

The Desert



Messenger

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

Volume 16, Issue 7 St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church, Las Vegas, NV July/August 2018

From Father John

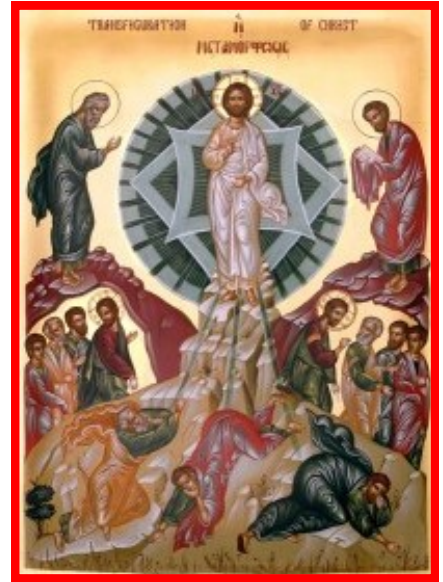
Beloved in Christ:

While you and I are looking to get away from the desert to cool off, we should think about how our Lord Jesus Christ journeyed by foot with His Disciples through the hot desert terrain of Palestine in the summer – donning robes and sandals, without the convenience of a vehicle or air conditioning or a vacation spot (other than under the shade of a tree) to beat the heat. Even in the midst of our Vegas summer, we take for granted our modern conveniences!

On **August 6**, the Orthodox Church commemorates an awesome event, when our Lord climbed up a mountain with three Disciples, but it was not simply to “cool off” (after all, it was in late winter) – rather His intent was to show them Who He was, is, and always shall be: *“Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart. And He was transfigured before them, and His Face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light. And behold there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with Him. . . (and) lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a Voice from the cloud said, ‘This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased; listen to Him.’” (Matthew 17:1-5)* This amazing revelation, which caused these Disciples to fall on their faces in awe, occurred forty days before Christ suffered His Crucifixion – and thus liturgically, the Feast of the Transfiguration is commemorated forty days before the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross (**September 14**). What was our Lord trying to teach His Disciples – and all of us – with His Transfiguration?

Why did Jesus select these three Disciples? St. John Chrysostom says that Peter, James and John “were superior to the rest”: Peter loved the Lord exceedingly (even after he denied Him three times, he genuinely repented and became chief among the Apostles, along with Paul); John was loved exceedingly by Him (he remained with Christ even by the Cross, where the Lord entrusted His Mother, the Theotokos, to him); and James showed his willingness to “drink the cup” of suffering by both his testimony and works. Similarly, Christ loves each of us exceedingly – indeed, He died and rose for the life of the world! He continuously reveals Himself to us in prayer, Holy Scripture, the worship of the Church and especially in the Holy Mysteries. Do we reciprocate this love by an active life in His Church, by doing our part in carrying out its mission, through genuine repentance, and faithfulness in all circumstances, even in our trials?

Why did our Lord appear on Mount Tabor with the Holy Prophets Moses and Elias (Elijah)? Although Christ was accused by the “Temple Elite” (Pharisees, Sadducees and Sanhedrin) of transgressing the Law and blaspheming by declaring that He is the Son God, His Transfiguration shows that these accusations sprang from envy, as St. John Chrysostom writes. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Law (which He gave) and the teachings and writings of the Prophets – moreover, to prove He has power over death and life, in the words of St. John, “He brings forward both him who had died (Moses), and him who never yet suffered this (Elias).”



(Continued on Page 3)

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

JULY

Sunday, July 1/*5th Sunday of Matthew/
Ss. Cosmas and Damian the Unmercenary Healers*

Orthros: Tone Four

Resurrection Gospel (Orthros): Luke 24:13-35

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

Gospel: Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1

Sunday, July 8/*6th Sunday of Matthew/
St. Prokopios the Great Martyr/*

St. Theophilos the Myrrhbearer of Mt. Athos

Orthros: Tone Five (First Plagal)

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

Epistle: Romans 12:6-14

Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8

Thursday, July 12/*St. Paisios the Athonite
8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy*

Epistle: Galatians 5:22-26; 6:1-2

Gospel: Luke 6:17-23

Sunday, July 15/*Holy Fathers of the Fourth
Ecumenical Council/Holy Martyrs Julitta and
Kyriscos (His Relics are in our Holy Altar)*

Orthros: Tone Six (Second Plagal)

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

Epistle: Titus 3:8-15

Gospel: Matthew 5:14-19

Friday, July 20/*Prophet Elias*

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

Epistle: James 5:10-20

Gospel: Luke 4:22-30

Sunday, July 22/*8th Sunday of Matthew/St. Mary
Magdalene, the Myrrh-Bearer and Equal to the
Apostles/St. Markella of Chios, the Virgin-Martyr*

Orthros: Tone Seven (Grave)

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22

Thursday, July 26/*Holy Martyr Paraskevi
8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy*

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

Gospel: Mark 5:24-34

*"For you are all one in Christ Jesus."
(Galatians 3:28)*

Friday, July 27/*Great Martyr and Healer
Panteleimon (His Relics are in our Holy Altar)
8:00 am Orthros - 9:00 am Divine Liturgy and
Artoclasia (Lekar/Eliades Family)*

Epistle: 2 Timothy 2:1-10

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

Sunday, July 29/*9th Sunday of Matthew/
Ss. Kallinikos, Theodote and their Children*

Orthros: Tone Eight (Fourth Plagal)

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:9-17

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-34

AUGUST

Dormition Fast August 1-14

Wednesday, August 1

6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos

Friday, August 3

6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos

Sunday, August 5/*10th Sunday of Matthew/
Forefeast of the Transfiguration/
Holy Martyr Eusygnius of Antioch*

Orthros: Tone One

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:9-16

Gospel: Matthew 17:14-23

Monday, August 6/*Holy Transfiguration of Our
Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*

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

Epistle: 2 Peter 1:10-19

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Blessing of the Grapes

Wednesday, August 8

6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos

Friday, August 10

6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos

Sunday, August 12/*11th Sunday of Matthew/
Holy Martyrs Photios and Aniketos of Nicomedia*

