



# Merry Christmas



## 2020 PRAXIS: A YEAR IN REVIEW

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### Making the Sign of the Cross

*In making this Sign we are making an act of worship, a confession of our Faith and a prayer, and therefore it should not be done carelessly or thoughtlessly, nor simply a matter of habit or nervous reaction. To make the Sign, first join the tips of the thumb, index finger and second finger of your right hand, while folding the other two fingers into your palm. Recollect that the three joined digits represent the Three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The two folded fingers are an expression of that other fundamental teaching of our Church, the Incarnation, for folded into the palm (the earth) they recall God the Son Who came down to earth and became man and is known in two natures, being both perfect God and perfect man. With the hand held thus, make the sign over yourself by touching in turn the forehead, the stomach, the right and the left shoulder. In this way taking up His Cross, dedicate your whole being to Christ in fulfillment of the commandment to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength and with all thy mind."*

### Receiving Communion

*Please allow children & Sunday School teachers to go first (when in session)*

*KEY POINT: stay still and be "inert".*

*Form two lines, one on each side of the church. When your turn is next, please*

*DO NOT defer to people on the other side of the aisle (ie, when there is only one chalice). We realize it feels more polite to do so, but it slows things down. Simply alternate left side, right side, one at a time. Don't worry about going between a child and their parent. Children who need to stay directly with their parent will come together to the chalice.*

*Cover Story continued on page 18*

## How to Return to Church

See article on page 5

# 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)

Office Hours: Tuesday–Friday 10:00 am - 3:00 pm



## 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)

*Saint Nicholas Messenger* is the official monthly newsletter of the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church of Tacoma Washington

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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**  
Kathy Rawley

**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

**2020 Parish Council**  
George Pirotis—President  
Gus Chamales—Vice-President  
Mark Robinson—Treasurer  
Christina Leinneweber—Secretary  
Sheila Auter, Genevieve Eagle, David Frisk,  
Ronnie-Sue Johnson, Zach Karanasos, Despina  
Kipelidis, Anna Marie Oakes-Joudy,

**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**  
Zoe Matteson-President  
Isabell Mastras-Vice President  
Elena Apostle-Treasurer  
Ingrid Chamalas—Advisor  
Helen McClure – Advisor

**Philoptochos Society**  
Jane Evancho - President  
Hoddi Motz - 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

**Prosphora Baking**  
Deborah Talbot

**Welcome**  
Ronnie Sue Johnson

## Parish Council

November parish council meeting is the 2nd Tuesday of the month.  
December 8, 2020

December 2020						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy 7:00pm-8:00pm Akathist to St Porphyrios 8:30am-8:45pm Evening Liturgy: St Porphyrios	2 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy FAST: Wine & Oil ok St Porphyrios 7:00pm-8:00pm No Service Tonight 7:30pm-8:30pm Genesis Catechism Class	3 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Prophet Zephaniah 8:30pm-8:30pm Vespers: St Barbara & St John of Damascus 8:30pm-7:00pm Modern Greek (Zoom)	4 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy FAST: Wine & Oil ok St Barbara & St John of Damascus 8:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 10:00am-12:00pm Bible Study 5:30pm-8:30pm Vespers	5 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Sabbas the Sanctified 8:30am-8:00am Orthros 8:30am-10:30am Divine Liturgy 7:30pm-8:00pm Vespers
8 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy ST NICHOLAS 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 11:30am-12:30pm Memorial for Elder Ephraim		7 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Andrew of Melan 8:30am-7:30am Orthros 8:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy w/ Readings from Elder Ephraim 8:30pm-8:30pm Vespers	8 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Conception of the Theotokos FAST: Wine & Oil ok 8:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 8:30pm-4:30pm Akathist for the Unborn 7:00pm-8:00pm Paralytic 8:00pm-8:30pm Genesis Catechism Class (FINAL SESSION)	9 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Thomas of Silyria 8:30pm-7:00pm Modern Greek (Zoom)	10 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Daniel the Stylite STRICT FAST 8:30am-7:30am Orthros 7:30pm-8:00pm Vespers: St Spyridon 7:45pm-8:45pm Evening Liturgy: St Spyridon	11 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Mardarije of Minio 7:30pm-8:00pm Vespers
13 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Herman of Alaska 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 11:30am-11:45am 40 Day memorial: Justin Hilberd	14 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Martyr Thyreas & Companions 8:30am-7:30am Orthros 8:30pm-8:30pm Vespers	15 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Euthimios 8:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 10:00am-11:00am Bible Study 5:30pm-8:30pm Vespers	16 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Prophet Haggai STRICT FAST 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers: Daniel & Three Young Men & Dionysios of Zakynthos 7:45pm-8:45pm Evening Liturgy	17 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Daniel and the Three Youths Dionysios of Zakynthos 8:30pm-7:00pm Modern Greek (Zoom)	18 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Martyr Sebastian STRICT FAST 8:30am-7:30am Orthros 8:30pm-8:30pm Vespers	19 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Martyr Boniface 7:30pm-8:00pm Vespers
20 Advent Fast: No Meat or Dairy Ignatius of Antioch John of Kronstadt 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	21 Juliana of Nisomedia STRICT FAST 8:30am-7:30am Orthros 8:30pm-8:30pm Vespers w/ Canon of Preparation	22 Anastasia Pharmakolitia STRICT FAST 8:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 10:00am-11:00am Bible Study 5:30pm-8:30pm Vespers w/ Canon of Preparation	23 STRICT FAST Ten Martyrs of Crete 8:30am-7:30am Akathist for the Unborn 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers	24 Christmas Eve STRICT FAST 8:30am-7:30am Orthros & 1st Royal Hour 10:00am-11:00am Third, Sixth & Ninth Royal Hours 8:30pm-8:30pm Vespers Liturgy of St Basil	25 FESTAL PERIOD: NO FASTING Nativity of Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ 8:45am-8:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	26 FESTAL PERIOD: NO FASTING Synaxis of the Theotokos 8:30am-8:00am Orthros 8:30am-10:30am Divine Liturgy 7:30pm-8:00pm Vespers
27 FESTAL PERIOD: NO FASTING Protomartyr Stephen 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	28 24,000 Martyrs of Nisomedia FESTAL PERIOD: NO FASTING Protomartyr Stephen 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	29 14,000 Infants Slain By Herod FESTAL PERIOD: NO FASTING 8:30am-7:30am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Bible Study 5:30pm-8:30pm Vespers & Orthros (Lamentation of Nativity)	30 FESTAL PERIOD: NO FASTING Lamentation of Nativity 8:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 7:00pm-8:00pm Paralytic	31 Fr Nestor Sawchuk FESTAL PERIOD: NO FASTING Melania the Younger 8:30pm-7:00pm Modern Greek (Zoom) 7:30pm-8:00pm Vespers: St Basil 7:45pm-8:45pm Evening Liturgy: St Basil	Notes:	

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

## News and Announcements

### Baklava Sales

Many of you know that we are selling phyllo and nuts that we purchased for making baklava before the State's Covid-19 restrictions prevented us from doing so. We are also selling phyllo and nuts as kits or in bulk. If you want to purchase those items contact **Joseph Johnson at either (360) 941-9972 or [sgtjcj@msm.com](mailto:sgtjcj@msm.com)** to coordinate for payment and pickup.

### Returning to Church

Parishioners are once again attending services in person at St. Nicholas and able to receive Holy Communion. Church gatherings are limited to a maximum of 50 people while maintaining social distancing and the wearing of masks. To facilitate adhering to the 50 person guidance, parishioners are asked to sign up in advance for Saturday and Sunday services on the church [website](#). Sign up in advance for up to two Sundays per month. After that, you can sign up for any open slots beginning 10am on Saturday mornings. No reservations are needed for weekday services. Please remember masks are required, stay home if you are not feeling well. Also, if you are at risk, please stay home. Contact Fr. Seraphim to make special arrangements for Communion or other special needs.

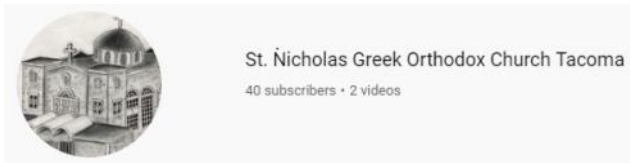
Live TV Streaming of church services continues. If you are unable to attend services in person, you can participate by watching most services live at home. See instructions below.

### Watch Services From Home, Live

Although you might not be able to be at St. Nicholas in person, you can watch services at home from any device capable of connecting to YouTube. This is free and is available for most services. Here's how to do it:

1. First, find the schedule when a service is being broadcast. This is called Live Streaming. Look at the calendar on the previous page, or better, look at the calendar on the St. Nicholas Web page. [www.StNicholasTacoma.org](http://www.StNicholasTacoma.org). There is a Live Streaming link at the church calendar.
2. You can simply click [here](#). If there is a service underway, press the button. You will see and hear the service.
3. Watch on any device. Open **YouTube** (you may have to start a browser like Chrome). In the *YouTube search bar*, type; *St Nicholas Tacoma*

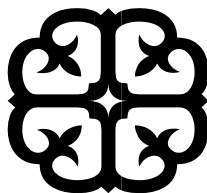
Click on this selection;



If a service is being broadcast, click the **LIVE NOW** button.

3. Some TV's allow direct connection to YouTube. You can connect as above.

*Bill Samaras—*



## Building Committee



### LOOKING FORWARD TO THE ONCOMING YEAR

Covid restrictions aside, November has been a relatively dormant month for the Building Committee and Narthex Renovation. A contract has been signed on the Narthex Renovation, and coordination is taking place to procure long lead items, select colors, finalize a mosaic floor tile design, and submit proposed finish hardware for new custom doors. Permits have been approved for some time, but have been held off for actual pick up until we get closer to ground breaking in May of 2021.

A new year brings about a new budget, which will be sorted out at the upcoming Building Committee meeting in regards to anticipated maintenance and repairs, and whether to include proposed upgrades such as filling in floor recesses and providing new laminate flooring at the Sanctuary pew areas, and replacing an existing Lower Hall exterior door assembly that faces South 16th Street.

Also in the works, but of much smaller dollar amounts, is a proposal to provide a keypad lock at the exterior side door in the Sanctuary facing South 16th Street, that would allow Parish members to come in before or during lesser attended weekday services, while keeping the main Narthex entrance secure. In addition, proposals are being sought from vendors to provide a ringer and camera at both the existing Narthex entry door, and the exterior ramp door facing Yakima Avenue that leads to the Upper Hall and church office. Both would act as relatively cheap security enhancements and conveniences when the church is being occupied by just a few people or less.

