

The Desert



Messenger

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

Volume 19, Issue 10 St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV

November 2021

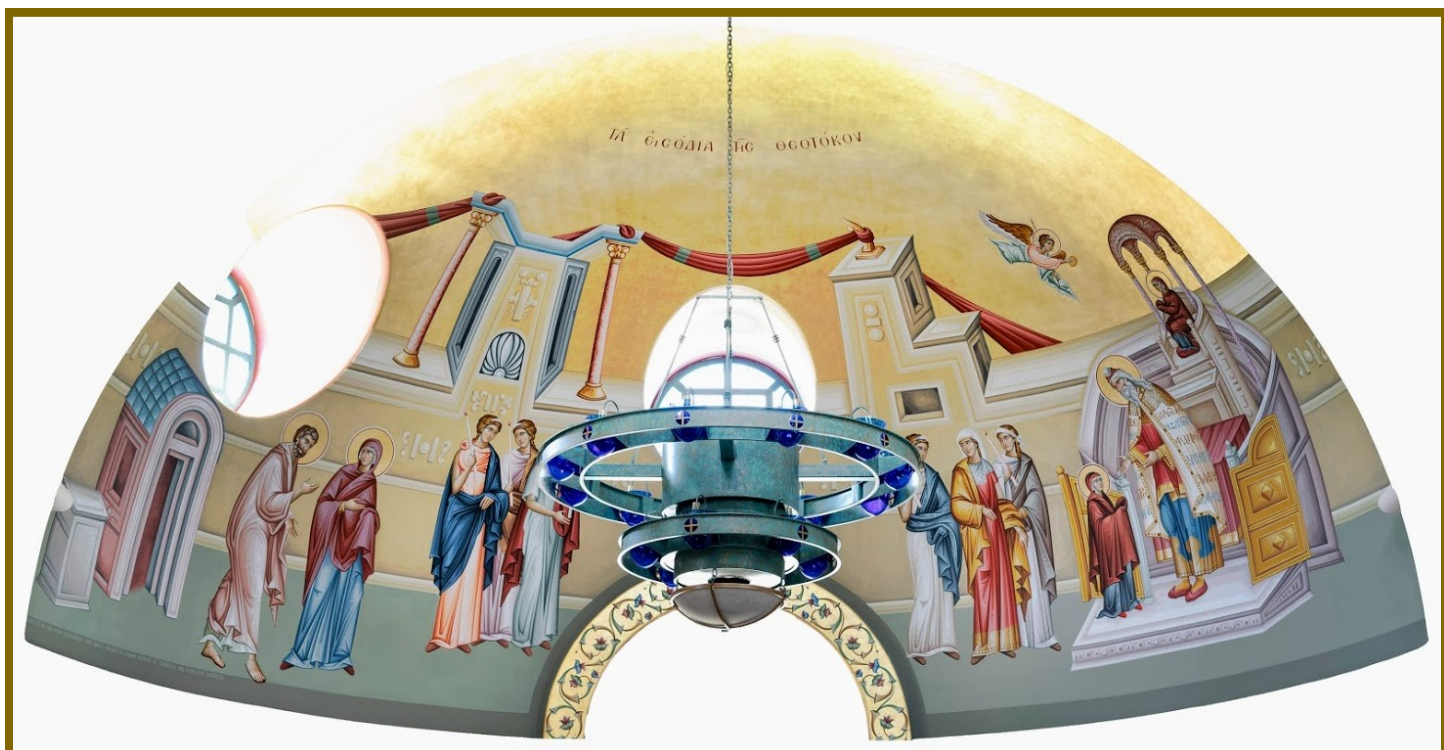
From Father John

Beloved in Christ:

The Orthodox Christian Church kicks off the holiday season quite differently than the secular world. Due to the pandemic, large holiday gatherings with family and loved ones are still discouraged by government officials, and our holiday celebrations are further challenged by the ongoing supply shortages. Although we live in a world full of obstacles, the Holy Tradition of our Church – regardless of what is happening in the world – will remain the same during this season and opens the door wide for our engagement and in-person participation. For us we will be called to attend more closely to our spiritual life, first with the *Nativity Fast* which begins *on November 15* – and then, less than a week later, *on Sunday, November 21*, we will gather in the Church for the Great Feast of *the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple*, when during the Orthros we begin chanting, "Christ is Born: Glorify Him!" – for this feast is the prelude to our Lord's Nativity in the Flesh.

The feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos does not have direct Biblical reference, just as the preceding Feast of the Virgin Mary's Nativity on September 8: The source material is rather found in the oral tradition of the Church and the second century *Protoevangelium of James* – a book with many details concerning the life of the Theotokos. Some authentic details provided by this text were carefully integrated into the liturgical services, hymnography, and iconography of the Orthodox Church. As a constant visual reminder, we are blessed to have the domed icon of this feast adorning the southwest exedra of our beloved St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church.

(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>

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

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

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

Gospel: Matthew 10:1, 5-8

Sunday, November 7/*7th Sunday of Luke/ 32 Martyrs of Melitene/St. Lazaros the Wonderworker*

Orthros: Tone Three

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

Epistle: Galatians 1:11-19

Gospel: Luke 8:41-56

Memorials: Stephen Carabas (40 days);

Andrew Jacob Melnichuk, Jr. (40 days);

Mary Karant (1 year), Thomas Tivas;

and Michael (Mack) Malpee (2 years)

Monday, November 8/*Holy Archangels Gabriel and Michael, Chief Captains of the Heavenly Host*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Hebrews 2:2-10

Gospel: Luke 10:16-21

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

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19

Gospel: Matthew 4:25; 5:1-12



Sunday, November 14/*8th Sunday of Luke/ St. Philip the Apostle/St. Gregory Palamas*

Orthros: Tone Four

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Memorials: Garifalia Stefanidou (40 days);

Nick Pandelis; and Departed Members of the

Chagares Family

Nativity Fast:

November 15 through December 24



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

Orthros: Tone Five (First Plagal)

Festal Orthros Gospel: Luke 1:39-49, 56

Epistle: Hebrews 9:1-7

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

Wednesday, November 24/*Great Martyr Catherine/Thanksgiving Liturgy*

5:00 pm Orthros

6:00 pm Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia

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

Gospel: Mark 5:24-34

Sunday, November 28/*13th Sunday of Luke/ St. Stephen the New/St. Irenarchos the Martyr*

Orthros: Tone Six (Second Plagal)

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

Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-7

Gospel: Luke 18:18-27

Tuesday, November 30/*First-Called Apostle Andrew (Patron Saint of our Ecumenical Patriarchate)*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

Gospel: John 1:36-52



From Father John (Continued from Page 1)

The ancient services of the Entrance into the Temple convey how Mary was brought at the age of three to the Temple in Jerusalem by her parents, Ss. Joachim and Anna, in fulfillment of their promise to offer her to the Lord. St. Joachim gathered the young virgins of his neighborhood to form a procession, carrying lighted candles, to lead Mary to the Temple – and per Joachim’s plan she went joyfully, without weeping or looking back to her parents. The young Mary was received into the Holy of Holies by the High Priest Zacharias, the future father of John the Baptist. Within this holy place, she was



nurtured and nourished by an angel, continuously listened to and meditated on the Scriptures, and lived a life pleasing to God. Mary remained in the Temple until the age of twelve, when Zacharias betrothed her to Joseph: Soon after, she found favor with God to become herself the “holy of holies” – the living temple who, not by human relations but by the Holy Spirit, would give birth to the incarnate Word of God.

This holy feast is the inauguration of the New Testament, which fulfills the prophecies of old that God will dwell amid His people. (*Zechariah 2:10*) As such, this feast also commemorates the end of the physical Temple in Jerusalem as the unique dwelling place of God: When the child Mary enters the Temple, the time of animal sacrifice comes to an end and the “prelude of God’s good pleasure” is shown forth, as the hymn (*Apolytikion*) for this day proclaims. Equally significant, on this feast we celebrate – in the person of Christ’s Mother – that we too are the place where the Lord resides. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Mysteries of the Church, and our love for one another, “*God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.*” (*1 John 4:12*) As we see with this great feast, an *active life* within Christ’s Church – which goes hand in hand with a *personal active life* of prayer, fasting, the reading of and reflection on Holy Scripture, and selfless love for others – brings the Divine Presence within us, and becomes the source of holy witness to all whom we encounter.

