



## The Gift of Christmas

By Theo Nicolakis

The Christmas season is such a beautiful time of the year. Lights, candles, and cutout snowflakes begin to decorate our city's streets. People begin to adorn their homes with the colors of red and green, wreaths, candles, and dazzling arrays of lights. These decorations even spill into our schools and businesses. That's the Christmas season! That is the Christmas season?

This past week, as I was speaking with one of my staff members, we began to discuss putting up

Christmas decorations in the office. As we were talking about Christmas decorations, she told me that at her son's school, her son's class had to write an essay on what Christmas meant to them. When her son showed her the essay he had written, she did not see any mention whatsoever about Jesus or His Birth. So she asked her son why he

didn't mention anything about Jesus. He responded to her and said, "Well mom, Christmas isn't about Christ anymore"; that's not what it is about anymore? Then what is Christmas about? "It's about presents," he said.

It's about presents. When I first heard this story, I was shocked and disturbed; but the more I thought about it, the more I began to realize that he's right. Christmas really is about presents. But what kind of presents?

It's about a father who punished his three-year-old daughter for wasting a roll of gold wrapping paper. Since money was tight, he became furious when his little daughter tried to decorate a box with gold wrapping paper and put it under the Christmas tree. Yet, on Christmas day, the little girl brought the gift wrapped in gold paper to her father and said, "This is for you, Daddy." When he saw the gift, he was embarrassed by his earlier reaction, but his anger flared up again when he unwrapped the gift, opened the box, and found it to be empty.

"Don't you know that when you give someone a present, there's supposed to be something inside of it?" he shouted. With tears in her eyes, the little girl looked up at him and said, "Daddy, it's not empty. I blew kisses into the box and put them in there for you." Her father then smiled, put his arms around his little girl, and begged her forgiveness and kept that gold box by his bed for years so that whenever he was discouraged he would take out a kiss and remember the love of his little daughter who put it there. — The gift of love.

Cover Story continued on page 24



Icon of the Adoration of the Magi, Lakonias, Greece, printed without permission

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# St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

1523 S Yakima Ave  
Tacoma, WA 98405  
Phone: 253-272-0466

Parish Website: [stnicholastacoma.org](http://stnicholastacoma.org)  
E-Mail: [mail@stnicholastacoma.org](mailto:mail@stnicholastacoma.org)



## Sunday Services

8:45 am Orthros  
10:00 am Divine Liturgy

Please join us for Social/Coffee Hour in our downstairs hall, following the Divine Liturgy



## Fr. Seraphim Majmudar, Our Presiding Priest

For appointments, questions or urgent needs, Fr. Seraphim is available 24/7 on his cell phone.

Fr. Seraphim's Cell phone: 253-365-5817

Office Hours at St Nicholas  
Thursdays 9:00am - 12:00 noon  
Email: [frseraphimm@gmail.com](mailto:frseraphimm@gmail.com)

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Submit content, comments, or corrections, addressed to the Editor at [mail@stnicholastacoma.org](mailto:mail@stnicholastacoma.org)  
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# St. Nicholas Ministries

**AHEPA**  
George Pirotis

**Akathist Group Prayer**  
Sandy Dutton

**Altar Servers**  
Dr Nick Themelis

**Bible Study**  
Genevieve Eagle

**Book Store**  
Dr. Nick Themelis

**Building Committee**  
Bill Acker

**Building, Grounds & Maintenance**  
Richard Heidal, John Pangis

**Choir**  
Rebecca Philips

**Hands of Love**  
Merrilee Pangis

**Military Service**  
LTC Gus Chamales

**Premarital Education**  
George Pirotis, Diane Pirotis

**Stewardship**  
LTC Gus Chamales

**2019 Parish Council**  
George Pirotis—President  
David Frisk—Vice-President  
Mark Robinson—Treasurer  
Anna Marie Oakes-Joudy —Secretary  
Sheila Auter, Gus Chamales, Genevieve Eagle,  
Ronnie-Sue Johnson, Zach Karanasos,  
Christina Leinneweber, Fenia Mavromichali, Bill Samaras

**Greek Folk Dance**  
Evy Kontos — Chair & Intermediate dancers  
Dr. Anastasia Fyntrilakis—Treasurer & Teen dancers  
  
Krisann Firth — Costume Director  
Julie Kotsali — Board Member  
Presbytera Sophie Majmudar — Board Member  
  
Kelly Rosati — Beginner dancers  
  
George Pirotis — Adult Group Instructor

**Coffee Hour**  
Zach Karanasos

**IT, etc.**  
Bill Samaras

**Philia**  
Diane Pirotis

**Pro Life**  
Genevieve Eagle

**Vitos Scholarship**  
Ronnie Sue Johnson

**Flowers & Church Decorating**  
Kathy Rowley

**Daughters of Penelope**  
Karen Samaras — President  
Olga Manos— Vice President  
Fenia Mavromichali— Secretary  
Helen McClure— Treasurer

**Maids of Athena**  
Alexandria Samaras— President  
Zoe Matteson—Vice President  
Elena Apostle— Treasurer  
Isabella Mastras- Secretary  
Ingrid Chamalas—Advisor  
Helen McClure — Advisor

**Philoptochos Society**  
Hariklia (Hoddi) Motz President  
Diane Pirotis- Vice-President  
Marian Palas- Secretary  
Joyce Kalivas- Griffin - Treasurer

**Sunday School**  
Sheila Auter, Director

**Greek School**  
George Pirotis

**Lazarus Group**  
Dean Hamos

**Pilgrimage**  
Zach Karanasos

**Prospora Baking**  
Deborah Talbot

**Welcome**  
Ronnie Sue Johnson

## Parish Council

The December Parish Council meeting is Tuesday December 10 at 7PM in the upper hall.

December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Sebastian Dabovich of Jackson, CA 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>2</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy St Porphyrios 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 7:30am-8:30am Akathist to St Porphyrios	<b>3</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy 10:00am-11:00am No Bible Study this week 11:00am-1:00pm Fr S at Clergy Koinonia Group 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers 7:00pm-8:00pm Building Committee	<b>4</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy FAST: Wine & Oil ok Great Martyr Barbara John of Damascus 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-7:00pm Modern Greek Class 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers: St Sabbas 8:00pm-9:00pm Choir rehearsal	<b>5</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Sabbas the Sanctified 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers: St Nicholas	<b>6</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy FAST: Fish, Wine & Oil ok NICHOLAS OF MYRA 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>7</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Ambrose of Milan 10:00am-2:00pm PC Fish Dinner Prep 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers
<b>8</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Patapios of Thebes 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 11:30am-12:30pm St Nicholas Fish Dinner	<b>9</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Conception of the Theotokos 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 7:30am-8:30am Akathist to the Theotokos	<b>10</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Thomas of Bithynia 6:30am-7:30am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Bible Study 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers 7:00pm-10:00pm Parish Council: Budget Mtg	<b>11</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Daniel the Stylite STRICT FAST 6:00pm-7:00pm Modern Greek Class 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers: St Spyridon 7:45pm-8:45pm Evening Liturgy: St Spyridon	<b>12</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Mardarije of Illinois Spyridon of Tremithous 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers & Orthros: St Herman	<b>13</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy FAST: Wine & Oil ok Herman of Alaska 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 7:30am-8:30am Akathist to St Herman 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	<b>14</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy 10:00am-11:00am Philoptochos Mtg (no meal) 7:00pm-8:00pm NO VESPERS TONIGHT
<b>15</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Eleutherios Fr S Vacation 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 11:30am-12:30pm Serma Charuhas Memorial & coffee hr	<b>16</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Fr S Vacation Prophet Haggai	<b>17</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Daniel and the Three Youths Dionysios of Zakynthos Fr S Vacation	<b>18</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Fr S Vacation STRICT FAST Sebastian 6:00pm-7:00pm Modern Greek Class 7:00pm-8:00pm Paraklesis 8:00pm-9:00pm Choir rehearsal	<b>19</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Boniface 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers & Orthros	<b>20</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy FAST: Wine & Oil ok Ignatius of Antioch John of Kronstadt 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 10:00am-11:00am Bible Study 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	<b>21</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Juliana of Nicomedia 11:00am-12:00pm Philia Christmas Party 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers
<b>22</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Anastasia Phamakoltria 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 11:30pm-2:30pm Schutt Baptism	<b>23</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Ten Martyrs of Crete	<b>24</b> Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Christmas Eve 6:30am-7:30am Orthros & First Royal Hr 10:00am-11:00am Third, Sixth, Ninth Royal Hrs	<b>25</b> FAST FREE Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-7:00pm Modern Greek Class	<b>26</b> FAST FREE Synaxis of the Theotokos 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy	<b>27</b> FAST FREE Protomartyr Stephen 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 7:30am-8:30am Akathist to St Stephen	<b>28</b> 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia FAST FREE 7:00pm-8:00pm No Vespers Tonight
<b>29</b> 14,000 Infants Slain by Herod FAST FREE 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>30</b> Anysia, the Virgin Martyr FAST FREE	<b>31</b> +Fr Nestor Savchuk FAST FREE Melania the Younger 6:30am-7:30am Orthros 11:00am-12:00pm Fr at Vicariate Clergy Koinonia Group 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers: St Basil 7:45pm-8:45pm Evening Liturgy: St Basil	<b>Notes:</b>			

The most up to date calendar is always found at the St. Nicholas web page: [www.stnicholastacoma.org](http://www.stnicholastacoma.org)

# News and Announcements

## Thank You

The family of Serma Charuhas wishes to thank St. Nicholas parishioners for your expression of sympathy after the loss of our mother. Your kindness is deeply appreciated and gratefully acknowledged. God bless you.

