

# The Desert



# Messenger

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

Volume 21, Issue 10 St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV

November 2023

From  
Father  
John

Beloved in Christ:

I have been blessed, as countless pilgrims, to visit the beautiful Holy Church of St. Nectarios (*commemorated on November 9*) and Monastery of the Holy Trinity on the Greek Island of Aegina and to venerate the relics of this wonderworking Saint, who reposed in 1920. Born in poverty and rising in the ranks of the Orthodox Priesthood – from Deacon to Bishop – because of his virtuous life and love for the poor, he also soon after experienced humiliation and persecution in the Church due to the jealousy and slander of his priestly peers. As a man who suffered much due to the mean-spiritedness of those who slandered him, the longsuffering St. Nectarios wrote these still timely words: “A Christian must be courteous to all. His words and deeds should breathe with the grace of the Holy Spirit, which abides in his soul, so that in this way he might glorify the Name of God. He who regulates all of his speech also regulates all of his actions. He who keeps watch over the words he is about to say also keeps watch over the deeds he intends to do, and he never goes out of the bounds of good and benevolent conduct. The graceful speech of a Christian is characterized by delicateness and politeness. This fact, born of love, produces peace and joy. On the other hand, boorishness gives birth to hatred, enmity, affliction, competitiveness, disorder and wars.”



With the holiday season approaching this month, we are given a wonderful opportunity with the *Christmas Fast*, which *begins on November 15*, to revisit our words, our behaviors, our priorities and to renew our relationship with Christ, one another, and His Holy Orthodox Church. Through this spiritual renewal we will hopefully understand that we have so much



to be grateful for as we celebrate the Thanksgiving Holiday and prepare for the Holy Nativity in the Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ. Given the ongoing tragedy and suffering that abound in our country and in our world these past months, we must be mindful of the ever-relevant prophecies of the Old Testament which were written in the context of pervasive evil and destruction: “*For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but My steadfast love shall not depart from you, and My covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord, Who has compassion on you.*” (Isaiah 54:10) While speaking hopefully of God’s love and fidelity toward His creation, there remains in all the prophetic writings the underlying call to repentance – that is, the need for God’s people to change their minds and hearts and return to Him.

(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>*

Wednesday, November 1/*Holy Unmercenaries  
Cosmas and Damianos the Wonderworkers, and  
their mother, Theodota/St. David of Evia*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

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

Gospel: Matthew 10:1, 5-8

Sunday, November 5/*Fifth Sunday of Luke/  
Holy Martyrs Galaktion and his wife, Episteme, of  
Emesa/Holy Apostles of the Seventy, Hermas,  
Patrobos, Linos and Philologos*

Orthros: First Plagal Tone

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

Epistle: Galatians 6:11-18

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Memorial: Departed Philoptochos Members;

Presvytera Despina Leventis (6 months)

Fellowship: Philoptochos, for Ss. Cosmas and  
Damianos (Patriarchate)

Wednesday, November 8/*Synaxis of the Holy  
Archangels Michael and  
Gabriel and All the  
Bodiless Powers*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Hebrews 2:2-10

Gospel: Luke 10:16-21

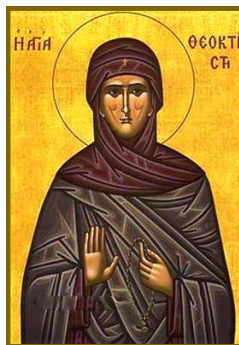
Thursday, November 9/*St. Nectarios of Pentapolis the Wonderworker/  
Holy Martyrs Onesiphoros and  
Porphyrios/Holy Mother  
Matrona/Holy Mother  
Theoctiste of Lesbos*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 2:9-14

Gospel: Luke 13:1-9



Sunday, November 12/*Eighth Sunday of Luke/  
Holy Father John the Merciful, Patriarch of  
Alexandria/Holy Father Nilus the Ascetic/Holy  
Father Leondos, Patriarch of Constantinople*

Orthros: Second Plagal Tone

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

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Memorials: Peter Chagares and Departed Chagares  
Family Members

Fellowship: Philoptochos Autumn Bake Sale  
*Parish Assembly follows Liturgy*

Wednesday, November 15/*Nativity Fast Begins*

Sunday, November 19/*Ninth Sunday of Luke/  
Holy Prophet Obadiah/Holy Martyr Barlaam of  
Ceasarea/Holy Martyr Heliodoros/Holy Martyrs  
Anthimos, Thallalaeos, Christopher, Euphemia  
and her children*

Orthros: Grave Tone

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): Mark 16:1-8

Epistle: Ephesians 2:14-22

Gospel: Luke 12:16-21

Memorial: Presvytera Ilean Eyler (2 years)

Fellowship: Greek Folk Dance Chili Lunch

Tuesday, November 21/*The Entrance of the Most  
Holy Theotokos into the Temple*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Hebrews 9:1-7

Gospel: Luke 8:38-42; 11:27-28

Wednesday, November 22/*Thanksgiving Liturgy/  
Holy Fathers Amphilochios, Bishop of Iconium,  
and Gregory, Bishop of Agrigentum/Holy Father  
Dionysios, Patriarch of Constantinople*

