

# The Desert



# Messenger

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

*Volume 15, Issue 7   St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV   July/August 2017*

**From  
Father  
John**

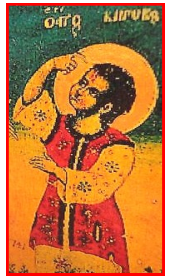
**“Θαυμαστός ο Θεός εν τοις οσίοις Αυτού.”**  
**“God is wondrous in His saints.” - Psalm 67(68):36**

Beloved in Christ:

Throughout our life, God's grace is operative – but do we know this? For those of us who have faith, it is easy to acknowledge God's grace when we experience blessings such as the birth of a child, receiving a diploma or degree, starting a career or getting a promotion, enjoying financial success and purchasing a home, meeting and marrying the love of our life, recovering from an illness, and enjoying retirement. But do we honestly believe that His grace is at work when we suffer disappointments or losses, experience prolonged sickness and suffering, or go through one hardship after another?

The grace of God is always at work, both in good times and during periods of trials, and this truth is at the heart of our Christian Faith: For Jesus Christ, though fully God, was *“made like His brethren in every respect . . . For because He Himself has suffered and been tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.” (Hebrews 2:17-18)* As Orthodox Christians we are taught that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses with the abundance of saints (on our calendar and icons, as well as in our hymns and books), who became holy through countless trials, enduring them all by looking *“to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)*

As we go through challenges in our life, rather than become discouraged, we should utilize these opportunities to become more familiarized through study and to develop a relationship through prayer with the saints of our Church. For the saints – bearing the same flesh as us – are models of faithfulness while enduring persecution, humiliation and loss; they are beacons of courage through suffering, and victors through humility and self denial; and they are witnesses to God's mercy through their genuine repentance. The great cloud of saints include men and women of various ages (we have the relics of a toddler martyr, St. Kyrkos, in our Altar!), some of whom were prophets and martyrs, others who were physicians and healers, and still others who left a life of sinfulness and embraced asceticism: The saints come from all walks of life, just like us, and reveal how God's grace can transform a fallen human being into a holy person united with Him!



We can learn more about these holy men and women by attending Divine Liturgy on the feast day of the saints (where the hymns and homily will teach us), reading an Orthodox book on the saints, or as easily as by clicking our Smartphone to an app that offers us the life of a saint each day! Our Holy Tradition encourages us to ask the saints to intercede for us, as they are true friends of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to especially seek the prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos, who is the greatest of all the saints: Every Orthodox prayer book includes prayers to the Virgin Mary as well as prayers to our patron saint – and indeed many of the prayers are written by those who became saints!

As we are blessed with a newly-ordained second priest, Father Seraphim Ramos, our Church will provide many opportunities to commemorate, honor and learn more about the saints during the several weekday Divine Liturgies and services that will be celebrated for the next two months (see the Worship Schedule on Pages 2-3). Let us remember that we are all saints in the making – and so our frequent efforts at becoming better acquainted and connected with the glorified saints will enhance our own path to holiness.

With love in Christ and prayers for a blessed summer,

*Father John*

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

*Sundays: 8:45 am Orthros - 10:00 am Divine Liturgy  
Church School follows Holy Communion (Starting Sunday, August 20)*

### JULY

**Sunday, July 2/4th Sunday of Matthew/**

***Robe of the Theotokos in Vlachernae***

Orthros: Tone Three

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): Luke 24:1-12

Epistle: Hebrews 9:1-7

Gospel: Matthew 8:5-13

**Friday, July 7/Great Martyr Kyriaki**

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

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

Gospel: Mark 5:24-34

**Sunday, July 9/5th Sunday of Matthew/**

***St. Pancratios of Sicily***

Orthros: Tone Four

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): Luke 24:13-35

Epistle: Romans 10:1-10

Gospel: Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1

**Wednesday, July 12/St. Paisios the Athonite**

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 3:1-8

Gospel: Matthew 13:31-36

**Saturday, July 15/Holy Martyrs Julitta and Kyrillos**

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 13:11-13; 14:1-5

Gospel: Matthew 17:24-27; 18:1-4

**Sunday, July 16/Sunday of the Holy Fathers**

Orthros: Tone Five (First Plagal)

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): Luke 24:36-53

Epistle: Titus 3:8-15

Gospel: Matthew 5:14-19

**Monday, July 17/Great Martyr Marina of Antioch**

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

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

Gospel: Mark 5:24-34

**Thursday, July 20/Prophet Elias**

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

Epistle: James 5:10-20

Gospel: Luke 4:22-30

**Sunday, July 23/7th Sunday of Matthew/**

***Prophet Ezekiel***

Orthros: Tone Six (Second Plagal)

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 20:1-10

Epistle: Romans 15:1-7

Gospel: Matthew 9:27-35

**Wednesday, July 26/Holy Martyr Paraskevi**

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

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

Gospel: Mark 5:24-34

**Thursday, July 27/Great Martyr Panteleimon**

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

Epistle: 2 Timothy 2:1-10

Gospel: John 15:17-27; 16:1-2

**Sunday, July 30/8th Sunday of Matthew/**

***Apostles Silas and Silvanos of the 70***

Orthros: Tone Seven (Grave)

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 20:11-18

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22

### AUGUST

*Dormition Fast August 1-14*

**Wednesday, August 2**

***6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos***

**Friday, August 4**

***6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos***

**Sunday, August 6/Holy Transfiguration of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

Orthros: Tone Eight (Fourth Plagal)

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

Epistle: 2 Peter 1:10-19

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

***Blessing of the Grapes***

**Monday, August 7**

***6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos***

**Wednesday, August 9**

***6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos***

*At Your Transfiguration on the Mount, O Christ God, You showed Your Disciples as much of Your glory as they could behold. Let Your eternal light shine also upon us sinners!*

Friday, August 11

6:00 pm *Paraklesis to the Theotokos*

Sunday, August 13/10th Sunday of Matthew/  
*St. Maximos the Confessor*

Orthros: Tone One

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

Monday, August 14

6:00 pm *Great Vespers of the Dormition*

Tuesday, August 15/*Dormition of the Theotokos*

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

Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11

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

*Artoclasia offered by Papas Family*

Sunday, August 20/11th Sunday of Matthew/  
*Prophet Samuel*

Orthros: Tone Two

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 21:14-25

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

*Blessing of Water for New Church School Year*

*First Day of Church School Classes*

*Panigyri tis Panagias (Dormition Luncheon)*

Sunday, August 27/12th Sunday of Matthew/  
*St. Fanourios the Great Martyr*

Orthros: Tone Three

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Gospel: Matthew 19:16-26

*Blessing of the Fanouropites (St. Fanourios Cakes)*

Tuesday, August 29/*Beheading of St. John the*

*Baptist (Strict Fast)*

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

Epistle: Acts 16:25-32

Gospel: Mark 16:14-30

*You preserved your virginity in birth-giving;  
you did not forsake the world in your falling  
asleep, O Theotokos, You have passed to life,  
being the Mother of Life, and through your  
intercessions deliver our souls from death.*

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
***“Most Holy Theotokos, Save Us!”***  
**Paraklesis – For the Health of:**




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**The Paraklesis will be chanted on August 2, 4, 7, 9 & 11**  
**Please Return Form to Father John by August 1.**

