

# The Desert



# Messenger

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

Volume 18, Issue 8    St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV

August 2020

**From  
Father  
John**

Beloved in Christ:

As we approach the final month of the Ecclesiastical Year, let us thank Christ our God for our health – and indeed for all things – and most especially for the many opportunities He provides through His Holy Church, even during this pandemic, for our spiritual growth and sanctification, whether we have sheltered in place or attended the Divine Services in a limited and restricted manner: *"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

For the past six months during this COVID 19 pandemic, so many of you have inspired me by your faith, forbearance and holy witness: By either worshipping with us for the many services of Lent, Holy Week and the many Divine Liturgies via live-stream, or carving out the time to worship in Spirit with an Orthodox prayer book during the appointed service times; by designating a special place as your "home church" where you (and perhaps your loved ones) regularly connect with our Lord in prayer; by supporting our Church with your prayers, encouraging words, service and financial offerings; through reaching out to fellow Parish members to check in or offer a hand; by sharing an inspiring thought or spiritual message or hearty laugh via text or email . . . and so on. Admittedly, each of us at some time during this pandemic have come close to or reached a breaking point – yet the care, concern, encouraging words, the sometimes much needed reality bites, and overall love of our fellow members of the Body of Christ have proven how interwoven we truly are in the Lord. Moreover, I am grateful to our merciful God for the many of you who have reached out to meet with me for the Sacrament of Holy Confession since our Church reopened: This affirms for me that this period in the "wilderness" has not been without its spiritual fruits, as for so many of us it allowed an opportunity to reflect, repent and genuinely return to God.

On August 6 the Orthodox Church celebrates *the Holy Transfiguration of Our Savior* – commemorating the event when Jesus Christ, shortly before His Passion, led three of His Disciples with Him up a high mountain and revealed the fulness of His Divine Glory to them. (Matthew 17:1-9) Having been to Mount Tabor in the Holy Land, I can assure you that even by vehicle this is not an easy ascent: But the splendor of entering the Holy Orthodox Church of the Transfiguration at the top of the mountain makes the journey worthwhile and gives the pilgrim a small glimpse of the Divine beauty, glory and faithful assurance the Disciples experienced – which moved them to fall down and cover their faces in awe of the Presence of the Living God. How much more, through the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion, do we experience the humility, love, mercy and acceptance of God – despite our many shortcomings and sins – toward His creation. May this feast arouse us to ascend spiritually through prayer, fasting, repentance, and selfless love for others – and approach the Holy Sacraments of Confession and Communion with more fervor, eagerness and gratitude. Hopefully, this pandemic has taught us to never take our life, our soul, our health, one another, our Church and our many blessings for granted.

In closing, allow me to share these ever-timely words of St. Theophan the Recluse: "Hasten as early as possible, before anything interferes, to lift yourself up to the Lord in mind and heart in solitude, to confess your needs and intentions to Him, and to beg for His help. Having attuned yourself by prayer and thoughts of God from the first moments of the day, you will then spend the whole day in reverence and fear of God, with collected thoughts."

With Much Love and Gratitude in Christ for All Things,

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

*Sundays: 8:45 am Orthros - 10:00 am Divine Liturgy*

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

### *Dormition Fast August 1-14*

Sunday, August 2/8th Sunday of Matthew/  
*Translation of the Relics of St. Steven the  
Archdeacon and Proto-Martyr*

Orthros: Tone Seven (Grave)

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22

Monday, August 3

6:00 pm *Paraklesis to the Theotokos*

Wednesday, August 5/Forefeast of the Holy  
*Transfiguration of Our Savior Jesus Christ*

5:00 pm *Orthros*

6:00 pm *Divine Liturgy of the Transfiguration  
(Please fast from 1:00 pm)*

Epistle: 2 Peter 1:10-19

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

*Blessing of the Grapes*

Thursday, August 6/Holy Transfiguration of Our  
*Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ (Liturgy  
celebrated on the preceding evening)*

Friday, August 7

6:00 pm *Paraklesis to the Theotokos*

Sunday, August 9/9th Sunday of Matthew/St.  
*Matthias the Apostle of the 70/St. Constantine,  
Patriarch of Constantinople*

