

# The Voice of Saint Anthony

## November 2025

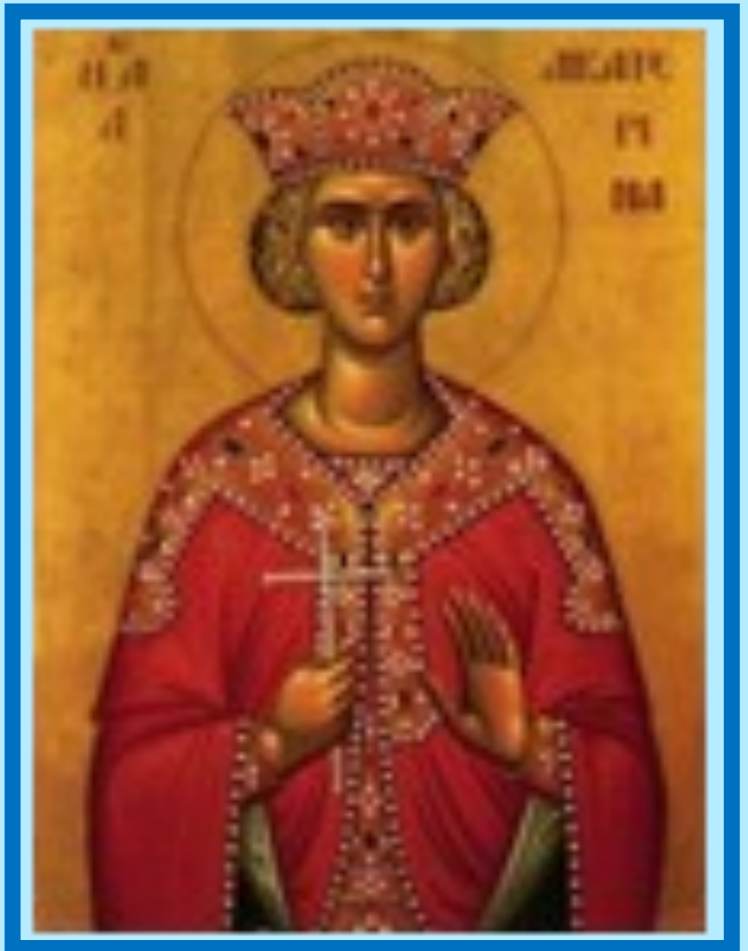
### Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

Reverend Father Peter Stratos

778 S. Rosemead Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107

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

|                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Cosmas & Damianos         | 1 November  |
| Archangel Michael         | 8 November  |
| Saint Nektarios           | 9 November  |
| Saint John Chrysostom     | 13 November |
| Saint Philip              | 14 November |
| Nativity Fast Begins      | 15 November |
| Saint Matthew             | 16 November |
| Saint Gregory             | 17 November |
| Entrance of the Theotokos | 21 November |
| Saint Katherine           | 25 November |
| Saint Andrew              | 30 November |



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**Saint Katherine  
the Great Martyr**

**25 November**

**DEADLINE for DECEMBER Newsletter is TUESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER**

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

## Message from Father Peter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Let us Pray...

*Let us rejoice!  
Let us celebrate with songs!  
The revelation of Christ is made manifest:  
The preaching of the prophets  
Having received their fulfillment.  
For Christ of whom they spoke,  
Foretelling His appearance in the flesh,  
Is to be born in a holy cave  
and to be placed as a babe in a manger.  
With uprightness of mind  
let us lift up a joyful prayer,  
celebrating the coming of the Lord.  
O Christ, our God, glory to You!*

Adapted Vesper Hymn – Fore feast of the Birth of Christ

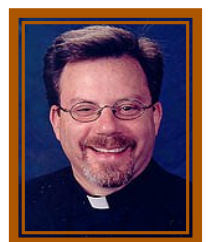
For forty days the Church seeks to prepare us for the true meaning of Christmas. Most of us need time to prepare for special events. It takes time to plan for a trip, a vacation, for entering college, for a baptism or wedding. We need time to anticipate, to prepare for the practical aspects, to think about their significance for us. With adequate preparation we enjoy these events much more.

During the liturgical year the Church has several periods of preparation prior to great feast days. The first such period begins on **November 15**, the **Christmas Fast**, which is not as strict as the Great Lent prior to Easter. For forty days we anticipate and prepare for the coming (**Advent**) of Christ into the world and into our lives.

Some practical advice for Advent:

As part of your preparation for Christmas.. resolve to give closer attention to the Word of God by reading for example, one chapter a day from the Gospels for the forty days of Advent. You might read the Gospels of Mark and Luke which together have forty chapters. Getting to know more about the life of Christ will make you appreciate more deeply the significance of His coming which we celebrate on Christmas. In your daily prayers include thanksgiving for the Lord's coming, invite Him to be at the center of your life and let your heart leap for joy as you meditate on God's gift of His Son to the world.

In Christ,  
Fr. Peter



## THE GOALS OF THE NATIVITY FAST & ADVENT

**1. SEEING GOD.** The first thing our church-traditions are helping us work on right now is our vision. More specifically, to behold or “see God” being born to us in Bethlehem. For this, my heart, mind, and body need a house-cleaning. The LORD said: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” The fasting-discipline, including extra attentiveness and tender-loving-care of my spiritual and physical health, helps me to re-focus on the presence of the tender-loving-and-caring of God in my life.



**2. SPIRITUAL AWAKENING.** I'm being awakened from my indifference and complacency to the Advent or coming of Christ into my world, and into my heart amidst the concerns and fears that creep into me when I lose focus, lose God-reliance, and get self-reliant and self-centered. This spiritual awakening to God, others, and myself is helped through:

**3. HUNGER & THIRST.** The kind of hunger and thirst that the Prophets had for the coming of the Messiah, is one I re-embrace when we celebrate the Prophets and immerse ourselves in their prophecies this season. I turn away from my not-healthy desires and aspirations, either physical or spiritual, which infect me with the “More” Disease: always demanding “more” and never satisfied. This season I let myself join the blessed, those who are satisfied: “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”

**4. JOY & PEACE.** Joy takes work. Peace takes work. Ultimately, the bit of daily, consistent “work” on my spiritual and physical health this season frees me to experience true joy and peace, coming to all of us from an unexpected, unassuming place, a little cave in Bethlehem. I need to begin in my own little “cave.” Let me take up this work today, as I clean house, that I may see more clearly the abundant Light pouring out on all of us from the most unexpected places: a cave in Bethlehem.

# STUDIES IN THE FAITH

Fall Session, 2025

October 06<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>

Our text for the 2025 Studies in the Faith class will be:

*The Orthodox Faith, "Spirituality" Volume 4*, by Fr. Thomas Hopko.

Our class for this fall, will be taught over 8 sessions: Monday evenings: 6:30 – 7:45pm.

These informative Zoom classes will serve as an excellent introduction to the Orthodox Faith for those interested in learning about the Orthodox Church. This series of classes will also provide an inspiring enrichment and review for practicing Orthodox Christians.

\*Reading each week's assigned chapter and participating in class discussions is encouraged to ensure that the sessions become an exciting and meaningful experience for all participants. For those interested in this fall's class please email Fr. Peter: [frpeter@saint-anthonys.org](mailto:frpeter@saint-anthonys.org)

I will respond with the Zoom link to logon.

To purchase this book:

- ♦ Google SVS Press
- ♦ Find a Book tab at the top right of page
- ♦ Volume 4 *Spirituality*
- ♦ Cost \$23. (Please order your copy as soon as possible and begin reading).

