

The Desert



Messenger

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

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

November 2019

From Father John

Beloved in Christ:

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

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



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

(Continued on Page 2)

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

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

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

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

Gospel: Matthew 10:1, 5-8

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

Orthros: Tone Three

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

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

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

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

Epistle: Hebrews 2:2-10

Gospel: Luke 10:16-21

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

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

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

Gospel: Luke 13:31-35

5:30 pm Great Vespers and Artoclasia

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

Orthros: Tone Four

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

Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Friday, November 15/*Nativity Fast Begins*

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

Orthros: Tone Five (First Plagal)

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

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18

Gospel: Luke 12:16-21

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

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

Epistle: Hebrews 9:1-7

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

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

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

Orthros: Tone Six (Second Plagal)

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

Epistle: Ephesians 2:4-10

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

Monday, November 25/*Great Martyr Catherine*

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

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

Gospel: Mark 5:24-34

Wednesday, November 27/*Thanksgiving Liturgy 5:00 pm Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia*

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 4:18-5:10

Gospel: Luke 20:9-18

From Father John (Continued from Page 1)

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

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

With much love and gratitude in Christ, 



PLEASE JOIN US IN THE CELEBRATION OF

“OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE”

THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY

of

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

5300 South El Camino Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89118

NOVEMBER 9 AND 10, 2019



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

GREAT VESPERS 5:30 pm

CELEBRATION 7 pm

Silent Auction, Cocktails, Dinner and Dancing

Pictorial History of St. John Community



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10

ORTHROS 8:30 am

HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY 10 am

CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH

INVITATIONS TO FOLLOW
RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED
702 221-8245

Parish Council Report

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

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

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

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

In Christ, John Matsis, Parish Council Vice President

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



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

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

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

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER 3

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

NOVEMBER 10: 60TH ANNIVERSARY

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

NOVEMBER 17: PARISH ASSEMBLY

Ushers: Demetrious Asim, John Matsis, Mark Karris, Stacy Mavrantonis, Justina Szukiewicz and John Koutsulis
Memorials: Departed Members of Chagares Family; Nick Pandelis; and Vasso Dangard
Fellowship: Daughters of Penelope

NOVEMBER 24

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

Notice of Parish Assembly

Sunday, November 17, 2019

Following the Divine Liturgy in Panos Hall

AGENDA:

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

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

Philoptochos News

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

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

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

Following are our exciting upcoming Philoptochos events:

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

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

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



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

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



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


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

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

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

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

With Love in Christ, Benita Beeman, Philoptochos President



The 2019 Annual Ladies Philoptochos Society Christmas Pastry Sale

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

Quantities are limited.

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

Send your order and check made payable to:

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

Name _____

Day _____ Cell or Evening Phone _____

Email _____

Number of boxes _____ x \$25 _____

Check enclosed _____

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

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

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

Thank you!

Stewardship and Community Outreach



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

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

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

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

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

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



Baptized into Christ: Na Mas Zisoun

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

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

Marriage: Na Zisete!

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

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

From Father Seraphim

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

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

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

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

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

(Continued on Page 12)

Youth and Family Ministries

Church School

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

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

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

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

Youth Choir News



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

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

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

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

Greek Folk Dance

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

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

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

With Much Gratitude, The Folk Dance Board

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

GOYA ~ For Teenagers



Dear GOYANs,

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

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



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

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

Orthodox Family Fellowship



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

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

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

In Christ, Amy Khuri and Jelena Boskovic, OFF Advisors



Greek Language Program



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

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

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

Adult and Young Adult Ministries

Young Adults

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

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

In Christ, Niko Asim and Melissa Fleetwood, YA Advisors

Friendsgiving



Mr. & Mrs. - A Couples Fellowship

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

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

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



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

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

Love in Christ, Demetrios Asim, Kali Parea Advisor

From Father Seraphim (Continued from Page 9)

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

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

With Love in Christ,

Father Seraphim

Forerunners - The Seniors of St. John the Baptist

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



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

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

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

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

Notes from the Choir Loft

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



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

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

Athena Mertes, Director



The AHEPA Las Vegas Chapter 341

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

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

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



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

Orthodox Bookstore

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

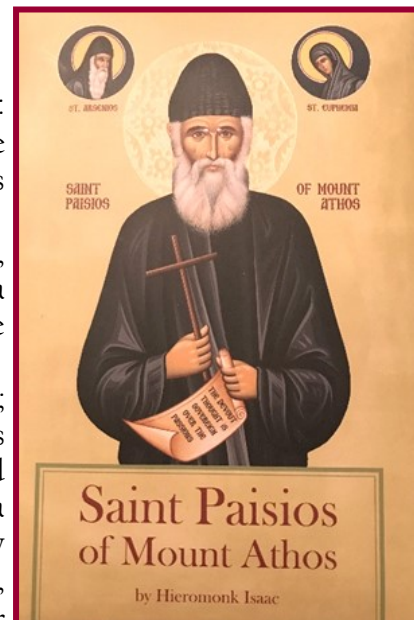
He is a relatively new addition to our family of Orthodox Saints, having been canonized in 2015. He was born in Pharasa, a small town in Asia Minor, in 1924. That same year his family was forced to relocate to the Greek homeland, as part of a mass exchange of Turk and Greek populations.

