



The Herald

Newsletter of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Archangels • 1527 Bedford St., Stamford, CT 06905

August 2015

Our New Pastoral Assistant



My name is Steven Sarigianis, and it is my pleasure to join the Archangels community! Please allow me to briefly introduce myself. I was born on January 16, 1988, in New Haven, CT. In a traditional fashion, I was named Stylianos (Στυλιανός) after my paternal grandfather and use his same English translation – Steven.

I come from a large family and have 3 siblings: Eleni, Anna, and Michael. I grew up in East Haven before moving to Orange at the age of 12. My parents James and Florence gave us a happy, joyful childhood and instilled in us an appreciation for all the blessings God had given us. The love our family shared for one another and the foundation of faith and love developed in the home and in our church community deeply impacted who I am as a person today.

St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange has been my home parish since baptism. This is where I first experienced the Divine Liturgy, learned to serve at the Lord's altar, and where I grew to love the worship of the church. From my youth I was greatly involved in the parish as a regular altar server, GOYA member, Greek dance and Greek school student, Sunday school student, and basketball player. In all of this I was merely following the example set by my parents and grandparents. GOYA was particularly important to me; my closest friends in high school were those with the same faith, found in the church. In many ways St. Barbara's raised me and shaped my life.

I was a kid with a great deal of energy. I played drums and percussion actively from 4th grade; I was also a long distance runner for 6 years in Jr. High and High School. I greatly enjoyed the outdoors. The most important aspect of my childhood and youth was being taught how to pray and form a relationship with Jesus Christ at a young age. Every evening before bed, our family would gather together to recite prayers, sing hymns and pray for others. I grew up in a supportive, encouraging, and loving household. And, I had a community of faith that nurtured me spiritually, socially, and emotionally.

I attended the University of Connecticut in Storrs in the fall of 2006 and graduated with a BA in Psychology in 2010. Like

many of my peers, I still needed additional time to examine who I was and discover where I ought to take my life. So I decided to take a year off. I supported myself with part time jobs as a waiter and graphic designer. During this time my faith was reenergized as I began to pray more frequently and more earnestly. I also became active at St. Barbara's again. I was reaching out to God for direction and realized that God was already reaching out to me. Each GOYA activity I helped with, each Church event and worship service I attended, each week at summer camp, even my first mission trip to North Carolina created a burning in my heart. I found increasing satisfaction and fulfillment in anything Church or faith related. By and by I was reacquainted with the strong yearning or "calling" to serve Christ and His Church that I felt as a child. After a year's time, my spiritual father suggested I consider attending seminary.

In the fall of 2011 I entered Holy Cross Seminary in Brookline, MA. In my four years there, two of my strongest passions were cultivated: those of mission work and youth ministry. As soon as I arrived I began exploring and studying Orthodox missiology with interest. I gained not only book knowledge but also experiential knowledge. I have gone to Alaska, Albania, Kenya, Guatemala, and most recently, Mexico. With each trip my understanding of the centrality of missions in the life of the church has been deepened, and my faith has been reenergized. Youth ministry was another area of major involvement for me at seminary. I was a Sunday school teacher for two years, a GOYA advisor for one, and have lead several GOYA retreats with fellow seminarians. Additionally, I have been a camp counselor at Camp Saint Paul and the Boston Metropolis Camp for the past five years. Connecting with our youth and engaging them in the faith is of critical importance, and it is a challenge I am always eager to meet. After four beautiful years in Boston, I graduated from Holy Cross this past May, and I am delighted to have the opportunity to be with and serve you now.

God has blessed me countless times in my life and has directed me in ways I couldn't have imagined. I am both humbled and blessed, and of course excited to be the new Pastoral Assistant here at the Archangels. I greatly look forward to meeting you, to sharing the journey of life with you, and to growing in faith you.

By the way, Steven's grandfather, Fr. Steven Sarigianis, a contemporary of Fr. George Poulos, retired several years ago after serving for decades, primarily in Poughkeepsie, New York. Fr. Steven now lives in the New Haven area with his wife, Presvytera Electra.

