

# The Desert



# Messenger

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

Volume 21, Issue 9 St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV

October 2023

From  
Father  
John

Beloved in Christ:

By God’s grace, I will turn sixty-five this month. Even if I wanted to keep this under wraps, it is impossible, given that I continuously receive a barrage of unsolicited mail regarding Medicare, supplemental plans, retirement seminars, financial planning for seniors, etc.: It is out there that I am soon to become part of the societal sector defined as – using the term we used in my teenage years – “old fogeys”! While I readily accept there is no going backwards, nor is that my desire, I do not feel anywhere near retirement – and although I have changed physically and in terms of perspective compared to my youth and middle aged years, I have more desire than ever to do the work God called me to do decades ago.

I have been inspired and guided by the life and words of St. Paul throughout my priestly ministry, and more so this month because this Holy Apostle was sixty-five when he wrote his last epistle in the year 67 AD to his beloved coworker in the Lord, Timothy. *“I thank God Whom I serve with a clear conscience, as did my fathers, when I remember you constantly in my prayers.”* St. Paul continued, *“I am reminded of your sincere faith . . . Hence I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of hands; for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control.” (2 Timothy 1:3, 5-7)*



Serving as a Parish Priest has its challenges, but as St. Paul wrote to the Apostle Timothy (among the Seventy), and as I have lovingly been reminded by my Hierarchs and Confessors through the years, we received all we needed for our Priestly ministry on our day of Ordination – namely, the Grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, St. Paul’s words, echoed in those who guided and continue to guide me, remain always relevant: *“Be strong in grace that is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 2:1)* The wisdom of years has taught me the unfruitfulness of hastily rushing to conclusions, taking sides, or being swayed by sensationalistic politics and controversies: *“No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits since his aim is to satisfy the One Who enlisted him.” (2 Timothy 2:4)* Admittedly, there are times I fall short, but the wisdom that goes along with getting older teaches me to quickly repent, get back on track, ask for forgiveness, and remember the Lord’s purpose for me.

We live in stressful times as foretold by the Holy Apostle Paul: *“For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding the form of religion but denying the power of it.” (2 Timothy 3:2-4)* All the more reason that I do not foresee retirement from the service to which He called me: I will serve in whatever capacity the Lord calls me for as long as He allows. Christ said, *“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few” (Matthew 9:37)* – and the Lord’s words are still relevant in our times, as we who serve in His Vineyard are undoubtedly aware, regardless of how long we have been in the ministry.

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

*All our Sunday Divine Services are Available on Live-Stream!  
Access the Live-Stream on <http://youtube.com/vegasgreekorthodox>*

Sunday, October 1/*Second Sunday of Luke/Holy Protection of the Theotokos/Holy Apostle Ananias of the Seventy/Holy Father Romanos the Melodist National Church Music Sunday*

Orthros: Fourth Plagal Tone

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

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1

Gospel: Luke 6:31-36

Memorials: His Excellency Metropolitan Ilia (1 year); Amerisa Kalliongis (6 months); Departed Church Musicians

Fellowship: The Katre Family, in memory of Metropolitan Ilia

Sunday, October 8/*Third Sunday of Luke/Holy Mother Pelagia/Holy Virgin Martyr Pelagia of Antioch/Holy Father Philip, Bishop of Gortyna*

Orthros: First Tone

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

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

Gospel: Luke 7:11-16

Fellowship: Folk Dance Groups

Sunday, October 15/*Fourth Sunday of Luke/Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council/Holy Martyr Loukianos of Antioch/St. Savinos of Catania/St. Barsos the Confessor*

Orthros: Second Tone

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

Epistle: Titus 3:8-15

Gospel: Luke 8:5-15

Memorials: Thymios Carabas (40 days); Savva Savvas (40 days)

Artoclasia: Papas Family for St. Luke

Fellowship: The Kitchen Crew, in memory of Savva

Friday, October 20/*St. Gerasimos of Cephalonia/ Great Martyr Artemios of Antioch/Holy Mother Matrona of Chios/Holy Martyr Andronicos*

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

Epistle: 2 Timothy 2:1-10

Gospel: Luke 10:1-15

Sunday, October 22/*Sixth Sunday of Luke/ St. Averkios, Equal to the Apostles and Wonderworker of Hieropolis/Holy Youth Martyrs of Ephesus*

Orthros: Third Tone

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

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

Gospel: Luke 8:26-39

*Philoptochos Membership Event*

Fellowship: Festival Favorites Pastry Sale

Monday, October 23/*Holy Apostle Iakovos (James), the Brother of Our Lord/Holy Father Ignatios, Patriarch of Constantinople*

*9:00 am Divine Liturgy of St. Iakovos*

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

Gospel: Matthew 13:54-58

Thursday, October 26/*Great Martyr Demetrios, the Myrrh-Streamer/ Commemoration of the Earthquake in Constantinople in 740*

*8:00 am Orthros*

*9:00 am Divine Liturgy*

Epistle: 2 Timothy 2:1-10

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

Sunday, October 29/*Seventh Sunday of Luke/Holy Martyr Anastasia of Rome/Holy Father Avramios*

Orthros: Fourth Tone

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

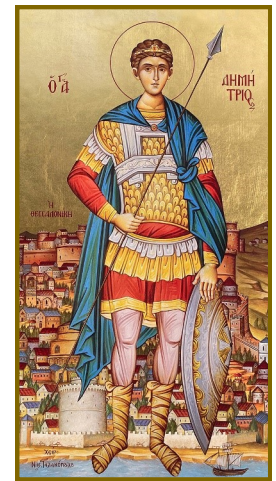
Epistle: Galatians 2:16-20

Gospel: Luke 8:41-56

Memorials: Departed Members of the Dalacas, Pappas and Kelesis Families; Departed AHEPA Chapter Members

Artoclasia: For the 60th Anniversary of Sophia and George Konsolakis

Fellowship: Daughters of Penelope



*From Father John (Continued from Page 1)*

Although the Apostle Paul suffered much persecution in spreading the Gospel of our Crucified and Resurrected Jesus Christ, his love for our Lord and his desire to grow the Church never waned. Moreover, he was a source encouragement to his coworkers who were also suffering much: *“As for you, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.” (2 Timothy 4:5)* St. Paul’s sixty-fifth year would also be his last year of life before his martyrdom in Rome, but he remained steadfast in fulfilling his holy vocation until the end: *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7)* My prayer is that my conviction – and that of my beloved coworkers – in serving Christ and His Church may remain steadfast until the Lord calls us from this life.

With Much Love in Christ,

*Father John*



**CHURCH 360**

*Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ, if you have not yet done so, we respectfully request you take the time to fill out the questionnaire we have prepared. This will enable the Parish to better communicate with you. Click [HERE](#) to access the questionnaire. The information you provide will only be used by the Parish to better serve the members of our community.*

Parish  
Council  
Report

Dear Father John, Father Florin, Deacon John, Ministries and Parishioners,

I want to start by thanking all of you who gave of your time and talents during our Greek Food Festival. As I walked the grounds I was stopped by both parishioners and guests who were thankful for our existence for 50 years of service to the community. May God grant us another 50 years!

Much gratitude to both Gus Flangas and Angelo Stamis, for chairing the event and putting in several months of planning which took them away from their personal businesses. There are too many booth and area captains to thank. Moreover, our spiritual outreach was impressive.

Congratulations to Janelle Salon who received the honor of lighting the Festival Torch. Janelle and her husband Nick, of blessed memory, were pioneers of our Festival. May God continue to bless her with health for many years to come.

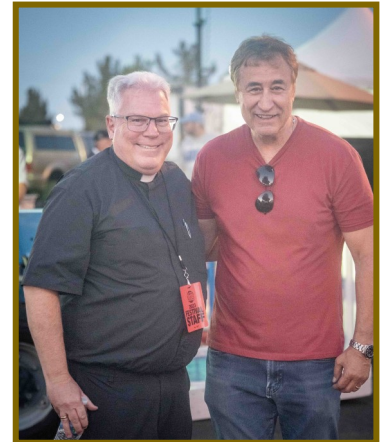
Steve Likourinou was there at every moment to capture all aspects of the Festival with his amazing sound and light performance. Thank you, Steve, for making every year a memorable one through your generous production.

It is time now to reflect on the real purpose of this event. I pray we have the health and mindset to come together as a faithful community and work throughout the Church Year in serving our Lord and preparing ourselves, including me, because we have no idea when the hour will come.

All invitations have been mailed for the Ariston Award Event honoring Gus Flangas *on Saturday, October 28*. Please respond *by October 1*, as we are trying to get the South Point Hotel and Casino a count of attendees.

