

# The Desert



# Messenger

“Behold, I send My messenger before Your Face, who shall prepare Your way...” (Matthew 11:10)

Volume 17, Issue 10 St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV November 2019

**From  
Father  
John**

Beloved in Christ:

Our Lord Jesus Christ in His Parable of the Sower speaks of the fruitful seed which fell into good soil, *“growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”* (Mark 4:8) Each of us received the seed of God’s Word on our day of Baptism, for through the blessed waters of the font we were clothed with Jesus Christ, becoming united with His Body – that is, the Church. (Galatians 3:27-28) To the extent that we, who are made in God’s image, have nurtured this spiritual seed in the soil of our souls, we will reap the eternal reward of the gift of Life in His Kingdom. Our Lord Jesus Christ established His Holy Orthodox Church through His Apostles for the sake providing the fertile ground for our souls – this soil has continued yielding rich fruit through proclaiming the “correct Faith,” preaching the Good News of the Crucified and Resurrected Christ, and especially in the divine services and the Holy Mysteries, through which we are united by grace with God and one another.

Over 60 years ago a handful of Greek Orthodox Christians gathered together and cared enough to do everything possible to establish a Church in the desert we know as home. With the encouragement of a visiting Bishop and Priest, who came to Las Vegas to conduct a Baptism, a Philoptochos Chapter was formed, becoming the springboard from which our Parish was established. Eventually a Parish Council was appointed which, together with Philoptochos and a small but mighty group of pioneers, labored toward their vision of tilling the desert soil into a spiritually fruitful garden: This led to the Parish Charter in 1959, the assignment of a full-time Priest, finding an appropriate facility for regularly celebrating the Divine Liturgy, as well as Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals, and offering ministries for our local faithful, and especially the youth. During the initial years, the divine services were held in a hotel room, then later in a converted synagogue, and finally a unified Parish vision led to building our current magnificent Church – which was consecrated to the glory of God – and is the center of our spiritual and community life. From the beginning we had people who have deeply loved and cared about St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church – but whether you were here from the first hour, or arrived at the third, sixth or ninth hour, or even if you have just recently joined us . . . each and every active Steward is a significant part of this Church.



By God’s grace, St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Our Diamond Jubilee – this year, and I pray *that every Parish member – including your children – can come and participate in the worshiping services and celebratory events scheduled for November 9 and 10.* I want to emphasize that on the occasion of our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary we are not just celebrating our founders, or that we have been around for six decades, or even that we are finally paying off our mortgage due to the generosity of our donors – though all are these are truly worthy of honoring and offering up an abundance of gratitude to God: Rather, we are celebrating our diverse Greek Orthodox Church, for regardless of when you became part of our Parish or what background you came from . . . YOU ARE PART OF US AND WE ARE ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS!

*(Continued on Page 2)*

**WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

***Sundays: 8:45 am Orthros - 10:00 am Divine Liturgy  
Church School follows Holy Communion***

Friday, November 1/*Holy Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damianos/St. David of Evia*

***8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy***

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 12:27-31; 13:1-8

Gospel: Matthew 10:1, 5-8

Sunday, November 3/*5th Sunday of Luke/Church of St. George in Lydda/St. Acepshimas of Persia*

Orthros: Tone Three

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 20:19-31

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Friday, November 8/*Synaxis of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel*

***8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy***

Epistle: Hebrews 2:2-10

Gospel: Luke 10:16-21

Saturday, November 9/*St. Nectarios of Pentapolis the Wonderworker*

***8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy***

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 5:9-13, 24-28

Gospel: Luke 13:31-35

***5:30 pm Great Vespers and Artoclasia***

Sunday, November 10/*8th Sunday of Luke/St. Olympas of the 70/St. Arsenios of Cappadocia*

Orthros: Tone Four

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 21:1-14

Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Friday, November 15/*Nativity Fast Begins*

Sunday, November 17/*9th Sunday of Luke/St. Gregory the Wonderworker/Ss. Gennadios and Maximos, Patriarchs of Constantinople*

Orthros: Tone Five (First Plagal)

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 21:14-15

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18

Gospel: Luke 12:16-21

Wednesday, November 20/*The Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple*

***5:00 pm Orthros - 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy***

Epistle: Hebrews 9:1-7

Gospel: Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28

Thursday, November 21/*Entrance of the Theotokos (Observed Wednesday evening, November 20)*

Sunday, November 24/*13th Sunday of Luke/St. Clement Bishop of Rome/St. Peter, Archbishop of Alexandria*

Orthros: Tone Six (Second Plagal)

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): Matthew 28:16-20

Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

Monday, November 25/*Great Martyr Catherine*

***8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy***

Epistle: Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-5

Gospel: Mark 5:24-34

Wednesday, November 27/*Thanksgiving Liturgy*

***5:00 pm Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia***

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 4:18-5:10

Gospel: Luke 20:9-18

***From Father John (Continued from Page 1)***

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco, His Excellency Metropolitan Ilia Katre, and Father Matthew and Presvytera Annie Swehla will be with us throughout the weekend – so please make sure you and your loved ones are also present, for this is a celebration of our family in Christ.

During this month of Thanksgiving, I thank God for each and every one of you – for being a special member of the Greek Orthodox Body of Christ in Las Vegas and for the many ways you are the “Amen” to my ministry in His Vineyard. You truly are the “good soil” and “fruitful seeds” in my life: May we together continue cultivating the fertile soil of our souls and our Church, for our sanctification and the generations that will follow!

With much love and gratitude in Christ, 



PLEASE JOIN US IN THE CELEBRATION OF

**“OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE”**

THE 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

of

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

5300 South El Camino Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89118

NOVEMBER 9 AND 10, 2019



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

GREAT VESPERS 5:30 pm

CELEBRATION 7 pm

Silent Auction, Cocktails, Dinner and Dancing

Pictorial History of St. John Community



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10

ORTHROS 8:30 am

HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY 10 am

CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH

INVITATIONS TO FOLLOW  
RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED  
702 221-8245

## Parish Council Report

Greetings to the Saint John the Baptist Community! After months of preparation and planning, another Greek Food Festival is in the books! While we all know that the weather affected the financial success of this event, we must address the positive aspects as well. To begin, a sincere thank you to all of the volunteers who through their time and talents make this “the number one cultural festival” in our state. This was probably the best organized, safest and aesthetically pleasing event that we have put on in the past 47 years. The winds on Saturday had an adverse effect on attendance, but we cannot control the weather. *Once again, the fact that a windy Saturday can have such a negative effect on our community’s finances illustrates how overly reliant we are on this event.* As Stewardship Pledge Season is almost upon us, we must again emphasize that Stewardship is designed to pay for our operating costs and the Festival funds are supposed to pay for capital improvements, such as painting, Church roof repair, air conditioning replacement – all expenses that are on the horizon. Please keep this in mind when you receive your Pledge Cards.

