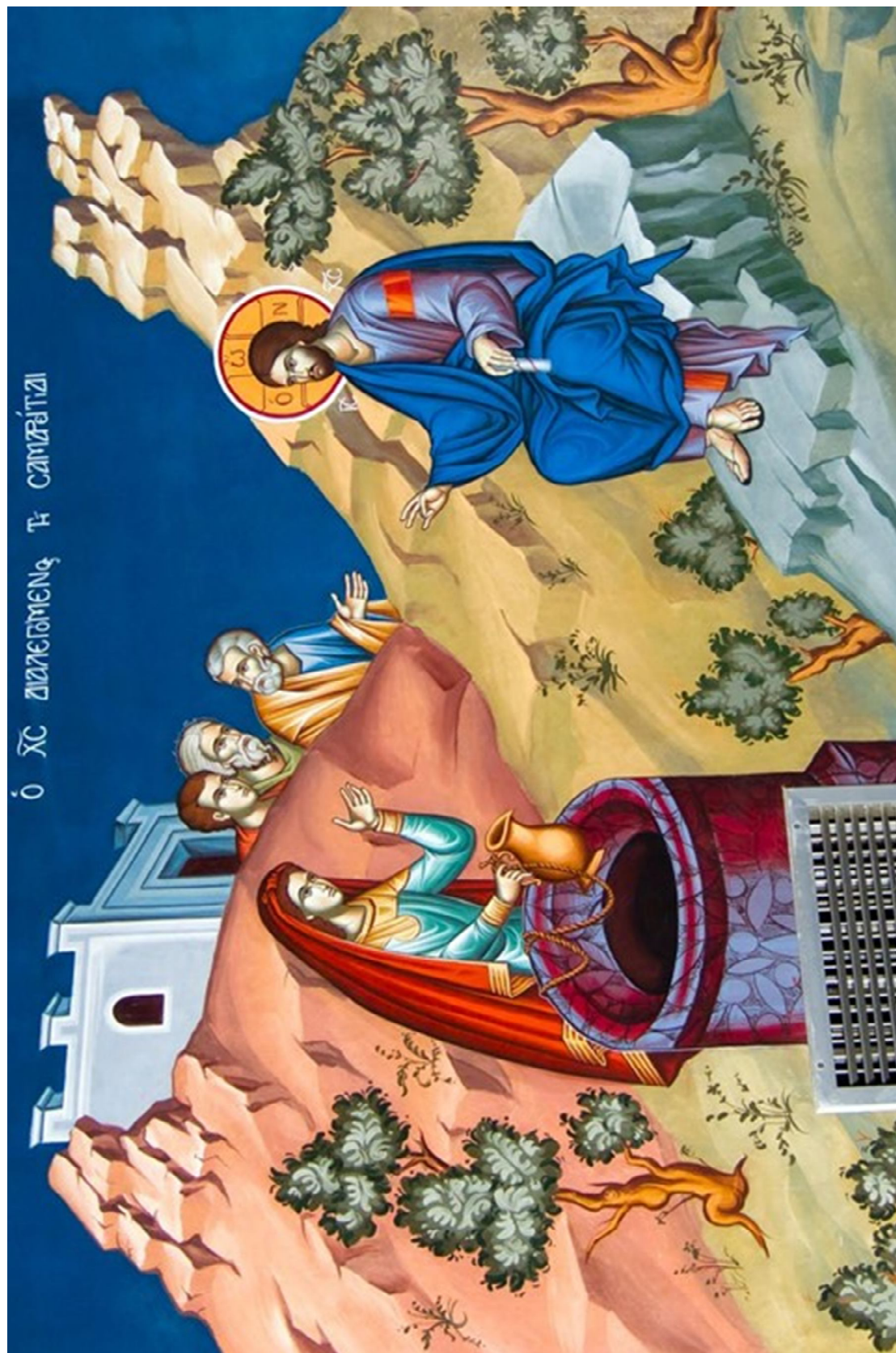




Greek Orthodox
Metropolis of
New Jersey

MAY 2025

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ! CHRIST IS RISEN!



Saint Andrew Family News

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF SAINT ANDREW GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MORRIS COUNTY

SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN (ICON) – MAY 18

ANNUAL TRICKY TRAY – MAY 09

BIG GREEK FESTIVAL MAY 30 & 31- JUN 01

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A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF SAINT ANDREW GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MORRIS COUNTY

On Sundays we celebrate

Orthros @ 8:15 AM & Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

For other services please check our website or call the office

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Mon – Fri 10am-4pm

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Please submit your articles and information on time to

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DIVINE SERVICES

MAY

Saturday 3 +ST. XENIA OF KALAMATA

Sunday 4 SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN

Monday 5 +IRENE THE GREAT MARTYR +ST EPHRAIM THE NEW

Thursday 8 SYNAXIS OF THE HOLY POWDER (OR MANNA) WHICH EMITTED FROM THE TOMB OF
+SAINT JOHN THE THEOLOGIAN

Sunday 11 SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC - MOTHER'S DAY

Sunday 18 SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN - MEMORIAL SERVICE AHEPA & DOP

Wednesday 21 +SAINTS CONSTANTINE & HELEN, EQUAL-TO-THE APOSTLES

Sunday 25 SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN

Thursday 29 HOLY ASCENSION

JUNE

Sunday 1 FATHERS OF THE 1ST COUNCIL

Saturday 7 SATURDAY OF SOULS | FR. JOHN VISITS LOCUST HILL CEMETERY TO PRAY FOR +LOVED ONES

Sunday 8 PENTECOST

Monday 9 MONDAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**Sunday 15 SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS; SYNAXIS OF THE TWELVE HOLY APOSTLES; MICHAEL THE NEW
MARTYR OF ATHENS - FATHER'S DAY**

Sunday 22 2ND SUNDAY OF MATTHEW

Tuesday 24 THE NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Sunday 29 STS. PETER AND PAUL THE HOLY APOSTLES

Sundays: Orthros @ 8:15AM & Divine Liturgy @ 9:30AM

Weekdays: Orthros @ 8AM & Divine Liturgy @ 9:00AM

*Sunday School students attend Divine Liturgy at 9:30am, receive Holy Communion,
and then proceed to their class – Graduation is on May 18th*

Ι Ε Ρ Ε Σ Α Κ Ο Λ Ο Υ Θ Ι Ε Σ

Μ Α Ϊ Ο Σ

Σάββατο 3 +ΑΓΙΑΣ ΞΕΝΙΑΣ ΚΑΛΑΜΑΤΑΣ

Κυριακή 4 Κυριακή Γ' τῶν Μυροφόρων

Δευτέρα 5 +ΕΙΡΗΝΗΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΜΑΤΗΣ + ὉΣΙΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ἘΦΡΑΙΜ ὁ ΝΕΟΣ

Πέμπτη 8 Ἐνδόξου Ἀποστόλου καί Εὐαγγελιστοῦ, ἐπιστηθίου φίλου, ἡγαπημένου καί παρθένου, Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου.

Κυριακή 11 Κυριακή Δ' τοῦ Παραλύτου - ΕΟΡΤΗ ΤΗΣ ΜΗΤΕΡΑΣ

Κυριακή 18 Κυριακή Ε' τῆς Σαμαρείτιδος - ΜΝΗΜΟΣΥΝΟ ΑΗΕΠΑ & ΘΥΓΑΤΕΡΕΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΗΝΕΛΟΠΗΣ

Τετάρτη 21 +ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΪΝΟΣ καί + ἙΛΕΝΗ Ἰσαποστολοι; ὉΣΙΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΠΑΧΩΜΙΟΥ

Κυριακή 25 Κυριακή ΣΤ' τοῦ Τυφλοῦ

Πέμπτη 29 ΤΗΣ ΑΝΑΛΉΨΕΩΣ

Ι Ο Υ Ν Ι Ο Σ

Κυριακή 1 Κυριακή Ζ' τῶν 318 Ἀγίων Πατέρων τῆς Α' Οἰκομ. Συνόδου

Σάββατο 7 ΨΥΧΟΣΑΒΒΑΤΟ : π. Ἰωάννης θα ἐπισκεφτεῖ το Νεκροταφεῖο στο Ντόβερ

Κυριακή 8 ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ Η' τῆς ΠΕΝΤΗΚΟΣΤΗΣ

Δευτέρα 9 ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ; ΓΕΝΕΘΛΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΥ

Κυριακή 15 ΣΥΝΑΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΔΩΔΕΚΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ; ΣΥΝΑΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΔΩΔΕΚΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ;
ΕΟΡΤΗ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΤΕΡΑ

Κυριακή 22 Β' Ματθαίου

Τρίτη 24 ΓΕΝΕΘΛΙΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΥ

Κυριακή 29 ἈΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΙ ΠΕΤΡΟΣ καί ΠΑΥΛΟΣ

Τὴν Κυριακή – Ὁρθρος - ὥρα 8.15πμ & Θεία Λειτουργία - ὥρα 9:30πμ

Τὶς καθημερινές – Ὁρθρος - ὥρα 8πμ & Θεία Λειτουργία - ὥρα 9.00πμ

Οἱ μαθητές Κατηχητικοῦ θα ἐρθοῦν στὴν Θεία Λειτουργία ὥρα 9.30πμ,
μετὰ Θεία Κοινωνία στὶς τάξεις τους.

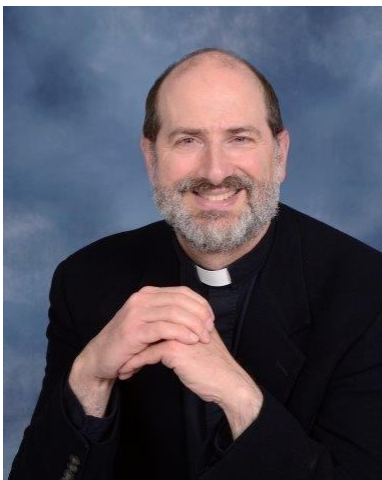
Christ is risen! Truly He is Risen!

Fr John Theodosion

There is a theme in the Gospels that the church is going to be talking about now in the light of the resurrection during the whole Pentecostarian period, which is the period that follows Easter: this theme is the enlightenment of man. The resurrection is being **applied** now. We see great things recorded in the book the Acts of the Apostles. In the light of the resurrection, we see what is happening. People's minds and hearts are changing, and they are beginning to believe that Christ really did resurrect. We see that the Holy Spirit was with the apostles and how they healed many people, how they led many people to convert, and how lives were changed. Even the shadow of the apostles healed people of their infirmities. In the light of the resurrection, there was activity, there was motion, and there was enlightenment. Overall, we see that people began to treat each other with love and respect as Christ commanded.

In today's gospel we see that Thomas had just left the house, probably on some errand, and that is when Christ came to the apostles, the doors being shut in the house for fear of the Jews. And Jesus spoke to the ten, and the Bible says they were glad. Indeed, they were glad when they saw the Lord! But Thomas was not there, and the resurrection was such an incredible thing; he just could not believe. This was because he was someone who doubted everything and was not open to the spirit of enlightenment, which was present at this time. St. Thomas is most famous for his doubting, but he was not the only disciple who expressed doubts.

Mary Magdalene, who saw the stone rolled away from the tomb together with the



Theotokos, did not immediately believe that the Lord had resurrected. She came back to the tomb with Peter and John. She had wanted to anoint the Lord because she thought He was dead. John and Peter ran ahead and saw the empty tomb. John remembered the teaching of the Lord and believed, but Peter was questioning in his heart. Then when Peter and John left the tomb. Mary stayed

behind and she was weeping because Jesus was not in the tomb. And she was weeping for someone who was dead. That's why the hymns of the church say, "*Do not weep for one who is dead, He is not dead, He is not here, He is alive and risen.*" In other hymns we hear, of how Mary misunderstood. And our Lord came to her, and she thought He was the gardener, till He spoke to her and just in the hearing of His voice, when He said, Mary, then she recognized Him.

Later on, the Lord appeared to the apostles and this time Thomas was present. And then he had the privilege of being the first of the apostles to proclaim unambiguously, in clear terms, the dual nature of Christ's humanity and His divinity. It is the first confession of faith in the scriptures, where Christ is proclaimed God and man openly. When Thomas saw the marks from the nails in Christ's hands and feet, and his side where he was pierced with a lance then He proclaimed with deep faith, "My Lord and my God!" Thomas had to wait awhile, but God gave him that great privilege of stating what could be a simple creed. What a great privilege it was.