Orthros: Tone Eight (Fourth Plagal)

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34

Monday, August 10

6:00 pm *Paraklesis to the Theotokos*

Wednesday, August 12

6:00 pm *Paraklesis to the Theotokos*

Friday, August 14

6:00 pm *Great Vespers for the Dormition of the  
Theotokos*

Saturday, August 15/Dormition of the Theotokos  
8:00 am *Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy and  
Artoclasia (Papaa and Kakavulias Families)*

***PLEASE RESERVE ASAP TO ATTEND!***

Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11

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

Sunday, August 16/10th Sunday of Matthew/  
*Translation of the Image of Christ "Not Made by  
Hands" - The Holy Mandelion/ St. Gerasimos of  
Cephalonia*

Orthros: Tone One

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

Sunday, August 23/11th Sunday of Matthew/  
*Apodosis of the Dormition/St. Irenaeus of Lyons*

Orthros: Tone Two

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): John 21:14-25

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

Saturday, August 29/Beheading of St. John the  
*Baptist (Strict Fast)*

8:00 am *Orthros*

9:00 am *Divine Liturgy*

Epistle: Acts 13:25-32

Gospel: Mark 6:14-30

Sunday, August 30/12th Sunday of Matthew/  
*Alexander, John, and Paul the New Patriarchs of  
Constantinople*

Orthros: Tone Three

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Gospel: Matthew 19:16-26

*"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building."  
(1 Corinthians 3:9)*

## Parish Council Report

Happy August to All!

Now that we have been holding Diving Liturgy under the COVID-19 restrictions for over a month, I am happy to say that despite all of the obstacles we have faced to open our Church, Sunday services are going well. This past Sunday we had close to our 50 person limit in the Church with an additional 30 or so attending in Panos Hall. All of the protocols seem to be working, including the wearing of masks as mandated by the State, bowing to venerate the Icons rather than kissing them, utilizing every other pew, etc. And of course, all Sunday Services are being live-streamed for those who cannot or do not feel comfortable attending. It cannot be overstated that if you are not feeling well in any way, it is better to participate at home for safety's sake.

It is my prayer that in the not too distant future we will look back at these times as a distant memory as we eventually return to the ability to celebrate in full capacity and are able to attend Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals, and participate fully in the Sacraments. In the meantime, I would like to thank the volunteers who ensure that our services run smoothly and safely, and specifically thank Steve Likourinou for donating the audio/visual equipment for the close-circuit broadcast in Panos Hall, as well as Bill and Erin Bruninga, Skip Ruffner and Juliana Likourinou for ensuring that the live-streaming is provided for every Sunday and Great Feast Service.

I am happy to report that the installation of the new Church roof, through the generosity of our Stewards who donated for this vitally important project, is now complete. We can all breathe a bit easier knowing that our priceless Iconography is no longer vulnerable to water damage every time it rains. With the imminent monsoon season, this is indeed good news.

Now that we are into August, it is official that we will not be holding our annual Greek Food Festival this year. Moreover, even if we wanted to put on this event, it is very doubtful that we would be permitted to do so. We will be watching how other public events unfold over the next few months, including sporting events. Although we had the Festival scheduled for September 11-13 this year, for the past several years the Parish Council has been discussing the idea of moving the Festival from September to sometime in the spring – for the simple fact that every September, Las Vegas hosts a myriad of events, including iHeartRadio Music Festival, Life is Beautiful, other local food and cultural festivals, and now the Raiders will be a potential September competition as well.

As a result of being shut down this year, it is the perfect time to fully explore a change in schedule, and the Parish Council has been discussing moving the event to May. Specifically, we are looking at the week before Memorial Day for 2021, which would make the dates *May 21-23*. Again, this is tentative, but it makes a lot of sense to move the event to May, and with the importance of this fundraiser, we can open for the community four months sooner than we normally would. In the meantime, I ask all of you to pray for everyone's good health and for everything to be as close to normal as possible by next May, I am sure that Las Vegas will be ready for our party by then!