As we all know, our *60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration* is planned for *November 9 and 10*, and if you have not done so already, please send in your payment and RSVP, as all tickets are being sold in advance. This will be a Gala Event with Special Guests, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos, His Excellency Metropolitan Ilia, and Father Matthew and Presvytera Annie Swehla. It has been the goal all along that we could celebrate the payoff of our mortgage in conjunction with this celebration, and by the grace of God and the efforts of Cheryl Pandelis, Nitsa Filios and their committee, as well as all of the donors who answered the call to help to pay off this debt, I am pleased to announce that after Father John’s appeal on October 18, the final \$40,000 has been donated and our community is officially mortgage free! From now on, the money from Festival proceeds that has been dedicated to mortgage payment can be put toward its intended use in the future, namely capital improvements and maintenance.

The next *Parish Assembly* meeting is scheduled for *Sunday November 17* after Divine Liturgy. The agenda will include approval of the 2020 Budget and nominations for the Parish Council. This is an important meeting and Stewards are encouraged to attend and participate!

Finally, it has been way too many years since we have published a Church Directory, and I am happy to announce that Bill and Erin Bruninga will begin taking photos for this directory during Fellowship *beginning on Sunday, November 24*. These sessions will continue every Sunday for a limited period, so please plan on being in Church with your family and having your portrait done. The Directories will be available to the community sometime after the first of the year. We look forward to full participation in this project!

In Christ, John Matsis, Parish Council Vice President

*“O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever.”  
(Psalm 136:1)*



**Adult Study with Father John**  
*Sunday Epistle and Gospel Readings*  
*and*  
*Churchianity vs. Christianity*  
*By Metropolitan Anthony Bloom*

*Join us every Wednesday, beginning November 13, 7:00 - 8:30 pm, in Kokkos Hall.*

*All are Welcome: We will start over with Metropolitan Bloom’s book -  
Adult Study books and Bibles are available in our Bookstore.*

## *SUNDAY SCHEDULE*

### *NOVEMBER 3*

Ushers: Justina Szukiewicz, John Koutsulis, Adam Bieker, Stacy Mavrantonis, Mark Karris and John Matsis  
Fellowship: Philoptochos Society

### *NOVEMBER 10: 60TH ANNIVERSARY*

Ushers: Gus Flangas, Skip Ruffner, Bessie Stavropoulos, Spiros Filios, Demetrious Asim and John Nicholas  
Fellowship: 60th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee Brunch (*Reservation Only*)

### *NOVEMBER 17: PARISH ASSEMBLY*

Ushers: Demetrious Asim, John Matsis, Mark Karris, Stacy Mavrantonis, Justina Szukiewicz and John Koutsulis

Memorials: Departed Members of Chagares Family; Nick Pandelis; and Vasso Dangard

Fellowship: Daughters of Penelope

### *NOVEMBER 24*

Ushers: Adam Bieker, Spiros Filios, Gus Flangas, Bessie Stavropoulos, John Nicholas and Skip Ruffner  
Fellowship: Autumn Bake Sale

## Notice of Parish Assembly

Sunday, November 17, 2019

Following the Divine Liturgy in Panos Hall

### AGENDA:

- Call to Order/Opening Prayer
  - Election of Assembly Chair
- Approval of Minutes (March 31, 2019)
- Stewardship Report & 2020 Vision Stewardship Commitment Drive
  - Greek Food Festival Report
    - Financial Review
  - Approval of 2020 Budget
- Internal Audit Report (for 2018)
- Election of 2020 Audit Committee
- Elect Nominations/Election Committee
- Nominations for Parish Council 2020-21
  - Closing Prayer/Adjournment

*Everyone is encouraged to attend, although only Pledged Stewards for 2019 may vote.  
Please see a Parish Council Member, a Stewardship Committee Member  
or call the Church Office to become a Steward.*

**Philoptochos  
News**

My Dearest Sisters of Philoptochos and St. John the Baptist Community,

I would like to start with something I read by Helen Keller that is so fitting for Philoptochos Ladies: "Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much."

On October 13 we had our Philoptochos Membership Meeting/Mimosa Luncheon. The attendance of both new and long-standing members was great and the sisterhood of everyone was a beautiful thing to be a part of. I would like to thank our wonderful chairwomen, Christina Snow and Bernadette Anthony, for making this a lovely event. A special thank you to all the women who came out on Saturday to help with the setup and decorations.

Following are our exciting upcoming Philoptochos events:

**Sunday, November 3 – Saints Cosmas and Damianos Presentation, Collection and Fellowship to benefit the Ecumenical Patriarchate.** The philanthropies of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, such as Baluki Hospital and Nursing Home, schools, shrines and parishes, are supported through this commitment. Please be generous in your contributions! Estella Nicholas will host the Fellowship honoring our Philoptochos patrons, Saints Cosmas and Damianos.

**Sunday, November 3 – Christmas Card and Christmas Pastries Pre-Sale.** Once again, Andrea Takas will oversee our Christmas Card sales, with Tami Stefanatos assisting. We appreciate all their help! Please fill out the form (*see Page 18*) and return it with your payment to Andrea or Tami. Please also help us sell all our Christmas Pastries (*see Page 7*). Don't forget to set your clocks back on November 3!

**Saturday, November 9 and Sunday, November 10 – Our Diamond Jubilee: The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. John the Baptist Church!** On November 9 Great Vespers will be at 5:30 pm, followed by dinner, music and dancing for everyone's enjoyment, along with a very special Pictorial History of St. John the Baptist Community put on by the Hellenic Historical Society, and a silent auction. On November 10 there will be a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am, followed by a Champagne Brunch at 1:00 pm. No reservations will be made without payment in full. No tickets will be sold at the door. Please get your reservations in as soon as possible for this wonderful, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

**Saturday, November 16 – Pastry Baking Day in the Kitchen, starting at 8:00 am.** We are grateful to Eleni Kakavulias and Kiki Mavrantonis, who once again accepted to be in charge of baking our Christmas cookies. Please come and help us as we need many hands on that day!

**Saturday November 23 – Pastry Packing Day.** Amanda and Tamara Flangas are again our wonderful chairwomen for our pastry packing day! Please sign up and help us on that day as we need many hands!



**Sunday, November 24 – Autumn Bake Sale and Christmas Décor Sale, following Liturgy.** Get your baked goods for Thanksgiving at our Autumn Bake Sale! Please see Rahel Kiflezgi, our energetic chairwoman, to offer your baked goods. Adrienne Snow and Christina Snow are overseeing our Christmas Trees project: Buy a beautiful hand-decorated Christmas tree for your home – they make a wonderful gift.

**December 1 and 8 – Pastry Pick-up Day.** Please pick up your Christmas pastries.

**Sunday, December 8 – Philoptochos Christmas Party.** Jelena Boskovic is our creative chairwoman for our holiday party, which will be held **at 5:30 pm at Bonefish Grill Town Square**. The price is \$50 a person, which includes a three-course meal with soft drinks and wine. Spouses are welcome. Please make your reservation with your payment early as seating is limited. Please contact Jelena at (917) 684-1329 or email her at [ellenabosk@gmail.com](mailto:ellenabosk@gmail.com).

**Sunday, December 15 – Last Day for Pastry Pick-up.**

Please join us by participating in and supporting all our events!

With Love in Christ, Benita Beeman, Philoptochos President



The 2019 Annual  
Ladies Philoptochos Society  
**Christmas Pastry Sale**

Delicious and traditional Greek Christmas Pastries lovingly baked and packaged in a decorated box for \$25.

Quantities are limited.