And this theme of enlightenment continues throughout the resurrection story. We have seen how Peter and John

and Mary Magdalene became aware of the Lord's resurrection. And then in the coming weeks gospels we will read about the blind man and the lame man, the paralytic. We see how the resurrection is applied in their lives and in our daily lives.

Why does the church do this? Why do we speak of things that have to do with enlightenment and healing right after Pascha? Because the resurrection ***applies to us in our life now***. It is very important to understand this. It is very important to understand, because you must know that God has given you the ability to be able to get rid of your sins, of your passions, of the problems in your life that are making you to be away from God. You have the ability, through the resurrection. In all of these examples of people that partially believed, even the great apostles, who were at times disbelievers, at times were cowards, at times were at odds with each other and vied amongst themselves who would be greatest, and all the other things -- even them -- the Lord purified them and brought them to a great wholeness.

If He can do it with them and do it with all the other examples in the scriptures, with the paralytic and the blind man and the woman at the well, named Photini, and all the others, then He can do it with us. The resurrection is not something that we believe in as an event that occurred in the past. Nor is it something that you believe, and say that it will happen in the future, for example at the judgment day of the Lord. Christ said, *"I am the resurrection. If I live in you, then you are resurrected now, not later."* This means that when we live our lives in Christ then we already begin to participate in the Lord's Kingdom here on earth. This may be a difficult concept to understand, but it is very important for us to try to understand this.

So, to live a life in Christ means to live as a Christian, fast as a Christian, think as a Christian, and when you cannot do things

properly, when you do things that are sinful, run to confession with the sure hope the sure knowledge that God will receive your repentance, because of the resurrection. I tell you if you live in the light of the resurrection, you will not give up or become despondent. The Lord will strengthen you.

So today we see an example of a man, Thomas, who became enlightened. Christ went out of His way to enlighten him, and Thomas believed, and he confessed. Christ did and does the same thing for us, to bring us to enlightenment. And now we must believe and confess that Christ is our Lord and our God.

We hear the confession of Thomas, *"My Lord and My God,"* and his confession is an example for us. But we must not only confess our belief in God in word but also in our actions.

We must use Christ as the example of how to live. The Christian life is one of difficulty and one of strife. We are in the light of the resurrection, but we can never get far away from knowing that our life is a difficult one. We make it so sometimes because of our sins, and other times because of the evil of the world surrounding us. We must follow the example of the saints. Follow the example of the apostles. Live as they lived, which means living in Christ and His Church.

Every time we fail to confess our Orthodox Faith in word and deed it is like gazing into an empty tomb and wondering where the Lord is. We cannot be like this. We must believe in the resurrection, and believe that we can be changed and grow, and through struggle, arduous struggle, through many tears, through ups and downs, and even in the midst of many sins. God will make you perfect, but only if you believe in the resurrected Christ, and follow his teachings.

Χριστός Ανέστη! Αληθώς Ανέστη!

Πατήρ Ιωάννης Θεοδοσίου

Υπάρχει ένα θέμα στα Ευαγγέλια για το οποίο η εκκλησία θα μιλά τώρα υπό το φως της ανάστασης κατά τη διάρκεια της Πεντηκοστής, την περίοδο που ακολουθεί το Πάσχα. Το θέμα αυτό είναι η φώτιση του ανθρώπου. Η ανάσταση **εφαρμόζεται** τώρα. Βλέπουμε σπουδαία πράγματα να καταγράφονται στο βιβλίο Πράξεις των Αποστόλων. Με το φως της ανάστασης, βλέπουμε τι συμβαίνει. Ο νους και οι καρδιές των ανθρώπων αλλάζουν, και αρχίζουν να πιστεύουν ότι ο Χριστός πράγματι αναστήθηκε. Βλέπουμε πως οι απόστολοι με το Άγιο Πνεύμα θεράπευσαν πολύ κόσμο από τις ασθένειές τους. Με το φως της ανάστασης, υπήρχε δραστηριότητα, υπήρχε κίνηση και υπήρχε φώτιση. Γενικά, βλέπουμε πως οι άνθρωποι άρχισαν να φέρονται με αγάπη και σεβασμό ο ένας στον άλλο όπως ζήτησε ο Χριστός.

Στο σημερινό ευαγγέλιο βλέπουμε πως μόλις ο Θωμάς έφυγε από το σπίτι, ίσως για κάποιο θέλημα, εμφανίστηκε ο Χριστός στους αποστόλους ενώ οι πόρτες ήταν κλειστές για τον φόβο των Ιουδαίων. Και ο Ιησούς μίλησε στους δέκα, και όπως λέει η Βίβλος χάρηκαν. Και βέβαια θα χάρηκαν όταν είδαν τον Κύριο! Ο Θωμάς όμως δεν ήταν εκεί, και η ανάσταση ήταν κάτι τόσο απίστευτο, που απλά δεν μπορούσε να το πιστέψει. Ήταν κάποιος που αμφέβαλε για τα πάντα και δεν ήταν ανοικτός στο πνεύμα της φώτισης, που υπήρχε εκείνη την ώρα. Ο Άγιος Θωμάς φημιζόταν για την δυσπιστία του, δεν ήταν όμως ο μόνος απόστολος που εξέφρασε αμφιβολία.

Η Μαρία Μαγδαληνή, που μαζί με την Θεοτόκο είδε τον λίθο στην είσοδο του τάφου να έχει κυλήσει, δεν πίστεψε αμέσως πως ο Κύριος αναστήθηκε. Επέστρεψε στον τάφο μαζί με τον Πέτρο και τον Ιωάννη. Ήθελε να αλείψει με μύρο τον Κύριο επειδή Τον νόμιζε νεκρό. Ο Ιωάννης και ο Πέτρος είχαν τρέξει νωρίτερα και είχαν δει τον τάφο άδειο. Ο

Ιωάννης θυμήθηκε όσα δίδαξε ο Κύριος και πίστεψε, αλλά ο Πέτρος βαθιά στην καρδιά του αμφέβαλε. Και όταν ο Πέτρος και ο Ιωάννης έφυγαν από τον τάφο, η Μαρία Μαγδαληνή έμεινε και έκλαιγε επειδή ο Ιησούς δεν ήταν στον τάφο. Έκλαιγε για κάποιον που θεωρούσε νεκρό. Για τον λόγο αυτό οι ύμνοι της εκκλησίας λένε, «Μην κλαίτε για αυτόν που πέθανε, δεν είναι νεκρός, δεν είναι εδώ, είναι ζωντανός και έχει αναστηθεί.» Σε άλλους πάλι ύμνους λένε πως η Μαρία Μαγδαληνή δεν κατάλαβε καλά. Και τότε ο Κύριος της παρουσιάστηκε και αυτή νόμιζε πως ήταν ο κηπουρός, μέχρι που της μίλησε και με το άκουσμα της φωνής Του, όταν είπε «Μαρία», Τον αναγνώρισε.

Αργότερα, ο Κύριος εμφανίστηκε πάλι στους αποστόλους και αυτή την φορά ήταν εκεί και ο Θωμάς. Και τότε είχε το προνόμιο να είναι ο πρώτος από τους αποστόλους που διακήρυξε χωρίς αμφιβολία τη δυαδική φύση του Χριστού, την ανθρώπινη και τη θεϊκή φύση Του. Είναι η πρώτη ομολογία πίστης στις γραφές, όπου ο Χριστός ανοικτά ανακηρύσσεται Θεός και άνθρωπος. Όταν ο Θωμάς είδε τα σημάδια από τα καρφιά στα χέρια και τα πόδια του Χριστού, και την πλευρά Του τρυπημένη από λόγχη, αναφώνησε με βαθιά πίστη, «Κυριέ μου και Θεέ μου!» Ο Θωμάς περίμενε για λίγο, αλλά ο Θεός του έδωσε το σπουδαίο προνόμιο της δήλωσης που ήταν και το σύμβολο της πίστης μας. Πόσο σπουδαίο προνόμιο ήταν!

Το θέμα αυτό της φώτισης συνεχίζεται σε όλη την ιστορία της ανάστασης. Έχουμε δει με ποιό τρόπο ο Πέτρος και ο Ιωάννης και η Μαρία Μαγδαληνή αντιλήφθηκαν την ανάσταση του Κυρίου. Και μετά τις επόμενες εβδομάδες στα ευαγγέλια θα διαβάζουμε για τον τυφλό και τον κουτσό, τον παράλυτο. Βλέπουμε πως εφαρμόζεται στις ζωές τους και στη δική μας καθημερινή ζωή η ανάσταση.

Γιατί η εκκλησία το κάνει αυτό; Γιατί μιλάμε για πράγματα σχετικά με τη θεία φώτιση και την ίαση ακριβώς μετά το Πάσχα; Διότι η ανάσταση **εφαρμόζεται στη δική μας ζωή τώρα**. Είναι πολύ σημαντικό να το κατανοήσουμε αυτό, επειδή πρέπει να ξέρετε ότι ο Θεός σας έδωσε τη δυνατότητα να απαλλαγείτε από τις αμαρτίες σας, από τα πάθη σας, από τα προβλήματα στη ζωή σας που σας απομακρύνουν από τον Θεό. Έχετε τη δυνατότητα να το κάνετε μέσα από την ανάσταση. Σε όλα αυτά τα παραδείγματα ανθρώπων που εν μέρει πίστεψαν, ακόμη και οι σπουδαίοι απόστολοι, που κατά καιρούς δυσπιστούσαν, και άλλοτε δείλιαζαν, ή μερικές φορές συγκρούονταν μεταξύ τους και συναγωνίζονταν ποιος θα γινόταν πιο σπουδαίος, και όλα τα άλλα πράγματα – ακόμη και οι ίδιοι- ο Κύριος τους εξάγνισε στο ακέραιο.

Εάν μπορεί να το κάνει με αυτούς και με όλους στα υπόλοιπα παραδείγματα των γραφών, τον παράλυτο και τον τυφλό και τη γυναίκα στο πηγάδι, την ονομαζόμενη Φωτεινή, και τόσους άλλους, τότε μπορεί και σε εμάς. Η ανάσταση δεν είναι κάτι που πιστεύουμε ως ένα γεγονός που συνέβη στο παρελθόν. Ούτε είναι κάτι που πιστεύεις και λες πως θα συμβεί στο μέλλον, για παράδειγμα την ημέρα της κρίσεως του Κυρίου. Ο Χριστός είπε, *«Είμαι η ανάστασις. Εάν ζω μέσα σου, τότε θα αναστηθείτε τώρα, όχι αργότερα.»* Αυτό σημαίνει πως όταν ζούμε εν Χριστώ, τότε ήδη συμμετέχουμε στη Βασιλεία του Κυρίου εδώ στη γη. Ίσως είναι δύσκολο να κατανοηθεί, αλλά είναι πολύ σημαντικό να προσπαθήσουμε να το καταλάβουμε.

Έτσι, ζωή εν Χριστώ σημαίνει να ζεις ως Χριστιανός, να νηστεύετε ως Χριστιανοί, να σκέφτεστε ως Χριστιανοί, και όταν δεν μπορείτε να κάνετε πράγματα σωστά, όταν κάνετε αμαρτίες, τρέξτε για εξομολόγηση με τη βέβαιη ελπίδα και τη βεβαιότητα ότι ο Θεός θα λάβει τη μετάνοιά σας, εξαιτίας της ανάστασης. Σας λέγω, αν ζείτε στο φως της

ανάστασης, δεν θα εγκαταλείψετε ούτε θα αποθαρρυνθείτε. Ο Κύριος θα σας ενισχύσει.

Σήμερα λοιπόν, βλέπουμε ένα παράδειγμα ανθρώπου, του Θωμά, που δέχτηκε φώτιση. Χριστός με επιμονή τον φώτισε, και ο Θωμάς πίστεψε, και ομολόγησε. Το ίδιο έκανε και θα κάνει και για εμάς, θα μας δώσει φώτιση. Και τώρα πρέπει να πιστέψουμε και να ομολογήσουμε ότι ο Χριστός είναι ο Κύριός μας και ο Θεός μας.

Ακούμε την ομολογία του Θωμά, *«Ο Κύριός Μου και ο Θεός Μου,»* και η ομολογία του είναι παράδειγμα για όλους. Δεν πρέπει όμως η ομολογία της πίστεως στον Θεό να είναι μόνο στα λόγια αλλά και στα έργα.

