



Christmas: When God Accepted our Pain

Ahmedabad, India, December, 1978.

I was seven years old, and had just landed in Mumbai after the long flight from San Francisco. The streets were a pageant of color, sound and smells: black and yellow rickshaws bipping through traffic, camels and cows sauntering across roundabouts, beautiful ladies in saris of turquoise, emerald and scarlet, street vendors frying pooris in clouds of peanut oil...it was an assault on the senses which left me spinning.

We arrived at my aunt’s house, six of us stuffed cartoonishly in a three wheeled rickshaw. The night was humid and alive with noise; as I walked up the concrete steps into her house, I encountered a little boy—seven years old, my doppelgänger, really. I recall his arms, stick-like, pushing through a torn t-shirt browned with dust. His eyes looked too big, since his face was shrunken with constant hunger. His mother was cooking a small pot of rice in the dirt field next to the house. She lit cow-dung for fuel, and I could smell the sickly sweet smoke filling the kitchen.

My aunt brought us to the table. Rotlis glistening with ghee; green bean shaak yellowed with turmeric; yogurt with onions & tomatoes, sprinkled brown with cumin; yellow daal with the tips of red chilis, like breaching whales. I involuntarily reached for a rotli, stuffing it in my mouth, to the amusement of all the relatives—I couldn’t help myself.

At that moment, the boy popped his head through the window (in India, they don’t have glass, but just openings). A cloud of dung-smoke rose up behind him. He looked straight through me, putting his empty hands to his mouth, and made the unforgettable “beggar’s plea”: “Oomah! Oomah!”

My stomach crumpled, the flavors vanished from the rotli, and my throat closed. I stared back at him, and even though I was only seven, I became sick with the thought: I have food and he doesn’t. He will be hungry outside and I will be full and in my bed soon. It was a sword that pierced my heart.

Why?

Why did I have food while he went hungry?

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St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

1523 S Yakima Ave

Tacoma, WA 98405

Phone: 253-272-0466

Parish Website: stnicholastacoma.org

E-Mail: 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

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

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St. Nicholas Ministries

AHEPA
Paul Apostle

Akathist Group Prayer
Kathy Rowley

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 Primis

Hands of Love
Merrilee Pangis

Military Service
LTC Gus Chamales

Premarital Education
George Pirotis, Diane Pirotis

Stewardship
Maria Koumantaros
Gus Chamales

2021 Parish Council
Ronnie-Sue Johnson—President
David Frisk—Vice-President
Mark Robinson—Treasurer
Christina Leinneweber—Secretary
Maria Koumantaros, Alan (John) Means, David Orriss Jr., Despina Kipelidis, Kathy Johnson, Klaudia Cedeno, Sheila (Monica) Auter, Zach Karanasos

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
Fenia Mavromichali — President
Olga Manos— Vice President
Evy Kontos - Treasurer
D. Lord/H. McClure - Secretary

Maids of Athena
Zoe Matteson-President
Alexandra Lord -Vice President
Katie McClure -Treasurer
N. Serhan/A. Matteson - Secretary
Ingrid Chamalas - Advisor
Virginia McClure - Advisor

Philoptochos Society
Jane Evancho - President
Hoddi Motz - Vice-President
Merrilee Pangis - Secretary
Ingrid Chamales - Treasurer

Sunday School
Sheila Auter, Director

Greek School
George Pirotis

Lazarus Group
Dean Hamos

Pilgrimage
Zach Karanasos

Prospora Baking
Deborah Talbot

Welcome
Ronnie Sue Johnson

Parish Council

Parish Council meeting is the 2nd Tuesday of the month.
December 14,, 2021

December 2021						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Parish Elections 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-7:00pm Vespers: St Nicholas	6 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa St Nicholas 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	7 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Ambrose of Milan Repose of Elder Ephraim of Arizona 10:00am-11:00am Fr S at Vicariate Clergy Mtg 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers 7:00pm-8:00pm Building Committee	8 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Patriotes of Thebes STRICT FAST Theotokos 6:00pm-7:00pm Vespers: Conception of the Theotokos 6:45pm-7:45pm Evening Liturgy: Conception of Theotokos	9 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Conception of the Theotokos 5:30pm-6:30pm Modern Greek	10 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Thomas of Bitunlia 6:30am-7:30am Orthros 10:00am-12:00pm Bible Study 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	11 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Daniel the Stylite 5:30pm-6:30pm Supplication to St Xenia for Homeless 6:00pm-7:00pm Vespers
12 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Spyridon of Tremithous Stewardship Sunday 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	13 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Herman of Alaska 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	14 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Martyr Thynsus 10:00am-11:00am Fr S at WOCA: St Spyridon 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers 7:00pm-8:00pm Parish Council	15 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Eleutherios Fast: Wine & Oil 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-7:00pm Paraklisis	16 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Prophet Haggai 5:30pm-6:30pm Modern Greek 6:00pm-7:00pm Vespers: Daniel & 3 Young Men; St Dionysios 6:45pm-7:45pm Evening Liturgy: Daniel & 3 Young Men; St Dionysios	17 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Daniel and the Three Youths Dionysios of Zakynthos Fast: Wine & Oil 10:00am-12:00pm No Bible Study This Week	18 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Martyr Sebastian 6:00pm-7:00pm NO VESPERS TONIGHT
19 Advent Fast: Fish, Wine, Oil on SIM/TT/Th/Sa Martyr Boniface 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 11:30am-12:30pm Alex Stefan Memorial	20 Fast: Wine & Oil Ignatius of Antioch John of Kronstadt 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	21 Juliana of Nicomedia STRICT FAST 6:30am-7:30am Orthros Group 10:30am-11:00am Fr S at Vicariate Clergy 6:00pm-7:00pm Vespers: Martyr Anastasia Pharmakoltria 6:45pm-7:45pm Evening Liturgy: St Anastasia	22 Anastasia Pharmakoltria Fast: Wine & Oil 6:00pm-7:00pm Paraklisis	23 STRICT FAST Ten Martyrs of Crete 5:30pm-6:30pm Modern Greek	24 Christmas Eve 6:30am-7:30am Orthros & 1st Royal Hr 10:00am-11:00am 3rd, 6th & 9th Royal Hours 10:00am-12:00pm No Bible Study Today 6:00pm-7:00pm Vespers: Divine Liturgy	25 FAST FREE PERIOD NATIVITY OF THE LORD 9:00am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 6:00pm-7:00pm NO VESPERS TONIGHT
26 FAST FREE PERIOD Synaxis of the Theotokos 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 11:30am-12:30pm Met Anthony & Fr Anthony Memorial	27 FAST FREE PERIOD Protomartyr Stephen 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	28 20,000 Martyrs of Nicomedia FAST FREE PERIOD 6:30am-7:30am Orthros 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	29 14,000 Infants Slain by Herod FAST FREE PERIOD 6:00pm-7:00pm Paraklisis	30 FAST FREE PERIOD Martyr Anyxia of Thessaloniki 5:30pm-6:30pm Modern Greek	31 +Fr Nestor Savchuk FAST FREE PERIOD Leavetaking of Nativity 10:00am-12:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm-7:00pm Vespers: St Basil 6:45pm-7:45pm Evening Liturgy: St Basil	Notes:

The most up to date calendar is always found at the St. Nicholas web page: www.stnicholastacomma.org

News and Announcements

Returning to Church

St. Nicholas is fully open and we look forward to seeing you all! Here is the current status:

1. No sign up is necessary. We are able to fill to full capacity.
2. Sit wherever you like. All pews are available.
3. Coffee hour has resumed!
4. We will continue live streaming.
5. The Metropolis is asking parishioners to please consider wearing a mask while attending services until the COVID disease rates decline to low levels of transmission as defined by the CDC.

Although this directive is voluntary, we are strongly encouraging our parishioners to wear masks while at Church. Also, please note, this is only an indoor directive and does not apply to outdoor places.

We will not be re-establishing social distancing and the sign-up reservation system for attending services.

Per His Eminence's guidance, we will not ask anyone about their vaccination status.

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. 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.

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

Bill Samaras—

News and Announcements

Rice Family Update

We are settling in to our new life here at Holy Cross, meeting fellow students and their families. We miss you all at St. Nicholas. We are glad to hear that the community is growing and that the recent bake sale was successful. Though we are far from our family and friends back home, we know that you are with us in our prayers and hearts.

We are beginning to explore the area. We enjoyed a family apple picking outing (a New England tradition). Ranae also ventured to the beach with another mom and the kids. Most of our time is filled with services, studies, and the everyday duties of family life. Some of you may know Micah and Rachel Breland, who are attending St. Tikhon's Seminary. We look forward to visiting them and other friends who are in other seminaries on the east coast as well.

Please keep us all in your prayers during this intense season, particularly for our spiritual life. Thank you for being with us on this journey!

Feel free to look at our fundraising page for more information and continued updates
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-the-rices-pay-for-seminary-expenses?mid=9ad9826f1f458ef671740e81a4427203>



If you would like to give directly, our mailing address is:

Aaron and Ranae Rice
C/o Campus Mail
50 Goddard Ave
Brookline MA 02445



Exaltation of the Holy Cross – Our school's feast day



Exploring Lynn Beach with friends

News and Announcements



Instant Church Directory™

Our Church Directory is now available to stewards in digital form which can be accessed on your computer or through an app on your mobile device. It's safe, easy to use and quite economical, saving us time and money in keeping our directory up-to-date in an instant!

A few details you'll want to know:

- Access to the online directory is only available to parishioners who have filled out a stewardship card for the current year. This contributes to keeping our directory safe and secure.
- Need to update your stewardship? Pledge cards are available in the Lower Hall. There's also a copy included in every monthly Messenger and on our church's website.
- All information in the online directory is secure. It can only be accessed by stewards who have been granted permission by one of our own parish administrators.
- There are plans in place to distribute a printed version of our church directory once we have built up the online one. We'll see you posted!