Guarantee your order by pre-ordering and pre-paying.  
**Complimentary logo for those who order 40 boxes or more, as well as 10% discount and free delivery.**

Send your order and check made payable to:

Ladies Philoptochos Society, attention Christmas Pastry Sale  
5300 El Camino Rd. Las Vegas, NV 89118

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Cell or Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Number of boxes \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Or please call Karen at the Church Office (702) 221-8245 to pay by credit card

Orders will be ready for pickup at St. John Church on Sunday, December 1, 2019, following Divine Liturgy.

Your generous contribution is greatly appreciated. It benefits the many ministries we support at St. John Church, the Las Vegas community at large, and around the world.

Thank you!

## Stewardship and Community Outreach



### 20/20 Vision - The Vision For Our Future Begins in 2020!

Blessings in the Name of the Lord! As I sit down to write this, I am doing a bit of post-Festival reflection. We know the weather was not great part of the time, and we did not have as many people come to support “the cause” – however, we still had wonderful success. Was it the same success that the Festival had in past years? In my opinion, in one most critical way, “Yes!” It brought the same amount of souls (if not a few more) to the Orthodoxy class that is held every Wednesday for six weeks directly after the Greek Food Festival. With this in mind should it not be our utmost priority to bring more souls in to the Body of Christ? If this is what our Food Festival accomplishes, I pray that it continue to be blessed!

With this being said, we must realize that it has become perfectly clear – “20/20 Vision” clear – that we have to continue with great zeal, the hard work and dedication that the past “visionaries” created when they started our beloved St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church 60 years ago! Paying off the mortgage and celebrating our Diamond Jubilee is one example of what happens when the hearts of inspired Stewards become determined.

The days, weeks, years, and even decades to come for our community have many wonderful goals to set, and accomplishments to look forward to! First, with the paying off of our mortgage, then as we see this completed, so many more exciting endeavors will be coming our way to grow our Parish community.

Please MARK YOUR CALENDAR *for Saturday, December 7 at 11:30 am* to join us for an extremely important gathering of the hearts and minds of the faithful of St. John the Baptist Church, to set a vision in place to move forward. We will be doing this with the most positive intentions to cultivate and grow what Christ has blessed us with, through the prayerful hard work and dedication of those who have gone before us. A Parish Vision sets the goals, priorities, and plans of the local Church in accordance with God’s will and the unique talents and individual strengths of the members of the Parish. We need a majority of our people to come to this meeting or else our vision will not fully encompass the hearts of all of our members. God willing, we shall all give of ourselves as abundantly as those who came before us did!

On behalf of the Stewardship and Community Outreach Committee, with much love,  
Justina Szukiewicz



#### *Baptized into Christ: Na Mas Zisoun*

Catherine (Cheri) Koupais on October 12, 2019 (Adult Baptism).  
Godparent: Vasilias Petrou.

Maria (Gianna), daughter of Mario and Cheri Koupais,  
on October 13, 2019.  
Godparents: Andreas Andreou and Vasilias Petrou.

#### *Marriage: Na Zisete!*

Alexios Hadji and Jaime Lyn Moore on October 5, 2019.  
Koumbaros: Andreas Hadji.

*“O Lord, You have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.”  
(Psalm 139:1-3)*

## *From Father Seraphim*

I recently had the opportunity to attend an Orthodox Leadership Conference where I heard a lecture by an Orthodox Priest named Father Barnabas Powell. Among his many points, one particularly caught my interest: “We must be Orthodox on purpose, not just Orthodox by a happy accident of our birth.” What does that mean? It means intentionally creating a pattern of life that is aimed toward Heaven. Orthodoxy is a way of life: It is not only cultural, but spiritual. Being Orthodox on purpose means participating in actions, habits, and ideas that are prescribed by Jesus Christ and His Church and lead to holiness. It means loving Christ is the most important thing in our life. This month I would like to talk about some of the basic practices that are specifically “Orthodox” and are integral to our identity as genuine Christians.

The first way to be Orthodox on purpose is to actively attend Church services. Actively, meaning to be fully present and paying attention to the prayers. Metropolitan Anthony Bloom writes: “If you come to a service, and just stand there waiting for it to end, you are not a partaker of the service. If you come to Communion, just because it is a Sunday, or because it is your Name-day, or just because everyone else does, you may as well not receive Communion at all. There is a very powerful passage in St. Symeon the New Theologian where he says that, ‘God is fire, but He is our Savior. And when you come to receive Communion, without an awareness of what you are doing, God does allow it but the living water passes through you as a channel because it did not find in you a cistern worthy to hold it.’” This is a sobering quote because it shows that we can go through the motions without really receiving the love God has for us: More than just our bodies need to be in the Church, but our hearts and minds as well.

When we are not able to make it to Church services, we truly should yearn to be there. There is a story in the life of Gerondissa Makrina Vassilopolou, where the Parish Priest saw her standing in the Liturgy, but when he talked with her the following day she told him that she was so sad that she could not make it to Church since she was very ill. To be Orthodox on purpose means to desire the special time that the Christian community spends together in the services, and this desire can only begin to grow with frequent attendance. Another suggestion as to how to be Orthodox on purpose, is to become familiar with the Church calendar. When we see that there is a feast day approaching or a Divine Liturgy scheduled, we can arrange our family and work schedule to place worship as a priority. Making the divine services a special family event is a beautiful way to live out our Faith in a transformative manner; doing this may cost a vacation day or making up homework we missed at school, but something not worth sacrificing for it is evidently lacking in value.

A difficult way (initially) to be Orthodox on purpose is to habitually and frequently confess our sins in the Holy Sacrament of Confession and Repentance. We are not Protestants who just stay in our room and confess to God alone. How can we be free of the passions and self-destructive addictive behaviors we all have in our lives without the grace of Christ? The way of forgiveness and healing in our Church is to attend the spiritual hospital and, in the presence of the Priest, to receive from the invisibly present Christ the remission of our sins. How beautiful and wonderful that we have a safe place to come and be freed of the darkness in our souls!

The list could go on and on but I will mention just a few more suggestions that that Church offers us to help us live a truly Orthodox life. *Prayer*: Just like the body cannot live without air or water, so the soul cannot be alive without a real relationship with our loving Creator. This relationship and our inner life is built on our personal prayer to God. *An Icon Corner*: Without somewhere to pray it becomes nearly impossible to do so. Every Orthodox home should have a place with some holy icons and a vigil lamp or candles, perhaps incense to burn, holy water and antidoron (for partaking when we are fasted). *We should all know and say the Jesus Prayer* (“Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me!”) using a prayer rope or out loud in any quiet circumstance, such as driving, washing dishes, or standing or sitting in front of our icons. *Pilgrimage*: Another element in our spiritual life is pilgrimage. We are already in a pilgrimage through time in the Church calendar toward Holy Pascha, but to take the time to visit a myrrh-streaming icon, another Orthodox country, a holy monastery or elder is essential to our spiritual growth. *Reading*: The Holy Gospels are the very Words of God in the Flesh. We will be judged by whether we kept the Commandments of God – and they are found in the Scriptures.

*(Continued on Page 12)*

## *Youth and Family Ministries*

### *Church School*

Hi Everyone! We have quite a few students registered for Church School so far this year. If you have not registered your child yet, please grab a registration form from me on Sunday or Karen during the week – and remember, for Pre-K, your child must be 4 years-old before September 30. Please return the form to me, your child's teacher, or to Karen in the Church Office. It is very important that we have all of the students registered – and best yet, registration is free!

