

# The Desert



# Messenger

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

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Volume 6, Issue 5    *St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV*

May 2008

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## *From Father John*

Beloved in Christ:

*Christos Anesti! Christ is Risen!*

We came in masses again this year, eagerly anticipating the lighting of our Paschal candles. We stood for hours and held them until the wee hours of the morning, feeling renewed and blessed that God had granted another year to receive the Light, to partake of the Body and Blood of our Lord at the Divine Liturgy, to be encouraged again by the inspired Homily of St. John Chrysostom, to crack our red eggs and to feast on the traditional lamb.

There is no question that the Orthodox Church embraces and expresses the true and full joy that is Pascha and celebrates this Feast of Feasts – both in worship and custom – with zeal that far surpasses the springtime rituals of others. And though we Orthodox Christians have held close this treasure for centuries, I often wonder if each of us personally grasps its profound worth, as well as its application to our lives.

Beloved, only at the grave do we discover the essence of Great and Holy Pascha and its impact on the world. Those who have experienced the loss of a loved one surely feel the sting of death – a blow that hits like no other, resulting in numbness and an array of emotions unlike any we have ever felt, the sense of loss that is beyond words, of isolation and mourning that is extremely difficult to comfort, and deep pain in knowing that we can no longer touch or hold the one we love. God, Who did not create us for death, knows this pain – and He was born in the flesh and carried His Cross to eradicate it.

Our Lord Jesus Christ before His Passion showed His love for all mankind as He comforted the grieving sister of His friend, Lazaros, who had died, with this pronouncement: *“I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in Me, though He die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” (John 11:25)* His words became reality when He descended into Hell and vanquished the final enemy – Death itself – transforming it to a passing-over (literally, a “Pascha”) to everlasting Life by His glorious third-day Bodily Resurrection.

The One Who wept at the tomb of His beloved friend is He Who willingly endured Crucifixion and He Who is Risen – drying the tears of all His creation forever, for His Resurrection allows for our own rising from sin, suffering and death. We were initially resurrected with Christ on the day of our Baptism, and we remain Christians of true Faith insofar as we seek to learn and understand, strive to believe and pray, participate regularly in the Holy Mysteries, and do all that we can with God’s help to *live that real life* for which the Church is meant to prepare us – the abundant Life that begins with our departure from this temporal life and will consummate with the ushering in of the new, unending Day at the time of the glorious Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Love in the Risen Lord,

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

Friday, May 2/ *Theotokos, The Life-Giving Spring*  
8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Acts 3:1-8

Gospel: John 2:12-22

Sunday, May 4/ *2nd Sunday of Pascha/St. Thomas*

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

Epistle: Acts 5:12-20

Gospel: John 20:19-31

Sunday, May 11/ *3rd of Pascha/The Holy Myrrh-Bearers/Ss. Cyril & Methodios, Equal to Apostles*

Orthros: Tone Two

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

Epistle: Acts 6:1-7

Gospel: Mark 15:43-47, 16:1-8

Sunday, May 18/ *4th of Pascha/The Paralytic*

Orthros: Tone Three

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

Epistle: Acts 9:32-42

Gospel: John 5:1-15

Wednesday, May 21/ *Feast of Mid-Pentecost/  
Ss. Constantine & Helen, Equal to the Apostles*

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

Epistle: Acts 26:1, 12-20

Gospel: John 7:14-30

Sunday, May 25/ *5th of Pascha/Samaritan Woman*

Orthros: Tone Four

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

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15

Gospel: John 4:5-42

## SUNDAY SCHEDULE

May 4

Ushers: William Carrico, Sam Koutsulis, John Karas, John Nicholas, George Kakavulias, George Nikols.

Fellowship: Senior Forerunners

May 11 - *Happy Mother's Day!*

Ushers: Alleck Orlando, Peter Papas, Marina Adamy, Stephen Carabas, Angelo Stamis, Gary Waters.

Fellowship: Orthodox Family Fellowship

Memorial: Georgia Ball (40 days)

May 18

Ushers: John Karas, John Nicholas, William Carrico, Sam Koutsulis, George Kakavulias, George Nikols.

Artoclasia: Offered by Daughters of Penelope

Memorial: James Andrew Hernquist (40 days);

Bartsas Family and Friends who have Fallen Asleep in the Lord

Fellowship: Philoptochos - Bartsas Memorial

*Church School Commencement - Kokkos Scholarship Awards*

May 25

Ushers: Marina Adamy, Stephen Carabas, Peter Papas, Alleck Orlando, Gary Waters, Angelo Stamis.

