

The Desert



Messenger

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

Volume 15, Issue 3 St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV

March 2017

From
Father
John

Beloved in Christ:

Καλη Σαρακοστη! Blessed Lent!

Just as our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ fasted for forty days in the wilderness immediately following His Baptism in the Jordan River by St. John the Forerunner, our Holy Orthodox Church has for centuries dedicated a forty-day fast preceding Great and Holy Week and Pascha. Our Lord refrained from all food and drink during His entire fast: We are guided by His Church to abstain merely from certain food products – yet even this is a challenge for most of us and many of us do not even attempt to fast. But if fasting were not essential to the spiritual health of the soul, then why did our Lord do so, and further, why did He direct His faithful (from Ancient Israel to the Apostles and all His followers) to fast during prescribed periods?

There are four important reasons for following the Great Fast:

Fasting is a sign of obedience to God. In the Garden of Eden God commanded Adam to eat freely from every tree *except* from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, “*for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.*” (Genesis 2:17) By breaking the Lord’s commandment to abstain from this tree, Adam and Eve were banished from Paradise. Through disobedience, sickness, suffering and death entered human nature. “*Adam was driven out of Paradise, because in disobedience he had eaten food; but Moses was granted the vision of God, because he had cleansed the eyes of his soul by fasting. If then we long to dwell in Paradise, let us abstain from all needless food; and if we desire to see God, let us like Moses fast for forty days.*” (Orthros, Sunday of Forgiveness, The Lenten Triodion)



Fasting is an essential weapon for combating in spiritual warfare. In the first century St. Paul wrote to the Church in Ephesus, “*For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*” (Ephesians 6:12) Every person, whether or not he believes so, is engaged in spiritual warfare. As St. Nicodemos of the Holy Mountain wrote: “*The arena, the field of battle, the site where the fight actually takes place is our own heart and all our inner man. The time of battle is our whole life.*” After expelling a demon from a young boy, our Lord instructed His Disciples (who had been unsuccessful in their own attempts to do so), “*This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting.*” (Mark 9:29) Thus prayer *and* fasting are both required to cast out our own unclean spirits whom we battle regularly!

Fasting is a discipline that helps us to acquire “*the mind of Christ.*” (1 Corinthians 2:16) In the first century, Christians were taught to imitate Christ: “*Bless those who curse you . . . pray for your enemies . . . and fast for those who persecute you. . . Abstain from physical and bodily cravings.*” (The Didache or The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles 1:3-4) The faithful were instructed to “*fast on Wednesday and Friday.*” (Didache, 8:1) From the earliest years of the Church, Christians were instructed to fast, just as Christ fasted and in remembrance of His saving acts.

(Continued on Page 3)

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

Abstain from Meat and Dairy until Holy Pascha

Wednesday, March 1

6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy

Friday, March 3

7:00 pm 1st Salutations to the Theotokos

Saturday, March 4/ *3rd Saturday of Souls/Miracle of St. Theodore and the Kollyva*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy and Memorial

Epistle: 2 Timothy 2:1-10

Gospel: Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-2

Sunday, March 5/ *1st Sunday of Lent/ Triumph of Orthodoxy/Commemoration of the Restoration of the Holy Icons/St. Conon the Gardener*

Orthros: Tone Four

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

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40

Gospel: John 1:43-51

Procession of Icons follows Liturgy

5:00 pm Lenten Pan-Orthodox Vespers at St. John

Monday, March 6

6:30 pm Great Compline

Wednesday, March 8

6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy

Friday, March 10

7:00 pm 2nd Salutations to the Theotokos

Sunday, March 12/ *2nd Sunday of Lent/ St. Gregory Palamas/St. Theophanes the Confessor*

Orthros: Tone Five (First Plagal)

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

Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-14; 2:1-3

Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

5:00 pm Lenten Pan-Orthodox Vespers at Ss. George & Dimitri Romanian Orthodox Church

Monday, March 13

6:30 pm Great Compline

Wednesday, March 15

6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy

Friday, March 17

7:00 pm 3rd Salutations to the Theotokos

Sunday, March 19/ *3rd Sunday of Lent/ Veneration of the Holy Cross/Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria*

Procession of Holy Cross at Doxology

Orthros: Tone Six (Second Plagal)

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

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-18; 5:1-6

Gospel: Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

5:00 pm Lenten Pan-Orthodox Vespers at St. Simeon Serbian Orthodox Church

Monday, March 20

6:30 pm Great Compline

Wednesday, March 22

6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy

Friday, March 24

7:00 pm Great Vespers for the Annunciation

Saturday, March 25/ *Annunciation of the Theotokos*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Hebrews 2:11-18

Gospel: Luke 1:24-38

Sunday, March 26/ *4th Sunday of Lent/ St. John Climacos/Apodosis of the Annunciation/ Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel*

Orthros: Tone Seven (Grave)

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

Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20

Gospel: Mark 9:17-31

5:00 pm Lenten Pan-Orthodox Vespers at St. Paul Orthodox Church (OCA)

Monday, March 27

6:30 pm Great Compline

Wednesday, March 29

6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy

Friday, March 31

7:00 pm Akathist Hymn

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

MARCH 5

Ushers: Stacy Mavrantonis, Justina Szukiewicz, Pete Tsohis, George Bochanis, Gus Flangas and Demetrious Asim

Fellowship: Forerunners - Seniors of St. John the Baptist

MARCH 12

Ushers: Skip Ruffner, Mike Beeler, Mark Karris, Kouli Pouridis, John Koutsulis and Bessie Stavropoulos

Memorials: Georgia Skandros (1 year); Mary van den Raadt (3 years); and Stella Tasios (8 years).

Fellowship: Pan-Arcadians

MARCH 19

Ushers: Kouli Pouridis, Mark Karris, Stacy Mavrantonis, Pete Tsohis, Justina Szukiewicz and George Bochanis

Memorials: Spiros Plentzas (40 days); Eugenia Dalacas (40 days); George Elfter (3 months); Prodromos Lambros (1 year); Dina Kelesis (3 years); Constandinos Birtas (5 years).

