

The Voice of Saint Anthony

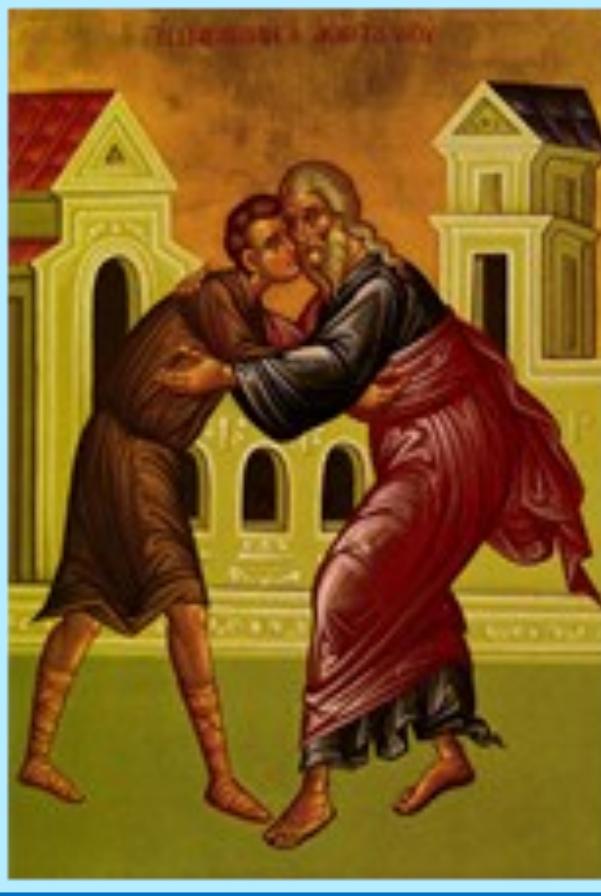
Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

February 2026

www.saint-anthonys.org

(626) 449-6943 Office

Sunday of the
Prodigal Son
8 February



**DEADLINE for
MARCH
Newsletter is
TUESDAY
24 FEBRUARY**

*Please send to:
newsletter_church
@aol.com*

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Triodion Begins	1 February
Sun, of Publican & Pharisee	1 February
Presentation of our Lord	2 February
Theodore the General	8 February
Sunday of the Prodigal Son	8 February
Judgment/Meatfare Sunday	15 February
Forgiveness/Cheesefare Sunday	22 February
Clean Monday	23 February

Message from Father Peter

On Sunday February 8 we commemorate the Prodigal Son.

A question that comes to mind when contemplating the Gospel Reading of the Prodigal Son, deals with a person's personal freedom. Is freedom a person's greatest burden in life? It is an awesome gift of God. It is an agent of good or evil in the world. It can even be a partner or rival of God! So is freedom man's greatest burden?

In the reading we encounter the following: "Father," the younger son said, "give me my share of the property now" (Luke 15: 12). And the father did! Bent on exercising his freedom in his own way, the son not many days later sold the property, took the money and left home to go to a far country where he could live in total independence. Amazingly the father let him go. He did not try to stop him. If the son insists, the father cannot do otherwise than let him be free to live his own life. There is guidance, admonition, and discipline. But finally he must let go. He loves his child too much to violate his or her personal dignity. He honors the gift of freedom, even though pain and injury may lie ahead for the son or daughter.

What do you do with your gift of freedom? The younger son who left his father's house wanted to be free but found himself a slave. He squandered his possessions – not merely his money but also his human qualities – until he reached a state of physical and spiritual desperation. In his search for complete autonomy, separate from God, he found a black hole, a hell of destruction. In the act of exercising his freedom arbitrarily, he became a slave first to himself, then to things, and then to others.

There is a principle in spiritual life which is unchanging: the more a person exercises his or her freedom in the right way, with love and sharing, forgiveness and reconciliation, the more a person becomes free. But the more a person exercises his or her freedom in the wrong way, with selfishness and arbitrariness, insensitivity and carelessness, the more a person becomes enslaved to self, the world, and human conditions. True freedom is with God who alone can liberate us from the bondage of our own will given to sinful inclinations and ways.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is freedom (2 Corinthians 3: 17).

True freedom is with Christ whose saving truths sets us free.

If the Son sets you free, then you will be really free (John 8: 36).

We read this parable of the Prodigal Son during the pre-Lenten period to prepare us for Great Lent. Prepare yourselves by utilizing your personal freedom to experience God's love as our Father in heaven offers to us. If you turn to the Father who waits for us patiently, the Son who sets us free, and the Spirit who is present in our lives, we experience God's overwhelming love. My prayer is that we all experience God's love that is always available to us. Exercise your freedom in the right way.

Have a blessed preparation for Great Lent.

In Christ.

Fr. Peter



OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2026

Created by Fr. Jonathan Barron (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
FEBRUARY 1st Fast - Free Week	TRIODION WEEKS Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
FEBRUARY 8th Normal Fast Week	The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
FEBRUARY 15th Meatfare FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
FEBRUARY 22nd Cheesefare FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! FORGIVENESS SUNDAY Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
MARCH 1st 1st Sunday of Lent	GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
MARCH 8th 2nd Sunday of Lent	ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
MARCH 15th 3rd Sunday of Lent	VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS HALF WAY TO PASCHA! 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!
MARCH 22nd 4th Sunday of Lent	ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
MARCH 29th 5th Sunday of Lent	ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
APRIL 5th FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! GREAT WEEK BEGINS	GREAT AND HOLY WEEK ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
APRIL 10th GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY	GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
APRIL 12th FEAST OF FEASTS! NO FASTING!	BRIGHT WEEK HOLY PASCHAI (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

STUDIES IN THE FAITH

We have begun our Winter Session - January 19th – March 30th

Text - *The Orthodox Faith, “Doctrine and Scripture,” Volume 1, by Fr. Thomas Hopko.*

11 sessions - Monday evenings 6:30 – 7:30 pm.