Fellowship: Folk Dance Group

“But someone will ask, ‘How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?’ You foolish man! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body which is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as He has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. . . So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body.” (1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-44)

**President's  
Column**

**CHRISTOS ANESTI!**

The General Assembly has approved the Parish Council's recommendation to request the Metropolis for an Assistant Priest. This is a very good sign of how our community is evolving and growing. With the help of an Assistant Priest, Fr. John will be able to better serve and maintain the spiritual needs of our growing community. Our Stewardship is also connected to our growth. We all must find a way to give all we can to meet the financial needs of our Church. We can also support our Church by getting involved, coming to meetings, offering your knowledge, suggestions and experience.

Our #1 fund-raiser, "THE GREEK FOOD FESTIVAL," is just around the corner and this year's Chairman, John Koutsulis, needs our support. The dates for the Festival this year are *Thursday, September 18 through Sunday, September 21* and there is much to do. Please plan on attending the next Festival Planning Meeting on *Friday, May 9 at 7:00 pm*. Come and get involved and be a part of the early planning of "THE FESTIVAL." George Nikols, Parish Council President



**Adult Study Group with Father John Hondros  
Meets Every Wednesday 7:00-8:30 pm in Kokkos Hall  
"Learning Orthodoxy through the Gospel of John"  
Bibles Available in Our Orthodox Bookstore**

*Thanking God for You . . .*

The beautiful services of Lent and Holy Week were enhanced by the offerings of so many: Beginning with our beloved spiritual leader, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos, who led us in a most inspiring Palm Sunday Weekend of worship and fellowship - and to those who enriched his visit through good planning, hospitality and service; my spiritual *papou* assistants, Fr. Dean and Fr. Paul; our great musicians, Faye and the St. John Choir, the Youth and Children's Choir, our Chanters, Presvytera Maria and Sotirios Vlavianos (Palm Sunday Weekend), the Readers, David and John; the dedicated Altar Servers and Myrrh-Bearers; our Philoptochos Ladies, who were as always my "right hand" - in countless ways - throughout this holy season; the Youth Ministries and their Palm Cross Crew; the Epitaphion Bearers; the Tsourekia and Koulourakia Bakers; our many Donors; and our faithful and dedicated Parish Council for awesome ushering, cooking and service whenever called on - all of you are a blessing!

All for Christ's Glory! *Christos Anesti - Father John*

*We would like to thank . . . our "family" at St. John for their outpouring of love and support for Jim and us. We gather strength from our faith and in knowing that we are blessed to have you in our lives. With our sincere appreciation - Angela, Jennifer, Courtney, Allison, Lindsay, & Morgan Hernquist*

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

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Philoptochos: Amalia Dominguez

Choir: Faye Brown

Chanters/Youth Choir:  
Presvytera Maria Hondros

Church School:  
Eileen Koutsulis

Altar Servers:  
Geo Nikols and Demetri Carabas

Stewardship Committee:  
John Karas

Hellenic Historical Society:  
Nitsa Filios

GOYA:  
Effie Lekar  
Tammy Chomakos

HOPE and JOY:  
Jennifer Orlando and Christy Vino

Orthodox Family Fellowship:  
Michael and Tami Stefanatos

Youth Ministries:  
Eileen Koutsulis

Orthodox Connection Las Vegas:  
Angela Coutris

Senior Forerunners:  
Ruth Plentzas

Greek Folk Dance:  
Tina Liaos, Chair  
Carla Cole and Bessie Stavropoulos

Greek Language Classes:  
Para Pouridis, Coordinator  
Phyllis Gousdovas,  
Antonia Tzelalis,  
Spiridoulla Vinieratos

Orthodox Bookstore: Costa Frangakis

**Philoptochos  
News**

Christ is Risen! The essence of the Philoptochos Society is philanthropy – the foundation for the loving care of human suffering – and the propagation of the Orthodox Faith.

We are in the process of wrapping up our activities for this year. Please join us *Tuesday, May 13 at 7:00 pm in Kokkos Hall* for the last general meeting prior to the summer break. On behalf of all of us on the Board, I would like to thank everyone who has supported our endeavors throughout the past nine months. Your time, efforts and donations are greatly appreciated and allow us to continue our mission. **Amalia Dominguez, President**

**Senior Forerunners**

The ministry of Senior Forerunners is open to all seniors in our parish; membership is \$10 per year. We meet once a month, except for July and August, and socialize over a luncheon followed by some educational and other enjoyable activity. The usual donation for the lunch is \$5.

