

FEB-MAR 2023



Greek Orthodox
Metropolis of
New Jersey

Saint Andrew Family News

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

ICON: *Restoration of the Holy Icons- Sunday of Orthodoxy – March 5th*

Godparents' Sunday – February 5th

Super Bowl Saturday TAKE OUT – February 11th

25th of March Program HAS – March 19th

Saint Andrew Family News

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

On Sundays we celebrate

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

For other services please check our website or call the office

OFFICE HOURS

Mon – Fri 10am-4pm

☎: 973-584-0388

Fax: 973-584-3573

E-mail info@standrewgonj.org

Web site <https://www.standrewgonj.org/>

NJ Metropolis Web: www.njgoarch.org G.O. Archdioceses Web: www.goarch.org

Father John Theodosion, *Editor in Chief*

2023 PARISH COUNCIL

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The Saint Andrew Family News is published monthly except in July and August and is distributed free of charge to all members. Submissions are accepted **only as electronic files, (via e-mail attachment)**. Pending availability of space and permission from Editor-in-chief, submissions will be in next month's issue.

Please submit your articles and information on time to

Vasiliki (Bessie) Petrakos info@standrewgonj.org

*Deadline for the **APRIL ISSUE** is March 16th*

Please find magazine issues on our web site <https://www.standrewgonj.org>

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DIVINE SERVICES

FEBRUARY

Wednesday	1	ST. TRYPHON OF PHRYGIA / RELICS*
Thursday	2	THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR IN THE TEMPLE
Sunday	5	Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion Begins [Godparent's Sunday]
Monday	6	ST. PHOTIOS, PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE
Friday	10	ST. HARALAMBOS THE MARTYR / RELICS*
Sunday	12	Sunday of the Prodigal Son
Saturday	18	FIRST Saturday of Souls <i>(with Kollyva)</i>
Sunday	19	Judgement Day (Meatfare Sunday)
Saturday	25	SECOND Saturday of Souls <i>(with Kollyva)</i>
Sunday	26	Forgiveness Sunday Cheesefare Sunday Forgiveness Vespers at 4:00pm
Monday	27	Office of the Great Compline @6:00pm GREAT LENT BEGINS

MARCH

Wednesday	1	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:00pm
Friday	3	1 st Salutations @6:00pm
Saturday	4	THIRD Saturday of Souls <i>(with Kollyva)</i> [ST. THEODORE commemorated]
Sunday	5	Sunday of Orthodoxy
Monday	6	Office of the Great Compline @6:00pm
Wednesday	8	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:00pm
Friday	10	2 nd Salutations @6:00pm
Sunday	12	Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas
Monday	13	Office of the Great Compline @6:00pm
Wednesday	15	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:00pm
Friday	17	3 rd Salutations @6:00pm
Sunday	19	Sunday of the Holy Cross
Monday	20	Office of the Great Compline @6:00pm
Wednesday	22	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:00pm
<i>Friday</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>Great Vespers at Evangelismos GOC, Jersey City, NJ</i>
Saturday	25	ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS Orthros at 8am Divine Liturgy at 9am Greek Independence Day "THE 25 TH OF MARCH"
Sunday	26	Sunday of St. John Climacus HAS Greek Independence Day Program
Monday	27	Office of the Great Compline @6:00pm
Wednesday	29	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:00pm
Friday	31	Akathyst Hymn @6:00pm

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

Weekdays: Orthros begins @ 8AM & Divine Liturgy @ 9:15AM

*(We have this saint's Relics at our Saint Andrew Reliquary) **

ΙΡΕΣ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΕΣ

ΦΕΒΡΟΥΑΡΙΟΣ

Τετάρτη	1	ΤΡΥΦΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΣ* / Λείψανα
Πέμπτη	2	+Η ΥΠΑΠΑΝΤΗ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ
Κυριακή	5	ΙΣΤ΄ Λουκᾶ (Τελώνου καὶ Φαρισαίου) - Αρχάς Τριοδίου [Godparent's Sunday]
Δευτέρα	6	+ΦΩΤΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ, ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΗΣ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΕΩΣ
Παρασκευή	10	+ΧΑΡΑΛΑΜΠΟΣ ΊΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΣ * Λείψανα
Κυριακή	12	ΙΖ΄ Λουκᾶ (τοῦ Ασώτου)
Σάββατο	18	Α΄ Ψυχοσάββατον (με κόλλυβα)
Κυριακή	19	Κυριακή τῆς Ἀπόκρεω
Σάββατο	25	Β΄ Ψυχοσάββατον (με κόλλυβα)
Κυριακή	26	Κυριακή τῆς Τυροφάγου Μέγας Εσπερινός <u>ώρα</u> 4:00μμ
Δευτέρα	27	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ [Νηστεία]