Need Help?

Members of the Directory Committee will be available during Coffee Hour to answer your questions, help you get registered or even upload a picture. You may also call the church office to request being added.

Submitted by Sheila Auter, Kathy Johnson, Klaudia Cedenó and Despina Kipelidis

Sunday School

Sunday School News

When is Sunday School Starting Again?

As soon as the narthex construction is complete and we've had a chance to clean the upper hall and prepare the space for meeting together, we will begin Sunday School. I know the children (and I) can't wait! But wait, we will.

In the meantime, check out these wonderful resources for you to use to plan meaningful activities at home that your whole family can enjoy:

orthodoxpebbles.com - a rich resource of learning activities put together by two Greek Orthodox mothers

Celebrate the Feasts CD - music by *Gigi Baba Shadid*, an Orthodox Priest wife who creates very catchy music for young kids to help them learn about our faith.

Great Saints & Major Feasts CD - by *Eikona too!* The singing group, Eikona, along with their children, present a collection of stories and hymns highlighting the major feasts and great saints of the Orthodox liturgical year. Great for adults, too!

Celebrating the various feasts throughout the year at home with your children or grandchildren is a beautiful way to create traditions for your family - especially during the fast!

Together you can *read the story* about the life of the Saint or Feast Day, *display an Icon* of the Saint or Feast in your family prayer corner, *attend a service* if one is offered, *say a prayer of intercession* during family prayers and *sing the Troparion* together (included on the CDs listed above).

Some important feast days during this season:

- St. Barbara - Dec 4th
- St. Nicholas Day - Dec 6th
- St. Lucia Day - Dec 13th
- St. Herman of Alaska - Dec 13th
- Nativity of Our Lord - Dec 25th



Council Corner

Curious about what your Parish Council is doing? Look no further than Council Corner! Highlights from November's Parish Council meeting include:

- **Bake Sale = Success!**

A huge thank you to BILL SAMARAS and especially the baking teams and wonderful VOLUNTEERS who worked at October's Bake Sale! Thanks to you, we raised over \$15,000!

- **Narthex Project**

- ***The best Christmas present is... a Narthex Door!***

Shipping delays may be making the holidays stressful, but our supplier believes that we will have the Narthex door arrive and be installed before Christmas. It will be a Happy New Year with the final completion of Project 2020!

- ***Sound System***

We know that it can be hard to hear the services if you need to step out into the Narthex, so we are looking at options for speakers.

- ***Landscaping***

We know that issues have arisen with the rock rivers in our City-approved landscaping plan. We are discussing the best options to mitigate this problem.

- **Parish Council Nominations**

Do you know someone who could serve our community on the Parish Council? Use our new **Nomination Form**—available via **email** or at the **candlestand**—before **November 21st** to submit your names! **Elections** will be held **December 5th**.

- **Reopening Volunteers**

The **Coffee Hour Ministry** and the **Welcome Ministry** are both restarting, and they need **YOU!** Our community life is not the same without the warm *philoxenia* we share together with our guests after the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. Do you want to help make that happen? Talk to Zach Karanasos about the Coffee Hour Ministry, or Ronnie-Sue Johnson about the Welcome ministry.

- **St. Nicholas Day Dinner**

It is fitting that the first Parish-sponsored community meal since COVID began will be in honor of our very own patron saint, St. Nicholas. The Parish Council is planning for a wonderful event **December 5th**, so mark your calendars!

- **Parish Directory**

As our community begins gathering together more and more, we realize it can be hard to refresh lost connections. In order to foster the spirit of *koinonia* after COVID, the Parish Council has invested in **digital Directory software**. All Stewards are invited to submit their names, photos, and as much contact information as they wish into our system. Don't have a computer? Don't worry! A "Help Desk" is available in the Lower Hall through November, and printed copies will be made available to those who request them once everything is compiled. Furthermore, on **December 12th**, we will be holding "**Stewardship Sunday**" to provide an opportunity for our community to learn more about our plans for 2022.

Continued next page...

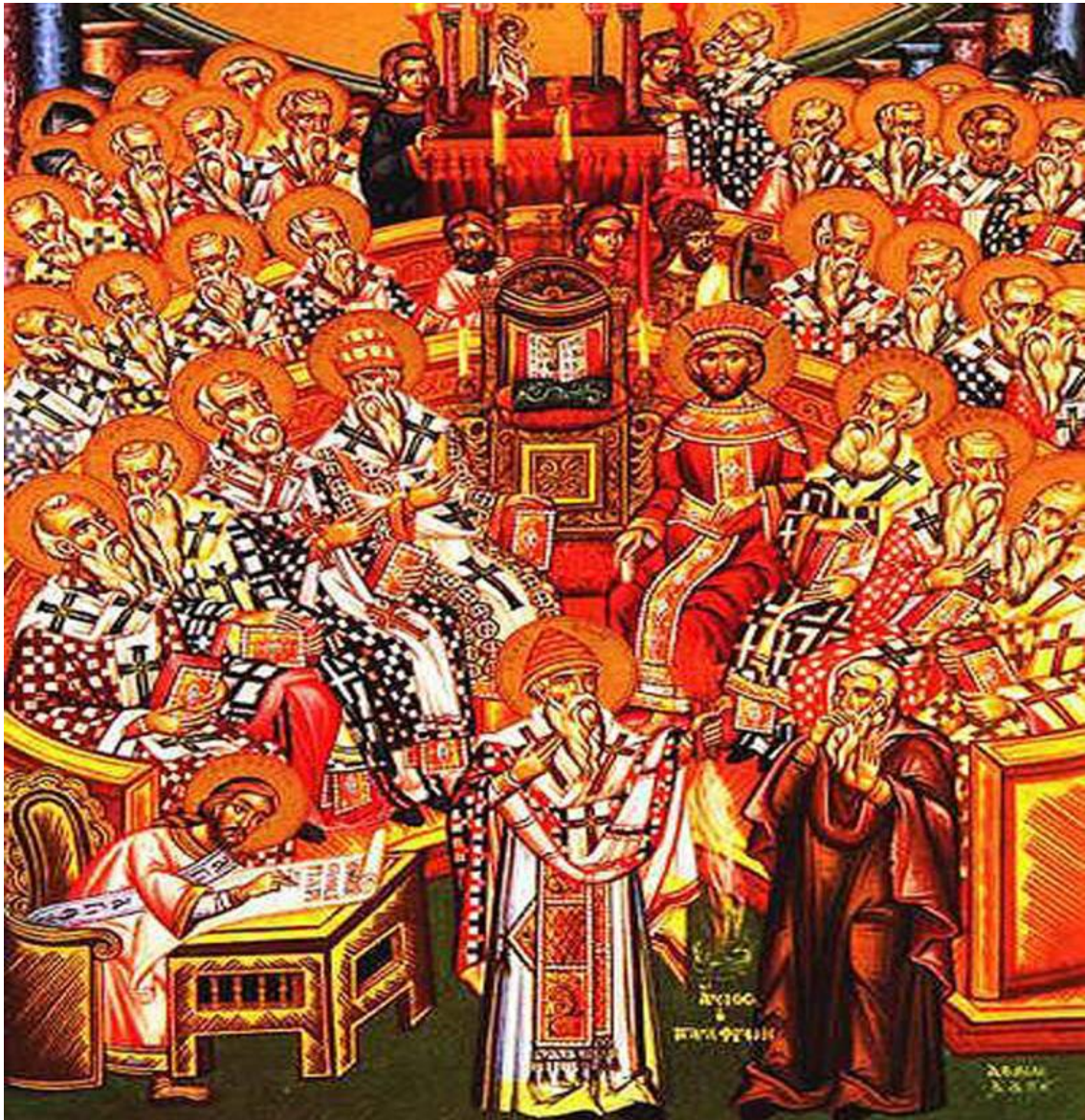
Council Corner

- **Janitorial Services**

Alan Means is getting bids for a deep clean of our church building as well as additional weekly cleanings. If you have a question or concern about the physical cleanliness of our building, please let Mr. Means know!

- **Daughters of Penelope**

Mark your calendars! After holding a wonderful Coffee Hour benefiting AHEPA scholarships on November 14th, our own *Icaria* branch of the Daughters of Penelope are already planning for 2022. Their annual fundraiser will be held on **February 5th**. Contact Helen McClure or Fenia Mavromichali if you would like more information.



Philoptochos News

PHILOPOCHOS

President's Message

31st Annual Holiday Food Certificate Drive - Fund raising for the food certificate drive has begun. Our goal is to raise \$2,000 to assist two families at four local schools. 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. Please send your donation to:

St. Nicholas Philoptochos

1523 S. Yakima Avenue
Tacoma, WA 98405

Mention Food Certificates on the memo line. You may also go to the website: stnicholastacoma.org and donate online with a credit card. The category will be listed as Holiday Food Certificates Drive.

As of Nov. 19 eight families were given food certificate assistance for a total of \$1,500. Additional assistance is planned to the same families for the Christmas holiday.

Koliva ministry - Koliva is the traditional boiled wheat dish made in remembrance of the dead in Greece and throughout the Greek communities. The recipe, though simple to prepare, requires time, patience and care. Philoptochos members have offered to prepare koliva for any memorial parishioners may wish to have in memory of loved ones no longer with us. Please check with Hoddi Motz or Kalitsa Xitco for more information. There will be a \$150 charge to cover cost of materials and preparation, which will go to Philoptochos.

Veteran's Day Luncheon - A Veteran's Day presentation and luncheon was held on Sunday, Nov. 7 after Divine Liturgy. Philoptochos members helped prepare this luncheon beforehand. This was a freewill offering with donations of \$1,019 going to the Fisher House at Joint Bases Lewis McChord.

Board meeting: The board met by Zoom on November 18. Board members include:

Jane Evancho-president, Hoddi Motz-vice-president, Merrilee Pangis- secretary, Ingrid Chamales-treasurer, Sally Hallis-advisor, Kathy Johnson, Joyce Kalivas-Griffin, Maria Koumantaros, Olga Manos, Diane Pirotis, and Kalitsa Xitco.

