

The Desert



Messenger

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

Volume 15, Issue 6 St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV

June 2017

From Father John

Beloved in Christ:

Fifty days after the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the promise He made to His Disciples during His Passion was fulfilled with the descent of the Holy and Life-Giving Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit, as tongues of fire, was distributed and rested on the heads of each of the Apostles (*Acts 2:1-3*) – as a sign that they were ordained by the Hand of God – and, following this they became *"fishers of men."* (*Matthew 4:19*) Pentecost Sunday (celebrated on *June 4* this year) marks the beginning of the Apostolic ministry, which is essential for the growth of Christ's Holy Church: Just as the Holy Twelve ordained others into the Holy Priesthood to become fishers of men and grow His Church both locally and in new uncharted places, still even today our Lord is calling men to serve Him as clergy, ordaining them through canonical Orthodox Bishops and thus continuing the Apostolic Succession according to God's will, until He returns again at the time of His Second Coming.



Almost four years ago, Deacon Matthew Swehla arrived in our parish, fresh out of seminary with his sweet wife, Annie, and a large family in tow – a family that would increase in a couple years. On the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos (September 8), Father Matthew was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by the laying on of the hands of His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos: For many this was the first experience of an ordination, and for all who were present, the power of Pentecost was felt as we knelt and prayed for the Holy Spirit to descend on Father Matthew, making him a worthy priest of Christ's Holy Church.

Father Matthew, by the grace of God and the loving prayers and support of our community, has developed into a remarkable clergyman: He is a humble and affable man with an engaging smile; he has become a wonderful liturgist, blessed with a soothing melodic voice, and his homilies are always clear, thoughtful and relevant. Although he was sent to our parish to primarily oversee the youth ministries, he has proven to be an extremely caring and attentive priest to young and old alike. With the youth and young adult ministries, Father Matthew has shown his gift as an incredible planner and organizer – and more importantly, he has shown his willingness to be hands on for all these ministries. While tending to his pastoral duties he has also proven to be a loving and effective husband and father of his own household. In every way Father Matthew has been a brother in Christ to me, and I am grateful to God to have served side-by-side with him in the formative years of his priestly ministry. I am confident – and this sentiment is shared by all in our parish – that Father Matthew will continue to be an effective vessel of God's grace and love in his new parish, and wherever our Lord sends him in the future.

We are now preparing to receive another recently graduated and newly-ordained servant of the Lord, Deacon Seraphim Ramos. Although Deacon Seraphim is 25 years-old, let us not despise his youth! (*1 Timothy 4:12*) This young, energetic man will arrive with his equally young wife, Olenka, and 18 month year-old daughter, Ivanna – and for those of us who had the opportunity to meet him a couple weeks ago, we are already impressed by his genuine joy and love, as well as his humility, his wonderful chanting, and infectious zeal for our Lord and His Church.

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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

Saturday, June 3/*Saturday of Souls*

8:00 am Orthros

9:00 am Divine Liturgy and Memorial

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

Gospel: John 21:14-25

Sunday, June 4/*Holy Pentecost /Holy Fathers of the Second Ecumenical Council*

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

Epistle: Acts 2:1-11

Gospel: John 7:37-52

Kneeling Vespers follows Liturgy

Pentecost Week: Fast-free

Monday, June 5/*Monday of the Holy Spirit/ Dorotheos the Hieromartyr of Tyre*

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

Epistle: Titus 3:8-15

Gospel: Matthew 18:10-20

Sunday, June 11/*All Saints /Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas*

Orthros: Tone Eight (Fourth Plagal)

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

Epistle: Hebrews 11:33-40; 12:1-2

Gospel: Matthew 10:32-33, 37-38; 19:27-30

Apostles Fast: June 12 - 28

Sunday, June 18/*2nd Sunday of Matthew/Martyr Leontios of Syria/Holy Fathers of Mount Athos*

Orthros: Tone One

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

Epistle: Romans 2:10-16

Gospel: Matthew 4:18-23

Saturday, June 24/*Nativity of St. John the Baptist*
8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Epistle: Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Gospel: Luke 1:1-25, 57-68, 76, 80

Sunday, June 25/*3rd Sunday of Matthew/Holy Martyr Fevronias*

Orthros: Tone Two

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

Epistle: Romans 5:1-10

Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33

Wednesday, June 28/*Ss. Peter and Paul*

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

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 11:21-33; 12:1-9

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19

Friday, June 30/*Synaxis of the 12 Holy Apostles*

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

Gospel: Matthew 9:36; 10:1-8

From Father John (Continued from Page 1)

I have been blessed to peruse a couple of his illuminating senior essays, and I can attest that this young man's theological mind is quite advanced for his age: Like Father Matthew, he will be an excellent teacher of our Faith. We will be blessed and privileged, yet again in our parish, to participate in the *Ordination of Deacon Seraphim to the Holy Priesthood by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos on Sunday, June 18*, appropriately on Father's Day!

Let us pray that more exceptional young men will respond to our Lord's call to serve as His priests . . . and may each of us allow the Holy Spirit to remain operative in our lives, so that we may faithfully serve His Church, for its growth, for our sanctification, and all for His glory!

With love and gratitude in Christ,

Father John



Parish Council Report

As many of you aware, Father Matthew and his family will be leaving us next month; he will become the Parish Priest of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Beaverton, Oregon. He and Presvytera Annie have been a tremendous asset for our Church and our community, and we are going to miss them tremendously. Father Matthew's last day with us will be *Sunday, June 4*. Immediately following Church services that day, please join us for lunch in Panos Hall to honor Father Matthew and his family and bid them a fond farewell.

Father Matthew's replacement, Deacon Seraphim Ramos, just graduated from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Seminary and was ordained to the Diaconate the following day. Father Seraphim visited our community a couple weeks ago and, after getting to know him better, we are looking even more forward to welcoming him and his family into our parish. Father Seraphim's Ordination to the Priesthood will take place on *Sunday, June 18*, here in our Church. An Ordination of a Priest is an extraordinary Sacrament and we encourage everyone to be there to witness it and shout, "Axios!" ("Worthy!") His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos will be the celebrant of the Hierarchical Liturgy and the Ordination. Following Father Seraphim's Ordination, there will be a luncheon in Panos Hall to celebrate this blessed event. Please join us.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank Bernadette Anthony for her selfless service as President of the Ladies Philoptochos Society. Throughout her four-year term of service as President, Bernadette has faithfully and energetically supported our Church and our mission, led many fundraising events, promoted the activities of our parish, and worked toward helping those who are less fortunate. We congratulate her on a job well done. A wonderful dinner event was recently held to honor Bernadette's service and to thank her for all she has done: The dinner was well planned and organized by Geri Kypreos, and her son George prepared the feast. Many thanks to them for their efforts. Also honored at the dinner for their accomplishments and years of selfless service to the Ladies Philoptochos were Geri Kypreos and Eleni Kakavulias. Bernadette's successor as Philoptochos President is Vicky Palivos: Vicky also has years of selfless service to the Ladies Philoptochos. All of us look forward to working with her in the coming years.

The planning for this year's Greek Food Festival is in high gear. We are working hard to offer our guests the total "Greek Experience" filled with high quality food, high quality music, efficient and courteous service, and a very "high energy" and "festive" atmosphere replete with our Greek Culture, which will resonate with all ages and all types of people.

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SUNDAY SCHEDULE

JUNE 4: PENTECOST/FATHER MATTHEW'S LAST SUNDAY

Ushers: Kouli Pouridis, Skip Ruffner, Bessie Stavropoulos, George Bochanis, Demetrious Asim and Pete Tsolis

Fellowship: Farewell Luncheon for Father Matthew and Family

JUNE 11

Ushers: Gus Flangas, Mike Beeler, Mark Karris, Stacy Mavrantonis, Justina Szukiewicz and John Koutsulis

Memorials: Nick Dalacas (40 days); Mike Mavros (3 months).