Πρέπει να έχουμε τον Χριστό παράδειγμα πώς να ζούμε. Η Χριστιανική ζωή έχει δυσκολίες και αγώνα. Είμαστε στο φως της ανάστασης, αλλά δεν πρέπει ποτέ να απομακρυνθούμε πολύ από τη γνώση ότι η ζωή μας είναι δύσκολη. Απομακρυνόμαστε εξαιτίας των αμαρτιών μας και άλλοτε εξαιτίας του κακού του κόσμου που μας περιβάλλει. Να ακολουθούμε το παράδειγμα των αγίων. Να ακολουθούμε το παράδειγμα των αποστόλων. Ζήστε όπως έζησαν, δηλαδή να ζείτε εν Χριστώ και μέσα στην Εκκλησία Του.

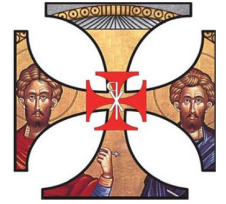
Κάθε φορά που αποτυχαίνουμε να ομολογήσουμε την Ορθόδοξη Πίστη με λόγια και πράξεις είναι σαν να κοιτάζουμε τον κενό τάφο και να αναρωτιόμαστε πού είναι ο Κύριος. Δεν πρέπει να είμαστε έτσι. Να πιστεύουμε στην ανάσταση, και να πιστεύουμε ότι μπορεί να αλλάξουμε και να αναπτυχθούμε, και μέσα από αγώνα, επίπονο αγώνα, μέσα από δάκρυα, μέσα από σκαμπανεβάσματα, και ακόμη και μέσα στις πολλές αμαρτίες. Ο Θεός θα σας κάνει τέλειους, μόνο όμως αν πιστεύετε στον αναστηθέντα Χριστό και ακολουθείτε τις διδαχές Του.

*with many thanks to Maria Kiritsis, Athens GR
for providing an adaptation of this article*



Geek Orthodox
Metropolis of
New Jersey

SAINT ANDREW GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH PHILOTOCHOS



***Christos Anesti! – Alithos Anesti!
Christ is Risen! – Truly He is Risen!***

Hope everyone had a blessed Lenten Journey and may the Resurrection of Christ be in your hearts always!! The Month of May we celebrate the "Mothers". We are grateful for all the mothers, grandmothers, and godmothers who love, nurture, and care for us.

It's a special bond that spans the years,
Through laughter, worry, smiles,
And tears.

A sense of trust that can't be broken, a depth of love sometimes unspoken.
A lifelong friendship built on sharing, hugs and kisses, warmth and caring.
Mother and child, their hearts as one-link that can never be undone.

-Unknown

On May 9th, we have our annual *Philoptochos Tricky-Tray Fundraiser* held at our Church. *Doors open at 6pm calling begins at 7:30pm. If you have any questions, please contact SaintAndrewsTT@gmail.com* Your support is important. Proceeds from the Tricky Tray 2025 will benefit:

1. Education, Careers & Lifelong Community (ECLC) Chatham, NJ
2. I am HOPE, NJ
3. Benny's Bodega
4. Saint Andrew Church



We appreciate your ongoing generosity and support for this Fundraiser!

use QR CODE for tickets

The Tricky Tray Committee: Antonia Clapsis, Melissa Dobias, Julie Ioannou, Irene Laoudis, Yiota Louca, Kia Paskas, Maro Schuster, Marina Venizelos

The Mission of our Philoptochos Society is:

To help 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 help anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts,



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.

Join this impactful organization!

Please complete the 2025 MEMBERSHIP FORM to *renew* your membership or to become a *New Member* of Philoptochos.

May God's Blessings be upon you!

Maro Nicolaou Schuster, VP

Executive Board: *President, Marina Venizelos; 1st Vice President, Maro Schuster; 2nd Vice President, Irene Laoudis; Treasurer, Salomi Massaras; Assistant Treasurer, Irene Petrou; Recording Secretary, Faye Paskas; Corresponding Secretary, Kia Paskas*
Board Members: Antonia Clapsis, Maria Daniskas, Maria Galvin, Joanna Haritos, Panayiota Louca, Irene Sergonis, Athena Theodosion
Advisor to Board: Mary Michailidis | Spiritual Advisor: Fr. John Theodosion

community partners program

JOIN OUR Saint Andrew Community Partners Program

As a Saint Andrew Community Partner, you will reach a wide audience through our various advertising efforts. At the same time, you are helping to support our charitable outreach programs and community service. We have five partner levels contact us today to discuss the one that is right for you .

DIAMOND PARTNER • \$5,000

For a full year, your sponsorship is promoted at ALL events at St. Andrew and in all publications.

- Exclusive 5' x 7' billboard in Community Center for 1 year
- An ad in the Saint Andrew Family News Magazine, 10 issues
- 1 full-page ad in annual Mardi Gras journal
- 1 full-page ad in annual Tricky Tray journal

PLATINUM PARTNER • \$2,000

6' x 4' sign in gym

GOLD PARTNER • \$1,000

5' x 3' sign in gym

SILVER PARTNER • \$750

4' x 3' sign in gym

BRONZE PARTNER • \$500

3' x 2' sign in gym

BigGreekFestival.com

community partners program



DEADLINE TO ADVERTISE DURING OUR ANNUAL FESTIVAL IS MAY 15

Please contact the office (info@standrewgonj.org) for more information & to become a Community Partner

BIG GREEK FESTIVAL.COM

May 30 – May 31 – June 1



Friday ♦ May 30 ♦ Lunch 11am – 2pm

Eat in or take out – pre-order at:
standrewgonj.square.site

Dinner 5pm – 11pm

Saturday ♦ May 31 ♦ 11am – 11pm

Sunday ♦ June 1 ♦ 12pm – 7pm



- Authentic Greek Food and Drink
- Greek Bakery – Homemade Pastries
- Outdoor Taverna Grill and Bar
- Live Greek Music, DJ, and Dancing
- Traditional Greek Folk Dancers
- Church Tours and Bookstore
- Kiddie Corner – Fun and Games
- Raffles and more

FREE ADMISSION

Free parking at County College of Morris with free round-trip shuttle service

St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church, 1447 Sussex Tpk., Randolph, NJ
Tel: 973 584-0388 • Fax: 973-584-3573 • info@standrewgonj.org

BigGreekFestival.com



ATM



GOYA News

On March 30th, our church went by bus to NYC to participate in the Greek Independence Day Parade. This year marked 204 years since the start of the Greek Revolution against the Ottoman Turks.

April was a meaningful month for GOYA, filled with preparation, service, and spiritual reflection. GOYAns have been hard at work distributing and making sandwiches for the Faith Kitchen food service and assembling Easter baskets that were sold during Lent. We also continued our weekly dance practices every Thursday evening as we prepared



for our final performances of the season at the St. Andrew's Greek Festival. On Good Friday, GOYAns will honor our annual tradition by helping decorate the Epitaphio, a special and sacred part of Holy Week in our Church. Additionally, practices started for the upcoming soccer tournaments and outdoor Olympics which we are excited to attend.

As we move into May the GOYA looks forward to an exciting lineup of events. On May 3rd, we will host a Car Wash Fundraiser in the Church parking lot. All members of the community are welcome to come support a great cause while getting your car cleaned. The Indoor Olympics will take place on May 10th, followed by the Soccer Tournament on May 17th. We will celebrate our graduation GOYAns at the Senior Send-Off on May 19th.

Then, over Memorial Day Weekend, May 24th–25th, GOYA will participate in the Outdoor Olympics. We will end the month with our biggest event of the season—St. Andrew's Greek Festival, held May 30th through June 1st. We are so proud of our GOYAns for their continued dedication, teamwork, and spirit. We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the various events this month and hope you all have a great end to the year.



Dean Zervos



GOYA INTEREST MEETING MONDAY MAY 19 AT 6:00-6:30PM

Future GOYAns are invited to join us on Monday May 19 at 6pm. Our current Senior GOYAns will be there to share their experiences with you and answer any questions you might have about join our Saint Andrew GOYA. *Parents are also welcome.*
You must be 12 years old by October 1st and in Grade 7.



RAFFLE



2025 MERCEDES-BENZ

GLC 300 W4 - MSRP \$56,335

POLAR WHITE | ALL-WHEEL DRIVE | REMOTE START
NAVIGATION and much more

TICKETS \$25 EACH | DRAWING SEPTEMBER 28, 2025, 12:30PM

To benefit Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox Church

1447 Sussex Turnpike, Randolph, NJ 07869 973.584.0388

Winner need not be present at drawing.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

BIGGREEKFESTIVAL.COM
May 30 – May 31 – June 1

Please Scan the QR Code to view the volunteer schedule and sign up!

Areas needing help: Festival Set Up Food Lines Kitchen Bar Outdoor Grill
Pastries Ice Cream Raffles/Games Admissions/Parking Festival Clean Up

WE NEED YOU

Not sure how to use the QR code? No problem!

email aborzeka@gmail.com

with the date/time you are available and area you'd like to
volunteer, and we will add you to the schedule.



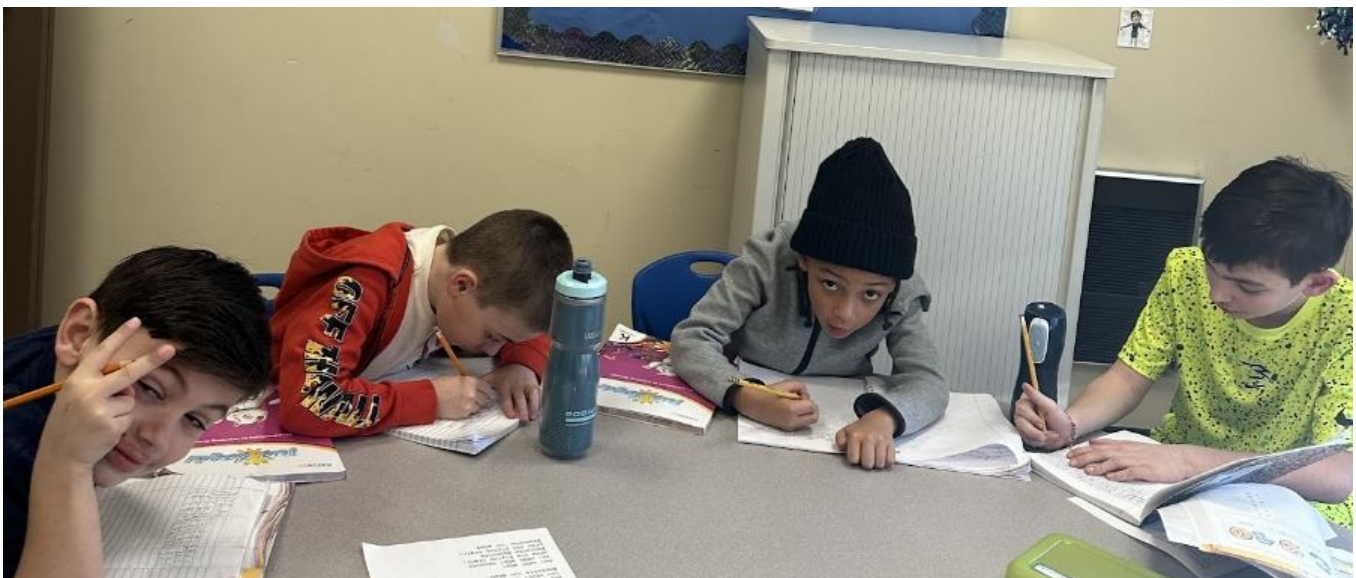
Hellenic Afternoon School

The Saint Andrew Hellenic Afternoon School (HAS) students and teachers have worked hard with the language and cultural programs throughout the school year. We are so proud of our students and appreciate our teachers. The 25th of March program was engaging and educational as the students enjoyed their roles in their performances. We continue to do our best to instill the love for the Greek language and culture to our students and encourage the parents to continue with their support at home. Parents play a critical role in their child's Hellenic Afternoon School education, as they encourage Greek language and culture, help their child with the homework and bring on private tutoring services when needed. We also appreciate all the parents support with the PTA which is vital to the Saint Andrew school programs. We look forward for more parents to participate with our PTA in the future.



Graduation Day is on Thursday, May 22, 2025

Teachers and students are preparing for the last program of the school year. The program theme will be based on a Summer in the Greek Islands. We look forward to completing another successful school year!



HONOREE GRAND BANQUET

This year's Annual Grand Banquet is held on Monday, May 12, 2025 @ 6pm at the Venetian in Garfield NJ. Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox church is honoring only a few of the many hard working and dedicated parishioners of our community. The Community Honoree is Community Honoree **Despina Zapantis**; Parish Council Honoree **Thomas J Borzeka**; Philoptochos Honoree **Salomi Massaras**; GOYA Honoree **Zoe Sifonios**; Religious Education Teacher Honoree **Rachel Lopardo**; Greek Education Teacher Honoree **Hariclea Christodoulou**; Youth Worker Honoree **Anna Sifonios**; Senior Steward honoree **John Gounaris**. We would like to thank them all for their services and contributions to the success of our ministries. Please join us on **Sunday June 18th** after church services when we will represent their plaques to our very deserving honorees.