Through the Prayers of the Theotokos and
with Love in the Incarnate God,

Father John

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Philoptochos: Bernadette Anthony

Stewardship & Community Outreach:
Justina Szukiewicz

Choir: Athena Mertes

Chanters & Youth Choir:
Presvytera Maria Hondros

Church School: Eileen Koutsulis

Altar Servers: Father John

GOYA:

Anne Pantelas & Maha Habiba

Orthodox Family Fellowship:
Imtisal Amy Khuri & April Rivera

Young Adults:
Fr. Seraphim

Greek Folk Dance: Sia Dalacas

Greek School: Paula Kelesis

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

Kali Parea: Demetrious Asim

Adult Basketball:
Nick Kelesis

Forerunners: Victoria Xikis

Orthodox Bookstore:
Paraskevi Santamaria

Greek Food Festival: Gus Flangas

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

Photography & Live-Streaming:
Bill & Erin Bruninga

Parish Council Report

As we near the end of the year, we hope and pray everyone is doing well and staying healthy. We as a community have been through some pretty tough times this past year with the uncertainty of the pandemic; however, we still managed to maintain some semblance of normalcy throughout this entire stretch. Through Hope, Faith, Confidence and Prayer, we continued to worship together in Church; we had a truly beautiful and spiritual Holy Week and Pascha, culminating with our traditional annual Apape Picnic; and ultimately, we hosted our Annual Greek Food Festival. In addition, we continued with our youth and various other ministries and reestablished our adult and youth religious education studies. Most notably, we pushed aside the fears foisted upon us by the pandemic and overcame them. *“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:5)*

As we continue moving forward, it becomes all the more important to contemplate and reflect upon Stewardship. This is especially significant and something to take to heart as we journey out of the dominion of darkness wrought upon us by the pandemic and turn our thoughts toward the future of our Church. To quote a previous column: The pandemic certainly taught us the importance of Faith and our ability to worship God together in Church. A major aspect of our future is Stewardship because a primary goal of Stewardship is to promote spiritual growth and strengthen faith. “Becoming a Steward begins when we believe in God, to Whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. Stewardship calls on the faithful to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which they have been blessed.”

Virtually every column written in this space over time has addressed Stewardship in some form or manner. To be blunt, for over twenty years, there have been extensive efforts by many to improve the Stewardship situation in our Church; however, for some reason, we remain virtually locked at the same level year after year. Stewardship, by all accounts, should provide 100 percent of the funds for the financial operation of our Church; unfortunately, we have been perpetually at the same level where Stewardship only covers roughly 40 to 45 percent of the operating costs. Although throughout the years, we have managed to make ends meet, mostly through the Grace of God, we still need to do better. With Stewardship contributions continually lingering at this low level, our ability to maintain our facilities and build for our future is being significantly hampered. As stated many times, we have some immediate and crucial issues pertaining to our facilities that we will need to address in the next couple of years, including having to re-do the floors in both Panos and Kokkos Halls, repairing cracks in the dome of the Church, painting all of our facilities inside and out, repairing and resurfacing the parking lots, upgrading our electrical and electrical back-up systems in the Church and Community Center, and eventually replacing our HVAC systems.

If Stewardship were to cover most of the operating costs of the Church, many of these issues would be resolved in a couple of years. Therefore, I implore every Parishioner in the most urgent of terms to take action and help us fix our Stewardship Program. Our future viability depends on us working together. I ask and urge those families who are not contributing to Stewardship, to now do so. I further ask and urge those who are already giving to reassess their level of giving and think about giving more. To make Stewardship successful requires each and every one of us to look into their hearts and give back to the Church for the gifts God has bestowed upon us all, and to look to the future of our Church for ourselves and our children. *“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7)*

In line with what was just said, fixing the Church facilities remains a high priority. To keep everyone informed, during the Festival, the A/C unit in the kitchen warehouse went out. Because of its age and type, it had to be replaced. In addition, the compressors for the A/C unit in the kitchen also went out during the Festival. Fortunately, we were able to rig it so that it worked at around 60 to 70 percent capacity during the event. The compressors for the unit were recently changed out through the efforts of Eddie Howard. He managed to save the Church quite a bit of money on the unit by doing the repairs to replace the compressors himself and by coordinating with the company changing out the warehouse unit to use their crane to lift the new compressors to the roof. It is now absolutely critical that we resurface both hall floors for purposes of renting and using our facilities for our own various events. As stated, there are many other issues pertaining to the facilities, which we will need to continue prioritizing in the coming months. *(Continued on Page 5)*

Parish Council Report *(Continued from Page 4)*

We have a *Parish Assembly* for Stewards in Good Standing, scheduled for *Sunday, November 14*, following Liturgy in Panos Hall. Parish Assemblies are extremely important for the Church, and we urge everyone to attend to learn about the future direction of the Church, participate in approving the annual Budget for 2021, nominate Parish Stewards for election to the Parish Council, learn about the external and internal Audits of the Church finances, and other issues affecting our Parish. Please come and participate.

Please note that Elections for the Parish Council are scheduled for *Sunday, December 5*, following the Divine Liturgy. Pursuant to the Uniform Parish Regulations, and the Parish Bylaws, you must be a Parish Steward for 2021 and vote in person. Voting by Absentee Ballot is allowed but they must be received by the Church Office no later than *Friday, December 3 at 5:00 pm*. No proxy ballots are allowed.

In closing, we want to again thank the various Church ministries and organizations, and the many individuals for all the work they do. It clearly takes a lot of work from the entire community to maintain our Church. Please step forward whenever you can and pitch in. We know a lot things are always happening; but they are extremely important. Please get involved as we move forward to make our Church better.

"Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

May God Bless! In Christ, Gus Flangas, Parish Council President

Notice of Parish Assembly Sunday, November 14, 2021 Following the Divine Liturgy in Panos Hall

AGENDA:

- Call to Order/Opening Prayer
- Election of Assembly Chair
- Approval of Minutes (November 22, 2020)
- Stewardship Report & 2022 Stewardship Commitment Drive
 - Financial Review
 - Approval of 2022 Budget
 - Greek Food Festival Report
 - Internal Audit Report (for 2020)
 - CPA Audit Report (for 2020)
 - Election of 2022 Audit Committee
 - Elect Nominations/Election Committee
 - Nominations for Parish Council 2022-23
 - Closing Prayer/Adjournment

*Everyone is encouraged to attend, although only Pledged Stewards for 2021 may vote.
Please see a Parish Council Member, a Stewardship Committee Member
or call the Church Office to become a Steward.*

Philoptochos News

Dear Father John, Father Seraphim and our Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is so wonderful to be able to greet you all once again at Church. Although attending Services by live streaming fed

our souls, it is by being able to smell the incense, stand shoulder to shoulder, and feel that human essence that feeds our humanity. Yes, we missed all the activities and ministries of our Church life as well. The Ladies Philoptochos Society is here to help fill the void! We have a full calendar of events to choose from and each needs your support, time and talents!



It is Membership Time! Please take a minute to complete the membership form and either email or return it in person to ***Christina Snow***. As a member of the Ladies Philoptochos Society you will be a member in one of the USA's oldest philanthropic women's organization! This November the Ladies Philoptochos Society will be celebrating its 90th Anniversary! The National and Metropolis Philoptochos are planning a yearlong celebration and we hope to be able to participate with them.

At St. John the Baptist Philoptochos, we are happy to be able to offer many different projects and ministries for our members and we ask, "What is your passion?" Is it helping with our new ***Outreach*** program? Check with ***Ellyn Nixon***. Is it helping with our ***Social Services*** projects? Contact ***Geri Kypreos***. Can we count on you to help with our ***Fundraisers***? Let ***Vicky Palivos*** know. Do you want to learn more about the ***Traditions of our Faith***? We have the Liturgical Team. We realize that your time is valuable and limited and we do appreciate you sharing your time and talents with us – your Church Family. Ladies: Please sign up your husbands as Associate Members and we will put them to good use too!

