



January 2014

TheWay

St. Andrew
Greek Orthodox Church

"I am the resurrection and the life.
He who believes in Me, though he may
die, he shall live. And whoever lives
and believes in Me shall never die."

St. John 11:25-26



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Ministries of St. Andrew

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Catechetical School-Cindy Katris.....	269-7644
Billie Limberopoulos....	485-7755
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Angela Magrames.....	259-4068
Good Samaritans – Terri Stavros.....	289-5000
GOYA –.....	
Hellenic Dance Troupe – Tina Assimios.	288-4105
Hellenic Cultural Society –	
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Library – Bruno Zovich.....	246-1408
Little Angels--Mary Scott.....	850-2831
Offertory – Andrew Manos.....	273-1298
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Please Note: Because the outside cover of the bulletin is an Icon, for proper disposal remove the front cover and burn it. Thank you.

Pastoral Message

THREE MAJOR HOLY DAYS OF THE SAVIOR CHRIST

The Circumcision of Christ

On the eighth day after His birth Christ received circumcision, as the Old Testament Jewish law provided. Because He was born and lived in a particular environment, He kept all its regulations and customs. Nevertheless His circumcision must be interpreted within the theology of the self-emptying (Kenosis) which He accepted for the salvation of the human race.

As the Fathers decided to celebrate the Nativity of Christ on the 25th of December, it is natural that the circumcision, which was performed after eight days, is celebrated on the first of January, just eight days after His birth. Therefore on that day the troparia (hymns) bring out the theological importance of circumcision. This troparion is well known: “The Savior, condescending to the race of men, in swaddling clothes accepted circumcision, He did not abhor the cutting of His flesh...” Just as, out of love and charity, He accepted to be wrapped in swaddling clothes, Christ also accepted the circumcision of His flesh. This extreme condescension and kenosis of Christ is regarded by the Church as a great feast of the Lord.

The word of God to Abraham by which circumcision was established also shows the most basic reason. God said: “and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you” (Genesis 17:11). In other words, it is an agreement between God and His own people, it is a testament. Such an agreement must be confirmed with blood. We see this also in the New Testament, for God’s new agreement with men is confirmed by the blood of Christ.

Circumcision was a mark of recognition that one belonged to the people of God. “So as to be a sign that this people is dedicated by it”. According to the interpreters, circumcision in itself was not a testament, but a sign of the testament and agreement.

Furthermore, circumcision was also a foreshadowing of Baptism which would be given at the appropriate time, through the incarnation of the Son and Logos (Word) of God, because in reality baptism is circumcision of the heart, as we shall see.

Christ accepted circumcision in order to show that He had assumed true human nature. And this is very important, for in the early Church a heresy had appeared that was called docetism, which maintained that Christ did not assume true human nature, a really human body, but that it was seeming and imagined body. This led to the conclusion that Christ was not crucified on the Cross, since He did not have real body, but He deceived the Jews. But such a view does not save man. How can man be saved if Christ did not assume the real human nature? Therefore, as Saint Epiphanius says, “Christ was circumcised in order to show that “He had in truth taken flesh upon Himself.”

Through circumcision men become good Israelites, God’s chosen people. Through Baptism and the family life in Christ men become children of God, they attain sonship by grace and they conquer death.

Therefore Christ’s circumcision suggests to us the circumcision of the heart. Through the Mysterion (sacrament) and ascetic life we become members of the Body of Christ. Christ’s condescension becomes our ascent.

The Meeting of Christ

Forty days after His birth in the flesh, Christ was presented at the Temple in accordance with legal convention. And because there in the Temple He was received by persons moved by the Spirit, and especially because Symeon took Him into his arms, this feast is also called a Meeting (‘Hpapante’ in Greek).

The Church appointed this great feast of the Lord and the Mother of God to be celebrated on the 2nd February, because it is the fortieth day after the 25th of December, when the Nativity of Christ in the flesh is celebrated. In this way the year is divided by the turning points in the divine economy and blesses them. At the same time it makes it possible for man to be initiated into the great mystery of the Incarnation of the Son and Logos (Word) of God.

God Himself, that is to say the unincarnate Logos (Word) of God, gave the Commandment of purification on the fortieth day to Moses and it has been established for all the Israelites. This Commandment was given to Moses even before the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, before they crossed the Red Sea.

According to Saint Gregory Palamas, Christ had no need of purification, but since ritual purification was legislated in the Old Testament for both the parents and the children, He did it in order to obey the law which He Himself had given. Christ had no need of ritual purification, because He was conceived without seed and given birth without loss of virginity.

God's Commandment was clear: "Sanctify to me all the first-born, whatever opens the womb" (Exodus 13:2). This commandment is at the same time a prophecy, which refers to the Incarnation of the Son and Logos (Word) of God.

One of the most important and central persons in the Meeting, apart, of course, from Christ and the Panagia (All-Holy Mother of God), was Symeon, "the righteous and devout", who was granted to welcome Christ, to take Him in his arms and to recognize Him by the power and energy of the Holy Spirit. In fact he is a great personality in that he saw Christ and in what he said at that moment.

Apart from Saint Symeon the receiver of God, in the Temple there was also Anna, the Prophetess, who was granted to recognize God and to proclaim that He was her Redeemer. Anna was eighty-four years old and was widowed after having lived with her husband for seven years (St. Luke 2:36-40).

No sooner had St. Symeon received Christ in his embrace that he exclaimed: "Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for my eyes have seen thy salvation which thou has prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel" (St. Luke 2:29-31). This is a magnificent expression, which the Church has taken over and placed at the end of the Vespers service, as well as in other services, such as the Thanksgiving after Holy Communion of the Holy Gifts.

According to Saint Athanasius the Great, it is our task to liken ourselves to righteous Symeon and Anna the Prophetess. We too must meet Christ with wisdom, purity, guilelessness, forgiveness and in general with love for God and mankind. No one can meet Christ, the True Life, in any other way.

The meeting of Christ shows that Christ is the Life and Light of men and that man should aim to attain this personal light and personal life.

The Divine Theophany

The feast of the Theophany refers to the Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan by Saint John the Forerunner, who is called the Baptist. This took place when Christ reached the age of thirty years, before He began His formal work of teaching and before His later sufferings for the salvation of the human race.

The event of Christ's Baptism by Saint John the Forerunner in the River Jordan is called Theophany and Epiphany. In the early Church the feasts of the Nativity and the Theophany were celebrated together on the same day (6th January). In the fourth century the feasts were separated, and Christmas was transferred to 25th December, the day on which the Gentiles celebrated the sun god and the Christians the Sun of Righteousness. Likewise it is called the feast of Lights, as Saint Gregory the Theologian characterizes it, because of the baptism, illumination of the catechumens, and because of the lighting of fires.

The word 'theophany' comes from the apostolic passage "God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by Angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed in the world, received up in glory" (1 Timothy 3:16), and relates mostly to Christ's Nativity. The word 'Epiphany' comes from the apostolic passage "the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11), and is related mostly to Christ's Baptism, for it was then that people recognized the Grace of Divinity.

In any case it is a fact that on the day of Christ's Baptism, with the manifestation of the Holy Trinity and the confession of the Worthy Forerunner, we have the official confession that the Son and Logos (Word) of God is the "one of the Holy Trinity" Who became man to save the human race from sin, the devil and death.

In the patristic tradition the Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan is connected with the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites. Just as it was by the wonder-working energy of the Unincarnate Logos (Word), through Moses, that the Egyptians were engulfed and the Israelites were freed, so also here by the power of the Incarnate Logos (Word), corrupt and perverted man is reformed and the dragons are crushed, that is to say, the demons lose their power.

During Christ's Baptism the Holy Trinity appeared. One of the purposes of the Divine Incarnation, as well as of the Baptism of Christ was the revelation of the Trinitarian God, that although God has ONE ESSENCE AND NATURE, yet He is of THREE PERSONS (YPOSTASEIS), FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT. So the voice of the Father is heard witnessing and giving assurance that He Who is in the Jordan at the moment is His Son, while the Holy Spirit also appears "like a dove", as a dove.

The same revelation of the Trinitarian God and the same assurance of the Father also took place shortly before Christ's Passion, at His Transfiguration, which took place on Mt. Tabor.

Saint Gregory Palamas also analyzes very theologically why the Trinitarian God is manifested at that time. He teaches that the Trinitarian God is manifested in the creation and recreation of man. The shaping of man is a common energy of the Trinitarian God, since the "Father, through the Son in the Holy Spirit makes all things". Moreover, it says in Holy Scripture that the Trinitarian God decided to create man: "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). The Father made man in the image of the Logos (Word) and breathed life into him with the Holy Spirit. And since the energy of the Trinitarian God is common to the Three, the whole Holy Trinity took part in man's creation. The Trinitarian God, then, had to be manifested in the re-shaping and re-creation of man. Moreover, after His Baptism Christ began His formal work for the salvation of the human race.

Christ was baptized in order to observe the law and to bring His Grace to the water, to the whole of creation and to man. So He gave to each one of us the possibility of attaining the Grace of adoption, of theophany in our personal life. This manifestation of God constitutes 'Theognosia' the knowledge of God, and since knowledge of God is an existential fact, it also brings salvation.

(Source: The Feasts of the Lord by Metropolitan of Nafpaktos, Hierotheos C. Vlachos)

Please note: We, as Orthodox Christians, speak of the baptism of Christ and NOT His Christening. The Greek word for baptism «βαπτίζω» means to immerse in the water. "Christening" is NOT an Orthodox Christian term or word for the Mystery of Baptism. Christening is usually used for the christening of ships when they break a bottle of champagne on it and a name is given to it.

YOUR PRAYERS HELP...

"...I was sick and you visited Me..." St. Matthew 25:36. "Holy Father, Physician of our souls and bodies have mercy, forgive and heal thy servants." The following brothers and sisters in Christ need your constant prayers and love, *recovering at home or ill at home/hospital*:

In nursing homes or home bound: Mary Verongos (home), Esther Magrames (home), Mary Manos (home), Bill and Betty Kanalos (Hearth at Juday Creek), Amelia Morris (Miller's Merry Manor, Walkerton), Joan Rekos (Signature), Helen Kaldis, Mary Rudhman (home), and Telesila Yustwan (Home).

Ecclesiastical Calendar

Wed, Jan 1	St. Basil the Great Circumcision of Christ 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy	Fri, Jan 17	St. Anthony 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy Vespers 4:30pm
Fri, Jan 3	Paraklesis to Theotokos 9am at Holy Dormition Chapel Vespers 4:30pm	Sat, Jan 18	Sts. Athanasios & Cyril 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy Great Vespers 5pm
Sat, Jan 4	Great Vespers 5pm	Sun, Jan 19	Sunday of Ten Lepers 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy
Sun, Jan 5	Sunday Before Theophany 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy Great Vespers for the Forefeast of Theophany 7pm	Mon, Jan 20	Orthros 9am Vespers 4:30pm
Mon, Jan 6	Holy Theophany/Epiphany 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy Blessing of Waters (Agiasmos) Great Vespers for the Forefeast of St. John the Baptist 7pm	Tue, Jan 21	Orthros 9am Vespers 4:30pm
Tue, Jan 7	St. John the Baptist 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy Vespers 4:30pm	Wed, Jan 22	Paraklesis to St Nektarios 9am Great Vespers 4:30pm
Wed, Jan 8	Paraklesis to St Nektarios 9am Vespers 4:30pm	Fri, Jan 24	Paraklesis to Theotokos 9a at Holy Dormition Chapel Vespers 4:30pm
Fri, Jan 10	Paraklesis to Theotokos 9a at Holy Dormition Chapel Vespers 4:30pm	Sat, Jan 25	St. Gregory 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy Great Vespers 5pm
Sat, Jan 11	Great Vespers 5pm	Sun, Jan 26	Sunday of Zacchaeus 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy
Fri, Jan 12	Sunday After Theophany 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy	Mon, Jan 27	Orthros 9am Vespers 4:30pm
Mon, Jan 13	Orthros 9am Vespers 4:30pm	Tue, Jan 28	St. Ephraim the Syrian 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy Vespers 4:30pm
Tue, Jan 14	Fathers Slain at Sinai & Raitho Apodosis of Theophany 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy Vespers 4:30pm	Wed, Jan 29	Paraklesis to St. Nektarios 9am Vespers 4:30pm
Wed, Jan 15	Paraklesis to St Nektarios 9am Vespers 4:30pm	Thu, Jan 30	Three Hierarchs 9:00 Orthros 10:00 Divine Liturgy
		Fri, Jan 31	Paraklesis to Theotokos 9a at Holy Dormition Chapel Vespers 4:30pm

Monthly Calendar

Wed, Jan 1	Office Closed
Fri, Jan 10	Bulletin Information Deadline
Sun, Jan 12	Vasilopita Sunday

Mark Your Calendars

February 3	Good Samaritans 6:30pm
February 22	Apokreatiko Glendi
June 6-8, 2014	Grecian Festival
June 12-14 2015	Grecian Festival

BLESSING OF HOMES AND BUSINESSES

Father George will be blessing homes and businesses in January. Please call the office to set up an appointment if you would like a blessing done. Business blessings should be scheduled either before they open, after they close or on a day they are not open at all. Thank you.

Ἡ Ὑπαπαντή τοῦ Χριστοῦ

Μητροπολίτου Ἱεροθέου Σ. Βλάχου

Σαράντα ἡμέρες ἀπὸ τὴν κατὰ σάρκα Γέννησίν Του ὁ Χριστὸς προσεφέρθηκε στὸν Ναό, σύμφωνα μὲ τὰ καθιερωμένα ἀπὸ τὸν νόμο. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἐκεῖ στὸν Ναό τοῦ ἐγίνε υποδοχὴ ἀπὸ πνευματοκίνητους ἀνθρώπους, καὶ μάλιστα ἐπειδὴ ὁ Συμεὼν τὸν πῆρε στὴν ἀγκαλιά του, γι' αὐτὸ καὶ λέγεται Ὑπαπαντή. Ἡ λέξις προέρχεται ἀπὸ τὸ ρῆμα ὑπαντάω καὶ σημαίνει ἐρχομαι σὲ συνάντηση κάποιου.

Ἡ Ἐκκλησία καθόρισε ἡ μεγάλη αὐτὴ Δεσποτικοθεομητορική εορτὴ νὰ εορτάζεται τὴν 2αν Φεβρουαρίου, γιατί αὐτὴ ἡ ἡμέρα εἶναι ἡ τεσσαρακοστὴ ἀπὸ τὴν 25^η Δεκεμβρίου, πού εορτάζεται ἡ Γέννησις τοῦ Χριστοῦ κατὰ σάρκα.

Ὁ Ἰδιος ὁ Θεός, δηλαδή ὁ ἄσαρκος Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἔδωσε τὴν ἐντολὴ τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ κατὰ τὴν τεσσαρακοστὴ ἡμέρα στὸν Μωϋσὴ καὶ εἶχε καθιερωθῇ γιὰ ὅλους τοὺς Ἰσραηλίτας. Καὶ μάλιστα ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτὴ δόθηκε στὸν Μωϋσὴ πρὶν ἀκόμη γίνῃ ἡ ἐξοδος τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν ἀπὸ τὴν Αἴγυπτο, δηλαδή πρὶν τὴν διάβασή τους ἀπὸ τὴν Ερυθρὰ θάλασσα...