COMMUNITY HONOREE **Despina Zapantis**:

I was born in 1946 in PERITHORI, MESSOLONGHI, Greece. I was the youngest of three children—my two older brothers both became merchant marines.

My oldest brother became friends with a young man from Piraeus named Kostantinos. After seeing a photo of me, Costantinos asked my brother if he could marry me. In 1969, I met him in person, and two weeks later, we were married.

Shortly after our wedding, he returned to sea with the Merchant Marines. But the ship ran into mechanical trouble and had to return to port. At three o'clock in the morning, I was woken by someone knocking at the door. Unbeknown to me, it was him. I shouted through the door, "You are not my husband—he's not here. Go away!" Kostantinos kept insisting it was him, so I stepped out onto the balcony. To my surprise, it really was him—I let him in, and we laughed about it for years afterward.

For the first five years of our marriage, my husband continued working at sea. He was away a lot, and it was difficult for me. In 1974, we made the decision to move to the United States, hoping he could find work that would keep him closer to home. With God's help, Kostantinos found a job as a painter, and eventually we bought a home in Landing, where we raised our two boys.

When our older son turned 10, I began working too—first at Draker Bakery, and later at Siemens. I worked for 10 years until health issues forced me to stop.

For the past 30 years, I have been a devoted member of Saint Andrew Church. I started by volunteering with the Baking Group, then joined the Crochet Group, where we make blankets for the homeless, nursing homes, hospitals, and anyone in need. Through this warm and welcoming church, I have made many dear friends. I pray that I can continue to help and support our community.

Three years ago, I lost my beloved husband after 53 wonderful years of marriage. I miss him every day. He brought such joy to my life—I loved to watch him dance, especially the ZEIBEKIKO Dance.

I am very proud of our two sons. I live with my older son, Christoforos, who is an auto mechanic and owns a pressure washing business. My younger son, John, works in the stock market in New York City. He is married and has given me a beautiful grandchild, Kenny. When I hear him call me "YIAYIA," my heart fills with joy. I thank God every day for my family, my friends and I pray to Saint Andrew to protect them—and the whole world.



PARISH COUNCIL HONOREE **Thomas J Borzeka**

Tom has been an active member of St. Andrew for over 50 years. He grew up in the church attending Sunday school, being an altar boy, a GOYAn and joining the parish council upon graduating from university. Currently he is the treasurer at St. Andrew. He volunteers for the annual festival, the Faith Kitchen and tries to help whenever he can. He is also the treasurer for the Morris County Chapter of the Order of AHEPA and the AHEPA 5th District Marshall.

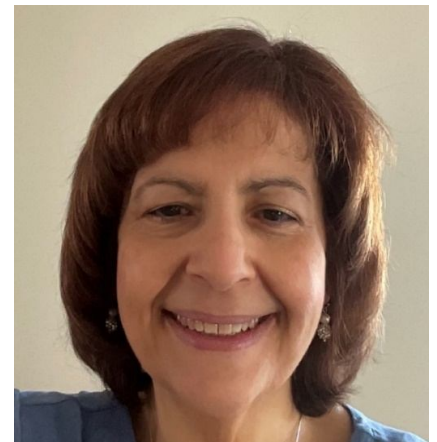


He graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University with a BS in Accounting and is a CPA. He started his career in public accounting and after seven years he left public for his first controllership position. He currently works for Atlantis UGS, an audio/visual installation firm as CFO. He served as Controller for a telephone equipment distributor for six years, a gasoline and oil distributor in Northern New Jersey for three and a half years, an IT staffing firm for six years, a security products distributor for three years. He is also a member of the NJ Society of Certified Public Accountants, the CFO Leadership Council, Financial Executives International and the Greek American Chamber of Commerce.

Tom is following the example of his family's service to the church and believes in maintaining the Orthodox Church and preserving Greek traditions. He has served several terms on the parish council over the last 25 years. He is extremely honored to be chosen as the Parish Council honoree.

PHILOPTOCHOS HONOREE **Salomi Massaras**

Salomi Massaras is the treasurer of Philoptochos at St. Andrew Church in Randolph, NJ. She is also the current director of the church choir and past principal of the Hellenic Afternoon School. She is a teacher and musician who works with a variety populations. Salomi holds a bachelor's degree in music therapy and a Master's in Educational Leadership.



Salomi attended St. Andrew's in her formative years and with the love and encouragement from her beloved grandmother Eugenia and her mother Sofia, her role models for her involvement in the church. As an immigrant, she is thankful for the opportunity to attend church services freely and is indebted to her ancestors for their efforts to preserve their faith and traditions despite historical obstacles. Salomi has been married to Aristotle for over thirty years and is appreciative of her extended family and friends for their support as of various endeavors.



GOYA HONOREE **Zoe Sifonios**

Zoe Sifonios is a dedicated junior at Mount Olive High School and currently serves as the President of her local GOYA. With a deep-rooted commitment to her faith and heritage, Zoe has taken on a leadership role with the mission of strengthening her GOYA community and creating a welcoming environment where Greek Orthodox youth can come together, grow spiritually, and form lasting friendships.

As president, Zoe is passionate about building a GOYA that is not only active and competitive, but also a place where members feel a strong sense of belonging. She works hard to make GOYA an exciting and meaningful part of

every member's life by organizing engaging social events, outreach opportunities, and faith-based activities. Her goal is to bring together young people who share a common faith and culture, and help them develop both spiritually and socially through their involvement.

Zoe aspires to continue expanding the reach of the GOYA, encouraging more youth to participate and stay involved. Whether it's through service projects, retreats, or fun gatherings, she believes in the power of community and connection. More than anything, Zoe is committed to fostering an atmosphere where strong bonds can form friendships that will carry members through their teenage years and beyond.

With her leadership, energy, and heart for service, Zoe is helping shape the future of her GOYA chapter and inspiring her peers to grow in faith, unity, and friendship.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHER HONOREE **Rachel Lopardo**

Rachel Lopardo is honored to be the Religious Education Honoree for 2025. Rachel has wanted to be a teacher since she was three years old. She began helping her mom teach the Pre-K Religious Education class when she was four (after being a student herself) and officially became her mom's co-teacher in high school. She has been teaching the Pre-K class for fourteen years. She loves how enthusiastic and excited the children are to learn and cannot wait to see them each week at church! Rachel and Photeine make a great team and are always teaching the children new songs to sing to the parish. This past year, she stepped in to assist with running the Religious Education program for our church. She is also an active member of St. Andrew Philoptochos.



Rachel graduated Summa Cum Laude from William Paterson with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education and a focus in Social Studies and Sociology. She began teaching Pre-K at a nursery school in Pine Brook in 2017 and is now the Director of the school. Every day she gets to nurture and teach children as young as six weeks old, as well as mentor and train new teachers.

In her free time, Rachel likes to read, craft, and listen to music. She loves to travel, be in nature, and organize. She attributes her love of teaching to her mother, who Rachel takes care of in their home in Rockaway.



GREEK EDUCATION TEACHER HONOREE **Hariclea Christodoulou**

Ονομάζομαι **Χαρίκλεια Χριστοδούλου** και είμαι μέλος της κοινότητας του Αγίου Ανδρέα για 33 σχεδόν χρόνια. Κατάγομαι από την αγαπημένη και πολύπαθη Κύπρο και έχω τέσσερα παιδιά τα οποία είναι απόφοιτοι του ελληνικού απογευματινού σχολείου.

Έχω αποφοιτήσει από τη Φυσικομαθηματική Σχολή του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών, καθώς και από το Ελληνικό Κέντρο Παραγωγικότητας όπου παρακολούθησα με επιτυχία το διετές πρόγραμμα με θέμα "Προγραμματισμός και Ανάλυση Ηλεκτρονικών Υπολογιστών" και έλαβα το σχετικό δίπλωμα. Επίσης παρακολούθησα με επιτυχία σεμινάρια του Ελληνικού Στατιστικού Ινστιτούτου με θέμα "Δειγματοληψεία- Δημοσκοπήση" και έτυχα του σχετικού διπλώματος.

Είχα την τιμή να εργαστώ σαν δικαστική υπάλληλος στο Πρωτοδικείο Αθηνών και κατόπιν στον Άρειο Πάγο που είναι το Ανώτατο Δικαστήριο της χώρας. Επίσης εργάστηκα σαν αναπληρώτρια καθηγήτρια Μαθηματικών σε Γυμνάσιο και Λύκειο της ιδιαίτερης πατρίδας μου.

Εδώ στην νέα πατρίδα εργάζομαι σαν δασκάλα της Ελληνικής γλώσσας για σχεδόν 13 χρόνια στο απογευματινό σχολείο του Αγίου Ανδρέα και τα τελευταία τρία χρόνια και στο Ελληνικό σχολείο της κοινότητας του Αγίου Γεωργίου στο Piscataway.

Έγνοια μας και χρέος μας είναι να μεταδώσουμε στα παιδιά μας την αγάπη για τον Χριστό και την Ελλάδα μας(για το έθνος μας γενικότερα), αλλά και για τον συνάνθρωπο.

«Χρωστάμε σ' αυτούς που πέρασαν, που ήρθαν, που θα ρθούνε»!

Σας ευχαριστώ.

My name is **Hariclea Christodoulou** and I have been a member of Saint Andrew's community for almost 33 years. I come from the beloved and much suffered Cyprus. I have four children who have all graduated from the Greek afternoon school of St. Andrew.

I have graduated from the School of Physics and Mathematics of the University of Athens and from the Greek Center of Productivity, where I successfully attended the two- year program "Programming and Computer Analysis" and was awarded the relevant diploma. I also successfully attended seminars at the Greek Statistics Institute concerning "Sampling – Polls" and obtained the relevant diploma as well.

I had the honor of working as a judicial employee at the Trial Court of Athens and then at the Supreme Court, the highest court of Greece. I have also worked as an associate Maths teacher at the High School and Lyceum of my birth country.

Here, at my new country, I have been working as a teacher of the Greek language at the afternoon school at Saint Andrew for almost 13 years and at the Greek School of the Saint George community for the last three years.

It should be our concern and duty to pass on to our children our love for Jesus and our Greece (our nation in general), and for all human beings. "We owe it to those who passed, who came, who will come"! Thank you



YOUTH WORKER HONOREE **ANNA SIFONIOS**;

Anna Sifonios is a dedicated mother of five and a passionate advocate for youth, faith, and community.

With over a decade of experience teaching music, Anna has nurtured creativity and confidence in her students, inspiring a love for the arts that extends beyond the classroom. Her teaching journey also included a meaningful time as a Pre-K teacher at Greek School, where she introduced young children to their cultural roots and the Greek language in a warm, supportive environment.

Anna's love for her faith and community naturally led her to become a GOYA advisor, a role she has embraced with heart and vision. As an advisor, Anna has made it her mission to grow the group not just in numbers, but in spirit. She has worked tirelessly to create an environment where young people feel welcome, supported, and connected. Through thoughtful planning, engaging events, and a deep commitment to the values of the Orthodox Church, she encourages teens to build lasting friendships grounded in shared faith and meaningful experiences.

Her leadership is marked by compassion, energy, and a genuine desire to see each young person thrive spiritually and socially. Whether organizing events, service projects, or simply creating a space for open conversation and connection, Anna is driven by the belief that church is more than a place of worship, it is a place where community is built, and where faith becomes a shared journey. She hopes the church will become a welcomed place where the youth can come together and create lasting friends and memories.

SENIOR STEWARD HONOREE **John Gounaris**

John Gregory Gounaris was born in Astoria-Queens, NY on August 8, 1931, during the great depression. His father worked many different odd jobs to feed a family of five. John was the oldest of three children and as a growing child he helped his father with his jobs, one of which included walking over the George Washington Bridge to pick up laundry and deliver them back to Queens. When John wasn't helping his father or going to school he enjoyed playing stick ball and other sports with kids in the neighborhood. He also enjoyed track in which he obtained a record in high school.



After high school, John served as a National Guard for several years and then got a job working for Railway Express. Shortly after, he met his sweetheart, Styliani and then had two children. Several years later, John and Stella decided to move to the suburbs of Rockaway, NJ . It was then that John started working for UPS driving tractor trailers. He worked countless hours always making sure he provided for his family and having yearly family vacations. His work was never without worry for Stella, especially, on snowy, icy days, recalling a time he lost control of the 18-wheeler and tipped over a guard rail down a hill. God was looking over John and he walked up that hill without a scratch on him. John loved his church and believed in the power of prayer. He served his life committed to God and the church. John volunteered long hours washing pots and pans at the yearly Greek festivals and enjoyed conversations with the people surrounding him. John is now 93 and although his wife is no longer with him, he enjoys the company of his children and three grandchildren.