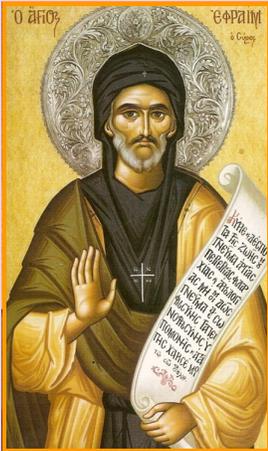
Fellowship: Ladies Philotochos Society - Benefits Holy Cross

MARCH 26

Ushers: Demetrious Asim, Gus Flangas, Bessie Stavropoulos, John Koutsulis, Skip Ruffner and Mike Beeler

Memorial: Albert Flangas (2 years).

Fellowship: AHEPA



Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

(Prayed daily during Lent, with prostrations)

*Lord and Master of my life,
cast away from me the spirit of laziness, idle curiosity,
love of power and vain talk.*

*But grant me, Your servant, the spirit of moderation,
humility, patience and love.*

*Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own faults and
not to judge my brothers and sisters.*

For You are blessed forever. Amen.

From Father John (Continued from Page 1)

Finally, fasting allows the soul to be ever vigilant and prayerful, rather than weighed down by dissipation and laziness. The opening words of the Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian, which is prayed daily in Lent, are *“Lord and Master of my life, cast away from me the spirit of laziness . . .”* The primary reason for not fasting is laziness: Yet fasting is the most effective tool in overcoming our spiritual and physical laziness! Fasting strengthens our soul, renews our mind, and reinvigorates our spiritual resolve to live in union with Christ. *“Let us put on the armor of abstinence and clothe ourselves in the glory of the angels!” (Doxastikon, Orthros, Sunday of Forgiveness)*

With love in Christ,

Parish Council Report

We have had and have a lot of great things going on in the Church community. First, we would like to congratulate our Dance groups for the great showing they had at FDF this last weekend in San Diego. Our Church was very well represented with some very talented dancers. Our high school group, Elliniki Yperifaneaia, completely excelled with an overwhelming first place finish in their category; and our adult group, Oi Antartes, excelled with a third place finish in theirs. Our other Dance Groups also gave great performances. Congratulations and thank you to the Folk Dance Board, Directors, Dancers, and everyone involved for a tremendous job well done. Also, we would like to congratulate the Dance group for the successful Glendi they recently held. The live music, food, and dancing made for a great time for all who attended.

Our Church recently hosted a really cool event called "Operation Boots and Booties," with 500 people in attendance. It was essentially a massive baby shower for over 250 wives of servicemen, who were pregnant or who just recently gave birth. Due to constant deployments, most of these women gave birth or are due to give birth while their husbands were and are deployed in combat areas such as Afghanistan. In addition to an evening of food and games, the event provided these new moms the opportunity to be surrounded by other women in the exact same situation, as they celebrate the births of their new babies. The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 12101, Fox 5, NV Energy, Subaru Las Vegas and Henderson Hospital joined forces to collect baby items which included cribs, car seats, toys, gift cards, and a host of other gifts. Our Ladies Philoptochos Society helped underwrite a portion of the expenses with a generous donation. Also many of our State's dignitaries were present to honor these military families. We hope to host the event again next year and be more involved in this important endeavor to take care of and honor those who give so much in the defense of our nation.

On another note, as you all have undoubtedly noticed, there are quite a few projects taking place. First and foremost is the Iconography. We presently have all the scaffolding in place, and have the Icon canvases, gold leaf and other materials in the Church, ready to be affixed. Our Iconographers were supposed to be here on Friday, February 10; unfortunately, they encountered difficulty in getting past US Customs due to a slight mistake with their travel documents. We are working on it with the help of one of our Parishioners who specializes in immigration issues. We are extremely grateful for all he has done in helping us. We expect to have our Iconographers here ready to work in the next 60 days or so.

We are also working on Panos Hall and Kokkos Hall, resurfacing all the floors. This process involves sanding, filling in holes, re-staining, and resealing the floors. The floors should look like new once this long over-due process is completed. Please note that both halls are closed and we would appreciate everyone staying out until we are done.

We are also working on the roofs of the Church and the Community Center. As many of you are aware, we have had some leaks for some time now. We have received several bids and have chosen the proper contractor to complete the job. Repairs on the roofs started on February 23. Also in the next month or two we will be painting the Narthex of the Church, and the inside of Panos Hall. We are working on the landscaping again to finish the massive project undertaken last summer. This effort will include replacing the remaining deficient watering pipes, putting decorative rock in the planters, and filling in and leveling off the holes in the grass. It will also include replanting grass in many areas of our lawn. We are also looking at repainting the area around surrounding the fountain in the courtyard.

Switching gears, we cannot over emphasize the importance of Stewardship to our Church. The perpetual shortfall in our Stewardship continually and significantly limits what our Church can do going forward in the way of capital improvements, greater funding for our ministries, maintaining and repairing our facilities and fulfilling our visions for the future, especially with our youth. We absolutely have to get Stewardship fully on track where it covers most if not all of our operating expenses. So, please look into your heart, pray, and give back accordingly to help our Church in this coming year.

The dates for this year's Greek Food Festival are the weekend of September 15, 16, and 17. We will be starting the planning meetings in the next couple of weeks, so please keep a look out for the dates and please step up and help. Every year, we get better and better.

(Continued on Page 5)

Notes from the Choir Loft



Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the following rehearsals in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha: *Fridays, March 10 and March 24, 5:45-6:45 pm* in the Choir Loft. If you intend to sing during the Holy Week and Pascha services, please make every effort to be present for these rehearsals! We have a lot of music to cover in a very short time. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to this ministry!

Athena Mertes, Director

Our Community Registry

Marriage: *Na zisete!*

Athanasios Antoniadis and Gina Gangemi on February 26.

Koumbaros: Kimon Antoniadis.

Fallen Asleep in the Lord: *Eternal Memory!*

Ritsa Prokopis on January 22, 2017. Funeral on January 31.

Spiros Plentzas on February 7, 2017. Funeral on February 15.

Eugenia Dalacas on February 15, 2017. Funeral on February 22.

