



72 YEARS

DECEMBER 2025

St.
Nicholas Greek
Orthodox Church
Baltimore, MD



Koinonia

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METROPOLITAN APOSTOLOS OF NEW JERSEY VISIT TO ST. NICHOLAS



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MESSAGE FROM THE PROTOPRESBYTER

Message from **FR. MICHAEL L. PASTRIKOS, PROTOPRESBYTER**

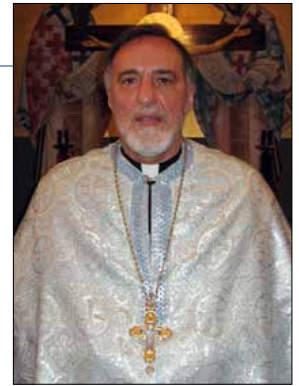
This is the time of the year when everyone starts getting ready for Christmas. Each year, we joyfully celebrate the "Feast of Christmas" the Birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In fact, we celebrate it each year, and remarkably some of us even go through this holiday season without giving a thought at all to the true meaning and reason for the season. All these preparations that we do during the Holidays, are wonderful expressions of emotions, but how do we as Orthodox Christians prepare for this Great Event?

We have gone away from the true essence of why we celebrate the Birth of Christ. It seems that we all have a tendency to build up to Christmas as a climax anticipating the Feast with all sorts of observances and celebrations, and then as soon as the day is past, we forget all about it. To bring a solution to this, we must make sacrifices and personal decisions that will correct the past mistakes. We have gone away from the idea of caring for Christ, to the idea of caring for our own pleasures. When we prepare a birthday celebration, our key focus must be on the birthday person. This is his/her day. Since December 25th is the Lord's birthday, then we should focus and **PUT CHRIST FIRST**. As Christians we have to get back to the basics and the old times where Christ came first in our lives.

Today we have Christ on the back burner. We have so many distractions that we fulfill in our everyday lives that we forget who our Creator is, and what is our purpose for being born in this world? We must have a purpose! I personally don't think that our purpose here on earth is just to satisfy our own personal pleasures. Just as we arrange our homes, schedules, and other aspects of our daily lives, God would like us to focus on what Christmas is all about. It's not about going to Department stores, and buying gifts for family and friends. It's not to schedule parties just to enjoy ourselves. **CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT CHRIST!** This is His Birthday, and we should celebrate this day with Him.

Today, we are pressured to proclaim a generic Happy Holidays, taking the focus of the season further and further away from the manger of our New Born Lord, and placing more emphasis on our own appetites, entertainment and satisfaction. Isn't it sad that on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day when the Bells of the Church ring to invite God's children to His home to celebrate His Birthday very few people show up? But when a Party, a Concert, a Banquet, a Football game, and other activities are scheduled we are there hours before to fill up the seats so we can enjoy the festivities. Or for Black Friday, people will stand in line for hours and hours just to get in the store and buy a product because it is cheaper on that day. For

all those that I have mentioned we find time to do those things but for Christ we have no time for Him. And then we call ourselves Christians, and when hard times are hitting us, we always ask for His help and guidance. That to me is so hypocritical. We should honor our Lord on His Birthday with our presence in Church. We can do all these things that are written above, and still make time to be with Him on His Birthday. His invitation is opened to everyone to come to His home and share the Christmas experience with Him.



We have Parents today who were raised in the Church. Their parents brought them to Church faithfully every Sunday. But today the same parents who are raising their children are the ones who neglect to teach their children the true essence of what Christmas is all about. How can anyone be so hypocritical? Is this what we are teaching our children that Christmas is just a day where we have parties, stay at home and open our gifts? If we are teaching our children this form of faith, then just imagine what our children will be teaching their children about Christmas. As good Christian parents, we can change all of that. We can have a better relationship with Christ, if we really wanted too. Remember the saying, "If there is a Will, there is a Way?" I hope and pray that this Christmas we can change things for the better. Let's bring our family to Church on Christmas Eve or on Christmas Day, to worship Him and receive Him in the Holy Eucharist as a family. Let us express to Him that we truly love Him, and for Him to bring peace into the world and into our hearts, and to help us let go of past resentments and guilt, forgiving those who have hurt us and seeking forgiveness from one another. We can do it all, have our parties, open up our gifts, and still find that special time to be with our Lord during His birthday celebration. Remember, the most important gift and the most expensive gift---- is to give ourselves to Him.

In closing, I hope and pray during this Christmas Holiday Season---that we make a change in our lives and correct our Old ways. Let's start this Christmas on the right foot, and head to a course that will truly bring us love, joy, fellowship, friendship, happiness and back to "Church".

Presvytera Toula and I, along with our whole family, wish you and your loved ones a Blessed and Merry Christmas and find the true meaning of Christ's birth.

MESSAGE FROM THE PROTOPRESBYTER

Αυτή είναι η εποχή του έτους, που όλοι ξεκινούν να ετοιμάζονται για τα Χριστούγεννα. Κάθε χρόνο, με χαρά γιορτάζουμε την «Εορτή των Χριστουγέννων» την Γέννηση του Κυρίου και Σωτήρος ημών Ιησού Χριστού. Στην πραγματικότητα το γιορτάζουμε κάθε χρόνο και κυριολεκτικά μερικοί από εμάς περνούν ακόμη και αυτή την περίοδο των εορτών χωρίς να σκεφτούν καθόλου την αληθινή έννοια και την σημασία της εποχής. Όλες αυτές οι προετοιμασίες που κάνουμε κατά τη διάρκεια των εορτών, είναι μια θαυμάσια έκφραση των συναισθημάτων, αλλά και ο τρόπος που προετοιμαζόμαστε γι αυτό το μεγάλο γεγονός, εμείς ως Ορθόδοξοι Χριστιανοί. Έχουμε ξεφύγει από την πραγματική ουσία του γιατί γιορτάζουμε τη γέννηση του Χριστού. Φαίνεται ότι όλοι έχουμε την τάση να χτίζουμε μέχρι τα Χριστούγεννα, ως αποκορύφωμα την πρόβλεψη της εορτής με όλες τις παραδόσεις και τις εορταστικές εκδηλώσεις, και στη συνέχεια, μόλις η ημέρα γίνει παρελθόν, ξεχνάμε τα πάντα. Για να βρούμε μια λύση σε αυτό, πρέπει να κάνουμε θυσίες και προσωπικές αποφάσεις που θα διορθώνουν τα λάθη του παρελθόντος. Έχουμε απομακρυνθεί από την ιδέα της φροντίδας για τον Χριστό, με την ιδέα της φροντίδας για τις δικές μας απολαύσεις. Όταν προετοιμαζόμαστε για μια γιορτή γενεθλίων, βασική μας εστίαση είναι το πρόσωπο που εορτάζει τα γενέθλιά του. Η ημέρα αυτή είναι η ημέρα του. Αφού λοιπόν η 25η Δεκεμβρίου είναι τα γενέθλια του Κυρίου, τότε θα πρέπει να επικεντρωθούμε και να βάλουμε ΠΡΩΤΟ ΤΟ ΧΡΙΣΤΟ. Ως Χριστιανοί πρέπει να επιστρέψουμε στα βασικά και στους παλιούς χρόνους που ο Χριστός κατείχε τη πρώτη θέση στη ζωή μας.

Σήμερα έχουμε τον Χριστό σε δεύτερη μοίρα. Έχουμε τόσους πολλούς περισπασμούς που γεμίζουν την καθημερινή μας ζωή, με αποτέλεσμα να ξεχνάμε ποιος είναι ο Δημιουργός μας, και ποιος είναι ο σκοπός μας, που γεννηθήκαμε σε αυτόν τον κόσμο. Πρέπει να έχουμε ένα σκοπό! Εγώ προσωπικά δεν νομίζω ότι ο σκοπός μας εδώ στη γη είναι μόνο να ικανοποιήσουμε τις δικές μας προσωπικές απολαύσεις. Ακριβώς όπως τακτοποιούμε τα σπίτια μας, τα προγράμματά μας, και τα υπόλοιπα θέματα της καθημερινής μας ζωής. Ο Θεός θα ήθελε να επικεντρωθούμε σε αυτό που πραγματικά σημαίνουν τα Χριστούγεννα. Δεν σημαίνουν να τρέχουμε σε πολυκαταστήματα για να αγοράσουμε δώρα για οικογένεια και φίλους. Δεν σημαίνουν να προγραμματίζουμε πάρτυ μόνο για τις δικές μας απολαύσεις. **ΤΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ ΠΡΕΠΕΙ ΝΑ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΑΦΙΕΡΩΜΕΝΑ ΣΤΟ ΧΡΙΣΤΟ!** Είναι τα Γενέθλιά Του και πρέπει να γιορτάσουμε αυτή την ημέρα μαζί Του.

Σήμερα, μας αναγκάζουν να λέμε, γενικά, Καλές Εορτές, απομακρύνοντας το επίκεντρο της εποχής όλο και πιο μακριά από τη Φάτνη Του Νεογεννηθέντος Κυρίου, και δίνοντας μεγαλύτερη έμφαση στις δικές μας ορέξεις, ψυχαγωγίας και ικανοποίησης. Δεν είναι λυπηρό το γεγονός ότι την Παραμονή των Χριστουγέννων και την Ημέρα των Χριστουγέννων, όταν οι Καμπάνες της Εκκλησίας χτυπούν για να καλέσουν τα παιδιά του Θεού στο σπίτι Του, να γιορτάσουν τα γενέθλιά Του, πολύ λίγοι άνθρωποι εμφανίζονται; Αλλά όταν προγραμματίζεται ένα πάρτυ, μια συναυλία, ένα επίσημο δείπνο, ένα παιχνίδι ποδοσφαίρου και άλλες δραστηριότητες, είμαστε εκεί πριν από μερικές ώρες για να πιάσουμε θέσεις και να απολαύσουμε τις εορταστικές αυτές εκδηλώσεις. Ή τη Μαύρη Παρασκευή, που οι άνθρωποι περιμένουν στην γραμμή για ώρες και ώρες μόνο για

να μπουν στο κατάστημα και να αγοράσουν ένα προϊόν επειδή είναι φτηνότερο εκείνη την ημέρα. Για όλους εκείνους τους λόγους που προανέφερα, βρίσκουμε χρόνο να κάνουμε αυτά τα πράγματα, αλλά για τον Χριστό, δεν έχουμε χρόνο γι' Αυτόν. Και μετά λέμε ότι είμαστε Χριστιανοί, και όταν οι δύσκολες στιγμές μας χτυπούν, πάντα ζητάμε τη βοήθεια και την καθοδήγηση Του. Για μένα είναι καθαρή υποκρισία. Θα πρέπει να τιμήσουμε τον Κύριό μας στα γενέθλιά Του με την παρουσία μας στην Εκκλησία. Μπορούμε να κάνουμε όλα αυτά τα πράγματα που έγραφα παραπάνω και ακόμα να βρούμε το χρόνο να είμαστε μαζί Του στα Γενέθλιά Του. Η πρόσκλησή Του είναι ανοικτή για όλους να έρθουν στο σπίτι Του και να μοιραστούν την εμπειρία των Χριστουγέννων μαζί Του.

Έχουμε σήμερα Γονείς που μεγάλωσαν μέσα στην Εκκλησία. Οι γονείς τους τους έφεραν στην Εκκλησία κάθε Κυριακή, ανελλιπώς. Σήμερα, όμως, οι ίδιοι οι γονείς που μεγαλώνουν τα παιδιά τους, είναι αυτοί που παραμελούν να τα διδάξουν την πραγματική ουσία του τι σημαίνουν τα Χριστούγεννα. Πώς μπορεί κανείς να είναι τόσο υποκριτής; Αυτό είναι που διδάσκουμε στα παιδιά μας ότι τα Χριστούγεννα είναι μια ημέρα που έχουμε πάρτυ, μένουμε στο σπίτι και ανοίγουμε τα δώρα μας; Εάν διδάξουμε στα παιδιά μας αυτή τη μορφή πίστης, τότε φανταστείτε τι τα παιδιά μας θα διδάξουν τα παιδιά τους για τα Χριστούγεννα. Ως καλοί Χριστιανοί γονείς, μπορούμε να τα αλλάξουμε όλα αυτά. Μπορούμε να έχουμε μια καλύτερη σχέση με τον Χριστό, αν όντως το θέλουμε. Θυμηθείτε το ρητό: “Αν υπάρχει θέληση, υπάρχει και τρόπος.”

Ελπίζω και προσεύχομαι ότι αυτά τα Χριστούγεννα μπορούμε να αλλάξουμε τα πράγματα προς το καλύτερο. Ας φέρουμε την οικογένειά μας στην Εκκλησία την παραμονή των Χριστουγέννων ή την Ημέρα των Χριστουγέννων, να προσκυνήσουμε, να εκκλησιαστούμε και να λάβουμε Θεία Κοινωνία σαν οικογένεια. Ας εκφράσουμε σ' Αυτόν ότι τον αγαπάμε πραγματικά, και να Τον παρακαλέσουμε να φέρει την ειρήνη στον κόσμο και στις καρδιές μας, να μας βοηθήσει να αφήσουμε πίσω μας τα μίσση, τις ενοχές και τις δυσaréσκειες του παρελθόντος, συγχωρώντας εκείνους που μας έχουν βλάψει, και να ζητήσουμε συγχώρεση ο ένας από τον άλλο. Μπορούμε να τα κάνουμε όλα, να έχουμε τα πάρτυ μας, να ανοίξουμε τα δώρα μας και να βρούμε ακόμα τον ιδιαίτερο χρόνο να είμαστε μαζί με τον Κύριό μας στην εορτή των γενεθλίων Του. Θυμηθείτε, ότι το πιο σημαντικό δώρο και το πιο ακριβό δώρο ---- είναι να αφιερώσουμε τον εαυτό μας σ' Αυτόν.

Κλείνοντας, ελπίζω και προσεύχομαι κατά τη διάρκεια αυτής της περιόδου των Χριστουγέννων --- να κάνουμε μια αλλαγή στη ζωή μας και να διορθώσουμε τους Παλιούς μας τρόπους. Ας ξεκινήσουμε αυτά τα Χριστούγεννα με το δεξί πόδι και να επικεντρωθούμε σε μια πορεία που θα μας φέρει πραγματικά την αγάπη, τη χαρά, την επικοινωνία, τη φιλία, την ευτυχία και την επιστροφή στην «Εκκλησία».

Η Πρεσβυτέρα Τούλα και ο υποφαινόμενος μαζί με την οικογένειά μας, ευχόμαστε σε εσάς και τους αγαπημένους σας Καλα Χριστούγεννα, και επίσης κατά την εορταστική αυτή εποχή να ανακαλύψετε το πραγματικό νόημα της Γέννησης του Χριστού.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear parishioners and friends of our church,

The Nativity of Christ: A Light of Love and Hope

As the great feast of the Divine Nativity approaches, our Church calls us to turn the gaze of our soul toward the humble cave of Bethlehem. There, where the eternal God becomes man in order to bring to the world peace, love, and hope. Christmas is not an ordinary day; it is an invitation to open our hearts to the light that never fades.

The Nativity of Christ is a call to let love become action:

- To visit someone who is lonely.
- To support a family in hardship.
- To forgive someone who has hurt us.
- To pray with gratitude.

Hope is not an idea—it is Christ Himself, who comes into our life when we make room for Him.

Let us, therefore, allow our heart to become the cave of Bethlehem, where love and peace are born anew.

In our noisy and often dark world, the Birth of Christ calls us to rediscover the peace of the heart, unity, forgiveness, and solidarity. To become bearers of His light in every part of our lives: in our family, at work, in society. Every act of kindness, every word of comfort, every heartfelt apology becomes a small star that brightens human darkness.

During these holy days, let us open our hearts to the Newborn Christ. Let us allow His uncreated light to warm our souls and lead us to a renewed life, filled with faith, love, and hope.

We wish everyone a Merry and Blessed Christmas!

With love and respect,
Stamatia Ieromonachos
President of St. Nicholas Parish Council
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church of Baltimore

Αγαπητοί μας ενορίτες και φίλοι της Εκκλησίας μας,

Η Γέννηση του Χριστού: Φως Αγάπης και Ελπίδας

Καθώς πλησιάζει η μεγάλη εορτή της θείας Γέννησης, η Εκκλησία μας καλεί να στρέψουμε το βλέμμα της ψυχής μας προς το ταπεινό σπήλαιο της Βηθλεέμ. Εκεί όπου ο άναρχος Θεός γίνεται άνθρωπος, για να φέρει στον κόσμο την ειρήνη, την αγάπη και την ελπίδα. Τα Χριστούγεννα δεν είναι μια τυπική ημέρα· είναι πρόσκληση να ανοίξουμε την καρδιά μας στο φως που δεν σβήνει.

Η Γέννηση του Χριστού είναι πρόσκληση να αφήσουμε την αγάπη να γίνει πράξη:

- Να επισκεφθούμε έναν μοναχικό άνθρωπο.
- Να στηρίξουμε μια οικογένεια που δοκιμάζεται.
- Να συγχωρήσουμε κάποιον που μάς στεναχώρησε.
- Να προσευχηθούμε με ευγνωμοσύνη.

Η ελπίδα δεν είναι ιδέα – είναι ο Χριστός που έρχεται στη ζωή μας, όταν εμείς Του ανοίγουμε χώρο.

Ας αφήσουμε, λοιπόν, την καρδιά μας να γίνει το σπήλαιο της Βηθλεέμ όπου γεννιέται ξανά η αγάπη και η ειρήνη.



Μέσα στον πολύβουο και συχνά σκοτεινό κόσμο μας, η Γέννηση του Χριστού μάς καλεί να ξαναβρούμε την ειρήνη της καρδιάς, την ενότητα, τη συγχώρηση και την αλληλεγγύη. Να γίνουμε φορείς του φωτός Του σε κάθε χώρο της ζωής μας: στην οικογένεια, στην εργασία, στην κοινωνία. Κάθε πράξη καλοσύνης, κάθε λόγος παρηγοριάς, κάθε συγγνώμη που δίνεται από καρδιάς γίνεται ένα μικρό άστρο που φωτίζει το ανθρώπινο σκοτάδι.

Αυτές τις άγιες ημέρες, ας ανοίξουμε την καρδιά μας στον Νεογέννητο Χριστό. Ας αφήσουμε το άκτιστο φως Του να ζεστάνει τις ψυχές μας και να μας οδηγήσει σε ζωή αναγεννημένη, γεμάτη πίστη, αγάπη και ελπίδα.

Ευχόμαστε σε όλους Καλά και Ευλογημένα Χριστούγεννα!

Με απέραντο σεβασμό, αγάπη και εκτίμηση,
Σταματία Ιερομονάχου
Πρόεδρος του Διοικητικού Συμβουλίου
Αγίου Νικολάου Βαλτιμόρης

Merry Christmas

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

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SUNDAY SCHOOL

PHAEDRA AVGERINOS AND SOPHIA GERAPETRITIS,

DIRECTORS

PHAEDRA AVGERINOS 10TH

NIKKI CANNING AND ROSE KOSTAKIS,

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

YANA KARABELAS, KINDERGARTEN

PENNY GERAPETRITIS & VASILIKI FONIADIKI, 1ST & 2ND

JENNA STAKIAS, 3RD & 4TH

STAVROULA SAKELAKIS 5TH

KALLIOPI CORNIAS & FLORA GIACOUMAKIS, 6TH

ELENI PIKOUNIS 7TH

MARIA FILIPPOU, 8TH & 9TH

AFTERNOON GREEK SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL - STAMATIA IEROMONAHOS

PRE-K - MARIA GOURGOULIATOU,

AGAPI MOSXONA MINADAKIS

KINDERGARTEN - MARIA GOURGOULIATOU,

AGAPI MOSXONA MINADAKIS

1ST GRADE - SEVI FROUMIS VLACHOU, YVVONI GALETAKI

2ND GRADE - SEVI FROUMIS VLACHOU, YVVONI GALETAKI

3RD & 4TH GRADE - PARASKEVI KOTSATOU ARGETAKI

5TH & 6TH GRADE - KELLY PEROS VASILIADES

AL ELLINOMATHEIA COORDINATOR -

PARASKEVI KOTSATOU ARGETAKI

A2, B1 ELLINOMATHEIA COORDINATOR -

KELLY PEROS VASILIADES

B2 ELLINOMATHEIA COORDINATOR -

PARASKEVI KOTSATOU ARGETAKI

TMHMA ENHLIKWN - YVVONI GALETAKI

VOITHOI ELLINOMATHEIAS - ELINA PAPANIMA

TSAPAKIDIS, DESPINA CHATZAKOU LARENTZOS

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TINA STAMATIADI

ANGELA YEAKIM

YAL

FOULA PARAGIOS

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

KOINONIA DEADLINE

Please submit your article(s) to the Koinonia staff by the deadline stated below:

ISSUE MONTH: JANUARY 2026

SUBMISSIONS DUE: DECEMBER 20th

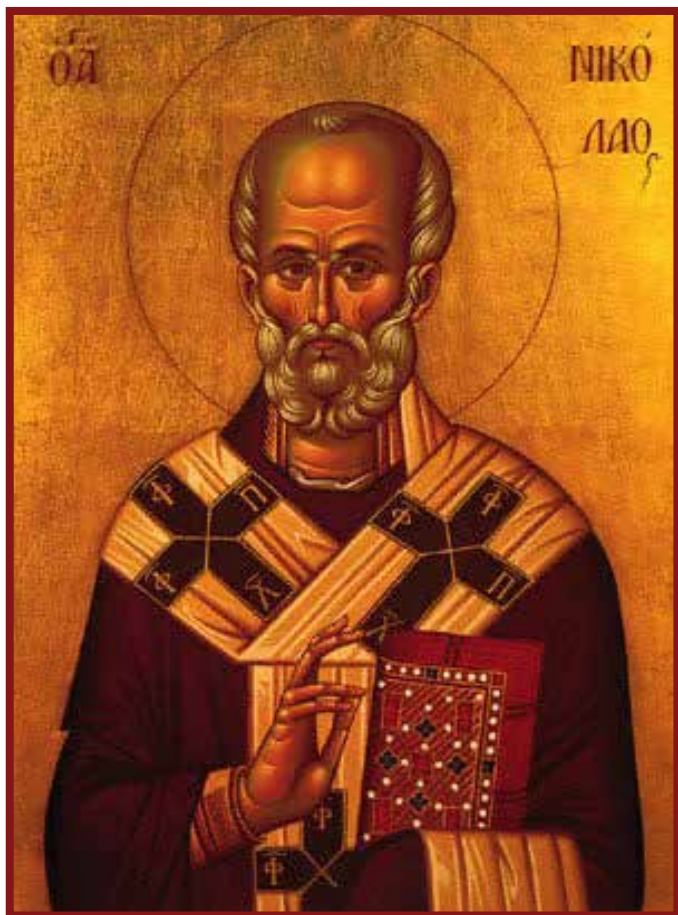
Please email your article(s) to: vkotsatou@stnicholasmd.org

Articles are due no later than the 20th of each month. If they are received after the deadline they will be published in the following month's issue.