These informative classes will serve as an excellent introduction to the Orthodox Faith for those interested in 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 joining please email Fr. Peter: frpeter@saint-anthonys.org

Order text online - Google SVS Press, Find a Book tab, search Volume 1 Doctrine and Scripture.

The cost of the book is \$23. (Please order your copy as soon as possible).

CHAPTERS TO BE DISCUSSED

Introductory Session – Monday January 19th
Chapter One: “Sources of Christian Doctrine”

Second Session – Monday January 26th
Chapter One: “Sources of Christian Doctrine” (cont.)

Third Session – Monday February 2nd
Chapter Two: “The Symbol of Faith”

Fourth Session – Monday February 9th
Chapter Two: “The Symbol of Faith” (cont.)

Fifth Session – Monday February 16th
Chapter Three: “The Holy Trinity”

Sixth Session – Monday February 23rd
Chapter Three: “The Holy Trinity” (cont.)

Seventh Session – Monday March 2nd
Chapter Four: “The Bible”

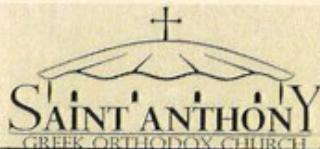
Eighth Session – Monday March 9th
Chapter Five: “Old Testament”

Ninth Session – Monday March 16th
Chapter Six: “New Testament”

Tenth Session: -- Monday March 23rd
Chapter Seven: “Salvation History”

Eleventh Session: -- Monday March 30th
Chapter Eight: “Great Week and Pascha”

Stewardship



2026 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)

2026

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 December 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 2026 offering of:

My Total Commitment for 2026: \$ _____

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Family Picnic
<input type="checkbox"/> Pasadena Golf Classic	<input type="checkbox"/> Dinner	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Pasadena Greek Fest	<input type="checkbox"/> Saint Anthony Feast Day	

Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____

Ministries



2026 PARISH COUNCIL

Pete Gallanis	President
Joe Akrotirianakis	1st Vice President
Perry Vidalakis	2nd Vice President
Kosta Papauasiliou	Secretary
Tashia Vagenas	Treasurer
Christos Vagenas	Assist. Treasurer

Christian Balas
 Tom Grafos
 Louis Kades
 Pete Katsafados
 Jonathan Nassos
 James Pappas
 Constandinos 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:
 Presuytera Aida Stratos

PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETYExecutive Board**President**

Nicolette Fuerst

1st Vice President

Liz Skandale

2nd 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 Stratos

Sunshine and Visitation

Maria Hronas

Union Station

Maria Kokoris

ADDITIONAL MINISTRIES**Acolytes**

Pres Aida Stratos

Bible Study

Fr. Peter Stratos

BookstoreChristiana Kontaxis
Michael Kontaxis**Bowling**

Anthia Drulias Lucas

Golf Tournament

Jimmy Christos

GOYAAnthia Drulias Lucas
Maria Katsas Gittings
Polly Vagenas**GOYA Basketball**

Pana Gelt

GOYA VolleyballAnthia 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 SchoolSophia Syrengelas
Mary Udria**VIPs**

Irene Albeck

Parish Council

ENTERING CHURCH

Please make every effort to arrive for services a little early. If you arrive late, it is important to observe the following moments in the Divine Liturgy when you should not enter the Nave but wait quietly in the Narthex:

- During the Small Entrance
- During the Epistle Reading
- During the Gospel Reading
- During the Homily
- When the Priest is censing just before the Great Entrance
- During the Great Entrance
- From the Creed until after the Consecration of the Gifts
- During the Lord's Prayer

A Parish Council member will gladly assist you with any question about the appropriate times to enter the Nave.

HOLY COMMUNION PROCEDURE

For the benefit of our Sunday School students, their teachers and the TIMELY start of their Sunday School Classes please allow 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.



January was a busy month for our Sunday School students! We wrapped up our Genesis unit at the end of the year and started off the new year with two very important and meaningful lessons.

Our students learned about the meaning behind the beautiful tradition of Vasilopita and about our patron saint, St. Anthony the Great.

Then, we kicked off our new thematic unit on the **Fruit of the Spirit**. All of the lessons and activities that we do center around our year theme, **Like Stars in Heaven: Created by God, Called to Shine**.

As we approach **Great Lent**, we hope to help the kids be mindful of the upcoming special and holy time in our church. Teaching the virtues of the Fruit of the Spirit as well the moral and spiritual lessons in the parables Christ taught during the Triodion period, our students will be preparing their minds, bodies, and spirits for Great Lent. We hope that they learn practical and meaningful ways that they can live their faith all year, but most especially during this holy time.

Please note that we will not have class on **Sunday, February 15th** due to FDF weekend.

Thank you for supporting our program and sharing your kids with us. We love having them in class and look forward to all that's to come in the second half of our Sunday School year.

Sophia Syrengelas



Youth & Young Adults

Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival-2026
Parish Level
Sunday, March 8, 2026
12:30pm
at
Saint Anthony
Greek Orthodox Church

Jr. and Sr High School Speech Divisions
Essay and Poetry Divisions

Topic Questions, Tips, Guidelines and details at:

www.goarch.org/oratorical

PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN TO
PARTICIPATE! YOU WILL BE AMAZED, IMPRESSED AND
INSPIRED BY THEIR THOUGHTS AND BY THEIR POISE
WHEN THEY PRESENT THEIR SPEECHES!

*A great experience for all participants.

*Scholarship Opportunities.

*Participation letter submitted to their school for inclusion
in their academic files.



JUNIOR DIVISION (GRADES 7-9)

Select one of the five following topics:

TOPIC 1

Select a hymn that is chanted in the Divine Liturgy and explain its meaning and theological significance.

TOPIC 2

Choose a Saint who was a child or young person. How did their faith influence their life, and what can we learn from them?