Our next meeting will be held *Tuesday, May 20 at 11:30 am*. Plans are still in the works for this event, and our phoning committee will let you know what we will be doing as soon as plans are finalized.

We will be hosting the Fellowship Hour after Liturgy on Sunday, May 4; please bring your goodies before Liturgy, so that they can be set up in time.

The Forerunners are collecting either new or lightly-used shoes for "Soles4Souls." This is a ministry that distributes shoes to aid the hurting worldwide. So clean out your closets and bring shoes to our next meeting. Soles4Souls has a simple mission: "To impact as many lives as possible with the gift of shoes." Thank you for all your cooperation. Christ is Risen! **Ruth Plentzas**

***Our Community Registry***

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

Joanna (Jennifer) Moss, on April 6, 2008.  
Godparent: Tamara Chomakos.

Skylar, daughter of Zeyad and Alisar Haddad,  
on April 13, 2008. Godparent: Edward Dagher.

***Chrismations***

Kyriaki (Kary) Chomakos on April 6, 2008.  
Sponsor: Efthimia Eliades Lekar

Irene Berta on April 6, 2008.  
Sponsor: Yianni Frangakis

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

Georgia Ball on March 14, 2008. Funeral on March 25.

James Andrew Hernquist on April 10, 2008.  
Funeral on April 14.

Evangelia Voreakou on April 11, 2008. Funeral on April 22.

**Notes From the Loft**



Christos Anesti!

Congratulations,

Choir, for the glorious renditions of our hymns for Holy Week, Good Friday, and Holy Pascha. The many hours of practice showed in the excellent performances - His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos was also pleased with our singing at the Hierarchical Liturgy on Palm Sunday and the Bridegroom Service that evening. You are to be commended for your unselfish dedication, commitment and devotion. *Sigharitiria!*

We will take a short respite from Choir practice, and we will begin rehearsals again in September. If it becomes necessary, you will notified of any special Church service for which we may need to practice. If you are interested in attending the Church Musicians Conference to be held in Long Beach June 26-29, please let me know.

**Faye Brown, Director**

Christ is Risen from the dead,  
by Death He has trampled down death,  
and to those in the tombs He is bestowing Life.

## Orthodox Bookstore

Christos Anesti! Hello from your Bookstore.

Am I independent? Well, I have my own car, my own place. I have a job. I do what I want independently of what other people think. We all feel independent probably to some extent, but are we really independent?

Let's examine it from a different perspective. Independence means non-dependence. It means not relying on anything outside of ourselves. I am dependent on air, I need oxygen to survive, and I'm dependent on water and food. Without these I won't survive. I am dependent on the sun and millions of other things just so I can wake up every morning. We are all dependent on other things and other people.

The only independent being is God. God does not need anything outside of Himself to exist. We however are created and are dependent on lots of stuff outside of ourselves to exist. If we can begin to see things from this perspective, we may begin to approach the humility that is necessary for us to purify our hearts and to really begin to enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven, even while still living here on Earth. This is what God intends for every single one of us.

Please be sure to stop by the Bookstore for a good spiritual read. There is nothing like the writings of the true Church of the true God anywhere else on the planet. Be careful of the false teachings that surround us and take us away from God. May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit keep us and protect us. Until next month (GW) - ICXC NIKA, Costa Frangakis

## Orthodox Connection Las Vegas

Christos Anesti! This month we have a few different opportunities to get together and I hope to see you. On *Thursday, May 1* we will be meeting at *Agave* Mexican Restaurant (W. Charleston and I-215) for some food and fellowship at 7:00 pm. Price is \$25 and includes food, beverage, tax and tip. This was one of our most popular venues last year, so don't miss out!

*Father Thomas Hopko* will be the guest speaker at a retreat at St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Irvine, CA on *May 16 and 17*. If you are interested in making the trip with us, please call to be included in the arrangements.