In Christ, John Matsis, Parish Council Vice President

*"You are God's temple . . ." (1 Corinthians 3:16)*

## 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:  
Fr. Seraphim & Melissa Fleetwood

Greek Folk Dance: Sia Dalacas

Greek School: Paula Kelesis

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

Kali Parea: Demetrios Asim

Adult Basketball:  
TBD

Forerunners: Victoria 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



## Philoptochos News

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

I pray that you and your families are doing well and continue to be safe during these challenging times.

We have been blessed over the last few weeks to return to Church for both Orthros and Divine Liturgy in small groups. I urge those who can to contact Karen at the Church Office and make reservations to attend. For those who cannot attend, we are incredibly fortunate to continue to have live online services. Thank you to those who make this possible.

*On August 15, we will celebrate the Orthros and Divine Liturgy for the Dormition of our Most Holy Theotokos.* On this day we will also celebrate the Name Day of our Panagia Chapter of Philoptochos.



Happy Name Day to all those who celebrate on this most holy and beautiful day! Unfortunately, due to current regulations, we cannot have our annual Fellowship following Liturgy or our *Panigyris tis Panagias Luncheon*.

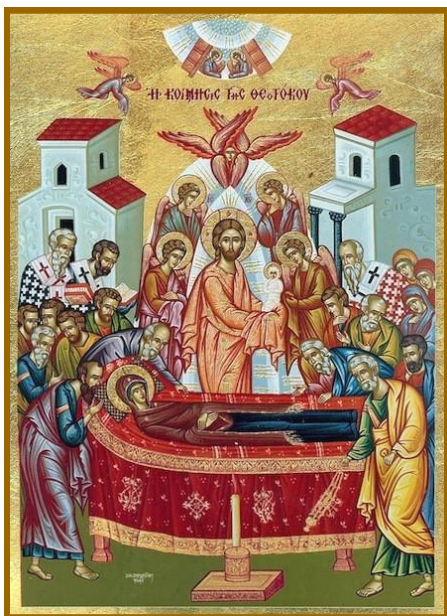
*The National Ladies Philoptochos Biennial Virtual Convention will be on August 21 and 22.* The registration fee is \$50 for all delegates and observers. The link to register is: <https://www.philoptochos.org/2020-national-philoptochos-biennial-convention/>.

As we are in the summer months and continue our down time, we must remember that our Philoptochos ladies carry on their work by reaching out to those in need. Please make that special call or text to say hello to someone and see if they have needs or know someone who does. We will continue to demonstrate love and compassion to all. We will notify everyone of any upcoming meetings or events by email. Please reach out to me with any needs or comments at (702) 885-6217. May you and your families enjoy the rest of the summer and your special time together.

With Love in Christ, Benita Beeman, Philoptochos President

## Stewardship and Community Outreach

*Most Holy Theotokos, Pray to God For Us!*



As we begin the two week period of fasting in preparation for the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, a couple of points come to mind. First, it is so shocking that August is already upon us! Even though there is a pandemic sweeping over the world, and many aspects of daily life have slowed down, time is still flying by at such a rapid pace!

With this being said, here is the next point: Two weeks of preparing for what is considered a "Second Pascha" is a very brief period in comparison to the Great and Holy Fast for Pascha. Perhaps we can do our best to keep focused on increased prayer and fasting for this very short time frame and, God willing, reap the benefits when the blessed Feast Day arrives! Our most beloved Panagia intercedes for us continually before the Lord: May we give our attention to her always, and particularly during these special days.

Lastly, on behalf of Father John, Father Seraphim and the entire Parish Council, we would like to thank you all who are continuing to support our Parish community through this difficult time.

In Christ, Justina Szukiewicz, Stewardship and Outreach Committee



*"He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant . . ." (Philippians 2:7)*

## Notes from the Loft ~ For Adult and Youth Choir Members



Sending our prayers your way for a safe and blessed summer. Please remember that there is still time to apply for a share of \$4,000 of scholarship funds available to any Church Musician who wishes to increase his or her skills and education in liturgical music arts! This is an incredible opportunity to make the most of the time while we are waiting to return as a group to providing music in our services.