Please contact Merrilee Pangis for the Zoom meeting information. Topics include Philoptochos programs and ministry commitments. We invite all interested members and parishioners to join these meetings and share their thoughts. Regular monthly meetings with the membership will resume soon. 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. Human contact and interaction is so important during these trying COVID-19 times.

Thank you for your Support!

Jane Evancho

Philoptochos News

Holiday Food Certificates Drive

The 31st 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 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

Coffee Hour



COFFEE HOUR MINISTRY

URGENT CALL FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN

The **coffee** hour teams will be in rotation again starting in January. Thank you to those who have signed up. You will be contacted by your team leader soon. We are still in need of more volunteers. You can help by volunteering to join the ministry. There is a sign-up sheet in the lower hall to sign-up. For the no-host coffee hours, you may bring something. Individuals or families may host a coffee hour for a special occasion. For more information please contact Zach Karanasos.

MISSION

- To extend the Holy Eucharist to social/coffee hour
- To express and manifest our faith by extending the hospitality we proclaim and by acknowledging the grace we have received during the Divine Liturgy
- To promote fellowship
- To connect with fellow parishioners, to welcome guests and to invite new faith seekers to our Church

Keeping the Coffee Hour Ministry alive is pivotal because it represents a great opportunity to:

- Put into practice principles of our faith (hospitality, discipline, respect, servitude, generosity, engagement) that enhance our spiritual growth and challenge us to become servant leaders
- Foster a sense of community
- Unify us by building within our parish a center of shared values and purposes

Coffee hour should become part of our collective identity as Orthodox Christians at St. Nicholas Church. Furthermore, it is one of the few and regular times parishioners can connect with each other.

TEAM SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER:

- 12-05-2021: St. Nicholas Day Luncheon
- 12-12-2021: Stewardship Sunday
- 12-19-2021: Open
- 12-26-2021: Open

Building Committee



STILL AWAITING FOR THE DOORS

At last check, specialty doors at the interior Sanctuary entry, the Narthex exterior main entry, plus a security scissor gate at the street level entrance steps along Yakima Avenue, are still due to arrive during the first week in December. Beyond finishing up around the interior sides of door openings after the specialty doors are installed, there is still some accent brick courses to field paint at new exterior masonry openings that will replicate the existing Sanctuary brick work. After that, water repellents will be applied over new masonry, and a set of ornamental security bars will be installed over Father Seraphim's large office window that faces east.

Upon the completion of exterior building work, temporary chain-link fencing currently in place outside the Yakima Avenue and 16th Street sides of the Narthex area will be removed. At present, the temporary fencing, with padlocks, is acting as a make-shift security barrier until the new street level scissor gate at the entry steps is installed, along with ornamental bars over Father Seraphim's office window. After that, barring any further distribution and/or weather delays, the Narthex Renovation should be 100% complete before Christmas.

In the meantime, on a smaller scale, we are still waiting for the delivery of a new door to replace a battered and weather worn exterior door that leads into the Lower Hall at the south side of the church. The new door was ordered about two months ago, and its delivery arrival is still pending, beyond what was originally scheduled. Once procured, it will be installed in relatively short order.

Submitted by: Bill Acker

Cover Story Continued

That became the compelling question of my life. Not growing up in a Christian home, I searched everywhere for an answer. Why is there pain? Why is there injustice? And if there is a God, what has He done about it? And how could such a God be good, when on that December night I was full and that boy went hungry?



I majored in Religious Studies at UCSB, and continued the search. I met with gurus, I read the texts of all the world's religions, traveled to many places, talked with philosophers, professors, and fellow travelers on the mysterious road of life.

Then something happened in my heart, which I know was the grace of the Holy Spirit. The answer came with peace and simplicity: Christmas is the answer.

Christmas was the answer to my question? It was indeed the answer because the God who created everything—including the human freedom which led to a world with pain and injustice—takes personal responsibility for the pain of every precious human being. The Innocent One is born to suffer for His suffering people—a suffering of a magnitude we will never comprehend. He takes flesh in order to take on our pain and by His divine power, redeem His own creation through His suffering. And in so doing, He transforms my suffering into the means of joy—an eternal joy. That was the moment I first believed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the most beautiful moment of my life!

Cover Story Continued

When the One who created everything—who started this whole thing we call human life—accepts the full consequences of our freedom, we know that we worship the true and loving God. The Creator Who Suffers for His Creation. He took personal responsibility for me, for you, and for that little boy in Ahmedabad. And thus, that little boy's suffering will be revealed on the last day to be his portion in the innocent suffering of Christ the Lord: and that little boy will shine with radiance in the Kingdom, feasting at the banquet table of the Master. I pray I will be counted worthy to feast alongside him!

Thus, we must fulfill our calling to co-suffer with every human being. We must give them our time, our attention, our food, our clothing, our home. In this way we follow our Suffering Lord, and will bring joy & comfort to our suffering neighbor. We thus become little Christs, following Him who was born to suffer for us.

This is the God whom we worship. The One, who on Christmas Day, accepted responsibility for our choice. And by His suffering, transforms our suffering into glory on the great Day of His Second Coming: the Christmas to come. Even so, come Lord Jesus! Maranatha!

Father Seraphim



Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

Sincere thanks to all who attended and contributed during the St. Nicholas Veterans Day luncheon!

The wonderful ladies and men of St. Nicholas Philoptochos along with this ministry sponsored last month's 2021 Veterans Day luncheon. Although many parishioners understandably are avoiding large crowds, through a combination of free will and mailed in charitable contributions, Philoptochos raised \$1,019.00 that will be donated to the Fisher House at JBLM!!!

Our sincere thanks go out to all the members of Philoptochos who prepared the wonderful meal, to all the parishioners that attended the event, and to all those who mailed in charitable contributions. Once again, you have proven that St. Nicholas is a blessed place to worship our Lord and Savior and to do God's work.

Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ

December 7, 2021. 80th Anniversary of the Japanese attack on

Pearl Harbor. Many of you know that our younger son, Kris, is serving in the United States Army. In June of this year he received PCS (Permanent Change of Station) orders from Fort Jackson, South Carolina, to what many in the Army consider the most sought after assignment location, HAWAII. Being assigned to Hawaii is no big deal for service men and women of other military branches but for the Army, it is considered "a prime assignment."

You see, unlike the Navy/Marines which for obvious reasons places their bases near beautiful major port cities along the Pacific (California) and Atlantic (Florida) coasts; and unlike the Air Force that places their air bases in locations that most people would consider "garden spot locations" around the country because, well, because that's just how the Air Force does things (The State of Florida alone hosts 21 Air Force Bases), the Army generally places their military posts in the middle of nowhere.

Locations commonly referred to as "the arm pit of America," with large open spaces for maneuver areas and ranges capable of accommodating tank and artillery fire, are simply ideal locations for Army installations. Places like Ft. Hood near Killeen, Texas (have you ever heard of Killeen, Texas?), or Ft. Drum, New York, where the average snowfall is 110 inches a year (avg for US is 27.8, avg for Tacoma is 4.) or one of my "favorite" spots where our family was lucky enough to get stationed, Ft. Irwin, California on the edge of the Mojave desert.



Ft. Irwin is an isolated military installation and the home of the National Training Center for the United States Army which, when we were there, had one pizza delivery establishment, one burger joint, and one fast food Mexican place, besides the "All Graders Club" for eating establishments. Oh yeah, and the nearest town was Barstow, CA and it was 45 miles away.

When Kris was getting ready to go to Hawaii he flew here to Washington, and then he and I flew to Hawaii to look for a place for him to live.

Continued on next page....

Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

We arranged to work with a real estate company to take us around and show us different properties, and the young lady that assisted us was very knowledgeable and professional. One day while driving around Honolulu I mentioned that Ingrid and I had already made reservations to visit Oahu again in December. Our agent assumed we were planning to visit Kris for Christmas, but I said, "Well that's partly the reason, but we also want to be here on December 7th to observe the 80th anniversary of Pearl Harbor." She looked at me somewhat bewildered and said, "Oh, what's the anniversary at Peal Harbor?" I am sure at that moment as she looked at me, she had to be thinking, "Why does he have that look of astonishment on his face?"

A brief history lesson. December 7th, 1941, just before 8:00 AM on a Sunday morning was when the Japanese Navy conducted a sneak attack against Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu. It was a bold plan conceived under Admiral Yamamoto and successfully executed through a combination of deceptive radio transmissions, and radio listening silence. It entailed a Japanese fleet with six aircraft carriers and numerous other warships sailing from Japan on a 3500 mile voyage across the Pacific, to a staging area approximately 230 miles from the Hawaiian Islands. Upon arrival at the staging area they launched over 300 fighters, bombers, and torpedo planes toward the island of Oahu with the mission of destroying the American naval fleet moored at Pearl Harbor, any aircraft located at airfields, and military logistical depots.



From the Japanese perspective the attack was a success. Eight battleships were sunk and 18 other ships were damaged. They virtually wiped out America's air capability in the Pacific by destroying 180 airplanes, and damaging another 128.

By the grace of God, the three American aircraft carriers of the Pacific Fleet were out at sea and they avoided the Japanese attack. They would go on to play a critical role in the battle for the Pacific and determine the outcome of the war.

In a speech to congress on the next day following the attack, President Roosevelt referred to the event as ***"Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy!"***



I was a surprised that our agent who lived on the island for many years was not well versed on what is one of our country's most significant days in modern history. Just how could that be?

On that day 2,403 Americans were killed and it was that horrible event which led President Roosevelt and the congress of the United States to declare war on Japan the next day, and thus, America entered into World War II.

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Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

December 7th is known as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day and although it is not an official federal holiday, the American flag is supposed to be flown at half-staff until sunset to honor those who were killed on that day. Additionally, every year, special events are held at Pearl Harbor in honor of those who were killed or injured.