Fellowship: Pan-Cretans

JUNE 18: FATHER SERAPHIM'S ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Ushers: Bessie Stavropoulos, George Bochanis, Demetrious Asim, Kouli Pouridis, Skip Ruffner and Mark Karris

Fellowship: Father Seraphim Ramos' Ordination Luncheon

JUNE 25

Ushers: John Koutsulis, Pete Tsolis, Justina Szukiewicz, Mike Beeler, Gus Flangas and Stacy Mavrantonis

Fellowship: Hosted by Estiatorio Milos Restaurant

Parish Council Report *(Continued from Page 3)*

To have a successful Festival, we need to energize our entire Church Community toward this very important effort. We need to make the Festival an effort of love and make it fun for our Church Members and friends to work on. The more people are energized and involved, the easier it is for everyone. In that vein, it is absolutely essential that we have aggressive pre-sales: Pre-sales are comprised of Raffle Tickets, Coupon Books, Souvenir Magazine Ads, and Vendor Leasing. All of these provide the “seed” money for the Festival. Good strong pre-sales could conceivably fund 40 to 45% or more of the cost going into the Festival and lower the risk. We need to strive to have at least \$200,000 in pre-sales this year, in order to have all our expenses covered by the end of Friday night and be into profit going into Saturday. We can get there by selling at least 700 Raffle Tickets prior to the Festival (\$70,000), selling \$25,000 worth of Coupon Books, obtaining \$70,000 worth of Souvenir Magazine Ad Sales and obtaining \$35,000 in Vendor Leases. These are the goals for which we need to strive and it takes everyone working on it to realize them. Please step up and help.

On another note, Stewardship needs to be addressed. Much time and effort that goes into Stewardship, yet we continually fall woefully short of our goals every year and it is starting to impact not only our ability to maintain our Church but also our ability to put together a vision for the future. Stewardship has been addressed in this column monthly for the past 17 months, to very little avail. In addition, various appeals pertaining to Stewardship have been ignored by way too many people. For more years than we care to mention, we have continually struggled in our Church to meet the goals of our Stewardship Program and it is way past time to get Stewardship to the point where it should be. Many people feel they are being continually asked over and over to contribute money to the Church. Although it may seem that way, this is simply not true. Virtually everything for which people are asked to contribute, there is usually something given in return . . . such as a lamb dinner, a chance to win a Mercedes Benz, a luncheon, etc. Stewardship does not fall in that same category. Stewardship is not about giving to get something in return; rather, it is about “giving back.” In other words, it is about giving back to the Church to thank God for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us. It is the life blood of our Church and every other Greek Orthodox Church. The importance of it cannot be overstated; so we ask and we need each and every one of you to work toward building Stewardship by encouraging other Parishioners to be Stewards, by increasing your own pledges, and challenging other Stewards to increase their pledges. We not only need your help but we also need your ideas as well to make this work.

Pertaining to the Iconography, there has only been some limited movement. We are still on hold until we can get the long awaited on-site inspection by the Immigration Office out of Southern California. We are still looking for the Iconographers to come here and complete the Iconography somewhere around the end of July or early August. We will try to keep everyone informed with the latest information as it becomes available to us.

In closing and as usual, we want to again thank the various Church ministries and organizations, and the many individuals for all the work they do and have done to help us secure the future of the Church for ourselves and, most importantly, our children. 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 many things are always happening, but each ministry and parish event are extremely important. Please get involved as we move forward to make our Church better. May God bless you.

Gus Flangas, Parish Council President



“I know My own and My own know Me.” (John 10:14)

*Please prayerfully fill out and return your
2017 Stewardship Pledge Card.*

Philoptochos News

June is busting out all over! There are always lots of beginnings in June! School – moving to the next level and graduations. Weddings – the beginning of new lives together. Vacations – getting to travel, near or far, just getting away is fun. This June we will get to celebrate new beginnings in the Ladies Philoptochos and at St. John the Baptist Church. We are so sad to be saying good-bye to Father Matthew, Presvytera Annie and the “Boys,” but wishing them love and happiness in their new beginning at St. John the Baptist in Beaverton, Oregon! We are so sad to not be able to watch the boys as they grow, oh, and we will miss you as well Father Matthew. But, we know that Father Matthew and Presvytera will be bringing joy, comfort and the Word to another St. John the Baptist community. Thank you Father Matthew for being with us and sharing your family with us. God bless you!

Another new beginning! Welcome to our new Deacon and soon to be Father Seraphim Ramos. We look forward to embracing you and your family to our St. John the Baptist Church, Las Vegas! It will be truly an honor to witness your Ordination and become a part of your beginning as a Priest and your ecclesiastical life.



Another farewell and hello! The Presidents Dinner was held on Tuesday, May 9 in Panos Hall. It was a lovely evening with recognition of the past Board of Directors and accomplishments from the past two years. The room was decorated in whites and pink with gorgeous flowers and the dinner was fantastic! Many thanks to George Kypreos for all his talents in the kitchen. A slide show of photographs was shown, compiled from the last two years from all our different activities and events. Ladies Philoptochos Society 2015-2017 Board Members were recognized and thanked for their service to the Ladies Philoptochos Society. The Kairos Award was presented and we honored and recognized the services of Eleni Kakavulias for her quiet devotion and love of Faith with her talents that she has shared with the Philoptochos and the Church as a phenomenal baker. We also recognized Geri Kypreos for her passion to Social Services and helping those in need in our Southern Nevada Community. Elections were held for the Board of Directors for 2017-2019. Please welcome and show your support to these women who will devote their time and talent to the Ladies Philoptochos Society for the next two years. There are some longtime returning members and some brand new women to the board. Such a board like this is the dream of every President. As you all know, any organization is only as successful as all the members make it to be, each and every woman is a viable and need member of the Ladies Philoptochos Society. Our new Board Members are:

Vicky Palivos, President

Dora Hart, Vice President

Tami Stefanatos, Treasurer

Bessie Chachas, Recording Secretary

Karlie Conger, Correspondence Secretary

Bernadette Anthony, Immediate Past President and Advisor to the Board

Erin Speer Bruninga, Membership

Geri Kypreos, Social Services

Jennia Szukiewicz, Outreach

Carolyn Beeler, Benita Beeman, Jennifer Chanos, Tamara Flangas and Rahel Kiflegzi – General Board Members.



The summer may be beginning but the Ladies Philoptochos Society will still be going on. Mark Sunday, June 4 and Sunday, June 18 on your calendars and get your aprons ready. There will be two more events in June for the Ladies to help with. Look for an email for more information.

As always, the Ladies Philoptochos Society is here for our Faith and St. John the Baptist Community. Our hands, talents, time and prayers are always ready for new beginnings.

Have a Blessed June! Your Sister in Christ, Bernadette Anthony

*Please Join Us As
We Say Good-Bye
to Father Matthew,
Presvytera Annie
and Family*



Farewell Luncheon

Pentecost Sunday, June 4, 2017
***Following Divine Liturgy
and Kneeling Vespers***

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

***Italian Salad, Chicken Parmigiana, Rigatoni,
Cake and Coffee***

Free-Will Offering
(Your Generosity is Appreciated)

From Father Matthew

Dear Father John, Presvytera Maria, Parish Council, Ministry Leaders, and all my Beloved Parishioners,

I am thankful to God, our Lord and Savior, for these blessed four years here at St. John the Baptist Church. It has been such a monumental, memorable, and exciting time for me and for my family. First and foremost I would like to commend the entire parish – and specifically those who were at the Parish Assembly four years ago – for having the wisdom to bring on a second priest. This is a large and vibrant parish, which can only be served well by having two full-time clergy to minister to the faithful.



Thank you, Father John, for teaching me how to be a priest and a servant of Christ. Your humble, patient, and forgiving example has guided me these four years, and will continue to guide me as I embark upon the next stage. You are a mentor and a brother. Special mentors in my time here have been our beloved senior priests, Father Paul and Father Dean (of blessed memory), who have imparted the wisdom of decades in the priesthood, as well as His Grace Bishop Ilia.