Saint Andrew Hosts

NJ DISTRICT LEVEL OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

By: Athina Vella | April 22, 2025



Nicholas Galvin (9th grade) and Marios Christodoulou (12th grade) proudly represented St. Andrew at the New Jersey District Level of the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival, hosted by our parish on Saturday, March 22. St. Andrew was honored to welcome 25 finalists from across the state for this all-day event, which featured public speeches from each participant and a beautiful Lenten luncheon shared by all.

Each year, a parish is selected to host this prestigious event, and this year St. Andrew was privileged to serve as host. The St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival is a nationwide program of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. It offers youth a meaningful opportunity to reflect on and express their faith through



public speaking. Participants from across the United States compete at the parish, district, and metropolis levels for the chance to represent their Metropolis at the National Oratorical Festival, typically held in early June.

The Festival includes two divisions: Junior (grades 7–9) and Senior (grades 10–12). Students choose from a set of annually updated topics, written by the Department of Religious Education, and are required to prepare and deliver a speech rooted in Orthodox Christian teachings and personal reflection.

This year the finalists from the NJ District Level Festival for the Junior Division are **Mariella Nissirios** from **St. Nicholas in Wyckoff**, **Evelyna Elissa Agathangelou** from **St. Athanasios in Paramus, NJ**. Senior Division finalists are **Constantina Pilarinos** from **St. George** in Clifton, and **Michael Maris** from **St. Nicholas in Wyckoff**. They will represent our District at the NJ Metropolis Event on Saturday April 26th at the St. George Cathedral in Philadelphia, PA.

This event was co-chaired by Maro Schuster and Athina Vella. It is with the help from the entire St. Andrew community that make these events possible. Thank you to everyone that participates and helps our community host such wonderful and inspiring events celebrating our Orthodox Faith and culture.



St. Photini's Life

The New Testament describes the familiar account of the “woman at the well” (John 4:5-42), who was a Samaritan. Up to that point she had led a sinful life, one which resulted in a rebuke from Jesus Christ. However, she responded to Christ’s stern admonition with genuine repentance, was forgiven her sinful ways, and became a convert to the Christian Faith – taking the name ‘Photini’ at Baptism, which literally means “the enlightened one”.

A significant figure in the Johannine community, the Samaritan Woman, like many other women, contributed to the spread of Christianity. She therefore occupies a place of honour among the apostles. In Greek sermons from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries she is called “apostle” and “evangelist.” In these sermons the Samaritan Woman is often compared to the male disciples and apostles and found to surpass them.

Later, Byzantine hagiographers developed the story of the Samaritan Woman, beginning where Saint John left off. At Pentecost Saint Photini received baptism, along with her five sisters, Anatole, Photo, Photis, Paraskeve, Kyriake, and her two sons, Phteinos and Joseph. She then began a missionary career, traveling far and wide, preaching the good news of the Messiah’s coming, His death and resurrection.

When Nero, the emperor of Rome, began to persecute Christians, Photini and her son Joseph were in Carthage, in Africa, where she was preaching the Christian gospel. After Jesus appeared to Photini in a dream, she sailed to Rome. Her son and many Christians from Africa accompanied her. Photini’s arrival and activity aroused curiosity in the capital city. Everyone talked about her, “Who is this woman?” they asked. “She came here with a crowd of followers and she



preaches Christ with great boldness.

Soldiers were ordered to bring her to the emperor, but Photini anticipated them. Before they could arrest her, Photini, with her son Joseph and her Christian friends, went to Nero. When the emperor saw them, he asked why they had come. Photini answered, “We have come to teach you to believe

in Christ.” The half-mad ruler of the Roman Empire did not frighten her. She wanted to convert him! Nero asked the saints their names. Again Photini answered. By name she introduced herself, her five sisters and younger son.

The emperor then demanded to know whether they had all agreed to die for the Nazarene. Photini spoke for them. “Yes, for the love of Him we rejoice and in His name we’ll gladly die.” Hearing their



defiant words, Nero ordered their hands beaten with iron rods for three hours. At the end of each hour another persecutor took up the beating.

The saints, however, felt no pain. Nothing happened to their hands. Photini joyfully quoted words of a psalm by David: "God is my help. No matter what anyone does to me, I shall not be afraid." Perplexed by the Christian's endurance and confidence, Nero ordered the men thrown into jail.

Photini and her five sisters were brought to the golden reception hall in the imperial palace. There, the six women were seated on golden thrones. In front of them stood a large golden table covered with gold coins, jewels and dresses. Nero hoped to tempt the women by this display of wealth and luxury. Nero then ordered his daughter Domnina, with her slave girls, to go speak with the Christian women. Women, he thought, would succeed in persuading their Christian sisters to deny their God.

Domnina greeted Photini graciously, mentioning the name of Christ. On hearing the princess' greeting, the saint thanked God. She then embraced and kissed Domnina. The women talked. But the outcome of the women's talk was not what Nero wished.

Photini catechized Domnina and her hundred slave girls and baptized them all. She gave the name Anthousa to Nero's daughter. After her baptism, Anthousa immediately ordered all the gold and jewels on the golden table distributed to the poor of Rome.

When the emperor heard that his own daughter had been converted to Christianity, he condemned Photini and all her companions to death by fire. For seven days the furnace burned. But when the door of the furnace was opened, it was seen that the fire had not harmed the saints. Next the emperor tried to destroy the saints with poison. Photini offered to be the first to drink it. "O King," she said, "I will drink the poison first so that you might

see the power of my Christ and God." All the saints then drank the poison after her. None suffered any ill effects from it.

In vain Nero subjected Photini, her sisters, sons and friends to every known torture. The saints survived unscathed to taunt and ridicule their persecutor. For three years they were held in a Roman prison. Saint Photini transformed it into a "house of God." Many Romans came to the prison, were converted and baptized.

Finally, the enraged tyrant had all the saints, except for Photini, beheaded. She was thrown first into a deep, dry well and then into prison again. Photini now grieved that she was alone, that she had not received the crown of martyrdom together with her five sisters, Anatole, Photo, Photis, Paraskeve and Kyriake and her two sons, Photeinos and Joseph. Night and day she prayed for release from this life.

One night, God appeared to her, made the sign of the cross over her three times. The vision filled her with joy. Many days later, while she hymned and blessed God, Saint Photini gave her soul into God's hands. The Samaritan Woman conversed with Christ by the well of Jacob, near the city of Sychar. She drank of the "living water" and gained everlasting life and glory. For generation after generation, Orthodox Christians have addressed this prayer to the woman exalted by the Messiah when He sat by the well in Samaria and talked with her:

Troparion to St. Photini

Illuminated by the Holy Spirit, All-Glorious One,
from Christ the Saviour you drank the water of salvation.
With open hand you give it to those who thirst.
Great-Martyr Photini, Equal-to-the-Apostles,
pray to Christ for the salvation of our souls.



ΑΓΙΑ ΦΩΤΕΙΝΗ Η ΜΕΓΑΛΟΜΑΡΤΥΣ

Η Αγία Μεγαλομάρτυς Φωτεινή έζησε στα χρόνια του Χριστού. Ήταν Σαμαρείτισσα στην καταγωγή και διέμενε στην πόλη Συχάρ όπου ζούσε ένα έκλυτο βίο. Ο τρόπος ζωής της ήταν γνωστός στους συμπολίτες της και για αυτόν την είχαν στιγματίσει. Κάθε μεσημέρι πήγαινε έξω από την πόλη, στο πηγάδι το λεγόμενο του Ιακώβ, και εγέμιζε την στάμνα της. Εκείνο τον καιρό, ο Ιησούς περνούσε από την Συχάρ και στάθηκε στο πηγάδι του Ιακώβ για να πει νερό. Εκεί συναντήθηκε με την Αγία Φωτεινή και εφάνέρωσε σ' αυτήν όλη τη ζωή της και από την οποία ζήτησε να του δώσει νερό. Ο Κύριος είπε στην Αγία, ότι Αυτός είναι « τό ύδωρ τό ζών », δηλαδή η αστείρευτη πηγή του Αγίου Πνεύματος. Τότε οι Ιουδαίοι και οι Σαμαρείτες δεν είχαν επαφές και γι' αυτό παραξενεύτηκε η Αγία που ένας Ιουδαίος της απηύθυνε τον λόγο.

Μετά από την συνομιλία με τον Χριστό, η Αγία Φωτεινή πίστεψε σε Αυτόν και κάλεσε τους συμπολίτες της να τρέξουν να Τον συναντήσουν. Ο Χριστός έμεινε δύο ημέρες στη Συχάρ και τους μετέδωσε τον Λόγο και την ευλογία Του.

Μετά την εις ουρανούς Ανάληψη του Κυρίου και την κάθοδο του Αγίου Πνεύματος στους Αγίους Αποστόλους κατά την ευφρόσυνο ημέρα της Πεντηκοστής, η Σαμαρείτιδα εκ της πόλεως Συχάρ έχοντας ως ξεχωριστό βίωμα την προσωπική της συνάντηση με τον Κύριο, βαπτίστηκε χριστιανή από τους Αγίους Αποστόλους μαζί με τους δύο γιους και τις πέντε αδελφές της και ονομάστηκε Φωτεινή. Από εκείνη τη στιγμή αφιέρωσε όλη τη ζωή της στη διάδοση του Ευαγγελίου του Χριστού. Κήρυξε τον λόγο του Χριστού στην Συρία, στην Φοινίκη, στην Παλαιστίνη, στην Αίγυπτο, στην Καρχηδόνα και τελικά στη Ρώμη επί των ημερών του αιμοβόρου και παρανοϊκού βασιλέως Νέρωνα (54 – 68 μ.Χ). **Η μεγάλη της αυτή αποστολική δράση είναι ο λόγος για τον οποίο η εκκλησία μας την ονομάζει Ισαπόστολο.** Πιστοί συναθλητές και φλογεροί συνοδοιπόροι της υπήρξαν οι πέντε αδελφές της, η Ανατολή, η Φωτώ, η Φωτίδα, η Παρασκευή και η Κυριακή, καθώς και οι δύο γιοι της, ο Βίκτωρας που μετονομάστηκε Φωτεινός και ο Ιωσής.

Ο μεγάλος της γιος Βίκτωρ ήταν στρατιώτης στον Ρωμαϊκό στρατό και έφερε το βαθμό του στρατηλάτη. Ρωμαίος αυτοκράτορας τότε ήταν ο Νέρων, ο οποίος μη γνωρίζοντας ότι ο Βίκτωρ ήταν



χριστιανός, του ανέθεσε να διώξει τους Χριστιανούς στην Ιταλία. Ο Βίκτωρ πήγε στην Ιταλία αλλά φυσικά αρνήθηκε να φέρει σε πέρας τις εντολές που είχε λάβει. Ο δούκας Σεβαστιανός, φίλος του Βίκτωρα προσπάθησε να τον μεταπείσει αλλά αντί αυτού και με την χάρη του Ιησού Χριστού, μεταπείστηκε ο ίδιος και βαπτίστηκε χριστιανός.

Ο Νέρων πληροφορήθηκε τα γεγονότα αυτά και κάλεσε στην Ρώμη τόσο τον Βίκτωρα, που είχε εν τω μεταξύ λάβει το χριστιανικό όνομα Φωτεινός, και τον Σεβαστιανό, όσο και την Αγία Φωτεινή με τις αδελφές της και τον μικρό της γιο.

Στο μεταξύ η Αγία Φωτεινή, στην οποία αποκαλύφθηκαν όλα όσα θα της συνέβαιναν, έφυγε από την Καρθαγένη και έφθασε στη Ρώμη. Εκεί άρχισε να κηρύττει με ξεχωριστή παρρησία τον Χριστό και όταν παρουσιάστηκε μαζί με τον γιο της, τον Ιωσή, ενώπιον του Νέρωνα, του είπε ότι θα του μιλήσει για τον Χριστό για να Τον ασπασθεί.

Στο άκουσμα αυτών των λόγων ο εξαγριωμένος βασιλιάς διέταξε να συντριβούν οι αρμοί των χεριών τους με σιδερένιες σφαίρες.

Όμως παρά το φρικτό βασανιστήριο ούτε πόνο αισθάνθηκαν ούτε τα χέρια τους συντρίφθηκαν, αφού προστατεύθηκαν από τον Θεό με θαυμαστό τρόπο.

