



Our New Seminarian Aaron and Ranae Rice Are Heading to Boston!



It is with great joy to announce that with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerassimos, our brother in Christ, Aaron Rice, has been officially accepted as a seminarian of our Metropolis. It is of course a tremendous honor for our parish to have given one of our sons to the Lord for service in His Vineyard!

Due to Covid, all seminarians will begin their studies this week digitally, and, God willing, will convene in-person beginning in January. While this is unusual, it offers us the wonderful opportunity to have Aaron and his beautiful family around for a while longer. Besides his duties as a chanter, we will also be including him in some other ministries and meetings to give him a chance to experience a variety of parish life experiences.

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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
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
Alexandria Samaras— President
Zoe Matteson—Vice President
Elena Apostle— Treasurer
Isabella Mastras- Secretary
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

October Parish Council meeting is the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

October 2020						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 Hierotheos, First Bp of Athens 8:45am-9:45am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	5 Mother Methodia of Kimolos 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers: Apostle Thomas 7:45pm-8:45pm Evening Liturgy: Apostle Thomas	6 Apostle Thomas 10:00am-11:00am Bible Study (Live on Zoom) 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	7 Fast: Wine & Oil ok Sergios & Bacchos 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 3:00pm-4:00pm Pro Life Vigil: Cedar River 7:00pm-8:00pm Paraklisis 8:00pm-9:00pm Catechism: Genesis (Videoconf)	8 Pelagia 6:00pm-7:00pm Modern Greek (Zoom)	9 Ap James, Son of Alphaeus Fast: Wine & Oil ok Patriarch Abraham 6:30am-7:30am Orthros 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	10 Ambrose of Optina 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers
11 Ap Philip, One of the 7 Deacons Fathers of the 7th Ec Council 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	12 Symeon the New Theologian Great Martyr Demetrios 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	13 Carpos & Companions Martyr Zlata of Bulgaria 10:00am-11:00am Bible Study (Live on Zoom) 7:00pm-10:00pm Parish Council	14 Nazarios 3:00pm-4:00pm Pro Life Vigil: Cedar River 7:00pm-8:00pm Paraklisis 8:00pm-9:00pm Catechism: Genesis (Videoconf)	15 Savinios 6:00pm-7:00pm Modern Greek (Zoom)	16 Longinos the Centurion 6:30am-7:30am Orthros 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	17 Prophet Hosea 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers
18 Apostle Luke 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy	19 Apostle Mnason Prophet Joel 6:30am-7:30am Orthros 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	20 Gerasimos of Kephalaria 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 10:00am-11:00am Bible Study 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	21 Hilarion the Great STRICT FAST 3:00pm-4:00pm Pro Life Vigil: Cedar River 7:00pm-8:00pm Paraklisis 8:00pm-9:00pm Catechism: Genesis (Videoconf)	22 Averkios 6:30am-7:30am Orthros 6:00pm-7:00pm Modern Greek (Zoom) 7:00pm-8:00pm Divine Liturgy of St James	23 Apostle James, Brother of the Lord Fast: Wine & Oil ok	24 Arethas 7:00pm-8:00pm Vespers
25 Tabitha, raised by Peter 8:45am-10:00am Orthros 10:00am-11:00am Divine Liturgy 12:00pm-1:00pm Vespers: St Demetrios	26 Great Martyr Demetrios 6:30am-7:30am Divine Liturgy 5:30pm-6:30pm Vespers	27 Claudia, Wife of Pilate Nestor 10:00am-11:00am No Bible Study this Week	28 OXI DAY 3:00pm-4:00pm Pro Life Vigil: Cedar River 7:00pm-8:00pm Paraklisis (Readers' Service) 8:00pm-9:00pm Catechism: Genesis (Videoconf)	29 Anastasia of Rome 6:00pm-7:00pm Modern Greek (Zoom)	30 Cleopas	31 Stachys of the 70 7:00pm-8:00pm NO VESPER TONIGHT

News and Announcements

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.

2020 Tacoma Greek Festival Canceled

As announced in the last issue, the 2020 Tacoma Greek Festival is canceled. The Festival Committee was proceeding optimistically hoping safety conditions concerning COVID-19 would improve significantly by October. Unfortunately, it is now apparent it will be impossible to provide a safe environment for Festival guests, volunteers, and parishioners.

Instead, the Festival Committee is considering alternative fundraising ideas. We are thankful for the privilege of operating the Festival consecutively for the past 58 years.

Next 2020 Festival Meeting Sunday September 27, 7PM

Although the regular Festival is canceled, the Festival Committee continues to meet. The next Festival Committee will be Sunday, September 27 at 7:00 PM. This will be a teleconference and will not take place at the church. Feel free to call in if you are already part of the Festival Team, or if you're just interested. Simply call this number from any phone: (605) 313-5942. When asked for an access code, type in 767419.

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** to coordinate for payment and pickup. Please see more about this in Gus's Stewardship article on page 14.

Bill Samaras—



News and Announcements

Thank You

The family of Elly Pangis would like to express our sincere thanks to Father Sera- phim, St. Nicholas parishioners, friends, and family for the many cards, flowers, do- nations and condolences expressed in the falling asleep of our mother, Elly. It is with great comfort to know she touched many lives in our parish. May her memory be

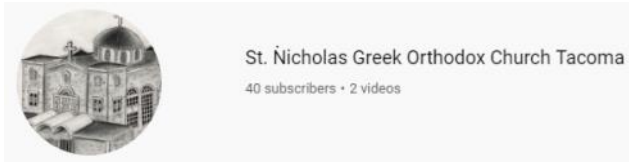


Watch Services From Home, Live

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.

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

Bill Samaras—



COFFEE HOUR MINISTRY



Coffee Hour is suspended until further notice.

Contributed by: Zach

HALLOWEEN ORIGINS

A Note Regarding Halloween
For Your Consideration



Christians and Halloween

I realize many of us have many happy memories of Halloween—both as children, and for those of us who are parents, of experiencing it through our children. I was not raised as a Christian, so I myself have many memories of Halloween nights with my friends. Many of them are happy memories, but when I examine my experience more closely, I also recall sensing a certain spiritual darkness that pervaded the neighborhood on that night.

Some of you will find the following article objectionable, while others will agree enthusiastically. I offer it to you for your consideration. I am familiar with the counter-arguments to some of the points His Eminence makes. Nevertheless, I feel in my conscience that participation in the ritual of Halloween is incompatible with the Christian life. Even if some of these historical arguments can be contested, I think it is obvious that Halloween, as we experience it today in America, is characterized by a kind of darkness—it is full of the “iconography” of death, not resurrection; it is ritualistic but not liturgical; it appeals to our passions of gluttony; it celebrates deception: costumes, and the phrase, “trick” itself...I could go on.

None of my children have been allowed to participate in Halloween or its “pre-festal” celebrations at school. I taught them that sometimes we Christians must dare to be different. We don’t just bend the knee to whatever the world is telling us we should do. Christians are the ultimate non-conformists: we refuse to accept the hopelessness of death, but confess the power of Christ and His Resurrection from death. Presbyter and I also made Halloween night enjoyable: we would watch a movie, and let the kids have sweets and a nice time. Brigid and John used to say, “I don’t even care about missing Halloween.”

HALLOWEEN ORIGINS

We have a better time at home!" I hope that it also helped shape their identity: we are not conformed to the image of this world which is perishing, but to the image of Jesus Christ, who is eternal life.

Fr Seraphim~

A Pastoral Word on Halloween

by Archbishop Kyrill of San Francisco (Russian Orthodox Church Abroad)

It is that time of the year when the secular society in which we live is preparing for the festival of Halloween. Many do not know its spiritual roots and history, and why it contradicts the teachings of the Church. The feast of Halloween began in pre-Christian times among the Celtic peoples of Great Britain, Ireland and northern France. These pagan peoples believed that life was born from death. Therefore they celebrated the beginning of the "new year" in the fall (on the eve of October 31 and into the day of November 1) when, as they believed, the season of cold, darkness, decay and death began. A certain deity whom they called Samhain was believed by the Celts to be the Prince of Death and it was he whom they honored at their New Year's festival*.