Thank you to the Parish Council and especially Gus Flangas, George Bochanis, and John Fotopoulos, the presidents during my time here. You are witnesses of the Orthodox Christian Faith and wise leaders. I have learned a great deal about the “nuts and bolts” of parish administration from our many (and long!) meetings together.

Thank you to the many ministry leaders who have made my job manageable. You all bring your gifts and talents to the benefit of our parish. Especially I thank those ministry chairs who worked closely with me in the youth and young adult ministries.

Thank you to all who make our liturgical services so magnificent: The Altar Servers, the Chanters, the Choir and Youth Choir members, the Ushers, and our beloved Guy Monroe.

Thank you to those of you who came to the Thursday Morning Study. It was a special blessing to study the Bible and *The Life in Christ* with each of you, discussing how they relate to our own lives.



Thank you, Karen, for your tireless work in the Church Office, filling in our gaps and making everything run more smoothly. We could not manage this parish as well without you. Likewise our parish facilities would not be in such good condition without the tireless work of Constantin Petriuc and Ramona Tasios. Thank you.

There are many more whom I wish to thank, and the list grows quite long because this parish is filled with so many true servants of Christ. Many of you have been helpful to me and my family,

offering assistance, guidance, love, care, and babysitting! :) We thank all of you and will continue to pray for you as we head to Oregon.

We are sad to go. But we know that God provides all things. May He bless you and bless this beloved parish.

Together with Presvytera Annie and our children, I thank God for all of you!

Father Matthew



From Deacon Seraphim Ramos



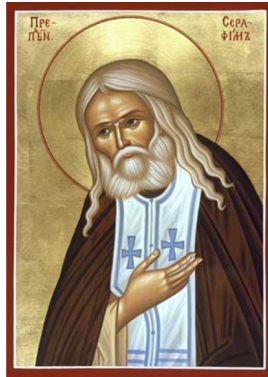
Seven years is a long time to prepare for something. I thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for allowing me to attend both our Hellenic College, and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology for such a long time in very formative years in my life. However long seven years of preparation may have been, when I came to Las Vegas it was impressed upon me immediately just how much work, time, prayer, and love have gone on in this community long before I was here – and long before I was even born – to arrive at what it now is today. When I first saw the Church, immediately I felt in my heart the weight of so many untold hours, tears, and dollars that have gone into the exquisite facilities and Church family you have here. To beautify the house of the Living God, and to transform the hard barren desert into a beautiful oasis of people filled with Christ's peace, joy, forgiveness, and love: There are few things better on this good earth. When we live such a life in Christ, filled with the kindness, gentleness, and patience of the Holy Spirit, our Orthodox Church really is heaven on earth!

The steady leadership and clear-sighted vision of Father John Hondros for the last fifteen years has built upon the foundation of Bishop Ilia Katre, a man whom you knew as parish priest and spiritual father. I will by God's grace be stepping into the (really) large shoes of your beloved second priest, Father Matthew Swehla who once more has allowed me to feel the weight of an immense burden and a feeling of no small guiltiness. Hours and hours of Father Matthew's time have selflessly been spent meticulously creating events while updating the youth directories and recording dates of events, people's attendance, etc. You cannot even imagine what I saw in his office as he took me through the files he has prepared for every one of the ministries under his excellent care.

Finally, I take this time of both graduation and ordination to reflect on where I came from, what happened to me those seven years at the only Greek Orthodox Seminary in America? How did I come to this moment: being sent as a deacon of the Church of the Living God to a town in the desert! Thoughts flood my mind and deep emotion enters my heart as I leave the place of my spiritual and intellectual birth. I hope we have all had people of one capacity or another (usually at first our parents) that love us so much their love "calls us into being" as it were. They see a quality or a virtue in us that is completely imperceptible to our own sight and yet because they believe so much in us – that we are better than we are – we end up becoming the real person that has the good they saw when we felt our life was just average or a mess. These people are gifts from God and really my parents and siblings, my wife and daughter, the mentors, professors, fellow seminarians, and my spiritual father, these the only reason I can stand in front of God just like Isaiah. He saw the heavenly vision of the seraphim and heard the voice of God saying, "*Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?*" I too say like the prophet Isaiah, and Samuel, Moses and Abraham who all responded to the call of God and said: "*Here I am. Send me!*" (Isaiah 6:8)

I feel that in my life I have experienced the beauty of transformation in the Orthodox Church. Who else celebrates the life of someone like St. Mary of Egypt?! If God who is so loving and merciful as to act and change her life so much that we now kiss her as an image of heavenly and divine beauty – so too can God change my and your life. "*What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?*" (Psalm 116:12) Having received such a beautiful experience of the Church, having received the gift of life and the love of God, I the newly-ordained deacon of Christ, Seraphim, my wife Diakonissa Olenka, and even our daughter Ivanna are ready to commit ourselves, each other, and our whole life to Christ our God, and will serve you with open hearts in the love of the Gospel, and the joy of the Resurrection!

In Christ, Deacon Seraphim Ramos



By the grace of God and through the
Apostolic Tradition of the laying on of hands,
His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco
will ordain the servant of God

Deacon Seraphim Ramos

to the Holy Priesthood

Sunday, June 18, 2017

“Father’s” Day

8:45 am Orthros

10:00 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

Ordination Luncheon follows in Panos Hall

Free-Will Offering (\$20 per person suggested)

Saint John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

5300 South El Camino Road

Las Vegas, Nevada

Congratulations, Graduates!

High School Graduates

Mary Beth Bruninga

Mary Beth, daughter of William and Erin Bruninga, is graduating from Nevada State High school with a President's List Award for Academics. Marybeth plans to be a dentist and will start with a major in Biology at Grand Canyon University. She received the University Dean's List Scholarship for her academic achievements in High School.

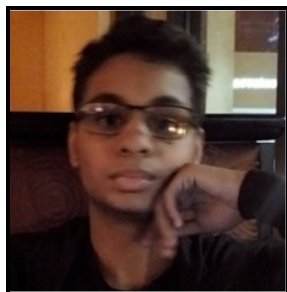


Dina Ciulla

Dina, daughter of Anthony and Kleri Ciulla, is graduating from Faith Lutheran High School with honors and is also a graduate of the Faith Lutheran Honors Institute. Throughout high school, Dina was involved in Varsity Tennis, National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Key Club, Social Norms, and DECA. Dina was the co-chair for One Drop and an Ambassador for the Junior Diabetes Research Foundation. She will be attending University of Nevada Las Vegas Honors College in the fall, planning to major in Business-Finance.

Reagan Eyler

Reagan, daughter of John and Lisa Eyler, is graduating from Tabor Academy in Marion, MA. Reagan will be receiving a Naval Honors Certificate. She has been on the sailing team for four years and a varsity sailor for the last two years, and is the volleyball captain. This spring she enjoyed sailing in Bermuda with the school team. This fall Reagan will attend Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. She plans to study Communications and Public Relations.

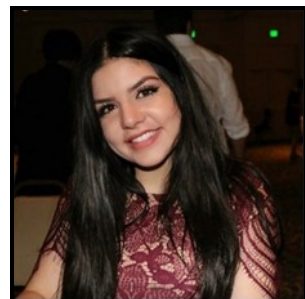


Nicolas Hardge

Nicolas, son of Dion and Zoe Hardge, is graduating from Odyssey Charter School. He is enrolled at the College of Southern Nevada with a major in Biology. His long term goal is to be a Veterinary Doctor.

Katerina Kane

Katerina, daughter of Larry and Irene Kane, is graduating from Coronado High School with an Advanced Honors Diploma. She will be attending University of Nevada Reno in the fall and her major is Kinesiology with a minor in Psychology.