The attack on Pearl Harbor took America into World War II. Following America's declaration of war against Japan on December 8, 1941, Japan's axis partners Germany and Italy, declared war on the United States. Congress responded formally declaring a state of war with Germany in a Joint Resolution on December 11, 1941 by a vote of 88-0 in the Senate, and 393-0 in House of Representatives.

World War II was devastating and official combat losses for America are reported to be 291,557 killed in action. President Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, shortly before America's war with Germany ended when the German High Command signed an unconditional surrender of all German forces at Reims, France, on May 7, 1945. America's war with Germany lasted almost 3.5 years, or 1242 days. America's war with Japan lasted four months longer, 1364 days to be exact. At tremendous cost to our country and America's Greatest Generation, after almost four years of horrible war and the lives of almost 300,000 killed in action, President Truman who became President and Commander in Chief after Roosevelt's death, made the decision to drop two atomic bombs on Japan. Those bombs destroyed the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. President Truman and America's allies demanded, and received, the unconditional surrender of Japan. Nothing else was acceptable to the leaders of the Allied forces.



President Truman declared September 2, 1945 to be Victory over Japan (VJ) day, and December 7th would go down in American history as **“A date which will live in infamy.”**

As I mentioned earlier, Ingrid and I are going to Hawaii in early December. Unfortunately, our son will not be there because he will be participating in a military exercise in Japan.

A lottery is held every year for people to be admitted on the morning of December 7th to the Pearl Harbor Memorial Museum area. We have never participated in any lottery but we thought we would try this one. We did not get selected so we can now honestly say, “We have never won a lottery.”



Nevertheless, we plan to get as close as we can to Pearl Harbor and around 0755, imagine what life must have been like for Americans at that location, 80 years earlier. I will think about the pictures and movies I have seen of wave after wave of Japanese airplanes attacking our ships, dropping bombs, and strafing Hickam Army Airfield. I will look across the harbor at the sight of the Battleship Arizona Memorial

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and imagine the horrific explosion that occurred as the 1,760-pound bomb dropped from a Japanese plane struck the forward deck of the mighty battleship, lifted the 33,000 ton vessel out of the water, and killed 1,177 sailors and Marines in a matter of minutes. Her sides were blown out and her gun turrets, conning tower, and much of the superstructure dropped several feet into her wrecked hull as she sunk quickly, while smoke billowed from her upper deck.



I shall say a prayer for the Americans who were present that day, and all who fought and died until the war was won. I'm sure I will also think about all of the of the Americans who fought and died in our subsequent wars, Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, the Gulf War, and those who died on 9/11 in another "sneak attack" on our country. I will also think about those who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, America's longest war, until they were commanded to withdraw. And I shall say a prayer for the 13 brave men and women who were the last servicemen and women to die in the final days of that war, that ended just a few short months ago. **MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL!**

What a coincidence that Ingrid and I will be at Pearl Harbor on December 7th, while Kris is serving our country in Japan on that same day. For our family **"December 7, 1941"** will always remain **"A date which will live in infamy!"**

Contributed by: Gus

Stewardship Ministry News

I always struggle to write these articles. I am not a good writer so inevitably I procrastinate. When I finally do start, I write a few lines and then think, "I need some ice cream!" So, I get up, go to the refrigerator, and take out whatever Tillamook flavor happens to be handy. In this case it was Mint Chocolate Chip. For some reason I think ice cream will inspire me to write something brilliant. You be the judge.



Additionally, whenever I write these stewardship articles, there are always two questions at the forefront my mind. 1. I wonder how many people will bother to read this? 2. I wonder how many people will see this article and think: "Oh boy, here's another Chamales stewardship article telling me that stewardship is defined as time, talent or treasure, and he wants me to give more of each!"

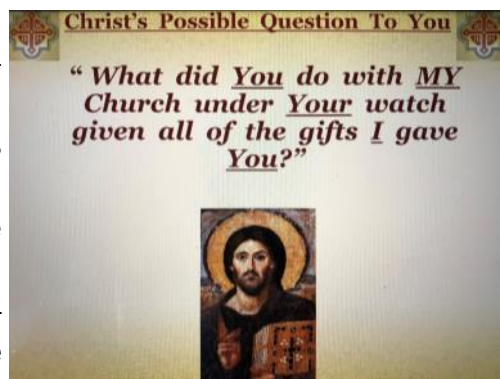
During the past year I have had the distinct privilege of serving our church in a variety of positions. I truly enjoy being a part of the Greeter Committee, and my involvement in the Military Ministry has developed into a labor of love. Sometimes it is more labor than love, but I find it so fascinating to speak with our fellow parishioners, to learn about their family's military service, and to discover the many heroes with whom St. Nicholas has ties through our parishioners.

Another ministry to which I attempt to contribute my time and talent, is of course this one, the Stewardship Ministry. Often it seems that I contribute more time than talent, but fortunately for me, it all counts toward the same heavenly objective.

These past months I have participated in several stewardship seminars that were sponsored by our Archdiocese. The primary speaker at all of them is a remarkable man by the name of Bill Marianes, who is an Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and is often referred to as a "stewardship evangelist." He was a very successful lawyer who retired early from his law practice so that he could "work" full time for free through his Stewardship Calling Ministry ([www. Stewardshipcalling.com](http://www.Stewardshipcalling.com)). His ministry has opened the eyes of many within in the Orthodox Church by helping people and parishes discover their stewardship callings so that in the words of Bill Marianes, "they can have a good account before the awesome judgment seat of Christ." Bill not only talks the talk, but he also walks the walk.

When watching a Bill Marianes presentation, he often begins his presentation with this slide, and he explains that stewardship is all about what we do with the gifts that God gave us. "So, it's all about you, but it's also all about God."

Everything we have is a gift from God. Our existence, our life experiences, our friends, our family, our successes in life, our material possessions, every opportunity we have ever had has been God's gift to us! So, the question then becomes "What are we doing with all those gifts for His greater glory, and ultimately to help prepare ourselves for salvation."



If we view stewardship the way our orthodox faith teaches us, we should conclude that money is the least important aspect of stewardship. What is more important is to be engaged with our church, and to understand what we are all called to do. If we are engaged in living our calling and sharing that calling with others, and if we work through the church to share that opportunity with others, the money takes care of itself. So, it's not really about the money but rather, it is about the relationship between us and God.

Continued on next page....

Stewardship Ministry News



The beautiful thing about all this is that God has given us at St. Nicholas the opportunity to serve him through a variety of ministries that can fulfill what we are called to do. Simply stated, we all have strengths and talents, and St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church has a ministry that is calling for them.

There are many scriptural quotes that tell us about stewardship. “What good deed must I do to hold onto eternal life? If we are un-

trustworthy about worldly wealth, who can be trusted with the riches of heaven.” If we put our stock and faith in material possessions, we will be sadly disappointed in the end, for as it is often said, you never see a U-Haul trailer following a hearse, and “News Flash,” we aren’t taking any of it with us.

I can’t write an email and motivate yours, mine, or anyone else’s behavior. I wish I could, but alas, I clearly do not have that talent. However, thanks to Bill Marianes, I have learned that if we can get back to understanding what our faith is, if we can get back to really focusing on what we are truly called to do, then with the help of our spiritual leaders we can truly practice our faith, and in so doing, give glory to God.

“Christ gives us the promise of all of eternity and what we do with the gifts God gives us on this earth, helps prepare us for what we hope is the right answer. In the end, we **ARE** all going to live forever! The question ultimately will be, will we like where we are?”

For more information on Bill Marianes, you can go to YouTube: Stewardship 302 Bill Marianes. He is truly an inspirational speaker, and I am confident you will enjoy listening to him.

Before closing this month’s article, I am compelled to share a few “public service” announcements. First, thanks to the initiative of the Parish Council, our church has implemented a St. Nicholas Church Directory. If you didn’t read about it last month you will learn more about it when you attend Sunday services, and particularly if you attend Sunday Liturgy on 12 December. That Sunday will be our “Stewardship Sunday” where we will be passing out 2022 Stewardship Cards, explaining to those in attendance what the Church Directory is all about, and articulating how it can help all of us foster a better spirit of friendship and cooperation within our parish. Please do your best to attend that service and learn first-hand what a fantastic tool this will be for all of us.

Second, to help keep records clear and organized, Stewardship Cards must be completed annually by all Stewards. This not only helps you, the Stewards, by writing down your pledge, it greatly benefits both our Treasurer and Secretary, as well as the Elections, Directory and Stewardship Committees.

Third, once again we wish to express our sincere appreciation to everyone who helped make our 2021 Bake Sale an outstanding success! Almost every single member of our church actually contributed in one way or another. Many people answered our call for help in preparing pans and trays of baklava, and thanks to Evy Kontos’ leadership, that was an absolute success! Others answered the call for help on weekdays to participate in the preparation of spanakopita, tiropita,

Continued on next page....



Stewardship Ministry News

kourambiethes, paximathia, and koulourakia, and thanks to the leadership of Merrilee Pangis and Krisann Firth, that too was a resounding success. Another group of people pitched in on the distribution days and under the leadership of Olga Manos and Bill Samaras, over 500 different orders were distributed without a single glitch. And finally, many people who were unable to assist in any of the planning, preparation, or execution phases of this operation contributed by purchasing some of the items that were so meticulously prepared. THANK YOU SO MUCH TO ALL WHO HELPED MAKE OUR BAKE SALE A GREAT SUCCESS!!!



And lastly, when I began this article, I mentioned the two questions that are always on the forefront of mind when writing about stewardship. If you took the time to read this article, would you please drop me an email and say, "I read it." Regarding the second thought about "time, talent, and treasure, and Chamales always asking for more", so as not to disappoint I am going to make a "Bake Sale Plea" for some more of your time and talent.

On Friday, December 10, from 0930 to 2:00 PM, we need four (4) people to assist with baking the holiday baklava that we must sell. Please email me at gleafops@gmail.com and let me know if you will help on this day.