Parish Council Report *(Continued from Page 4)*

Please remember that we have the Palm Sunday Luncheon on April 9 following Church Services. His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos will be here to worship and celebrate with us. And we will have the Agape Picnic on Pascha, April 16, starting at noon. These are great events for fellowship, so please come and join us.

Please take note that we are in the process of planning a New Year's Eve Party this year in Panos Hall with live music, great food, lots of dancing and fun, and no speeches. This event will also serve as part of the initial plan to help retire the Mortgage. It is our intent to make this the best event to hang out for New Year's Eve for all ages, so mark your calendars.

Other projects also underway include redrafting the Parish Bylaws to make them consistent with the Uniform Parish Regulations of the Archdiocese, and finalizing a new plan for use of the Community Center Facilities and Catering.

In closing and as usual, 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. Please step forward whenever you can and pitch in. We know many things are always happening, but they are extremely important. Please get involved as we move forward to make our Church better. May God bless our Lenten season!

Gus Flangas, Parish Council President

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Philoptochos: Bernadette Anthony

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:

Presv. Annie Swehla & Cassie Bieker

Young Adults:

Nicholas Asim & Anthony Kunard

Greek Folk Dance:

Sia Dalacas

Greek School: Paula Kelesis

Mr. & Mrs.:

Fr. John, Fr. Matthew & Presvyteres

Kali Parea: Demetri Asim

Adult Basketball: George Chomakos

Forerunners: Marie & Gary Setian

Orthodox Bookstore:
Constantine Frangakis

Bill Andrews Library: Susan Stamis

Greek Food Festival: Gus Flangas

Hellenic Historical Society:
Cheryl Pandelis and Susan Stamis

Photography: Bill Bruninga

Philoptochos News

Dear Reverend Fathers, Sisters of Ladies Philoptochos and Fellow Parishioners,

Thank you for another fun and exciting Las Vegas' Best Contest! This time we went with the Super Bowl Tradition of Chicken Wings. The entries were amazing and plentiful. Thank you to all the contestants! Bragging rights (and a beautiful icon and a check) go to these winners: Kitty Komashko Gott, 1st Place; Debbie Mavros, 2nd Place; Dianne Bacon, 3rd Place. Many thanks to Melissa Fleetwood for co-chairing the event. It was her first event and she rocked it!

On Sunday, February 19, the kitchen was packed with all the helping hands that filled the 50 bags for the "Food for the Hungry" project. This simple project will help 50 families that have empty cupboards over weekends and school holidays! Many thanks to the Mary Bartsas Family for their generous donation that paid for all the supplies!

Save the Dates . . . As we begin our personal Lenten journey, please mark your calendars with the following dates of Philoptochos commitments.



Sunday, March 5 – Pan-Orthodox Vespers and Dinner: Please join us as we welcome the Orthodox faithful from around the valley at the Vespers and dinner. We will need help setting up the hall for the dinner and serving the light repast. We also need several trays of Lenten cookies for dessert. Please let me know if you are interested in helping.

Sunday, March 12, following Liturgy – Monthly Meeting: Please get your coffee and treats, and join us for a short meeting. The Wine Wagon sale will start and in order to make this a huge success we will need two bottles of wine from every member at this meeting. Bring your favorite wine – red or white – and remember, no Charles Shaw, a.k.a. Three Buck Chuck! Tickets are still \$5, and the proceeds are earmarked for local Panagia Chapter projects.

Sunday, March 19 – Holy Cross Fellowship: We will offer a very special Fellowship on this day. Geri Kypreos and Alexia Chandrinos are co-chairing this event. Please let them know if you would like to help with this special day.

Election Notice: It is hard to believe that another two years have passed since the last election of the Board of Directors. At the last meeting, we officially announced the upcoming election and nominations are now open. We will be following the prescribed election procedures from National Philoptochos and they are available for review on the National Philoptochos website. The election will be held at the May meeting.

Lastly, we have a Saint Nicholas National Shrine update from Jeanne Ranglas, President of the Metropolis of San Francisco:

Dear Philoptochos Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Saint Nicholas National Shrine is not just any parish, it is the Church for all. It is as much a part of our past as it is our present. It represents our future. Every time we walk into Church, we light a candle. A little light emanates from one candle but as others light their candles, the warm glow fills the Church until it radiates God's Love. This is what the Saint Nicholas National Shrine will become – a shining beacon of our Faith, of peace, and of love; but this can only happen if we all come together as an Orthodox family for our Church to bring it to its full realization and completion.

Your support of the Saint Nicholas National Shrine is your light to shine bright for all eternity for our Church. We are thousands of miles away from New York City, but we are united by our Faith: Faith and believing in what is hoped for, but not seen. Let us also be united as Philoptochos sisters and brothers in Christ by showing our support for the Saint Nicholas National Shrine. I respectfully appeal to you to humbly offer \$100, yet no gift is too small. What is important is that we all give as one family of Orthodox Christians for our Church!

Thank you for responding to this request with love. This is a historical opportunity for the Orthodox Church to be an example for all believers. I hope you will join me . . . for our Church!

Dora Hart and Vicky Palivos are the contacts for the Saint Nicholas National Shrine and will gratefully accept any and all contributions to the Shrine. Please let them know if you have any questions or concerns.

As always, thanks you for your generous support for all Philoptochos endeavors.

Your Sister in Christ, Bernadette Anthony, Philoptochos President



"WHEN YOU PRAY... PRAY LIKE THIS..."

(MATTHEW 5:5-13)

A LENTEN RETREAT

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 2017

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

BISHOP ILIA (KATRE) OF PHILOMELION, SPEAKER

HIERARCH OF THE ALBANIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF AMERICA

FORMER PRIEST OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN LAS VEGAS

FORMER DEAN OF STUDENTS AT HOLY CROSS SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY



RETREAT SCHEDULE

9:00AM DIVINE LITURGY

10:00AM REFRESHMENTS & REGISTRATION

10:30AM RETREAT BEGINS

12:00PM LENTEN LUNCH

3:30PM RETREAT CONCLUDES

• \$15 PER PERSON, INCLUDING LUNCH

• REGISTER BY FRIDAY, MARCH 24

• CASH OR CHECK ONLY

PAYABLE TO: "ST. PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH"

MEMO: "LENTEN RETREAT"

SPONSORED BY THE CLARK COUNTY ORTHODOX CLERGY ASSOCIATION



Stewardship and Community Outreach

Being new to the Parish Council, I have been spending time these past couple of months learning not only how things are done locally but also how things must be done in accordance with Uniform Parish Regulations (“UPRs”) set forth by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, as delivered by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America with approval and ratification by His All Holiness Bartholomew, Patriarch of Constantinople, in order that they “be exactly adhered to and applied by . . . the Christ-loving faithful.”