Communication: Events, meetings and activities are only successful if you are there! Our chapter's main communication method is email. If you are not receiving emails from lasvegasphiloptochosstjohn@gmail.com please check your junk/spam folder. If it is not there, then please contact Christina Snow at snowy4000@gmail.com with your membership information.

Upcoming Events:

Sunday, October 31 – Celebration of Ss. Cosmas and Damianos (Feast Day on November 1), the Holy Unmercenaries and Patrons Saints of Philoptochos. We will memorialize in Church the Departed Members of our chapter, followed by a Fellowship in Panos Hall and General Meeting in Kokkos Hall. We will also take up a special collection for the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Sunday, November 7 – Christmas Fundraisers Kickoff: Holiday Pastry Sale, St. John Community Christmas Card, and Christmas Raffle. New this year – Fresh Holiday Wreaths, a gorgeous décor for your home or for gifts. Do not forget your checkbook, but just in case – we take credit cards. As always, the proceeds from all these events and projects are turned around to feed, clothe, educate or rescue someone in need. Many thanks for your kindness and bountiful help.

Saturday, November 20, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm – "In the Kitchen with Eleni" Baking Day. One of our favorite days! If you like to roll cookies, drink coffee and visit with friends, this is your day! All hands needed.


Sunday, November 21 – Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, and Autumn Bake Sale. All members are asked to participate in bringing goodies, pre-wrapped and ready to be sold – please drop them off in Panos Hall before the Divine Liturgy.

Saturday, December 4, 9:00 am until we are done – Packing Day for the Holiday Pastry Sale! All hands needed! We will have a task for everyone regardless of ability and age!

Christmas Raffle: We had such a wonderful success last year that we will be repeating it again this year. We have a beautiful ***Icon of the Nativity*** from the Monastery of the Life Giving Spring, a gorgeous ***Diamond Cross*** from The Jewelers, and a ***Raiders*** gift basket with ***Two Tickets*** to a game. Definitely worth a \$50 donation!

We look forward to seeing you at one or all of the above events. If you have any questions, need more information about one of the events or just to chat about Philoptochos, please contact me at Bernadette.anthony@gmail.com with your name and phone number. I will be happy to give you a call or return an email.

Your Sister in Christ, Bernadette Anthony, Philoptochos President



The 2021 Annual Ladies Philoptochos Society Christmas Pastry Sale

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

Due to the on-going COVID 19 Pandemic, quantities are limited.

**Guarantee your order by pre-ordering and pre-paying by
November, 13, 2021.**

Complimentary logo for those who order 40 boxes or more.

Send your order and check made payable to:

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

Name _____

Day _____ Cell or Evening Phone _____

Email _____

Number of boxes _____ x \$25 _____

Check enclosed _____

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

Orders will be ready for pickup at St. John Church on Sunday, December 5, 2021,
following Divine Liturgy.

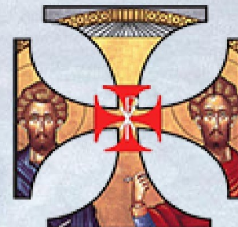
Your generous contribution is greatly appreciated. It benefits the many ministries we
support at St. John Church, the Las Vegas community at large, and around the world.

Thank you!



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*

FROM
\$54.95



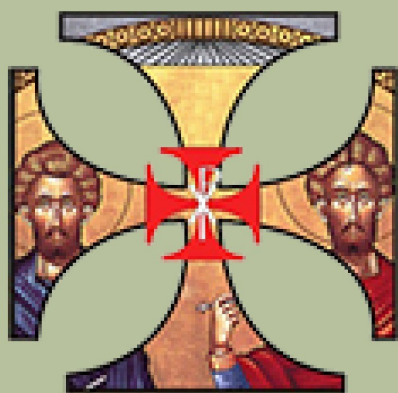
*Center
Pieces*

FROM
\$47.95



*Fresh
Wreaths*

FROM
\$49.95



Philoptochos will
receive 15% of all
orders. Orders can
be placed now with
delivery as soon as
November 1st.

Scan this QR code
with your phone
camera to order



Stewardship and Community Outreach

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,



Glory be to God for all things, especially for all the wonderful gifts He has bestowed upon us. The month of November gives us so much for which to be thankful.

Here in the United States, we celebrate Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday in November. In 1621, the Plymouth colonists and Wampanoag Native Americans shared an autumn harvest feast that is acknowledged today as one of the first Thanksgiving celebrations in the colonies. This holiday was established to remember those who fled religious persecution and landed on the shores of this great nation; this was a day to celebrate their safe arrival and give thanks to God for all the bountiful gifts with which they had been blessed.

On this Thanksgiving Day, we Orthodox Christians have a unique opportunity to show our neighbors and friends what this holy day is truly about. We must reflect on the things for which we are grateful and the blessings we have received; we must likewise share our blessings with those in need; and in our prayers we should thank God for all things.

While we too celebrate this American Thanksgiving, as Orthodox Christians we have an even greater reason to give thanks during this month. *On November 15* we begin the Nativity Fast – a period of fasting leading up to the Birth of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ on December 25. However, even this alone is not enough, for us Orthodox Christians every day should be a day of thanksgiving. We are taught this during Vespers: *“I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing to my God as long as I exist.” (Psalm 104:33)* We are also taught this at Orthros: *“Let everything that breathes praise the Lord.” (Psalm 150:6)* In the Divine Liturgy the Priest, on behalf of all of us, makes this declaration: *“It is proper and right to hymn You, to bless You, to praise You, to give thanks to You, and to worship You in every place of Your dominion.” (The Holy Anaphora)*

Do we thank God as often as we should for the time He has given us, the talents He has bestowed upon us, or the treasures He has granted us? If we are all being honest with ourselves, the answer is probably “No.” Therefore the Orthodox Church reminds us continuously to do so through our Divine Services, and most especially when we partake of the Sacrament of Sacraments – the Holy Eucharist – a word derived from the Greek, *Eucharistia/Εὐχαριστία*, meaning “Thanksgiving.”

God has blessed each of us so richly. First and foremost, the life He gave us is sacred. He created us in His image and likeness. He gave us the breath of life. He is the source of our being and reason for our existence. In His immense love, God created us to commune with Him. *“Let us give thanks to the Lord for His mercies and His wonders to the sons of men; for He fed the empty soul and filled the hungry soul with good things.” (Psalm 106:8-9)*

As we gather with family and friends on this Thanksgiving Day, let us remember to give thanks to God for our many blessings. Let us share our blessings with those in need, showing them the same hospitality that Abraham offered by the oaks of Mamre and, in so doing, served the Lord God Himself! *(Genesis 18:1-18)*

In Christ, Stewardship and Outreach Committee





CONNECTION!

*“... that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You;
that they also may be one in Us...” (John 17:21)*

CONNECTING WITH ... CHRIST OUR CHURCH AND ONE ANOTHER

Please detach and return to St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church.

+++++

Please Print Name(s), Address, Phone and Email

2021 CONNECTION

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

As a blessed member of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, I/we commit to \$ _____
per week/month, with the total amount for the year 2021 of \$ _____.

Signed: _____

Orthodox Christian: Yes No

Signed: _____

Orthodox Christian: Yes No

Others sharing in the gift (children): _____

From Father Seraphim

St. Sophrony of Essex reposed in the Lord on July 11, 1993 and was canonized in November of 2019. He wrote and spoke extensively on many themes, but a particularly beloved topic was prayer, which he described as, “*Fervent reaching toward the loving God Who continually inspires us.*” The spiritual life, becoming God-like, is bound up with our physical body. This is why our Holy Faith consists of and continuously teaches about such things such as fasting, almsgiving and hospitality. Prayer is also a very physically difficult process we engage in: But what exactly is prayer? What do we pray about or to Whom? Where does prayer lead us? St. Sophrony extensively answers these questions in his beautiful book, *His Life is Mine*, which will be quoted below in italics.