Κατὰ τὸν ἅγιο Γρηγόριο τὸν Παλαμά, ὁ Χριστὸς δὲν εἶχε ἀνάγκη καθαρισμοῦ, ἀφοῦ ὁ καθαρμὸς νομοθετήθηκε στὴν Παλαιὰ Διαθήκη καὶ γιὰ τοὺς γεννήτορας καὶ γιὰ τὰ γεννώμενα, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἔκανε χάριν ὑπακοῆς στὸν Νόμο πού Αὐτὸς ἔδωσε. Δὲν εἶχε ἀνάγκη καθαρμοῦ ὁ Χριστὸς, γιατί συνελήφθη ἀσπύρως καὶ γεννήθηκε ἀφθόρως...

Εἶναι συγκινητικὴ ἡ σκηνὴ πού ὁ Χριστὸς προσφέρεται ὡς νήπιο, ὡς βρέφος στὸν Ναό. Ὁ προαιώνιος Θεός, πού ταυτόχρονα ὡς Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἦταν πάντοτε ἐνωμένος μὲ τὸν Πατέρα Του καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, καὶ διηύθυνε τὸν κόσμον, ὅλα τὰ σύμπαντα, παρουσιάζεται ὡς βρέφος στὸν Ναό, εὐρισκόμενος στὴν ἀγκαλιά τῆς μητέρας Του...

Ἐνα ἀπὸ τὰ σημαντικὰ καὶ κεντρικὰ πρόσωπα τῆς Ὑπαπαντῆς, ἐκτὸς βέβαι, ἀπὸ τὸν Χριστό καὶ τὴν Παναγία, ἦταν ὁ Συμεὼν, «ὁ δίκαιος καὶ ευλαβής», πού ἀξιώθηκε νὰ προϋπαντήσῃ τὸν Χριστό, νὰ τὸν λάβῃ στὰ χέρια του καὶ νὰ τὸν ἀναγνωρίσῃ μὲ τὴν δύναμη καὶ ἐνέργεια τοῦ Παναγίου Πνεύματος. Πραγματικά, πρόκειται γιὰ μιὰ μεγάλη προσωπικότητα, τόσο γιὰ τὸ ὅτι εἶδε τὸν Χριστό, ὅσο καὶ γιὰ τὰ ὅσα εἶπε τὴν στιγμὴ ἐκείνη...

Ἐκτὸς ἀπὸ τὸν ἅγιο Συμεὼν τὸν Θεοδόχον, στὸν Ναό παρευρέθηκε καὶ ἡ Ἄννα, ἡ Προφῆτις, πού ἀξιώθηκε νὰ ἀναγνωρίσῃ τὸν Θεό καὶ νὰ διακηρύξῃ ὅτι Αὐτὸς εἶναι ὁ λυτρωτὴς τῆς. Ἡ Ἄννα βρισκόταν στὴν ἡλικία τῶν ογδόντα τεσσάρων ἐτῶν, καὶ ἦταν χήρα, ἀφοῦ εἶχε ζήσει μὲν τὸν ἄνδρα τῆς ἐπτὰ χρόνια...

Μόλις ὁ δίκαιος Συμεὼν ἔλαβε στὴν ἀγκαλιά του τὸν Χριστό ἀνεφώνησε: «νῦν ἀπολύεις τὸν δούλον σου, δέσποτα, κατὰ τὸ ρῆμα σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ, ὅτι εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου τὸ σωτήριόν σου, ὃ ἡτοίμασας κατὰ πρόσωπον πάντων τῶν λαῶν, φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν καὶ δόξαν λαοῦ σου Ἰσραὴλ» (Λουκ. β' 29-31)...

Ἡ δευτέρη προφητεία τοῦ ἁγίου Συμεὼν, πού ἀναφερόταν στὴν Παναγία, εἶναι ἡ ἐξῆς: «καὶ σοῦ δέ αὐτῆς τὴν ψυχὴν διελεύσεται ρομφαία, ὅπως ἂν ἀποκαλυφθῶσιν ἐκ πολλῶν καρδιῶν διαλογισμοί» (Λουκ. β' 35).

Προφανῶς ἡ προφητεία αὐτὴν ἀναφέρεται στὸν πόνο καὶ τὴν θλίψη τῆς Θεοτόκου πάνω στὸν Σταυρό, ὅταν θὰ ἐβλεπε τὸν Υἱό τῆς, πού εἶναι ταυτόχρονα Υἱὸς Θεοῦ, νὰ πάσχῃ καὶ νὰ υποφέρῃ. Ἡ Παναγία δὲν υπέφερε οὔτε πόνεσε κατὰ τὴν γέννησι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀκριβῶς γιατί τὸν συνέλαβε ἀσπύρως καὶ τὸν γέννησε ἀφθόρως. Ἐπρεπε, λοιπόν, νὰ πονέσῃ πολὺ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸ τῆς ἐξόδου.

Ἡ Ὑπαπαντή τοῦ Χριστοῦ δείχνει ὅτι ὁ Χριστός εἶναι ἡ ζωὴ καὶ τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ ὅτι ὁ ἄνθρωπος πρέπει νὰ ἀποβλέπῃ στὴν ἀπόκτηση αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἐνυποστάτου φωτός καὶ τῆς ἐνυποστάτου ζωῆς. Ἡ Ἐκκλησία ψάλλει παρακλητικά: «Λάμπρυνόν μου τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὸ φῶς τὸ αἰσθητόν, ὅπως ἰδῶ καθαρῶς καὶ κηρύξω σε Θεόν». Γιά νὰ κηρύξῃ κανεὶς τὸν Θεό πρέπει νὰ τὸν δῇ καθαρὰ. Μόνον οἱ ὁρῶντες τὸν Θεό ἢ τουλάχιστον ἐκεῖνοι πού δέχονται τὴν πείρα τῶν ὁρῶντων, μποροῦν νὰ γίνωνται διδάσκαλοι. Ἀλλά, γιὰ νὰ δῇ κανεὶς τὸν Θεό πρέπει προηγουμένως νὰ λαμπρυνθῇ, νὰ φωτισθῇ ὡς πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴ καὶ τίς σωματικές αἰσθήσεις. Τότε ἡ εορτὴ τῆς Ὑπαπαντῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ γίνεται καὶ εορτὴ τῆς ὑπαπαντῆς τοῦ κάθε πιστοῦ.

Τὰ Θεία Θεοφάνεια

Τό γεγονός τῆς Βαπτίσεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ στὸν Ἰορδάνη ποταμὸ ἀπὸ τὸν Ἰωάννη τὸν Πρόδρομο λέγεται Θεοφάνεια καὶ Ἐπιφάνεια. Στὴν ἀρχαία Ἐκκλησία τὴν ἴδια ἡμέρα (6 Ἰανουαρίου), εόρταζαν μαζί τὴν εορτὴ τῶν Χριστουγέννων καὶ τὴν εορτὴ τῶν Θεοφανείων. Κατὰ τὸν 4^{ον} αἰῶνα χωρίστηκαν οἱ εορτές, ὁπότε τὰ Χριστούγεννα μεταφέρθηκαν στὶς 25 Δεκεμβρίου, τὴν ἡμέρα πού οἱ Ἐθνικοὶ εόρταζαν τὸν θεὸ ἥλιο καὶ οἱ Χριστιανοὶ τὸν ἥλιο τῆς δικαιοσύνης. Ἐπίσης λέγεται καὶ ἡμέρα τῶν Φώτων, ὅπως τὴν χαρακτηρίζει ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ὁ Θεολόγος, λόγω τοῦ βαπτίσματος, τοῦ φωτισμοῦ τῶν κατηχουμένων καὶ λόγω τῆς φωταψίας.

Ἡ εορτὴ τῶν Θεοφανείων ἢ Ἐπιφανείων δείχνει πολλές καὶ μεγάλες θεολογικὲς ἀλήθειες.

Πρῶτον. Ὅσοι βαπτίζονται καὶ χρίονται λέγονται Χριστιανοί, καὶ διότι εἶναι μαθητὲς τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ διότι δέχθηκαν τὸ χρίσμα ἀπὸ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα. Ἀλλωστε, τὸ ἓνα δὲν ἀναιρεῖ τὸ ἄλλο, ἀφοῦ εἴμαστε μαθητὲς Χριστοῦ διὰ τῆς Χάριτος πού λαμβάνουμε μὲ τὰ μυστήρια.

Δεύτερον. Μὲ τὸ Βάπτισμα λαμβάνει κανεὶς τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ Πνεύματος, ἀλλὰ ὅμως τὸν λαμβάνει μὲ τὴν δυνατότητα ὁλοκληρώσεως. Ὁ ἅγιος Γρηγόριος ὁ Παλαμὰς λέγει ὅτι, ὅπως τὸ βρέφος ἔλαβε ἀπὸ τοὺς γονεῖς του τὴν δυνατότητα νὰ γίνῃ ἀνὴρ καὶ κληρονόμος τῆς πατρικῆς κληρονομίας, ὅταν θὰ ἔλθῃ στὴν κατάλληλη ἡλικία, τὴν χάνει ὅμως ἂν ἐν τῷ μεταξύ πεθάνῃ, τὸ ἴδιο συμβαίνει καὶ μὲ τὸν Χριστιανό. Μὲ τὸ Βάπτισμα ἔλαβε τὴν δύναμη νὰ γίνῃ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ κληρονόμος τῶν αἰωνίων ἀγαθῶν, ἂν ἐν τῷ μεταξύ δὲν πεθάνῃ ἀπὸ τὸν νοητὸν θάνατο, πού εἶναι ἡ ἁμαρτία. Ἐπομένως, ἂν ὁ ἄνθρωπος χάσῃ τὴν κοινωνία του μὲ τὸν Θεό, ἂν πεθάνῃ πνευματικά, χάνει τὴν δυνατότητα πού ἔλαβε μὲ τὸ Βάπτισμα. Βέβαια, ἡ Χάρη δὲν χάνεται, δὲν εγκαταλείπει τὴν καρδιά τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἀλλὰ δὲν ἐνεργεῖ τὴν σωτηρία.

Τρίτον. Ὅταν ἡ Χάρη τοῦ Βαπτίσματος σκεπασθῇ ἀπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτία, τότε πρέπει ὁποσδήποτε νὰ ἀκολουθήσῃ τὸ βάπτισμα τῆς μετανοίας καὶ τῶν δακρύων.

Ὁ Χριστὸς βαπτίσθηκε γιὰ νὰ τηρήσῃ τὸν Νόμο καὶ νὰ φέρῃ τὴν Χάρη Του στό νερό, σέ ὅλη τὴν κτίση καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπο. Ἐδῶσε, λοιπόν, τὴν δυνατότητα στὸν καθένα νὰ ἀποκτήσῃ τὴν Χάρη τῆς υιοθεσίας, τὰ Θεοφάνεια στὴν προσωπικὴ του ζωὴ. Αὐτὴ ἡ φανέρωση τοῦ Θεοῦ συνιστᾷ τὴν Θεογνωσία, τὴν γνώση τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἡ Θεογνωσία εἶναι ὑπαρξιακὸ γεγονός, γι' αὐτὸ καὶ αὐτὴ προξενεῖ τὴν σωτηρία.

THE DEFINITION OF A GREEK ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN AND PARISHIONER ACCORDING TO THE GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ARTICLE 18, Sections 1-7 of the Uniform Parish Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America state the following:

Section 1: Every person who is baptized and chrismated according to the rites of the Orthodox Church is a parishioner. The religious, moral and social duties of a parishioner are to **APPLY THE TENETS OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH to his/her life and to: ADHERE TO AND LIVE ACCORDING TO THE TENETS OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH; FAITHFULLY ATTEND THE DIVINE LITURGY AND OTHER WORSHIP SERVICES; PARTICIPATE REGULARLY IN THE HOLY SACRAMENTS; RESPECT ALL ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY AND ALL GOVERNING BODIES OF THE CHURCH; BE OBEDIENT IN MATTERS OF FAITH, PRACTICE AND ECCLESIASTICAL ORDER; CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH'S SACRED MISSION; and BE AN EFFECTIVE WITNESS AND EXAMPLE OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH AND TRADITIONS TO ALL PEOPLE.**

A parishioner in **GOOD STANDING practices ALL THE RELIGIOUS AND MORAL DUTIES as described in this Section 1.** At a minimum, a parishioner in good standing must: be eighteen (18) years of age or over; be current in his or her stewardship and other financial obligations to the Parish, abide by all the regulations herein stated and the Parish Bylaws; and cooperate in every way towards the welfare and well being of the Parish. (Stewardship is recommended to be ten percent (10 % of one's income as stated in Holy Scripture to help meet the financial obligations of the Parish, the Metropolis and the Archdiocese.)

Section 2: Any person wishing to be a parishioner in good standing in more than one Parish must remit his or her Stewardship financial obligation to each Parish as stated in Section 1 of this Article. A parishioner wishing to move from one Parish to another must present a letter of transfer from the Priest of the Parish from which he or she is moving stating that he or she is in good standing.

Section 3: NO PERSON SHALL BE DEEMED A PARISHIONER IN GOOD STANDING WHILE: NOT ADHERING TO THE STANDARDS OUTLINED IN SECTIONS 1 AND 2 OF THIS ARTICLE; retaining affiliation in an Orthodox Parish which defies the jurisdiction or the ecclesiastical authority of the Archdiocese; **BEING A MEMBER OF OR PRACTICING A NON-ORTHODOX FAITH OR OTHER RELIGION;** and **DELIBERATELY DISREGARDING AND TRANSGRESSING THE MORAL LAW OF THE CHURCH.**

Section 4: The Priest shall judge any cases of special circumstances justifying the waiver of a parishioner's stewardship financial obligations.

Section 5: A parishioner in good standing has the right to attend, participate and vote at Parish Assemblies, as well as to vote in Parish Council elections. Each such parishioner may also be nominated for election to the Parish Council or to represent the Parish at a Local Assembly or the Congress.

Section 6: An Orthodox Christian parishioner in good standing at his or her canonical Orthodox Parish may serve as a sponsor in another Parish without being obligated to become a member in good standing at the Parish where the sacrament will take place. A parishioner may serve as a sponsor in another Parish by presenting a letter of good standing from his or her home Parish Priest.

Section 7: Each Parish shall maintain a Parish Record which shall include, at a minimum, the following information concerning each parishioner: baptismal and family name, occupation (optional), dates of baptism and/or chrismation and marriage, complete family record of spouse and children, date of entry into the Parish indicating if transferred from another Parish, date of death, and such other information that shall be deemed appropriate.

ST. ANDREW PARISH BY-LAWS

PARISHIONERS

Article 2, Section 5:

For the purpose of determining a parishioner's entitlement to notice, or to vote at any Parish Assembly, or to make a determination of good standing for any other purpose, the parishioner must meet the following standards:

- A. A parishioner who has paid his/her stewardship pledge in FULL FOR THE PREVIOUS YEAR AND HAS SIGNED AND SUBMITTED HIS/HER STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE CARD FOR THE CURRENT YEAR IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE AT THE SPRING PARISH ASSEMBLY.
- B. A parishioner who has paid his/her stewardship pledge in FULL for the previous year and who has paid SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT (75%) OF HIS/HER STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE FOR THE CURRENT YEAR is eligible to vote at the FALL PARISH ASSEMBLY and in the election of Parish Council members.
- C. A new parishioner of the Parish may vote in a Parish Assembly or Election of Parish Council if he/she has been ENROLLED AT LEAST THREE (3) MONTHS PRIOR THERETO. His/her stewardship pledge must be fifty percent (50%) paid to be eligible to vote at the Fall Parish Assembly and the Election of Parish Council members.