5:00 pm Orthros

6:00 pm Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia

Epistle: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17; 3:1-5

Gospel: Luke 18:31-34

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

*(Continued from Page 2)*

Sunday, November 26/*Thirteenth Sunday of Luke/Holy Fathers Alypius the Stylite of Adrianopolis, Nicon Metanoeite, who called for Repentance, and Stylianos of Paphlagonia*

Orthros: Fourth Plagal Tone

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): Mark 16:9-20

Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-7

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

Fellowship: The Eyler Family, in Memory of Presvytera Ilean

Thursday, November 30/*Holy Apostle Andrew the First-Called/Holy Father Froumentios, Archbishop of Abyssina*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

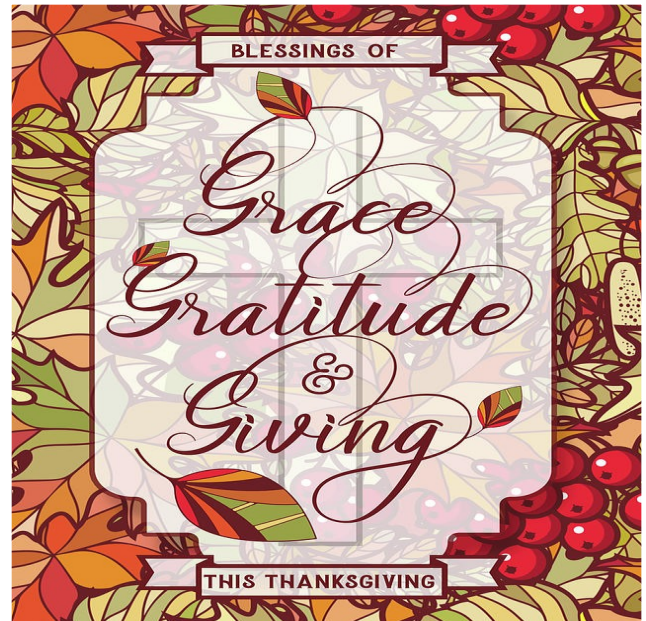
Gospel: John 1:35-51



*“Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see Heaven opened, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” (John 1:51)*

## 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.*



## From Father John *(Continued from Page 1)*

How much truer in our times is the need for each of us – as the members of Christ’s Body – to pause prayerfully and reflect on the ever-increasing evil, division, disorder, violence, disasters, and persistent rebellion against God all over His created world. All of us, as Baptized Christians, must be honest about the ways that we who are made in God’s image and likeness participate in this cosmic sinfulness through our thoughts, words and deeds. Are any of us without need of Jesus Christ, Who is the True Physician of our souls, minds and bodies? Do we have all the correct assessments, judgments and solutions to the tragic state of affairs? My beloved, evil is not overcome through arrogant opinions, judgment calls, social reforms, or secular ideologies – but rather, through personal accountability, repentance and humbly becoming, by grace, the genuine children of God. Through the process of repentance, we – personally and as a community – can experience in a real and powerful way the love and mercy of Christ our God, Who came in the Flesh to redeem us, deliver us and reconcile us with Him and one another in His Kingdom.

Before we jump to conclusions about each other or crises in the world, quickly push “send” on our devices, pontificate on social media, engage in gossip and slander, or arrogantly attack others with our words and opinions . . . let us be mindful that we just might be attacking saints in the making, and moreover impede our own sanctification.

Love in Christ,

**Parish  
Council  
Report**

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

I cannot believe that November and Thanksgiving is here. We have much to be thankful for as 2023 comes to a close. We have completed many projects in the upkeep and beautification of our Church. I ask that you review your Stewardship Commitment. Our Stewardship is vital to the growth and development of our ministries.

The time has come where we need the involvement of our youth to bring new ideas and fresh thoughts into the future planning of events and spiritual programs involving our youth and new parishioners. I along with our Parish Council stand ready to receive your input.

Many of you may already know that we have hired Michelle Eugenio, our part-time Bookkeeper, as a full-time employee. Michelle has been terrific in keeping our financial ledgers in order. Thank you, Michelle, for all your efforts. We have also brought Claudia Kasiotis, our Housekeeper, to full-time status – and we appreciate all her work in keeping our Church and facilities clean.

Congratulations to Gus Flangas as our recent Ariston Award recipient. The celebration was wonderful, and the Parish thanks Gus for all his service to our Church. Also, a special thank you to Gus' family for their contribution as well. Mark Karris and his committee are to be commended in the planning of the event. A special Thank You to Steve Likourinou for providing the music.