## CHAPTERS TO BE DISCUSSED

Introductory Session – Monday October 06<sup>th</sup>

Chapter One: "Orthodox Spirituality"

Session 2 – Monday October 13<sup>th</sup>

Chapter Two: "The Beatitudes"

Session 3 – Monday October 20<sup>th</sup>

Chapter Three: "The Virtues"

Session 4 – Monday October 27<sup>th</sup>

Chapter Four: "The Greatest Virtue is Love"

Session 5 – Monday November 03<sup>rd</sup>

Chapter Five: "Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving"

Session 6 – Monday November 10<sup>th</sup>

Chapter Six: "Sexuality, Marriage, and Family"

Session 7 – Monday November 17<sup>th</sup>

Chapter Seven: "Sickness, Suffering, and Death"

Session 8 – Monday November 24<sup>th</sup>

Chapter Eight: "The Kingdom of Heaven"



## Stewardship

**2025 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)*

**2025**

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 &amp; 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 &amp; 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, 2025

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

**In response to God's blessings, I/we pledge a 2025 offering of:**

**My Total Commitment for 2025: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

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

☐ Weekly at \$ \_\_\_\_\_/week

☐ Monthly at \$ \_\_\_\_\_/month ☐ Annually

Contact the Church office to set up easy recurring electronic payments  
-OR- set up your own recurring giving at [saint-anthonys.churchgiving.com](http://saint-anthonys.churchgiving.com)

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



# 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 \_\_\_\_\_

***Christ is Risen!  
Truly He is Risen!***

**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



2025 PARISH COUNCIL

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Perry Vidalakis    | President          |
| Pete Gallanis      | 1st Vice President |
| Joe Akrotirianakis | 2nd Vice President |
| Kosta Papavasiliou | Secretary          |
| Tashia Vagenas     | Treasurer          |
| Tony Christopoulos | Assist. Treasurer  |

Christian Balas  
Tom Grafos  
Louie Kades  
Pete Katsafados  
Jonathan Nassos  
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:  
Krystina Vagenas

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

Kindergarten, First:  
Elena Tsianos, Theoni Vagenas

Second, Third:  
Sophia Syrengelas, Andrianna Lareau

Fourth, & Fifth:  
Mary Udria & Athena Serban

Middle School:  
Polly Vagenas & Chris Syrengelas

High School:  
Presvytera Aida Stratos

## PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

## ADDITIONAL MINISTRIES

### Executive Board

#### **President**

Nicolette Fuerst

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

Liz Skandale

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

Carolina Kokoris

Sophia Syrengelas

#### **Corresponding Secretary**

Tanya Christodoulelis

#### **Recording Secretary**

Fontaine Malisos

#### **Treasurer**

Maria Kypreos

#### **Assistant Treasurer**

Mary Dewar

#### **Philoptochos Advisor**

Judith Din

#### **Spiritual Advisor**

Father Peter Stratos

### Board of Directors

#### **Beautification**

Connie Becker

Andrea Patzakis

#### **Community Outreach**

Mary Dewar

#### **Fellowship**

Mary Udria

Noula Serban

#### **Operation Classroom**

Helen Skandale

Lisa Xanthos

#### **Publicity**

Christine Pappas

#### **Scholarship**

Presbytera Aida Statros

#### **Sunshine and Visitation**

Maria Hronas

#### **Union Station**

Maria Kokoris



### **Acolytes**

### **Bible Study**

### **Bookstore**

### **Bowling**

### **Golf Tournament**

### **GOYA**

### **GOYA Basketball**

### **GOYA Volleyball**

### **Greek Dance Groups**

### **Greek Festival**

### **Greek Language**

### **JOY/HOPE**

### **Myrrh Bearers**

### **Oratorical Festival**

### **Prayer Shawls**

### **Psalter Group**

### **Vacation Bible School**

### **VIPs**

Pres Aida Stratos

Fr. Peter Stratos

Christiana Kontaxis  
Michael Kontaxis

Anthia Drulias Lucas

Jimmy Christos

Anthia Drulias Lucas  
Maria Katsas Gittings  
Polly Vagenas

Pana Gelt

Anthia Lucas  
Pana Gelt

Nikole Zoumberakis

Christian Balas

Anastasia McClain

Irene Albeck

Irene Albeck

Pres Aida Stratos

Maria Kypreos

Fr. Peter Stratos

Sophia Syrengelas  
Mary Udria

Irene Albeck



## Parish Council



### HOLY COMMUNION PROCEDURE

For the benefit of our Sunday School students, their teachers and the **TIMELY** start of their Sunday School Classes please all the children to receive Holy Communion first.

- ♦ Please remain standing while following the directions of the ushers.
- ♦ The ushers will release the children by pew from Front to Back.
- ♦ Only parents of the smallest, youngest Sunday School children, who need assistance, should receive Holy Communion with their children.
- ♦ If you are not in a pew when Holy Communion begins, please quietly find a spot in the back rows. Your children will be released in turn.
- ♦ Please do not attempt to send your children down the side aisles to the front alone or down the center aisle.
- ♦ After all children have received, the ushers will release the adults, again from the front pews.
- ♦ Please cooperate with our ushers. Please do not ask to be allowed to proceed ahead of others or enter the center aisle ahead of the pews in front of you.
- ♦ When receiving Holy Communion, make the Sign of the Cross, state your name (baptismal name) and naturally receive as if being fed.
- ♦ Non-Orthodox Christians may not receive Holy Communion, but they may receive the Holy Bread at the end of the service.
- ♦ All Orthodox Christians must be spiritually prepared to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Please see your priest if you have any questions.





## No Sunday School Classes 30 November

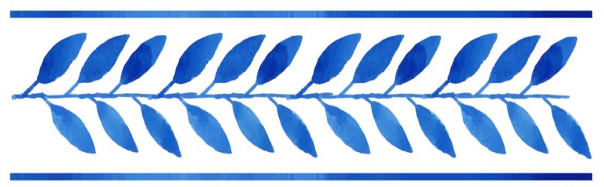
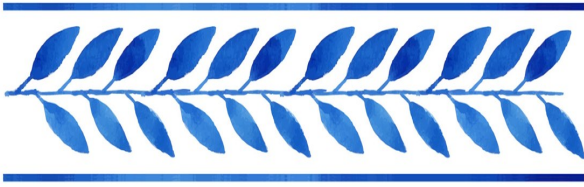
Our new Sunday School year had a strong and positive start and we are well underway in our routines and curriculum. Beginning our year with our Youth Ministry Sunday kick-off set a positive tone for our program as we welcomed our students back with enthusiasm and celebration. The momentum has been going strong, as we have had high attendance each week and even quite a few new students join our program!

We continue our curriculum as we focus on the Book of Genesis in relation to our year theme:  
*Like Stars in the Heavens; Created by God, Called to Shine.*

Each Sunday, our students study a passage from Genesis with the focus being on who they were meant to be as Orthodox Christians and how they shine like stars in the heavens when they follow God's way. Under the care of our wonderfully creative and faithful teachers, important discussions accompanied with fun crafts and activities are taking place in our classrooms each week. Our students are engaged in the learning and excited about learning about their faith.



## Youth & Young Adults



### GOYA NEWS

We've had two events this month. We had a get together at Handel's and Chipotle to enjoy some fellowship and also many attended Knott's Scary Farm!

Thank you to our lovely mom chaperones!

**Save the date** for our **Friendsgiving Lock-In** on Tuesday, **November 25th!**

GOYAns will have a potluck Thanksgiving dinner, and then stay overnight in the church hall, playing games, hide and go seek, etc!

**Next meeting – Sunday, November 9th at 12:15pm** in the high school classroom. See you there!

If your child has not been signed up for GOYA in the past, please click on the QR code on the next page.





2025-2026 GOYA SIGN UP

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

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

# Philoptochos

## Good Works

### **EATON FIRE DISASTER RELIEF SUPPORT**

Philoptochos has been working to provide support and assistance to those who have been affected by the Eaton Fire.

Recovery Relief Buckets are available to anyone who has been displaced or is recovering from the after-effects of the fire.

Buckets contain essential cleaning supplies to help you clean and neutralize the lingering ashes and residue of the fire.

Contact a Board member if you or someone you know needs a Disaster Relief Bucket.

Philoptochos is here to help those affected by the Eaton Fire.

If you need assistance or aid, please let us know.  
The Army of Agape is here for you.

Questions: Judith Din (626) 676-1240 or [jnda810@gmail.com](mailto:jnda810@gmail.com)

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

USHS is in need of sack lunch donations. The prepared lunches can be dropped off at the Adult Center (412 S. Raymond Ave., Pasadena) from 8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Please, email [volunteer@unionstationhs.org](mailto:volunteer@unionstationhs.org) to schedule delivery.

Philoptochos prepares a nutritious dinner, funded 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 welcome your donations to help offset our costs of large aluminum pans with lids. We invite you to consider helping us feed the needy by making a contribution towards this ministry. ***We are most grateful for your generous 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    | <a href="mailto:mcmg2a@aol.com">mcmg2a@aol.com</a>                     |
| Maria Kokoris   | <a href="mailto:nmkokoris@gmail.com">nmkokoris@gmail.com</a>           |
| Christina Kades | <a href="mailto:christinekades@gmail.com">christinekades@gmail.com</a> |

***"Break your bread for the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
If you see a naked man, cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh."***

Isaiah 58:7

## ***"CHRISTMAS FOR THE KIDS" In Conjunction with Friends In Deed***

Once again, Philoptochos and the St. Anthony community will partner with Friends In Deed to provide Christmas presents for low income youth in the Pasadena area.