TOPIC 3

Who is the Ecumenical Patriarch, and why is he significant in the Orthodox Church today?

TOPIC 4

Choose an Old Testament story (such as David and Goliath, Daniel in the lion's den, or Joseph and his brothers) and explain how it teaches us important lessons that apply to young people today.

TOPIC 5

Select a major Orthodox feast day and explain why we celebrate it and how participating in this celebration deepens our understanding of Christ and our faith.



SENIOR DIVISION (GRADES 10-12)

Select one of the five following topics:

TOPIC 1

Pick a common icon type that is found in Orthodox churches (for example Christ Pantocrator, Virgin Hodegetria, the Resurrection icon) and explain its meaning and theological significance.

TOPIC 2

Why is the feast of Pentecost important and what does the story of Pentecost teach us about the Holy Spirit?

TOPIC 3

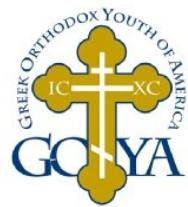
Saint John frequently contrasts light and darkness in his Gospel and letters. Choose one of his teachings about light (such as "God is light" or Christ as "the light of the world") and discuss how this imagery helps us understand our Christian calling and witness.

TOPIC 4

Throughout history, Orthodox Christians have faced persecution for their faith, from ancient martyrs to modern confessors. How does the witness of martyrs, both ancient and contemporary, strengthen and guide the Church today?

TOPIC 5

Orthodox funeral services speak of death as "falling asleep" and emphasize the hope of resurrection. How does Orthodox teaching about death and eternal life influence how we live and how we care for the dying and grieving?



GOYA NEWS

GOYA is so excited for 2026! We had a great time during the holidays with our Annual Lock-In, which included Vespers with Father Peter, dinner, gingerbread houses, trivia, games, karaoke, lots of sweets, and very little sleep! We also got together after the New Year to cut Vasilopita all together. Congratulations to both Kostadina and Nicoletta for getting the coin this year!

If you haven't had a chance to join GOYA and are in 7-12 grade, we'd love for you to join us! Please email goya@saint-anthonys.org and we'll get you plugged in!

Basketball is starting up so there will be no meetings in the meantime but make sure you're on our mailing list to stay up to date with all things GOYA!





2026 GOYA Basketball Information

Registration & Fees

- **TeamSnap Registration:** Please register on TeamSnap as soon as possible: [TeamSnap Registration](#).
- **League Fees:** League fees of **\$125 per player** will be collected this **Sunday, February 1st**. (if you are unable to come to church this Sunday we will schedule a second date)
- **Uniforms:** Uniform distribution will also take place this Sunday outside the hall after church.

Practice Schedule

Mayfield Senior School (500 Bellefontaine St., Pasadena)
Fridays from 6:30-8:30 PM.

- **Note:** There will be no practice on 2/13, 3/6, and 4/10..

2026 Game Schedule

- 2/22: @ Assumption
- 3/1: vs. St. Basil (Home)
- 3/8: @ Saint John
- 3/15: vs. St. Nick (Home)
- 3/22: @ Saint Sophia
- 3/29: @ Saint Katherine
- 4/19: vs. St. George (Home)
- 4/25: Quarter Finals
- 4/26: Semi Finals
- 5/3: Finals

Coaching Contacts

If you are unable to attend a practice or game, please notify your respective coaches:

Jr. & Sr. Girls and Jr. Boys:

- Chris Syrengelas: 714-348-8935
- Jenny Poulopoulos: 626-676-1831

Sr. Boys:

- Tony Christopoulos: 626-664-0734
- Tom Grafos: 818-825-5469

Note: JUNIOR BOYS - Please attend practice! We should know by Sunday if we have enough to make a team.

Questions: text Pana Gelt – 626-278-2808

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

Philoptochos is here to help those in need.

Should you find yourself facing hardship, contact a Philoptochos member or
Nicolette Fuerst, Philoptochos President - nicolette.fuerst@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 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 mcmg2a@aol.com

Maria Kokoris nmkokoris@gmail.com

Christina Kades christinekades@gmail.com

*"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

Community Happenings

SOUPER SUNDAY

Sunday, February 22, 2026, following Divine Liturgy.

CALLING ALL CHEFS

Enter your soup or chili and compete for the Golden Ladle at our Souper Sunday fundraiser.

To sign up, please contact Judith Din at jnda810@gmail.com / (626) 676-1240.

Chefs need to bring 1-2 gallons of prepared soup. The community is invited to attend and vote on their favorite soup while helping raise funds for the San Gabriel Valley Bad Weather Shelter. There is no charge to attend the event. We welcome donations at Souper Sunday to support the Bad Weather Shelter operated by Friends In Deed. This refuge is funded by donations from the community.

VASILOPITA SUNDAY

Many thanks to our wonderful ladies, Evelyn Kefalas, Christine Kades and Yiota Poulos

for preparing the delicious Vasilopitas for our January 11, 2026 celebration.



COMMUNITY UPDATE ON HOMELESSNESS – January General Meeting

October 15, Philoptochos members and church community attended an inspiring, informative and timely presentation with Venice Dunn of Pasadena Union Station Homeless Services. Venice shared an update on the progress that USHS has made over the recent years. She explained the current needs and programs in place to assist unhoused individuals and families within the San Gabriel Valley. On behalf of The Philoptochos of Saint Anthony Church, Nicolette Fuerst, President and Liz Skandale 1st Vice-President presented a donation to USHS.



Upcoming Philoptochos Meetings

Christmas Benefit 2025 Committee Wrap Up Meeting - Tuesday, February 3 at 6:30 PM

February Board Meeting - Wednesday, February 11 at 7:00 PM

February General Meeting – Wednesday, February 18 at 6:30 PM. More details to follow.

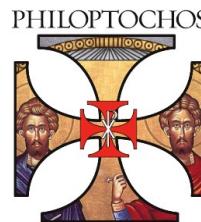
Upcoming Scholarship Opportunities in 2026

Attention High School Seniors – Philoptochos of Saint Anthony Scholarship Applications will be available in the spring later this year. 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 Saint Anthony church community may apply.

