



The Herald

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

DECEMBER 2019

Christmas & Hospitality

Typically, we think of the birth of Christ as a warm, wonderful, and extraordinary beginning to the most important Life ever.

There is certainly truth in this.

But the reality is quite challenging.

Consider that:

- Jesus was conceived to an unwed young mother who was engaged to an older man, a situation that was morally explosive for the time since Mary did not have any sexual relations with Joseph, and he was at first quite troubled to discover she was pregnant;
- Joseph & Mary were not part of the mainstream of society. In fact, they were members of a small religion that was mostly tolerated by the highly developed Roman Empire – Judaism had some unusual beliefs and practices that struck most people as odd if not outrageous;
- They were caught between a rock and a hard place after enduring 9 months of public scrutiny: when the time was nearing for Mary to finally give birth, she and Joseph had to travel quite a distance for a civil registration, and found themselves in an unfamiliar area looking desperately for housing;
- Tragically, they found none – no one offered the most basic form of hospitality to friends, strangers, and especially a pregnant woman: shelter and protection! (take a look at the Prayer of the Month by St. Romanos the Melodist, patron of Church music)
- As a result, they had to hunker down in a stable of animals – not unheard of (since many poorer households often lived close to animals in a farming culture) but certainly not dignified
- To top it all off, the local governor – King Herod – was so filled with jealousy and rage that he ordered the slaughter of thousands of innocent babies in an effort to get rid of a potential rival.

This is not exactly the way we might have scripted how our world greeted its long-awaited Savior. The birth of Jesus involved a complex set of circumstances, all pointing to an astonishing failure of hospitality – within his own community of faith as well as in society more generally.

Yet, there is no evidence that this bothered them. Joseph and Mary reverently accepted their dilemma, remained faithful to God, and stretched themselves physically and mentally to meet the challenge. They managed to provide a safe birth for the

Christ child and received a variety of signs of God's presence and blessing along the way – an unusual star, angels at different times, shepherds from a nearby field, and wise men from afar bearing gifts.

Just recently, it turns out, two homeless people with whom I've been working for months have finally been able to enter into permanent housing through apartments: one by government assistance and the other because of very generous philanthropy by a family in our parish. They had found themselves suddenly unemployed or with a serious illness that made work impossible. They survived by moving from shelter to shelter, in and out of hotels, and selling most of their belongings to pay for more immediate expenses while looking for help anywhere they could find it.

How much I can now also rejoice in the miracle of Christmas that also occurred in very difficult and threatening conditions as well!

On any given night in America, it is estimated there are more than 500,000 homeless people, aside from many more who live in substandard housing.

Perhaps Christmas is in a special way the "Feast of the Homeless." This month, in fact, there are two related events (unfortunately, both are on the same night):

- Soup Run – Thu, Dec 19, 6:30pm: GOYA and adults will assist Holy Trinity Church in New Rochelle with their monthly ministry to feed and clothe the homeless in NYC near Madison Square Garden; the Men's Koinonia participated earlier this year and benefited greatly from the experience;
- Homeless Persons Memorial Service – Thu, Dec 19, 7pm: Interfaith worship and fellowship @ St. Francis Episcopal Church (2810 Long Ridge Road, Stamford), sponsored by the Interfaith Council of SW Connecticut (I've participated in the past and was asked to offer the sermon).

As we prepare our hearts, homes and community to rejoice with family, friends and guests to celebrate Christmas, perhaps we can consider how we can open more widely our personal lives and public commitments to those who still suffer from the lack of permanent, stable housing.

I certainly can say that both homeless families will remember this Christmas for the rest of their lives, thanks to the generosity of our parish and our local government!

Merry Christmas!

– Fr. Harry

PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council

The Parish Council is excited to usher in a blessed holiday season and Nativity Fast, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord. This season of Thanksgiving and Christmas also coincides with the kickoff of our annual Stewardship Campaign, where we as a community come together to renew our commitments of time, talents and treasures to the Lord and the mission of our church. Please make sure that you and your family fill out a stewardship card to ensure that we are properly tracking your commitment of time, talents and treasures for 2020. Also, if you have not already made a financial gift for 2019, please do so before year-end. Stewardship is not only an essential part of ensuring the ongoing operation and growth of our church's ministries and community outreach work, but also is a vital piece of our spiritual growth as Greek Orthodox Christians and as a community of faith. If you have questions about the goals of stewardship or the operations of the church that your stewardship pledges support, please reach out to a member of the Parish Council.