Section 6:

Parishioners who sign a stewardship pledge card as a family (husband and wife) are each entitled to the rights and privileges of a parishioner in good standing provided that the provisions of the above Section 5 are met.

Section 7:

The waiver of a parishioner's financial obligation by the Priest shall not exclude his/her name from the roster of parishioners in good standing.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PRIEST AND PARISH COUNCIL ARE OBLIGATED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE TO IMPLEMENT THE UNIFORM PARISH REGULATIONS AS WELL AS THE PARISH BY LAWS. IT IS UP TO EVERY ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN TO COMPLY AND TO ADHERE TO THEM. THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION

PLEASE NOTE: A Letter of Good Standing CANNOT be issued to any Orthodox Christian who doesn't adhere to the UPR, Article 18, Section 1 (see below). Anyone requesting any official document from the parish registry must be a current and active member of our parish and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

2013 Financial Report

Oct 13 Income	Oct 13 Expenses	Monthly Balance	Oct 12 Income	Oct 12 Expenses	Oct 12 Balance
\$26,052.00	\$23,656.40	\$2,395.60	\$18,948.25	\$34,936.34	--\$15,988.09

YTD 13 Income	YTD 13 Expense	YTD 13 Balance	12 YTD Inc	12 YTD Ex	12 YTD Bal
\$370,083.20	\$357,864.75	\$12,218.45	\$516,040.67	\$501,425.41	\$14,615.26

Stewardship Report

Oct Pledge Income	Oct Pledge Goal	Difference goal/income	YTD 13 Pledge Inc	YTD 13 Pledge Goal	Difference goal/income
\$17,261.00	\$16,500.00	\$761.00	\$133,208.00	\$158,500.00	--\$25,292.00

*Year-to-date as of **November 30, 2013**

St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church
South Bend, IN
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
November 19, 2013

Opening:

The President called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM with a quorum met. The meeting began with a prayer led by Rev. George Konstantopoulos.

Members Present:

President: Hristos Kirgios, Vice President: Tina Assimos, Treasurer: Pano Arvanitis, Secretary: John Madias, Bill Giannakakis, Nick Giannakakis, Alex Himonas, Dr. George Mighion, Kelly Popyk, Chris Strafford and Mary Jo Tirikos.

Members Absent:

Tom Limberopoulos and Pete Mattheos.

Guests: 1st Source Bank (Michelle Miller and Dan Peppler)

Michelle Miller and Dan Peppler presented information (pamphlets) and commentary regarding services from 1st Source Bank. They showed potential savings for both Business Banking and Cash Management services. Among the items discussed, below are some highlights and action items.

- 1) 1st Source also provides Insurance Services – **Michelle to provide additional information to Hristos.**
- 2) Direct deposit is available for Church employees.
- 3) Automatic withdrawals for Stewardship can be provided for parishioners.
- 3) 1st Source can provide Swipe Cards for Festival and substantial savings could be realized.
- 4) Swipe Cards can also be utilized to replace the current credit card machine for an apparent savings.

Hristos to review information about current credit card machine.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the October 2013 meeting were reviewed.

Alex Himonas moved to accept the minutes as written. Chris Stratford seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report:

A. Pano reviewed the October 2013 Treasurer's Report.

- 1) P1: General Fund dropped by \$4868.51.
- 2) P2: Anna is still working to eliminate the negative payroll liabilities.
- 3) P3: Capital Improvements donation of \$9,373.70 is showing for upstairs kitchen renovation.
- 4) P3: Current year Stewardship is down \$3,936 YTD.
- 5) P5: Had an unexpected cost for Fire/Gas Inspection of \$641.31. It was not part of the budget.

Pano will add to next year's budget.

Dr. George Mighion moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Mary Jo Tirikos seconded the motion. All were in favor.

B. Pano updated the group regarding the Catering Lease.

- 1) Callahan's agreed to a 10% increase or \$250 per month. The new contract will run from January 2014 to December 31, 2019. Pano recommended that a new contract be created utilizing the exact verbiage of the initial contract, only changing the dates.

Hristos will speak to Kris Kurtis. Kris' lawyer wrote the original contract. There was some discussion at a later time in the meeting to utilize a new parishioner, who is a lawyer for Parish Council items.

Tina asked about the bar proceeds in the contract, since bar proceeds are not discussed or collected after an event. The contract includes the bar proceeds in the 60/40 split. Pano and Hristos will discuss with Sam.

Pastor's Report:

1. Father read a letter from St. Constantine and Helen in Merrillville, IN in regards to Stewardship, the need for parishioners to increase their Stewardship and commented to how it relates to our Church and sustaining its financial future.
2. Father reminded everyone of the December 1 luncheon with Bishop Demetrios and hopes everyone can attend. It is a free-will donation and the cost per plate will be approximately \$15 according to the caterer.
- 3) Father mentioned the Parish Council elections on December 8. All applicable Parish Council up for re-election confirmed to Father that they have signed the form provided by Leon Andrews of the Election Committee.
- 4) Father strongly encouraged the Parish Council Members to have a special meeting (separate from the monthly meeting) to watch a video about the meaning of serving on the Parish Council. **It was suggested that we watch the video during the January meeting ("business is slow") when new Council Members have been elected.**

Secretary's Report:

No Report.

President's Report:

A) Hristos indicated that he found a bank statement from Key Bank recently with approximately \$550 balance and its origin is unknown.

None of the Council members knew about the account. Hristos to contact bank to determine if there is a signature card on file.

B) Hristos requested a motion to approve the purchase of a Folding Machine as discussed previously.

John Madias moved to approve the purchase of a Folding Machine from Advanced Imaging Solutions for a cost of \$1,945. Nick Giannakakis seconded the motion. All were in favor.

C) Hristos reminded everyone about the discussion of a roof leak during the last heavy storm. As it turned out, it was not the roof, but a drain that was leaking. However, upon calling the roofing subcontractor, Hristos learned that Chenoweth Roofing Inc. has a lien against the Church and has suspended the warranty. The General Contractor (Lemax) that did the work on the Church went out of business and Chenoweth was not paid. In addition, Hristos learned that other sub-contractor(s) attempted to place a lien against the Church for the same reasons, but were rejected since they did not file their lien before the prescribed time had ended.

There was discussion about the lack of notification/communication from Chenoweth Roofing. A discussion was made to support an attorney from within the Parish (perhaps help with communication). Tina was going to find out if there were any other liens (or any liens in general) against the church through the County. Update: Tina found there were no other liens except for Chenoweth.

Upcoming Dates:

Sunday, December 1: Luncheon with Bishop Demetrios (after the Divine Liturgy)

Sunday, December 8: Parish Council Elections (after the Divine Liturgy)

Sunday, December 8: St. Nicholas Project Gift Due
Tuesday, December 10: Parish Council Meeting at 7:00 PM
Sunday, December 15: Christmas Pageant
Sunday, January 12: Vasilopita Sunday
Saturday, February 22: Apokreatiko Glendi (Chairperson: Tina Assimos)
June 6, 7, 8 2014: Grecian Festival
June 12, 13, 14 2015: Grecian Festival

Old Business:

- A) At the last meeting, it was discussed to add updated No Skateboarding signs and No Parking signs. **Nothing was done since the meeting in October. It was decided that the No Parking and No Skateboarding signs would be combined and posted in two locations (different from previous discussions). Tina will report back to the group at the next meeting.**
- B) Fire and Emergency Escape Plan. **Tina is waiting on the Fire Marshall to finish the packet. Tina plans to contact the police for the Security Plan after receiving the Fire and Emergency Escape Plan.**
- C) Ushers to manage candle purchases during the Divine Liturgy. **No Report at the last meeting.**

New Business:

- A) St. Andrew Feast Day: Tina reported that the Church made \$2,980 from Ticket Sales. Expenses were \$150 for the DJ and \$53 for the decorations, leaving \$2,767. The caterers 60% portion of the event is \$1,500. Therefore, the Church made \$1,267.
- B) Mary Jo mentioned the concrete in need of repair in the area around the hall entrance. She also made the suggestion that this concrete could be lifted rather than replaced to save money.
- C) Mary Jo requested that Ushers be at the front before and during the Divine Liturgy to assist the elderly when entering the Church.

Adjournment:

Alex Himonas motioned for adjournment. Bill Giannakakis seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The meeting closed with a prayer.

ARTICLE 17 OF THE UNIFORM PARISH REGULATIONS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE--CLERGY

Section 1: The Priest by virtue of his canonical ordination and assignment heads and administers the Parish and exercises on its behalf the priestly duties, which consist in shepherding the Parish entrusted to his care, directing its orderly life, preserving its unity and keeping it faithful to its divine purpose. He shall sanctify his parishioners through the administration of the sacraments and the performance of all other prescribed services of worship. He shall also proclaim the Gospel and impart knowledge of the doctrines, traditions, canons and discipline of the Church. Further, he shall guide the growth and progress of the Parish the Christian life through the performance of his pastoral duties. Priests are accountable to their respective Hierarch and will submit a report of their ministry to him at least annually. The Eparchial Synod shall determine the format for these reports.

Section 2: Clergy entering the Archdiocese from the Holy Cross School of Theology, or otherwise, shall be initially assigned by the Archbishop in consultation with the respective Hierarch...

- A. In accordance with the canons and ecclesiastical procedure, neither the Parish Council nor the Parish Assembly is authorized to dismiss a Priest.
- B. All transfers and assignments and changes in a Priest's status shall be reported to the Archdiocese in a timely manner.

Section 3: The Priest shall have charge of all matters pertaining to the spiritual life and growth of the Parish, including, but not limited to, divine worship and related personnel. He shall determine the usage of all sacred vessels and appointments. He shall personally maintain the register books for all marriages, baptisms, chrismations, and funerals that take place at the Parish. In addition, the Priest must submit registry records in a timely manner. He shall also promptly submit all required civil marriage license and documents to the appropriate governmental authorities in a timely manner.

Section 11: It shall be mandatory for each Priest to join and maintain current his participation in the Archdiocesan Pension Program and the Orthodox Health Plan in accordance with the provisions of said program/health plan.

(For all other articles pertaining to the Clergy please consult your pamphlet of the U.P.R)

CHAPTER TWO

ARTICLE 24

PARISH COUNCIL

Section 1: To serve on a Parish Council is a ministry and all those who serve are called to represent Christ and the Orthodox Faith to all whom they meet in all aspects of life. The Parish Council shall consist of the Priest, as the head of the Parish, and a number of elected lay members fixed by the Parish Bylaws or by local statute according to the needs of the Parish. The Parish Council is responsible to the Parish Assembly and to the respective Hierarch for conducting all Parish affairs in keeping with the mission, aims and purposes of the Church as set forth in the Charter and these Regulations...The Priest shall be a non-voting member of the Parish Council.

Section 5: A vacancy on the Parish Council shall be considered to exist in the event of: the death or resignation of a member; the physical or mental incapacity of a member; the invalidation of the election of a member; or the failure of a member to be current in his Stewardship financial obligations to the Parish.

- A. Removal from the Parish Council shall be considered when a member: (1) is not or has ceased to be loyal to the doctrines, canons, worship, discipline, customs and practices of the Church; (2) is in violation of these Regulations or the Hierarchical Encyclicals of the Archdiocese; (3) does not recognize the duly constituted ecclesiastical authorities of the Metropolis or Archdiocese; (4) is guilty of a serious moral transgression; or (5) has violated his or her affirmation of office; or (6) has engaged in actions which do not further the administrative or spiritual well being of the Parish, the Metropolis or the Archdiocese.
- B. In the event that the Priest believes that the removal of a Parish Council member is required for one of the reasons listed in subsections (1) through (5) above, the Priest shall submit his recommendation, in writing, for the removal of the member to the respective Hierarch.
- C. If, the respective Hierarch, upon the recommendation of the Priest, or for any other reason, determines that the removal of a Parish Council member is necessary for one or more of the reasons listed in subsections (1) through (5) above, the respective Hierarch shall render a decision regarding the matter and shall notify the Priest and Parish Council of such decision. If any member (s) of the Parish Council is (are) removed, the matter shall not be brought before a Parish Assembly.
- D. Prior to removing all or a majority of the members of a Parish Council for any reason (s) during the same twelve (12) month period, the respective Hierarch shall consult with and obtain the consent of the Synod.
- E. When an individual or individuals are removed from the Parish Council by the respective Hierarch, , the vacancy(ies) created shall be filled through direct appointment by the respective Hierarch, with a recommendation from the Priest and Parish Council, from among the Parish's parishioners in good standing to fulfill the term of the person removed. The interim Parish Council shall serve for such period of time as the Hierarch may determine, but in no event longer than twelve (12) months.

Section 8: All newly appointed members who fill a vacancy of the Parish Council, must attend a Parish Council Seminar to be conducted by the Priest prior to taking the affirmation of office and assuming the duties of their position.

(Please turn to your pamphlet on the U.P.R. for articles omitted)

St. Andrew's Renovation and Endowment Fund, Inc. (SAREF)

SAREF consists of two separate funds, Renovation and Endowment.

The Renovation Fund consists of restricted assets whose purpose is to provide for the long term repair and renovation needs of St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church with regards to its physical structures and fixtures. Once assets are deposited in the Renovation Fund they are intended to be held indefinitely. Regular disbursements may be issued upon a majority vote of the SAREF Board of Directors. Regular disbursements within a given year cannot exceed 5% of the market value of the Renovation Fund. The current balance of the Renovation fund is **\$19,610.35**

The Endowment Fund consists of restricted assets whose purpose is that of an emergency reserve of St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church. Once assets are deposited into the Endowment Fund they are intended to be held indefinitely. All interest, dividends and other income on the Endowment Fund shall accrue except that only 50% of that income shall be annually transferred and added to the Renovation Fund and subject to withdrawal. NO disbursements of any kind may be taken from the Endowment Fund unless the principal of the Fund is in the amount of \$500,000 and any disbursements MAY NOT decrease the fund to less than \$500,000. The Endowment Fund will never be liable for any debts or obligations of St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church. The current balance of the Endowment Fund is **\$150,641.04**.

Full copies of the SAREF Bylaws are available through the Church office.

The 2013 Saint Andrew Renovation and Endowment Fund Board of Directors is: Tom Limberopoulos, President; Alex Himonas, Vice President; John Madias, Secretary; Christ Kurtis, Treasurer and John Magrames.

Everyone is encouraged to donate towards the fund. Please make it clear, when doing so, if your donation is to go to the Endowment or the Renovation fund.

SAREF (ST. ANDREW'S RENOVATION AND ENDOWMENT FUND, INC.)

I will be pledging as: Individual ☐ Family ☐ Business ☐ For: Renovation ☐ Endowment ☐ Pledge Year: 20__

Name (1): _____ Name (2): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone (1): _____ Work Phone (2): _____

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/we pledge to contribute for Christ's continued work at Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox Church at the level of:

Goodwill \$1,000 ☐ Bronze Member \$5,000 ☐ Silver Member \$10,000 ☐ Gold Member \$25,000 ☐

Platinum Member \$50,000 ☐ Benefactor \$75,000 ☐ Great Benefactor \$100,000 ☐

MEGAS EVERGETIS, above \$100,000 \$ _____ One Time Gift \$ _____

Payment made: \$ _____ monthly \$ _____ quarterly \$ _____ semi-annually \$ _____ annually

\$ _____ per year I have pledged \$ _____ in my will

Signature: (1) _____ (2) _____ Date: _____

Make payments to: SAREF (St. Andrew's Renovation and Endowment Fund, Inc.)