ΜΑΡΤΙΟΣ

Τετάρτη	1	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Παρασκευή	3	Α΄ Χαιρετισμοί - <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Σάββατο	4	Γ΄ Ψυχοσάββατον (με κόλλυβα) ΑΓΙΟΥ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ
Κυριακή	5	Κυριακή Α΄ τῶν Νηστειῶν (τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας)
Δευτέρα	6	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Τετάρτη	8	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Παρασκευή	10	Χαιρετισμοί - <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Κυριακή	12	Κυριακή Β΄ των Νηστειῶν - Γρηγόρου του Παλαμά Ἀρχιεπ. Θεσσαλονίκης
Δευτέρα	13	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Τετάρτη	15	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Παρασκευή	17	Γ΄ Χαιρετισμοί - <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Κυριακή	19	Κυριακή Γ΄ των Νηστειῶν - τῆς Σταυροπροσκυνήσεως
Δευτέρα	20	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Τετάρτη	22	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
	24	Εσπερινός στην Εκκλησιά JERSEY CITY ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ
Σάββατο	25	Ο ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ «25η Μαρτίου» Ὁρθρος - <u>ώρα</u> 8πμ & Θεία Λειτουργία - <u>ώρα</u> 9.15πμ
Κυριακή	26	Κυριακή Δ΄ τῶν Νηστειῶν - τοῦ Ὁσίου Πατρός ἡμῶν Ἰωάννου τοῦ συγγραφέως
Δευτέρα	27	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Τετάρτη	29	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ
Παρασκευή	31	Γ΄ Χαιρετισμοί - <u>ώρα</u> 6μμ

Την Κυριακή – Ὁρθρος - ώρα 8.15πμ & Θεία Λειτουργία - ώρα 9:30πμ
Τις καθημερινές – Ὁρθρος - ώρα 8πμ & Θεία Λειτουργία - ώρα 9.15πμ
(ἔχουμε τα Λείψανα του Αγίου στην Λειψανοθήκη της εκκλησία μας)*

DIVINE SERVICES

APRIL

Sunday	2	Sunday of Mary of Egypt
Monday	3	Office of the Great Compline @6:00pm
Wednesday	5	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:00pm
Saturday	8	LAZARUS SATURDAY – at 9:00am Orthros & Divine Liturgy
Sunday	9	Palm Sunday - Orthros & Divine Liturgy @8:45am The Service of the Nymphios @7pm
Mon- Sat	10 - 15	HOLY WEEK SERVICES
Sunday	16	HOLY AND GREAT PASCHA Agape Service @11AM
Friday	21	Renewal Friday - THEOTOKOS OF THE LIFE-GIVING SPRING
Sunday	23	THOMAS SUNDAY +SAINT GEORGE
Sunday	30	Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing Women (GID Parade in NYC)

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

Weekdays: Orthros begins @ 8AM & Divine Liturgy @ 9:15AM

ΙΕΡΕΣ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΕΣ

ΑΠΡΙΛΙΟΣ

Κυριακή	2	Κυριακή Ε' τῶν Νηστειῶν - Ὁσίας Μητρός ἡμῶν Μαρίας τῆς Αἰγυπτίας
Δευτέρα	3	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6.00μμ
Τετάρτη	5	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6.00μμ
Σαββάτο	8	ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΛΑΖΑΡΟΥ <u>ώρα</u> 9.00ΠΜ Ὁρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία
Κυριακή	9	Κυριακή τῶν Βαΐων Ἡ Ακολουθία του Νυμφίου <u>ώρα</u> 7μμ
Δεύτερα-Σάββατο	10 - 15	ΙΕΡΕΣ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΕΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΗΣ ΕΒΔΟΜΑΔΑΣ
Κυριακή	16	Κυριακή Α' τοῦ Ἁγίου Πάσχα -Ακολουθία του Εσπερινου της Αγάπης
Παρασκευή	21	ΖΩΟΔΟΧΟΥ ΠΗΓΗΣ
Κυριακή	23	Κυριακή Β' τοῦ ΘΩΜΑ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΑΣ
Κυριακή	30	Κυριακή Γ' τῶν Μυροφόρων (Παρέλαση στην Νέα Υόρκη)

Την **Κυριακή** – Ὁρθρος - ώρα 8.15πμ & Θεία Λειτουργία - ώρα 9:30πμ

Τις **καθημερινές** – Ὁρθρος - ώρα 8πμ & Θεία Λειτουργία - ώρα 9.15πμ



Souper Bowl TAKE OUT GYRO & SOUVLAKI

Feb 11 SATURDAY 11am-6pm

order & take out all your favorites

more information on menu to come

need volunteers ... please contact

Nick Monokandilos 973 462 3192



MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION

Αποκριάτικο Γλέντι

Feb 19 | Sunday 4– 9 pm

Hosted by our **P**arent & **T**eacher **A**ssociation at the Saint Andrew **C**ommunity Center