## Baklava Pans for Sale Hand made at St. Nicholas

To benefit the St. Nicholas *Daughters of Penelope & Maids of Athena*

\$25 per pan (30 pieces)

For pickup at the church Sunday December 15

Order in the lower hall, Sundays: November 24, December 1, December 8

Also, call or text: Karen Samaras 360-970-5264 by December 8

*Orders must be reserved and pre-paid by December 8*

## Akathist Group Prayer

*Akathist to  
Jesus Christ*



*For a Loved One  
who has Fallen Asleep*

Our St. Nicholas Akathist Ministry has been busy since the beginning of the year.

**Thank you** for your devotion to the souls of our Orthodox family. I pray you have been blessed and felt the love that surrounds this ministry.

In Christ Love, Sandy.

Sandy Dutton—

## Ministry News

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

#### Christmas Pageant - December 15

The Sunday School children cordially invite you to join them in offering up praise to the Christ Child through carol singing downstairs in the lower hall following Divine Liturgy, Sunday December 15.

Parents - please watch for emails announcing details of practice and costumes

**See the flyer on page 27**

#### In Stillness and Silence: Reflecting on the Nativity of Christ

*The following is an excerpt of an article written by Fr. Timothy Pavlatos, assistant priest at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Beaverton, OR, in 2016.*

The second week of December brought a rare snowstorm to the Northwest. Seeing my backyard blanketed in white was a bit nostalgic for me. It takes me back to my childhood in the Midwest...later that evening after the sun had set, I looked out into the backyard and saw that it was luminous. There was just enough moonlight reflecting off the snow to create a beautiful winter scene.

As I stepped outside, I noticed that it had started to snow again. Taking in the moment, I realized how quiet it was. Unlike the rain, which creates the sound of pitter-patter when it strikes the earth, snow falls in complete silence.

This moment presented an experience that stood in stark contrast to earlier in the day when I was rushing around running errands, shopping, returning e-mails, meeting with people, and getting things ready for a long week. After a minute or two, though, my thoughts returned to the silent snow fall—gentle and peaceful.

In that instant, I turned to reflect on the Nativity of Christ and the Mother of God resting in a cave, waiting to give birth. In the cave all alone, she delivered the Savior of the world without travail, without pain, without any suffering whatsoever. I imagined that during that miraculous birth all of creation stood still and silent. There was no commotion, unlike delivery rooms today. All of creation remained motionless and silent when the Christ child passed through his Mother and entered the world that He created.

And I wonder: When we think of Christmas, do we think of the birth of Christ in this way? Do we allow our minds to go back in time and think about that awesome moment? Do we sit in stillness and awe and envision the birth of God in the flesh and a young mother giving birth without travail, and all of creation motionless, completely silent?

Amid the mayhem of the season—shopping, long lines, and traffic to name a few—let's give ourselves the opportunity to be still and wonder at the awesomeness of the birth of Christ. Though there is noise around us, we can offer ourselves the chance to sit, be still, and reflect on that beautiful moment in the cave.

As I stood and watched the snow falling silently, I imagined the utter stillness of all creation on that day when the Virgin Mary gave birth. The visitors (shepherds, wise men, and midwives) came later, each bringing what they had to give; the shepherds their wonder, the wise men their gifts, the midwives their service.

What will we bring this year to the birth of Christ? What does our Lord possibly need? Gold, myrrh and frankincense have already been offered. What can we offer Him? In truth, there is only one thing that He asks from us—our hearts. Let us take a moment to pause, to set aside our daily cares and to meet Christ our Savior in the cave—in stillness and silence.

*Sheila Auter—*

# Ministry News

## BUILDING COMMITTEE



## CONSTRUCTION FUNDING APPROVED FOR NARTHEX

Full construction funding for the Narthex Renovation was approved at the last General Assembly on November 3rd, along with site security landscaping and other enhancements beyond the proposed Project 2020 scope. A permit pre-application meeting is now set with the City of Tacoma on November 26th, the purpose of which is to sort out permitting questions, requirements and details. A formal permit design package will be submitted shortly thereafter. In the meantime, the present design has already been reviewed and approved by the Metropolitan's office, pending upon receiving a copy of the final permit package. Looking ahead, below are some important project scheduling benchmarks:

**Building Permit Submittal:** By or around December 1st. Estimated time for approval is about 3 months, and it is important to have this processed around the time of the bid solicitation.

**Contractor Bid Solicitation and Bid Opening:** This is about a four week process, scheduled to start around mid-February. Three to four vetted general contractors will be selected to bid the project, with a bid due date by or before March 15th, 2020. This will allow about 1-1/2 months after the bid opening to confirm and award a contract, and then allow the successful contractor to procure materials and mobilize before actual project ground breaking.

**Onsite Project Construction:** Starting April 27, 2020, 8 days after Pascha.

**Substantial Completion:** September 4, 2020, a little over 4 months after the start of field construction and 4 weeks before the 2020 Greek Festival. At this point an occupancy building permit should be obtained and the Narthex space available for general use. All that would be left are some touch-up items and administrative requirements to complete.

**Final Completion:** September 18, 2020, two weeks before the 2020 Greek Festival. By this time all outstanding items should be taken care of and the project officially completed.

*Bill Acker—*

# Ministry News



## Coffee Hour Ministry

### SEEKING NEW VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN TEAMS

#### MISSION

- To extend the Holy Eucharist to social/coffee hour
- To express and manifest our faith by extending the hospitality we proclaim and by acknowledging the grace we have received during the Divine Liturgy
- To promote fellowship

To connect with fellow parishioners, to welcome guests and to invite new faith seekers to our Church

#### TEAM SCHEDULE DECEMBER

12/1/2019	Team Karanasos
12/8/2019	St Nicholas Luncheon
12/15/2019	Serma Charuhas Memorial
12/22/2019	Team Kipelidis
12/29/2019	Team Pres Sophie

•

#### REQUIREMENTS TO JOIN THE MINISTRY

A servant's heart and a sense of love and care that is penetrating, engaging and inspiring.

#### TEAMS:

**Team Karanasos: Daphne Karanasos, Leader;** Anna Karanasos, Zach Karanasos, Angie Wilen, Ann Koopman, John Kouklis, Mary Matherine and Pres Maria Armatas

**Team Johnson: Joseph Johnson, Leader;** Ronie-Sue Johnson, Fenia Mavromichali, Katrina Orriss, David Orriss, Marie Bell, Barbara Phillips and Kathy Hermick.

**Team Kipelidis: Despina Kipelidis, Leader;** Dana Robinson, Sandra Ciarochi, Anastasia Bouzinekis, Yvonne Brandvold, Maro Kouklis and Fenia Mavromichali.

**Team Samaras: Karen Samaras, Leader;** Marion Palas, Sally Hallis, Jane Evancho, Kathy Heiser, Anastasia Scopelitis, Krysanthos Barnes, Rikky Kapes and Fenia Mavromichali.

**Team Pres Sophie: Pres Sophie Majmudar, Leader;** Evy Kontos, Irene Misiewicz, Gloria Brown, Deborah Talbot, Anna Marie Oakes Joudy, Ingrid Chamales and Claudia Cedeno.

**Men's Team: Dr Fred Ehret, Leader;** Bill Samaras, John Cook, Ed Winskill, Hugh Winskill, Jason Heiser, Andrew Phillips and Alex Misiewicz.