Your participation in this program is very easy:

1. Individuals and families interested in donating Christmas presents for these youth should stop by our Christmas Wish List Table after liturgy. The children's names and their lists will be available in mid-November.
2. Select a name of a child and their wish list. The list is meant only as a guide; the number of gifts you would like to donate is up to the you.
3. Place the unwrapped gifts in a Christmas gift bag with the child's name attached.
4. Gifts must be brought to the Church by **Sunday, December 14, 2025**. If possible, please include gift receipt. When giving a gift card, please include the amount somewhere on the card.
5. Cash donations are welcome if you wish to participate but do not want to do the shopping.

Please contact Judith Din with any questions:

(626)676-1240 cell or [jnda810@gmail.com](mailto:jnda810@gmail.com).

Thank you for supporting the youth in the Pasadena area.

## **Community Happenings**

### ***Blessing of the Animals in Memory of Stephanie Zanglis Soewers***

This special prayer service took place outside the Trinity Ballroom on a sunny Saturday, October 18th. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship and tasty treats, especially the dogs. We appreciate the support from all who attended. Thank you for the donation of blankets, towels and cash which has been donated to the Pasadena Humane Society. Many thanks to Judith Din who continued this ministry started by our Philoptochos Sister Stephanie Zanglis Soewers in 2022. We are appreciative that Stephanie's family was able to join us and continue her good work.





### *Philoptochos Kicks Off the Year in Style!*

Our **“Back to School – Helping Others 101”** general meeting was a wonderful success, with more than 30 members and friends joining in fellowship. The bright red tables and school-themed centerpieces set a cheerful tone, and the delicious Luna Grill dinner, hors d’oeuvres, and desserts made the evening even sweeter. President Nicolette Fuerst shared updates and upcoming plans, while everyone enjoyed a lively Philoptochos trivia quiz with prizes.

All the school supplies used for our décor were donated to Villa Esperanza—making this fun and spirited night one that truly celebrated giving back and community.



## Upcoming Philoptochos Events



Join Philoptochos and friends for our Benefit Luncheon, **A TIMELESS CHRISTMAS**, Saturday, December 6, 2025. Proceeds will benefit **SAN GABRIEL VALLEY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**, a very worthy local organization who help families rebuild homes affected by the Altadena fire as well as other Philoptochos charities in our community, Metropolis and National.

We hope you support our good works by making a reservation, becoming a Star Donor, purchasing a Grand Awards raffle ticket, shopping at our amazing Christmas boutique and specialty vendors, and purchasing tasty goodies from Santa's Kitchen.

*Make your reservation early since seating is limited. Fully paid tables of ten are reserved on a first come, first served basis. Contact Nicole Schulman, Reservation Chair, to make your reservations by phone.*

For Information and Reservations, contact

Reservation Chair – Nicole Schulman: [stanthonybenefit@gmail.com](mailto:stanthonybenefit@gmail.com)

or go to the event website link – <https://stanthonybenefit.square.site/>

*(Online reservations will be available for purchase Monday, November 3 on our event website)*

For Donations to the Star Program, contact

Star Program Chair – Mary Dewar: [philostarprogram@gmail.com](mailto:philostarprogram@gmail.com)

or donate directly using this link [The Star Program](#)



Event Website

*Reservations and Star Program deadlines are Thursday, November 20, 2025.*

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## Upcoming Philoptochos Meetings

2025 Christmas Benefit Planning Meeting – Monday, November 3, 2025 – 7:00 PM – Trinity Hall.

Board Meeting – Wednesday, November 5, 2025 – 7:00 PM

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## Upcoming Scholarship Opportunities in 2026

**Attention High School Seniors** – Philoptochos of Saint Anthony Scholarship Applications will be available in Spring 2026. Applications will be open for graduating seniors who are active members of our parish.

**Patzakis Scholarships for Nursing and Medical Studies** – Applications will be available next year in March and due in May. Any student pursuing a degree in nursing, medicine, healthcare profession, or dentistry and is a member in our St. Anthony church community may apply.

Philoptochos wishes to support our young people in their academic advancement.

Additional announcements forthcoming in future Voice newsletters.

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## Upcoming Metropolis Events

**LIGHT THE PATH** – The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos invites you to attend Light the Path, a Christmas Luncheon, on **Sunday, November 16, 2025** at 2:00 p.m. at The Olympic Club in San Francisco. Proceeds from this festive holiday event will benefit the Bishop Anthony Philoptochos Student Aid Endowment Fund, (BAPSAEF), which provides assistance to students and seminarians enrolled at Hellenic College and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, as well as their families.

Mark your calendar and plan to attend! For more information and to donate, please visit the [Metropolis of SF Philoptochos](#) website .



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

**PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP FORM**

☐ 2025 Philoptochos Membership      ☐ 2025 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          |      |



**2025 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

To register for membership online, click here:

<https://stanthonypiloptochos.square.site/product/become-a-philoptochos-member/58>



## COFFEE HOUR FELLOWSHIP



### *Host a Coffee Hour*

**Celebrate a Name Day, Birthday, Anniversary, Loved One, or as a Family Activity!**

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 Coffee Hour, you are assisting in providing a delicious snack while we spend time with our church family. Your fellow parishioners will be grateful for the snack and fellowship.

#### **Hosting is easy:**

1. **Sign-up on the poster located in the Parish Hall or Church Office.** If you would like your name or event included in the weekly bulletin, notify the Church Office by the Wednesday prior to the date chosen at 626.449.6943 or by email at [office@saint-anthonys.org](mailto:office@saint-anthonys.org)

*For Memorials, please notify the Church Office by the Wednesday prior to the date chosen at 626.449.6943 or by email at [office@saint-anthonys.org](mailto:office@saint-anthonys.org)*

2. **Bring snack for 70 adults & 30 kids** – See reverse side for suggestions and quantities
3. **Bring snack items plated on serving trays/bowls ready to serve by 10:00AM on your chosen day.** (Serving tables and coffee/water station are set up by 10:00AM)
4. **Clean up snack tables and remove all personal items** – Our dedicated Parish caretaker, Carlos, will assist on the day of the event, as needed, but he is not responsible for the set up or clean up of the snack tables. Please remove any leftover food

Coffee, sugar, creamer, paper plates, plastic utensils, paper cups and napkins used for coffee hour are underwritten by Parish Council & Philoptochos. Please consider donating these items to help offset the cost.

***All donations made during Coffee Hour go toward the Church Altar Fund to provide the liturgical needs for our St. Anthony Parish***

## *Host a Coffee Hour*

### Food Suggestions & Quantities

100 people – 70 adults & 30 children

Costco, Smart & Final or Super King are recommended for most items. Specialty items can be found at any Greek or Armenian market

Please have all items brought to the Parish Hall ready-to-serve on platters/bowls by 10AM. preferably disposable. If not disposable, please remember to take them home

Tables, Tablecloths, Coffee, Cream, Sugar, Paper Plates, Napkins, Cups and Water will be set up by 10AM

Paper goods are underwritten by both Parish Council & Philoptochos. Please consider donating these items to help offset the cost

Our dedicated Parish caretaker, Carlos, is responsible only for the setup of water and coffee. He should not be expected to set-up the snack or cleanup any remaining food or serving pieces.

Any questions, please contact Tanya Mallis-Christodoulelis @ 626-379-2304

| QTY          | ITEM                           | COMMENTS                                                   |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
|              | Mini Bagels or Bagels          | 100 Mini whole or 6 bags of 12 Regular Sliced, cut in half |
| 1 Jumbo Jar  | Peanut Butter                  | Served in 4 paper/plastic bowls                            |
| 1-48oz Jar   | Jelly                          | Served in 2 paper/plastic bowls                            |
| 1 Jumbo Jar  | Nutella                        | Served in 2 paper/plastic bowls                            |
|              | <b>OR</b>                      |                                                            |
| 100          | Mini Deli Sandwiches           | Assorted Meats, Tuna, Veggie                               |
|              | <b>OR</b>                      |                                                            |
| 5lbs         | Greek Cheese                   | Feta or Kefalotyri, sliced                                 |
| 4lbs         | Greek Olives                   | 1-4lb Tub or equivalent                                    |
|              | Hummus                         | Homemade (1 lg can chickpeas) or 3-34oz tubs Costco Hummus |
| 4            | Pita Bread Bags of 12          | Pita - cut into quarters / Baguettes - sliced              |
|              | <b>OR</b>                      |                                                            |
| 2-3          | Assorted Salads                | Potato Salad, Greek Salad, Tabouli                         |
| 2            | Assorted Vegetable Trays       |                                                            |
|              | <b>AND (Choose 2)</b>          |                                                            |
| 100          | Cookies                        | Biscotti, Oreos, Assorted                                  |
| 4            | Bundt Cakes or similar         | Cut into thin slices                                       |
| 50-100       | Muffins / Pastries / Donuts    | 50 Large, cut in half or 100 Small                         |
| 6 containers | Seedless Grapes                | Cleaned and cut into small bunches                         |
| 3 – 5lb bags | Tangerines                     |                                                            |
| 2            | Assorted Fruit or Veggie Trays |                                                            |



**FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA**  
 Facebook: St. Anthony Philoptochos  
 Instagram: stanthonypiloptochos

With the successful GreekFest 2025 and a well-attended luncheon outing at the Old Spaghetti Factory behind us, the VIPs found themselves back in the Community Center for our October meeting. President Irene Albeck called the meeting to order followed by the opening prayer led by Staurula Kiotas.