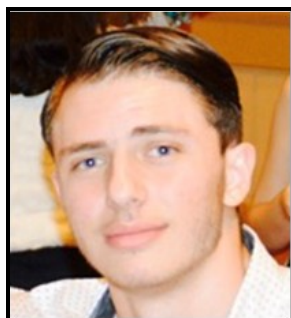
Sophia Leventis

Sophia, daughter of Nick and Christina Leventis, is graduating from Coronado High School with High Honors and an Advanced Honors Diploma. She will attend the University of Arizona this fall and will major in Pre-Law Studies.

Class of 2017!

Kyriacos Philippou

Kyriacos, son of Demetrios and Luanne Philippou, is graduating from Northwest Career and Technical Academy where he is part of the Engineering and Design program. He will graduate with an Advanced Diploma with High Honors. He plans to attend UNLV in the fall where he will continue his education in Engineering.

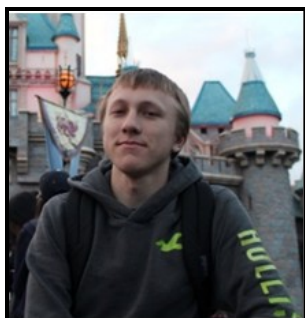
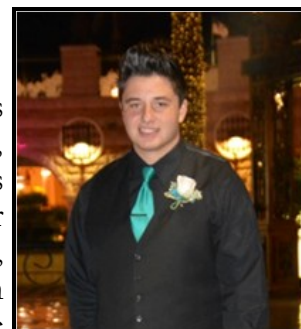


Demitri Pouridis

Demitri, Son of Kouli and Para Pouridis, is graduating from West Career and Technical Academy with an Advance Honors Diploma. During his time at West Tech, Demitri has specialized and received several certifications in the Information Technology and Business field including: IC3, Comp TIA A+, and CTE Consortium of States certifications. Demitri has been involved in the St. John's community from a young age and has devoted lots of time to: Youth Choir, GOYA, Church School, Greek Folk Dance, and Greek Language School. As a student Athlete, Demitri has played Lacrosse for local and travel teams for five years. He made an elite travel team for two consecutive years, taking him to places like San Diego, CA and Denver, CO. In the fall, Demitri will be attending the University of Nevada Las Vegas and plans to major in Business Administration with a minor in Finance or Marketing.

Nikolas Pouridis

Nikolas, son of Kouli and Para Pouridis, is graduating and receiving his diploma from West Career and Technical Academy. During his time at West Tech, he has studied and performed the practices of Economics, Marketing, and Business Management. Just like his twin brother, he has been involved in extracurricular Church activities such as: Altar Server, GOYA, Church School, Greek Folk Dance, Greek Language School, and Youth Choir. He has played Lacrosse for seven years on local and travel teams. His senior season was restricted due to an ACL tear he suffered during a semi-final game during his junior year. In the fall, Nikolas will be attending the College of Southern Nevada. He then plans to take his education to the University of Nevada Las Vegas to master in Hospitality Management. His love for Greek and country music keeps us all entertained!



Michael Sorkin

Michael Sorkin, son of Olga Sorkin Willey, is graduating from Advanced Technologies Academy with an Advanced Honors Diploma. He plans to attend the Carroll School of Management at Boston College next fall.

Maria Tafoya

Maria, daughter of Liza LaMancusa, will graduate from Spring Valley High School with an Advanced Honors Diploma. Maria was active on Student Council and in GOYA at St. John Church. In the fall, she will attend University of Nevada Las Vegas and pursue a degree in Nutrition specializing in Dietetics.



Congratulations, Graduates!

Christopher Zimmerman

Christopher, son of Paul and Angela Collins Zimmerman, is graduating with an Advanced Honors Diploma from Spring Valley High School. Christopher is a four year varsity letter winner, three year captain of the Spring Valley Tennis Team and recipient of the Spring Valley Athletic Scholarship. He represented Spring Valley at the National Student Council Leadership Conference. Christopher has served as an Acolyte at St. John the Baptist Church for ten years and participated in the Folk Dance ministry, Youth Choir, Church School and Greek Food Festival. Christopher will attend the University of Nevada Reno in the fall and plans to major in Business with a minor in Entrepreneurship.



Justina Failla

Justina, daughter of John and Jennifer Failla, is graduating from South Forsyth High School in Georgia. She plans to return to Las Vegas and attend UNLV and major in Biochemistry.

College Graduates

Lindsey Flangas

Lindsey Nicole Flangas, daughter of Gary and Amanda Flangas and granddaughter of Bill and Marilyn Flangas, graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering. Lindsey will be moving to Seattle, WA this summer, where she will be working for Boeing in their research and technology department.



Maritza Kelesis

Maritza Helena Kelesis, daughter of George P. Kelesis and Sandra Robelledo, granddaughter of the late Peter and Dina Kelesis, will graduate from UCLA with a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology, Immunology and Molecular Genetics. This summer she will be going to Greece along with her cousin Eugenia Mylordos and Aunt Paula Kelesis, and upon returning she will apply for medical schools.

Theofania Mavrantonis

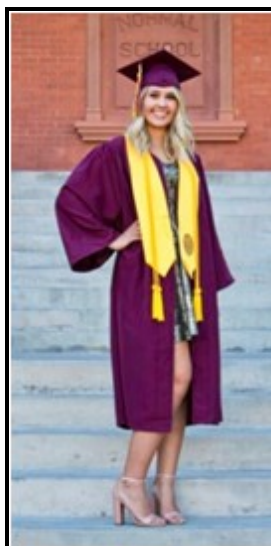
Theofania, daughter of Stacy and Kiki Mavrantonis, will graduate from University of Nevada Las Vegas with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. After graduation, she will be starting her Masters of Science degree in Psychology. Then she plans to pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology with the hopes of becoming a Biomedical Researcher and Psychologist.



Class of 2017!

Talia Orlando Curtis

Talia Curtis (Orlando), daughter of Alleck and Jennifer Orlando, graduated Magna Cum Laude from Arizona State University in December 2016. Talia earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Family and Human Development, as well as a certificate in Child Life. She will remain in Gilbert, AZ as she continues to work toward her Board Certification as a Child Life Specialist. She currently works providing behavior therapy and support to children. Talia remains active in the Greek Orthodox Church as part of the Young Adult Orthodox Forum, a counselor at All Saints Camp AZ, and a Youth Leader for the Phoenix area GOYA. She is enjoying being newly married, and looking forward to a mission trip with Project Mexico. Talia wishes to thank her family and friends in the St. John Church for their continued love and prayers.



Stewardship and Community Outreach

Sitting down to write this article I feel excited anticipation of the changes that will rapidly be coming our way!

First, we must say "farewell" to Father Matthew, Presvytera Annie, and their beloved children. Then immediately "welcome" to Deacon Seraphim Ramos and his young, vibrant family. May our "farewell" not be with sadness (even though we will miss them terribly) but instead may it be with joy for what the future holds in Oregon for Father Matthew and the Swehla crew! The Stewardship and Community Outreach Committee joins with all of the St. John the Baptist community in wishing the warmest of hopes and prayers for the Swehlas in their new parish home!



With that being said, as Faithful Stewards of Christ's Holy Orthodox Church, we should find comfort in the fact that our faithful works have helped grow the community under the loving guidance of our dedicated spiritual fathers, and alongside their families.

As we continue this very important holy endeavor and welcome Deacon Seraphim Ramos, his wife Olenka and their adorable daughter Ivanna – may it be blessed that we take our Stewardship commitments to heights that soar sky-high as we live the Faith together and strive to truly make Christ the center of our lives!