Please refer to this link on our website for full details and application materials: <https://sfchurchmusic.org/#scholarships>. *The firm deadline for scholarship applications is August 15, 2020.*

Please also be sure to check out the Church Music Federation ministry's YouTube video channel featuring excellent instructional materials that may be utilized during this and any time. Our videos have two primary playlists: Theory/Music Literacy and Hymnology. Subscribe to the channel and never miss the CMF video postings: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-aeHxCuWfPePrVWB7kljmQ>.

We will keep everyone posted regarding our Parish music programs – unfortunately, we are still unable to meet until further notice. We miss all of you and your beautiful voices.

Love in Christ, Athena Mertes and Presvytera Maria, Directors

## Orthodox Bookstore

The Bookstore is open by appointment only. Summertime is a great time for families to read about the Saints together.

The Bookstore carries the Paterikon for Kids from Potamitis Press. The inspiring stories and illustrations engage the entire family with titles like: *The Abbot and the Robbers*, *St. Nektarios' Shoes*, *The Barber Saint*, *The Story of the Vasilopita*, *St. Gerasimos and the Lion*, *The Monks and the Grapes*. *The Creation of the World*, and many more stories of the Saints.

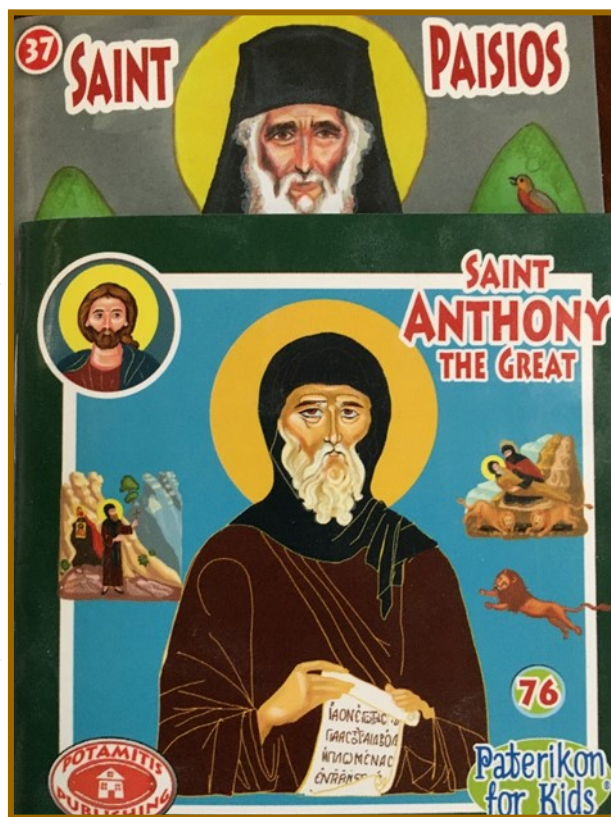
These books are short, only 16 pages, and fully illustrated. There are even some books in Greek. There are 98 different titles. The series is an encyclopedia of the Saints. Look for the Patron Saints of your family or just ones that you want to learn more about. These delightful stories are good for all ages.

Here is a short excerpt from Book #37, *St. Paisios the Hagiorite*:

Once in Panagouda, Paisios was asked to find a solution to a very complicated matter. He prayed for several days but could not decide. Then, suddenly, there was a knock on his door. "Who's there?" asked the Saint. "It's me, Euphemia." It was indeed Saint Euphemia, a well known saint from the fourth century. Seeing Paisios struggling, she came and helped him find the correct answer.

Glory to God for our living Saints!

Until next month, God Willing, Mary Pursell and the Bookstore Team



*"But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, 'Lord, save me.' Jesus immediately reached out His Hand and caught him, saying to him, 'O man of little faith, why did you doubt?'" (Matthew 14:30-31)*

## Ministry News

### Orthodox Family Fellowship

Welcome back to ministry meetings after a hiatus due to this pandemic! We look forward to being together in a digital format over the Zoom platform and doing a wonderful craft project together. You will have to gather some required materials in the next few weeks to be able to participate!