Irene reported that our September outing to the Old Spaghetti Factory was very well attended by 37 of our members. She then detailed the VIP participation in GreekFest 2025 which included our \$500.00 donation along with the tireless efforts of many of our members who assisted in food preparations, pastry baking, kitchen and booth duties.

Moving on to a preview of coming attractions, Irene said that our traditional **November meeting** and Thanksgiving potluck feast would be very special this year as it would fall on **November 11th** which happens to be Veterans Day. The plan is to show a video presentation that was originally provided some years ago by our Philoptochos during a post-liturgy coffee hour that honored our parish and family members who had served our nation in the armed forces. This will help us to remember and express our deep gratitude to those who have worn the uniform with honor and thank all who have served in defense of our freedoms.

On **December 16th** at 11:00 AM, the VIPs are once again invited to the home of **Julie and Dino Ballas** for some holiday cheer and hospitality. Members are asked to e-mail **Jim Hronas** at **[jhronas@aol.com](mailto:jhronas@aol.com)** if they need a ride or are able to provide transportation for members to the Ballas residence.

Judie Christopoulos will once again assist in planning for the ever-popular outing to see the holiday production at Citrus College. More information on this event will be provided as we get closer to the Christmas advent season.

Irene suggested that as a part of the VIP Community Outreach, we support the **Pasadena City College Pantry**. Envelopes were provided for members to purchase gift cards for restaurants close to the campus. If food or personal care donations are preferred, members are asked to bring these items to church for subsequent transfer to the PCC Pantry. Monetary donations by check should be made out to Pasadena City College with the words "FOOD PANTRY" on the memo line. All envelopes should be brought to the Ballas residence on December 16th.

**Birthday greetings** are extended to our October celebrants, including **Elizabeth Demopulos, Chris Giannoulis, Evelyn Kefalas, Vivian Mauredakis, Pat Pastis, and Tashia Vagenas**.

As Jim and "crafty" Maria Hronas were visiting their grandchildren in San Diego during this meeting, Nicole Schulman graciously shepherded the members through a "Maria designed" holiday keepsake art session to produce a votive candle with a Thanksgiving theme. The pictures on the next page show some enthusiastic participants and their finished products. Many thanks Nicole for helping out with this activity.

We look forward to a well attended meeting for our **Veterans Day Remembrance and Thanksgiving Potluck Feast** to be held on **November 11th** in the Community Center.

Jim Hronas

VIP Communications



## Community News & more...

### Saint Anthony Bowling League



St. Anthony Bowling League began their Fall season on Thursday, September 4, at Bowlero Lanes in Pasadena. All bowlers were very excited to return to the lanes and catch-up with new and old friends. This season we are happy to have 33 bowlers comprising 11 teams. Bowling will be 12 weeks and conclude on Thursday, November 20, 2025.

After a brief hiatus, the league welcomed back Brian Gittings, and our friends Alice Jacquez, and Rick Nassif. We were also happy to welcome new bowlers, Maria, Max, Dena Ibrahimzade, and Maria Papavasiliou. On the injured list this season are, Adoni Dimopoulos and Andrea Lappas.

#### Returning bowlers include:

Sophia Angelos, Katherine Boukidis, Georgia Tripodes, Pete Bissias, Kosta Papavasiliou, Chrissa Syrus and Parviz Mobayen, Virginia and Vincent Lappas, Joyce and Jim Nichols, Jim Horaites, Lee Anton, Mary and Andrew Dewer, Ted Dupas, Cleo Kades, Elene Kalivas, Nick Paziouros, Randy Soewers, John Caire, Anthia Lucas and Maria, Chris and Elleni Conley, from St. Paul in Irvine!

As we enter the 9<sup>th</sup> week of our 12-week season.. standings are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Team 8: Peter Bissias, Virginia Lappas, Randy Soewers
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Team 12, 'Livin' on A Spare:' Joyce Nichols, Ted Dupas, Chris Conley
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Team 4, 'Hail Mary,' John Caire, Mary and Andrew Dewer
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place Team 1, 'Holy Rollers,' Kathrine Boukidis, Georgia Tripodes, Brian Gittings
- 5<sup>th</sup> Place Team 2, 'Roll Tide,' Chrissa, Syrus, Parviz Mobayen,
- 6<sup>th</sup> Place Team 9, 'Bowl Movements,' Anthia Lucas, Jim Nichols, Alice Jacquez
- 7<sup>th</sup> Place Team 6, Cleo Kades, Elene Kalivas, Nick Paziouros
- 8<sup>th</sup> Place Team 3, Maria, Max and Dena Ibrahimzade
- 9<sup>th</sup> Place Team 10, 'Seven,' Lee Anton, Maria Conley, Rick Nassif
- 10<sup>th</sup> Place Team 5, Elleni Conley, Kosta and Maria Papavasiliou
- 11<sup>th</sup> Place Team 11, Sophia Angelos, Jim Horaites, Vincent Lappas

Photos and final standings will be reported in next month's Voice.



## A Night of Thanks: Greek Fest Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

On Friday, October 17, the St. Anthony community came together for a fun and heartfelt evening to celebrate the people who make the Pasadena Greek Festival possible — our amazing volunteers.

This year's executive committee included:

Christos Vagenas, Louis Kades, Alex Tarter, Vicki Kades, Thanasi Papoulios, Nikolitsa Vagenas, Theodora Trigonis, Mary Tio, Eleni Vagenas, Tereza Giannoulis, Katherine Boukidis, Kosta Papavasiliou, Mark Nastri, Alex Gallagher, Yianni Levandis, Yianni Kades, and Thanos Mitsis.

After recognizing the committee, the spotlight turned to the Booth Captains:

- Anthia Lucas – Cash Room
- Jimmy Pappas – Entrance
- Christina Zoumas – Agora Booth
- Katherine Boukidis – Information Booth & Raffle Sales
- Michael Kontaxis & Liam McCann – Church Tours
- Dr. Jonathan Nassos & Family – Kids Zone
- Cleo Kades & Joyce Mavredakis-Nichols – Loukoumades
- Alexandro Romios & Panagioti Giannoulis – Feta Fries / Calamari
- Johanna Koulos & Team – Pastries & Baking
- Elleni Ioannou – Pastries / Greek Dance
- Jimmy Kypreos – Lamb Chops
- Kosta Papavasiliou – Sports Bar & Raffle
- Mark Nastri – Santorini Wine Bar & Wine Tasting
- Michael & Christiana Kontaxis – Bookstore
- Nick Begakis & Christian Balas – Gyro Booth
- Nikole Zoumberakis – Greek Dance
- Pete Katsafados – Souvlakia
- Sia Soris & Team – Head Chef – Kitchen
- Helen Skandale & Team – Pre-Festival Cooking
- Ted Tarazi – Yiayia's Kouzina – Front of House
- Teresa Argueta & Stacy Papavasiliou – Frappe

One of the loudest rounds of applause went to the Kitchen and Baking Team, who cook, bake, and prepare for *months* leading up to the festival. They are truly the heart of the food that brings everyone back year after year.

The evening also highlighted the new generation of leaders who've stepped up over the past few years. Christo Vagenas and Christian Balas were recognized for helping build a stronger committee structure, while new faces like Alex Gallagher, Alex Tarter, Theodora Trigonis, Mary Tio, and Nikolitsa Vagenas helped improve key areas of operations, marketing, and volunteer coordination. Their teamwork allowed others to focus on specific projects — like securing major sponsorships, creating the Festival Ad Book (thank you, Tereza Giannoulis — who finished it in her *ninth month of pregnancy!*), and enhancing community outreach. Thanks to this expanded team, the festival continues to grow in professionalism, creativity, and community spirit. There is an open invitation to everyone that wants to be part of this group in 2026!

A big part of the evening's message focused on keeping families connected to the church. The festival isn't just about food and music — it's about building friendships, deepening faith, and creating a welcoming space for everyone. When new people get involved, our community gets stronger.