What is the essence of Christian prayer? “Prayer is infinite creation, the supreme art . . . The Personal God Himself seeks to be with us, to give us the abundance of His life . . . We bear in ourselves the legacy of the sins of our ancestors; and, by virtue of the ontological unity of the human race, healing for us means healing for them too. We are so inter-joined that man does not save himself alone . . . In prayer we glimpse in ourselves Divine infinity . . .”

These words of St. Sophrony are perhaps very different from our idea of what prayer is. We think of it as part of our routine, the words we read out of our Prayer Book. We may believe that prayer is something we do in Church or reserved for those who have the “calling” like monastics or clergy. Many think prayer is a conversation with God where we tell him the things we need. We all slip into false beliefs concerning what prayer is: “*Over and over again we experience an eager upsurge toward God, followed only by a falling away from His light.*” Despite its difficulty, prayer is what we were created for, and the only way we humans can come to know our Personal and Triune God.

Regardless of our “profession,” our days should be filled with longing to reach into the Divine sphere, and if this is far from where we are, we must begin to ask God to stir our hearts: “*You gave me Your command to love but there is no strength in me for love. Come and perform in me all that You have commanded, for Your commandments overtax my powers. My mind is too frail to comprehend You. My spirit cannot see into the mysteries of Your will. My days pass in endless conflict. I am tortured by the fear of losing You because of the evil thoughts in my heart.*” *(Continued on Page 12)*



Baptized into Christ: Na Mas Zisoun

Michael, son of Richard and Angela Acovino, on October 10, 2021.

Godparents: Joseph and Justina Szukiewicz.

Despina (Samantha), daughter of Alexander and Jennifer Mavros, on October 16, 2021. Godparent: Elaine Bucy.

Petros (Ebenezer), son of Hagos and Wegahta Tesfay, on October 17, 2021. Godparent: Medhane Zeraï.

Marriage: Na Zisete!

Luis Beltran Valencia and Katie Markidis on October 9, 2021. Koumbara: Marianthi Roberts.

Timothy Zekichev and Alexandra Morris on October 16, 2021. Koumbaros: Mario Koupais.

Fallen Asleep in the Lord

Louis George on September 16, 2021. Funeral on October 1.

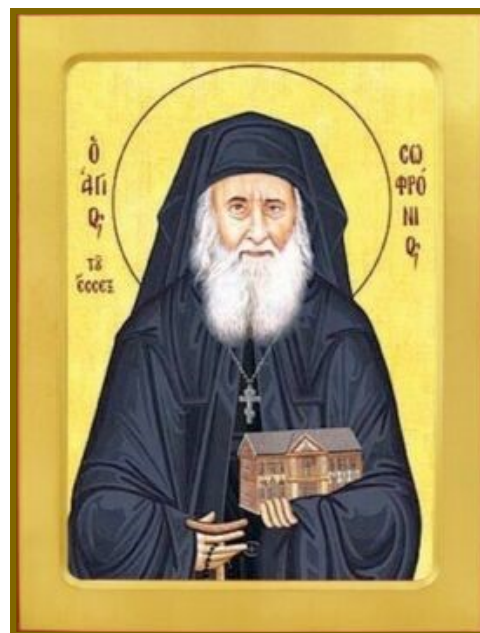
Stephen Paul Carabas on September 30, 2021. Funeral on October 11.

Athena Paschalis on August 31, 2021. Funeral on October 12.

Andrew Melnichuk, Jr. on October 3, 2021. Funeral on October 18.

From Father Seraphim (Continued from Page 11)

Who and what do we contemplate when we pray? Prayer is not trivial: "Now and then we may forget what we have prayed about, but God preserves our prayer forever . . . At certain crucial moments, when we are faced with various possibilities our prayer should be formulated by the final aim that we have in view: *The Kingdom of the Father . . .*" All the words that the Church gives us in prayer are focused on longing for Christ to come be with us, and for His paradise to come down again and consume our life. We contemplate not our own desires, but our longing for the Light of Divinity, Whose presence is so ineffably tender one is often unaware of His approach: "It may come in the night watch. Or at bright noonday . . . It brings peace, it brings an experience of Resurrection. The spirit of man enters the realm where death is no more. Time is at a standstill. The world, which is devoured by death, comes to life." Prayer should be focused on God alone, and the moment is promised to come, when He touches us with Eternal knowledge.



How does this sort of prayer begin in a person? Very simply and yet with great toil, the Saint explains: "From the moment we turn to God, resolved to follow His commandments, a process of basic healing begins . . . even our outwards appearance may alter . . . Deep prayer comes gradually. Body and soul slowly adapt . . . patient attitude to every ordeal makes the soul more able to apprehend the wisdom that is from above . . . Taking part in Liturgy gradually teaches the faithful when we are pierced by sorrow, pain, loss, we transfer our own hurt to the universal plane, and suffer not merely for ourselves but for all humanity." We have certainly seen the opposite response to suffering in people who are not part of the life of the Church. Not having integrated Christ's suffering in themselves, at the stroke of misfortune they become bitter and hateful – sometimes for the rest of their lives.

A crucial way we cripple our prayer life is by not confessing our sin. St. Sophrony writes: "When I make my confession, I convict myself of every evil because there is no sin in all the world of which I am not guilty, even if only for a second." To be clearer, this can be rephrased: The more earnest the repentance, the shorter the road to transformative prayer. Or again, the humbler our opinion of ourselves the more swiftly our prayer rises to God. True prayer is born in our constant awareness of our nothingness. The deeper one goes into radical self-condemnation (even when things "are not our fault"), the higher God raises us up.

What will happen if I attain true prayer? "At first the struggle for prayer seems to be beyond our strength, but if the soul persists she will eventually be able to contain within herself at the same time sorrow and joy; despair and hope. There is no more alternating between elation and depression . . . Prayer affords an experience of spiritual liberty of which most people are ignorant. The first sign of emancipation is a disinclination to impose one's will on others. The second – an inner release from the hold of others on oneself. Mastery over the wish to dominate is an extremely important stage which is closely followed by dislike of constraining our brother."

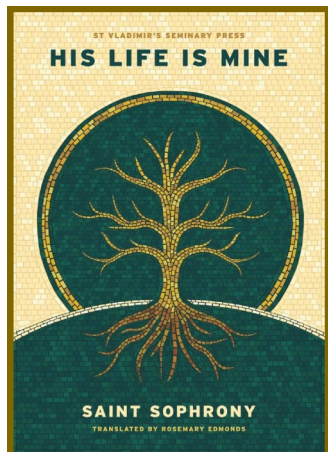
Often even in true prayer the mind is at war with thoughts, our efforts seem fruitless; but in fact even this leads us to the desired end: "There is meaning in this influx of untimely thoughts, our prayer becomes like a shaft of light focused on the dark places in our life, revealing to us the attachments occupying our soul." When we begin to pray, the first manifestations of the Uncreated Light shine in a secret way – not visibly that is – and it illuminates the darkness of our inner world and reveals to us "a spectacle that is far from joyous . . . we feel a burning sensation. To behold one's pitiful reality is to have begun to pray and contemplate man as he is in God's idea of him, before the creation of the world."

How do we practice this in our busy world? St. Sophrony is not unique in his teaching that the method of the Jesus Prayer is an irreplaceable aspect of a Christian life. "Prayer is like a strong hand clinging fast to God's raiment, at all times and in all places: In the turmoil of the crowd, in the pleasant hours of leisure, in periods of loneliness." This is extremely difficult; we can imagine it literally.

(Continued on Page 13)

From Father Seraphim (Continued from Page 12)

Take all that we know about Christ's whereabouts in the Gospels. At times He is pressed from all sides by a great crowd, at other times He slips away to pray somewhere in a secluded place, He is near people who love him and later surrounded by some with stones in their hands ready to kill Him. Place yourself there, desperately trying to hold on to His hem through those situations, not to mention our own conflicts, fatigues, and so on. This is analogous to us trying to maintain prayer throughout our day. The Jesus Prayer is the most



helpful way we can continue to hold on to Christ. St. Sophrony describes the prayer as follows: "First, it is a verbal matter: We say the prayer with our lips while trying to concentrate our attention on the Name and the words. Next, we no longer move our lips but move our minds to His Name, Jesus Christ. In the third stage, mind and heart combine to act together; and the prayer is said in the heart. Fourthly, the prayer becomes self-propelling and with no effort of our own prayer continues in us. Finally, the prayer starts to act like a gentle flame, inspiring, rejoicing, and delighting the mind in spiritual contemplation. This last state is sometimes accompanied by a vision of Light."