In his letter, attached to the UPRs, the Patriarch encourages the faithful to adhere to these regulations “with care and precision,” which will contribute not only to the “proper functioning of our parishes, but also to the edification of these communities in Christ for the spreading of Orthodoxy and for the glory of God.”

With apologies for the long preamble, I would like to quote the section that defines a “parishioner” verbatim for this month’s Stewardship reflection:

“Section I: Every person who is baptized and chrismated according to the rites of the Orthodox Church is a parishioner. The religious, moral and social duties of a parishioner are to apply the tenets of the Orthodox Faith to his/her life and to: adhere to and live according to the tenets of the Orthodox faith; faithfully attend the Divine Liturgy and other worship services; participate regularly in the holy sacraments; respect all ecclesiastical authority and all governing bodies of the Church; be obedient in matters of the Faith, practice and ecclesiastical order; contribute toward the progress of the Church’s sacred mission; and be an effective witness and example of the Orthodox Faith and Traditions to all people.

“A parishioner in good standing practices all the religious and moral duties as described in this Section I. At a minimum, a parishioner in good standing must: be eighteen years of age or over; be current in his or her stewardship and other financial obligations to the Parish, abide by all the regulations herein stated and the Parish Bylaws; and cooperate in every way toward the welfare and well being of the Parish. Stewardship is recommended to be ten percent (10%) of one’s annual income as stated in Holy Scripture to help meet the financial obligations of the Parish, the Metropolis and the Archdiocese.” (*Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, Part Three, Uniform Parish Regulations, Chapter One: Parish and Parish Organization, Article 18 – Parishioners*)

These descriptions apply to you, they apply to me, and they apply to all of us. We all know that living a Christian life is oftentimes difficult, and living an Orthodox Christian life can seem harder still. But who can argue with the vital importance of contributing toward the progress of the Church’s sacred mission, of being an effective witness and example of the Faith, of cooperating in every way toward the welfare and well-being of the Parish? Let us instead trust in Him who said, *“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”* (Matthew 11:28-30)

Yours in Christ, Mike Beeler, for the Stewardship Committee

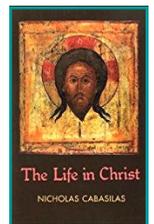
“For with God nothing will be impossible.” (Luke 2:37)



*Adult Study with Father John:
“St. Paul’s Letters to the
Corinthians”*

*Meets every Wednesday during Lent
7:30 - 8:30 pm in Kokkos Hall
Bring your Bible (RSV - Available in Bookstore)*

*Thursday Morning
Study with
Father Matthew:
The Life in Christ,
by St. Nicholas Cabasilas*



Weekly in the Library at 10:30 am

From Father Matthew



One day, as I drove up Highway 93 to Ely, Nevada, I saw a sign posted, “Rough Road.” It was a warning to drivers to slow down and be more alert, because the road’s surface was uneven.

Wouldn’t it be nice if life had warnings when there was a rough road ahead? Then we could brace ourselves and prepare. Yet all too often the bad times hit with no warning, catching us unaware and causing more damage. We feel ill-equipped and unprepared, desperately looking for some assistance as we bear the burden of the struggle.

In many occupations, preparedness is essential. In the military this is accomplished through the rigorous training program called “boot camp.” Firefighters and police officers likewise have specialized academies that train them for all sorts of situations and eventualities.

As Christians, we too have “training” that can prepare us for the rough stretches down the road of life. The saints of our Church attest to this preparation with their lives, which were so often full of struggle and toil – yet they resolutely persevered despite all, often having tranquility and peace that defy explanation. Imagine being equipped for any situation, no matter how difficult!

The good news for us non-saints is that the tools of training are right in front of us; they are virtually every aspect of our life in the Church: prayer, worship services, fasting, the Body and Blood of Christ, acts of charity, Confession, and the many ways in which we are taught to imitate Christ. All of these tools help to put our soul in the right framework (in the “mind of Christ”) so that we can face whatever may come.

Unfortunately we often do not see these things as tools of training. Rather we look at them as optional additions to our already full life – “It is nice to go to Church on Sunday, if you are able to make it . . .” – or even as burdens than are thrown upon us by an unreasonable or out-of-touch Church, “I don’t do fasting.”

Then when the tough times come – and come they will – we look externally: We focus on assigning blame (someone else, God, etc.), reciprocating, ignoring, covering up, or other responses. We fail to realize that the way we react to the trials of life has far more to do with what occurs *inside* of us than what occurs externally. Look to Jesus: How many struggles, trials and tribulations did He face with serenity and patience?

I am NOT saying that we cause our struggles by our spiritual unawareness (though sometimes we do), or that we can prevent them; rather I am saying that when struggles come – from whatever source – our response to them is affected by the state of our soul.

Think of a small island in a lake and a boat floating on the lake. When a storm comes, causing large waves, does the island get moved by the waves? No. However the boat is tossed to and fro and is capsized. The island is a soul which has been immersed in the life of the Church; while the boat is a soul that has not used the tools of the Church to prepare for the storm. In Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount he says the same:

“Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them (that is, whoever lives the life of an Orthodox Christian), I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” (Matthew 7:24-27)

So here is your warning sign: Rough Road Ahead. Live the life of the Church so that you may be prepared for that road when it comes – pray, fast, give, confess, help, love, worship. And may the rough roads be smooth, and the crooked paths straight, by the grace and strength of God.

Blessed 40 Days!

Father Matthew

“Let it be to me according to your word.” (Luke 1:38)

Youth and Family Ministries

Church School

Kali Sarakosti!

First I would like to congratulate our Folk Dancers on a job well done at FDF. I saw photos, videos and I even watched it live on YouTube. How exciting modern technology is when everyone is scattered all over the world.