Orthros: Tone Two

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

WORSHIP SCHEDULE (Continued from Page 2)

Monday, August 13

6:00 pm *Paraklesis to the Theotokos*

Tuesday, August 14

6:00 pm *Great Vespers of the Dormition*

Wednesday, August 15/*Dormition of the Theotokos*

8:00 am *Orthros* - 9:00 am *Divine Liturgy and Artoclasia (Papass and Kakavulias Families)*

Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11

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

Fellowship hosted by Philoptochos

Sunday, August 19/*12th Sunday of Matthew/*

St. Andrew and the 2,593 Soldiers with Him/

Ss. Timothy, Agapios and Thekla

Orthros: Tone Three

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Gospel: Matthew 19:16-26

Panigyri tis Panagias (Dormition Luncheon)

Sunday, August 26/*13th Sunday of Matthew/*

Ss. Adrian, Natalia and 33 Companions/

St. Joseph the Righteous

Orthros: Tone Four

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

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 16:13-24

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42

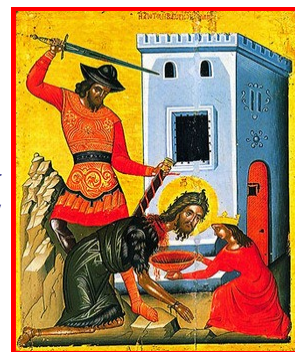
Wednesday, August 29/*Beheading of St. John the Baptist (Strict Fast)*

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

Epistle: Acts 13:25-32

Gospel: Mark 6:14-30

*"But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's suffering, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed."
(1 Peter 4:13)*



From Father John (Continued from Page 1)

Finally, what is the significance of the bright cloud and the Voice heard by the Disciples? Both the cloud and the Voice represent an "epiphany" – that is, a manifestation or revelation of God the Father. Since the days of the ancient Israelites, a cloud – usually dark – has been associated with the Presence of God, as when He spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai. In this instance, however, the cloud was bright: St. John Chrysostom observes that when God "threatens, He shows a dark cloud . . . so here, because it was His desire not to alarm, but to teach, it is a bright cloud." At the Transfiguration, God the Father gives assurance – to the Disciples and to the faithful of every generation – that Christ is His "*beloved Son*" and then follows with a command to "*listen to Him.*" At the heart of the mystical event of our Savior's Transfiguration is the holy call for each of us – who are under the cloud of His grace – to remain faithful to Christ . . . to seek out His will daily in our life . . . and to love, serve and glorify Him as the only True God.

With love in Christ,

Father John



Mount Tabor

P.S. We will be journeying to Mount Tabor during the Holy Land Pilgrimage November 28 through December 11, 2018 – please join us!

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

JULY 1

Ushers: Gus Flangas, Mike Beeler, Bessie Stavropoulos, George Bochanis, Demetrious Asim and John Nicholas

Memorial: William Markham (10 years)

Fellowship: The Kakavulias Family, in memory of Maria - Proceeds to benefit the Mortgage Fund

JULY 8

Ushers: Demetrious Asim, John Nicholas, John Matsis, Mark Karris, Justina Szukiewicz and John Koutsulis

Fellowship: Young Adults

JULY 15

Ushers: Adam Bieker, George Bochanis, Gus Flangas, Bessie Stavropoulos, John Nicholas and Mike Beeler

Fellowship: Pan-Arcadians

JULY 22

Ushers: Justina Szukiewicz, Mike Beeler, John Koutsulis, Adam Bieker, Mark Karris and John Matsis

Memorial: Alexandra Pappas (1 year)

Fellowship: Farolyn McSweeney and Jennifer Santamaria in honor of their Name Days

JULY 29

Ushers: John Nicholas, Demetrious Asim, Justina Szukiewicz, John Koutsulis, Demetrious Asim and George Bochanis

Fellowship: Pan-Cretans

AUGUST 5

Ushers: Gus Flangas, Mike Beeler, Mark Karris, Stacy Mavrantonis, Bessie Stavropoulos and John Koutsulis

Fellowship: Kali Parea

AUGUST 12

Ushers: Justina Szukiewicz, George Bochanis, John Matsis, John Nicholas, Demetrious Asim and Mark Karris

Fellowship: GOYA

AUGUST 19

Ushers: John Koutsulis, Adam Bieker, Bessie Stavropoulos, Mike Beeler, Gus Flangas and Stacy Mavrantonis

Fellowship: Panigyri tis Panagias Luncheon

AUGUST 26

Ushers: Stacy Mavrantonis, John Matsis, Demetrious Asim, Justina Szukiewicz, Mark Karris and George Bochanis

Fellowship: Sons of Pericles



Adult Study with Father John

The Acts of the Apostles

Resumes Wednesday, August 1

and meets Every Wednesday (except August 15)

7:00 - 8:30 pm in Kokkos Hall - Bring Your Bibles (RSV Preferred)



Panigyri tis Panagias

Celebration for the Dormition of the Theotokos

*Come Celebrate the Feast!
Greek DJ and Dancing!*

*Sunday, August 19
following
Divine Liturgy
in Panos Hall*

\$20 per Person

(\$200 per 10-Person Table)

*Purchase your tickets from
a Parish Council Member
or the Church Office.*



Greek Salad

*Chicken or Pork Souvlaki
with Tzatziki*

Rice Pilaf and Briami

Garlic Bread

Cake

Wine-Beer-Soda Cash Bar

Stewardship and Community Outreach

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Glory be to God for all things. The heart of summer is upon us and many will be traveling by land, sea, or air to wonderful places. Some to see the natural wonders of this world, others to see family and friends, and some to do both. During these summer months, many of us tend to put our thoughts and considerations for the Church on the back burner. When we return, we can rest assured our beautiful Parish will still be here in Las Vegas, serving the Holy Mysteries and caring for our spiritual needs.