- ▶ DJ Entertainment ▶ Serving Delicious Food ▶ Tricky/Tray & 50/50
- ▶ Traditional dances performed by our Jr. dance group & GOYA dancers

Tickets: ages 18+ \$50 | ages 5-17 \$25 | under age 4 \$5

Sales in church on Thursday nights & Sundays | Look for more info in Weekly Bulletin
RSVP deadline Feb. 10th - \$5-dollar additional charge per person after 2/10/23



Keeping A Fasting Mentality During Lent

by Fr John Theodosion

As we enter this very important time of the year which we call the Great and Holy Lent we think of a few prominent images. The first is the Resurrection of Christ and Easter Sunday which we are preparing for during Lent. Other images we have are the Xeratismoi services and of course the fasting. For some of us the fasting becomes one of the central acts in which we participate during lent. Another image which I have heard referring to this time of year is a spiritual running race. Each year as we struggle to grow spiritually and to follow the teachings of Christ more closely, we can think of ourselves as athletes who are running a race for Christ. And as we run this race during the year, we come to this time called Holy Lent. We can think of it as the time to sprint during the last leg of a race.

And just as athletes have training and nutritional requirements so we Orthodox Christians have special nutritional and spiritual training requirements. When we refer to special nutritional requirements, we of course refer to abstinence from certain foods. When we refer to spiritual training requirements, we can think of these as guarding our thoughts, actions and increased prayer. I think it is unfortunate that sometimes we begin to think so much about what foods we will have stop eating, that we become like our brothers and sisters in other churches who have to "give up something" for Lent. I remember when I was in grade school that some kids gave up bubble gum and others gave up candy. They gave these things up in order to remind themselves that Christ made a tremendous sacrifice for us when he was hung on the cross. Being mindful of the sacrifice of Christ is very important, but we as Orthodox Christians have much deeper and more beautiful



ways to gain from the experience of Fasting and Great Lent. Lent is not only about sacrifice, but it is about growth. It is about becoming better Christians and about obtaining the virtues that we see in Christ and the saints. The saints are those who through virtue and good works have achieved salvation, and we should keep in mind that our ultimate goal in life is to become unified with Christ achieve salvation and be more Christ like in our daily lives. In the Bible, we

have as our example Christ Himself and we also have His teachings. Lent has been given to us as our opportunity to give increased concentration to achieving these goals.

One way that we can help achieve these goals is by improving our relationship with God. We do this by praying more often and more sincerely. Prayer, both at church and at home, help us know God and better understand His expectations for us, and through prayer we enter a real relationship with Him. We can thank Him and share our worries and our joys with Him. God will be close to us like our nearest and dearest relative or friend; someone that you know intimately and knows you the same way. I have heard that a person can be a theologian of the Church by studying the writings of the Church fathers and the Bible, but this person will never truly know God until he or she learns to pray to Him. The Church Fathers say that the true theologian is a man or woman of prayer, and this is because prayer is the only way to have a close relationship with God.

There is one priest I know who recommends that each person should establish a daily schedule for prayer. He says that we should pick a quiet time during the day to say our prayers. We should also

pray throughout the day by talking with God and This Lent as we continue our spiritual sprint to the finish line of the Resurrection, we should not only concentrate on the foods we should fast from, but we should also keep in mind the actions we should stay away from. St. John Chrysostom says, "not only should the mouth fast, but the eyes and the legs and the arms and all the other parts of the body should fast as well.

Let the hands fast, remaining clean from stealing and greediness. Let the legs fast, avoiding roads which lead to sinful sights." He also says that we should not see immorality with our eyes, and we should fast with our hearing because "the fast of hearing is not to accept gossip and false accusations against others." As well, we should consider doing acts of kindness throughout the day by using our physical being to bring the love of Christ to those who need it. It is important to have a comprehensive view of the Lenten fast and avoid the narrow view which only concentrates on the abstinence of food.

So, as we learn to fast from food and sin, the abstinence from these things may create in us a physical hunger, but we can fill this void with a divine nourishment. St. Clement of Alexandria says that this "divine nourishment consists of faith, hope, love, patience, knowledge, peace and prudence." Now I know that some of you are saying to yourselves Fr. John these things don't sound like they're too filling. But Christ himself said "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The reason I say that divine nourishment

sharing with Him whatever is on our mind.

is more filling is **because it is more fulfilling**. Think about it. Once the food you have eaten has been digested it is no longer satisfying, but the virtues of faith, hope, love, patience, knowledge, peace, and prudence, bring about a fulfillment which lasts. These virtues foster good works which bring blessings upon both the people who do them as well as the people who receive them.