On Saturday, December 11, we need twenty (20) people to assist with the packaging of the baklava from 0930 to 3:00 PM. Attendees are respectfully asked to mask if you are going to help. There will be some people present that day who are immunocompromised and the threat of COVID is of great concern. They are wanting to do their part to help our church. I very respectfully ask that you help everyone present that day to feel at ease by wearing your mask. Please email me at gleafops@gmail.com, and let me know if you will help on this day.

And finally, we will be distributing the baklava to people on Sunday, December 12, following the Liturgy from 1230-1700. We will need four people to assist with the distribution that day. Please email me at gleafops@gmail.com, and let me know if you will help that day.

Once again, THANK YOU SO MUCH, FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR OUR CHURCH!

Best Wishes for a Very Merry Christmas!



Stewardship Ministry News

Stewardship

Offering Our Time, Talent and Treasure To God

2022 STEWARDSHIP CARDS HAVE ARRIVED!!!

What a privilege we have as stewards of our beloved St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which we have been blessed!

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, December 12th for STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY, and join us for a special presentation in the Lower Hall during Coffee Hour, *"Our Church, Our Spiritual Home"*.

Stewardship Message

Each month the Messenger publishes a list of contributors who have made monetary donations to St. Nicholas for 2021. We also indicate those contributors who have a signed 2021 stewardship card on file in the church's office by showing an (•) after each last name. Each month, the contributors and those who have a signed stewardship card on file is growing. On behalf of the Parish Council, we THANK each and every one of you for your contributions. Below is an updated list of contributors as of **November 11, 2021**. If you have completed a 2021 Stewardship card and have made a contribution to St. Nicholas this year, your name with an (•) should be shown. If your name is NOT listed or an (•) is not indicated, please contact the church office to update your status.

The Parish Council wishes to thank the parishioners who have returned the 2021 Stewardship Cards. We thank you for your support and commitment to St. Nicholas. May you and your families be Blessed with a Very Happy Holiday Season. Merry Christmas to each and every one of you.

William & Mary Acker •	Theodora Bessinas •	Reanne Charuhas
Nicholas Afeiche	Tatiana Bilibin	Elena Chen
Leonidas & Despina Alatsis •	Dean & Anna Bolaris	Chris A. Cherbas
Patra Alatsis •	Andrew & Kathy Bouzinekis	Anthony & Sandra Ciarochi •
Kacoulou Andreas*	Yvonne Brandvold •	Courtney Cole-Faso •
Anna Andrey	Dora Brown	Sharmarie & Troy Dares •
Sonny & Irene Angelos •	Cheryl Burack •	Dina Deliyianides •
Rick & Marlene Angelus •	Scott & Marcia Cairns •	Maria Diamond
Paul & Dolores Apostle •	William and Bonnie Caress •	P. & J. Dionas Trust
Tony and Lori Apostle •	Cash Donations - Anonymous	Voula Dodd
Andrew & Sheila Auter •	Donors	Gretchen Eagle •
Tina Ayers	Barry & Deborah Middleton Cas-	Timothy & Sunny Edgren •
George Ballasiotes	sidy	Frederick & Anastasia Ehret •
Tyler & Lexi Balser •	Klaudia Cedeno •	Amber Lynn Eramo •
E. Anthe Barbas	C.G. and Ingrid Chamales •	Mary Erickson
Chrysanth & SFC® Wiley	Steven Chamales	Andrew & Jane Evancho •
Barnes	Yianni Charitou	James & Deena Fotinopoulos
Harry & Sheri Basil •	Reagan Charuhas	David & Savina Frisk •
Sophia Elizabeth Berg •		
T.L. Berg		

Stewardship Ministry News

Stewardship

Offering Our Time, Talent and Treasure To God

Dayle Sokratis Frisk • Father and Alexanorie Gavrill Andrea Georgopolos Danny Georgopolos Mary Georgopolos • * Christina Ginosatis Alla Glagoleva John & Judy Godulas • Eliza Gooler Stephan & Claire Gorham • John Gregory • Christina Gretty • Robin & Joyce Kalivas-Griffin • Sally Hallis • Dean & Carol Hamos • Michael & Kristine Hanberg • Daniel & Ekaterini Hanson • Natalya Harpe Timothy and Kathleen Harvey • Brent & Evangelia Hassel Magdaline Hatzikazakis • Vance and Suzanne Hawk Richard & Kathleen Heidal • Will Horton Christopher & Cheryl Hunt Thomas & Helga Jackson • Joseph & Ronnie-Sue Johnson • Kathy Johnson • "Rikki" Hariklia Kapes • Anna Karanasos • Paula Karanasos • Zachary & Daphne Karanasos • Sharon Kennedy • Naser & Catalina Khalaj • Nelya Khamilonova Claudia Sargent Kieszling •	Evangelos & Despina Kipelidis • Anna Kiraki Anna Koopman • Steve Koukles • John C. Kouklis Mary Kouklis • Ourania Koukousoula & Ronald Ayume Maria Koumantaros • Peter and Margaret Laketa Elia and Micheline Lakkis Deanne Langevin Vernon Larson Robert & Anne Latz • Christina Leinneweber • Mary Leonard • L. Likos Mary Linak Svetlana Lukianova Andrew Lurker George and Bess Lurker • Jeff & Laura Macaluso John Basil Majmudar • Fr. Seraphim & Pres. Sophie Majmudar • Sara & Costas Makariou • Olga Lynn Manos • Chris & Susan Manthou • Mathew John Manthou • Natalia Marberg Katherine Mason • Dean & Julie Mastras • Iphigenia Mavromichali • Helen & George McClure • Alan (John) & Sheilagh Means • Cole Meyer Tatyana Mikeladze • Cassie & Paul Moeller • Tom Mollas Nina & John Morrison • Hariklia & Dick Motz • Roger Muresan	Michael & Rodica Murphy • Order of AHEPA - Olympic Chapter David & Katrina Orriss • Evangelos Pamboukas Niko & Sonia Pamboukas • Tony and Debbie Panagiotu • George Panagiotu Alexis Pangis • John & Merrilee Pangis • Stathis & JoAnna Papanico- laou Scott and Rachael Parnell Audrey Pasion Kesha Patel Andrew Phillips • George and Diane Pirotis • Stavros Pirotis • Lena & Charles Plunkett • Joaquin & Shanna Poirot Martha Politakis Steve & Kathleen Politakis • Andrew and Rebecca Primis • Helen and G.W. Psaros Emmanuel Psilovikos Scott, Peg and family Radford Sammy Ramzi Despina Reinmuth Homer-Christian Reiter and Audrey Sikara • Martin J. Reiter III & Lorissa Catherine Reiter • Aaron T. & Renae C. Rice Mark & Dana Robinson • Jill Rogers Katherine Rowley • Lilia Rusu Katherine Salatas Bill and Karen Samaras • Peter Sandas Jr.
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Stewardship Ministry News

Stewardship

Offering Our Time, Talent and Treasure To God

Alexandra and Richard Schutt •
St. Nicholas Philoptochos Society
Alexandru Stefan • *
Denise and Richard Stahl •
Jacob Swan
Andy & Joanne Stergachis •
James & Jenise Sweeney
Olympia and John Stafford •
Deborah Talbot •
The Matherne Family
Nicholas and Becky Themelis •
Roxanne Vallantine •
Dee Varca •
Georgia & Peter Vlahas •
John Volkert •
Michael Jane White •
Jeffrey and Janice Williams
Edward Winskill •
Hugh Winskill
Marcela Wirth
Kalitsa & John Xitco •
Tasso & Sarah Zambaras •
John Zaoutsos
Luai Zureikat

• 2021 Stewardship card on file

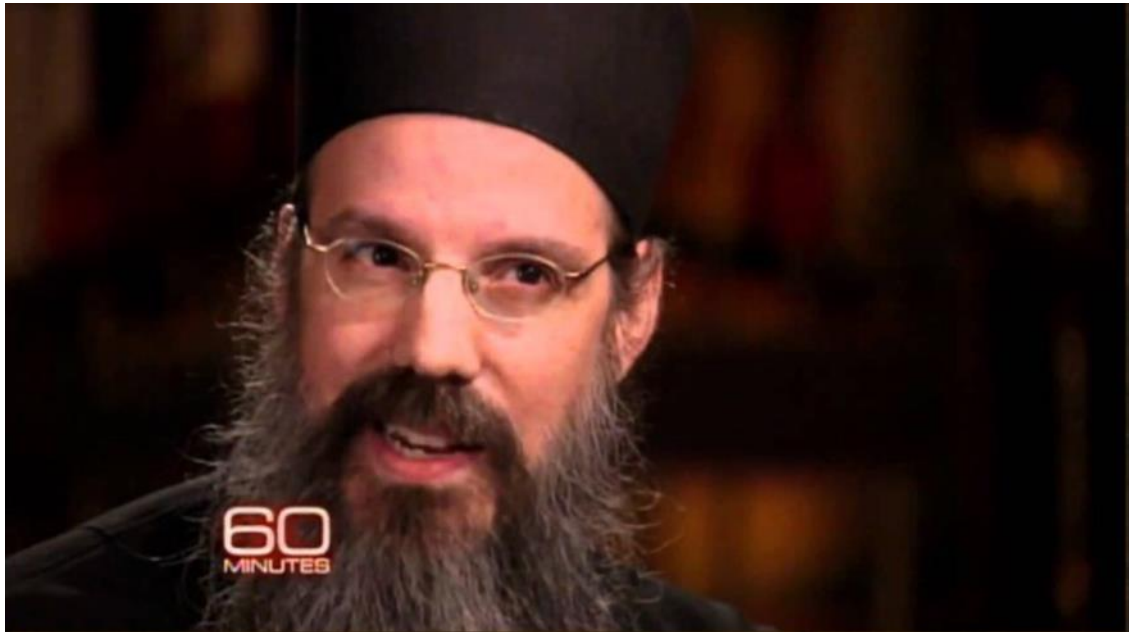
* Deceased

Organization: Order of AHEPA,
St. Nicholas Philoptochos Society

Contributed by: Gus Chamales and Maria Koumantaros

Bible Study

ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY THE REVELATION



Father Maximos Constas – Holy Cross Seminary



INTRODUCTION

The Theotokos in the Orthodox Church

Bible Study

To understand the Theotokos is to understand the mystery of the Church. Those, on the other hand, who misunderstand the Theotokos, and who distort or ignore her role and significance, fundamentally misunderstand and distort the Christian faith as a whole. Without continuous reference to the Theotokos in the history of salvation and in the life of the Church, there can be no genuine devotion or theology. Only a reductive and impoverished rendering of the Christian faith could exclude the Mother of God from the Church's life and experience, including its theology, which is faithful and inspired reflection on the experience of salvation in Christ.