As we anticipate the summer months, we look forward to our vacations. We feel we have worked long and hard all year long so that we may be able to enjoy these travels. However, we need to remember that everything we have comes from God, even our very life. As St. James says, *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” (1:17)* In this passage, St. James is encouraging believers in Christ to acknowledge this truth: God gave us every single good thing in our lives. He is the source of all the good we have and all the good we crave.

The question now becomes: Why does God, “the Father of lights,” bestow upon us the many gifts and blessings we have? He does this out of love for us and waits patiently to see if we will reciprocate His love. How do we reciprocate His love, you may ask? St. John of Kronstadt explains: “Love for God begins to manifest itself, and to act in us, when we begin to love our neighbor as ourselves, and not to spare ourselves or anything belonging to us for him, as he is the image of God: *‘For he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, how can he love God, whom he has not seen?’ (1 John:4:20)*” There are many ways to demonstrate our love for our neighbor. This includes doing works of charity by feeding the hungry, giving drink to those in need, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and those who are in prison. *(Matthew 25:35-36)* It also includes returning a portion (a tenth) of our God given time, talents, and treasures to the Church. Rest assured, by doing so we will be blessed in this life and in the life to come.

Our Parish Council and the Stewardship and Outreach Committee wish everyone a safe and blessed summer. We pray everyone returns safe and sound and remembers the importance of returning our love to God and showing our love for our neighbor by sustaining the financial needs of our Parish through our Stewardship. As the Lord spoke through the Prophet Malachi:

“Will a man insult God? Yet you have insulted Me! But you say, in what way have we insulted You? You kept back your tithes and offerings. You most certainly turned your backs on Me . . . you insulted Me.” (3:8-9)

While the concept of tithing was codified in Jewish Law, handed down to Moses, it actually began with Abram (Abraham): Upon returning from rescuing his nephew Lot, Abram was greeted by Melchizedek, the King of Salem and high priest of the God, who brought out bread and wine to him. Melchizedek blessed Abram, who in turn gave him a tithe of all his goods. *(Genesis 14:18-20)* Just as Abram was blessed by God for his righteousness, we too will be blessed when we lovingly give to God, our neighbor and our Parish a tenth of our time, talents, and treasures.

Let us all return from our summer vacations and remember to love one another as the Lord loves us. And let us strive to reach out and help one another as the Lord would have us do.

In Christ, St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church Stewardship and Outreach Committee



**2018 Stewardship
Report
(as of 6/17/18)**

Stewardship Gifts Pledged: \$330,956
Stewardship Gifts Received: \$205,564
Unfulfilled Pledge Balance: \$125,392
Stewardship Families Pledged: 359
Average Pledge to Date: \$922

Parish Council Report

While the summer vacation season is upon us, everything appears quieter in our community, but there is a flurry of activity taking place during this calm before the storm that is our annual Greek Food Festival.

Please keep an eye on your emails and bulletins as the time is coming for the food preparation and, as always, many volunteer hands are needed to roll the thousands of dolmathes, prepare the hundreds of trays of pastitsio, and bake the countless pastries that are such popular and beloved items at our Festival. We need new blood, so come and learn from the veteran cooks and bakers who work tirelessly every year to help ensure that we have plenty of great food to serve to what we are predicting will be record crowds this year.

As always, the pre-sales are vital to funding the Festival, as the expenses to put on our event are great. So please, if you have not already done so, pick up your coupon books to sell or give as presents, and of course, the raffle tickets are available at the early bird pricing of 3 for \$250. The grand prize is the choice of \$25,000 cash, a Mercedes, a Harley Davidson or a Sport Boat. A cruise will be given away as well as over 30 prizes worth more than the cost of a ticket. If everyone in the community participates in pre-sales, this will go a long way in ensuring a successful event. You can stay on top of events leading up to the Festival on Facebook by entering @lvgreekfest in the search bar.

The Parish Council is working diligently to ensure the safety of our Church and community. We have received three legitimate bids for up to date video surveillance systems that will monitor the Church, Community Center, and all of the grounds. This will be a significant investment but is imperative for the safety of our parishioners. While Stewardship is addressed elsewhere in *The Desert Messenger*, I must remind you that the summer inevitably means lower cash flow via Stewardship and contributions: In order to pay the bills this month, money had to be taken from the Festival and C&E accounts. With this impending investment in our security on the horizon, it is imperative that we make and pay our Stewardship Pledges and remember all that the Church does for us.

In the ongoing issue of the Iconography, to review, the Church has been required to apply for 501(c)(3) nonprofit status from the IRS, even though we are under the umbrella of the Archdiocese. That being said, the law firm that is working with us on this issue has now informed us that it will be November before we can receive this designation, at which time we can re-file with Immigration to bring the Iconographers back. While this is taking considerably longer than we ever thought, we have been given hope that this process is moving forward.

Please join us on *Sunday, August 19* for our annual Panagias Luncheon that will be held after Liturgy. Parish Council member John Koutsulis is chairing this event and he promises some great food and fellowship, so keep an eye out for details (see Page 5).

John Matsis, Parish Council Vice President

"When one is following the will of God, no insurmountable obstacles will stand in the way." - St. Leo of Optina

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Constantin Petriuc & Ramona Tasios
Maintenance & Grounds

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

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www.vegasgreekorthodox.com

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

Young Adults:
Nicholas Asim & Elizabeth Arbuiso

Greek Folk Dance: Sia Dalacas

Greek School: Paula Kelesis

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

Kali Parea: Demetrious Asim

Adult Basketball:
George Karvounidis

Forerunners:
Vicki Xikis & Faye Brown

Orthodox Bookstore:
Constantine Frangakis,
Paisios & Mary Pursell

Greek Food Festival: Gus Flangas

Hellenic Historical Society:
Cheryl Pandelis and Susan Stamis

Photography: Bill Bruninga

Philoptochos News

Dearest Members of Philoptochos,

I hope you are enjoying your summer and staying cool. Please mark your calendars for the following upcoming events.