It is always a great idea to keep our Faith alive at home with prayer during the week, keeping the fasts of the Church, and preparing as a family for Holy Communion. Talk to your children and help them learn the Creed, as that is our theme this year. We have wonderful teachers who love Christ and our Orthodox Faith, and are eager to teach our youth, especially the Nicene Creed.

*On Sundays, November 10 and December 1*, we will have Family Worship – no classes – due to the 60th Anniversary and Thanksgiving Holiday. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Eileen Koutsulis, Church School Director (702) 521-6516 or [vivaleenie@cox.net](mailto:vivaleenie@cox.net)

### *Youth Choir News*



Thank you to all the Youth Choir members who chanted on Sunday, October 13: You all sounded wonderful! It was nice to be back in our old spot in the exedra after two years.

We will change things up a bit in November. Our practice will be *on Sunday, November 3 at 12:15 pm* in the 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grades classroom.

We encourage all of our members to join forces upstairs with the Adult Choir *on Sunday, November 10*, when Metropolitan Gerasimos and Metropolitan Ilia will celebrate the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy for our Diamond Jubilee Weekend.

We will chant the Divine Liturgy *on Sunday, November 17*. Please be on time for both Liturgies – *before 10:00 am!* With Love in Christ, Presvytera Maria

### *Greek Folk Dance*

Folk Dance Registration is now complete! Our dancers are hard at work learning traditional dances from all regions of Greece! We are preparing our dance suites for the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Greek Orthodox Folk Dance and Choral Festival (FDF), which will take place *February 13-17, 2020, in Anaheim, CA*. A big thank you to all the volunteer directors and all the parents who put in so much time and effort to keep these wonderful traditions alive.

Please mark your calendars for Christmas Caroling! The dancers in our ministry will be traveling around town spreading holiday cheer on *December 6 and 7!* We would love to come to your home, business, or Christmas party to share our traditional Greek and English Christmas Carols. Any questions? Please email [Stjohngreekdance@gmail.com](mailto:Stjohngreekdance@gmail.com).

Also, on *Sunday, December 8*, we will be hosting our annual Soup Fellowship in Panos Hall after Divine Liturgy. Please join us as we try to raise some money and serve delicious Lenten soup to all! Enjoy a blessed Thanksgiving with all your families!

With Much Gratitude, The Folk Dance Board

*“My son, if you receive My words and treasure up My commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.” (Proverbs 2:1-5)*

## GOYA ~ For Teenagers



Dear GOYANs,

Thank you to all who came out for our GOYA Night in October, when we teamed up with Philoptochos for a service project and had a great time putting together activity bags for UMC Children's Hospital. Thanks also to our moms who provided an awesome home-cooked meal for our teens!

This month we will have a unique opportunity at our *GOYA Night on Sunday, November 17 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm*: We will be joined by some familiar faces from Red Rock Search and Rescue to do



some CPR and First Aid training! Not only have they come and helped us at the Festival for the past two years, but they also have the equipment and the know-how to get our youth emergency ready. It will be a little longer GOYA Night, but we ask you to please come and enjoy our normal fellowship, meal, prayers and games, and additionally arrive ready to be trained in response to different emergency situations by expert professionals. See you there!

With Love in Christ, June Likourinou and Kouli Pouridis, GOYA Advisors

## Orthodox Family Fellowship



OFF had a blast painting pumpkins and making caramel apples in October!

Please come and participate in our *60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration* this month. This is a wonderful time for everyone to be together in joy and thanksgiving for everything God has done for us in the last 60 years.



The celebration will begin with Great Vespers *on Saturday, November 9 at 5:30 pm*, followed by an evening dinner/celebration; then *on Sunday, November 10* we will have a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy *at 10:00 am* with both Metropolitan Gerasimos and Metropolitan Ilia, together with Father Matthew Swehla, and a brunch will follow. Please reserve your ticket for Saturday evening's celebration and Sunday morning's brunch and do not miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime event!

In Christ, Amy Khuri and Jelena Boskovic, OFF Advisors



## Greek Language Program



Greek School students and teachers jumped right into the fall semester. We recently had our Halloween Greek costume party at which the children and adults dressed up as a mythological or traditional Greek person. Everyone had a good time and enjoyed treats!

Thank you to all the teachers, old and new, who make this program viable! With that said I need one more teacher to head up a class – please contact me if you are able to help out every Tuesday from 5:00 - 6:30 pm. If you are not able to make it to Greek School on a regular basis we have extra book packs for \$100; please see me if interested.

Please note: There will be no class *on Tuesday, November 26*. Enjoy your time with family and give thanks to God for all your blessings! Paula Kelesis, Greek School Director

## Adult and Young Adult Ministries

### *Young Adults*

We hope to see everyone at our *Annual Friendsgiving Celebration* this month! *Mark your calendars for Sunday, November 24 at 5:00 pm at Niko Asim's house.* Please bring your favorite Thanksgiving side dish, drinks, salad, or dessert – please share what you will bring on the YA Facebook Page, so we do not get too many of the same dishes. Each year this event has been so much fun – let us keep the tradition going! Looking forward to seeing everyone!

*“So that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.” (2 Corinthians 4:15)*

In Christ, Niko Asim and Melissa Fleetwood, YA Advisors

*Friendsgiving*



### *Mr. & Mrs. - A Couples Fellowship*

We want to first of all offer a heartfelt thank you to John and Ellyn Nixon for hosting a beautiful dinner at their home in October. A good time was had by all!

This month we will be meeting at the home of Mike and Effie Eliades Lekar for our potluck gathering *on Friday, November 22 at 6:00 pm.* You are encouraged to bring a fast-appropriate side dish, dessert, drinks, or salad to share. As always, we will also have an engaging discussion. We hope to see you there!

Yours in Christ, Father John, Father Seraphim, and their Presvyteres



### *Kali Parea - “Good Company” for the 40+ Crowd*

We will join in with the events of our Parish's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in November. It all begins with Great Vespers *on Saturday, November 9 at 5:30 pm*, followed by an evening dinner/celebration. *On Sunday, November 10 at 10:00 am* we will have a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Gerasimos and Metropolitan Ilia, and Father Matthew Swehla will also be joining us. Please reserve your ticket for Saturday evening's celebration and Sunday morning's brunch and do not miss out on this milestone event!

Love in Christ, Demetrios Asim, Kali Parea Advisor

### *From Father Seraphim (Continued from Page 9)*

Together with the lives of the Saints and the writings of the great Church Fathers, books form the spiritual inheritance we all lay claim to as Orthodox, so it is imperative we make an attempt to read these gems.