## ***SUNDAY SCHEDULE***

### ***JULY 2***

**Ushers:** Kouli Pouridis, Skip Ruffner, Bessie Stavropoulos, George Bochanis, Demetrious Asim and Pete Tsolis

**Memorials:** Zacharias Pertsinides (40 days); Maria Kakavulias (4 years)

**Fellowship:** Kakavulias Family - Proceeds benefit Mortgage Principal

### ***JULY 9***

**Ushers:** Gus Flangas, Mike Beeler, Mark Karris, Stacy Mavrantonis, Justina Szukiewicz and John Koutsulis

**Memorials:** Elizabeth Goddard (40 days).

**Fellowship:** Kypreos and Pandelis Families - Proceeds benefit Mortgage Principal

### ***JULY 16***

**Ushers:** Bessie Stavropoulos, George Bochanis, Demetrious Asim, Kouli Pouridis, Skip Ruffner and Mark Karris

**Fellowship:** Ladies Philoptochos Society

### ***JULY 23***

**Ushers:** John Koutsulis, Pete Tsolis, Justina Szukiewicz, Mike Beeler, Gus Flangas and Stacy Mavrantonis

**Fellowship:** Irene Pertsinides in Memory of Departed Family Members

### ***JULY 30: BISHOP ILIA'S 80TH CELEBRATION LUNCHEON***

**Ushers:** Kouli Pouridis, Skip Ruffner, Bessie Stavropoulos, George Bochanis, Demetrious Asim and Pete Tsolis

**Memorials:** Thomas Tivas (1 year); Liliana Margaretis (5 years)

**Fellowship:** Bishop Ilia's Birthday Luncheon

### ***AUGUST 6: HOLY TRANSFIGURATION***

**Ushers:** Gus Flangas, Mike Beeler, Mark Karris, Stacy Mavrantonis, Justina Szukiewicz and John Koutsulis

**Fellowship:** Pan-Cretans

### ***AUGUST 13***

**Ushers:** Bessie Stavropoulos, George Bochanis, Demetrious Asim, Kouli Pouridis, Skip Ruffner and Mark Karris

**Fellowship:** Sons of Pericles

### ***AUGUST 20: PANIGYRI TIS PANAGIAS (DORMITION LUNCHEON)***

**Ushers:** John Koutsulis, Pete Tsolis, Justina Szukiewicz, Mike Beeler, Gus Flangas and Stacy Mavrantonis

**Memorial:** James Toutoulis (1 year)

**Fellowship:** Panigyri Luncheon

### ***AUGUST 27***

**Ushers:** Kouli Pouridis, Skip Ruffner, Bessie Stavropoulos, George Bochanis, Demetrious Asim and Pete Tsolis

**Fellowship:** Folk Dance Groups



***"I know My own and My own know Me." (John 10:14)***

***Please prayerfully fill out and return your  
2017 Stewardship Pledge Card.***



## Parish Council Report

We have had a flurry of activity this past month. On June 4 we said farewell to Father Matthew, Presvytera Annie and family, with a luncheon in their honor. We wish them well in their continued journey in service to God and the Church. We would like to thank Mark Karris and Geri Kypreos for their great work in organizing the event, and George Kypreos and his crew for putting on an a delicious lunch.

On June 18 we were blessed with the privilege of being part of the Ordination of our new priest, Father Seraphim, and we definitely want to say "Axios!" An Ordination of a Priest is an extraordinary Sacrament and a tremendous experience to witness. His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos was here to celebrate the Liturgy and the Ordination, and we thank him for being here for such a great occasion. We would like to congratulate Father Seraphim, Presvytera Olenka and their daughter Ivanna on his Ordination. We look forward to working with Father Seraphim, learning from him and hopefully teaching him as well. A Priest's first Parish is extremely important because it can shape his entire outlook on his service to God and the Church. As a Parish, we take this charge seriously and hope that we can make Father Seraphim's first experience not only memorable, but also very positive and blessed. Following Father Seraphim's Ordination, we held a luncheon in his honor; we would like to thank Demetrious Asim and Geri Kypreos for their great work in organizing the event, and George Kypreos and his crew for once again putting on an awesome lunch.

The question is continually being asked about the Iconography. Our paperwork is in and we are still waiting for someone from the Immigration Office out of Southern California to perform a surprise site inspection to verify that we are actually a Church. I know it is a close call but I am sure we will pass for a Church. We are still hoping to have the inspection any week now. If we can get the inspection completed in the next few weeks, we could have our iconographers here doing work in early August. We do not think July is on the table anymore for their arrival. We will try to keep everyone informed with the latest information as it becomes available to us. Stand by as we hurry up and wait.

We are now in that part of the year where we need to get serious about the Greek Food Festival. As I stated last month, we are working hard to offer our guests the total "*Greek Experience*" filled with high quality food, high quality music, efficient and courteous service, and a very "*high energy*" and "*festive*" atmosphere replete with our Greek Culture, that will resonate with all ages and all types of people. We really need everyone to step up and utter those magic words, "I want to help." At this juncture, we need everyone to help with the pre-sales efforts, which include raffle tickets, coupon books, souvenir magazine ads and vendor leasing. These provide the "seed" money for the Festival. ***Strong pre-sales could conceivably fund 40 to 45% or more of the expense*** going into the Festival and significantly lower the risk. So please help the Church by buying and selling these items. The Festival is a community effort; it is the showcase of our Church and our great Greek Culture. With everyone (and we mean everyone) kicking in, we can improve on last year and make this year's Festival once again a resounding success. Please do not hesitate to step up with your time, talents and treasures.

His Grace Bishop Ilia Katre will be filling in for most of July while Father John takes his hard earned vacation. We look forward to seeing His Grace and even more forward to visiting with him. Please mark ***Sunday, July 30*** on your calendars, as our Parish will offer a luncheon celebrating Bishop Ilia's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Also in July many of our kids will be attending Summer Camp at St. Nicholas Ranch, which is truly a great experience for them to enjoy.

Fixing the parking lot is on hold until mid August, when the Church is in a better financial position, recognizing that the summer months are somewhat lean. We are still in the process of refinishing the floor in Kokkos Hall; we have had to take a different approach in fixing it and hope to have it in shape soon. Lastly, we have started the process for the outside audit of the Church finances so that everyone can clearly see the full picture and have confidence in our financial procedures with complete transparency.

We want to again thank the various Church ministries and organizations, and the many individuals for all the work they do and have done to help us secure the future of the Church for ourselves and, most importantly, our children. It clearly takes a lot of work from the entire community to maintain our Church, so please step up whenever you can and pitch in as we move forward to make our Parish better.

May God Bless, Gus Flangas, Parish Council President

## Philoptochos News

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Philoptochos Ladies for giving me this great honor and trust of electing me as the new chapter President. I will faithfully serve and give the best of my ability to this magnificent organization.



I would also like to thank our past President Bernadette Anthony for all her hard work during her term.

On June 4 the Parish Council and the Ladies Philoptochos hosted a delightful Farewell Luncheon for Father Matthew and his family. It was an outpouring of love and appreciation from everyone who attended to our beloved Priest for his four years of outstanding service to our Church and community. A special thanks to all the volunteers who devoted their time and talents in making this luncheon as magnificent as it was!



As we said goodbye to Father Matthew, we also welcomed Deacon Seraphim Ramos, who was ordained to the Priesthood at St. John Church on June 18 by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos. This event was also followed by a luncheon as a warm welcome and embrace from our Church community to our new Priest, his lovely Presvytera, and all their family. The Ladies Philoptochos Society members were in full force decorating the tables with the colorful sunflower centerpieces, and of course behind the scenes.

Our appreciation is extended to Marika Lamancusa who made the delicious Galaktoboureko and to Geri Kypreos who shared her organization and event planning skills as always. The continued work of these two exceptional women is a testament of their devotion to their Faith, the Church and Philoptochos. On behalf of our chapter, Bernadette Anthony presented Father Seraphim with a beautiful icon of St. Seraphim, which was hand painted by the sisters of the Life-Giving Spring Monastery at St. Nicholas Ranch. Father Seraphim was overwhelmed with joy as he remembers serving as a counselor at St. Nicholas Camp for several summers during his formative years at the seminary. Gerontissa Markela also sent her love and prayers to our new priest and wished him, "Axios!"