*Submitted by: Bill Acker*

# Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

## New parishioner: Private First Class Ryder

**C. Barr.** Ryder is a recent arrival to Washington State. He grew up in Coopersville, Michigan and enlisted in the Army about one year ago. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) is Field Artillery and he attended Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at the home of the Field Artillery School in Ft. Sill, Oklahoma (affectionately known by soldiers as the arm pit of the world). Like many of us, Ryder enlisted in the Army with a strong sense of patriotism and a sincere desire to serve his country. He is presently assigned to the 17th Fires Brigade at Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) and just recently started attending liturgy services at St. Nicholas. Additionally, recently started attending Fr. Seraphim’s catechumen class and is very interested in becoming an Orthodox Christian. When you see Ryder please take a moment to introduce yourself, welcome him to our parish, and where possible assist him with learning about the Orthodox faith. **WELCOME TO ST. NICHOLAS, RYDER!**



**PFC Ryder C. Barr**  
**U.S. Army**  
 Presently serving as  
 a Field Artillery soldier  
 at Joint Base Lewis  
 McChord



**December 1, 1913. Crete unites with Greece.** “It was on a Sunday, the 1st of December, 1913 that the Greek flag was raised on top of the fortress of Firka, on the western side of the harbor of Chania, in front of the King of Hellenes, Constantine, the Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos and a tearful, emotional and enthusiastic crowd of proud Cretans. The struggle to reach that moment had been a bloody and very long one. As the plaque at the location says:



**Kapetan Giannikos**  
**Cretan Guerilla Leader**  
**HERO OF THE WAR**  
**FOR INDEPENDENCE**  
**Island of Crete.**  
**John & Maro Kouklis’**  
**Great Grandfather**

### TURKISH OCCUPATION OF CRETE

**1669 – 1913**

**267 YEARS, 7 MONTHS, 7 DAYS**

**YEARS OF AGONY**

Although the whole period was one of a difficult and often a bloody struggle, the last ninety years were the most difficult for all Cretans to bear because Greece, after enormous sacrifices following the revolution of 1821, achieved independence from the Turkish yoke, but not Crete. Cretans had fought equally hard to overthrow the Turkish occupier, had made similar sacrifices, had shed in similar ways their blood for freedom, but the Great Powers had prevented Crete from joining Greece in becoming part of the new nation.” Eventually it happened, after “267 YEARS, 7 MONTHS, and 7 DAYS OF AGONY”. (Source: *The Union of Crete with Greece, EXPLORE CRETE travel guide.*)

**December 1, 1918. Unification of all Romanian principalities.** We have several Romanian Orthodox parishioners at our St. Nicholas Church and in recognition of their love for our church and pride in their country, we wish them all the best as they celebrate Romania’s national holiday known as **Great Union Day.** Romania declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1877, with the country

*Continued on next page....*

## Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

comprised of the principalities of Moldova and Wallachia. Following the end of World War I, during the reign of King Ferdinand I, Romania almost doubled in size when Transylvania and the provinces of Bessarabia and Bukovina unified with Romania. The declaration of unification happened in Alba Iulia on December 1st 1918. A joyous 'GREAT UNION DAY' to all our parishioners of Romanian dissent. (Source: Office Holidays, LTD)

**December 4. St. Barbara's Feast Day.** The History of our Church offers many examples of individuals who dedicated their lives to God. Their stories are different and vary greatly, yet one thread that links them all is their love for God. They endured whipping, stoning and other forms of torture because of their beliefs. Some were fed to lions while others were beheaded. Yet even when faced with enormous pressure to deny Christ they stood firm and fearless even unto death.

One such individual named Barbara lived in the city of Heliopolis at the beginning of the third century. She was a lovely and delightful girl; the daughter of Dioscorus, a wealthy nobleman and pagan. Dioscorus' intentions were to surround his daughter with the greatest comforts and attendants focused on teaching her how to worship the pagan gods.

One day before leaving on one of his many business trips, Dioscorus decided to build a bathhouse for Barbara next to her tower. He drew up plans and left strict instructions for the builders to follow. While Dioscorus was able to control Barbara's environment, he was unable to prevent her from exercising her acute intelligence. Through contemplating the reflection of God in nature, Barbara had come to the knowledge of the One God in Trinity and turning aside from vanities, she felt in her heart a longing for Christ.



One day Barbara decided to walk down from her tower and inspect the new structure. She noticed it only had two windows and she instructed the builders to insert a third, so that the room would be lit by a triple light which would symbolize the threefold light of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A few days later Barbara stood by a pool facing the East and said, "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit" and miraculously drew the sign of the cross in the hardened marble wall of the bathhouse with only the use of her finger making the holy impression.

When Dioscorus finally arrived home he immediately noticed the third window in the bathhouse and he became very angry. He entered the bathhouse to inspect it further and noticed the large cross carved in the marble wall, and became furious!

Dioscorus immediately sought out his daughter and demanded to know why she deviated from his strict instructions, and if the inclusion of this third window had an additional meaning. Barbara responded in a loving way to her father, stating that indeed the three windows represented the three Lights or the Holy Trinity, which guide everyone who comes into the world. Barbara then proceeded to confess her faith in the Holy Trinity.

*Continued on next page....*



# Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

Blinded by his fury, Dioscorus delivered Barbara to Marcian, the Roman prefect, to torture her until she denied Christ. She was stripped and struck with whips and clubs, and to make her pain more intense the soldiers rubbed vinegar into her wounds. Through all this however, Barbara stood firm in her faith and refused to deny Christ. She was thrown into a dungeon and ordered to return the following day. Barbara prayed to God to continue to grant her strength and as she prayed her heart was filled with heavenly joy, and her wounds were completely and miraculously healed.

The next day Marcian was amazed to see that her wounds had healed but still demanded that she deny her faith in Christ. Her refusal angered the prefect who ordered her tortured even worse than the day before! Yet through it all, Barbara found consolation in prayer. Her refusal to renounce her faith further angered Marcian, and he ordered her taken out of the city and killed.

Dioscorus offered to execute Barbara himself and led her out of the city to a mountainside, and beheaded her. As he headed down the mountain back to the city a bolt of lightning came from heaven and struck Dioscorus, killing him. When Marcian heard of this event he became so paralyzed by fear that he died of fright.

Saint Barbara gained her crown of martyrdom on December 4, 306 and joined her true Father in Heaven. *(Source: St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church, Orange, Connecticut)*

## U.S. Army and Marine Corps “HONORABLE ORDER OF ST. BARBARA MEDAL.”

Military organizations of many countries recognize several Orthodox saints as their patron saint, and it is a tremendous honor to be awarded a “Patron Saint Medal”, in recognition of demonstrated expertise.

In the United States Army and Marine Corps, “The Honorable Order of Saint Barbara” recognizes those individuals who have demonstrated the highest standards of integrity and moral character; displayed an outstanding degree of professional competence; served the United States Army or Marine Corps Field Artillery with selflessness; and contributed to the promotion of the Field Artillery in ways that stand out in the eyes of the recipient’s seniors, subordinates and peers alike. *(U.S. Army Field Artillery Association)*



The following parishioners or family members have served in the United States Field Artillery.



**Walter R. Motz,**  
U.S. Army  
*World War I*  
**Walter Motz’**  
father



**Elia J. Pangis**  
U.S. Army, *WWII*  
**Recipient of**  
**The Purple Heart**  
**For wounds sustained**  
**during the Italian**  
**Campaign.**  
**Elly Pangis’ husband**



**PFC Ryder C. Barr**  
U.S. Army  
Presently serving as  
a Field Artillery soldier  
at Joint Base Lewis  
McChord



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## Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

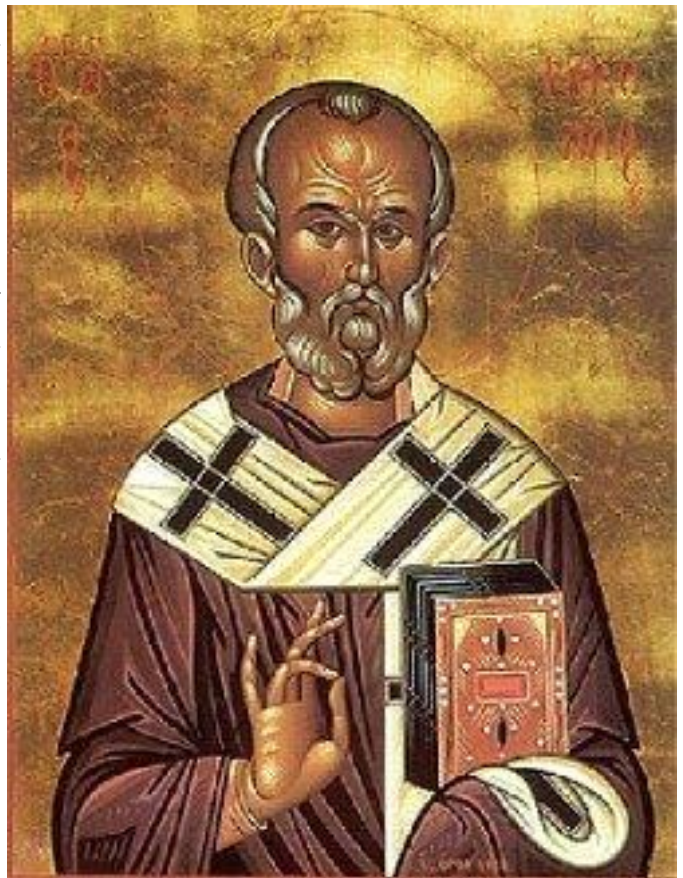
**December 6. St. Nicholas the Wonderworker Feast Day.** Our Holy Father Nicholas, emulator of the Apostles and ardent imitator of the Lord Jesus Christ, appears as a living pillar of the Church, zealous in defense of the faith and a model of pastoral solicitude for holy bishops. Through his countless miracles on behalf of the poor, the abandoned, of those suffering injustice and of all who call upon his fatherly protection, he has to this day shown himself “a good steward of the manifold grace of God” (I Peter 4:10).

Saint Nicholas was born in Patara in Lycia towards the end of the third century, to Christian parents who had long been childless. From infancy, he showed his love of virtue and his zeal for observing the ordinances of the Church by abstaining from his mother’s breast on Wednesdays and Fridays until the evening. Pious and inclined to silence, he was educated in theology and, while still young, was ordained priest by his uncle, Archbishop Nicholas. For many years, vigil, fasting and prayer were the virtues he excelled in, but from the time of his parents’ death and his giving away his inheritance to the needy, the virtue of almsgiving became his greatest glory to God. He regarded himself merely as the steward of goods which belonged to the poor and took particular care to keep his good deeds secret, so as not to lose the heavenly reward (cf. Matthew 6:7). On three occasions he secretly left gold enough for the marriage portions of three maidens whom their debt-ridden father intended to give up to prostitution. When the man eventually discovered his good deed, Nicholas made him promise, as he valued his salvation, to tell no one of it.

God recompensed him through the charismata and miracles for which he became renowned in the sight of men. On pilgrimage to the Holy Places he twice by his prayer calmed the winds that imperiled the ship he was sailing in.

Soon after his return, an angel made known to the synod of bishops, meeting to elect a shepherd for the nearby city of Myra, that they should choose Nicholas—which they did, to the joy of the people. During the last great persecution under Diocletian and Maximian (c. 305), Saint Nicholas was thrown into prison where he continued to confirm his spiritual flock in the faith. With the accession of Constantine, he was very zealous for the destruction of idolatrous temples and for driving out the demons that inhabited them. Among the Fathers gathered at Nicaea in 325 for the first Ecumenical Council, Nicholas was one of the leading champions of Orthodoxy against the impious heresy of Arius, which had so swiftly sprung up to trouble and divide the holy Body of Christ.

He saved the city of Myra from famine by appearing to the master of a vessel laden with corn, and telling him to discharge his cargo at the harbor there. Later the man of God saved the lives of three Roman offi-



*Continued next page...*

## Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

cers unjustly accused of conspiracy, by appearing in a dream to the Emperor Constantine and to the perfidious Prefect Avlavius. Full of gratitude to the Saint for their deliverance, the three soldiers became monks.

On many other occasions after his death as well as during his lifetime, Saint Nicholas has miraculously assisted ships in distress and people making voyages, and so is venerated as the protector of all who sail the seas. Thus, one day during a gale, he appeared at the helm of a ship in distress and brought it safely to port; and on another occasion, he rescued a passenger who fell overboard crying, "Saint Nicholas, help me!" and at once found himself at home surrounded by his astounded family.

For many years the holy Bishop was, as the presence of Christ, a friend of man and good shepherd to his faithful; there was no misfortune that would not move him to compassion, no injustice that he would not redress, no discord that he would not allay. Wherever he happened to be, his illumined countenance and the atmosphere of radiant peace surrounding him were instantly recognizable. When he fell asleep in peace his people lamented the loss of their pastor and their providence, through whom they had received so many benefits, but the angels and Saints rejoiced with great joy to receive the meek Nicholas among them. His holy relics, placed in a church built in his honor at Myra, were venerated by crowds of pilgrims every year. One day the Devil, unable to tolerate the glory that shone from Saint Nicholas' tomb, took the form of a poor old woman and accosted some pilgrims who were leaving for Myra, lamenting that she was not able herself to travel, and entrusting them with a flask of oil for the lamps that burned perpetually before the shrine. During the voyage, Nicholas appeared to the ship's captain and told him to throw the oil into the sea. No sooner had he done so than the surface of the water caught fire and swirled about in blazing eddies to the terror of the passengers, who gave thanks to God for having saved the sanctuary through his Saint. In 1087, after Myra had fallen to the Saracens, the holy relics of Saint Nicholas were transferred to Bari in the south of Italy, accompanied by many miracles, and there they are venerated to this day (cf. May 9).