Parish Council elections are quickly approaching, and voting will take place after liturgy on Sunday, December 8. There are five open spots on the Parish Council that will be up for election. New members will each be elected to a three-year term. The Parish Council urges all stewards to take the time to learn about the candidates and vote. If you are not able to be at church on December 8, please contact the office to request an absentee ballot.

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Tuesday, December 17th at 7:30 p.m. in the conference room of the church hall. All parishioners are welcome to attend Parish Council meetings. Contact: Georgia Man, georgiavman@gmail.com

Parish Council Elections – Sunday, December 8

Elections are Sun, Dec. 8, for about 1½ hours following the Liturgy (approximately 11:45 am – 1:15 pm). Eligible Voters: all baptized or chrismated members of the Orthodox Church who are 18 years or older, worship regularly, are currently stewards in good standing & have been members in our parish at least since Sept 8 (i.e., for a minimum of 3 months). Note: if you have not yet made a financial offering this year, you may do so on Election Day. We will elect 5 candidates listed below.

Absentee ballots are available in advance by contacting George Perkins geoperka1@aol.com or 203-972-6852, or the office 203-348-4216. All absentee ballots must be returned by Friday, Dec 7, in order to be valid; any ballot returned after this date will be declared invalid (per our own Parish By-Laws). Contact: Board of Elections – George Perkins, Louie Blanco, Penny Nanos & Roula Stergians

Online Donations

Online donations can be always made through our church website www.archangelsgoc.org, where you can offer one-time or recurring contributions. Please make sure to include a note in the "special instructions" field if you would like to direct your donation for a specific purpose or ministry. Donations can be made by bank account or credit card and are processed securely via PayPal, one of the largest and most trusted online payment processors. However, you do not need to have a PayPal account to make online donations. You can expect to see improvements and refinements to this capability over time, including the ability to more easily direct your donation to a particular ministry and provide online payment options for ministry programming (e.g. Greek School) and social gatherings (e.g. Mardi Gras, GreekFest). Contact: Antonia or Laura in the office

Meet the Candidates

DENISE (DEEDEE) AIVALIS

Church Ministries

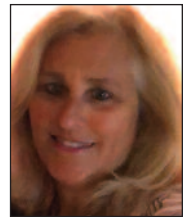
- Church Member for over 50 years
- Former Sunday School Teacher-25 years of service
- Former Treasurer of the Ladies Philoptochos Society
- Former PTO member of the Greek School
- Current Philoptochos Board Member
- Festival Volunteer

Current Status: Managing Real Estate Investor

Reason for Running: The Greek Church of the Archangels is a very important part of my family's history, present day, and I can only pray for it to be a part of my family's future. My personal relationship with this church began as early as my baptism, however my roots run deeper than that, and I have also been blessed with the privilege to witness my grandchildren's baptism at the Archangels as well.

My reason for running for Parish Council is based on that part above, where I note "I pray" for the Greek Church of the Archangels to be a part of my family's future. The world has changed but our religion, Greek culture and ecclesiastical traditions remain and it is important that we do not lose sight of that. We, as parishioners, old and young, deserve to have this continue in our beautifully built and remodeled home of worship. I want to have an open communication with all parishioners and be able to represent their views and any concerns at the board meetings. I want to further the transparency of our parish and keep those that do not attend the meetings well informed.

As God has blessed us with a beautiful church and community, I would like to be a part of the Parish Council as a member furthering positive growth and spirituality.



JAMES J. (JIM) MARCARELLO

Church Ministries

- Church member 33 years
- Audit Committee (2016—2018)
- Festival volunteer

Current Status: Retired

Reason for Running: If honored to be elected I would welcome the opportunity to help in any capacity. With a background in volunteer service and as the treasurer of a volunteer fire district with an annual budget of \$750,000, I would hope to bring to and enhance the church treasurer's efforts to further improve the church's finances particularly with budgeting and timely reporting and forecasting. I am Proficient using QuickBooks financial software while serving as treasurer at the Vista Fire department and district.



NICHOLAS (NICK) MOISIADES

Church Ministries

- Church Member for over 16 years
- Parish Cantor
- President of AHEPA, Stamford, Conn. Chapter

Current Status: U.S. Department of the Treasury Examiner

Reason for Running: As a longtime member of the church, I want to serve on the parish council to help guide our parish during this new and exciting period of renewal (both of our campus and ministries). As a father of a young professional, I want to ensure that we continue to build a vibrant community that focuses on the needs of everyone, while serving our Lord. Faith and community have always been important to me. I believe I have the education and experience to make a contribution.