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

Additional announcements forth-coming in future Voice newsletters.



JOIN PHILOPTOCHOS

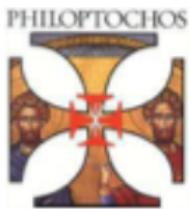
All are welcome to become members or associate members of our group who help those in need. Renew or Join now by Mail or Online!

Please stop by our table after Divine Liturgy on Sunday, **February 1st** to learn more about joining. We will be holding a membership drive soon - more information to come!

For questions, contact Carolina and Sophia at panagiaphiloptochosmembership@gmail.com

To register for membership online, click this link:

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



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

PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP FORM

2026 Philoptochos Membership 2026 Associate Membership (Men / Non-Voting) Date _____

Last Name	First Name	Spouse Name	M.I.
Street Address			
City	State	Zip	
Home Phone	Cell Phone		
Email			
<i>Notices will be sent via email. If you prefer your notices mailed, please, let us know by checking here</i> <input type="checkbox"/>			

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

\$50 \$75 \$100 \$125 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

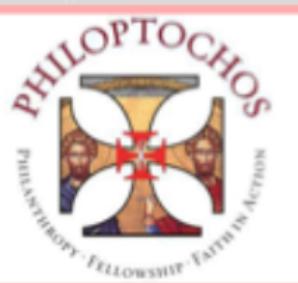
Fundraising

Other Talents

Telephone Tree

Social Media

Specify



2026 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://stanthonyphiloptochos.square.site>

Scroll down to “Annual Membership Dues”

WHY JOIN PHILOPTOCHOS

We are part of a national network of more than 25,000 women in Philoptochos Chapters throughout the country who continually seek to extend our kindness to those who need it most.

Our most recent efforts assisted our local community ravished by wild fires. We asked for donations to help these fire victims and our parish responded above and beyond our expectations.

We invite you to join us in this and other efforts to respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters with love, compassion and dedication.

"Members are the foundation, heart and soul of our organization and the talents and gifts our members contribute are the sparks that light the flame of love and service for the underprivileged and the needy by their participation and actions."
(Former Philoptochos National President Aphrodite Skeadas).

Each member's \$50 stewardship supports our:

- National Philoptochos obligations and commitments (\$15)
- San Francisco Metropolis Philoptochos obligations and commitments (\$15)
- St. Anthony Philoptochos obligations and community projects (\$20)

To renew or join please complete the form below and send a check, payable to St. Anthony Philoptochos Society and mail to:

St. Anthony Philoptochos Society
778 South Rosemead Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91107

or pay online: <https://stanthonyphiloptochos.square.site>

or visit the Membership table on Sundays after Divine Liturgy

General Membership:

Women of Orthodox Faith, 18 years of age or older, married or single, widowed, divorced, or separated are welcome to join. Please consider the gift of membership for the young women 18 and over in your life.

Associate Membership (non-voting):

Men of the Orthodox faith and non-Orthodox wives of Orthodox husbands are eligible to join as associate members.

Thank you for your partnership and for helping our community!

2026 Philoptochos Scholarship for Graduating HighSchool Seniors

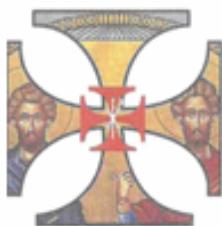
Announcing the Applications and Rules & Regulations Sheets for the Philoptochos Scholarship for Graduating High School Seniors. All forms will be available at the Community Center entry table next to the Church Office beginning Sunday, January 11, 2026.

Please note that the deadline for submission of applications and recommendation letters is April 3, 2026.

All letters of recommendation can be mailed to the Church office or emailed to frpeter@saint-anthony.org and addressed: "Attention Philoptochos Scholarship Committee" If you have any questions, please contact Presvytera Aida at presaida7@gmail.com

PLEASE SEE NEXT 2 PAGES...

- ♦ ***Philoptochos Scholarship Rules and Regulations***
- ♦ ***Philoptochos Scholarship and Award Application***



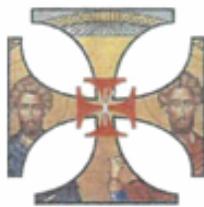
PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY OF SAINT ANTHONY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

PHILOPTOCHOS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD - 2026 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 2026-2027 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 3, 2026**. 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 300words 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 - 2026

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 VERIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

Applicant's Signature

Date

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

UPCOMING CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP
THURSDAYS: FEBRUARY 19 – MARCH 26, 2026

PHILOPTOCHOS FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP FOR ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS NATIONWIDE

- Are you caring for a spouse, a parent, an in-law, or other loved one of any age who has Alzheimer's or a chronic or life-threatening illness or disability?
 - Are you a male trying to navigate the challenges of caregiving?
 - Are you in the sandwich generation, raising a child while also caring for a parent?
 - Are you exhausted, stressed, feeling angry and then feeling guilty about getting angry?
 - Do you wish there were others with whom to share your thoughts, concerns, and questions, and who understands our faith, culture, and community?
 - Are you so overwhelmed you're not even sure what questions to ask?



If you answered yes to any of the above, join the

PHILOPTOCHOS CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Led by professionals, we will "meet" over Zoom on **six consecutive Thursday evenings** from **7 pm – 8 pm EST**. In a **confidential, non-judgmental, and safe environment**, we will discuss best practices to help you manage the physical, emotional, and cognitive issues faced by your loved one and to help you find and access resources to help ease your caregiving journey.

We will discuss the importance of self-care, managing your own roller-coaster emotions, the impact of family dynamics on caregiving, long-distance and holiday caregiving, financial concerns, and preparing for the future.

One session, **led by a member of the clergy**, will address how faith, culture, and spirituality can help build your understanding, strength, and resilience.