May God continue to bless St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church.

With Much Love,  
John Fotopoulos, Parish Council President



*The Community of  
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church  
Cordially Invites You to  
"A Grand Event"*

*Honoring Gus W. Flangas*

*With the Ariston Award*

*Saturday, October 28, 2023  
6:00 pm Cocktails – 7:00 pm Dinner*

*South Point Casino and Hotel  
Sonoma Ballroom  
9777 Las Vegas Boulevard South  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89183*

*RSVP by October 1, 2023*

*Cocktail Attire*

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**RESERVATIONS**

**"A GRAND EVENT" HONORING GUS W. FLANGAS**

**RSVP By No Later Than October 1, 2023**

**PLEASE PRINT**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ENCLOSED IS MY PAYMENT OF \$ \_\_\_\_\_ FOR:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **NUMBER OF PERSONS AT \$150 PER PERSON.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **NUMBER OF TABLES OF TEN AT \$1500 PER TABLE.**

**OR PLEASE CHARGE TO:**  **MASTERCARD**  **AMERICAN EXPRESS**  **VISA**

**OTHER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME IN WHICH CARD IS ISSUED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CARD NO.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EXP. DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Philoptochos  
News

*“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”  
(Galatians 6:9)*



Dear Father John, Father Florin, Ladies Philoptochos Society Members and Fellow Parishioners of St. John the Baptist,

This is the life of the Ladies Philoptochos Society! We have a season for all things, relating to our Faith, Church and Philoptochos. Now that it is Fall, we move into our Season of Faith, Philanthropy and Fellowship. This is the time of year that we encourage all Orthodox women to become involved with this most wonderful opportunity to help your Faith, Church and Community by becoming or renewing your Membership.

Did you know that the Ladies Philoptochos Society is one of the oldest service organizations in the US? Social Service projects will begin by stocking pantries at schools, and searching for nonprofit groups which are desperately in need, so that our donations will make a difference. The Outreach Committee will be open to visiting anyone who is sick, lonely or infirm. We will be hosting several Fellowships for different causes and need some new folks to take on the hostess duties: We have a great Fellowship team to assist you.

We are heading into the season of fundraising – Holiday Wreaths for Thanksgiving or Christmas, the St. John Community Christmas Card and, of course, the Holiday Pastry Sale. Plans are being made for the baking and packing days. Unlike the words of St. Paul, the women of the Ladies Philoptochos do not grow weary or lose heart – we are too busy!

*On Tuesday, October 3*, we will have our General Meeting in Kokkos Hall: *5:30 pm Mix and Mingle, 6:00 pm Meeting*. Please make your plans to join us.

Please join us for the Membership Wine and Cheese Event *on Sunday, October 22*, following Divine Liturgy. We will soon kick off the Holiday Wreath Sales, St. John Community Christmas Card, and the Holiday Pastry Sale – more information in this issue!

We would like to send our very special prayers and best wishes to Father Florin and Presvytera Alexandra on the birth of their baby boy, Alexander Stavros, who made his appearance on September 15. Many special blessings for this newest child of God! We look forward to watching him and Daria grow in our St. John the Baptist Parish.

The Weekly Word is starting back up – look for it in your email if you are a member. This is the very best way to stay in touch. We also have a Facebook group page: Las Vegas Ladies Philoptochos Society – St. John the Baptist, which we use to announce meetings, promote special projects, Holy Days, and of course to share photos!

Kudos: Many thanks to Imtisal (Amy) Khouri, for hosting the Holy Cross Fellowship on Sunday, September 10. Along with the basket collections in Church, we were able to make a nice donation to Holy Cross Seminary.

We look forward to the upcoming few months of activities in our Philoptochos! Give your hands to Serve and your hearts to Love.

As always, I remain your Sister in Christ, Bernadette Anthony, Philoptochos President



*Holy Chrismation*

Emilia (Yolanda) Franco, on September 24. Sponsor: John G. Karas.

*Fallen Asleep in the Lord*

Thymios Carabas on August 28, 2023. Funeral on September 9.

Savva Savvas on September 3, 2023. Funeral on September 11.



THE LADIES  
PHILOPTOCHOS  
SOCIETY



# Welcomes All Ladies

AS GREEK ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN,  
WE ARE GIVEN THE GREAT PRIVILEGE AND  
UTMOST RESPONSIBILITY TO BE THE ARMS  
OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD TODAY  
AND EMBRACE ALL THOSE IN NEED.

2024 MEMBERSHIP WINE & CHARCUTERIE  
OCTOBER 22, 2023  
FOLLOWING DIVINE LITURGY



PLEASE RSVP TO  
LASVEGASPHILOPTOCHOSSTJOHN@GMAIL.COM

## *Building and Maintenance Committee*

Greetings and Happy Fall!

As my term on the Parish Council is coming to an end, it is important to share with all of you the amazing work that we have been able to accomplish because of your generous donations toward the Building Fund. Without your continued support we would not be able to do what we have over the past two years. You will find a spreadsheet *on Page 9*, detailing many of the important projects that we have completed and their cost. In the past 22 months we have paid over \$400,000 toward deferred maintenance projects, with over \$233,000 coming from monies raised and donated within the past two years!

On this spreadsheet you will also see future projects that we would like to undertake and bid amounts that have already been received. I would say in order of priority, our Hall Building is in desperate need of stucco repair and repainting, with aging air conditioning units soon needing replacement. Bids for exterior repainting and stucco are coming in around \$130,000, with 7.5-ton ac units ranging from \$17-23,000 each. Currently, our power bills for the Church and Hall are \$7,300 a month! Our new Church units are expected to arrive in the next few weeks, and this will hopefully help lower our electric bill.

For years we have been stating that \$45,000 of the proceeds from the Festival are supposed to go toward maintaining our Church and grounds and to the Building Fund for capital improvements. But as we know, our Stewardship Pledges have never been enough to fund the general operations of our Parish, and the Festival account has evolved into an overdraw protection account when our expenses exceed our income from Stewardship, trays and candles.

It goes without saying that maintaining our buildings and grounds is a costly and constant responsibility with unexpected repairs occurring all the time. Just this past week, we had to jet out cleanouts (sewer lines) because of backflow flooding, costing \$4,100. The walk-in refrigerator went out and our water bill was \$8,300. This is why it is crucial that everyone do what they can toward helping make sure we keep costs down. Whether it be turning off lights, not changing thermostat settings, cleaning up after oneself, volunteering your time; every small effort makes a big difference. I am deeply appreciative for all your assistance and thankful for such wonderful contributions.

With Love and in Christ, Eleni Filios, Building and Maintenance Chair

## *Notes from the Loft*

On *Sunday, October 1*, we celebrate National Church Music Sunday by honoring our Choir members and remembering our departed members. Joining the Choir ministry is a great way to learn about the Liturgical hymns and share your time and talents. If you are interested in joining us in the Choir Loft, we would love to see this ministry grow. I have created digital practice tracks that are available for you to use at home to help you learn the hymns. Please join us in the Choir Loft!

Athena Mertes, Choir Director

## *A Note from Presvytera Maria*

On *October 1* we celebrate National Church Music Sunday where we honor all our Chanters and Choir members. It is also the day of our Patron Saint, Romanos the Melodist, whose Icon adorns our Church over the sound room. Music is vital to every aspect of our Orthodox worship. Our hymns are expressed in song and elevate our understanding of our Faith.

We are always in need of Readers, Chanters and Singers. Fortunately, much of our chant in English is now available through AGES Digital Chant Stand. If anyone is interested in learning, please see any of the Priests or me. We are always in need of dedicated musicians, whom I am willing to teach. YOUTH CHOIR and Youth Musicians: This includes you!