Saint Nicholas, with Saint George, is one of the Saints most beloved by Christian people in the East as well as in the West. The churches dedicated to him are as countless as the places and the faithful named after him. He is especially revered by the Russian people as the protector of crops, and in the West he is regarded as the patron of schoolchildren and of young people in general. (Source: GOARCH)

### **December 7, 1941. "A day that will live in infamy!" President Franklin D. Roosevelt**

On this day the Japanese Navy attacked American military installations at Pearl Harbor and on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. Many Navy warships were damaged and destroyed during the attack, most notable being the battleship USS Arizona. America's involvement in the war lasted approximately almost four years but on September 2, 1945, the formal Japanese surrender was signed on board the USS Missouri, bringing the war to an end.



# Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

## December 21, 1944. Denny F. Lagounaris Killed in Action.

Many St. Nicholas men served in the armed forces during World War II, and sadly, one was killed in action. PFC Denny Lagounaris was an infantryman fighting with the 433rd Infantry Regiment, a part of the 106th Infantry Division. That Division was one of several that took the brunt of the German attack during the battle of the bulge, and the 433rd Infantry Regiment was quickly surrounded and forced to



**Remember our Heroes!**  
**PFC Denny Lagounaris**  
**U.S. Army, WWII**  
**Killed in Action at the**  
**Battle of the Bulge**  
**1944**  
**Recipient of the**  
**Purple Heart**

surrender. Approximately 195 men from the 433rd were killed in action or died of wounds, almost all the others were captured as prisoners of war. Official accounts list Denny as having been captured by the Germans during the Battle of the Bulge, and dying of wounds in a German POW camp. However there is an eyewitness account in a book written after the war that states he was killed in action, having been shot by a German machinegunner. A plaque commemorating PFC Denny Lagounaris hangs in the upper hall at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church. **MAY HIS MEMORY BE ETERNAL.**

## December 25, CHRISTMAS DAY.

As we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, it is important to take time to reflect on the many blessings we received this past year. This ministry is very grateful for the time that many of you spent rounding up pictures of your loved ones who served in the military, and for the time you spent sharing mementos, documents, and stories about their service. It is important that we remember their stories, acknowledge their sacrifices, and honor their contributions that have made ours, the greatest country in the world. God has truly blessed this country, and I believe God has truly blessed our St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church. This ministry would like to thank everyone for their contributions of time, talent and treasure, that make our church the wonderful place that it is to worship Jesus Christ. Wishing you all God's blessings!

**DOXA TO THEO!**



Entering the birthplace of Jesus at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem October 2018



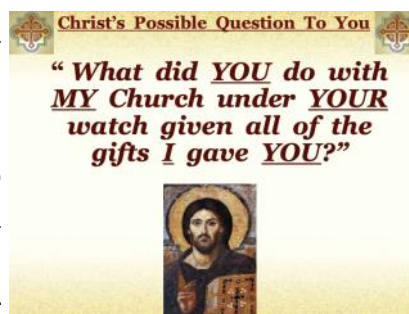
Contributed by: Gus

# Stewardship Ministry News

**About 21 months ago** I was asked to be a part of the Stewardship Ministry, one of the many ministries that serves our St. Nicholas parish. In a small way compared to many others, this ministry tries to support our church in the accomplishment of its primary mission, enabling St. Nicholas Greek orthodox Church to spread the word of God and Orthodoxy. I have tried to incorporate in these articles reports about you and the organizations at our church that share so much of your time, talent, and treasure. It is your efforts that have proven instrumental to the success of our St. Nicholas church. I have also tried to express on behalf of all of us on the Parish Council our sincere appreciation for your dedication!

Recently George Pirotis and I had the opportunity to participate in several stewardship seminars sponsored by our Metropolis, and presented primarily by a remarkable gentleman whose name is Bill Marianes. If you find yourself with some spare time and would like to learn about the pillars upon which great churches are built, at the end of this article is a link that will take you to Bill's seminars. I am certain you will be impressed and inspired by what he has to say.

Among the many things that I learned from his seminars was the importance of imagining yourself standing before the heavenly gates and hearing Christ ask you one simple question: **“What did YOU do with MY church under YOUR watch given all of the gifts I gave to YOU?”** I find myself asking that question more and more, and as a result I find myself paying more attention to what's happening in and around our church, and learning more about the people that make up our St. Nicholas family. I respectfully encourage you to give it a try! Ask yourself that question every day, and see if it changes the way you think about our church and our St. Nicholas family! I strongly suspect it will have a similar positive effect on you.



I was also amazed to learn some interesting statistics about stewardship in general, but I was particularly surprised when he displayed the charts that offered specific statistics about Orthodox Christians. I could elaborate on several of them but in the interest of space and time, I would like to share with you some of his charts that I found impactful. If the old saying “A picture is worth a thousand words” is true, then these chart images are worth approximately 10 written pages! Take a look at them and please let me know your thoughts regarding any of these statements, and if these chart images are inclined to make you “reevaluate” the way you view our church, and your stewardship.

**The Giving Facts<sup>1</sup>**

- ~ People are giving a lower % of income to churches in the 2000's than they did either during the Great Depression or the 1920's
- ~ 37% of church goers give \$0 to their church
- ~ 17% of American families have reduced the amount that they give to their local church
- ~ 7% of church goers have dropped regular giving by 20% or more
- ~ Parish median proxy tithe analysis shows GOA stewards typically only give between 0.5% to 0.8% of their income (not 10%)

<sup>1</sup> Christian Stewardship Association; Barna Research Group; Empty Tomb; Giving USA Foundation, <https://www.givingusa.com/online-giving-statistics/church-giving/>; Stewardship Calling Financial Stewardship Analysis of over 250 parishes

**Church Attendance Data**

**ATTEND CHURCH WEEKLY**

• YES • NO

21% Attend weekly

79% Do Not attend weekly

~ Only **21%** of all Greek Orthodox adherents attend church services regularly on a weekly basis.<sup>1</sup>

**P.S. It averages:**  
 22% in Serbian parishes;  
 37% in Antiochian parishes;  
 40% in OCA parishes; and  
 48% in Carpatho Russian parishes

<sup>1</sup> Eight Facts about Church Attendance in US Orthodox Christian Churches (2010) Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America.

# Stewardship Ministry

**The Giving Facts<sup>1</sup>**

U.S. Orthodox Christians are in the:

(a) top quartile in annual income

(b) bottom quartile in giving to their churches in their annual stewardship

<sup>1</sup> New Forum income data compared with analysis of several hundred Orthodox Parish financial statements (mostly in GDA) by Stewardship Calling.

**The Bottom Line**

**DECLINING:**

- ~ Church membership
- ~ Church sacraments
- ~ Church contributions
- ~ Church member spirituality
- ~ Church relevance in daily lives
- ~ Church stewardship
- ~ Church attentiveness during services

**GROWING:**

- ~ Church disengagement by youth
- ~ Church member deaths
- ~ Church dependence on Festivals, raffles and fund raisers

**The Empirical Data Shows<sup>1</sup>**

“...congregations with engaged members are:

1. spiritually healthier;
2. better able to:
  - (a) carry out their missions,
  - (b) attract more new people,
  - (c) fund new ventures; and
3. have a higher percentage of spiritually committed individuals.”

<sup>1</sup> Growing An Engaged Church: How To Stop “Doing Church” And Start Being The Church Again – By Al Winseman, Global Practice Leader for Faith-Based Organizations for the Gallup Organization

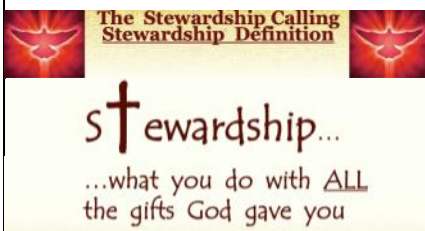
**Scripture Discusses Money Frequently**  
(i.e., it’s OK to properly ask for money for God’s house and Christ’s church)

If you were intrigued by any of these charts and if you are interested in reviewing some of Bill Marianes’ presentations, please type **Coronavirus Resources for Stewardship . Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco** into your web browser. That should bring up several options and you should select the one for **Stewardship**. If for any reason you are unable to access the correct site, send me an email (gleafops@gmail.com) and I can forward to you an email from the Metropolis that has a link on which you may click for direct access.

Before leaving this subject, I am compelled to ask one more time about submitting your 2021 Stewardship pledge. If you haven’t already done so, please go to our church website and scan down to **HELP ST. NICHOLAS GROW**. Once there, you may select either **STEWARDSHIP** or **DONATE**. Selecting **STEWARDSHIP** will take you to a line item entitled **DOWNLOAD A 2021 STEWARDSHIP CARD**. You may then print out and complete the 2021 card, and follow the instructions for returning it to the Secretary’s office. If you select **DONATE** you will be given two options. The first is **DONATE**, and the second is **QUICK PAY DONATION**. Selecting **DONATE** will enable you to specify **2021 Stewardship Pledge**, the amount you wish to pledge, and how you wish to make those payments (weekly, monthly, one lump sum, or some combination of the three). Selecting **QUICK PAY DONATION** will enable you to make a one-time donation for whatever amount you choose. Regardless of which option you choose, please be sure to specify **2021 Stewardship Pledge** somewhere on your form, if that is in fact where you intend for your pledge or contribution to go. Otherwise your pledge/contribution may be assigned to the 2020 fiscal year, and we will not use your pledge for completing the 2021 annual budget. **PLEASE SUPPORT THE PARISH COUNCIL WITH THIS EFFORT!**

*Continued on next page....*

## Stewardship Ministry News



### TIME, TALENT, & TREASURE

You may recall that in last month's article we shared with you a need for volunteers to help the outdoor maintenance/cleanup teams led by Genevieve Eagle and John Pangis. Genevieve has been leading a team of people who rake up our grounds and police the parking lot area of trash, and John has been mowing the grass at St. Nicholas since he was old enough to push a lawn mower! We needed some additional assistance and one of our newest parishioners was kind enough to volunteer! Our sincere thanks goes out to **Yianni Charatou**, a new parishioner from Seattle, for his gracious offer to tithe his time, and assist with this effort. **THANK YOU SO MUCH, YIANNI!**

You've heard it said that the Lord works in mysterious ways, so allow me to share with you something positive that recently transpired. Several weeks ago I arrived at the church early for Narthex duty, and noticed that there were multiple piles of leaves that had been raked on our property. The logical assumption was that it was either Genevieve or Fran's handiwork, and that they needed some additional assistance with bagging and hauling them to the dump.

Later that morning I was standing on the steps to the church a few minutes before the liturgy ended, and a gentleman approached me from around the corner. He introduced himself, asked if I was a member of the church, and after acknowledging that I am, he gave me his business card. He stated that he travels by our church quite regularly and that he was dismayed by all the trash in the alley. I offered that the alley is not our property and that the mess back there was not attributable to our church. He acknowledged that fact but stated it is still up against our fence, it looks horrible, and its appearance could be perceived as a sad reflection on us. I agreed with him on all counts. The gentleman explained that although he was not a member of any church he thought it was unfortunate that we had to endure the messes caused by others, and he offered to pay our maintenance person whatever it would cost to remove the trash. I told him I would pass the information to our Priest and Parish President, and assured him that someone would get back to him in the near future.

A couple days later Genevieve and her team were raking leaves on the church grounds and she mentioned that she did not know who had raked up the leaves into piles a few days earlier. John Pangis arrived a short time later and he shared that he had seen a homeless man cleaning up trash laying around our dumpster, and wondered if it had been him. He pointed to the tent in which he thought the fellow lived, so together we walked over to ask if he in fact had raked up the leaves.

At the tent we met a man named James and a woman named Rachel. They acknowledged that they had been raking up our leaves because they thought it looked bad, and they wanted our church grounds to look tidier. No one had asked them to do it. They just did it because ours was a house of God, and they thought it was the right thing to do.