Six consecutive Thursday evenings | FEBRUARY 19 to MARCH 26
2026 February 19, 26; March 5, 12, 19, 26
7pm - 8pm EST

Pre-registration is Required.

Pre-register here: <https://forms.gle/kP8Li3ir1vqipqGp8>

Space is limited - Don't delay!



Sponsored by:

Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc. • Department of Social Services
 126 East 37th Street • NY, NY 10016 • (212) 977-7770 • www.philoptochos.org
supportgroup@philoptochos.org



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-anthony.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-anthony.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
1-4oz Jar	Jelly	Served in 2 paper/plastic bowls
1 Jumbo Jar	Nutella	Served in 2 paper/plastic bowls
	OR	
100	Mini Deli Sandwiches	Assorted Meats, Tuna, Veggie
	OR	
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
	OR	
2-3	Assorted Salads	Potato Salad, Greek Salad, Tabouli
2	Assorted Vegetable Trays	
	AND (Choose 2)	
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

VIPs

With many VIPs anxious to gather for the first meeting of the New Year, our January get-together was extremely well attended!! After the opening prayer led by Stavrula Kiotas, president Irene Albeck began her report by promising to keep the business meeting short so that the membership could enjoy a delightful breakfast/brunch menu prepared by our friends and fellow parishioners **Mark Carpenter** and **Noula Serban**.

With the new year underway, the first order of business was the collection of 2026 dues which were now due and payable. Irene announced that the breakfast/brunch was free of charge, paid by our ministry treasury. Upcoming events including the vesper and feast day services of our patron Saint Anthony, and dance group preview events were mentioned.

After Irene announced that the position of recording secretary was vacant, Christine Kades passed around a sympathy card for signatures by all members present to be sent to Jimmy Christos expressing our condolences for the passing of his dear mother Mrs. Eleni Christodoulelis who departed this life in Greece on December 29th. May her memory be eternal.

Our excursion coordinator Judie Christopoulos spoke of the highly entertaining Christmas program many of our members enjoyed at Citrus College on December 14th.

Irene then asked for volunteers to attend a baking session on Thursday January 22nd for the production of koulourakia to be baked and packaged for sale after church on Sunday, January 25th to raise funds for community outreach. This charitable activity actually generated \$451.00 for a donation to the Foothill Unity Center to provide Easter meals for food-insecure families.

On the weekend of January 31st and February 1st, seminarian **Demetri Dogias and his wife Christina** are expected to visit our parish in anticipation of their assignment to Saint Anthony upon his graduation from Holy Cross Theological School. It is anticipated that the Philoptochos and other parish ministries will have receptions to acquaint the couple with our community.

After the business was concluded, we settled down to a delicious breakfast/brunch masterfully prepared by Mark Carpenter and Noula Serban. Anyone who has ever worked in the kitchen and dinner line during the annual Greek-Fest has seen Mark in action doing virtually anything and everything required to produce our delicious culinary offerings. It's no surprise that the VIPs enjoyed tasty scrambled eggs, bacon, hash browns, fluffy pancakes and assorted fruits beautifully prepared and presented. Many thanks Mark and Noula for volunteering in the kitchen and to Mary Udria for taking care of the shopping.

As there was no VIP meeting in December, our birthday celebrants included those members in attendance with birthdays in December and January: **Niki Brown, Gena Pegadiotes, Christine Kades, Vaso Giakas, and Leah Pastis**. MANY HAPPY RETURNS LADIES!!

To round out our sumptuous repast, we all enjoyed a delicious Vasilopita lovingly baked by **Yiota Poulos**. Many thanks to you Yiota! Kai Tou Hronou!

We will look forward to seeing many of you at our next meeting on **February 10th**!

Jim Hronas

VIP Communications



Community News & more...



Save the Date

Southern California Greek Orthodox Easter Picnic 2026

Sponsored by Saint Sophia Cathedral Foundation

Sunday April 12th
1pm - 7pm

Fabulous Food, Desserts and Drinks will be available for purchase..

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

Baklava, Galatoboureko, Karidopita, Kourambiedes,

Melomakarona, Koulourakia and Tsoureki

Beer, Wine, Soft Drinks, Coffee, Water

Questions ? Volunteer ?

Stephanie Caiopoulos Lubian

easterpicnic@aol.com



CHURCH IS HARD

Church is hard for the person walking through the doors, afraid of judgement.

Church is hard for the Priest's family, under the microscope of an entire body.

Church is hard for the prodigal soul returning home, broken and battered by the world.

Church is hard for the girl who looks like she has it all together, but doesn't.

Church is hard for the couple who fought the entire ride to service.

Church is hard for the single mom, surrounded by couples holding hands, and seemingly perfect families.

Church is hard for the widow and widower with no invitation to lunch after service.

Church is hard for the person with an estranged child.

Church is hard for the person chanting while being overwhelmed by the weight of the lyrics.

Church is hard for the man insecure in his role as a leader.

Church is hard for the wife who longs to be led by a righteous man.

Church is hard for the nursery volunteer who desperately longs for a baby to love.

Church is hard for the single woman and single man, praying God brings them a mate.

Church is hard for the teenage girl, wearing a scarlet letter, ashamed of her mistakes.

Church is hard for the sinners and hard for me.

It's hard because on the outside it all looks shiny and perfect with our Sunday best in behavior and dress.

However, underneath those layers, you find a body of imperfect people, carnal souls, selfish motives.

But, here is the beauty of church...

Church isn't a building, mentality, or expectation.

Church is a body.

Church is a group of sinners living in fellowship among the saints.

Church is a body of believers bound as brothers and sisters by an eternal love.

Church is a holy ground where sinners stand as equals before the Judgement Seat of Christ.

Church is a refuge for broken hearts and a training ground for mighty warriors.

Church is a converging of confrontation and invitation, where sin is confronted and hearts are invited to seek restoration.