• *The Dormition of our Most Holy Theotokos – Wednesday, August 15:* Women are needed to help with the Fellowship after Liturgy. Please contact Benita at (702) 885-6217 or bgbeeman@cox.net.

• *Greek Food Festival – September 14 – 16:* Our annual and biggest event of the year is very much anticipated and our Philoptochos will once again have a booth, greeting and welcoming the many thousands of guests who will be arriving to experience our Greek hospitality. To volunteer a few hours of your time, please contact our chairwomen, Jennifer Chanos at (702) 371-1786 or jlchanos@gmail.com, or Alis Dokakis (415) 378-2192 or alis.dokakis@gmail.com.

• *National Hellenic Society Heritage Weekend and Classic at the Four Seasons Hotel, Las Vegas – October 4 – 7:* The National Hellenic Society's focus is on the promotion of Hellenic Heritage and the furtherance of Hellenic ideas through the sponsorship of scientific educational programs. For more info, please visit www.nationalhellenicsociety.org.

• *Philoptochos Membership:* We are still in the Philoptochos membership enrollment period, so once again I appeal to you: If you have never been a member, please become a new member, or renew your stewardship. All ladies and gentlemen are invited to join our wonderful organization for the support of our charities.

With Love in Christ, Vicky Palivos, Philoptochos President

Greek Food Festival Baking Dates:

Friday, July 6 & Saturday, July 7: Dolmathes

Friday, July 13 & Saturday, July 14: Pastitsio

Saturday, August 25: Bougatsa

Tuesday, September 11: Pasta Flora

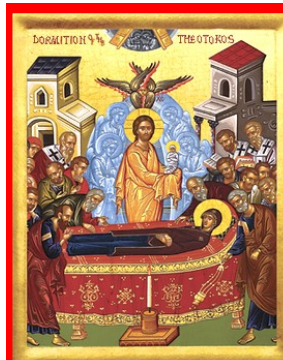


Greek Food Festival: September 14, 15 & 16

Your Stewardship of Time is Encouraged!

Greek Food Festival Souvenir Magazine Ads

We are now taking ads for the Souvenir Magazine! If you own a business or know of someone who does, please contact us. You can also place an ad in memory of a loved one, to acknowledge a milestone or anniversary, or to congratulate the 46th Annual Greek Food Festival. Registration forms are available at the Church Office, or with Marilyn Flangas (702) 277-6773.



*Most Holy
Theotokos,
Save Us!*

From Father Seraphim

I had no idea what coming to Las Vegas would be like when His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos called me on March 1, 2017 – during my final semester at our seminary – and told me I would be coming here to Southern Nevada. I would like to be open and honest and say that both Presvytera Olenka and I (and our children especially!) have truly felt the embrace of Christian *agape* from this Community of St. John the Baptist. We look back and think about all the beautiful moments we have shared with you the past twelve months.

Beginning with my ordination last June 18 – which was an incredible outpouring of love from the luncheon, to gifts of vestments and an icon of St. Seraphim – I think about the heat of our first summer, learning to serve my first Divine Liturgies under His Grace Bishop Ilia in July, and then my first Las Vegas Greek Food Festival! From running with the torch to doing tours in the Church, and then seeing our dancers on the big screen and eating the wonderful food: My greatest reflection from the Festival was seeing just how many people gave so self-sacrificially of their time, expertise, and labor to come together and portray the unity of our Parish family.

We had the Parish Name Day Celebration early this year, and then our first son was born in January. Being so far from either of our families it was difficult at first, as is to be expected, but we received so much help and support from so many people. We were reminded that although our biological families live in different states, we have a new Church family that is real and alive and life-changing. Next came the holiest of seasons, the Lenten Fast and our communal journey to Holy Week and the Resurrection of Christ. I loved my first GOYA Overnight Retreat with many teenagers from our Parish and St. Paul Church; then came the annual visit of His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos for Palm Sunday, and my first Pascha before the Holy Altar.

Just a few weeks ago we celebrated the Holy Feast of Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit – the constant energy, fire, and Presence of God in the Church. Now here we are, right where I started, with my one-year anniversary to the Holy Priesthood. All I can say is thank you! We participate in each other's salvation, and no one is saved alone. We are all journeying together in this Holy Faith toward Christ and the Kingdom of God, which He opens to all who believe in Him and who struggle for it.

Every service for the past year was my first one as a priest, and from June 2017 to June 2018 Father John and I have celebrated 15 Weddings (my first wedding happened later on the very day I was ordained!), 24 Baptisms (including the baptism of my own son!), 6 Chrismations, and 19 Funerals (I even gave my first eulogy last July when Father John was away!). Bringing Communion to the sick and dying people of our community, learning from Father John about a true work ethic and the need to be ready at all times every day to respond to the needs of the faithful people of God entrusted to us to pray for and serve. We have built numerous relationships with people of all ages, which we now cherish.

My only sadness is that there are many indeed in the larger Greek Orthodox community here in Las Vegas who do not regularly attend the Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings and receive the Holy Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There are some – who either out of ignorance, forgetfulness, or laziness – do not come to the Sacrament of Holy Confession to receive the love of God and the forgiveness of their sins. Some parents do not pray with their children, read to them the lives of our saints, and show by their own example that Jesus Christ, the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Church come absolutely first in our lives. We are all together on the path of transformation, the path of repentance, the *“narrow path that leads to eternal life.” (Matthew 7:13)* So if we have become disconnected from the Church, which is a source of constant blessing, healing and miracles, let us once again commit ourselves, one another and *our whole life* to Christ our God. Note the wording: It is not merely, “Let us commit our lives to Christ . . .” Rather, it is *one shared life in Christ!* I will end with the words of St. Paul to the Christians in Corinth, which have become our words to this Community of St. John the Baptist: *“You are in our hearts to die and live with you.” (2 Corinthians 7:3)*

With Love in Christ,

Father Seraphim



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

2018-2019 CHURCH SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Please Write Legibly - Use One Form Per Child

Church School Classes Begin Sunday, September 9.
Pre-Kindergarten (4 years old by September 30) through High School

Student Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

School Grade (2018-2019 school year): _____

Special Needs, Allergies, Medications: _____
(e.g. "Autism Spectrum," "Peanuts," "Insulin Dependent")

Patron Saint and Date of Commemoration: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN OR OTHER RELATIVE (Relationship: _____)

Name: _____ Name: _____

Phone: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ E-mail: _____

Home Address: _____
Street City ZIP

Student Cell Phone: _____ Student E-mail: _____
If you DO NOT want your child to be contacted by phone/text or by e-mail, please leave one or both of these blank.