With Love in Christ, Presvytera Maria





*Building and Maintenance Committee (Continued from Page 8)*

| HALL-COMPLETED WORK                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Deep cleaning of entire interior:<br>Carpets, tile floors, walls, lighting, bathrooms, mini bar room<br>Alarm & Fire system upgrade(\$9,500)<br>Complete professional kitchen clean up (\$8,210)<br>Hood and duct cleaning/ oil disposal (\$1,750)<br>Warehouse organization and inventory<br>Replacing remaining roof (\$30,745)<br>Shredding of documents DONATED- \$750<br>Organization and inventory of equipment/ repair<br>Ceiling repair from leak / ceiling tile replacement DONATED-\$1,200 |
| FUTURE PROJECTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Paint and stucco repair of exterior (\$120-135,000)***<br>Repainting interior<br>Interior doors repair/replacement<br>Sink Cabinet repair<br>Cork flooring-replacement (\$100,000+)***<br>Repair of retractable divider<br>Sound system upgrade<br>Can lighting replacement<br>Air Conditioning unit replacement 20 units (\$400-500,000)***                                                                                                                                                         |
| *** BIDS CURRENTLY ACQUIRED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

| EXTERIOR-COMPLETED WORK                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Landscaping clean up/ sprinklers<br>Stucco and paint on interior perimeter walls DONATED-\$1,500<br>Resealing and striping of parking lots (\$53,000)<br>CONEX Container for festival materials (\$7,098)<br>Gates (hinges) DONATED-\$750<br>Replacement of Hacienda Main Gate & Interior Fountain Gate (\$10,333)<br>Organization of outdoor kitchen and container materials<br>Perimeter gate fencing along Hacienda (\$2,400)<br>Fountain reconcrete/tile cleaning (\$7,500)<br>New Fountain pump &lights (\$6,500)<br>Tree replacement (\$7,140)<br>Parking and Church stair lights repair (\$1,300)<br>Reestablishing mat room/ new tool shed<br>Cameras back kitchen (\$1225)<br>Bollard lights (\$19,000) DONATED-\$6,500<br>Grass reseeding (\$1,620)<br>Landscaping valves replacement (\$2800)<br>Landscaping maintenace company (\$1,550 per month)<br>Jetting of cleanouts (\$4,100)<br>Broken Roof tile and Pavillion Dome Repair (\$2,220)<br>Tool replacement (\$3,000) |
| FUTURE PROJECTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Restaining and repair of outside church steps<br>Waterproofing planters (\$150,000)***                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

| CHURCH-COMPLETED WORK                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Carpet replacement Church & Hall DONATED -\$52,000<br>Polishing of marble flooring (\$1500)<br>Air conditioner replacement DONATED-\$94,000<br>Water heater copper replacement<br>Thermostat replacement<br>Reupholstry of pews DONATED -\$46,829<br>Choir loft cabinets (\$2,382)<br>Update Inland marine schedule-insurance<br>LIVE STREAM CAMERAS DONATED- \$2,795<br>UPGRADED WIFI FOR FESTIVAL (\$20,000) DONATED-\$10,000<br>Maintenance man<br>Cleaning lady part time |
| FUTURE PROJECTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Paint and structural crack repair of interior<br>Paint and stucco repair of exterior                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |



*Lord, sanctify those  
who love the beauty of  
Your House!  
(Divine Liturgy of  
St. John Chrysostom)*



# **Six Classes on the Orthodox Faith**

**Wednesdays 6:30-8:00 pm  
beginning on September 20  
in Kokkos Hall**

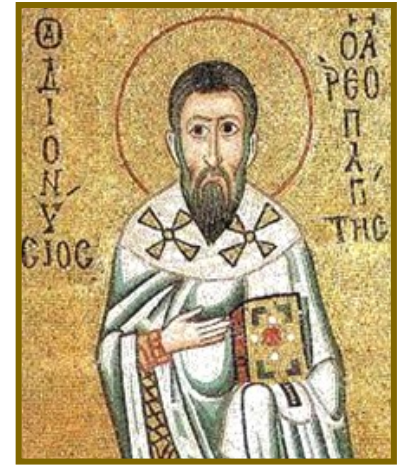
**For inquirers, catechumens, and  
Orthodox Christians who want to know  
more about the ancient, Apostolic Faith**

We will cover...

- *Theology and Church History*
- *Sacraments and the Divine Liturgy*
- *Spirituality and Prayer*
- *and a “Show and Tell” in our magnificent Byzantine Church.*

## *From Father Florin*

Among the Fathers of the Church lies what I would call a rather mysterious figure: A sixth-century theologian whose name is unknown and who wrote under the pseudonym of Dionysios the Areopagite, whom we commemorate *on October 3*. With this pseudonym he was alluding to a passage of Scripture in the *Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 17*, where St. Luke tells how St. Paul preached in Athens at the Areopagus to an elite group of the important Greek intellectual world. In the end, the majority of his listeners proved not to be interested and went away jeering at him. Yet a few approached St. Paul and opened themselves to the Faith. The Evangelist gives us two names: Dionysios, a member of the Areopagus, and a woman named Damaris.



Five centuries later, an author of many books chose the pseudonym “Dionysios the Areopagite.” His intention was to put Greek wisdom at the service of the Gospel, to foster the encounter of Greek culture and intelligence with the proclamation of Christ. He wanted to do what this Dionysios had intended, that is, to make Greek thought converge with St. Paul’s proclamation; being a Greek, he wanted to become a disciple of St. Paul, hence a disciple of Christ.

Why did he hide his name and choose this pseudonym? It seems he desired to make an act of humility. He did not want to glorify his own name: Rather than building a monument to himself with his work, he truly served the Gospel through his ecclesial theology. We can place his theology in the sixth century because of the Greek spirit that he encountered in the books of Proclus, who died in Athens in 485, which he placed at the service of the Gospel.

Proclus belonged to late Platonism, a current of thought which had transformed Plato’s philosophy into a sort of religion. Proclus was demonstrating a great cosmic system of divinity, of mysterious forces, through which, in this deified cosmos, man could find access to the divinity. As can be seen, this thought is profoundly anti-Christian. It is a late reaction to the triumph of Christianity, an anti-Christian use of Plato, whereas a Christian interpretation of the great philosopher was already in course.

It is interesting that Pseudo-Dionysios dared to avail himself of this very thought to demonstrate the truth of Christ; to transform this polytheistic universe into a cosmos created by God, into the harmony of God’s cosmos, where every force is in praise of God: From the Seraphim to the Angels and Archangels, to man and to all the creatures which together reflect God’s beauty. He thus transformed the polytheistic image into a praise of the Creator and His creature. In this way we can discover the essential characteristics of his thought: First and foremost, it is cosmic praise. Since the creature is in praise of God, Pseudo-Dionysios’ theology became a liturgical theology: God is found above all in praising Him, not only in reflection. Moreover, the liturgy is not something made by us, something invented to have a religious experience for a certain period; rather, it is singing with the choir of creatures and entering into cosmic reality itself. In this very way the liturgy becomes expansive and great, it becomes our union with the language of all creatures.

Although Pseudo-Dionysios’ theology is cosmic, ecclesial, and liturgical, it is also profoundly personal. He created the first great mystical theology. With him the word “mystic” becomes more personal and more intimate, for it expresses the soul’s journey toward God. And how can God be found? Here we note once again an important element in his dialogue between Greek philosophy and Christianity. Apparently what Plato says and what the great philosophy on God says is far loftier, far truer. The Bible appears somewhat simple – but he remarks that this is necessary, so that in this way we can understand that the loftiest concepts on God never reach His true grandeur: They always fall short of it. In fact, these images enable us to understand that God is above every concept; in the simplicity of the images, we find more truth than in great concepts. The Face of God is our inability to express truly what He is. So, St. Dionysios uses a “negative theology”. It is easier for us to say what God is not rather than to say what He truly is. Only through these images can we intuit His true Face, and this Face of God is very concrete: It is Jesus Christ.

*(Continued on Page 12)*

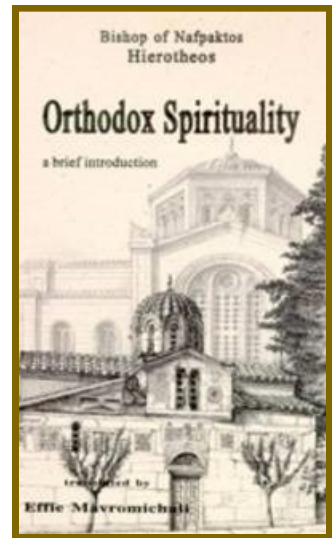
## Orthodox Bookstore

Greetings from the Bookstore!

Restocked from the Birth of the Theotokos Monastery in Greece is this month's featured selection, *Orthodox Spirituality: A Brief Introduction*, by Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos. As we embark on the journey through a New Ecclesiastical Year, it is the perfect time to reflect as to whether any of us are caught up in our own spiritual 'Babylonian captivity' (as the author suggests) to any theology outside of the Church. We are not called to satisfy any sort of



divine justice for having offended an angry God, for example, but to become temples of the Holy Spirit. How we approach and understand this mystery is put forward very well in this short, easy-to-read book.