PARISH COUNCIL

FAST OF AUGUST (Δεκοπενταυγουστο)

As a community of faith, we prepare for the Great Feast of the Dormition (Falling Asleep; Κοιμησις) of the Theotokos, on August 15, by observing a 2-week fasting period that begins this year on Saturday, August 1. The “spiritual” dimension of this Fast, which anyone can follow, prescribes that we intensify our personal prayer, attend weekday Supplicatory (Παρακλησις) services along with Sunday worship, do works of mercy to help the poor, sick and suffering, reduce our entertainment, strive more consciously to fight temptation and avoid sin, and receive the Sacrament of Holy Confession. As for the “physical” dimension of the Fast, the Church encourages us to restrict our diet to vegetables, beans, pasta, grains, fruits, nuts, and shellfish, and in general to eat less food and reduce our snacking. On weekends we may also consume alcoholic beverages, and, on the Great Feast of the Transfiguration (August 6) we may eat boned fish. As with all fasting in the Church, the physical standards do not apply to young children, pregnant or nursing mothers, and can be modified for those who are ill or very elderly. Feel free to consult Fr. Harry or Fr. George about the specifics of your own discipline this year.

PARAKLESIS (Παρακλησις) or SUPPLICATORY SERVICE

Characteristic of this holy season are the Paraklesis Services offered 7 pm typically on Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays (either here or at Annunciation). This beautiful service consists of prayers, psalms, petitions, and a Gospel reading that are enveloped in magnificent poetry that glorifies Christ by honoring the Theotokos as his Mother. Please write a list of first names of the living that will be prayed for, especially the poor, sick, shut-ins and suffering, and bring this with you (see attached sample). Alternating churches for these services represents another effort for our two parishes to continue our cooperation as we pray and work together.

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council approved an amount of \$16,000 to install new flashing for the church roof. This is a continuation of the roof repairs started during the recent window installation project. After the installers and Building & Grounds Committee had a better opportunity to inspect the roof using the mechanical lift, it was determined that the damage was more extensive than previously assumed. We are very excited about our new Pastoral Assistant, Steven Sarigianis, beginning to work with us this month! Contact: George Papis

STEWARDSHIP

We are grateful for those who have stepped up their financial contributions this summer when our expenses remain constant but income declines, and encourage others to help us. We also encourage everyone to think ahead about offering time and talent to the annual Greek Festival in late September. Contact: George Khouri

Additional Stewards (as of July 31)

Mr & Mrs Michael Burke	Mr & Mrs Marc Magliacano
Mrs Sophia Caloutas	Mr & Mrs George Nanos
Maria Carlucci	Mr Peter Nanos
Mr & Mrs Christopher Carozza	Mr & Mrs Kimon Passios
Alexandra Kaltsas	Mr & Mrs Thomas Passios
Mr & Mrs Chris Kantzas	Mr & Mrs Avram Sidiropoulos
Dr & Mrs Chris Kassaris	Mrs Catherine Sofronas
Mr & Mrs Peter Kokkoris	Mr & Mrs Thomas Tsiralidis
Mrs Maria Laveris	Mrs Dena Vanech
Mr & Mrs George Lines	Mr & Mrs Dennis Vanson
Mr & Mrs John Lycouris	

MASTER PLANNING COMMITTEE

Master Planning Committee members met numerous times to complete the initial design phase with our architects. That work is done! Renderings and a draft floor plan will be presented to the parish this September. They include fresh perspectives on our Fellowship Hall, administrative spaces, meeting areas, rest rooms, and our entrances and exits. We will have easels set up to prominently display some of these aspects. We have also completed production of marketing materials. These will be used by the Capital Campaign Committee to communicate individually with parishioners. We look forward to sharing our hard work with you this Fall. Questions? Contact Jason Konidaris

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

During this period, the Building & Grounds Committee was involved with the Trane Company, whose automatic temperature control products are installed at the Center and the Church. Trane fine-tuned each facility, as well as performed diagnostics. The results of the inspection identified areas to be monitored. The choir loft area had minor modifications that increased comfort levels. At the July Parish Council meeting, proposals were approved to make needed repairs to the church’s roof, the result of the past harsh winter we experienced. With input from James Rogers, who has been retained as our architect for the Master Plan, we are working with an air balancing company to confirm the quantity of air being delivered throughout the church, hall and first floor classrooms. Thanks go to Gregg Demetros and his crew for a job well-done cleaning and disposing years of useless items, old shelving etc. from the basement. Then, Dennis Vanson and Michael Oris did a wonderful job painting the rear basement room. Now that the remainder of the basement has also been painted, we will purchase (with some help from Philoptochos) new shelving and restock all the material that is currently stored on the stage. Contact: Peter Licopantis