All articles must be proofread and color corrected prior to submission.

Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra

Courtesy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America - www.goarch.org



Saint Nicholas lived during the reign of Saint Constantine the Great, and reposed in 330. As a young man, he desired to espouse the solitary life. He made a pilgrimage to the holy city Jerusalem, where he found a place to withdraw to devote himself to prayer. It was made known to him, however, that this was not the will of God for him, but that he should return to his homeland to be a cause of salvation for many. He returned to Myra, and was ordained bishop. He became known for his abundant mercy, providing for the poor and needy, and delivering those who had been unjustly accused. No less was he known for his zeal for the truth. He was present at the First Ecumenical

Council of the 318 Fathers at Nicaea in 325; upon hearing the blasphemies that Arius brazenly uttered against the Son of God, Saint Nicholas struck him on the face. Since the canons of the Church forbid the clergy to strike any man at all, his fellow bishops were in perplexity what disciplinary action was to be taken against this hierarch whom all revered. In the night our Lord Jesus Christ and our Lady Theotokos appeared to certain of the bishops, informing them that no action was to be taken against him, since he had acted not out of passion, but extreme love and piety. The Dismissal Hymn for holy hierarchs, The truth of things hath revealed thee to thy flock ... was written originally for Saint Nicholas. He is the patron of all travellers, and of sea-farers in particular; he is one of the best known and best loved Saints of all time.

[Apolytikion of Nicholas the Wonderworker](#)

Fourth Tone

A model of faith and the image of gentleness, the example of your life has shown you forth to your sheep-fold to be a master of temperance. You obtained thus through being lowly, gifts from on high, and riches through poverty. Nicholas, our father and priest of priests, intercede with Christ our God that He may save our souls.

[Kontakion of Nicholas the Wonderworker](#)

Third Tone

Saintly One, (St. Nicholas) in Myra you proved yourself a priest; for in fulfilling the Gospel of Christ, venerable One, you laid down your life for your people and saved the innocent from death. For this you were sanctified as One learned in divine grace.

ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER - DECEMBER 6TH

Our Patron Saint - Saint Nicholas of Myra

[Our Community](#) / Patron Saint



Saint Nicholas, the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia is famed as a great saint pleasing unto God. He was born in the city of Patara in the region of Lycia (on the south coast of the Asia Minor peninsula), and was the only son of pious parents Theophanes and Nonna, who had vowed to dedicate him to God.

As the fruit of the prayer of his childless parents, the infant Nicholas from the very day of his birth revealed to people the light of his future glory as a wonderworker. His mother, Nonna, after giving birth was immediately healed from illness. The newborn infant, while still in the baptismal font, stood on his feet three hours, without support from anyone, thereby honoring the Most Holy Trinity. Saint Nicholas from his infancy began a life of fasting, and on Wednesdays and Fridays he would not accept milk from his mother until after his parents had finished their evening prayers.

From his childhood Nicholas thrived on the study of Divine Scripture; by day he would not leave church, and by night he prayed and read books, making himself a worthy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Bishop Nicholas of Patara rejoiced at the spiritual success and deep piety of his nephew. He ordained him a reader, and then elevated Nicholas to the priesthood, making him his assistant and entrusting him to instruct the flock.

In serving the Lord the youth was fervent of spirit, and in his proficiency with questions of faith he was like an Elder, who aroused the wonder and deep respect of believers. Constantly at work and vivacious, in unceasing prayer, the priest Nicholas displayed great kind-heartedness towards the flock, and towards the afflicted who came to him for help, and he distributed all his inheritance to the poor.

The Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Flesh

Courtesy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America - www.goarch.org



Introduction

The Feast of the Nativity of Jesus is one of the most joyful days of the Orthodox Church. It ranks next to the greatest holiday, the Resurrection of Jesus. The Feast of the Birth of Jesus is also known as the “Incarnation of Christ.” This means that Jesus became a man and came into the world to save us. We also refer to this joyous feast as Christmas.

Biblical Story

The story of the Nativity of Christ is beautifully told in the Holy Scriptures. The story is found in Matthew 1:18-25 and in Luke 2:1-20. No matter how often the Birth of Jesus is told, we realize that it is an important event.

As the story is told by the Apostles, the Roman Empire was powerful. The Romans had conquered much of the then known world. Judea and Samaria, what we know today as Israel, were included in their conquests. Emperor Augustus ordered that a census be taken in all his lands. He needed to know how many people lived in the empire so he could tax them. Everyone had to go to the town of their family’s origin to register for the census. This meant that Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. They were descendants of King David and Bethlehem was the City of David.

Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth and it was a great distance from Bethlehem. It was about 100 miles over very rugged roads. Moreover, Mary was expecting the baby and it was almost time for her to give birth. Bethlehem

was a small town and there were many descendants of David who had come to register for the census. By the time Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem there was no place for them to stay. Joseph tried very hard to find a place to sleep that evening. There was no room at the inn. Finally, Joseph found a cave-like place where they could rest. This place was used by shepherds to protect their sheep in stormy weather. It was here that Mary gave birth to Jesus. The baby was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the straw in the manger.

Now, that night the shepherds were out in the fields guarding their sheep. Suddenly, there was a bright light which startled the

shepherds. The light was so bright that it turned the night into daylight. Of course, the shepherds were frightened. Nothing such as this had ever happened. Soon an angel appeared and calmed them. The angel said:

“Fear not for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior; which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger” (Luke 2:11-12).

Then a larger group of angels appeared. They praised and glorified God and sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men” (Luke 2:14). When the angels finished singing, they disappeared and the light began to fade. It became dimmer and dimmer until it was dark again. The shepherds were awed. They didn’t know what to do. Finally, they decided to leave their flocks of sheep and go to Bethlehem. They decided that they wanted to see for themselves what the angels had told them. When they got to Bethlehem, they found Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus. They fell to their knees and adored Jesus.

Some Wise Men came from the East for they knew of the coming of Jesus. They had seen a star that told them that a new king had been born to the Jews. They followed the star and were looking for the child. At this time the governor of Judea was King Herod. He was a wicked man and was feared and hated by the people. When Herod heard about the Wise Men looking for the child, he invited them to his palace. Herod asked the Wise Men to find the child so that he, too, could worship Him. But Herod was lying. He did not want anyone to take his place. The Wise Men went on to look for Jesus. The Star led them to Jesus and Mary. When the Wise men found Jesus, they fell to their knees and worshipped Him. They gave

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25TH - Continued

Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The Wise Men left but did not return to Herod. They had a dream that warned them that Herod wanted to harm Jesus. Instead, they returned to their native country by a different route.

Icon of the Feast

The icon of the Nativity tells the story of Christ's birth from the Scriptures. It also shows that all creation is taking part in Christ's birth. The angels give thanks with their song; the heavens give the star; the Wise Men give their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The poor, humble shepherds give their praise and amazement; the earth gives the cave, and humanity gives the Virgin.

This Holy Icon is an icon with many scenes. First, it stresses the importance of the Theotokos, the Mother of Jesus. She is placed in the center and is the largest figure in the icon. In this icon, she is kneeling with crossed arms, looking at the Christ child. The three stars, denoting her virginity before, during, and after the Nativity, are on her garments. The Christ Child, in the center of the icon, is in swaddling clothes and is lying in the manger. In the background is the dark cave where He was born. In the cave are an ox and a donkey guarding the newborn Babe. Even though the Gospels say nothing of the cave, this information is from Holy Tradition. Neither do the Gospels speak of the ox and the donkey, but all icons of the Nativity include these animals. Including the animals in the icon fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 1:3, "The ox knows his master, and the donkey his master's crib; but Israel does not know me, and the people have not regarded me." The long ray of light from the star points directly to the cave. This ray comes from the star and travels to all parts of the world. It teaches that this bright star is an astronomical happening, and is a messenger from heaven announcing the birth of Jesus.

On the left hand side of the icon is another scene. The Wise Men, who were led by the star, are riding horses to bring their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to Jesus. The Wise Men are of various ages. One is without a beard. In those days, young men did not wear beards. The other Wise

Man has long hair and a long beard, which indicates that he is much older. These details teach that regardless of age and appearance, the Good News was given to each and everyone.

Opposite the Wise Men is the scene with the humble shepherds. An angel proclaims the glad tidings. A young shepherd plays a reed instrument. This scene reveals that the music of the humans was added to the hymn of the angels. Across from the shepherd's scene is the heavenly choir of angels. They are giving glory to God. The angels serve two purposes in the Nativity of Christ. They give glory to God and announce the good news to all mankind.

The background shows a very rugged terrain. This is not a true representation of the land in this area. Joseph could not find room in Bethlehem, so they went outside of Bethlehem to a cave. This rocky mountain formation only serves as a background for the event.

In the lower part of the icon are two more scenes. In the right hand corner are the two women Joseph brought to take care of the Christ child. They are bathing Him just as any baby is bathed. The humanity of Jesus is clearly shown in this setting.

Opposite the bathing of Jesus scene sits a sad and worried Joseph. He is not part of the central group the Christ Child and the Theotokos. Joseph is not the natural father. Joseph is troubled and despondent. There is an old man talking to Joseph. The old man is Satan. Satan can appear in many forms. Here he is as an old man who is tempting Joseph and disturbing him. Satan is telling Joseph that virgin birth is impossible. He's telling Joseph that he's a fool if he believes this. This story comes to us from Holy Tradition. The sad Joseph shows us not only his personal predicament but the dilemma of all mankind the difficulty of accepting that which is "beyond words or reason."

The tree, which is in the middle of the lower part of the icon, is a symbol of the Tree of Jesse. This tree refers to Isaiah 11:1-2, "But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom. The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him." King David was often

mentioned as the son of Jesse and Jesus was from the House of David.

The Holy Icon of the Nativity reminds one to praise and glorify the Birth of Christ. The celebration of Christmas each year serves to remind each and everyone of us that Christ came for you and me.

The Orthodox Celebration of the Feast of the Nativity

As with Pascha, or Easter, the Feast of the Nativity begins with a period of preparation. It is preceded by a fast corresponding to Lent and lasting for forty days. The fast begins on November 15.

On the Sundays immediately before December 25, special commemorations emphasize the link between the Old Covenant and the New. On December 20 the Forefeast of the Nativity is commemorated, and the daily liturgical texts are directed toward the Feast itself. On Christmas Eve, services include the Great or Royal Hours, the Great Vespers, and the Liturgy of Saint Basil.

On Christmas Day the service commemorates the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, the adoration of the Shepherds, and the arrival of the Wise Men with their gifts. The service held on this day is the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.

The days following Christmas are associated with the Theotokos and Joseph. December 26 is the Synaxis of the Mother of God, and the first Sunday after the Feast commemorates "Joseph the Betrothed." December 29 commemorates the Massacre of the Innocents, and January 1 the Circumcision of our Lord. The Nativity season concludes on December 31, but the spirit of the festival extends to the celebration of Theophany (Epiphany), the feast commemorating the Baptism of our Lord in the Jordan River.



*“I WILL HONOR CHRISTMAS IN MY HEART”
Charles Dickens said.*

He built his own philosophy based on this phrase and he created a really unique perspective for the celebration of Christmas, writing his literary masterpiece “Christmas Carol”, which established not only the tradition of Christmas carols, but also the spirit of the celebration of Christmas. Through this novel he recounts a story of transformation of emotions in the “hard” heart of Ebenezer Skrutz on Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve is a magical night in our hearts! Under the Christmas tree in the small manger of the horses, a baby is born that will change the world and history. Why? Because he is the humblest of all, who taught humanity Love, as a gift of life, with all its derivatives. Kindness, compassion, equality, brotherhood. A brilliant star was born to illuminate and guide our steps in life. This is the spirit of Christmas. And that is what Dickens meant when he said I will honor Christmas in my heart. That is it, to allow the love for all the beings of the Great Mother Nature that surrounds me to be born in my inner manger. Then the Magi will come with the gifts, who are none other than my inner guards who guard the precious gifts of my heart.

So, what was it that illuminated and transformed the hard heart of Ebenezer Skrutz that magical night of the 19th century? It is what made him see the world differently, through the prism of love and compassion.

This coming Christmas my friends, in the gloomy era of uncertainty and insecurity that we all experience, seems to be different. And many will wonder: “but what kind of Christmas will this gonna be under these conditions”.

I recommend you my friends, this year to HONOR CHRISTMAS IN OUR HEARTS!

*“ΘΑ ΚΑΝΩ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΚΑΡΔΙΑ ΜΟΥ”, έγραψε ο
Κάρολος Ντίκενς.*

Πάνω σε αυτή την φράση έχτισε μία ολόκληρη φιλοσοφία και στάση ζωής για την γιορτή των Χριστουγέννων, γράφοντας το λογοτεχνικό του αριστούργημα “Christmas Carol”, το οποίο και καθιέρωσε τα χριστουγεννιάτικα κάλαντα, αλλά και το πνεύμα της γιορτής των Χριστουγέννων. Μέσα απ’ αυτό παρουσίασε μία αλχημική μεταμόρφωση συναισθημάτων στην σκληρή καρδιά του Ebenezer Skrutz την παραμονή Χριστουγέννων. Αυτή η νύχτα, της παραμονής των Χριστουγέννων είναι στην συνείδηση όλων μας μαγική. Κάτω απο το Χριστουγεννιάτικο δέντρο μέσα στην μικρούλα φάτνη των αλόγων, γεννάται ένα μωρό που θα αλλάξει τον κόσμο και την ιστορία. Γιατί? Γιατί είναι ο ταπεινότερος όλων, που δίδαξε στην ανθρωπότητα την Αγάπη, σαν δώρο ζωής, με όλα της τα παράγωγα. Καλοσύνη, συμπόνια, αλληλεγγύη, ισότητα, αδελφσύνη. Γεννήθηκε ένα υπέρλαμπρο άστρο για να φωτίζει και να καθοδηγεί τα βήματά μας στη ζωή. Αυτό είναι το πνεύμα των Χριστουγέννων. Κι αυτό εννοούσε ο Ντίκενς όταν έλεγε θα κάνω Χριστούγεννα στην καρδιά μου. Να επιτρέψω δηλαδή στην εσωτερική μου φάτνη να γεννηθεί η αγάπη προς όλα τα όντα της Μεγάλης Μητέρας Φύσης που με περιβάλλει. Τότε θα προσέλθουν και οι Μάγοι με τα δώρα, που δεν είναι άλλοι απο τους εσωτερικούς μου φρουρούς που διαφυλάττουν τα πολύτιμα δώρα της καρδιάς μου.

Τι είναι αυτό που την μαγική εκείνη νύχτα του 19ου αιώνα φώτισε και μετέλλαξε τα συναισθήματα στην σκληρή καρδιά του Ebenezer Skrutz? Είναι αυτό που τον έκανε να δει τον κόσμο αλλιώς, μέσα απο το πρίσμα αγάπης και συμπόνιας.

Τα φετεινά Χριστούγεννα φίλοι μου, μέσα στο ζοφερό κλίμα αβεβαιότητας και ανασφάλειας που βιώνουμε όλοι, φαίνεται ότι θα είναι διαφορετικά. Και πολλοί θα αναρωτηθούν: “μα τι Χριστούγεννα θα κάνω με τέτοιες συνθήκες”.

Θα πρότεινα, φέτος, ΝΑ ΚΑΝΟΥΜΕ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΚΑΡΔΙΑ ΜΑΣ.

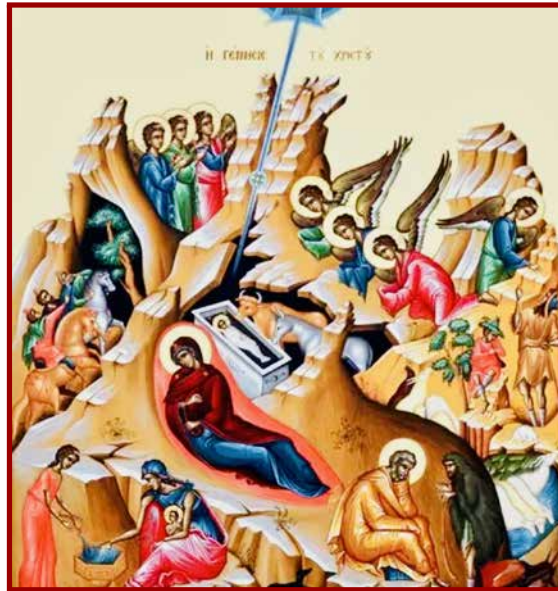
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GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ



Pastoral Message of His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey for the Inception of the Nativity Fast

15 November 2025

Beloved and faithful children in the Lord,

As we enter the blessed period of the Forty-Day Fast in preparation for the Holy Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I extend to you my heartfelt paternal blessing and spiritual embrace. The Church once again calls us to walk the path of repentance, illumination, and inner stillness, that we may worthily behold the mystery of the Incarnation—“the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us” (John 1:14).

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The Nativity Fast, gentle yet profound, invites us to reorient our hearts toward the things of the Spirit. Fasting, as Holy Scripture teaches, is not merely abstention from food, but an offering of the heart: “Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness... to share your bread with the hungry?” (Isaiah 58:6–7). Let our fasting be filled with compassion, our restraint crowned with mercy, and our discipline adorned with love.

Let us also enrich these days with fervent prayer. The Apostle exhorts us: “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). In our homes, in our parishes, and within the quiet chambers of the soul, may prayer become the warm light that leads us toward Bethlehem—the place where heaven bends low to meet humanity. As we chant the sacred hymns of anticipation, may our hearts echo the joy of the Prophet who proclaimed: “For unto us a Child is born... and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God” (Isaiah 9:6).

Beloved children, in these holy days, let us cultivate peace within ourselves and extend that peace to one another. Let us heal old wounds, seek forgiveness, and renew the bonds of unity within our families and communities. For Christ comes not only to be born in the manger of Bethlehem but to be born anew in the manger of the human heart.

As your Metropolitan, I pray that this holy fast becomes for each of you a wellspring of spiritual strength, a season of inner transformation, and a living witness to the hope that does not fade. May the approaching Feast of the Nativity fill your homes with the radiance of divine grace and your lives with the joy proclaimed by the angels: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill among men” (Luke 2:14).

With paternal love and blessings,



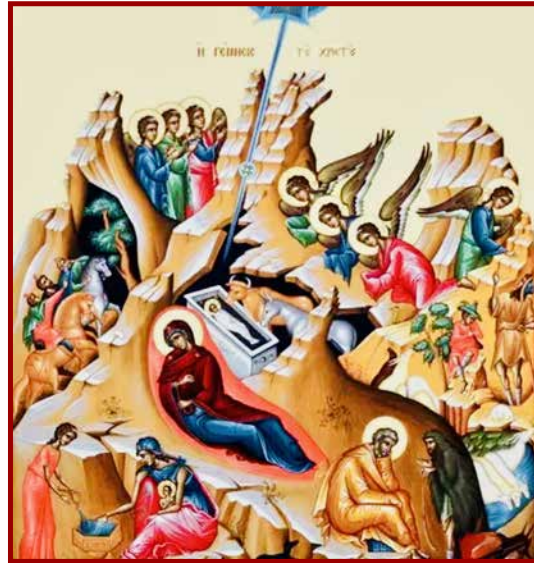
† APOSTOLOS
Metropolitan of New Jersey

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ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ



ΠΑΤΡΙΚΟ ΜΗΝΥΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΣΕΒ. ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ

Γιά τήν "Εναρξη τής Αγίας Σαρακοστής τών Χριστουγέννων

15 Νοεμβρίου 2025

Καθώς εισερχόμαστε στην εύλογη περίοδο τής Αγίας Σαρακοστής τών Χριστουγέννων, πού μᾶς ὀδηγεῖ στή μεγάλη ἑορτή τής κατά σάρκα Γεννήσεως τοῦ Κυρίου καί Σωτήρος μας Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, σᾶς ἀπευθύνω τήν πατρική μου εὐλογία καί τήν ἐγκάρδια στοργή μου. Ἡ Ἐκκλησία μᾶς καλεῖ καί πάλι σέ μία πορεία μετάνοιας, ἐγρήγορσης καί ἐσωτερικῆς ἀνανέωσης, ὥστε νά ὑποδεχθοῦμε ἄξια τό μέγα μυστήριό τής θείας Ἐνανθρωπήσεως, κατά τό ὁποῖο «ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καί ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν» (Ἰω. 1,14).

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Ἡ νηστεία αὐτή, ἥπια ἀλλά βαθιά, μᾶς προσκαλεῖ νά στραφοῦμε περισσότερο πρὸς τὰ πνευματικά καὶ νά ἀνακαλύψουμε ἐκ νέου τὸν ἐσωτερικό μας κόσμο. Ἡ Ἁγία Γραφή μᾶς διδάσκει ὅτι ἡ ἀληθινὴ νηστεία δέν περιορίζεται στὴν ἐγκράτεια τῆς τροφῆς, ἀλλὰ ἐκφράζεται μέσα ἀπὸ ἔργα ἀγάπης καὶ ἐλέους: «Οὐχὶ τοιαύτην νηστείαν ἐξελεξάμην; λύε πάντα σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας... διάθρυπτε πεινῶντι τὸν ἄρτον σου» (Ἡσ. 58,6-7). Ἄς συνοδεύσουμε, λοιπόν, τὴ νηστεία μας μὲ καλοσύνη, τὴ σωματικὴ ἄσκηση μὲ φιλανθρωπία, καὶ τὴν ἐγκράτεια μὲ ἀγάπη πρὸς τὸν συνάνθρωπο.

Ἄς ἐνισχύσουμε ἐπίσης τὴν προσευχή μας, σύμφωνα μὲ τὴν προτροπὴ τοῦ Ἀποστόλου: «ἀδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε» (Α΄ Θεσ. 5,17). Στὰ σπίτια μας, στὶς ἐνορίες μας, καὶ στὴ σιωπὴ τῆς καρδιάς μας, ἡ προσευχὴ ἄς γίνῃ φῶς πού μᾶς ὀδηγεῖ πνευματικά πρὸς τὴ Βηθλεέμ, ἐκεῖ ὅπου ὁ οὐρανὸς συναντᾶ τὴ γῆ. Ἀκούγοντας τοὺς ὕμνους καὶ τὰ ἀναγνώσματα τῆς περιόδου, θυμόμαστε τὴν προφητεία: «Ὅτι παιδίον ἐγεννήθη ἡμῖν... καὶ κληθήσεται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Θαυμαστός, Σύμβουλος, Θεὸς Ἰσχυρός» (Ἡσ. 9,6).