From the back cover: "A spiritual person is one who participates in the energies of the Most Holy Spirit and has himself become a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Orthodox spirituality is not something abstract, emotional, or intellectual. The bearer of Orthodox spirituality par excellence is the Saint, who is revealed through his teachings and his relics. The non-spiritual individual, who is deprived of the Holy Spirit, lives on the psychological and carnal level.

"This distinction points to the difference between Orthodox spirituality and other spiritualities. Orthodox spirituality differs markedly from the spiritualities of the East and the West. The difference in dogma indicates the difference in ethos as well. The essence of Orthodox spirituality lies in its therapeutic effects. It cures a person's infirmities and renders him an integrated person."

Looking forward to seeing you in the Bookstore for your copy and other devotional needs!

Serving you with Love in Christ,  
Paraskevi Santamaria, Bookstore Director



## From Father Florin (Continued from Page 11)

St. Dionysios shows us that on our journey toward God we are still very far from Him. In the end, the journey to God is God Himself, Who makes Himself close to us in Jesus Christ. Thus, a great and mysterious theology also becomes very concrete, both in the interpretation of the liturgy and in the discourse on Jesus Christ. With all this, St. Dionysios the Areopagite exerted a strong influence on all medieval theology and on all mystical theology.

In the end, he tells us to take the path of experience, the humble experience of faith, every day. Then the heart is enlarged and can see and illumine reason so that it perceives God's beauty. Let us pray to the Lord to help us to place the wisdom of our day at the service of the Gospel, discovering ever anew the beauty of faith, the encounter with God in Christ.

Fr. F. J. Ristache.

## *Stewardship and Community Outreach*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory be to God for all things. What an incredible sight we had during our recently completed 50th Las Vegas Greek Food Festival. It was wonderful seeing so many of our parishioners share their unique talents and to offer their time on this important annual event in our Parish. May it be blessed.

As we all know, Stewardship is like a three-legged stool, time, talents, and treasures, and all three legs of this stool must be working for carrying out the mission given to us by our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ: *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matt 28:19-20)*

There are many examples throughout the Bible, of Saints and other people who have dedicated their lives to carrying out this great commission of the Lord. One such example is St. Theophanes the Confessor, who possessed a mind illumined by the light of Christ, even as a child. Once, while walking along the street in very cold weather, he saw a naked child freezing. He quickly removed his clothes, clothed the child, and thus warmed him and brought him back to life. He then returned home naked. His startled parents asked him, “Where are your clothes?” To this the Saint replied, “I clothed Christ.” St. Theophanes clearly understood the Lord’s message: *“In as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it unto Me.” (Matthew 25:40)*

Another marvelous example is St. John the Almsgiver, who was the Patriarch of Alexandria in the 7th Century. Those who knew him spoke of his great compassion for the needy. He would never think of ignoring a beggar, a prisoner, or any afflicted person that he met in the street. As often as he gave, though, he never seemed to run out of resources for the work of the Church. God abundantly blessed him in every conceivable way because of his charity to others.

After his enthronement, he called in the treasurers and financial administrators of the Patriarchate, and told them, “Go, therefore, through the whole city, and make a list of all my masters down to the last.” They were puzzled by his request, so he said to them, “Those whom you call poor and beggars, these I proclaim my masters and helpers. For they, and they only, are really able to help us and bestow upon us the Kingdom of Heaven.” Once this task was accomplished, he instructed his private treasurer to set aside a daily sum sufficient for the needs of these poor; there were more than seven thousand of them.

One last example is that of St. Martin of Tours. As a young soldier, Martin encountered a beggar in Amiens, France where he was serving in the Roman army. The beggar was unclothed, asking alms, and was very cold. Others passed the beggar by as if he did not exist. However, Martin, having nothing else to give removed his cloak and with his sword, he cut it in half. He gave one half to the beggar and dressed himself in the other half. That night, Martin had a vision in which the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him. The vision spoke to him, “Martin, a mere catechumen has clothed Me.”

May we all remember that the Lord has granted us so many gifts, be they our time in this temporal life, our individual talents, and the financial means he has provided us. May we use these gifts wisely being seen by Him as Good Samaritans. The Holy Fathers of the Church remind us that God accounts the value of our giving back of time, talents, and treasures, not by how much is given, but by how much is kept back. May we all freely give back to the Lord what is needed for the poor, the sick, and the suffering and do all for His Glory. Glory be to God. Δόξα Σοι ο Θεός.

In Christ, Stewardship and Outreach Committee



## Ministry News

### Church School



Hi Everyone! Congratulations to our 50th Annual Greek Food Festival. For me it was so great seeing so many of our former Church School students coming to the Festival all grown up and doing great things in their lives. Where have the years gone?

We are still registering students for Church School and ensuring their families are Parish Stewards. The last day to enroll your child for the 2023-2024 school year is **Sunday, November 5**. Please see me to enroll your child.

We are so excited to have your children in our classrooms. We will be learning many great things about our Orthodox Faith, especially about the lives of the Saints, and we are excited to see our young people involved in our wonderful Church community as well. Please encourage your children to get involved with other Church Youth Ministries in addition to Church School. We would love to see them in other activities.

Thank you for enrolling your children and we look forward to seeing them.

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

### Combined Youth Event: OFF and GOYA

Dear Parents, Kids and Teens,

I would personally love to thank all of you who volunteered manning the Soda Booth! Your presence and especially all your help were much appreciated. I am sure everyone had lots of fun and a wonderful time. The Festival is our Church's biggest fundraiser and we love seeing the future of our Church work hard!

For October, we will come together as a group again and have some Bowling Fun! Please join us **at Red Rock Lanes on Friday, October 13 from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm**. Please bring money for game and shoe rental. There is also a snack bar there, so I am sure we will have a fun evening. Please confirm your participation at [frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com).

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you and hope to see you there!

In Christ, Father Florin, Maha Habiba and April Rivera, Youth Advisors



### Greek Folk Dance

Thank you for all the love and support during our Folk Dance Group performances at the 50th Annual Greek Food Festival! We are in the final push of registration for our dance groups. Please see Karen for a registration form! Practices are Sundays and Tuesday evenings (for competitive groups, only).

The Metropolis of San Francisco has announced that the annual Folk Dance Festival will be **on February 15-18, 2024 in Anaheim, California**. We are looking forward to having a great year!

Much Gratitude in Christ,

Sia Dalacas and the Folk Dance Board



## *Young Adults - 18 Years through Early 30s*

I am very grateful for each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication in making our 50th Greek Food Festival a success! It was a fun event, but one that necessitated lots of work. Thank you for putting your time and energy into it! Everyone appreciated your presence, support, help and joy that you shared between yourselves and with everyone else.

This month, join us *on Saturday, October 7, 5:00 pm, at Jeremiah (Phanourios) Barrett's Home.* We will relax and play board games. Please let us know if you intend to be there and please also bring a dish to share with everyone. For Jeremiah's address and for any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com).

Thank you and hope to see you there!  
In Our Lord Christ, Father Florin



*As you enjoy the memories of the 50th Greek Food Festival in this issue, we express our heartfelt gratitude for our photographers: Clark McCarrell, Everett Nikephoros DeBree, Catalina Maria Magee, Brett Eaves and Bill Vasilios Bruninga!*



## *Kali Parea - For the 40+ Crowd*

We skipped our September meeting, so we could gather to offer our service to our Parish for the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Greek Food Festival. Thank you to all our volunteers who worked so hard for our Festival!

This month, we will gather at the home of Demetrious Asim, our fearless advisor, to celebrate his Name Day. Please join us *on Sunday, October 22 at 3:00 pm*. We will have a potluck dinner and awesome discussion.



Thank you, Demetri, for your generous invitation! We are all looking forward to the event! And Happy Name Day!

Father Florin, on behalf of Kali Parea

## *Mr. & Mrs.*

We would like to thank you all for your dedicated help, as every year, at the Greek Food Festival. It was a magnificent event, one that we all enjoyed!

This month we will not meet, but we will gather for a Friendsgiving Potluck at the Rivera Home *on Saturday, November 11 at 5:00 pm*.

We are encouraging all couples to attend the Ariston Event honoring Gus Flangas *on Saturday, October 28*. Please look for details *on Page 5* in this issue.

Yours in Christ, Father John, Presvytera Maria, Father Florin and Presvytera Alexandra

## *Forerunners - Our Seniors Fellowship*



We hope you had a pleasant Summer and pray you are in good health. We thank all our Seniors who came out and volunteered for our Greek Food Festival.

The Forerunners will have their kick-off Luncheon *on Monday, October 16 at 11:30 am*. This is the third Monday of the month; however, we will revert to the second Monday of the month in November.