MINISTRIES

PASTORAL ASSISTANT

The Pastoral Assistant is a full time, professional ministry position under the direct supervision of the Presiding Priest and accountable to the Parish Council. Steven Sarigianis will primarily be responsible for youth ministry and fully support our Vision Statement: "The Church of the Archangels is an Orthodox Christian community that proclaims and celebrates the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ through worship, education, fellowship, service and mission." As part of our worshipping congregation, Steven's direct responsibilities will include:

- Coordination of all Youth Ministry with Adult Advisors, educating and inspiring parents & children through GOYA, HOPE/JOY, Little Angels, Camp St. Paul, Youth Athletics, Philanthropic outreach & Missionary work
- Cooperation in Educational Programs as needed in Preschool, Church School & Greek School
- Establishment of ministry to Young Adults
- Leadership in serving in Altar during worship through training and oversight of Sexton, Altar Servers & Handmaidens
- Assisting in weekday worship (e.g., Liturgies, Paraklesis, Vespers)
- Assisting with various administrative tasks such as communications and database in Church Community Builder
- Various Pastoral visits as needed to families or individuals (e.g., home, school, activities)

Naturally, because so much of youth ministry is related to the cycle of the year, Steven will be on "flex time", that is, in slower periods of the year he will work less than 40 hours/week, and busier periods (such as Summer Camp) he will obviously work more than 40 hours/week. His starting salary will be \$40,000/year, along with benefits (½ Social Security, ½ medical insurance, auto reimbursement, computer, smart phone plan) and 2 weeks vacation annually. Such compensation is compatible with his level of education (Master of Divinity, the standard professional ministry degree in the U.S.) and living expenses in our area.



Great Entrance with the Holy Gifts

PARISH PICNIC & OUTDOOR LITURGY (June 14)

Our first ever family style picnic and outdoor liturgy at Cove Park was a resounding success with nearly 250 people attending, including a few families and Fr. Evan from Annunciation (see photos). It was so well received that many expressed the desire to do it again. We certainly will, and some initial planning is already happening for next June. Thanks go to many people, too many to list, but including John Skoparantzios, who organized all the food & paper purchases and the cooking and clean up, Chris Nanos & Presvytera Kerry, who assisted with worship set up and clean up, Peter Romanovsky, who led the choir, Chris & Luisa Nanos, who organized games and activities for children & adults, and many who assisted in cooking, serving, and cleaning.

PASTORAL NOTE

Fr. Harry has enjoyed reaching out to the growing number of new and younger families in order to get to know them better this summer through visits to their homes and praying the traditional house blessing. These new families include those who grew up here and are now married and raising the next generation, those who moved here from other areas in Metropolitan New York, those from other parts of our country, and those from other countries, such as Greece and the Ukraine. Most young couples are inter-Christian, with an Orthodox married to a Roman Catholic or Protestant spouse. Such a reality presents the challenge of offering such young families an opportunity to meet and get to know one another since they either do not know each other or haven't seen one another in years. Most often, both spouses are working full time, and they are stretched balancing family commitments with professional ones.



Servers Diane Skoparantzios & Sylvia George at lunch



Liturgy under the canopy (Outdoor Liturgy & Picnic June 14)



Choir singing under direction of Peter Romanovsky (Outdoor Liturgy & Picnic June 14)

SENIORS

Secretary Catherine Apostolos was hospitalized this summer and is now recovering at Greenwich Woods. Please pray for her full recovery, and feel free to contact her, send a get-well card, or visit (1165 King Street, Greenwich, CT; 203-531-6452). Regular monthly meetings will resume in September. Contact: Joan Bolanis (203-324-0034) or George Hasapis (203-966-2534)

LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

The first meeting of the year of the Archangels Ladies Philoptochos Society will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 7 p.m. Please come and share pizza and ideas to help make our chapter even more dynamic. During the summer months, the board is considering ways to encourage more people to join and to make our events even better. We are open to all suggestions. Our members will be actively working at the Greek Fest in September and many events are planned for the fall. Your help and support are very welcomed. If you know of a worthy charity that we should consider supporting, please let us know. Our chapter accepts members at any time, so please join us! Contact: Marion Vanson

As you know, Philoptochos means "friends of the poor." In these difficult economic times, you or someone you know may be having difficulty paying their bills or other expenses and need some assistance. Our Philoptochos is here for our Archangels community. Be assured, strict confidentiality will be maintained. Please contact Father Harry directly or Vicki Kyriakos (203) 550-7708.