*When we look at Scripture and the official theological teachings of the Church, the material on the Theotokos appears at first glance to be rather limited. In the New Testament, she is mentioned in the infancy narratives of the Synoptic Gospels. In the Gospel of John, she appears only twice, at the wedding in Cana, and again at the Crucifixion, though John never mentions her name. The Old Testament presents an even smaller number of passages, such as **Isaiah 7:14**: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." The official dogmatic statements of the Church are equally lapidary. The Third Ecumenical Council (Ephesus, 431) canonized the theological title "Theotokos." The Fifth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople, 553) canonized the doctrine of her "ever-virginity." These Councils did not invent these doctrines, but simply recognized what had long been a part of the Church's faith and practice.*

To be sure, the seeming paucity of this material is the result of a set of false assumptions, namely, that Scripture and theological doctrines can be understood in isolation from the devotional and liturgical life of the Church. All three—Scripture, theology, and the worship of the Church—need to be seen together as an organic, integral whole, like a living organism composed of parts. To separate any one of the parts from the others is to distort and destroy each and all of them. To know them only in separation is never to know the whole. Theology and worship illumine and inform each other, similar to the interaction of theory and practice. On its own, however, theology can easily degenerate into a series of abstract intellectual propositions, incapable of accounting for the exalted place of the Theotokos in the devotional and liturgical life of the Church. Scripture, too, apart from the experience of liturgy, would have little to say about the Theotokos, being unable on its own to disclose the mystery of the Mother of God hidden in its holy pages.

*This mysterious, hidden presence of the Mother of God in Scripture and theology points to a still deeper foundation. Devotion to the Theotokos has always been an essential part of the Church's inner life, the heart and soul of its spiritual and mystical tradition. Here, too, we see the integral unity of spirituality and theology, since the Church's extraordinary love for and devotion to the Theotokos flows directly from the doctrine of the Incarnation. But such devotion, precisely because it is a mystery, has always been covered by the modesty appropriate to the soul's life of intimacy with God, and thus has never been part of the Church's public proclamation. If, when preaching the good news of the Gospel, St Paul "decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified," (**1 Cor 2:2**) this was not to the exclusion of a higher and hidden form of teaching, for "among the perfect we speak a message of wisdom—not the wisdom of this age, but of the mysterious and hidden wisdom of God, which He destined for our glory before time began." (**1 Cor 2:7**) Vladimir Lossky describes this well when he says: "The Mother of God was never a theme of the public preaching of the apostles. While Christ was preached from the housetops and proclaimed for all to know in an initiatory teaching addressed to the whole world, the mystery of his Mother was revealed only to those who were already within the Church, only to the faithful who had received the sayings of Christ, and who were pressing toward the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is not so much an object of faith as a foundation of hope, a fruit of faith, ripened in tradition."¹*

¹ Vladimir Lossky, "Panagia," in *The Mother of God: A Symposium*, edit-ed by E.L. Mascall (London: Dacre Press, 1959), p. 35.

Reflections on: *Scripture, too, apart from the experience of liturgy, would have little to say about the Theotokos, being unable on its own to disclose the mystery of the Mother of God hidden in its holy pages.*

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Reflections on: *Scripture, too, apart from the experience of liturgy, would have little to say about the Theotokos, being unable on its own to disclose the mystery of the Mother of God hidden in its holy pages.*

Bible Study

Deborah M: God is setting us up to see that the Theotokos has been in the Holy Scriptures from the beginning. We just haven't always seen it. He is leading us to understand her role in Scripture and in the Church.

Father Seraphim: It's not that Scripture doesn't contain it or is somehow incapable of communicating something, but the relationship between Scripture and truth is that Scripture is what came about after the Church was created (for our purpose of discussion) by Pentecost. It became a living entity that is rooted in the Eucharist. The role of the Mother of God and how she is referred to in this "mysterious hidden way" throughout Scripture, is symbolized best by the Mother of God's role in the Resurrection.

Genevieve E: I understood it to be two things: 1) The Apostles wanted to protect the Theotokos from the Jewish leaders. 2) They also didn't want the Theotokos to be the target of controversy over her as a witness to His Resurrection and Ascension.

Father Seraphim: St. Gregory Palamas says that the first person to see the resurrected Christ (even though it appears to be St. Mary Magdalene) is Mary the mother of James. Anyone who knows the family tree, knows that James is the (half) brother of the Lord, who is the son of Joseph the Betrothed from his first marriage. Because she was betrothed to Joseph, she has the title of the mother of his children even though they were the product of a previous marriage. St. Gregory explains that the Gospel writers, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, deliberately left out identifying Mary the mother of James as the Mother of God because it could potentially deprive people of salvation. They didn't want the Jews to accuse the Theotokos of fabricating Christ's Resurrection. Out of evangelical love, the Gospel writers word it so those with an open heart would understand it and not be tempted to dismiss it. They didn't want those whose faith was weak to stumble. Scripture is not going to contain something to quench the smoking flax (so to speak). Father Maximos' broader point about the hidden presence of the Mother of God is not some two-thousand-year-old way to cloak our quasi-pagan idolatrous side.

Father Maximos continues:

When we consider the nature and extent of the spiritual architecture built upon this "foundation of hope," savoring the "ripened fruit of faith" expressed in the Church's devotion to the Theotokos, we see that it is at once so magnificent, so vast, and so complex as to defy any attempt to organize it into simple categories or concepts. Here a few examples will be helpful. While most of us would have difficulty naming even one miraculous icon of Christ, miraculous icons of the Mother of God exist in staggering abundance. A recent attempt to catalogue the various Greek names and epithets of icons of the Mother of God (e.g., Amolyntos, Glykophilousa, Eleousa, Hodegetria, Kardiotissa, etc.) astonishingly revealed the existence of well over one-thousand such epithets, indicative either of iconographic type, geographical region, or associated with the many hundreds of popular shrines and pilgrimage centers dedicated to the Theotokos.

The witness of the Divine Liturgy is even more striking. On the morning when a Divine Liturgy is celebrated, the priest enters the sanctuary only af-ter he has opened its central gate and drawn aside its veil, saying: "Open to us, O blessed Theotokos, the gate of compassion, for hoping in you, we will not be put to shame. Through you may we be delivered from all adversity, for you are the salvation of Christians." This is exactly the spirit of the prayers collected in this volume. After the priest enters the sanctuary, and while he is preparing the Holy Gifts that will become the Body and Blood of Christ, he places a small piece of bread, stamped with the let-ter "M" for Mary, on the paten in honor of the The-otokos, saying: "In honor and memory of our most holy, glorious Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, through whose intercessions, O Lord, re-ceive this sacrifice upon your heavenly altar"—as if the Liturgy itself could not take place without her intercession. Finally, at the spiritual heart of the Liturgy, the miraculous transformation of the Eu-charistic Gifts into the Body and Blood of Christ, the Mother of God is commemorated immediately after the consecration, when the whole body of the Church turns to her in a moment of surpassing gratitude and exhilarating praise.

To these outward, liturgical expressions of faith and devotion, there is the corresponding inward re-ality of the Theotokos as model of the spiritual life. She is the type and paradigm of perfection for every Christian, the archetype of the identity of their life in Christ. If St John of Damascus can say: "In the name of the Theotokos, the whole mystery of the in-carnation is implied," then we too can say that the same name also implies the life of purity and virtue that made the Incarnation possible. In this way, the union of Christ and the Theotokos becomes the model for the life of grace, beginning with the gift of the Holy Spirit in baptism, the sacraments, and the life of prayer and

Bible Study

devotion. St Athanasios of Alexandria, in his *Letters to Virgins*, sees the Mother of God as the revelation of a whole new manner of life and living, a life of grace beyond the law and beyond nature. According to St Gregory of Nyssa, in his work *On Virginity*: “What took place bodily in the undefiled Mary – when the fullness of the divinity which was in Christ (cf. Col 3:9) shone forth through her virginity – takes place spiritually in every soul living a virginal life.” St. Maximos the Confessor, in his *Responses to Thalassios*, likewise teaches that the Mother of God symbolizes the inner faith of the believer, affirming that: “Just as the Word created His own mother in order to be born, so too He first creates faith within us, and then becomes the son of that faith, through which He is embodied through the practice of the virtues.”

Father Seraphim:

This brings us back to the text in **Revelation 12** regarding the “birth of the child from the woman”. St. Andrew of Caesarea, St. Hippolytus and St. Irenaeus were speaking about the child being the fruit of the Church’s life through Baptism. All of these are interconnected concepts and that’s why this quote from St. Maximos the Confessor is so powerful. That is what He is doing in every person and that’s why the devil (the dragon) is poised to devour those children because he wants to stop the process that St. Maximos just described. He wants to interrupt it at the stage between the creation of faith and the birth of virtue. With the birth of virtue as we heard from all three of these saints, we are talking of another being who is being united to that spiritual body that is going to be in glory forever. The “woman, the child and the dragon” is a key issue. The easiest way to approach that is to look at the mystery of the Mother of God. As Orthodox Christians we don’t just love and honor the Panagia, we enter the womb of the Mother of God (we are born again) – it’s the very essence of what it’s like to be in the Church. That is what St. Maximos is saying. Otherwise, we are just atomized individuals.