In closing, please plan on attending the *Parish Assembly on Sunday, November 12, following the Divine Liturgy.*

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

With Much Love, John Fotopoulos, Parish Council President

**Notice of Parish Assembly  
Sunday, November 12  
Following the Divine Liturgy in Panos Hall**

**AGENDA:**

- Call to Order/Opening Prayer
  - Election of Assembly Chair
- Approval of Assembly Minutes from April 30, 2023
- Stewardship Report & 2024 Stewardship Commitment Drive
  - Greek Food Festival Report
    - Financial Review
  - Approval of 2024 Budget
- Elect Nominations/Election Committee
- Nominations for Parish Council 2024-25
  - Audit Report & CPA Audit
- Election of 2024 Audit Committee
- Closing Prayer/Adjournment

*Everyone is encouraged to attend, although only Pledged Stewards for 2023 may vote. Please see a Stewardship Committee Member or call the Church Office to become a Steward.*

*“I, Jesus, have sent My Angel to you with this testimony for the Churches.” (Revelation 22:16)*

## Philoptochos News

*“The Lord will open the Heavens, the storehouse of His bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands.” (Deuteronomy 28:12)*



Hello Father John, Father Florin, Ladies Philoptochos and fellow Parishioners,

November is *“all hands-on deck”* time. If you look at the Philoptochos calendar, this is the busiest month that our Chapter has all year long. We ask your patience as we request you to help the Philoptochos fundraise, bake, sell, and buy. Every weekend, with one exception, is all Philoptochos and we are asking for your assistance to make each one of these activities meaningful and successful.

From now until the end of November – please look for the LPS table every Sunday to turn in your Christmas Card form and join us in sending your Christmas Greetings to our entire St. John’s Community. There will be an opportunity to order your Holiday Pastries as well. We anticipate another sold out year so get your order in quick! Also, if you have any questions about the Lynch Creek Wreaths, we can help. All of these order forms are included in this issue of *The Desert Messenger* and are available at the Church Office.

Please mark the following dates on your calendar. More information on times and volunteering will be in the upcoming *Weekly Words*.

*On Sunday, November 5*, we remember our Holy Patrons, *Saints Cosmas and Damianos (Feast Day on November 1)*, we remember our dear Philoptochos Sisters who have passed before us with a Memorial. Additionally, we will take up a collection for the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

*On Sunday, November 12*, the annual Autumn Bake Sale will be held following Divine Liturgy. This is a traditional old fashioned bake sale that our members like to show off their favorite recipes.

*On Friday and Saturday, November 17 and 18*, we will be baking for the Holiday Pastry Sale. The baking team will be getting an early start, and we hope to be done each day by 1:00 pm.

If that is not enough, we would like to remind you that you have the privilege of joining this amazing group of women by becoming a member! The Annual Membership drive is going on now.

I would like to thank everyone in advance for their support and love during this busy, fun, hectic, and yummy time of year.

Your Sister in Christ, Bernadette Anthony, Philoptochos President



*“‘Surely I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!” (Revelation 22:20)*

# 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  
November 25, 2023

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

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#### 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



**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**

## *Stewardship and Community Outreach*

On November 21, we celebrate the Great Feast of the *Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple*. This Feast invites us to look beyond the conflicts and culture of our everyday existence, and to focus on who we really are and how we can better our lives through an acceptance of God and His Will for us in our lives, and not the idols of our fallen world.

Rooted in Church Tradition, the Icon of this Feast features the Virgin Mary as a little girl, about three years of age, being brought to the Temple by her parents, Joachim and Anna, as a gift to the Lord for their answered prayers. They were older and considered unable to have a child. In those days, according to ancient Judaic thought, this was considered a stain on them. But by God's good grace, they did bring Mary into the world, and their first joy for this miracle was to thank God.

With gratitude for their blessing, Ss. Joachim and Anna responded to God's gift by offering Mary to grow up in the Temple, which prepared her to become the bearer of our Lord. Mary freely agreed to His Divine plan for her, accepting Christ into her life, when she said to the Archangel Gabriel, *"Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."* (Luke 1:38)

Jesus Christ can unite every dimension of our lives with His Divinity. This is a Feast of anticipation of not only how Mary prepared herself, but how we, who are to be the living Temples of the Almighty God, can prepare ourselves to become a dwelling place for the Most High God. ([ancientfaith.com](http://ancientfaith.com))

The Troparion (Tone 4), or Hymn, for the day states: "Today is the preview of the good will of God, of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. The Virgin appears in the Temple of God, in anticipation proclaiming Christ to all."

Through her, God is with us. Through her, the Word became Flesh. Through her, the Son of God becomes the Son of Man. That is what is celebrated this day! ([orthochristian.com](http://orthochristian.com))

Let us consider our Stewardship pledge not as monthly or yearly "dues," but as our way of expressing gratitude for our blessings, of uniting ourselves more with Christ, and becoming the Icons of His goodness.

In Christ, Marina Adamy, Stewardship and Outreach Committee



*The Servants  
of God  
Receive  
the Seal of  
the Gift of  
the Holy Spirit!*



## *Building and Maintenance Committee*

Fall Greetings!