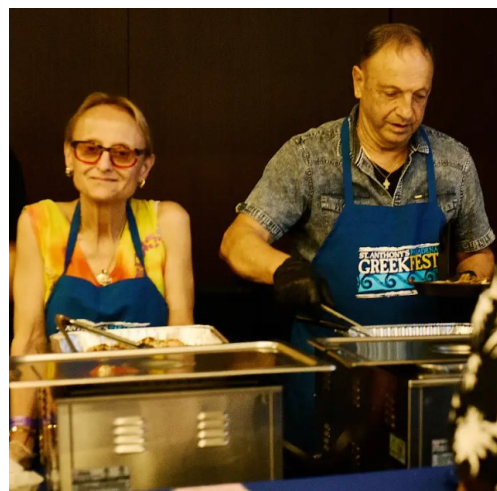
Guests were also treated to a video presentation featuring highlights from this year's Festival — a mix of photos and social media promo clips that captured the energy and excitement of the weekend.

After the video, Christo Vagenas gave a financial overview of the festival, sharing detailed booth-by-booth results and the overall revenue and profit numbers.

A few lighthearted “unofficial awards” added some fun to the night:

- Alex Tarter, “It’s Handled” Award – for fixing problems before anyone noticed.
- Helen Skandale, “Philoxenia Spirit” Award – for sharing genuine Greek hospitality with everyone she meets.
- The Pastry Booth Young Ladies, “Next Generation” Award – for their energy and teamwork.
- Ricky (Christo’s college roommate), “Adopted Greek” Award – for diving into the chaos with grace and humor.
- Jim Christos and Yianni Levandis, “Festival MVP” Award – for going above and beyond before, during and after the event.

The evening wrapped up with one final toast to the volunteers who make it all happen. It was a night filled with gratitude, laughter, and a shared sense of purpose — a reminder that when we work together, our community grows stronger, closer, and more connected.



## Pasadena Greek Fest Photos









**Southern California  
Cretans' Association**



*celebrates*  
**75**  
*years*

**Saturday, November 15, 2025**

**Appetizers 5:30 pm    Traditional Cretan Dinner 7:00 pm**

*St. Anthony Greek Orthodox Church Trinity Ballroom*

**788 South Rosemead Boulevard  
Pasadena, California 91107**

*Reservations*

**Bobby Zoumberakis (562) 413-3968    John Koulakis (818) 434-4030  
socialcretans@gmail.com**

**Adults - \$90.00 (presale by October 15th) \$100.00 after  
Youth/Students 21 and under - \$45.00 (presale by October 15th) \$50.00 after  
Children 5 and under - free**



**Featuring live music from Crete by:**

**Nikos Manioudakis  
Miros Niotakis  
Giorgos Pashalidis  
Manolis Giatromanolakis**

**SCAN ME**



**RESERVE NOW**



# Pasadena Rose Bowl AHEPA #373

## 2025 Christmas Party

Honoring **Irene Albeck** on her exemplary service to the Pasadena Greek community with her leadership in Christian education including Sunday School, and in the Philoptochos.



Friday, December 19, 2025  
North Woods Inn

7247 Rosemead Blvd, San Gabriel, CA 91775 (at Huntington Drive & Rosemead Boulevard)  
7:00 p.m. no host cocktails, 7:30 p.m. dinner — free parking

Choice of Filet Mignon Steak, New York Steak, Icelandic Filet of Cod, or Broiled Mahi Mahi  
Two Salads, Cheese Bread, and Rice Pilaf  
Baked Potato with Butter, Chives and Cheese, plus dessert!

**\$70 each, limited to 50 persons, paid reservations required**

Virginia Lappas will lead us in an optional \$15—\$20 Gift Exchange after dinner. Neutral gift suitable for either men or women, wrapped, with no names. Anyone who brings a gift will receive a gift. The community is invited.

Please make checks payable to: Pasadena AHEPA  
Send to: Dean Tripodes, Post Office Box 486, Sierra Madre, CA 91025-0486  
Or pay by Zelle on your bank's app or website, enter ahepa373@gmail.com as the recipient.

**Registration is OPEN for Saint Sophia Winter Camp!**

December 27 - 30 at Camp Saint Nicholas in Frazer Park.

Check out the camp website [saintsophiacamp.org](http://saintsophiacamp.org) for more information and to register.

Saint Sophia Camp presents

# Winter Camp

December 27- 30

Camp Saint Nicholas in Frazer Park

\$350 per camper

For More Information & Registration visit  
[www.saintsophiacamp.org](http://www.saintsophiacamp.org)



## Church Etiquette

When are we NOT to enter the Nave of the Church?

As we are entering God's Home, we must always keep in mind that during the following times, we should NOT enter the Nave of the Church nor come to the front of the Church to light a votive candle:

- During the Small Entrance (when the procession with the Gospel takes place)

- During the Epistle Reading

- During the Gospel Reading

- When the priest is censuring and is facing the Congregation

- During the Great Entrance (when the procession of the Holy Gifts takes place)

- When the priest is blessing the Congregation

- During the recitation of the Nicene Creed ("I believe...")

- During the Consecration of the Holy Gifts

- During the recitation of the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father...")

- During the Priest's sermon

Also, during these times, we should avoid leaving the Nave unless it is for family needs, medical or some other necessary reason. If you are unsure when to enter or leave the church, ask a Parish Council member in the Narthex.

While in the Church, remember to...

- Wear appropriate attire to enter God's House

- Silence your mobile devices

- Refrain from chewing gum, mints, or candy

- Remove lipstick when receiving Holy Communion & when venerating & kissing the icons

- Follow the direction of the Priest for standing & sitting

- Maintain quiet in the Sanctuary

- Enter God's House with reverence and respect



sample

# The Voice of Saint Anthony

## January 2025

### 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/<br>Saint Basil | 1 January  |
| Holy Theophany/<br>Epiphany            | 6 January  |
| Saint John the Baptist                 | 7 January  |
| St. Anthony the Great                  | 17 January |
| Gregory the Theologian                 | 25 January |
| Three Hierarchs                        | 30 January |

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| Priest's Message      | 2  |
| Stewardship           | 4  |
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**Saint Anthony the Great**  
**17 January**

**Christ is Born !**  
**Glorify Him !**

*Deadline for February Newsletter is Saturday, 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**

## Monthly Lesson from Father Stavros Akrotirianakis

*The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Galatians 5:22-23*

*If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Galatians 5:25*

I'm a nice jerk. I'm a truthful liar. Can these be true statements? It would seem not. Either a person is classified as "nice" or as a "jerk." Someone either tells the truth all the time or they are a liar.

As Orthodox Christians, we were given the gift of the Holy Spirit at Chrismation, and we continually receive the Holy Spirit through prayer and Holy Communion. Today's Scripture verse reminds us that if we claim to live by the Spirit, if we claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit, then our lives need to reflect this. How can we be "Spirit-filled" or "Spirit-led" or "Spirit-centered" if we lack **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control**? Going back to yesterday's reflection, it's not an either/or proposition. Being filled with the Spirit means that we genuinely strive to grow the Fruit of the Spirit in us. We can't seek after or experience the power of the Holy Spirit without seeking to grow His Fruit. There are certainly points in every life, probably in every day of every life, that we are not loving, or patient, or kind or we lack self-control. We all have these moments. I have these moments.

How do you grade yourself on each of these Fruit? More importantly, how do you think God would grade you on these Fruit and how they are present in your life?

In school, an "A" was given for excellent, a "B" was good but had room for improvement, a "C" was average, a "D" was "passing," and an "F" was failing. If you were to give yourself a grade on how well what you say you believe falls in line with how you live your life, what kind of grade would you give yourself? What kind of grade do you think God would give you?

In Orthodox circles, we hear the term "spiritual warfare." While described in different ways, this essentially means that there is a battle for our souls waged between ourselves (who innately desire to be close to God) and the devil (who wishes us to be as far from God as possible). In practical terms, the battle is material (earthly) versus spiritual (heavenly), meaning that we wage a daily battle for the works of the flesh versus the Fruit of the Spirit. And yes, it is a battle. I don't know anyone who has won the battle and can just relax, filled with the Spirit with no concerns with temptation. I suppose there are some who have given up or are taking a break and letting the works of the flesh win. But there is no one who has won the battle for the Spirit over the flesh. It is a war we will fight until our dying breath.

In heaven, there will be only Spiritual Fruit. There won't be this battle, there will be no spiritual turmoil. However, in order to reach the Kingdom of Heaven, we have to fight this battle in our earthly life. We have to cultivate the Fruit in our life now, so that when the harvester (God) comes for us, He will find souls filled with good fruit, with Spiritual fruit, souls that are ready to enter His Kingdom and enjoy the Fruit of their labor.

Choosing to walk with the Spirit is a choice. And it is a choice we have to make daily. But we can't have it all - we can't be a "Spirit-filled" hater, or a Spirit-filled "peace taker" or a "Christ-centered kill joy" or an "out of control" dedicated Christian. Just like we can't make a right-left turn or take both forks in a road - we have to choose the path to salvation. If we say we "live by the Spirit" then we also must "walk by the Spirit." If we say we are a Christian, then we have to act the way a Christian is supposed to act.