Church is a lesson in faith and trust.

Church is a bearer of burdens and a giver of hope.

Church is a family coming together, setting aside differences, forgetting past mistakes, rejoicing in the smallest of victories.

Church, the body, and the circle of sinners-turned-saints, is where He resides, and if we ask, He will come.

So even on the hard days at church...

The days when I am at odds with a friend

I've fought with my spouse because we're late once again

I've walked in bearing burdens heavier than my heart can handle, yet masking the pain with a smile on my face

I've worn a scarlet letter, under the microscope

I've longed for a baby to hold, or fought tears as the hymns were chanted

I've walked back in, afraid and broken, after walking away...

I'll remember, He has never failed to meet me there.

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 censing 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

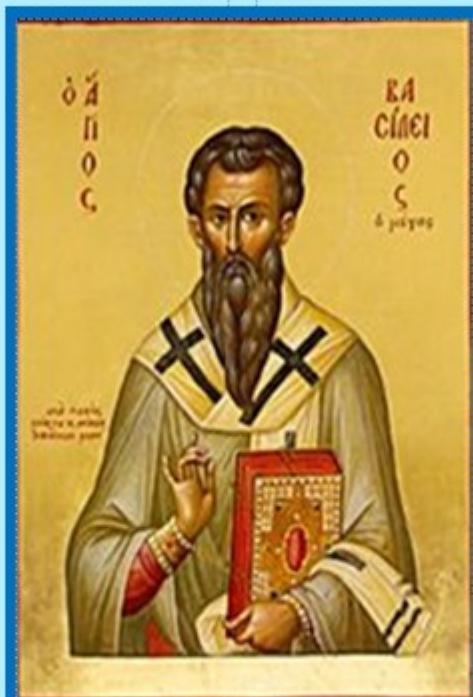


The Voice of Saint Anthony
Saint Anthony Greek Orthodox Church

January 2026 www.saint-anthony.org (626) 449-6943 Office

sample

Saint Basil 1 January



DEADLINE for FEBRUARY Newsletter is SUNDAY 25 JANUARY

Please send to: newsletter_church@aol.com

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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

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

For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, "I believed, and so I spoke," we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. II Corinthians 4: 6-15

On the feast day of saints who were known for forsaking their material lives for Christ, we read from St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 4: 6-15. In this passage Saint Paul exhorts us to walk as Jesus did. We know that His power did not come "from earthen vessels" (II Corinthians 4:7) but from His relationship with His Father, a perfect union with God. We spend so much of our lives working for the material things which fade, fail and ultimately are left behind. Saint Paul reminds us that the real power and real freedom in life come from our relationship with Christ, not our possession of "earthen vessels."

Christ's choice to walk in unity with God did not mean that His life was easy, and our choice to do the same does not guarantee an easy life either. Jesus was afflicted in every way—He was denied, betrayed, spat upon, insulted, falsely accused, beaten and ultimately killed. Saint Paul followed in the same footsteps. So did many of the saints. And while we may not end up being killed for our faith, we can bet that if our faith is genuine (and if it is genuine it will be known) that we will suffer for it in some way. Saint Paul reassures us, however, that even when we are afflicted, we will not be crushed. Even if we are made to suffer for our faith, our faith will not be crushed. (2 Corinthians 4:8) We might be perplexed, but we will not be driven to despair. Even if we have doubts, we will not be driven to sadness. (4:8) We might be persecuted by others but we will not be forsaken by God. The faith may cost us jobs, friends, and other things. It may cause others to "forget" about us. But God will always remember us and what we believe about Him. (4:9) We may even be killed for our faith, or suffer catastrophic loss because we are Christians—we might lose a job, or reputation. In some countries a Christian may even lose his or her freedom. But the faith we hold cannot be destroyed. (2 Corinthians 4:9)

We are called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus—dying to the world and living in Him. If we have in our hearts and souls the sacrifice that Jesus made, as well as the willingness to make our own sacrifices for Him and for our neighbor, then we will also carry in us the glory Christ has in the Light of the Resurrection. We will also carry that Light within us. This is why Saint Paul reminds us of God's word "*Let light shine out of darkness.*" (2 Corinthians 4:6)

Saint Paul tells us "*for while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.*" (2 Corinthians 4:11) The Christian life is a constant challenge of dying to the world and living in Christ and for Christ. This exercise is not just a one-time proposition but happens throughout our lives. When we go to confession, as an example, we approach this sacrament because we reach a realization that we are not living for Christ but for the world. We identify areas in our lives where we need to "die" and then through repentance we "die" to those things and "live" in Christ, so that He is manifested in us.

When Christ died on the cross, He said to His Father, "*Into Thy hands I commit My spirit!*" (Luke 23:46) At the moment of His death, He died with confidence and faith. The result of this faith was the Resurrection. If we live out this verse, not only at the hour of our death but throughout our lives, we can feel confident as well, "*that He Who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us into His presence.*" (2 Corinthians 4:14)

We study the lives of the saints, like St. Paul as a reminder that they (and we like them) are to walk in the footsteps of Christ, being willing to have nothing material but to gain everything spiritual. This is how we can have nothing but still have everything.

Walk in the footsteps of Christ today! Put God first! Put others ahead of you! Let's God's word be manifest/be at work in your life today!

Saints & Feasts

Triodion Begins—

Sunday of the Publican & the Pharisee

1 February

The Pharisees were an ancient and outstanding sect among the Jews known for their diligent observance of the outward matters of the Law. Although, according to the word of our Lord, they "did all their works to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5), and were hypocrites. Because of the apparent holiness of their lives they were thought by all to be righteous and separate from others, which is what the name Pharisee means. On the other hand, Publicans, collectors of the royal taxes, committed many injustices and extortions for filthy lucre's sake and all held them to be sinners and unjust. It was therefore according to common opinion that the Lord Jesus in His parable signified a virtuous person by a Pharisee and a sinner by a Publican, to teach His disciples the harm of pride and the profit of humble-mindedness.