CHRISTOPHER PAUL NANOS

Church Ministries

- Devoted Church Member for 40+ years
- Former Altar Boy and Former Head Altar Boy
- Former GOYA President
- Greek School Graduate
- Current Member, Foundation Board
- Current Leader, Hope & Joy Youth Ministry

Current Status: Director of Demand Generation, Nestle Waters North America; Northwestern University, M.S., 1998; Wesleyan University, B.A., 1997

Reason for Running: I consider this community to be an extension of my own family, as it has played a significant role in my development during my formative years: I was baptized in this church; I attended Sunday School and Greek School here; I played Church basketball; I participated in and led our GOYA group; I faithfully served in the altar, first as an altar boy, and then as head altar boy. As an adult, I returned to this community: I was married in our church and my two sons were also baptized here as well. Today, my own children participate in many of the same activities I did as a child.



My commitment to this parish can be evidenced by my active participation as a Foundation Board member and my co-leadership of the Hope & Joy Children's ministry. Further, for the past 3+ years, I have attended almost every Parish Council meeting, not as a member but as an interested parishioner, asking the difficult questions and offering my perspective when appropriate.

As a lifelong member of the church, I want to serve on the Parish Council to help guide our parish as we navigate the next chapter of our story. I want to ensure that the community I experienced during my youth evolves and continues for our next generation.

AGESILAOS (AGGIE) SOTIRE

Church Ministries

- Former Vice-President of the Parish Council
- Head Usher
- Master Planning Committee
- CCB Implementation team
- Bible Study attendance
- Pilgrimage to Israel-2013 and 2019
- Men's Koinonia

Current Status: Retired

Reason for Running: I have been a life-long member of the Church of the Archangels and it would be of great spiritual pleasure for me to perpetuate my service through the Parish Council to our church community.



Online Donations

You can make a stewardship pledge or financial contribution through our CCB system. Please follow the steps below:

- Log in to your profile on CCB – www.archangels.ccbchurch.com –with your personal identity (typically your email) and password
- On the left column of home page (dark background) click "\$"
- Select file tab marked 'give' or 'donate'
- Select 'one time gift' or 'repeating gift'
- Select 'designation' from the drop-down arrow
- Select 'giving amount' using decimals
- CLICK 'CONTINUE' tab
- Visually verify 'designation' and 'gift amount'
- Select payment type from drop down arrow (checking account OR debit / credit card)
- Visually verify donor/personal information
- Select 'Update profile with this contact information' if necessary
- Enter checking account or debit / credit card information as needed
- Select 'Save payment information for future use' if desired
- CLICK 'CONTINUE' tab
- CLICK 'CONFIRM' if all information is correct
- TRANSACTION IS COMPLETE – RETRIEVE RECEIPT FROM PERSONAL EMAIL

Stewardship Report

Stewardship Sunday this year will be December 8, the first day everyone is encouraged to bring their completed pledge card for 2020 to Liturgy. There will be a Special Catered Reception in the Hall. The purpose of Stewardship Sunday is to celebrate the enormous blessings we have received from God and to commit to sharing these generously with the Church and our fellow parishioners. Just as God sent his Son to save us, so Jesus asks us to use our time, talents, and financial resources to serve him in the world today. Packets with materials for the 2020 campaign have been mailed. Please remember to complete both sides of their pledge card (Time & Talents on one side; Treasures or Finances on the other) since we value who you are and how you wish to serve Christ. We thank everyone for giving very generously to our parish! Contact: Tim Hartch, timhartch1@outlook.com

Master Planning

Efforts continue in regard to the Punch List: a catalogue of necessary corrections that we notice that we want the building contractor to take care of. This is very normal in projects like ours – there always are details that need attention for some time after construction is finished. Questions or concerns? Contact: jason.konidaris@yale.edu

2019 Stewardship –

New Stewards: October 23 to November 30, 2019

Aivalis, Dean and Denise	Nanos, George and Amy
Aivalis, Nick	Nikas, Nicholas and Ruth
Androulidakis, Jameela	Otis, James and Marcine
Cameron, Catherine and Ian	Paparis, George
Clifton, Helen	Petrotos, Dr. Athanassios and Vasiliki Karlis
Gelashvili, Keteven	Poulos, Michael
Johnson, David and Nicole	Shepard, Maria and Ken
Kaiser, Carolyn	Shola, Micheline
Khoury, George	Sioles, Louis and Anna
Kulukundis, Elian	Spanos, Penelope and James
Lambrinakos, Maria	Vafiadis, Alexandra
Licopantis, Peter and Yolanda	Valassis, Steven A. and Anastasia
Marcarello, James and Kyriaki	Varunes, Barbara
Mihaleas, Perry and Kim	Young, Chrys Ann and John
Nanos, Christopher and Christine	

Buildings & Grounds

Over the last few weeks, the Committee received pricing to add window shades to the church offices and to spaces that face the parking lot. These shades will offer more privacy and block excessive sunlight during key parts of the day. We hope to have approval on a vendor soon in order to move forward with the installation.