We are looking forward to fun, good food, and games to begin our get-togethers. If you are able to donate a bottle of wine for our luncheons, please bring it with you.

Love in Christ, Paula Kelesis for the Forerunners

## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

5300 S. El Camino Road  
Las Vegas, NV 89118

Rev. Father John Hondros  
frjohn@vegaskgreekorthodox.com

Rev. Father Florin Ristache  
frflorin@vegaskgreekorthodox.com

Rev. Deacon John Nixon  
deaconjohn@vegaskgreekorthodox.com

Karen Rawlinson  
Administrative Assistant

Michelle Eugenio  
Bookkeeper

Bruce Royal  
Maintenance & Grounds

### *Office Hours*

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

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

Parish Council: John Fotopoulos

Philoptochos: Bernadette Anthony

Stewardship & Community Outreach:  
John Karas

Building & Maintenance:  
Eleni Filios

Choir: Athena Mertes

Chanters & Youth Choir:  
Presvytera Maria Hondros

Church School: Eileen Koutsulis

Altar Servers: Father John

### GOYA:

Fr. Florin Ristache & Maha Habiba

Orthodox Family Fellowship:  
Fr. Florin Ristache & April Rivera

Young Adults: Fr. Florin Ristache

Greek Folk Dance: Sia Dalacas

### Mr. & Mrs.:

Fr. John & Presv. Maria,  
Fr. Florin & Presv. Alexandra

Kali Parea: Demetrious Asim

Forerunners: Paula Kelesis

Orthodox Bookstore:  
Paraskevi Santamaria

Greek Food Festival: Gus Flangas

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

Photography & Live-Streaming:  
Bill & Erin Bruninga



# Ladies Philoptochos Society

*Quantities are limited*

Your generous contribution is greatly appreciated. It benefits the many ministries we support at St. John The Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, the Las Vegas community at large, and philanthropic and humanitarian programs in the U.S. and around the world.

## *Order*

**Send your order and check made payable to:**

Ladies Philoptochos Society  
Attention: Christmas Pastry Sale  
5300 El Camino Rd. Las Vegas NV 89118

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Day / Evening

Email \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Boxes \_\_\_\_\_ X \$30.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

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

Orders will be ready for pick-up at St. John Church on Sunday December 3, 2023 following Divine Liturgy

## 2023 Annual Christmas Pastry Sale

### Place your order today!

Delicious and Traditional Greek Christmas Pastries – lovingly baked and packaged in a decorated box for \$30.00

Guarantee your order by pre-paying by November 13, 2023



THE LADIES  
PHILOPTOCHOS  
SOCIETY  
THANKSGIVING &  
CHRISTMAS  
FUNDRAISER



Lynch Creek Farm handcrafts traditional and decorated Christmas wreaths, fresh centerpieces, and other beautiful holiday gifts of exceptional quality.



*Fresh  
Garland*

STARTING AT  
\$59.95



*Center  
Pieces*

STARTING AT  
\$49.95



*Fresh  
Wreaths*

STARTING AT  
\$49.95

Your choice will make great client and family gifts. You can ship your gifts directly to your recipients on the date you select, as early as **November 1.**

Scan this QR code with your phone to order



Philoptochos will receive 15% of all orders.



**The Community of St. John the Baptist  
Greek Orthodox Church**

**2023 Annual Christmas Card**

A wonderful way of expressing our Christmas Greetings and best wishes for the holidays to our family and friends this year by including our name on the St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Community Christmas Card.

Please complete this form and return with your check for \$25.00 made out to the Ladies Philoptochos Society, to the Church Office by **Friday, November 25, 2023**

Name on the card (example – Jones Family, or Gus Jones)

---

**To purchase please complete, the following:**

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

Daytime or Cell phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed and number on the check: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card payments please contact Karen at the Church Office at (702) 221-8245

Offered by The Ladies Philoptochos Society.




**The Ladies  
Philoptochos**

**AUTUMN  
Bake Sale**

**NOVEMBER 12TH**

**GET YOUR FRESH BAKED ITEMS FOR  
THANKSGIVING AT OUR AUTUMN BAKE  
SALE! GREAT ADDITION TO YOUR TABLE OR  
A GIFT FOR A NEIGHBOR OR FRIEND.**

**IF YOU ARE DONATING ITEMS, PLEASE HAVE YOUR BAKED  
GOODS IN PANOS HALL BY 9:30 AM**



*Love One Another!*

# Remembering the Church through Planned Giving

“...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...” Matthew 6:20 (RSV)

For most people, the greatest financial gift we are able to give is what we leave behind when we fall asleep in the Lord. Making a Planned Gift to the Church is an opportunity to leave a legacy that strengthens God’s ministry and expresses our thankfulness to Him. Through a charitable gift, you can help sustain our place of worship first and foremost, allowing the Church to continue to meet the spiritual needs of our current faithful as well as future generations; as well as have a significant positive effect on the ministries of the Church and the people whose lives are changed by them. A charitable gift may also give you substantial current tax benefits as well as estate tax benefits. As part of our Parish Stewardship Committee’s ongoing efforts, we are inquiring if parishioners would be interested in attending a Church hosted meeting/workshop, where estate planning attorneys would come and discuss how basic estate planning tools work such as wills, trusts, powers of attorney, and the probate process; as well as how Planned Giving can be incorporated into one’s estate plan.

Giving to the Church is an opportunity to examine our priorities and values. It is an opportunity to express our thankfulness, to give of ourselves and to grow in grace. Giving is not a substitute of our commitment – it is an expression of our commitment. Come And See what we can do together with your support.

**CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you are interested in attending a future meeting/workshop, please email [legacygiving@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:legacygiving@vegasgreekorthodox.com) or call the Church at (702) 221-8245 to be placed on the invite notification list for any future events.

**SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

5300 El Camino Road, Las Vegas, NV 89118



Dear Father John, Father Florin and Beloved Fellow Parishioners:

With every good intention this letter is intended to refresh the memory of our community and/or familiarize those of us who may be unaware of the history of the *Hellenic Historical Society*.

In 2003, at the Parish Assembly of that year, the *Hellenic Historical Society* (HHS) was established. From that time through 2009 a concentrated effort was made by our archivists to systematically collect and preserve the first 50 years of history of our St. John the Baptist Church Community and the Greek Community at large in Las Vegas and Nevada. This monumental undertaking guaranteed that our history has not been lost.

In 2009 our community was able to enjoy the fruits of that labor at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. During the 3-day celebration of *Our Golden Heritage*, 740 chronologically ordered display boards with a program guide, presenting approximately 7,500 documents, letters, charters, books, photos, newspaper clippings, invitations, etc. were mounted on the walls of Panos Hall and on the walls of the foyer.

In 2019 at the 2-day 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of our community, *Our Diamond Jubilee*, we were able to further enjoy the fruits of that initial labor in addition to 50 new display boards. These displays were reproduced and those interested can find five large albums in the Church Library.

Please remember how valuable and interesting our story has been. Too many of us do not know of the events that led us to this magnificent Church where we are today. There are **many gaps in the history** which we would like to fill. To further preserve a more inclusive and detailed history we are asking the Parish Council, the Ministries and Pan Orthodox organizations to **select a member of their body to act as historian to gather past, present and future records and to share these documents with the Hellenic Historical Society.**

**We welcome any and all submissions from any member of the community who has material pertinent to the St. John the Baptist Church Community and the Greek Community at large in Las Vegas and Nevada.**

We look forward to receiving your historical materials. Please see the guidelines for your submissions.

We count on your continued support of this most important ministry.

Thank you kindly.

Your Sisters in Christ, for Hellenic Historical Society.

*Nitsa Filios*  
[nitsalv@aol.com](mailto:nitsalv@aol.com)  
702 595-6888

*Cheryl Pandelis*  
[cheryl.pandelis@outlook.com](mailto:cheryl.pandelis@outlook.com)  
702 338-1601

*Susan Stamis*  
[susanstamis@gmail.com](mailto:susanstamis@gmail.com)  
702 460-9954



**SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBMISSIONS**

- a) actual materials to **Karen Rawlinson at St. John Church Office (702 221-8245)**  
*(a receipt will be issued for temporarily loaned or permanently donated items)*
- b) digital materials (**high resolution** scanned documents, captioned photos, PDF's, etc.).  
to **susanstamis@gmail.com**

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS** *(including but not limited to)*

- a) Documents
- b) Letters
- c) Charters
- d) Books
- e) Newspaper pages or clippings
- f) Invitations
- g) Photos (please include)
  - 1. name of event
  - 2. date of event
  - 3. names of people
    - a) labeled left to right
    - b) front row, second row, third row etc.