If the Holy Spirit plants you the desire to join the Coffee Hour Ministry, please contact Zach Karanasos.

Zach—



## Ministry News

### PILGRIMAGE TO ST ANTHONY'S MONASTERY



From November 16 to 20, 26 members of St. Nicholas, St. Herman of Alaska (Port Townsend), and Holy Cross (Yakima) churches went on a pilgrimage with Father Seraphim to Saint Anthony's Greek Orthodox Monastery in the Sonoran Desert near Florence, Arizona.

This beautiful monastery is truly an oasis both spiritually and in nature. Among the monastery's pathways one can discover stately saguaro and other cacti and desert life, citrus and olive groves, date palms, a vineyard, and many flowers and plants which attract butterflies, bees, and a wide variety of birds. One can meditate on God's goodness and generous provision among the trees, sitting near one of several beautiful Spanish fountains, or read and pray quietly in one of the many beautiful chapels on the grounds. The chapels reflect the world-wide universality of our faith, each reflecting a different architectural style from classic Byzantine to styles from countries such as Greece, Russia, and Romania.

Our group had an immersive experience of following the monastic daily cycle of worship, prayer, contemplation, serving through work, and rest, capped off with daily reflections with Father Seraphim. A typical day started at 1:30 AM with Church services of the Midnight Hour, Orthos & Divine Liturgy. Afterwards (around 4 AM) there was a light breakfast, quiet hours and rest until 8 AM. At 8, most of the men were on a work detail under the obedience of Fr Minas. Most of the women also did various task as assigned by the monks. Lunch was at 11:30 AM. Not only was our body fed, but so was our nous with spiritual reading during the meal. At 12:30 PM we met with Fr Seraphim for reflections on our pilgrimage. At 3:30 PM, it was back to Church for the 9<sup>th</sup> hour & Vespers. Dinner was at 4:30 PM. Again both the body & nous were fed. Small Compline was after dinner. For the rest of the evening until quiet hours at 6:30 PM, we were free to either read, walk around the grounds or talk with other pilgrims. *Continued on page 26*

## Ministry News

### MILITARY/FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT MINISTRY

**JEFF ROGERS UPDATE:** Jeff continues to do his duty as a logistician for allied troops serving in Afghanistan and will soon be granted his mid-term leave. A change of plans may be in the works so Jeff may be flying back to the States to link up with Lexi and the boys, in lieu of a rendezvous in “Deutschland”. Plans are not firm just yet but wherever they are reunited we wish the entire Rogers family all the best as they celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK JEFF!** Our country is extremely fortunate to have men and women of your caliber who serve as a member of our armed forces in harms way!

**THANK YOU LEXI AND BOYS!** We are grateful for Jeff’s service and your sacrifices in his absence.



**Since Father Seraphim established this ministry** we continue to strive to make it better. We do our best to recognize and honor all who serve in our armed forces, and the agencies (Federal/State/Local law enforcement) that serve on the “front lines of freedom” both here and abroad. These are men and women who serve to keep our city/state/country safe and protect the freedoms that we all enjoy. There are many “unsung heroes” out there with fascinating stories. With your support we will share those stories and in doing so, provide them with the recognition they so richly deserve.



**Along that same line ALEX JOUDY**, who is one of our parishioners, operates a podcast called **CORNERSTONE OF AMERICA**. Alex’s podcast shares the stories of individuals both locally and elsewhere, that form the bedrock of our country. Entrepreneurs, small business owners, military personnel, and others who sought out hardship, overcame adversity, raised wonderful children, created a stable life for their families, touched the lives of others, and in the process served their community.



By doing so they, in their own way, helped make ours “The greatest nation on God’s green earth.” If you would like to hear some very interesting stories about everyday people and the traits that contributed to their success, I encourage you to listen to Alex’s podcasts.

Something else I would ask you to consider is the possibility of sharing your own stories about your life’s experiences. I know that our church is loaded with many fascinating people who have very interesting stories! The history of how your family arrived in this area, the story about the values with which you were raised, the choices you made that resulted in hardships that had to be overcome, and your determination to persevere that ultimately spurred you to your success in life just might be able to make a difference in someone else’s life, simply by sharing your story. Many of us would love to hear your stories! Take a moment to talk to Alex and learn more about what he does? I think you will be glad you did?

*Continued on next page....*

# Ministry News

## MILITARY/FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT MINISTRY

**RECENT ADDITIONS TO OUR MINISTRY.** Below are recent photos of military family members that I have added to our video presentations. Thank you so much to Despina and Chyrsanthe for providing them! In addition to the photos they shared with me some captivating stories about each of them that someday I hope you will hear. Chyrsanthe's father fought in WWII and was captured by the Albanians. Imagine his experiences as a prisoner of war!



**COL(R) Avram Demetriathis**  
 Royal Hellenic Army  
*Cold War*  
 Despina Kipelidis' father

much time in the military inevitably you live through moments in your country's history and have first hand experiences that most people may only read about.

That's the great thing about this ministry! I hear and research the stories behind these remarkable men and women who served their nation in times of peace, and in times of war. In my humble opinion and as I alluded to earlier, all are heroes in their own right, and their stories need to be heard.

If you haven't already done so, please take some time to locate pictures of your family members who served in uniform, snap a picture of them with your phone, and email them to [gleafops@gmail.com](mailto:gleafops@gmail.com). And remember, we are not just a military ministry! We are also a Federal/State/Local Law Enforcement ministry and we want to be able to recognize anyone who served/serves our nation on the "front line of freedom". Please send me a picture of your relative in uniform along with some basic information about who they are, their dates of service and their relationship to you. And one more thing, if you have a box of your relatives medals, military documents, or souvenirs from their time in service and you're not certain about what they are, snap a picture of them and send them to me. I'll do my best to help you identify them and explain their significance.



**December 7th, Pearl Harbor Day, "A day that will live in Infamy."**

Before 9/11, there was December 7th, 1941. If you have a family member who was a Pearl Harbor survivor please let me

know by sending an email to [gleafops@gmail.com](mailto:gleafops@gmail.com). **NEVER FORGET!**



**Ionnis Kiosses**  
 Royal Hellenic Army  
*WWII*  
*Fought against the Italians but was later captured by the Albanians early in the war.*  
 Chyrsanthe Barnes' father



**Kostandinos Kiosses**  
 Royal Hellenic Air Force  
 Chyrsanthe Barnes' brother



*Continued on next page....*

# Ministry News

## MILITARY/FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT MINISTRY

**December 13: National Guard Birthday!** On this day in 1636 the Massachusetts General Court directed the establishment of the first militia regiments in North America. A total of fifteen separate towns contributed as many companies with a combined strength of approximately 1,500 men to form three new regiments. A colonel commanded each regiment with assistance from a full-



**MAJ Jeff Rogers**  
U.S. Army N.G.  
*Presently serving in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom*  
**Lexi Rogers' husband**

time, paid "muster master" who maintained unit rolls. Because Massachusetts was the first government in North America to raise militia regiments,



**SSG Richard Schutt**  
Washington State Army National Guard  
*Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom*  
**Alexandra Schutt's husband**

December 13, 1636 is recognized as the birthdate of the modern U.S. National Guard. Pictured are two St. Nicholas family members who are members of the Washington State National Guard. Jeff Rogers is presently serving in Afghanistan



as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Richard Schutt is presently serving in Washington. He has deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan in the past.

**DECEMBER 25th: Birthday of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!**

**WISHING YOU ALL GOD'S BLESSINGS!**



*Continued on next page*

# Ministry News

## STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

I love this picture of the Greek Yiayia with the stern look asking “When was the last time you were in church?” Every time I see it I think of my Yiayia (pictured lower left) and the many times she had a very similar look as she asked me the same question. More often than not my response was followed by “Po, Po, Po Kostaki mou! Yiati eise paliopetho? Thelis na fas xilo!”



I love my Yiayia to this day but she passed away in 1990 when I was 37 years old, a Major in the United States Army and two days before I was to board an airplane and deploy for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. I’m pretty sure we had that same conversation the last time we saw each other but I’m certain she is much happier with me now that my church attendance has improved significantly! May her memory be eternal.

This is our last Stewardship article for 2019 so it is only right that we take this opportunity to reflect back and thank everyone who worked so hard to make it another blessed year for St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church. We are truly thankful for so many wonderful and kind-hearted people at our church who gave generously of their time, their talent, and their treasure! Your stewardship enables our parish to move forward in doing God’s work and improving our church for future generations come. EF HARISTO POLI KAI THOXA TO THEOS!