Do not be discouraged! Great distractions happen in prayer, tasks to be done begin to bombard us, worries drip on our conscience like a runny faucet, the news of current events barks continuously like an annoying neighbor's pup. Man's spiritual understanding and desire develops more quickly than his ability to harmonize his bodily conduct with God's Word. This is why the Apostle Paul says, "*That which I do not wish to do, is exactly what I do!*" (Romans 7:19), and the Apostle Matthew writes, "*The spirit is willing but the flesh weak.*" (Matthew 26:41) Do not be discouraged if our soul and heart desire such a relationship with Christ and our body is struggling to follow through. "To pray like this is not easy. But if we persist, the day will be stamped by our prayer and everything that happens will take on a different character we will behold things in another light . . . The essence of Christ's peace lies in His perfect knowledge of the Father. So it is with us: If we know the Eternal Truth all the torments of this life will be confined, as it were, to the periphery of our being, while the Light of life proceeding from the Father will reign within us."

I leave you this month, with these precious words of St. Sophrony: "It has fallen on our lot to be born into the world in an appallingly disturbed period. We are not only passive spectators but to a certain extent, participants in the mighty conflict between belief and unbelief, between hope and despair, between the dream of developing mankind into a single universal whole and the blind tendency toward dissolution into thousands of thoughts of irreconcilable, national, racial, class or political ideologies . . . Our most effective contribution to the victory of good is to pray for our enemies, for the whole world."

With Love in Christ,

Father Seraphim



*O Commanders of the Heavenly Host,
we the unworthy beseech you,
that through your entreaties you will fortify us,
guarding us in the shelter of the wings of your ethereal glory,
even as we fervently bow before you crying:
"Deliver us from all danger, as Commanders of the Powers on high!"
(Hymn of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel,
Commemorated on November 8)*



Christmas Caroling

*Let's celebrate the spirit of Christmas!
All children and families of our community
are welcome to participate in our annual
event on Saturday, December 4, 2021!
Please invite us to your home to spread
some Christmas cheer!*

*We will sing traditional Greek and English Christmas carols and the
program will last approximately 15 minutes.*

*Due to Covid, all carolers will remain outside
on the front porch or in your backyard!*

*If you would like to have the carolers come to your home,
please fill out the following and return to any Folk Dance Board Member
or the Church Office by December 1, 2021.*

Name:_____

Address:_____

Phone Number:_____

Email:_____

*You will be contacted three days prior to confirm our arrival time.
Questions? Contact Sia Dalacas at aeconomy@hotmail.com or (951) 285-4970.*

ALL PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE GREEK FOLK DANCE MINISTRY.

YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

Notes from the Choir Loft



Thank you to all who
have been singing with us on
Sundays for the Divine Liturgy.

Anyone interested in
singing with the Choir, please join us! We
would love to have you!

Athena Mertes, Director



*Please
remember
Karen
in your
prayers*

*for a fruitful surgery
and full healing.
May God be with her!*

Ministry News

Church School

Hi Everyone!

We have been going strong in Church School for a few weeks now. Friendly reminder: Please do not bring your child to Church or classes if he or she (or anyone in your house) is not feeling well. As always, we will receive Holy Communion with our classmates and then proceed to our classrooms. I will be unlocking the door to let the kids in and locking the door when they have all entered for the safety of all of us. Please forgive me in advance if I question you about entering the hall: I will do my best to remember all your faces.

Please make sure that you register your child, so we have complete information on every student. This is a requirement. You can grab a form on the wall next to the Church Office, and then return the completed form to either your child's teacher or me.

Our curriculum follows the Church calendar and has been going well. Teachers are also including other activities in the classroom so your child will have a nice variety of ways to learn about our wonderful Faith. If your child misses a class and you would like to go over the curriculum, please let me know and I can email it to you.

If you would like to help, please ask your teacher what they need. I know that most of the teachers are serving snacks and small bottles of water. We would all love any donations.

Class will end at 12:15 pm every week. Please wait until then to pick up your children. In the event you need to take them out early, please notify me or the teacher in advance. Please reach out to me if you have any questions, concerns, or if you would like to offer anything.

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

Greek Folk Dance

Our 2021-2022 Folk Dance season is in full swing and all our dancers have been hard at work brushing up on their dance skills and learning new ones too! A big thank you to all the directors, parents and families who commit their time each week to keep our wonderful Greek traditions alive.

This Christmas season we are happy to announce that we will bring back our Christmas Caroling fundraiser! **On December 4, 2021**, we will be driving across our valley, singing beautiful Greek and English Christmas Carols. Please fill out the form **on Page 14** in this issue of *The Desert Messenger* if you are interested in having us visit your home to spread the Christmas spirit. Due to Covid, all carolers will sing the beautiful carols from your front porch, driveway, or even in your backyard!

We are also in the process of organizing and gathering the costumes the dancers will wear to the Folk Dance Festival, which will be held in Phoenix, Arizona, **on February 18-21, 2022**. We know that there are many outstanding costumes from years past that have not been returned. We are asking that any costumes that were checked out in years past be returned. Check your closets, attics, basements, and trunks and return any costumes or costume pieces to the Church Office!

Much Gratitude, Folk Dance Board



Young Adults

It's November: So that means we hope to see everyone at our **Annual Young Adults Friendsgiving Celebration!** Mark your calendars for **Sunday, November 7 at 5:00 pm at Elizabeth and Josh Britton's Home.**

Please share in advance what favorite Thanksgiving side dish, salad or dessert you will bring, so we do not get too many of the same dishes. Each year this event has been so much fun – let us keep the tradition going! Looking forward to seeing everyone!

"So that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God." (2 Corinthians 4:15) In Christ, Father Seraphim

Orthodox Family Fellowship (OFF)

This month we will gather for a wonderful afternoon of crafts, giving back, and learning about a wonderful Saint! *On Saturday, November 20 at 2:00 pm, we will meet in Kokkos Hall* to make our own personalized Orthodox Advent Calendars to help us countdown to and anticipate the joyous Feast of our Lord and Savior's Incarnation and Holy Birth.

We also ask each family to bring one unwrapped toy that we will have the opportunity to wrap and prepare for delivery to the Las Vegas Rescue Mission, as we think of those children suffering from the effects of homelessness this Holiday Season.

Finally, we will have a chance to encounter a wonderful Saint, the Holy Wondeworker Nicholas of Myra. It is his charity and legacy of giving large sums of money away that sparked the entire gift-giving tradition surrounding Christmas; it will be a wonderful chance for our youth to come to know his holy life and miracles as well. We will be serving light refreshments.

To RSVP or to volunteer to bring any of the supplies or snacks, please contact frseraphim@vegaskgreekorthodox.com.

Love in Christ, Father Seraphim and the OFF Advisors

GOYA - Our Teen Ministry

We thank everyone, including parents, who joined us for our hike and pumpkin painting! We especially appreciate the generous donations of paint supplies and the delicious food for our recent potluck (13 desserts)!

This month our GOYA night will *be on Sunday, November 21, from 5:00 to 8:00 pm*. We are extending the hours to allow us ample time to decorate our 12-foot-tall Parish Christmas Tree in Panos Hall. Please bring some ornaments, and join us for tree-decorating, Christmas music, dinner and discussion with Father Seraphim.

We also ask each family to bring one unwrapped toy that we will have the opportunity to wrap and prepare for delivery to the Las Vegas Rescue Mission, as we remember those children suffering from the effects of homelessness this Holiday Season.

The tree will remain up until our St. John the Baptist Name Day Celebration *on January 7*, when we will have a takedown party.

Please RSVP at frseraphim@vegaskgreekorthodox.com: Let me know whether you are bringing food, gift-wrapping supplies, or ornaments for this fun annual event.

Much Love in Christ, Father Seraphim



Mr. & Mrs.