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

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

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

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



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

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

COMING SOON

2020 Church Directory



Your Family Here

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

Photography Ministry

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

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

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



*“Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him,
for what his hands have done shall be done to him. . .*

*My people, your leaders mislead you,
and confuse the course of your paths.”*

(Isaiah 3:11-12)

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

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

Rev. Father John Hondros
frjohn@vegaskgreekorthodox.com

Rev. Father Seraphim Ramos
frseraphim@vegaskgreekorthodox.com

Karen Rawlinson
Administrative Assistant

Michelle Eugenio
Bookkeeper

Mara Braun
Catering & Events

Constantin Petriuc & Ramona Tasios
Maintenance & Grounds

Office Hours

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

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

Parish Council: Gus Flangas

Philoptochos: Benita Beeman

Stewardship & Community Outreach:
Justina Szukiewicz

Choir: Athena Mertes

Chanters & Youth Choir:
Presvytera Maria Hondros

Church School: Eileen Koutsulis

Altar Servers: Father John

GOYA:

Kouli Pouridis & June Likourinou

Orthodox Family Fellowship:
Jelena Boskovic & Amy Khuri

Young Adults:
Nicholas Asim & Melissa Fleetwood

Greek Folk Dance: Sia Dalacas

Greek School: Paula Kelesis

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

Kali Parea: Demetrious Asim &
Joy Wolfenbarger

Adult Basketball:
Nate Dallas

Forerunners: Vicki Xikis

Orthodox Bookstore:
Constantine Frangakis,
Paisios & Mary Pursell

Greek Food Festival: Gus Flangas

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

Photography: Bill Bruninga

AXIOS TO
HIS EXCELLENCY
METROPOLITAN ILIA
OF PHILOMELION

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

ΕΙΣ ΠΟΛΛΑ ΕΤΗ ΔΕΣΠΟΤΑ!



Church Account Summaries - September 2019

SIGOC - Account Summaries August - September 2019

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

STEWARDS OF THE FAITH ~ 2019

Adamy, Marina
 Alexander, Eleni
 Alexandrakis, George
 Alford, Cynthia "Mary"
 Anastasakis, Mark and Elaine
 Anastasiou, Andrew and Kathleen
 Andary, Oscar
 Andrews, Catherine
 Andrews, Chris and Pamela
 Andrews, George
 Andricopoulos, Margo
 Anthony, Stavros and Bernadette
 Anton, Mike and Carol
 Antonopoulos, Angela
 Arbuiso, Elizabeth
 Aristides, George and Diana
 Asim, Demetrious
 Asim, Niko
 Athens, Maria and Centers, Scott
 Bacon, Ken and Dianne
 Balaouras, Panos and Helen
 Balason, Anna+
 Balason, Voula
 Baldwin, Richard and Vivi
 Balodimas, James
 Barbarino, Demetra
 Bartzos, Eugenia
 Beeler, Mike and Carolyn
 Beeman, Karl, Sr. and Benita
 Beeman, Karl Jr. and Ivana
 Berendji, Jim and Vivian
 Bernier, Micah and Alissa
 Berta, Irene
 Bieker, Adam and Cassie
 Bieker, Georgea
 Birtas, Helen and Birtas, Ann
 Bizani, Katia
 Bledsoe, Lori
 Bochanis, George and Enid
 Booth, Brian and Effi
 Borzeka, Stephen
 Boskovic, Jelena
 Bougalis, Nickolaos
 Brennan, Peter and Maria
 Britten, Ronald and Carol
 Brown, Faye
 Bruninga, Bill and Erin
 Bucy, Brent and Elaine
 Campbell, Paul and Victoria
 Capre, Julio
 Carabas, Stephen and Linda
 Carahalios, John and Jillian
 Caredis, Jon and Marjorie
 Carrico, William and Alexandra
 Carter, Maria
 Chachas, Bessie
 Chachas, James
 Chagares, Kiki
 Chandrinis, Alexia
 Chanos, Jennifer
 Chio, Napoleon
 Chomakos, Dean and Tammy
 Chomakos, Jeremy and Romina
 Chondrakis, Dimosthenis and Kragerud, Kaaren
 Christian, Clair and Chloe
 Christou, Andreas and Toni