Father Maximos continues:

With this we enter the mysterious place of the soul’s intimacy with God, the mystery of human transformation in Christ, and so move to a place beyond ordinary speech and language. It is here where we enter the place of prayer, devotion, and doxology. It is here where the living presence of the saints becomes palpable, where the Mother of God emerges in all her tender maternal compassion, as we surrender to a reality greater than ourselves, to the reality of God manifested and revealed through prayer, liturgy, and sacrament.

Father Seraphim:

The Theotokos was the first person to actually manifest the fullness of the truth of God’s intention for the Church, which is that interpenetrating oneness. That’s why we sing, “Hail o Bride without Bridegroom”(chere nimfi, nim fefte). She has taken that to a whole new level where you don’t have to have a sexual encounter to achieve that unity. We are not limited in our ability to have this unbelievable profound unity with one another.

Submitted by: Genevieve Eagle

ST. NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY

ST. NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY



ST. NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY

Sunday, October 31, the last campaign vigil celebration was an incredible blessing! Thank you to all those who came out to pray, sing, laugh and testify with us! For those who could not make it, we missed you and held you in our thoughts and prayers. While somewhat weary I could see it in the eyes of the witnesses to God's grace and mercy that we have a lot more fight in us. Through God's divine providence, because of the sacrifice of our sweet Jesus and the subsequent filling of the Holy Spirit we will endure, we will prevail and we will stand together as long as it takes. We will see Cedar River shut down brothers and sisters! Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all your support as the three of us took this on and made our way through it.

God bless you all and Godspeed.

40 Days for Life, Tacoma - Tammy, Amy and George

Another 40 Days for Life campaign is in the books,
And we know of 588 babies saved from abortion –
With reports continuing to come in!

Margaret in Sarasota, Florida approached a man sitting in his pickup truck alone near Planned Parenthood. Just a few minutes earlier, he accompanied a woman inside the abortion facility.

When she realized the man spoke Spanish, Margaret decided to phone a friend.

She called another team member, Gloria, who halted a work meeting to have her colleagues pray for the abortion-vulnerable couple while she counseled the man in his native tongue.

The discussion revealed that the couple was advised to abort due to a medical problem. But after talking with Gloria, the man texted his wife. They left Planned Parenthood, visited the local pregnancy help center, and chose life!



"It was a pro-life team effort at its best!" Margaret said. "Praise God!"

ST. NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY



Jos, Nigeria

Maureen in Jos said it **hasn't been an easy campaign...but it has been a fruitful one.**

"It has not been easy because of a lack of support for those who chose life for their babies," she explained.

But Maureen and her team are standing in the gap to support moms who opt against abortion—and that's resulted in **four saved babies!**



Atlanta, Georgia

"Praising God for a **young couple who changed their minds** late Thursday afternoon!" wrote Margarita, the longtime Atlanta leader.

"We had been thinking about [abortion]," the man said as the couple's other two children in the back seat played with a kitten. "But then we were like, 'Nah.'"

Vigil participants offered the family a Bible, a grocery store gift card, and a baby shower. All three offers were gratefully accepted.

ST. NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY



Santa Maria, California

Hilda reported **FIVE saved babies** this campaign.

One married couple was advised to abort because the mom had a C-section less than two years ago and was told to wait before having more children.

A prayer warrior directed them to the local pregnancy help center for life-affirming support.

"They were able to see their 10-week-old baby on the ultrasound and received the help and guidance they needed and really wanted," Hilda said.

Revelation 21:4 *"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

Matthew 16:18 *"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."*

Father, we have done battle with the power of evil, and therefore we can have compassion on those still within its grip. We have been freed from the kingdom of darkness, and, therefore, we can bear witness to Your Kingdom of Light. May the witness of all Your people through these 40 Days for Life bear abundant fruit.

Submitted by: Genevieve

ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

Ministry of Akathist, Prayers for the Departed

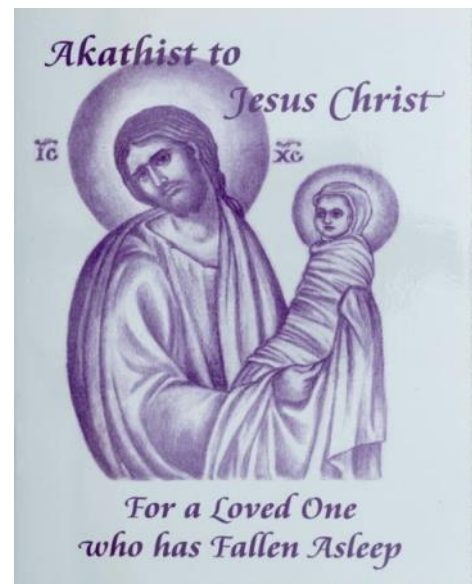


Thank you to all who are involved in this wonderful ministry at Saint Nicholas. In offering the gift of praying the Akathist to Jesus Christ for a Loved One who Has Fallen Asleep, it is a great comfort to family and friends of the departed ones.

When we offer these prayers for the newly departed, it also helps us in many ways. **May God bless your gift of prayer.**

If you are interested in knowing more about this ministry, or would like to be involved, please contact the church office.

Thank you again,
Kathy Rowley



Greek Language School

Ohi Day Remains Part of History

[Robbi K. Mark, ESL EDU](#)

Follow

Nov 4 · 4 min read

“No” to the Italian Forces on October 28, 1940



Photograph credited to George Pirotis

Greek Language School

My dream of visiting Greece came to fruition in December of 1999, when I vacationed in Athens. This was my first trip to Greece which developed into a love affair with the country and its inhabitants. In January of 2002, I decided to move to Greece after seeing [Cape Sounion](#), the ruins of the [Temple of Poseidon](#). I gleefully returned from the United States year after year. I became a Greek resident in 2005. Soon after, I was adopted as a Greek.

Since I love to learn about Greek culture years later, I became more and more interested in the Greek language. I now live in the Pacific Northwest as well as the Peloponnese Peninsula in Greece. I honor my Greek Teacher, Giorgos (George) Pirotis who is teaching all of us Greek. He also lives in the Pacific Northwest as well as Greece. It has been an honor to take Greek from him.

George prepared a celebration of Oxi Day last Thursday that celebrates what happened on October 28, 1940. His explanation contains the following information: At 3:00 am on the morning of Ohi' Day. [Emanuel Grazzi](#), the Italian Ambassador to Greece, delivered an ultimatum from Benito Mussolini to [Prime Minister Ioannis Metaxas](#). II Dulce (nickname for [Mussolini](#)) demanded that Metaxas allow the Italian free passage to enter and occupy strategic sites in Greece. Faced with this demand, Metaxas delivered an unequivocal response in French (the diplomatic language of the day), "Alors, c'est la Guerre." "So, it is war." This brief phrase was quickly transmuted into the laconic "Oxi," the Greek word for no, by the citizens of Athens.

Greek Language School

At 5:30 am, before the ultimatum had even expired, the Italian army poured over the Greek-Albanian border into the mountainous Pindos region of Northern Greece. There they met fierce and unexpected resistance by the Greeks.

Within six months, Ioannis Metaxas would be dead; his successor, [Alexandros Koryzis](#) would commit suicide; Mussolini would be humiliated, but the Germans would raise the [swastika](#) over the Acropolis.

The first act of heroic resistance

The first act of heroic resistance

From the very first moment of the Occupation, the Greek people face this gloomy situation without losing their courage and their fighting spirit. He strongly resisted spontaneous acts of reaction, individually and collectively, expressing a will to resist, which soon manifested itself in organized forms, with the establishment of resistance organizations in the autumn of 1941.



The first major act of resistance to German troops for its symbolic value, was **the lowering of the German flag, the Swastika, from the Acropolis on the night of May 30, 1941** . The protagonists are two young students, **Manolis Glezos** and **Apostolis Santas** .

Despite Greece's ultimate fall to Axis powers (six-month fight as part of the Greek Resistance) resulted in a fatal diversion and delay for the Axis powers in general, specifically the German army. The Germans ravaged the villages and stole food and supplies, but the Greeks survived.

Greek Language School

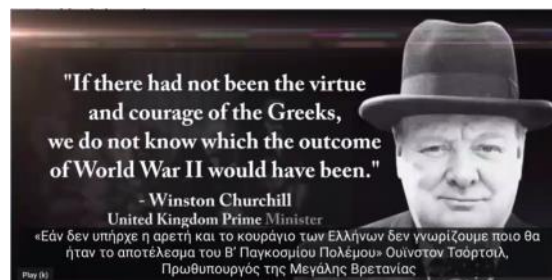
Local women aided Greek troops throughout 1940 and 1941.



Argiris Balatsos recorded his encounter with several of these women in his diary:

"7 November 1940. ... I met women who were carrying ammunition. One was 88 years old. Another one told me that she had locked the kid in the shed, so that she could come to help the army. During the night, I saw an old woman taking care of the two kids, while their mother was baking bread for the army under the candle light."

British military historian Sir John Keegan describes the Battle of Greece as "decisive in determining the future course of the Second World War."



I am honored to be learning more about the culture of Greece as well as continuing to learn the Greek language. Long Live Greece (Ζήτω η Ελλάδα)

Greek Language School

Modern Greek Language School/Classes

"Advanced Class" - Student Picture of 04-15-2021



"Pictures of previous years"



Greek Language School

Pictures of previous years continued...