Much of October was spent getting our grounds and facilities cleaned and organized from our recent Food Festival. We had an unfortunate and costly repair of sewer cleanouts that came out to \$ 4,100 due to oil and paper towels from the outdoor bathrooms being dumped down the drains during the Festival. We also had numerous irrigation leaks totaling \$800 and two of the a/c units in the Administrative portion of the Hall needed repair (\$3,500). I must reiterate that each month there are numerous unexpected expenses that come up as our buildings are over 25 years old. These are only going to increase moving forward along with our monthly bills.

Also, our handyman Bruce Royal is no longer an employee, so it is important that we all continue to do our part until we can find a replacement. We ask that you please utilize the facility request forms in front of Karen's Office for all requests and we will try to do our best in facilitating them.

The Building Committee was established by the Parish Assembly over 30 years ago. Over the past two years as chairperson, I would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge two of the original members: Mr. Angelo Stamis and my father in-law, Mr. George Filios for all their guidance as well as our Parish President John Fotopoulos and Treasurer Mark Karris for their support with many of the major repairs and projects over the past 23 months. It goes without saying that without all our community's amazing donations and contributions, we would not have been able to fund and complete such beautification and deferred maintenance projects. I hope and pray that we can continue achieving our future goals toward maintaining and beautifying our Lord's House.

Wishing all of you a very blessed and Happy Thanksgiving.

With Love, Eleni Filios, Building and Maintenance Chair



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

Maria (Litzzy) Diaz (Adult Baptism) on September 30, 2023.  
Godparent: Farolyn Anna McSweeney.

Luke, son of Mario and Cheri Koupais, on October 21, 2023.  
Godparents: Timothy and Alexandra Zekichev.

### *Chrismations*

Philaret (Richard) Feola on October 22, 2023. Sponsor: Deacon John Nixon.

Stefanos (Steven) Thompson on October 22, 2023. Sponsor: Andrew Andrews.

Abel Kidane on October 22, 2023. Sponsor: Mark Stransky.

Demetrios (Richard) Landahl on October 29, 2023. Sponsor: Silviu Ionut Briceag.

### *Marriage: Na Zisete*

Darin Allen and Vasiliki Andrews on October 14, 2023.  
Koumbara: Panayiota Philippou.

### *Fallen Asleep in the Lord*

Eleni Xhurka on September 25, 2023. Funeral on October 3.

Anthony Anton on September 15, 2023. Funeral on October 11.

# 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

## From Father Florin

On November 1, the Church honors the *Holy Wonderworking Unmercenaries, Ss. Cosmas and Damianos*. They were twin brothers, physicians, and martyrs who have been widely venerated in the East and West since the time of their repose. While little is known for certain about these Saints, we do know they were martyrs, most likely under Roman Emperor Diocletian. What has come down to us by oral tradition offers an inspiring witness of their faith and courage.

Cosmas and Damianos might have been born in Cyrrhus, modern-day Syria, and later moved to the Gulf of Iskenderun in Cilicia, modern-day Turkey, in the mid to late third century. They were twins, sons of a Christian mother and possibly a Christian father, who raised them in the Faith. They were educated in the science of healing and became physicians.

At that time, physicians were often paid based on their reputations. Those who were highly skilled and successful often catered to the wealthy, receiving regular salaries from them. Others charged for services on a case-by-case basis. Because Cosmas and Damianos were Christians, they decided to evangelize the largely pagan community in which they lived by doing something extraordinary: They offered their healing services for free! This charitable work earned them the title “*Anargyroi*,” meaning “*without silver*.” Their counter-cultural practice caught the attention of their fellow citizens and drew many to the Christian Faith. They were excellent physicians who healed many, perhaps more through their prayers than by their science. It is said that they were the first to transplant a leg to an amputee, which is often depicted in art.

In 284, Diocletian became the Roman Emperor and embarked on many reforms within the Empire. In 303, he began to issue a series of edicts that led to an Empire-wide persecution and death of many Christians. Prior to that, persecutions were more localized and random. Around the year 287 or 303, the Roman Prefect Lysias of Cilicia arrested the twins Cosmas and Damianos, due to their prominence as Christians.

As was the custom, the brothers were given the opportunity to publicly renounce their Faith and honor the Roman gods to save their lives. They refused and were sentenced to death. Various stories surrounding their deaths state that they were first tortured in an attempt to get them to comply with the prefect’s wishes. However, they were miraculously preserved from suffering, sustaining no injuries. Multiple attempts were then made to kill them by drowning, fire, arrows, and stoning, but each attempt failed. Finally, Ss. Cosmas and Damianos, along with three of their brothers, were beheaded. It is believed that Ss. Cosmas and Damianos were buried in the city of Cyrrhus, and from that time on, they have been widely venerated. Many miraculous healings have been attributed to their intercession. Within a century of their martyrdom, Churches were built in their honor in Jerusalem, Egypt, and Mesopotamia.