Dear Married and Engaged Couples:

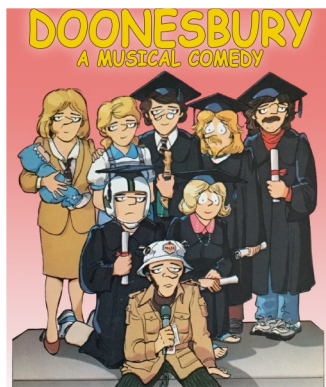
Bill and Erin Bruninga are organizing a private room at *Pinot's Palette at The District in Henderson* for fun, food, wine and a guided painting project, *on Saturday, November 6 at 6:30 pm*. Price per person is \$30.

Please RSVP at frseraphim@vegaskgreekorthodox.com or (702) 768-7480. Come out and join your Church friends for some guaranteed fun together!

Love in Christ, Father Seraphim and Father John



Kali Parea



Please join *on Saturday, November 13* as we gather to see the performance of *Doonesbury: The Musical*. *The doors open at 7:00 pm for the 7:30 pm performance* at the Super Summer Studio 3 Theater (4340 S. Valley View, Las Vegas – enter through Suite 206).

Tickets are \$25 cash/check at the office, \$27.50 credit card presale, or \$30 day of performance. You can purchase tickets Monday through Friday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm – or online at supersummertheatre.org/Doonesbury. Seating is limited and CDC guidelines will be upheld.

Looking forward to our Kali Parea at the theater!

God Bless! Demetrious Asim

Orthodox Bookstore

Greetings from the Bookstore!

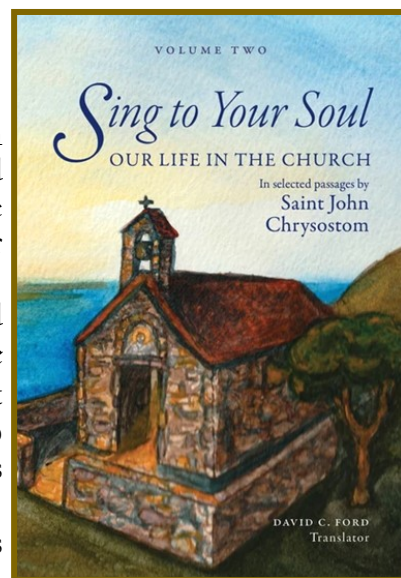
November 13 greets us again with the Feast Day of St. John Chrysostom, a renowned Church Father, prolific writer, and beloved preacher of the Orthodox Faith. His particular composition of the Divine Liturgy has been and continues to be celebrated all over the world in our churches past and present.

In time for his Feast Day, St. Tikhon's Monastery Press has released Volume Two of this month's featured selection, *Sing to Your Soul: Our Life in the Church* and is now available in the Bookstore. Translated by David C. Ford, it covers a range of topics beginning with the Church as Christ's Body, up to and including the Guidance of the Clergy, while concluding with an exegesis of The Lord's Prayer.

From *Sing to Your Soul* on the "Unity of All in the Church": "What is this 'unity of spirit?' Just as in the human body there is a spirit that holds it all together, even though the body is comprised of different members, so also here. For this reason the Spirit was given: that he might unite into one those who are separated by race and various customs. For the old and the young, the poor and the rich, the child and the youth, the woman and the man: every soul becomes one, even more so than if there were but one body, and the preciseness of the unity is more complete . . . Paul would have us be bound to one another – not merely to be at peace, not merely to be loving one another – but that all should be *one soul*. This is a beautiful bond! With it, let us bind ourselves to one another and to God."

Stop by for your copy or other spiritual reading and devotional needs as we move forward into the blessed Nativity season of our Lord.

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



The Vespers Psalm 103 (104)

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are magnified exceedingly; You clothe Yourself with thanksgiving and majesty, who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain; You are He who covers His upper chambers with water, Who makes the clouds His means of approach, Who walks on the wings of the winds, Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.

He established the earth on its stable foundation; it shall not be moved unto ages of ages. The deep like a garment is His covering; the waters shall stand upon the mountains; at Your rebuke they shall flee; at the sound of Your thunder, they shall be afraid. The mountains rise up, and the plains sink down to the place You founded for them. You set a boundary they shall not pass over; neither shall they return to cover the earth.

You are He Who sends springs into the valley; the waters shall pass between the mountains; they shall give drink to all the wild animals of the field; the wild asses shall quench their thirst; the birds of heaven shall dwell beside them; they shall sing from the midst of the rocks. You are He Who waters the mountains from His higher places; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Your works.

You are He Who causes grass to grow for the cattle, and the green plant for the service of man, to



bring forth bread from the earth; and wine gladdens the heart of man, to brighten his face with oil; and bread strengthens man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be full of fruit, the cedars of Lebanon, which You planted; there the sparrows shall make their nests; the house of the heron takes the lead among them. The high mountains are for the deer; the cliff is a refuge for the rabbits.

He made the moon for seasons; the sun knows its setting. You established darkness, and it was night, wherein all the wild animals of the forest will prowl about; the young lions roar and snatch their prey, and seek their food from God. The sun arises, and they are gathered together; and they shall be put to bed in their dens. Man shall go out to his work and to his labor until evening.

O Lord, Your works shall be magnified greatly; You made all things in wisdom; the earth was filled with Your creation. There is this great and spacious sea: the creeping things are there without number; the living things are there, both

small and great; there the ships pass through; there is this dragon You formed to play therein.

All things wait upon You, that You may give them food in due season. When You give it to them, they shall gather it; when You open Your hand, all things shall be filled with Your goodness. But when You turn Your face away, they shall be troubled; when You take away their breath, they shall die and return again to their dust. You shall send forth Your Spirit, and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let the glory of the Lord be forever; the Lord shall be glad in His works; He looks upon the earth and makes it tremble; He touches the mountains, and they smoke. I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing to my God as long as I exist; may my words be pleasing to Him, and I shall be glad in the Lord. May sinners cease from the earth, and the lawless, so as to be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knows its setting. You established darkness, and it was night.

O Lord, Your works shall be magnified greatly; You made all things in wisdom.

Ways to Leave a Legacy to St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox:

1. **Bequest in a Will:** While providing for your beneficiaries in your will, you can include a charitable gift for a specific amount, a percentage, or remainder of your estate to the Parish.
2. **Life Insurance Policy:** You can turn a life insurance policy into charitable support. By naming St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church as the owner or beneficiary of an existing or new life insurance policy, you can make a significant gift.
3. **Retirement Accounts:** Naming St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church as the beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k), Keogh, 403(b) or other qualified retirement plan can provide greater tax benefits to your heirs while maximizing the impact to Orthodoxy.
4. **Savings and Investment Accounts:** Naming St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church a beneficiary of your savings and investment account is an easy way to leave a legacy.
5. **Gift in a Trust:** St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church can be designated as a beneficiary of a revocable or irrevocable trust.
6. **Charitable Remainder Trust:** Cash, marketable securities or real estate may be placed into a charitable remainder trust. A Charitable Remainder Trust is a way to make a gift that allows you to retain income from your property for life or for a specific period of time that you specify.
7. **Charitable Lead Trust:** Provide a substantial gift over a period of years while ensuring that the property will ultimately return to the donor or to loved ones. The lead trust is one of the few ways to reduce or eliminate taxes that otherwise would be due on assets left to children or grandchildren.
8. **Real Estate:** You may donate residential, commercial or undeveloped property.
9. **Securities:** Giving long term appreciated securities saves capital gains tax and may serve you better than giving cash. The donor of stock donation receives a tax deduction for the stock's fair market value.

Other non-Stewardship ways to support St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church:

1. **Targeted Cash Donation:** Donate cash to St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church for specific projects, for example:
 - a. Roof repairs;
 - b. Air Conditioner Replacement;
 - c. Repaving parking lot;
 - d. Purchasing equipment to support the Annual Food Festival;
 - e. Etc.
2. **Amazon Smile:** Log into your Amazon account with www.smile.amazon.com, once logged in, search for St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, as the charity you support. When you purchase anything on Smile Amazon, the Parish will receive a donation. There is **NO ADDITIONAL COST** to anyone for supporting a charity.