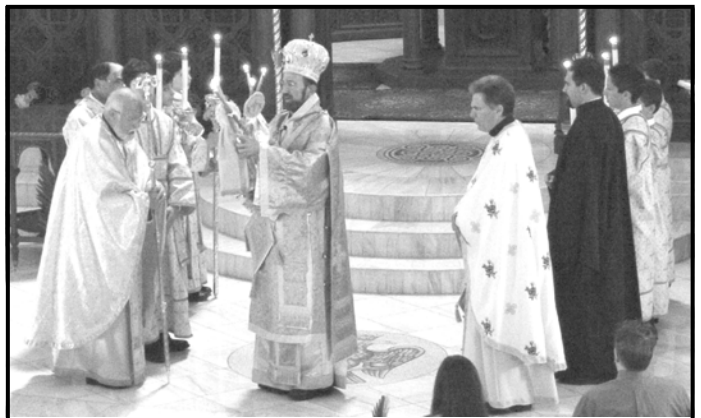
Finally, St. Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church located on Annie Oakley will be hosting their annual *International Food Festival* the weekend of *May 17 and 18*. Please support our sister parish.

OCLV is a pan-Orthodox ministry for singles in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. For more information contact Angela Coutris at (702) 497-2529 or [acoutris@hotmail.com](mailto:acoutris@hotmail.com).



We regretfully announce the cancellation of the Symposium for the Historical Societies of the Metropolis of San Francisco and the *World Odyssey* events scheduled for May 3, due to the disappointing lack of response. We apologize for any inconvenience to those of you who did respond and thank you very much for your interest.

We also thank those of you who contributed your family histories. The *World Odyssey* presentation will most assuredly be presented at a future date at St. John the Baptist community.



His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco celebrated the Divine Liturgy at St. John the Baptist Church on Palm Sunday. He was joined by Sotirios Vlavianos, a chanter from Greece, and Pete Sotiras, Metropolis Youth Director.

## *Youth Ministries*

### ***Hey, Batter, Batter!***

It's that time again to bring the youth and their families of St. John Church together! Join us as we celebrate the first day of summer with a Las Vegas Pro Baseball Game! On *Friday, June 20*, game time at 7:05 pm, we will go to see the Las Vegas 51's vs. Tacoma. We expect as always a great turn-out with lots of fun for the kids and adults, too. Tickets are \$8 per person. Please contact *Para Pouridis* to order tickets at (702) 304-1726. Deadline for orders is Sunday, June 1 - tickets are available for pick up at will-call.

### ***Church School***

Christos Anesti! I can't believe that the school year is almost over. Boy, does time fly! I would like to thank everyone for contributing to Pennies and Prayers. It was a wonderful success, and we will present the check to the Philoptochos on *Sunday, May 4* during Fellowship; Philoptochos will forward the funds to COME for support of our Metropolis Mission Parishes. As promised, Philoptochos will reward our children with a *Pizza Party* after Liturgy on *Sunday, May 25*. I thank everyone also for bringing treasured filled eggs for the Agape Picnic. There were so many eggs and the children had a blast!

All of the classrooms will be having their pictures taken for the Parish Directory on *Mother's Day, May 11*. Please make an effort to attend so we can have all of the children represented in the directory.

Our *Commencement* will be on *May 18 in Panos Hall*. We will have our end-of-the-year party at the home of Michael and Tami Stefanos.; join us at 2:00 pm for the potluck BBQ and swimming. Please RSVP to your child's teacher or to Tami. Please see the OFF article for further details.

Thank you to all of my teachers for doing such a great job. You are all wonderful! A special thanks to Presvytera Maria for bringing music into our classrooms. And of course to Father John, for all you do for us and for your support. Eileen Koutsulis, Church School Director

### ***Myrrh-Bearers 2008***

Thank you to all of the wonderful girls who were Myrrh-Bearers during Holy Week. You were all so lovely and made the services all the more special. Love, Eileen and Marina

### ***Orthodox Family Fellowship***

Orthodox Family Fellowship will be combining with Church School on Commencement Day, *May 18 at 2:00 pm*, for a BBQ Potluck and Swim Party at the home of Tami and Michael Stefanantos. Church School will provide the burgers and hot dogs. Please RSVP to *Tami (702) 458-0266 or 491-2713 (cell)*, or your child's teacher.

If your last name starts with: A-H, please bring a side dish and dessert; I-P, please bring a side dish and drinks; Q-Z, please bring drinks and dessert.