From an Orthodox Christian point of view, we can see many diabolical beliefs and practices associated with this feast which have endured to this time. On the eve of the New Year's festival, the Druids, who were the priests of the Celtic cult, instructed their people to extinguish all hearth fires and lights. On the evening of the festival, a huge bonfire built from oak branches (oak was regarded by the Celts as sacred) was ignited. Upon this fire sacrifices were burned as an offering in order to appease and cajole Samhain, the Prince of Death. It was also believed that Samhain, being pleased by the offerings, allowed the souls of the dead to return to their homes for a festal visit on this day. It is from this belief that the practice of wandering about in the dark dressed up in costumes imitating ghosts, witches, hobgoblins, fairies, etc. grew up. For the living entered into fellowship and communion with the dead by what was, and still is, a ritual act of imitation, through costume and the activity of wandering around in the dark of night, even as the souls of the dead were believed to wander.

The dialogue of trick or treat is also an integral part of this system of beliefs and practices. It was believed that the souls of the dead who had entered into the world of darkness, decay and death, and therefore into total communion with and submission to Samhain, bore the affliction of great hunger on their festal visit. Out of this grew the practice of begging, which was a further ritual enactment and imitation of what the Celts believed to be the activities of the souls of the dead on their festal visit. Associated with this is the still further implication that if the souls of the dead and their imitators were not appeased with "treats", i.e., offerings, then the wrath and anger of Samhain would be unleashed through a system of "tricks", i.e. curses. Such is the true meaning of this pagan feast. It is then evident that for an Orthodox Christian participation at any level is impossible and idolatrous, resulting in a genuine betrayal of God and Church. If we participate in the ritual activity of imitating the dead and wandering in the dark asking for treats or offering them to children, we then have willfully sought fellowship with the dead, whose Lord is not Samhain, but rather Satan. It is to Satan then that these treats are offered, not to children.

There are other practices associated with Halloween from which we must stay away, such as sorcery, fortune telling, divination, games of chance, witchcraft and the carving of an ugly face upon a pumpkin and then placing a lit candle within the infamous Jack O' Lantern. The pumpkin (in older days other vegetables were used) was carved by the Celts in imitation of the dead and used to convey the new light (from the sacred oak fire) to the home where the lantern was left burning through the night. This "holy lantern" is no other than an imitation of the truly holy votive light (lampada) offered before an icon of Christ and the saints. Even the use and display of the Jack O'Lantern involves participation in this "death" festival honoring Satan.

HALLOWEEN ORIGINS

The Holy Fathers of the first millennium (a time when the Church was one and strictly Orthodox) counteracted this Celtic pagan feast by introducing the Feast of All Saints. It is from this that the term Halloween developed. The word Halloween has its roots in the Old English of All Hallow E'en, i.e., the Eve commemorating all those who were hallowed (sanctified), i.e. Halloween Unfortunately, either due to lack of knowledge or understanding, the Celtic pagan feast being celebrated on the same day as the Christian feast of All Saints (in western Christendom) came to be known as Halloween.

The people who remained pagan and therefore anti-Christian reacted to the Church's attempt to supplant their festival by celebrating this evening with increased fervor. Many of these practices involved desecration and mockery of the Church's reverence for Holy Relics. Holy things, such as crosses and the Reserved Sacrament, were stolen and used in perverse and sacrilegious ways. The practice of begging became a system of persecution designed to harass Christians who were, by their beliefs, unable to participate by making offerings to those who served the Lord of Death.

One can see in contemporary Western society that the Western Church's attempt to supplant this pagan festival with a Christian feast failed. How then did something that is so obviously contradictory to the Holy Orthodox faith gain such acceptance among Christian people?

The answer is spiritual apathy and listlessness which are the spiritual roots of atheism and turning away from God. Today's society urges one that Halloween and other such festivities, notwithstanding their apparent pagan and idolatrous origin, are nonetheless harmless and of no consequence. Upon closer consideration these pagan festivals are the source for destroying any kind of spiritual foundation and lead to disbelief and outright atheism.

Halloween undermines the very basis of the Church which was founded on the blood of martyrs who had refused, by giving up their lives, to partake in any form of idolatry

Holy Mother Church must take a firm stand in counteracting any such (pagan) events. Christ taught us that God is the judge in all our actions and beliefs and that we are either FOR GOD or AGAINST GOD. There is no neutral or middle of the road approach.

Today we witness a revival of satanist cults; we hear of satanic services conducted on Halloween night. Children are kidnapped by satanists for their ritualistic sacrifices. Orthodox clergy are ritualistically killed as has happened more than once in California. Everywhere Satan reaches out to ensnare as many innocent people as possible. The newsstands are filled with material on spiritualism, supernatural phenomena, séances, prophesies and all sorts of demonically inspired works. These works all serve Satan, for they are not the fruit of the Holy Spirit, but the fruit of the spirit of this world.



Building Committee



GETTING MOBILIZED FOR THE NARTHEX RENOVATION FIELD CONSTRUCTION

After a near-consensus approval of 96% last month to proceed with construction on the Narthex Renovation, there is still much preparation to do before field work actually starts. Currently, details of the project contract are being worked out with Rush Commercial Construction, the contractor, the church, and Demetriou Architects the architect. This should be finalized around the time the October Messenger is issued.

Because there is just over a 4 month time frame to construct the project between May 10, 2021, one week after Pascha, through September 17, two weeks before the start of the 2021 Greek Festival, it is important the contractor get its ducks in a roll beforehand to help facilitate a running start.

Beyond the contract, there are some long lead items to submit, approve and order, such as a special brick run and custom doors, both of which take anywhere from 3 to 5 months to procure. Also, we are in the midst of coordinating specifics of how the main floor area of the church is going to remain accessible while the Narthex is being demolished and replaced, and when and how long Father Seraphim will be required to relocate and work in a temporary office.

The architect and contractor have been working as a positive, proactive team. While the project will be logistically challenging and demanding, the prospects of its successful implementation are encouraging. And thanks for the full-hearted support of the Parish as well.

Contributed by: Bill Acker

Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

Once again I would like to remind everyone that if you have access to pictures of family members who served in either the armed forces of the United States or their homeland from which they originated, or if you have pictures of family members who served in either the Office of Strategic Services, the Central Intelligence Agency, or any branch of law enforcement, PLEASE snap a photo of their picture and email it along with their name and relationship to you, to gleafops@gmail.com. We will use these photos to honor these outstanding men and women during video presentations on Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

HELP US TO HONOR THOSE WHO SERVED!

This month's newest addition is the aunt of Diane Pirotis. Diane's paternal grandparents had seven children, six of whom served in the military during WWII. Diane's father served in China, while four uncles served in New Guinea, Italy, Hawaii, and Virginia, and her aunt served at the Army hospital at Ft. Benning, Georgia.



T-5 Minnie Lee Jameson
 Women's Auxilliary
 Army Corps
 WWII
 Diane Pirotis' aunt

October 10, 1845. United States Naval Academy established. The Naval Academy is a federal service academy adjacent to Annapolis, Maryland. It is the second oldest of five U.S. service academies, and educates officers for commissioning primarily into the United States Navy and the United States Marine Corps. The entire campus (known to insiders as "the yard") is a National Historic Landmark and home to many historic sites, buildings, and monuments. It replaced the Philadelphia Naval Asylum, in Philadelphia, that served as the first United States Naval Academy from 1838-1845 when the Naval Academy formed in Annapolis, Maryland.

Candidates for admission generally must both apply directly to the academy and receive a nomination, usually from a Member of Congress. Students are officers-in-training and referred to as midshipmen. Tuition for midshipmen is fully funded by the Navy in exchange for an active duty service obligation upon graduation. (Source: Wikipedia) St. Nicholas graduates of the Naval Academy are shown below.