*Lord, thank You for the gift of Your Holy Spirit which I receive through prayer and worship.*

*Fill me with Your grace, so that I may grow in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control today.*

*Help me to have courage to live my Christian faith even in moments when others around me are encouraging me not to.*

*Help me to keep focus and to nurture the **Fruit of Your Spirit** in me, today and always.*

*Amen.*

Let your **actions** reflect your Christian faith!



Have you ever felt trapped in a situation? Ever felt completely overwhelmed? Like there is literally no way out. The Gospel of Luke (*Luke 8: 26-39*) tells the story of the healing of a man possessed by demons. The demon-possessed man is healed by Jesus Who sent the demons into a herd of swine. The herd of swine rush down a steep bank and into the sea where they perish. This was a big blow to the economy of the region where people raise livestock. A herd of swine suddenly perishing would have created some economic strife for some of the citizens of that area who raised the swine as a business enterprise. Thus, the people of the town ask for Jesus to leave their area.

The man was tormented by demons. He was really trapped by them. How many of us are tormented by demons? Abusive relationships, substance abuse, financial crises, marital problems—all of these things that people are chained to, that rob people of dignity and worth and joy. The man wore no clothes. He was vulnerable and exposed, and consigned to living in the tombs. He was abandoned by family and friends showing further how tormented his life was. Again, it seems that in some way he represents all of us at times in our lives.

When the man saw Jesus, he seemed to recognize Him, questioning him *“What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?”* (Luke 8:29) This is an early announcement of Jesus as the Son of God. Do WE recognize Jesus, the Son of God, here with us? Do we cry out to Him when we’re lost or confused or beaten down? Do we expect to hear Him answer us? To heal us?

When the people saw the man clothed and sitting at the feet of Jesus, they probably wondered how their whole social order had been reversed. It was now the demon possessed man who was healed and sitting at the feet of the healer. And some of them, the farmers, had lost their herd of swine.

We know from Luke’s account, the man who was healed begs Jesus to stay with Him. Jesus, however, tells the man not to stay with Him, telling him *“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.”* (Luke 8:39) And the man went and did exactly that, telling the whole city what Jesus had done for him.

There are three lessons to be learned here:

First, the man asked Jesus to stay with him.

As I reflect on this, I wonder how often we ask Jesus to be with us. Some Christian denominations use the phrase “asking Jesus into your heart”. That’s not a phrase used in Orthodoxy. Nonetheless, in our prayers, we should invite Jesus to be with us. We should pray that we grow ever closer to Him. We should ask Him to guide our hearts, our thoughts and our actions.

The second lesson is that sometimes we think we are called to something and Jesus calls us to something else.

In this Gospel passage, the man had an overwhelming desire to stay with Jesus, perhaps join the group of disciples that was travelling with Jesus. However, Jesus told the man that this was not going to be his role. For this man, Jesus wanted him to tell those he met, presumably in his town, what Jesus had done for him. Most of us have had the disappointment of not getting a job we wanted, or a role in the school play, or the starting position on a sports team, or an office we had hoped to be elected or appointed to. When this happens, often we are so disappointed that we don’t look for the proverbial “other door” that usually opens. Sometimes Jesus rejects OUR ideas because HE has a different plan for us. Have you asked Jesus what He wants from YOU? Have you listened to His answer? Have you sat at His feet and have you felt relief? Like the man, do you “beg” to be with Jesus.

The man didn’t go away sulking that his request was not met. He did what Jesus asked him to do. He told everyone about Him.

Which bring us to the third lesson – being a Christian takes a lot of courage.

The man knew that Jesus wasn’t popular. After all, the people of His own town asked Jesus to leave. So it was courageous for him to talk about Jesus. The challenge for us, in a modern world that is shutting out Jesus and Christianity, do we have the courage to talk about Him? Do you tell others all what Jesus has done for you?

Ask the Lord in prayer today to be close to you..

Take the opportunities He provides even if they were not the ones you were looking for..

Have courage in your Christianity!

Our Thoughts Determine our Lives:  
The Life and Teachings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitounica" (1914-2003)  
On Repentance

We need repentance. You see, repentance is not only going to a priest and confessing. We must free ourselves from the obsession of thoughts. We fall many times during our life, and it is absolutely necessary to reveal everything [in Confession] before a priest who is a witness to Our repentance.

**Repentance is the renewal of life.** This means we must free ourselves of all our negative traits and turn toward absolute good. No sin is unforgivable except the sin of unrepentance.

There are many kinds of tears. Some people cry out of rage, some to spite another person, others because they have been offended. Some cry because they have lost a loved one. There are many kinds of tears. There are also **tears of repentance**, when a person's conscience tells him that he has committed many sins. When he realizes his sinfulness, he weeps. That is an act of God's Grace – a soul repents, and the sin is washed away by tears. Tears of repentance are a gift from God. When a person realizes his sinfulness, he gradually frees himself from the cares of this world and from his own egoism and leaves all his cares to the Lord. His soul is humbled, and when this occurs, it is in a state of Grace. Prayer requires a completely carefree life, for even the slightest worry disrupts our prayer, as the Holy Fathers say. Just as the slightest speck of dust can blur our vision, so, too, does the slightest worry interfere with our concentration in prayer.

When we are united with the Lord, then our soul is at peace and Grace descends upon us. A person who dwells in a state of Grace is ready to weep for anyone. He weeps when he sees the suffering of an animal, a plant, a person.... Such a person is always ready to shed tears for the whole world. That means that the Grace of God is in that person and that his tears are a gift from God. Those are tears that save. They bring a soul to perfection. Perfection cannot be achieved by worrying about the things of this world. The Lord has said that we are not to burden ourselves with food and drink and with the cares of this world.

All of us sin constantly. We slip and fall. We fall into traps set by the demons. The Holy Fathers and the saints always tell us, "It is important to get up immediately after a fall and to keep on walking toward God." Even if we fall a hundred times a day, it does not matter; we must get up and go on walking toward God without looking back. What has happened has happened. It was in the past. Just keep on going, all the while asking for help from God.

Remembering a sin we have committed does not mean that the sin has not been forgiven. This remembrance of our sins is only a warning to us lest we become proud and sin again. In fact, we – not God – are the ones who cannot forgive ourselves. We cannot forgive ourselves because of our pride. A genuine sign that a sin has been forgiven is the fact that it has not been repeated, and we are at peace. It is also important how we spend the last years of our lives. A God-pleasing life in old age blots out the sins of youth.



## Saints & Feasts

### Cosmas and Damianos

1 November

These Saints were from Asia Minor. After the death of their father, their Christ-loving mother Theodota reared them in piety and in all manner of virtue and had them instructed in every science, especially that of medicine. This became their vocation, and they went about healing every illness and malady, bestowing healing freely on both men and beasts alike. Because of this, they are called "Unmercenaries" and thus, having completed the course of their life, they reposed in peace.



### Synaxis of Archangel Michael & other Bodiless Powers

8 November

All the Angels, according to the Apostle Paul, are ministering spirits, - sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation - (Hebrews 1:14). God sent them as overseers of every nation and people and guides to that which is profitable (Deuteronomy 32:8); and while one Angel is appointed to oversee each nation as a whole, one is also appointed to protect each Christian individually. He commands them to guard those who hope on Him, that nothing should harm them, neither should any evil draw nigh to their dwelling (Psalms 90:10-12). In the Heavens they always behold the face of God, sending up to Him the thrice-holy hymn and interceding with Him on our behalf, seeing they rejoice over one sinner that repents (Matthew 18:10; Luke 15:7).

In a word, they have served God in so many ways for our benefit, that the pages of Holy Scripture are filled with the histories thereof. It is for these reasons that the Orthodox Church, wisely honoring these divine ministers, our protectors and guardians, celebrates today the present Synaxis that is, our coming together in assembly for their common feast to chant their praises, especially for the Archangels Michael and Gabriel, who are mentioned in the Scriptures by name.



**The name Michael means "Who is like God?" and name Gabriel means "God is mighty."** The number of Angels is not defined in the divine Scriptures, where Daniel says that thousands of thousands ministered before Him, and ten thousands of ten thousands attended upon Him (Daniel 7:10). But all of them are divided into nine orders which are called Thrones, Cherubim, Seraphim, Dominions, Powers, Authorities, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.