Please don't be a drop-off parent! Come to Divine Liturgy with your children, and remain on the grounds while they are in Church School. Teach by example! Thank you!

I give my child permission to take part in all Church School activities and
will support this ministry through my annual Stewardship.

Signed, Parent or Legal Guardian: _____

Many hands ease the load! Please let us know in which way you would like to help our children:

_____ Teaching _____ Snack _____ Crafts

***Please return this registration form to Karen at the Church Office during the week
or to Eileen Koutsulis, Church School Director, on Sundays before classes start.***

Youth and Family Ministries

Church School

Hi Everyone!

I hope you all are enjoying your summer break! Our first day of class will be on *Sunday, September 9*. Please register your children with me over the summer or with Karen in the Church Office during the week. You will find the enrollment form in this issue of *The Desert Messenger* (see Page 10). As always, to enroll in our Pre-K program, your child must be 4 years-old by September 30, or starting CCSD Kindergarten next year.

Caroline Lekar will not be returning as a teacher for the 2018-19 school year, but we want to thank her for her years of service with our program. We welcome our new teacher, Elizabeth Arbuiso.

Please don't be a drop-off parent! Come to Liturgy with your children, and remain on the grounds while they are in Church School. Teach by example! Thank you!

With Love in Christ,

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

Youth Choir News



Happy Summer!

We will be taking a break for July and August and will resume chanting the Liturgy in September. We are always looking for new voices to join our ranks!

Have a wonderful and safe summer. Please do not forget God during these months: Attend services, even if you are on vacation away from Las Vegas!

With Love in Christ, Presvytera Maria

Orthodox Family Fellowship

In June we had an amazing afternoon of fun and fellowship at Mount Charleston. The short forty-five minute drive away from the city allowed us to spend the time as one big family.

On *Sunday, July 1 at 1:00 pm* we will leave right from Church and go to Seaquest Aquarium inside the Boulevard Mall (3528 S. Maryland Pkwy., Las Vegas). We will view all the exhibits as a group and enjoy a nice afternoon together.

On *Sunday, August 12* we will have a Parish Family Swim Afternoon, *from 2:00 to 4:00 pm*, at Aquatic Springs (7025 S. Fort Apache Rd., Las Vegas). We purposely chose the day before the school starts to kick off the year in a fun, united manner. Last year's event at the same place was a huge success and we are anticipating another great event.

We look forward to seeing you over the summer!

In Christ, Amy Khuri and Jelena Boskovic



Greek Folk Dance

Hope everyone is enjoying their summer break! Registration for the 2018-2019 Greek Folk Dance Ministry is open! Registration forms are in this issue of *The Desert Messenger* (see Pages 13-14) and are also available at the Church Office.

Practice for *returning dancers* begins on *Sunday, August 19*, so that we may prepare for our Greek Food Festival performance. Practices for *all new dancers* will begin on *Sunday, September 23*. All children/teens/young adults are welcome! (Must be 4 years and older as of September 30, 2018.) No prior experience necessary! Any questions, please email stjohngreekdance@gmail.com.

Looking forward to another wonderful year!

The Folk Dance Board

GOYA ~ For Teenagers

We hope you are all enjoying the summer. We advisors met with Father Seraphim and discussed monthly events that will take the GOYAns on a path of spiritual enlightenment in our Orthodox Faith during the next school year.

We will have a break in July. Our first event in August will be a GOYA Fair and Fellowship on *Sunday, August 12* after Liturgy in Panos Hall. We will have signup sheets for parent volunteers.

Then to kick off the new school year, we will have the annual Photo Scavenger Hunt and Pool Party at Steve, June and Juliana Likourinou's Home on *Saturday, August 25 from 4:00 to 8:00 pm*. Meet us at the Likourinou's home, where we will divide into teams to drive around town on a photo scavenger hunt. First team back wins! After, we will swim in the Likourinou's pool and have dinner. Please remember to bring a swimsuit and towel!

RSVP and get directions with Father Seraphim: frseraphim@vegasgreekorthodox.com.

GOYA (Greek Orthodox Youth of America) is a ministry for teens 6th through 12th grades.

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

Greek Language Program



We raised \$2,000 at our recent Fellowship, thanks to everyone's generous donations, so we have the funds needed for the upcoming school year. We will be starting on *Tuesday, August 28*. During the summer, please come by the Church Office to pick up your registration form (also available on Page 20 of this issue). If you would like more information, please contact Paula Kelesis at (702) 249-4740.

We had 27 registered students last year and would love to expand it this year, but in order to do that we need teachers! If we do not have teachers for certain age groups we will not have classes for them. It is a 90 minute commitment once a week for enhancing a child's culture. Keep practicing Greek with your children this summer!

Paula Kelesis, Greek School Director

Our Community Registry

Baptized into Christ: Na Mas Zisi

Theodosios, son of Christopher Murray and Veneta George, on June 16, 2018.

Godparent: Elias Pete George.

Marriages: Na Zisete!

Georgios Sakkas and Vasiliki Bessie Stavropoulos on May 27, 2018.

Koumbara: Andrea Katotakis.

Joseph Sheetz and Joanne Koutromanos on June 9, 2018.

Koumbaros: Lazarus P. Koutromanos.

Sophocles Christos Frangakis and Tara Thekla Whaley on June 24, 2018.

Koumbaros: Justin Pechonis.

Fallen Asleep in the Lord: Eternal Memory!

Stefan Vesa on May 12, 2018. Funeral on May 25.