### ***Attention All Graduates!***

We want to share your good news in the June issue of *The Desert Messenger*! If you (or your child) will be graduating soon from High School or University, please email the following to [frjohn@vegaskorthodox.com](mailto:frjohn@vegaskorthodox.com) by *May 15* -

- School from which you are graduating
- The degree you will receive, including honors
- What your plans are, and what you will study if pursuing further education
- And most importantly, a photo of you!

## *Youth Choir News*

Christos Anesti! A HUGE THANK YOU to all of you who have participated in the Friday Salutations Services during Lent and, of course, your favorite service on Holy Saturday Morning. You are becoming a great-sounding group of kids and we all appreciate it very much.

We will chant the Divine Liturgy on Mother's Day, *Sunday, May 11*. PLEASE be there by 9:45 am in your black and whites. After the Liturgy, we will take our annual group photograph in front of the Sanctuary. This year's photograph will be published in the new Church Directory along with the annual Church Music Federation Conference Album, so it is important for everybody to be there. Besides, your Moms, Yiayias, Theias and Nounas will LOVE hearing you and be really proud of all of your accomplishments! With Love in the Risen Lord, Presvytera Maria

Metropolitan Gerasimos in Las Vegas on Palm Sunday Weekend:

*"What happens in Church should not stay in Church!" - from Homily at Bridegroom Service*



*Photos by Stephen Carabas*

## Stewardship Report: “Commit to Christ”

<u>2008 Stewardship Status (April 15, 2008):</u>	Stewardship Target – 2008	\$470,500
Stewardship Families Pledged 419	Stewardship Gifts Pledged	\$331,673
Stewardship Gifts Received \$128,885	Current Stewardship Deficit	\$138,827
Average Stewardship Pledge \$791.58	Percentage of Goal Achieved	70.49%

<u>Pledge Range</u>	<u>Number of Families</u>	<u>\$ &amp; % of Gifts Pledged</u>
\$1-\$999	312	\$112,953 – 34.05%
\$1000-\$2499	85	\$109,780 – 33.10%
\$2500-and higher	22	\$108,940 – 32.85%

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Christ is Risen! Our 2008 Stewardship Drive has improved this past month. As noted above, 419 stewardship families have pledged a total of \$331,673 or 70.49% of our goal. As of April 15, 26 more families have pledged than at this time in 2007 and the total gifts pledged is running \$761 ahead of last year’s pace.

We are all familiar with the parable the Lord told of the Good Samaritan, where a man going from Jerusalem to Jericho was attacked, robbed and left for dead. While laying there in desperate need of help, a priest walked by and passed him on the other side of the road, ignoring his needs and not wanting to get involved. Likewise, a Levite did much the same thing.

However, as a Samaritan came along, who *“had compassion and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper saying, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend I will repay you when I come back.’”* (Luke 10:33-35)

Has it ever occurred to you that this Samaritan showed us an incredible example of stewardship? By his compassionate actions, this Samaritan truly fulfilled God’s law by ‘loving one’s neighbor as oneself.’ He clearly demonstrated the true meaning of stewardship by the free-will giving of his time, talent and treasures. At great personal risk he bandaged the man’s wounds and provided him medical care on the dangerous road between Jerusalem and Jericho. Additionally, he set aside whatever plans he had and spent the whole day and night caring for this complete stranger.

He then showed more generosity by providing from his treasure the means to ensure that the injured man continued to receive care until he was well by giving the innkeeper two denarii to care for him. Additionally, he committed to release the stranger from any debt by assuring the innkeeper, that upon his return, he would reimburse him for any additional expenses he might incur by taking care of this stranger.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I hope and pray this lesson of love and stewardship will touch each of us to do all we can to help His children.

May everything we do be for His Glory. – Glory be to God – Δόξα Σοι ο Θεός.

With Love in Christ, John G. Karas (702) 219-5057, Stewardship Chairman

### Greek Food Festival ~ September 18-21

Please join us on *Friday, May 9 at 7:00 pm* in Kokkos Hall for our next Food Festival Meeting. Everyone is invited to attend and sign up for positions that are still available. An exciting agenda is planned with previews of a fresh layout of the grounds and some of the ideas we have been talking about. This is *our* Festival; the more people that become involved early, the closer we will come to achieving the goals we have set for ourselves.

Dates will be set for upcoming food preparation, so don’t miss out in being a part of the action and the opportunity to learn a new recipe or two. If you have that secret talent you’ve been hiding, now is the time to come and show it off.

I look forward to seeing you at our meeting and thank you for your continued support.