During the last couple of months we have been asking our fellow parishioners to complete their stewardship pledge cards for the upcoming 2020 calendar year. We’ve been asking for your support in order to assist the parish council with to all in attendance following in January. Many of you have pledged cards while others have completed the direct deposit con- where we will be able to pro- our parishioners have gra- we have made great strides of the last year. To put things many people had already ment of time and talent to our ceived only 30 pledge cards of



our budget preparation that will be briefed liturgy on either the second or third Sunday responded to our request by completing logged onto our church website and com- tribution form. We are not yet to the point duce a budget projection based upon what ciously pledged, but the good news is that toward achieving that goal over the course into perspective, by mid-April of 2019, made a tremendous stewardship commit- church. However, our treasurer had re- financial commitment, while another 8 families were enrolled in automatic contributions. Those 38 individuals and families represented all the financial assistance on which we could be certain would be dedicated to our operating expenses for 2019, and we were already four months into the year! Think about that for a moment!!! By April of 2019 we had only 38 families that had made a financial stewardship commitment to support our church.

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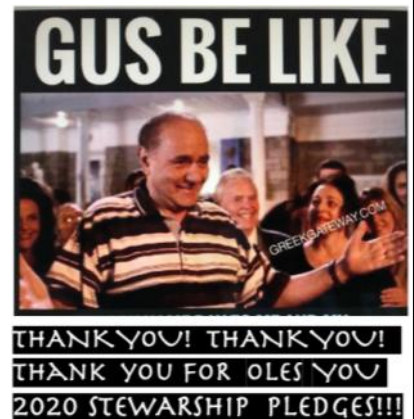
# Ministry News

## STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

**GOOD NEWS!** As was alluded to in the preceding paragraph, we started our stewardship pledge drive for calendar year 2020 on September 1st of this year, and many of you have rallied to the cause! In just the last three months our treasurer has received 55 pledge cards while another 31 families are doing automatic weekly/monthly/annual contributions! The number of families that have made a financial stewardship commitment for 2020 is almost ten times that when compared to this time last year (Nov 2018)! And get this— if those that pledged in 2019, but have not yet done so for 2020, would either complete a pledge card or enroll in automatic contributions via the St. Nicholas web site, we would be able to produce an accurate budget for 2020 that would very likely cover all of our operating expenses for the year.

We are all extremely grateful for the stewardship of time and talent that makes St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church a wonderful place to worship God! Everyone that is physically able strives to devote their time and talent as best they can, and thank God you all do! Nevertheless, it takes financial commitment to pay utility bills and keep a functional roof over our church, and placing a dollar in the slot as you purchase a candle unfortunately isn't enough to make ends meet.

Once again, we wish to express our sincere thanks to the following people who have responded to our request for financial stewardship for the 2020 calendar year! **EFXARISTO POLI KAI DOXA TO THEO!**



- |                               |                                   |                                     |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| William & Mary Acker          | Dr. Patra Alatsis                 | Mark & Katerina Warns               |
| Sonny & Irene Angelos         | Rick & Marlene Angelus            | Tony & Lori Apostle                 |
| Andrew & Monica Auter         | George Ballasiotes                | Francis & Oksana Barnes             |
| Harry & Sheri Basil           | Vasilakis H. Basil                | Theodora Bessinas                   |
| Morgan Blackmore              | James Brailey                     | Yvonne Brandvold                    |
| Dora Brown                    | Cheryl Burack                     | Barry Cassidy/Deborah Middleton     |
| Klaudia Cedeno                | Dr. Ingrid & LTC(R) C.G. Chamales | MA(R) Russell & Staci Chappell      |
| Chris A. Cherbus              | Anthony & Sandy Ciarochi          | Courtney Cole-Faso                  |
| SFC(R) John & Maria Cook      | Dr. & Mrs. George Dellyanis       | Anne Dykstra                        |
| Genevieve Eagle               | Dr. Fred & Dr. Anastasia Ehret    | Krisann & Pete Firth                |
| David & Savina Frisk          | Christina Gretty                  | Sally Hallis                        |
| Michael & Kristina Hanberg    | Daniel & Ekaterini Hanson         | Natalya Harpe                       |
| MSG(R) Thomas & Helga Jackson | Ioanna Jimenez                    | MSG(R) Joseph & Ronnie-Sue Johnson- |
| Joyce Kalivas-Griffin         | Harikliia & Pod Kapes             | Anna Karanasos                      |
| Paula Karanasos               | Zachary & Daphne Karanasos        | Sharon Kennedy                      |
| Naser & Catalina Khalaj       | Claudia Kieszling                 | Evan & Despina Kipelidis            |
| Maria Koumantaros             | Peter & Margaret Laketa           | Jeffery LeCates                     |
| Christina Leinneweber         |                                   |                                     |

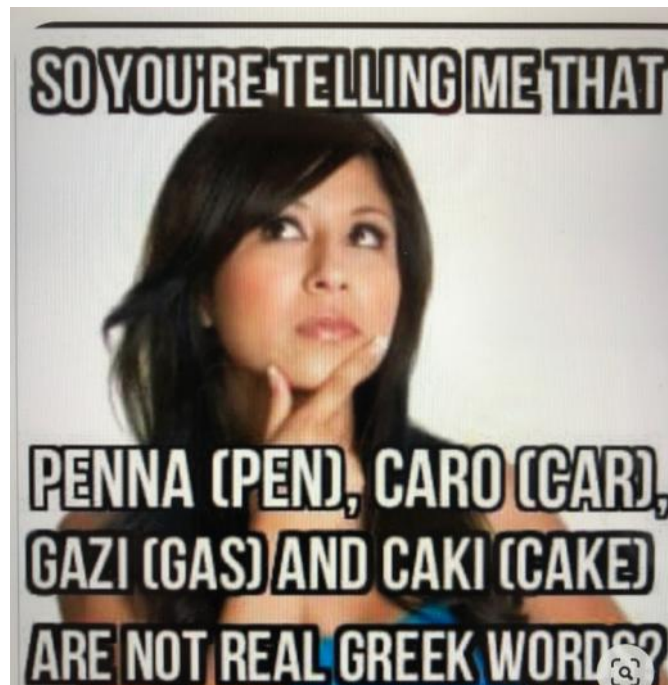
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## Ministry News

### STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

Mary Leonard	Fr. Seraphim & Pres. Sophie	Katherine Mason
Dr. Dean & Julie Mastras	Mary Ann Matherne	Fenia Mavromichali
COL(R) George & Helen McClure	Mark O'Neil	Marian Palas
Anthony Panagiotu	George Panagiotu	Mike & Gina Panagiotu
Alex Pangis	John & Merrilee Pangis	John Payne
George & Diane Pirotis	Stavros Pirotis	Joaquin & Shanna Poirot
Steve, Kathleen, & Martha Politakis	Andrew & Rebecca Primis	Mark & Dana Robinson
Katherine Rowley	James Salatas	Katherine Salatas
Alexandra & SSG Richard Schutt	SGT Richard & Denise Stahl	Aaron T. & Ranae C. Rice
Dr. Olympia Tachopoulou	Dr. Nick & Becky Themelis	Roxanne Vallantine
Dee Varca	Kalitsa & John Xitco	Tasso & Sarah Zambaras
Mathew & Leigh Ann Zehnder		

**THIS JUST IN!** Coming soon to St. Nicholas will be a new way for parishioners to complete stewardship pledging. Our Treasurer, Mark Robinson, is working on adding a new system that will enable anyone with a cell phone to text their contributions at anytime. That means you'll no longer have to worry about asking for change while you're standing in the Narthex or experience that sinking feeling when you remember the \$50.00 you thought you had in your wallet or purse, you already spent on groceries!