Following, you will find the upcoming Philoptochos events:

**Fellowship – July 16:** Philoptochos will be hosting the Fellowship and we need volunteers to bake and help. Please call Karen at the Church Office, and she will put you in touch with me.

**Bishop Ilia's 80th Birthday Luncheon – July 30:** Philoptochos will assist with this special event honoring His Grace. To offer a hand, please contact Dora Hart.

**The Dormition of the Theotokos – August 15:** Philoptochos will again be hosting the Fellowship. Two of our new members, Jennifer Santamaria and Farolyn McSweeney, will be chairing this event and need volunteers to assist with the baking and the fellowship. To those ladies who celebrate their Name Day (Maria, Despina or Panagiota), or who have family members celebrating, please honor the Theotokos by offering your help.

**Greek Food Festival – September 15, 16 and 17:** Our annual and biggest event of the year, the Greek Food Festival, is very much anticipated and our Philoptochos will once again have a booth, at which we will greet and welcome the many thousands of guests who will be coming to experience our Greek hospitality. Please let me know if you can volunteer at either one or both.

We have many exciting programs and events planned for this year. Please join our Philoptochos and be part of a group that does so many things for so many worthy causes.

**With Love and Appreciation, Vicky Palivos, Philoptochos President**

## From Father Seraphim

Beloved Faithful of St. John the Baptist,

You are the “*living stones*” (1 Peter 2:5) God has used to build His Holy Church here in Las Vegas!

I am grateful to our Church family for your continuous welcoming spirit and love for my family and me. It is amazing how much hospitality and generosity we have received in such a short time, and this is a testament to your faith in Christ and your obedience to His life-giving and saving commandments. I want to especially thank Father John and the entire Parish for the beautiful set of vestments I received on my Ordination. I would also like to thank the Ladies Philoptochos Society for the exquisite icon of my patron, St. Seraphim of Sarov – my love of this saint led me to the Orthodox Church. I would like to thank each person who contributed to the Ordination Luncheon, which was an unforgettable outpouring of love and a total embrace. I finally would like to thank His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos for placing me here and ordaining me to the Holy Priesthood, so that I might follow in the footsteps of our beloved Father Matthew, and continue to grow, learn from, and serve with Father John.



Let us draw our hearts to the remembrance of a blessing that is in the very midst of our community: St. Panteleimon, the glorious great martyr and unmercenary healer, who contested for Christ in the fourth century. His relics were placed inside our Holy Altar table at the Consecration of our Church. In ancient times Christians would build Churches over places of spiritual significance, especially where martyrs had given their lives for Christ. Nowadays, each consecrated Church receives the relics of martyrs, which are placed permanently in the cavity of the Altar Table, designating it for the worship of God until the Second Coming of Christ. Being ordained at the Altar with St. Panteleimon's relics was very meaningful, since one focal aspect of the priestly ministry is healing souls and bodies – through visiting the sick, sacraments and prayers.

The saint's name at birth was Pantoleon (meaning “in everything a lion”); he was the son of a pagan physician and a Christian mother from the city of Nicomedia. In his youth, Pantoleon was taught by his mother the Christian way of life and the young boy's heart was set aflame for Christ. His mother died while he was still young, and under the new care of his pagan father, Pantoleon began worshipping false idols. What an important detail in the life of this saint – showing us the continuous and foundational influence parents have in the upbringing of their children! God's providence allowed him to meet a priest named Hermolaos (also a saint), and he was reintroduced to the message of God's love. He soon converted to Christianity, taking the name Panteleimon (meaning “all-merciful”). Even though he was on track to become one of the top physicians in the Eastern Roman Empire, the young man did not seek personal gain, but rather healed those who came to him in the Name of Jesus Christ. The pagan Emperor Galerius Maximian eventually found out about Panteleimon's faith in Christ and sentenced him to death by beheading after various tortures proved ineffectual.

Saint Panteleimon healed many people through traditional medicines, and by miracles and prayer. In our times, illness is something we all have to face and is a double cross: both of suffering and exorbitant medical costs. What is the answer of our Church? We have the tradition of holy healers who brought compassion, genuine care for the temporal and eternal health of their patients, and finally those who performed medical services completely free of charge (the meaning of “unmercenary”). Where are these healers now? Well, these saints are always still available to us today through prayer, and are gladly taking patients. Additionally, there are those men and women alive today who also have mercy on those stricken and impoverished and still in the 21st century participate in this holy tradition of healing people free of charge.

We look forward to seeing you on *July 27* for the Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia in memory of this powerful saint! Invoke the name of St. Panteleimon often in your sufferings of both body and soul, for he has been placed here in our Church not as an artifact in a museum, but truly for the benefit, comfort and joy of our lives – and to heal us from the passions and every disease and sickness.

In the Love of Jesus Christ Our Lord,

*Father Seraphim*





Please join us for a Parish Celebration  
of His Grace Bishop Ilia's  
80th Birthday!

Sunday, July 30  
following the Divine Liturgy  
in Panos Hall

Menu:

Greek Salad

Chicken Kabobs and Gyros

Greek Potatoes and Baked Asparagus

Birthday Cake

Free Will Offering

### *Our Community Registry*

#### *Baptized into Christ: Na mas zisi!*

Angelina (Dolores), daughter of John Fitzgerald and Karina Gaines,  
on May 27, 2017.

Godparents: Vasilios Fitzgerald and Alexandra McCullen.

#### *Marriage: Na zisete!*

Sean Adams and Ranya Asmar on June 3, 2017. Koumbaros: Rami Asmar.

John Mavrakis and Rebecca Papakonstantinou on June 17, 2017.

Koumbara: Effie Konstas.

Jason Lovaas and Alis Dokakis on June 18, 2017.

Koumbaroi: Nikolaos and Maria Dokakis.

Meltiathis Katsikathas and Salomay Martinez on June 24, 2017.

Koumbaros: George Chachas.

#### *Fallen Asleep in the Lord: Eternal Memory!*

Elizabeth Goddard on June 7, 2017. Funeral on June 14.

Vally Vasile Grigore on June 9, 2017. Funeral on June 19.

*Sovereign Master,  
preserve in purity of life  
and in unswerving faith  
this man whom You have  
been pleased to ordain  
through me by the laying  
on of hands, graciously  
imparting to him the  
great grace of Your Holy  
Spirit, making him  
wholly Your servant, well-  
pleasing to You in all  
things, and worthily  
exercising this great  
honor of the Priesthood  
which You conferred  
upon him by the power of  
Your wisdom.  
(Ordination Prayer)*





# *Panigyri* *tis Panagias*

*Celebration for the Dormition of the Theotokos*

*Sunday, August 20*

*Immediately Following  
Divine Liturgy  
in Panos Hall*

*\$15 per Person*

*\$150 for Reserved Table*

*Purchase your tickets from  
a Parish Council Member  
or the Church Office.*



*Greek Salad*

*Chicken or Pork Souvlaki  
with Tzatziki & Pita*

*Greek Fries*

*Cake*

*Wine-Beer-Soda Cash Bar*



## Stewardship and Community Outreach



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Glory to God for all things! In the movie *Jerry Maguire*, a successful sports agent is known for famously shouting, “Show me the money,” when negotiating a contract for one of his clients. When the subject of Stewardship and almsgiving comes up in Church, immediately we tend to think the Church is shouting, “Show me the money!” For the most part, many of us feel that we are not sure we can give any more than we are already giving. The story of the poor widow who put two mites in the treasury should make us reflect on the truth of this feeling: ***“She out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.” (Mark 12:44)***

Stewardship refers to three facets: Giving of our God-given time, using our God-given talents to help our fellow human beings (who are His children), and sharing our God-given treasures with our Church and the community at large. Let us focus for now on our God-given treasures.