Please detach and send this portion with your payment to: 52455 N. Ironwood Road, South Bend, IN 46635

Protocol for Inviting Orthodox Clergy to Sacraments

It should be noted that if you are inviting an Orthodox Priest or Bishop to participate in a sacrament (Baptism, Wedding or Funeral) the following is the proper protocol to follow:

1. Before an invitation is extended to the visiting clergy, you should **FIRST** get permission from your parish priest to do so.
2. If the invited clergy accepts the invitation, he should then extend a courtesy call to the parish priest to express his desire to participate in the sacrament or funeral service.
3. If the visiting clergy is serving a Metropolis other than the one where the sacrament is taking place, he will need to secure permission

to participate in the sacrament from his home Metropolis AND the Metropolis he will be entering (Chicago). This is the current policy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and all Metropolises.

4. Once the invite has been extended and accepted the family inviting the visiting clergy **MUST** assume all expenses associated with the visit, i.e. traveling, hotel, stipend, etc.

The above procedures are to be followed throughout the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Non-Orthodox clergy may be invited to ATTEND the sacrament, but they may NOT PARTICIPATE

Wedding Information

A NECESSARY REQUIREMENT: No wedding can be booked with the church office UNTIL the prospective couple meets with Father George. The Orthodox parishioner must make an appointment for the couple to discuss the marriage ceremony and various documents needed for the wedding to take place at the parish.

Everyone is asked to remember, that although weddings are happy occasions, we should still be respectful of the fact we are in Church. For rehearsals everyone should be dressed appropriately for church. Wedding gowns should not be sleeveless or strapless unless there is a jacket to go over it. The same for bridesmaids' dresses. If you are using the Church facilities to dress, please clean them up when you are finished. We should also remember to be respectful; no clapping after the ceremony, no loud voices, only Orthodox liturgical music and the traditional wedding march is allowed. The receiving line should be outside the building not the Narthex or Church proper. **NO RICE ALLOWED INSIDE THE CHURCH.**

Days when Marriage is not permitted:

No Wednesdays or Fridays, September 14, December 13-25, January 5-6, Great Lent and Holy Week, Pascha (Easter), Eve of Pentecost, Pentecost, August 1-15 August 29. Any exceptions are made only with the permission of the respective hierarchy.

Affidavit for License to Marry:

The Affidavit should be submitted to the Department of Registry, Metropolis of Chicago NO LESS THAN FOUR MONTHS prior to the anticipated date of wedding. In rare cases of absolute necessity only, the Metropolis will allow communication by facsimile to request permission to marry. In that the required documents have been mailed. By oikonomia,

permission may be given under the full responsibility of the Priest.

Required Information: The exact date of the wedding, exact birth dates and baptism dates, the city, state and country of birth, religion, occupation, date of moving into the Metropolis of Chicago, and the Archdiocese Card number or parish receipt number (for the Orthodox partner) are ALL required. Any previous marriage must be noted, as well as the date of completing the form. **THE AFFIDAVIT WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT PERMISSION TO PERFORM THE WEDDING IF ANY OF THESE ARE NOT COMPLETED.** Both the first and last names of the bride and groom should be recorded in BOTH GREEK AND ENGLISH if they are of Greek descent.

For the Bride: the last name should be her family name or that of a previous spouse. The name of a present spouse should never be used, even if she does use it due to a civil marriage, because the wedding has not yet taken place ECCLESIASTICALLY.

Required Documentation:

1. A certificate that the person is free to marry is required for anyone who has come from another Metropolis after the age of 16. If from another country, this must be issued from the Metropolis in which the person was born and NOT from the parish or community. If from another Metropolis of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, this must be issued from the home parish and verified by the local Metropolitan. Originals ONLY; fax or photocopy is UNACCEPTABLE.
2. If widowed, a certificate of death of the spouse from the previous Orthodox marriage is required.

3. If ecclesiastically divorced, the ORIGINAL divorce Decree is required. If civilly divorced from a non-ecclesiastical marriage, the Priest must see the civil divorce to verify it, but it does not need to be submitted.
4. Form 165 must be submitted by each petitioner if any previous marriage has taken place, be it ECCLESIASTICAL or CIVIL.
5. In any case where one of the two applicants is a non-Orthodox Christian, a photocopy of the person's baptismal certificate must be provided. In the case where the party does not belong to one of the Christian communions, whose baptism is known to be Trinitarian in formula, then a statement from his/her church verifying the fact that the baptism was performed in the Name of the Holy Trinity must be included, along with photocopy certificate, or a signed statement from the petitioning Priest, verifying baptism was Trinitarian in formula.
6. Written consent is required of BOTH parents for any bride or groom under 18 years of age.

A cashier's check or money order made payable to the "Metropolis of Chicago" for \$100 filing fee is required to go with the paperwork.

ITEMS NECESSARY FOR THE MYSTERION OF MARRIAGE

1. Civil license
2. Ecclesiastical license
3. Crowns and two candles
4. Wedding bands (rings)
5. The koumbaro(a) must be in good standing with the Church i.e., must be "baptized and chrismated according to the rites of the Orthodox Church. The religious, moral and social duties of a parishioner are to apply the tenets of the Orthodox Faith to his/her life and to: adhere to and live according to

the tenets of the Orthodox faith; faithfully attending the Divine Liturgy and other worship services; participate regularly in the holy sacraments; respect all ecclesiastical authority and all governing bodies of the Church; be obedient in matters of the Faith, practice and ecclesiastical order; contribute towards the progress of the Church's sacred mission; and be an effective witness and example of the Orthodox Faith and Traditions to all people...be current in his or her stewardship and other financial obligations to the Parish." (Uniform Parish Regulations of the Holy Archdiocese of America). If he/she is a member of another Orthodox parish they MUST bring a letter of good standing from his/her parish priest.

6. Please Note: If the koumbaro(a) was married and divorced civilly but NOT ecclesiastically they CANNOT participate in the sacrament of marriage or any other sacrament of the Church.
7. Orthodox Christians who have absented themselves from the Church for many years deliberately cannot consider themselves in good standing with the Church. Before participating in any of the sacraments he/she must first meet with the parish priest and enter the Church through the sacrament of Holy Confession and Penance.
8. "No person shall be deemed a parishioner in good standing while: NOT adhering to the standards outlined in Sections 1 and 2 of this Article; retaining affiliation in an Orthodox Parish which defies the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authority of the Archdiocese; being a member or practicing a non-Orthodox faith or other religion; and deliberately disregarding and transgressing the moral law of the Church"(Article 18, Section 3 of the UPR).

Ecclesiastical Divorce

Petitions for Ecclesiastical Divorce must include 5 items:

1. The Petitioner's Application. This should include all the requested information, especially the phone numbers and zip codes of both the petitioner and spouse, and their birthplaces. The petitioner should explain why the marriage deteriorated in their own words.
2. The Statement of the Petitioning Priest
3. The Original Certificate of Marriage. Since they are divorcing, they no longer need the original. (They may retain photocopies.) If the Original is lost, an Official Transcript issued by the parish in which the wedding took place is acceptable.

4. The Decree of Dissolution of Marriage issued by the Civil Court. This document will be retained by the Metropolis Office.
5. A money Order or Cashier's Check of \$200 made payable to the "Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago." Personal checks are **NOT** acceptable. The Petitioner must be a steward (supporting member) of the local parish of the current year.

REMINDERS;

- A. The Petitioner is expected to attend a hearing before the Spiritual Court at the Metropolis in Chicago. The other spouse is also invited to attend the Spiritual Court.

- B. Under NO circumstances plan or arrange a marriage until the Ecclesiastical Decree of Divorce is IN HAND
- C. Divorce petitions can ONLY be submitted by the Parish Priest.
- D. **Anyone who has NOT received the Ecclesiastical Divorce is NOT permitted to receive any of the Sacraments, be a sponsor at a baptism or koumbaro/koumbara at an Orthodox wedding.**

PLEASE NOTE: It is understood that the Orthodox couple that is experiencing marital difficulties will make it a point to meet with their Parish Priest to confront their differences from a spiritual perspective and to find out if there is any possibility of a reconciliation and to better understand why the marriage deteriorated before they file for a Civil Divorce.

After the Ecclesiastical Divorce has been issued the Petitioning spouse is expected to participate in the Mysterion (Sacrament) of Holy Confession before resuming participation in Holy Communion. In accordance with prevailing practice of the Church, as directed by the very words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." (Matt. 5:32) An ecclesiastical divorce is granted first of all only because of adultery. In such cases, the divorce is given only to the wronged party, not to the party that betrayed the marital trust or brought dishonor to the marriage. St. Paul the Apostle says, "If a woman should separate from her husband for the reason of adultery, let her remain single." (Corinth. 7:11). The same thing holds true, of course, for the husband who is guilty of adultery.

It is true that our Church has decided, through compassion and for reasons of "oikonomia" that a second marriage is permitted in certain cases but only after an ecclesiastical divorce is rendered to dissolve the first one. But the Church also remembers that there

are certain instances when a second marriage is never permitted.

This is especially true for a marriage that will lead to derision and complete derision and complete defilement of the sanctity of this sacrament.

To keep you properly informed and instructed, we are enumerating below the instances in which our Church, with great sorrow and pain is forced to dissolve a legal and canonically contracted marriage. Divorce is given is given and considered valid:

1. Adultery
2. Apostasy
3. Bigamy
4. Deceit, coercion, fear, mental emotional and physical abuse
5. Mental illness
6. Impotency or sexually transmitted disease (kept secret prior or during marriage)
7. Abortion
8. Conspiring against the life or honor of one's spouse
9. Lengthy separation or abandonment of spouse
10. When one of the spouses is lawfully convicted or imprisoned for a lengthy period of time.
11. Immoral behavior with others.
12. Various addictions which lead to the destruction of harmonious family relationships.
13. Refusal of childbearing.

Non-Petitioning Spouse's Request for Official Copy

After the Ecclesiastical Divorce has been issued, the spouse may also request an official copy of the decree through his/her Parish Priest. A simple written request should be submitted to the Priest by the spouse, along with a money order of \$200.00, payable to the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago.

The issuance of the copy is NOT AUTOMATIC; depending on the circumstances of the divorce, it is possible for the request NOT to be granted.

It is most important to remember that the Ecclesiastical Decree should be kept in safe place since it CANNOT be replaced or reissued. The Original Decree will be REQUIRED should he/she decide to remarry.

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣΤΙΚΑ ΔΙΑΖΥΓΙΑ

Σύμφωνως πρὸς τὴν Ἀγίαν Γραφήν, ὁ Κύριος λέγει: Ἐρρέθη δὲ ὅς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, δότω αὐτὴ ἀποστάσιον. Ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὅς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ παρεκτός λόγου πορνείας, ποιεῖ αὐτὴν μοιχᾶσθαι, καὶ ὅς εἰς ἀπολελυμένη γαμῆσιν, μοιχᾶται (κατὰ Ματθαῖον 5, 31-32). Ἡ ἐρμηνεία ἔχει ὡς ἐξῆς: «Ἀκόμη ἐλέχθη, ὅποιος χωρίσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα του, ἢ τῆς δώσῃ γραπτὸν διαζύγιον. Ἐγὼ ὅμως σὰς λέγω ὅτι ὅποιος χωρίσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα του χωρὶς τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς μοιχείας τὴν σπρώχνει εἰς τὴν μοιχείαν (διότι μοιχεία εἶναι πλέον, εἰάν αὐτὴ ἔλθῃ εἰς

νέον γάμον, ἐφ' ὅσον ζῇ ὁ πρῶτος τῆς ἀνδρας). Καὶ ἐκεῖνος πού θά λάβῃ ὡς σύζυγον διεξευγμένη γυναῖκα, διαπράττει μοιχείαν».

Ἐκκλησιαστικὸ διαζύγιον παρέχεται, κατ' ἀρχήν, μόνον δια λόγους μοιχείας καὶ συζυγικῆς ἀπιστίας.

Παρά τὸ ὅτι ἡ Ἐκκλησία μας συγκαταβατικῶς καὶ κατ' οἰκονομίαν ἠνέχθη καὶ δεύτερον γάμον, εἰς τινὰς περιπτώσεις, καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἐκδοσὶν ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ διαζυγίου, αὕτη ἐνεκα ἐιδικῶν λόγων δὲ ἐπιτρέπει δεύτερον γάμον.

Εκκλησιαστικά διαζύγια εκδίδονται επίσης εις περιπτώσεις κατά τὰς οποίας ἐξεδόθη πολιτικὸν διαζύγιον, καὶ τὰ σχετιζόμενα ἄτομα ἐπιθυμοῦν τὴν ομαλοποίησιν τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς καταστάσεώς των, δια λόγους συμμετοχῆς τῶν εἰς τὴν Μυστηριακὴν ζωὴν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας.

Εἰς περιπτώσεις μικτῶν γάμων, κατὰ τὰς οποίας τὸ μὴ ὀρθόδοξον μέλος ἀρνεῖται νὰ συμμετάσχῃ εἰς τὴν διαδικασίαν τοῦ Ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ διαζυγίου, τὸ διαζύγιον παρέχεται εἰς τὸ ὀρθόδοξον μέλος.

Με βαθεῖα θλίψιν καὶ οδύνην, ἡ Ἐκκλησία ἐπιτρέπει τὴν διάλυσιν τοῦ γάμου ἔνεκα σοβαρῶν λόγων. Μεταξὺ αὐτῶν, οἱ κάτωθι συνιστοῦν βασίμους λόγους πρὸς αἴτησιν ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ διαζυγίου:

1. Μοιχεία
2. Αποστασία
3. Διγαμία
4. Εξαπάτησις, ἐξαναγκασμός, φόβος, διανοητική, συναισθηματικὴ καὶ σωματικὴ κακοποίησις

Ψυχικαὶ ἀσθένειαι

5. Ἀνικανότης ἢ γενετήσιοι μεταδοτικαὶ ἀσθένειαι (αἱ ὁποῖαι ἀπεκρύβησαν πρὸ ἢ κατὰ τὴν διάρκειαν τοῦ γάμου)
6. Ἑκτρώσις
7. Ἐπιβουλὴ κατὰ τῆς ζωῆς ἢ τιμῆς τῆς/τοῦ συζύγου
8. Μακροχρόνιος χωρισμός ἢ ἐγκατάλειψις τοῦ/τῆς συζύγου
9. Νόμιμος καταδίκη ἢ φυλάκισις ἐνός ἐκ τῶν συζύγων διὰ μεγάλῃν χρονικὴν περίοδον
10. Ἀνήθικος συμπεριφορὰ μετὰ ἄλλων προσώπων
11. Ποικίλαι ἐξαρτήσεις, αἱ ὁποῖαι ὁδηγοῦν εἰς καταστροφὴν τῶν ἀρμονικῶν οἰκογενειακῶν σχέσεων
12. Ἄρνησις τεκνογονίας
Μετὰ πατρικῆς ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγάπης καὶ εὐχῶν,
Ὁ Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἀμερικῆς Δημήτριος
Πρόεδρος Ἱεράς Ἐπαρχιακῆς Συνόδου

Baptismal Information

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...” (St. Matthew 28:19) Jesus also says, “I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he CANNOT enter the kingdom of God” (St. John 3:50.) If we had only these two statements of Our Lord to rely upon, we would know clearly that Baptism is a necessity for salvation, and that it is the duty of Orthodox Christians to lead others to it.