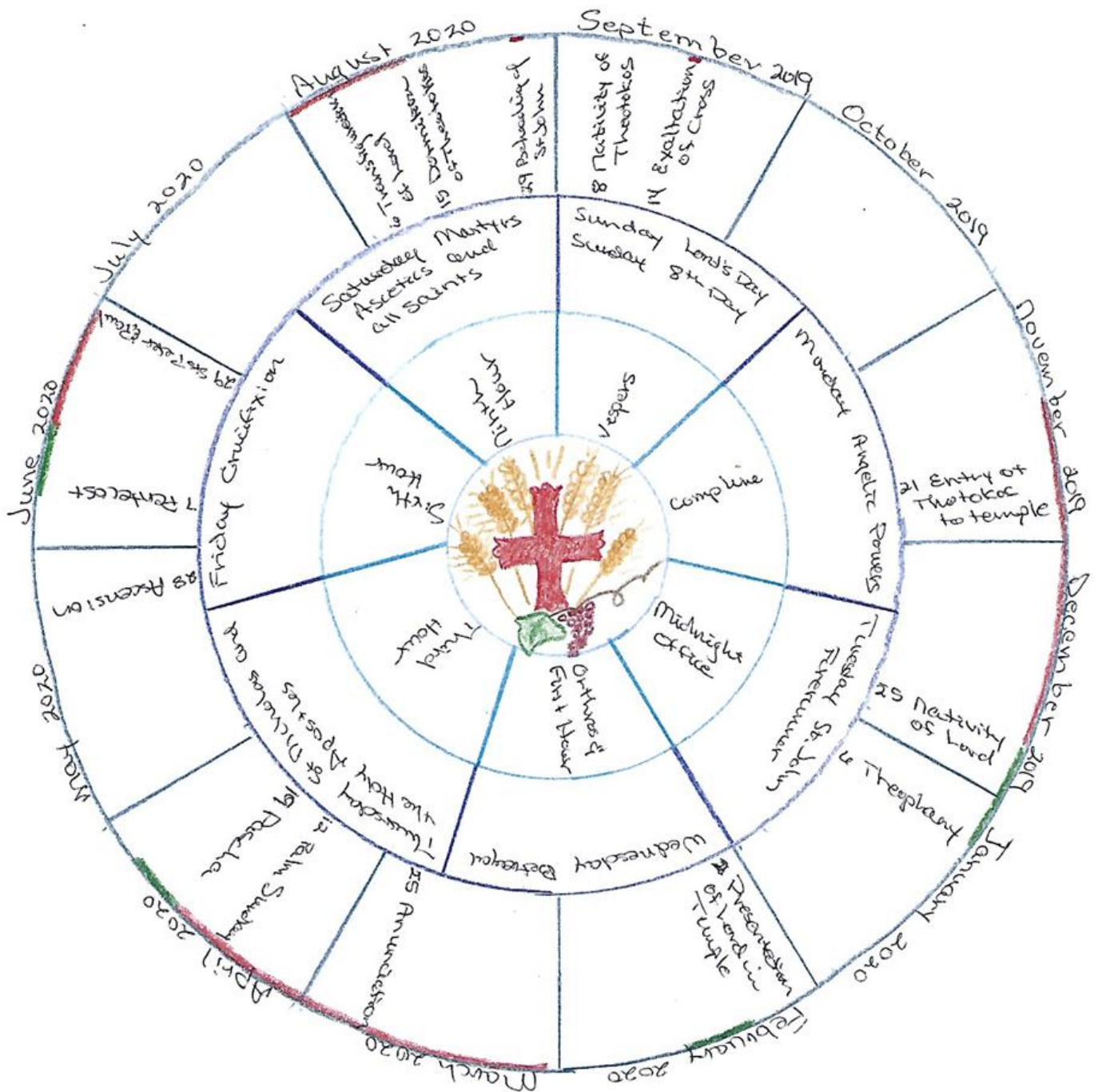


BUT I'LL SOON BE ABLE  
 TO TEXT MY STEWARDSHIP?

# Ministry News

## Life as Liturgy

This month I'm only submitting the picture that was promised last month, along with this statement: With all the explanation about the picture, it can seem as if it is about moral rules based on abstract principles, but it is



not. It is about reality as revealed in the incarnation of Christ. I had always seen the world as a noisy collection of things that had no relation to each other and could not be reconciled. But Christ in His incarnation and in His Church reconciles all things, which are inherently unified, only scattered by sin. This is a picture of reconciliation, of the unity found in Christ and by design in His Church.

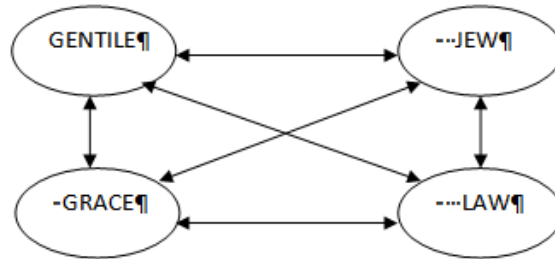
Deborah Talbot-



# Ministry News

## ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

BOOK OF HEBREWS—Hebrews 8



How in the Theology of St. Paul, are Jew and Gentile understood in relationship to one another; and furthermore, in the concept of grace, and the Law? A good source to connect and understand the relationship is Romans 11.

Reviewing Romans 11, one can perceive that God has given up on the Jews and now chosen the Gentiles to be His people. **Romans 11:11** *“I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.”*

St. Paul is leading to show the inexplicable divine wisdom of God, to play the Gentiles off the Jews for the salvation of both. **Romans 11:22-24** *“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?”*

But, as we continue in Romans, that we see He has not turned in back on the Jews. God is not concerned with ethnicity or titles, He is concentrating on a relationship with those who, through faith and belief, come to Him with open hearts.

Romans 11:1	Romans 11:11	Romans 11:1	Romans 4
<p><u>“has God cast away His people?”</u></p> <p>↓</p> <p>τον λαον αυτου</p> <p>ton laon aftou</p>	<p><u>“Gentiles”</u></p> <p>↓</p> <p>εθνων</p> <p>ethnon</p> <p>* nations</p> <p>* peoples</p> <p>* “the swarm”</p>	<p><u>“Israelite”</u></p> <p>↓</p> <p>ισραηλιτης</p> <p>Israelitis</p>	<p>* circumcision</p> <p>* Jew (3:1)</p>

Jew:  
Israelite:  
Hebrew:

Judean  
Israel (Jacob)  
Abraham

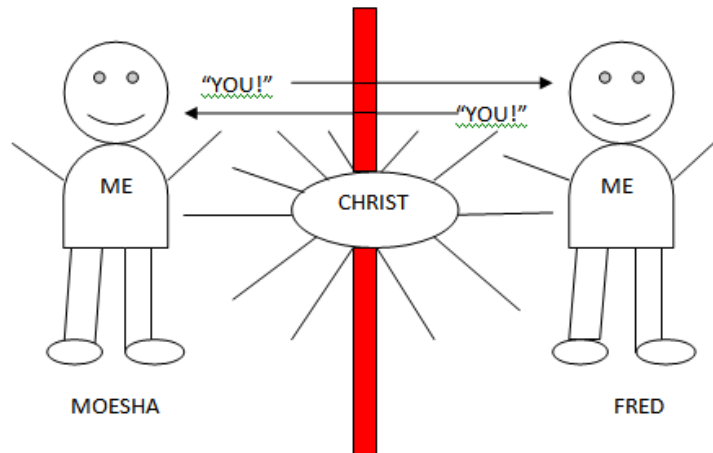
Tribe of Judah  
Sons of Jacob  
From over the river

Continued on next page

# Ministry News

*Continued from previous page*

Looking at the definition of “Gentiles” we see the term “the swarm”. This indicates congestion, confusion, no order, no purpose, no identity, no personhood and massiveness from the point of view from Scripture. Seeing ourselves through the eyes of the Jewish believers coming from the understanding that you are a member of the race that God has covenanted with, given a Law to, given a Temple to worship Him, given a very clear identification as a member of a specific group of people that He has called out from among “the swarms” and these facts have been reinforced throughout time; it is unsettling to learn that those who are “stumbling” in Romans 11:11 are not the Gentiles, but the Jewish people. To learn that the swarms are now welcomed into God’s Covenant can be seen as heresy to the Jews.



Most of us have a moment when we feel that we are the only person in existence, and everyone else we come in contact with are similar to actors in a play. “I” am me and everyone else is simply “you”. We all have to deal with the similar and dissimilar when comprehending another individual. Christ unites us through His love for all of us, totally aware that each one of us has true existence simultaneously, unique from each other. Christ breaks through the barrier, without losing His own identity, that separates us and gives life to each one of us who are dying because of Adam and Eve’s fall. Those who are redeemed in Christ can now love as Christ allowing them to cross that barrier. God is love which is the defining characteristic of love. The Patristic definition of what it is to be a created being is that we want to perpetuate our existence and to avoid the interruption of that existence. On the basis of Adam, whose life was utterly dependant on his unceasing communion with God, turned away from the source of his life and turned to himself as the source of his life and as a result he does not have independent existence. God fuels man’s existence and Adam interrupted that source of his existence. The reason to love one another is because “your” existence depends on “my” existence and on down the line. The very essence of nature is to come together.