Friends, we have mentioned so many things regarding the Great and Holy Lent. But after all this is said, each of us must still remember that our fasting, if it is true fasting will be a real fight and probably, we shall fail many times. But the very discovery of Christian life as a fight and effort is the essential aspect of fasting. A faith which has not struggled to overcome doubts and temptation is seldom a real faith. No progress in Christian life is possible without the bitter experience of failures. This is important to keep in mind as we approaching Holy Lent, because we have many days to go to reach the finish line of the Resurrection, but if we persist and keep in mind the nutritional and spiritual training requirements that we need, we will be able to say like St. Paul says in 2nd Timothy "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that day, and not to me only, but also to all who have loved His appearing." Amen.

Godparent's Sunday February 5th

Please join us as we celebrate and pray for this special relationship and ask for God's blessing for godparents and godchildren everywhere.

Let us make it a Day for Godparents, Godchildren, Family and Friends to Worship God Together.

Following the Services please join us in the social hall for fellowship and refreshments.



Are you willing to spend a little time to confidentially tell us what our Parish can do to better serve your and your family's needs?

47%

of cradle Orthodox have left the church

64%

of young people fall away from the church

21%

of Greek Orthodox Christians regularly attend Church

99%

of Parishes are dependent on festivals & fundraisers to fund their operations

WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW!

THE CHALLENGE

The statistics prove our Orthodox parishes are at a critical turning point. We can and must address these disturbing trends now.

EFFECTIVE PARISH ASSESSMENT

Orthodox Ministry Services (OMS) worked with over 500 Orthodox parishes and on strategic plans covering 26% of U.S. Orthodox Christians to develop a powerful Effective Parish Assessment (EPA) survey.

This EPA survey will help us determine which of the 6 Pillars and 30 Building Blocks of operational excellence require our immediate attention. It will also provide us a roadmap to address our biggest challenges.

OUR PARISH OPPORTUNITY

OMS is providing this invaluable Effective Parish Assessment Program to our parish for FREE.

If you give your parish less than 30 minutes to complete a simple, online survey, we will have the information we need to create a much stronger, healthier, and loving Christ-centered community.

You can help improve our parish with this small investment of your time.



To begin our EPA survey, visit www.effectiveparish.org/survey or scan the QR code.



SUPPORTED BY:



Please complete our Effective Parish Assessment now.



Greek Orthodox
Metropolis of
New Jersey

SAINT ANDREW GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Rev. John Theodosion
Pastor

PARISH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE BOARD 2023

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Maro Nicolaou Schuster

Herbert Schuster

Mike Serghiou

Dear fellow Parishioners:

The attached financial summary for our fiscal year ending December 2023. We concluded the year with expenses paid exceeding income for a second year in a row -- this year by \$38,138, even though we managed to spend less than our budgeted expenses by \$63,284. Our income, after being below budget most of the year, actually closed the year above our budget estimate by \$17,170, largely due to strong Stewardship payments and other donations in December, along with the commencement of rental income from the Little Village school.

At year end, our cash available for expenses remained at an uncomfortably low \$89,885, or only about \$15,000 above a typical month's expenses. We like to maintain an unrestricted cash balance for two month's expenses, or about \$145,000, in order to have sufficient funds to meet unexpected repairs and expenses.

The recent expenditures for the new carpeting and restoration of our pews were paid out of restricted donations for those purposes, and therefore play no role in our reduced cash available to meet regular expenses. But it will be important to replenish our reserve funds for capital improvements and major repairs. As we look to the future, we are going to face many challenges for properly maintaining our church facilities, and will eventually incur the following significant costs:

- Resurfacing our parking lot as our patch-work repairs are simply not lasting anymore
- Many parking lot posts have failed, and the entire group need to be replaced and rewired
- We also need to begin setting funds aside for repair work to our gym air conditioners, installed nearly 20 years ago

We ask that you consider these upcoming needs in your support for our church. Thank you.