We count on your continued support of this most important ministry.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

*Nitsa Filios*  
[nitsalv@aol.com](mailto:nitsalv@aol.com)  
702 595-6888

*Cheryl Pandelis*  
[cheryl.pandelis@outlook.com](mailto:cheryl.pandelis@outlook.com)  
702 338-1601

*Susan Stamis*  
[susanstamis@gmail.com](mailto:susanstamis@gmail.com)  
702 460-9954

*With Gratitude to God for Our Pledged Stewards in 2023  
If you wish to become a Parish Steward, please call Karen for a Pledge Form*

|                                             |                                               |                                        |                                         |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Acovino, Richard and Angela                 | Chondrakis, Dimosthenis and Kragerud, Kaaren  | Fotopoulos, John and Barbara           | Karas, Kevin and Elaine                 |
| Adamatopoulos, Alejandro and Lopez, Mariana | Christou, Toni                                | Fountas, Constantinos                  | Karris, Mark and Suzanne                |
| Adamy, Marina                               | Coll, Patrick and Anita                       | Fountoulakis, Vasileios                | Kasiotis, Nicholas and Claudia          |
| Adondakis, George and Kim                   | Collins, David                                | Franco, Yolanda                        | Katopodis, Efstratios                   |
| Alcala, Georgia                             | Conger, William and Alexia                    | Frangakis, Christos and Anastasia      | Katre, Dhimitra and Fry, Jesse          |
| Alexander, Eleni                            | Cooper, Eirene                                | Frudakis, George and Darlene           | Katre, Sotir Mark                       |
| Alford, Cynthia "Mary"                      | Costacos, John                                | Gancheva, Hrist                        | Katris, Nick and Theana                 |
| Alhayek, Majd and Areen                     | Costuros, George and Marsha                   | Gantcheva, Galia and McDaniel, Rodney  | Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon             |
| Allen, John and Denise                      | Cotsilis, Jenny                               | Gantcheva, Marin and Iordanova, Albena | Kelesis, John and Vicki                 |
| Alvarez, Kelly                              | Crist, Adam and Kanistra                      | Gauvin, Chad and Marissa               | Kelesis, Paula                          |
| Anastasakis, Mark and Elaine                | Dalacas, Dimitri and Athanasia                | Geiger, Dan and Hart, Dora             | Kiflezgi, Rahel                         |
| Andrews, Catherine+                         | Dalacas, Eleni                                | Gekakis, George                        | Kirchner, Gary "Barlaam"                |
| Andrews, Chris and Pamela                   | Dalacas, Georgia                              | Generales, John and Arlene             | Kirollos, Michael and Molina, Adriana   |
| Andrews, George                             | Damascus, Peter                               | George, Pete and Georgia               | Kokkinis, Peter and Jennifer            |
| Andrews, Vasiliki                           | Daskalos, George and Voula                    | Georgis, John                          | Koliambas, Eleni                        |
| Andricopulos, Margo                         | Davis, Matthew and Christine                  | Georgis, Pete and Keshia               | Kontos, Diana                           |
| Anthony, Stavros and Bernadette             | De Bree, Everett                              | Ghebreab, Daniel and Ghermay, Selam    | Koroni, Tara                            |
| Antoniou, Elias and Glorielys               | Deep, Joseph and Alexi                        | Gialketsis, William and Rachelle       | Kostas, James                           |
| Aristides, George and Diana                 | Demas, Spiro and Rita                         | Giambi, Jason and Kristian             | Kostopoulos, George                     |
| Asim, Demetrious                            | Demolas, Maria and Nour, Reza                 | Giouzelis, Sasa                        | Kostopoulos, Georgia                    |
| Atkins, Sean and Christina                  | Demoleas, Alexandra                           | Goodman, Linda                         | Kountanis, Panagiota                    |
| Balaouras, Panos and Helen                  | Demoleas, Eleni and Thomas, Kristian          | Gordon, Victor and Demetria            | Kouretas, Daniel                        |
| Balason, Voula                              | Demoleas, Spero and Grace                     | Grabovoi, Daphne                       | Kouretas, Spiro                         |
| Baldwin, Richard and Vivi                   | Demoleas, Stephanie                           | Granillo, Abrahan                      | Kouris, Demitris and Terry              |
| Balodimas, James                            | Demopoulos, Dimitrios and Selina              | Gutierrez, Connie                      | Koutsulis, John and Eileen              |
| Barbarino, Demetra                          | Demopoulos, Vasiliki                          | Gutierrez, Daniel                      | Koutsulis, Sam and Effie                |
| Barrett, Jeremiah                           | Dimitri, Janet and Martha                     | Hagos, Yohannes and Mebrat             | Krikie, Jonathan and Iryna              |
| Bartel, Robert and Ioanna                   | Dominguez, Eric and Amalia                    | Hamilton, Mary                         | Kypreos, George                         |
| Bartzos, Eugenia                            | Doskas, Athanasios and Anastasia              | Hamilton, Paul and Brandi              | Kypreos, Lesley                         |
| Beeler, Mike and Carolyn                    | Doukakis, Panagiotis and Chrisi               | Haralambakis, Demetre and Dimitra      | Kypreos, Peter and Geri                 |
| Beeman, Benita                              | Dounis, Georgia                               | Haramis, John and Kitsios, Eugenia     | Kyriannis, Justin and Linda             |
| Belch, George                               | Dounis, Kiki                                  | Hastings, Teri                         | Kyriazopoulos, Constantine, Jr.         |
| Belojevic, Marija                           | Dramitinos, Mary                              | Haynes, Maria                          | Lakkis, Christina                       |
| Berendji, Jim and Vivian+                   | Dudunakis, Michael                            | Hemmers, Oliver and Pantelas, Anne     | Lamancusa, Lisa                         |
| Bieker, Adam and Cassie                     | Earl, Christine                               | Himaegiosca Goldie Family              | Landahl, Richard and Johana             |
| Bieker, Georgeea                            | Eliades, Aristotelis and Caroline             | Hollar, Michelle and DiGioia, Antonio  | Lavine, Frederick                       |
| Birtas, Helen and Ann                       | Eliades, Eleni and Garza, Everardo            | Hondros, Christina                     | Lee, David and Alexandra                |
| Bjorklund, Danielle and Gersonsin, Justin   | Eliades, Gregory and Maria                    | Hondros, Christopher and Darlene       | Lekar, Caroline                         |
| Blume, Michael                              | Eliades, Harry and Agapi                      | Hondros, Fr. John and Presv. Maria     | Lekar, Michael and Effie                |
| Bochanis, Aris and Savannah                 | Eliades, Katerina                             | Hondros, Marissa                       | Leong, Marissa and Elaine               |
| Bochanis, George                            | Eliades, Sia                                  | Howard, Eddie and Willie               | Leonis, Tishe                           |
| Booth, Alina                                | Eliakis, Peter                                | Hristopoulou, Spiridoula               | Leonis, Nick and Sophia                 |
| Boskovic, Jelena and Vasilija               | Eliakis, Varthie                              | Iten, Robert and Sophia                | Leventis, Nicholas and Christina        |
| Brennan, Peter and Maria                    | Eyler, John and Elizabeth                     | Jandete, Johanna                       | Lexis, Annette                          |
| Britten, Ronald and Carol                   | Eyler, Fr. Paul+ and Nathan                   | Jaynes, Christine                      | Liaos, James and Tina                   |
| Brown, Faye                                 | Failla, Jennifer                              | Jensen, Matthew and Michelle           | Liaos, Steven and Francine              |
| Brown, Mark and Alyssa                      | Fenlason, Nathan and Zmina-Fenlason, Jennifer | Kachikis, Ernestine                    | Likourinou, Angie                       |
| Bruninga, William and Erin                  | Feola, Richard                                | Kakavulias, George and Helen           | Likourinou, Steve and June              |
| Bryant, Timothy and Janet                   | Filios, George and Nitsa                      | Kakavulias, John and Elizabeth         | Litsos, Nicholas and Catherine          |
| Bucy, Brent and Elaine                      | Filios, Spiridon and Eleni                    | Kalkas, John and Rena                  | Loughton, Dustin and Rena               |
| Carabas, Sotiroulla                         | Fischer, Cheryl                               | Kambouris, Litsa                       | Makris, Apostolos                       |
| Carahalios, John and Constance              | Fischetti, George and Cassidy                 | Kanis, Constantinos and Katie          | Malamatos, Kindina+                     |
| Caredis, Jon and Marjorie                   | Fitzgerald, Norman and McCullen, Sandra       | Karas, George                          | Manakides, Alexis and Varonos, Nicholas |
| Carrico, William and Alexandra              | Flangas, Gary and Amanda                      | Karas, James                           | Mangafas, Kyriakos and Elefteria        |
| Carter, Maria                               | Flangas, Gus and Tamara                       | Karas, John and Marcie                 | Manolakos, Catherine                    |
| Chachas, Bessie                             | Flangas, Marilyn                              |                                        | Manos, Constantine and Michele          |
| Chachas, James                              | Fleischer, Robert and Penny                   |                                        | Mansour, Muna                           |
| Chagares, Kiki                              | Foster, Kyle and Maria                        |                                        | Markakis, Sandy Kiriaki                 |
| Chamie, Elie, Emil and Claudine             |                                               |                                        | Markantonis, Demos and Kate             |
| Chandrinou, Alexia                          |                                               |                                        | Markantonis, George and Sarah           |
| Chanos, Jennifer                            |                                               |                                        | Martinaitis, Louis                      |
| Chomakos, Dean and Tammy                    |                                               |                                        |                                         |