Contact: Peter Hantes, peter.hantes@gmail.com

MINISTRIES

Nativity Fast Guidelines

The fast for Christmas this year began on Nov. 15 and lasts 40 days, ending with Liturgy for Christmas. In its ancient wisdom, the Church invites us to prepare for meeting the Lord by increasing our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (acts of mercy to the poor, sick, and suffering).

For the physical fast, there are two stages:

- 1) from Nov. 15 to Dec. 11, we fast from meat and meat by-products and consume boned fish, beans, pasta, rice, vegetables, grains and fruits; then
- 2) from Dec. 12-24, we are urged to abstain from boned fish as well. On weekdays, we are also asked to refrain from alcoholic beverages and olive oil.

Such a vegetarian diet is actually quite healthy and cleanses our bodies of heavier foods and toxins. Along with restricting the kinds of foods we eat, the Church also recommends that we reduce the amount – by eating less often and reducing (or even eliminating) snacks and dining out. The food and money we save can be used to feed the poor and underprivileged. If you have never really fasted before, consider simply abstaining from meat, or skipping a meal in the middle of the day, or eliminating snacks at night. The purpose is for us to learn greater self-control over one of our biggest needs – eating & drinking – in order to grow in holiness and receptivity to God's grace.

Children's Christmas Program

Following Liturgy on Sun., Dec. 15

Including Church School, Greek School, and GOYA

Special Reception in the Fellowship Hall

Please bring non-perishable food for
Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County

GOYA

Discount Restaurant Cards

Sold throughout this month

\$20 – good for discounts at more than 20
area restaurants & good for 1 year

Available Coffee Hour or in the Office

Worship for Christmas

Tuesday, December 24

Royal Hours – 9:00 am

Vespers Liturgy – 5:00 pm

Followed by Christmas Carols

Wednesday, December 25

Orthros – 8:45 am

Divine Liturgy – 9:30 am

During this season, there are many parties before Christmas. We can still observe the spirit of the fast by eating in moderation or selecting lighter foods, without drawing attention to ourselves. Any time we have to explain ourselves to someone else, we violate the teaching of Christ who taught us to fast in secret (see Matthew 6:16-18).

As with all physical fasting in the Church, these guidelines are moderated (or even eliminated) for the sick, the elderly who are too weak, children under 7 years of age, and pregnant or nursing mothers. Children 7 & older are encouraged to fast in ways that are age and temperament appropriate, something best determined by parents.

In addition, the Church encourages us to modify other activities that, however good in themselves, often consume our attention, energy and resources: to reduce our dependence on entertainment (e.g., watching television, going out to movies, listening to music, playing games on the computer), and to abstain from sexual relations with our spouse for a brief period of time that is mutually agreed upon. The purpose of all this is to grow in self-control and to free up time and energy for prayer, meditation, reading Scripture, observing silence, and serving others, especially the less fortunate.

Nonetheless, everyone, regardless of age and temperament, can fast spiritually by combating sin (e.g., gossip, laziness, indifference, greed, anger, lust, gluttony, jealousy, pride, apathy, judging others), and by coming to the Sacrament of Confession to receive the gift of forgiveness. A good rule of thumb is this: identify one bad habit and concentrate on battling it. An example: if I struggle with driving too fast, I will aim to drive the speed limit. Or: if I all too easily talk about people behind their back, I will seek not to gossip and avoid loose talk.

Feel free to direct your questions and concerns to the clergy who are here to help you grow in faith, hope and love as we prepare to encounter our Lord anew this Christmas!

Pastoral Q & A

Question: Why would a priest talk about money from the pulpit? I always thought that this was inappropriate and even offensive.