Ciulla, Anthony and Kleri
 Ciulla, Dina
 Cocores - Ely, Caron
 Cokotis, Julie
 Collins, David
 Cominos, Ted
 Conger, William and Alexia
 Costuros, George and Marsha
 Cosulas, Fr. Basil and Presv. Samantha
 Cotsilis, Jenny
 Coutris, Angela
 Crist, Adam and Kanistra
 Cromwell, Michael and Allison
 Dalacas, Dimitri and Athanasia
 Dalacas, Eleni
 Dalacas, Georgia
 Daskalos, George and Voula
 Daughters of Penelope
 Demolas, Maria and Nour, Reza
 Demoleas, Spero and Grace
 Demoleas, Stephanie
 Demopoulos, Vasiliki
 Diamantis, Filippas
 Dimitri, Janet
 Dimitri, Martha
 Dimitri, Patricia
 Dominguez, Eric and Amalia
 Doskas, Athanasios and Anastasia
 Dudunakis, Michael
 Earl, Christine Michaelides
 Eliades, Artemis
 Eliades, Gregory and Maria
 Eliades, Harry and Agapi
 Eliades, Katerina
 Eliades, Peter
 Eliades, Vaso
 Eliakis, Peter and Glenda
 Eliakis, Varthie and LeeAnn
 Eyler, John and Elizabeth
 Eyler, Fr. Paul and Presv. Ilean
 Filios, George and Nitsa
 Filios, Spiridon and Eleni
 Fischer, Bob and Cheryl
 Fitzgerald, Norman and McCullen, Sandra
 Flangas, Marilyn
 Flangas, Gary and Amanda
 Flangas, Gus and Tamara
 Fleetwood, Thomas and Melissa
 Fotopoulos, John and Barbara
 Foster, Kyle and Pierro, Maria
 Fountas, Constantinos
 Frangakis, Christos and Anastasia
 Frangakis, Constantine
 Frangakis, John
 Frangakis, Sophocles and Tara
 Frantzen, Robert
 Franzi, Jack +
 Garanyants, Sergey and Bilali, Markella
 Garza, Everardo and Eliades, Eleni
 Gauvin, Chad and Marissa
 Geiger, Dan and Hart-Geiger, Dora
 Gekakis, George
 Generales, John and Arlene
 George, Elias and Saladino, Maria

George, Peter and Georgia
 Georgoulakis, Mary Ellen
 Geronikolaou, Constantine
 Ghebrea, Daniel and Ghermay, Selam
 Gianakoulis, Nick and Magda
 Gianoukakis, Andrew and Anna
 Gideon, Jesse and Sara
 Giouzelis, Anastasia
 Goodman, Robert and Linda
 Gott, C. Thomas and Kitty
 Gousdovas, Nikos+
 Green, Todd and Susan
 Gruber, Ernest and Zoe
 Gutierrez, Connie
 Gutierrez, Daniel
 Hadzoglon, Christos
 Hamilton, Mary
 Hamilton, Paul and Brandi
 Hastings, Teri and Audra
 Hayes, Tulla
 Hemmers, Oliver and Pantelas, Anne
 Henderson, Jimmie Laverne
 Henneforth, Rula
 Herman, Martin and Diane
 Hertberg, Jennifer
 Hetzel, David and Joanne
 Hoadrea, Jimmy and Monci
 Hondros, Catherine
 Hondros, Christina
 Hondros, Christopher and Darlene
 Hondros, Fr. John and Presv. Maria
 Hondros, Marissa
 Houlis, Ila and Debbie
 Howard, William and Willie
 Howse, Paul and Kelly
 Hristopoulou, Spiridoula
 Hunter, Zach and Krystle
 Iteen, Robert and Sophia
 Justice, Flora
 Kachikis, Ernestine
 Kakavulias, Christina
 Kakavulias, George and Helen
 Kakavulias, John and Elizabeth
 Kaltcheva, Maria
 Kambouris, Litsa
 Kanis, Constantinos and Katie
 Kapla, Mary
 Karalias, Petros and Constance
 Karas, James
 Karas, John and Marcie
 Karris, Mark and Suzanne
 Katopodis, Efstratios
 Katris, Nick
 Katris, Theana
 Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon
 Kelesis, George
 Kelesis, Maritza
 Kelesis, Paula
 Kiflezgi, Rahel
 Kleanthis, George and Zanetta
 Kofinas, Maria
 Kokkinis, Peter and Jennifer
 Kolimbas, Eleni
 Konstantarakis, Michelle
 Kontos, Diana
 Koroni, Tara