In the sixth century, Roman Emperor Justinian honored these Saints by restoring the city of their burial. Shortly after, the Emperor received a miraculous cure through their intercession. In gratitude, he brought their relics to Constantinople where he built a Church in their honor that became a popular pilgrimage site. In that Church, a custom began where the faithful would remain all night at their tomb in prayer, seeking miraculous cures to their ailments. Many miracles have been reported over the centuries. Also in the sixth century, a fourth-century pagan temple in Rome, within the Forum of Peace, was repurposed and became the “*Basilica dei Santi Cosma e Damiano*.” Though it has gone through many renovations, the fifth-century mosaics depicting their story are among the most revered pieces of sacred art in Rome.

Though we will never know the exact historical details of the lives and martyrdoms of Ss. Cosmas and Damianos until we reach the glories of Heaven, the virtues they enshrine should be a source of inspiration and encouragement. Their work of evangelization through free and selfless service in the name of Christ is worthy of imitation. Their heroic martyrdom presents us with the virtues of courage and fidelity to Christ. Their miraculous intercessions for those who are ill continue to have effect still today.

Pray for us, Holy Wonderworking Unmercenaries!

Fr. F. J. Ristache.



## Ministry News

### Church School

Hi everyone! I would like to thank all of you for registering your children. We have a large enrollment this year and we are very excited. If you have not enrolled your children, please see me to take care of that. Church School is for families that are Parish Stewards for 2023.

**Sunday, November 5** will be the last day to enroll for the 2023-2024 school year. After this date we will no longer be accepting any more students.

Please make sure that you are on the property with your children while they are at Church School. For safety purposes, you cannot just drop your kids off. If there is some sort of emergency, you need to be on the Church grounds.

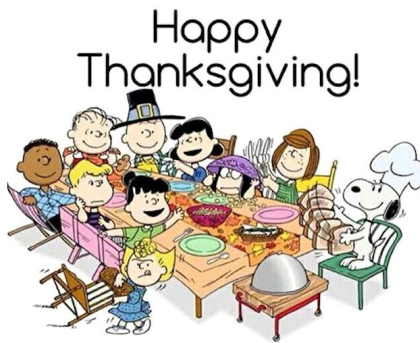
Interested in helping? Please reach out to your child's teacher to see if they need anything. We can always use snacks and mini bottles of water.

Family Worship is **on Sunday, November 26**. Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

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 Kids, Teenagers, and Parents,

We are organizing an All Youth and Family Harvest Fun Event **on Saturday, November 4, from 4:00 until 6:00 pm**. We will meet at Church, where we will paint on pumpkins and celebrate the harvest season. Please bring your own pumpkin. We will also play games and enjoy food, so in the spirit of Thanksgiving, please bring your favorite dish.

Of course, we will also have time for a spiritual discussion and prayer. Please confirm your participation with Father Florin at [frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com).

Feel free to contact me, Maha or April if you have any questions.

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

### Greek Folk Dance

We are working hard preparing for the Annual Folk Dance Festival. Our wonderful Directors this year are Nick Varonos, Maya Sorkhabi, Gabi Payan, Anna Rouvas, Panayiota Dalacas and Nick Katopodis. We are so blessed to have them sharing their wealth of Greek Dance knowledge with our dancers!

Please join us during Fellowship **on Sunday, November 19**, when we host our annual Chili fundraiser! We will be selling delicious chili which is perfect for our wonderful fall weather!

Also, save the date for **Saturday, December 9**, when our dance groups will be Christmas Caroling again. It is always such a fun evening for both the dancers and all the wonderful hosts who open up their homes to them!

Much Gratitude, The Folk Dance Board

### Greek Language Classes



George Kouris has graciously agreed to teach Greek School! Children ranging from ages 6 to 9 are welcome to join us for very beginners Greek **on Tuesdays from 4:30 to 6:00 pm** at the Church. If you are interested in joining, please obtain a Registration Form from Karen, so we can order your textbooks. Contact **Paula Kelesis, Director**, if you are interested in learning Greek at [Pkelesis89104@yahoo.com](mailto:Pkelesis89104@yahoo.com).

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

This month, join us *on Friday, November 10, starting at 6:00 pm*, for a Friendsgiving Dinner in Panos Hall. Please RSVP with me at [frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com](mailto:frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com). Kindly let me know what side dishes you wish to bring and, of course, let me know also who wants to bring the turkey.

Thank you and hope to see you all there! **In Christ, Father Florin**

## *Mr. & Mrs.*

Dear Couples of St. John the Baptist,

Our next potluck gathering of Mr. & Mrs. will be *on Saturday, November 11, starting at 5:00 pm*, at the home of Elias and April Nina Rivera. We thank them and all who generously offer to host our monthly fellowship – please let Father John or Father Florin know if you are interested in hosting in the future. Please contact Karen for the Rivera's address, and to let us know what you will bring.

We are looking forward to seeing you all there for a lively discussion and for an amazing dinner. See you soon!

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

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

On behalf of the Kali Parea, we would like to thank Demetri Asim for the wonderful gathering he organized at his house last month. It was an incredible event honored by the presence of well over a hundred people throughout the day. Thank you again, Demetri, for your generosity and, of course, your amazing hospitality! Everyone enjoyed the food, the discussions, the Blessing of the Water by Father John and the excellent fellowship that followed. We are all looking forward to your upcoming fantastic ideas and gatherings!