*On Sunday, August 16 at 3:00 pm* we will make an icon together using mod-podge glue, a paper icon, a piece of wood used as the base or background, and sandpaper together with any decorations (glitter glue, mosaic tiles, etc.). We will send you the link for the Zoom meeting, and text blast as well.

Now is a good time in the new school year to send us your email or phone number so that we can effectively communicate our events going forward. We look forward to seeing your shining faces and pray this summer was as peaceful and joyful as can be under the present circumstances.

God bless and see you on August 16! Amy Khuri, Jelena Boskovic and Father Seraphim

### GOYA - For Teenagers

Please join us for our fifth digital GOYA Zoom meeting *on Sunday, August 9 at 5:00 pm*. We will be changing things up before school starts for the 2020-21 academic year. We will have the chance to play digital Bible and Church Trivia – Jeopardy style over Zoom! We will get all the questions and format worked out, all you have to do is join in! So mark your calendars and please make sure to follow the link and the text blast we will be sharing in the following weeks leading up to our GOYA Jeopardy Night.

If you have not done so, please share with us your e-mail and phone number so that we can effectively communicate with you. God bless! Kouli Pouridis, June Likourinou and Father Seraphim

### Young Adults

Please join us for our fifth digital Young Adult Zoom meeting *on Sunday, August 9 at 7:00 pm*. We will be changing things up this month. We will have the chance to play digital Bible and Church Trivia – Jeopardy style over Zoom! We will get all the questions and format worked out. All you have to do is join in! So mark your calendars and please make sure to follow the link and the text blast we will be sharing in the following weeks leading up to our YA Jeopardy Night.

If you have not done so, please share with us your email and phone number so that we can effectively communicate with you. Yours in Christ, Father Seraphim and Melissa Fleetwood

### Church School

Digital Zoom Church Classes will start soon! Watch for more information this month via email blast and the *Weekly Bulletin*. Love in Christ, Eileen Koutsulis, Church School Director



### Chrismations

Paul (Richard) Acovino on June 30, 2020.

Sponsor: John Nixon.

Evangelia (Angela) Acovino on June 30, 2020.

Sponsor: Angeliki Fleetwood.

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

Constantine Leaskas on June 16, 2020. Trisagion on July 1.



## From Father Seraphim

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ addresses difficult words to us if we want to be His disciples: *“If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.” (Matthew 16:24)*

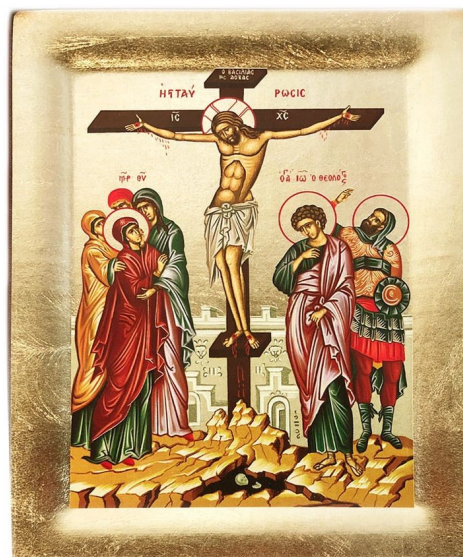
In our lifetime in America, there have been very few real threats to Christians in the freest and most religiously tolerant nation the world has ever seen. This has not been the reality for synchronous Christians in Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, China, Sudan, Indonesia, Egypt, and other places around the world, where persecution is a very real and present danger. According to the secular International Society for Human Rights, 80 percent of violations of religious freedom in the world today are directed against Christians. In effect, our era is witnessing the rise of a new generation of martyrs. Underlying the global war on Christians is the demographic reality that more than two-thirds of the world’s 2.3 billion Christians now live outside the West, often as a beleaguered minority up against a hostile majority – whether it is Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East or parts of Africa and Asia, Hindu radicalism in India, or state-imposed atheism in China and North Korea. In Europe and North America, as well, Christians face political and legal challenges to religious freedom.