It is apparent from the New Testament evidence that there are four (4) primary dimensions to the event of Baptism:

1. In Baptism we are made partakers of the Divine Nature. Therein, we are incorporated into the death and resurrection of Christ and are made one with Him.
2. In baptism, we are cleansed of our previous sinfulness. We are brought into a new state of being with regard to God: “...but you are washed, you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 6:11).
3. Baptism is a new birth, making us new men and women. The new birth comes through “water and the Spirit.” It is given “...according to His mercy....by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit....(Titus 3:5)
4. Baptism is an enlightenment, an illumination, a movement from the darkness of fallen mankind into union with “the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world” (St. John 1:9). The early holy Fathers of the Church almost always referred to Baptism as “illumination.”

SPONSORS OR GODPARENTS:

At baptism we have sponsors or godparents who must be of the Orthodox Christian Faith since they undertake to assist in the religious nurture of the child. The sponsor should be a practicing Orthodox Christian who realizes that he/she must keep in touch with his/her godchild and help him or her grow in the Orthodox Christian faith especially by his/her own godly example. A potential sponsor or godparent should go to Confession before participating in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Also the sponsor should be present at the 40 day blessing of the child along with the child’s parents.

Please Note: When one baptizes a child in the Orthodox Church, both the parents and the sponsor make a commitment to raise the child in the Orthodox Church. **For children out of wedlock (outside of an Orthodox marriage), both the Orthodox and non Orthodox parent must be willing and consent to the baptism and willing to raise the child in the Orthodox Christian Faith.**

ITEMS NEEDED FROM THE GODPARENTS:

A Letter of Good Standing from their parish priest with the parish seal, stating he/she is a member in good standing, SPIRITUALLY and financially.

Lathopana (large white sheet, non-absorbent to retain oil on child), one white bath towel, two white hand towels, white undershirt & diaper for infant (white underwear for older child), bathing suit for older child, small container of olive oil, bar of soap, large white decorated candle, two smaller white candles, Orthodox cross with chain and the child’s Orthodox Christian name.

Immediately following the Baptism:

1. The Sponsor receives the infant in his/her outstretched arms upon which the large white sheet lays and does NOT cover the children until the child has been chrismated by the Priest.
2. There are 4 lathopana (oil undergarments);
 - a. The oil sheet
 - b. The oil hat
 - c. The oil undershirt
 - d. The oil underwear or cloth diaper

Please Note: The lathopana (oil cloth garments) are made of the purest cotton fabric which does NOT absorb the holy oil that the child has been anointed with during the Sacrament of Baptism. It is important that the holy oil stay on the body of the child as long as possible.

This is why the baptized child should not be bathed for three (3) days following his/her baptism. And when bathed, the water should NOT be discarded in the sewer but should be collected and poured in a large

body of water, i.e. river, lake, sea. When the cloth diaper is soiled by the child it should be washed separately and after that the parent may replace it with a regular disposable diaper.

It is also the Orthodox tradition to save the white sheet used at Baptism and not used for any other purpose.

The white sheet is symbolic of the shroud of the baptized person and it is used once again at the burial of that Orthodox Christian when that day comes.

Baptisms **may not** be performed on the following days unless it is absolutely necessary and permission is obtained from the Diocesan Bishop:

December 25-January 6,

Holy Week,

Major Feast Days of the Lord.

FROM THE PARENTS: A cashier's check or money order made payable to the "Metropolis of Chicago" for \$50 is due the day of Baptism

Baptismal Pamphlets are available for \$1.50 each

The Pastoral Care of the Sick

The pastoral care of the sick and dying has always been an integral part of the Church's mission entrusted to it by its Divine Founder: "I was sick and you visited me" (Saint Matthew 25:36). This ministry (diakonia) finds sacramental expression in the rites of anointing. Saint James the Holy Apostle writes in his epistle: "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven" (St. James 5:14-15).

It is important to understand that an Orthodox Christian must always be spiritually prepared for the unexpected and spiritually in "good standing" in order to receive the Mysteries (Sacraments) of the Church. Also, that he or she request the sacraments i.e., Holy Communion or Holy Unction while he/she is still conscious and understands what he/she is receiving.

An unconscious or comatose person cannot receive the sacraments. In those cases the priest may offer prayers.

The necessary Mysterion or Sacrament for the Orthodox Christian at risk of dying is the sacrament of Penance and Confession because it requires repentance and through it one receives forgiveness of sins. There is no repentance after death.

There is NO "last rites" or "extreme unction" in our Church. Therefore, there is no need for family members of a dying person to become anxious at a dying relative. Your parish priest brings and offers the sacraments to all who are sick when he visits them at the hospital or home. This does not mean that you shouldn't call your priest to be there, only that the person has received the sacraments and is spiritually prepared. The priest is always available for the person and the family

Funeral Information

When a loved one dies, please contact Father George immediately and he will come pray a Trisagion with the family at the bedside of the deceased before his/her body is taken to the mortuary in preparation for the funeral.

In consultation with Father and the funeral home, set the days and times for the viewing, Trisagion and Funeral Service.

The Trisagion is a brief service, not more than 10 minutes in length, during which we pray that the Lord will grant forgiveness of sins and rest to the soul of the deceased "in the bosom of Abraham" (Luke 16:22-23)

with Christ and the saints where "there is no pain, no sorrow and no suffering" (Rev. 21:4)

The Orthodox Funeral Service is held at the Church and is normally about an hour long. The Funeral Service consists primarily of the singing of verses from Psalm 119, a series of hymns on the meaning of life and death composed by St. John of Damascus (676-749AD), Scripture readings from St. Paul's 1st letter to the Thessalonians (4:13-18) and the Gospel of John (5:24-30) and a brief homily/eulogy by the priest.

Commonly, the priest will meet the family with the casket outside the church and escort the deceased into the nave. The casket will be placed on the solea facing East (feet

towards the altar). The Orthodox Tradition is to have an open casket during the Funeral Service to acknowledge the reality of death and allow for last respects. The hope and joy of the resurrection is expressed in the priest wearing white vestments during the service. The priest prays the service and the worshippers are encouraged to join in the singing of the hymns and the responses. After the final prayer, the priest usually offers a sermon to share the inspirational message of Christ's teaching regarding life, death and eternal life. He will also incorporate, where appropriate, important aspects of the deceased's life to further personalize the message. **(Point of information: our Tradition as Orthodox Christians is that *only* the priest offers the eulogy during services in Church. Family members and friends who wish to speak and share memories may do so at the Makaria.)** At the conclusion of the service, everyone present at the service is invited to come forward and kiss an icon of the Resurrection and offer their final respects to the deceased. **(Point of information: The family should be allowed a few minutes for a private goodbye. Everyone is asked to leave the Church proper and exit into the Fellowship Hall and remain quiet for the family to do so.)** The priest anoints the body in the form of cross will oil and earth reciting several verses from Scripture: "Wash me with hyssop and I shall be pure; cleanse me and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:7) and "You are dust and unto dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). He then escorts the deceased out of church with the family and others following behind.

According to the Holy Orthodox Tradition and practice, the deceased is covered with a shroud, which has been blessed. ***Please contact the office if you should need one.***

Following the Funeral Service held at the church the deceased is taken to the cemetery where another Trisagion is prayed at the graveside. The deceased is then lowered into his/her grave to await the Second Coming of Christ and, as we confess in the Creed at every celebration of the Liturgy, "the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come."

Makaria or Meal of Blessing: Following the graveside service it is customary to invited everyone to a meal called, in Greek, the Makaria. (If you would like to use the Good Samaritan Cultural Center for the Makaria, please contact Callahan's Catering at 574-903-6272.) Our Tradition as Orthodox Christians is for the main dish at the Makaria to be some kind of plaki (broiled fish). This is because the first meal the Lord Jesus ate with His disciples following His Resurrection consisted of broiled fish and bread, as recorded in John 21:12-13. As this meal is a reminder of Christ's Resurrection and His closeness to those who believe in Him, it is **NOT** appropriate to serve meat.

Regarding Cremation: *Because the Orthodox Faith affirms the fundamental goodness of creation, it understands the body to be an integral part of the human person and the temple of the Holy Spirit, and expects resurrection of the dead. The Church considers cremation to be the deliberate desecration and destruction of what God has made and ordained for us.*

Therefore, the Church does not grant funerals, either in the sanctuary or at any other place, to persons who have chosen to be cremated. Additionally, memorial services with kollyva are not allowed in such instances.

Regarding Suicide: *Suicide, the taking of one's own life, is self-murder and as such, a sin. More importantly, it may be evidence of a lack of faith in our loving, forgiving God. If a person has committed suicide as a result of a belief that it is rationally or ethically defensible, the Orthodox Church denies that person a Church funeral, because such actions and beliefs separate a person from the community of faith.*

The Church shows compassion, however on those who have taken their life as a result of mental illness or severe emotional stress, when a condition of impaired rationality can be verified by a physician.

Important Please Note: According to our Holy Orthodox Christian Tradition, all Orthodox Christians in spiritual good standing with the Church must be given a funeral service conducted in the local parish. The wishes of the deceased or family play no part in whether their loved one has a church funeral service or service in a funeral home chapel. The family needs to abide by the Orthodox Tradition and order of the Church. Again, according to our Orthodox Tradition there is no option or exception to this practice.

Please Note: *Orthodox Christians who are NOT in good standing, i.e., not married in the Orthodox Church, have not received an Ecclesiastical Divorce, etc, may only have a complete funeral service at the funeral home chapel. The deceased is not brought to the church for the funeral service.* The following items are needed: a table with a white tablecloth, 2 candlesticks with white candles, podium, microphone and an Icon of the Resurrection. All other items will be brought by Father.

Funerals cannot be held on Sundays or Holy Friday
Shrouds are available through the Church Office..

The Sacred Memorials for the Dead

Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle”
(2 Thes. 2:15).

Prayers and Memorials:

“With the saints give rest, O Christ, to the souls of thy servants, where there is neither sickness, nor sorrow, nor sighing, but life everlasting.” So the Holy Orthodox Church prays for the faithful departed; and again: “O God of spirits and of all flesh, who has trampled down death and overthrown the Devil, and given life unto Thy world: Do Thou, the same Lord, give rest to the souls of Thy departed servants, in a place of light, refreshment, and repose, whence all pain, sorrow, and sighing have fled away. Pardon every transgression which they have committed, whether by word or deed or thought”.

Orthodox are convinced that Christians here on earth have a duty to pray for the departed, and they are confident that the dead are helped by such prayers. “In God and in His Church there is no division between the living and the departed, but all are one in the love of the Father.

Whether we are alive or whether we are dead, as members of the Church we still belong to the same family, and still have a duty to bear one another’s burdens. Therefore just as Orthodox Christians here on earth pray for one another and ask for one another’s prayers, so they pray also for the faithful departed and ask the faithful departed to pray for them. Death cannot sever the bond of mutual love which links the members of the Church together.” That Christian love endures is certain and strong even after death (1 Cor 13:8). Because our love remains, the Holy Orthodox Church has from the beginning established the practice of saying special prayers for those who have fallen asleep in the Lord, and on certain specified days it has memorials for them.

According to Saint John Chrysostom even the Holy Apostles had established the practice of prayers and memorials. According to Saint John of Damascus, the Disciples of the Savior and Holy Apostles are the ones who decreed that we remember the faithful who have fallen asleep in the Lord at the awesome holy and life giving mysteries.

The Church recognizes several days as formal commemoration that are:

1. **THE FOUR SOUL SATURDAYS.** These Saturdays are set aside by the Church for all Orthodox Christians, three during the Holy and Great Lent and one for the Saturday before Pentecost.
2. **THE THREE-DAY MEMORIAL.** The Apostolic Constitutions recommend that memorials for the dead be served with psalms and readings and prayers on the third day after death of our beloved one, on account of the Lord Jesus who rose after three days. Another reason for the three day memorial is the

notion that the deceased has kept the three virtues (the foundations of our faith) faith, hope and love as well as the fact that man acts and expresses himself with actions, words and thoughts.

3. **NINE-DAY MEMORIAL.** The Apostolic Constitutions also prescribe Memorials on the ninth day as a reminder of the living and of the dead, as well as on the fortieth day after death according to ancient practice. Saint Symeon of Thessaloniki attributes the nine-day memorial to the nine Orders of Holy Angels.
4. **FORTY-DAY MEMORIAL.** This memorial is for the Ascension of the Savior that took place forty days after His third day Resurrection. In addition to these we must have annual Memorials in remembrance of the deceased.

Please Note: Memorials may be held at three, six, and twelve months interval. **MAKARIA (BLESSING):**

When one talks about memorials in the Orthodox Church it is inevitable that the issue of Makaria (blessing) and Kollyva will also be discussed. In the early Christian times, bread, wine, and olives or cheese or rice were offered. The offering of these gifts served the purpose of **CHARITY** (Philanthropia) and those who partook of them would pray: Blessed be his/her memory. This is why they were called Makaria and their origin can be found at the meals or the funeral meals of which the Apostolic Constitutions speak. It has nothing to do with the so called “honor” to the deceased.

Sometime during the middle of the 4th century the Kollyva (boiled wheat) prevailed over the other gifts, as they project a profound didactic symbolism. They symbolize the resurrection from the dead of the bodies. “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain” (St. John 12:24). Saint Symeon of Thessaloniki observes that in the Kollyva we add various other seeds (raisins, walnuts, almonds, sesame, and so on). However, the basic ingredient is always wheat because the Savior Himself likened His All Holy Body and His resurrection to wheat (St. John 12:24).

BENEFITS OF MEMORIALS AND PRAYERS

We all know that when one dies that is the end for correcting mistakes, errors, and having a change of heart for the things that we did while alive. Why then do we as Orthodox Christians pray and have memorials for the souls of the departed? It is a critical question and indeed it has been addressed by many Holy Fathers of the Church.

All our prayers and memorials are petitions on behalf of the dead to God because we believe in His infinite mercy loving kindness and philanthropy as well as compassion.

Our courage for asking is based in 1 John 5:14-15 which says, "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of Him." Furthermore, our assumption of the petitions is based on the knowledge that "God desires all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:4), which according to Saint John of Damascus is what especially pleases and gladdens the compassionate Lord. He continues to emphasize the fact that our God wants very much that all of us be assisted by everyone both when living and after we die.

Saint John Chrysostom writes that prayers and memorials for the departed are BENEFICIAL. He says that it is a great honor to have your name commemorated at the time of the Divine Liturgy for they provide a certain consolation.

As we can see the Prayers and Memorials have been established by our Holy Orthodox Church both for those who have departed in repentance and for those who have departed in sin. The Church prays out of love for all.

IT IS OUR DUTY AND CHRISTIAN OBLIGATION TO REMEMBER OUR LOVED ONES AND TO CONDUCT MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR THEM SO THEIR SOULS MAY FIND COMFORT AND ETERNAL REST. AMEN.

•

Please Note: For any celebration (marriage, baptism, etc.), meats are not to be served if it is a *fasting period*. If there is meat, Father cannot attend or even bless the table. Father also cannot attend rehearsal dinners held on Friday nights if there is meat, as Friday is a fasting day. Thank you.

