Next, bring to mind the things that are weighing you down at present, the current struggles, and this is where a conversation will take place about repentance, and how to work on the current challenges to bring one's life more into alignment with the way Christ wants us to live.

At the end of confession, the priest offers a prayer of absolution, which indicates to the person going to confession, that they need not have any further anxiety about the things that they have confessed, but are to go away in peace. Many people find peace and indeed go away feeling lighter. Others struggle with this - they struggle with forgiving themselves. I counter this with a few simple, logical questions:

- ◆ *Who is greater, you or God?* The answer obviously is God.
- ◆ *Do you believe that God can forgive you?* Hopefully, a person who has come to confession believes that that they can be saved, or they would not have come. For the person who is not sure if God can forgive them, the answer is that He can. He preached about forgiveness. He offered forgiveness, even during His Crucifixion.
- ◆ *If God who is greater than you can forgive you, can you forgive yourself?* If this is true. then you must be able to forgive yourself. Part of our faith in God's ability to forgive us means that we must accept His forgiveness and also forgive ourselves.

It is true that even confessing certain things doesn't always rid us of our personal guilt and shame. Sometimes this is a process that takes time. It takes time to feel washed by the grace of God.

Thankfully the church offers two other sacraments that we are to receive regularly, which aid us in being cleansed not only of sin, but of associated guilt over sin.

The sacrament of **Holy Unction**, which will be offered on Holy Wednesday, affords us the opportunity to receive cleansing through prayer and oil, and to remember the stories of great saints who at one point were great sinners.

The sacrament of **Holy Communion**, is offered by the church for sustenance. St. Peter received Holy Communion from Jesus at the last supper, and shortly after denied Him three times. The rest of the disciples received Communion and all except for John abandoned Jesus only hours later.

**Holy Communion is not the reward for the perfect but the medicine for the sick and imperfect.** That's why we approach with fear of God, a recognition of our sinfulness, but also with faith and with love, and our hope in His mercy. God knows we will fall again and again. Holy Communion hopefully gives us the strength and the motivation to get up each time we fall. We have the opportunity to receive Holy Communion every Sunday, and on feast days. During Great Lent, there are also opportunities to receive Holy Communion at the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy offered on Wednesdays and Fridays during Great Lent.

Reading the Bible is important for many reasons. I've heard the Bible called "God's love letter to us." Yes, it is filled with history, theology and guidance. It is also a great source of encouragement. There are so many instances of short passages that provide comfort and reassurance. One comes from Isaiah 43:1-3.

Isaiah was a prophet who prophesied between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. This was a time when the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel were under attack from the Assyrians and eventually were exiled to Babylon. Chapters 40-55 of Isaiah reassure the exiled Israelites that better days will be ahead, and that they have not been forgotten by God. The Prophet writes with conviction but also with reassurance:

*But now thus says the Lord, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are Mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.*

Psalm 147:4 says *He determines the number of the stars, He gives to all of them their names.* Each of us has a name that is known to God. We may cross off names of people from our list of friends, but God will not cross us off His list, at least not as long as we are alive. However, if we are numbered among the goats at the judgment (Matthew 25:31-46) we will be sent away into eternal punishment, but right now, if we are alive to read this message, there is still time to correct things. He knows our names. We are His.

You are worthy of God's love.

God knows your name.

You are His.

## Saints & Feasts

### Sunday of the Holy Cross

07 April

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.



### Sunday of St. John Climacus

14 April

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.



### Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt

21 April

The memory of this Saint is celebrated on April 1, where her life is recorded. This was a woman in all of human history who stood on air at the moment of her prayer.

Since this is during the holy Forty Days, it has been appointed for this day also, so that if we think it hard to practice a little abstinence for forty days, we might be roused by the heroism of her who fasted in the wilderness forty seven years; and also that the great loving-kindness of God, and His readiness to receive the repentant, might be demonstrated in every deed.

Her whole life is a living expression of the word said by St. Paul, *"All the more the blood of Christ, Who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, will purify your con-science from dead works to serve the living God."* (Hebrews 9:14).

St. Paul's words are Divinely inspired and verified by the Most Holy Mother of God Herself. She guided St. Mary of Egypt to repentance and Eternal Life. As much as we know about St. Mary of Egypt, we can understand that in reality, the truth is that Christ is the True God and that all of the false gods of the world then and now are idols who do not save humanity, but can truly harm us.



## Saturday of Lazarus

27 April

Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary, the friends of the Lord Jesus, had given Him hospitality and served Him many times (Luke 10:38-42 and John 12:2-3). They were from Bethany, a village of Judea. This village is situated in the eastern parts by the foothills of the Mount of Olives, about two Roman miles from Jerusalem. When Lazarus, whose name is a Hellenized form of "Eleazar," which means "God has helped," became ill some days before the saving Passion, his sisters had this report taken to our Saviour, Who was then in Galilee. Nonetheless, He tarried yet two more days until Lazarus died; then He said to His disciples, "Let us go into Judea that I might awake My friend who sleepeth." By this, of course, He meant the deep sleep of death.

On arriving at Bethany, He consoled the sisters of Lazarus, who was already four days dead. Jesus groaned in spirit and was troubled at the death of His beloved friend. He asked, "Where have ye laid his body?" and He wept over him. When He drew nigh to the tomb, He commanded that they remove the stone, and He lifted up His eyes, and giving thanks to God the Father, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." And he that had been dead four days came forth immediately, bound hand and foot with the grave clothes, and Jesus said to those standing there, "Loose him, and let him go." This is the supernatural wonder wrought by the Saviour that we celebrate on this day.