Στὴ διάρκεια αὐτῶν τῶν ἱερῶν ἡμερῶν, ἄς καλλιεργήσουμε τὴν εἰρήνη μέσα μας καὶ ἄς τὴν προσφέρουμε καὶ στοὺς γύρω μας. Ἄς συγχωρήσουμε, ἄς συμφιλιωθοῦμε, ἄς ἀναζωπυρώσουμε τοὺς δεσμούς ἐνότητας στὶς οἰκογένειες καὶ στὶς κοινότητές μας. Διότι ὁ Χριστὸς θέλει νά γεννηθεῖ ὄχι μόνον στὴ φάτνη τῆς Βηθλεέμ, ἀλλὰ καὶ στὴ φάτνη τῆς ἀνθρώπινης καρδιάς.

Ὡς Μητροπολίτης καὶ ποιμενάρχης σας, προσεύχομαι αὐτὴ ἡ Ἁγία περίοδος τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας νά γίνῃ γιὰ ὅλους σας πηγὴ πνευματικῆς δύναμης, περίοδος μεταμόρφωσης καὶ ἀνανέωσης, καὶ ὁδὸς ἐλπίδας πού μᾶς ὀδηγεῖ στό φῶς τῆς Γεννήσεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Εἴθε ἡ ἐρχόμενη ἐορτὴ νά γεμίσει τὰ σπίτια σας μὲ τὴ χάρι τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τίς καρδιές σας μὲ τὴ χαρὰ πού ἀνήγγειλαν οἱ Ἄγγελοι: «Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη, ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία» (Λουκ. 2,14).

Με πατρικὴ ἀγάπη ἐν Κυρίῳ,



† Ο ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ

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METROPOLITAN APOSTOLOS OF NJ VISIT

The Synaxis of the All-Great Archangels at the Church of St. Nicholas in Baltimore

On Saturday, November 8, 2025, Metropolitan Apostolos of New Jersey presided over the Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Synaxion of the All-Great Archangels at the Church of St. Nicholas in Baltimore, Maryland. His Eminence was warmly welcomed by the head of the community, Fr. Michael Pastrokos, the members of the Church Council and the youth of the parish.

In his sermon, Metropolitan Apostolos spoke about the feast of the Synaxion of the All-Great Archangels and the Incorporeal Forces. He emphasized that “during this great feast, all believers should rejoice, because with our holy Baptism, every Christian receives from God a Guardian Angel. Our guardian angels are our protectors, sent by God to watch over us in our daily lives, to keep us away from evil and to guide us towards goodness and repentance. However, when we indulge in evil, our guardian angel moves away, especially when we criticize others or harbor hatred, and thus we lose his advice and guidance.” He also said that “angels were created by God before man and reside in the spiritual world. Of these, the best known are the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. Archangel Michael is close to people and protects them from evil. All that is required of us to receive his help is to call upon him and ask for his blessings. He offers healing and care from every kind of illness and infertility, as is also evident from the miraculous icon of Archangel Michael of “Panormites” on the island of Symi.” He pointed out that Archangel Gabriel is known throughout the Holy Bible as the messenger of good news. In the Gospel of Luke, Gabriel announced to the Most Holy Theotokos that she would give birth to Christ, conveyed the joyful message to Zechariah and Elizabeth that they would have the Forerunner, and announced to Joachim and Anna that Anna would conceive the Theotokos Mary. Given the protection and love that the Archangels show to faithful Christians, we should not hesitate to ask for their intercession and help.”

At the end of the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence ordained thirteen young people and children of the parish as readers-servants of the Holy Altar, giving them his blessing to assist Fr. Michael during the Holy Services. After the tonsure, His Eminence offered Fr. Michael a kneeler of the Archangel Michael, in honor of his name day and his almost fifty years of priestly ministry.

After the Divine Liturgy, the youth dance group “Golden Coins” presented traditional Greek dances in honor of Metropolitan Apostolos and the feast, with the participation and joy of the entire parish community.



METROPOLITAN APOSTOLOS OF NJ VISIT





**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHEPISCOPAL ENCYCLICAL**

Prot. No. 548/2025

Archepiscopal Encyclical for Thanksgiving

November 27, 2025

Unto the Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs, Pious Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, Presidents and Members of Parish Councils, Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Members of Leadership 100, the Day and Afternoon Schools, Philoptochos Societies, the Youth, Greek Orthodox Organizations, and the entirety of the Christ-named Plenitude of the Sacred Archdiocese of America:

“ ... fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it ... to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and union.

(Abraham Lincoln’s Thanksgiving Day Proclamation, October 3, 1863)

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

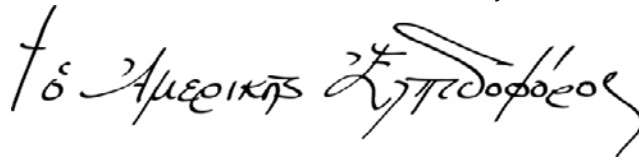
The Thanksgiving Day Proclamation of President Lincoln was given in the midst of the Civil War that almost destroyed our Nation. It was a time of great sacrifice of far too many lives — when the total casualties, those slain and those wounded, may have reached one and a half million Americans, a number unimaginable even in our own day. And yet, in the midst of the horrors of war, President Lincoln called all citizens to turn to God, that He might “heal the wounds of the nation.”

This Thanksgiving Day, a National Holiday that invites us to gather with family, friends and loved ones to share in the abundant blessings of God and to express our gratitude to our Creator, Lincoln’s words may have a special meaning for all Americans. Our Country may be deeply divided in many ways, but we are certainly not at war with one another. And though there might be some rare voices that actually wish to incite violence, Americans at their heart are a People who cherish peace and prosperity, knowing that the one is always dependent upon the other.

Nevertheless, we still tend to have some strong personal opinions from time to time that can elicit equally firm responses in return or even bitter divisions among us. Against our own better judgment, we might employ incendiary language to describe an opposing viewpoint, and thus a feeling of degradation begins to seep ever so slowly and deeply into our societal norms. But in remembering the words of Lincoln, which remind us to turn to the Lord and seek His ways, we have the possibility to experience “the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and union.” And this is because acting with generosity and gratitude softens even the hardest of hearts, and reminds us that we are so much more than our differing opinions or opposing points of view. We are all fellow American compatriots and beloved brothers and sisters — created in the image and likeness of God, and made for communion with one another.

Therefore, on this Thanksgiving Day, let us tend to the wounds of our Homeland, of our neighbors, and of our own selves, with gratitude and compassion, lovingly binding up one another with the “oil and wine” the Samaritan offered (Luke 10:34), so that we may be a united American People that is blessed to know jubilation in the midst of the world (Psalm 88:15 LXX). Happy Thanksgiving to all!

In the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,



+ ELPIDOPHOROS
Archbishop of America



**ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ
ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΚΗ ΕΓΚΥΚΛΙΟΣ**

Αριθμ. Πρωτ.: 548/2025

**Αρχιεπισκοπική Έγκύκλιος
για την Ήμέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν.**

27 Νοεμβρίου 2025

Πρὸς τοὺς Σεβασμιωτάτους καὶ Θεοφιλεστάτους Ἀρχιερεῖς, τοὺς Εὐλαβεστάτους Ἱερεῖς καὶ Διακόνους, τὶς Πρεσβυτέρες καὶ τὶς Διακόνισσες, τοὺς Μοναχοὺς καὶ τὶς Μοναχές, τοὺς Προέδρους καὶ τὰ Μέλη τῶν Κοινοτικῶν Συμβουλιῶν, τοὺς Ἐντιμολογιωτάτους Ἄρχοντες τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου, τὰ μέλη τῆς Ἠγεσίας τῶν 100, τὰ Ἡμερήσια καὶ Ἀπογευματινὰ Σχολεῖα, τὶς Φιλοπτώχους Ἀδελφότητες, τὴ Νεολαία, τὶς Ἑλληνορθόδοξες Ὄργανώσεις καὶ ὁλόκληρο τὸ Χριστεπώνυμο πλήρωμα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Αρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀμερικῆς.

«...παρακαλοῦμε θερμῶς γιὰ τὴν παρέμβαση τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ Παντοδυνάμου, ὥστε νὰ θεραπεύσει τὶς πληγὲς τοῦ ἔθνους καὶ νὰ ἐπαναφέρει πλήρως τὴν εἰρήνη, τὴν ὁμόνοια, τὴ γαλήνη καὶ τὴν ἐνότητα» (Ἄβρααμ Λίνκολν, Διακήρυξη γιὰ τὴν Ἡμέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν, 3 Ὀκτωβρίου 1863).

Προσφιλεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ἀδελφές ἐν Χριστῷ,

Ἡ Διακήρυξη τῆς Ἡμέρας τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν ἀπὸ τὸν Πρόεδρο Λίνκολν ἐκφωνήθηκε κατὰ τὴ διάρκεια τοῦ Ἐμφυλίου Πολέμου ποὺ σχεδὸν εἶχε διαλύσει τὴν πατρίδα μας. Ἦταν μία ἐποχὴ μεγάλων θυσιῶν καὶ δυσβάστακτων ἀπωλειῶν, καθὼς τὰ συνολικὰ θύματα, νεκροὶ καὶ τραυματίες, ἴσως νὰ προσέγγιζαν τὸ ἐνάμισυ ἑκατομμύρια Ἀμερικανούς, ἀριθμὸς ἀδιανόητος ἀκόμη καὶ γιὰ τὴν ἐποχὴ μας. Καὶ ὅμως, ἐν μέσῳ τῆς φρίκης τοῦ πολέμου, ὁ Πρόεδρος Λίνκολν κάλεσε ὅλους τοὺς πολίτες νὰ στραφοῦν πρὸς τὸ Θεό, γιὰ νὰ «θεραπεύσει τὶς πληγὲς τοῦ ἔθνους».

Αὐτὴ τὴν Ἡμέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν, τὴν ἐθνικὴ ἐορτὴ πού μᾶς προσκαλεῖ νὰ βρεθοῦμε μὲ τὴν οἰκογένεια, τοὺς φίλους καὶ τοὺς ἀγαπημένους μας γιὰ νὰ γευθοῦμε τὶς ἄφθονες εὐλογίες τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐκφράζοντας τὴν εὐγνωμοσύνη μας πρὸς τὸ Δημιουργό, οἱ λόγοι τοῦ Προέδρου Λίνκολν ἴσως ἔχουν ἰδιαίτερη σημασία γιὰ ὅλους τοὺς Ἀμερικανούς. Ἡ πατρίδα μας ἴσως νὰ εἶναι διχασμένη σὲ πολλοὺς τομεῖς, ἀλλὰ μὲ κανένα τρόπο δὲν βρίσκεται σὲ ἐμφύλιο πόλεμο. Καὶ μοιλονότι ὑπάρχουν κάποιες σπάνιες φωνές πού ἐπιδιώκουν νὰ ἐνθαρρύνουν τὴ βία, οἱ Ἀμερικανοὶ εἴμαστε ἓνα ἔθνος πού ἀγαπάει τὴν εἰρήνη καὶ τὴν εὐημερία, γνωρίζοντας ὅτι ὁ ἓνας πάντοτε ἐξαρτᾶται ἀπὸ τὸν ἄλλον.

Ὅμως, ἐξακολουθοῦμε νὰ ἔχουμε διαφορετικὲς προσωπικὲς ἀπόψεις πού ἐνίοτε προκαλοῦν ἰσχυρὲς ἀντιπαραθέσεις καὶ ἴσως διχασμούς. Παρὰ τὴν καλὴ μας θέληση, ἴσως κάποιες φορὲς χρησιμοποιοῦμε δηκτικὴ γλῶσσα γιὰ νὰ στηλιτεύσουμε μίαν ἀντίθετη γνώμη, ἔχοντας ὡς ἀποτέλεσμα τὴν ἐμφάνιση κρίσης ἐμπιστοσύνης μεταξὺ τῶν συμπολιτῶν μας. Ὅμως, ἐνθυμούμενοι τοὺς λόγους τοῦ Προέδρου Λίνκολν, πού μᾶς παραπέμπουν στὸ νὰ στραφοῦμε πρὸς τὸν Κύριο ἀναζητώντας ὁδοὺς σωτηρίας, ἔχουμε τὴν δυνατότητα νὰ γευθοῦμε «πλήρως τὴν εἰρήνη, τὴν ὁμόνοια, τὴ γαλήνη καὶ τὴν ἐνότητα». Διότι ὅταν συμπεριφερόμαστε μὲ γενναιοδωρία καὶ εὐγνωμοσύνη, ἀκόμη καὶ ἡ σκληρότερη καρδιά μαλακώνει, καὶ τότε ἀντιλαμβανόμαστε ὅτι εἴμαστε κάτι πολὺ σημαντικό, παρὰ τὶς διαφορὲς μας καὶ τὶς διαφορετικὲς ἀπόψεις. Εἴμαστε πατριῶτες ἀμερικανοὶ καὶ ἀγαπημένα ἀδελφία, πλασμένοι «κατ' εἰκόνα καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν Θεοῦ» καὶ προορισμένοι γιὰ κοινωνία μετ' ἀλλήλων.

Γιὰ αὐτὸ αὐτὴ τὴν Ἡμέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν, ἄς φροντίσουμε νὰ ἐπουλώσουμε τὰ τραύματα τῆς πατρίδος μας, τῶν συνανθρώπων μας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ μας, μὲ εὐγνωμοσύνη καὶ συμπάθεια. Ἄς περιθάψουμε ὁ ἓνας τὸν ἄλλον μὲ «ἔλαιον καὶ οἶνον» ὅπως ἔκανε καὶ ὁ καλὸς Σαμαρεῖτης τῆς παραβολῆς (Λουκ. 10, 34), ὥστε νὰ εἴμαστε ὅλοι οἱ ἀμερικανοὶ ἐνωμένοι, διότι «μακάριος ὁ λαὸς ὁ γινώσκων ἀλαλαγμόν · Κύριε, ἐν τῷ φωτὶ τοῦ προσώπου σου πορεύονται» (Ψαλμ. 88,15).

Ἄς ἔχουμε μίαν εὐλογημένη Ἡμέρα τῶν Εὐχαριστιῶν!

Μετὰ τῆς ἐν Κυρίῳ καὶ σωτῆρι ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ ἀγάπης,

Ὁ Ἀμερικὸς Ἐλπιδοφόρος

+ Ὁ Ἀμερικὸς Ἐλπιδοφόρος,

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Fr. Konstantinos Loukas and Fr. Deacon Julian Kellios joined Fr. Michael Pastrikos to celebrate the St. Nicholas Thanksgiving Liturgy. It was a memorable moment for our Parish.





Pope Leo and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew pray during a Doxology service today at the Patriarchal Cathedral of Saint George. (Photo by Orthodox Observer)

November 29, 2025

Today, His Holiness Pope Leo XIV visited the Ecumenical Patriarchate for a Doxology service at the Patriarchal Cathedral of Saint George and was warmly welcomed by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

“Upon entering this Church,” Pope Leo said, “I experienced great emotion, mindful that I am following in the footsteps of Pope Paul VI, Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis. I am also aware that Your All-Holiness had the opportunity to meet my venerable predecessors personally, and to develop a sincere and fraternal friendship with them based on shared faith and a common vision of the challenges facing the Church and the world.”

Following the service, a joint declaration was signed that reaffirms their shared commitment to the path toward restored full communion and their united rejection of any appeal to religion to legitimize violence.

Message from Fr. Michael L. Pastrikos

I would like to talk to you about Christmas. It seems that we all have a tendency to build up to Christmas as a climax anticipating the feast with all sorts of observances and celebrations and then, as soon as the day is past, we forget all about it. The Christmas season is around the corner, it's the most wonderful time of the year. Christians all over the world prepare to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, the son of God, as the Christmas Season approaches. But how are we going to celebrate this wonderful occasion this year, that is the question. I would like to avoid that pitfall if I might and extend our focus on the right way of celebrating this great feast. During this time of the year, we tend to concentrate on the non essential factors of the celebration instead of truly preparing ourselves spiritually for the Lord.

Most of us fall into several traps as we approach the celebration, and the Lord knows that Satan lays many snares for us. Satan will use anything in his book to convince us that we should give priority to less important things and put the most important things of spiritual value somewhere down the list in our evaluation of what is important and what is not. Today commercialism has played a great role in the interference or the spiritual happiness that we experience during this Sacred Holiday.

For example, when we put secular consideration before worship we fall into a Christmas trap. When the giving of gifts over the giving of ourselves becomes more important, once more we have fallen into a trap. When we place secular observances over the receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ, over confession and spiritual preparation, we again are falling into the hands of Satan. Using Christmas Eve as an excuse to have a party for the family rather than an opportunity for the family to worship together at the Divine Liturgy then we again have fallen into a Christmas trap.

Today we have so many parties, so many get-togethers, we spend hours, days, and months preparing for this ordeal, and none of these preparations include the true celebration of Christ birth. We have gone away from the idea of caring for Christ, to the idea of caring for our own pleasures. When we enter into the season of the Nativity of Christ still bearing grudges and retaining hard feelings against others rather than forgiving them in the

spirit of the forgiving God who was incarnate for us we again fall into the hands of the evil one.

The many snares that Satan lays for us now are even greater than those that he normally lays for us throughout the year and it is necessary that we be aware of those snares. He encourages us to make Christmas merely a secular rather than a spiritual feast in order to lure us away from Christ. He causes us to become so busy that we have no time to consider enhancing our spirituality, he stops us from coming to church on Christmas Eve or Christmas day.

I was told by many of our parishioners that they have never come to church to worship God on those most important days. Isn't it sad that throughout a person's life time, they have never stepped foot in the church, not only during major

holidays, but even on regular Sunday Liturgies. I must say that today, Christmas is celebrated not because of the Birth of Christ, but more so for financial reasons. They are using Christmas as a financial market to gain billions of dollars, and in the meantime they are sucking our blood for their gain.

I tell you, why was Jesus born in the first place? Surely Christ was not born merely to give us an excuse to have another holiday celebration. Surely He was not born in the humble way in which He came into this world in order that you and I might feast royally and forget why He was born in the

first place. If our first priority is Christ and our commitment to Him then all these things will be added to you, but if our priorities are disorganized and we put shopping, football, gift giving and parties before our commitment to Him, then Christmas has no meaning whatsoever. To you who believes this, then it is just another pagan feast day among the others.

In closing, I hope and pray during this Holiday Season that we make the right choices and make the right decisions to follow our Christian Orthodox Traditions. That we attend with our families the Christmas Eve service, or the Christmas day service. This is the only way true Christians celebrate the "Birth of Christ" and the only way to experience that Christ is truly in our midst and that He is the center of our lives.

God Bless everyone and may you have a wonderful and "Blessed Christmas."



Μήνυμα από τον Πατέρα Μιχαήλ Παστροικό

Θα ήθελα να σας μιλήσω για τα Χριστούγεννα. Φαίνεται ότι όλοι έχουμε μια τάση να δημιουργούμε βαθμιδόν μέχρι τα Χριστούγεννα σαν πρόβλεψη το αποκορύφωμα της γιορτής με όλα τα είδη των τελετών και των εορτασμών, και στη συνέχεια, μόλις η ημέρα περάσει, ξεχνάμε τα πάντα. Η εποχή των Χριστουγέννων πλησιάζει, είναι η πιο υπέροχη εποχή του χρόνου. Χριστιανοί σε όλο τον κόσμο ετοιμάζονται να γιορτάσουν τη γέννηση του Σωτήρα μας, Ιησού Χριστού, του υιού του Θεού, καθώς πλησιάζει η περίοδος των Χριστουγέννων. Αλλά πώς θα γιορτάσουμε αυτή τη θαυμάσια εορτή φέτος, αυτό είναι το ερώτημα. Θα ήθελα να αποφευχθεί η παγίδα, αν θα μπορούσα, και να επεκτείνω την εστίασή μας στο σωστό δρόμο του εορτασμού αυτής της μεγάλης γιορτής. Κατά τη διάρκεια αυτής της περιόδου του έτους, έχουμε την τάση να ελιξεντρώνουμε το ενδιαφέρον μας στα μη ουσιώδη στοιχεία της γιορτής, αντί πραγματικά να προετοιμαζόμαστε πνευματικά για τον Κύριο.

Οι περισσότεροι από εμάς πέφτουν σε διάφορες παγίδες, όσο πλησιάζει η γιορτή, και ο Κύριος ξέρει ότι ο Σατανάς μας βάζει πολλές παγίδες. Ο Σατανάς θα χρησιμοποιήσει ό,τι μέσον μπορεί για να μας πείσει ότι πρέπει να δώσουμε προτεραιότητα σε λιγότερο σημαντικά πράγματα και να τοποθετήσει τα πιο σημαντικά πράγματα της πνευματικής αξίας κάπου χαμηλά στη λίστα αξιολόγησής μας για το τι είναι σημαντικό και τι όχι. Σήμερα η εμπορικότητα παίζει σπουδαίο ρόλο στην παρεμπόδιση της πνευματικής ευτυχίας που βιώνουμε κατά τη διάρκεια αυτής της Ιερής Εορτής.

Για παράδειγμα, όταν βάζουμε το κοσμικό μας ενδιαφέρον πριν από τη λατρεία του Κυρίου, έχουμε πέσει σε παγίδα των Χριστουγέννων. Όταν γίνεται πιο σημαντικό να δίνουμε δώρα παρά να προσφέρουμε τον εαυτόν μας, για μια ακόμη φορά έχουμε πέσει σε παγίδα. Όταν βάζουμε κοσμικές εκδηλώσεις πάνω από την παραλαβή του Σώματος και του Αίματος του Χριστού, πάνω από την εξομολόγηση και πνευματική προετοιμασία, πέφτουμε και πάλι στα χέρια του Σατανά. Χρησιμοποιώντας την Παραμονή των Χριστουγέννων, ως δικαιολογία για να κάνουμε πάρτυ για την οικογένεια και όχι σαν μια ευκαιρία για την οικογένεια να παρακολουθήσουν μαζί τη Θεία Λειτουργία, τότε πάλι έχουμε πέσει σε παγίδα των Χριστουγέννων.

Σήμερα γίνονται τόσα πολλά πάρτυ, τόσες πολλές συγκεντρώσεις, περνάμε ώρες, ημέρες και μήνες για την

προετοιμασία αυτής της δοκιμασίας, και κανένα από αυτά τα σκευάσματα δεν περιλαμβάνει την αληθινή σημασία της γιορτής, της γέννησης του Χριστού. Έχουμε ξεφύγει από την ιδέα του ενδιαφέροντος για τον Χριστό, ενδιαφερόμαστε μόνον για τη δική μας ευχαρίστηση. Όταν μπαίνουμε στην εποχή της Γέννησης του Χριστού και εξακολουθούμε να έχουμε μνησικακίες και να διατηρούμε μίσση εναντίον άλλων αντί να τους συγχωρούμε όπως συγχωρεί ο Θεός, ο οποίος ενσαρκώθηκε για εμάς, και πάλι πέφτουμε στα χέρια του Σατανά.