Dolores M. Hanna on May 25, 2018. Funeral on June 1.

Carnation Irene Tsonakas-Andary on June 2, 2018. Funeral on June 8.



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH GREEK FOLK DANCE MINISTRY

2018-2019 REGISTRATION FORM

One Registration Form Required for Each Dancer
Registration Deadline: September 23, 2018

Dancer's Name: _____ Age: _____ Birth Date: _____

Minimum Age: 4 years old by September 30, 2018

Address: _____

City: _____, Nevada Zip Code: _____

Mother's Name: _____ Father's Name: _____

Contact Information (Please fill out completely and legibly):

Phone Numbers: Mother's Cell: _____ Father's Cell: _____

Dancer's Cell: _____ Home: _____

If you DO NOT want your child to be contacted by text message, please check this box: ☐

Email Addresses: Mother: _____

Father: _____

Dancer (if applicable): _____

If you DO NOT want your child to be contacted by e-mail, please leave this blank.

I understand and accept the following requirements for participation in the Greek Folk Dance Ministry:

1. The dancer must be Baptized and Chrismated in the Orthodox Church. Proof of Baptism or Chrismation must be provided for each dancer (or previously verified by Fr. John).
2. The parent(s) must be Steward(s) of St. John Church for 2018 **before their child(ren) attend any dance practice** and Steward(s) for 2019 by January 1. **Please check one box:**
 - ☐ I am already a 2018 Steward. (This will be verified with the Church Office.)
 - ☐ I am attaching my Stewardship Commitment Card to this registration form.
3. The dancer must **on a regular basis participate** in Divine Liturgy on Sunday, throughout the year, and in Church School (if he or she is of age), **September through May**. Infrequent participation is a basis for removal from the program.

(Continued)

4. The dancer must arrive to practice on time and be respectful.
5. The dancer and parent(s) are expected to participate in all fundraising activities of the Greek Folk Dance Ministry.
6. Dancers who have excessive absences may be subject to removal from the program.
7. The Folk Dance Festival will take place in February, 2019 at a location TBA. The dancer and parent(s) must determine by October 31, 2018 if they will attend FDF. Dancers who elect not to go to FDF may only participate in dance practices through the end of December.
8. The dancer and parent(s) agree to meet all financial responsibilities assigned to the participants by the St. John Greek Folk Dance Ministry and the Folk Dance Festival (FDF).
9. Registration fees are:
 - a. Competitive Dance Groups: \$150 per dancer, or \$125 for each additional sibling, due by September 23. (No registrations will be accepted after this date.)
 - b. Liondaria (non-competitive) Dance Group: \$75. (Must be at least 4 years old by September 30.)
10. Registration can only be accepted when all of the following are turned in:
 - a. Registration form
 - b. Non-refundable registration fee
 - c. Proof of Baptism/Chrismation (unless verified by Fr. John)
 - d. Stewardship Commitment Card (unless verified by Church Office)
11. Dancers from previous years must re-register. Dancers are prohibited from practice until their registration is complete and until their parent(s) become Steward(s) for 2017.

First Folk Dance Practice for Returning Dancers: Sunday, August 19, 2018

First Folk Dance Practice for New Dancers: Sunday, September 23, 2018

For information on the St. John Greek Folk Dance Ministry, please contact the Folk Dance Board at stjohngreekdance@gmail.com or the Church at (702) 221-8245.

MAKE OUT CHECKS TO "ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH,"
WITH "FOLK DANCE GROUP" IN THE MEMO LINE.

Signature of Dancer

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Date

FOR DANCE BOARD USE:

Payment Received On: _____ Check #: _____ OR Cash: _____

Stewardship Card Received: _____ Proof of Baptism/Chrismation: _____

Adult and Young Adult Ministries

Young Adults

Hello, Young Adults!

Please join us for our potluck get-together on *Friday, July 13 at 6:00 pm* at the Chomakos' Home! Please come, bring your favorite dish to share, and plan on enjoying time with the Young Adults of St. John Church.

For August we will be meeting at the home of Thomas and Melissa Fleetwood on *August 18 at 6:00 pm* for a Mexican Fiesta!

Hope to see you all there for our two summer events!

In Christ, Niko Asim and Elizabeth Arbuiso, Advisors

Mr. & Mrs. - A Couples Fellowship

Dear M&M's,

We want to thank Demetri and Luanne Philippou for graciously hosting the June fellowship at their beautiful home. We will not be having a Mr. and Mrs. gathering in July.

We will reconvene at the home of Thomas and Kitty Gott on *Saturday, August 25 at 6:00 pm*. Have a wonderful summer!

Yours in Christ, Father John, Father Seraphim, and their Presvyteres



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

Summer is here! We had a wonderful evening under the stars at the Super Summer Theater – so much so that we are going back in July! Join us on *Saturday, July 14 at 8:00 pm* at Spring Mountain State Park (6375 Highway 159, Blue Diamond), where we will watch "She Loves Me." Please bring drinks and food to share, and your own blanket – or you can rent chairs at the theater area. General Admission is \$15 per person. You can purchase your tickets ahead of time at www.supersummertheaters.org or by contacting Demetri Asim at (702) 210-4056 as soon as possible.

For August, we will sit together as a group at the Panigyri tis Panagias on *Sunday, August 19*. Tickets are \$20 per person for a delicious meal, Greek DJ and dancing. Please see Demetri Asim for tickets. Hope to see you this summer!

Demetrious Asim, Advisor

Forerunners - The Seniors of St. John the Baptist



Thank you, Marie and Gary Setian, for your many years of service to our Senior Forerunners. The Thank You Luncheon for Marie and Gary on June 4 was delightful. Our Master Chef Sam outdid himself.

For the month of July we will be doing a Movie Day at The Orleans. Mark your calendars for *Tuesday, July 24 at 1:30 pm*. We will see *Mama Mia! Here We Go Again* for a *2:20 pm showing*. Please make your reservations by calling Vicki at (702) 419-5294 or Faye at (702) 363-3094. All reservations should be in by *Saturday, July 21*. The Orleans offers a Cafe, a Food Court and a Buffet. Cost for the buffet is \$9.99 if you present their rewards card.