It is truly amazing the number of times the discussion of treasures occurs in Scripture, and the most notable passage can be found in ***2 Corinthians 9:6-15***, in which St. Paul gives us the landmark teaching on Christian Stewardship. In this momentous teaching, is St. Paul just talking about grudgingly giving money to the Church or almsgiving because that is what is expected of us? Of course not. Rather, St. Paul teaches about ***sowing bountifully*** the gifts we have received from the Lord: ***“Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness.” (2 Corinthians 9:10)*** The Lord is the one who supplies the sower (us) the seed and bread for our food. What St. Paul is further telling us is if we sow the seeds we have received from God, that is, we joyfully provide for our Church and the Lord’s children (all human beings), He will increase the fruits of our righteousness. In other words, we will be blessed now and in the age to come when we go before the awesome judgment seat of Christ. Another example of the increase of the fruits of our righteousness can be found in ***St. Matthew’s Gospel*** where the Lord says: ***“And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.” (10:42)***

There are numerous examples in the Gospels about people who had an abundance of “seed” but failed to sow it as they should have, hoarding it for their own benefit and use. One example is that of the rich man and Lazarus from the ***Gospel of St. Luke (16:19-31)***. In this parable, the rich man failed to understand that Lazarus could have been “his ticket” to heaven; had he “sown the seed,” that is had he taken care of Lazarus’ needs, he may have been blessed even more in this age and, more importantly, in the age to come. Sadly, the rich man was apathetic and ended up ***“in torments in Hades.” (Luke 16:23)***

In yet another parable on a similar theme, the Lord teaches about a rich man whose field yielded an abundant crop. Instead of sowing the seeds of the bountiful crops which the Lord bestowed upon him for his spiritual benefit, the rich man made a selfish decision: ***“I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.’” (Luke 12:18-19)*** We know from the parable that the Lord told him, ***“Fool! This night your soul will be required of you . . . So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” (Luke 12:20)*** The message again demonstrates our need to sow the seeds the Lord has provided each one of us so that we will increase the fruits of our righteousness.

We honor the Lord with our possessions and wealth because we are thankful that He has given us so much! We thereby receive even greater blessings in this life, and on Judgment Day will hear the Lord say, ***“Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Matthew 25:34)***

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I pray all of us will properly sow the “seeds” with which the Lord has graced us, according to His will. In so doing, we will be with Him in paradise at the end of the age.

***In Christ, St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church Stewardship and Outreach Committee***

***“We were eyewitnesses of His majesty.” (2 Peter 1:16)***



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

## 2017-2018 CHURCH SCHOOL REGISTRATION

*Please Write Legibly - Use One Form Per Child*

Church School Classes Begin Sunday, August 20.

Pre-Kindergarten (4 years old by September 30) through High School

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School Grade (2017-2018 school year): \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs, Allergies, Medications: \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. "Autism Spectrum," "Peanuts," "Insulin Dependent")

Patron Saint and Date of Commemoration: \_\_\_\_\_

MOTHER

FATHER

OR

OTHER RELATIVE

(Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City ZIP

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Student E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

If you DO NOT want your child to be contacted by phone/text or by e-mail, please leave one or both of these blank.

I give my child permission to take part in all Church School activities, and planned and supervised outings.

Signed, Parent or Legal Guardian:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Many hands ease the load!** Please let us know in which way you would like to help our children:

\_\_\_\_ Teaching

\_\_\_\_ Snack

\_\_\_\_ Crafts

*Please return this registration form to Karen at the Church Office during the week  
or to Eileen Koutsulis, Church School Director, on Sundays before classes start.*

# Youth and Family Ministries

## Church School

Hi Everyone!

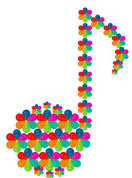
I hope you all are enjoying your summer break! What a wonderful day we experienced last month at the Ordination to the Holy Priesthood of Father Seraphim. The Ordination service is one of the beautiful Mysteries of the Orthodox Church. All of us who were present were truly blessed to witness this.

Our first day of class will be on **Sunday, August 20**. Since the Clark County School District is starting their school year early, so are we. How exciting!

Please register your children with me over the summer (you can scan and email it), or with Karen in the Church Office during the week. You will find the enrollment form in this month's edition of *The Desert Messenger* (Page 11). As always, to enroll in our Pre-K program, your child must be 4 years-old by September 30, or starting CCSD Kindergarten next year.

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

## Youth Choir News



Happy Summer! We will be taking a break for July and August and will resume chanting the Liturgy in September. We are always looking for new voices to join our ranks!

Have a wonderful and safe summer. Please do not forget God during the summer. Attend services, even if you are on vacation away from Las Vegas!

Love in Christ, Presvytera Maria

## Altar Servers

We are looking for a few good men . . . to serve in the Holy Altar! Altar Servers are 8 years-old and older and assist the Priests during the Divine Liturgy and other liturgical services.

To learn more, please contact Alex or Eric Szukiewicz, our Altar Captains. Once you have made the commitment to serve, please contact Father John for a blessing.



## GOYA ~ For Teenagers

We hope you are all enjoying the summer. We advisors met with Father Seraphim and he is delighted to meet and get to know all of you. He is eager to take the GOYAnS on a path of spiritual enlightenment in our Orthodox Faith with many beautiful activities planned for the next year.

On **Wednesday, July 12** we will meet at the Orleans Bowling Lanes! Join us at 6:00 pm. Please bring money for shoe and ball rental, as well as dinner afterward.

Then to kick off the new school year, we will have a Scavenger Hunt and Party at Steve, June and Juliana Likourinou's home, on **Saturday, August 12 from 4:00 to 8:00 pm**. Meet us at the Likourinou's home, where we will divide into teams to drive around town on a scavenger hunt. First team back wins! After the scavenger hunt, we will swim in the Likourinou's pool and have dinner. Please remember to bring a towel and swimsuit! RSVP and get directions with Father Seraphim: [frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com).

Mark your calendars on the first Sunday of every month for our monthly GOYA meetings. Our first meeting will be Sunday, September 3, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at the Church. Come and meet with Father Seraphim and share fellowship, a meal, and a short discussion!

GOYA (Greek Orthodox Youth of America) is a ministry for teens 6th through 12th grades.

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



## Greek Folk Dance

We hope everyone is enjoying their summer break! Registration for the Greek Folk Dance Ministry will begin in late July at Sunday Fellowship and continue throughout the month of August. Registration forms are now available in this issue of *The Desert Messenger* (Pages 17-18) or at the Church Office.

Practice for returning dancers begins on **Tuesday, August 22**, so that we may prepare for our Greek Food Festival performance. Practices for all new dancers will begin on **Tuesday, September 19**. All children ages 4 years and older (as of September 30, 2017) are welcome!

Finally, due to the earlier start of Lent in 2018, the Greek Orthodox Folk Dance and Choral Festival (FDF) will take place Martin Luther King weekend, **January 11-15**, at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in San Francisco, CA.

Sia Dalacas of the Greek Folk Dance Board

## Orthodox Family Fellowship

Blessings to all! School is officially finished and therefore we invite those young families with children who are still here in Las Vegas to join us for some fun together! Please mark your calendar for the following two summer events:

**Sunday, July 23:** After the Divine Liturgy and Fellowship we will head out to the brand new Aquatic Springs Indoor Pool, located at 7025 S. Fort Apache Rd., Las Vegas (next to Wet 'n Wild). We have reserved the pool *exclusively* for our Parish from 1:30 to 3:30 pm, so bring your swimsuits and prepare to have a blast. There are also tables and chairs for us to enjoy some lunch and snacks! Parents, there will be a lifeguard on duty, so you will be able to kick back and relax.