Modern Greek Language School / Classes:



The 2020 - 2021 Modern Greek Language School "Advanced Class - Εκτὴ Τὰξὴ "resumed on Thursday, October 8, 2020 and will continue to September 30, 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

Contact Church Office - 253-272-0466

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.**

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:

Ἀγίασμαὸς (Blessing) of the class at 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-

PROSPHORA

PROVIDING PROSFORO

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

Despina Ampatzis brings the offering for the first Sunday of every month. Just a reminder that people are welcome to bring the prospora (and artoklasia) for special days, name days, etcetera. The procedure would be to contact Father Seraphim and discuss it with him before the actual day, and to have the offering there in time. We also have a need for people desiring to participate in the Liturgy in this way to commit to providing the offering on one Sunday every month. The second, third, and fourth, Sundays of every month are available. You can bring in your bread for Sunday at Saturday evening Vespers, or you can bring it in at 8:30 Sunday morning. Any extra loaves will be frozen and used during the weekday liturgies.

Contributed by: Deborah Talbot



PROSPHORA

LECHEM-ARTOS-BREAD

Following the Word Through Scripture

Last month we began the book of Deuteronomy, which is the second telling of the forty years of traveling through the desert with God. We looked at chapter eight, “...*man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word proceeding from the mouth of God man shall live.*” After His baptism and forty-day fast, Jesus quoted this verse in response to the tempter.

Moses also fasted for forty days, twice, when he was up on Mt. Sinai in the presence of the Lord. The second fast, he says, was on account of the sins of the people.

*Deuteronomy 9:9: ...when I went up into the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant the Lord established with you; and I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate **bread (lechem/artos)** nor drank water.*

*Deuteronomy 9:18: And I prayed before the Lord a second time, as at the first forty days and forty nights; I neither ate **bread(lechem/artos)** nor drank water, because of all your sins you committed in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord your God to provoke Him.*

The next verse mentioning bread is in Deuteronomy chapter sixteen. This section refers to Pascha. The first Pascha was the tenth plague in Egypt, the killing of the firstborn of man and the firstborn of cattle in all the households whose door frames were not marked with blood. The marked households were “passed over” (pascha). The people ate the roasted lambs that night - it was the blood of those lambs that marked their door frames - and then they had to leave Egypt in a hurry and had no time to let the dough develop leaven. Every year following that one the Jewish people were to remember their delivery from bondage by eating lamb on Pascha and eating no leaven for the seven days beginning with Pascha. Here in Deuteronomy, that unleavened bread is called the bread of affliction.

*Deuteronomy 16:3: You shall eat no leaven with it; seven days you shall eat unleavened [bread] with it, that is, the **bread of affliction (matsah al lechem ohnee/azymos artos kakosis)**, for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste, that you may remember the day you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life.*

In an effort to understand what is meant by this **azymos artos kakosis (unleavened bread of affliction)**, I looked up the original words for affliction. The Greek word *kakosis* (Strong’s G2561) here in Deuteronomy 16:3 translated as affliction, is from a root word (Strong’s G2559) meaning something evil is intended; to injure or exasperate, maltreat, embitter. There are other Greek words translated into English as affliction, but according to Strong’s, which does not include the apocrypha, *kakosis* is found only eleven times in the Septuagint. I think it is fair to say all those uses are associated with affliction unto death or affliction too great to bear. In Isaiah it actually refers to the Suffering Servant (Christ), *Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted/kakosis (Is 53:4).*

Though I am not grasping the significance of the *unleavened bread of affliction*, I do believe it is significant. Back in Exodus the Lord told Moses that anyone who eats leaven during the seven days of Passover, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. Here in Deuteronomy it says *...you shall eat the unleavened bread of affliction....* And so I offer these thoughts and observations below which may or may not be relevant to the significance of the *unleavened bread of affliction*.

When we were studying the Book of Hebrews in Bible Study, the affliction-faith dynamic, I came to understand affliction in its relationship to faith as the evidence of things gone awry due to sin in the world. Faith, being the substance of things hoped for, is the evidence of those things hoped for but not yet seen (Hebrews 11:1). You do not actually see the sin - you see what results from sin, the pain and affliction. You do not actually see the things hoped for - you see the faith that results from the hope. We

PROSPHORA

learned in that study how opposing the passions through ascetic practice in affliction increases faith and hope. Increased faith and hope, per St. John Chrysostom, help us to rise above the senses and above the weaknesses of human reasoning. In other words, how we live our lives is important to where we end up; what we do, what we do not do, what we embrace, what we turn away from. It may be the same sort of thing in Deuteronomy in the instructions given to the children of Israel to eat no leaven for the seven days of Passover, but to eat the *unleavened bread of affliction*. I am suggesting that staying away from leaven was important, but not enough; one also must eat the bread of affliction.

Another thought is that bread is also sometimes a metaphor for the Christ. *Then*, the children of Israel were not to eat leavened bread for the seven days of Passover, and if they did it was such a serious offense that their souls were to be *cut off from Israel*. Some people think that any offering to God containing leaven was taboo, and that is how they explain the unleavened bread at passover. However, if one reads Leviticus, there are times that leaven is specifically instructed to be used in an offering to God. In Leviticus 7:13 the Thanksgiving Offering is to be made with leaven. In Leviticus 23:17-20 at Pentecost, fifty days after Pascha and the seven days of unleavened bread, the firstfruits of the harvest were to be offered as loaves baked with leaven.

Now that the Lamb of God has come and offered Himself once and for all, I observe that we Orthodox eat the body of Christ in the Thanksgiving Offering as leavened bread, and this eating is evidence of our being a part of the body of Christ; that is, it is evidence of our being *joined to Israel*.

This is a puzzle I have not fitted together. More information that pertains to it, I believe, is that when we talk about leavened bread in the biblical sense, we are talking about yeasted bread, in those days wild yeast (that is, not scientifically isolated and factory grown for consistent results like the yeast you buy at the market). This leavening is a process of fermentation; if we called it fermented bread, we would mean the same thing as leavened bread. This process of yeast fermentation, which is a living process, by the way, until the yeast dies off, is also what turns grapes into wine and has something to do with why you cannot pour new wine into old wineskins, a parable found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, which started out with a question about fasting, and in all three Gospels comes right after Jesus answered the Pharisees that He has not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. I posit that ultimately we are talking about two kinds of leaven, the leaven of the Holy Spirit, or the leaven of sin, and how can we be purged of the leaven of sin and filled with the leaven of the Holy Spirit without being destroyed in the process.

To be continued...

Deborah Talbot-



Donations and Pledges

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.

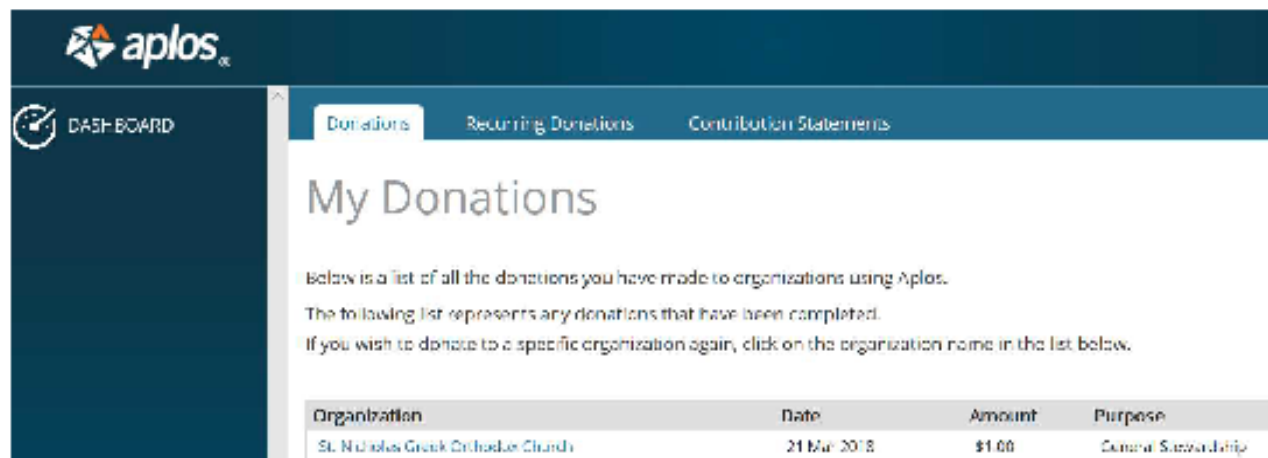
I want parishioners to enjoy greater flexibility in making Church donations and receiving an accounting of their annual to date contributions at any time of the year. Many of you have asked and inquired about the possibility of accounting for your donations automatically on-line. It is now a reality.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

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. For more information, please visit: stnicholastacoma.org/stewardship.

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
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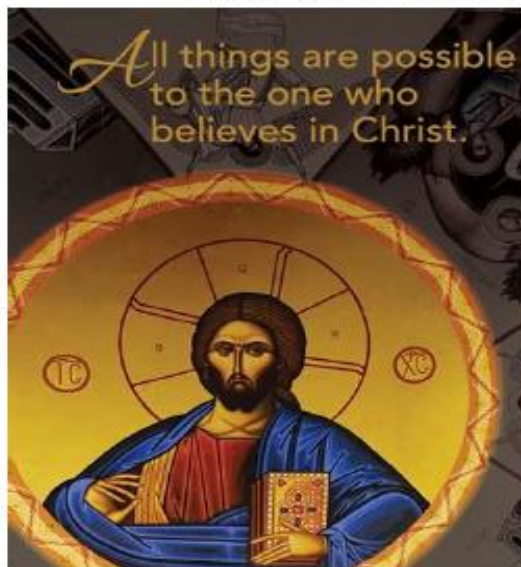
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2022 STEWARDSHIP CARD
ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
TACOMA, WASHINGTON



"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

"Those who seek the Lord shall never want for any good thing." (Psalm 34:10)

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

2022 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT

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

I/We offer a minimum stewardship pledge of \$...../year or \$...../month in 2022 to support God's work.

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

SIGNATURE.....

Saint Nicholas Messenger

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

1523 S Yakima Ave

Tacoma, WA 98405

Address Service Requested