With Love in Him, Justina Szukiewicz,
on behalf of the Stewardship and Outreach Committee

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God." (1 John 4:7)

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

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frjohn@vegasgreekorthodox.com

Rev. Father Matthew Swehla
frmatthew@vegasgreekorthodox.com

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Catering & Events

Constantin Petriuc & Ramona Tasios
Maintenance & Grounds

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Parish Council: Gus Flangas

Philoptochos: Vicky Palivos

Stewardship & Community Outreach:
Justina Szukiewicz

Choir: Athena Mertes

Chanters & Youth Choir:
Presvytera Maria Hondros

Church School: Eileen Koutsulis

Altar Servers: Alex & Eric Szukiewicz

GOYA:

Kouli Pouridis & June Likourinou

Orthodox Family Fellowship:
Jelena Boskovic & Amy Khuri

Moms & Tots:
Cassie Bieker

Young Adults:
Nicholas Asim

Greek Folk Dance: Sia Dalacas

Greek School: Paula Kelesis

Mr. & Mrs.:

Fr. John, Fr. Seraphim & Presvyteres

Kali Parea: Demetrious Asim

Adult Basketball: George Chomakos

Forerunners: Marie & Gary Setian

Orthodox Bookstore:
Constantine Frangakis

Greek Food Festival: Gus Flangas

Hellenic Historical Society:
Cheryl Pandelis and Susan Stamis

Bill Andrews Library: Susan Stamis

Photography: Bill Bruninga

Youth and Family Ministries

Church School

What a wonderful school year we have had! Commencement as always was great and quite energetic. I love to see how much our students have grown in the faith. Congratulations to our soon-to-be high school graduates, whom we honored at our Commencement. We are so proud of them and pray that whatever path they choose, they are happy and continue to grow in their faith.

We had an amazing Lenten collection for "Mochas for Missions," for the benefit of our mission parishes in the Metropolis of San Francisco. Thanks to your generosity, our children collected \$925.07!

Thank you to the advisors and parents of GOYA and OFF for arranging our end-of-the-year party. The students (and adults) appreciated the food. A special thank you to the Ladies Philoptochos for sponsoring the pizza. I would like to say thank you to everyone who helped our ministry this year: Teachers, substitute



Our Graduates!



Our Church School and Greek School Teachers

teachers, parents, Presvytera Maria, Father John, Father Matthew, and Karen. We could not run this large ministry without your support.

A special thank you to Father Matthew, who will be leaving us this month to head off to another St. John the Baptist Church in Beaverton, Oregon. He will always have a special place in our hearts since he had a special connection with the youth in our community. We will miss you and your lovely family. May God grant you all the blessings you deserve.

I am happy to announce that *all* of our teachers will be returning in the fall! Our first day of class will be *Sunday, August 20*. Please keep an eye out for the registration form in the August issue of *The Desert Messenger*.

See you all during the summer! With love in Christ,

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

Youth Choir News



The Youth Choir did a fantastic job chanting from the Chanter's Stand on Mothers Day. Beautiful voices!

We will take a break for the summer months. By the time we return again in September, we hope and pray that we can be back in our regular spot in the right front excedra with new icons behind us!

We want to wish Father Matthew, Presvytera Annie and their children all the best for their new assignment at St. John the Baptist Church in Beaverton, Oregon. In turn, we welcome Deacon Seraphim Ramos and his family here to Las Vegas!

Have a wonderful and restful summer!

With Love, Presvytera Maria

GOYA ~ For Teenagers

Happy end-of-the-school-year! And congratulations to our graduates - we had a bumper crop! The Church School Graduation Party on May 21 was a whole lot of fun, though it was tough to say good-bye to Father Matthew and his family. We will miss them.

For June, we will escape the hot weather with a picnic on Mt. Charleston! Join us for the annual *Parish Picnic on Mt. Charleston, on Saturday, June 10, starting at 11:00 am.*

Please bring a dish to share. You can also bring sports equipment (Frisbees, balls, etc.) and hiking clothes. And jackets are recommended just in case.

The picnic will take place on Mt. Charleston, in Lee Canyon, Foxtail Group Picnic Area, "Butterfly" Site. Take 95 North from Las Vegas. About 15 minutes outside of town, turn left on "NV 156 / Lee Canyon." (*Do not take NV 157.*) Drive 16.0 miles to a roundabout. Foxtail Group Picnic Area is to the LEFT. Tell the gate attendant you're here for the St. John Church group, then drive to the "Butterfly" site. Have fun!

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

Orthodox Family Fellowship

What a fun party we had after Church School Commencement! Thank you to everyone who helped make it happen. And thank you to Father Matthew for your time here at St. John Church. May God bless your move to Beaverton.

For June, we will escape the hot weather with a picnic on Mt. Charleston! Join us for the annual *Parish Picnic on Mt. Charleston, on Saturday, June 10, starting at 11:00 am.*

Please bring a dish to share. You can also bring sports equipment (Frisbees, balls, etc.) and hiking clothes. And jackets are recommended just in case.

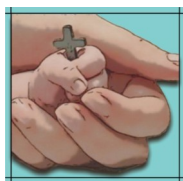
The picnic will take place on Mt. Charleston, in Lee Canyon, Foxtail Group Picnic Area, "Butterfly" Site. Take 95 North from Las Vegas. About 15 minutes outside of town, turn left on "NV 156 / Lee Canyon." (*Do not take NV 157.*) Drive 16.0 miles to a roundabout. Foxtail Group Picnic Area is to the LEFT. Tell the gate attendant you're here for the St. John Church group, then drive to the "Butterfly" site.

We hope to see all of you there!

In Christ, Amy Khuri and Jelena Boskovic, OFF Advisors



Moms & Tots



"It's good to hear the children crying in Church." – Father John, at the end of Liturgy one Sunday.

Our Church is growing; and we are reminded of this when we hear the coos, cries, and little laughs during Church services. It is a joy and a blessing. It is also a bit sad that a few less cries and laughs will be heard as our beloved Father Matthew and Presvytera Annie and their family depart from St. John Church to serve in Oregon. They will most certainly be missed!

To continue this beautiful ministry that our beloved Presvytera Annie created, I urge you and your little ones to continue to come to our monthly gatherings and make Moms & Tots blossom into the vision which she had: To connect moms and young children in the Church, to grow and to love our Orthodox Faith and establish forever friendships with each other and with God.

Our next date is *Tuesday, June 13 at 10:30 am in Kokkos Hall.* Snacks or drinks are greatly appreciated.

Thank you and God bless.

In Christ, Cassie Bieker

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." (1 John 4:11)

Hot Sun? Cool Down!

Come to the
Parish-Wide Potluck Picnic
@ Mt. Charleston
Saturday, June 10
Starting at 11:00 am

Everyone is invited!

Join us as we escape the heat in Vegas and soak up the cooler temperatures among the pine trees.

Please bring a main dish or side dish to share and enjoy a communal picnic – then go hiking, exploring, or just relaxing!

Carpooling is encouraged! And jackets are recommended, just in case.

[FYI, cell phones don't work in Lee Canyon.]

DIRECTIONS TO: Lee Canyon, Foxtail Group Picnic Area, "Butterfly" Site

- Take 95 North from Las Vegas
- About 15 minutes outside of town, turn left on "NV 156 / Lee Canyon"
- Drive 16.0 miles to Foxtail Group Picnic Area, on LEFT at roundabout
- Drive to the "Butterfly" site

For mapping programs use one of these addresses: "Forest Road 106, Las Vegas, NV 89124" or "NF-106, Las Vegas, NV 89124."

QUESTIONS? Call or e-mail Father Seraphim.

Church School and Greek School Commencement



Photos by Bill Bruninga

Greek Folk Dance

We will start back up with Greek Folk Dance beginning in mid-August 2017, with preparations for the Greek Food Festival that takes place in mid-September. Please look for registration forms in the July and August edition of *The Desert Messenger* as well as further information on the practice schedule. Registration is open to all children, age 4 and up.

On behalf of the entire Folk Dance Ministry, we want to thank Father Matthew for all his spiritual guidance, patience and commitment to the success of this Ministry over the last several years. He will truly be missed! We wish Father Matthew and his family all the best as they begin their new journey in Oregon.