Answer: Many faithful people in the Church feel this way. Some have never heard a priest do this before and others have heard a priest do so in an unseemly manner (e.g., badgering people to give more). In the broader culture in which we live – Western culture that has been evolving for centuries since the Protestant Reformation – there has arisen a common perception that religion is about “spiritual things” (e.g., prayer, worship, teaching, pastoral work) while daily life involves more “practical things” (e.g., money, rules, administration, budgets). The clergy are expected to take care of the former, while the lay people in a parish are concerned with the latter. Tragically, this is a huge misunderstanding. God is intimately involved in “spiritual things” as God is in “practical things” of daily life. All matters – especially money – are spiritual in nature, according to the amazing vision of the Bible and the unbroken witness of our Orthodox Tradition. God has made a variety of commands about how we are to use it properly: the tithe (giving the 1st and best 10% of our income back to God in gratitude for his blessing every year), another tithe every 3rd year to care for the poor and needy, a command to deliberately leave “leftovers” in business for the poor and needy and not to profit from everything we produce (called “gleanings” in a field), prophets who repeatedly called God’s people to get back to proportional giving that honors God, warnings about greed when God’s people become affluent, worship services and feast days that include material offerings along with alms for those less fortunate. Jesus’ own teaching refers to money far more than any other topic in life – e.g., salaries, income, and debt – in order to teach about what God is doing through his earthly ministry. He gave a variety of specific teachings and warnings about becoming self or family centered through accumulating wealth without regard for the



New Portable Stage arrives in handy Cart just in time for Oxi Day Program (Oct 25)



The preschool children are dressed as Pilgrims for their annual Thanksgiving Feast!



Family and friends of the preschool enjoy a bountiful Thanksgiving meal together.

common good. The Apostle Peter held Ananias and Sapphira, an early Christian couple, accountable for lying about their financial stewardship. The Apostle Paul compared greed to false religion. The Bishops of the early Church needed to be good managers of their own household (which includes real estate, possessions, and investments) before ordination. One of their most important functions as Bishop was to manage the Church's finances: collecting offerings and distributing these in an equitable and loving way. Budgets are spiritual documents that show a church's priorities. I could expand this far more but suffice it to say that, like love, prayer, and service to others, money is a spiritual matter that concerns Christ a great deal since it is loaded with so much significance and power. We clergy are called first to model good Stewardship by setting the example for God's people and then to teach and explain the extraordinary vision of Scripture in Tradition so that everyone can be inspired, learn, and grow as Christians.

Prayer of the Month

St. Romanos the Melodist (died in 556 A.D.), the greatest hymn writer of the Orthodox Church, composed a magnificent series of 24 hymns ("Kontakia" in Greek) celebrating the birth of Christ. Here is another one of these that poetically develop the rich Biblical story. Notice how the theme of hospitality is highlighted:

High King, what have you to do with beggars?
 Maker of heaven, why have you come to those born of earth?
 Did you love a cave or take pleasure in a manger?
 See, there is no place for your servant in the inn,
 I do not say a place, not even a cave,
 for that too belongs to another.
 To Sarah [wife of the Old Testament Patriarch Abraham], when she bore a child
 a vast land was given as her lot. To me, not even a fox hole.
 I used the cave where willingly you made your dwelling,
 a little Child, God before the ages!

Philoptochos Vasilopita Bread Sale

Please Order by Wed., December 11

Prepayment Appreciated

Contact Marion Vanson marionvanson@yahoo.com

Did You Know?

As a perpetual movement that is counter-cultural, the Church engages Western culture in three basic ways:

- accepting those things that are good (such as educational opportunities)
- rejecting those things that cannot be redeemed (such as pornography)
- modifying those things that can become compatible with the Gospel.

In this last category is one of the most famous transformations of popular culture the Church has ever made: Christmas! Yes, no one really knows the actual date of Christ's birth. Over time, as the Church developed in an ancient world dominated by paganism (the widespread belief in many different gods and goddesses, no Scripture, and no standard morality), there was a very popular feast of the Winter Solstice, the day in late December (usually around 20 or 21 in our calendar today) when the decreasing amount of daylight ends and everyone looks forward to more sunshine. Many Christians were enticed by their neighbors, business associates, and friends to join in this large, impressive public festival. To counteract this, the early Bishops and theologians decided to establish the feast of Christ's birth on December 25! And the dismissal hymn (Apolytikion in Greek) still to this day is a subversive re-interpretation of the Winter Solstice. Notice how Christ is deliberately called the Sun (worshiped by pagans as a god), and the Star of Bethlehem guides the Wise Men (who worshipped stars as pagans):

Ἡ γέννησίς σου Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ἀνέτειλε τῷ κόσμῳ, τὸ φῶς τὸ τῆς γνώσεως· ἐν αὐτῇ γὰρ οἱ τοῖς ἀστροῖς λατρεύοντες, ὑπὸ ἀστέρος ἐδιδάσκοντο, σὲ προσκυνεῖν, τὸν Ἥλιον τῆς δικαιοσύνης, καὶ σὲ γινώσκειν ἐξ ὕψους ἀνατολήν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

Your nativity, O Christ our God, has caused the light of knowledge to rise upon the world. For thereby those who adored the stars, were taught by a star to worship you, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know you as Orient from on high. Glory to you, O Lord!