*With Gratitude to God for Our Pledged Stewards in 2023  
If you wish to become a Parish Steward, please call Karen for a Pledge Form*

Matsis, John and Rebecca  
Mavrantonis, Stacy and Kiki  
Mavros, Alex and Jen  
Mavros, Debbie  
Mavroudis, Frank  
Mazzorana, Vicki  
McCarty, David and Soesetyo, Grace  
McKinney, Michael and Mersene  
McManus, Jeanette  
McPherson, Robert and Marie  
McSweeney, Farolyn  
Mehas, Andrew and Samantha  
Melake, Nayel and Euxana  
Menegatos, James  
Merritt, Devin and Sonia  
Meyers, Evon  
Mikelis, Nikolas and Angela  
Minas, Arthur and Ewa  
Miteva, Galya  
Monolakis, Anthony  
Monoyudis, Jim and Julie  
Moore, Brenda  
Murray, Christopher and George, Veneta  
Newell, Ronald and Maria  
Nicholas, Christina  
Nicholas, John and Estella  
Nichols, George and Tereza  
Nicolas, Samer and Christine  
Niforos, Helen  
Nikolopoulos, Nick and Dimitra  
Nikoloudakos, Georgia  
Nixon, Deacon John and Diakonissa Ellyn  
Olmsted, Travis and Marilyn  
Orlando, Ritsa  
Osborn, Alexandra and Spotti, Peter  
Oustian, Juliette and Ararat  
Pahigiannis, Nikon  
Paikos, Tom and Elizabeth  
Pajak, Scott and Angela  
Palivos, Peter and Vicky

Pallis, Paul  
Pan-Arcadians  
Pandelis, Cheryl  
Panos, Jeanne  
Papalois, John and Maria  
Papas, Christian and Nicole  
Papas, Louis and Magaly  
Papas, Peter and Rita  
Papas, Peter Nikko  
Pappas, Panagiotis and Andrea  
Paschalis, Evangelos and Maria  
Payan, Luis and Eleni  
Pendleton, Tricia  
Peratikos, Tony  
Peterson, Todd and Diane  
Petro, Aleko and Georgia  
Petrou, Jim and Penelopi  
Philoptochos Society  
Pierro, Joe and Rhonda  
Polimerou, Angelina  
Politis, Pantelis and Dimitra  
Poulis, Chris and Francine  
Poulos, Christine  
Pouridis, Kouli and Para  
Powell, Scott and Angela  
Powers, Russell and Rebecca  
Prestage, Adam and Courtney  
Raptis, Presvytera Evonne  
Rasmussen, Scott and Rebecca  
Reizakis, Yianna Albertson-  
Rigas, Anthony and Mary  
Rigas, Evie  
Rihani, Gary and Linda  
Ristache, Fr. Florin and Presv. Alexandra  
Rivera, Elias and April  
Robison, Diane and Patricia  
Rodis, Dimitri and Angeline  
Rodis, Sophia  
Rotas, Beatrice  
Sakkas, Georgios and Stavropoulos, Bessie  
Salon, Janelle  
Salonikis, Valentinos and Sophia

Santamaria, Jennifer and Robert  
Savvas, Savva +  
Sechrist, Carl and Christine  
Sehremelis, Andy and Leslie  
Sellen, Jeffrey

Senior Forerunners  
Setian, Gary  
Simmons, John  
Simos, Eleni  
Simos, Tony and Lorie  
Simpson, Bryan and Julie  
Sirhan, Michael and Khuri, Imtisal  
Skalkotos, Nikolas and Georgia  
Skandros, Stephanie  
Snow, Clifford and Christina  
Sorkhabi, Arian and Habiba, Maha  
Soteropoulos, Gust and Rita  
Sotiropoulos, Christopher and Jessica  
Soursos, Helene  
Sparkuhl, Alex and Antoinette  
Sparkuhl, Andreas and Diana  
Spirtos, Nick  
Staub, Douglas and Anastasia  
Stavropoulos, Terry and Niki  
Stenos, Louis +  
Stransky, John and Rachel  
Stransky, Mark  
Szukiewicz, Joseph and Justina  
Tadich, Andrea  
Tadich, Katerina  
Tafoya, Steven and Irene  
Temple, Voula  
Thanos, Nicholas and Victoria  
Theros, James and Kathryn  
Thomas, Anastasia Palivos-  
Thompson, Maggy  
Thompson, Steven and Aliko  
Tijiboy, Ana  
Tijiboy, Christine  
Tohme, Tony and May

Tsiralidis, Kosmas and Katerina  
Tsobanakis, Chris  
Tsobanoglou, Niki and Paris  
Tsolis, Christos and Panagioula  
Tsortanidis, Sophia  
Vervilos, James and Anna  
Villatoro, Luis and Prifti, Teuta  
Wadlow, Nicholas and Pamela  
Wagner, Sophye  
Wainscott, Betty  
Wallace, Robert and Katerina  
Walter, Vernon and Alice  
Ward, Angeliki  
Waterhouse, David and Aleighzja  
Webb, Taylor  
Welles, Brigitte  
Wilkerson, Chuck and Kristina  
Williams, Anthony and Anna  
Williamson, Daniel and Stavroula Halatsis-  
Wilson, Clyde  
Wilson, Kelly and Egi, Junichiro  
Wilson, Cleo  
Wirtz, Aphrodite  
Womack, Karl  
Womack, Kimberly  
Xerogianes, Nick and Nikki  
Xikis, Victoria  
Yurkov, Andre and Kalina  
Zachariou, Sozos and Aspasia  
Zaferatos, Ted  
Zakis, Pope  
Zarkos, Nick and Dina  
Zaronis, Mary  
Zarras, Nick and Chery  
Zervas, Dionisios and Cacilda  
Zimmerman, Paul, Angela, Christopher and Vangeli  
Zimmerman, Paul and Julie  
Zmina, Stephen and Cynthia

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Paula Kelesis, Director [pkelesis89104@yahoo.com](mailto:pkelesis89104@yahoo.com)



**2023  
Stewardship  
Report  
(as of 9/25/23)**

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$552,746 (\$525,893 in 2022)  
 Stewardship Gifts Received: \$437,156 (\$426,265 in 2022)  
 Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$115,590 (\$99,628 in 2022)  
 Stewardship Families Pledged: 405 (396 in 2022)  
 2023 Goal: \$600,000 . . . Keep the Pledges Coming!