CHURCH SCHOOL

Vacation Church School inaugurates a free summer program the week of August 3, from 9 am – 12 noon each morning, for pre-school through grade school children. Under the leadership of Kiriaki Yoranidis (Preschool Director), Steven Sarigianis, and Fr. Harry, the children will pray together, learn the faith through hands on crafts, hymns, and Bible verses, and have time for play and snacks. Theme is "Behold the Light" and will focus on 4 significant events in the life of Christ:

- Nativity (December 25)
- Presentation in the Temple (February 2)
- Baptism/Theophany (January 6)
- Transfiguration (August 6)

Since the last feast occurs on Thursday, the children will attend some of the Liturgy that morning and are invited to bring grapes and any fresh vegetables from a family garden for the traditional blessing at the end.

Church School for all children will resume on Sunday, September 13, with a special blessing during Liturgy and Kick-off celebration during Coffee Hour. Mark your calendar! Contact: Evelyn Biliakos (203) 550-7708

CALLING ALL PARISHIONERS!

**ANNUAL
GREEK FESTIVAL
SEPT. 25, 26, 27 & 28**

YOUR HELP WILL ASSURE SUCCESS!

Please fill out and return your volunteer forms
For more information, contact Diane Sierpina at sierpina@yahoo.com
Or Vicki Kyriakos at vskdmd@aol.com



Greek School Summer Camp (July 13-24)



Greek School Summer Camp (July 13-24)

GREEK SCHOOL

Γεια σας! Καλο Καλοκαίρι! The inaugural Greek School Summer Camp (July 13-24) was a wonderful success under the leadership of Kiki Bellos, Lead GS Teacher, with assistance from Eleni Spanos, new staff member, and several of their grown children (see photo)! The faculty, PTO, and Greek School Committee eagerly look forward to the start of the new academic year. Registration is open for Pre-K through Grade 8. Our mission is to teach the Greek language and culture, along with the Orthodox Christian tradition and faith. Students who have completed this program have been able to get college credits by passing the New York State Contact: Rebecca Kelesidis

GOYA

Advisors Bill Giantomidis and Diane Skoparantzios met with Steven Sarigianis recently to orient him to the history of GOYA in our parish, recent challenges and opportunities, and their hopes for his leadership in working with our youth. Contact: Bill Giantomidis at (732) 779-3696 or Diane Skoparantzios – Skoparantziosd@optonline.net

HOPE/JOY

The Hope & Joy ministry, for pre-school children through 6th grade, is designed to help young people learn more about their Orthodox faith, get to know their church friends better, and grow together in positive and spiritual ways. This year, we have many meaningful and fun-filled activities planned. Our first event will be our “Nature Outing” at the Stamford Museum and Nature Center, which is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 3. The Nature Outing will feature an outdoor scavenger hunt. Next will be our Christmas Party in December. In February, we will visit Atria senior living facility for our “Valentine Visit” during which we will make and exchange cards for many of the residents there. In March, we hope to have our first “Family Fun Fitness” night at the Stamford Athletic Club. In April, we will visit the Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County. We hope that we will see many of you at these activities and look forward to your participation in another exciting year. Please contact us with any questions at 203-609-0749 or cnanos@optonline.net . Contact: Chris and Luisa Nanos



Servers Diane Skoparantzios & Sylvia George at lunch (Outdoor Liturgy & Picnic June 14)



Chefs Nick Chivily, Jim Stanton, John Louizos & John Skoparantzios (Outdoor Liturgy & Picnic June 14)



Jane is surprised with a "Thank You" Cake for her devoted service (June 21)

LITTLE ANGELS

If you are not on our email list and would like information about our events, please contact Anastasia Valassis at 516.582.0830 or avalassis@gmail.com.