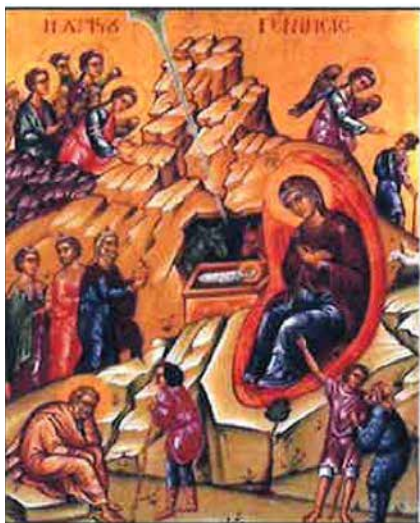
Οι πάμπολες παγίδες που μας βάζει ο Σατανάς αυτή την εποχή, είναι ακόμη μεγαλύτερες από εκείνες που μας βάζει κανονικά όλο το χρόνο, γι αυτό είναι απαραίτητο να τις σκευδητοποιήσουμε. Μας ενθαρρύνει να εορτάσουμε τα Χριστούγεννα απλώς σαν μια κοσμική εορτή και όχι σαν μια πνευματική γιορτή, για να μας παρασύρει μακριά από τον Χριστό. Ο Σατανάς μας κάνει να είμαστε τόσο απασχολημένοι που δεν έχουμε χρόνο για να ενδιαφερομαστε για την ενίσχυση της πνευματικότητάς μας, μας εμποδίζει να ερχόμαστε στην εκκλησία την Παραμονή των Χριστουγέννων ή την ημέρα των Χριστουγέννων.

Πολλοί από τους ενορίτες μας μου είπαν ότι ποτέ δεν έρχονται στην εκκλησία για να προσκυνήσουν τον Θεό αυτές τις σημαντικές ημέρες. Δεν είναι λυπηρό το γεγονός ότι καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της ζωής του κάποιος δεν έχει πατήσει το πόδι του στην εκκλησία, όχι μόνο κατά τη διάρκεια μεγάλων εορτών, αλλά ακόμη και στις τακτικές Θείες Λειτουργίες της Κυριακής. Πρέπει να πω ότι σήμερα, τα Χριστούγεννα γιορτάζονται όχι λόγω της γέννησης του Χριστού, αλλά πιο πολύ για οικονομικούς λόγους. Χρησιμοποιούν τα Χριστούγεννα ως μια χρηματοπιστωτική αγορά για να κερδίσουν δισεκατομμύρια δολάρια, και εν τω μεταξύ απομιμούν το αίμα μας για το οικονομικό τους όφελος.

Σας λέω, πρώτα απ' όλα γιατί γεννήθηκε ο Ιησούς; Σίγουρα ο Χριστός δεν γεννήθηκε απλώς να μας δώσει μια δικαιολογία για να έχουμε ακόμη μια εορτή. Σίγουρα δεν γεννήθηκε με τον ταπεινό τρόπο με τον οποίο ήρθε σε αυτόν τον κόσμο, έτσι ώστε εσείς και εγώ να γιορτάζουμε βασιλικά και να ξεχάσουμε γιατί πραγματικά Γεννήθηκε. Αν η πρώτη προτεραιότητά μας είναι ο Χριστός και η αφοσίωσή μας σ' Αυτόν, τότε όλα αυτά θα προστεθούν σε σας, αλλά αν είναι και οι προτεραιότητές μας δεν είναι οργανωμένες και βάζουμε τα ψώνια, το ποδόσφαιρο, το δόσιμο δώρων και των πάρτυ πριν από τη αφοσίωσή μας γι' Αυτόν, τότε τα Χριστούγεννα δεν έχουν κανένα απολύτως νόημα. Για εσάς που το πιστεύετε, τότε είναι απλώς άλλη μια ειδολολατρική εορτή μεταξύ των άλλων.

Κλείνοντας, ελπίζω και προσεύχομαι ότι κατά τη διάρκεια αυτής της Εορταστικής περιόδου, θα κάνουμε τις σωστές επιλογές και να πάρουμε τις σωστές αποφάσεις για θα ακολουθήσουμε την Ορθόδοξη Χριστιανική μας Παράδοση. Δηλαδή θα παρακολουθήσουμε με τις οικογένειές μας την Ακολουθία της Παραμονής των Χριστουγέννων, ή την Θεία Λειτουργία την ημέρα των Χριστουγέννων. Αυτός είναι ο μόνος τρόπος που οι αληθινοί Χριστιανοί γιορτάζουν τη «Γέννηση του Χριστού» και ο μόνος τρόπος να αισθανθούμε ότι ο Χριστός είναι πραγματικά ανάμεσά μας και ότι είναι ο πυρήνας της ζωής μας.

Με τις ευλογίες του Κυρίου σας εύχομαι ΚΑΛΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ.



THE ICON OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

The icon of the Nativity depicts the whole Gospel message of the incarnation of our Savior of the Theotokos, along with other details from Holy Tradition.

The focus of the icon, of course, is the birth of our Lord to His most pure mother; she is shown larger than any of the other figures, reclining on a mat and looking not at her newborn Son but rather with love and compassion at her spouse, St. Joseph the Betrothed; she sees his affliction and bewilderment at this most strange and divine birth. St. Joseph is shown conversing with Satan, who is disguised as an old shepherd. The elderly saint's posture is one of doubt and inner trouble, for he wondered whether Christ's conception and birth had not come about by some secret human union. How blessed he was to serve the Mother of God and her divine Son despite these thoughts and temptations and to protect her from the evil gossip of people who could not yet possibly understand so great a mystery.

Our Lord is shown in swaddling clothes lying in a manger, "for there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2). The backdrop for the manger is a dark cave, which immediately reminds us of the cave in which our Lord was buried thirty-three years later, wrapped in a shroud. In the cave are an ox and donkey, details not mentioned by the Gospels but which are an invariable feature of every icon of the Nativity; the scene is included to show the fulfillment of the words of the prophet Isaiah: "The ox knows his Owner, and the donkey his Master's crib, but Israel does not know Me, and my people has not regarded Me" (Isaiah 1:3).

Above this central composition, in the very center of the icon is the wondrous star coming from heaven, which led the Magi to the place where our Savior lay; it reminds us of the heavenly orb we see in icons of the Theophany, or Pentecost, wherever divine intervention is indicated. The holy angels

are seen both glorifying God and bringing the good tidings of the Lord's birth to the shepherds. The fact that Jewish shepherds and Gentile Magi were among the first to worship our Lord demonstrates the universality of this great event, meant for the salvation of all humankind.



The final detail of this icon, the scene of the washing of the Lord, is an element that has caused some controversy over the ages. In some churches of the holy monasteries of Mount Athos, the scene in the frescoes has been deliberately obliterated and replaced with bushes or shepherds; there was a prevailing opinion that this scene was degrading to Christ, who had no need of washing, having been born in a miraculous manner from a pure virgin. But we retain this image on our icons because it is part of the Holy Tradition passed on to us; truly, it does not degrade the Lord but magnifies Him, as is evident in the prayer that is read for the midwife of a child at the time of baptism: "O Master, Lord our God ... Who lay in a manger and blessed the midwife Salome, who came to believe in an honorable virginity." Who, more effectively than a midwife, could testify to the divine and virginal birth? Therefore, we do well to understand the importance of this blessed scene.

Finally, as we look at the icon as a single united composition, we can only be filled with joy—not only because of the bright colors and the festive activity depicted there but also because of the joyous news of our salvation so clearly proclaimed by it. In it, all creation is rejoicing at the birth of our Lord: the heavens (a star and angels); the earth (the mountains, plants, and animals), and especially humankind, represented most perfectly in the figure of the

new Eve, the most pure Mother of God.

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

(English text adapted from http://www3.telus.net/public/josaphat/Newsletters/December_21th_Bulletin_extra.htm)

Η ΕΙΚΟΝΑ ΤΗΣ ΓΕΝΝΗΣΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ

Η εικόνα της Γεννήσεως απεικονίζει ολόκληρο το μήνυμα του Ευαγγελίου την ενσάρκωση του Σωτήρα μας από τη Θεοτόκο, μαζί με άλλα στοιχεία από την Ιερά Παράδοση.

Η εστίαση της εικόνας, φυσικά, είναι η γέννηση του Κυρίου μας από την αγνή μητέρα του, η οποία φαίνεται μεγαλύτερη από τα άλλα στοιχεία, ξαπλωμένη σε ένα χαλί και κοιτάζοντας, όχι τον νεογέννητο γιο της, αλλά με αγάπη και συμπόνια προς τον σύζυγό της, τον Αγ. Ιωσήφ τον Μνηστήρ, βλέποντας την θλίψη και σύγχυση του μπροστά από αυτή την παράξενη και θεία γέννηση. Ο Αγ. Ιωσήφ συνομιλεί με τον Σατανά, ο οποίος είναι μεταμφιεσμένος ως παλιός βοσκός. Η στάση του ηλικιωμένου αγίου δείχνει αμφιβολία και τον εσωτερικό πρόβλημα του, διότι αναρωτήθηκε αν η σύλληψη και γέννηση του Χριστού δεν είχε έρθει από κάποια μυστική ανθρώπινη ένωση. Πόσο ευλογημένος ήταν ο Ιωσήφ να εξημερήσει την Μητέρα του Θεού και τον Υίο της, παρόλες αυτές τις σκέψεις και τους πειρασμούς, και να την προστατεύει από το κουτσομπολιό των ανθρώπων που δεν μπορούσαν να καταλάβουν ακόμα το τόσο μεγάλο μυστήριο.

Ο Κύριος παρουσιάζεται σε σπάρανα και κειτόμενος εν τη φάτνη, επειδή δεν υπήρχε χώρος γι' αυτούς στο πανδοχείο (δείτε Λουκ. 2). Το φόντο για τη φάτνη είναι μια σκοτεινή σπηλιά, η οποία μας θυμίζει αμέσως το σπήλαιο στο οποίο ο Κύριος μας θάφτηκε τριάντα-τρία χρόνια αργότερα, τυλιγμένος στο σάβανο. Στο σπήλαιο υπάρχουν ένα βόδι και ένα γαϊδούρι, στοιχεία που δεν αναφέρονται στα Ευαγγέλια, αλλά τα οποία αποτελούν πάγια χαρακτηριστικά της κάθε εικόνας της Γέννησης. Η σκηνή περιλαμβάνει αυτά τα πλάσματα για να δείξει την εκπλήρωση των λογίων του προφήτη Ησαΐα: «Το βόδι γνωρίζει τον ιδιοκτήτη του, και ο γάιδος τον κύριό του, αλλά το Ισραήλ δεν με ξέρει, και ο λαός μου δεν με αναγνωρίζει!» (Ησαΐας 1:3).

Πάνω από αυτήν την κύρια σύνθεση, στο κέντρο της εικόνας είναι το θαυμαστό αστέρι το οποίο προέρχεται από τον ουρανό και οδήγησε τους τρεις Μάγους στον τόπο όπου ο Σωτήρας μας γεννήθηκε. Μας θυμίζει την ουράνια σφαίρα που βλέπουμε στις εικόνες των Θεοφανείων, ή την Πεντηκοστή, όπου ενδείκνυται η θεική παρέμβαση. Βλέπουμε

τους άγιους αγγέλους να δοξάζουν τον Θεό και να φέρνουν την καλή είδηση της γέννησης του Κυρίου στους παϊμένες. Το γεγονός ότι οι εβραϊκοί βοσκοί και ειδωλολάτρες Μάγοι ήταν μεταξύ των πρώτων για να λατρεύουν το Θεό μας καταδεικνύει την παγκοσμιότητα αυτού του μεγάλου γεγονότος, το οποίο προοριζόταν για τη σωτηρία όλης της ανθρωπότητας.

Η τελευταία λεπτομέρεια της εικόνας αυτής, η σκηνή του πλυσίματος του Κυρίου, είναι ένα στοιχείο που έχει προκαλέσει κάποια διαμάχη διά των εποχών. Σε ορισμένες εκκλησίες των ιερών μονών του Αγίου Όρους, αυτήν την σκηνή στις τοιχογραφίες έχουν σκοπίμως σβήσει και την έχουν αντικαταστήσει με θάμνους ή ποιμένες. Υπήρξε μια επικρατούσα άποψη ότι η σκηνή ήταν ταπεινωτική για τον Χριστό, ο οποίος δεν είχε καμία ανάγκη από το πλύσιμο, αφού έχει γεννηθεί με θαυμαστό τρόπο από αγνή παρθένα. Αλλά την διατηρούμε στις εικόνες επειδή είναι μέρος της Ιεράς Παραδόσεως της Εκκλησίας μας. Η αλήθεια είναι ότι δεν υποβαθμίζει τον Κύριο, αλλά Τον μεγενθύνει, όπως είναι προφανές στην προσευχή που διαβάζεται για τη μαία ενός παιδιού την ώρα της βάπτισης: «Δέσποτα, Κύριε ο Θεός ημών...

Ο οποίος κείτοταν σε μια φάτνη και ευλόγησε την μαία Σαλώμη, η οποία πίστεψε σε μια έντιμη παρθένα." Ποιος, θα μπορούσε, πιο αποτελεσματικά από ό,τι μια μαία, να καταθέσει για την θεία και παρθενική γέννηση; Ως εκ τούτου, πρέπει να κατανοήσουμε τη σημασία αυτής της ευλογημένης σκηνής.

Τέλος, όπως κοιτάμε την εικόνα ως μια ενιαία σύνθεση, μπορούμε μόνο να νιώσουμε χαρά, όχι μόνο λόγω των φωτεινών χρωμάτων και της εορταστικής δραστηριότητας που απεικονίζονται εκεί, αλλά και λόγω της χαρούμενης είδησης της σωτηρίας μας, η οποία τόσο ξεκάθαρα διακηρύχθηκε από την Γέννηση αυτήν. Σε αυτό το γεγονός, όλη η δημιουργία πανηγυρίζει τη Γέννηση του Κυρίου: οι ουρανοί (ένα αστέρι και οι άγγελοι), η γη (τα βουνά, τα φυτά και τα ζώα), και ειδικότερα η ανθρωπότητα, η οποία εκπροσωπείται απόλυτα στο σχήμα της νέας Εύας, της πιο αγνής Μητέρας του Θεού. Ο Χριστός γεννιέται! Δοξάζουμε!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Dear Parishioners,

The Christmas season is here, and as the song is sung, “Its the most wonderful time of the year”. Christians all over the world prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the Christmas Season approaches. But during this time of the year, we tend to concentrate on the nonessential factors of the celebration instead of truly preparing ourselves spiritually for the Lord.

So as we prepare for Christmas, as we shop for appropriate gifts for the family and friends, we have to ask ourselves this: “What have I given to Christ my God on His birthday?” What can each of us give to Christ on His special Holy Day? Here are some ideas.

Do we treat each other with love and forgiveness? Are we caring toward people who are not part of our circle? Do we volunteer assistance before we are asked? Do we volunteer our services to our church and community? Do we really give serious thought to the church’s Stewardship Program? Are we good stewards—do we offer ourselves unselfishly to fulfill the needs of God’s home? The financial support of our church should be at the top of our gift list as a rather small token of our gratitude. And lastly, I want everyone to know my suggestion, that we celebrate this Christmas by bringing our families to church on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. I think this is the greatest gift we can give our Lord Jesus Christ---the gift of ourselves.

In closing, as your priest I offer my greetings, along with Presvytera Toula’s, to all the families of St. Nicholas, and we extend our prayerful best wishes for a joy-filled celebration of our Lord’s Nativity and a New Year that is abundant in Divine Blessings.

May the Lord continue to bless you all with health, joy, peace, and happiness, and all that is needful for eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

With Love in the Newborn Christ----Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all filled with much love, and prosperity.

Rev. Michael L. Pastrikos
Protopresbyter



Greetings and Wishes from Father Michael and Family

Christmas gives us the opportunity to commemorate and focus on the birth of our Lord. The presence of the Divine word is manifested only within the Church and in the person of Jesus Christ.

My sincere prayer to all of my parishioners as we approach this most Holy Day is that families and friends love one another and forgive one another. May each of you reach out and accept the most blessed and eternal gift we could ever receive: the salvation

of our souls, which our Heavenly Father offers us through His Son, Jesus Christ, because of His love for us all.

I would like to express on behalf of myself, Presbytera Toula, and my family a great big thank you for the love and respect that you have shown to me and my family in the last few months. We send our sincere best wishes to everyone in the Parish for a Joyous and fruitful Christmas, and a very prosperous and healthy New Year. **May God Bless!**

Ευχές από τον Πατέρα Μιχαήλ και την Οικογένεια του

Τα Χριστούγεννα μας δίνουν την ευκαιρία να εορτάσουμε και να συγκεντρωθούμε στην γέννηση του Κυρίου μας. Η Θεότητα της λέξης, φανερώνεται μόνον μέσα στην Εκκλησία και εις το πρόσωπο του Ιησού Χριστού.

Η ειλικρινής μου προσευχή για όλα τα μέλη της Ενορίας μου, καθώς πλησιάζουμε την πιο Ιερή Ημέρα, είναι όπως οικογένειες και φίλοι αγατούν ο ένας τον άλλον και συγχωρούν ο ένας τον άλλον. Εύχομαι ο καθένας από εσάς να πλησιάσει και να δεχθεί το πιο ευλογημένο και αιώνιο δώρο που θα ήταν δυνατό να λάβει, την σωτηρία της ψυχής του, που ο Επουράνιος Πατέρας

μας προσφέρει μέσω του Υιού Του, Ιησού Χριστού, επειδή μας αγαπά.

Θάθελα να εκφράσω εκ μέρους μου, της Πρεσβυτέρας Τούλας, και της οικογένειάς μου, ένα μεγάλο ευχαριστώ για την αγάπη και το σεβασμό που δείξατε σε μένα και την οικογένειά μου τους τελευταίους μήνες που είμαστε μαζί σας. Στέλνουμε τις ειλικρινείς μας ευχές σε όλα τα μέλη της Κοινότητας, Καλά Χριστούγεννα και με υγεία και ευτυχία ο Καινούργιος Χρόνος.

Ο Θεός μαζί σας!

Christmas Message from Father Michael

“Your Nativity, O Christ, our God, shines forth light of Reason over the earth for, in it, they who served the stars, were by a star taught to adore You, the Sun of Truth, and to see You from the heights of the East, O Lord, glory to You.”

The Christmas Season is here and—the song is sung, “It’s the most wonderful time of the year.”

Christians all over the world prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the Christmas Season approaches.

For centuries we have been celebrating the coming of life in its fullest into the world, bringing with it the right to fullest of life given by God in Christ to every human being. And yet, we are aware today, perhaps more than ever that people everywhere still are yearning for their God given right to this fullness of life.

With Christmas around the corner, everyone begins to plan for that big event on the horizon (Christmas!).

In our Orthodox tradition we have a 40 day preparation season which begins November 15 (Advent). This season of preparation stresses fasting, prayer, meditation, forgiveness, giving of oneself to help another, (Christian fellowship stewardship) ad etc.

During this time of the year, we tend to concentrate on the non essential factors of the celebration instead of truly preparing ourselves spiritually for the Lord. We realize today that commercialism has played a great role in the interference or the spiritual happiness that we experience during this Sacred Holiday.

I really don’t think that back then during the time of Christ’s birth - that everyone was going out to the stores to buy gifts and also to certain entertainment places to celebrate the birth of Christ.

This is a spiritual celebration meaning that our focus as Christians during the Lenten Season should be on Christ and nothing else.

Today we have so many parties, so many get together, we spend hours, days and months preparing for this ordeal, and none of these preparations include the true celebration of Christ’s birth. We’ve gone away from the idea of caring for Christ, to the idea of caring for our own pleasures and satisfaction of ourselves.

We buy gifts to exchange with others, with our loved ones, relatives and friends, but we forget that out there, there are thousands

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Χριστουγεννιάτικο Μήνυμα απο τον Πατέρα Μιχαήλ

«Η γέννησή Σου Χριστέ ο Θεός ημών, ανέτηλε τω κόσμω τω φως τω της γνώσεως, εν αυτή γαρ οι τοις άστροις λατρεύοντες υπό αστέρος εδιδάσκοντο, σε προσκυνείν, τον Ήλιον της δικαιοσύνης και Σε γιννώσκειν εξ ύψους Ανατολή, Κύριε δόξα Σοι.»

Η εποχή των Χριστουγέννων έφθασε και πάλι και τα λόγια στα κάλαντα λένε «Είναι η ωραιότερη εποχή του χρόνου.»

Καθώς πλησιάζουν τα Χριστούγεννα οι Χριστιανοί σε όλο τον κόσμο προετοιμάζονται να εορτάσουν την γέννηση του Σωτήρος μας, Ιησού Χριστού, του Υιού του Θεού.

Για αιώνες εορτάζουμε τον ερχομό της πληρότητας της ζωής, τη σωστή κατεύθυνση της ζωής που έχει δώσει ο Θεός στην ανθρωπότητα μέσω του Υιού Του. Επίσης, στη σημερινή εποχή το γνωρίζουμε καλύτερα από ποτέ, ότι οι άνθρωποι όπου και αν βρίσκονται αναζητούν αυτήν τη γεύση της πληρότητας που μας έχει δώσει ο Θεός.

Όσο πλησιάζουμε πιο κοντά στην Εορτή των Χριστουγέννων, όλοι κάνουν σχέδια για το κοσμοϊστορικό αυτό γεγονός (Χριστούγεννα).

Στη Χριστιανική μας παράδοση ο χρόνος προετοιμασίας μας είναι 40 ημέρες και αρχίζει την 15η Νοεμβρίου. Η εποχή αυτή της προετοιμασίας απαιτεί νηστεία, προσευχή, περι-

συλλογή, συγχώρηση, βοήθεια προς τον πλησίον μας, (χριστιανική περισυλλογή) κ.λ.π.

Θα λέγαμε ότι σήμερα ενδιαφερόμαστε περισσότερο για θέματα όχι και τόσο σοβαρά για την εορτή, αντί να προετοιμαζόμαστε αληθινά και πνευματικά για να υποδεχθούμε τον Κύριο. Μας είναι πλέον γνωστό ότι η σημερινή εμπροκτικότητα έχει παίξει μεγάλο ρόλο και παρενοχλεί την πνευματική χαρά, που θάπρεπε να μας κατέχει την Ιερή αυτή Εορτή.

Δεν νομίζω ότι την εποχή που γεννήθηκε ο Χριστός—ο κόσμος πήγαινε στα καταστήματα να αγοράσει δώρα ή να πήγαινε σε κέντρα διασκέδασων για να εορτάσει την γέννηση του Χριστού.

Είναι μια πνευματική εορτή που σημαίνει ότι στόχος μας, ως Ορθοδόξων Χριστιανών τούτη την εποχή της Νηστείας, θάπρεπε να είναι ο Χριστός και μόνο Αυτός.