Happily, we have so many students in our classrooms. Please make sure your child is registered. You can register with Karen at the Church Office, his or her teacher, or myself. The registration form is available from Karen or on the bulletin boards.

Lent started on February 27. As always, we are encouraging our students to attend at least one weekday service to make their Lenten journey more fulfilling. The Friday service is Salutations to the Theotokos. As the Youth Choir chants it is a wonderful service for the children to participate in. Please see the worship schedule for all of the services.

The OFF Lenten Mini-Retreat will be on *Saturday, March 4*. A flyer will be handed out in Church School. All elementary-aged kids and their parents are welcome! Please let us know if you need more details or if you would like to help.

On *Sunday, March 5, Sunday of Orthodoxy*, our Church School children will participate in the Procession of Icons; please bring a favorite icon from home to carry. Also on that date we will begin collecting for "Mochas for Missions" (formerly known as "Pennies 'n' Prayers"), which is part of a Metropolis-wide Lenten effort to support the work of the Commission for Orthodox Missions and Evangelism ("COME"). COME helps fund new mission parishes in the Metropolis of San Francisco and assists in their growth. Last year our parish raised more than \$900. We will have a weekly collection in the classrooms: Please have your children collect their loose change during the week to add to our "bucket" on Sunday, which will continue until Palm Sunday. The children will receive a little treat for every week that they bring money for the bucket. Mochas for Missions is the main funding source for COME.

Please feel free to call or e-mail me with any questions or concerns.

In Christ, Eileen Koutsulis, Church School Director (702) 521-6516 or vivaleenie@cox.net

Youth Choir News



Congratulations to all of the Folk Dancers who participated in FDF last month: They danced beautifully at the luncheon and made us all proud at FDF.

The Youth Choir did a great job chanting the Liturgy on February 12 even though all 12 of us were crammed around the chanters stand and not in our usual spot!

Now that we have entered Lent, the Youth Choir will participate (as they do so annually) in the Friday Salutation Services to the Theotokos. Practices start at *6:15 pm on Fridays, March 3, 10, 17 and 24*, with the Salutations service beginning at 7:00 pm. Additionally, we will have practice on *Friday, March 24* and chant the responses to the Vespers service that evening.

Looking forward to another uplifting Lenten Season with our group!

Love in Christ, Presvytera Maria

Orthodox Family Fellowship

What is Holy Week all about? This is the question we will answer at our annual *OFF Lenten Mini-Retreat, "Passport to Holy Week," on Saturday, March 4*. Join us for an exciting retreat, geared toward children 4 to 11 years old. Parents are welcome too! We begin with Liturgy at 9:00 am, followed by the Memorial service. The retreat will start at *11:00 am*. See the retreat flyer on Page 13.

In Christ, Father Matthew and OFF Advisors, Jelena Boskovic and Amy Khuri

GOYA ~ For Teenagers

Hi GOYAns!

Congratulations to our Folk Dancers! Our GOYAns danced so well that they received first place in their division at FDF! We started the Lenten season with a meal, discussion and Forgiveness Vespers.

It is time again for the annual *Lenten Overnight Retreat!* You can expect all of the usual fun and games, as well as opportunities to worship together, eat together, and talk together. We will camp out in the Church on *Friday and Saturday, March 17 and 18.* See the retreat flyer on Page 12 for more information.

In Christ's Love, Kouli Pouridis and June Likourinou, GOYA Advisors

Greek Folk Dance

Now that our busiest part of the year is behind us, we would like to thank our community for its continued support. Our groups had a great time at FDF in San Diego and made us so proud! Congratulations to Elliniki Yperifaneia for their 1st place win and to Oi Antartes for taking 3rd place in the most difficult category at FDF! Our Advanced Senior performance was again a showstopper for the second year in a row with everyone talking about Las Vegas all Sunday afternoon! A big congratulations to our younger groups as well for their beautiful performances from Samos and Thrace and the non-competitive exhibition group with their oh-so-cute performance! A great year at FDF we had!



We would like to thank our directors: Irene Taxopoulos, Vikki Andrews, George Chomakos, Demetrios Philippou, Penny Philippou, Jonathan Liaos, Sophia Leventis, Katerina Kane, Nick Barbarino, Phoebe Orlando and Alexandra Liaos. There is so much more involved than just showing up to practice; and we recognize every bit of your hard work and dedication.

A special thank you to Presvytera Maria for banging out 12 foustaneles in what seemed like lightning speed for our adult group and to the moms that were in Kokkos during practices helping with pinning and cutting fabric. A very heartfelt thank you to Jenn Orlando for sewing all the remaining pieces and whatnot at the 11th hour! We are so grateful to you all for your help.

Thank you to everyone that attended our Glendi and our preview luncheon. Your support tells these kids you care. A big thank you to all involved in putting these great events on!

One last THANK YOU to the Folk Dance Board members for all their hard work: Pete Tsolis, Sia Dalacas, Jenn Orlando, Antonia Tzelalis and Penny Philippou. It gets more difficult each year to do what you all do! Thank you for your class, first and foremost, your talents, and contributions as individuals and the unity we share to make each year more successful than the last. I wish you all continued success in the upcoming years.

Kali Sarakosti to all and a Blessed Pascha!

With gratitude, Bessie Stavropoulos and the Folk Dance Board

Moms & Tots



Our group enjoyed a fun Moms Night Out in January at Brio Tuscan Grille in Town Square. We certainly had a fun time and enjoyed good food, company and uninterrupted conversations while our kids stayed at home in the care of others! In February we had a gathering at the Church with the moms and their tots.

If you are a mother of a young child, or children, please join us for our next Moms & Tots gathering on *Tuesday, March 14, 10:30 am to noon, in Kokkos Hall.*

In Christ, Presvytera Annie Swehla and Cassie Bieker

2017 TEEN OVERNIGHT RETREAT

walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and has given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice. ... For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. walk as children of light.

~ Ephesians 5:1, 8

Walking With Our Lord A Journey Through Holy Week

Friday & Saturday, March 17 & 18
6:00 pm – 1:00 pm

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

All middle school & high school students are welcome!