MAJ Steve Chamales
 USMC
 Operation Iraqi Freedom &
 Operation Enduring Freedom
 Dr. Ingrid & Gus' son



CDR David A. Orriss
 U.S. Navy
 Vietnam War
 Commander, USS Impervious
 David Orriss' father

October 15, 1962. Cuban Missile Crisis. The Cuban Missile Crisis is thought by many to be the closest the world ever came to nuclear war. The United States armed forces were at their highest state of readiness and Soviet field commanders in Cuba were prepared to use nuclear weapons to defend the island if it was invaded. Luckily, war was averted and the world was spared WWII. (Source: Former Vet. Svcs. Director, Burlington, MA) One of our parishioners joined the Navy shortly thereafter and was stationed at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba one year later. Imagine being in his shoes back then?



Lieutenant John C. Kouklis
 U.S. Navy
 Cold War
 Andrew Kouklis' father

Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

28 October 1940—OXI DAY! This day commemorates the anniversary when former military general and later Prime Minister of Greece, Ioannis Metaxas replied “OXI!” (NO!) to an ultimatum made by Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini, demanding that the Greeks allow Italian military forces to occupy strategic locations in Greece, or face war. Pictured below are St. Nicholas family members who fought with the Royal Hellenic Army during WWII.

“In the first 13 months of WWII, the European nations fell to the German invasion at the rate of one nation every two weeks. Everyone expected Greece to capitulate within two weeks at the most. Unlike France, which fell in about four weeks, Greece did not have a sizeable army. But instead, Greece kept the Axis—both Italy and Germany—in the battlefield for seven months and four days. At that time the British Commonwealth had no other ally fighting on its side. The Greek victories in Epirus and Albania were the first Allied victories in WWII.”



Antonios D. Georgantzis
Royal Hellenic Army
WWII
Wounded while fighting the Italians and Germans early in the war.
 Hoddi Motz’s father



Lieutenant Costas Kouklis
Royal Hellenic Army
WWII
 John and Maro Kouklis’ father



George Markakis
Royal Hellenic Army
Killed in Action during the Italian Invasion of Greece at the beginning of WWII.
 Mary Leonard’s grandfather



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



October 29, 1942. President Roosevelt authorizes the Legion of Merit. A very illustrious award, the medal is awarded by the U.S. Departments of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Homeland Security. It is awarded to members of the Armed Forces for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.

The Royal Hellenic Army has an award called **The Order of the Phoenix/Gold Cross Award.** The honor is bestowed by the Greek Government to Greek citizens who have excelled in the arts, science, public administration, shipping, commerce, and industry.

Military, CIA, Law Enforcement Ministry News

Avram Demetriades, Despina Kipilidis' father, served as a Colonel in the Royal Hellenic Army before immigrating to America. He was awarded this very prestigious award which is comparable to the American Legion of Merit Medal for his outstanding military service. Below are St. Nicholas parishioners who have earned the American Legion of Merit Medal, and Greece's comparable award, the Order of the Phoenix w/ Gold Cross Award.



**LTC(R) Jennifer Clark
U.S. Army**
Jennifer was recently awarded the Legion of Merit Medal for outstanding military service.



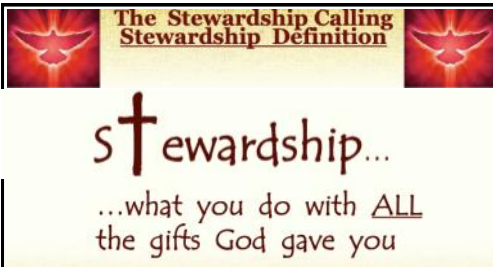
**COL(R) George McClure
U.S. Army**
*Operation Desert Storm
Recipient of the Legion of Merit w/OLC*
**Helen McClure's
Husband**



**COL(R) Avram Demetriades
Royal Hellenic Army**
Recipient of the Royal Hellenic Order of the Phoenix w/Golden Cross. It is equivalent to the American Legion of Merit Medal.
Despina Kipilidis' father



Stewardship Ministry



Members of your Parish Council and other parishioners have been participating in a variety of Metropolis wide zoom meetings ever since Covid-19 was unleashed upon the world. There have been Metropolis zoom meetings on many subjects ranging from Accounting to Festivals; one that started a couple weeks ago and will continue for the next month deals with Stewardship.

It is no secret that many churches rely heavily on the income from their annual Greek Festivals to cover their annual operating expenses, and our St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Tacoma was one of those until approximately five years ago. Thanks to the leadership efforts of Father Seraphim and our recent Parish Councils, and thanks to the generous support of our loyal parishioners, we have been blessed to fund our operating expenses through financial stewardship! **DOXA TO THEO!**

Recently our parish held a General Assembly via zoom and we overwhelmingly voted to move forward with the Narthex construction project. **DOXA TO THEO!** The money used to fund that project will come from a combination of the funds raised through Project 2020 and from funds that we have banked from festivals in recent years.

The absence of a festival this October will put our “festival account” into decline until the threat of Covid-19 is resolved by a vaccine or some other source. Therefore it is imperative that we look for other ways to keep it growing. 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 selling the product at cost so please contact **Joseph Johnson at either (360) 941-9972 or sgtjcj@msm.com** to coordinate for payment and pickup. Phyllo has a defined freezer and shelf life, so either we sell it or we throw it away, and as my mother used to say, “It’s a sin to waste good food!”



Another festival fund-raising suggestion offered by a California church representative during a recent Metropolis Festival zoom meeting was to ask parishioners to donate to their church’s festival fund an amount equal to what they would have personally spent at their church festival. That suggestion was discussed by our festival committee and shared with our parish council, and our parish council voted to accept the suggestion as a way to keep our festival fund growing.

Our Parish Council President correctly noted that if we as a Parish Council were going to ask our parishioners to support such an action, then the Parish Council members should lead the way in doing so. He and other council members immediately pledged their support and the first three pledges yielded over \$800.00 dollars, and more will soon be contributed! If everyone will support this festival fund-raising effort in a similar manner it will go a long way toward replenishing the festival fund with needed dollars for future maintenance expenses.



If it is at all possible, will you PLEASE contribute an amount similar to what you would have spent at our October 2020 Greek Festival, and help our festival fund to continue to grow? You can do this by


Stewardship Ministry

either contributing through the St. Nicholas website or by writing a separate check to the festival fund. If you write a separate check please mail it to the treasurer or place it in the slot on the desk in the Narthex.

The two Metropolis Stewardship zoom meetings that have occurred to date identified several issues that need to be shared with everyone. Both of the first two seminars began with a hypothetical question that may ultimately be posed to all of us when we stand before Christ on our Judgment Day. *“What did **YOU** do with **MY** church under **YOUR** watch given all the gifts I gave **YOU**?”* Can you imagine standing before Christ and being asked that question? How would you respond?

Christ's Possible Question To You

*“What did **YOU** do with **MY** Church under **YOUR** watch given all of the gifts I gave **YOU**?”*



Tithing Is The Right Answer (not just in the Old Testament)

“Stewardship is recommended to be ten percent (10%) of one’s annual income as stated in Holy Scripture to help meet the financial obligations of the Parish, the Metropolis and the Archdiocese”

Uniform Parish Regulations Article 18, Section 1 of the Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

The Metropolis Stewardship seminars highlight that the hallmark of a strong parish is one where the parishioners worship regularly and do their best to tithe in order to support the mission of God’s work. The orthodox church defines tithing as a minimum of 10% of Time, Talent, and Treasures. Research by several Christian organizations was conducted and “The Giving Facts” pertaining to Greek Orthodox Churches are all too often significantly less than 10%.

The chart on the right should help us to reevaluate our own situation and help us determine how we would respond to Christ’s possible question shown above.

Tithing a minimum of 10% may seem overwhelming! Our Metropolis recognizes this dilemma and suggests that we strive to increase our tithing through incremental steps. It is suggested that we begin by calculating what percentage of our income we are tithing for 2020, and then round that amount up to the next whole number. Using that percentage, determine if you can find it in your heart to pledge that stewardship amount for 2021.

The Giving Facts!

- ~ 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%)

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

We all recognize that 2020 has been a difficult year and the effects of Covid-19 are felt almost everywhere. If you have not been negatively effected by Covid-19 in some direct way consider yourself extremely fortunate! If so, are you in a position to consider increasing your stewardship tithe even more?