## Stewardship Ministry News

John and I visited with them for several minutes and after expressing our appreciation for their kindness and hard work, an arrangement was made to compensate them for their efforts. Since that initial meeting James and Rachel have raked over 80 bags of leaves along our Yakima frontage, within our vacant lot across the street, and within our parking lot area! At our vacant lot they have also filled a hole under the sidewalk that was at risk of collapse, cleaned up several bags of trash and old lumber that had been discarded in our yard, and they are as of this writing in the process of edging along the sidewalks. In addition to raking leaves and policing trash in our parking lot, James disassembled the old refrigerator that has been sitting for months outside of our “kota house”, and assisted with hauling it to a scrap metal yard. Among their most impressive accomplishments however, James and Rachel have worked very hard to clean up the alley! They have cut down the blackberry vines that were growing along our fence, they have bagged over 80 bags of trash, and they stacked the trash in the alley along with items such as mattresses and old furniture, to facilitate their removal.



The city of Tacoma has been contacted to come through the alley and haul away the trash, but to date that has not occurred. Not to be dismayed, James and Rachel fill our dumpster and others in the alley with the trash they have bagged every week, so little by little it is going away.

I have had the opportunity to visit with Rachel and James several times over the past few weeks and they have shared with me aspects of their personal lives. They describe themselves as people that are simply down on their luck, and trying to get back on their feet. They have no full-time employment but when they can earn some money they try to save with the goal of finding a property that they can rent. They estimate they will have to save approximately \$2500.00 before that can happen, and they hope to be off the street by Christmas. Rachel says that the money they are earning for cleaning up around the church will help toward that effort.

Rachel and James’ story was shared with several people from our church. Thankfully, one of our parishioners who manages a business in Tacoma expressed a willingness to interview them for employment. The business information has been passed to Rachel and we pray that she follows through.

Remember the gentleman who was mentioned at the beginning of this story? George Pirotis arranged for a meeting with him to discuss his kind offer of assistance. Recently that meeting occurred and the work of Rachel and James have been doing in the alley was discussed, as was their homeless situation. True to his word the gentleman offered to cover the cost of work performed by Rachel and James, but he was informed that would not be necessary, since other arrangements had already been made. After learning this, the gentleman asked if he and his wife could instead make a contribution to St. Nicholas church. Despite being told that was not necessary he insisted, and he and his wife contributed a four figure amount to our church.

The Lord truly does work in mysterious ways! “And now you know the rest of the story! Good day!”



# Maids of Athena

Presented by  
M.O.A. Sparta 1 &



## Crafting for Community



Join local artist and Maid of Athena Ginny McClure of Shop Second Best to learn how to make clay earrings and support Nourish Pierce County in their fight against food insecurity and poverty in our community. No one should go hungry!

### **COST:**

\$35 - This option includes a materials kit with everything you need to make 2-3 pairs of earrings

\$20 - This option allows you to buy your own materials (we'll let you know what you need)

Both options get you 25% off a purchase from the Shop Second Best Etsy Shop!

**Sunday December  
6th @ 6:30PM  
on Zoom**

**For more info  
visit us on Facebook  
or Instagram!**



For more information on the event, contact Sparta 1 Chapter President Zoe Matteson at [moasparta1@gmail.com](mailto:moasparta1@gmail.com).

## Cover Story Continued...

Cross your arms or hold them to your side when approaching; open your mouth wide; stay as still and "inert" as possible; allow the priest to place the spoon in your mouth; close your lips (but not your teeth) around the spoon; allow the priest to remove the spoon, and don't pull your head back—keep it still; allow the altar servers to wipe your lips; DON'T make the Sign of the Cross at the chalice or try to wipe your own lips (this can cause a spill); take one piece of antidoron (blessed bread) and resist the temptation to take several and/or hand out to neighbors at the pews. They will get a chance to receive bread (if they are not receiving Communion that day) at the end of the liturgy.

If you are bringing a child: please receive first, and then present the child for Communion. If you are carrying the child, please hold their head against your right arm, and use your arms to restrain their arms and legs.

### Care for Antidoron.

"Blessed bread" as we call it, is exactly that: blessed. The word literally means "instead of the Gifts", which originally was consumed by those not receiving communion that day. In common practice throughout the Archdiocese, everyone receives the antidoron at the end of the liturgy, including visitors/Non-orthodox.

- After Communion, please only take one piece, and refrain from gathering extras to share with pew neighbors. They will receive some at the end of the liturgy
- Don't spill antidoron crumbs. Cup your hands, consume the piece, and afterwards, do a slight "suck" to pull up any remaining crumbs on the palm of your hand
- Teach your children to respect the antidoron in the same way
- Take antidoron home, cut it into crouton-size pieces, dry it and keep it in a special bowl to receive first thing in the morning before you start your day (on days you won't be fasting for Communion, of course!) Take holy water home, and keep it next to the antidoron bowl, and receive it in three sips "In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) with your antidoron (again, only on days you won't be going to receive Communion)

### Receive a blessing from the priest.

"Kiss (don't shake) a priest's or bishop's hand."

The proper way to greet a priest or a bishop is to ask for his blessing and to kiss his right hand. Approach the priest or bishop with your right hand over your left hand and say, "Father, bless." (If a Bishop, say, "Master, bless") This is much more appropriate (and traditional) than shaking their hands. When you kiss their hand you are theologically kissing Christ's own hand, as the grace of ordination makes this possible. (think: icons) As they give you a blessing, they will trace the sign of the Cross over you, with their fingers held in a particular way that actually spells out the letters IC XC (which means Jesus Christ) in Greek. So in actuality, he is imparting the name and grace of Jesus Christ to you. It renews the soul, and imparts grace to the priest himself, as he too is renewed in the coming of Divine Grace through this act of love and humility. It is a win-win for both.

## Cover Story Continued...

### ENTERING & EXITING THE CHURCH

Upon entering the church sanctuary:

1. Stop
2. Look at the icon of Christ on the iconostasion
3. Close your eyes & take a slow, deep breath and say the Jesus Prayer silently
4. Open your eyes and bow, putting your right hand as low to the floor as possible (while still standing, like a "touching your toes" exercise)
5. Raise your arm and make the Sign of the Cross, and then go to your seat (preferably using the side aisle, if possible)
6. When exiting the church, repeat the above; don't simply walk out of the church

### DAILY PRAYER RULE

Think of the soul like a newborn: it needs constant care. The soul, like a baby, needs food; it needs water; it needs love and attention; and of course it needs its diaper changed!

Without constant care, a baby will become unwell very quickly. The same is true of the soul: daily prayer, spiritual reading, fasting, confession and regular reception of Communion are essential for its health and wellbeing.

Here is a daily prayer rule that EVERYONE should follow to the best of their ability and circumstances. If you don't already have a prayer rule, take a few moments to look this over and chat briefly with Fr Seraphim to come up with a specific plan that is best for you:

- Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Have Mercy On Me") [100-300 per day, usually done with a prayer rope]
- "Most Holy Theotokos Save Us" [50-100 per day on the prayer rope]
- 1 section of holy Scripture a day [ie, one chapter, or at least the daily readings]
- Morning Prayers: Kiss the icons, say the Trisagion Prayers, Nicene Creed, pray for your loved ones by name. If possible, add some of the morning prayers from a prayer book (Fr Seraphim can help you get one)
- Make the Sign of the Cross upon starting your vehicle and going somewhere
- Follow the fasting rules of the day (see the parish calendar for food restrictions that may apply)
- Give thanks to God and bless your food with the Sign of the Cross at every meal
- Evening Prayers: if possible, read the Small Compline each afternoon or evening. If not, at least do the Trisagion Prayers
- Prostrations (ie, stand in front of icons, make the Sign of the Cross, go down to the floor on your knees, with head to the floor, stand back up) if physically possible. All able bodied should do at least 3 per day, and preferably around 25-50.

Paraklesis or Akathist. If possible, read one of these every day, or at least a portion each day. See Fr Seraphim for a copy.

### Congregational Singing

It is a great joy when everyone in the congregation sings together! Please come to services and join in the singing of the service. A few points:

- Sing with joy! Remember that when you sing from your heart, it is a source of joy and blessing to others

Be sure to follow the chanters—they will set the volume, tempo and pitch. Definitely sing from your heart, but remember to keep listening to the chanters

## Cover Story Continued...

- Try to blend your voice with everyone else around you— a rule of thumb in singing in choirs is that you should always be able to hear everyone else's voice around you. For some, this will mean singing a little more loudly; for others, it will mean toning down your volume. Try to evaluate your own singing style and see where you fall on this spectrum. In general, it is better to sing to softly than too loudly.
  - Rule of thumb: sing when you know the hymn; listen when you don't. At most services, the chanters will be doing some hymns intended to be chanted by them alone (i.e., the Cherubic Hymn, hymns of the day, etc.) During these moments, focus on listening, as these are words of holy Scripture or from the Saints
  - Practice the Jesus Prayer as well. There will be times when you feel in your heart that you would like to be silent, praying the Jesus Prayer or listening to the chanting. That is totally okay! The key is to cultivate a spirit of humility, and joy in worshipping the Lord.
- Follow the chanters during spoken prayers. During the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Prayer Before Communion, etc., listen carefully to the chanters. They will set the pace and phrasing of these prayers. Sometimes I hear people speaking these prayers too loudly or off-rhythm, which throws things off. When everyone is reading prayers at the same pacing, it is beautiful and powerful.

### PREPARING FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Receiving the Lord's Body and Blood is the ultimate moment of our life in Christ. Just as a bride will spend months preparing for her wedding day, we too must spend time and energy preparing to receive our Bridegroom Jesus Christ:

- **Be spiritually ready.** This involves confession (at least two or three times a year), being at peace with anyone who might be a difficult person in your life, and having read the Prayers Before Communion
- **Be physically ready.** Unless you have a health issue, everyone coming for Holy Communion should have kept a total fast for at least six hours (ie, food and drink). It is a pious custom to have fasted from meat and dairy products the day before, or at least the last meal taken before beginning the fast. An alternative to this is to keep the Wednesday & Friday fasts (or if in a fasting season, every day) but still is okay to have meat and dairy on Saturday. If you are not keeping the Wednesday & Friday fasts (at least from meat) consider refraining from Holy Communion until you are able to do so. Children & the sick are of course exception to these guidelines

**Be spiritually pure.** You should not be engaged in (or committed in the past without confession) any grievous sin (theft, violent behavior, fornication/adultery, fraud, pornography, verbal/physical/emotional abuse, homosexuality, abortion, bitter anger towards enemies, slander, among others).

**Be in good standing.** You should be a steward of the parish (or if a visitor, a steward of your home parish); tithe regularly (to whatever degree possible); attend services regularly. If you have missed church (ie, more than three Sundays) for any other reason than medical or work issues, you should come to confession before receiving communion. You should also come to confession before receiving communion if you have participated in the services & sacraments of a non-Orthodox church.