Βλέποντας ο Νέρων το παράδοξο αυτό θαύμα, διέταξε να κοπούν τα χέρια των μαρτύρων. Αμέσως οι υπηρέτες του βασιλιά άρπαξαν την Αγία Φωτεινή και αφού έδεσαν τα χέρια της, τα έβαλαν πάνω στο αμόνι. Όμως παρά τα αλλεπάλληλα χτυπήματα με μαχαίρια, δεν κατόρθωσαν απολύτως

τίποτα, αλλά απεναντίας οι δήμιοι παρέλυσαν και έπεσαν κάτω σαν να ήταν νεκροί.

Η Αγία ευχαρίστησε τον Θεό, αλλά ο αιμοχαρής βασιλιάς άρχισε να απορεί με τα γενόμενα, αλλά και να σκέπτεται τί θα πράξει για να κατατροπώσει τους μάρτυρες και να τους υποτάξει στο δικό του θέλημα.

Έτσι αποφάσισε τους μεν άνδρες να τους κλείσει σε σκοτεινή φυλακή, τη δε Αγία Φωτεινή μαζί με τις πέντε αδελφές της να τις οδηγήσει μέσα σ' ένα χρυσό κουβούκλιο. Εκεί οι θρόνοι, τα στολίδια, τα ενδύματα και οι ζώνες θα ήταν χρυσά, ενώ διέταξε και την κόρη του, τη Δομνίνα, να πάει μαζί με όλες τις υπηρέτριές της στο χρυσό κουβούκλιο για να δελεάσει τη Φωτεινή και τις αδελφές της να εγκαταλείψουν τη χριστιανική πίστη.

Τους δόθηκε μάλιστα και η υπόσχεση ότι εάν αρνηθούν τον Χριστό, τότε θα έχουν πάντοτε την εύνοια και τη φροντίδα του βασιλιά, αλλά και πολύ περισσότερα πλούτη και τιμές.

Όμως οι άγιες αυτές γυναίκες απέρριψαν τις δελεαστικές προτάσεις του παρανοϊκού βασιλιά και όταν η Αγία Φωτεινή είδε τη Δομνίνα, της είπε:

Χαῖρε, ἡ νύμφη τοῦ Κυρίου μου

η δε κόρη του Νέρωνα της απάντησε:

Χαίροις καί σύ, κυρία μου, ἡ λαμπάς τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Μόλις η Αγία άκουσε τη Δομνίνα να λέει το όνομα του Χριστού, χάρηκε τόσο πολύ, ώστε αφού ευχαρίστησε τον Κύριο και την αγκάλιασε, την κατήχησε στη χριστιανική πίστη μαζί με όλες τις υπηρέτριές της και κατόπιν τις βάπτισε όλες.

Στη Δομνίνα δόθηκε το όνομα Ανθούσα, η οποία πρόσταξε τη Στεφανίδα, που ήταν η μεγαλύτερη από τις υπηρέτριες, να διανείμει στους φτωχούς όλα τα χρυσά στολίδια και τα χρήματα που βρίσκονταν μέσα στο χρυσό κουβούκλιο.

Μόλις πληροφορήθηκε ο βασιλιάς τις νέες αυτές εξελίξεις, διέταξε εξοργισμένος να βάλουν μέσα σ'

ένα πυρακτωμένο καμίνι που έκαιγε επί επτά ημέρες την Αγία Φωτεινή μαζί με όλους τους συνακολούθους της, άνδρες και γυναίκες, και να τους αφήσουν μέσα σ' αυτό τρεις ημέρες.

Όταν όμως πέρασε το διάστημα των τριών ημερών και διέταξε ο Νέρων να ανοίξουν το καμίνι και εάν βρουν τα οστά τους μέσα να τα ρίξουν στο ποτάμι.

Ανοίγοντας όμως οι στρατιώτες το καμίνι, τους βρήκαν όλους σώους και αβλαβείς, γεγονός που τους άφησε άναυδους και το παράδοξο αυτό θαύμα διαδόθηκε αμέσως στη Ρώμη και όλοι δόξασαν τον Θεό.

Στην προσπάθειά του να τους κάνει να αλλάξουν πίστη, ο Νέρων χρησιμοποίησε όσα δόλια μέσα και όσα βασανιστήρια του ήταν γνωστά. Η Αγία Φωτεινή και οι υπόλοιποι μάρτυρες δεν λύγισαν ούτε στιγμή και συνεχώς δοξολογούσαν τον Ιησού Χριστό.

Κατά τη διάρκεια των φρικτών μαρτυριών που υπέστησαν, πολλά θαύματα έλαβαν χώρα. Μετά από κάθε μαρτύριο, τόσο η Αγία όσο και οι υπόλοιποι μάρτυρες ήταν ανέπαφοι – οι πληγές τους αποκαθίσταντο. Αυτό ήταν κάτι που πείσμωνε τον Νέρωνα αλλά ταυτόχρονα έκανε πολλούς από αυτούς που έβλεπαν τα θαύματα αυτά να πιστέψουν στον Χριστό και να βαπτιστούν χριστιανοί. Μετά από ατελείωτα μαρτύρια που υπέστη η Αγία Φωτεινή φυλακίστηκε και μέσα στην φυλακή παρέδωσε την ψυχή της στον Κύριο

Η Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία ονόμασε την Αγία Φωτεινή μεγαλομάρτυρα και ισαπόστολο και καθιέρωσε να εορτάζει τη μνήμη της στις 26 Φεβρουαρίου, ενώ της έχει αφιερώσει και την Ε΄ Κυριακή από του Πάσχα, τη γνωστή ως «**Κυριακή της Σαμαρείτιδος**», κατά την οποία τιμούμε τον διάλογο του Ιησού Χριστού με την αμαρτωλή Σαμαρείτιδα, τη μετέπειτα μεγαλομάρτυρα και ισαπόστολο Αγία Φωτεινή.

Άπολυτίκιον (Κατέβασμα)

Τὴν πηγὴν δεξαμενὴ τῆς σοφίας καὶ χάριτος, ἐκ χειλέων Κυρίου Φωτεινὴ Ἰσαπόστολε, νομίμως ἡγωνίσω πανοικεῖ, καὶ νέμεις φωτισμὸν παρὰ Θεοῦ, τοῖς προστρέχουσι τῇ σκέπῃ σου τῇ σεπτῇ, καὶ εὐλαβῶς βοῶσί σου. Δόξα τῷ δεδωκότι σοι ἰσχύν, δόξα τῷ σὲ στεφανώσαντι, δόξα τῷ χορηγούντι διὰ σοῦ, χάριν ἡμῖν καὶ ἔλεος.

Περισσότερα για τον συγκλονιστικό βίο και τα φρικτά βασανιστήρια της Αγίας Φωτεινής, των παιδιών και των αδελφών της μπορείτε να διαβάσετε εδώ: <https://www.ekklisiaonline.gr/ekklisiaonline/agia-fotini-megalomatis-o-syglyklistikos-vios-ke-ta-frikta-vasanistiria/>

The Holy Spirit

At the end of our religious education class, a student asked me "Who is the Holy Spirit?" How would you answer this profound question? Sometimes trying to find the right words can reveal our own inability to provide an answer. I struggled to provide something meaningful only to realize that I wasn't saying anything. At the root of this question is the trinitarian experience of God.



Orthodox Christians believe in one of the greatest mysteries - the Holy Trinity. Here is the central teaching of our faith. But it isn't just something we "believe"; it is a reality that ultimately authenticates our lives as God's children. God is the creator who called into existence the cosmos and "formed" human beings in the image of God. Then, almost miraculous, beyond human language, God acted decisively in the person and work of Jesus Christ to liberate all of us from the bondage of Sin. How do these events become personal for each one of us without simply remaining distant ideas? And if personal, how is our daily life impacted by these profound events, these "realities" that confront the realities we have fashioned while living lost in Sin? It is here where we encounter the Holy Spirit.

There is a tendency to place God into a different dimension from the one in which we find ourselves. While God is transcendental and completely Other, God is also present, immanent. A crucial truth of our faith is that God acts within creation and this action is experienced as "Father", "Son", and "Holy Spirit" having the purpose of liberation from SIN and reconciling love for all of us and the entire created cosmos. Because we seldom

realize the desperation of our created condition, many of us have placed God and Jesus Christ outside of our daily living, as if these are just reserved for Sunday worship. Maybe this is why so many of us just struggle with life's problems and often feel forsaken by a "personal" God and Saviour. If each of us remains separated from God's invitation to enter into fellowship with

Jesus Christ, then we are denying ourselves those essential foods for spiritual growth. Surely God and Jesus are offering a more personal, deeper relational encounter. This is why God is not an absolute, unitary monad but a functional relationship - the Trinity. It is the Holy Spirit that completes the triune nature of God. So, who or what are we to make of the Holy Spirit?

"God is not only over us (as Creator) and *for us* (as Jesus the redeemer) but also at work *in us* and in all creation. This speaks of the Holy Trinity and the new humanity in Christ. How do men and women participate in the great drama of creation, reconciliation, and transformation? What power enables humanity to have a share in the life and activity of the triune God? What new attitudes, practices, and relationships are to characterize those who have encountered God's grace in Jesus?" (Daniel L. Migliore, ***Faith Seeking Understanding***, 3d edition, 2014, page 232). Here we encounter the working of the Holy Spirit.

We read in John 20:22 "He breathed on them, and said them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.' You will notice that in Genesis 1:2 the Spirit of God "was hovering" over water, that representative substance of both potential creation and chaos. God spoke light into darkness. Jesus tells us in

John 8:12 "I am the light of the world." God tells Moses "I AM who I AM" (Exodus 3:14). When God formed humanity God "breathed in his face the breath of life; and humanity became a living soul." (Genesis 2:7).

Each Sunday the Divine Liturgy brings us to the most sacred of moments - the "epiklesis" or invocation or calling down the Holy Spirit upon the bread and wine during the Eucharist, asking that they become the Body and Blood of Christ. What you should notice is that the Anamnesis precedes the epiklesis. Anamnesis is not simply remembering something that once occurred; anamnesis is a spacial-time event whereby the event is fully present in the moment, in the Eucharist. In short, Christ is brought into our midst and is standing right behind the chalice from which each believer asks for Christ to enter their very life. The Holy Spirit hovers over us in order to bring each person into the new creation of a loving relationship with God's I AM.

That is why it is essential, even urgent, for all Orthodox believers to know who the Holy Spirit is so that power of the Holy Spirit to transform can occur within you. Sadly, many go through the motion of the Eucharist, as if it is some Orthodox ritual or an action we just routinely perform. It is so far removed from a performance or some routine action. It is creation itself! "What is the significance of the objective reality (event) of salvation in Christ if there is no personal appropriation of this reality and no actual participation in its transforming power?" (Migliore, page 234). It is impossible to be in the presence of the Holy Spirit and not be transformed, even if it is almost imperceptible. The Holy Spirit is the creative presence of the Trinity that is always Father and Son. Can anyone experience such presence and not be transformed?

"The Spirit makes the living Christ, through His words and teaching, effective in our lives. By means of the Spirit, Christ and His truth are active in the whole person that is open to Christ, lead us into truth by destroying errors, purify, and inspire. In making Jesus and His words active in our lives, the Holy Spirit brings us closer to the fullness of Christ in our lives." (Diogenes Allen, *THEOLOGY FOR A TROUBLED BELIEVER*, 2010, page 182).

When we Orthodox Christians affirm our faith in a living God we embrace a dynamic, not a solitary communion in love. We are invited into a mutual sharing of life and love among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The reality of this sharing is visible in how we respond to the "least of my brethren" for a dynamic love is real only in genuine action. If we expect God to respond to our needs, shouldn't we respond to each other's needs? Our faith doesn't reduce the Holy Spirit to some power but to a person. You might think Jesus left us 2000 years ago and all that remains is His memory. Many respond by imitation but that is insufficient without transformation and this can only occur when each person stands in relationship to the Holy Spirit because then the fullness of the Trinity is present to transform.

As you prepare for Pentecost (June 8), allow yourself to stand open to a new creation that is available in the Holy Spirit that is ready to transform you. It may take some time, like yeast, for you to rise to this new creation. Go to Church, participate, and make your faith a dynamic communion. Then, the next time anyone asks you who the Holy Spirit is, show them through your love. We live the resurrection in communion.

Herbert Schuster

PARENTS' CORNER

By Alexandra Protopapas

MAY – 2025 - ELECTRONIC AGE OR NOT?