Not many people in the world will actually read and think about the Bible, but they will read our lives. What story are they reading? Before the critical eyes of our age, we must illuminate real lives transformed by the power of God. For that to happen we must first believe in Him, love Him, and be recipients of His grace through the above mentioned spiritual practices, which are the indispensable means by which we attain the ultimate goal of union with Christ and being filled with the Holy Spirit. The majority of the followers of our Lord Jesus Christ today are satisfied with a life so conformed to the world that in almost every respect, to a casual observer, no difference is discernible. To be the salt and the light of the world, which we are called to be, we all must begin to really be *Orthodox on purpose.*

With Love in Christ,

*Father Seraphim*

## *Forerunners - The Seniors of St. John the Baptist*

Our turn-out for our October Forerunner Luncheon was extremely nice, and we all enjoyed a wonderful lunch of our favorite Festival foods. Father John memorialized Father Constantine Raptis, founder Pearl Osborn, and Antonia Pappas and Vasilios Liaos, who have recently fallen asleep in the Lord. Father Seraphim then led us in a nice discussion.



We were extremely happy to have Ruth Plentzas with us before she moved to Victoria, British Columbia. As all of you know, Ruth has been extremely instrumental in keeping the Forerunners together and spearheading our Shoebox Program for Homeless Teens for many years. Father John wished her well on behalf of all of us. We will certainly miss her and we welcome her back at any time.

Our next Forerunner Luncheon will take place this month *on Monday, November 4 at 11:30 am*. Please remember to mark your calendars accordingly. Also, please note that this year our Christmas Party will take place in the Panos Hall Foyer *on Monday, December 9 at 11:30 am*.

As always we offer our prayers and good wishes for the health of our seniors who are homebound or in facilities. Happy Thanksgiving!

With Love in Christ, Victoria Xikis, for the Senior Forerunners

## *Notes from the Choir Loft*

Thank you to everyone for a wonderful National Church Music Sunday! A special thank you to Father John, Father Seraphim, Vicki Xikis, our Parish Council and all who helped organize and prepare the wonderful luncheon! Special thanks to Steve Tzelalis and his crew for offering their culinary talents – we thoroughly enjoyed the excellent meal and company!



I hope that many of our Choir members are able to attend the Church Music Conference at St. Nicholas Ranch, November 14-17. Please visit this link for registration information: <http://sfchurchmusic.org/conference/2019/>.

I have been asked to be the guest director for the Conference Choir. Sam Herron from the Assumption Church in Scottsdale, AZ will be the Chant director, and Chris Vezzuto, of St. Katherine Church in Redondo Beach, will be the organist!

Athena Mertes, Director



## *The AHEPA Las Vegas Chapter 341*

I wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving and wish you and your families all the best! We will not be meeting this month but look for a meeting notice for December.

We are currently looking for Board Members to assist with the redevelopment of the Chapter. If you are interested in a Board Position or assisting with this very important organization, please contact me.

Thank you, Kouli Pouridis, Acting Chapter President [pouridis5@cox.net](mailto:pouridis5@cox.net) or (702) 604-0885



*“Let not loyalty and faithfulness forsake you; bind them about your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.” (Proverbs 33)*

## Orthodox Bookstore

This month we are featuring two wonderful books about Saint Paisios: *Saint Paisios the Athonite*, and *Saint Paisios of Mount Athos*. Both books are biographies compiled after he fell asleep in the Lord (1994), full of quotations and many detailed accounts of his miraculous gifts from God.

He is a relatively new addition to our family of Orthodox Saints, having been canonized in 2015. He was born in Pharasa, a small town in Asia Minor, in 1924. That same year his family was forced to relocate to the Greek homeland, as part of a mass exchange of Turk and Greek populations.

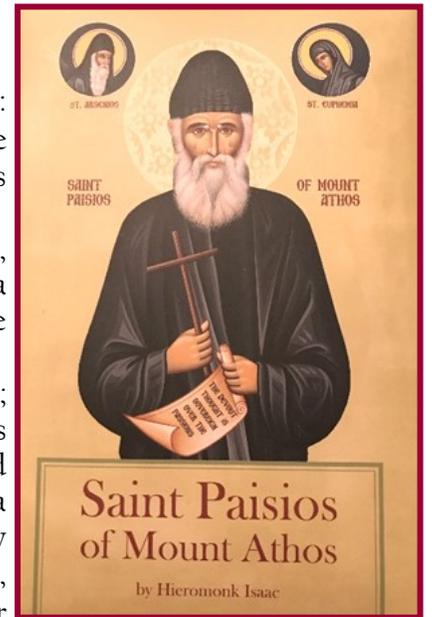
“Ever since he was a child, Saint Paisios had Heaven as his objective; with amazing precision, he remained focused on that goal throughout his life.” He loved to read Lives of the Saints, away from distractions in secluded places. His devout mother “helped him confront every difficulty in a spiritual way, seeking to teach him the virtue of humility at every opportunity.” He learned this lesson well, and was a most humble person, and the very embodiment of selfless *Philotimo* (literally: the love of honor; or self-sacrifice for the other) his entire life. His most fervent desire was to live a life of solitude and prayer: But instead, he would devote decades to providing personal spiritual advice to the hundreds of pilgrims who sought him out daily at his humble ascetic kalyvi (hut). Here is one example:

“There were times when the Saint’s visitors even experienced the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. The Saint wanted to offer a group of visitors some dyed red eggs. Because he had only one such egg, he prayed to Elder Hadji-Georgis, who, during Pascha, had dyed potatoes red instead of eggs. Shortly afterwards, he went out and, holding in his hand the single red egg, said, “Christ is Risen, *pallikaria!* Come on, let’s crack some eggs!” And then, what a miracle! At that very moment, they all found themselves holding a dyed red egg!”

“There were times when the Saint’s visitors even experienced the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. The Saint wanted to offer a group of visitors some dyed red eggs. Because he had only one such egg, he prayed to Elder Hadji-Georgis, who, during Pascha, had dyed potatoes red instead of eggs. Shortly afterwards, he went out and, holding in his hand the single red egg, said, “Christ is Risen, *pallikaria!* Come on, let’s crack some eggs!” And then, what a miracle! At that very moment, they all found themselves holding a dyed red egg!”

We have personally read and enjoyed both of these great books. It is wonderful to see that true Orthodox Saints are still among us in modern times, and we can all benefit by their example. Come and visit us at the Church Bookstore and read about Saint Paisios.

Until next month, God willing, Paisios Pursell and the Bookstore Team



Father Matthew Swehla and Father Seraphim Ramos enjoying the company of brother clergy at the National Clergy Retreat held in San Antonio, Texas, in late October.

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the beard, upon the beard on Aaron, rung down upon the collar of his robes!  
(Psalm 133:1-2)

**COMING SOON**

**2020 Church Directory**



**Your Family Here**

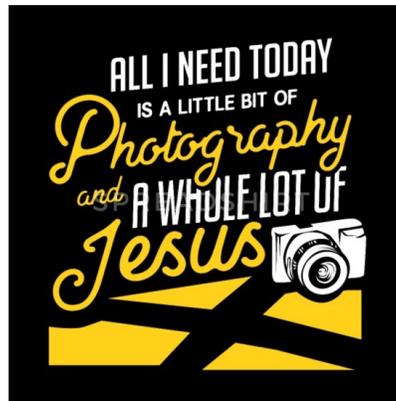
Portraits for the Church Directory will begin this **November**.  
Watch for the weekly schedule

**Photography Ministry**

What a great 2019 Greek Food Festival. Congratulations! Thanks to everyone who accommodated photo requests while working so hard. In addition to the photos in last month's issue of *The Desert Messenger*, there is an online catalog of Greek Food Festival Photos, from planning meetings to Monday clean-up: You can view these by accessing [tinyurl.com/yxhf2xpa](http://tinyurl.com/yxhf2xpa).