Σήμερα μας καλούν σε τόσα πάρτυ, σε τόσες χριστουγεννιάτικες συγκεντρώσεις, περνούμε ώρες, ημέρες και μήνες προετοιμαζόμενοι για αυτές τις εκδηλώσεις, που καμιά δεν συμπεριλαμβάνει την αληθινή σημασία της εορτής της γέννησης του Χριστού. Ξεφεύγουμε από την ιδέα της αγάπης μας για τον

Συνέχεια στην σελίδα 22



Christmas Message from Father Michael

Continued .

of people who are less fortunate and don't have the opportunity and the luxury to celebrate the birth of Christ like we do.

As concerns the commercialism of Christmas, it is not bad to give gifts, for after all, Christ's birth was a gift to us. The Wisemen offered their gifts to Jesus.

The problem comes when we only stress the gifts and in particular when we only think about the gifts that we receive. Even the concept of "exchanging gifts" is weird when you think of our Lord's teachings: "It is better to give than to receive."

Most of the time the one gift that we forget to give to Jesus is ourselves. Many of us forget to give the Church, a Christmas Gift. That should be our first priority, we always think and calculate what each of our family members would want. Christmas, we spend thousands of dollars to make them secure and satisfied, thinking that this is the way to show our appreciation and love, but for Christ, not only we do not think of Him, we do not even attend the Christmas Services that were scheduled, or we do not even do that small task of responsibility that we at least owe Him for what He has done for us.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, you must ask yourself why is it the most wonderful time of the year.

Is it for the Department Stores—they suck in the money). Is it for the material gifts that we receive (they come and go).

Christmas gives us the opportunity to commemorate and focus in on the birth of Christ. Our celebration of His incarnation is not limited to a feast of celebration once a year, with all its festivities.

We are Orthodox Christians living in a New Orthodox environment. Let us plan ahead correctly this Holiday Season and let us set our minds and our hearts to what is important for our souls and not our bodies. I urge each of you to prepare for and live Christmas in the true Orthodox Spirit. Let us all celebrate Christmas the way we celebrate PASCCHA, first with a sincere preparation for the Holy Eucharist. Second, we should all, young and old, come to worship Christ as a family during the Christmas Liturgy on Christmas Eve and receive the Holy Eucharist with your family members, and then we can truly celebrate the real Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

May you enjoy the riches of God's graces during this Christmas—tithe and abundance of His blessings during the New Year. Merry Christmas to all!

*With Love in our Incarnate Lord,
Fr. Michael Pastrikos*

Χριστουγεννιάτικο Μήνυμα απο τον Πατέρα Μιχαήλ

Χριστό, αλλά φροντίζουμε για την ιδέα της πλήρους ευχαρίστησης και ικανοποίησης του εαυτούλη μας.

Αγοράζουμε δώρα για να ανταλλάξουμε με άλλους, τα αγαπημένα μας πρόσωπα, συγγενείς και φίλους, αλλά ξεχνάμε ότι κάπου εκεί έξω, υπάρχουν χιλιάδες άνθρωποι που είναι δυστυχημένοι και φτωχοί και δεν έχουν την ευκαιρία και την πολυτέλεια να εορτάσουν την γέννηση του Χριστού όπως εμείς.

As αναφερθούμε και στην εμπορικότητα των Χριστουγέννων, δεν είναι κακό να δίνεις δώρα, διότι εκτός των άλλων, η γέννηση του Χριστού ήταν δώρο σ' εμάς. Όπως επίσης οι Μάγοι πρόσφεραν τα δώρα τους στον Ιησού. Το πρόβλημα αρχίζει όταν δίνουμε έμφαση μόνο στα δώρα και ειδικότερα, μόνο στα δώρα που θα λάβουμε. Ακόμη και η ιδέα «ανταλλαγής δώρων» δεν είναι σωστή, αν σκεφθούμε τα διδάγματα του Κυρίου μας: «Είναι καλύτερα να δίνεις παρά να παίρνεις.»

Τις περισσότερες φορές το μοναδικό δώρο που ξεχνούμε να δώσουμε στον Ιησού είναι ο εαυτός μας. Πολλοί από εμάς ξεχνούμε να προσφέρουμε στην εκκλησία, ένα Χριστουγεννιάτικο δώρο. Θα πρέπει να είναι το πρώτο που πρέπει να επιμεληθούμε, γιατί πάντοτε σκεπτόμαστε και σπάμε το κεφάλι μας, για το τι θάθελε το κάθε άτομο της οικογενείας μας. Τα Χριστουγεννα, ξοδεύουμε χιλιάδες δολάρια, για να τους κάνουμε ευτυχημένους, με το σκεπτικό ότι με τον τρόπο αυτό δίνουμε την εκτίμησή και την αγάπη μας, αλλά για το Χριστό, όχι μόνον δεν Τον σκεπτόμαστε, αλλά ούτε ερχόμαστε στις Ακολουθίες που έχουν προγραμματιστεί για την Εορτή των Χριστουγέννων, δεν εκτελούμε ούτε αυτή την παραμικρή ευθύνη, που αν μη τι άλλο χρωστάμε στον Κύριο, για τα όσα έκανε για μας.

Αδελφοί και αδελφές μου εν Κυρίω, σας παρακαλώ να

αναρωτηθείτε—γιατί είναι η ωραιότερη εποχή του χρόνου; Είναι για τα πολυκαταστήματα—που ρημάζουν τις τσέπες μας; Είναι για τα υλικά δώρα που παίρνουμε (έρχονται και φεύγουν);

Τα Χριστούγεννα μας δίνουν την ευκαιρία να εορτάσουμε και να συγκεντρώσουμε τη σκέψη μας μόνο στη γέννηση του Χριστού. Η εορτή της ενσάρκωσής Του, δεν περιορίζεται σε μια πανηγυρική εορτή μια φορά το χρόνο, και σε όλες τις εορταστικές της εκδηλώσεις.

Είμαστε Χριστιανοί Ορθόδοξοι και ζούμε σε ένα Καινούργιο Ορθόδοξο περιβάλλον. Ας προγραμματίσουμε εκ των προτέρων σωστά την Εορταστική αυτή Εποχή και ας σκεφθούμε τι είναι πιο σημαντικό για την ψυχή μας και για το σώμα μας. Θέλουμε όλοι σας, να προετοιμαστείτε και να περάσετε τα Χριστούγεννα με αληθινό Ορθόδοξο Πνεύμα. Ας εορτάσουμε όλοι τα Χριστούγεννα με τον ίδιο τρόπο που εορτάζουμε το Πάσχα, πρώτα με ειλικρινή προετοιμασία για να Μεταλάβουμε. Δεύτερο, θα πρέπει όλοι, μεγάλοι και μικροί, να έλθετε στην Εκκλησία σαν οικογένεια για την Χριστουγεννιάτικη Θεία Λειτουργία την Παραμονή των Χριστουγέννων και να λάβετε Θεία Κοινωνία με τα μέλη της οικογενείας σας, και κατόπιν μπορούμε κάλλιστα να εορτάσουμε την πραγματική Γέννηση του Κυρίου μας και Σωτήρα Ιησού Χριστού.

Είθε η Χάρις του Θεού είναι μαζί σας, τα Χριστούγεννα—και οι ευλογίες Του για παν αγαθό κατά τη Νέα Χρονιά.

Καλά Χριστούγεννα σε όλους σας!

*Με αγάπη στον Εσσαρκωθέντα Κύριο.
Πατήρ Μιχαήλ Α. Παστρικός*



The countdown to Christmas began months ago, reminding us of the diminishing number of shopping

days. Many feel that Christmas has become over commercialized as merchants began displaying holiday decorations and gift items in early autumn; they wonder if the true meaning of this sacred holiday has been lost.

Not so in one household by the little boy who asked his mother to bake a birthday cake. When she wanted to know who was celebrating his birthday, her son exclaimed, "Jesus, of course! It's Christmas!" The Happy Birthday, Jesus cake has become a tradition in their home.

Likewise, many churches are presenting Christmas programs with the central theme of The Nativity and God's love for His children, not only the joy of snowmen, etc. In our Church, November 15th marks the beginning of the Christmas Fast: a period of preparation for each of us in anticipation of The Perfect Gift which we are about to receive from God.

Beyond dietary abstinence fasting includes a focus on our behavior: avoiding anger, hurtful words and actions, and replacing them with kindness, forgiveness, and prayer for our fellow man. Prayers thanking God and asking for His forgiveness and guidance help us concentrate on righteous behavior. Fasting helps cleanse both body and soul.

As we prepare to celebrate the joyous birth of our Lord and Savior, perhaps the following article best reminds us of the Spirit of Christmas. It is anonymous and we thank our friend and parishioner the late Aspasia Karpathiou Johns for having shared it with us.



Let's Keep Christmas

We all feel the presence of approaching Christmas. The traffic is terrible, You can't find a parking space.

The stores are crowded, Mall scenes make shopping a night-mare. You think of friends and loved ones who are so hard to shop for. Maybe there is nothing in a store they need. But what about some token of love—

What about LOVE itself..... and FRIENDSHIP..... and UNDERSTANDING..... and CONSIDERATION... and a HELPING HAND... and a SMILE... and a PRAYER?

You can't buy these things in a store, and these are very special things people need. We all need them.

Blessed will they be who receive them this Christmas or at any time. Let's not permit the rush to crowd Christmas out of our hearts... for that is where it belongs. Christmas IS NOT in the stores, but IN OUR HEARTS.

In the midst of the commercialized holiday season, perhaps the recognition of the real meaning of the Christmas Spirit is re-surfacing among many. Our hope is that Christmas Love remains within us, in our hearts; now, throughout the year, and beyond.



Greek Corner

In addition, I am adding “The Greek Corner” which is the outcome of phrases frequently used during conversations with Father Michael. They are sayings, parables, idioms with variations that address and express life situations or specific persons and have been common throughout the Greek world for many generations. In fact, such messages are universal. You are encouraged to inform us of some that are familiar to you. Please send them to: el817@yahoo.com

1). Άνθρωπος αγράμματος, ξύλο απελέκητο.

An uneducated man is like a piece of uncarved, rough wood.
An educated person has been tended to; is knowledgeable, is polished.

2). Δέκα μέτρα και ένα κόφε.

Check your measurements ten times before you cut...in carpentry, sewing....be accurate, don't be in a hurry.



3). Η πέτρα στόν τόπο της μαλιάζη.

Moss grows on the stone that stays in its place.
Rolling Stones gather no moss. Stay put, don't flit from place to place.

4). Με όποιο δάσκαλο καθήσης, τέτοια γράμματα θα μάθης.

Whoever your teacher is, that's the type of knowledge you will learn.
You should gain more knowledge if you are taught by an accredited teacher,
or attend an accredited school.

5). Πές μου ποιού είναι οι φίλοι σου και θα σου πω ποιός είσαι.

Tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you the kind of person you are.
You are known by the company you keep.

Some common American phrases that are probably familiar to you, and their meaning!

- 1) Break the ice...start a conversation upon meeting someone or a group
- 2) Walk on eggshells...be careful, watch your behavior
- 3) Turn a blind eye...ignore “κανε πως δέν βλέπης! κανε πως δέν ακούς!
- 4) The ball is in your court...your move...your turn... it's up to you now
- 5) Save face...protect your reputation...
Take the proper measure, say the right thing to correct what was done or said
in order to protect your reputation

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH HAPPENINGS

The 2nd Annual Honoree Grand Banquet on Sunday, November 9th.



The Feast of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary into the Temple



ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH HAPPENINGS

St. Nicholas Stewardship Sunday took place on November 30th. This year's guest speaker was Allison Almason, Assistant State's Attorney's Office, Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office. We thank her for describing what stewardship means to her and her family's journey in Orthodoxy.



Ο μήνας Νοέμβριος ήταν γεμάτος γνώση, δημιουργία και όμορφες στιγμές για το σχολείο μας, γεμίζοντας τις τάξεις με χαρά και έμπνευση.

Οι μαθητές της Πέμπτης Τάξης παρουσίασαν με ενθουσιασμό το αγαπημένο τους βιβλίο, μιλώντας για τους ήρωες, τον συγγραφέα και την πλοκή, ενώ οι πολύχρωμες ζωγραφιές τους ζωντάνεψαν τις ιστορίες και γέμισαν την τάξη φαντασία και χρώμα.

Την ίδια περίοδο, οι μαθητές της Έκτης Τάξης εργάστηκαν με ενδιαφέρον πάνω στην Κυκλοφοριακή Αγωγή, δημιουργώντας όμορφες αφίσες με τα σήματα της τροχαίας που συναντούν στη γειτονιά τους. Μελετώντας τα, έμαθαν τη σημασία τους και τα παρουσίασαν με δημιουργικό και κατανοητό τρόπο.

Με αφορμή το Thanksgiving, με τους μαθητές μου συζητήσαμε για τους λόγους για τους οποίους είμαστε ευγνώμονες και για όλα όσα ευχαριστούμε τον Θεό. Ξεκίνησα αναφερόμενη σε κάθε μαθητή ξεχωριστά, τονίζοντας ένα ιδιαίτερο χαρακτηριστικό του για το οποίο αισθάνομαι ευγνωμοσύνη και το οποίο συμβάλλει θετικά στην τάξη μας.

Στη συνέχεια, τα παιδιά μοιράστηκαν τις δικές τους σκέψεις και καταγράψαμε όλες τις απαντήσεις στον πίνακα. Για να δώσουμε πιο δημιουργική διάσταση στη δραστηριότητα, φτιάξαμε μια μεγάλη γαλοπούλα-αφίσα, όπου κάθε μαθητής έγραψε πάνω σε ένα φτερό τις προσωπικές του ευχαριστίες.

Έτσι, δημιουργήσαμε όλοι μαζί μια πολύχρωμη «γαλοπούλα ευγνωμοσύνης», γεμάτη με τις όμορφες σκέψεις και τα συναισθήματα των παιδιών, καλλιεργώντας κλίμα ενότητας, ευγνωμοσύνης και χαράς μέσα στην τάξη.

Τώρα, με το πνεύμα των Χριστουγέννων να μας πλησιάζει, έχουμε ήδη ξεκινήσει με χαρά τις προετοιμασίες για τη Χριστουγεννιάτικη γιορτή μας. Ετομαζόμαστε επίσης για τα κάλαντα που κάθε χρόνο τραγουδάμε στη γειτονιά του Αγίου Νικολάου, κρατώντας ζωντανά τα όμορφα έθιμα και τις παραδόσεις της πατρίδας μας. Τα ελληνόπουλά μας βιώνουν έτσι το αληθινό νόημα των γιορτών, μέσα από μουσική, χαμόγελα και ζεστή δημιουργικότητα.

Με πολλή αγάπη και ευγνωμοσύνη, ευχόμαστε σε όλους τους Ενορίτες μας Καλά και Ευλογημένα Χριστούγεννα, γεμάτα υγεία, ειρήνη και οικογενειακή θαλπωρή!

Καλλιόπη Πέρου Βασιλειάδη
Δασκάλα Πέμπτης & Έκτης Τάξης

The month of November was filled with knowledge, creativity, and joyful moments for our school, bringing inspiration and happiness to every classroom.

The students of the Fifth Grade proudly presented their favorite books, speaking about the characters, the author, and the storyline, while their colorful drawings brought the stories to life and filled the room with imagination and brightness.

At the same time, the Sixth Grade students worked enthusiastically on their Road Safety projects, creating beautiful posters with the traffic signs they encounter in their neighborhood. Through their work, they learned the meaning of each sign and presented them in a creative and engaging way.

To celebrate Thanksgiving, my students and I talked about the reasons we are grateful and the ways we thank God. I began by speaking about each student individually, highlighting a special characteristic that makes them unique and for which I am thankful.

Then, the children shared their own thoughts, and we recorded all their answers on the board. To add a creative touch to the activity, we made a large turkey poster, where each student wrote their personal expressions of gratitude on a feather.

Together, we created a colorful “Gratitude Turkey,” filled with the children’s beautiful thoughts and feelings, fostering a sense of unity, thankfulness, and joy within our classroom.

Now, as the Christmas spirit draws near, we have joyfully begun preparing for our Christmas celebration. We are also getting ready to sing the traditional carols in the neighborhood of Saint Nicholas, as we do every year, keeping alive the cherished customs and traditions of our homeland. Through these festive activities, our Greek children experience the true meaning of the holidays—through music, smiles, and warm creativity.

With love and gratitude, we wish all our Parish members a Merry and Blessed Christmas, filled with health, peace, and the warmth of family.

Kelly Peros Vasiliades
Teacher of 5th & 6th Grade





PTA OFFICERS & MEMBERS

President	Alexandra Forakis
Vice President	Maria Ieromonahos
Treasurer	Alexandra Karoutsos
Recording Secretary	Angela Yeakim
Corresponding Secretary	Stella Fotinos
Members	Angela Tserkis
	Anna Ieromonahos
	Dimitra Douskas
	Lia Dimas
	Maria Lykos
	Moshoula Tsamouras
	Sofia Vasiliadis
	Sophia Politis
	Tsambika Korologos



- Monday, December 8th at 5:30 pm
- Monday, January 12th at 5:30 pm
- Monday, February 9th at 5:30 pm
- Monday, March 9th at 5:30 pm
- Monday, April 20th at 5:30 pm
- Monday, May 11th at 5:30 pm



Monday, December 1st & Wednesday, December 3rd	Christmas Decorating
Wednesday, December 17th	Christmas Party & Caroling
Monday, January 5th	Theophany - Craft & Video, Vasilopita Cutting
Monday, January 12th & Wednesday, January 14th	Lambades Making
TBD	Three Heirarchs Program
Thursday, February 12th	Tsiknopempti Fundraiser
Wednesday, February 18th	Apokries Activities/Crafts
TBD	Godparents Sunday -Spaghetti Lunch, Laganes & Tiropites Fundraiser
Monday, February 23rd	Clean Monday: Lenten Foods & Craft
Monday, March 2nd	Marti Bracelets
Sunday, March 22nd	Greek Independence Day Program
Wednesday, April 1st	Easter Crafts
Saturday, April 4th	Lazarus Breakfast
Monday, May 4th	Protomagia Celebration
Wednesday, May 27th	End of Year Program
TBD	6th Grade Dinner
June 11th -14th	Kids Zone at Greek Festival



Congratulations to the GOYA Girls A Team for winning the championship at the St. George Bethesda Basketball Tournament!



Registration:

Registration is always open as we always welcome new Goyans at any time. We would love all children 12 yrs old (and up) and in 7th grade to join our youth group. Whether or not you choose to play basketball, it is a great opportunity to make new friends and become closer to your faith and your church.

If interested, please email the advisors at stnicholasgoyabalto@gmail.com

Upcoming Events:

Dec. 6th St. Nicholas Name Day Dance.

Dec 13th- GOYA's Christmas party at the plateia

Dec 29th- Caroling



BINGO SAVE THE DATE

Our annual Bingo will be held on February 7th, 2026. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year. You may purchase tickets from any Goyan or advisor. Tickets are \$40 if purchased in advance or \$45 at the door. Please reach out to Penny Alafassos with any questions (443) 756-2201.

EARLY EDUCATION CENTER NEWS



ST. NICHOLAS BILINGUAL EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

The Saint Nicholas Bilingual Early Education Center provides a safe, nurturing, home away from home learning center. We accept children from 6 weeks till 5 years of age. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact the center at 410-633-5020 extension 4 or message us on Facebook.

November was full of fun activities in BEEC. We learned about giving, appreciation, culture, season, and more. BEEC had a thanksgiving feast with families and teachers. BEEC Parents really enjoyed spending that time with their children and our BEEC teachers. We enjoyed our meal together and enjoyed each other's company. BEEC wants to thank the families and teachers who supported our Thanksgiving feast.

This coming December, BEEC is inviting BEEC families and teachers to join us to meet Santa Claus on December 19th, 2025, 3 pm– 5 pm in the St. Nicholas Church Hall. BEEC's Preschool class will also be performing 2 holiday songs. We can't wait to see what January will have in store for us!

Happy Holidays to all!

Το Δίγλωσσο Κέντρο Προσχολικής Αγωγής Αγίου Νικολάου παρέχει ένα ασφαλές, φροντιστικό, κέντρο μάθησης μακριά από το σπίτι. Δεχόμαστε παιδιά από 6 εβδομάδων έως 5 ετών. Εάν έχετε οποιοσδήποτε ερωτήσεις ή χρειάζεστε πρόσθετες πληροφορίες, μη διστάσετε να επικοινωνήσετε με το κέντρο στο 410-633-5020 εσωτερικό νούμερο 4 ή να μας στείλετε μήνυμα στο Facebook.

Ο Νοέμβριος ήταν γεμάτος διασκεδαστικές δραστηριότητες στο BEEC. Μάθαμε για την προσφορά, την εκτίμηση, τον πολιτισμό, την εποχή και πολλά άλλα. Το BEEC διοργάνωσε μια γιορτή των Ευχαριστιών με οικογένειες και δασκάλους. Οι γονείς του BEEC απόλαυσαν πραγματικά τον χρόνο που πέρασαν με τα παιδιά τους και τους δασκάλους του BEEC. Απολαύσαμε το γεύμα μας μαζί και απολαύσαμε ο ένας την παρέα του άλλου. Το BEEC θέλει να ευχαριστήσει τις οικογένειες και τους δασκάλους που υποστήριξαν τη γιορτή των Ευχαριστιών.

Τον ερχόμενο Δεκέμβριο, το BEEC προσκαλεί τις οικογένειες και τους δασκάλους του BEEC να συναντήσουν τον Άγιο Βασίλη στις 19 Δεκεμβρίου 2025, 3 μ.μ.- 5 μ.μ. στην αίθουσα της εκκλησίας του Αγίου Νικολάου. Η τάξη προσχολικής ηλικίας του BEEC θα ερμηνεύσει επίσης 2 εορταστικά τραγούδια.

Ανυπομονούμε να δούμε τι μας επιφυλάσσει ο Ιανουάριος!



Καλές γιορτές σε όλους!

EARLY EDUCATION CENTER NEWS



The St. Nicholas Bilingual Early Education Center hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for all the children and parents.



PHILOPTOCHOS

We would like to thank all those who contributed to the non-perishable food drive for our local pantry. The items were delivered and appreciated. During the month of December, we will be collecting new blankets, hats, gloves, and socks. Collection box will be in the church atrium. Thanksgiving we assisted five families with food and or food cards. The need is great throughout the year but especially during the winter months and holiday season. On behalf of those we help, thank you for your generosity!

Monday, December 1st in the church social hall Philoptochos General Meeting at 6:00 p.m. Join us for an evening of fellowship with snacks and refreshments. All are welcome!

Join us for vespers on December 5th and Liturgy December 6th as we celebrate our Patron Saint Nicholas followed by a reception sponsored by the community and Philoptochos. May God through the intercession of Saint Nicholas Bless your families with health, happiness, and love!