Since the chief weapon for virtue is humility and the greatest hindrance to it is pride, the divine Fathers have set these three weeks before the Forty-day Fast as a preparation for the spiritual struggles of virtue. This present week they have called Harbinger, since it declares that the Fast is approaching; and they set humility as the foundation for all our spiritual labors by appointing that the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee be read on this day, even before the Fast begins, to teach, through the vaunting of the Pharisee, that the foul smoke of self-esteem and the stench of boasting drives away the grace of the Spirit, strips man of all his virtue and casts him into the pits of Hades; and, through the repentance and contrite prayer of the Publican, that humility confers upon the sinner's forgiveness of all his wicked deeds and raises him up to the greatest heights. No fasting the week that follows this Sunday.



The Presentation of the Lord

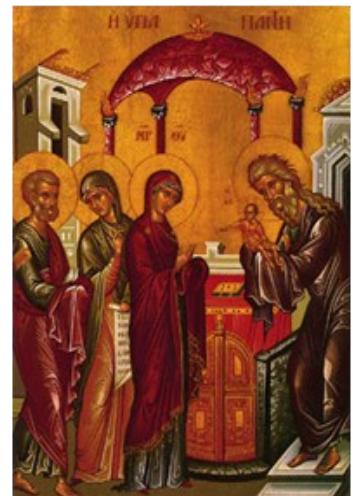
2 February

When the most pure Mother and Ever-Virgin Mary's forty days of purification had been fulfilled, she took her first-born Son to Jerusalem on this, the fortieth day after His birth, that she might present Him in the temple according to the Law of Moses, which teaches that every first-born male child be dedicated to God, and also that she might offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons, as required by the Law. (Luke 2:22-24; Exod. 13:2; Lev. 12:6-8)

On this same day, a just and devout man, the greatly aged Symeon, was also present in the temple, being guided by the Holy Spirit. For a long time, this man had been awaiting the salvation of God and he had been informed by divine revelation that he would not die until he beheld the Lord's Christ. Thus, when he beheld Him at that time and took Him up into his aged arms, he gave glory to God, singing:

"Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master. . ." And he confessed that he would close his eyes joyfully, since he had seen the Light of Revelation for the nations and the Glory of Israel. (Luke 2:25-32)

From ancient times, the Holy Church has retained this tradition of the churcning of the mother and new-born child on the fortieth day and of the reading of prayers of purification.

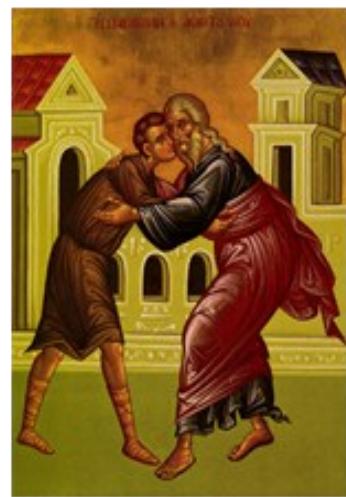


Triodion – Sunday of the Prodigal Son

8 February

Through the parable of the Gospel, our Savior has set forth three things for us: the condition of the sinner, the rule of repentance, and the greatness of God's compassion. The divine Fathers have put this reading the week after the parable of the Publican and Pharisee so that, seeing in the person of the Prodigal Son our own wretched condition -- inasmuch as we are sunken in sin, far from God and His Mysteries -- we might at last come to our senses and make haste to return to Him by repentance during these holy days of the Fast.

Furthermore, those who have wrought many great iniquities and have persisted in them for a long time, oftentimes fall into despair, thinking that there can no longer be any forgiveness for them; so being without hope, they fall every day into the same and even worse iniquities. Therefore, the divine Fathers, to root out the passion of despair from the hearts of such people, and rouse them to the deeds of virtue, have set the present parable to show them the surpassing goodness of God's compassion, and to teach them that there is no sin -- no matter how great it may be -- that can overcome at any time His love for man



The foregoing two parables -- especially that of the Prodigal Son -- have presented to us God's extreme goodness and love for man. But lest certain persons, putting their confidence in this alone, live carelessly, squandering upon sin the time given them to work out their salvation and death suddenly snatch them away, the most divine Fathers have appointed this day's feast commemorating Christ's impartial Second Coming, through which we bring to mind that God is not only the Friend of man, but also the most righteous Judge, Who recompenses to each according to his deeds.

It is the aim of the holy Fathers, through bringing to mind that fearful day, to rouse us from the slumber of carelessness unto the work of virtue and to move us to love and compassion for our brethren. Besides this, even as on the coming Sunday of Cheese-fare we commemorate Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight -- which exile is the beginning of life as we know it now -- it is clear that today's is reckoned the last of all feasts, because on the last day of judgment, truly, everything of this world will come to an end.

All foods, except meat and meat products, are allowed during the week that follows this Sunday.

Saint Theodore Commander and Great Martyr

8 February

The Holy Martyr Theodore was from Euchaita of Galatia and dwelt in Heraclea of Pontus. He was a renowned commander in the military. Emperor Licinius was told that he was a Christian and abominated the idols. Licinius therefore sent certain men to him from Nicomedia, to honor him and ask him to appear before him. Through them, however, Saint Theodore sent back a message that it was necessary for various reasons, that Licinius come to Heraclea. Licinius, seeing in this a hope of turning Saint Theodore away from Christ did as was asked of him.

When the Emperor came to Heraclea, Saint Theodore met him with honor and the Emperor in turn gave Theodore his hand, believing that through him he would be able to draw the Christians to the worship of his idols. Seated upon his throne in the midst of the people, he publicly bade Theodore offer sacrifice to the gods. But Theodore asked that the emperor entrust him with the most venerable of his gods, those of gold and silver, that he might take them home and himself attend upon them that evening, promising that the following day he would honor them in public. The Emperor, filled with joy at these tidings, gave command that Theodore's request be fulfilled. When the Saint had taken the idols home, he broke them in pieces and distributed the gold and silver to the poor by night. The next day a centurion named Maxentius told Licinius that he had seen a pauper pass by carrying the head of Artemis. Saint Theodore, far from repenting of this, confessed Christ boldly. Licinius, in an uncontrollable fury, had the Saint put to many torments, then crucified.