According to an ancient tradition, it is said that Lazarus was thirty years old when the Lord raised him; then he lived another thirty years on Cyprus and there reposed in the Lord. It is furthermore related that after he was raised from the dead, he never laughed till the end of his life, but that once only, when he saw someone stealing a clay vessel, he smiled and said, "Clay stealing clay." His grave is situated in the city of Kition, having the inscription: "Lazarus the four days dead and friend of Christ."

In 890 his sacred relics were transferred to Constantinople by Emperor Leo the Wise, at which time the Emperor composed his stichera for Vespers, "Wishing to behold the tomb of Lazarus . . ."



## Palm Sunday

28 April

On Sunday, five days before the Passover of the Law, the Lord came from Bethany to Jerusalem. Sending two of His disciples to bring Him a foal of an ass, He sat thereon and entered into the city. When the multitude there heard that Jesus was coming, they straight-away took up the branches of palm trees in their hands, and went forth to meet Him. Others spread their garments on the ground, and yet others cut branches from the trees and strewed them in the way that Jesus was to pass; and all of them together, especially the children, went before and after Him, crying out: "Hosanna: Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel" (John 12:13). This is the radiant and glorious festival of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem that we celebrate today.

The branches of the palm trees symbolize Christ's victory over the devil and death. The word Hosanna means "Save, I pray," or "Save, now." The foal of an ass, and Jesus' sitting thereon, and the fact that this animal was untamed and considered unclean according to the Law, signified the former uncleanness and wildness of the nations, and their subjection thereafter to the holy Law of the Gospel.



## Holy Monday

29 April

The Holy Passion of our Savior begins today, presenting Joseph the all-comely as a prefiguring of Christ. He was the eleventh son of Jacob, and his first son by Rachel; because he was so beloved of his father, his own brethren came to envy him and cast him into a pit. Later they sold him to foreigners for thirty pieces of silver, who later sold him again in Egypt. Because of his virtue, his master gave him much authority in governing his house; because he was fair of countenance, his master's wife sought to draw him into sin with her; because of his chastity, he refused her, and through her slanders was cast into prison. Finally, he was led forth again with great glory and was honored as a king. He became lord over all Egypt and a provider of wheat for all the people. Through all this, he typifies in himself the betrayal, Passion, death, and glorification of our Lord

To the commemoration of Patriarch Joseph is added also the narration concerning the fig tree, which on this day was cursed and subsequently dried up because of its unfruitfulness. It portrayed the Jewish synagogue, which had not produced the fruit demanded of it - obedience to God and faith in Him. It was stripped of all spiritual grace by means of the curse.



## Holy Tuesday

30 April

Today we bring to mind the parable of the ten virgins, which our Savior related as He was coming to His Passion. This parable teaches us that the accomplishment of the great work of virginity should not make us careless in other matters, especially in almsgiving, wherewith the lamp of virginity is made radiant.

Furthermore, it teaches us that we should not be remiss about the end of our life, but should be prepared for it at every moment, like the wise virgins, so that we may meet the Bridegroom, lest He come suddenly and the doors of the heavenly bride chamber be shut, and we also, like the foolish virgins, hear that dread sentence: *"Amen, I say unto you, I know you not"* (Matthew 25:1-13).





































THE MORE YOU PAY ATTENTION TO THE CUP ON THE LEFT,  
THE LESS YOU CARE ABOUT THE CUP ON THE RIGHT





# Orthodox Calendar

## April 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	 1 4:30 Greek School	 2	 3 6pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7pm Philoptochos Union Station	 4 4:30 Greek School	 5 6pm Salutations to the Holy Theotokos	 6
 7 <b>Sunday of the Holy Cross</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	 8 4:30 Greek School	 9 10:30 VIPs 7pm Parish Concl 7pm Philoptochos Board Mtg	 10 6pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	 11 4:30 Greek School	 12 6pm Salutations to the Holy Theotokos	 13
 14 <b>Sunday of St. John Climacus</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 12:15 Hope/Joy Meeting 12:15 GOYA Meeting Indoor & Live-stream	 15 4:30 Greek School	 16	 17 6pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	 18 4:30 Greek School	 19 6pm Akathist Hymn	 20
 21 <b>Sunday of Mary of Egypt</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	 22 4:30 Greek School	 23 <b>St. George</b> Liturgy at Saint George, Downey 7pm Philoptochos General Mtg	 24 6pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	 25 4:30 Greek School	 26	 27 <b>Saturday of Lazarus</b> 9am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Breakfast after liturgy
 28 <b>Palm Sunday</b> 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Luncheon to follow 6pm Bridegroom Serv. Indoor & Live-stream	 29 <b>Holy Monday</b> 6pm Bridegroom Serv.	 30 <b>Holy Tuesday</b> 6pm Bridegroom Serv. Hymn of Kassiani				
		<b>Strict Fast</b> 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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TIME SENSITIVE

POSTAGE  
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.*

ORTHODOX CHURCH FATHERS



True fasting lies in rejecting evil,  
holding one's tongue,  
suppressing one's hatred and  
banishing one's lust, evil words,  
lying and betrayal of vows.

St. Basil the Great