Hristos Anesti, Christ is Risen! I hope everyone had a Blessed Easter as we move into May with Mother's Day, planning for summer, weddings for many, college and university classes coming to an end, and preparation for most schools in New Jersey ending for our students next month. Did we meet with family and send cards like we do at Christmas? I can now send Easter messages to all my friends and relatives



without spending so much on cards and stamps by simply sending them through email. I found Easter cards from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese on www.goarch.org and sent some out. Of course, this should never replace a personal phone call or a visit.

These days, we see our children using their cell phones to communicate with their friends, and they can click away faster than you can turn your head! You think you know how to put parental controls on the TV or computer, but what are they saying on their cell phones through text messages on Facebook or TikTok or who knows these new application areas? I learned years ago that BFF is "best friends forever" because my students told me, but there are so many new acronyms! Oh yes, in this electronic age, messages can be sent and disappear so you can't find them. Parents, remember the article on artificial intelligence (AI)? Parents, do you also know what they're thinking? Be their "friend" on "Facebook". Go ahead, but it is now not the only social media electronic way of communication. It is a social network where one can communicate with another on nothing

important. Once you set your privacy settings, only those you allow can see your profile, and what is on your profile is what you want on it. (For example, I am on Facebook as a way of communicating with my colleagues, students, family, and friends from Greece, but I try to set my privacy settings so that I do not get hacked. We always need to follow up, as sometimes I see a photo from years ago that shows

up, and I do not want it! Your children may not know that if they have a credit card, and they subscribe to "stuff" or use their personal information to "like" a specific ad, they take a chance on getting hacked or for sure, can be followed. I don't find Facebook dangerous, but if your child is on it, become their "friend".)

Let's face it! It is not necessary anymore for your children to get on the phone for hours because there are other ways of communication, especially silent texting. That is one reason why schools want to not allow cell phones during class time. Learn how to communicate electronically, and you will also learn how to communicate with your children. Your children may know more than you know. Play their bluff. Tell them to help you. You may know how to pay your bills online, how to use your phone as a credit card, and, of course, how to use Amazon, Instacart, or shop online, but ask and see if they know! We are in an electronic age for sure!

Happy Mother's Day to all mothers and wishing you all a blessed month of May!

"Christ is Risen" Christ is risen, from the dead, trampling down death by death,
and to those in the tombs granting life."

"Christos Anesti" *Christos Anesti ek nekron thanato, thanaton patisas ke tis en tis mni-ma-si
zo-in cha-ri-sa-me-nos*

My Table Prayer Guide prayer today is from a **Prayer for "Upon Completion of a Task."**

*"Thank you, Lord, for Your strength and guidance in my work. You are the fulfillment of all good things.
Fill my soul with joy and gladness, that I may praise You always. AMEN*

Feel free to email me or call with your comments and suggestions for our "Parents' Corner" at: alexandraproto@gmail.com (973) 214-2583 | (You can also find me on FACEBOOK under my name, Alexandra Alex Protopapas) | **Alexandra Protopapas MEd** Certified Teacher of the Handicapped & Social Sciences – Retired, part-time at Educational Services Commission of Morris County, (ESC).

WHERE ARE ALL THE MIRACLES-PART 2

Last July, after a 29-year hiatus, I returned to Cyprus, where my father Andreas was born. The trip had a particular resonance for me as my three siblings were also making the trip (our first joint visit in 54 years!) and we had planned a reunion dinner with 85 of my cousins and family. A particular highlight for me was the replacement of my baptismal cross, which disappeared into the sands of time decades ago.

I was humbled and moved by the simple cross I had selected from a local jeweler in Larnaca. But a few months after my return, after a workout at a local track, the cross disappeared. I was very upset, but undaunted, I set out to retrace my steps. After scouring my home without success, that meant walking back to the track with my eyes to the ground, searching for any glint of metal.

And so I went, traveling the 1.5 miles while scanning the ground with hope in my heart. As I walked, I did something that I have never really done before; I prayed aloud. I

repeated a simple phrase-with God, all things are possible. Matthew 19:26.

Now I realized this was a long shot. I spied many foil gum wrappers, bits of metal and other debris, but no cross. When I reached the track, I walked a slow lap, again searching for what had come to symbolize a renewal of faith. As the minutes ticked by without finding the cross, I had several thoughts. First, I realized that the loss of the cross did not affect my faith-it was but an outward symbol, although an extremely meaningful one. Second, I prayed that perhaps whoever found it would take it as a sign, and perhaps draw closer to God. And so, at peace, I returned home.

When I told my wife Lauren that I had not found it, she started looking herself. Of course, this was futile as I had already searched every room in the house. And yet. And yet. Within two minutes, she found the cross on a bathmat downstairs. I know I had searched every inch of that bathroom. And yet, with God all things are possible.

Anthony Boyadjis



A peaceful ending to our life

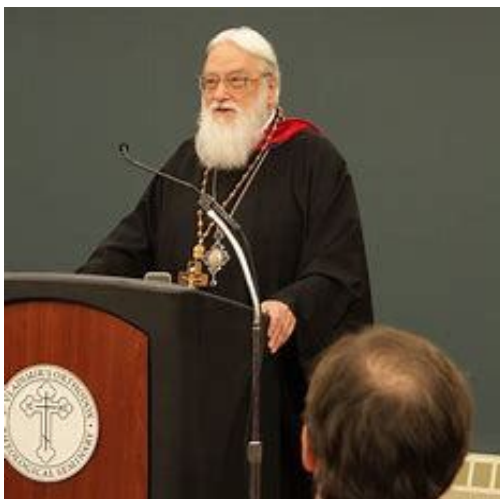
Bodily death as an experience of healing -PART 3 OF 3

Orthodox Peace Fellowship retreat in Vézelay, April 1999 / final lecture by Bishop Kallistos

Surely the secret of true life is to accept each state as it comes. To die the death and to live the new life, not to cling to the past but to live with total integrity in the present. Now in all these cases out of dying there comes resurrection. Not loss but enrichment, not decay but growth. Something dies means something comes alive. May not the death that comes right at the end of our life, fit into that pattern? May not our bodily death be the final stage in our growth? The last and greatest in the long series of deaths and resurrections, that we have been experiencing ever since the day we were born. If the small deaths each lead beyond death to resurrection, may this not be true of the great death that awaits us when we finally leave this world? May this not be the greatest passover? Then we should enlarge our vision, we should look beyond our own life stories to the Christ story. We should relate the death and resurrection pattern within our own life to the death and resurrection of Jesus our Saviour that we have just been celebrating. Our story makes sense in the light of His story. Our small deaths and resurrections are joined across history through His definitive death and resurrection. What did we hear at Paschal midnight? "Let none fear death, for the death of the Saviour has set us free. He has destroyed death by undergoing death. Christ is risen and death reigns in fear. Christ is risen and there is none dead in the tomb."

Now, when people change their tapes over I know that means I have been talking quite a long time, so I'll try and speed things up. That was my first theme. In Eliott's words "A time of death is every moment," that death is not closer than we think but death goes with growth and resurrection.

Now I want to look at the second question: "Is death enemy or friendly companion?" My answer here is that our attitude toward death should not be blind terror but awe and wonder.



What is death? Let me offer you two definitions. The first is from St. Clement of Alexandria, in the early third century. "Death," he says, "is the separation from the soul and the body." My second definition is from St. Maximus the Confessor, who writes: "Death in the true sense is the separation from God." Now I think both definitions are true, but the second comes closer to the heart of the matter. St. Clement speaks of physical death, the separation of

soul and body -- the heart stops beating, the breathing ceases, the body grows cold, the person dissolves. But St. Maximus goes further. He speaks about spiritual death. Death, in the deep sense, is the separation of the total person, soul and body together from God. Life is communion with God, losing that communion we die. Now the corollary of this is many people die before their deaths. Outwardly and physically they are still alive, but inwardly and spiritually they are already dead. Their souls have died before their bodies. Animated corpses walk about in our midst and we meet them every day.

Now spiritual death, as separation from God, means a state of sinfulness. In Scripture death and sin are very closely related. Death is an aspect of our fallen condition. In the Genesis story, disobedience to God's command brings death. God says "On the day you eat from the tree which you are told not to eat from, you shall surely die." So the real death is not physical but spiritual.

Now is death an enemy or a friend? From one point of view, it is an enemy. The true person, of the Christian understanding as I have already said in my opening talk, is a undivided unity of soul and body together. The body is not a prison or tomb. It is an integral part of our personhood. As C.G. Jung says: "Spirit is the living body seen from within and the body the outer manifestation of the living spirit." So death from this point of view is not natural. It is profoundly unnatural. It is an affront against the wholeness of our human nature. It is not what God intended for us. He didn't create us for death but for life. Death in this sense is monstrous and tragic. It is, in Paul's

words, "an enemy to be destroyed" and hence Christ's grief and tears at the grave of His friend Lazarus. Jesus wept. If He wept at the face of death, so may we. St. Paul tells us not to refrain altogether from sorrow, but he simply says we are not to sorrow as others do who have no hope (1 Th 4-13). So he doesn't disapprove of all sorrow, only unbelieving, hopeless sorrow. I often think of that beautiful passage in The Brothers Karamazov where starets Zosima speaks with a woman who has lost her child and he doesn't say to her stop weeping, he tells her that she should weep. And yet he says the time will come when, through your weeping, you will reach peace. Tears can have a healing effect, the bereaved need to be allowed to mourn and they have to have time for their mourning.

What I find impressive about the Orthodox funeral service is that people don't feel ashamed to weep. I was brought up in a culture which thought that a funeral should be very tight lipped and restrained, dignified. If people broke down and showed grief, the others were embarrassed. But thank God, in the Orthodox Church, we are not embarrassed.

If Christ wept so may we. At Gethsemane, Christ felt real anguish in the face of death. He did feel a sense of horror at His own coming death. So death can be seen as an enemy, but it is also a friend. It may be monstrous but it can be full of beauty. Yes, we do feel grief at the death of those we love, but the sorrow can be a sorrow that leads to joy. Death is not part of God's original purpose for us but is in a fallen world part of His loving providence. There is a Russian fable that Jim [Forest] probably knows better than I do. Once upon a time a peasant was walking the woods and he met death. Being quite an alert character, very quickly he put his sack over death's head and tied him up inside the sack and took him back home all tied up. Death struggled and shouted but the person said "I am not going to let you out." At first everybody said he was a marvelous man because he got rid of death. But then people just went on living. They got older and older and their rheumatism got worse and worse. They

grew more and more tired, but there was no release. They just had to go on living. So after a time they came to the man and said: "For goodness sake, let death out again so we can have a way of escape." I think that is true, in the fallen world, simply to live forever in this fallen world is not endurable. God in His mercy has given us a way of escape.

That is the way Jeremiah sees it when he uses the analogy of the potter. He goes down, in Jeremiah chapter 18 to the potter's house and he sees how the pot has been spoiled on the wheel. The potter then shatters the clay and reworks it. So death is the shattering of the pot, so that it may be refashioned. It is also what we say in the funeral service: "Of old Thou has created me from nothing and honored me with Thy divine image, but when I disobey Thy commandment, Thou hast returned me to the earth whence I was taken. Lead me back again to Thy likeness, refashioning my ancient beauty." So there death is seen as a way in which we are led back again to our true home, we are refashioned. So death is also a friend.

Just before supper I went into the Basilica and went round to the place where there is a statue of St. Francis. The Canticle of the Son is posted there. I read St. Francis' words written just before his death "Praised be my Lord for our sister bodily death." Death is the means of our return to God. It is an encounter with Christ. It could be transformed into an act of worship, into an experience of healing. It is a friend not an enemy. It is a beginning, not an end.

I think of the last words of the Russia thinker Prince Trubetskoy. As he was dying, he said: "The royal doors are open, the great Liturgy is about to begin."