As stated many times before, what we choose to pledge is between each of us individually and God.

“Every man shall give an amount as he is able, according to the blessings the Lord your God gave you.” Deuteronomy 16:17


Please do your best to pledge an amount that will enable our church to do God’s work, and please attend church services regularly either in person, or through Father Seraphim’s live streaming on UTube. We

Stewardship Ministry


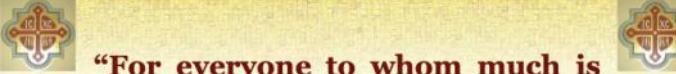
are all important in making St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church a great place to worship and our support by providing our Time, our Talent and our Treasures will enable us to grow financially and spiritually.

DOXA TO THEO!

In closing, please allow me to take this opportunity to remind everyone that our **2021 Stewardship Campaign started last month.** Once again I ask that you sign up for automatic stewardship contributions either through our St. Nicholas website, or by automatic payroll deduction, which enables our church to budget more accurately. If you are using an automatic contribution it is not necessary to complete a new pledge card unless there are changes to your personal information. All others will need to complete the 2021 Stewardship Pledge Card shown on the next page. Simply print it out and either email, or snail mail it back to the treasurer’s office. Please do so at your earliest opportunity.




“But this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. (2 Corinthians 9: 6-8)

“For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.” (Luke 12:48)


“Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessings the Lord your God gave you.” (Deuteronomy 16:17)

Message:
Proportional giving


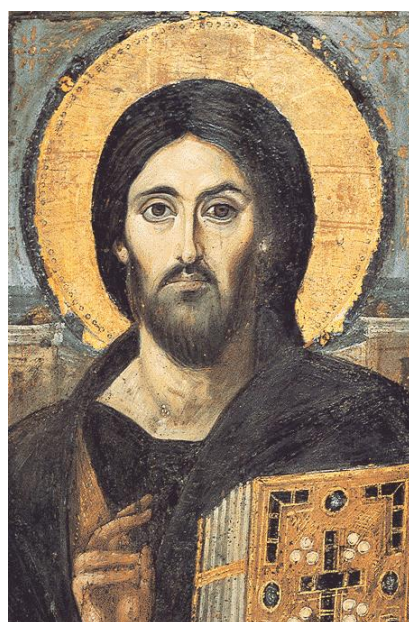


Luke 16:11

“And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth,



...who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?”

Stewardship Ministry

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:

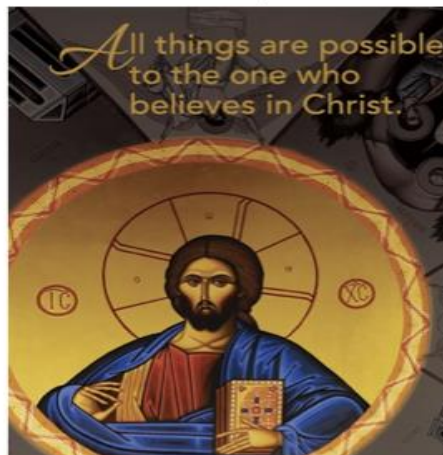
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church
 Attn: Church Treasurer
 1523 S. Yakima Ave.
 Tacoma, WA 98405

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.

**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

Cover Story

Aaron

I was born in Tacoma and raised in Bonney Lake, WA. My parents brought me and my sister up as devout Christians. My dad has worked for Darigold in Seattle for nearly 30 years and my mom currently works as a SPED para educator for the Puyallup School District.

Aside from my faith, music has been one of the other major constants in my formative years. Growing up, a guitar could always be found slung around my neck (still a favorite pastime of mine). It was only natural that a major way I experienced a life in Christ involved music. Additionally, I was involved in youth groups, countless summer camps/retreats, and mission trips. Of course, now the integration of music and faith has found its fulfillment for me at the analogion and in the study of Ecclesiastical Chant. Nevertheless, my upbringing and involvement in these church activities helped to solidify my desire to study the Scriptures and enter into a life of ministry. I attended Multnomah University in Portland, Oregon. I graduated in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in Biblical and Theological Studies and a Concentration in Biblical Languages.

During the course of my studies at Multnomah, I discovered the Orthodox Church which answered many of the questions about the Christian faith that I had had for many years. It gave real definition to things that my previous faith had only touched on. Upon entering the church building for the first time, I had a moment of clarity that I will never forget. On the top of the iconostasis I noticed the icons of the Twelve Apostles. I puzzled over this only for a moment until suddenly it dawned on me that this church, whatever it was, had a true self-awareness of the fact that it was built on the foundation of these apostles. The rest is history. I was received into the Church at St. George Antiochian Church in Portland on Pentecost 2013 with the name Spyridon. My plans to enter ministry were put on pause as I focused on developing my Orthodox faith and other career skills. After college I started in landscaping, eventually starting my own small-scale operation. During this period, I met Ranae, and we were married in 2016 at St. Demetrios in Seattle.

I realized that having a landscape business would force us to lay roots deeper in Portland, while in our hearts we longed to be near family in the Puget Sound area. I then attended trade school to become a welder so that I would have more job flexibility. I have been working in welding and metal fabrication for the last four years. Some of the projects with which I have been involved include the Boeing 777x Autoclave, a passenger boarding station for Carnival Cruise lines, and submarine camels for Naval Base Kitsap, to name a few.

During these last four years we have been blessed with two children, three-year-old Marcella, and Anthony who was born this June. In March 2019 we settled in Tacoma. Since then we have been blessed to be here at St. Nicholas. This is a parish uniquely blessed with the sweetness of divine services and people wholly dedicated to their respective ministries. Fr. Seraphim in a recent message regarding Project 2020 called the narthex "a womb which births us into a new life each time we enter the Sanctuary through it." I share this vision for our parish: that those who enter through the doors of the church would be renewed continually, that they would find a safe haven, and that they would be able to share these same blessings with their children.

Cover Story

Though I have enjoyed my work the past few years, a desire to serve the church, and a sense of calling to the Priesthood have stayed with me. After prayerful consideration, receiving counsel from Fr. Seraphim, and with the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos, we are immensely grateful for me to have the opportunity to attend Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology as a seminarian of our beloved Metropolis. Please pray for us on the road ahead, that God would make the way straight, and that we would continue to be open to His will.

Ranae

I grew up in Bothell, Washington surrounded by a loving family and close church community at St. Paul Antiochian Church in Brier, WA. My parents set before me and my brother a beautiful example of prayer, love for God and the Church, and ministering to the needs of others. As I formed relationships with parishioners, I began to see the church as my second home. My faith was further nurtured by many youth retreats, St. John's monastery girls' camp, and getting to know our local priests. Experiences of ministry deepened my love for others, including homeless outreach, visiting the elderly, caring for children, teaching Sunday School, short-term mission trips to Mexico, and participating in the choir. Outside of church, I enjoyed cooking, playing piano, swimming, and track & field.

As I entered adulthood, I decided to pursue a degree in Elementary Education from Seattle Pacific University. I felt that this degree would fit most naturally with my love for children and learning. Following graduation in 2014, I received an elementary teaching position at Agia Sophia Academy, an Orthodox preschool and elementary school in Beaverton, Oregon. I quickly integrated into the community and developed trusting relationships with staff and families. Then in 2016, Aaron and I were married. After a few years of teaching I was asked to serve as the Interim Principal, a position which I held for two years. During this time, I learned a great deal about the inner workings of an Orthodox school, built even stronger ties among staff and families, focused on the spiritual life of the school, and developed a deep appreciation for Orthodox education.