## Saint Nektarios

9 November

**Saint Nektarios** was born in Selyvria of Thrace on October 1, 1846. After putting himself through school in Constantinople he became a monk on Chios in 1876, receiving the monastic name of Lazarus. Because of his virtue, a year later he was ordained deacon, receiving the new name of Nektarios. Nektarios went to Athens to study in 1882. Completing his theological studies in 1885, he went to Alexandria, where he was ordained a priest in 1886 at the Cathedral of Saint Sabbas. In August of the same year, in the Church of Saint Nicholas in Cairo, he was ordained an Archimandrite. Archimandrite Nektarios showed much zeal both for preaching the word of God, and for the beauty of God's house. He greatly beautified the Church of Saint Nicholas in Cairo. Years later, when Nektarios was in Athens, Saint Nicholas appeared to him in a dream, embracing him and telling him he was going to exalt him very high.

In 1889, in the same Church of Saint Nicholas, Nektarios was consecrated Metropolitan of the Pentapolis in eastern Libya, which was under the jurisdiction of Alexandria. This office did not affect his modesty and childlike innocence, but it aroused the envy of lesser men, who slandered him. In 1890, Sophronius relieved Metropolitan Nektarios of his duties; in July of the same year, he commanded Nektarios to leave Egypt.

Without seeking to avenge or even to defend himself, the innocent Metropolitan left for Athens. Because his good name had been soiled, he was unable to find a position worthy of a bishop, and in February of 1891 accepted the position of provincial preacher in Euboia; then, in 1894, he was appointed Dean of the Rizarios Ecclesiastical School in Athens. Through his eloquent sermons, his generous alms deeds despite his own poverty, and the holiness, meekness and fatherly love that were manifest in him, he became a shining light and a spiritual guide to many.

At the request of certain pious women, in 1904 he began the building of his convent of the Holy Trinity on the island of Aegina while still Dean of the Rizarios School. Finding later that his presence there was needed, he took up his residence on Aegina in 1908, where he spent the last years of his life, devoting himself to the direction of his convent and to very intense prayer; he was sometimes seen lifted above the ground while rapt in prayer.

He became the protector of all Aegina, through his prayers, delivering the island from drought, healing the sick and casting out demons. Although he had already worked wonders in life, an innumerable multitude of miracles have been wrought after his repose in 1920 through his holy relics, which for many years remained incorrupt. There is hardly a malady that has not been cured through his prayers; but Saint Nektarios is especially renowned for his healings of cancer for sufferers in all parts of the world.

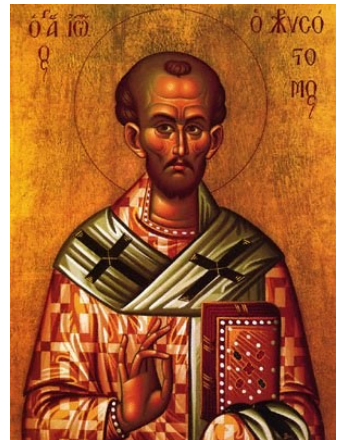


**Saint John Chrysostom****13 November**

This greatest and most beloved of all Christian orators was born in Antioch in the year 344; his pious parents were Secundus and Anthusa. After his mother was widowed at the age of twenty, she devoted herself to bringing up John and his elder sister in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. John received his literary training under Anthragathius the philosopher, and Libanius the sophist, who was the greatest Greek scholar and rhetorician of his day. Libanius was a pagan. With such a training, and with such gifts as he had by nature, John had before him a brilliant career as a rhetorician. But through the good example of his godly mother Anthusa and of the holy Bishop Meletius of Antioch, by whom he was ordained reader about the year 370, he chose instead to dedicate himself to God.

From the years 374 to 381 he lived the monastic life in the hermitages that were near Antioch. His extreme asceticism undermined his health, compelling him to return to Antioch, where Saint Meletius ordained him deacon about the year 381. Saint Meletius was called to Constantinople later that year to preside over the Second Ecumenical Council, during which he fell asleep in the Lord. In 386 Bishop Flavian ordained John presbyter of the Church of Antioch. Upon his elevation to the priesthood his career as a public preacher began, and his exceptional oratorical gifts were made manifest through his many sermons and commentaries. They are distinguished by their eloquence and the remarkable ease with which rich imagery and scriptural allusions are multiplied; by their depth of insight into the meaning of Scripture and the workings of God's providence; and not least of all, by their earnestness and moral force, which issue from the heart of a blameless and guileless man who lived first what he preached to others. Because of his fame, he was chosen to succeed Saint Nectarios as Patriarch of Constantinople. He was taken away by stealth, to avoid the opposition of the people, and consecrated Patriarch of Constantinople in 398, by Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who was to prove to be his mortal enemy.

At that time the Emperor of the East was Arcadius, who had had Saint Arsenius the Great as his tutor. Arcadius was a man of weak character, and much under the influence of his wife Eudoxia. The zealous and upright Chrysostom's unsparing censures of the lax morals in the imperial city stung the vain Eudoxia; through Theophilus' plottings and her collaboration, Saint John was banished to Pontus in 403. The people were in an uproar, and the following night an earthquake shook the city; this so frightened the Empress Eudoxia that she begged Arcadius to call Chrysostom back. While his return was triumphant, his reconciliation with the Empress did not last long. When she had a silver statue of herself erected in the forum before the Church of the Holy Wisdom (Saint Sophia) in 403, Saint John thundered against her, and she could not forgive him.



## **Saint John Chrysostom**

### **Continued..**

In June of 404 he was exiled to Cucusus, on the borders of Cilicia and Armenia. From here he exchanged letters with Pope Innocent of Rome, who sent bishops and priests to Constantinople requesting that a council be held. Saint John's enemies, dreading his return, prevailed upon the Emperor and had John taken to a more remote place of banishment called Pityus near the Caucasus. The journey was filled with bitter sufferings for the aged bishop, both because of the harshness of the elements and the cruelty of one of his 310 guards. He did not reach Pityus, but gave up his soul to the Lord near Comana in Pontus, at the chapel of the Martyr Basiliscus, who had appeared to him shortly before, foretelling the day of his death, which came to pass on September 14, 407. His last words were "Glory be to God for all things."

His holy relics were brought from Comana to Constantinople thirty-one years later by the Emperor Theodosius the Younger and Saint Pulcheria his sister, the children of Arcadius and Eudoxia, with fervent supplications that the sin of their parents against him be forgiven.

Saint John was surnamed Chrysostom ("Golden-mouth") because of his eloquence. He made exhaustive commentaries on the divine Scriptures and was the author of more works than any other Church Father, leaving us complete commentaries on the Book of Genesis, the Gospels of Saints Matthew and John, the Acts, and all the Epistles of Saint Paul. His extant works are 1,447 sermons and 240 epistles. Twenty-two teachers of the Church have written homilies of praise in his honor. Besides his feast day, he is celebrated as one of the Three Hierarchs on January 30, together with Saint Basil the Great and Saint Gregory the Theologian.

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## **Saint Philip**

### **14 November**

Saint Philip one of the Twelve, was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and was a compatriot of Andrew and Peter. He was instructed in the teachings of the Law and devoted himself to the study of the prophetic books. Therefore, when the Lord Jesus called him to the dignity of apostleship, he immediately sought out and found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of Whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1.45). Having preached Jesus the God-man throughout many parts of Asia Minor and having suffered many things for His Name's sake, he was finally crucified upside down in Hierapolis of Phrygia.



## Advent Fast for the Feast of the Nativity

**15 November - 24 December**

In the Orthodox Church the Feast of Christmas is called “**The Nativity**”. As with Pascha, the Feast of the Nativity begins with a period of preparation known as **Advent or the Nativity Fast**. It is preceded by a fast corresponding to Lent and lasting for forty days. The fast begins on **November 15**, 40 days prior to the Birth of Christ.

The Nativity Fast is one of four main fast periods throughout the ecclesiastical year. Beginning on November 15 and concluding on December 24, the Nativity Fast gives individuals the opportunity to prepare for the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior in the Flesh on December 25. By abstaining from certain food and drink, particularly from meat, fish, dairy products, olive oil, and wine, as well as focusing more deeply on prayer and almsgiving, we can find that the primary aim of fasting is to make us conscious of our dependence upon God.

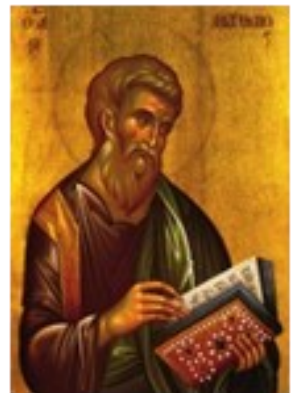
As we go thru the next 40 days, let us reflect on how we can make ourselves better Christians. Let us change our habits for the next 40 days and focus on the true meaning of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Beginning with Christmas Day, the Feast of the Nativity is celebrated for twelve days of fast-free (except on January 5), culminating in the Feast of Epiphany on January 6.