This is a masterful bit of pastoral ingenuity: adopt something very popular that is based on bad theology, give it good theology and offer it to Christians!

Coffee Hour Servers Needed!

Any Sunday in December

Only a 30-minute commitment

Contact the office if interested



Greek School children and teachers learn traditional Greek Christmas songs from Thanos Kokkalas, new music teacher



GreekFest Debrief meeting (Nov 4)

Weekday Worship

We continue our common worship with Annunciation Church on the following weekdays this month, with Orthros at 9 am and Liturgy 9:30 am:

- Fri, Dec 6 - St. Nicholas the Wonder-worker, with Procession & Veneration of the Relic of St. Nicholas; Agiasmos (Blessing of Waters) 3pm by Archbishop Elpidophoros @ St. Nicholas Shrine at Ground Zero.
- Thu, Dec 12 – St. Spyridon: later worship for Seniors who meet this day – Orthros 10am & Liturgy 10:30am

Adult Education

- Bible Study of the New Testament Gospels continues on Monday evenings according to the following schedule that continues our study of the Book of Revelations

‡ Dec 2 – chapter 5

‡ Dec 9 – chapter 6

‡ Dec 16 – chapter 7

Contact: Fr. Harry hpappas@svots.edu

- Men's Koinonia – due to the Soup Run on Dec 19, meeting is postponed tentatively until Jan 16, 7pm. Contact: Fr. Harry, hpappas@svots.edu

Kali Parea Seniors

Our November meeting celebrated the coming of Thanksgiving, which included all the trimmings-turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, soft drinks and wine. Also included was a huge amount of pies, cakes and pastries. As always we celebrated monthly birthdays. Our speaker, Meg Haffner, represented The Kennedy Center Inc. The subject matter discussed various means of transportation programs for seniors, who are unable to drive or have no means of transportation. The programs included getting seniors to and from doctor appointments, shopping, etc. There were handouts which described the various services available. "KALI PAREA", WELCOMES ALL NON MEMBERS TO OUR DECEMBER GALA. Our luncheon will include a traditional Christmas meal, with typical Greek appetizers, drinks and special raffles. Please contact: Pam Koutroubis, 203-554-0042 or Antonia in the church office.

GOYA Soup Run

DONATIONS NEEDED!

Adult Men's or Women's gloves, hats, scarves, undershirts, underwear & socks

Please place in bins in Church Foyer
under Christmas tree

GOYA will be distributing on December 19

For more details, please visit <https://philoxenia.org/>



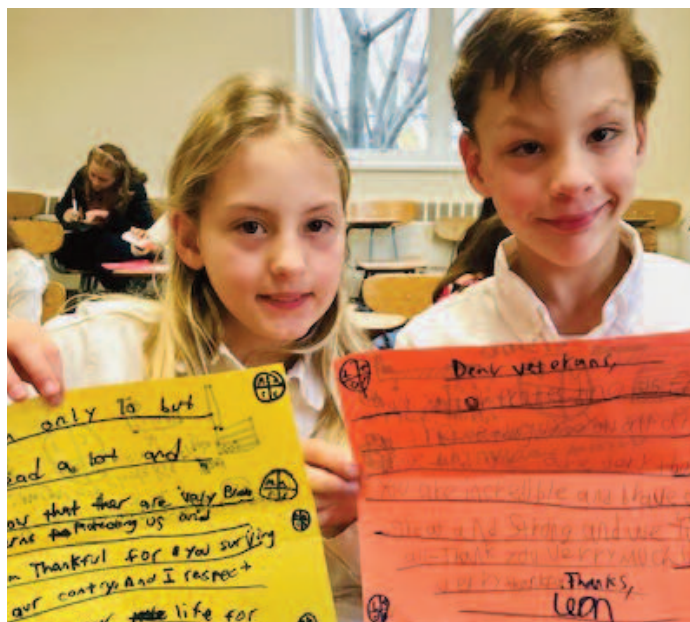
Raffle Prizes at Turkey Bingo (Nov 23)



Over 200 enjoyed Turkey Bingo (Nov 23)



Maria Olga Athanasiadis at Philanthropy Sunday - Letters & Cards to U.S. Servicemen & Women (Nov 10)