Christos Anesti! John Koutsulis, Chairman

*2008 Parish Stewards and Contributors: "Commit to Christ"*

Adamy, Marina	Coroneos, Marika	Gortsilas, Nikolas and Stefania	Lambiris, Justin and Amy
Agnos, Dimitrios and Angeline	Costuras, George and Marsha	Gorup, Anton and Sofia	Latelle, George and Penny
Alex, Jim and Renee	Cotsilis, Peter and Jenny	Gousdovas, Nikos and Phyllis	Lawrence, Vicki
Alexander, Eleni	Coutris, Angela	Grillas, Vasiliios and Roula	Lazarakis, John and Panagiota
Alexis, Georgia	Dalacas, Anthony and Eugenia	Gruber, Ernest and Zoe	Lechner, Sofia
Andraktos, Manuel	Dalacas, Dimitri and Athanasia	Haddad, Zeyad and Alisar	Lekar, Michael and Effie
Andrews, Andrew	Dalacas, Eleni	Hadzoglon, Christos and Barbara	Leone, Stephen
Andrews, Catherine	Dalacas, Nick and Georgia	Hallis, Louis and Betty	Leonis, Nick and Sofia
Andrews, Presv. Helen	Davis, Jared	Hamilton, Mary	Leonis, Tishe
Anthony, Stavros and Bernadette	DeCarlo, Frank and Nadine	Hamilton, Paul and Brandi	Leventis, Nicholas and Christina
Apostolopoulos, Chris and Katia	Delalis, Dina	Hardge, Dion and Zoe	Lewis, Foula
Arcamuzi, Georgia	Delalis, Pete and Alysondra	Haritopoulos, Douglas	Liaos, Jim and Tina
Aristides, George and Diana	Demas-Goodin, Maria	Harris, Melty and Angeline	Liaos, Steven and Francine
Arsoniadis, Juliana	Demolas, Ilias and Jodi	Harrison, Angie	Liaos, William and Irene
Asim, Demetrious	Demolas, Maria	Hart, Russell and Dora	Likourinou, Angie
Athens, Ann	Demoleas, Grace and Spero	Hastings, Audra	Likourinou, Steve and June
Attard, Constantine and Sofia	Demoleas, Stephanie	Hastings, Teri	Luckey, Jason and Shawna
Austin, Christopher and Athanasia	Demopoulos, Tommy and Vasiliki	Hernquist, Jim † and Angela	Lymberopoulos, Mary
Bakalas, Estella	Dennis, John	Hetzal, David	Makris, Apostolos
Balason, Anna	Depelchin, Serge and Melissa	Hondros, Christina	Malamatos, Kindina
Balason, Voula	Dervis, Irene	Hondros, Fr. John and Presv. Maria	Maland, Tim and Donna
Baldwin, Richard and Vivi	DeWindt, Dennis and Susan	Hoover, Patrick and Pauline	Malpee, Mack and Kalliope
Balodimas, Dr. James	Diamantis, Filippos	Howard, Willie B.	Mamasis, Dena
Bariames, George and Athans, Eleni	Dominguez, Eric and Amalia	Howe, Kiparissia	Mamasis, Tessie
Barngrover, Andrew and Kathleen	Doppe, Victoria	Iracleanos, Sonia	Manakides, Tom and Ginger
Bartzos, Sam and Eugenia	Dornin, Christopher and Marcella	Jacobs, Joseph	Manolakos, Catherine
Baucek, Jeremy and Amy	Dougan, Linda	Kachikis, Paul and Ernestine	Manos, Patricia
Berendji, Jim and Vivian	Doukakis, Panagiotis and Chrisi	Kakavulias, Christine	Maragos, Constance
Berta, Irene	Dounis, Dina	Kakavulias, George and Helen	Markakis, Emmanuel and Cathy
Bicos, Adriana	Dounis, Georgia	Kakavulias, John	Marlas, Louis and Vivien
Bieker-Grissom, Georgeea	Dounis, Kiki	Kakavulias, Maria	Martinek, Richard and Esther
Bigler III, Louis B.	Dudanakis, Michael	Kalkas, John and Rena	Matsis, John and Rebecca
Bingham, Georgia	Economys, Peter	Kalmantis, George	Matsukas, George
Bledsoe, Lori	Eliades, Artemis	Kane, Irene	Mavrantonis, Stacy and Kiki
Bochanis, George	Eliades, Gregory and Maria	Kanellis, Ann	Mavroidis, Demetri and Debra
Borzekas, Stephen and Katharina	Eliades, Harry and Agapi	Kanoles, Helene	Mavros, Michael and Debbie
Bratta, Georgene	Eliades, Peter and Janet	Kanoles, Konstantine	Mazzetti, Tess
Brilis, Christie	Eliakis, John and Atsuko	Karacostas, Alice	McNear, Elizabeth
Brilis, George and Satoko	Eliakis, Peter and Glenda	Karagines, Peter and Linda	McPherson, Robert and Marie
Britten, Ronald and Carol	Eliakis, Varthie and Lee Ann	Karalis, Gianni and April	Menegatos, Jim and Dana
Brown, Andrew and Christina	Exarhos, Nick and Sharon	Karas, James	Mezilson, Evangeline
Brown, Faye	Eyler, Fr. Paul and Presv. Ilean	Karas, John and Marcie	Mikelis, Peter
Bucy, Brent and Elaine	Eyler, Jesse and Dianna	Karas, Vasiliki	Miller, Mary
Cahill, Michael and Irene	Eyler, John and Elizabeth	Katris, Nick and Kathryn	Millet, Jennie
Capadalis, Tim and Marling	Falcone, Frank and Nancy	Katsanevas, Nick and Mary	Milonas, George
Captain, Nicholas and Maria	Fanandakis, George and Helen	Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon	Milonas, Henry †
Carabas, Stephen and Linda	Filios, George and Nitsa	Katsikakis, Evangelos	Miralles, Jean
Carabas, Thymios and Sotiroulla	Flangas, Bill and Marilyn	Kelly, Tess	Mirich, Kyle and Melissa
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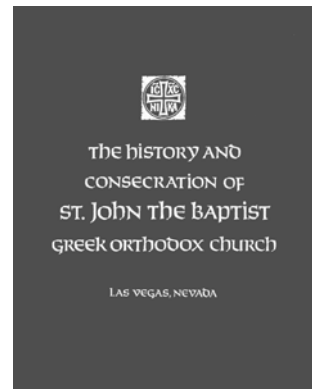
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*XPICTOC ANECTH*