**Sunday, August 6:** Following the Liturgy for the Holy Transfiguration and Fellowship, we will go to explore our American – well, in our case Greek – ninja warriors' skills at Flip N Out Xtreme, located at 4245 S. Grand Canyon Dr. # 111, Las Vegas. We will meet there at 1:30 pm sharp. The price per person for one hour is \$18 – but if more of us show up, the price goes down. Afterward, we will grab a bite at a restaurant nearby.

Please RSVP or send any questions to Fr. Seraphim at [frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com).

ALL ARE WELCOME! Philotimo forever!

In Christ, Amy Khuri and Jelena Boskovic, OFF Advisors

## Moms & Tots



It was such a pleasure meeting with our new Priest and Presvytera at our June event! It was truly a blessed one as we also endeavored our very first arts and crafts project for our dads in celebration of Father's Day! Playing with paint and reading a thankful book dedicated to the daddies of our Church made an impression on the Moms and Tots group as we continue to grow our ministry.

Having our beloved Church Fathers present, accompanied by their Presvyteres and their own children, is a humbling reminder of the life we, as Orthodox Christians, strive to live in our own homes which is the first Church. I urge and invite you to attend our events and to get to know our new Priest and his family as Father Seraphim continues in Father Matthew's shoes, offering peaceful words of encouragement and a reflection on the Church to us as mothers living out the Orthodox faith.

Our next gathering will be in Kokkos Hall on **Tuesday, July 11 and Tuesday, August 8** at 10:30 am. Potluck style snacks and refreshments are much appreciated (although not a requirement to attend). With summer here and school out, please bring older siblings to enjoy the activities with their moms, younger brothers and sisters, and with Father Seraphim and Presvytera Olenka.

In Christ, Cassie Bieker



## Greek Language Classes



Our Greek Language Classes had a wonderful end-of-the-school-year party, including an old-fashioned ice cream truck, compliments of Eleni Eliades!

We need a few teachers to teach the 4-7 year-old class; if we do not have teachers that age group will unfortunately be without a class.

We will start registration in September, with the first day of Greek School on *Tuesday, September 19*. We will be going back to Tuesdays for our classes, and we will meet from 4:30 to 6:00 pm. Good news: Adult conversation classes will start up again in September as well!

I will be out of the country during the summer; if you have any questions or wish to become a Greek School Teacher, please email me at [pkelesis89104@yahoo.com](mailto:pkelesis89104@yahoo.com).

Have a great summer and I look forward to seeing everyone in the fall.

Paula Kelesis, Greek School Director

## Notes from the Choir Loft



This year's summer Church Musicians Conference will be held at St. Nicholas Ranch in Dunlap, CA, from *August 24 to 27*. Vicki Xikis will attend the conference as the representative from our Parish. If you would like to attend, or wish for more information, please see Vicki!

Although the Choir will not be formally singing the Divine Liturgy during the month of July, if you wish to chant please feel free to join me at the chanter's stand or in the choir loft. The Choir will resume singing the Sunday Liturgies on *August 6*.

Have a wonderful summer! Athena Mertes, Director

## Orthodox Bookstore

Greetings from the Bookstore.

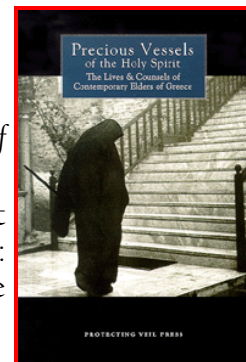
This month we are featuring *Precious Vessels of the Holy Spirit, The Lives & Counsels of the Contemporary Elders of Greece*.

This book highlights several modern Greek elders and saints, and tells us about their lives and teachings. Contained within the book are the following holy personalities: Amphilochios of Patmos, Epiphanius of Athens, Joseph the Hesychast, Saint Paisios the Athonite, Philotheos of Paros, Saint Porphyrios of Kavsokalivia, and George of Drama.

From Elder Joseph the Hesychast:

"Don't fear sicknesses, even when you suffer up to the edge of death. As God is constantly present, why do you worry? In Him we live and move. Our struggle is in His embrace. We breathe God, we are surrounded by God, we touch God, we mystically eat God. Wherever we turn, wherever we look, God is everywhere: in Heaven, on earth, in the abyss, in wood, in rocks, in your mind, in your heart. So doesn't He see what you bear? That you suffer? Tell Him your complaints and you will see . . . healing both in your soul and in your body."

Until next month, God willing, ICXC NIKA, Constantine Frangakis, Bookstore Director



## 2017 Stewardship Report (as of 6/12/17)

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$320,073 (\$400,948 total in 2016)

Stewardship Gifts Received: \$193,295

Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$126,778

Stewardship Families Pledged: 352 (443 total in 2016)

Average Pledge to Date: \$909 (\$905 in 2016)

# Adult and Young Adult Ministries

## *Young Adults*

We want to thank one of our very faithful members of YA, Rahel Kiflezgi, for hosting a beautiful dinner at her house this past June! Join us again on ***Sunday, July 16***, 6:00 pm, at the Fleetwood's home for a wonderful young adults gathering, and for some great fellowship. Guests are encouraged to bring a side dish, dessert, or drink of their choice.

Please also mark your calendars for another great event on ***Saturday, August 19***. We will be having dinner at McMullen's Irish Pub at 6:00 pm, and then head over and play a couple rounds of bowling at Orleans Bowling Center. RSVP to Father Seraphim for directions or with questions for either event at [frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com).

So, all you Young Adults, keep your schedules clear on those dates! God bless you all, and have a great summer!

In Christ, Niko Asim and Fani Mavrantanis, Young Adults Advisors

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

Greetings to the faithful couples of our Mr. and Mrs. Ministry! First of all we would like to thank the Gott's for hosting a beautiful meal at their home in June – what an amazing spread!

We will miss Father John and Presvytera Maria as they travel this July on their much needed and well-earned vacation and thus, there will be no meeting in July. We look forward to starting back up again with a meeting on ***Saturday, August 5*** at 6:00 pm, graciously hosted by Mike and Carolyn Beeler. Please RSVP for directions and for a head count with Father Seraphim at [frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com). Attending couples can bring a fast-friendly appetizer or dessert. We look forward to seeing you there and pray that your summer is filled with God's peace!

In Christ, Father John, Father Seraphim, and Presvyteres



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

Kali Parea came out together with Philoptochos and helped make Father Matthew's Farewell Luncheon a memorable event. We miss Father Matthew, but we also welcome our newly-ordained priest, Father Seraphim.

Kali Parea is taking a break for the summer and will resume after the Greek Food Festival.

Demetrious Asim, Kali Parea Advisor

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

A warm WELCOME to Father Seraphim, Presvytera Olenka, and little Ivanna. Our Senior Forerunners look forward to meeting you, and sharing many precious and happy moments.

As you know, the Forerunners will resume activities again in early October, but we remind you all to step up to the plate and volunteer your services for our Greek Food Festival.

We bid Farewell to our dear Dina Delalis, who has gone to live with family in Chicago. She will be missed. Dina contributed so much of her time, not only to the Senior Forerunners but to our entire parish.

Get well wishes go out to Antonia Pappas who just recently had knee replacement surgery, and to Maria Gatski recuperating from a recent illness. And, as always our thoughts and prayers are with all our seniors who are homebound and in care centers.

Our best wishes to all of you who will be vacationing here in the USA or elsewhere. Have a happy summer.