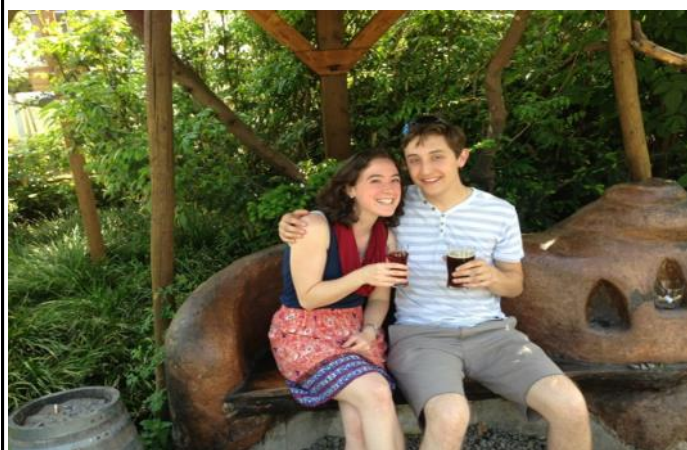
In summer of 2017, God blessed us with our daughter, Marcella. Becoming a mother was a life-transforming and a learning experience for me. I often recall the words that a seasoned mother shared with me, "Our children teach us how to be parents." As my focus changed to raising our daughter, Aaron and I decided that I would step down from my position and we would move north to be near both of our families.

Cover Story

In March 2019 we settled in Tacoma, close to St. Nicholas where we could enjoy a more consistent relationship with Fr. Seraphim, our spiritual father since 2015. Aaron and I have enjoyed being members at St. Nicholas and getting to know the people in our parish. Most recently in June, we welcomed our son Anthony. It is a joy to raise our children in the Orthodox faith, surrounded by friendly parishioners and a priest who loves us and challenges us. Within parish life, the areas that I feel passionate about are Orthodox education, intergenerational relationships, elderly care, and welcoming young families to grow the next generation of the Church.



Over the years of marriage and even before, Aaron and I have discussed his desire for ministry in the church and the opportunity of attending seminary. After years of waiting, seeking direction, and praying, God has opened the door to attend Holy Cross. We are humbled by this opportunity. We know that the education and experiences of seminary will be an invaluable preparation for us to serve the Church. We ask for your prayers as we embark upon this new chapter.



Cover Story



Congratulations to Aaron and Ranae

ST. NICHOLAS AKATHIST MINISTRY

MESSAGE FROM THE AKATHIST MINISTRY

Thank you for your devotion to the souls of our Orthodox family. Our St. Nicholas Akathist Ministry continues to comfort the family and loved ones of those who have fallen asleep.

I pray you have been blessed and felt the love that surrounds this ministry.

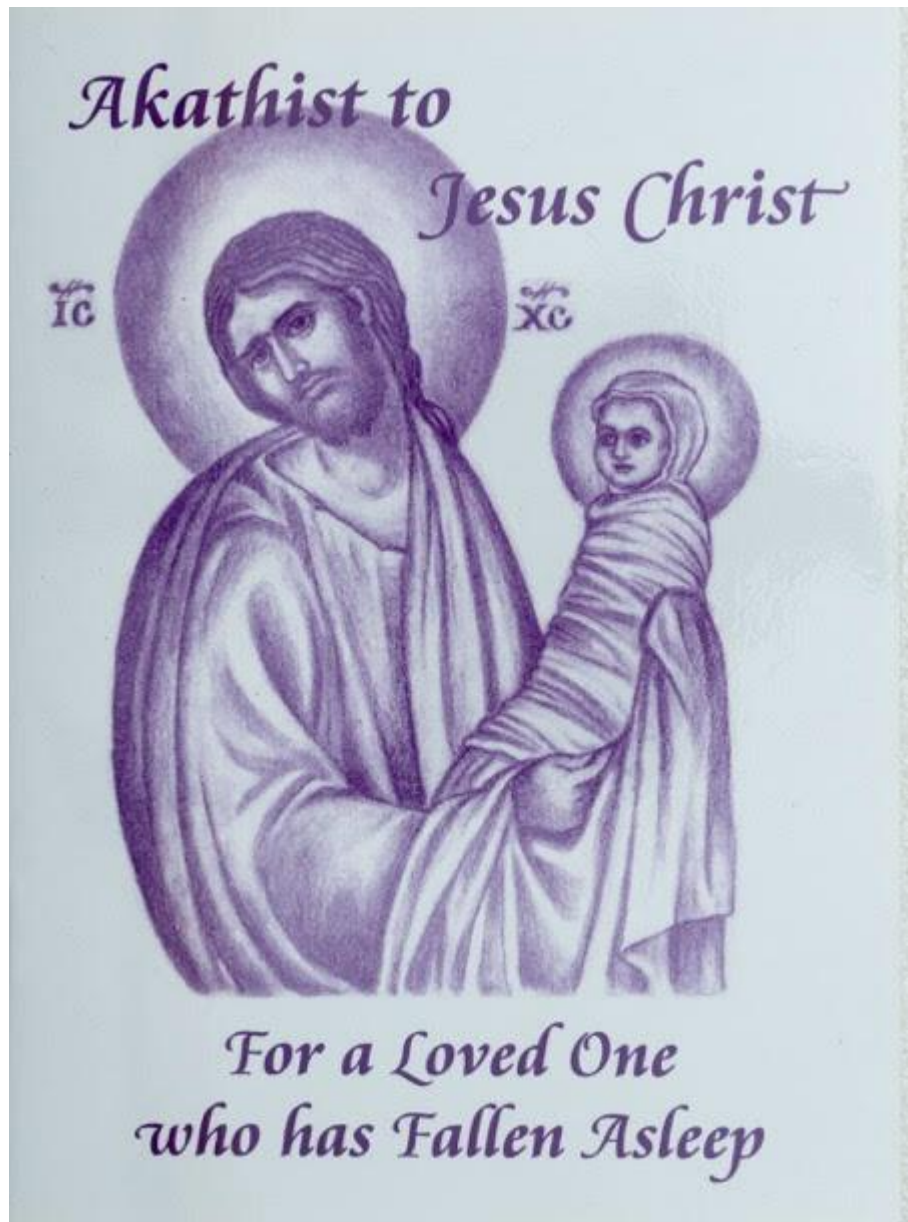
If you are interested in knowing more or would like to participate, please contact me.

Thank you again,

In Christ Love,

Kathy.

Submitted by Kathy Rowley



ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

St. Nicholas Bible Study just started a new study: "The Revelation" and Father Seraphim and I would like to send an invitation for all members of our parish to join us via Zoom. We meet either Tuesdays or Fridays (visit: stnicholastacoma.org and check the calendar for the monthly schedule) from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Please contact me, Genevieve: goobahoo@gmail.com or 253-359-0455 (phone or text) if you wish to receive up-to-date information and reminders and I will be glad to add your name and contact information to the list.

Below is the link to join the study by video or the phone number if you just want to participate by phone:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86022473583?pwd=cVU5Mm8vYyt4dGZsRkMybUZicUppUT09>

Meeting ID: 860 2247 3583

Passcode: 296104

Log in by phone:

1-253-215-8782

Father Seraphim shared two wonderful articles with us during the last couple of weeks of our Hebrews Bible Study and I would like to share them with all of you.

Stop Saying "Glory to God for All Things!"

January 8, 2019 by Death to the World



ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

A testimony offered by Hieromonk Synesios.

"A few years ago, I was the parish priest of St. Vasileios church (Piraeus) and was called to hear the confession of a young man, Xenophon, 42 years old.

When I arrived, his days were numbered. Cancer with rapid metastases had affected his brain too. He was all alone at the ward, the bed next to him was empty, so we were all alone.

This is what he told me about how he came to Faith, since he was a "hardened atheist" in his own words:

'I arrived here about 35 days ago, in this ward of two beds. Next to me was another patient, about 80 years old. He was suffering from cancer too, in his bones, and although he was experiencing excruciating pain, he was constantly praising the Lord "Glory to God! Glory to God for all things!" He also recited more prayers which I heard for the first time in my life since I was an atheist who had never set my foot to church. Often, all those prayers comforted him and he slept for a couple of hours. Then, after 2-3 hours, he woke up again from the excruciating pain, and he would start over "My Christ, I thank you! Glory be to Thy Name! Glory to God! Glory to God for all things!" I was moaning with my pain, and this patient at the next bed to mine was glorifying God. I was blaspheming Christ and the Theotokos, and he was thanking God, thanking him for the cancer which he had given to him, and for all the excruciating pain he was suffering.