# MAY 2008 - IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
				<b>1</b> 7:00 pm Orthodox Connection at Agave Mexican Restaurant	<b>2</b> Life-Giving Spring 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>5</b> 7:00 pm Special Parish Council Festival Mtg	<b>6</b> 7:00 pm Philoptochos Board Meeting	<b>7</b> 4:15 pm Greek/Youth 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 7:00 pm Festival Planning Meeting in Kokkos Hall	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> Mother's Day 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Youth Choir Chants	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 5:00 pm Youth Ministries Meeting 7:00 pm Philoptochos General Meeting	<b>14</b> 4:15 pm Greek/Youth 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Commencement follows 2:00 pm OFF and Church School Commencement Party @ Stefanatos' Home	<b>19</b> 6:30 pm Parish Council	<b>20</b> 11:30 am Senior Forerunners Luncheon	<b>21</b> Mid-Pentecost/Ss. Constantine and Helen 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 4:15 pm Greek/Youth 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 7:00 pm Adult Study	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

# *The Desert Messenger*

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## *The Way of the Lord*

“The Orthodox Church lovingly embraces the one who is dying  
as well as those around him or her who, out of true Christian love,  
are praying for the one who is dying or has already fallen asleep.

The liturgical life of the Orthodox Church rarely mentions the words death and dying.

The Church uses the expression ‘falling asleep,’ not as a euphemism  
but as a biblically rooted expression which truly describes what happens to us.

In his homily on the first letter to the Corinthians, St. John Chrysostom says the following:

‘The farmer does not complain when he sees how the seed goes into the ground and disappears.

He is trembling and fearful if the seed remains unchanged and lifeless in the ground.

But he is very happy and he rejoices when he sees how the seed starts to grow  
and he already envisions the future fruits of it.

In the same way, so shall we rejoice when seeing that the fragile structure of  
the human body comes to its end and finds its resting place in the ground.

Should we then wonder that the Apostle uses exactly the same example to describe  
something much, much better which is awaiting us? For after our resurrection,

there will be no more pain, sorrow or problems to solve,

but Life Everlasting in the presence of our Triune God.”

*-Protopriest Milos M. Vesin, Preface, The Akathist to Jesus Christ for a Loved One who has Fallen Asleep*