Love in Christ, Victoria Xikis, for the Forerunners – the Seniors of St. John the Baptist



## The Ordination to the Priesthood of Father Seraphim Ramos



*AXIOS!!!*



*With gratitude to Bill Bruninga, Brandon Fleetwood, Amy and Jeremy Bauck for the awesome photography and videography.*





ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
GREEK FOLK DANCE MINISTRY

## 2017-2018 REGISTRATION FORM

*One Registration Form Required for Each Dancer*  
*Registration Deadline: September 24, 2017*

Dancer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Minimum Age: 4 years old by September 30, 2017

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_, Nevada Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information (Please fill out completely and legibly):**

Phone Numbers: Mother's Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Dancer's Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_

If you DO NOT want your child to be contacted by text message, please check this box: ☐

Email Addresses: Mother: \_\_\_\_\_

Father: \_\_\_\_\_

Dancer (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

If you DO NOT want your child to be contacted by e-mail, please leave this blank.

I understand and accept the following requirements for participation in the Greek Folk Dance Ministry:

1. The dancer must be Baptized and Chrismated in the Orthodox Church. Proof of Baptism or Chrismation must be provided for each dancer (or previously verified by Fr. John).
2. The parent(s) must be Steward(s) of St. John Church for 2017 **before their child(ren) attend any dance practice** and Steward(s) for 2018 by January 1. **Please check one box:**
  - ☐ I am already a 2017 Steward. (This will be verified with the Church Office.)
  - ☐ I am attaching my Stewardship Commitment Card to this registration form.
3. The dancer must **on a regular basis participate** in Divine Liturgy on Sunday, throughout the year, and in Church School (if he or she is of age), **August through May**. Infrequent participation is a basis for removal from the program.
4. The dancer must arrive to practice **on time** and be **respectful**.

(Continued on back)

5. The dancer and parent(s) are expected to participate in **all fundraising activities** of the Greek Folk Dance Ministry.
6. Dancers who have excessive absences may be subject to removal from the program.
7. The Folk Dance Festival will take place January 11-15, 2018 in San Francisco, CA. The dancer and parent(s) must determine by October 31, 2017 if they will attend FDF. Dancers who elect not to go to FDF may only participate in dance practices through the end of December.
8. The dancer and parent(s) agree to meet all financial responsibilities assigned to the participants by the St. John Greek Folk Dance Ministry and the Folk Dance Festival (FDF).
9. Registration fees are:
  - a. Competitive Dance Groups: \$150 per dancer, or \$125 for each additional sibling, due by **September 24**. (No registrations will be accepted after this date.)
  - b. Liondaria (non-competitive) Dance Group: \$75. (Must be at least 4 years old by September 30.)
10. Registration can **only** be accepted when all of the following are turned in:
  - a. Registration form
  - b. Non-refundable registration fee
  - c. Proof of Baptism/Chrismation (unless verified by Fr. John)
  - d. Stewardship Commitment Card (unless verified by Church Office)
11. Dancers from previous years must re-register. **Dancers are prohibited from practice until their registration is complete and until their parent(s) become Steward(s) for 2017.**

***First Folk Dance Practice for Returning Dancers: Tuesday, August 22, 2017***

***First Folk Dance Practice for New Dancers: Tuesday, September 24, 2017***

For information on the St. John Greek Folk Dance Ministry, please contact the Folk Dance Board at [stjohngreekdance@gmail.com](mailto:stjohngreekdance@gmail.com) or the Church at (702) 221-8245.

MAKE OUT CHECKS TO "ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH,"  
WITH "FOLK DANCE GROUP" IN THE MEMO LINE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Dancer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

FOR DANCE BOARD USE:

Payment Received On: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_ OR Cash: \_\_\_\_\_

Stewardship Card Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Proof of Baptism/Chrismation: \_\_\_\_\_

# *"I know My own and My own know Me." (John 10:14)*

Adamy, Marina	Costacos, John	Goodman, Linda	Lambros, Kyriakos and Maria
Anastasakis, Mark and Elaine	Costas, Charles and Louise	Gott, C. Thomas and Kitty	Latelle, Penny
Anastasiou, Andrew and Kathleen	Costuros, George and Marsha	Gousdovas, Nikos	Lazarakis, John and Panagiota
Andrews, Catherine	Cosulas, Fr. Basil and Presv. Samantha	Grillas, Roula	Lekar, Caroline
Andrews, Chris and Pamela	Cotsilis, Jenny	Gruber, Ernest and Zoe	Lekar, Michael and Effie
Andricopoulos, Margo	Coutris, Angela	Gutierrez, Connie	Leonis, Nick and Sophia
Anthony, Stavros and Bernadette	Crescenti, Stephen and Katherine	Hadzoglon, Christos and Barbara	Leonis, Tishe
Anton, Mike and Carol	Crist, Adam and Kanistra	Hall, Elizabeth	Leventis, Naomi
Arcamuzi, Georgia	Dalacas, Dimitri and Athanasia	Hamilton, Mary	Lewis, Foula
Aristides, George and Diana	Dalacas, Eugenia +	Hamilton, Paul and Brandi	Liaos, Jim and Tina
Asim, Demetrious	Dalacas, Nick + and Georgia	Harrison, Angie and Schildmeyer, Christine	Liaos, Steve and Francine
Asim, Nicholas	Daskalos, George and Carrie	Hayes, Tulla	Liaos, William and Irene
Austgen, Harold Max	Daskalos, George and Voula	Hemmers, Oliver and Pantelas, Anne	Likourinou, Angie
Balaouras, Panos and Helen	Delalis, Dina	Henneforth, Rula	Likourinou, Steve and June
Balason, Anna	DeMangus, Joanne	Hetzel, David and Joanne	Litsos, Nicholas and Catherine
Baldwin, Richard and Vivi	Demetriou, Demetrios and Bessie	Hoadrea, Jimmy and Monci	Little, Martin and Kaytia, Patricia
Balodimas, James	Demolas, Maria and Nour, Reza	Hondros, Christina	Lymberopoulos, Mary
Barbarino, Demetra	Demoleas, Spero and Grace	Hondros, Christopher	Maddox, Thomas and Maria
Bartzos, Sam and Eugenia	Demoleas, Stephanie	Hondros, Fr. John and Presv. Maria	Malamatos, Kindina
Bather, Crissie	Demopoulos, Vasiliki	Hoover, Patrick and Pauline	Maland, Tim and Donna
Bauck, Jeremy and Amy	Diamantis, Filippas	Houlis, Ila and Debbie	Malpee, Mack and Kalliope
Beeler, Mike and Carolyn	Dimitri, Patricia and Martha	Howard, William and Willie	Maniatakos, Ted and Maria
Beeman, Karl, Sr. and Benita	Dominguez, Eric and Amalia	Hristopoulou, Spiridoula	Manos, Constantine and Michele
Beeman, Karl, Jr. and Ivana	Dornin, Christopher and Marcella	Ignadiou, Marios	Mansour, Muna
Berendji, Jim and Vivian	Doskas, Athanasios and Anastasia	Iteen, Robert and Sophia	Manteris, Arthur and Sue
Bernier, Micah and Alissa	Doukakis, Panagiotis and Chrisi	Kachikis, Paul and Ernestine	Margaretis, John and Lucila
Berta, Irene	Dounis, Dina	Kakavulias, Christina	Mavrantonis, Stacy and Kiki
Bieker, Adam and Cassie	Dounis, Georgia	Kakavulias, John and Elizabeth	Mavrantonis, Theofania
Bieker, Georgea	Dounis, Kiki	Kambouris, Litsa	Mavroidis, Demetrios and Debra
Birtas, Helen and Ann	Dramitinos, Mary	Kanis, Constantinos and Katie	Mavros, Michael+ and Debbie
Bochanis, George and Enid	Earl, Christine Michaelides	Kanis, Georgios	Mavroudis, Frank and Vess, Olga
Bratta, Georgene	Eliades, Artemisa	Kaptain, Catherine	McClain, Gavin and Jaymee
Brilis, George and Satoko	Eliades, Harry and Agapi	Karalias, Petros and Constance	McManus, Jeanette
Britten, Ronald and Carol	Eliakis, John	Karas, John and Marcie	McKinney, Michael and Mersene
Brown, Faye	Eliakis, Peter and Glenda	Karris, Mark and Suzanne	McSweeney, Farolyn
Bruninga, Bill and Erin	Eliakis, Varthie and LeeAnn	Katopodis, Efstratios	Melton, Donald and Susan
Bucy, Brent and Elaine	Exarhos, Sharon	Katris, Nick	Minas, Arthur and Ewa
Cahill, Irene	Eyler, John and Elizabeth	Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon	Moffett, Todd and Eliopulos, Tina
Camel, Joseph	Eyler, Fr. Paul and Presv. Ilean	Katsikakis, Evangelos	Monoyudis, Jim and Julie
Campbell, Theodore and Cheryl	Farren, Anthony and Maritsa	Kelesis, John, Vickie and Niko	Moore, Brenda
Capre, Julio and Betty	Filos, Spiridon and Eleni	Kelesis, Paula	Mulopulos, George and Jenny
Carabas, Stephen and Linda	Fischer, Bob and Cheryl	Kiflezgi, Rahel	Myers, Stella
Carabas, Thymios and Sotiroulla	Fitzgerald, Norman and McCullen, Sandra	Kimball, Sarah	Neocleous, Plato
Carahalios, John and Jillian	Flangas, Bill and Marilyn	Kinard, Panorea	Nestlebusch, Marissa
Caredis, Jon and Marjorie	Flangas, Gary and Amanda	Kleanthis, George and Zanetta	Newell, Eric and Devona
Carrico, William and Alexandra	Flangas, Gus and Tamara	Koliambas, Eleni	Newell, Ronald and Maria
Carter, Maria	Fleetwood, Thomas and Melissa	Kostopoulos, Georgia	Nicholas, John and Estella
Cero, Dean	Foster, Kyle and Maria	Kotonias, Patricia	Nichols, George and Tereza
Chachas, Bessie	Fotopoulos, John and Barbara	Kountanis, Pat	Nikitas, Rigas and Aphrodite
Chachas, James	Frangakis, Christos and Anastasia	Kourlos, Georgia	Nikolopoulos, Nick and Dimitra
Chagares, Kiki	Frangakis, Constantine	Koutsulis, John and Eileen	Nixon, John and Ellyn
Chandrinis, Alexia	Frangakis, John	Koutsulis, Sam and Effie	Olmsted, Travis and Marilyn
Chanos, George	Frangakis, Sophocles	Kratky, Frank and Constance	Ostis, Sotirios
Chanos, Jennifer	Funk, Helen	Kunard, Derek	Pahigiannis, Nikon
Chomakos, Dean and Tammy	Garza, Evarardo and Eliades, Eleni	Kypreos, George and Lesley	Paikos, Thomas and Elizabeth
Chomakos, George and Nikki	Geiger, Dan and Hart, Dora	Kypreos, Peter and Geri	Palivos, Peter and Vicky
Chondrakis, Dimos	George, Pete and Georgia	Kyprianou, Gilbert and Alexis	Pallis, Paul
Christian, Clair and Chloe	Georgoulakis, Mary Ellen	Kyriannis, Justin and Linda	Pandelis, Cheryl
Christou, Andreas and Toni	Gialkatsis, Barbara	Lagomarsino, Victor and Sophia	Panos, William and Jeanne
Christou, Eleni	Giouzelis, Anastasia	Lakis, Antoinette	Papas, Peter and Rita
Ciulla, Anthony and Kleri	Gianakoulis, Nick and Magda	Lamancusa, Lisa	Papas, Christian and Nicole
Collins, David	Goltsos, Andreas and Sofia		Pappas, Antonia
Cominos, Ted			Pappas, Constantine and Karina
Conger, William and Alexia			Pappas, Spiro and Libby
			Pappas, Rita