WHAT TO BRING

- ◆ Wear Church clothes
- ◆ Casual clothes for Capture the Flag and for the next day
(Running shoes please, and nothing tight or short!)
- ◆ Sleeping clothes, sleeping bag, pillow, toothbrush, etc.

PASSPORT TO HOLY WEEK

A Lenten Mini-Retreat
For Young Children
(4-11 years old)

Saturday, March 4



9:00 am - 10:30 am

Divine Liturgy for the Saturday of the Souls

10:30 am - 11:00 am

Light snack in Kokkos Hall. Outdoor play time.

11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Mini-Retreat Sessions and Confession

Greek Language Classes

Adult Conversational Greek Class has started with a bang! We have a great group of adults who are eager to learn. Thank you to John Apostolos for stepping up and teaching them!

Our youth are doing great too; the kids are learning the Greek national anthem to sing at the Greek Independence Day Fellowship hosted by AHEPA on March 26.

Paula Kelesis, Greek School Director



Greek Independence Day Flag-Raising Ceremony



Please join AHEPA Chapter 314 in the raising of the Greek flag in celebration of *Greek Independence Day on Thursday, March 23 at 10:00 am at City Hall* (495 South Main St, Las Vegas, NV 89101).

City Councilman Stavros Anthony will be officiating the event with a Proclamation and short presentation. Please make an effort to attend this event so we can showcase our Greek Community to the greater Las Vegas area.

For more information, contact Kouli Pouridis at (702) 604-0885 or Pouridis5@embarqmail.com, or Dean Chomakos at (702) 296-3502, or Jimmy Philippou at (734) 260-4643.

“ZITO ELLAS”

Your Sponsorship is encouraged . . . for a name day, birthday, anniversary or in memory of a loved one: \$100 - The Desert Messenger, \$50 - Weekly Bulletin.



FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL 2017
Congratulations to our Dancers!



From top to bottom:
Liondaria, Delfinia,
Oi Antartes,
Elliniki Yperifaneia,
Oi Antartes.



Adult and Young Adult Ministries

Young Adults

Great job at FDF, for those of you who danced in the young adult group – and congratulations on winning 3rd Place in this very competitive division! This month Caroline Lekar and her parents will host our Young Adult Dinner: Join us on *Sunday, March 19 at 7:00 pm*. RSVP with us or with Father Matthew.

In Christ, Nicholas Asim and Anthony Kunard, YA Advisors

Mr. & Mrs. - A Couples Fellowship



Thank you to Jeremy and Amy Bauck for hosting a wonderful dinner in February – we had a great discussion as well! Our March dinner will be at *John and Marcie Karas' home on Saturday, March 18 at 6:00 pm*. Since it is Lent please bring non-meat dishes only. Please RSVP with John, Marcie, or Father Matthew.

In Christ, Father John, Father Matthew, and their Presvyteres

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

We had a great time in February at the Folk Dance Glendi. What a great night! In March, as we will be in the middle of Lent, Kali Parea is not having a formal get-together; but I hope to see everyone at the many Church services.

Mark your calendars though for *Saturday, April 1*. As a group we are attending the *Lenten Retreat*. The topic is "When you Pray, Pray Like This." Our speaker is our very own Bishop Ilia. Registration is \$15 per person and includes lunch. Please register ahead of time.

Demetrious Asim, Kali Parea Advisor

Forerunners - The Seniors of St. John the Baptist

Our February luncheon was dedicated to the memory of Spike Plentzas. Spike was not only a member of our group but also served as our Vice President. We were also honored to have Bishop Ilia make a surprise visit, and we opened our luncheon with prayer followed by special prayers for the repose of Spike and for the health of little Michael Manteris, who is still fighting for his life. We ask all our parishioners to keep praying hard for Michael. Bishop Ilia went on to speak lovingly and personally about Spike. The Senior Forerunners will be offering the 40-Day Memorial for Spike – with Ruth's blessing.

Our luncheon was hosted once again by Atria Senior Living – a delicious meal, and we thank Atria so very much.

Please note that as of March we are moving our luncheon gatherings back to Mondays. This month our luncheon will be on *Monday, March 13 at 11:30 am*. This will be a Lenten meal prepared by our Master Chef Sam Koutsulis. We will have great fellowship as always and hope to see you all there.

There is no April meeting scheduled due to Holy Week. However, if you would like to do something special after Pascha, please offer your ideas to Marie and Gary.

Always in closing we send our love, thoughts and prayers to all our homebound seniors.

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

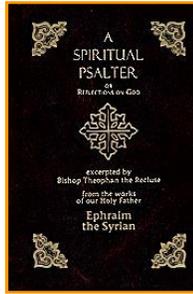
HOLY CONFESSION DURING LENT:

Lent is the season of repentance, when all are encouraged to go to the Sacrament of Holy Confession. Father John is available for Confession by appointment only during the weekdays of Lent. Do not delay, as Confessions will not be heard Holy Week.

Orthodox Bookstore

Kali Sarakosti from the Bookstore!

This month we are featuring *A Spiritual Psalter, or Reflections on God*. This book is based on the works of Saint Ephraim the Syrian and collected by Bishop Theophan the Recluse. Here is an excerpt:



“Punish me here and correct me with grace, so that I might not then be ashamed: O kindhearted Lord, spare Thy servant, that I might not be found in fear and great shame at Thy judgment, that I might not be a disgrace to angels and men. Punish me here, O my Savior, as a tenderhearted Father Who loves His children; and forgive me there, as the only sinless and most merciful God.”

ICXC NIKA, Constantine Frangakis, Bookstore Director

Serving Dinner to the Homeless

The Community of St. John the Baptist is invited to serve dinner to the homeless at the Las Vegas Rescue Mission on *Friday, March 3, starting at 4:30 pm*. We will finish at 6:00 pm, so our volunteers are able to worship at the Salutations to the Theotokos at 7:00 pm.