Pete Petrou,
Outgoing Treasurer

St Andrew Financial Summary 2022

	Jan-Dec	Budget	\$ over Budget
INCOME			
CONTRIBUTION INCOME	506,667.07	468,050.00	38,617.07
EDUCATION/DANCE NET INCOME	34,014.66	34,000.00	14.66
SUMMER CAMP NET INCOME	-	400.00	(400.00)
FUNDRAISING EVENTS NET INCOME	170,933.96	207,500.00	(36,566.04)
OTHER INCOME	56,503.89	41,000.00	15,503.89
TOTAL INCOME	768,119.58	750,950.00	17,169.58

EXPENSE

STAFF EXPENSE	322,707.14	382,741.00	(60,033.86)
CAR EXPENSE	12,585.35	12,000.00	585.35
INSURANCE EXPENSE	69,885.61	74,525.00	(4,639.39)
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	4,488.30	5,375.00	(886.70)
EQUIPMENT	3,641.68	6,000.00	(2,358.32)
BANK CHARGES	4,740.24	6,950.00	(2,209.76)
MORTGAGE PAYMENT (Principal & Interest)	133,724.76	133,725.00	(0.24)
TELEPHONES/INTERNET EXPENSE	5,252.00	5,700.00	(448.00)
ADVERTISING	832.74	1,500.00	(667.26)
PERMITS	-	300.00	(300.00)
LITURGICAL	-	2,500.00	(2,500.00)
UTILITIES	70,990.25	54,500.00	16,490.25
SUPPLIES & PRINTING EXPENSE	27,941.35	32,500.00	(4,558.65)
BLDG & GROUNDS EXP.	56,412.84	49,900.00	6,512.84
POSTAGE & HANDLING	5,105.17	4,500.00	605.17
MINISTRY EXPENSE	79,513.35	79,625.00	(111.65)
EVANGELISM/OUTREACH	2,378.07	11,000.00	(8,621.93)
CONVENTIONS & SEMINARS	6,058.45	5,000.00	1,058.45
TRANSPORTATION	-	1,200.00	(1,200.00)
MISC.	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENSE	806,257.30	869,541.00	(63,283.70)
NET CASH RECD (SHORT)	\$ (38,137.72)	\$ (118,591.00)	\$ 80,453.28

From Operations

Unrestricted Cash 12/31/21	128,022.83
Cash generated (used) this year	(38,137.72)
Cash Balance 12/31/22	89,885.11

1447 Sussex Turnpike Randolph Nj 07869 Tel 973-584-0388 Fax 973-584-3573
 Web: www.standewgonj.org Email: info@standewgonj.org



A Parish Council is the administrative body of a Church community elected by its stewards for the purpose of working together with the Parish Priest or Proistamenos in fulfilling the mission and goals of that community.

Historically, clergy and laity have worked together in dealing with matters of the Church's life. The Parish Council is an example of the synergy of clergy and laity; it is a vehicle for implementing the ongoing mission of the Church and planning the necessary strategies, policies, procedures, and activities that will enable the Parish to move forward in accomplishing God's work.

Elections for the Parish Council were held on December 18th, 2022. We'd like to welcome back our six re-elected Parish Council members to serve in 2023-2024-2025: Athena Borzeka, Thomas J. (TJ) Borzeka, Pavlos Giannikopoulos, Steven P. Mitrakos, John A. Paxos, and Peter C. Sedereas.

On January 15th Parish Council Members took the following Oath of Office: *"I, _____, do solemnly affirm that I will uphold the dogma, teaching, traditions, holy canons, worship and moral principles of the Greek Orthodox Church, as well as the Charter and Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, and that I will faithfully and sincerely fulfill the duties and obligations required of a member of the Parish Council. So help me, God."*

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our returning Parish Council members for their hard work over the past years for their commitment to the community of Saint. Andrew. We look forward to your many contributions in the New Year.

DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE NEWS

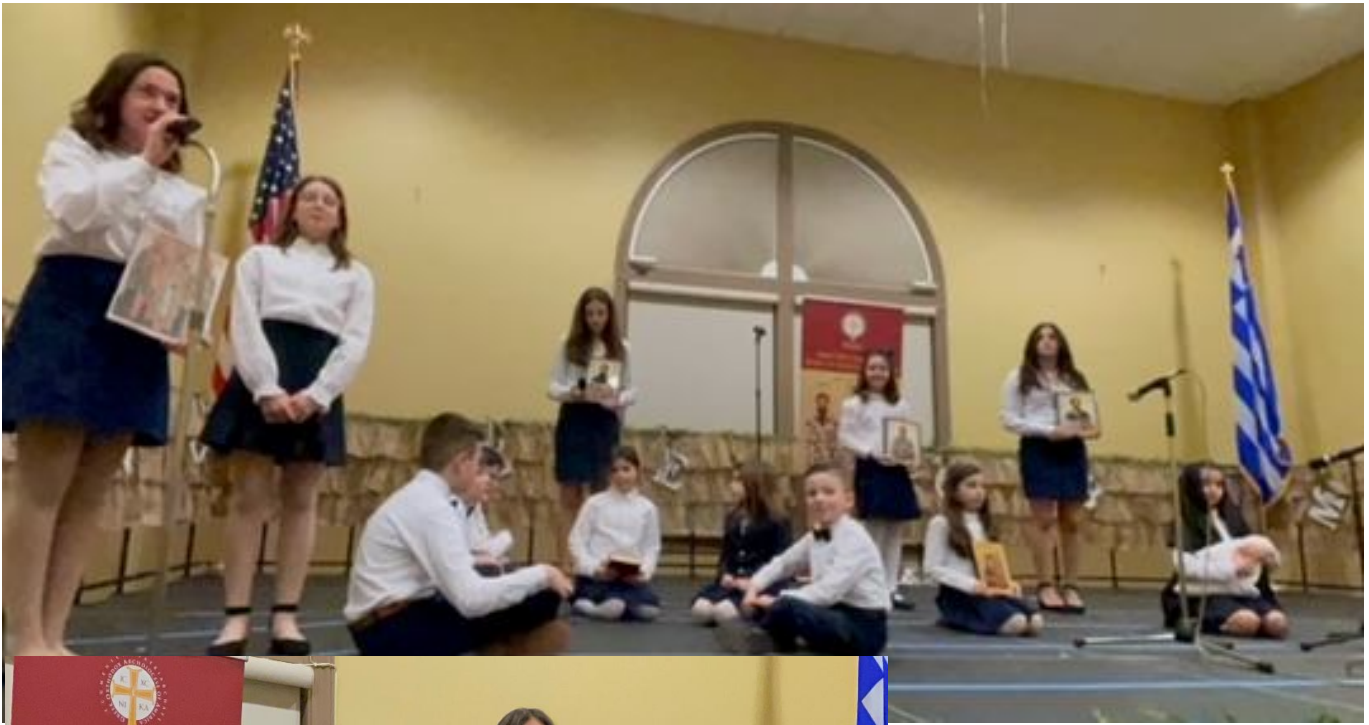
The Daughters of Penelope is a wonderful organization which plays a vital role in our Saint Andrew community. The last few months have been action packed. On December 3rd, our chapter, Alexander #250, participated in Christmas Jingo held in Ocean, NJ and then kept the spirit alive by assembling 80 empowerment bags and distributing them on Christmas Eve at the Faith Soup Kitchen. These bags included, towels, wash cloths, socks, hats, scarves, gloves, body wash, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, candy and more! The children's bags had all of the basics as well as blankets and games to make these children feel loved and seen. Special thanks to all of our sisters who contributed to this cause.



A special shout out to Sisters Dimitra Pallis and Jennifer Mantzas for their extraordinary efforts! On Friday, January 13th, our chapter hosted a wine, cheese and art lecture, "Go Van Gogh!" Our lecturer was Michael Norris who shared his vast knowledge with us. Many thanks to Sisters Georgia Haglund and Anna Kavalos for arranging the event and refreshments.

We have so much planned for the months ahead. From Family Night Bowling, Salute to Women to the Broadway Show, "Six." We continue to plan meaningful events and welcome all women to become part of our growing Sisterhood. For more information on our organization, please contact Eleni Boyadjis at eboyadjis@aol.com



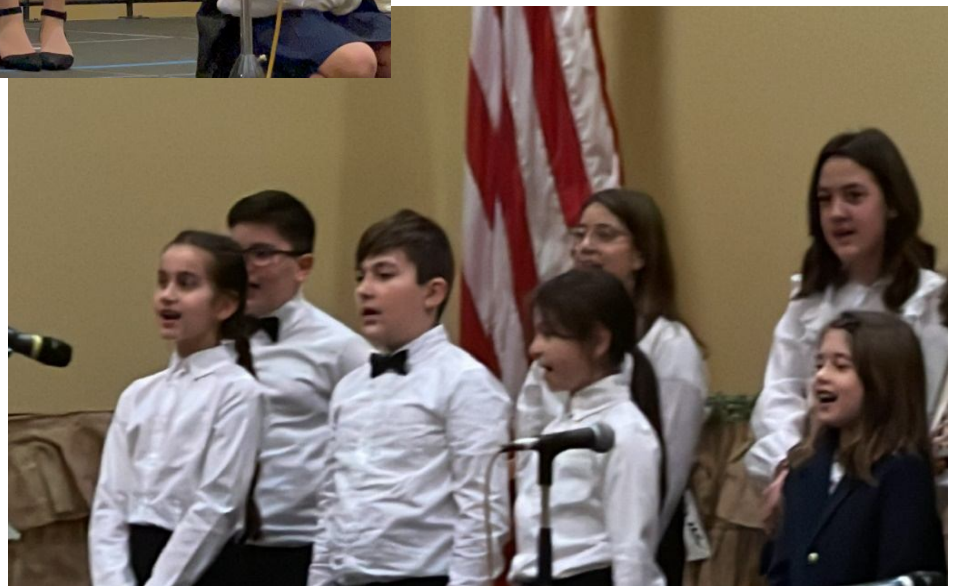


Hellenic Afternoon School (HAS)

On January 21, 2023, several students from the Saint Andrew Hellenic Afternoon School participated in the Metropolis Greek Letters Day and Three Hierarchs Celebration. The students and teachers worked consistently together for weeks in preparation for this special event.