Tuesday, December 9th our Annual Christmas Cheer which will be held at Jimmy's Famous Seafood, 6526 Holabird Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21224 at 6:00 p.m. Donation \$45.00 includes buffet dinner, dessert, soft drinks, and coffee. CASH BAR. For information or tickets contact Maria Giorgakli 1-443-413-2657 or any Philoptochos board member. We look forward to celebrating the start of the Christmas Season with you!

Luke 2:10-11 "But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you, he is the Messiah, the Lord.'" Wishing everyone a Blessed and Merry Christmas with family and friends.

DONATIONS TO SAINT NICHOLAS PHILOPTOCHOS:

In memory of Nina Tripolites: Anonymous

In memory of Flora Karais:

John and Despina Pikounis and Family

In memory of Nicholas Karanikolis:

John and Despina Pikounis and Family

DONATIONS TO PHILOXENIA HOUSE:

In honor of

Michael and Nora Kefalas' 50th Wedding Anniversary:

Michael, Sylvia Tsakalos, and family and Dr. and Mrs. Nicholas Kambouris

Θα θέλαμε να ευχαριστήσουμε όλους όσους συνέβαλαν στην εκστρατεία συγκέντρωσης μη ευαλλοίωτων φαγητά για την τοπική μας αποθήκη τροφίμων. Τα είδη παραδόθηκαν και εκτιμήθηκαν. Κατά τη διάρκεια του Δεκεμβρίου, θα συλλέξουμε νέες κουβέρτες, καπέλα, γάντια και κάλτσες. Το κουτί συγκέντρωσης θα βρίσκεται στο αίθριο της εκκλησίας.

Για την Ημέρα των Ευχαριστιών βοήθησαμε πέντε οικογένειες με τρόφιμα ή/και κάρτες τροφίμων. Η ανάγκη είναι μεγάλη καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια του έτους, αλλά ιδιαίτερα κατά τους χειμερινούς μήνες και τις γιορτές. Εκ μέρους όσων βοηθήμα, σας ευχαριστούμε για τη γενναιοδωρία σας!

PHILOPTOCHOS



Δευτέρα, 1 Δεκεμβρίου, στην αίθουσα κοινωνικής συνέλευσης της εκκλησίας, θα πραγματοποιηθεί Γενική Συνέλευση της Φιλόπτωχου στις 6:00 μ.μ. Ελάτε μαζί μας για μια βραδιά συντροφικότητας με σνακ και αναψυκτικά. Όλοι είναι ευπρόσδεκτοι!

Ελάτε μαζί μας για τον εσπερινό στις 5 Δεκεμβρίου και τη Λειτουργία στις 6 Δεκεμβρίου, καθώς γιορτάζουμε τον Πολιούχο μας Άγιο Νικόλαο, ακολουθούμενη από δεξίωση που διοργανώνεται από την κοινότητα και τη Φιλόπτωχο. Είθε ο Θεός, μέσω της μεσιτείας του Αγίου Νικολάου, να ευλογεί τις οικογένειές σας με υγεία, ευτυχία και αγάπη!

Τρίτη, 9 Δεκεμβρίου, η ετήσια Χριστουγεννιάτικη Εορταστική μας Γιορτή, η οποία θα πραγματοποιηθεί στο Jimmy's Famous Seafood, 6526 Holabird Avenue, Βαλτιμόρη, Μέριλαντ 21224, στις 6:00 μ.μ. Η δωρεά \$45.00 δολαρίων περιλαμβάνει δείπνο σε μπουφέ, επιδόρπιο, αναψυκτικά και καφέ. CASH BAR. Για πληροφορίες ή εισιτήρια, επικοινωνήστε με τη Μαρία Γιωργακή στο 1-443-413-2657 ή με οποιοδήποτε μέλος του διοικητικού συμβουλίου της Φιλοπτώχου. Ανυπομονούμε να γιορτάσουμε μαζί την έναρξη της Χριστουγεννιάτικης περιόδου!

Λουκάς 2:10-11 "και είπεν αυτοίς ὁ ἄγγελος ἡμῶν φοβεῖσθε ἰδοὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην, ἣτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, ὅτι ἐτέχθη ὑμῖν σήμερον σωτὴρ, ὃς ἔστι Χριστὸς Κύριος, ἐν πόλει Δαυὶδ". Εὐχόμαι σε ὄλους Καλά και Ευλογημένα Χριστούγεννα με την οικογένεια και τους φίλους σας.

Δωρεές στην Φιλόπτωχο του Άγιο Νικόλαο:

Στη μνήμη της Νίνας Τριπολίτη: Ανώνυμη

Στη μνήμη της Φλώρας Καραή:

Ιωάννης και Δέσποινα Πικούνη και Οικογένεια

Στη μνήμη του Νικόλα Καρανικολή:

Ιωάννης και Δέσποινα Πικούνη και Οικογένεια

Δωρεές στον Οίκο Φιλοξένια:

Προς τιμήν της 50ής επετείου

γάμου του Μιχαήλ και της Νόρας Κεφαλά:

Μιχαήλ, Σύλβια Τσάκαλος και οικογένεια και

Δρ. και Κα. Νικόλαος Καμπούρης

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Dear Parishioner,

“ELECTION FEVER” is beginning to grip our Country. During the month of November we will be voting for officials that we elect every four years. I hope that all of you will participate in the Democratic process. Also another election will be taking place in December of this year. It is the election of the members of the St. Nicholas Parish Council. I hope that this also gives us the Election Fever to vote for the new members of the Parish Council. This election will impact our Church and Community, and the spiritual life of the men and women we elect to help the Parish Priest in the administration of the parish. We are prepared to give it the same thought effort and consideration as we give the National Elections?

We should be extremely grateful to the Men and Women who have served the Parish Council in past years. With God’s blessing their hard work, dedication, and sacrifice has given us a Church and facilities that is known far and wide for its beauty and Christian environment. We cannot thank them enough for all they have accomplished. I have always said that now is the time that the younger generation needs to step up to the plate, and get involved in the administration of the parish and learn from the present remaining dedicated individuals. Our faith is not a spectator sport without action, involvement, dedication, sacrifice, and commitment our faith is in vain.

These Elections will take place on the second Sunday of December 2025. Mark this date on your calendars and come to church ready to vote for the new members of the Parish Council.

(Note) In order to vote in these elections, every parishioner must take care of their financial responsibilities in full, or else they cannot vote in this coming election day.

With Love in Christ Jesus



Fr. Michael L. Pastrikos
Protopresbyter



PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

NOTICE FOR NOMINATIONS TO PARISH COUNCIL

We would like to inform you that there are several positions available on the Parish Council. The Nomination Committee was elected at the general meeting held on November 2nd, 2025. We encourage all members of our community, who have met their financial obligations and are willing and able to offer their services to our community, to submit their candidacy to the Nominating Committee by Sunday, December 7th, 2025. Please keep in mind the procedure: The Committee for the Nomination of Candidate Members of the Board of Directors will announce the names that have expressed interest. If you wish to participate in the election process, you can also fill out the following application and send it to the church office by Sunday, December 7th, 2025.
The election will be held on Sunday, December 14, 2025.

According to the "Uniform Parish Regulations", any member who wishes to participate in the electoral process must be Christian Orthodox and a member of the community for at least one year until election day. In addition, his/her lifestyle and character should be in accordance with the faith and rules of our Orthodox Church. A new member of our community can vote if they have registered in the last three months before election day.

You can send your application to:

Nominating Committee
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church
520 S. Ponca St.
Baltimore, MD 21224

CANDIDACY FORM FOR PARISH COUNCIL

Candidacy for _____

Signature _____

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail address _____



PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

ΕΙΔΟΠΟΙΗΣΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΕΚΛΟΓΗ ΝΕΩΝ ΜΕΛΩΝ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΤΙΚΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ

Θα θέλαμε να σας ενημερώσουμε ότι υπάρχουν αρκετές διαθέσιμες θέσεις στο Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο. Η Επιτροπή για την Ανάδειξη Υποψηφίων εκλέχθηκε κατά την γενική συνέλευση που πραγματοποιήθηκε 2 Νοεμβρίου, 2025.

Ενθαρρύνουμε όλα τα μέλη της κοινότητας μας, τα οποία έχουν εκπληρώσει τις οικονομικές τους υποχρεώσεις και έχουν την διάθεση και την ικανότητα να προσφέρουν τις υπηρεσίες τους στην κοινότητα μας, να υποβάλλουν την αίτησή τους για το διοικητικό συμβούλιο στην Επιτροπή Ανάδειξης Υποψηφίων μέχρι την Κυριακή 7 Δεκεμβρίου, 2025. Παρακαλούμε να έχετε υπόψη σας την διαδικασία: Η Επιτροπή για την Ανάδειξη Υποψηφίων Μελών του Διοικητικού Συμβουλίου θα ανακοινώσει τα ονόματα που έχουν εκδηλώσει ενδιαφέρον. Εάν επιθυμείτε να συμμετέχετε στην εκλογική διαδικασία μπορείτε επίσης να Συμπληρώσετε την παρακάτω αίτηση και να την στείλετε στο γραφείο της εκκλησίας μέχρι την Κυριακή 7 Δεκεμβρίου, 2025.

Οι εκλογές θα πραγματοποιηθούν την Κυριακή, 14 Δεκεμβρίου, 2025.

Σύμφωνα με τους «Ομοιόμορφους Κανονισμούς των Κοινοτήτων», όποιο μέλος επιθυμεί να συμμετέχει στην εκλογική διαδικασία θα πρέπει να είναι Χριστιανός Ορθόδοξος και μέλος της κοινότητας για τουλάχιστον ένα χρόνο μέχρι την ημέρα των εκλογών. Επιπλέον ο τρόπο ζωής και ο χαρακτήρας του / της θα πρέπει να είναι σύμφωνος με την πίστη και τους κανόνες της ορθόδοξης εκκλησίας μας. Ένα καινούργιο μέλος της κοινότητας μας μπορεί να ψηφίσει εάν έχει εγγραφεί τους τρεις τελευταίους μήνες πριν την ημέρα των εκλογών.

Μπορείτε να στείλετε την αίτησή σας στην διεύθυνση:

Nominating Committee
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church
520 S. Ponca St.
Baltimore, MD 21224

ΕΝΤΥΠΟ ΑΙΤΗΣΗΣ ΥΠΟΨΗΦΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ

Θέτω υποψηφιότητα για το Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο _____

Υπογραφή _____

Όνοματεπώνυμο (με κεφαλαία γράμματα) _____

Διεύθυνση _____

Τηλέφωνο _____

e-mail address _____



MEMORIALS

In Memory of

Mr. & Mrs. Miltiadis & Anna Aravidis
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas & Smaragda Aravidis

In Memory of Clara Cornias

Chris Angelopoulos
Mrs. Chrisanthi Karanikolis
Ms. Eve Lallas
Mr. & Mrs. John & Angela Sfakianoudis
Mr. & Mrs. Chuck & Olga Paterakis
Mrs. Dora Kolotas
Mr. & Mrs. Larry & Kyriala Cornias
Mrs. Helen Pikounis
Ms. Theonimfi Cornias
Mr. & Mrs. Nick & Calliopi Cornias

In Memory of Konstantinos & Markella Forakis

Mr. & Mrs. Tony & Maria Pearce

In Memory of Flora Karais

Rologas Family
Araviakis Family
Mrs. Maria Kornias
Mr. & Mrs. John & Despina Pikounis
Mrs. Koula Giakoumakis
Dr. Mary Kamos
Mr. Nikos Kamos
Angelou Family
Mrs. Maria Karagiannis
Mr. & Mrs. Tony & Maria Pearce
Mrs. Anastasia Halikias
Ms. Anna Halikias
Mrs. Anastasia Vasilakopoulos
Mrs. Anthi Roufas
Mr. & Mrs. George & Voula Chrisovergis

Mr. & Mrs. Ted & Koula Cozmo
Ms. Teresa Flynn
Mrs. Kaliopi Philippou
Ms. Eve Lallas
Mr. Chris Angelopoulos
Mrs. Kitsa Paidousis
Mr. & Mrs. Larry & Kyriala Cornias
Mrs. Kiki Kavouriou

In Memory of Nikolaos Karanikolis

Mr. & Mrs. Stefanos & Constantia Siskos
Mrs. Despina Cornias
Mr. & Mrs. John & Angela Sfakianoudis
Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios & Paraskevi Topouzoglou
Mrs. Dora Kolotas
Mrs. Maria Verenikis
Mrs. Anastasia Halikias
Ms. Anna Halikias

In Memory of George Katsimpiris

Nichola Katsimpiris-Wallace

In Memory of Manuel G. Koukoulas

Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas & Hariklia Nezis

In Memory of Lambros & Athina Neofitou

Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy & Argie Maurakis

In Memory of Christos & Georgia Triantafillidis

Anonymous
Mrs. Kaliopi Philippou
Araviakis Family

In Memory of Ekaterini "Nina" Tripolitis

Mr. Chris Angelopoulos

Mrs. Maria Karagiannis
Mrs. Kaliopi Philippou
Mrs. Maria Verenikis
Mrs. Helen Pikounis
Mrs. Anastasia Halikias
Ms. Anna Halikias
Mr. & Mrs. Mike & LEMONIA Stakias

Donation in Honor of Stamatia Ieromonahos' Name Day & Birthday

Ms. Eve Lallas

Donation in Honor of Fr. Michael's Name Day

Ms. Eve Lallas

Donation in Honor of Emily Syropoulos' Birthday

Ms. Eve Lallas

Donation to decorate the Icons of The Archangels

Mrs. Mary Kaikis

Donation to decorate the Icons of Saint Nicholas

Mrs. Maritsa Souranis
Mr. & Mrs. John & Despina Pikounis
Mr. & Mrs. Larry & Kyriallas Cornias
Mr. Nicholas Cornias
Mr. & Mrs. Tony & Maria Pearce



NOTICE:

All organizations must review their upcoming events with ELENI KOSTALAS-LENTIS (410-633-5020) who will add the event to the official church calendar on the bulletin board across from Father Michael's office.

Thank you for your cooperation.

HELP US GROW THROUGH E-GIVING



It's through your contributions that we're able to carry on important work both spiritually and in our community.

Electronic giving is a convenient, easy way to support St. Nicholas.

By giving electronically, you can:

- Give anywhere, anytime from your computer, smartphone or tablet.
- Donate easily for special projects.
- Set up recurring offerings and pledges and never worry about bringing your checkbook or cash again.

Show your support and try one of our e-Giving options. If you would like to give electronically, visit our website www.stnicholasmd.org or download the GivePlus mobile app.

Thank you for all you do to support our St. Nicholas family throughout the year!



NOTICES

Blessing Your Home

Dear Parishioners:

In the month of January, we celebrate a Great Feast within the Orthodox Church. Epiphany, the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ, on January 6th. It is the season of the blessing of the Holy Waters, when also the parish priest through his very rich custom brings the Blessed Holy Water to the faithful in their homes and business establishments. This enables everyone to receive the Great Blessing of our Lord for the New Year.

I feel that this is a beautiful custom, that as your priest, bringing the Blessed Holy Water of Epiphany to you, my parishioners, allows me to remain close to you and your family.

We request that you fill out the form below or call the church secretary to set up a convenient time.

PLEASE NOTE: Only those homes that submit this form or call will be visited.

I hope that each family will take advantage of this traditional and important blessing for the New Year.

With Paternal Blessing and Best Wishes for this Holiday Season!

With Love in Christ Jesus,

Father Michael



BLESSING OF HOME/BUSINESS

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Preferred time of visit: Morning _____ Afternoon _____ Evening _____
(Please check one)

Please complete this form and return to the church office or call (410) 633-5020



SPONSOR A COFFEE HOUR

We have resumed the Coffee Hour following the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. Please consider sponsoring a coffee hour in memory of a loved one, for the health of your family, or in honor of our St. Nicholas Church. Please call the office at 410-633-5020 to schedule.

Thank you for your support!



IMPORTANT NOTICE

If you have not been receiving notifications from the church, we kindly request that you notify the church office of any change of address, phone number (home and/or cell) as well as change of your e-mail address.

Thank you for your cooperation.



COMMUNITY & CHRISTMAS CARD & Poinsettias for the Church

Please help us to decorate our beautiful church for the upcoming Christmas season by donating \$25.00 toward the purchase of a poinsettia plant.

Your family is also invited to join the Community Christmas Card for a donation of \$25.00. Please specify your choice and enclose your donation with this form.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Community Christmas Card (# _____) \$ _____ Deadline 12/6

Please indicate how you wish your family name to appear on the Christmas card _____

Poinsettias (# _____) \$ _____ Deadline 12/18



Thank you for your support!

NOTICES





ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
Υπουργείο Εργασίας
και Κοινωνικής Ασφάλισης

REBRAIN

TALENT CENTER GREECE

Connecting talents with leading enterprises

New York!

Sunday, December 7th 2025

Σας προσκαλούμε στην εκδήλωση διασύνδεσης
ταλέντων και επιχειρήσεων REBRAIN Greece New York
που διοργανώνει το Υπουργείο Εργασίας
και Κοινωνικής Ασφάλισης
Κυριακή 7 Δεκεμβρίου 2025 στο
Ξενοδοχείο Marriott Marquis New York
1535 Broadway, New York, NY 10036

Δηλώστε
συμμετοχή
εδώ



Συμμετέχουσες Επιχειρήσεις





YOU'RE INVITED!

SAINT BASIL ACADEMY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025
11AM-2PM

KINDLY RSVP BY DECEMBER 1ST
TO L.BINIARIS@SBAGOA.ORG





Mission Statement: Our Golden Age Activity Center provides for stimulating the spiritual, social, and interpersonal interaction of our seniors in a loving, safe and comfortable environment.

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 9am to 3pm

Location: Annunciation Orthodox Center

Contact Information: GoldenAgeAC@annunciationbaltimore.org
<https://annunciationbaltimore.org/golden-age-activity-center>

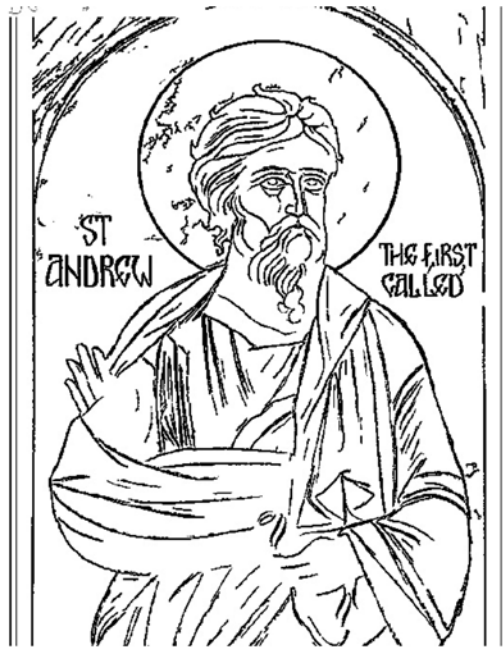
Activities:

- Participation in weekday Divine Liturgy services
- Orthodox study of various topics including lives of the Saints
- Modest levels of physical activity
- Continental breakfast, lunch, and end of day snack
- Word and board games
- Arts and crafts
- Singing and dancing including performances by guests
- Field trips including to other orthodox churches and festivals

Suggested Donation: \$35 per day. Sponsorships available, please contact Father George and Evelyn Kimos, Director, to discuss.

Reservations are required one week in advance to have an accurate headcount for meals.

Saint Andrew, pray for us!



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian kids. Copyright 2025 Alexandra Houck. Email is orthodoxchildrensword (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at orthodoxchildrensword.org.

The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

Sunday, November 30, 2025

Volume 13, Issue 48

Be imitators of me!

Have you ever had to follow an example? Maybe when you were learning to read and write, you traced letters. Or when you wanted to learn how to draw something, you colored the pattern just the way they told you to. If you follow the pattern or example closely, your work will turn out just right.



In our Christian faith, we need examples too! Saint Paul is a wonderful example to us, and we can follow him to turn out to be great, strong, Christians. In today's epistle reading, Saint Paul tells his students in Corinth, "I urge you then, be imitators of me." Saint Paul knew that God had shown him the right way. Now, he wanted the Christians to imitate him so they would turn out right. He wanted the new Christians to follow his example.

Sometimes we might think we know a lot about our Church, especially when we answer all the questions right in Church School. But as Christians, we are really just beginners! We try to imitate Saint Paul and the saints so that we follow a good example and turn out right—with a good and holy Christian life.

So, let's always try to learn more about the saints so we can imitate them. You can read the Bible by yourself or with your parents. You can ask your teachers or your priest to tell you some good books so you can learn more about other saints too! Be imitators of them!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

- Andrew
- Apostle
- Commandments
- Confident
- Cross
- Epistle
- Gifts
- Patras
- Riches
- Salvation

G	S	A	C	A	D	C	L	B	G	L	N	D	P	Q
Y	B	V	E	P	P	R	O	Y	F	O	N	A	S	N
A	N	D	R	E	W	O	T	N	I	K	T	H	T	M
F	D	Q	C	S	T	S	S	T	F	R	A	J	N	O
S	E	H	C	I	R	S	A	T	A	I	C	M	E	J
T	K	D	D	B	X	V	S	S	L	M	D	L	M	Y
E	P	I	S	T	L	E	R	Z	A	E	C	E	D	E
S	Z	F	I	A	M	H	Q	Z	I	K	J	P	N	T
C	U	X	S	O	N	Y	A	K	U	B	Z	R	A	T
Q	K	N	U	L	X	I	K	F	S	H	I	Q	M	E
C	J	W	Z	T	V	V	E	Q	S	T	K	L	M	R
S	V	L	Z	K	P	R	I	V	T	M	F	P	O	V
D	K	N	J	M	C	H	C	X	T	C	M	I	C	G
Y	T	U	I	W	C	A	C	D	M	S	Q	I	G	D
O	C	F	F	F	E	A	A	J	K	M	F	P	Q	X

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

Here is an icon of Saint Andrew, the first disciple.

Do you see his cross? How is it different from the one our Lord was crucified on?



ANOTHER KIND OF CROSS

SAINT ANDREW THE FIRST-CALLED

We all know about the Cross of

our Lord, Jesus Christ. But did you know that many, many other people were crucified on crosses too? Today, we celebrate the feastday of Saint Andrew. Andrew was the first person Christ called to follow Him. He was Jesus's first disciple.



Saint Andrew did follow Christ, and he followed Him all his life. He even followed Christ so much that he got in trouble with the Roman authorities. These people did not want Christians to have any

power or influence. So, they told Andrew that he would be crucified, too. Our saint said that he could not be crucified the same way as our Lord was, so he asked to be bound to an X-shaped cross instead. He followed Christ to the end, and he even follows Christ in heaven now!



You can see the cross of Saint Andrew in Patras, Greece.

Now, there is a beautiful church at the same spot where Saint Andrew was crucified. People even found the cross of Saint Andrew buried underground. You can visit this beautiful church and kiss the holy cross in Patras, Greece. You can ask Saint Andrew to pray for all of us!

We remember St. Andrew today November 30th (OC: December 13th).