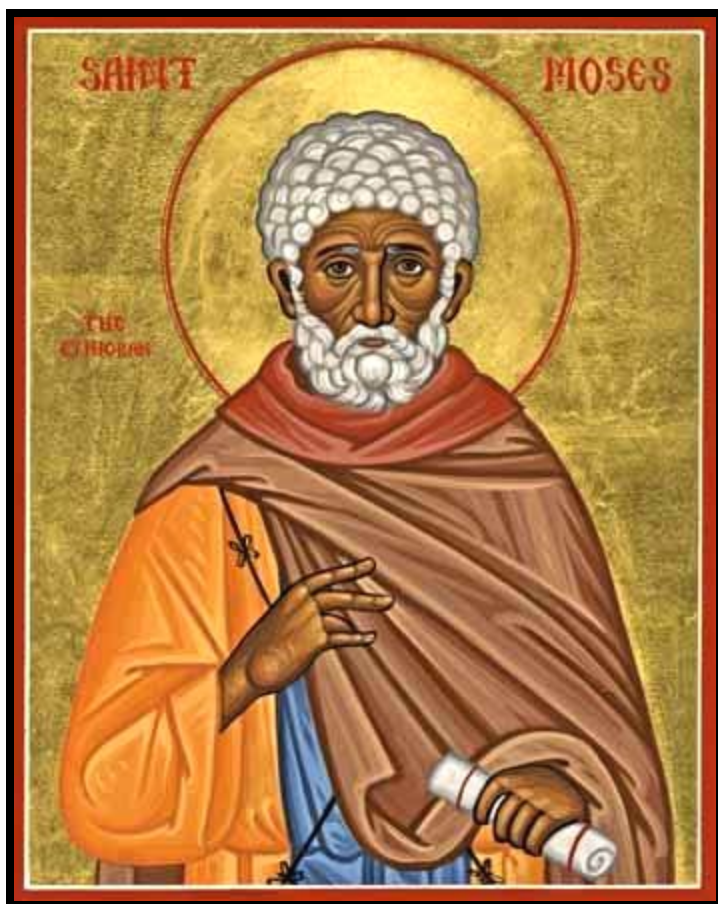
Jesus soberly promises us: *“If the world hates you, know that it hated Me before it hated you.” (John 15:18)* Now – as Christian images, statues, and Churches have been vandalized in our country through burning, toppling, vandalism, or graffiti – we may begin to reflect on the many words of the Gospel which are so easily glossed over. Many of us are inclined to dismiss what is going on: “Oh this intolerance of Christianity does not apply to me here in America,” or, “We have Freedom of Religion in the US, so we will be okay.” In the high calling of Christians toward the Kingdom of God, it is imperative that we do not become too comfortable in this world, *“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly await our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 3:20)* In the many sins that so easily entangle us in this present life – its pleasures, its priorities and goals, and its metrics of success, beauty, and happiness – the words of the Bible always challenge us: *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and its lust: but he that does the will of God abides forever. (1 John 2:15-17)*

When the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese released data in 2014 that 60 percent of Greek Orthodox families of the last generation and 90 percent of Americans with Greek roots are no longer in communion with the Church, it was a startling moment – a wakeup call for all of us. It is precisely the spirit of this world, the spirit of the age which declared that “God was dead” that habituates us into absence from Church attendance and participation in the Sacraments, and that entices us to all the abandon of unlimited pleasurable experiences. Much of the time our life (and even our Church life now!) is mediated to us through a screen. Therein, through variegated technologies that categorize us on the basis of algorithms and user “profiles” (which we embrace wholeheartedly and uncritically), we are sold as information to advertisers, who are deeply invested in the market-driven process of configuring and conforming entire populations to superficial external images. Together with the atheistic Marxist revolution in our country and the global pandemic, it is easy in the face of such difficulties to lose hope or to become despairing and just give up.