Please join us and see why “*it is more blessed to give than to receive.*” (Acts 20:35)



*“I know My own and My own know Me.” (John 10:14)
Please prayerfully fill out and return your
2017 Stewardship Pledge Card.*

AHEPA CHAPTER 314 GOLF TOURNAMENT SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 24, 2017



*The Tournament will be held at the PALMS in Summerlin.
Golf Package - \$125: Green Fees, Lunch and Ticket for Raffle.
Shotgun Start at 7:30 am.*

*We are also looking for hole sponsors, donations and prizes.
For information on registration, sponsorships and donations please contact:
Jimmy Philippou (734) 260-4643 or Jim Liaos (702) 449-6716.*

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

Adamy, Marina	Dalacas, Eugenia +	Katris, Nick	Pappas, Constantine and Karina
Anastasakis, Mark and Elaine	Daskalos, George and Carrie	Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon	Payan, Luis and Eleni
Anastasiou, Andrew and Kathleen	Daskalos, George and Voula	Katsikakis, Evangelos	Pelletier, Michael
Andrews, Catherine	Delalis, Dina	Kelesis, Paula	Pendleton, Patricia
Andrews, Chris and Pamela	Demoleas, Stephanie	Kimball, Sarah	Pentogenis, Katherine
Andricopoulos, Margo	Demopoulos, Vasiliki	Koliambas, Eleni	Peredera, Maria
Anthony, Stavros and Bernadette	Diamantis, Filippas	Kostopoulos, Georgia	Petro, Aleko and Georgia
Aristides, George and Diana	Dominguez, Eric and Amalia	Kountanis, Pat	Petrou, James and Penelopi
Asim, Demetrious	Doukakis, Panagiotis and Chrisi	Kourlos, Georgia	Pierro, Joe and Rhonda
Asim, Nicholas	Dounis, Dina	Koutsulis, John and Eileen	Pierro, Joseph and Christine
Austgen, Harold Max	Dounis, Georgia	Koutsulis, Sam and Effie	Plentzas, Spiros + and Ruth
Balaouras, Panos and Helen	Dounis, Kiki	Kratky, Frank and Constance	Polimerou, Angeline
Balason, Anna	Dramitinos, Mary	Kunard, Derek	Politis, Pantelis and Dimitra
Balodimas, James	Earl, Christine Michaelides	Kyprianou, Gilbert and Alexis	Poulos, Christine
Barbarino, Demetra	Eliades, Artemisa	Kyriannis, Justin and Linda	Powers, Russell and Rebecca
Bartzos, Sam and Eugenia	Eliades, Harry and Agapi	Lagomarsino, Victor and Sophia	Prokopis, Ritsa +
Bauck, Jeremy and Amy	Eliakis, John	Lakis, Antoinette	Pursell, Robert and Mary
Beeler, Mike and Carolyn	Eliakis, Peter and Glenda	Lamancusa, Lisa	Raptis, Fr. Dean and Presv. Evonne
Beeman, Karl and Benita	Eliakis, Varthie and LeeAnn	Lambros, Kyriakos	Rifakes, John
Berendji, Jim and Vivian	Exarhos, Sharon	Latelle, Penny	Rigas, Evie
Bernier, Micah and Alissa	Eyler, John and Elizabeth	Lazarakis, John and Panagiota	Rihani, Gary and Linda
Berta, Irene	Eyler, Fr. Paul and Presv. Ilean	Lekar, Caroline	Robison, Diane and Patricia
Bieker, Adam and Cassie	Fischer, Bob and Cheryl	Lekar, Michael and Effie	Rodis, Dimitri
Bieker, Georgea	Fitzgerald, Norman and McCullen, Sandra	Leonis, Tishe	Rodis, Sophia
Bochanis, George and Enid	Flangas, Bill and Marilyn	Leventis, Naomi	Rosenthal, Joseph and Stephanie
Bratta, Georgene	Flangas, Gus and Tamara	Liaos, Jim and Tina	Rotas, Beatrice
Brilis, George and Satoko	Fleetwood, Thomas and Melissa	Liaos, Steve and Francine	Rouvas, John and Keri
Britten, Ronald and Carol	Flores, Michael	Liaos, William and Irene	Rudolph, Brandon
Brown, Faye	Foster, Kyle and Maria	Likourinou, Steve and June	Ruffner, Skip and Kathy
Bruninga, Bill and Erin	Frangakis, Constantine	Litsos, Nicholas and Catherine	Santamaria, Jennifer
Bucy, Brent and Elaine	Frangakis, John	Lymberopoulos, Mary	Savvas, Savva
Cahill, Irene	Frangakis, Sophocles	Maddox, Thomas and Maria	Setian, Gary and Marie
Camel, Joseph	Georgoulakis, Mary Ellen	Malamatos, Kindina	Simpson, Brian and Zacharias, Julie
Campbell, Theodore and Cheryl	Gialketsis, Barbara	Maniatakos, Ted and Maria	Sinclair, Bill
Capre, Julio and Betty	Giouzelis, Anastasia	Mansour, Muna	Skalkotos, Nikolas and Georgia
Carabas, Stephen and Linda	Goltsos, Andreas and Sofia	Manteris, Arthur and Sue	Skarlatos, Nick
Carabas, Thymios and Sotiroulla	Goodman, Linda	Mavrantonis, Stacy and Kiki	Smith, Kathleen
Carahalios, John and Jillian	Gott, C. Thomas and Kitty	Mavrantonis, Theofania	Snow, Adrienne
Caredis, Jon and Marjorie	Gousdovas, Nikos	Mavroidis, Demetrios and Debra	Snow, Clifford and Christina
Carrico, William and Alexandra	Grillas, Roula	Mavros, Michael and Debbie	Snowden, Robert and Niki
Carter, Maria	Gruber, Ernest and Zoe	Mavroudis, Frank and Vess, Olga	Sparangis, Spyro and Helen
Cero, Dean	Gutierrez, Connie	McClain, Gavin and Jaymee	Sparkuhl, Alex and Antoinette
Chachas, Bessie	Hadzoglon, Christos and Barbara	McManus, Jeanette	Staubs, Douglas and Anastasia
Chachas, James	Hamilton, Mary	McKinney, Michael and Mersene	Stavropoulos, Bessie
Chagares, Kiki	Hamilton, Paul and Brandi	McSweeney, Farolyn	Stavropoulos, Terry and Niki
Chandrinos, Alexia	Hayes, Tulla	Melton, Donald and Susan	Stefanatos, Michael and Tami
Chanos, George	Hetzel, David and Joanne	Minas, Arthur and Ewa	Stenos, Louis
Chanos, Jennifer	Hoadrea, Jimmy and Monci	Moffett, Todd and Eliopoulos, Tina	Swehla, Fr. Matthew and Presv. Annie
Chomakos, Dean and Tammy	Hondros, Christina	Monoyudis, Jim and Julie	Szukiewicz, Joseph and Jennia
Chondrakis, Dimos	Hondros, Christopher	Moore, Brenda	Tafoya, Steven and Irene
Christian, Clair and Chloe	Hondros, Fr. John and Presv. Maria	Mulopulos, George and Jenny	Takas, Andrea
Christou, Andreas and Toni	Hoover, Patrick and Pauline	Neocleous, Plato	Tasios, Ramona and Pete
Ciulla, Anthony and Kleri	Houlis, Ila and Debbie	Nestlebrush, Marissa	Thompson, Maggy
Collins, David	Ignadiou, Marios	Nicholas, John and Estella	Thompson, Steve and Aliko
Conger, William and Alexia	Kachikis, Paul and Ernestine	Nichols, George and Tereza	Touroutoglou, Nikolaos
Costacos, John	Kakavulias, George and Helen	Nikitas, Rigas and Aphrodite	Tsarouhas, Maria
Costas, Charles and Louise	Kambouris, Litsa	Nixon, John and Ellyn	Tsolis, Panagiote
Costuros, George and Marsha	Kanis, Constantinos and Katie	Ostis, Sotirios	Turman, Lucas and Maria
Cotsilis, Jenny	Kaptain, Catherine	Palivos, Peter and Vicky	Tzortzis, Maria
Coutris, Angela	Karas, John and Marcie	Pallis, Paul	Vafiadis, Victoria
Crescenti, Stephen and Katherine	Karris, Mark and Suzanne	Pandelis, Cheryl	Vervilos, James and Anna
Crist, Adam and Kanistra	Katopodis, Efstratios	Panos, William and Jeanne	Wadlow, Nicholas and Pamela
Dalacas, Dimitri and Athanasia		Papas, Peter and Rita	Walter, Vernon and Alice
		Papas, Christian and Nicole	