While upon the cross, the holy Martyr was further tormented -- his privy parts were cut off, he was shot with arrows, his eyes were put out and he was left on the cross to die.

The next day Licinius sent men to take his corpse and cast it into the sea; but they found the Saint alive and perfectly whole. Through this, many believed in Christ. Seeing his own men turning to Christ and the city in an uproar, Licinius had Theodore beheaded, about the year 320. The Saint's holy relics were returned to his ancestral home on June 8, which is also a feast day of the Great Martyr

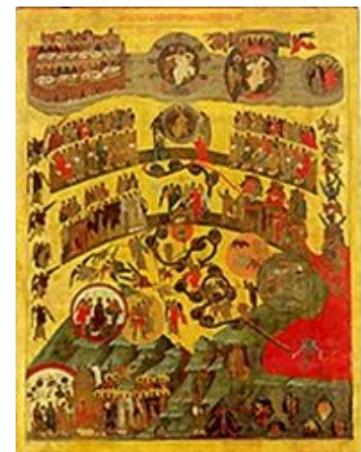
Triodion - Judgment Sunday - Meatfare Sunday

15 February

The foregoing two parables -- especially that of the Prodigal Son -- have presented to us God's extreme goodness and love for man. But lest certain persons, putting their confidence in this alone, live carelessly, squandering upon sin the time given them to work out their salvation and death suddenly snatch them away, the most divine Fathers have appointed this day's feast commemorating Christ's impartial Second Coming, through which we bring to mind that God is not only the Friend of man, but also the most righteous Judge, Who recompenses to each according to his deeds.

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All foods, except meat and meat products, are allowed during the week that follows this Sunday.



Dairy, Eggs, & Fish
Allowed
Refrain from Meat



Triodion – Forgiveness Sunday – Cheesefare Sunday

22 February

The Holy Fathers have appointed the commemoration of Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight, here, on the eve of the holy Forty-day Fast, demonstrating to us not by simple words, but by actual deeds, how beneficial fasting is for man, and how harmful and destructive are insatiety and the transgressing of the divine commandments.

For the first commandment that God gave to man was that of fasting, which the first-fashioned received but did not keep; and not only did they not become gods, as they had imagined, but they lost even that blessed life which they had, and they fell into corruption and death, and transmitted these and innumerable other evils to all of mankind.



The God-bearing Fathers set these things before us today, that by bringing to mind what we have fallen from, and what we have suffered because of the insatiateness and disobedience of the first-fashioned, we might be diligent to return again to that ancient bliss and glory by means of fasting and obedience to all the divine commands.

Taking occasion from the Gospel of Matthew 6:14-21 to begin the Fast unencumbered by enmity, we also ask forgiveness this day, first from God, then from one another and all creation.

Clean Monday / Kathara Deftera

3 March

Today we begin the 40-day Lenten Fast with a strict fast from meat, fish, oil, wine, dairy, and eggs.

Strict Fast
Refrain from
Meat, Fish, Wine,
Oil, Dairy & Eggs



LENTEN PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM

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

(prostration and +)

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

(prostration and +)

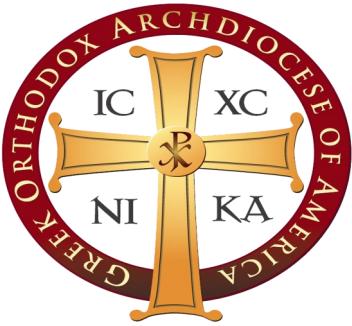
Yes, O Lord and King! Grant me
to see my own errors and not to
judge my brothers and sisters.
For You are blessed to ages of
ages. Amen.

(prostration and +)

Orthodox Calendar

FEBRUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Sunday of Publican & Pharisee Triodion Begins 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 12:15 Dance Practice Indoor & Live-stream	2 Presentation of our Lord 9am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 4:30 Greek School 5pm Dance Pract.	3 6:30pm Philoptochos Benefit Wrap-up Mtg	4 7pm Union Station	5 4:30 Greek School	6 7pm Dance Practice	7 10am Dance Practice
8 Sunday of Prodigal Son Theodore the General 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 12:15 Dance Practice Indoor & Live-stream	9 4:30 Greek School 5pm Dance Prac.	10 10:30 am VIP Meeting 6:30pm Dance Practice	11 7pm Philoptochos Board Meeting	12	13	14 Saturday of Souls
						FDF
15 Judgement/Meatfare Sunday 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy Indoor & Live-stream	16 	17 7pm Parish Council Mtg	18 6:30pm Philopochos General Meeting	19 4:30 Greek School	20	21
						FDF
22 Forgiveness/Cheesefare Sunday 8:45am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy 11:30 Souper Sunday Indoor & Live-stream	23 Clean Monday 4:30 Greek School	24	25	26 4:30 Greek School	27	28
		Strict Fast Refrain from Meat, Fish, Wine, Oil, Dairy & Eggs	Fish, Wine & Oil Allowed	Wine and Oil Allowed	Dairy, Eggs, & Fish Allowed; Refrain from Meat	Fast Free All foods allowed
						No Symbol



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TIME SENSITIVE

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

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

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

Purity of heart is accomplished through
focus on God.

We achieve this through prayer, scripture reading,
the Eucharist, church worship, repentance,
fasting and almsgiving.

When we focus on holy things,
we become more holy.

When we focus on unholy things, we become unholy.

The hateful person sees hateful people.

The dishonest person sees dishonest people.

The loving person sees loving people.