## Saint Matthew

**16 November**

Saint Matthew who was also called Levi, was the son of Alphaeus and had Galilee as his homeland. A publican before being called by Christ, he became one of the Twelve Apostles, and an Evangelist. While still in Palestine, he wrote his Gospel first in Hebrew, being also the first of all to write the Gospel. When he is depicted in icons, there is portrayed next to him the likeness of a man, one of the symbolic living creatures mentioned by Ezekiel (1.10), which, as Saint Irenaeus writes, is a symbol of our Savior's Incarnation.



## Gregory the Wonderworker

**17 November**

Saint Gregory was born in Neocaesarea of Pontus to parents who were not Christians. He studied in Athens, in Alexandria, in Beirut, and finally for five years in Caesarea of Palestine under Origen, by whom he was also instructed in the Faith of Christ. Then, in the year 240, he became bishop of his own city, wherein he found only seventeen Christians. By the time the Saint reposed about the year 265, there were only seventeen unbelievers left there. Virtually the whole duration of his episcopacy was a time of continual, marvellous wonders worked by him. Because of this, he received the surname “Wonderworker”; even the enemies of the truth called him a second Moses.



## The Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

### 21 November

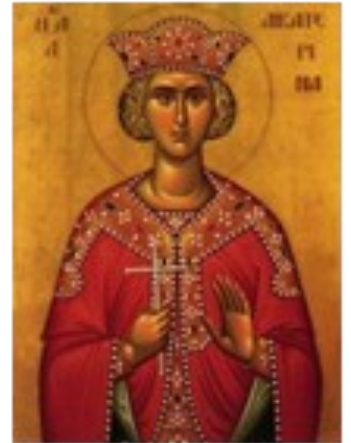
According to the tradition of the Church, the Theotokos was brought to the Temple at three years of age, where she was consecrated to God and spent her days until she was fourteen or fifteen years old; and then, as a mature maiden, by the common counsel of the priests (since her parents had reposed some three years before), she was betrothed to Joseph.



## Saint Katherine

### 25 November

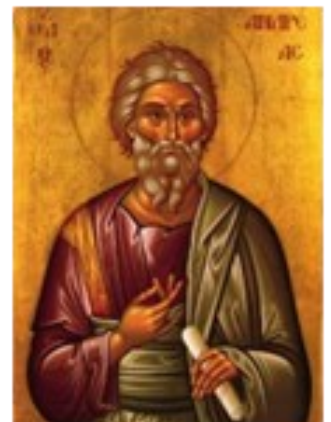
Saint Katherine who was from Alexandria, was the daughter of Constatas. She was an exceedingly beautiful maiden, most chaste and illustrious in wealth, lineage, and learning. By her steadfast understanding, she utterly vanquished the passionate and unbridled soul of Maximinus, the tyrant of Alexandria; and by her eloquence, she stopped the mouths of the so-called philosophers who had been gathered to dispute with her. She was crowned with the crown of martyrdom in the year 305. Her holy relics were taken by Angels to the holy mountain of Sinai, where they were discovered many years later; the famous monastery of Saint Katherine was originally dedicated to the Holy Transfiguration of the Lord and the Burning Bush, but later was dedicated to Saint Katherine. According to the ancient usage, Saints Katherine and Mercurius were celebrated on the 24th of this month, whereas the holy Hieromartyrs Clement of Rome and Peter of Alexandria were celebrated on the 25th. The dates of the feasts of these Saints were interchanged at the request of the Church and Monastery of Mount Sinai, so that the festival of Saint Katherine, their patron, might be celebrated more festively together with the Apodosis of the Feast of the Entry of the Theotokos.



## Saint Andrew

### 30 November

Saint Andrew was from Bethsaida of Galilee; he was the son of Jonas and the brother of Peter, the chief of the Apostles. He had first been a disciple of John the Baptist; afterwards, on hearing the Baptist's witness concerning Jesus, when he pointed Him out with his finger and said, "*Behold the Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world.*" (Book of John 1:29,36), he straightway followed Christ, and became His first disciple; wherefore he is called the First-called of the Apostles. After the Ascension of the Saviour, he preached in various lands; and having suffered many things for His Name's sake, he died in Patras of Achaia, where he was crucified on a cross in the shape of an "X," the first letter of "Christ" in Greek; this cross is also the symbol of Saint Andrew.



# Orthodox Calendar

## NOVEMBER 2025

| SUN                                                                                                                                   | MON                                                                                                      | TUE                                                                 | WED                                                                     | THU                                                              | FRI                                                                                  | SAT                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                          |                                                                     |                                                                         |                                                                  |                                                                                      | 1<br>Cosmas & Damianos                                        |
| 2<br>5th Sunday of Luke<br>8:45am Orthros<br>10am Divine Liturgy<br>12:15 Dance Practice<br>Indoor & Live-stream                      | 3<br>4:30 Greek School<br>5pm Dance Practice<br>6:30pm Studies in the Faith                              | 4                                                                   | 5<br>7pm Philopotochos Board Meeting<br>7pm Philopotochos Union Station | 6<br>4:30 Greek School<br>7pm Bowling League                     | 7                                                                                    | 8<br>Synaxis of the Archangels                                |
| 9<br>7th Sunday of Luke<br>Saint Nektarios<br>8:45am Orthros<br>10am Divine Liturgy<br>12:15 Dance Practice<br>Indoor & Live-stream   | 10<br>4:30 Greek School<br>5pm Dance Practice<br>6:30pm Studies in the Faith                             | 11<br>10:30 am VIP Meeting                                          | 12                                                                      | 13<br>John Chrysostom<br>4:30 Greek School<br>7pm Bowling League | 14<br>Philip the Apostle                                                             | 15<br>Nativity Fast Begins (11.15–12.24)<br><br>Nativity Fast |
| 16<br>Matthew Apostle & Evangelist<br>8:45am Orthros<br>10am Divine Liturgy<br>12:15 Dance Practice<br>Indoor & Live-stream           | 17<br>Gregory the Wonderworker<br>4:30 Greek School<br>5pm Dance Practice<br>6:30pm Studies in the Faith | 18<br>7pm Parish Council Mtg                                        | 19                                                                      | 20<br>4:30 Greek School<br>7pm Bowling League                    | 21<br>Entrance of the Holy Theotokos in Temple<br>9am Orthros<br>10am Divine Liturgy | 22                                                            |
| Nativity Fast                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                          |                                                                     |                                                                         |                                                                  |                                                                                      |                                                               |
| 23<br>9th Sunday of Luke<br>8:45am Orthros<br>10am Divine Liturgy<br>12:15 Dance Practice<br>Indoor & Live-stream                     | 24<br>4:30 Greek School<br>5pm Dance Practice<br>6:30pm Studies in the Faith                             | 25<br>Katherine the Great                                           | 26                                                                      | 27<br>Thanksgiving Day<br>                                       | 28<br>                                                                               | 29                                                            |
| Nativity Fast                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                          |                                                                     |                                                                         |                                                                  |                                                                                      |                                                               |
| 30<br>Andrew 1st Called Apostle<br>8:45am Orthros<br>10am Divine Liturgy<br>No Sunday School<br>12:15 Dance Practice<br>Nativity Fast |                                                                                                          | Strict Fast<br>Refrain from Meat, Fish, Wine, Oil, Dairy & Eggs<br> | Fish, Wine & Oil Allowed<br>                                            | Wine and Oil Allowed<br>                                         | Dairy, Eggs, & Fish Allowed: Refrain from Meat<br>                                   | Fast Free<br>All foods allowed<br><br>No Symbol               |



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TIME SENSITIVE

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

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

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

### Pray for Your Enemies

God's goodness is shown to His enemies by His works. You should at least show your goodness towards them by your words: Pray for your enemies and in this way, at least, you will be like your Father in heaven who "is good to the ungrateful and the wicked" (Luke 6:35). How many times we have preached about this! And we will not stop preaching, no matter how annoyed you get. For we will never cease discoursing on these things until your conduct is agreeable to them.

Imitate God! If He wills that all people be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, there is reason why one should pray for all. If He wills all to be saved, you should want it too. And if you want it, then pray for it; for wishes lead always to prayers. Observe how from ev-

ery quarter He urges this upon the soul, to pray for the heathen, showing how great advantages come from this. . . . And what is more, it is pleasing to God to do this, for in doing it we become Godlike since we will the very same things that God wills. This is enough to shame a dumb beast! Fear not therefore to pray for the unbelievers, for God Himself wills it. But fear only to pray against anyone; for this God forbids. And if you pray for the heathen, you ought, of course, to pray for the heretics also. For we are to pray for all people, and not to persecute. For we are of one human nature with all, and God commands and accepts good will and affection towards all.

*St. John Chrysostom*