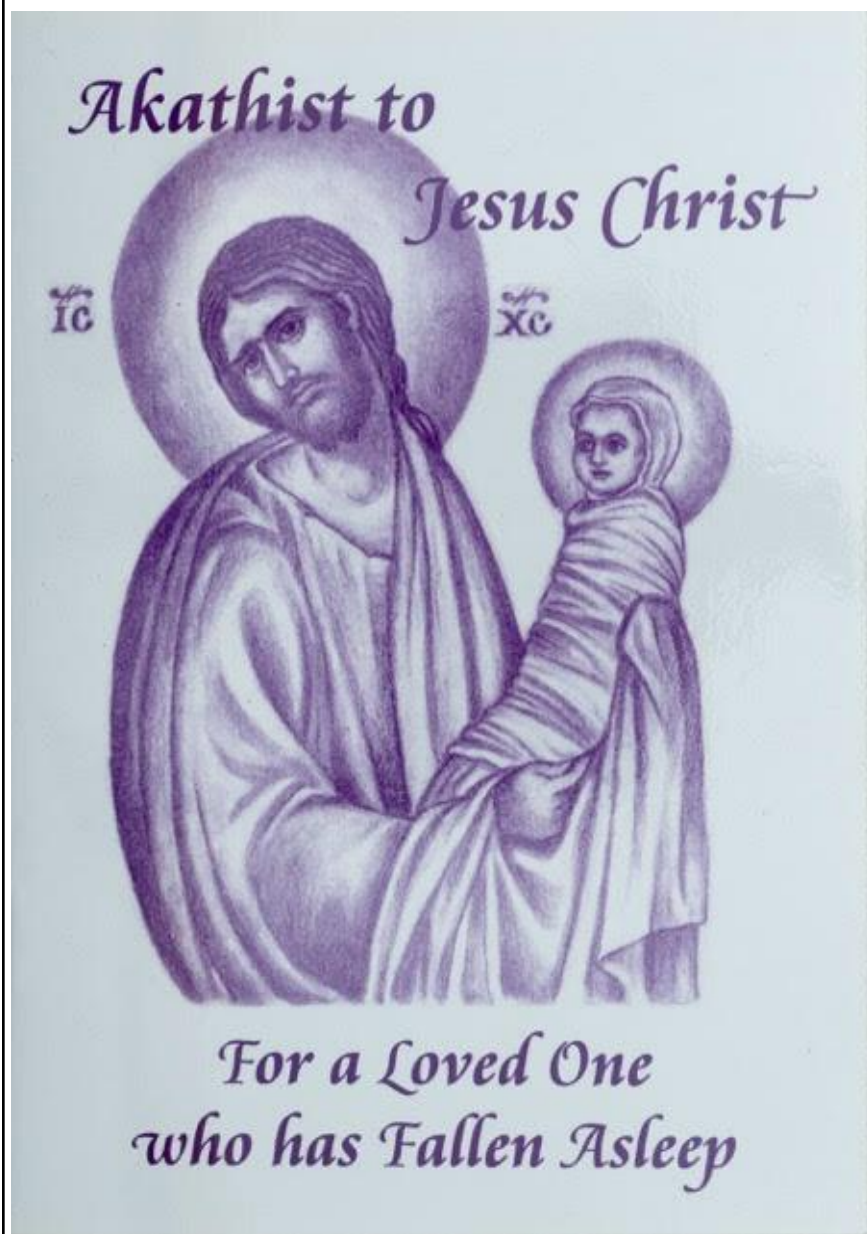
Father Seraphim

## ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

## Ministry of Akathist Prayers for the Departed

Thank you to all who are a part of this wonderful ministry of offering prayers for the departed. We currently have openings for a few people who may be interested in joining, as some have left the group.

When a loved one has fallen asleep, the family [or the priest] may request the Akathist Ministry to begin 40 days of prayer for the departed person.



In this ministry, each day for 40 days, one different person will independently pray [the prayer below] making a continuous offering of prayer for the departed brother or sister at Saint Nicholas.

I have assumed everyone on my list is current information. When I contact everyone, about 50% of the time there is an acknowledgment or response. If you are still a part of the Akathist Ministry, and your number has changed in the past two years, its possible I don't have your new number.

If you would like to make a change, or aren't sure, please contact me with an update.

Thank you again for your gift of prayer for the departed, in our Orthodox family. May God bless your gift of prayer.

*Continued next page.....*

## ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

### *Prayers for the departed*

#### Akathist to Jesus Christ For a Loved One Who Has Fallen Asleep

————Kontakion 1————

Chosen Intercessor and High Priest, Who hast laid down Thy soul for the salvation of the sinful world and hast given us authority to be children of God, and to dwell in the never-ending day of Thy Kingdom, grant forgiveness and eternal joy to Thy servant who has fallen asleep, for whom we cry to Thee in supplication: Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (handmaiden) (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

————Ikos 1————

O holy Guardian Angel given by the Lord: Come pray for thy servant, whom thou didst accompany, preserve, and direct on all the paths of life, and cry with us to the All-compassionate Saviour:

Jesus, tear up the handwriting of the sins of Thy servant (Name).

Jesus, heal the wounds of his (her) soul.

Jesus, grant that there not be bitter memories of him (her) on earth.

Jesus, for the sake of this\* have mercy on those who were grieved and offended by him (her).

Jesus, cover his (her) imperfections with the radiant garment of Thy redemption.

Jesus, gladden him (her) by Thy loving-kindness.

Jesus, Ineffable, Great and Wondrous—reveal Thyself to him (her).

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

————Kontakion 2————

Like an inconsolable dove, the soul is borne aloft over the earthly vale, contemplating from the heights of divine reason the sins and temptations of its past life, and bitterly sorrowing over every irretrievable day which passed without benefit; but do Thou, O Master, have mercy on Thy servant that he (she) may enter into Thy rest, crying out: Alleluia!

————Ikos 2————

Since Thou didst suffer for all the world, since Thou didst pour forth tears and the sweat of blood for the living and the dead—who, then, could restrain us from prayer for the departed one! Imitating Thee, Who didst descend even unto hades, we pray for the salvation of Thy servant:

Jesus, Giver of Life, illumine him (her) with Thy light.

Jesus, may he (she) be only with Thee and the Father.

Jesus, Who callest all to Thy vineyard, forget not to illumine him (her) by Thy light.

Jesus, generous Bestower of eternal rewards, show him (her) to be a son of Thy bridal chamber.

Jesus, return to his (her) soul the grace-filled powers of the first-created purity.

Jesus, may good deeds be multiplied in his (her) name.

Jesus, warm those left behind with Thy mystical consolation.

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

## ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

*Prayers for the departed, continued...*

## ————Kontakion 3————

Bound with the bonds of the flesh, Thy servant would fall into sin, but his (her) spirit pined for Thine eternal truth and holiness. Now, when the weakness of the flesh is constrained by the corruption of the tomb, may his (her) soul be borne aloft higher than the sun to Thee, the All-holy, and may it sing a song of deliverance: Alleluia!

## ————Ikos 3————

Thy chief Apostle, in the cold night by the bonfire, denied Thee thrice yet Thou didst save him. Thou who alone knowest the weakness of human nature: forgive also Thy servant (Name) for the many ways he (she) often fell away from Thy will:

Jesus, establish him (her) there, where there is no going astray.  
 Jesus, deliver him (her) from grievous torments of the conscience.  
 Jesus, may the memory of his (her) sins perish forever.  
 Jesus, remember not the temptations of his (her) youth.  
 Jesus, cleanse him (her) of secret transgressions.  
 Jesus, overshadow him (her) with the gladsome light of salvation.  
 Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

## ————Kontakion 4————

The tempests of life have passed, earthly sufferings are ended, the enemies with their malice are powerless; but love is strong, delivering from eternal darkness and saving all, for whom with boldness it raises a song to Thee: Alleluia!

## ————Ikos 4————

Thou art merciful to us without measure. Thou art the only Deliverer; what shall we add to the great of Thy saving love? But as Simon the Cyrenian helped Thee, the All-powerful, to bear Thy Cross, so now it is pleasing to Thy goodness to accomplish the salvation of our close ones with our participation:

Jesus, Thou didst command that we bear one another's burdens.  
 Jesus, Thou Who hast mercy on us after death through the intercession of our close ones.  
 Jesus, union of love placed between those who have fallen asleep and those among the living.  
 Jesus, may the labours of those who loved him (her) serve for the salvation of Thy servant (Name).  
 Jesus, hear his (her) heartfelt cry, offered up by our own lips.  
 Jesus, in our tears accept his (her) repentance.  
 Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

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## ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

*Prayers for the departed, continued...*

-----Kontakion 5-----

O God, may his (her) last sigh of contrition before death be accepted by Thee, as was the supplication of the wise Thief. He (She) breathed his (her) last on the cross of this life: grant him (her) to inherit Thy promise, as Thou didst say to the Thief: Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in paradise where the throngs of repentant sinners joyfully sing: Alleluia!

-----Ikos 5-----

O Thou Who wast crucified for us and Who for us wast tormented: Stretch forth Thy hand from Thy Cross and with the drops of Thy poured-forth blood wipe away his (her) sins without a trace; and with Thy beautiful nakedness warm his (her) soul, now stripped bare and orphaned:

Jesus, Thou didst know his (her) life from birth and didst love him (her).

Jesus, Thou didst see him (her) from afar from the height of Thy Cross.

Jesus, suffering painfully on the Cross, Thou didst stretch forth to embrace him (her) as he (she) came from afar.

Jesus, Thou didst cry out for his (her) forgiveness on blood-stained Golgotha.

Jesus, Thou didst in grievous torments meekly die for him (her).

Jesus, Who didst suffer to be laid in the tomb, sanctify his (her) repose in the grave.

Jesus, Risen, raise up to the Father his (her) soul which was embittered by the world and saved by Thee.

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

-----Kontakion 6-----

He (She) sleeps the eternal slumber of the grave, but his (her) soul is awake, awaiting Thee O Lord, thirsting for Thee, the Eternal Bridegroom. May Thy words be fulfilled for the departed: Whosoever eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath eternal life. Grant him (her) to eat the mystical manna and to sing at Thy throne: Alleluia!

-----Ikos 6-----

Separated by death from all those close to it, the soul has flown afar off; those who knew him (her) grieve and Thou alone remainest near. The barriers of the flesh are destroyed and Thou art revealed in the unapproachable greatness of the Godhead, awaiting an accounting:

Jesus, Love beyond all understanding, have mercy on Thy servant.

Jesus, when he (she) withdrew from Thee, he (she) suffered greatly.

Jesus, forgive the unfaithfulness of his (her) heart.

Jesus, disappointed hopes in him (her) gave birth to a longing for Thee.

Jesus, remember the hours when his (her) soul trembled with delight in Thee.

Jesus, grant to the departed unearthly joy and repose.

Jesus, O only faithful and unchanging One, do Thou receive him (her).

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.



## ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

### *Prayers for the departed, continued...*

————Kontakion 7————

We believe that our parting will be free. We bury thee, as a grain in a field, and thou wilt spring forth in another land. Let the weeds of thy sins die in the grave, but may good deeds shine forth there, where good seed brings forth incorrupt fruit, and where holy souls sing: Alleluia!

————Ikos 7————

When the fate of the departed fades into oblivion, when his (her) image dims in the heart, and time obliterates, along with his (her) tomb, the fervency of prayer for him (her), then do Thou not abandon him (her) but give delight to his (her) lonely soul:

Jesus, the warmth of Thy love never ceases.

Jesus, Thy goodwill is inexhaustible.

Jesus, in the never-ending supplications of the Church may his (her) sins be washed away by the offering of the Bloodless Sacrifice.

Jesus, through the intercession of all Thy Saints, grant him (her) the grace of prayer for the living.

Jesus, in the days of our own trials, accept his (her) intercession for us.

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

————Kontakion 8————

Let us pray with tears while the memory of the one who has fallen asleep is painfully fresh. Let us remember his (her) name day and night, giving alms, feeding the hungry, and crying from the depths of our souls: Alleluia!

————Ikos 8————

The Seer of Mysteries, John the Theologian, in contemplation beheld at the Throne of the Lamb of God a great multitude of people, clothed in white garments. These are they who came out of great sorrow. They joyfully serve God day and night, and God dwells with them, and torment will not touch them:

Jesus, number among them also Thy servant (Name).

Jesus, he (she) suffered much and languished.

Jesus, all his (her) bitter hours and painful moments are known to Thee.

Jesus, on earth he (she) had sorrow and tribulation—grant him (her) joy in heaven.

Jesus, refresh him (her) from the fountains of living water.

Jesus, take away every tear from his (her) eyes.

Jesus, grant him (her) an abode where the sun of Thy righteousness scorches not but rather gives life.

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

*Continued next page...*

## ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

*Prayers for the departed, continued...*

————Kontakion 9————

When earthly sojourning is ended, how graceful is the passing to the world of the Spirit; what contemplation of new things, unknown to the earthly world, and of heavenly beauties. The soul returns to its fatherland, where the bright sun, the righteousness of God, enlightens those who sing: Alleluia!