Sia Dalacas of the Greek Folk Dance Board

Greek Language Classes



We had a wonderful school year for Greek Language School and a fun picnic celebration on May 31. We will start back up in September, and are looking for teachers. Please contact me at (702) 249-4740 if you are interested in teaching.

Paula Kelesis, Greek School Director

Notes from the Choir Loft



Please mark your calendars for the following very important rehearsals: *Sunday, June 11 after Liturgy and Wednesday, June 14 at 6:00 pm.* We will be rehearsing music for the *Hierarchical Liturgy Ordination on Sunday, June 18.*

The Choir would like to wish Father Matthew, Presvytera Annie and family safe travels and continued success in your new parish. We will miss you very much and appreciate all you have done for us!

Athena Mertes, Director



Adult Study with Father John:

*A Spiritual Psalter
or Reflections on God by
St. Ephraim the Syrian
(Available in the Bookstore)*

*Wednesdays 7:00 - 8:30 pm
in Kokkos Hall*

Orthodox Bookstore

This month we feature *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, a collection from the 4th Century.

Isidore of Pelusia: "Prize the virtues and do not be the slave of glory; for the former are immortal, while the latter soon fades."

Paul the Barber: The same Abbas Paul and Timothy, the Barbers, were troubled by the brethren at Scetis. Timothy said to his brother, "Why do we follow this trade? They do not let us live in peace the whole day long." But Abba Paul replied, "The peace of the night is enough for us if our thoughts are watchful."

Abba Ammonas: Abba Ammonas was asked, "What is the 'narrow and hard way?'" "The narrow and hard way is this, to control your thoughts, and to strip yourself of your own will, for the sake of God. This is also the meaning of the sentence, 'Lo, we have left everything and followed You.'"

Until next month, God willing, ICXC NIKA, Constantine



2017 Stewardship Report (as of 5/12/17)

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$311,914 (\$400,948 total in 2016)

Stewardship Gifts Received: \$164,877

Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$147,036

Stewardship Families Pledged: 344 (443 total in 2016)

Average Pledge to Date: \$907 (\$905 in 2016)

Adult and Young Adult Ministries

Young Adults

Please join us for a night of great fellowship the Young Adults gathering at Rahel's house on **Saturday, June 24 at 7:00 pm.** The Young Adults would like to thank the Koutsulis family for another great gathering this past month!

On behalf of the Young Adults, we will miss you very much, Father Matthew. Thank you for showing and teaching us many things we will never forget. We wish you the best of luck on your new journeys in life with your beautiful family up in Oregon! We would like to welcome Father Seraphim to our St. John community: The Young Adults look forward to getting to know you!

In Christ, Niko Asim, Young Adult Advisor

Mr. & Mrs. - A Couples Fellowship

Thank you to Bob and Cheryl Fischer for hosting a wonderful dinner at their home. We had a full house, with lots of couples represented.

In June, Tom and Kitty Gott will be hosting the M&Ms dinner. Please join us on **Sunday, June 25 at 6:00 pm.** Bring your significant other and a dish to share. Please RSVP with the Gotts.

In Christ, Father John, Father Seraphim, and Presvyteres



Kali Parea - "Good Company" for the 40+ Crowd

We had a nice evening at my home in May. Looking forward, we have two big milestone luncheons in June: Father Matthew's Farewell Luncheon is on **Sunday, June 4.** We will definitely miss him and his family. **On Sunday, June 18** Deacon Seraphim Ramos will be Ordained to the Priesthood by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos; a luncheon will follow to honor our new priest. Kali Parea will come together as a group and help with these luncheons in any way we can.

Demetrious Asim, Kali Parea Advisor

Forerunners - The Seniors of St. John the Baptist

Happy Birthday to Marie Setian!

If you had not been able to attend our last two events, you missed big time. Our movie day at The Orleans was great. *The Promise* was an excellent movie, we were all moved by the events depicted, and it was sad as well.

Our everlasting thanks to Sam, our Super Chef, and to Harry and Mike who so ably assisted for a super lunch last month. We were also entertained by Teddy Kaye with his music – Thank You for closing our program that day with the famous "New York, New York."

We pray that all of you enjoy your summer until we meet again in October. In the meantime, a reminder: Do not forget to volunteer to help at our Greek Food Festival – **September 15, 16 and 17.**

Our prayers and thoughts always to all our shut-ins.

The Forerunners would like to say "So Long" to Father Matthew, Presvytera Annie, Dimas, Débora, Thomas, Peter, Nicholas and Baby Joseph. On **Sunday, June 4** we will bid Farewell to this wonderful family that we have all grown to love, and wish them the best of everything in their new parish assignment in Beaverton, Oregon. May our good Lord bless them, and may their new parish of St. John the Baptist love them as much as we have loved them.

Love in Christ, Victoria Xikis, for the Forerunners – the Seniors of St. John the Baptist

"By this we know we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His own Spirit." (1 John 4:13)

Our Community Registry

Baptized into Christ: Na mas zisi!

Jason Lovaas (Adult Baptism) on May 13, 2017.
Godparent: Paisios Pursell.

Elizabeth (Alis) Dokakis (Adult Baptism) on May 13, 2017.
Godparent: Stacy Lendaris-Weeks.

Ariani (Aria), daughter of Anton and Athena Pitts, on May 20, 2017.
Godparents: Zachary and Chrysoula Christopoulos.

Marriage: Na zisete!

Micah Bernier and Alissa Losser on April 29, 2017. Koumbaros: Joel Bernier.

Fallen Asleep in the Lord: Eternal Memory!

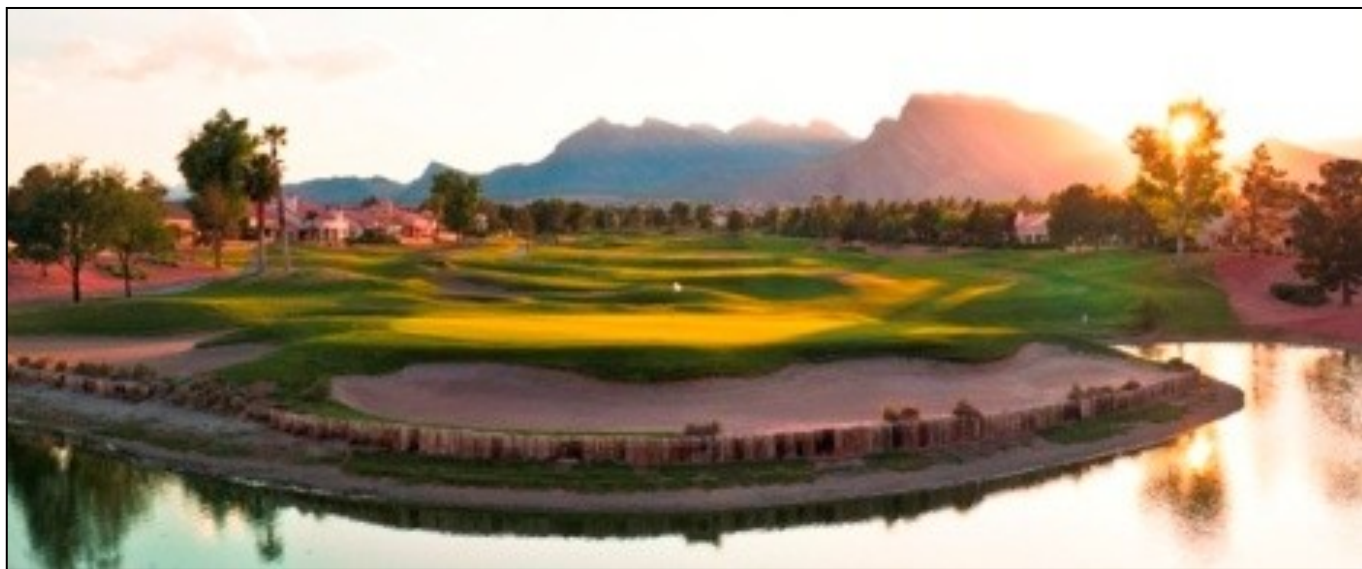
Marika Coroneos on April 25, 2017. Funeral on May 5.