St. Nicholas eGiving Stewardship

One Less Thing
to think about



eGiving Benefits

- Easy set up
- One-time/recurring payment options
- Confidential & secure
- Track easily for tax purposes

How it Works

- Go to: stnicholasmd.org/give
- Select fund(s)
- Create your profile
- Select amount, payment method & frequency
- Complete donation
- THAT'S IT! Simple.

Thank you for your generosity!

Give yourself *One Less Thing* to think about
stnicholasmd.org/give
Or download the mobile app!

VANCO



STEWARDSHIP

MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE CARD ΚΑΡΤΑ ΕΘΕΛΟΝΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΣΦΟΡΑΣ

“YOUR OWN FROM YOUR OWN: SEE OUR CHURCH AS IT COULD BE”

“ΤΑ ΣΑ ΕΚ ΤΩΝ ΣΩΝ: ΟΡΑΜΑΤΙΖΟΜΑΣΤΕ ΤΗΝ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΤΟΣΟ ΥΨΗΛΑ...ΟΣΟ
ΕΚΕΙ ΠΟΥ ΜΠΟΡΕΙ ΝΑ ΦΤΑΣΕΙ”

2025 SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH CONFIDENTIAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CARD
2025 ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΗ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ –ΚΑΡΤΑ ΑΠΟΡΡΗΤΗΣ ΕΘΕΛΟΝΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΡΟΣΦΟΡΑΣ

In gratitude for God's blessings I/we make the following commitment to the ministries of St. Nicholas Church:
Σαν έκφραση ευγνωμοσύνης μου για τις ευλογίες που έχω λάβει από τον Θεό, δεσμεύομαι με την ακόλουθη
οικονομική και εθελοντική μου προσφορά προς την Εκκλησία του Αγίου Νικολάου:

\$ _____ (Weekly / Monthly / Quarterly / Yearly)
\$ _____ (Εβδομαδιαίως / Μηνιαίως / Ανά Τρίμηνο / Ετησίως)
TOTAL ANNUAL PLEDGE FOR 2025 :\$ _____
Συνολικό ποσό προσφοράς για το 2025:\$ _____

Come and See God work through your talents, skills, and experience, as well as your financial support.

Your offering to Christ and His Church can do as much as you empower it to do.

We give to Christ and His Church not according to our means but according to our love for Him.

Γίνετε μάρτυρες του έργου του Θεού! Δώστε από το ταλέντο με το οποίο σας έχει προικίσει,
με τις ικανότητες, τις εμπειρίες, την οικονομική σας ευχέρεια. Η προσφορά μας στον Χριστό και την
Εκκλησία Του σας βασιστεί στην αγάπη μας προς Αυτόν, όχι στην οικονομική μας δυνατότητα.

Planned Giving _____ Please send me information on making a planned gift to the Church.
Δωρεά που σχεδιάζω _____ Παρακαλώ στείλτε μου πληροφορίες σχετικά με τον τρόπο που μπορώ
να προσφέρω να δωρίσω.

Print Full Name/ Γράψτε με κεφαλαία γράμματα το επίθετό σας

Signature/ Υπογραφή

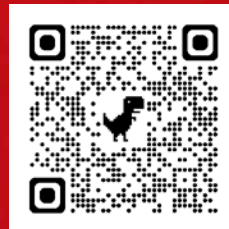
Date/ Ημερομηνία

Name / Όνομα	Date of Birth / Ημερομ. Γεννήσεως
Name of Spouse / Όνομα συζύγου	Date of Birth / Ημερομ. Γεννήσεως
Occupation / Επάγγελμα	
Occupation / Επάγγελμα (Spouse)	
Street Address / Ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση	
City / πόλη	Zip Code / ταχ. τομέας
Home Phone / Σταθερό τηλέφωνο σπιτιού	
Mobile Phone / Κινητό τηλέφωνο	Mobile Phone / Κινητό τηλέφωνο (Spouse)
Email Address / Ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση	
Email Address of Spouse / Ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση συζύγου	
Communication Preferences / Προτιμήσεις επικοινωνίας	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mail / Ταχυδρομείο	<input type="checkbox"/> Email / Ηλεκτρονική
<input type="checkbox"/> Text / Μήνυμα	
Dependent Children's Names and Birthdates / Όνόματα παιδιών και ημερομηνία γεννήσεώς τους	

Introducing Auto Pay Set It and Forget It!

Take the work out of giving! Set up automatic offerings and pledges right from your computer or tablet that will seamlessly reoccur every week, month, quarter, or year.

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ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΗ ΣΤΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΜΑΤΟ ΤΡΟΠΟ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΗΣ ΡΥΘΜΙΣΤΕ ΤΟ ΚΑΙ ... ΞΕΧΑΣΤΕ ΤΟ!

Δεν χρειάζεται να θυμάστε να στείλετε τη προσφορά σας. Ρυθμίστε την αυτόματη δωρεά και την εθελοντική σας προσφορά απευθείας από τον υπολογιστή σας ή το tablet σας που θα επαναλαμβάνεται ανελλιπώς κάθε εβδομάδα, μήνα, τρίμηνο ή έτος.

Εάν επιθυμείτε να στείλετε τη δωρεά σας ηλεκτρονικά, επισκεφθείτε την ιστοσελίδα μας www.stnicholasmd.org/give ή κατεβάστε την εφαρμογή GivePlus mobile. Εάν έχετε απορίες, επικοινωνήστε με το Γραφείο της Εκκλησίας στο τηλέφωνο 410-633-5020.

EVENTS

Saint Nicholas Name Day Dance Saturday December 6, 2025

Greektown Square
700 Quail Street
Baltimore, MD 21224

Adults: \$75
Under 18: \$50
Includes Dinner & Cash Bar

Doors open at 8:00PM,
Dinner served at 9:00PM

Church office: 410-633-5020

 **APOLLONIA**

FEATURING:
Yianni
Papastefanou



RHODIAN SOCIETY OF MARYLAND
PRESENTS ITS ANNUAL

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Holiday Crafts & More

Saturday December 13, 2025
from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
at
St. Nicholas Large Social Hall
520 South Ponca Street

Children will enjoy breakfast,
a craft and a visit with Santa.
Free to Children up to age 12.

Sponsored by Rhodian Society of Maryland
"Diagoras"

RSVP to diagoras3@msn.com



GOYA CHRISTMAS PARTY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13TH
5PM - 10PM
AT THE PLATEIA

DINNER & DESSERTS
GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST
KARAOKE & OTHER FUN GAMES
WHITE ELEPHANT (\$25 LIMIT)
CHRISTMAS PJS OR SWEATER

RSVP ON TEAMSAP BY DECEMBER 8TH



EVENTS

Hellenic Golden Coins 3rd Annual

RAFFLE FUNDRAISER

TO SUPPORT OUR YOUTH DANCERS!
Your chance to win amazing prizes!

\$5

1st Prize
Apple Mac Book
Air 13 inch Lap top
(\$1,000 value)

2nd Prize
Apple 11 inch iPad Air
(\$600 value)

3rd Prize
Beats Studio Wireless
Headphones
(\$350 value)

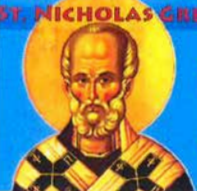
TICKET

For Tickets
Call/Text or Venmo
Vasili Philippou
(443) 845-0601



Drawing Dec. 21st, 2025
Write your phone number & 'HGC Raffle' in comments

ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF BALTIMORE
A PARISH OF THE METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY



HOPE & JOY

OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN AGES 5-12

First meeting will be held on

Sunday | January 4th 2026 | Greek School Classroom

Strengthening the relationship of Youth Orthodox Christians with Jesus Christ & His Church through fellowship, prayer, discussion, interactive activities, crafts and more!

Contact Eva Mavroulis 717-969-0016



Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it
Proverbs 22:6



ST. NICHOLAS
DIAMONDS

Christmas LUNCHEON PARTY

SATURDAY | JANUARY, 17, 2026 | 1:00PM

Greektown Square 6 Event Center
700 Quail St, Baltimore, MD 21224

TICKETS: \$50

MENU:

2 LAMB CHOPS ROASTED VEGETABLES
CRAB CAKE ROASTED POTATOES



SAVE THE DATE



JANUARY 31ST, 2026

DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT
PARATHOSI
A Celebration of Hellenic Heritage & Dance



NOTICE

† Sunday Coffee Hour Sponsored by St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church



Coffee & Assorted Cookies - \$200
Includes setup, cleanup, paper goods

Coffee Service Only - \$120
Includes setup, cleanup, paper goods

Fruit Tray - \$40

Spanakopita - \$75
100 pieces

Tyropita - \$75
100 pieces

Tray of Cheese, Olives & Crackers - \$100

Sandwiches - \$2 per piece
Tuna, Shrimp or Chicken

For orders please call 410-633-5020 or visit the
St Nicholas Office at 520 Ponca St



Sunday Coffee Hour & Makaria Menus

† Makaria Menu Sponsored by St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church



Appetizer Choices

Cheese Pies (included)
Spinach Pies (included)
Fried Calamari (add \$2.00pp)



Choices of salad (1)

Garden Salad, Greek Salad, Village Salad, Caesar Salad

Choices of Entree (1)

Roll & Butter (included)

Package #1 - \$31pp

Salmon (broiled/grilled)
Shrimp Creole
Shrimp Orzo
Cod Fish (broiled/fried)

Package #2 - \$39pp

Two (2) Jumbo Lump Crab Cakes
Choice of Fish and One (1) Jumbo Lump
Crab Cake

Sides (2 choices)

Greek Style Lemon Potatoes, Roasted Red Skin Potatoes,
Kritharaki(orzo), white rice, fresh cut vegetables, string beans Greek style

Beverages (items included)

Red or White Wine, Coffee and Tea, Sodas,
Water

Also available - Paximadia

Bar Options

Mixed Drinks \$6
Domestic Beer \$6
Imported Beer \$6
Mixed Drinks and Beer Available at Per
Drink Charge \$10

tel church: 410-633-5020
tel venue: 410-633-3131



Exercise Your Brain! **FIFTEEN TOUGH RIDDLES TO CONTEMPLATE**



1. I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with wind. What am I?
2. You measure my life in hours, and I serve you by expiring. I'm quick when I'm thin and slow when I'm fat. The wind is my enemy.
3. I come from a mine and am surrounded by wood. I help others to express themselves. What am I?
4. What is brown and has a tail, a head, and no legs?
5. If all Wibbles are Criggles, all Borkins are Kwumblins, no Hoggles are Borkins, and all Criggles are Borkins, is it true that all Borkins are Criggles?
6. What English word has three consecutive double letters?
7. A bus driver goes the wrong way down a one-way street. He passes the cops, but they don't stop him. Why?
8. Name the next three letters in this combination: OTTFSS.
9. There came a bird featherless and sat on the trees leafless. There came a maiden speechless and ate the bird featherless, from off the trees leafless. What is it?
10. You don't know me yet, but you always miss me when I'm gone. What am I?
11. Poor people have it. Rich people need it. If you eat it you die. What is it?
12. I can fly but have no wings. I cry but have no eyes. What am I?
13. Sam is outside a shop. She can't read the signs, but she knows she needs to go in to make a purchase. What store is she at?
14. What walks on four feet in the morning, two in the afternoon, and three at night?
15. The more you try to see me, the less you see. The closer you get, the less you know. I'm everywhere, but I can't be touched. What am I?

[Answers Next Page](#)

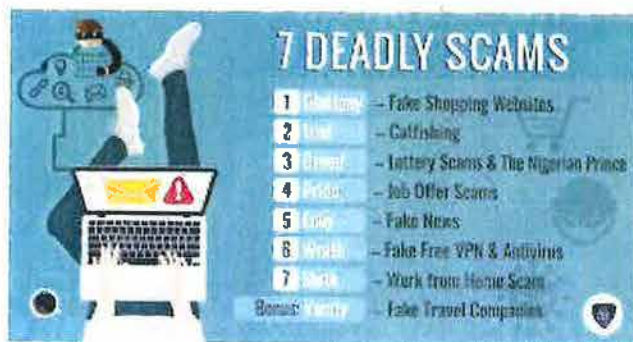
MORE FUN FACTS

Fact: There are parts of Africa in all four hemispheres. For people whose education was largely focused on the Western world, it may be surprising to find out exactly how huge the continent of Africa is. For instance, it spans all four hemispheres and covers nearly 12 million square miles.

Fact: Your eye can see a million different colors. Our bodies are made up of some bizarre features! According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, humans can distinguish approximately 10 million colors. That's thanks to the cone cells in your retina, the back part of your eye that senses light and sends signals to your brain. These alerts allow you to perceive different colors. Some people who have a rare condition called tetrachromacy have an extra eye cone that enables them to see hundreds of millions of colors.

Fact: German chocolate cake was invented in Texas. The "German" part of German chocolate cake comes from a person's name—and that person wasn't even from Germany. Specifically, it's named after Samuel German, who, in 1852, created the formula for a sweet baking chocolate bar for Baker's Chocolate Company in Massachusetts, which subsequently (and confusingly!) named the product Baker's German's Sweet Chocolate. Fast-forward to June 13, 1957. The Dallas Morning Star published a recipe for a cake, invented and submitted by a reader identified as Mrs. George Clay, which used the chocolate. Over the years as the recipe made its way around the country, people lost the original reference for the name and thought German chocolate cake came from the country of Germany.





"A lot of scammers will give themselves titles," said Rodney Hobson, author of "The Book of Scams." "They may be quite meaningless titles and completely fictitious, but it sounds very impressive. People will always believe someone who's got a title."

That's why scammers will claim to be from your bank or cable company or represent the post office, or will send emails supposedly from your boss or your boss' boss. Whether they're preying on your greed or your desire to help out, they borrow trust by claiming either to be a person in a position of authority or someone personally connected to you.

So how do you know it's not really your bank or Amazon that's calling? If someone claims they're with your bank, simply say you need to call them back. And don't call back the number they give you (as Howard did). Look up the right number.

It may be unfortunate, but you have to be suspicious. If something sounds too good to be true, it almost certainly is. Ask yourself why some unknown "stockbroker" is calling you, of all people, to get you in on a can't-miss deal.

"It's amazing how many people think they can win the lottery when they haven't even bought a ticket," Hobson said.

It's not important that you keep up with all the latest scams to recognize them right off. Scams are always evolving. What is important is that your spidey sense starts to tingle as soon as you're asked for one of two things: money or information. If they're trying to get you to send money, slow the transaction down, stay calm and take steps to make sure you know for sure whom it is you're dealing with.

Lots of your personal information is already out there, sold and resold by entities you've willingly given it to, such as credit card companies (or taken out of their control by data breaches). Your bank already knows your birthday and Social Security number; no one legitimate is going to call and ask. Scammers will often know just enough about you to sound authoritative, but if you give them anything more, that helps them complete a puzzle that will allow them to set up credit cards in your name or put you on the hook in some other way.

One way to prevent that is by freezing your credit reports. There are three main credit bureaus: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. It costs you nothing to freeze your accounts, which will prevent scammers from being able to use your information to open credit cards or take out loans. You can always open them back up temporarily if you need to.

"It just locks everything down," Tressler said. "You

may have an identity theft try, but they won't be able to get any of the information they would need to open up a new credit card or get a mortgage or a car loan."

Everyone should check their credit reports periodically for fraud and mistakes, she continued. And if you have been a victim of fraud, it's important to report it. The money you sent through a payment app is likely gone for good, but reporting scams to the local police or your state's attorney general or the FTC provides information about the current scams being run, while giving shape to the scope of the problem. This information also gets checked routinely by law enforcement agencies so they can detect patterns regarding the type of people or regions being heavily targeted at any given time.

Nowadays, it's a good idea to update the wisdom of Ronald Reagan: don't trust, always verify.

"The ones that play on people's desire to be helpful are a clever way to get people to divulge their personal information," Brooks said. "It makes us less helpful as a society, just because there are scams out there."

HEALTHY BODY AND MIND

BRUSH, DON'T RINSE

Dental experts increasingly agree that people should not rinse after brushing their teeth.

As the Washington Post reports, they recommend brushing "at least twice a day with a fluoride-containing toothpaste to help prevent cavities. And they say skipping the rinse after brushing allows the fluoride to stay on the teeth, providing added protection."

A study of 2,800 people in Britain, "found that those who rinsed with a cup of water after brushing had an average of almost 20% for decayed, missing or filled teeth, compared with about three for those who did not rinse at all."

Answers Previous Page

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. An echo. | 9. Snow. |
| 2. A candle. | 10. Time. |
| 3. Pencil lead. | 11. Nothing. |
| 4. A penny | 12. A cloud. |
| 5. No. | 13. An eyeglass store. |
| 6. Bookkeeper. | 14. A man. The |
| 7. He was walking. | times of day represent a |
| 8. ENT. Each represents | lifetime. He crawls as a |
| the first letter of a number in a | baby, walks as an adult, |
| sequence beginning with "one." | and walks with a cane as |
| So what comes after six and | an elderly man. |
| seven? Eight, nine, and ten. | 15. A shadow.Brush. |

\$ A FOCUS ON FINANCES \$

TECHNOLOGY HAS MADE AMERICANS MORE AVAILABLE TO SCAMMERS

Howard, a retired professor who's written several books, considers himself pretty smart. Nonetheless, he got duped. He received a "very official-sounding call" one morning from someone purporting to be from Amazon's fraud division. There was a problem with Howard's account that needed to be cleared up but to do so, he had to go out and buy an expensive gift card to make the transition work.

The caller had gotten Howard worked into a panicky state, so he went along. He only wised up when the caller said the first gift card didn't clear up the problem and he needed to buy another one. "I don't know whether it was worth \$400, but it was a good lesson to learn," said Howard. "I haven't gone for one since then."

The number of scams has grown for one simple reason: technology. It's now easy for scammers to send out thousands of emails or texts at next to no cost, or have machines do the dialing to thousands of numbers. (That's why there's that telltale pause when you answer the phone, and it takes a beat before another person comes on the line.)

Meanwhile, we're all more accessible to criminals. It wasn't that long ago that they had to try to find us at home, or maybe at work. Now we carry mini-computers around all the time, ready to receive emails or texts from people claiming to be Nigerian princes.

Technology has made not only individuals but their money more readily available. Most of the relevant regulations were crafted at a time when the big fear was bad guys coercing people to collect and cough up the daily maximum amounts they could withdraw from an ATM. Now, much more of their money can be transferred instantly and irrevocably using gift cards, payment apps and crypto ATMs.

Everyone can and will be targeted for scams, but certain groups are heavily preyed upon—seniors in particular. They're part of a generation that grew up when answering the phone felt imperative. They may feel lonely and welcome calls. Some may have cognitive impairment; even if they don't, they



may not be as tech savvy as younger digital natives.

The other reason seniors present a major target is that they have accumulated wealth. Not all, certainly, but older people are more likely to have built up assets than someone in their 20s. But scammers are happy to go after anyone with money. Young people are often victims because they're new to managing money and their own accounts, said Colleen Tressler, a senior project manager with the Federal Trade Commission's division of consumer and business education.

"Young people are much more on social than any generation before and they're maybe not as savvy about not sharing information—and realizing that the person on the other end may not be legitimate and has nefarious plans for the use of that information," she said.

Each year, Americans lose more than 1 billion to romance scams, falling for online declarations of love and, ultimately, requests for money. "They're good talkers and they often work from a script, so they're ready for anything you might raise," said Adam Rust, director of financial services at the Consumer Federation of America. "They are very good at luring you in, and very clever people fall for them."

Some scams are quite detailed and elaborate, involving personally tailored information and deepfake videos. But scamming is mostly a volume business. There's a reason you probably get a half-dozen calls every day. Not everyone has to fall for a scam for it to work. Tricking a handful out of a thousand can be profitable.

"The problem is, a lot of people don't believe it's ever going to happen to them, so they don't watch out for the red flags," Nofziger said.

DON'T TRUST, ALWAYS VERIFY

In the early 19th century, the Eiffel Tower was for sale. At least, according to Victor Lustig, who went around to the scrap metal merchants of Paris, telling them the authorities were so worried about the tower's structural integrity that they were going to tear it down, putting a whole lot of scrap iron on the market. He even convinced a merchant named Andre Poisson that his bid—the equivalent of 1 million today—would be the winner at auction, going so far as to accept a bribe to make the transaction seem more plausible.

Lustig concocted not only a story but a convincing background, staying at one of the fanciest hotels in Paris and calling himself the "deputy director of the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs" while also claiming to be a count.



A BREAK IN YOUR DAY

MORE DEMETRI MARTIN JOKES BY READERSHIP REQUEST

*[*Demetri Martin is the son of Father Dean and Presvytera Lillian Martin. Father Dean Martin's final parish assignment was in Toms River, New Jersey]*

I like to stand near ATM machines and, when somebody types in their pin number, I go, 'Got it!' And then I run away.

I used to play sports. Then I realized you can buy trophies. Now I am good at everything.

Automatic paper towel dispensers are a solution to something that was never a problem in the first place.

Here is a tip for all you young people drinking wine. With pasta, drink white wine. With steak, drink red wine. And if you're vegan, you're annoying.

A sports bar is a way to take a bar and fill it with even more annoying people than usual.

I saw a sign that said, "Watch for children." I was like, "That sounds like a fair trade—especially if they're bad kids."

If you have a lip ring, try hanging some tiny keys from it. This will make you look even more interesting.

Mosquito bites Jesus, receives communion.

Pets are only animals that don't taste good.

The best way to make somebody feel important is to try to assassinate them.

The Lord works in mysterious ways. Indeed. And a shorter way to say that is: God is a sneak.

The problem with most people, is that they are most people.

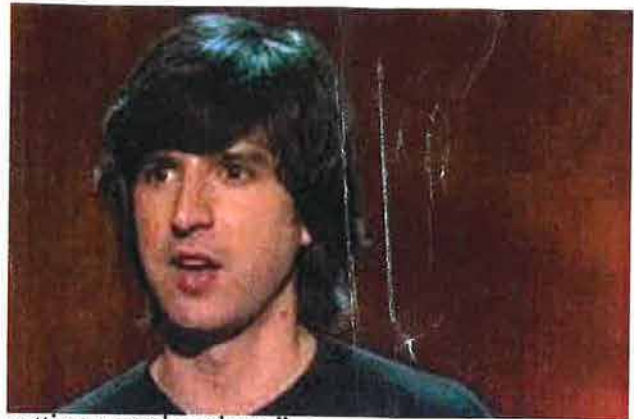
I think cats would have an even worse attitude if they found out how stupid their names were.

I think one of the most ground-breaking inventions of all time is the jackhammer.

I remember when I used to be really into nostalgia.

Game, set, match equals tennis. Set, match, run equals arson.

I go the gym and I try to run on the treadmill and I listen to music but it doesn't motivate me enough. So, I'm going to get a recording of a pack of wolves gaining on me. People would be like, "Why is that guy crying on that treadmill over there?" "I don't know, but he's been yelling, "help" for like 20 minutes. He's



getting a good workout."