————Ikos 9————

If the reflection and trace of Thee make the faces of mortals shine, then what can we say about Thou Thyself! If the fruits of Thy hands are so wonderful, and if the earth, which reflects only a shadow of Thee, is full of unutterable majesty, then what can be said of Thine unseen countenance! Reveal Thy glory to Thy servant (Name) who has fallen asleep:

Jesus, enhance his (her) hearing unto the perception of Thy divinity.

Jesus, enhance his (her) hearing for heavenly wisdom.

Jesus, may his (her) joy be full.

Jesus, strengthen him (her) with the hope of meeting in the dwelling places of the blessed.

Jesus, grant that we may feel the grace-filled power of the prayer of the reposed.

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

————Kontakion 10————

Our Father, accept this departed one into Thy Kingdom, where there is neither sin nor evil, where Thy holy Will is inviolable and Thy grace-filled Name is hallowed among the hosts of most pure Angels, and where praise gives forth a sweet fragrance: Alleluia!

————Ikos 10————

In that day, the Angels will set forth Thy Throne, O Judge, and Thou wilt shine forth in the glory of Thy Father, rendering due reward to each man. O look then mercifully on Thy humble servant (Name) and say to him (her): "Come stand at My right hand":

Jesus, as Thou art God Thou hast authority to remit sins.

Jesus, forgive those transgressions of his (hers) which were forgotten or concealed because of shame.

Jesus, loose his (her) sins of weakness and ignorance.

Jesus, deliver him (her) from the unholy depths of the despair of hell.

Jesus, may he (she) inherit Thy life-giving promise.

Jesus, count him (her) to be among the blessed of Thy Father.

Jesus, grant him (her) endless blessedness unto the ages.

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

*Continued next page...*

## ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

*Prayers for the departed, continued...*

## -----Kontakion 11-----

O All-good Master, may the radiant gates of Paradise be opened to him (her) who has fallen asleep; and may he (she) be met with exultation by the assemblies of righteous and holy ones, and the multitude of his (her) close ones. May Thy light-bearing Angels rejoice over him (her), and may he (she) see Thine Ever-blessed Mother there, where victoriously there resounds: Alleluia!

## -----Ikos 11-----

At Thy breath flowers come to life, the river Nile is resurrected and a multitude of tiny creatures awakens. Thy glance is brighter than the spring sky; and Thy love, O Jesus, is warmer than the rays of the sun. Thou didst raise our mortal human flesh from the dust of the earth unto the blossoming of the eternal spring of incorruptible life. Do Thou then illumine also Thy servant (Name) with the light of Thy mercy:

Jesus, at Thy right hand are goodwill and life.

Jesus, in Thy gaze are light and love.

Jesus, deliver him (her) who has fallen asleep from eternal spiritual death.

Jesus, he (she) fell asleep in hope as did Nature before the cold winter.

Jesus, rouse him (her) when the thorns of the earth are clothed in the light of eternity.

Jesus, may nothing earthly cloud his (her) final rest.

Jesus, Thou unchanging Gladness and goal of our existence.

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

## -----Kontakion 12-----

O Christ! Thou art the Kingdom of Heaven; Thou art the land of the meek; Thou art the dwelling place of many. Thou art the drink which is completely new; Thou art the vesture and crown of the venerable ones. Thou art the couch of repose of the Saints. Thou art our Sweetest Jesus and to Thee is due praise: Alleluia!

## -----Ikos 12-----

Using the image of peaceful gardens of unearthly beauty and mansions bright as the sun, in the splendor of heavenly singing Thou hast revealed to us the blessedness of those who love Thee:

Jesus, may Thy servant enter into Thy joy.

Jesus, clothe him (her) with the radiance of the glory of the Father.

Jesus, sanctify him (her) with the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus, may he (she) hear the ineffable song of the Cherubim.

Jesus, may he (she) ascend from glory to glory.

Jesus may he (she) see Thee face to face.

Jesus, All-merciful Judge, vouchsafe Thy servant (Name) the sweetness of Paradise.

Continued next page...

# ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

## *Prayers for the departed, continued...*

-----Kontakion 13-----

O immortal Bridegroom, coming from Heaven with the Angels at the midnight of sin and unbelief to judge the whole world, open the doors of Thy glorious bridal chamber to Thy servant (Name), that amidst the countless hosts of saints he (she) may forever sing: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! (Thrice.)

(And again, Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1.)

Submitted by:  
Katherine Rowley  
253-948-2864



## ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

# ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY

## THE REVELATION

### The Question of PROPHECY

What is it?



Nostradamus

#### PROPHECY: PAST – PRESENT – FUTURE

##### Father Athanasios Mitilinaios:

*We mentioned that prophecy in its broad sense is not limited to the future, but may contain or include the future, the present, and even the past. We will explain. When a prophecy pertains to the future, it reveals something that will take place in the future and which is unknown to every created being. The future is not known to any created being. Prophecy is a privilege of the true God and it is a privilege of our true Orthodox Faith.*

*A prophecy can also pertain to the present and to whatever thing or event escapes the attention of the people at that time. For example, when St. John the Baptist is called a prophet, he was not prophesying the future but the present; the nucleus of his prophecy was, “Here is the Messiah. Here is the Lamb of God.” (cf. John 1:29). The leaders of the people asked him, “Who are you? Are you the Messiah?” “No, I am not the Messiah.” “I am the voice of the one calling and crying out in the wilderness.” (Isaiah 40:3). “I am here to witness for the Messiah, The One Who has been before me in time, is here now The One Who is more powerful than I, the thongs of Whose sandals I am not worthy to untie!” (John 1:27). John is prophesying about Christ, but Christ is already present. We must add that it is more difficult to prophesy the present than to prophesy the future.*

*Finally, a prophecy also pertains to the past as it prophesies events that the human eye has not seen. The creation of nature and man was unseen. All this was revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai whose prophetic eye captured the past. To add another dimension to the meaning of prophecy which we set forth above, prophecy has the element of teaching. It serves to advise, to move people towards straight paths and repentance, to bring consolation and encouragement to those who are fighting the good fight of the spiritual life, and so on. So, prophecy does not limit itself to what happened and what will happen, but it also serves to teach God’s people how to conduct themselves.*

## ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

*That said, we must not look at Revelation in the narrow sense of prophecy, as a book that will reveal the future to us. Revelation will take us back into the past and refer to the present as well. Our Lord said, "what is now" (1:19), those things that exist now, not necessarily the symbolic images that John was seeing in the vision. No, when St. John writes about Babylon the great prostitute (the great harlot), meaning Rome, Rome is not limited to that period of two thousand years ago. "What is now" is also valid for today, so we must not limit our interpretation only to historical facts. Thus, "what is now" is for today and for tomorrow.*

*We need to understand that Revelation transcends the past, present, and future. It serves to comfort, uplift, restore, censure, call out, and to point out the Antichrist. This is for all times, for all seasons but especially at times when spiritual awareness is at low ebb. Revelation is a very graphic book with much inexpressible grace, freshness and tenderness despite some of the horrific images.*

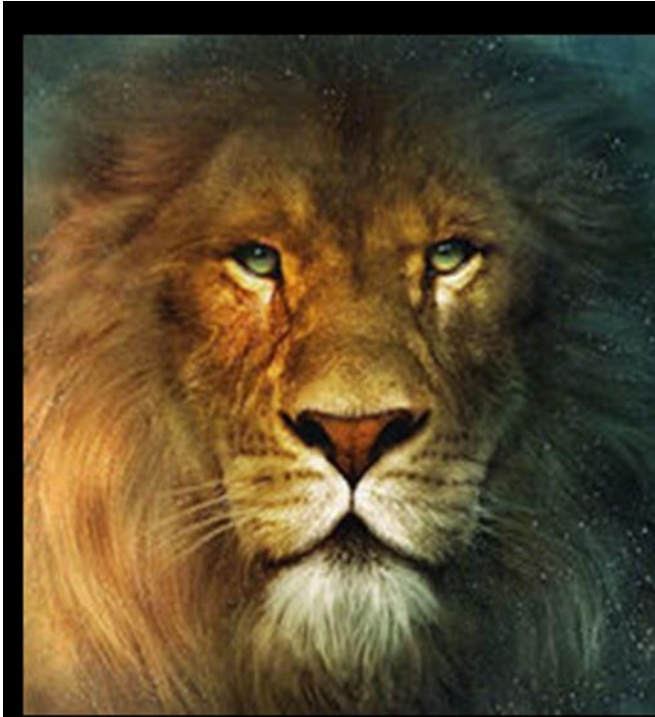
*It is a true masterpiece of the Holy Spirit and it becomes truly delightful for the person who can comprehend and see some of its wonders.*



### ENIGMA ENCODER – THE BOOK OF REVELATION IS **NOT** A DECODER!

When we get into the modality of viewing the Book of Revelation as a decoder, we lose track of what it is truly about – Jesus Christ. It's about Who He is and what He is doing in the salvation of mankind. He is the God-man and the center and focus of this Book.

## ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY



*Aslan is not a tame lion.*

*“Safe? Who said  
anything about safe?  
Of course he isn’t safe.  
But he’s good.  
He’s the King, I tell you.”*

*The Lion, the Witch and the  
Wardrobe – C.S. Lewis*

In the book “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe”, by C.S. Lewis, Aslan (the lion) is a symbol of Jesus Christ. We are introduced to a different view of Christ in Revelation than what we see in the Gospels. Here we see Christ with a 2-edged sword coming out of His Mouth and flaming eyes. This is Christ Almighty, the Christ of judgment, the Christ Who is to come and bring all of human history to its conclusion. As represented by Aslan in C.S. Lewis’ book, Christ is NOT safe. We shouldn’t expect to see the “nice” Jesus in the Book of Revelation. He is GOOD, but He is NOT safe or nice. He represents a complete and total threat to the devil and has the power to destroy death, itself. He is, simultaneously, the very definition of meekness and the awesome power of God. Orthodox Professor Veniamin, teaching the theology of Elder Sophrony of Essex, shared a Patristic doctrine: God doesn’t ask us to be humble while He, Himself, is awesome and fearful. He asks us to practice humility because He wishes us to conform ourselves to Him, Who is humble by nature. It is a divine attribute not an expectation. So, at this point we might be confused. Is He a fiery, fearsome visage of Christ with a radiant face and a 2-edged sword coming out of His Mouth Who is threatening humanity and the Churches that won’t repent, throwing the evil one into the fiery pit, and coming in judgment? Or, is He Christ the all humble One, Who gives His life as The Sacrificial Lamb on the Cross? Because of our various backgrounds and the numerous Christian denominations in this country, each person you speak with has a different viewpoint of Jesus Christ.

## ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY



“And in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.” Rev. 1:13-16



### St. Andrew of Caesarea:

*...A golden belt was wrapped around Him, not on the hip like other men as in the era of hedonisms – the divine flesh is inaccessible to these – but on the chest by the breasts (to show) also how the boundless and righteous divine anger is restrained by love for mankind.\*\* The truth is shown in the girding of the Master’s breasts, that is, the two testaments, through which the faithful are nourished. The belt is gold on account of honor, purity and genuineness.*

### Dr. Jeannie Constantinou’s comment:

*\*\*The unusual placement of the belt, which symbolizes self-control, expresses the love of God restraining His judgment against humanity.*

Submitted by: Genevieve Eagle



## ST NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY

Please join the Pro-Life Ministry in the Supplication for the Victims of Abortion service every other Wednesday from 3:00 – 4:00 pm. The next service is Wednesday, November 25 at 3:00 pm. Check the St. Nicholas calendar at [stnicholastacoma.org](http://stnicholastacoma.org) for the service schedule. For security purposes, we are keeping the front door locked during the service, so please come to the door (up the stairs) on the 16<sup>th</sup> St. side of the Church and knock. The dangers outside the womb are real also, so we have added prayers for our children and grandchildren. I hope to see you there.

---

I got involved in a conversation on an Orthodox website on Facebook recently and sought Father Seraphim's knowledge of the subject to help set things straight. The following is our email conversation and a supporting article from Focus on the Family.