**“WALK  
IN  
LOVE”  
(Ephesians 5:2)**

| <u>Average Pledge</u> | <u>No. of Families</u> | <u>Amount Pledged</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| \$1 - \$500           | 180                    | \$ 46,386             |
| \$501 - \$1,000       | 88                     | \$ 69,728             |
| \$1,001 - \$2,500     | 92                     | \$145,184             |
| \$2,501 - \$5,000     | 26                     | \$ 96,264             |
| \$5,001 - \$9999      | 13                     | \$ 78,964             |
| \$10,000 & Above      | 6                      | \$116,220             |
| <b>Total Families</b> | <b>405</b>             | <b>\$552,746</b>      |

**Church Account Summaries  
August 2023**

| Nevada State Bank Accounts                    | July                | Deposits           | Transfers In       | Withdraws/<br>Checks | Transfers Out      | August              | Notes                              |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
|                                               | Ending Balance      |                    |                    |                      |                    | Ending Balance      |                                    |
| General Operating Account (GOA)               | \$18,108.78         | \$94,047.18        |                    | 12,349.37            | \$57,839.52        | \$41,967.07         |                                    |
| Community and Education (C&E)                 | \$51,479.86         |                    |                    | \$1,669.39           | \$26,500.00        | \$23,310.47         | Transferred to GOA                 |
| Greek Food Festival (GFF)                     | \$114,755.03        | \$4,525.56         |                    | \$25,164.50          | \$3,864.59         | \$140,251.50        |                                    |
| Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)         | \$178,671.06        | \$14,641.63        | \$79,162.60        | \$804.25             | \$1,996.73         | \$189.63            |                                    |
| Building & Maintenance (B&M)                  | \$228,602.44        | \$460.00           |                    | \$20,955.00          | \$79,162.60        | \$128,944.84        |                                    |
| Folk Dance Group                              | \$19,246.82         |                    |                    | \$10.00              |                    | \$19,236.82         |                                    |
| Hellenic Historical Society                   | \$3,250.47          |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$3,250.47          |                                    |
| Designated Funds                              | July                | Deposits           | Transfers In       | Withdraws/<br>Checks | Transfers Out      | August              | Notes                              |
|                                               | Ending Balance      |                    |                    |                      |                    | Ending Balance      |                                    |
| Bookstore                                     | \$42,292.76         | \$1,712.10         |                    | \$189.63             | \$1,996.73         | \$41,818.50         |                                    |
| Restricted Funds                              | July                | Deposits           | Transfers In       | Withdraws/<br>Checks | Transfers Out      | August              | Notes                              |
|                                               | Ending Balance      |                    |                    |                      |                    | Ending Balance      |                                    |
| ICON                                          | \$11,266.47         | \$51.50            |                    |                      |                    | \$11,317.97         |                                    |
| Faithtree                                     | \$1,626.39          |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$1,626.39          |                                    |
| Youth Choir                                   | \$2,989.18          |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$2,989.18          |                                    |
| Church School                                 | \$137,116.44        |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$137,116.44        |                                    |
| GOYA                                          | \$530.36            |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$530.36            |                                    |
| Eyler Memorial Fund                           | \$5,654.00          | \$12,871.15        |                    |                      |                    | \$18,525.15         |                                    |
| Emergency Fund                                | \$5,000.00          |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$5,000.00          |                                    |
| Three Priests                                 | \$50,918.06         |                    |                    | \$614.62             |                    | \$50,303.44         | Glass for Altar                    |
| Building Fund                                 | -\$75,000.00        | \$6.88             | \$75,000.00        |                      |                    | \$6.88              | Will transfer balance in September |
| Altar Servers                                 | \$440.00            |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$440.00            |                                    |
| Building Fund Balance                         | -\$4,162.60         |                    | \$4,162.60         |                      |                    | \$0.00              |                                    |
| <b>Designated, Restricted and Other Total</b> | <b>\$178,671.06</b> | <b>\$14,641.63</b> | <b>\$79,162.60</b> | <b>\$804.25</b>      | <b>\$1,996.73</b>  | <b>\$269,674.31</b> |                                    |
| Building and Maintenance Funds                | July                | Deposits           | Transfers In       | Withdraws/<br>Checks | Transfers Out      | August              | Notes                              |
|                                               | Ending Balance      |                    |                    |                      |                    | Ending Balance      |                                    |
| Building Fund                                 | \$137,355.02        | \$460.00           |                    | \$20,955.00          | \$79,162.60        | \$37,697.42         |                                    |
| Panos Flooring Repair                         | \$23,722.83         |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$23,722.83         |                                    |
| Roof Appeal                                   | \$10,283.22         |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$10,283.22         |                                    |
| HVAC                                          | \$48,351.50         |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$48,351.50         |                                    |
| Giving Tree                                   | \$8,889.87          |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$8,889.87          |                                    |
| Lighting                                      | \$0.00              |                    |                    |                      |                    | \$0.00              |                                    |
| <b>Building &amp; Maintenance Funds Total</b> | <b>\$228,602.44</b> | <b>\$460.00</b>    | <b>\$0.00</b>      | <b>\$20,955.00</b>   | <b>\$79,162.60</b> | <b>\$128,944.84</b> |                                    |
| Other Funds                                   | July                | Deposits           | Transfers In       | Withdraws/<br>Checks | Transfers Out      | August              | Notes                              |
|                                               | Ending Balance      |                    |                    |                      |                    | Ending Balance      |                                    |
| Kokkos Scholarship Fund                       | \$67,281.39         |                    | \$2,194.93         |                      |                    | \$69,476.32         | as of 06.30.23                     |
| Commonwealth Investments (Icon)               | \$130,175.07        |                    |                    |                      | \$2,735.70         | \$127,439.37        | Change in Investment               |

**August 2023 Candles** \$6,369.81  
**August 2023 Trays** \$4,586.00  
**Total August 2023 Candles & Trays** \$10,955.81



# OCTOBER 2023 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD



*Sunday*

*Monday*


*Tuesday*

*Wednesday*

*Thursday*

*Friday*

*Saturday*

|                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                   |                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                      |                                                                      |                                                                   |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>1</b><br>Church Music Sunday<br>8:45 am Orthros<br>10:00 am Divine Liturgy                                                                     | <b>2</b>                                                                                          | <b>3</b><br>5:30 pm Philoptochos<br>General in Kokkos Hall     | <b>4</b><br>6:30 pm Six Classes on<br>the Orthodox Faith:<br>Class #3                                                                                                                                                  | <b>5</b>                                                             | <b>6</b>                                                             | <b>7</b><br>5:00 pm Young Adults<br>Game Night at Barrett<br>Home |  |
| <b>8</b><br>8:45 am Orthros<br>10:00 am Divine Liturgy                                                                                            | <b>9</b>                                                                                          | <b>10</b>                                                      | <b>11</b><br>6:30 pm Six Classes on<br>the Orthodox Faith:<br>Class #4                                                                                                                                                 | <b>12</b>                                                            | <b>13</b><br>6:30 pm GOYA/OFF at<br>Red Rock Bowling                 | <b>14</b>                                                         |  |
| <b>15</b><br>8:45 am Orthros<br>10:00 am Divine Liturgy                                                                                           | <b>16</b><br>11:30 am Forerunners<br>Luncheon in Kokkos Hall                                      | <b>17</b><br>5:00 pm Ariston Meeting<br>6:00 pm Parish Council | <b>18</b><br>6:30 pm Six Classes on<br>the Orthodox Faith:<br>Class #5                                                                                                                                                 | <b>19</b>                                                            | <b>20 St. Gerasimos</b><br>8:00 am Orthros<br>9:00 am Divine Liturgy | <b>21</b>                                                         |  |
| <b>22</b><br>8:45 am Orthros<br>10:00 am Divine Liturgy<br>12:00 Philoptochos<br>Membership Event<br>3:00 pm Kali Parea at<br>Demetri Asim's Home | <b>23 Holy Apostle<br/>Iakovos (James)</b><br>9:00 am Divine Liturgy<br>of St. Iakovos            | <b>24</b><br>6:00 pm Parish Council<br>Budget Meeting          | <b>25</b><br>6:30 pm Six Classes on<br>the Orthodox Faith:<br>Class #6                                                                                                                                                 | <b>26 St. Demetrios</b><br>8:00 am Orthros<br>9:00 am Divine Liturgy | <b>27</b>                                                            | <b>28</b><br>6:00 pm Ariston Award<br>Gala at South Point         |  |
| <b>29</b><br>8:45 am Orthros<br>10:00 am Divine Liturgy                                                                                           | <b>30</b><br> | <b>31</b>                                                      | Folk Dance Practices:<br>Liondaria ~ Sundays 12:30 - 1:15 pm in Foyer<br>Primary ~ Sundays 12:30 - 2:00 pm, Tuesdays 6:00 - 7:30 pm in Kokkos<br>Aetopoula ~ 1:00 - 2:45 pm in Panos, Tuesdays 6:00 - 7:30 pm in Panos |                                                                      |                                                                      |                                                                   |  |

# *The Desert Messenger*

*St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church  
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THE DESERT MESSENGER

## *The Way of the Lord*

*“Is any one among you suffering.  
Let him pray. Is any cheerful.  
Let him sing praise. Is any among you sick?  
Let him call for the elders of the Church  
and let them pray over him, anointing him  
with oil in the Name of the Lord;  
and the prayer of faith will save the sick  
man, and the Lord will raise him up;  
and if he has committed sins,  
he will be forgiven.  
Therefore confess your sins to one another,  
and pray for one another,  
that you may be healed.  
The prayer of a righteous man has  
great power in its effects.”  
(James 5:13-16)*