Also many grateful thanks to my professional photographer friend, Clark McCarrell, who volunteered – especially on Friday at the Festival while I was with the Torch Run. And thanks to everyone who said “yes” to his photo requests!

Our next photography ministry project: The 2020 Church Directory! Details of your portrait participation will be forthcoming in the *Weekly Bulletin*. Happy 60th Anniversary! Bill Bruninga



*“Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him,  
for what his hands have done shall be done to him. . .  
My people, your leaders mislead you,  
and confuse the course of your paths.”  
(Isaiah 3:11-12)*

*During this month of Thanksgiving, let us pray for the peace  
and unity and godliness of our nation.*

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

5300 S. El Camino Rd.  
Las Vegas, NV 89118

Rev. Father John Hondros  
frjohn@vegasgreekorthodox.com

Rev. Father Seraphim Ramos  
frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com

Karen Rawlinson  
Administrative Assistant

Michelle Eugenio  
Bookkeeper

Mara Braun  
Catering & Events

Constantin Petriuc & Ramona Tasio  
Maintenance & Grounds

*Office Hours*

Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Telephone: (702) 221-8245  
www.vegasgreekorthodox.com

Parish Council: Gus Flangas

Philoptochos: Benita Beeman

Stewardship & Community Outreach:  
Justina Szukiewicz

Choir: Athena Mertes

Chanters & Youth Choir:  
Presvytera Maria Hondros

Church School: Eileen Koutsulis

Altar Servers: Father John

**GOYA:**

Kouli Pouridis & June Likourinou

Orthodox Family Fellowship:  
Jelena Boskovic & Amy Khuri

Young Adults:  
Nicholas Asim & Melissa Fleetwood

Greek Folk Dance: Sia Dalacas

Greek School: Paula Kelesis

Mr. & Mrs.:  
Fr. John, Fr. Seraphim & Presvyteres

Kali Parea: Demetrious Asim &  
Joy Wolfenbarger

Adult Basketball:  
Nate Dallas

Forerunners: Vicki Xikis

Orthodox Bookstore:  
Constantine Frangakis,  
Paisios & Mary Pursell

Greek Food Festival: Gus Flangas

Hellenic Historical Society:  
Nitsa Filios, Cheryl Pandelis &  
Susan Stamis

Photography: Bill Bruninga

AXIOS TO  
HIS EXCELLENCY  
METROPOLITAN ILIA  
OF PHILOMELION

ON THE OCCASION OF HIS  
RECENT EPISCOPAL ELEVATION  
BY HIS ALL HOLINESS  
PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE

ΕΙΣ ΠΟΛΛΑ ΕΤΗ ΔΕΣΠΟΤΑ!



Church Account Summaries - September 2019

SIGOC - Account Summaries  
August - September 2019

Nevada State Bank Accounts	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
General Operating Account (GOA)	\$23,800.84	\$76,015.03	\$20,215.38	\$12,117.14	\$96,503.82	\$11,410.29	
Community and Education (C&E)	\$2,670.10	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,170.10	Transferred to GOA to cover payroll & bills
Greek Food Festival (GFF)	\$40,210.00	\$277,843.67	\$221,797.11	\$122,900.16	\$13,526.70	\$403,423.92	
Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)	\$180,789.24	\$8,112.01	\$4,273.31	\$15,470.13	\$18,630.99	\$159,073.44	
Folk Dance Group	\$15,083.23	\$1,970.00				\$17,053.23	
Hellenic Historical Society	\$3,300.94					\$3,300.94	
Mortgage Account	\$5,326.68				\$5,201.14	\$125.54	Mortgage Balance \$69,587.15
Designated Funds	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Bookstore	\$5,346.82	\$1,912.01	\$1,595.00	\$1,849.47	\$819.79	\$6,184.57	
Ornaments	\$1,087.41					\$1,087.41	
Restricted Funds	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
ICON	\$138,592.76	\$550.00				\$139,142.76	
Library Account	\$1,470.77					\$1,470.77	Account owed \$21,000. Funds used to make payroll and pay bills in 2015
Miscellaneous	\$0.00					\$0.00	
Giving Tree	\$8,450.91				\$8,450.00	\$0.91	Transferred to GOA to cover payroll & bills
Building Fund	\$0.00					\$0.00	Transferred to Mortgage Principal
\$300,000 One Year Plan	\$0.00	\$5,650.00	\$2,678.31		\$7,328.31	\$1,000.00	Funds collected and transferred. Will transfer \$1K balance 10/19
Youth Choir	\$2,989.18					\$2,989.18	
Church School	\$1,306.37					\$1,306.37	
Three Priests	\$2,684.49					\$2,684.49	
Roof Appeal	\$16,908.17			\$13,620.66	\$732.13	\$2,555.38	Mold Ebatement/Renovations
Baptismal Water Heater	\$1,370.00				\$1,300.76	\$69.24	
Altar Servers	\$440.00					\$440.00	
GOYA	\$142.36					\$142.36	
<b>Designated, Restricted, and Other Total</b>	<b>\$180,789.24</b>	<b>\$8,112.01</b>	<b>\$4,273.31</b>	<b>\$15,470.13</b>	<b>\$18,630.99</b>	<b>\$159,073.44</b>	
Other Funds	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Kokkos Scholarship Fund	\$67,990.45					\$67,990.45	
<b>September 2019 Candles</b>	<b>\$5,392.00</b>						
<b>September 2019 Trays</b>	<b>\$4,262.00</b>						
<b>Total September Candles &amp; Trays</b>	<b>\$9,654.00</b>						