Hi Father

I was reading a debate on an Orthodox Facebook website about the moment a soul enters a fetus. This one man had several Orthodox Christians stirred up by saying a soul doesn't enter a fetus until the sixth week when God breathes life into it. He claimed it was Scripture based but never gave the Scripture reference. He also claimed to be Orthodox. This is one of his quotes:

"Please I'm no advocate of abortion, I believe it is murder no matter how many weeks. Also, I didn't make up the 6 weeks, it is written. This is when God breathes life into the fetus."

Do you know what Scripture, if any, he's referring to? I understood that each person receives a soul at conception.

Thanks - Genevieve

Greetings, Genevieve~

Christ is in our midst!

Thanks for sharing this discussion with me, and I am very sorry to hear that this gentleman is deceived and is attempting to spread this untruth. First off, I don't know what Scripture he could possibly be referring to. Scripture is clear about this matter, as is our Patristic teaching. Focus on the Family has collected some helpful Scripture verses on the subject:

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/pro-life/what-the-bible-says-about-the-beginning-of-life/>

In the west, they had a debate about "ensoulment", or when the soul joins the body after conception. Some interpret St. Augustine as having taught that there is a delay between when the body is formed at conception and then, later, God gives it a soul. I'm guessing this gentleman is reading stuff that ultimately is drawn from this (there is a lot of speculation in later western theology).

Ultimately, the Fathers are clear about the fact that "ensoulment" begins at conception, and furthermore, don't consider it a point worth debating very much. This explains why the western theologians took up the question with so much vigor, as they were rationalist philosophers and not illumined elders. The early councils, as well as the canons of St Basil and other great teachers of the Church expressly forbid abortion at any stage, and a woman having an abortion would be facing a lifetime of excommunication and repentance—only being able to commune at the end of their life. Hence, these discussions about "ensoulment" are speculative and ultimately meaningless (at best!)

Thanks for setting this guy straight!

Fr Seraphim

## ST NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY

The following article is from the Focus on the Family website that Father Seraphim referred to in his email:

### WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THE BEGINNING OF LIFE

The Bible is far from silent on the topic of the sanctity of human life, especially preborn life in the womb. This resource provides just a few of the Scripture verses that speak to the value of preborn life created in God's image from the moment of fertilization. The Bible is far from silent on the topic of the sanctity of human life, especially preborn life in the womb. This resource provides just a few of the Scripture verses that speak to the value of preborn life created in God's image from the moment of fertilization.

#### Why Should We Value Life?

"Know that the LORD Himself is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture" (Psalm 100:3, NASV).

"Thus, says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the One who formed you from the womb, 'I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself, and spreading out the earth all alone . . .'" (Isaiah 44:24, NASV).

"But now, O LORD, Thou art our Father, we are the clay, and Thou our potter; and all of us are the work of Thy hand" (Isaiah 64:8, NASV).

#### Who Is the Creator of the Preborn?

"For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works and that my soul knows well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed, and in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them" (Psalm 139:13-16, NKJV).

"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5, NIV).

#### How Is God Concerned With the Preborn?

But when He who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through His grace . . ." (Galatians 1:15, RSV).

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for giving us through Christ every possible spiritual benefit as citizens of heaven! For consider what he has done—before the foundation of the world He chose us to become, in Christ, His holy and blameless children living within His constant care" (Ephesians 1:3-4, PME).

#### Are the Preborn Human Beings?

"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit...[saying] 'As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy'" (Luke 1:41, 44, NIV).

The Lord Jesus Christ began his incarnation as an embryo, growing into a fetus, infant, child, teenager, and adult: "While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son" (Luke 2:6-7, NIV).

#### Who Is Responsible for Life and Death?

Then God spoke all these words, saying . . . 'You shall not murder'" (Exodus 20:1, 13, NASV).

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19, KJV).

## ST NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY

### Are Humans Permitted to Take Life Before Birth?

“If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman’s husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise” (Exodus 21:22-25, NIV).

### Should a Child Conceived as a Result of Rape or Incest Be Aborted?

“Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin” (Deuteronomy 24:16, NKJV).

### Should a Child Who Might Be Born Deformed or Disabled Be Aborted?

“So, the LORD said to him, ‘Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD?’” (Exodus 4:11, NKJV).

“Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you making?’ Does your work say, ‘He has no hands?’ Woe to him who says to his father, ‘What have you begotten?’ or to his mother, ‘What have you brought to birth?’ This is what the LORD says—the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker: Concerning things to come, do you question Me about My children, or give Me orders about the work of My hands?” (Isaiah 45:9-11, NIV).

“Yet, to shame the wise, God has chosen what the world counts folly, and to shame what is strong, God has chosen what the world counts weakness” (1 Corinthians 1:27, NIV).

### How Should A Woman View Her Body and the Preborn Life Growing in Her Womb?

“Behold, children are a gift of the LORD; the fruit of the womb is a reward” (Psalm 127:3, NASV).

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20, NKJV).

### Does God Forgive Those Who Have Had Abortions?

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace . . .” (Ephesians 1:7, NKJV). “I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins” (Isaiah 43:25, NASV).

Submitted by: Genevieve Eagle



# Greek Language School

## Τα Ελληνικά μου

ΠΡΩΤΟ ΕΠΙΠΕΔΟ  
ΤΕΥΧΟΣ 1Α

Β' ΕΚΔΟΣΗ



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΑΜΕΡΙΚΗΣ  
ΓΡΑΦΕΙΟ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ

### Modern Greek Language School / Classes:

The 2020 - 2021 Modern Greek Language School resumed on Thursday, October 8, 2020 and will continue to Jun. 25, 2021, **every Thursday from 6:00 to 7:00 PM.**

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions on "Gathering" **all classes are virtual** via "Zoom Teleconferencing", for more information please contact Genevieve Eagle or George Pirotis.

**General Information:** The classes are open to everyone that is interested to learn the Greek Language, History and Culture!

**Teacher - George Pirotis 206-841-5705.**

*Continued next page...*

## Greek Language School

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Greek School is to promote the Greek letters, language, culture, and Hellenic Civilization. The classes are **open to all parishioners** independently of age (this may change if it is needed). Students will learn Grammar, Modern Conversational Greek and some of the Biblical - Ancient Greek Terminology.

To the satisfaction of the teacher, there is lots of energy, interest, and curiosity of the class in learning the great influence of the "Greek Language and the Hellenism" to the "Western Civilization" and to the whole world!

Yearly events and possible student involvement:

**Αγιασμός** (Blessing) of the class in the beginning of the School year.

**Sunday, October 31st - OXI Day Celebration.**

**Thursday, March 28th, 2021 Celebration,** commemorating the March 25th, 1821 Revolution for the Greek Independence from the Ottoman Empire!

**Cost:** The classes are provided free of charge!

George Pirotis.



# Prospora

## PROSPHORA BAKING SCHEDULE

*Your own of your own we offer unto You, on behalf of all and for all.*

Despina Ampatzis: The first Sunday of every month

Deborah Talbot: The second 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 is welcome to make the offering.

–Deborah Talbot

## LECHEM-ARTOS-BREAD

### Following the Word Through Scripture

Last month we left Moses on the mountain at the end of Exodus Chapter 24, spending his first forty days alone with God. In Chapters 25-31 God is instructing Moses on the building of the tabernacle. Saint Gregory of Nyssa, in the *Life of Moses*, points out that the tabernacle was actually shown to Moses on the mountain. Moses was seeing the heavenly tabernacle for the purpose of getting things right on earth. This month we are talking about Exodus Chapter 29, the consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests to minister to the Lord in the tabernacle, because bread is involved in this consecration.

**Note:** In scripture in the original languages of Hebrew and Greek the word unleavened usually stands alone. However, here in Exodus 29:2 the original languages say *unleavened bread*, which catches my attention, and furthermore as the verses progress the unleavened is dropped and the unleavened bread becomes simply bread, which seems to indicate leavened bread. My elementary research skills did not find any patristic commentary on these verses, but I am thinking the message is transformation, here in these verses in the context of men becoming priests of the Most High God.

*Exodus 29:2: ...and unleavened bread kneaded with oil, and unleavened cakes anointed with oil. You shall make them of wheat flour.* According to the Blue Letter Bible, the Hebrew for this verse (translated) reads, *...unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil, [of] wheaten flour thou shalt make them.* The Greek reads, *καὶ ἄρτους ἀζύμους πεφυραμένους ἐν ἐλαίῳ καὶ λάγαννα ἄζυμα κεχρισμένα ἐν ἐλαίῳ σεμίδαλιν ἐκ πυρῶν ποιήσεις αὐτά.* I can make out **and bread unleavened** as the first three words, with the ninth word being another “unleavened.” The point I want to make is that the original languages actually say unleavened bread. The English always translates unleavened as unleavened bread, but it is not usually that way in the original languages.

*Exodus 29:23: ...and one loaf of bread, one unleavened cake from the basket of unleavened set before the Lord;* According to Blue Letter Bible, the Hebrew of this verse (translated) reads, *one loaf bread, one cake oiled, one wafer from basket of unleavened before the Lord.* The Greek reads, *καὶ ἄρτον ἓνα ἐξ ἐλαίου καὶ λάγανον ἐν ἀπὸ τοῦ κανοῦ τῶν ἀζύμων τῶν προτεθειμένων ἐναντι κυρίου.* Here the first three Greek words read **and bread one**. In this verse, in the Hebrew and English the unleavened bread has become a loaf of bread. In the Greek, the unleavened bread has become simply bread.

## PROSPHORA

*Exodus 29:32-34: Then Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram and the **bread** in the basket by the doors of the tabernacle of testimony. They shall eat those things by which they were sanctified to consecrate their hands. But an outsider shall not eat them, because they are holy. If any of the flesh of the consecration offerings or of the **bread** remains until the morning, you shall burn the remainder with fire. It shall not be eaten, because it is holy.* Again, per Blue Letter Bible, the original Hebrew of verse 32 (translated) reads *Aaron and sons shall eat flesh of ram and **bread** in the basket...* The original Greek reads, *καὶ ἔδονται Ααρων καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ τὰ κρέα τοῦ κριοῦ καὶ τοὺς ἄρτους τοὺς ἐν τῷ κανὼ παρὰ τὰς θύρας τῆς σκηνῆς τοῦ μαρτυρίου.* And now the unleavened bread that became the loaf of bread has become simply “bread” in all three languages. It is the same in verse 34.

To try to put these verses in context, God is instructing Moses on how to consecrate the priests. Moses is to take one young bull, and two rams without blemish; in 29:2 he is also to take the loaves and cakes anointed with oil and made of wheat flour and put them in one basket. Then he is to bring that one basket with the bull and rams. Then he is to bring Aaron and his sons to the doors of the tabernacle of testimony and wash them with water and dress them in the priestly garments. Aaron was also anointed by pouring anointing oil over his head. Then Aaron and his sons are to put their hands on the bull, which is then slain at the doors. The blood anoints the altar and then is poured out at the base of the altar, and certain parts of the bull are burned on the altar, but the flesh, skin, and offal are burned outside the camp as a sin offering. Then one ram is slain in the same manner, and the blood is sprinkled all around the altar. The whole animal is then cut up and offered on the altar as a whole burnt offering for a sweet aroma, an offering of incense to the Lord. In 29:23 we come to the second ram. It is slain in the same manner as the other animals, but then some of the blood is put on the tip of Aaron’s right earlobe, on the thumb of his right hand, on the big toe of his right foot, and on the earlobes of his sons, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet. Some of the blood on the altar and some of the anointing oil is sprinkled on Aaron and his robe, on his sons and on his sons’ robes with him, and he and his garments shall be sanctified, and his sons and his sons’ garments with him. Then the blood of the ram is poured all around the altar. Then certain parts of the ram *and **one loaf of bread and one unleavened cake from the basket of unleavened*** are put into the hands of Aaron and his sons and set aside as a separate offering before the Lord. Moses is to receive these things from their hands and offer them on the altar as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. Verses 32-34 are still talking about the second ram, the ram of consecration. A portion of it was set aside before the Lord and given to Moses, and portions of it were made a special offering from the children of Israel to the Lord as an ordinance forever, a special offering from their peace offerings. Then Moses was told to take this ram of consecration and boil its flesh in the holy place, and Aaron and his sons were to eat the flesh of the ram and the **bread** in the basket. The next verses describe the daily offerings that are to be made (a lamb each morning and each evening, with fine flour, oil, and wine). God says in verses 42-43 that *this shall be a continual sacrifice throughout your generations at the doors of the tabernacle of testimony before the Lord, where I will be known to you to speak to you. There I shall give directions to the children of Israel, and I shall be sanctified in My glory.* The chapter finishes with verses 45-46: *I will be called upon among the children of Israel and will be their God. So they shall know I am the Lord their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt to be called upon among them and to be their God.*

This is God actually showing Moses the manner in which His people have access to Him through worship. The act of worship is the offering of a sacrifice, receiving that sacrifice back from God, and eating it there in His presence. Our Divine Liturgy is an act of worship. We offer the sacrifice of bread and wine and incense. He turns that bread and wine into His body and blood and gives it back to us. He accepts the sweet fragrance of the incense. We eat the sacrifice there in His presence, inhaling also the sweet fragrance of the incense. This whole process transforms us.