St. Paul comes right out with the main point of what he is saying in **Hebrews 8:1-2** “*Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: we have such a High Priest, Who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.*”

God already had a priest serving Him in Jerusalem to whom Abraham gives tithes and offerings, before Moses is given the Law by God and appoints Aaron as High Priest (as per God’s instructions) hundreds of years later. The Hebrews are a people of a priestly covenant before the Law is given by God. The Jewish people have forgotten this over thousands of years and consider themselves people of The Law. The original covenant that God made with Abraham was a “one-party” agreement. The strength of the covenant is built on God’s faithfulness alone, otherwise the covenant would be breakable. A covenant is only as strong as the commitment of both parties.

Submitted by: Genevieve

## Ministry News

### St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church Pro-Life Ministry

I just wanted to share some comments and actions that were made during the 40 Days for Life Vigils that St. Nicholas Pro-Life Ministry participated in from September 25 – October 30, 2019 at the Cedar River Abortuary.

- a woman confronted us with "what do YOU do for women who are pregnant?" We were in the process of answering, but she heard "prays" and took off, saying her 2 abortions were the best decisions she ever made.

- a woman complained that it is legal - we can love it or leave it

- a young woman stopped to give us a donation. We thanked her, but said that we do not take donations

- a self proclaimed pagan man stopped his car to talk with us. He was pro-choice, but took a pro-life brochure. We talked about rape, over population, etc. He said that he respects what we do, in that we are peaceful and prayerful in witnessing for our beliefs. He said that he was raised Christian. At the end of the conversation, I told him not to give up on God, God had not given up on him

- we had a young woman stop to chat. She thought that we needed more sex education. We had a positive interaction and talk

- a young woman wanted to share that her life has been difficult - 17 foster homes, etc. She said "some lives want to be aborted." We shared about the value of every life and how God can bring good out of all things. She was very respectful, and thanked me for my sharing

- a man came to pray with us and shared that, many years before legalized abortion, his mother has been advised to have a "therapeutic" abortion with him due to suspected health problems. His mother refused, praying and trusting in God, and he was born healthy.

- Usually, I can't understand a word anyone yells, good or bad, but the construction has lightened traffic so this time I heard. So, I said to my prayer partners, "Hey, rejoice, we got persecuted for Jesus!" I said we're supposed to get up one step higher in heaven, lol! Later, a nice man in a nice pickup truck slowed down to say "Thank you for what you do." Then later, a woman slowed down next to us and asked if we were against abortion to which I replied, "We're Pro-Life." I wasn't sure if she was going to be for or against us, but then she started in on how we need to get a life. I said, "Thank you, I have a life. Excuse me, we're praying," and we went back to the Stations of the Cross. She said something about rape, and we continued praying. I didn't want to get into shouting back and forth since she was in her car and would be holding up traffic and obviously wasn't interested in dialogue. When she saw she wasn't going to get the reaction she wanted, she drove off annoyed. I always think later what I wish I would have said, "Thanks be to God, I have a life. Unfortunately, the babies here are not given that opportunity."

- As we were finishing a song, a young woman stopped and waited to speak to us. She asked why we were there. We explained this building behind her was a late term abortion clinic, and we were here to pray that the mothers would have a change of heart and keep their babies. She had a respectful dialog with us for 30 minutes. She began by asking what brought each of us there. One of us shared that she was there because she had had an abortion, and she wanted to spare other women that regret and pain. The woman thanked her for sharing that. Another shared that she was there because she has a condition that makes it so that she cannot have children. She talked about how she would never feel the kick of a child in her womb and how it particularly pained her that these women did not understand this great gift that they have been given and how upsetting it is to see that life and great gift thrown away when she would so treasure that experience and gift. I shared that when I was a child my parents took care of foster babies until they were adopted, but after Washington legalized abortion there were no more babies and all of these families waiting to adopt. I added that my sister was adopted. She asked us how we defined love. I said love is sacrifice and that love is willing the good of the other. I don't think she'd heard that response before. She apparently asks this question of people frequently. She talked about love being a combination of joy and fascination with what is different about the other person. I took that opportunity to say that we are each unique and unrepeatable and that is what is so sad about a child being aborted. The world will never know that unique, unrepeatable person and their contributions, and that disabled people are often targeted for abortion (she has a hearing disability herself). At the very end she said she was fundamentally against what we stood for. We shared names at the end, and she said, "See you around Tacoma." I thought when we were talking to her that she might be somewhat on the fence, but that wasn't the case.

Submitted by: Genevieve—

## Cover Story

### Philoptochos

#### President's Message

#### Christmas Greetings

Hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving spent with family and friends and have lots of blessings for which to be thankful. Many people are thankful for having YOU in their life (I am one of those people). You have been helping people quietly and with a lot of dignity despite what you may have been going through in your personal life. Thank you Philoptochos team!!!

On behalf of the Philoptochos Leadership Team, I wish you a very **Merry and Blessed Christmas**

This item was published in 2017 and it pretty much defines our Philoptochos. I found it worth repeating this year. Note: Current items and plans for December follow the article.

*"Another year has passed and many of us are fortunate to be around, in relatively good health, able to enjoy our participation in church services and functions and on occasion give a helping hand.*

*Our Philoptochos organization does just that, participates in church services and events and gives a helping hand to fellow parishioners and the community at large, whenever possible.*

*This past year our Philoptochos catered a number of Makaria and Memorial events, a Palm Sunday Luncheon, a Veteran's Day Luncheon, a Memorial Day Luncheon.*

*We also catered our annual Ladies Spring Luncheon (formerly known as Mother's Day Tea) and Raffle, making it our major fundraiser for the year. We held events such as the Soup and the Pie Sundays collecting money for the Metropolis cancer and autism funds, the Harvest Breakfast Kickoff where we collect money (you can still donate till Dec 10) for holiday gift certificates for needy families. We honor our house bound and present them on Valentine's Day with goodie bags and at Easter with Easter baskets.*

*Then there is the Giving Tree process where our parishioners purchase Christmas gifts for children whose age and sex are defined in tags they (parishioners) take off the tree. Learn more about this from Marian Palas, who has been leading this process for many years. Thanks to Marian, her helpers, and to all of you for your support.*

*We participate and assist our Puget Sound Philoptochos sisters with Camp Agape fund raising efforts and the camp functions in July.*

*These are some of the events where we participate as a team but not all. We have fun doing all of these things and we learn from each other as we always strive to do things better and more efficiently. We have leaders at each section of meal prep who know exactly what/how much to purchase and how to prep. For example, we have a couple of ladies who are experts in the fish we normally make for the Makaria services. They know how much we need, what kind, how to prep it how long to cook it, a couple experts on sauce making with the right herbs etc etc. we have a couple of ladies who always make the most delicious manestra. Folks who can make the awesome desserts even for large quantities. Our Philoptochos is an unbelievable team!!!*

*We also watch the bottom line minimizing expenses so more funds can be available for our philanthropic work.*

*This year (2017) we were able to purchase and donate to our church a wonderful stand up mixer (over \$8,000 cost). This mixer is of great help for festival baking prep (mixing tsoureki, cookie/pastry dough etc. etc)."*

Continued on next page

## Cover Story

### Philoptochos

Continued from previous page

So why did I repeat this article from 2017? Well, I am trying to illustrate how great and satisfying it is to belong to this organization. Come join us, and participate in any/all of these activities that interest you. Be a hostess and decorate your Ladies Spring Luncheon table in the theme of your choice or be the leader in charge of one of our functions or be a helper. Come join. If you pay your dues now (\$30 - checks made out to Philoptochos.) then we will apply them for 2020 starting in Jan.

#### **This is our calendar for December:**

**Dec 5.** St. Nicholas Vespers (The Themelis family and Philoptochos will prepare and serve a Lenten meal)

**Dec 6.** St. Nicholas Feast Day. (Philoptochos and other church members will prepare and serve a Lenten meal)

**Dec 8** Giving Tree Gifts must be delivered

**Dec 14** at 10:00 am Philoptochos meeting Upper Hall .

**Dec 15 Reservations due for annual Philoptochos After Christmas Social (See narrative below and at-Flyer on page 29)**

**Dec 21** Philia Christmas Party (See narrative below)

#### **Philia Christmas Party.**

Philoptochos is once again sponsoring their annual Philia Party on Dec 21, 2019 at 11:00 . We are serving a Lenten Pasta Luncheon with Salad, Bread , Dessert and Drinks.

After lunch we will play Bingo. There will be prizes for all, supplied by our members. Please come and join us for fun and fellowship as we celebrate Christmas.

Contact Diane Pirotis or Hoddi Motz if you have questions.