Father Florin, on behalf of Kali Parea

## *Forerunners - Our Seniors Fellowship*

The Senior Forerunners were a small but mighty group at our first luncheon in October. We enjoyed delicious spanakopita, pastitsio and baklava, raffle and great conversation. Thank you to who attended; we missed those who could not make it.

We will have a Thanksgiving get-together *on Monday, November 13 at 11:30 am at Yassou Greek Grill* (7871 W. Charleston Blvd, Suite 110). Peter Papas will open his restaurant for us to come together and celebrate the holiday. Price is \$20 per person, including your beverage.

Please RSVP with Karen at the Church Office if you are able to make it so we can let Peter know how many are attending. Happy Thanksgiving!

Love in Christ,

Paula Kelesis for the Forerunners



**Light the Path**  
A CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN GERASIMOS  
AND THE METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO  
PHILOTOCHOS JOYFULLY INVITE YOU TO ATTEND

**Sunday, November 19, 2023**  
**2:00 p.m.**

**The Olympic Club**  
599 Skyline Boulevard • San Francisco, California

Please join us for an inspiring afternoon to benefit the

**Bishop Anthony Philoptochos Student  
Aid Endowment Fund  
For Seminarians and Students at  
Hellenic College/Holy Cross  
Greek Orthodox School of Theology  
Brookline, Massachusetts**

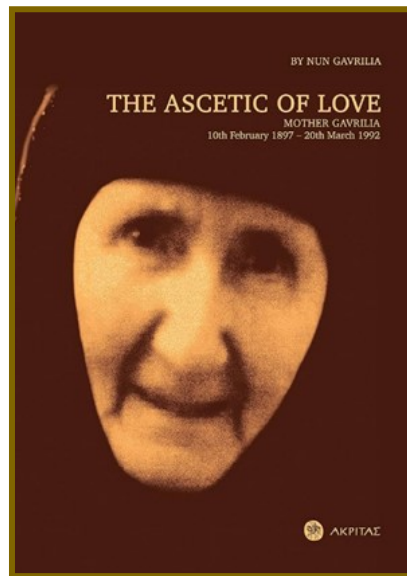
\$125 per person, limited capacity - secure your reservation early.  
Register at [www.sfphiloptochos.org](http://www.sfphiloptochos.org) or  
by calling 415-431-2600 by November 14.

Donate today online: [www.sfphiloptochos.org](http://www.sfphiloptochos.org)

## Orthodox Bookstore

Greetings from the Bookstore!

New in store this month, and in celebration of newly Canonized Eldress Gabriela by the Ecumenical Patriarchate on October 3, is *The Ascetic of Love* by Nun Gavriila. Born in Constantinople in 1897 to Elias and Victoria Payayanni on the Feast Day of Ss. Cyprian and Justina, Avriila Papayanni was felt by others to be a constant loving presence – “one you had always longed to see, even if furtively. You had the certainty that someone loved you deeply, of old, unconditionally, without deserving it, without your knowing it. She used to say, ‘This is the way to love, this is the kind of love taught by God.’”



*The Ascetic of Love* contains a short biography of St. Gabriela’s life and follows through to the end with interviews translated from tape recordings, sayings, and letters saved over the years by those fortunate to have interacted with her. (See [mystagogyresourcecenter.com](http://mystagogyresourcecenter.com) for an introduction and brief recap of her life).

From *The Ascetic of Love* on love of one’s neighbor: “We cannot see the ineffable glory of God with these earthly eyes, but we can behold it when the Holy Spirit fills our mind and soul, our entire being. Then we can understand what is said in the Holy Bible: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind.’ That is: totally. Our entire being loves Him. And then, what happens? Automatically you ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’ You cannot distinguish yourself from the others.”

Supplies of this book are very limited, but printing is expected to resume soon. Looking forward to seeing you in the Bookstore!

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



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

5300 S. El Camino Road  
Las Vegas, NV 89118

Rev. Father John Hondros  
frjohn@vegasgreekorthodox.com

Rev. Father Florin Ristache  
frflorin@vegasgreekorthodox.com

Rev. Deacon John Nixon  
deaconjohn@vegasgreekorthodox.com

Karen Rawlinson  
Administrative Assistant

Michelle Eugenio  
Bookkeeper

Claudia Kasiotis  
Housekeeping

### Office Hours

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

Telephone: (702) 221-8245  
www.vegasgreekorthodox.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





## FESTIVAL FOOD SALE!

Pastry Sampler Box ~ \$15

Pastitsio Full Steam Pan ~ \$75

Pastitsio Half Pan ~ \$35

Dolmathes Full Pan (120 pcs) ~ \$75

Pan of 35 Dolmades ~ \$30

Tyropita/Spanakopita Full Case (36 count) ~ \$65  
or One Tray of 12 ~ \$25



*See Karen to purchase items, Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm*