The easiest time to add insult to injury is when you're signing somebody's cast.

I think the best thing about being dumb is that it makes magic a lot better. Where the hell did that bunny come from? I dunno, but I'm calling the cops because he just cut that lady in half.

If you drink enough beer, everything turns in to a bed.

My friend asked me I ever swam with dolphins. I was like, "Yeah, of course. What distance are we talking about from the dolphins? Because the last time I was in the ocean, I'm pretty sure I swam with most of them."

Timing is everything. That's a cliché. Now. If I'd said that a long time ago, I'd have been original.

It turns out dentists don't like it very much when you show up for a cleaning in full vampire gear.

When I am holding a water balloon, so many things look so unnecessarily dry.

I have a jar at home, and I put pennies in it whenever I curse. The other day I spilled the jar. I owe it about \$25.

Socrates became a trendsetter. Other philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle, quickly followed suit, dropping their last names too. And, for centuries after that there would be countless imitators including Voltaire, Michelangelo, and, much later, Cher.

I can tell how lonely I am by how easily I'm fooled by a mannequin in a store.

I set a personal record on Christmas. I got my shopping done three weeks ahead of time. I had all the presents back at my apartment, I was halfway through wrapping them, and I realized, "Damn, I used the wrong wrapping paper." The paper I used said, "Happy Birthday." I didn't want to waste it, so I just wrote "Jesus" on it.

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Church and Greek School

January - October 2025

PRELIMINARY

	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget
Income			
4000 Stewardship	143,940.00	202,320.00	(58,380.00)
4010 Greek School Registration	55,922.63	57,425.00	(1,502.37)
4020 Sales - Candles	69,301.06	74,845.00	(5,543.94)
Other Income	95,536.62	62,660.00	32,876.62
Total Income	364,700.31	397,250.00	(32,549.69)
Total Cost of Goods Sold	77,130.94	55,523.30	21,607.64
Gross Profit	287,569.37	341,726.70	(54,157.33)
Expenses			
Total CAPITAL COSTS (CHURCH)	13,806.00	34,115.00	(20,309.00)
Total GENERAL & ADMINISTRATION	203,431.14	212,534.00	(5,589.22)
Total OCCUPANCY COSTS	89,260.22	70,210.00	19,050.22
Total PAYROLL EXPENSES	315,800.19	277,038.42	38,761.77
Total YOUTH AND EDUCATIONAL	2,010.64	6,750.00	0.00
Total Expenses	624,308.19	600,647.42	23,660.77
Net Operating Income	(336,738.82)	(258,920.72)	(77,818.10)
Other Revenue			
ERTC (Net, less Paychex fee)	281,946.25	0.00	281,946.25
Total Other Revenue	\$ 281,946.25	\$ 0.00	\$ 281,946.25
Net Other Revenue	\$ 281,946.25	\$ 0.00	\$ 281,946.25
Net Revenue	(54,792.57)	(258,920.72)	204,128.15

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Plateia

January - October 2025

PRELIMINARY

	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget
Income			
4140 Plateia Income (Onsite)	193,229.96	324,785.00	(131,555.04)
Total Income	193,229.96	324,785.00	(131,555.04)
Cost of Goods Sold			
COST OF GOODS SOLD			
Total Plateia CGS Expenses	84,160.27	105,465.00	(21,304.73)
Total COST OF GOODS SOLD	84,160.27	105,465.00	(21,304.73)
Total Cost of Goods Sold	84,160.27	105,465.00	(21,304.73)
Gross Profit	109,069.69	219,320.00	(110,250.31)
Expenses			
PLATEIA EXPENSES			
Total Occupancy Expenses (Plateia)	113,637.27	142,975.00	(29,337.73)
Total Payroll Expenses (Plateia)	21,813.22	46,310.00	(24,496.78)
Total Admin Expenses (Plateia)	15,128.91	20,690.00	(5,561.09)
Total Bus Dev/Marketing Expenses (Plateia)	4,797.37	18,440.00	(13,642.63)
Total PLATEIA EXPENSES	155,376.77	228,415.00	(73,038.23)
Total Expenses	155,376.77	228,415.00	(73,038.23)
Net Operating Income	(46,307.08)	(9,095.00)	(37,212.08)
Other Revenue			
Insurance Payout	8,497.82	0.00	8,497.82
Total Other Revenue	8,497.82	0.00	8,497.82
Net Other Revenue	8,497.82	0.00	8,497.82
Net Revenue	(37,809.26)	(9,095.00)	(28,714.26)

Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Budget vs. Actuals: Learning Center

January - October 2025

PRELIMINARY

	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget
Income			
4011 Learning Center Income	1,165,493.95	1,084,725.00	80,768.95
Total 4011 Learning Center Income	1,165,493.95	1,084,725.00	80,768.95
Total Income	1,165,493.95	1,084,725.00	80,768.95
Gross Profit	1,165,493.95	1,084,725.00	80,768.95
Expenses			
LEARNING CENTER			
Total Payroll Expense (L.C.)	908,107.17	764,250.80	143,856.37
Total Food and Classroom Supplies (L.C.)	41,344.56	40,300.00	1,044.56
Total Admin and Office Expenses (L.C.)	51,689.29	54,545.00	(2,855.71)
Total Occupancy Expenses/Cap Improvements (L.C.)	107,726.58	81,725.00	26,001.58
Total LEARNING CENTER	1,108,867.60	940,820.80	168,046.80
VACANT BUILDING EXPENSES - 4815 Eastern Ave	7,790.65	12,510.00	(4,719.35)
Total Expenses	1,116,658.25	953,330.80	163,327.45
Net Operating Income	48,835.70	131,394.20	(82,558.50)
Other Revenue			
State and Local Grants	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Other Revenue	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Net Other Revenue	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Net Revenue	\$ 48,835.70	\$ 131,394.20	(82,558.50)

4815 Eastern AVE Mortgage Principal Payments \$ 5,651.20

OVERALL BEEC SURPLUS (LOSS) (Operating and Mortgage) \$43,184.50

STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 - 11/1/24 - 10/31/25

STEWARDSHIP YEAR 2025 [11-01-2024 --- 10-31-2025]						
Contribution Type	Transaction Location	Pledged	Received	Outstanding	Report Date:	12/02/2025
Pledged	Office	\$61,895.00	\$44,420.00	-\$17,475.00	Number Of Family Contributions	367
Not Pledged	Office/Vanco	--	\$147,926.72	--	Number of Individual Contributions	460
TOTAL	--	--	\$192,346.72	--		--

Agapios, Maria	Cook, Harry	Gialamas, Joanna
Alafassos, Spiro & Penny	Cornias, Arezina	Giannakoulis, George & Amy
Alexandrou, Constantina	Cornias, Clara	Giannas, Stylianos & Maria
Alexandrou, John & Despina	Cornias, Despina	Giorgakis, John & Maria
Alexandrou, Niki	Cornias, Fotini	Giorgakis, Vasilios
Alourdas, Nick	Cornias, John	Gluszcz, Christine
Alsup, Andrew & Vasilias	Cornias, Kiriaki	Glykiadis, Despina
Amann, Mary & Franz	Cornias, Larry	Glykiadis, Konstantinos
Anastasiades, Demos & Nancy	Cornias, Nicholas	Glytsis, Filippos & Papakanaki, Georgia
Angelopoulos, Chris	Cossis, Milton & Amalia	Gray, Jamison
Angelos, John & Irene	Dardamanis, Eva	Gyftopoulos, Sofia
Angelos, Mark & Kalliope	Dendrinis, Evangelia	Halikias, Anastasia
Apesos, Antigoni	Diakantonis, Nickolaos & Agathi	Halikias, Anna
Aravidis, Nickolas & Smaragda	Diniotis, Anastasia	Halkias, Fotini
Argetakis, Andronikos & Paraskevi	Dotis, Markellos & Georgia	Harris, Athena
Argetakis, Angeliki	Douskas, Konstantinos	Hatziefthimiou, Anastasia
Argetakis, Niko & Vasilias	Douskas, Nicolas & Dimitra	Hatzigeorgalis, Antonios
Argirakis, Pantelis & Despina	Douskas, Vasiliki	Hatzigeorgalis, Nicholaos
Argiropoulos, William & Fotini	Eleftheriou, John	Hazarides, Melli
Argyrakis, Despina	Eliopoulos, Anna	Hiotis, Michael & Hiotis, Despina
Asmar-, Oliver & Nikoletos, Anna	Eliou, Ernest & Lilian	Houvardas, Minas
Athnasiou, Antonios & Penny	Fakas, James & Valasia	Ieromonahos, Dimitrios & Maria
Athos, Janet	Fakas, Vasilios	Ieromonahos, Pantelis & Stamatia
Atsalis, Gus & Kalliope	Fantis, Penelope	Jurado, Jonathan
Atsidis, Ioannis & Efthimia	Filipidis, Effie	Kafouros, Demetrios
Avgerinos, George & Phaedra	Filipidis, James	Kaikis, Clemis & Maria
Avgerinos, Vasilios & Sophia	Filipidis, Maria	Kaitis, Angela
Bakalis, John	Filippakis, Filippos	Kalambihis, Maria
Bakiasi, Edward	Finney, Thomas & Virginia	Kaliakoudas, Sofia
Balatsoukas, Konstantina	Forakis, George	Kaminaris, Demetrios & Michelle
Balomas, Patricia	Forakis, Michael & Alexandra	Kammas, Georgios & Eleftheria Tzanakaki
Basil, George & Angie	Forakis, Nicholas & Athena	Kamos, Mary
Benetos, Ioannis & Cynthia	Forakis, Stamati & Despina	Kapetanakos, Elias & Stephanie
Bisbikis, Pete & Eleni	Fotinos, Aikaterini	Kapetanakos, Soulla
Black, Mark & Sakellis Black, Irene	Fotinos, James	Kaputsos, Irene
Bonolis, Catherine	Fotinos, Michael	Karabelas, Ioanna
Bouloubasis, Nicholas	Foukas, Andromahi	Karabelas, Pete & Helen
Bournias, Lambrini	Fragakis, Aikaterini	Karaflos, Nektarios
Bournousouzis, Panagiota	Frangakis, Sofoula	Karagiannis, Carla
Britzolakis, Georgios & Eugenia	Frangos, John & Katerina	Karagiannis, Maria
Canning, Nicole	Galiatsatos, Chrysoula	Karagiorgos, Nicholaos
Cardiges, Nicholas	Gargiulo, Angela	Karais, Konstantinos
Chagetas, Angela	Gatanas, Angelos	Karamihalis, George
Charalambopoulos, Charalambos & Aspasia	Gavrilis, John & Patricia	Karamihalis, Theologos
Charalambopoulos, George & Sofia Koutsoumbis	Georgakakou, Vasiliki & Chandar, Bharath	Karanikolis, Nikos & Vasiliki
Chionis, Antonios	Georgalas, Michael & Hrisovalantou	Karavedas, Viola
Chrissomallis, Metaxia	Georgalas, Olga	Kardiasmenos, Metaxia
Chrissomallis, Sophie	Georgas, George	Karoutsos, George & Alexandra
Christ, Philip & Marina	Georgiadis, Diogenis & Nektaria	Karoutsos, Nikitas
Christakou, Stavroula	Gerapetrites, Panagiota	Kastanakis, Michael & Nikki
Conway, Rose	Giakoumakis, Nick & Marianna Gavrilis	Kastellorizios, Konstantinos & Maria

STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 - 11/1/24 - 10/31/25

STEWARDSHIP YEAR 2025 [11-01-2024 --- 10-31-2025]						
Contribution Type	Transaction Location	Pledged	Received	Outstanding	Report Date:	12/02/2025
Pledged	Office	\$61,895.00	\$44,420.00	-\$17,475.00	Number Of Family Contributions	367
Not Pledged	Office/Vanco	--	\$147,926.72	--	Number of Individual Contributions	460
TOTAL	--	--	\$192,346.72	--		--

Katsaros, Emanuel
 Katsas, Stavros & Evangelia
 Kattavenos, Michael & Stamatia
 Kazamias, Voula
 Kazos, Vagelis & Maria
 Kefalas, Mike & Nora
 Kevas, George & Agella
 Kevas, Yanni
 Klosterides, Michael
 Klosteridis, Michael & Klosteridis, Eleni
 Klosteridis, Spiros & Paraskevi
 Koliadis, Zinovia
 Koliotofis, Evangelos & Athina
 Kolotos, Dora
 Komninos, Emmanuel
 Komninos, Joanna
 Konstantinou, John & Charlotte
 Kontoudis, Konstantinos & Kyriaki
 Kornias, George & Maria
 Korologos, Louis & Anastasia
 Kosmas, Demetrios & Denise
 Kosmas, Sam & Leraki, Marianna
 Kostos, John
 Koukides, Georgios
 Koukides, Harry & Stella
 Koukides, John
 Koumoudis, Kyriakos
 Koumoudis, Sotiris & Vasiliki
 Kouroupi, Steve
 Kourtesis, Michael & Adrienne
 Koutsantonis, Demetrios
 Koutsantonis, George
 Koutsouris, Stylianos & Maria
 Kouvaris, Paula
 Kovios, Panagiotis & Christine
 Kron, Christopher & Alexa
 Laiakis, Dimitrios & Anastasia
 Lallas, Eva
 Lambrow, Stephanie
 Larentzos, James & Despina
 Ledakis, Panagiotis
 Lentis, Minas & Kostalas, Eleni
 Loizou, Chris & Doxia
 Lykos, Konstantinos
 Makris, John
 Maltas, John
 Marianos, Vasilios & Lamprini
 Mastromanolis, Manuel
 Mastrovasilis, Michael & Lisa Kastellorizios
 Matsangos, Argyro
 Mavromoustakos, Tsampika
 Mavronis, Michael & Kleopatra

Mavronis, Nicholas
 Mavroulis, Photis & Eva
 Mekins, Angeliki
 Micklos, Angelos & Panagiota
 Micklos, Christine
 Miller, Emanuel & Shirley
 Millett, Earl & Alex, Elizabeth
 Millon, Edwards & Florence
 Milonas, Kimon
 Mimaros, Paraskevi
 Minadakis, Antonios & Agapi
 Minas, Rose
 Moniodis, Michael & Effie
 Moniodis, Michael & Flora
 Myaris, John & Sofia
 Nakos, Angelo & Mary Kamos
 Nickoles, Josh
 Nicolarakis, George
 Niotis, Vasilios
 Nistazos, George & Despina
 Nistazos, Nickolas & Alena
 Nychis, George & Angeliki
 Nychis, Vasilios & Evangelia
 O'Drudy, Leo & Tricia
 Ohno, Maria
 Oikonomou, Fr. Georgios
 Orfanos, Anthony & Regina
 Orfanos, Michael
 Palas, John & Katina
 Pandelidis, Demetrios & Elisavet
 Pantelides, Joanne
 Papadimitriou, Maria
 Papadopoulou, Anastasios & Marianthi
 Papadopoulou, Efsthathios & Kalliopi
 Papalexopoulos, Christianna
 Papatthakis, Matthew
 Papavasiliou, Dimitris
 Papavasiliou, Lucas & Renee
 Papavasiliou, Virginia
 Papavasilis, Arhontoula
 Paragios, Ioannis & Popi
 Paralys, Kon/Nos & Anna
 Paros, Mary
 Parthemos, Antonia & Mitchem, Jos
 Parthemos, Kaliope
 Parthemos, Konstantinos & Angelika
 Pateris, Nicanor
 Patras, Leonard
 Peach, Antonia
 Pearce, Anthony & Maria
 Pelekakis, Maria
 Perdikakis, George

Petrinolis, Georgios & Irene
 Petropoulos, Dimitrios
 Philippou, Kalliopi
 Philippou, Philip
 Philippou, Vasilios
 Pikounis, Adrew
 Pikounis, Eleni
 Pikounis, George & Vasiliki
 Pikounis, John & Despina
 Polikandriotis, Kostas & Hariklia
 Polikandriotis, Maria
 Polychronis, Aristides & Virginia
 Poulimenakos, Eleni
 Prassinis, Demetrios & Carol
 Protopapas, George & Sofia
 Protopapas, Marina
 Protopapas, Nicholas
 Pulianas, Despina
 Qirjako, Spiro & Bona
 Quintero, Dennis & Rita
 Redmiles, Sophia
 Reese, Kalyopi & John
 Reppas, Paraskevi
 Reppas, Soterios & Elia
 Rigopoulos, Mary Ann
 Roberts, Brian & Maria
 Rologas, Christina
 Roros, Dimitrios & Poli
 Roros, John & Angeliki
 Roros, Kyriaki
 Roros, Stavros
 Roufas, Anthie
 Roussos, Anthony & Laura
 Roxanis, Dean & Soula
 Roxanis, John
 Roxanis, Steven
 Sakpazis, Ioannis & Maria
 Saliaris, Panagiotis
 Samaras, Peter
 Sarioglou, Anastasia
 Sarioglou, Nikolaos
 Sarlanis, Kiriako
 Sazaklis, Antonios
 Sevdalis, Spiros
 Sevdalis, Theohariti
 Sfakianoudis, John & Angeliki
 Sfakianoudis, Kon/Nos & Angela
 Sfakianoudis, Vasilis & Lemonia
 Sfriou, Antonia
 Sgouros, Shirley
 Sigambris, Irene
 Siskos, Stefanos & Dina

STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 - 11/1/24 - 10/31/25

Skandalis, George
 Skevofilax, Emmanuel
 Sotirchos, Elias & Yiouli Ktena
 Souranis, Maritsa
 Souranis, Michael & Thoula
 Souranis, Paraskevi
 Spencer, Eric & Donna
 Stakias, Dimitrios & Joanne
 Stakias, Michael & Lemonia
 Stakias, Stelios & Tina
 Stamatopoulos, Nicolas
 Stamidis, Anastasios & Angela
 Stamidis, Stergios & Fotini
 Stamoulis, George & Maria
 Stamoulis, Kyriakos & Jessica
 Stavlas, Jerry & Kalliope
 Stavrakis, Demetrios & Antonia
 Stewart, John & Rita
 Syropoulos, Amalia
 Syropoulos, Nicholas & Angeliki
 Tasker, Dale & Kalomira
 Tetteris, Rhodea
 Themelis, Constantine & Thalia
 Themelis, John & Renee
 Theoharis, Emmanuel & Maria

Triantafilos, Mary
 Trintis, Thorina
 Tsakalas, Steven & Dina
 Tsakalos, Jeanette
 Tsamouras, Constantine & Moshoula
 Tsampos, Michael & Christina
 Tsapakidis, Nikolaos
 Tsapakidis, Theoharis & Tsapakidis Papadimas, Evan
 Tserkis, George
 Tsironis, Evdokia
 Tzavaris, Stelios & Theodosia
 Tzimas, Anna
 United Chian Society Of Baltimore
 Vasilakopoulos, Anastasia
 Vasilakopoulos, Irene
 Vasiliades, Antonios & Sofia
 Vasiliades, Minus & Kelly
 Vasiliadis, Antonios & Sofia
 Vasilios, Frank & Irene
 Vatakis, Tessie
 Venetis, Dimitrios & Kiki
 Verenakis, Maria
 Vergos, John
 Vizaniaris, Evangeline
 Vlachos, Nikolaos & Sevi Froumis

Vonakis, George & Irene
 Vonakis, Joseph
 Vourgarakis, Harry
 Voxakis, Samantha
 Xouri, Sofia
 Yeakim, Dionysios & Angela
 Yianakis, Steve & Katina
 Zervos, Christine

*Thank you to
 all of our
 2025 Stewards!*

STEWARDSHIP FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026 - 11/1/25 - 10/31/26

STEWARDSHIP YEAR 2026 [11-01-2025 --- 10-31-2026]						
Contribution Type	Transaction Location	Pledged	Received	Outstanding	Report Date:	11/04/2025
Pledged	Office	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$0.00	Number Of Family Contributions	28
Not Pledged	Office/Vanco	--	\$2060.00	--	Number of Individual Contributions	28
TOTAL	--	--	\$2060.00	--		--

Amann, Mary & Franz
 Aravidis, Nickolas & Smaragda
 Avgerinos, George & Phaedra
 Cornias, Clara
 Cossis, Milton & Amalia
 Cozmo, Theodore & Kiriaki
 Douskas, Konstantinos
 Georgakakou, Vasiliki & Chandar, Bharath
 Georgalas, Michael & Hrisovalantou
 Ieromonahos, Pantelis & Stamatia
 Karoutsos, Apostolis & Anna
 Koumoudis, Kyriakos
 Kourtesis, Michael & Adrienne
 Kron, Christopher & Alexa

Ledakis, Panagiotis
 Lentis, Minas & Kostalas, Eleni
 O'Drudy, Leo & Tricia
 Papadopoulos, Anastasios & Marianthi
 Papavasilis, Arhontoula
 Paragios, Ioannis & Popi
 Patrikios, Aikaterine & Jissri, Mike
 Peach, Antonia
 Polychronis, Aristides & Virginia
 Sfikas, Paraskevas
 Stamidis, Anastasios & Angela
 Stamidis, Stergios & Fotini
 Vasilakopoulos, Irene
 Vasiliadis, Antonios & Sofia

Please remember to submit your 2026 Stewardship Cards!

ST. NICHOLAS MAILING LIST

To subscribe to the St. Nicholas mailing list, please follow these steps:

- 1) Open your Email client and create a new message.
- 2) Enter stnicholasbaltimore@listserv.goarch.org as the To address. If this address does not work, you may need to use **STserv@stnicholasbaltimore@listserv.goarch.org**. Older list serve accounts were configured with the STserv address.
- 3) Enter **“subscribe” stnicholasbaltimore** in the body of your message where *stnicholasbaltimore* is the name of the list you are subscribing to.
- 4) Leave the subject of the message blank. If your mail program requires text in the subject field, enter random characters.
- 5) Send the email; you will receive a confirmation if you successfully subscribed.



LITURGICAL CALENDAR - DECEMBER

- Thursday, December 4 St. Barbara the Great Martyr:
Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30
- Friday, December 5 St. Nicholas Great Vesper Service: 6:30 pm
Reception will follow after the Vesper Service.
- Saturday, December 6 St. Nicholas Name Day Celebration:
Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
Reception will follow after the service.
- Sunday, December 7 Tenth Sunday of St. Luke:
Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
- Friday, December 12 St. Spyridon the Wonderworker:
Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
- Sunday, December 14 Eleventh Sunday of St. Luke:
Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
- Sunday, December 21 Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord:
Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
- Wednesday, December 24 Christmas Eve Service: 7:30 pm
- Thursday, December 25 The Holy Nativity (The Birth of our Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ): Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
- Saturday, December 27 St. Stephen the First Martyr:
Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
- Sunday, December 28 Sunday after the Nativity of our Lord:
Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am

Note: From December 12th until December 25th Strict Fast is prescribed.