#### **Philoptochos Annual after Christmas Social**

**Jan 11, 2020 at 5:30**

**Fircrest Golf and Country Club , 1500 Regents Blvd, Fircrest, WA 98466**

**NOT a fundraiser.** All are invited to our elegant affair. Come and celebrate with us. Reservations appreciated by Dec 15. Cost is \$60 per person. It will be a beautiful sit down dinner served at the table. The menu is: Entrees Top Sirloin or Chicken Marsala, plus sides and Desserts with no-host Open Bar. This venue is very pretty and the service is impeccable. If you choose to participate in the Pirate Gift Exchange, bring a gift marked Man or Lady as appropriate. (Flyer attached)

**“You all have a Blessed Christmas with your loved ones!”**

Χάρη (Hoddi)

Χάρη (Hoddi)

# Ministry News

## Philoptochos Calendar 2019/2020

2019

Date	Event	Notes	Chair
SEPT 15	Tray for HOLY CROSS	Tray for seminary	Diane, Sandy, Joyce, Yvonne
SEPT 21	MEETING	NO MEAL @ 10:00 am	
OCT 19	MEETING	NO MEAL @ 10:00 am	
OCT 20	HARVEST GIFT CERT	Breakfast kick off	Joyce and Katy
NOV 3	ST KOSMAS AND DAMIAN	Tray for Patriarchate Charities	Hoddi, Diane, Sally, Kathleen
NOV 10	VETERANS LUNCHEON	Program by Gus Chamales	Merrilee and Diane
NOV 16	MEETING	NO MEAL @ 10:00 am	
NOV 19	GIVING TREE & TAGS GO UP		Marian
DEC 5	ST NICHOLAS VESPER	Light Lenten Meal	Becky, Diane,
DEC 6	ST NICHOLAS FEAST	Light Lenten Meal	
DEC 8	ALL GIVING TREE GIFTS MUST BE DELIVERED		
DEC 14	MEETING	NO MEAL @ 10:00 am	
DEC 21	PHILIA CHRISTMAS PARTY	@ 11:00	Diane, and?

2020

Date	Event	Notes	Chair
JAN 11	"AFTER CHRISTMAS PARTY"	At the Country Club???	Committee/Marian?
JAN 12	VASILOPETA	VASILOPETA CUTTING	Elly?
JAN 18	MEETING	NO MEAL @ 10:00	
JAN 19	POTLUCK SOUP COFFEE HOUR	BENEFITING SOCIAL SERVICES/CANCER FUND	Hoddi
FEB 8	PIE SALE	BENEFITS AUTISM	Sally
FEB 14	VALENTINE BAGS FOR HOMEBOUND		All
FEB 15	MEETING	NO MEAL @ 10:00 am	
		Place holder for membership meeting	Jane
MAR	LENTEN MEALS	?	Presbytera Sophie
MAR 7	LADIES LUNCHEON MTG	@ 12:00(BJ'S Restaurant) Planning Committee(Hostesses, chairs etc)	
MAR 21	MEETING -	NO MEAL @ 10:00 am	
APR 11	PALM TYING/LUNCH		Presbytera Sophie
APR 12	PALM SUNDAY DINNER		Hoddi
APR 12	PASCHA BAGS FOR HOMEBOUND		All
APR 19	PASCHA		
MAY 9	MOTHERS DAY FLOWERS		Sally
MAY 16	LADIES SPRING LUNCHEON		Committee
MAY 23	MEETING	Celebration Dinner - Need committee	
MAY 24	VETERANS LUNCHEON	VETERANS PROGRAM by Gus Chamales	Merrilee, Diane, Hoddi
JUNE 13	GRADUATES COFFEE		Marian
JUNE 20	FATHERS DAY BREAKFAST	Notify Zach to take over this coffee hour	
JULY 18	CAMP AGAPE	Training for camp July 18-25	
JULY 21	CANW Kafeneion	Provide Appetizers from St. Nicholas Philoptochos	Hoddi, Jane, Marian and Yvonne

## Ministry News

### PROSPHORA BAKING SCHEDULE

Despina Ampatzis:	The first Sunday of every month
Deborah Talbot:	The second Sunday of every month
Mark Robinson	The third Sunday of every month
Anne Dykstra:	The fourth Sunday of every month
Freezer Stock:	The fifth Sunday of every month

Anyone wanting to bring this offering on a particular day should make the arrangements with Father Seraphim. Every Orthodox Christian in good standing (talk to your priest about what that means) is welcome to make the offering.

The purpose of the Divine Liturgy is to make this Thanksgiving Offering to God and receive it back from Him, transformed by Him, for our own transformation.

A recipe and tutorial for making moist, dense prospora is available to anyone interested. Once you have practiced making prospora a time or two, you may find you have the courage to bring this Thanksgiving Offering to the Liturgy for your name day or any day and more fully experience your Orthodox faith. I would also be happy to bake one time with anyone interested in learning about making prospora. For more information leave a message for Deborah Talbot at 360-593-2831.



*Deborah Talbot—*

## Cover Story

### The Gift of Christmas

*Continued from front page*

It's about presents. Christmas really is about presents.

It's about a contest held to find the most caring child. The winner was a four-year-old boy whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there. When his mother asked the little boy what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy said, "Nothing... I just helped him cry." — The gift of consolation.

It's about presents. Christmas really is about presents.

It's about a four-year-old who went to the pediatrician for a check up. As the doctor looked down her ears with an otoscope, he asked, "Do you think I'll find Big Bird in here?" The little girl stayed silent. Next, the doctor took a tongue depressor and looked down her throat. He asked, "Do you think I'll find the Cookie Monster down there?" Again, the little girl was silent. Then the doctor put a stethoscope to her chest. As he listened to her heartbeat, he asked, "Do you think I'll hear Barney in here?" Oh no!, the little girl replied. "Jesus is in my heart." — The gift of faith.

It's about presents. Christmas really is about presents.

It's about God, who loved each one of us so much that he gave us his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. — The ultimate gift.

It's about presents. Christmas really is about presents; but it's not about the presents we give that we bought at the local Toys - R - Us, or the local department store. It's not about the giving of money; Christmas is not about a holiday season.

Rather, Christmas is about the gift of giving of ourselves. Giving of our time and talents so that we might touch the life of another. And the reason why we give of ourselves is because we commemorate the gift God gave us — His Son.

So what gift we will give this Christmas? But not only this Christmas, but also every day of the year. Will it be the gift of love by telling our family and friends how special they are to us? The gift of consolation by remembering those who have no one else to remember them; by visiting those who have no one to visit them? Bringing the gift of laughter to those who are in sorrow; imparting the gift of faith, by keeping Jesus Christ as the focus of our Christmas.

Therefore, how we can give of ourselves is perhaps summarized best in the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi who said:

O Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love.

Where there is injury, pardon,

Where there is doubt, faith,

Where there is despair, hope,

Where there is darkness, light,

And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console;

To be understood, as to understand;

To be loved, as to love;

For it is in giving that we receive—

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen

*Theo Nicolakis is the Chief Information Officer of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America*



# Ministry News

## On line Donations now possible

### ON-LINE DONATIONS

The donation section of the Church’s website has been revamped to include a link to a new on-line donation form. The form allows one-time donations, setup for automatic recurring donations, and selection of donation purpose. There is also a note section to inform Church accounting of special handling needs, such as memorial donations or address changes. Church on-line donations are directed to the Church through WePay (a Chase Bank Affiliate) and Aplos Software, LLC. Donors contributing on-line receive an email thanking them for their donation. In addition, through a link in the donation notification, each donor can setup their own Aplos account to view a list of on-line donations, manage recurring donations, and to view and print a contributions statement.



Please be aware that in converting to this software I noticed multiple duplicative account names. In some instances, I will need to merge duplicate accounts so the contribution statement accurately combines into one statement both the on-line donations and check and cash donations. The unique identifier for this purpose is a valid email address.