## STEWARDS OF THE FAITH ~ 2019

Adamy, Marina	Ciulla, Anthony and Kleri	George, Peter and Georgia	Kostopoulos, Georgia
Alexander, Eleni	Ciulla, Dina	Georgoulakis, Mary Ellen	Kountanis, Panagiota
Alexandrakis, George	Cocores - Ely, Caron	Geronikolaou, Constantine	Koupais, Mario and Cheri
Alford, Cynthia "Mary"	Cokotis, Julie	Ghebream, Daniel and	Koupais, Pat
Anastasakis, Mark and Elaine	Collins, David	Ghermay, Selam	Koutsulis, John and Eileen
Anastasiou, Andrew and	Cominos, Ted	Gianakoulis, Nick and Magda	Koutsulis, Sam and Effie
Kathleen	Conger, William and Alexia	Gianoukakis, Andrew and Anna	Kypreos, George and Lesley
Andary, Oscar	Costuros, George and Marsha	Gideon, Jesse and Sara	Kypreos, Peter and Geri
Andrews, Catherine	Cosulas, Fr. Basil and	Giouzelis, Anastasia	Kypreos, Sophia
Andrews, Chris and Pamela	Presv. Samantha	Goodman, Robert and Linda	Kyprianou, Gilbert and Alexis
Andrews, George	Cotsilis, Jenny	Gott, C. Thomas and Kitty	Lagomarsino, Victor and Sophia
Andricopoulos, Margo	Coutris, Angela	Gousdovas, Nikos+	Lakkas, Christina
Anthony, Stavros and Bernadette	Crist, Adam and Kanistra	Green, Todd and Susan	Lamancusa, Lisa
Anton, Mike and Carol	Cromwell, Michael and Allison	Gruber, Ernest and Zoe	Lambros, Kyriakos and Mary
Antonopoulos, Angela	Dalacas, Dimitri and Athanasia	Gutierrez, Connie	Latelle, Penny
Arbuiso, Elizabeth	Dalacas, Eleni	Gutierrez, Daniel	Lavelle, Eleissa
Aristides, George and Diana	Dalacas, Georgia	Hadzoglon, Christos	Lavine, Frederick
Asim, Demetrius	Daskalos, George and Voula	Hamilton, Mary	Lazarakis, John and Panagiota
Asim, Niko	Daughters of Penelope	Hamilton, Paul and Brandi	Lekar, Caroline
Athens, Maria and	Demolas, Maria and Nour, Reza	Hastings, Teri and Audra	Lekar, Michael and Effie
Centers, Scott	Demoleas, Spero and Grace	Hayes, Tulla	Leonis, Nick and Sophia
Bacon, Ken and Dianne	Demoleas, Stephanie	Hemmers, Oliver and	Leonis, Tishe
Balaouras, Panos and Helen	Demopoulos, Vasiliki	Pantelas, Anne	Leventis, Nicholas and Christina
Balason, Anna+	Diamantis, Filippos	Henderson, Jimmie Laverne	Lewis, Foula
Balason, Voula	Dimitri, Janet	Henneforth, Rula	Liaos, Jim and Tina
Baldwin, Richard and Vivi	Dimitri, Martha	Herman, Martin and Diane	Liaos, Steven and Francine
Balodimas, James	Dimitri, Patricia	Hertberg, Jennifer	Liaos, William+ and Irene
Barbarino, Demetra	Dominguez, Eric and Amalia	Hetzel, David and Joanne	Likourinou, Angie
Bartzos, Eugenia	Doskas, Athanasios and Anastasia	Hoadrea, Jimmy and Monci	Likourinou, Steve and June
Beeler, Mike and Carolyn	Dudunakis, Michael	Hondros, Catherine	Litsos, Nicholas and Catherine
Beeman, Karl, Sr. and Benita	Earl, Christine Michaelides	Hondros, Christina	Loughton, Dustin and Rena
Beeman, Karl Jr. and Ivana	Eliades, Artemis	Hondros, Christopher and Darlene	Lovaas, Jason and Dokakis, Alis
Berendji, Jim and Vivian	Eliades, Gregory and Maria	Hondros, Fr. John and	Makris, Apostolos
Bernier, Micah and Alissa	Eliades, Harry and Agapi	Presv. Maria	Malamatos, Kindina
Berta, Irene	Eliades, Katerina	Hondros, Marissa	Maland, Tim+ and Donna
Bieker, Adam and Cassie	Eliades, Peter	Houlis, Ila and Debbie	Malpee, Mak and Kalliopi
Bieker, Georgea	Eliades, Vaso	Howard, William and Willie	Maniatakos, Ted and Maria
Birtas, Helen and Birtas, Ann	Eliakis, Peter and Glenda	Howse, Paul and Kelly	Manolakos, Catherine
Bizani, Katia	Eliakis, Varthie and LeeAnn	Hristopoulou, Spiridoula	Manos, Constantine and Michele
Bledsoe, Lori	Eyler, John and Elizabeth	Hunter, Zach and Krystle	Mansour, Muna
Bochanis, George and Enid	Eyler, Fr. Paul and Presv. Ilean	Iteen, Robert and Sophia	Manteris, Arthur and Sue
Booth, Brian and Effi	Filios, George and Nitsa	Justice, Flora	Margaretis, John and Lucila
Borzeka, Stephen	Filios, Spiridon and Eleni	Kachikis, Ernestine	Markakis, Catherine
Boskovic, Jelena	Fischer, Bob and Cheryl	Kakavulias, Christina	Markakis, Sandy
Bougalis, Nickolaos	Fitzgerald, Norman and	Kakavulias, George and Helen	Markantonis, George and Sarah
Brennan, Peter and Maria	McCullen, Sandra	Kakavulias, John and Elizabeth	Matsis, John and Rebecca
Britten, Ronald and Carol	Flangas, Marilyn	Kaltcheva, Maria	Mavrantonis, Stacy and Kiki
Brown, Faye	Flangas, Gary and Amanda	Kambouris, Litsa	Mavroidis, Demetrios and Debra
Bruninga, Bill and Erin	Flangas, Gus and Tamara	Kanis, Constantinos and Katie	Mavros, Alex and Jen
Bucy, Brent and Elaine	Fleetwood, Thomas and Melissa	Kapla, Mary	Mavros, Debbie
Campbell, Paul and Victoria	Fotopoulos, John and Barbara	Karalias, Petros and Constance	Mavroudis, Frank
Capre, Julio	Foster, Kyle and Pierro, Maria	Karas, James	McKinney, Michael and Mersene
Carabas, Stephen and Linda	Fountas, Constantinos	Karas, John and Marcie	McManus, Jeanette
Carahalios, John and Jillian	Frangakis, Christos and Anastasia	Karris, Mark and Suzanne	McSweeney, Farolyn
Caredis, Jon and Marjorie	Frangakis, Constantine	Katopodis, Efstratios	Melton, Don and Susan
Carrico, William and Alexandra	Frangakis, John	Katris, Nick	Nenegatos, James
Carter, Maria	Frangakis, Sophocles and Tara	Katris, Theana	Merrin, Maria
Chachas, Bessie	Frantzen, Robert	Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon	Mitchell, Thomas
Chachas, James	Franzi, Jack +	Kelesis, George	Moffett, Todd and
Chagares, Kiki	Garanyants, Sergey and	Kelesis, Maritza	Eliopoulos, Tina
Chandrinos, Alexia	Bilali, Markella	Kelesis, Paula	Molina, Adriana and
Chanos, Jennifer	Garza, Everardo and	Kiflezgi, Rahel	Elhamy, Kirollos
Chio, Napoleon	Eliades, Eleni	Kleanthis, George and Zanetta	Monoyudis, Jim and Julie
Chomakos, Dean and Tammy	Gauvin, Chad and Marissa	Kofinas, Maria	Mulopulos, George and Jenny
Chomakos, Jeremy and Romina	Geiger, Dan and	Kokkinis, Peter and Jennifer	Murray, Chris and
Chondrakis, Dimosthenis and	Hart-Geiger, Dora	Koliambas, Eleni	George, Veneta
Kragerud, Kaaren	Gekakis, George	Konstantarakis, Michelle	Myers, Stella
Christian, Clair and Chloe	Generales, John and Arlene	Kontos, Diana	Nedelchev, Diyan
Christou, Andreas and Toni	George, Elias and Saladino, Maria	Koroni, Tara	Nedelchev, Zhivko