I was so rebellious and indignant at this! Not only for the excruciating pain I was suffering, but also for his never-ending Doxology. He was also partaking daily of Holy Communion, while I was throwing up in disgust.

- 'Will you please shut up! Shut up and stop saying all the time 'Glory to God'! Can't you see that this God, Whom you are thanking and glorifying, this same God is torturing us with such cruelty? What kind of God this is? No, He does not exist!'

And the patient on the next bed would meekly answer me: 'He does exist, my child, and He is also a most loving Father, because with all this illness and pain, He cleanses me from my many sins. If you had worked on some rough task, and your clothes and your body stank, would you not need a rough brush to clean all this dirt? Likewise, God is using this disease as a balm, as a beneficial cleansing for my soul, in order to prepare it for the Kingdom of Heaven'.

His replies got even more on my nerves and I was blaspheming gods and demons. All my reactions were sadly most negative, and all I did was to keep on screaming: 'There is no God. ... I do not believe in anything. ... Neither in this God nor in His Kingdom ...'

I remember his last words: 'Wait and you shall see with your own eyes how the soul of a Christian who believes is separated from his body. I am a sinner, but His Mercy will save me. Wait, and you will behold and will believe!'

And that day came. The nurses wanted to place a screen, as is their duty, but I protested against and stopped them. I told them 'No, don't do this, because I want to watch how this old man will die!!!'

ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

So, I watched him and he was glorifying God all the time. He also said a few 'Hail, Unwedded Bride' for the Theotokos, which as I later found out, they are called 'Salutations'. He would also chant "Theotokos Virgin Mary ...", "From my many sins .." and "It is truly right to bless you, Theotokos ...", and he would also make the sign of the Cross a number of times.

Then ... he raised both of his hands and said "Welcome, my Angel! Thank you for coming with such a bright synodeia to take my soul. Thank you! Thank you!" He raised his hands a little bit more, he made the sign of the Cross, he crossed his arms on his chest and fell asleep in the Lord. Suddenly, the ward was filled with Light, like ten and more bright suns had risen all together, such was splendor of the light with which this ward was lit!" And not only was this ward lit, but a heavenly fragrance spread around, inside the ward, even outside the corridor, so powerful that those patients in the neighboring wards who were not asleep and could get out of their beds, they came out and started walking up and down the corridor, trying to discern where this special fragrance was exuded from.

Thus, my Father, I, the hardened atheist did believe and called for you to hear my Confession.'

*

Xenophon was firm and merciless with his old self, but the Mercy of our Lord was great, really great! He offered a clear confession, received Holy Communion a couple of times, and departed in deep repentance, in peace, a holy death, himself glorifying God!"

By Protopresbyter Stephanos Anagnostopoulos

St. Paisios and St. Euphemia



One day Father Paisios was going through a very difficult phase. A problem was created in the Church at that time and many bishops had gone to him to ask for his help. However, it was a very complicated problem and even if he wanted to, he was unable to assist; as he said, no matter from which side you look at the problem, you come face to face with a spiritual impasse. So, he decided to turn his efforts to solve the problem with prayer. During that time, Father Paisios constantly prayed for God to give solution to the Church's problem; he prayed especially to St. Euphemia: "St. Euphemia, you who miraculously solved the serious problem the Church was facing then, take the Church out of the present impasse!"

ST. NICHOLAS BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

One morning at nine o'clock, when Father Paisios was reading the service of the third hour, he suddenly heard someone discreetly knocking on his door. The Elder asked from inside: "Who is it?" Then, he heard a woman's voice answering: "It is me, Euphemia, Father."

"Which Euphemia?" He asked again. There was no answer. There was another knock on the door and he asked again. "Who is it?" The same voice was heard saying: "It is Euphemia, Father."

There was a third knock and the Elder felt someone coming inside his cell and walking through the corridor. He went to the door and there he saw St. Euphemia, who had miraculously entered his cell through the locked door, and she venerated the icon of the Holy Trinity, which the Elder had placed on the wall of his corridor, on the right-hand side of the Church's door. Then the Elder told the Saint: "Say, Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." St. Euphemia clearly repeated those words and immediately Father Paisios knelt and venerated the Saint. Afterwards, they sat and talked for quite a while; he could not specify for how long, as he had lost all sense of time while being with St. Euphemia. She gave the solution for all three matters he had been praying for and in the end, he said to her: "I would like you to tell me how you endured your martyrdom." The Saint replied: "Father, if I knew back then how eternal life would be and heavenly beauty the souls enjoy by being next to God, I honestly would have asked for my martyrdom to last forever, as it was absolutely nothing compared to the gifts of the grace of God!"

Submitted by: Genevieve



Pro-Life Ministry

ST. NICHOLAS PRO-LIFE MINISTRY



Alefu and Jetachew

The following is a beautiful story of bravery from our friends at Care Net of Puget Sound

In July 2012, I found out I was pregnant, and my boyfriend and I weren't prepared. When I told my boyfriend, he said, "Whatever you want, I'll support you." Though his response might sound like a positive thing, part of me thought, "He's not going to be here."

I knew he wanted to leave so I begged him to stay, telling him I'd get an abortion. We got the pregnancy confirmed and scheduled an abortion for a couple days out. My boyfriend left for Portland, and when it was time for the abortion, he was going to come up and join me.

After he left, I had more time to think. The night before my appointment I Googled "pregnancy help" and Care Net of Puget Sound showed up. I visited the website and called the first phone number I saw. I told the woman on the phone about my situation and my plans to get an abortion. She asked if she could schedule an appointment with me today or tomorrow before the abortion. I told her I'd plan on coming in tomorrow morning before my abortion.

That night I just kept praying, "Father, this is your son. You can take care of him better than I can. I can't do this. I can't raise him. I'm sorry. Please forgive me."

I didn't want an abortion, but I felt like I had no choice. That night (the night before the abortion) my boyfriend and I stayed at his mother's house since it was close to the abortion clinic. I remember sitting with the boyfriend and asking him, "Do you believe Jesus Christ is the son of God?" He said, "Yes." Somehow that just gave me hope to keep this child, and I began to think "Maybe I can do this."

Pro-Life Ministry

The next morning, I was at the abortion clinic when I realized I had missed my appointment with Care Net, but I thought, “No, I’m not going. I’m already here. I’m just going to do it.” The client advocate from Care Net called me and left a voicemail, but I didn’t listen to it.

As I sat in the parking lot of the abortion clinic, I texted a couple of friends to tell them what I was going to do. One friend, who I had just recently met, was begging me not to have an abortion and told me he would raise my child. Another friend called me, pleading, “Please don’t do it. My wife had an abortion and she still regrets it.” I was confused about why they cared so much. But God used these friends to change my heart.

At that moment, I decided I wasn’t going to have an abortion, and I felt so much peace. I knew I needed to look serious as I entered my appointment, but I was struggling to hide my joy. We walked into the abortion clinic, and when it was time for my appointment, I went back alone, and immediately told the nurse “I’m not going to do it.” She said, “Well, congratulations you’re going to have a baby!” She asked if my boyfriend knew, and I said he didn’t and that I’d tell him later. She said, “Well you’re going to have to wipe that smile off your face and there is a water fountain right there. Before you leave you need to put some fake tears in your eyes.”

The nurse led me to the procedure room, and I sat on the bed. When the doctor came in, she said, “I hear you’re having a baby!” The doctor knew I didn’t want my boyfriend to find out. So, she said, “we’re going to kill some time while your boyfriend waits.” She offered me an ultrasound, and I saw my baby was 6 weeks old. She showed me his heartbeat and pointed out his hands, and I just felt God’s presence in the room.

You don’t expect that to be your experience at an abortion clinic. You expect it to be all dark, but God is everywhere, and he is greater than any earthly presence. I could feel that he was there in that room.

The doctor gave me a card for a hospital and a prescription for prenatal vitamins. She said, “Now remember, you have to look sad because you’re leaving an abortion clinic.” I left the clinic with ultrasound pictures tucked away and my joy hidden.