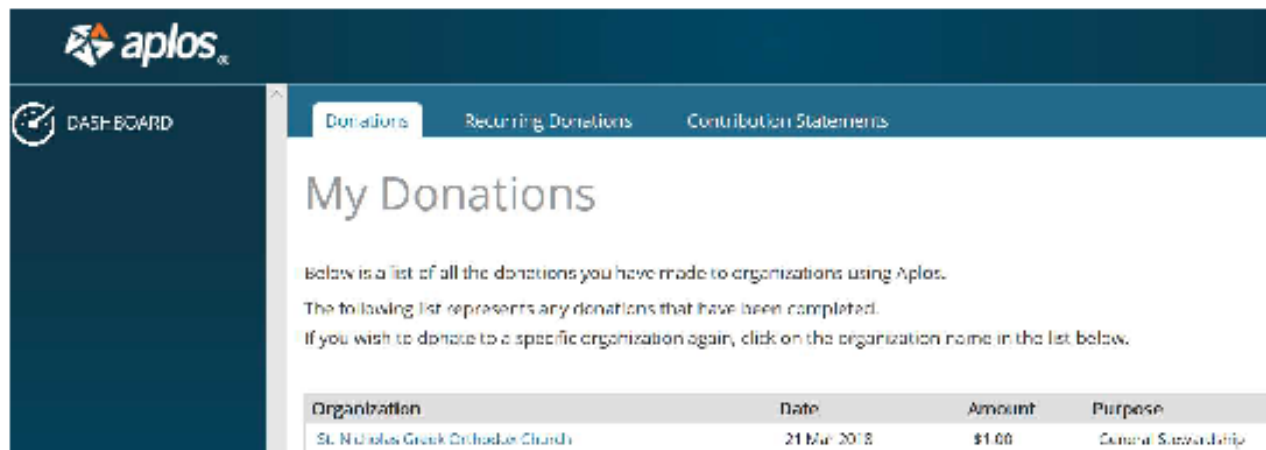
I want parishioners to enjoy greater flexibility in making Church donations and receiving an accounting of their annual to date contributions at any time of the year. Many of you have asked and inquired about the possibility of accounting for your donations automatically on-line. It is now a reality. If you have any problems or questions with this new service, please let me know. As your treasurer, I am here to serve you!

In Christ,

Mark Robinson

### On-Line Contribution Instructions:

- 1) On a computer or mobile device, go to the Church’s website – [www.stnicholastacom.org](http://www.stnicholastacom.org)
- 2) Select the  button. This takes you to the Church’s donate page!
- 3) Select the gold colored donate  button at the bottom of the page.
- 4) You will now be taken to the page to make your donation. Simply complete the form.
- 5) From the contributions email you receive, select the link to setup your own Aplos account. An account history page will be available. The first tab will show only on-line donations, the second tab allows accounting for recurring donations, and the third is for contribution statements listing on-line, check, and cash donations.



The screenshot shows the Aplos software interface. At the top left is the Aplos logo. Below it is a navigation menu with 'DASH-BOARD' and three tabs: 'Donations', 'Recurring Donations', and 'Contribution Statements'. The main heading is 'My Donations'. Below the heading, there is explanatory text: 'Below is a list of all the donations you have made to organizations using Aplos. The following list represents any donations that have been completed. If you wish to donate to a specific organization again, click on the organization name in the list below.' Below this text is a table with the following data:

Organization	Date	Amount	Purpose
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church	21 Mar 2018	\$1.00	General Stewardship

# Pilgrimage

*Continued from page 9*

We were given the great joy of receiving blessings more than once from Elder Ephraim, and the added gift of blessings from Metropolitan Andonios from Greece.

Finally, the fellowship we enjoyed with our fellow pilgrims deepened our experience and helped us get to know and appreciate each other in Christ's Love even more. It was a wonderful trip, and we encourage others to visit this blessed place next time St. Nicholas Pilgrimage Ministry offers the opportunity to go.

Zach—



# An Offering of Praise

A Children's Christmas Pageant  
With Carol Singing

Sunday, December 15

*Lower Hall, following Divine Liturgy*



St. Nicholas  
**Maids of Athena**  
Holiday Fundraiser

**Gift Basket Raffle**  
Valued over \$200

*Contents:*


- 2 Dinner Gift Cards
- See's Candies
- Regal Movie Tickets
- And more...

Tickets:

\$5 each or 5 for \$20

Drawing, Sunday December 22

Proceeds to St. Nicholas Maids of Athena



The St. Nicholas Philoptochos Society  
Cordially Invites You to Our

*Annual After  
Christmas Social*

January 11, 2020 at 5:30  
Fircrest Golf and Country Club  
1500 Regents Blvd, Fircrest, WA 98466

Reservations Appreciated by December 15th  
Tickets are \$60.00

**Menu:** Entrees are Top Sirloin or Chicken Marsala, plus  
Sides and Desserts with No-Host Open Bar

PLEASE CONTACT CHAIRPERSONS:

Sally Hallis - 253-651-9097

Yvonne Brandvold - 253-206-1621

Kathy Johnson - 253-278-5787

Marian Palas - 253-224-8432

CALLING ALL SUPERHEROS!  
SAVE THE DATE

# ALL SAINTS CAMP ANNUAL FUNDRAISER DINNER



DATE: SATURDAY, JANUARY 25TH

LOCATION: ST. DEMETRIOS

TIME: 5:30 PM

TICKETS AVAILABLE STARTING IN DECEMBER



# ORTHODOX WINTER YOUTH RETREAT

*Save the Date!*  
*January 18-20, 2020*

*This retreat is coordinated by the Orthodox Christian Youth Ministry (OCYM) Team from the Antiochian Archdiocese under the arch-pastoral oversight of Metropolitan JOSEPH*

## **Cedar Springs Camp Lake Stevens, WA**

Open to all Orthodox Junior High and High School Youth and their friends!

An opportunity for youth to grow in spirit through worship, prayer, good food and games!

Registration begins October 1, 2019  
**\$160 early bird pricing!**  
[www.tinyurl.com/orthodoxretreat](http://www.tinyurl.com/orthodoxretreat)

# 2020 STEWARDSHIP CARD

## ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH TACOMA, WASHINGTON



### OUR MISSION

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church proclaims and teaches the Gospel in accordance with the Orthodox Faith; sanctifies the faithful through God's grace in worship, the Divine Liturgy, and other sacraments; enhances parishioners' spiritual life; and adds to the faithful by receiving individuals into the Church through instruction, baptism, and/or [chrismation](#).

### COMMIT YOUR TIME AND TALENT TO ASSIST WITH GOD'S WORK

St. Nicholas has several ministries that exist to fulfill our parish mission and serve our community. Giving of our time and talent through these ministries is just as much an act of stewardship as giving financially. If you would like to contribute your time and talent through one of our ministries, please visit our website to see a list of active ministries: [stnicholastacoma.org/ministry-center](http://stnicholastacoma.org/ministry-center).

### HOW TO RETURN THIS CARD

#### BY MAIL:

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church  
Attn: Church Treasurer  
1523 S. Yakima Ave.  
Tacoma, WA 98405

#### AT CHURCH:

Drop your completed card into the secured [dropbox](#) on the stewardship table in the downstairs hall.

Stewardship contributions can be fulfilled with cash, check, credit card, or through online donations at [stnicholastacoma.org/donate](http://stnicholastacoma.org/donate). For more information, please visit:

[stnicholastacoma.org/stewardship](http://stnicholastacoma.org/stewardship).

*"Stewardship is an opportunity to examine our priorities and values, to express our thankfulness, to give of ourselves, and to grow in grace. It allows us to participate in the work of God. Giving is not a substitute for commitment - it is an expression of our commitment."*

*Fr. Seraphim Majumdar*



Please PRINT your information clearly

*“Those who seek the Lord shall never want for any good thing.”*

*(Psalm 34:10)*

**OUR DONATIONS ARE IN THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR HIS CONTINUED BLESSINGS GIVEN TO US. OUR DONATION REFLECTS HOW MUCH WE ARE BLESSED AND HOW THANKFUL WE ARE; HOWEVER, WE ARE AWARE THAT GOD EXPECTS US TO GIVE SACRIFICIALLY TO HIS WORK.**

**2020 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT**

Stewardship contributions cover all of our parish operating expenses. An average contribution of approximately \$2000/year from each family would enable our parish to meet its operational expenses without depending on Festival revenue.

I/We offer a minimum stewardship pledge of

\$...../year or \$...../

month in 2020 to support God’s work.

I/We understand that by participating in supporting our parish financially and by committing my/our Time and Talents, I/we shall be a member(s) in good standing at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church.

SIGNATURE.....

Name (F/M/L): .....

DOB (M/D/Y): .....

Email: .....

Telephone: .....

Spouse: .....

DOB (M/D/Y): .....

Email: .....

Telephone: .....

**Household Information**

Address .....

City/St/Zip .....

**Dependent Children**

Name (F/MI/L)      DOB (m/d/y)      Orthodox

.....(Y/N)

.....(Y/N)

.....(Y/N)

.....(Y/N)

Saint Nicholas Messenger

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

1523 S Yakima Ave

Tacoma, WA 98405

*Address Service Requested*