Bishop Kallistos is Spalding Lecturer in Eastern Orthodox Studies at the University of Oxford and leads the Greek parish in the same city. His books include The Orthodox Church and The Orthodox Way. His lecture may not be reproduced without his permission. The transcription was made by Maria Armstrong. Our thanks to her

Metropolitan Kallistos Ware (1934-2022) was a distinguished pastor, scholar and theologian in the Orthodox Church who treasured his evangelical roots. He has been a major figure not only in the Orthodox Church, but more widely in English-speaking Christianity. He has helped many to a greater understanding of the Orthodox Christian tradition and made an important contribution to its scholarly study. He has now, as the Orthodox say, "reposed in the Lord". May he rest in peace and rise in glory. read more about [Kallistos \(Ware\) of Diokleia - OrthodoxWiki](#)



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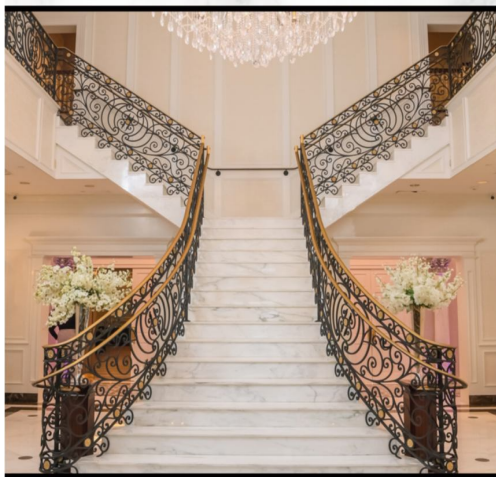
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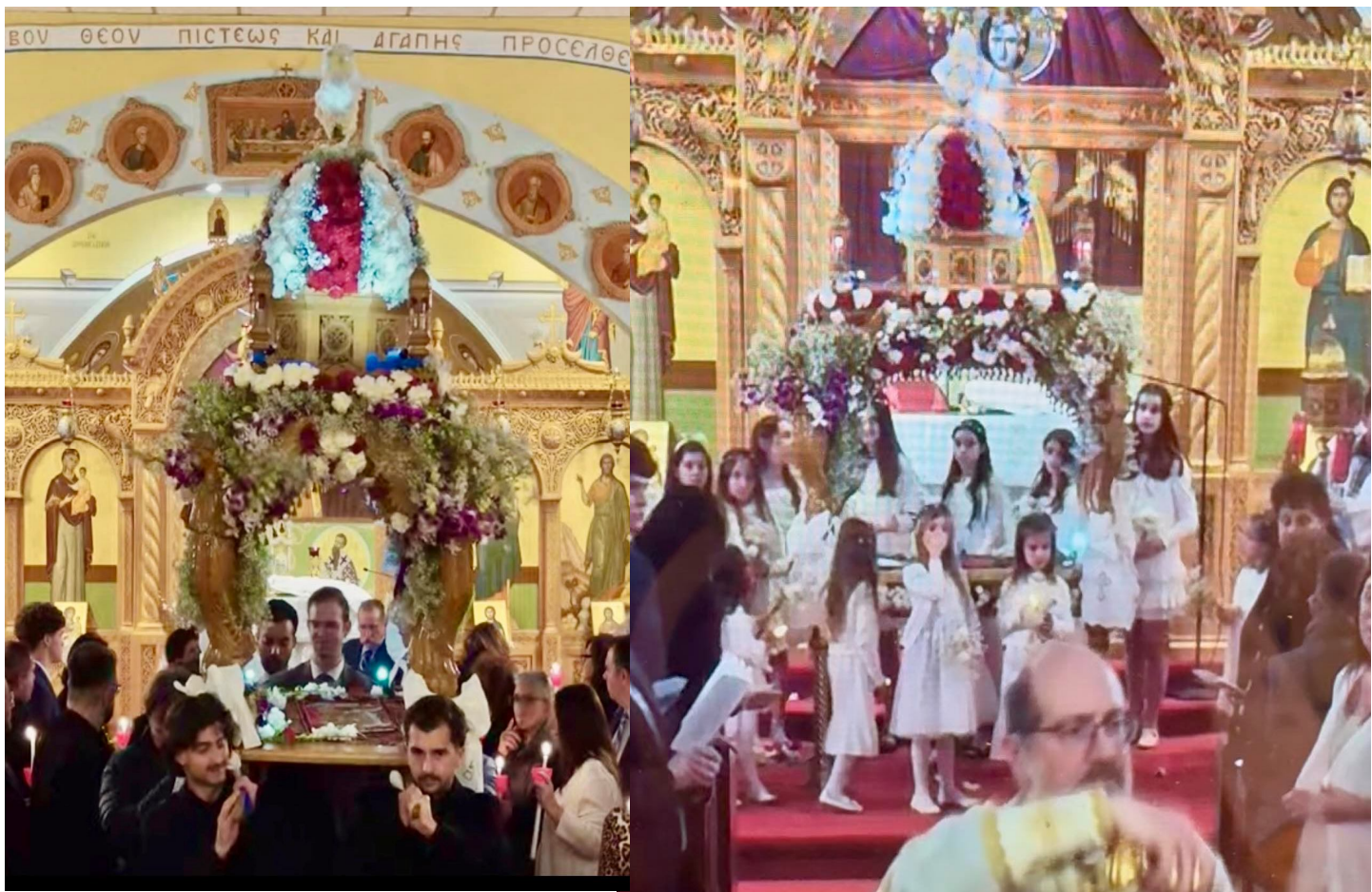
GOOD FRIDAY

Morning
The Royal Hours 9AM

Afternoon
APOKATHELOSIS (Unnailing Service)
3PM

Evening
The Service and Procession of the
Epitaphios 7PM





ΤΡΟΠΑΡΙΟ ΕΟΡΤΗΣ ΠΑΣΧΑ - ΘΡΙΑΜΒΙΚΟΣ ΎΜΝΟΣ

✠Χριστός ανέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν, θανάτῳ θάνατον πατήσας, καί τοῖς ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι ζωὴν χαρισάμενος

Apolytikion for Great and Holy Pascha

✠Christ is risen from the dead, by death, trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.



CHRISMATION –ΧΡΙΣΜΑ

MICHAEL BOVA was received into the Greek Ortodox Church byt the Holy Sacrament of Chrismation on February 23rd, 2025 with the Chrismation Name **MICHAEL**. Godmother was Eleni Demakos.



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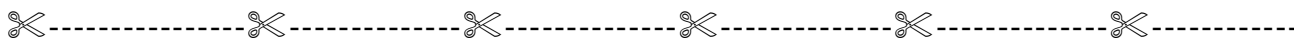
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SAINT ANDREW CALENDAR *LOOK FOR UPDATES IN WEEKLY E BULLETIN OR ON WEBSITE

Parish Calendar - St Andrew Greek Orthodox Church

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS IN MAY: 5/4 PHILOPTOCHOS, 5/11 PC, 5/18 BAKALIKO, 5/25 DOP

5/1 @11:30am AGAPE Luncheon: 6/12, 9/25

5/2 NON-PARISH EVENT (PBA BEEFSTEAK DINER) gym

5/3 @10AM-3PM GOYA CAR WASH

5/3 @11AM CHRISTATOS BAPTISM

5/3 IOCC TASTE OF NORTH JERSEY AT ST NICHOLAS WYCOFF NJ

5/4 @11:45AM GENERAL ASSEMBLY

5/9 ANNUAL TRICKY TRAY / PHILOPTOCHOS

5/11 MOTHER'S DAY

5/12 NNJ HONOREE GRAND BANQUET, *Venetian Garfield*

5/13 @6pm Stewardship Meeting

5/13 @7:30pm Parish Council Meeting next 6/9/25

5/14 @11:30am Knitting ... *June 4 & 18; Sept 3 & 17*

5/15 @4:30PM HAS REHEARSALS FOR GRADUATION

5/15 GOYA SENIOR SEND-OFF

5/17 NON-PARISH EVENT (B DAY PARTY) in our gym

5/18 AHEPA & DOP MEMORIAL SERVICE

5/18 RE-PRESENTATION OF PLAQUES IN CHURCH

5/18 DOP MEETING IN ROOM 103 AFTER SERVICES

5/18 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GRADUATION

5/18 @1:30 PM ROSENGARTH BAPTISM

5/19 @6PM GOYA INTEREST MEETING

5/19 @6:30PM GOYA SENIOR SEND-OFF

5/19 HOMELAND SECURITY AT CALAIS RD @7PM

5/22 @4:30PM HAS GRADUATION in our gym

5/24 FAITH KITCHEN - PARISH COUNCIL

5/24-25 GOYA OUTDOOR OLYMPICS

5/26 MEMORIAL DAY

5/30, 5-31, & 6/1 BIG GREEK FESTIVAL

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS IN JUNE: 6/1, FESTIVAL, 6/8 PHILOPTOCHOS, 6/22 DOP, 6/29 SUMMER SCHEDULE

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS JULY & AUGUST SUMMER SCHEDULE

Summer Coffee Hour: It is our summer tradition that all coffee hour trays will benefit our Ministries. We all share the responsibility of bringing food. Please bring a cake, cookies, fruit, etc. to church with you from time to time to add to our coffee hour table. Or, arrange to host a COFFEE HOUR by contacting the church office. Thanking-you in advance for your participation this summer.

6/4 @11:30am KNITTING GROUP *June 18; Sept 3 & 17*

6/7 SATURDAY OF SOULS

6/7 @3PM BAPTISM

6/8 PENETECOST

6/8 DOP EOY LUNCHEON IN SA SOCIAL HALL

6/9 @7:30pm Parish Council Meeting

6/12 @11:30am AGAPE Luncheon *next on 9/25*

6/15 FATHER'S DAY

6/20 @8AM-5PM LIFELINE

6/21 @11AM BAPTISM

6/22 @1PM BAPTISM

6/28 FAITH KITCHEN - PHILOPTOCHOS

6/28 @12PM BAPTISM @1:30 BAPTISM

7/4 INDEPENDENCE DAY

7/12-20 CAMP GOOD SHEPHERD | LINWOOD SANDYSTON NJ

7/20 Turkish invasion of Cyprus launched on 20 July 1974

7/26 FAITH KITCHEN - PARISH COUNCIL

5/15 DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS

8/23 FAITH KITCHEN - DOP& AHEPA

9/1 ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR

9/11 HAS 1ST DAY OF CLASSES

9/15 1ST DAY OF GREEK DANCE

9/25 @11:30AM AGAPE LUNCHEON

9/27 FAITH KITCHEN - GOYA

9/27 GYRO & SOUVLAKI FEST @11AM-6PM

9/28 @12:30 BAPTISM

9/28 @12:30PM CAR RAFFLE DRAWING



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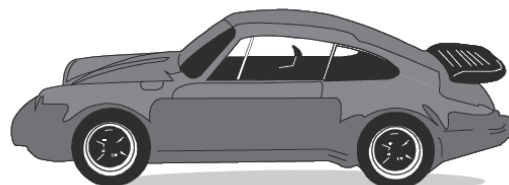


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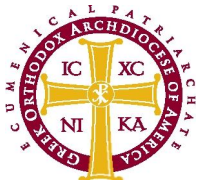
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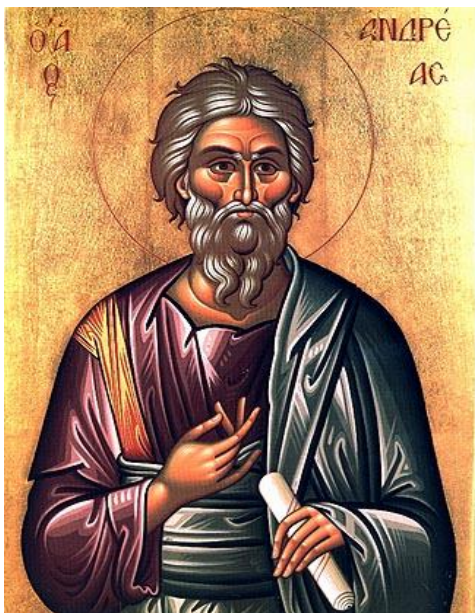


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✠ Χριστός ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν, θανάτῳ
θανάτον πατήσας,
καὶ τοῖς ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι ζῶν
χαρισάμενος.

✠ *Hristos anestee ek nekron, thanato
thanaton pateesas
ke tis en tis mneemasee, zoin harisamenos*

APOLYTIKION FOR GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA

✠ Christ is risen from the dead, by death,
trampling down upon death, and to those
in the tombs He has granted life.

HYMN OF THE APOSTLE SAINT ANDREW

As first called of the Apostles and brother
of Peter the Preeminent, O Andrew,
intercede with the Master of all to grant
peace to the whole world, and great
mercy to our souls.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟ ΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ ΑΝΔΡΕΟΥ

Ὡς των Αποστόλων πρωτόκλητος,
και του κορυφαίου αυτάδελφος,
τον Δεσπότην των όλων Ανδρέα ικέτευε,
ειρήνην τη οικουμένη δωρήσασθαι,
και ταις ψυχαῖς ημών το μέγα έλεο.

THE SAINT ANDREW VISION STATEMENT

Our Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox Church is a welcoming place where our family is committed to God, and salvation through Orthodox worship, Christian education, philanthropy, and sharing of Hellenic culture, for the benefit of those whose lives we touch.