*Please contact the Church Office or  
a Parish Council Member for a Pledge Card!*

Patrick, Ernest  
Payan, Luis and Eleni  
Pelletier, Michael  
Pendleton, Patricia  
Pentogenis, Katherine  
Peredera, Maria  
Petro, Aleko and Georgia  
Petrou, James and Penelopi  
Pierro, Joe and Rhonda  
Pierro, Joseph and Christine  
Pitts, Anton and Athena  
Platis, Anna  
Plentzas, Spiros + and Ruth  
Polimerou, Angeline  
Politis, Pantelis and Dimitra  
Poulos, Christine  
Pouridis, Kouli and Para  
Powers, Russell and Rebecca  
Prokopis, Ritsa +  
Punsalan, Basil and Sophie  
Pursell, Robert and Mary  
Radosta, Athena  
Radza, Mike  
Ramos, Fr. Seraphim and  
Presv. Olenka  
Raptis, Fr. Dean+ and  
Presv. Evonne  
Rifakes, John  
Rigas, Evie  
Rihani, Gary and Linda  
Robison, Diane and Patricia  
Rodis, Dimitri  
Rodis, Sophia  
Rosenthal, Joseph and Stephanie  
Rotas, Beatrice

Rouvas, John and Keri  
Rudolph, Brandon  
Ruffner, Skip and Kathy  
Salon, Nicholas and Janelle  
Santamaria, Jennifer  
Savvas, Savva  
Senior Forerunners  
Setian, Gary and Marie  
Simpson, Brian and  
Zacharias, Julie  
Sinclair, Bill  
Skalkotos, Nikolas and Georgia  
Skarlatos, Nick  
Smith, Kathleen  
Snow, Adrienne  
Snow, Clifford and Christina  
Snowden, Robert and Niki  
Sparangis, Spyro and Helen  
Sparkuhl, Alex and Antoinette  
Stamatakis, Christine  
Staub, Douglas and Anastasia  
Stavropoulos, Bessie  
Stavropoulos, Terry and Niki  
Stefanatos, Michael and Tami  
Stenos, Louis  
Stransky, Mark  
Stransky, Jack and Gladys  
Strong, Karlie  
Swehla, Fr. Matthew and  
Presv. Annie  
Szukiewicz, Joseph and Jennia  
Szukiewicz, Joseph  
Tafaya, Steven and Irene  
Takas, Andrea  
Tasios, Ramona and Pete

Thompson, Maggy  
Thompson, Steve and Aliki  
Touroutoglou, Nikolaos  
Tsarouhas, Maria  
Tsolis, Christos and Panagioula  
Tsolis, Panagiote  
Turman, Lucas and Maria  
Tzortzis, Maria  
Vafiadis, Victoria  
Vervilos, James and Anna  
Vlahos, Thomas and Demas,  
Rita  
Vreeland, Chandler  
Wadlow, Nicholas and Pamela  
Wallace, Robert and Katerina  
Walter, Vernon and Alice  
Waterhouse, David and  
Aleighzja  
Weisman, Diane  
Wheeler, Charles and Alyce  
Wilcox, Thalia  
Wilkerson, Chuck and  
Kristina  
Williams, Anthony and Anna  
Wilson, Steven and Cleo  
Wixom, Penelope  
Wolfenbarger, Joy  
Womack, Karl  
Womack, Kimberly  
Wood, Nadine  
Wronski, Chuck  
Xerogianes, Nick and Nikki  
Xikis, Victoria  
Zaferatos, Ted  
Zarkos, Nick and Dina  
Zarras, Nick and Chery  
Zimmerman, Paul and Angela