Please Note: The Formal Memorial Services of the Church may be conducted ONLY for Orthodox Christians. Your priest however does include the non-Orthodox Christians of his parish in his private or personal prayers.

Please Note: Memorial services may NOT be chanted from the Saturday of Lazarus through the Sunday of Thomas, on any Feastday of the Lord or any Feastday of the Theotokos.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR MEMORIALS:

- Bottle of Wine (St. John Commandaria or you may donate \$20 to the Church in lieu of bringing the bottle)
- One loaf of Prosforo
- Bottle of Olive Oil
- Kollyva

PLEASE NOTE:

If you are not spiritually in good standing (not married in the church, not ecclesiastically divorced, children not baptized, etc.) please give Father George a call to discuss how to remedy this. Father is more than willing to work with our families to be sure they maintain their good standing. Thank you

Simple Ways to Make a Planned Gift

Here are a few simple ways to make a planned gift to your Church. These gifts don't require you to amend or create a Will and don't usually take much time to do. If you are not sure how much to give because you are not sure how much you will need, these methods donate amounts that are left after you are gone.

- Designate your Church as the beneficiary of your retirement account (e.g., IRA or 401(k) plan). (Your plan administrator can provide you with the appropriate beneficiary designation form.)
 - You may leave the entire account or a percentage of the proceeds to the Church.
 - You may name the Church as the primary beneficiary or as the contingent beneficiary.
- Designate your Church as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy you don't need. (Your life insurance agent can provide you with the appropriate beneficiary designation form.)
 - You may leave the entire policy or a percentage of the proceeds to the Church.
 - You may name the Church as the primary beneficiary or as the contingent beneficiary.
- Add a Payable on Death ("POD") or Transfer on Death ("TOD") designation to a bank or securities account so that the account assets are distributed to the Church on your death.
- Establish a pattern of giving to your Church and authorize your Attorney-in-Fact to continue that pattern on your behalf in the event that you become incompetent. If your parish participates in FaithDirect, you may establish your pattern of giving online and it will automatically deduct donations in the amount you designate from the account you direct.
- Direct family members to request that memorial donations be made to your Church on your death.

Please contact your parish priest or a member of your parish's Planned Giving Committee to obtain the legal name of your parish and its tax identification number. You can also contact these Archdiocesan offices for more information on a confidential, no-obligation basis.

Stewardship Ministries Tel 646-519-6160 email Stewardship@goarch.org

Office of Parish Development Tel 847-478-5275 email JMinetos@Goarch.org

Your final plans should always be discussed and reviewed with your attorney and/or financial advisor.



STEWARDSHIP MINISTRIES

DEPARTMENT OF STEWARDSHIP, OUTREACH & EVANGELISM

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

307 West 54th Street • New York, NY 10019

646/519-6160 • Stewardship@goarch.org

Gifts of Appreciated Stock (non-IRA assets for any age donor)

The stock market has performed well the last few years. Many people have owned some stocks for years that have appreciated. As a result, many families today are considering ways to leverage the value of their stock in support of charitable organizations in order to realize the following:

- A gift of appreciated stock to charity preserves 100% of the value, which allows the charity to sell and bypass the capital gains tax (the donor does not pay capital gains tax on the appreciation of the stock value).
- A gift of appreciated stock triggers a charitable income tax deduction that results in actual cash savings to the donor.

Tax Free Gift from your IRA if over age 70 1/2

- Your financial institution must make check payable to St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church directly from your IRA
- You must be 70 ½ years old or older in 2013
- This gift can count toward your required minimum distribution.
- You can give any amount up to \$100,000
- You cannot claim this gift as a charitable deduction since the distribution is Federal Income Tax free.

This information is intended to provide general guidance and is not a substitute for professional counsel. Consult your tax or legal advisor for professional guidance.

St. Andrew's Bishop Philotheos Library

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of St. Andrew's Bishop Philotheos Library (established March 1964) is to make both traditional and new media available to members of the parish, our educational ministries, inquirers after Orthodoxy, and members of the wider community seeking knowledge about Greek Orthodoxy and Hellenic culture. The scope of the collection will primarily focus on materials pertaining to Orthodox spirituality and praxis.

The majority of our resources will be in English, and another portion of our titles in Greek. Books in other languages will be considered if they meet the needs of our congregants. The library will seek to continually strengthen all areas of the collection and to broaden our engagement with the wider community and the world through technological advancement.



Bishop Philotheos,
served St. Andrew
Parish 1926-1937

STAFF:

Bruno Zovich, Librarian

Janice Lampos, Associate Librarian

CHECKOUT PROCEDURES:

Fill in a name and a date on the card in the back of the book and leave it in the box on the desk marked "Checkouts." If there is no card, please use a piece of paper to write the title, your name and date and leave it in the box.

Books are available for a period of one month from the date they are checked out. We will have a computerized library program that will keep track of all books checked out.

LIBRARY HOURS:

Monday-Friday 10am-2pm and Sundays following Liturgy

If you need assistance, Janice Lampos will be in the Library on Wednesdays 10am-1pm.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS:

Any monetary gifts to go towards the purchase of books and maintaining the library are always greatly appreciated. Checks can be made payable to "St. Andrew's Bishop Philotheos Library"

THE LAMPOS POST

We received a new book *Hear Me: A Prayer Book for Orthodox Teens*. This is not just a prayer book, though it does contain prayers. It is also a book of guidance for the challenges facing Orthodox teens today.--
Janice Lampos

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago

St. Iakovos Retreat Center

A place to celebrate our Faith and Heritage: Our Hellenic values are embedded in our Orthodox Faith, and the St. Iakovos Retreat Center provides an ideal environment in which to appreciate, celebrate and strengthen the Greek Orthodox Church community.

The Center is a place to reflect upon what we share—and to share in fellowship the precious spiritual, social and cultural gifts with which we have been bestowed.

With the frantic pace of life today, amidst the chaos in the world, finding a place of peace and quiet can be challenging. The beautiful, natural setting of the Center, with ample facilities for a wide array of gatherings, answers this challenge gracefully for members of our community.

A place where God's creation speaks: Set on 137 breathtaking acres in Kenosha County, Wisconsin, the St. Iakovos Retreat Center is a testament to the wonder of the Lord's creation. Away from worldly cares, this natural setting has 35 acres of original growth woods and hills, a sparkling eight-acre lake, streams, tree-lined paths, even a bountiful apple orchard. There are fenced pastures where horses roam, domesticated animals like llamas and dazzling peacocks, as well as wild deer and other creatures that dwell on the land. Where better to reflect upon the many gifts we have been given and how we should live our lives?

Centrally located to serve all parishes and communities within the Metropolis, the Center is 60 miles from Chicago and 35 miles from Milwaukee. It is easily accessible from all parishes of the Metropolis.

A place for our youth to grow in their faith: "Let alone the little children come to Me, and cease hindering them; for such is the kingdom of Heaven." The St. Iakovos Retreat Center will greatly help us in reinforcing the loving qualities of children the Lord called attention to—and in bringing our children closer to God through our Faith.

An ideal pastoral setting, perfect for youth ministries, Fanari camps, and gatherings of our youth organizations like YAL and GOYA, the Center provides a safe yet stimulating environment for our children to meet, to gain greater understanding of our faith and its traditions, and to build the spiritual foundation that will serve them throughout their lives.

A place of our own to benefit all of us: For many years, the need for our retreat center has been a priority of His Eminence Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago, the Clergy throughout our parishes, and the laity. Now, by and with the consent of the faithful, that need has been met in the St. Iakovos Retreat Center.

Groups and activities that will benefit immediately from the Center and its facilities includes: Family Synaxis, Metropolis Council, Philoptochos, YAL, GOYA, Fanari, Presvytera Sisterhood, Archons, Youth Ministries, Syndesmos, Social Programs (e.g., The Bishop's Task Force on AIDS) and Cultural/Ethnic Celebrations.

A special place for today, a spiritual home for tomorrow: The St. Iakovos Retreat Center meets our immediate needs by providing an ideal setting to meet individual, family, group, education and church requirements for a special setting away from the cares of the world, by eliminating the outflow of church resources to 'outside' facilities, and by creating a physical and spiritual asset that will appreciate for our community over time.

The nature of The Center itself—its scale, structure and flexibility—ensures that this Retreat will be able to grow as our community grows and meet our needs however they emerge and develop.

St. Iakovos Retreat Center Existing Facilities:

- 137 acres in a rural setting; 35 acres of pristine woods and hills
- Sparkling eight-acre lake
- Classic century old farmhouse, 1,600 square foot; 2 stories; 5 comfortable bedrooms, large kitchen, spacious living room
- Historical 2,000 square foot Community Center; comfy screened porch; large game room; wide screen television/video; outdoor pool
- Indoor pool with Jacuzzi
- Sports facilities: basketball court; baseball diamond; tennis court; grounds for volleyball, soccer, cross-country skiing
- 4 car mini-train with 20 person capacity that circles grounds
- 930 square foot barn
- Two car garage with attached shed

Planned new facilities:

- Chapel
- Hotel-style facility for up to 128 children
- All-purpose building with kitchen/dining and meeting facilities

Open your heart to a special place: The St. Iakovos Retreat Center represents an opportunity to give in a way that nourishes our children and families, strengthens our Faith, supports and extends the Community, and serves the Lord. This is a gift to be embraced by generations and generations.

With the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Iakovos, we prayerfully ask for your support for this worthy project.

We believe the St. Iakovos Retreat Center will prove to be a truly special place for our Greek Orthodox community. We hope you will open your heart to this special place.

St. Iakovos Retreat Center
1070 224th Avenue
Town of Brighton, WI 53139

To make a donation or for more information call 312-337-4130 or email info@stiakovosretreatcenter.com

www.stiakovosretreatcenter.com

The Inter-Christian Marriage

Beloved in Christ,

According to the vital statistics kept by the Department of Registry of our holy Archdiocese of America indicate that the numbers of inter-Christian marriages conducted in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America have steadily increased. Today, nearly two thirds (63%) of all marriages conducted in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese are designated inter-Christian. When Greek Orthodox persons marrying outside of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America are also considered, intermarriage rates are likely closer to 75 – 80%.

In the article ‘Mixed’ Marriages and the Canonical Tradition written by Professor Lewis J. Patsavos, a Professor of Canon Law at Holy Cross School of Theology states the following: “In the early Church when marriages were normally blessed during the course of the Eucharist, marriage under these circumstances between an Orthodox and a non-Orthodox Christian was unheard of. It was not until the marriage ceremony was removed from the central act of worship—the Eucharist—that the term ‘mixed’ marriage acquired meaning...” There are a significant number of canons according to Professor Patsavos i.e., canon 72 of the Sixth Ecumenical Council is unequivocal in its prohibition of marriage between an Orthodox and a non-Orthodox Christian.

Professor Patsavos in this same article points out that “a significant step in the progressively more lenient attitude of the Church of Constantinople towards ‘mixed’ marriages was taken at the end of the last century. It constituted the transfer of the prerogative to exercise ‘economy’ in ‘mixed’ marriages from the Holy Synod to the local bishop. According to related decisions, ideally the non-Orthodox partner should be urged to espouse the Orthodox faith; otherwise, he or she must sign a written statement that children born of the marriage would be baptized into the Orthodox faith”.

The Mysterion (Sacrament) of Holy Marriage between a man and a woman should be performed in the Orthodox Church according to the liturgical tradition, and blessed by a priest recognized as canonical by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

“In the case of ‘mixed’ marriages, the non-Orthodox Christian must be a person who belongs to a denomination which accepts the sacramental character of Holy Baptism. Having been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, he or she would declare responsibly that future children will be baptized according to the rites of the Greek Orthodox Church and that they shall be raised in the Orthodox Faith...A non-Orthodox Christian who marries an Orthodox Christian does not automatically become a member of the Orthodox Church, and is therefore not permitted to receive Holy Communion or other sacraments in the Orthodox Church”.

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America “As a result of the Orthodox concept of *economia*, (a type of theological tolerance) inter-Christian marriages between an Orthodox Christian and another Trinitarian Christian are permitted. Briefly, the Church has made this concession because it recognizes that we live in an increasingly pluralistic society. The Church is also concerned with each member’s salvation, and therefore does not desire to place any obstacle before its faithful by denying the Sacrament of Marriage to those who choose to enter an inter-Christian marriage.

Although the Orthodox Church permits inter-Christian marriages between its faithful and other Trinitarian Christians, it has done so by seeking to protect its theological integrity. To that end, the following additional pastoral directives (regarding inter-Christian marriages between Orthodox Christians and other Trinitarian Christians) have emerged.

Since the Sacrament of Marriage is a Christian ceremony, and the Orthodox Church does not perform the Sacrament of Marriage for an Orthodox Christian and an un-baptized person, non-Orthodox Christians wishing to get married in the Orthodox Church must have been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity. In addition, the Orthodox Church also does not perform the Sacrament of Marriage for two non-Orthodox Christians. At least one individual must be Orthodox in good standing with his or her parish. (According to the Special Regulations and Uniform Parish Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese (Article VI, Section 1), “Any person, eighteen years of age or over, who has been baptized according to the rites of the

Church, or was received into the Church through Chrismation, who lives according to the faith and canons of the Church, who has met his financial obligation to the Parish and abides by the regulations herein and the by-laws of the Parish, is a member in good standing of the Parish”).

In order to remain in proper canonical and spiritual standing with the Orthodox Church, Orthodox Christians must be married by an Orthodox priest, in an Orthodox Church, and in the manner prescribed by the priest's service book.

Couples marrying in the Orthodox Church must also commit themselves to baptizing and raising their children in the Orthodox Church. Orthodox Christians who choose to baptize their future children in their partner's church call into question their desire to live an Orthodox lifestyle. Such a decision also affects the Orthodox partner's standing with his or her church.

Since only Orthodox Christians are permitted to participate in the Orthodox Church's sacraments, sponsors exchanging the wedding rings and crowns must be Orthodox Christians in good standing with their parish. This rule is connected to the Church's understanding of the sponsor. Briefly, the sponsor is more than a legal witness. The sponsor (koumbaro or Koumbara) also functions as a spokesperson for the Orthodox congregation affirming the spiritual preparedness of the couple to enter into the community of marriage.

Orthodox spouses should be made aware that if their marriage is not solemnized by the Orthodox Church, they are NO longer in good standing and are NOT permitted to receive the sacraments or participate in the sacraments as a sponsor. (The term sponsor is a generic term that refers to either the paranymphos or paranymphy who exchanges the rings and crowns during the Sacrament of Marriage or the godparent during the Sacrament of Baptism).

MONASTICISM IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

“The innermost spiritual sense of Orthodox Monasticism is revealed in joyful mourning. This paradoxical phrase denotes a spiritual state in which a monk (or nun) in his prayer grieves for the sins of the world and at the same time experiences the regenerating spiritual joy of Christ’s forgiveness and resurrection. A monk (or a nun) dies in order to live, he forgets himself in order to find his real self in God, he becomes ignorant of worldly knowledge in order to attain real spiritual wisdom which is given only to the humble ones.”

With the development of monasticism in the Church there appeared a peculiar way of life, which however did not proclaim a new morality. The Orthodox Church does not have one set of moral rules for the laity and another for monks or nuns, nor does it divide the faithful into classes according to their obligations towards God. The Christian life is the same for everyone. All Christians have in common that “their being and name is from Christ”. This means that the true Christian must ground his life conduct in Christ, something which is hard to achieve in the world.