As a society, and as a Church within that society, we are far too comfortable in this life and its false promise of utopia, with its comforts, pleasures, and soul-deadening attractions. Yet, our Lord’s call for us to deny ourselves . . . and follow Him . . . is in effect a call for us to return to the Light of His Church. If we would commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God, we can no longer try to embrace with our love both light and darkness, both this world and the Kingdom which is to come.

*(Continued on Page 8)*





## HOLY LIVES MATTER!

A brother at Scetis committed a fault.

A council was called to which Abba Moses was invited, but he refused to go to it. Then the priest sent someone to say to him, "Come, for everyone is waiting for you." So he got up and went. He took a leaking jug, filled it with water and carried it with him. The others came out to meet him and said to him, "What is this, Father?" the old man said to them, "My sins run out behind me, and I do not see them, and today I am coming to judge the errors of another." When they heard that they said no more to the brother, but forgave him.

### *From Father Seraphim (Continued from Page 7)*

These prophetic words of St. Seraphim Rose could not be timelier for us today as we seek to navigate our way through our current darkness toward the light of God's Kingdom: "Let not us, who would be Christians, expect anything else from it than to be crucified. For to be Christian is to be crucified, in this time and in any time since Christ came for the first time. His life is the example – and warning – to us all. We must be crucified personally, mystically; for through crucifixion is the only path to resurrection. If we would rise with Christ, we must first be humbled with Him – even to the ultimate humiliation, being devoured and spit forth by the uncomprehending world. And we must be crucified outwardly, in the eyes of the world; for Christ's Kingdom is not of this world, and the world cannot bear it, even a single representative of it, even for a single moment. The world can only accept Antichrist, now or at any time. No wonder then, that it is hard to be a Christian – it is not hard, it is impossible. No one can knowingly accept a way of life which, the more truly it is lived, leads the more surely to one's own destruction. And that is why we constantly rebel, try to make life easier, try to be half-Christian, try to make the best of both worlds. We must ultimately choose – our felicity lies in one world or the other, not in both. God give us the strength to pursue the path to crucifixion; there is no other way to be Christian."

We know of course that "*with God all things are possible*" (Matthew 19:26) – and so with His help and with His own Presence and Life in us, let us rededicate ourselves to the soul-saving practices that incorporate us into His Church, His Body, and His never-ending Life.

With Love in Christ,

*Father Seraphim*



# WELCOME TO ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH!!!

*Continuing in August . . .*

*Our Church is Open for the Scheduled Divine Services,  
By Reservation on a First Come/First Serve Basis,  
Per the Guidelines of the State of Nevada and  
The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco.*

FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL,  
PLEASE FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

- ~ If you have felt sick in the last 48 hours, please do not enter the Church.
- ~ Hand washing units and sanitizers are available for your use.
- ~ Social distancing must be followed.
- ~ Face masks are required (except for infants and toddlers).
- ~ Our Ushers will assist you with the Candles.
- ~ Please do not kiss the Icons, Gospel or Priest's hand.
- ~ Please follow the direction of the Ushers regarding seating.
- ~ If you feel you are unable to remain in place for the duration of the Service, please inform the Usher prior to seating.
- ~ You are responsible for supervising your own children.
- ~ Our Priests will give instructions regarding Holy Communion.
- ~ There will be no distribution of Antidoron during Communion – only at the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy.
- ~ Please leave your offering in the designated Trays.
- ~ There will be no Fellowship Hour until the restrictions are lifted.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND COOPERATION.

GLORY TO GOD!!!

## LIGHTING A CANDLE FOR YOU:

Your Priests are here to light a candle for you and your loved ones on a request basis. Please call Karen at the Church Office with your request. Any offering you can make during these challenging times, though not required, will be most appreciated.