ST. PHANURIOS

The feast of St. Phanurios, patron saint of lost things, is commemorated on Aug 27, the date an icon of him was found in the ruins of a Greek Orthodox Church on the island of Rhodes in Greece. On Sunday, August 23, you are invited to bake and bring a "Bread of Phanurios" (Phanuriopita) to Liturgy for a blessing. The following recipe is from Roula Stergianis and Sophia Hartch:

CONTENTS:

- 3 cups flour
- 2 level teaspoons cinnamon
- ¾ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup sugar
- ¼ cup cognac or brandy
- ½ cup water
- 1¼ cup orange juice
- 2 level teaspoons baking soda
- 2 level teaspoons baking powder
- Zest from one orange
- 1 cup golden raisins
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- Powdered sugar for the top (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Mix flour and cinnamon in a bowl. In a separate bowl, combine oil, sugar, cognac, water, orange juice, baking soda, baking powder, and orange zest. Beat for a few minutes, then add flour mixture, raisins and walnuts. Grease and flour 9 inch round pan; pour in batter and bake at 350 degrees for 45-60 (test with a toothpick). When cool, sift powdered sugar on top, if desired.

IOCC

For additional information about the coordinated efforts of pan-Orthodox worldwide relief efforts to Greece, Palestine, Syria, and throughout the world, see the IOCC website at www.iocc.org or contact our IOCC representative, Tim Hartch, at timhartch1@outlook.com.

STAMFORD ATHLETIC CLUB

As you may or may not know, for over 10 years, Nancy Mourtidis, one of the finest swim instructors in our area, has been at SAC. So many children have learned to swim and enjoy the benefits of water-based activity with her. Aside from paid instruction, Nancy has donated her time to our parish members as well with the recent "Parent-Child Swim Classes" held in May (see photo). Unfortunately, about a month ago, Nancy suffered several broken bones in very serious motorcycle accident. She was recently transferred to a physical therapy center, where she will continue to heal although it may take several more months. Please pray for her full recovery and return to what she loves most – teaching children to swim. In the interim, we have a need for more swim instructors. Currently, we have two wonderful instructors, one of them currently booked solid. If you know of any certified swim instructors looking for a home, please have them contact Glenn Colarossi 203-357-7555. It would be greatly appreciated.



Swim Instructor Nancy Mourtidis helps preschoolers in June

FREE OFFICE SAFE

We wish to donate our large office safe free of charge to any businesses in our area. We no longer need it with our recent office remodeling and restructuring of our administrative operations. Contact: Jane Vorvis 203-348-4216

Wish List

Several items in the altar need to be re-plated in gold, so we are seeking donors for:

- 2 Communion spoons (\$85/each)
- 1 Wedding Goblet (\$450)
- 1 Censer (\$350)

Contact: Fr. Harry or Jane in the office

CALLING ALL PARISHIONERS TO SUPPORT GREEKFEST!

Ask anyone who helped at our 2014 Archangels GreekFest and they will tell you that volunteering at this event was great fun and a chance to get to know fellow church members of all ages!

Our 2015 festival takes place from Thursday, Sept. 24 through Sunday, Sept. 27 and we need all hands on deck in order for this, our parish's biggest single event in which we offer our time, talents, energy and finances to support the mission of our Church!

Please support the festival by:

- Signing up to help one or more days at the festival on posters in the Church Hall or by contacting the Co-Chairs of Volunteers, Diane Sierpina at sierpina@yahoo.com or Vicki Kyriakos at vskdmd@aol.com. We need volunteers in all jobs – from server and take-out to hot dog stand, ride ticket sales, raffle ticket sales, set-up and clean-up, among others;
- Buying a raffle ticket and selling a raffle ticket (a letter mailed out the week of July 19);
- Purchasing a sponsorship sign on behalf of your family or business or selling a sign sponsorship to a business you frequent;
- Donating funds to cover the cost of supplies – any size donation is appreciated!
- Baking for the pastry booth;
- Joining cooking teams to prepare foods;
- Posting flyers at your favorite businesses; and
- Inviting your friends and family to attend the festival.

It's a huge job! Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for set up on Sunday, Sept. 20, after the Special Coffee Hour to kick off the Capital Campaign for our Remodeling Project, and the evenings leading up to the festival, during the festival and/or for clean-up on Sunday, Sept 27. We appreciate your time and know you will find this experience memorable and fun! Pass the word!

Contact: Co-Chairs Margaret & Steve Fornaciari