Our legal title is St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

Our Federal Tax ID number is: 88-0096637

With Gratitude to God for Our Pledged Stewards in 2021

If you wish to become a Parish Steward, please fill out Pledge Form and return to Karen

Acovino, Richard and Angela
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 Agouridis, Lambros and
 Constantino, Erika
 Alford, Cynthia "Mary"
 Allen, John and Denice
 Alvarado, Jessie and Julie
 Anastasakis, Mark and Elaine
 Anastasiou, Andrew and
 Kathleen
 Andrews, Catherine
 Andrews, Chris and Pamela
 Andrews, George
 Andricopoulos, Margo
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 Atkins, Dakota
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 Balanos, Anastasia and Garyfalia
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 Balodimas, James
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 Beeman, Benita
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 Bieker, Adam and Cassie
 Bieker, Georgea
 Birtas, Helen and Ann
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 Bledsoe, Lori
 Bochanis, George and Enid
 Boehm, Alexy and
 Cone, Jayme
 Booth, Alina
 Bratta, Georgene
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 Campbell, Theodore and Cheryl
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 Carahalios, John and Constance
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 Chachas, James
 Chagares, Kiki
 Chamie, Elie, Emil and
 Claudine
 Chandrinis, Alexia
 Chanos, Jennifer
 Chomakos, Dean and Tammy

Chomakos, Jeremy and Romina
 Chondrakis, Dimosthenis and
 Kragerud, Kaaren
 Christou, Toni
 Collins, David
 Conger, William and Alexia
 Costacos, John
 Costuros, George and Marsha
 Cosulas, Fr. Basil and
 Presv. Samantha
 Cotsilis, Jenny
 Coyle, Helen
 Crist, Adam and Kanistra
 Dalacas, Dimitri and Athanasia
 Dalacas, Eleni
 Dalacas, Georgia
 Daskalos, George and Voula
 Deep, Joe and
 Schumacher, Alexi
 Demas, Spiro and Rita
 Demolas, Maria and
 Nour, Reza
 Demoleas, Alexandra
 Demoleas, Eleni and
 Thomas, Kristian
 Demoleas, Spero and Grace
 Demoleas, Stephanie
 Demopoulos, Vasiliki
 Dimitri, Patricia, Martha and Janet
 Dominguez, Eric and Amalia
 Doskas, Athanasios and Anastasia
 Dounis, Dina
 Dounis, Georgia
 Dounis, Kiki
 Dramitinos, Mary
 Earl, Christine Michaelides
 Eliades, Aristotelis and Caroline
 Eliades, Gregory and Maria
 Eliades, Harry and Agapi
 Eliades, Katerina
 Eliades, Sia
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 Eliakis, Varthie and LeeAnn
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 Filios, Spiridon and Eleni
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 Fitzgerald, Norman and
 McCullen, Sandra
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 Flangas, Gus and Tamara
 Flangas, Marilyn
 Fleetwood, Brandon
 Fletes, Richard and Stephanie
 Foster, Kyle and
 Pierro, Maria Elena
 Fotopoulos, John and Barbara
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 Frangakis, Christos and Anastasia
 Gantcheva, Galia

Garza, Everardo and Eliades, Eleni
 Gauvin, Chad and Marissa
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 Saladino, Maria Veronica
 George, Louis+
 George, Pete and Georgia
 Georgiena, Reni
 Georgis, John
 Ghebream, Daniel and
 Ghermay, Selam
 Ghebrecristos, Jonathan and
 Habtay, Kokob
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 Gialketsis, Julie
 Gialketsis, Steve
 Gialketsis, William+
 Giouzelis, Anastasia
 Goodman, Robert+ and Linda
 Gordon, Victor and Demetria
 Gorgan, Patrick
 Gutierrez, Connie
 Gutierrez, Daniel
 Hadzoglon, Christos
 Hall, Elizabeth
 Hamilton, Mary
 Hamilton, Paul and Brandi
 Hanna, Robert and Julie
 Hastings, Teri
 Hemmers, Oliver and
 Pantelas, Anne
 Hertberg, Jennifer
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 Hondros, Christina
 Hondros, Christopher and Darlene
 Hondros, Fr. John and Presv. Maria
 Hondros, Marissa
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 Kambouris, Litsa
 Kanellopoulos, Evangelia
 Kanis, Constantinos and Katie
 Karas, James
 Karas, John and Marcie
 Karris, Mark and Suzanne
 Katopodis, Efstratios
 Katris, Nick and Theana
 Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon
 Kelesis, Paula
 Kiflezgi, Rahel
 Kilgore, Alexandra and
 Rickerson, Connor

Kinard, Panorea
 Kirchner, Gary "Barlaam"
 Kirolos, Elhamy and
 Molina, Adriana
 Kleanthis, George and Zanetta
 Kolev, Plamen and
 Koleva, Slaveya
 Koliambas, Eleni
 Konsolakis, Eleni and Sophia
 Kontos, Diana
 Kostas, James
 Kostopoulos, Georgia
 Kountanis, Panagiota
 Koupais, Mario and Cheri
 Kouris, Demetris and Terry
 Koutsulis, John and Eileen
 Koutsulis, Sam and Effie
 Koutsulis, Sam, Jr.
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 Kypreos, Peter and Geri
 Kyriannis, Justin and Linda
 Kyriazopoulos, Constantine, Jr.
 Laird, Blair and Leeann
 Lakkis, Christina
 Lamancusa, Lisa
 Lambros, Kyriakos and Mary
 Latelle, Penny
 Lavine, Frederic
 Lee, David and Alexandra
 Lekar, Michael and Effie
 Leone, Stephen
 Leong, Marissa
 Leonis, Nick and Sophia
 Leonis, Tishe
 Leventis, Naomi
 Leventis, Nicholas and Christina
 Lexis, Annette
 Liaos, James and Tina
 Liaos, Steven and Francine
 Likourinou, Angie
 Likourinou, Steve and June
 Litsos, Nicholas and Catherine
 Loney, Thomas and Chrysi
 Luke, Parker and Maria
 Makris, Apostolos
 Malamatos, Kindina
 Maland, Donna
 Malpee, Kalliope
 Mangafas, Kyriakos and Eleftheria
 Manolakos, Catherine
 Manos, Constantine and Michele
 Margaretis, John and Lucila
 Markakis, Sandy Kiriaki
 Markantonis, Demos and Kate
 Markantonis, George and Sarah
 Matsis, John and Rebecca
 Mavrantonis, Stacy and Kiki
 Mavroidis, Demetrios and Debra
 Mavros, Alex and Jen
 Mavros, Debbie
 Mavroudis, Frank
 McManus, Jeanette

(Continued on Page 21)

With Gratitude to God for Our Pledged Stewards in 2021
If you wish to become a Parish Steward, please fill out Pledge Form and return to Karen

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 Moffett, Todd and
 Eliopulos, Tina
 Mohammednur, Algenes
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 Monoyudis, Jim and Julie
 Montisano, Jon and Jennifer
 Moore, Brenda
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 George, Veneta
 Myers, Stella
 Neocleous, Plato
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 Pahigiannis, Nikon
 Paikos, Tom and Elizabeth
 Pajak, Scott and Angela
 Palivos, Peter and Vicky
 Pan-Arcadians
 Pandelis, Cheryl
 Panos, Jeanne
 Papalois, John and Maria
 Papas, Christian and Nicole
 Papas, Peter and Rita
 Pappas, Panagiotis and Andrea
 Pappas, Rita
 Pappas, Stella
 Paschalis, Evangelos and Maria
 Payan, Luis and Eleni
 Pendleton, Tricia
 Peratikos, Tony
 Pertsinides, Irene
 Petersen, Todd and Diane
 Petriuc, Constantin
 Petro, Aleko and Georgia
 Petrou, Jim and Penelopi
 Philippou, Demetrios and
 Luanne
 Philoptochos Society
 Pierro, Joe and Rhonda
 Polimerou, Angeline
 Politis, Pantelis and Dimitra
 Poulis, Chris and Francine
 Poulos, Christine
 Pouridis, Kouli and Para
 Powers, Russell and Rebecca
 Punsalan, Basil and Sophie
 Ramos, Fr. Seraphim and
 Presv. Olenka
 Raptis, Presv. Evonne
 Rasmussen, Scott and Rebecca
 Rigas, Anthony and Mary
 Rigas, Evie