Anastasios Kouris on April 26, 2017. Funeral on May 2.

Nick Dalacas on May 15, 2017. Funeral on May 23.

*"Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and every one who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments."
(1 John 5:1-2)*

AHEPA CHAPTER 314 GOLF TOURNAMENT SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 24, 2017



*The Tournament will be held at the PALMS in Summerlin.
Golf Package - \$125: Green Fees, Lunch and Ticket for Raffle.
Shotgun Start at 7:30 am.*

*We are also looking for hole sponsors, donations and prizes.
For information on registration, sponsorships and donations please contact:
Jimmy Philippou (734) 260-4643 or Jim Liaos (702) 449-6716.*

"I know My own and My own know Me." (John 10:14)

Adamy, Marina	Costas, Charles and Louise	Gousdovas, Nikos	Leonis, Tishe
Anastasakis, Mark and Elaine	Costuros, George and Marsha	Grillas, Roula	Leventis, Naomi
Anastasiou, Andrew and Kathleen	Cosulas, Fr. Basil and Presv. Samantha	Gruber, Ernest and Zoe	Liaos, Jim and Tina
Andrews, Catherine	Cotsilis, Jenny	Gutierrez, Connie	Liaos, Steve and Francine
Andrews, Chris and Pamela	Coutris, Angela	Hadzoglon, Christos and Barbara	Liaos, William and Irene
Andricopoulos, Margo	Crescenti, Stephen and Katherine	Hall, Elizabeth	Likourinou, Steve and June
Anthony, Stavros and Bernadette	Crist, Adam and Kanistra	Hamilton, Mary	Litsos, Nicholas and Catherine
Anton, Mike and Carol	Dalacas, Dimitri and Athanasia	Hamilton, Paul and Brandi	Little, Martin and Kaytia, Patricia
Arcamuzi, Georgia	Dalacas, Eugenia +	Harrison, Angie and	Lymberopoulos, Mary
Aristides, George and Diana	Dalacas, Nick + and Georgia	Schildmeyer, Christine	Maddox, Thomas and Maria
Asim, Demetrious	Daskalos, George and Carrie	Hayes, Tulla	Malamatos, Kindina
Asim, Nicholas	Daskalos, George and Voula	Henneforth, Rula	Maland, Tim and Donna
Austgen, Harold Max	Delalis, Dina	Hetzel, David and Joanne	Malpee, Mack and Kalliope
Balaouras, Panos and Helen	DeMangus, Joanne	Hoadrea, Jimmy and Monci	Maniatakos, Ted and Maria
Balason, Anna	Demetriou, Demetrios and Bessie	Hondros, Christina	Manos, Constantine and Michele
Baldwin, Richard and Vivi	Demolas, Maria and Nour, Reza	Hondros, Christopher	Mansour, Muna
Balodimas, James	Demoleas, Spero and Grace	Hondros, Fr. John and Presv. Maria	Manteris, Arthur and Sue
Barbarino, Demetra	Demoleas, Stephanie	Hoover, Patrick and Pauline	Margaretis, John and Lucila
Bartzos, Sam and Eugenia	Demopoulos, Vasiliki	Houlis, Ila and Debbie	Mavrantonis, Stacy and Kiki
Bather, Crissie	Diamantis, Filippas	Howard, William and Willie	Mavrantonis, Theofania
Bauck, Jeremy and Amy	Dimitri, Patricia and Martha	Hristopoulou, Spiridoula	Mavroidis, Demetrios and Debra
Beeler, Mike and Carolyn	Dominguez, Eric and Amalia	Ignadiou, Marios	Mavros, Michael+ and Debbie
Beeman, Karl, Sr. and Benita	Dornin, Christopher and Marcella	Iteen, Robert and Sophia	Mavroudis, Frank and Vess, Olga
Beeman, Karl, Jr. and Ivana	Doskas, Athanasios and Anastasia	Kachikis, Paul and Ernestine	McClain, Gavin and Jaymee
Berendji, Jim and Vivian	Doukakis, Panagiotis and Chrisi	Kakavulias, Christina	McManus, Jeanette
Bernier, Micah and Alissa	Dounis, Dina	Kakavulias, George and Helen	McKinney, Michael and Mersene
Berta, Irene	Dounis, Georgia	Kakavulias, John and Elizabeth	McSweeney, Farolyn
Bieker, Adam and Cassie	Dounis, Kiki	Kambouris, Litsa	Melton, Donald and Susan
Bieker, Georgea	Dramitinos, Mary	Kanis, Constantinos and Katie	Minas, Arthur and Ewa
Birtas, Helen and Ann	Earl, Christine Michaelides	Kanis, Georgios	Moffett, Todd and Eliopoulos, Tina
Bochanis, George and Enid	Eliades, Artemisa	Kaptain, Catherine	Monoyudis, Jim and Julie
Bratta, Georgene	Eliades, Harry and Agapi	Karalias, Petros and Constance	Moore, Brenda
Brilis, George and Satoko	Eliakis, John	Karas, John and Marcie	Mulopulos, George and Jenny
Britten, Ronald and Carol	Eliakis, Peter and Glenda	Karris, Mark and Suzanne	Myers, Stella
Brown, Faye	Eliakis, Varthie and LeeAnn	Katopodis, Efstratios	Neocleous, Plato
Bruninga, Bill and Erin	Exarhos, Sharon	Katris, Nick	Nestlebusch, Marissa
Bucy, Brent and Elaine	Eyler, John and Elizabeth	Katsaros, Thomas and Sharon	Newell, Eric and Devona
Cahill, Irene	Eyler, Fr. Paul and Presv. Ilean	Katsikakis, Evangelos	Newell, Ronald and Maria
Camel, Joseph	Farren, Anthony and Maritsa	Kelesis, Paula	Nicholas, John and Estella
Campbell, Theodore and Cheryl	Filios, Spiridon and Eleni	Kiflezgi, Rahel	Nichols, George and Tereza
Capre, Julio and Betty	Fischer, Bob and Cheryl	Kimball, Sarah	Nikitas, Rigas and Aphrodite
Carabas, Stephen and Linda	Fitzgerald, Norman and McCullen, Sandra	Kinard, Panorea	Nikolopoulos, Nick and Dimitra
Carabas, Thymios and Sotiroulla	Flangas, Bill and Marilyn	Kleanthis, George and Zanetta	Nixon, John and Ellyn
Carahalios, John and Jillian	Flangas, Gus and Tamara	Koliambas, Eleni	Olmsted, Travis and Marilyn
Caredis, Jon and Marjorie	Fleetwood, Thomas and Melissa	Kostopoulos, Georgia	Ostis, Sotirios
Carrico, William and Alexandra	Flores, Michael	Kotonias, Patricia	Pahigiannis, Nikon
Carter, Maria	Foster, Kyle and Maria	Kountanis, Pat	Paikos, Thomas and Elizabeth
Cero, Dean	Fotopoulos, John and Barbara	Kourlos, Georgia	Palivos, Peter and Vicky
Chachas, Bessie	Frangakis, Christos and Anastasia	Koutsulis, John and Eileen	Pallis, Paul
Chachas, James	Frangakis, Constantine	Koutsulis, Sam and Effie	Pandelis, Cheryl
Chagares, Kiki	Frangakis, John	Kratky, Frank and Constance	Panos, William and Jeanne
Chandrinis, Alexia	Frangakis, Sophocles	Kunard, Derek	Papas, Peter and Rita
Chanos, George	Funk, Helen	Kypreos, Peter and Geri	Papas, Christian and Nicole
Chanos, Jennifer	Garza, Evarardo and Eliades, Eleni	Kyprianou, Gilbert and Alexis	Pappas, Antonia
Chomakos, Dean and Tammy	George, Pete and Georgia	Kyriannis, Justin and Linda	Pappas, Constantine and Karina
Chomakos, George and Nikki	Georgoulakis, Mary Ellen	Lagomarsino, Victor and Sophia	Pappas, Spiro and Libby
Chondrakis, Dimos	Gialketsis, Barbara	Lakis, Antoinette	Pappas, Rita
Christian, Clair and Chloe	Giouzelis, Anastasia	Lamancusa, Lisa	Patrick, Ernest
Christou, Andreas and Toni	Goltsos, Andreas and Sofia	Lambros, Kyriakos and Maria	Payan, Luis and Eleni
Ciulla, Anthony and Kleri	Goodman, Linda	Latelle, Penny	Pelletier, Michael
Collins, David	Gott, C. Thomas and Kitty	Lazarakis, John and Panagiota	Pendleton, Patricia
Cominos, Ted		Lekar, Caroline	Pentogenis, Katherine
Conger, William and Alexia		Lekar, Michael and Effie	Peredera, Maria
Costacos, John		Leonis, Nick and Sophia	Petro, Aleko and Georgia
			Petrou, James and Penelopi

Please contact the Church Office or a Parish Council Member for a Pledge Card!