What is difficult in the world is approached with dedication in the monastic life. In his spiritual life the monk simply tries to do what every Christian should try to do: to live according to God’s commandments. The fundamental principles of monasticism are not different from those of the lives of all the faithful. This is especially apparent in the history of the early Church, before monasticism appeared.

In the tradition of the Church there is a clear preference for celibacy as opposed to the married state. This stance is not of course hostile to marriage, which is recognized as a profound mystery, but simply indicates the practical obstacles marriage puts in the way of the pursuit of the spiritual life. For this reason, from the earliest days of Christianity many of the faithful chose celibacy. Thus St. Athenagoras the Confessor in the second century wrote: “You can find many men and women who remain unmarried all their lives in the hope of coming closer to God”.

From the very beginning the Christian life has been associated with self-denial and sacrifice: “If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me”. Christ calls on us to give ourselves totally to Him: “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of me”.

Finally, fervent and unceasing prayer, obedience to the elders of the Church, brotherly love and humility, as well as all the essential virtues of the monastic life were cultivated by the members of the Church from its earliest days.

One cannot deny that the monk or nun and the married man or woman have different ways of life, but this does not alter their common responsibility towards God and His commandments. Every one of us has his own special gift within one and indivisible body of Christ’s Church. Every way of life, whether married or solitary, is equally subject to God’s absolute will. Hence no way of life can be taken as an excuse for ignoring or selectively responding to Christ’s call and His commandments. Both paths demand effort and determination. Saint John Chrysostom is particularly emphatic on this point: “You greatly delude yourself and err, if you think that one thing is demanded from the layman and another from the monk; since the difference between them is in that whether one is married or not, while in everything else they have the same responsibilities... Because all must rise to the same height; and what has turned the world upside down is that we think only the monk must live rigorously, while the rest are allowed to live a life of indolence”. Referring to the observance of particular commandments in the Gospels, he says: “Whoever is angry with his brother without cause, regardless of whether he is a layman or a monk, opposes God in the same way. And whoever looks at a woman lustfully, regardless of his status, commits the same sin”. In general, he observes that in giving His commandments Christ does not make distinction people: “A man is not defined by whether he is a layman or a monk, but by the way he thinks”.

Christ’s commandments demand strictness of life that we often expect only from monks or nuns. The requirements of decent and sober behavior, the condemnation of wealth and adoption of frugality, the avoidance of idle talk and the call to show selfless love are not given only for monks or nuns, but for all the faithful.

Therefore, the rejection of worldly thinking is the duty not only of monks or nuns, but of all Christians. The faithful must not have a worldly mind, but sojourn as strangers and travelers with their minds fixed on God. Their homes is not on earth, but in the Kingdom of Heaven: “For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come”. The Church can be seen as a community in exodus. The world is its temporary home but the Church is bound for the Kingdom of God. Just as the Israelites, freed from bondage in Egypt, journeyed

towards Jerusalem through many trials and tribulations, so Christians, freed from the bondage of sin, journey through many trials and tribulations toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

In the early days this exodus from the world did not involve a change of place but a change of the way of life. A man does not reject God and turns towards the world physically but spiritually, because God was and is everywhere and fulfills everything, so in the same way the rejection of the world and turning towards God was not understood in physical sense but as a change of the way of life. This is especially clear in the lives of the early Christians. Although they lived in the world they were fully aware that they did not come from it nor did they belong to it: "In the world but not of the world". And those who lived in chastity and poverty, which became later fundamental principles of the monastic life, did not abandon the world or take to the mountains.

Orthodox monasticism has always been associated with stillness or silence, which is seen primarily as an internal rather than an external state. External silence is sought in order to attain inner stillness of mind more easily. This stillness is not a kind of inertia or inaction, but awakening and activation of the spiritual life. It is intense vigilance and total devotion to God. Living in a quiet place the monk or nun succeeds in knowing himself/herself better, fighting his or her passions more deeply and purifying his or her heart more fully, so as to be found worthy of beholding God.

In the lives of monks or nuns the Christian sees examples of men and women who took their Christian faith seriously and committed themselves to the path which everyone is called by Christ to follow. Not all of them attained perfection, but they all tried, and all rose to a certain height. Not all possessed the same talent, but all strove as good and faithful servants. They are not held up as examples to be imitated, especially by laymen. They are however valuable signposts on the road to perfection, which is common for all and has its climax in the perfectness of God.

ORTHODOX MONASTIC COMMUNITIES

GREEK ORTHODOX

Holy Convent of Saint John Chrysostom
4600 93rd Street
Pleasant Prairie, WI 53158
Abbess: Gerontissa Melanie
Tel.: (262) 694-9850
Fax: (262) 697-1581

Holy Monastery of Holy Trinity
125 Sturdevant Road
Smith Creek, MI 48074
Abbott: Geronda Joseph
Tel: (810) 367-8134
Fax: (810) 367-6344

SERBIAN ORTHODOX

Nativity of the Mother of God
Serbian Orthodox Monastery
32787 Early Road
New Carlisle, IN 46552
Mati: Gerontissa Makrina
Tel.: (574) 654-7994

Holy Monastery of Transfiguration
17906 Rt. # 173
Harvard, IL 60033
Abbot: Geronda Akakios
Tel.: (815) 943-3588
Fax: (815) 943-3878

St. Anthony Monastery
4784 N. St. Joseph's Way
Florence, AZ 85132
Abbot: Geronda Paisios
Tel: (520) 868-3188
Fax (574) 868-3088

RUMANIAN ORTHODOX

Dormition of the Mother of God
Orthodox Monastery
3389 Rives Eaton Road
Rives Junction, MI 49277
Abbess: Mother Gabriella (Ursache)
Tel.: (517) 569-2873
Fax: (517) 569-2252

Bookstore

Why not allow us to help you with those birthday and feastday gifts for your family or friends.

Listed below are just a few ideas:

- Holy Bible
- Prayer Books
- Vigil Light
- Heavenly Banquet
- Orthodox Study Bible
- The Divine Liturgy
- A Dictionary of Greek Orthodoxy

Don't forget to check our selection of Greek items such as worry beads, hats and aprons.

The St. Andrew's Bookstore is open Monday-Friday from 9:00a.m. to 2:00p.m. in a self-serve capacity (though calling ahead to make sure you can be helped if necessary is always a good idea). We open on Sundays following Divine Liturgy, if volunteer workers are available. **REMEMBER TO USE THOSE IMPORTANT FORMS LOCATED IN THE BOOKSTORE AREA.** Please read it and follow the instructions. We need those item stickers. Checks are made payable to **St. Andrew's Bookstore.**

The Church thanks you for your continuous support.--Father George, Anna and Staff

Young Married Couples, Young Adults Ministry

Through this ministry it is hoped that they will a) be better acquainted with each other; b) have a better understanding of the Holy mission of the church and be involved in the various parish ministries; and c) infuse our parish with greater energy, enthusiasm, ideas and activity. Needless to say, that they are not only the present of our parish but also the future. It is imperative to the

welfare, stability and progress of the parish for them to gradually assume greater responsibility and leadership of the parish ministries including administration and organization. Our parish needs them and they need the parish. May God bless this effort and the St. Andrew Parish. If any of our young married couples are interested in joining please call Father George.

Hall Usage

Parish Council Meeting
The next meeting will be **Tuesday, PLEASE NOTE:** Parish Council meetings are open to all members in good standing to come and observe. If you need to address the Council please contact, in writing, Father George or the Parish Council president two weeks before the meeting so the council may add it to the agenda.

Any ministry wishing to use the hall and/or kitchen or any parishioner wishing to rent the hall, **needs to contact Callahan's Catering directly at 574-206-8565 or callahans2you@gmail.com.** They are more than willing to work with us on scheduling; we simply need to let them know as soon as possible any dates we would like. Thank you

Coffee Hour Host/Hostess

Sun, Jan 5-

Sun, Jan 12

Sun, Jan 19-Giannakakis, Samoilis,
Skotadis, Limberopoulos, Giannakakis
families

Sun, Jan 26-Popyk Family

We need hosts/hostesses *throughout the year*. Signup sheet is located in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you.

Offertory Schedule

Sunday, Jan 5 Group #1

Sunday, Jan 12 Group #2

Sunday, Jan 19 Group #1

Sunday, Jan 26 Group #2

Good Samaritans

New members are always welcome! **Next Meeting: Monday, February 3, 2014 at 6:30.** Annual membership dues are \$20. Please make checks payable to Good Samaritans and mail to 52455 N. Ironwood Road. South Bend, IN 46635

Prosforo Schedule

Sunday, Jan 5	Anthoula Kanalos
Sunday, Jan 12	Neovi Karakatsanis
Sunday, Jan 19	Cindy Crawford
Sunday, Jan 26	Pres. Elaine

Acolyte (Altar Boy) Ministry
Acolytes Advisors: George Callas
Stefan Konstantopoulos

Xavier Gibbons
Frederick Hawley
Joseph Hawley
Matthew Hawley
Nico Hawthorne
Demetrios Kamiotis
Alexander Karamitsos
Giovanni Karakatsanis-Swartz
John Kungu
Tommy Limberopoulos
Matthew Mattheos
Alex Metros
Athan Mighion
Costa Nolan
Maximos Nolan
Stephen Price
Nicholas Samolis
Senior Acolytes:
Nicholas Karamalegos the Reader
Nicholas Karamitsos the Reader
Constantine Katris the Reader
Panagiotis Kurtis the Reader
Dimitri Napoleon the Reader
Makarios Ngure the Reader
Samuel Ngure the Reader
Mattheos Popyk the Reader
Yanni Samoilis the Reader
Nicholas Schlitt the Reader
Nicholas Strafford the Reader

NOTE: If serving in the Altar, you must also attend Catechetical School classes.

Prison Ministry

Our St. Andrew parish has now established a Prison Ministry to serve the spiritual needs of Orthodox Christians who have been convicted of crimes. Father George visits the local prison weekly so as to bring the inmates closer to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and help them grow in our holy Orthodox Christian faith.

Father is able to supply them with Orthodox Christian prayer books, spiritual books, the Orthodox Study Bible, etc. Also, he offers the Sacrament of Holy Confession and conducts prayer services.

We welcome the participation of all Orthodox Christians who have compassion for those men and women who are behind bars. We ask that you include them and their families in your daily prayers.

Orthodox Campus Fellowship

In 2001, Fr. George Konstantopoulos (St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church) worked closely with Maria Calash (ND student), and James Giannokopoulos (ND student), Fr. Jovic Dragisa (Sts. Peter and Paul Serbian Orthodox Church), Deacon Stefanos Alexopoulos (ND student), and Virgil Andronache (ND student) to establish the first organized Orthodox Campus Fellowship for Michiana (serving the Orthodox student communities of Saint Mary's College, the University of Notre Dame, and Indiana University - South Bend).

Since then, Fr. Konstantopoulos and Fr. Sasa Nedich (current Priest of Sts. Peter and Paul Serbian Orthodox Church) have continued to provide spiritual guidance for all the Eastern Orthodox students as well as opportunities for philanthropic activities, prayer services in various locations, and transportation to the canonically established Eastern Orthodox churches in Michiana. These Eastern Orthodox churches are members of the Standing Conference of Orthodox Churches of America.

The mission of Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) is support fellowships on college campuses, whose members and experience and witness to the Orthodox Christian Church through community life, prayer and study of the faith.

Please contact Father George at 277-4688 if you are interested in joining.

Voice of Orthodox Christianity

There are selected videos available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/SPPSOC and also at www.goarch.org

Holy Relics here at Our Saint Andrew Parish

The following Holy Relics are entombed in the crypt of the Holy Altar Table, placed by Metropolitan Iakovos at the Consecration of Saint Andrew on October 7, 1990: St. Haralambos the Hieromartyr (celebrated February 10), St. Kerykos the Martyr (July 15), and the Holy Fathers of Sinai & Raitho (Jan 14).

There are also two portable Reliquaries that sit on top of the Altar Table with the following Holy Relics: St. John Chrysostom (Nov 13), St. Vlassios the Holy Martyr (Feb 11), St. Mark, Bishop of Ephesus (Jan 19), St. Artemios the Great Martyr (Oct 20), St. Antipas, Bishop of Pergamos (Apr 11), 614 Martyrs of the Holy Monastery of Hotzeva and St. Christophoros the Martyr (May 9).

Catechetical School

“Let the little children come to Me, do not hinder them, for such belongs the Kingdom of God.” Mark 10:14

Our St. Nicholas Gift Project for Children's Memorial Hospital of South Bend was a true blessing. The children were so excited to receive the special gifts as they battle their health issues. Please remember to keep them in your daily prayers.

Our Christmas Program/luncheon was beautiful. Thank you for joining us.

Special Thanks to:

Father George for his guidance and prayers

Mr. & Mrs. Tom Leonakis at Roseland Fruit and Garden for the Christmas trees and Wreathes

Mr. & Mrs. George Limberopoulos for the oranges and luncheon

Mr. & Mrs. Chris Katris for the luncheon

Mrs. Eleni Owens for all her patience in organizing the Christmas Program

Mr. Bruno Zovich for playing St. Nicholas

Mr. Ted Poledor for the gold chocolate coins

Mrs. Isabel Gibbons for the juice

Uncle Joseph for always being there

Mrs. Mary Koucoucoutahkis for being the best

Mrs. Anna Napoleon for beigna wonderful mentor and gracefully guiding us through this transition.

Our wonderful Catechetical School staff and parents

Students enrolled: 84

Icon Program—All Sunday School students must be registered and participate to receive a wooden 3.5 x 4.5 icon of one of the twelve feastdays. They will receive this icon in May at the end of the Sunday School year. What a wonderful way for them to build their home altar and keep their spiritual life strong.

Martin's Program—If you shop at Martin's, please fill out the Shopper Sign-up sheet and return it to your child's Catechetical School teacher or the church office. Every time your card is scanned, we earn points to use towards items for the school.

Dates to remember:

Coffee Hour Information

ATTENTION: Coffee Hour Host/Hostess (Catechetical School Parents and Parishioners):

As a host/hostess you will need to bring in treats for approximately 100 children **and** 100 adults.

Please, remember the drinks for the children in Sunday School.

Sign-up sheets are located in the Fellowship Hall. We encourage all our families to sign up at least once throughout the year. ***We also need you to sign up for Sundays that events take place (i.e. St. Nektarios Luncheon, Pancake Breakfast), just for the children's snacks.*** Our Senior Coffee Hour Leader, Mary Koucouthakis, is there to assist you with any questions you may have.

NOTE: When planning a coffee hour for a loved one's Memorial, you will also need to sign-up on the coffee hour sheet so that there is no confusion. Please, remember to follow the above treat amounts.

The Catechetical School treasurer will come to collect Coffee Hour donations. All monies collected are used to buy icons, books and other necessary supplies for our Catechetical School classes. God Bless and Thank you.

P.S. When you are a host/hostess you are in charge of the Kitchen duties.

ATTENTION: Coffee Hour Host/Hostess Kitchen Duties

1. ARRIVE BEFORE DIVINE LITURGY TO ALLOW TIME FOR CATECHETICAL SCHOOL TREAT SET-UP BY OUR SENIOR COFFEE HOUR LEADER, MARY KOUCOUTHAKIS.
2. Set-up coffee hour treats for adults in kitchenette area.
3. Leave Church just before dismissal to start brewing coffee and to serve treats.
4. After Coffee Hour please remember to :
 - a. Clean up kitchen area
 - b. Clean up Catechetical School pitchers, plates and cart
 - c. Turn off all coffee pots (There are five of them)
 - d. Wipe down counter
 - e. Turn off lights.