Margaret & Leon Cholakis

Ladies Philoptochos Society

November was really a month of thanks! Thank you to everyone who donated coats to benefit the Bridgeport Rescue Mission. More than 150 coats, plus scarves, hats and gloves, were collected, according to Natalie Kulukundis, chair of this event. Coats were delivered to the Rescue Mission by Natalie, Jameela Androulidakis and Kay Marcarello. Thanks also to everyone who helped prepare and serve at the Archangels Vesper reception on Nov. 7th chaired by Penny Nanos and to those who helped at and donated turkeys and raffle prizes for the annual Turkey Bingo on Nov. 23rd, which was a great success. Hearty thanks to our fearless and energetic Turkey Bingo chair, Lara Paschalidis, and those who helped assemble the raffle baskets for a job well-done. Five charities will benefit from the proceeds – Filling in the Blanks, Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County, Invictus ReEntry Program at Domus Kids, Person to Person and Ronald McDonald House. On Philoptochos Sunday, Nov. 3rd, Father Harry offered a Trisagion during liturgy in memory of our Philoptochos members who have fallen asleep in the Lord. Thank you, Father, and to everyone who contributed to the tray passed to benefit the Patriarchate. The December meeting of Philoptochos members will take place on Saturday, Dec. 7th after the annual Christmas brunch, which begins at 11 am. Please RSVP your attendance to Marietta Morelli at Marietta.morelli@gmail.com. Vasilopita breads are now for sale. Please get your orders in to Marion Vanson before Dec. 11. Cost is \$17 and prepayment would be appreciated. Contact: Eugenia Zavras, etz124@yahoo.com

Choir

Practice is scheduled for Sunday, December 8 after Liturgy and Sunday, December 15 at the conclusion of the children's Christmas pageant. On Sunday, December 22 during the distribution of Blessed bread (Antidoron), we will sing two Christmas carols - "Beautiful Savior" and "Angels We Have Heard on High." Then after the first Christmas Liturgy on Dec 24, we will lead the singing of "O Come O Ye Faithful," "The First Noel," "Beautiful Savior," "Joy to the World," and conclude with the Dismissal Hymn, "H Yennisis Sou/Your Nativity" in Greek & English. Contact: Nadine Vasil NVasil@darienps.org

Church School

The Church School Program together with the Greek School Program co-sponsored our Parish's first Children's Gratitude Retreat followed by a bountiful Friendsgiving fellowship dinner! Over 50 adults and children attended this beautiful evening of togetherness and thanks. Our deep gratitude to Father Harry for leading this retreat and for all who helped to prepare meals and joined for this celebration and to the Stew Leonard family for their gracious donation of catered turkey dinner. Our next celebration is our highly anticipated Children's Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 15th with a festive reception to follow! A full dress rehearsal for the pageant will be held Friday, December 13th at 4:30pm. Come one, come all on December 15th and be prepared for your hearts to bust with joy! Contact: Dr. Evelyn Biliadis, ebiliadis@aol.com



Gratitude Retreat (Nov 15) - Children surround Fr. Harry who holds new hand-painted icon of the Theotokos as a 3 year old toddler, given to our parish by Eleni Giagkou, former Greek School Teacher and professional artist and iconographer who now lives in North Carolina

Little Angels

Little Angels is the church ministry group representing young families including infants, toddlers and preschoolers (ages 0-5 years). Our purpose is to bring together parents and little ones for fun and fellowship, support, and to strengthen our faith and church family friendships.

Mom's Night Out

Mark your calendar for Friday, January 24th at 7:30pm for our annual Mom's Night Out! You are invited to join us for dinner, laughter, fun, and fellowship. Relax and enjoy time together with new and old friends after the holidays. Additional details will be sent via email. We look forward to seeing you!

Contact: Vasso Spanos (bkarachris@gmail.com) or Rachel Jones (racheljones.cpa@gmail.com)

HOPE/JOY

During November, the Hope & Joy children enjoyed a gratitude retreat and Friendsgiving gathering in the fellowship hall on Friday the 15th. Over 50 attended this wonderful event. We hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Please save the date of Dec 15th for the annual Christmas party at the Norwalk Inn. It will include delicious buffet lunch, special magic show, raffle for great prizes and Christmas crafts. [Event cost tba]

GOYA

The GOYAns have been very busy this month. They created their discount cards to sell (see table in Herald) as their fundraiser this year. For the annual Philoptochos Turkey Bingo on November 23, several teens and parents volunteered to help set-up the 30+ tables and chairs needed to host the event. GOYAns also enjoyed themselves that evening, establishing two

tables in the back corner to play bingo and spend time together. At our upcoming meeting we are looking to host a special speaker, Steve Christoforou, the Director of the Youth in our Archdiocese. Please make every effort to attend this exciting event. Finally, we will be attending the Soup Run in Manhattan on Dec 19th with the leadership of Despina Karson from New Rochelle Holy Trinity Church (please see box with details). Please RSVP if you will be attending. Questions please email Maria Otis, maria.otis@yahoo.com or Rebecca Kelesidis, rebecca@kelesides.com.