Pierro, Joe and Rhonda
 Pierro, Joseph and Christine
 Pitts, Anton and Athena
 Platis, Anna
 Plentzas, Spiros + and Ruth
 Polimerou, Angeline
 Politis, Pantelis and Dimitra
 Poulos, Christine
 Pouridis, Kouli and Para
 Powers, Russell and Rebecca
 Prokopis, Ritsa +
 Punsalan, Basil and Sophie
 Pursell, Robert and Mary
 Radosta, Athena
 Raptis, Fr. Dean+ and
 Presv. Evonne
 Rifakes, John
 Rigas, Evie
 Rihani, Gary and Linda
 Robison, Diane and Patricia
 Rodis, Dimitri
 Rodis, Sophia
 Rosenthal, Joseph and Stephanie

Rotas, Beatrice
 Rouvas, John and Keri
 Rudolph, Brandon
 Ruffner, Skip and Kathy
 Salon, Nicholas and Janelle
 Santamaria, Jennifer
 Savvas, Savva
 Setian, Gary and Marie
 Simpson, Brian and
 Zacharias, Julie
 Sinclair, Bill
 Skalkotos, Nikolas and Georgia
 Skarlatos, Nick
 Smith, Kathleen
 Snow, Adrienne
 Snow, Clifford and Christina
 Snowden, Robert and Niki
 Sparangis, Spyro and Helen
 Sparkuhl, Alex and Antoinette
 Stamatakos, Christine
 Staubs, Douglas and Anastasia
 Stavropoulos, Bessie
 Stavropoulos, Terry and Niki

Stefanatos, Michael and Tami
 Stenos, Louis
 Stransky, Mark and Jack
 Swehla, Fr. Matthew and
 Presv. Annie
 Szukiewicz, Joseph and Jennia
 Szukiewicz, Joseph
 Tafoya, Steven and Irene
 Takas, Andrea
 Tasios, Ramona and Pete
 Thompson, Maggy
 Thompson, Steve and Aliki
 Touroutoglou, Nikolaos
 Tsarouhas, Maria
 Tsois, Christos and Panagioula
 Tsois, Panagiote
 Turman, Lucas and Maria
 Tzortzis, Maria
 Vafiadis, Victoria
 Vervilos, James and Anna
 Vlahos, Thomas and Demas, Rita
 Vreeland, Chandler
 Wadlow, Nicholas and Pamela

Wallace, Robert and Katerina
 Walter, Vernon and Alice
 Waterhouse, David and Aleighzja
 Weisman, Diane
 Wheeler, Charles and Alyce
 Wilcox, Thalia
 Wilkerson, Chuck and Kristina
 Williams, Anthony and Anna
 Wilson, Steven and Cleo
 Wixom, Penelope
 Wolfenbarger, Joy
 Womack, Karl
 Womack, Kimberly
 Wood, Nadine
 Wronski, Chuck
 Xerogianes, Nick and Nikki
 Xikis, Victoria
 Zaferatos, Ted
 Zarkos, Nick and Dina
 Zarras, Nick and Chery
 Zimmerman, Paul and Angela

GOD BLESS OUR FAITHFUL STEWARDS!

Church Account Summaries ~ April 2017

Nevada State Bank Accounts	March	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	April	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
General Operating Account (GOA)	\$25,716.05	\$67,578.89	\$30,897.61	\$24,895.71	\$45,667.56	\$53,629.28	
Community and Education (C&E)	\$9,139.54	\$16,390.00	\$2,812.50	\$6,824.53	\$8,015.03	\$13,502.48	
Greek Food Festival (GFF)	\$13,659.32	\$95.00	\$800.00	\$61.88	\$2,425.34	\$12,067.10	
Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)	\$316,858.32	\$4,900.00	\$1,551.00	\$6,243.13	\$3,188.07	\$313,878.12	
Folk Dance Group	\$9,767.44	\$291.00		\$57.90		\$10,000.54	
Mortgage Account	\$31,294.92				\$5,201.14	\$26,093.78	
Designated Funds	March	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	April	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Bookstore	\$6,061.07		\$976.00		\$37.72	\$6,999.35	
Ornaments	\$1,077.41					\$1,077.41	
Restricted Funds	March	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	April	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
ICON	\$264,001.40	\$4,400.00	\$575.00		\$113.98	\$268,862.42	Merchant Fees
Library Account	\$1,470.77					\$1,470.77	Account owed \$21,000. Funds used to make payroll and pay bills in 2015
Giving Tree	\$3,450.91					\$3,450.91	
Building Fund	\$37,065.83			\$6,243.13	\$3,036.37	\$27,786.33	2nd Utility Cart, Install Security Gate, Staff
Youth Choir	\$2,569.82	\$500.00				\$3,069.82	Nikolaos Touroutoglou Donation
Church School	\$1,206.37					\$1,206.37	
Misc. D & R Deductions	-\$535.26					-\$535.26	
Altar Servers	\$440.00					\$440.00	
GOYA	\$50.00					\$50.00	
Designated, Restricted, and Other Total	\$316,858.32	\$4,900.00	\$1,551.00	\$6,243.13	\$3,188.07	\$313,878.12	
Other Funds	March	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	April	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Kokkos Scholarship Fund	\$55,859.07		\$2,310.77			\$58,169.84	Change in Value of Investments



JUNE 2017 ~ IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

					1 Welcome, Fr. Seraphim and Family!	2	3 Saturday of Souls 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy & Memorial
4 Holy Pentecost 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy & Kneeling Vespers Fr. Matthew's Farewell Luncheon	5 Monday of the Holy Spirit 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy	6	7 7:00 pm Adult Study	8	9	10 11:00 am Parish Picnic at Mt. Charleston	17
11 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Adult Choir Practice Follows Liturgy	12	13 10:30 am Moms & Tots in Kokkos Hall 6:00 pm Parish Council Meeting	14 6:00 pm Adult Choir Practice in Choir Loft 7:00 pm Adult Study	15	16		
18 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Hierarchical Liturgy & Ordination of Fr. Seraphim Ramos Ordination Luncheon	19	20	21 7:00 pm Adult Study	22	23	24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm Young Adults at Rahel Kiflezgi's Home	
25 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 12:00 pm Church School Teachers Meeting 6:00 pm Mr. & Mrs. at the Gotts	26	27	28 5:00 pm Orthros 6:00 pm Divine Liturgy (Ss. Peter and Paul) 7:30 pm Adult Study	29 Ss. Peter and Paul (Liturgy on June 28)	30 Synaxis of the 12 Holy Apostles 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

*“For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me.”
(1 Corinthians 4:14-16)*

Please join us on Sunday, June 4, as we bid farewell to our beloved Father Matthew. And then again on Sunday, June 18 for the Ordination to the Holy Priesthood of Deacon Seraphim Ramos by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos.