We are so proud of our students as they recited poems and left the audience in awe when singing “ΘΕΡΙΣΤΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΧΑΡΑΣ.” Congratulations to all the students and the teachers for representing Saint Andrew Hellenic Afternoon School!

Χρόνια Πολλά!
ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΟΝΟΥ!





Ζήτω η 25η Μαρτίου!



*On **March 25th**, we commemorate the beginning of the fight for Greek independence in 1821 against the Ottoman Empire. We celebrate our past with a deep sense of pride as we remember our Hellenic ancestors and honor the sacrifice, they made so many years ago.*

Those fighting, with both the sword and the pen, understood that knowledge and education is fundamental to Hellenism. We at Saint Andrew Hellenic Afternoon school want to enrich and encourage our children to become young Hellenes through education.

Hellenic Afternoon School Program

25th of March Greek Independence Day Program will be held in the gym on
Sunday March 26th.

Please join the students and their families as we commemorate 25th of March
It is a double Celebration as we observe the "THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS"
as well as our national holiday of the "GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY".

GOYA NEWS



December is always a great time for GOYAns, we love singing Carols for people that can't normally come to church or haven't gone in a long time and spreading Christmas Cheer, seeing the people's faces light up while we sing to them and give them pillows and κουλουράκια is always such a treat and a highlight of our year. The Christmas dance followed weeks after and it was very fun, it was nice seeing our fellow GOYAns from other churches since it had been quite a while since the last dance we've seen them. We thank Trenton for hosting 2022's Christmas Dance and We look forward to the Valentine's Dance in February at Holmdel.



A GOYA Alumni, Antoni Bulko recently had his Court of Honor Ceremony for him reaching the Rank of 'Eagle Scout' in Boy Scouts. It was a beautiful ceremony and his Eagle Scout Project, the 27/7 Self-Serving Food Pantry that is outside our Church today was blessed, if it weren't for Antoni it would not be there. We will miss him when he is in Florida and wish him luck in his Future endeavors.



Now our GOYAns are getting ready for Sights and Sounds which is happening on the 4th of March. We will have our Play, instrumental group and much more. Wish us Luck! Thank you for Reading.

Evangelos Clapsis

ANTHONY BULKO

EAGLE SCOUT

JULY 18, 2022

On January 7, 2023 Anthony "Antoni" Bulko had his Eagle Scout Court of Honor at Saint Andrew, officially granting him the highest rank achievable in the Boy Scouts of America (BSA).

Only 4% of all Boy Scouts make it to Eagle Scout. The process involved advancing through 6 earlier ranks, earning a total of 21 merit badges, completing an independent "Eagle Project" in service to the community (Antoni constructed a self-service, outdoor food pantry on the property of Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox Church in Randolph, NJ), and an appearance before BSA senior leadership for a final Board of Review that confirms all requirements were met.

Congratulations, Antoni, **AXIOS!** *και σε ανώτερα!*
We at Saint Andrew are proud of our youth, and you are a wonderful example of that.



Inflation and our Church

By: Jaime Andrews

Saint Andrew Stewardship Committee Member

Lately, it seems we cannot go a day without hearing about inflation and its effect on the economy. But have we considered how inflation impacts our Church?

As stewards we are called to prayerfully consider many factors including how much we can financially donate in support of Saint Andrew and its ministries. Now, more than ever, inflation is affecting all aspects of life which is why it is important to understand how this, in turn, impacts our Church.

Inflation is generally understood to mean that the price for goods and services is rising, and subsequently, purchasing power is falling. What does this mean for us and the Church? It means that a donation made at one point in time may not hold the same value in the future. For example, if in the year 2000 we put \$1 into the basket on Sundays, we now need to double our donation to

have the same financial impact. And if a candle was \$2 in 2020, just 3 short years later in 2023, that same candle now costs at least 15% more.

Inflation is an economic reality we all must face, and the Church is not immune to its effects either. However, there are ways to counteract this influence such as pledging to give a larger amount upfront or putting that extra \$2 or \$3 into the basket on Sundays. In addition, setting up a recurring donation through our new on-line giving platform, **Abundant Giving** (<https://abundant.co/standrew/give>), can be an effective way to ensure our giving remains consistent and can also be easily increased over time. By understanding inflation and taking the time to plan for our giving, we can make certain that our donations have the greatest impact on Saint Andrew and its ministries.