## PROSPHORA

Regarding bread, which is what I have been writing about, we have seen over the last few months that sometimes the word refers to food or nourishment in general, sometimes to bread specifically. We have seen that the word first appeared after the fall, after the ground was cursed and man would have to begin working for his sustenance, working to try to outlive death. We have seen bread as a blessing, a gift, an act of hospitality, consumed in reconciliation and consumed during an evil act, the thing that brought the Israelites down to Egypt, as miraculous manna raining down from heaven and other things I do not know how to summarize, but particularly we see bread as an offering, a prosphoron.

To be continued...

*Deborah Talbot—*





# PHILOPTOCHOS

## PHILOPTOCHOS

### President's Message

The Philoptochos annual project to give back to our community is described below.

**Holiday Food Certificate Drive-** Every year Philoptochos has spearheaded a project to donate food certificates to families in the community for Thanksgiving and Christmas. This year we will assist eight families at four schools, Boze, Blix, Downing and McCarver elementary schools. Gift cards have already been distributed to the families for Thanksgiving.

Our goal is to raise \$2,000 for this project. As of November 20, 2020, we had raised \$2,005, surpassing this goal. We continue to welcome donations towards this project and will apply those funds towards parishioner and/or local community needs. A flyer describing the project is a separate attachment in the bulletin. Donations can be made by mail (please make your check out to Ladies Philoptochos-memo holiday food certificates) at the church mailing address or through the church donation website.

**Philoptochos Member Meetings-**The chapter member meetings will continue to be held monthly by Zoom. The next meeting is scheduled for December 3 at 5:00 P.M. Please call Merrilee Pangis at 253-759-1026 for the Zoom information. Topics will include the Holiday Food Certificate drive, and potential community and parishioner needs. We invite members and interested parishioners to join these meetings and share their thoughts. The calendar of events will be posted in the Messenger when we can resume our activities.

**Outreach to others-**Please take a few minutes to call and support the older members of our community during the pandemic. Human contact and interaction is so important during these trying COVID-19 times.

*Thanks for your Support!*

*Jane Evancho*

## Philoptochos

### Holiday Food Certificates Drive

The 30th Annual Food Certificates for Families in our area who might not enjoy Thanksgiving or Christmas begins this month and will end December 15th. As in the past, we work with school counselors in 4 Tacoma Schools who will give us the names of 2 families in their schools who are in need of a better holiday season.

We are asking members of our Parish to please be mindful of families who are not as fortunate as we are, and make a donation for this worthy cause. Our goal is \$2,000 that will be distributed to 8 families.

Please send your donation to:

St. Nicholas Philoptochos  
1523 South Yakima Avenue  
Tacoma, WA 98405

and mention Food Certificates on the memo line. You may also go to the website: [st.nicholastacoma.org](http://st.nicholastacoma.org) and donate online with a credit card. The category will be listed as Holiday Food Certificates Drive.

If you have any questions on the Food Drive, please contact any Philoptochos member. Not a Philoptochos Member? Feel free to join this wonderful organization Remember Philoptochos means **Friends of the Needy**.

Sponsored by the St. Nicholas Philoptochos Society, St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, Daughters of Penelope and the Order of AHEPA Families

# Flower Ministry

## MESSAGE FROM THE FLOWER MINISTRY

The Flower Ministry would like to invite anyone who may be interested in helping with this beautiful ministry to please contact **Kathy Rowley** or **Marian Pallis**.



There are so many ways to be apart of what we do here; new parishioners are encouraged to participate! It's an easy way to get to know each other. Please feel welcomed!



We are busy, especially during Holy Week, and Advent, right after Thanksgiving!

## Flower Ministry

There are plenty of simple and practical things to do. Even for those who may not be particularly interested in arranging flowers or the creative process, we often need vehicles, [like covered pickup trucks and vans], for transporting flowers from the florist to the church.



Generally, we set up big white buckets in the basement kitchen, cut the stems, and get all the flowers into the water.



Many people decorate, and it's a great team. It goes very well.

There are also things like cutting bay leaves, creating wreaths, procuring flowers, and clean up.

We also traditionally bring flowers or donate to the church in honor of your Patron Saint on you name day. Thank you all who honor your Patron Saint with the gift of flowers.

## Flower Ministry

Since Covid-19, everything has changed. God willing, we will again be together to decorate the kovouklion next year.



*On Saturday, November 28, at 11 AM, we are installing greens and decorating the church in preparation for Saint Nicholas Day. Last year Gretchen placed some hooks which makes hanging, and everything else, go smoothly, It's lots of fun...we encourage all who are interested to please come!*

Submitted by:

Katherine Rowley

253-948-2864

## Ministry News

### EXCEPTIONAL DINING SET AVAILABLE

This beautiful set has been donated to our church by an Orthodox Christian woman (who wishes to be anonymous). She has terminal brain cancer and must travel back to her home in Greece in order to be with her family in what sadly appear to be her final months in this life.

This set is handcrafted in Greece many decades ago, and has been in her family all these years. Many joyful meals and beautiful family times were had over this table, and as you can imagine, is very dear to her and the family.

She is unable to bring it back to Greece as it is large and extremely expensive to transport.

The set includes the table, extension, six chairs and a buffet. There is no cost for the set, even though it is of very high quality and would be very expensive to purchase. Her only request is that the set go to a family that might need it and would receive it in the same spirit it was used in her family.

If you are interested, simply call or email the church office. We will pick it up on November 21 and will keep it in the lower hall until someone wants it.



# Ministry News



**Saint John of Kronstadt Orthodox Christian School  
is looking to hire a K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher to take over from the current  
teacher going on maternity leave.**

St. John of Kronstadt Orthodox Christian School is a parochial Christian school associated with Holy Cross Orthodox Church in Yakima, WA. St. John's School serves grades K-8 in four multi-grade classrooms. Our mission is to provide a high-quality education in a nurturing Christian environment. The school has an opening for a full-time teaching position for the second half of the 2020-2021 school year. We are looking for a candidate who has a love for children, a passion for learning, and is a committed Christian who supports Orthodox Christian education.

**Job Requirements:**

- Candidate must be able to demonstrate flexibility, organization, and the ability to work well with others
- Prior work experience in a school environment preferred
- Teaching certification preferred, but not required
- Must be legally authorized to work in the United States
- Position to start December 1, 2020

Interested candidates, please contact Principal Jennifer Maher: [jen@stjohnkronstadt.org](mailto:jen@stjohnkronstadt.org)

For more information about St. John's School, please visit our website at:  
[www.stjohnkronstadt.org](http://www.stjohnkronstadt.org)

# 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.

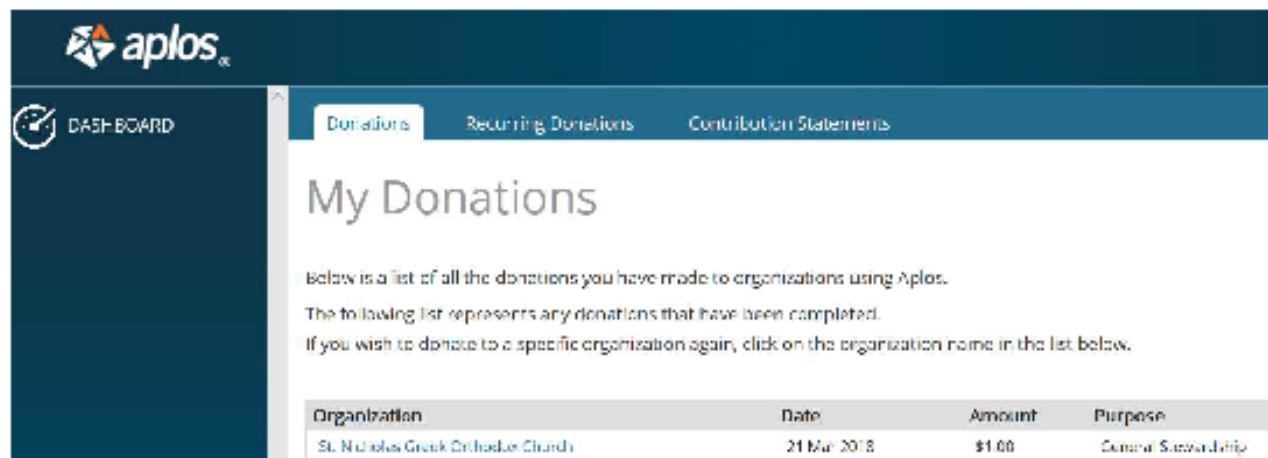
I want parishioners to enjoy greater flexibility in making Church donations and receiving an accounting of their annual to date contributions at any time of the year. Many of you have asked and inquired about the possibility of accounting for your donations automatically on-line. It is now a reality. 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.stnicholastacoma.org](http://www.stnicholastacoma.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.





**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:**

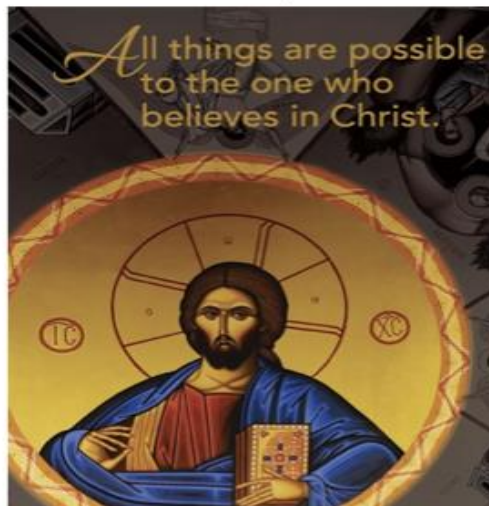
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church  
 Attn: Church Treasurer  
 1523 S. Yakima Ave.  
 Tacoma, WA 98405

**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).

**2021 STEWARDSHIP CARD  
 ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
 TACOMA, WASHINGTON**



*"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 Majmudar*

Please PRINT your information clearly

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)

Are we living our calling and preparing: "... a good account before the awesome judgment seat of Christ?"  
 Is our stewardship the healthiest and the most effective it can be?

**Christ's Possible Question to You:**

**"What did you do with MY Church under Your watch given all of the gifts I gave you?"**

**..... 2021 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT.....**

Tithing a minimum of 10% of the blessings God has bestowed upon us is what we as Orthodox Christians are asked to do. If you are unable to tithe 10% of God's blessings at this time, please consider tithing a percentage amount equal to what you gave last year, but rounded up to the next whole number.

I/We offer a minimum stewardship pledge of \$...../year or \$...../month in 2021 to support God's work.

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

SIGNATURE.....

Click Here to Email Completed Form To Treasurer Note: To email - the PDF must be open in Adobe Acrobat or a Comparable PDF Reader

Saint Nicholas Messenger

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

1523 S Yakima Ave

Tacoma, WA 98405

*Address Service Requested*