Later that day, I listened to the voicemail from Care Net. The client advocate shared that she was just calling to check on me, and she wanted me to know that whatever decision I made, I was welcomed back at Care Net.

When I told my boyfriend that I didn’t have the abortion, he was very upset, and he left for Portland.

For the last 7 years, I’ve been a mom to the most beautiful boy in the world named Jetachew. I named him after my brother (his uncle) who was only 1-year-old when he passed away.

Since I chose to give life, more life has been added to me. Raising Jetachew hasn’t always been easy, but it is amazing to see how God works. Up to this day, He still supplies all our needs. There is not one day where I’ve ever wanted for anything. Everything I’ve ever needed; He has provided a way. Jetachew is amazing and truly a gift of God. He is 7 years old now, and such a funny and smart child.

Last year, I called Care Net back and now we are reconnected in such a special way. These people really cared about me and my unborn child. I truly believe it was the power of prayer that led me to choose life.

Today, I am a completely different person than I was 7 years ago. God has completely changed me, and he can do that for anyone. He has shown me that when you give your child to the Lord, your child is going to be great.

Pro-Life Ministry

To anyone out there struggling with a positive pregnancy test or just being a single mom, I want you to know that God loves your child more than you can ever love them, and you are not alone.

Love, Alefu

Submitted by: Genevieve



Ministry News



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.

LECHEM-ARTOS-BREAD

Following the Word Through Scripture

Scripture ... may guide again to the harbor of the divine will those adrift on the sea of life with a pilotless mind....Let us put forth Moses as our example for life...— St. Gregory of Nyssa

Last month we began the Book of Exodus. This book records a forty-year period of time when Moses and Aaron, descendants of Levi, led the children of Israel out of Egypt and on the journey to the promised land. The Hebrews, along with the mixed multitude who believed in the Hebrew God and came out of Egypt with them (Exodus 12:38), found themselves wandering in the desert for these forty years learning what it means to be a people set apart for God and what preparation is necessary in order to enter the promised land. This brings to my mind the end of the creed—*I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come*. So also the Hebrews were looking for life in the promised land; yet, we have been told a great many of them were not able to enter in.

Again from St. Gregory of Nyssa: *The day before the Sabbath is named the Preparation for the Sabbath. This day would be the present life in which we prepare for ourselves the things of the life to come.*

Moses has journeyed back to Egypt, his brother Aaron came out to meet him, and the two of them together appeared before Pharaoh. The ten plagues have already occurred, many miraculous things have happened, and the people have been protected by God whose glory is visible to them as a cloud and as a pillar of fire. God opened up the Red Sea and they crossed it on dry land. He closed the sea over their pursuing enemy, who were all slain. The people danced and sang a victory song. Then they headed out into the wilderness. Uh oh, the wilderness, a desert, a wasteland. Where's all the milk and honey? Where's the good life? Where are the pots of meat and the loaves of bread? Here in the Wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai, the recalcitrant people are complaining. They think they are complaining against Moses and Aaron, but really it is against God. And God tests them. He will provide a miraculous kind of bread, manna, Angel's bread, six days a week. Here is the scriptural account:

Ministry News



MOSES BEFORE "I AM THE EXISTING ONE" IN THE BURNING BUSH

*Exodus 16:3-5: The children of Israel said to them [to Moses and Aaron], "Would we had died, smitten by the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the pots of meat and ate **bread** to the full. For you brought us out into this desert to kill this whole assembly with hunger." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain **bread** out of heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, **that I may test them**, whether they will walk in my law or not. So it shall be on the sixth day, they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."*

*Exodus 16:8, 12: Also Moses said, "The Lord's glory shall be seen when he gives you meat to eat in the evening, and in the morning **bread** to the full: for the Lord hears your complaints you make against Him. But what are we? Your complaints are not against us but against God..."the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with **bread**. Then you shall know I am the Lord your God.'"*

*Exodus 16:15: (In the morning when the dew lifted the ground was covered with a small round substance, white like coriander seed.) So when the children of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is this?" For they did not know what it was. Thus Moses said to them, "This is the **bread** the Lord gives you to eat." They were instructed to gather it and on five days of the week to leave nothing over for the next day, but some of them did, and it rotted and bred worms.*

*Exodus 16:22: So it was on the sixth day they gathered twice as much **bread**, two omers for each one; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.*

*Exodus 16:29: "Behold, for the Lord has given you this day as the Sabbath; therefore, on the sixth day He gives you **bread** for two days. Let every man remain in his house; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." Some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather, even though they had been told there would be no manna that day. And the Lord said, in verse 28: "How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? Behold, for the Lord has given you this day as the Sabbath; therefore..."*

*Exodus 16:32: Then Moses said, "This is the thing the Lord commanded: 'Fill an omer with the manna to be kept for your generations, so they may see the **bread** you ate in the desert when the Lord led you out of the land of Egypt.'" Aaron put an omer of manna in a golden pot and laid it up before the testimony to be kept.*

Commentary: In his book, *The Life of Moses*, St. Gregory of Nyssa comments on the manna in two places; first in Book I, *The History*, chapters 36-38, and second in Book II, *Contemplation of the Life of Moses*, chapters 137-146.

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From Book I, The History, chapters 36-38: ... "Then the most incredible marvel of all occurred: Food did not grow out of the earth in the customary manner but fell like dew from heaven. For the dew was poured out upon them at daybreak and became food for those who gathered it. What was poured out was not drops of water as in the case of dew but crystal-like drops in the shape of coriander seed, tasting as sweet as honey. With this marvel was seen also another: those who went out to gather the food were all, as one might expect, different ages and capacities, yet despite their differences one did not gather more or less than another. Instead, the amount gathered was measured by the need of each, so that the stronger did not have a surplus nor was the weaker deprived of his fair share. In addition, the history tells another marvel. Each one, when making provision for the day, laid up nothing for the morrow, but when some stingy person did store up some of the daily food for the next day, it became inedible, being changed into worms. The history offers yet another astounding feature of this food, for one of the seven days of the week was observed by rest in keeping with a mystical ordinance. On the day before the day of rest, the same amount of food flowed down as on other days and the effort of those gathering it was the same, yet what was gathered was found to be double the usual amount, so that their need for food was no excuse for breaking the law of rest. Divine power was shown even more in that, whereas on other days the excess became worthless, on the day of Preparation for the Sabbath (which is the name of this day of rest) alone did what was stored up remain imperishable so that it in no way appeared to be less fresh than the new."

In Book II on the Contemplation of the Life of Moses, chapters 137-146, St. Gregory takes his comments to another level. For instance, he says that the food provided was both varied and uniform, uniform in appearance, but varied in quality, for it conformed itself to each person's desire, whereby we learn of what we need to purify ourselves. He ties the manna to the mystery of the virgin, because the bread is the Word who changes his power in diverse ways to suit those who eat, becoming milk, meat, greens, or whatever is appropriate to and desired by the one who receives him. He talks about the manna in connection with accumulating material things and points out to the covetous that the insatiable greed of those always hoarding surplus (I think of the farmer in the Gospels who had a super harvest and planned to build himself a bigger storage barn in order to keep it all for himself) is turned into worms "the next day," the next day being the future life, and he adds "He who hears 'worm' certainly perceives the undying worm which is made alive by covetousness." (Mark 9:48, Isaiah 66:24) Then he says that there is a time we should gather, that time being when what is gathered does not corrupt (I think of Mary at the feet of Jesus), because that will be useful to us when we come to rest after death. He calls this life the day before the Sabbath, which is named the Preparation for the Sabbath. And he talks about seeds sown and fruits harvested, "*For he who sows in the field of the spirit, Scripture says, will get from it a harvest of eternal life, but he who sows in the field of self-indulgence will get a harvest of corruption out of it.*" (Galatians 6:8)

To be continued...