## STEWARDS OF THE FAITH - 2019

Neocleous, Plato	Petrou, James and Penelopi	Savvas, Savva	Thompson, Steve and Alik
Nesheiwat, Peter and Ohan, Ida	Philippou, Demetrios and Luanne	Schildmeyer, Christine	Tohme, Tony and May
Newell, Ronald and Maria	Philippou, Kyriacos and Christine	Serafim, George and	Tsarouhas, Maria
Nicholas, Christina	Philippou, Philippos	Tzeleki, Roxani	Tsiralidis, Kosmas and Katerina
Nicholas, John and Estella	Pierro, Joe and Rhonda	Serpentini, Athanasia	Tsolis, Christos and Panagioula
Nichols, George and Tereza	Pierro, Joseph and Christine	Setian, Gary and Marie	Tsolis, Panagiot
Nikolopoulos, Nick and Dimitra	Pitts, Anton and Athena	Simos, Tony and Lorie	Tsortanidis, Sophia
Nixon, John and Ellyn	Platis, Anna	Sirhan, Michael and	Turman, Maria
Olmsted, Travis and Marilyn	Polimerou, Angeline	Khuri, Imtisal	Tzelalis, Antonia
Oustian, Ararat and Juliette	Politis, Pantelis and Dimitra	Skalkotos, Nikolas and Georgia	Tzelalis, Steve
Pahigiannis, Nikon	Poulos, Christine	Skandros, Stephanie	Tzortzis, Maria
Palivos, Peter and Vicky	Pouridis, Kouli and Para	Snow, Adrienne	Varinos, Nick and Kiki
Pallis, Paul	Powers, Russell and Rebecca	Snow, Clifford and Christina	Wadlow, Nicholas and Pamela
Pan-Arcadians	Punsalan, Basil and Sophie	Snowden, Robert and Niki	Wallace, Robert and Katerina
Pandelis, Cheryl	Pursell, Robert and Mary	Song, Adrienne	Walter, Vernon and Alice
Panos, William and Jeanne	Pytikakis, Emmanouil and Elaine	Sparkuhl, Alexander and Antoinette	Waterhouse, David and Aleighzja
Papas, Peter and Rita	Radosta, Athena	Spotti, Peter and Alexandra	Welles, Brigitte
Papas, Christian and Nicole	Ramos, Fr. Seraphim and	Stathopoulos, Anastasia	Wilkerson, Chuck and Kristina
Pappas, Antonia+	Presv. Olenka	Staub, Douglas and Anastasia	Williams, Anthony and Anna
Pappas, Libby	Raptis, Presvytera Evonne	Stefanatos, Michael and Tami	Wilson, Steven and Cleo
Pappas, Panos and	Rasmussen, Scott and Rebecca	Stenos, Louis	Womack, Karl
Katotakis, Andrea	Rigas, Anthony and Mary	Stevens, Charles and Mary	Womack, Kimberly
Pappas, Rita	Rigas, Evie	Stransky, Mark	Wood, Nadine
Pappas, Spiro	Rihani, Gary and Linda	Stransky, Jack and Gladys	Wronski, Chuck
Pappas, Stella	Rodis, Dimitri	Szukiewicz, Alex	Xerogianes, Nick and Nikki
Paton, Mia	Rodis, Sophia	Szukiewicz, Joseph and Jennia	Xikis, Victoria
Paul, Janet	Rosenthal, Joseph and Stephanie	Szukiewicz, Joe +	Yurkov, Nikolina and Daniela
Payan, Luis and Eleni	Rotas, Beatrice	Tafoya, Steven and Irene	Zachariou, Sozos and Aspasia
Pelletier, Michael	Ruffner, Skip and Kathy	Takas, Andrea	Zaferatos, Ted
Pendleton, Trisha	Sakkas, Georgios and	Tasios, Ramona and Pete	Zamir, Talor and Michelle
Peratikos, Tony	Stavropoulos, Bessie	Taxopoulos, Bryan and Irene	Zarras, Nick and Chery
Pertsinides, Irene	Salon, Janelle	Tesfasilase, Tiebe	Zervas, Dionisios
Petersen, Todd and Diane	Salonikis, Valentinos and Sophia	Thanos, Nicholas and Victoria	Zimmerman, Paul and Angela
Petro, Aleko and Georgia	Santamaria, Jennifer and Robert	Thompson, Maggy	Zmina, Stephen and Cynthia

### 2019 Stewardship Report (as of 10/28/19)

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$443,078 (\$398,773 in 2018)  
 Stewardship Gifts Received: \$376,895 (\$314,873 in 2018)  
 Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$66,183 (\$183,900 in 2018)  
 Stewardship Families Pledged: 408 (426 in 2018)  
 Average Pledge to Date: \$1,086 (\$936 in 2018)  
 Average Pledge Needed: \$2,365 (Decreases with More Pledges)



## COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD

### 2019 Christmas Card Submission Form

Name & Phone or Email:

---

Print Your Name as you wish it to appear on the card (names only - no greeting, please):

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*Donation: \$20 per family - Deadline: Sunday, December 8, 2019*

*Please submit form & payment to Philoptochos c/o St. John Church.*





NOVEMBER 2019 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<p><b>3</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 12:15 pm Youth Choir Practice in 4th/5th Class</p>	<p><b>4</b> 11:30 am Forerunner Luncheon in Kokkos Hall</p>	<p><b>5</b> 5:00 pm Greek Language Classes 6:00 pm PC Budget Meeting 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice</p>	<p><b>6</b> 7:00 pm Orthodoxy Class #6: Church Tour</p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>1 Ss. Cosmas &amp; Damianos</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><b>2</b> 10:00 am Liturgy with Fr. Seraphim at Lake Havasu Mission</p>
<p><b>10</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Gerasimos &amp; Metropolitan Iliia Champagne Brunch by Reservation Only</p>	<p><b>11</b> <b>Veterans Day</b> </p>	<p><b>12</b> 5:00 pm Greek Language Classes 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice 6:00 pm Folk Dance Board Meeting 6:00 pm Parish Council Meeting in the Library</p>	<p><b>13</b> 7:00 pm New Adult Study: Sunday Readings &amp; Churchianity vs. Christianity, in Kokkos</p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>8 Holy Archangels/ Michael and Gabriel</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><b>9 St. Nectarios</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 5:30 pm Great Vespers and Artodasia 60th Anniversary Dinner by Reservation Only</p>
<p><b>17</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Youth Choir Chants <b>12:00 pm Parish Assembly</b> 5:00 pm GOYA Night in Panos Hall</p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>19</b> 5:00 pm Greek Language Classes 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice</p>	<p><b>20</b> 5:00 pm Orthros 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy (Entrance of the Theotokos) 7:15 pm Adult Study</p>	<p><b>21 Entrance of the Theotokos (observed 11/20)</b></p>	<p><b>22</b> 6:00 pm Mr. &amp; Mrs. Potluck at Lekar Home</p>	<p><b>23</b> 8:00 am Philoptochos Pastry Packing</p>
<p><b>24</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Autumn Bake Sale 5:00 pm Young Adults Friendsgiving at Niko Asim's Home</p>	<p><b>25 St. Catherine</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><b>26</b> 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice No Greek School</p>	<p><b>27 Thanksgiving Liturgy</b> 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy and Artodasia No Adult Study</p>	<p><b>28</b> <b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>  <b>Church Office Closed</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>

# The Desert Messenger

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church  
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THE DESERT MESSENGER

## The Way of the Lord



*“But God, Who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God – not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

*(Ephesians 2:4-10)*