Athletics

The Connecticut Eastern Orthodox Basketball and Volleyball Leagues [CEOBL & CEOVL] are now in full swing. This year we have 5 Stamford United teams, open to youth ages 6-18: Farm (6-9), Youth (8-11), JV (12-14), and Varsity (15-18). Stamford United teams practice every Wednesday evening (see calendar). We also have girls volleyball practicing on Tuesdays from 7:30-9:30 pm at Annunciation. We are going to have the youth girls practice with the varsity girls from 7:30-8:30 and then the Varsity will continue their practice. We are in need of new young players, ages 9 and up!

There is still time to sign up for our teams! Here are the benefits of playing in the church leagues:

- Fellowship and fun with other Greek Orthodox youth
- Develop basketball/volleyball and team-building skills
- Competitive but less stressful than town or school leagues
- Faith based program that embraces youth in the Church

Basketball games begin on Dec 1.

For more info contact: John Skoparantzios atoz@aol.com



Families enjoy a thanksgiving meal and fellowship

Greek Language Classes for Adults

The world is shrinking with globalization and the internet! Now is a great time for adults to learn modern Greek. We are blessed to have an excellent instructor in Dr. Eugenia Zavras, a biology Professor at Fairfield University and past teacher and director of the Greek School. For information and registration, contact her directly at 203-322-9561, or call church office 203-348-4216.

IOCC

December is a great month to support the International Orthodox Christian Charities, the world-wide relief agency that represents all Orthodox in America. Thanks to a generous donor, IOCC will match all gifts dollar for dollar, up to \$10,000 on “Giving Tuesday” December 3. Donations allow IOCC to provide emergency relief after a disaster, clean water to those in remote areas, tools to help farmers grow sustainable crops, and much more:

\$10 – Nutritious Hot Meal

\$30 – Technology Lessons

\$60 - Eyeglasses

For easy access online:

https://support.iocc.org/site/Donation2?df_id=4990&mfc_pref=T&4990.donation=form1&utm_source=Website&utm_medium=HomepageBanner&utm_term=GivingTuesday&_ga=2.37300064.1189731420.1575250414-2028624923.1575250414

Or you can mail a check to: IOCC, 110 West Road, Suite 360, Baltimore, MD 21204

Contact: Fr. Harry happas@svots.edu



PARISH NEWS

Funeral

Jim Kambas - Nov 12 @ St. Barbara in Orange

GOYA FUNDRAISER Discount Cards Are Back!!

For only \$20 you get a 10% discount at some great local establishments.
They make great stocking stuffers!!

**ARCHANGELS GOYA**
****DISCOUNT CARD****
\$20

Stamford:
All Star Café @ Chelsea Piers New Wave Seafood
Atlantic Street House Pine Hill Deli & Grill
Bull's Head Diner Ron's Deli
Donut Delight Season's Café
Elm Street Diner Springdale Diner
Kouzina Summer St. Pizza, Deli & Rest.
Liz Sue Bagels Tomato Tomato (excl. alcohol)
Lucky's

Valid 12/1/2019 thru 11/30/20

**ARCHANGELS GOYA**
****DISCOUNT CARD****
\$20

Norwalk: Caffé Social Jordan's Pizza & Restaurant Post Road Diner Silver Star Diner Uncle Joe's Pizza & Restaurant	Darien: Darien Diner Darien Florist (20% over \$50) Two Greek Women (phone orders only) New Canaan: New Canaan Diner
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*10% off total bill unless noted; card must be present for discount
Valid 12/1/2019 thru 11/30/20*

Please see Antonia in the office or ask a GOYAn or their Advisors Maria Otis or Rebecca Kelesidis to purchase your cards. Discount card fundraisers are a win-win for all. Businesses benefit because they bring in more customers and you will save money every time you use the card. Please help support our GOYAns by purchasing your card today! Thank you!

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

AHEPA

For questions or membership applications contact Nicholas Nikas 203-554-5570 or niketes@yahoo.com.