Thank you to our wonderful coffee hour hosts/hostesses for the months of **November and December: Billie Limberopoulos, Gabriella Lamos, Holland, Hawthorne and Strafford Families, Wynkoop Family, REkos Family and the Giannakakis, Samoilis, Skotadis, Limberopoulos and Giannakakis families..** God bless you!

From the Choir Loft...

Father George and Catherine Hostetler (Director) invite fellow parishioners to join our Saint Andrew Choir to chant the solemn and sacred hymns of our Church during the Divine Liturgy.

"Make a joyful shout to the Lord...Come before His presence with singing...Be thankful to Him and bless His name..." (Psalm 100)

Our almighty God calls upon all the worshipping faithful to thank Him, to glorify and worship Him for the abundant love and the blessing He bestows on us.

Those who have been given the grace to sing, are expected to use this talent for God's service, for in serving God and putting Him first, we honor Him and thank Him.

REQUIREMENTS: Choir members must always respect our divine services; be at every Choir rehearsal; wear the proper attire showing respect for the Lord's house, be on time for Divine Liturgy, and must follow the instructions of the Choir Director.

Please contact Catherine and become a part of this most important ministry

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Uniform Parish Regulations of the Archdiocese: Article 19, Section 3: Each Parish shall endeavor to have at least the following ministries: Chanter(s); a Choir; Acolytes; a Catechetical School; a Greek Language/Cultural School; chapters of the Greek Orthodox Youth of America (GOYA); Young Adult League (Y.A.L.), a Junior Orthodox Youth (JOY); a chapter of the ladies Philoptochos Society; an Outreach and Evangelism Ministry; and such other ministries as are necessary to meet the spiritual and cultural needs of the Parish.

A child's world is changing rapidly—it is virtually impossible to keep up with every new trend and movement of their culture. Growing up in today's society is a much more difficult task than it was in previous times. Our children are constantly being exposed to negative and destructive influences. If these influences are not challenged, they can, and will, define who our children are and what they will become. Innocence is slipping away at an alarmingly early age. For these reasons, the positive teachings and traditions of the Orthodox Church must become a living presence in the lives of our children. This makes ministry to our children not an option, but rather a necessity.

But what is ministry? The word minister means to give aid to those in need. Therefore, a ministry of the Orthodox Church gives aid as part of the Body of Christ. A child becomes a full member of this Body at their baptism. The foundation of all youth ministry is the cultivation and education of our children, so that they may become active members of the Body of Christ. Youth ministry needs to begin early, even before the child begins to participate in Church Ministries. It begins with the family in the home and it needs to continue in the home as the child grows in the Church

We are in need of volunteers to lead the HOPE (K-2nd grades), and GOYA (7th-12th grades). Please contact Father if you are interested in volunteering.

The St. Andrew Family Ministries established last year was not and is not meant to take the place of our youth groups. It is a ministry to serve ALL members of our parish. All ministries of the parish are meant to work cooperatively to enhance and enrich the spiritual lives of our parishioners of all ages.

TO ALL OF OUR GREEK ORTHODOX LADIES OF OUR PARISH...

The Ladies Philoptochos Society has offered assistance of philanthropy and service for over 80 years to people throughout the world.

JOIN THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT OF OUR GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE IN NEED, I.E., MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD THAT NEED OUR LOVE, COMPASSION, GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT.

WHO CAN JOIN?

ANY WOMEN 18 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER...

OVER 30,000 GREEK ORTHODOX WOMEN BELONG AND ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH THE NATIONAL PHILOPTOCHOS LADIES SOCIETY OF OUR ARCHDIOCESE.

THEY ARE WOMEN FROM VARIOUS WALKS OF LIFE, I.E., Homemakers, Professional, business, educators, scientists, etc.

THE PHILOPTOCHOS CHAPTER OF OUR SAINT ANDREW'S PARISH IS A PART OF THIS ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT.

ST. ANDREW'S LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc., is the duly accredited women's philanthropic society of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Society shall be:

- To aid the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts; and
- To promote the charitable, benevolent, and philanthropic purposes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through instructional programs, presentations, lectures, seminars and other educational resources;
- To preserve and perpetuate Orthodox Christian concepts and the Orthodox Christian Family, and through them, to promote the Greek Orthodox Faith and traditions, in accordance with its doctrines, canons, discipline, divine worship, usages and customs;
- To promote participation in the activities of the Greek Orthodox community, with the cooperation of the Parish Priest and the Parish Council.

The charitable work of the Society shall be performed with discretion, courtesy and kindness.

The 2013 Philoptochos Board and Officers are: Mary Jo Tirikos, President; Mary Koucouthakis, Vice president; Kelly Popyk, Treasurer; Athina Kamiotis, Secretary; Irene Walsh, Advisor; Maria Giannakakis, Elena Kristos, Athina Kamiotis and Georgia Vello.

Our Philoptochos members, here at St. Andrew, are actively involved in the Parish Council, Choir, and as Catechetical School teachers. The Philoptochos supports every program of our Parish as well as being actively involved the Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos and national Philoptochos. We also support many local charities.

Any young women over 18 should be a member of our St. Andrew's Philoptochos so please join us and let us become friends of the poor and help the less fortunate. **Next meeting:**



PHILOPTOCHOS PRAYER

O Lord Jesus Christ, we bow our heads before You, and with humble hearts we give thanks to You for the abundant blessings, which You have poured forth upon us. We praise You for gathering us together as members of the Ladies Philoptochos Society in the service to Your Holy Church. We bless You for the selfless sacrifice of countless generations of women who have faithfully fulfilled the philanthropic mission entrusted to them. Through Your ineffable wisdom and Your Divine power, You have enabled us to minister to those who are in need of Your love, Your comfort, and Your care. Make us instruments of Your peace and of Your hope, O Lord. Where there is pain and suffering, may we bring Your healing and comfort. Where there is loneliness and isolation, may we bring the fellowship of Your Holy Church. Where there is despair and discouragement, may we inspire hope and faith in You. Where there is hatred and strife, may we be peacemakers producing the fruits of love and reconciliation. We also ask You, O Lord, to guide our deliberations, our decisions, our fellowship, and all our labors, so that in all we do, or say, we may bring glory to Your Holy Name, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

National Philoptochos Website: www.philoptochos.org

Back by popular demand: **THE SCHOOL OF GREEK COOKERY AT ST. ANDREW'S**, sponsored by the Hellenic Cultural Society. Greek cooking classes open to the public, featuring the demonstration and sampling of a complete Greek meal, including appetizer, green salad, full entrée, fresh baked bread, wine, dessert and Greek coffee. We will also play music and invite vendors to set up at the event for a nominal fee.

Classes will start on a semi-annual schedule and grow to quarterly if there is public interest and parish support. **The first class has been scheduled for Sunday, May 4, 2014, 3-6 pm in the Good Samaritan Cultural Center.**

We are in need of: recipe demonstrators, bread bakers, servers, publicity and advertising support as well as set-up and clean-up. To get involved, contact Spyro Sinis-Terezis at 513-260-1431 (call or text) or via email at spyrosinisterezis@gmail.com.

Profit will support urgent church needs.

Thank you in advance for your help!

Parish Life

Baptisms

The son of **Kevin and Karalynn Armstrong** was baptized in the Holy Mother Church on June 4, 2013 at St. Andrew. He was given the name **Kevin** by his nuno **Peter Armstrong**. May our Lord bless Kevin, his parents and nuno.

The son of **Bill and Cindy Giannakakis** was baptized in the Holy Mother Church on September 15, 2013 at St. Andrew. He was given the name **Damianos** by his nuno and nouna, **Nick and Evelyn Giannakakis**. May our Lord bless Damianos, his parents and nuno and nouna.

The daughter of **Bill and Cindy Giannakakis** was baptized in the Holy Mother Church on September 15, 2013 at St. Andrew. She was given the name **Anna** by her nouna **Anna Christodalakis** and her nuno **Emmanuel Saitis**. May our Lord bless Anna, her parents and nuno and nouna.

The daughter of **George and Amanda Lepeniotis** was baptized in the Holy Mother Church on November 3, 2013 at St. Andrew. She was given the name **Anastasia** by her nouna **Helen Conits**. May our Lord bless Anastasia, her parents and nuno and nouna.

Weddings

Philip Kolliopoulos and Ashley Schelling were joined in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony on September 21, 2013 at St. Andrew. The Koumbaro is Nick Limberopoulos. May our Lord shower His blessings upon them their entire lives.

Philip McClanahan and Kristiana Martinez were joined in the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony on October 26, 2013 at St. Andrew. The Koumbaro is Mike Chronopoulos. May our Lord shower His blessings upon them their entire lives.

Fallen Asleep

The Servant of God **Serafim Philippis** fell asleep in the Lord on October 25, 2013. The funeral took place here at Saint Andrew on November 1. Our sincerest condolences and prayers to his sons, Michael and Tim; and his sisters-in-law, Aphrodite Pappas and Anna Pappas. family and friends. MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL

"YOU ARE GOING TO HELL!"

It was the Spring semester of 2006, and I was a Freshman at Michigan State University (Go Spartans! Beat the Irish!). Walking through the snow and ice, I kept my face covered from the howling winds that came off the Red Cedar River. As I came to Wells Hall, I was startled when I heard, **"YOU ARE GOING TO HELL!"**

Pulling down my scarf, I looked up at a man standing on a bench and holding a Bible. Around him, a few of his colleagues were approaching students and telling them that, for this or that reason, they were all going to hell. Right at that moment he hopped off the bench and approached me. "You, young man, all bundled in the cold, are going to hell!" I stopped, and I looked at him with astonishment. "You are going to hell because you're on your way to class instead of preaching God's word. I am not because I am perfect."

While I didn't understand why going to class was an apparent impediment to salvation, I couldn't help but think, "This guy isn't serious, is he? He doesn't really think he's perfect, does he?" So I questioned him about it and he put his Bible in my face, pointing out verses that could be interpreted as saying that only the perfect go to heaven. And he claimed to be one of the perfect.

I had heard of these "Wells Hall Preachers." They were known to show up on campuses all over the country, belittling and condemning people. They thought they were preaching God's word, but I knew they were only pushing people further away from Christ.

It was sad. I knew he was wrong, but I felt terrible: *I didn't know what to say*. I didn't know the Bible well enough to answer his destructive claims.

I went back to my dorm that evening and called my mom, who is well versed in Scripture. She emailed me a list of verses that countered his claims. Armed and ready to go, I went out to meet him again. We exchanged blows, like a duel. "Verse X shows this!" "No, but Verse Y says that!"

Back and forth we went. Finally in the middle of our "fight," a student rolled by in his roller blades and the man yelled, "You're going to hell roller derby!"

It was then that it hit me. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." (1 Corinthians 13:2-3).

I could throw verses around, but I didn't really know or have any context for any of them. I didn't really know the Bible well enough. But even if I knew the Bible as well as that preacher, neither of us was approaching the situation properly. We weren't interested in saving souls; we were having an argument, and looking to prove ourselves right. We "had not love." No wonder we were talking past each other, rather than getting through to each other.

So I quoted St. Paul, shook his hand, and walked away.

I'm still far from an expert on the Scripture. Fr. Thomas Hopko has said, "Unless you've read the Bible three times, you don't know what you're talking about." Well, reading the Bible has been tough for me in the past, and I definitely haven't read it three times yet.

But reading it became much easier when I realized that it isn't just a big book. It's the story of a real relationship between an AWESOME and UNCONDITIONALLY LOVING GOD and HIS PEOPLE. It's been a huge support to me to read the Bible with you, as one people, united in God.

We've been posting the Bible in a Year readings everyday on the GOA Young Adults Facebook page [embed link]. If you haven't joined us yet, don't worry! Just pick it up where we are now. You can always go back and read what you've missed later. Click here for a [printable checklist](#) to help you along the way.

We'll have a weekly video blog coming soon, too!

In the mean time follow us on Facebook and feel free to ask questions, or make comments. I look forward to continuing reading this masterpiece with you.

Be REAL,

Nick Lionas

Young Adult Ministries Coordinator

Reprinted from: <http://orthodoxyouthministry.blogspot.com/>
September 20, 2013

The Authentic Symbol of Faith of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church

The Confession of Faith

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father through Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; And He rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; And He will come again with glory to judge the living and dead. His kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets. In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen.

ΤΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ

Πιστεύω εις ένα Θεόν, Πατέρα Παντοκράτορα, Ποιητήν Ουρανού και γής, ορατών τε πάντων και αοράτων. Καί εις ένα Κύριον Ιησούν Χριστόν, τόν Υιόν τού Θεού, τόν Μονογενή, τόν εκ τού Πατρός γεννηθέντα προ πάντων τών αιώνων. Φώς εκ Φωτός, Θεόν αληθινόν εκ Θεού αληθινού, γεννηθέντα ού ποιηθέντα, ομοούσιον τω Πατρί, δι' ού τά πάντα εγένετο. Τόν δι' ημάς τούς ανθρώπους και διά τήν ημετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα εκ τών Ουρανών, και σαρκωθέντα εκ Πνεύματος Αγίου και Μαρίας τής Παρθένου, και ενανθρωπήσαντα. Σταυρωθέντα τε υπέρ ημών επί Ποντίου Πιλάτου, και παθόντα και ταφέντα. Και αναστάντα τή Τρίτη ημέρα κατά τάς Γραφάς. Και ανελθόντα εις τούς Ουρανούς, και καθεζόμενον εκ δεξιών τού Πατρός. Και πάλιν ερχόμενον μετά δόξης κρίναι ζώντας και νεκρούς, Ού τής Βασιλείας ούκ έσται τέλος. Και εις τό Πνεύμα τό 'Αγιον, το Κύριον, το Ζωοποιόν, τό εκ τού Πατρός εκπορευόμενον, το σύν Πατρί και Υιώ συμπροσκυνούμενον και συνδοξαζόμενον, τό λαλήσαν διά τών Προφητών. Είς μίαν Αγίαν, Καθολικήν, και Αποστολικήν Εκκλησίαν. Ομολογώ έν Βάπτισμα εις άφεσιν αμαρτιών. Προσδοκώ Ανάστασιν νεκρών. Και ζωήν τού μέλλοντος αιώνος. Αμήν.

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Our Holy Mission

St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church of South Bend, Indiana; under the auspices of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago; is a Christian Community committed to serving our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit, and united in faith and in love with God, and called to make that love real to others through...

- **Worship** (the Divine Liturgy) and the reception of the Sacrament of Holy Communion by which we achieve union with Jesus Christ and with each other.
- **Philanthropic Diakonia** (Service) to those people in need of our love and compassion. In teaching His disciples the Lord said, "...as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)
- **Educational Opportunities** which enable Orthodox Christians to grow in Christ and be faithful disciples and prepares them to strengthen their personal commitment to our Lord, His church and the Holy Tradition.
- **National, Metropolis and Parish Ministries** of our Holy Orthodox Church which provide opportunities for Parish Outreach and to live as an integral and vital part of the community. The prime objective is to encourage a greater participation in the life of the Church and the world.
- **Teaching** the commandment of the New Life, imparting a clear knowledge of the doctrines, traditions, canons and disciplines of the Church and guiding the growth, process and enlightenment of all Orthodox Christians.