For those off on summer vacations, have fun: *Kalo Kalokairi* to all.

As always, our thoughts and prayers are with those who are homebound, in hospitals or other facilities.

Love in Christ, Victoria Xikis, Forerunners Co-Chair

"For freedom Christ has set us free." (Galatians 5:1)

Notes from the Choir Loft



This year's Church Music Conference will be held at the Parish of St. Spyridon in San Diego, California on **August 24 – 26**. If you are interested in attending, or would like more information, please let me know!

Although the Choir will not be formally singing the Divine Liturgy during the month of July, if you wish to chant please feel free to join me at the chanter's stand or in the choir loft. The Choir will resume singing the Sunday Liturgies on **Sunday, August 5**. Enjoy some summer relaxation!

Athena Mertes, Choir Director

Orthodox Bookstore

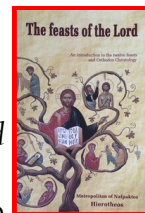
Greetings from the Bookstore!

For the summer we are featuring *The Feasts of the Lord: An Introduction to the Twelve Feasts and Orthodox Christology* by Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos.

"Christ is the King of the new Israel of the grace of God. But His rule has nothing to do with a worldly glory and outlook. His rule is a kingdom of love and humility. Christ does not come to Jerusalem and into history like other kings and leaders, He is no harsh evil-doer accompanied by guards and spear men, nor has He a following of rapacious soldiers who demand from people taxes, labours and services which injure and degrade. Christ's banner is humility, poverty and inferiority (St. Gregory Palamas)."

Come by the Bookstore – we have great books for summer reading.

Until September, God willing, ICXC NIKA, Constantine Frangakis, Bookstore Director



Church Account Summaries ~ May 2018

Nevada State Bank Accounts	April	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	May	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
General Operating Account (GOA)	\$35,897.13	\$44,870.02	\$15,340.33	\$17,203.33	\$47,055.54	\$31,848.61	
Community and Education (C&E)	\$3,960.34	\$6,000.00		\$2,000.00		\$7,960.34	
Greek Food Festival (GFF)	\$40,191.07	\$2,150.00	\$1,875.00	\$4,497.50		\$39,718.57	
Designated, Restricted & Other (DR&O)	\$327,407.59	\$3,036.00			\$1,154.42	\$329,289.17	
Folk Dance Group	\$14,088.68					\$14,088.68	
Mortgage Account	\$26,131.24				\$5,201.14	\$20,930.10	
Designated Funds	April	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	May	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Bookstore	\$16,708.45	\$1,111.00				\$17,819.45	
Ornaments	\$1,077.41					\$1,077.41	
Restricted Funds	April	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	May	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
ICON	\$273,932.96	\$1,925.00				\$275,857.96	
Library Account	\$1,470.77					\$1,470.77	Account owed \$21,000. Funds used to make payroll and pay bills in 2015
Giving Tree	\$5,450.91					\$5,450.91	
Building Fund	\$4,436.16				\$1,154.42	\$3,281.74	Air Conditioning Repairs, Replacements
Youth Choir	\$3,069.82					\$3,069.82	
Church School	\$1,306.37					\$1,306.37	
Three Priests	\$20,000.00					\$20,000.00	Arthur Minas
Misc. D & R Deductions	-\$535.26					-\$535.26	
Altar Servers	\$440.00					\$440.00	
GOYA	\$50.00					\$50.00	
Designated, Restricted, and Other Total	\$307,407.59	\$3,036.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,154.42	\$329,289.17	
Other Funds	April	Deposits	Transfers In	Withdraws/ Checks	Transfers Out	May	Notes
	Ending Balance					Ending Balance	
Kokkos Scholarship Fund	\$58,169.84					\$58,169.84	



Please join us on *Tuesday, July 10 at 7:00 pm* in the Library for an Open Forum Discussion: If you are interested in being part of a Pan-Hellenic Committee for Las Vegas, please attend this meeting. We will be discussing the Hellenic Community and creating a forum for open discussion and community involvement. All are welcome!

We will also be discussing the upcoming AHEPA Golf Tournament and OXI Day events. Please contact Kouli Pouridis at pouridis5@embarqmail.com or (702) 604-0885 with questions.

Adult Basketball



Join us for a pick-up basketball game every *Tuesday at 7:00 pm in Panos Hall*. Please call *George Karvounidis at (702) 339-8955* to be added to the basketball email list.

*"Bear one another's burdens,
and so fulfill the law of Christ."
(Galatians 6:2)*

LAS VEGAS AHEPA CHAPTER 314 2nd ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2018



The Tournament will be held at the Palm Valley in Summerlin

Golf Package-\$125: Green Fees, Lunch, Ticket for Raffle

Shotgun Start at 1:00 pm

We are also looking for hole sponsors, donations and prizes

Please pick up a registration form outside the Church Office or Karen can email you the form to register, sponsor or donate

For additional information please contact:

Jimmy Philippou (734) 260-4643

Jim Liaos (702) 449-6716

It's Like
Taking a Trip
to **Greece**
Without Leaving
Las Vegas!

46th Annual Las Vegas

GREEK

FOOD
FESTIVAL



3 EXCITING DAYS

Fri, Sept. 14th, 3PM-11PM
Sat, Sept. 15th, Noon-11PM
Sun, Sept. 16th, Noon-10PM

A FAMILY ORIENTED FUN EVENT!

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\$25,000 Cash
or choice of

Mercedes Sedan



Harley Davidson



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Many More Great Prizes

- Live Music & Dancing
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- Greek Pastries
- Tour Our Magnificent Byzantine Church
- Greek Folk Dance Performances
- Kids Fun Zone



Plenty of free parking.
Convenient
Uber/Lyft drop-off.