STEWARDS
2017

Waterhouse, David and Aleighzja
Wheeler, Charles and Alyce
Wilcox, Thalia
Wilkerson, Chuck and Kristina
Wilson, Steven and Cleo

Wolfenbarger, Joy
Womack, Karl
Womack, Kimberly
Wood, Nadine
Wronski, Chuck

Xerogianes, Nick and Nikki
Xikis, Victoria
Zaferatos, Ted
Zarkos, Nick and Dina
Zimmerman, Paul and Angela

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

“I know My own and My own know Me.”
STEWARDSHIP 2017

2017 Stewardship Report (as of 2/20/17)

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$270,477 (\$400,948 total in 2016)

Stewardship Gifts Received: \$89,929

Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$180,548

Stewardship Families Pledged: 271 (443 total in 2016)

Average Pledge to Date: \$998 (\$905 in 2016)

Church Account Summaries - January 2017

Nevada State Bank Accounts	December	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	January	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
General Operating Account (GOA)	\$27,400.80	\$53,564.87	\$28,433.84	\$14,613.45	\$60,527.46	\$34,258.60	
Community and Education (C&E)	\$9,804.07	\$661.00	\$1,000.00	\$5,863.00	\$592.70	\$5,009.37	
Greek Food Festival (GFF)	\$14,052.17	\$3,608.40	\$449.68	\$400.00		\$17,710.25	
Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)	\$345,364.85	\$125.00	\$11,162.00	\$10,753.51	\$1,966.38	\$343,931.96	
Folk Dance Group	\$18,514.94	\$2,305.00	\$250.00	\$3,216.01	\$5,259.43	\$12,594.50	
Mortgage Account	\$46,898.34			\$5,201.14		\$41,697.20	
Designated Funds	December	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	January	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Bookstore	\$6,146.24		\$162.00	\$2,077.38	\$277.80	\$3,953.06	
Ornaments	\$1,077.41					\$1,077.41	
Restricted Funds	December	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	January	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
ICON	\$266,841.20	\$125.00	\$11,000.00			\$277,966.20	
Library Account	\$1,470.77					\$1,470.77	Account owed \$21,000. Funds used to make payroll and pay bills in 2015
Giving Tree	\$1,450.91					\$1,450.91	Olympia Pachares Fund Donation
Building Fund	\$64,747.39			\$8,676.13	\$1,688.58	\$54,382.68	Utility Cart; Brass Covers for Church
Youth Choir	\$2,469.82					\$2,469.82	
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	
Designated, Restricted, and Other Total	\$345,364.85	\$125.00	\$11,162.00	\$10,753.51	\$1,966.38	\$343,931.96	
Other Funds	December	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	January	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Kokkos Scholarship Fund	\$55,935.34					\$55,859.07	

The Desert Messenger

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

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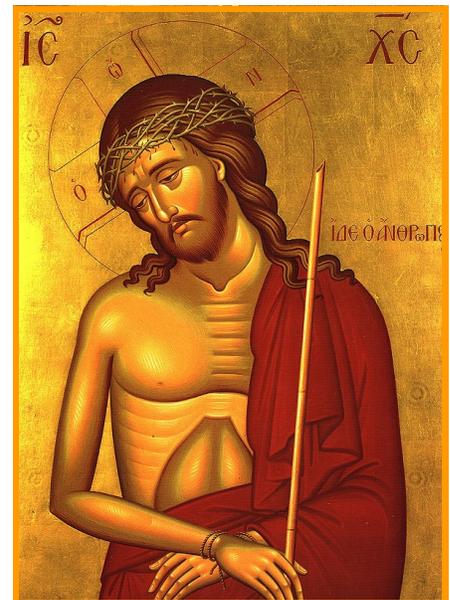
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THE DESERT MESSENGER

The Way of the Lord

*“Is this not the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?*

*Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?”
(Isaiah 58:6-7)*



*“As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.”
(Matthew 25:40)*