Kostopoulos, Georgia
 Kountanis, Panagiota
 Koupais, Mario and Cheri
 Koupais, Pat
 Koutsulis, John and Eileen
 Koutsulis, Sam and Effie
 Kypreos, George and Lesley
 Kypreos, Peter and Geri
 Kypreos, Sophia
 Kyprianou, Gilbert and Alexis
 Lagomarsino, Victor and Sophia
 Lakkas, Christina
 Lamancusa, Lisa
 Lambros, Kyriakos and Mary
 Latelle, Penny
 Lavelle, Eleissa
 Lavine, Frederick
 Lazarakis, John and Panagiota
 Lekar, Caroline
 Lekar, Michael and Effie
 Leonis, Nick and Sophia
 Leonis, Tishe
 Leventis, Nicholas and Christina
 Lewis, Foula
 Liaos, Jim and Tina
 Liaos, Steven and Francine
 Liaos, William+ and Irene
 Likourinou, Angie
 Likourinou, Steve and June
 Litsos, Nicholas and Catherine
 Loughton, Dustin and Rena
 Lovaas, Jason and Dokakis, Alis
 Makris, Apostolos
 Malamatos, Kindina
 Maland, Tim+ and Donna
 Malpee, Mak and Kalliopi
 Maniatakis, Ted and Maria
 Manolakis, Catherine
 Manos, Constantine and Michele
 Mansour, Muna
 Manteris, Arthur and Sue
 Margaretis, John and Lucila
 Markakis, Catherine
 Markakis, Sandy
 Markantonis, George and Sarah
 Matsis, John and Rebecca
 Mavrantonis, Stacy and Kiki
 Mavroidis, Demetrios and Debra
 Mavros, Alex and Jen
 Mavros, Debbie
 Mavroudis, Frank
 McKinney, Michael and Mersene
 McManus, Jeanette
 McSweeney, Farolyn
 Melton, Don and Susan
 Menegatos, James
 Merrin, Maria
 Mitchell, Thomas
 Moffett, Todd and Eliopoulos, Tina
 Molina, Adriana and Elhamy, Kirollos
 Monoyudis, Jim and Julie
 Mulopulos, George and Jenny
 Murray, Chris and George, Veneta
 Myers, Stella
 Nedelchev, Diyan
 Nedelchev, Zhivko

STEWARDS OF THE FAITH ~ 2019

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

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

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



COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD

2019 Christmas Card Submission Form

Name & Phone or Email:



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

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

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



NOVEMBER 2019 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

Sunday

Monday


Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

3 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 12:15 pm Youth Choir Practice in 4th/5th Class	4 11:30 am Forerunner Luncheon in Kokkos Hall	5 5:00 pm Greek Language Classes 6:00 pm PC Budget Meeting 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice	6 7:00 pm Orthodoxy Class #6: Church Tour	7	8 Holy Archangels! Michael and Gabriel 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	9 St. Nectarios 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 5:30 pm Great Vespers and Artodasia 60th Anniversary Dinner by Reservation Only	2 10:00 am Liturgy with Fr. Seraphim at Lake Havasu Mission
10 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Gerasimos & Metropolitan Iliia Champagne Brunch by Reservation Only	11 Veterans Day 	12 5:00 pm Greek Language Classes 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice 6:00 pm Folk Dance Board Meeting 6:00 pm Parish Council Meeting in the Library	13 7:00 pm New Adult Study: Sunday Readings & Churchianity vs. Christianity, in Kokkos	14	15 Nativity Fast Begins	16 8:00 am Philoptochos Pastry Baking 9:00 am Liturgy at St. Barbara in McGill	
17 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Youth Choir Chants 12:00 pm Parish Assembly 5:00 pm GOYA Night in Panos Hall	18	19 5:00 pm Greek Language Classes 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice	20 5:00 pm Orthros 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy (Entrance of the Theotokos) 7:15 pm Adult Study	21 Entrance of the Theotokos (observed 11/20)	22 6:00 pm Mr. & Mrs. Potluck at Lekar Home	23 8:00 am Philoptochos Pastry Packing	
24 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Autumn Bake Sale 5:00 pm Young Adults Friendsgiving at Niko Asim's Home	25 St. Catherine 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	26 6:00 pm Folk Dance Practice No Greek School	27 Thanksgiving Liturgy 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy and Artodasia No Adult Study	28 Thanksgiving Holiday	29 Church Office Closed	30	

The Desert Messenger

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

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THE DESERT MESSENGER

The Way of the Lord



*“But God, Who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God – not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”
(Ephesians 2:4-10)*