Early Bird Specials

August 19th Drawing, **\$1,000 Cash Prize**

Packets of 3 Tickets \$250

Available until Aug. 19th or while supply lasts

2018 Las Vegas Greek Food Festival Raffle Prizes

Only 1,000 Tickets Available \$100 Each



GRAND PRIZE **\$25,000** Cash or YOUR choice of **Mercedes Sedan, Harley Davidson or Sport Boat**



1st **\$2,500** Cash or 7 day cruise for two to the Mexican Riviera



2nd **\$1,000** Cash or weekend for two in San Diego



3rd Ski Weekend for two in Big Bear, CA

4th Golf Weekend for two at Casa Blanca Resort in Mesquite

5th Nascar Tickets from the Las Vegas Speedway

6th Two night stay in a Venetian Luxury Suite with private gondola ride



7th Two night stay in a Palazzo Luxury Suite with private gondola ride

8th & 9th Large 4K HDMI Smart TVs

10th \$300 Gift Card to the Smith Center



Plus At least 30 additional top prizes to be won!

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GREEK LANGUAGE REGISTRATION FORM 2018-2019

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

Beginning Tuesday, August 28, 2018 through May 2019

Classes sponsored by the Pan-Arcadian Alea Chapter #115

There will NOT BE ANY charge for students whose parent or grandparent are current Stewards of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church.

Enrollment form must be completed and returned to Karen at the Church Office no later than **Friday, August 17, 2018**. Please do not delay as materials need to be ordered.

Class Times:

Ages 5 - 18 ~ 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm ~ Tuesdays

4 year olds will be allowed if able to stay in classroom for 90 minutes ~
as determined by Director and Teacher.

Classes will take place in the Community & Education Center

Please complete one registration form for each student, print clearly.

Student Full Name _____

Birth Date _____

Name in Greek: _____

Parents' or Guardian's Names: _____

Steward of St. John the Baptist? (yes/no) _____

(If no, please contact Church Office to become a Steward. If not, a \$200 fee will be assessed.)

Address _____ City/Zip _____

E-mail _____

Cell Phone _____ Home Phone _____

If applicable, what area, town or village is your family from in Greece?

Does anyone at home, read, write or speak Greek? _____

Any Medical, Physical or Allergy concerns? Please list and explain: _____

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

“Most Holy Theotokos, Save Us!”
Paraklesis – For the Health of:



_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The Paraklesis will be chanted on August 1, 3, 8, 10 & 13
Please Return Form to Father John by August 1

PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND



You are invited and encouraged to join Father John in
“Following the Star to Bethlehem and the Holy Land”
as he leads a Spiritual Pilgrimage *from November 28 to December 11, 2018.*

All inclusive price is \$4,179 for double occupancy.

You can get the registration form and full itinerary at www.mgatours.com, or by contacting
Victoria Xikis at (702) 419-5294 or Paula Kelesis at (702) 249-4740.

Deadline to register is July 15, 2018.

22

Saturday

	Dormition Fast August 1-14		1 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos 7:00 pm Adult Study	2	3 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	4
5 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	6 Holy Transfiguration 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Grapes	7 6:00 pm Food Festival Planning Meeting in Kokkos Hall 7:00 pm Adult Basketball	8 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos 7:00 pm Adult Study 7:00 pm Greek Folk Dance Board in Library	9	10 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	11
12 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 1:00 pm OFF at Aquatic Springs Pool	13 6:00 pm Paraklesis to the Theotokos	14 7:00 pm Adult Basketball	15 Dormition of the Theotokos 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy & Artoclasia <i>Fellowship Follows</i>	16	17	18 6:00 pm Young Adults Mexican Fiesta at Fleetwood Home
19 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy Panigyri Tis Panagias 1:00 pm Folk Dance Practice Begins (Returning Dancers Only)	22	21 6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting in Library 7:00 pm Adult Basketball	22 6:00 pm Food Festival Planning Meeting in Kokkos Hall 7:00 pm Adult Study	23	24	25 9:00 am Festival Baking: Bougatsa 4:00 pm GOYA Scavenger Hunt & Pool Party at Likourinou's 6:00 pm Mr. and Mrs. at Gott Home
26 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	27	28 5:00 pm 1st Day of Greek Language Classes 7:00 pm Adult Basketball	29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist (Strict Fast) 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm Adult Study	30	31	

The Desert Messenger

*St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
5300 South El Camino Road
Las Vegas, Nevada 89118-1922*

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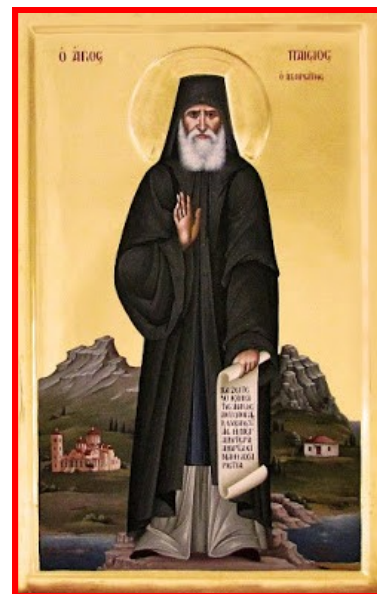
*God Bless
America!*

POSTMASTER : DATED MATERIAL - PLEASE EXPEDITE

THE DESERT MESSENGER

The Way of the Lord

“Humility has great power and destroys the devil. It is the strongest shock that we can give him. Where there is humility, there is no room for the devil. And where there is no devil, there are, of course, no temptations. Once an ascetic pressed a devil to recite: ‘Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.’ The devil said, ‘Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal,’ but he would not say, ‘Have mercy on us.’ The ascetic insisted, ‘Say, ‘have mercy on us.’ But to no avail! Had the devil complied, he would have become an angel again. The devil will say anything except ‘have mercy on me,’ because this requires humility. In every ‘have mercy on me’ there is humility and the soul that utters these words receives what she is seeking: God's great mercy.



“... Pray that we may always give joy to Christ and distress to the devil, since the devil likes hell so much that he does not want to repent.”

~ St. Paisios of Mount Athos, With Pain and Love for Contemporary Man