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

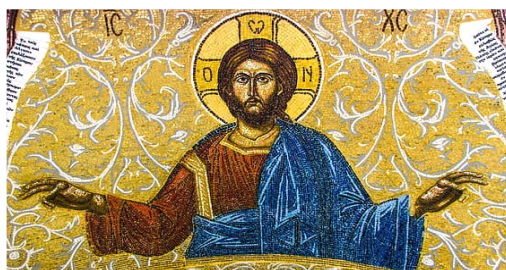
*With Gratitude to God for Our Pledged Stewards in 2023  
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Leventis, Nicholas and Christina  
Lexis, Annette  
Liaos, James and Tina  
Liaos, Steven and Francine  
Likourinou, Angie  
Likourinou, Steve and June  
Litsos, Nicholas and Catherine  
Loughton, Dustin and Rena  
Makris, Apostolos  
Malamatos, Kindina+  
Manakides, Alexis and  
Varonos, Nicholas  
Mangafas, Kyriakos and Eleftheria  
Manolakos, Catherine  
Manos, Constantine and Michele  
Mansour, Muna  
Manteris, Arthur and Sue  
Markakis, Sandy Kiriaki  
Markantonis, Demos and Kate  
Markantonis, George and Sarah  
Martinaitis, Louis  
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  
Mengsteab, Ruta  
Merritt, Devin and Sonia  
Meyers, Evon  
Mikelis, Nikolas and Angela  
Minas, Arthur and Ewa  
Miteva, Galya  
Mokonen, Tiebe  
Monolakakis, Anthony  
Mokonen, Tiebe  
Monoyudis, Jim and Julie  
Moore, Brenda  
Murray, Christopher and  
George, Veneta  
Myers, Stella  
Newell, Ronald and Maria  
Nicholas, Christina  
Nicholas, John and Estella

Nichols, George and Tereza  
Nicolas, Samer and Christine  
Niforos, Helen  
Nikolopoulos, Maria  
Nikolopoulos, Nick and Dimitra  
Nikoloudakos, Georgia  
Nixon, Deacon John and  
Diakonissa Ellyn  
Oda, Enesh  
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  
Palikrousis, Antonis  
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  
Pytikakis, Manos and Elaine  
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, Valentinis and Sophia  
Santamaria, Jennifer and Robert  
Savvas, Savva +  
Searles, Chrysoula Sourla  
Sechrist, Carl and Christine  
Shremelis, 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  
Soteropulos, Gust and Rita  
Sotiropoulos, Christopher and  
Jessica  
Soursos, Helene  
Sparkuhl, Alex and Antoinette  
Sparkuhl, Andreas and Diana  
Spirtos, Nick  
Staubs, 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  
Tekle, Armaz  
Temple, Voula  
Tesfu, Shewit  
Thanos, Nicholas and Victoria  
Theros, James and Kathryn  
Thomas, Anastasia Palivos-  
Thompson, Maggy

Thompson, Steven and Alik  
Tigisti, Desta  
Tijiboy, Ana  
Tijiboy, Christine  
Tohme, Tony and May  
Tsiralidis, Kosmas and Katerina  
Tsobanakis, Chris  
Tsobanoglou, Niki and Paris  
Tsolis, Christos and Panagioula  
Tsolis, Kosta and  
Burgos, Nairobi  
Tsortanidis, Sophia  
Vervilos, James and Anna  
Villatoro, Luis and Prifti, Teuta  
Wadlow, Nicholas and  
Pamela  
Wadsworth, Ginger  
Wagner, Sophye  
Wainscott, Betty  
Wallace, Robert and Katerina  
Walter, Vernon and Alice  
Ward, Angeliki  
Waterhouse, David and  
Aleighzja  
Webb, Taylor  
Welles, Brigitte  
Wilkinson, 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



*“I am the Alpha and  
the Omega, the first and  
the last, the beginning  
and the end.”  
(Revelation 22:13)*

**2023  
Stewardship  
Report  
(as of 10/25/23)**

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$565,017 (\$538,511 in 2022)  
 Stewardship Gifts Received: \$478,461 (\$459,533 in 2022)  
 Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$86,556 (\$78,978 in 2022)  
 Stewardship Families Pledged: 433 (408 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	205	\$ 50,201
\$501 - \$1,000	88	\$ 69,782
\$1,001 - \$2,500	94	\$148,336
\$2,501 - \$5,000	27	\$101,264
\$5,001 - \$9999	13	\$ 78,964
\$10,000 & Above	6	\$116,470
<b>Total Families</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>\$565,017</b>