Rihani, Gary and Linda
 Rivera, Elias and April
 Rodis, Dimitri and Angie
 Rodis, Sophia
 Rosenthal, Joseph and Stephanie
 Rotas, Beatrice
 Rowe, Jim and Eleni
 Ruffner, Skip and Kathy
 Sakkas, Georgios and
 Stavropoulos, Bessie
 Salon, Janelle
 Salonikis, Valentinos and Sophia
 Santamaria, Jennifer and Robert
 Savvas, Savva
 Sechrist, Carl and Christine
 Sehremelis, Andy and Leslie
 Setian, Gary and Marie+
 Simos, Eleni
 Simos, Tony and Lorie
 Simpson, Bryan and Julie
 Sirhan, Michael and
 Khuri, Imtisal
 Skalkotos, Nikolas and Georgia
 Skandros, Stephanie
 Smith, Kathleen
 Snow, Clifford and Christina
 Snowden, Robert+ and Niki
 Soter, Gregory and Renee
 Sorkhabi, Arian and
 Habiba, Maha

Sparkuhl, Alex and Antoinette
 Spirtos, Nick
 Staubs, Douglas and Anastasia
 Stavropoulos, Terry and Niki
 Stenos, Louis
 Stransky, Jack and Rachel
 Stransky, Mark
 Szukiewicz, Alex
 Szukiewicz, Joseph and Justina
 Tafoya, Steven and Irene
 Takas, Andrea
 Tanguay, Steven and Elizabeth
 Tasios, Ramona and Pete+
 Thanos, Nicholas and Victoria
 Theros, James and Kathryn
 Thompson, Maggy
 Tijiboy, Christine
 Tohme, Tony and May
 Tsiralidis, Kosmas and Katerina
 Tsois, Christos and Panagioula
 Tsortanidis, Sophia
 Tzelalis, Steve
 Tzelalis, Vaso
 Varinos, Nick and Kiki
 Villas, Lee
 Walta, Hagos
 Wadlow, Nicholas and Pamela
 Wainscott, Betty
 Wallace, Robert and Katerina

Walter, Vernon and Alice
 Waterhouse, David and Aleigja
 Wayne, Elias and Lori
 Welles, Brigitte
 Wells, Adrienne
 Wilkerson, Chuck and Kristina
 Williams, Anthony and Anna
 Williamson, Rula Halatsis-
 Wilson, Clyde
 Wilson, Kelly and
 Egi, Junichiro
 Wilson, Lori
 Wilson, Steven and Cleo
 Wirtz, Athena and
 Grutz, Tanner
 Womack, Karl
 Womack, Kimberly
 Wronski, Chuck
 Xerogianes, Nick and Nikki
 Yurkov, Andre, Nikolina and
 Daniela
 Zaferatos, Ted
 Zarras, Nick and Chery
 Zekichev, Timothy and
 Morris, Alexandra
 Zerai, Medhane
 Zervas, Dionisios
 Zimmerman, Paul and Angela
 Zmina, Stephen and Cynthia

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



METROPOLIS
E-News

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*Our Church is fully open for the scheduled Divine Services.
If you have been sick for the last 48 hours, please do not come
to Church. If you are unable to come to Church,
your Priests are here to light a candle for you and your loved ones.
Please call Karen with your request.*



2021 Stewardship Report (as of 10/18/21)

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$455,268 (\$476,496 in 2020)
Stewardship Gifts Received: \$397,078 (\$402,144 in 2020)
Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$58,190 (\$74,351 in 2020)
Stewardship Families Pledged: 379 (396 in 2020)
Average Pledge to Date: \$1,201 (\$1,203 in 2020)
2021 Budgeted Goal: \$500,000 . . . Keep the Pledges Coming!

Church Account Summaries - September 2021

Nevada State Bank Accounts	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
General Operating Account (GOA)	\$124,481.54	\$98,916.05	\$21,943.33	\$83,383.48	\$92,311.29	\$69,646.15	
Community and Education (C&E)	\$19,203.01	\$3,000.00		\$1,000.00		\$21,203.01	
Greek Food Festival (GFF)	\$49,091.49	\$833,123.40	\$32,584.00	\$368,050.83	\$29,387.35	\$517,360.71	
Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)	\$241,678.31	\$5,625.00	\$6,847.00	\$3,053.26	\$1,003.22	\$250,093.83	
Folk Dance Group	\$17,583.00	\$1,450.00				\$19,033.00	
Hellenic Historical Society	\$3,284.94					\$3,284.94	
Designated Funds	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Bookstore	\$8,759.76	\$5,625.00	\$6,847.00	\$3,053.26	\$980.32	\$17,198.18	
Ornaments	\$1,169.41					\$1,169.41	
Restricted Funds	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
ICON	\$143,465.31					\$143,465.31	
Library Account	\$1,470.77					\$1,470.77	
Giving Tree	\$3,912.77				\$22.90	\$3,889.87	
Faithtree	\$1,626.39					\$1,626.39	
Building Fund	\$28,119.26					\$28,119.26	
Youth Choir	\$2,989.18					\$2,989.18	
Church School	\$1,306.37					\$1,306.37	
Three Priests	\$37,093.51					\$37,093.51	
Roof Appeal	\$11,183.22					\$11,183.22	
Altar Servers	\$440.00					\$440.00	
GOYA	\$142.36					\$142.36	
Designated, Restricted, and Other Total	\$241,678.31	\$5,625.00	\$6,847.00	\$3,053.26	\$1,003.22	\$250,093.83	
Other Funds	August	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	September	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Kokkos Scholarship Fund	\$84,352.25		\$1,000.62	\$9,000.00	\$2,156.73	\$74,196.14	\$9000 paid to scholarships

September 2021 Candles **\$3,915.00**
September 2021 Trays **\$3,472.00**
Total September 2021 Candles & Trays \$7,387.00



NOVEMBER 2021 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

	1 <i>Ss. Cosmas and Damianos</i> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:00 pm Adult Basketball	2	3	4	5	6 6:30 pm Mr. and Mrs. at Pinot's Palette
7 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Folk Dance Practice 5:00 pm Young Adults Friendsgiving at Britton's	8 <i>Holy Archangels Gabriel and Michael</i> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:00 pm Adult Basketball	9 <i>St. Nectarios</i> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:00 pm Parish Council in Library	10	11	12	13 7:00 pm Kali Pareia at Doonesbury: The Musical
14 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Folk Dance Practice <i>Parish Assembly</i>	15 <i>Nativity Fast Begins</i> 6:00 pm Adult Basketball	16	17	18	19	20 9:00 am Philoptochos Pastry Baking in Kitchen 2:00 pm OFF Advent Craft in Kokkos Hall
21 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Autumn Bake Sale Folk Dance Practice 5:00 pm GOYA Tree Decorating in Panos Hall	22 6:00 pm Adult Basketball	23	24 <i>Great Martyr Catherine/ Thanksgiving Liturgy</i> 5:00 pm Orthros 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy	25 <i>Happy Thanksgiving!</i>	<div>Church Office Closed</div>	27
28 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Folk Dance Practice	29 6:00 pm Adult Basketball	30 <i>St. Andrew</i> 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy				

The Desert Messenger

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

The Way of the Lord



Prayer to My Guardian Angel

O Holy Angel, who stand by my wretched soul and my passionate life: Do not abandon me, a sinner, neither depart from me because of my lack of self-control. Leave no room for the evil demon to gain control of me through the violence of this mortal body. Strengthen my weak and feeble hand, and instruct me in the path of salvation. O Holy Angel of God, the guardian and protector of my wretched soul and body: Forgive all the sorrows I have caused you, every day of my life. If I have sinned in this past night, protect me during this day. Keep me from every adverse temptation, that I may not anger God by any sin. Pray to the Lord for me, that He may establish me in His fear and make me, His servant, worthy of His goodness. Amen.