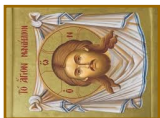


### 2020 Stewardship Report (as of 7/24/20)

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$420,988 (\$435,043 in 2019)  
 Stewardship Gifts Received: \$319,238 (\$293,539 in 2019)  
 Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$101,751 (\$141,504 in 2019)  
 Stewardship Families Pledged: 371 (375 in 2019)  
 Average Pledge to Date: \$1,135 (\$1,160 in 2019)  
 Average Pledge Needed: \$2,683 (371 Families)

## Church Account Summaries ~ June 2020

Nevada State Bank Accounts	May	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	June	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
General Operating Account (GOA)	\$55,870.40	\$32,995.46	\$38,140.06	\$9,048.75	\$61,560.72	\$56,396.45	
Community and Education (C&E)	\$5,527.68					\$5,527.68	
Greek Food Festival (GFF)	\$5,188.07			\$200.00	\$21.60	\$4,966.47	
Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)	\$337,538.19	\$3,390.40	\$8,117.25	\$329.67	\$38,077.57	\$310,638.60	
Folk Dance Group	\$17,966.00					\$17,966.00	
Hellenic Historical Society	\$3,292.94					\$3,292.94	
Designated Funds	May	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	June	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Bookstore	\$8,494.37	\$1,710.40		\$329.67	\$61.36	\$9,813.74	
Ornaments	\$1,169.41					\$1,169.41	
Restricted Funds	May	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	June	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
ICON	\$140,057.76	\$110.00				\$140,167.76	
Library Account	\$1,470.77					\$1,470.77	
Giving Tree	\$0.91					\$0.91	
Line of Credit Reserve	\$20,000.00		\$8,000.00		\$4,000.00	\$24,000.00	
Building Fund	\$24,119.26	\$1,000.00				\$25,119.26	
Landscaping	\$669.88	\$570.00			\$1,235.00	\$4.88	
Youth Choir	\$2,989.18					\$2,989.18	
Church School	\$1,306.37					\$1,306.37	
Three Priests	\$38,916.25		\$117.25			\$39,033.50	Refund of taxes for Laptop purchase
Roof Appeal	\$64,911.22					\$64,911.22	
Baptismal Water Heater	\$69.24					\$69.24	
Altar Servers	\$440.00					\$440.00	
GOYA	\$142.36					\$142.36	
PPP Loan - W2	\$20,483.75				\$20,483.75	\$0.00	Transfer to GOA for payroll & associated expenses
PPP Loan - Fr John	\$7,930.78				\$7,930.78	\$0.00	Transfer to GOA for payroll & associated expenses
PPP Loan - Fr Seraphim	\$4,366.68				\$4,366.68	\$0.00	Transfer to GOA for payroll & associated expenses
<b>Designated, Restricted, and Other Total</b>	<b>\$337,538.19</b>	<b>\$3,390.40</b>	<b>\$8,117.25</b>	<b>\$329.67</b>	<b>\$38,077.57</b>	<b>\$310,638.60</b>	
Other Funds	May	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	June	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Kokkos Scholarship Fund	\$70,650.45					\$70,650.45	
<b>June 2020 Candles</b>	<b>\$2,492.00</b>						
<b>June 2020 Trays</b>	<b>\$1,514.00</b>						
<b>Total June Candles &amp; Trays</b>	<b>\$4,006.00</b>						



# AUGUST 2020 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

							<b>1</b> <i>Dormition Fast Begins</i>
<b>2</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>3</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 5:00 pm Orthros 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy ( <i>Holy Transfiguration</i> ) Blessing of the Grapes	<b>6</b> <i>Transfiguration of Our Lord</i> (Celebrated 8/5)	<b>7</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	<b>8</b>	
<b>9</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 5:00 pm GOYA Zoom Jeopardy 7:00 pm Young Adults Zoom Jeopardy	<b>10</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 6:00 pm Great Vespers for the Dormition	<b>15</b> <i>Dormition of the Theotokos</i> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia	
<b>16</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 3:00 pm OFF Zoom Icon Craft Project	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 6:00 pm Parish Council Meeting	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	
<b>23</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <i>Beheading of St. John the Baptist</i> (Strict Fast) 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	
<b>30</b> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	<b>31</b>						



# *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*



*You preserved  
your virginity in  
birthgiving; you  
did not forsake  
the world in your  
falling asleep, O  
Theotokos. You  
have passed to  
Life, being the  
Mother of Life,  
and through your  
intercessions  
deliver our souls  
from death.  
(Apolytikion for the  
Dormition)*