Deborah Talbot--

Beginning quotes and commentary from *The Life of Moses*, by St. Gregory of Nyssa, found at <http://www.newhumanityinstitute.org/pdf-articles/Gregory-of-Nyssa-The-Life-of-Moses.pdf>

Ministry News

PHILOPTOCHOS

President's Message

St. Nicholas Philoptochos Food Drive-

We depend on our community to help us with our festival and now we want to give back to our community. The critical need for non-perishable food continues. To address this need, we are holding a food drive to assist an existing organization, Families United Network, that works from the University Place Presbyterian Church (UPPC) in University Place.

We are continuing to collecting food donations during the **month of October at the church**. As of September 18, 2020, we had collected funds of \$350 and 5+cases of canned foods for the food drive. If you are unable to shop for groceries, please consider a monetary donation that we will use to purchase food for our drive. (Please make your check out to Ladies Philoptochos-memo food drive.) For those attending church on Sundays there will be a box in the upper hall by the kitchen for drop off of canned items.

Food items needed are: Canned chili & canned tuna/chicken. Please make sure products are within expiration dates. NO GLASS containers. No cans larger than 15 1/2 oz. Please call Kalitsa Xitco at (253) 312-6312 or Gus Chamales at (605)691-3423 if you can assist or have questions about this project.

Adopt A Student-His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos and the Metropolis Philoptochos oversee the returning and new students at Hellenic College/Holy Cross in Massachusetts. St. Nicholas chapter adopted Emmanuel Aspiotis in fall, 2019. He is a seminarian attending Holy Cross in the Masters of Divinity program. His home parish is St. Demetrios, Tucson, AZ. He will be attending classes in a virtual mode for fall semester.

Recently our fellow parishioner Aaron Rice enrolled as a student at Holy Cross. The Metropolis has asked that we not adopt a student from our parish. However, we will continue to encourage and support our fellow St. Nicholas seminarian in our prayers as he and his family begins this journey.

Philoptochos Member Meetings-The chapter board members will be holding monthly meetings by Zoom starting on September 26. The September meeting will be held to discuss and approve the budget for 2020/2021. The calendar of events is posted in the Messenger. We invite members and interested parishioners to join these meeting and share their thoughts

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

Philoptochos Calendar 2020

Date	Event	Notes	Chair
FEB 14	VALENTINE BAGS FOR HOMEBOUND		Marian Palas
FEB 15	MEETING	NO MEAL @ 10:00 am	Jane
FEB 29	LADIES LUNCHEON MTG	ELMERS 11:00 am Planning Committee (Hostesses, chairs etc.)	
MAR	LENTEN MEALS		Presbytera Sophie
MAR 21	MEETING --	NO MEAL @ 10:00 am	Jane
APR 11	PALM TYING/LUNCH		Presbytera Sophie
APR 12	PALM SUNDAY DINNER		Hoddi/Marrilee
APR 12	PASCHA BAGS FOR HOMEBOUND		All
APR 19	PASCHA		
MAY 9	MOTHER'S DAY FLOWERS		Sally
MAY 16	LADIES SPRING LUNCHEON		Committee
MAY 23	MEETING	Celebration Dinner - Need committee	
MAY 24	VETERAN'S LUNCHEON	VETERANS PROGRAM by Gus Chamales	Merrilee, Diane, Hoddi
JUNE 20	FATHER'S DAY BREAKFAST		
JULY 18	CAMP AGAPE	Training for camp July 18-25	
JULY 21	CANW Kafeneion	Provide Appetizers from St. Nicholas Philoptochos	Hoddi, Jan, Marian and Yvonne

Meetings at the church suspended, for now

Commemorating Saturday of Souls



Ministry News

Sunday School News

“When are we going to have Sunday School again? I miss it!” Oh, how these precious words from one of our precious little ones touched my heart as they walked out of church last Sunday. It must be difficult for the children to understand what’s going on and for the parents to navigate their family through it all. Remember to pray for our families, especially now as the children and youth have started another school year with all of its challenges and uncertainties. And one day soon, God willing, we will swing the classroom doors wide open and welcome the children back to Sunday School with open arms!

20 Activities for Families to Do Together

1. Dust & wipe all the icons in your home
2. Clean one room in your home per day
3. Randomly open up your Bible - read & discuss the passage you land on
4. Go on a walk together
5. Cense your home while chanting hymns
6. Play charades
7. Read one Psalm out loud together
8. Share 3 positive things from each day with one another
9. Put on a play based on a favorite Bible story
10. Have a dance party
11. Learn the patron saint hymns (apolytikia) for everyone in your family: bit.ly/menaion
12. Go through all your toys and decide if any can be given away to those in need
13. Go through family photo albums together
14. Facetime/call any people that you know are alone during this time
15. Go for a drive and take in the scenery
16. Build a fort
17. Paint icons of your family’s patron saints
18. Set a plate for Christ at your dinner table as a reminder that He is always with you
19. Go on a virtual field trip using this link: bit.ly/virtual-fieldtrip
20. Sit together in silence for 5 min with an icon of Jesus in front of you

Ministry News

Comfort Food for Families - YouTube Video Series

In response to this unsettling time, the Center for Family Care (a ministry of GOA) created a series of video reflections designed to inspire family devotion time and offer spiritual "comfort food" for all. There are 27 videos your family can view and discuss together.



Here's the link to #25 Comfort Food for Families - Stress: https://youtu.be/uXqgxVgRf_M

~ Sheila Auter

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.

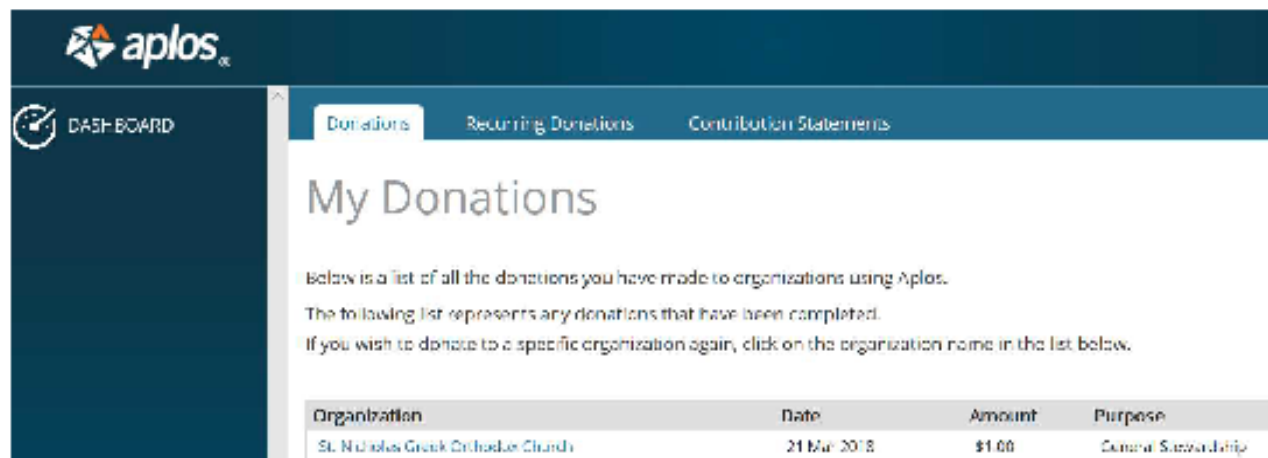
I want parishioners to enjoy greater flexibility in making Church donations and receiving an accounting of their annual to date contributions at any time of the year. Many of you have asked and inquired about the possibility of accounting for your donations automatically on-line. It is now a reality.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



2020 STEWARDSHIP CARD

ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH TACOMA, WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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.



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

Fr. Seraphim Majumdar

Please PRINT your information clearly

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

(Psalm 34:10)

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

2020 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT

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

I/We offer a minimum stewardship pledge of \$...../year or \$...../

month in 2020 to support God’s work.

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

SIGNATURE.....

Name (F/M/L):
DOB (M/D/Y):
Email:
Telephone:
Spouse:
DOB (M/D/Y):

Email:
Telephone:

Household Information

Address
City/St/Zip

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

..... (Y/N)

..... (Y/N)

..... (Y/N)

..... (Y/N)

Saint Nicholas Messenger

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church

1523 S Yakima Ave

Tacoma, WA 98405

Address Service Requested