**Church Account Summaries  
September 2023**

Nevada State Bank Accounts	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
General Operating Account (GOA)	\$41,967.07	\$522,310.64	\$26,793.12	22,707.37	\$526,020.45	\$42,343.01	
Community and Education (C&E)	\$23,310.47			\$609.25	\$365.73	\$22,335.49	
Greek Food Festival (GFF)	\$140,251.50	499,012.99	\$446,795.49	\$331,882.85	\$32,362.89	\$721,814.24	
Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)	\$269,674.31	\$13,565.65		\$5,867.74	\$17,085.29	\$260,286.93	
Building & Maintenance (B&M)	\$128,944.84	\$13.76		\$55,266.99	\$729.92	\$72,961.69	
Folk Dance Group	\$19,236.82	\$1,505.00		\$760.00		\$19,981.82	
Hellenic Historical Society	\$3,250.47					\$3,250.47	
<b>Designated Funds</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>Deposits</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Withdraws/ Checks</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Ending Balance</b>					<b>Ending Balance</b>	
Bookstore	\$41,818.50	\$11,804.47		\$3,137.63	\$17,071.53	\$33,413.81	PC Approved transfer to GOA
<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>Deposits</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Withdraws/ Checks</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Ending Balance</b>					<b>Ending Balance</b>	
ICON	\$11,317.97	\$314.30				\$11,632.27	
Faithtree	\$1,626.39					\$1,626.39	
Youth Choir	\$2,989.18					\$2,989.18	
Church School	\$137,116.44	\$25.00				\$137,141.44	
GOYA	\$530.36					\$530.36	
Eyler Memorial Fund	\$18,525.15	\$1,415.00				\$19,940.15	
Emergency Fund	\$5,000.00					\$5,000.00	
Three Priests	\$50,303.44			\$2,730.31		\$47,573.13	Glass for Altar/Fix Office AC
Building Fund	\$6.88	\$6.88			\$13.76	\$0.00	Final transfer to Building Fund
Altar Servers	\$440.00					\$440.00	
<b>Designated, Restricted and Other Total</b>	<b>\$269,674.31</b>	<b>\$13,565.65</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$5,867.94</b>	<b>\$17,085.29</b>	<b>\$260,286.73</b>	
<b>Building and Maintenance Funds</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>Deposits</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Withdraws/ Checks</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Ending Balance</b>					<b>Ending Balance</b>	
Building Fund	\$37,697.42	\$13.76		\$55,266.99	\$729.92	-\$18,285.73	
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>\$128,944.84</b>	<b>\$13.76</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$55,266.99</b>	<b>\$729.92</b>	<b>\$72,961.69</b>	
<b>Other Funds</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>Deposits</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Withdraws/ Checks</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Ending Balance</b>					<b>Ending Balance</b>	
Kokkos Scholarship Fund	\$69,476.32					\$69,476.32	as of 06.30.23
Commonwealth Investments (Icon)	\$127,439.37				5,211.48	\$122,227.89	Change in Investment

September 2023 Candles **\$4,880.75**  
 September 2023 Trays **\$3,147.40**  
**Total September 2023 Candles & Trays \$8,028.15**



# NOVEMBER 2023 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

		<p><b>Folk Dance Practices:</b>                  Liondaria ~ Sundays 12:30 - 1:15 pm in Foyer                  Primary ~ Sundays 12:30 - 2:00 pm, Tuesdays 6:00 - 7:30 pm in Kokkos                  Aetopoula ~ 1:00 - 2:45 pm in Panos, Tuesdays 6:00 - 7:30 pm in Panos</p>				
<p><b>5</b>                  8:45 am Orthros                  10:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><b>6</b>                  6:00 pm Parish Council Meeting in Library</p>	<p><b>7</b>                  4:30 pm Greek School</p>	<p><b>8 Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel</b>                  8:00 am Orthros                  9:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><b>9 St. Nectarios</b>                  8:00 am Orthros                  9:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><b>10</b>                  6:00 pm Young Adult Friendsgiving in Panos Hall</p>	<p><b>11</b>                  5:00 pm Mr. and Mrs. Potluck at Rivera Home</p>
<p><b>12 8:45 am Orthros</b>                  10:00 am Divine Liturgy                  Parish Assembly                  Follows Liturgy                  Philoptochos Autumn Bake Sale</p>	<p><b>13</b>                  11:30 am Forerunners Luncheon at Yassou Greek Grill</p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>17</b>                  9:00 am Philoptochos Baking in the Kitchen</p>	<p><b>18</b>                  9:00 am Philoptochos Baking in the Kitchen</p>
<p><b>19</b>                  8:45 am Orthros                  10:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>21 The Entrance of the Theotokos in the Temple</b>                  8:00 am Orthros                  9:00 am Divine Liturgy                  4:30 pm Greek School</p>	<p><b>22 Thanksgiving Liturgy</b>                  5:00 pm Orthros                  6:00 pm Divine Liturgy                  and Artoclasia</p>	<p><b>23 Thanksgiving Day</b></p>	<p><b>24</b>                  Church Office Closed</p>	<p><b>25</b></p>
<p><b>26</b>                  8:45 am Orthros                  10:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	<p><b>28</b>                  4:30 pm Greek School</p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30 Holy Apostle Andrew</b>                  8:00 am Orthros                  9:00 am Divine Liturgy</p>		

# *The Desert Messenger*

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

## *The Way of the Lord*

*“I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving  
and call on the Name of the Lord.  
I will pay my vows to the Lord  
in the presence of all His people,  
in the courts of the House of the Lord,  
in your midst, O Jerusalem.  
Praise the Lord!” (Psalm 116:17-19)*