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

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

**Rev. Father John Hondros**  
frjohn@vegaskgreekorthodox.com

**Rev. Father Seraphim Ramos**  
frseraphim@vegaskgreekorthodox.com

**Karen Rawlinson**  
Administrative Assistant

**Rebekah Black**  
Bookkeeper

**Mara Braun**  
Catering & Events

**Constantin Petriuc & Ramona Tasios**  
Maintenance & Grounds

**Office Hours**  
Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

**Telephone: (702) 221-8245**  
**Fax: (702) 221-9167**

**www.vegaskgreekorthodox.com**

**Parish Council: Gus Flangas**

**Philoptochos: Vicky Palivos**

**Stewardship & Community Outreach:**  
**Justina Szukiewicz**

**Choir: Athena Mertes**

**Chanters & Youth Choir:**  
**Presvytera Maria Hondros**

**Church School: Eileen Koutsulis**

**Altar Servers: Alex & Eric Szukiewicz**

**GOYA:**  
**Kouli Pouridis & June Likourinou**

**Orthodox Family Fellowship:**  
**Jelena Boskovic & Amy Khuri**

**Moms & Tots:**  
**Cassie Bieker**

**Young Adults:**  
**Nicholas Asim & Fani Mavrantonis**

**Greek Folk Dance: Sia Dalacas**

**Greek School: Paula Kelesis**

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

**Kali Pareia: Demetrios Asim**

**Adult Basketball: George Chomakos**

**Forerunners: Marie & Gary Setian**

**Orthodox Bookstore:**  
**Constantine Frangakis**

**Greek Food Festival: Gus Flangas**

**Hellenic Historical Society:**  
**Cheryl Pandelis and Susan Stamis**

**Photography: Bill Bruninga**



**Adult Study with  
Father John:**



*A Spiritual Psalter  
or Reflections on God by  
St. Ephraim the Syrian*

*(Available in the Bookstore)*

*Starting Again on August 2*

*Wednesdays 7:00 - 8:30 pm*



*Wonders without end are made manifest  
from the time your icon was revealed unto all, O Saint.  
Hence, things lost are straightaway discovered by their seekers  
when your blessed name is called on, far-famed Fanourios.  
(Megalynarion, August 27)*





## Greek Food Festival Baking Dates:

Friday, July 21 & Saturday, July 22: Dolmathes

Friday, July 28 & Saturday, July 29: Pastitsio

Saturday, September 9: Pasta Flora and Karidopita

TBD: Bougatsa

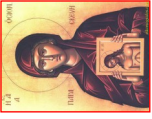
**Greek Food Festival: September 15 - 16 - 17**

Your Stewardship of Time is Encouraged!

*"This is my beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased." (2 Peter 1:17)*

## Church Account Summaries ~ May 2017

Nevada State Bank Accounts	April Ending Balance	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	May Ending Balance	Notes
General Operating Account (GOA)	\$53,629.28	\$33,107.07	\$23,459.29	\$38,078.90	\$55,469.87	\$16,646.87	
Community and Education (C&E)	\$13,502.48	\$24,583.63	\$6,600.00	\$12,266.40	\$757.82	\$31,661.89	
Greek Food Festival (GFF)	\$12,067.10	\$205.00	\$55.00	\$425.00	\$40.31	\$11,861.79	
Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)	\$313,878.12	\$18,266.00	\$1,833.00	\$1,593.54	\$7,193.85	\$325,189.73	
Folk Dance Group	\$10,000.54					\$10,000.54	
Mortgage Account	\$26,093.78				\$5,201.14	\$20,892.64	
Designated Funds	April Ending Balance	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	May Ending Balance	Notes
Bookstore	\$6,999.35	\$401.00	\$1,833.00		\$28.21	\$9,205.14	
Ornaments	\$1,077.41					\$1,077.41	
Restricted Funds	April Ending Balance	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	May Ending Balance	Notes
ICON	\$268,862.42	\$1,265.00			\$12.09	\$270,115.33	Merchant Fees
Library Account	\$1,470.77					\$1,470.77	Account owed \$21,000. Funds used to make payroll and pay bills in 2015
Giving Tree	\$3,450.91					\$3,450.91	
Building Fund	\$27,786.33	\$16,600.00		\$1,593.54	\$7,153.55	\$35,639.24	Home Depot, Floor Refinishing Supplies
Youth Choir	\$3,069.82					\$3,069.82	
Church School	\$1,206.37					\$1,206.37	
Misc. D & R Deductions	-\$535.26					-\$535.26	
Altar Servers	\$440.00					\$440.00	
GOYA	\$50.00					\$50.00	
<b>Designated, Restricted, and Other Total</b>	<b>\$313,878.12</b>	<b>\$18,266.00</b>	<b>\$1,833.00</b>	<b>\$1,593.54</b>	<b>\$7,193.85</b>	<b>\$325,189.73</b>	
Other Funds	April Ending Balance	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	May Ending Balance	Notes
Kokkos Scholarship Fund	\$55,859.07		\$2,310.77			\$58,169.84	Change in Value of Investments



# JULY 2017 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

*Sunday*

*Monday*

*Tuesday*

*Wednesday*

*Thursday*

*Friday*

*Saturday*

<b>2</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <i>Independence Day</i> <i>Church Office Closed</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7 Great Martyr Kyriaki</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>1</b>
<b>9</b> 7:00 am Campers Depart for St. Nicholas 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 10:30 am Moms & Tots in Kokkos Hall	<b>12 St. Paisios the Athonite</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:00 pm GOYA at Orleans Bowling Alley	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15 Ss. Julitta &amp; Kyricos</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy
<b>16</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:00 pm Young Adults at Fleetwood's Home	<b>17 St. Marina</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20 Prophet Elias</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>21</b> 9:00 pm Dolmathes	<b>22</b> 9:00 pm Dolmathes
<b>23</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 1:30 pm OFF at Aquatic Springs Pool	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 6:00 pm Folk Dance Board Meeting	<b>26 St. Paraskevi</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:00 pm Greek Food Festival Meeting	<b>27 St. Panteleimon</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia	<b>28</b> 9:00 am Pastisio	<b>29</b> 9:00 am Pastisio
<b>30</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy <b>Bishop Ilia's 80th Birthday Celebration</b>	<b>31</b>					



# AUGUST 2017 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	<b>5.</b> 6:00 pm Mr. & Mrs. at Beeler's Home
<b>6 Holy Transfiguration</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Blessing of Grapes 1:30 pm OFF at Flip N Out Xtreme	<b>7</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	<b>8</b> 10:30 am Moms & Tots in Kokkos Hall 6:00 pm Parish Council	<b>Dormition Fast</b> <b>August 1-14</b>	<b>9</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	<b>12</b> 4:00 pm GOYA Scavenger Hunt & Pool Party at Likourinou's Home
<b>13</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>14</b> 6:00 pm Great Vespers of the Dormition	<b>15 Dormition of the Theotokos</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia <i>Fellowship Follows</i>	<b>16</b> 6:00 pm Greek Food Festival Meeting 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 6:00 pm Young Adults at McMullen's Irish Pub & Bowling	
<b>20</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Blessing and First Day of Church School <b>Panigyri Luncheon</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice Begins (Returning Dancers Only)	<b>23</b> 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	
<b>27</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Blessing of Fanouroupites	<b>28</b>	<b>29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist (Strict Fast)</b> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>30</b> 6:00 pm Greek Food Festival Meeting 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>31</b>			



# *The Desert Messenger*

*St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church  
5300 South El Camino Road  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89118-1922*

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LAS VEGAS NV  
PERMIT NO. 98

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*God Bless  
America!*

POSTMASTER : DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE EXPEDITE

## THE DESERT MESSENGER

### *The Way of the Lord*

*Receive this Divine Trust, and guard it until  
the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
at which time He will demand it from you.*