One day, a person complained to his priest that the Church and Christianity is one continual “give, give, give.” To which the priest replied, “Thank you very much for the finest definition of Christianity I have ever heard. You’re right, Christianity is all about a constant “give, give, give.” God giving His only Son to the world to show His unconditional love. His Son Jesus giving His life on the cross to forgive our sins and destroy death. Then our Lord’s disciples giving all they had to make sure God’s Good News of love was preached to all people everywhere. They not only gave away their homes and businesses, but even gave up their lives as martyrs in gratitude to God!





March 5th, 2023, is Sunday of Orthodoxy
vereneration of icons is an integral part of Orthodoxy

Reflection

The veneration of icons is an integral part of Orthodoxy, from which it cannot be separated. That the veneration of icons appears to some people the same as idolatry is no proof against icons.

To the Jews it seemed that Christ worked miracles by the power of Satan and not God, and to the Romans it seemed that Christian martyrs were ordinary sorcerers and magicians.

Saint Nicephorus said to Leo the Armenian, the iconoclastic emperor: "An icon is a divine thing, but not to be worshipped." Then he explained how God commanded Moses to make a serpent of brass and to raise it in the wilderness, even though just before this He had commanded: Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image (Exodus 20:4).

The latter He commanded in order to save the chosen people from the idolatry of the Egyptians, and He commanded the former that He, the One and Most High God, might manifest His power through a visible thing.

In the same manner He manifests His power through icons. This is His holy will and our aid for salvation. If icons are things of little significance or even idolatry, why would many of the holiest and most spiritual men and women in the history of the Church have suffered to the death for icons?

[From The Prologue of Ohrid by St. Nikolai Velimirovic](#)



Venerate Icons by Becoming One: On the Sunday of Orthodoxy

20 March 2016

PRIEST PHILIP LEMASTERS

One of the great dangers of our age is the tendency to set our sights too low, to expect too little of ourselves and others. It is so appealing to think that being true to ourselves means indulging every desire and finding fulfillment by getting whatever we want at the moment. It is so easy to envision our neighbors and even God in our own image, as though the meaning and purpose of all reality boils down to whatever makes us comfortable here and now. The blessed season of Lent, however, calls us to an entirely different way of life that reveals the holy beauty for which God created us in His image and likeness.

Today we celebrate the restoration of icons to the Orthodox Church at the end of the iconoclastic controversy, during which emperors ordered the destruction of images of our Lord, the Theotokos, and the Saints in the name of opposing idolatry. Of course, icons are not false gods to be

worshiped, but visual symbols of the salvation that the incarnate Son of God has brought to the world. They reflect the true humanity of Jesus Christ, as well as how people like you and me may participate in His holiness in every dimension of our lives. They remind us not only that we are surrounded by "a great cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1) who have gone before us, but that our Savior calls and enables us to join them in shining radiantly with the divine glory, even as we live and breathe as flesh and blood.

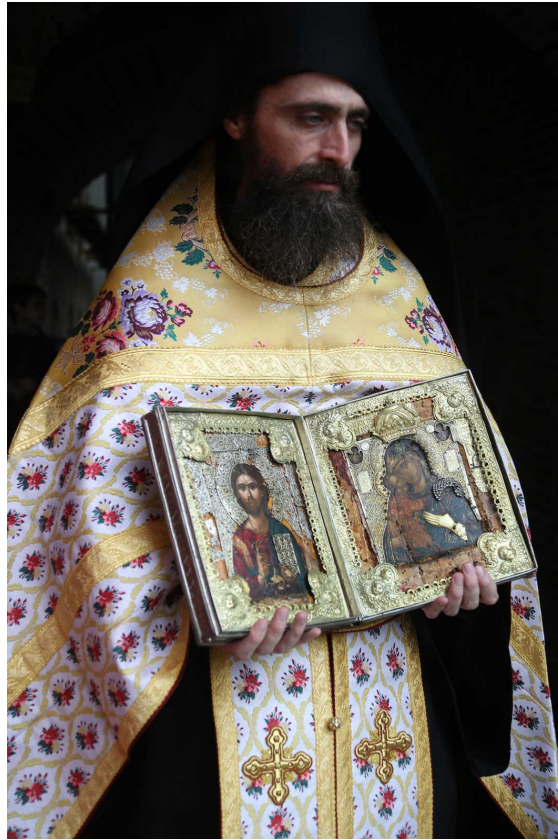
When we make a procession after Liturgy today with our icons, we will proclaim that our identity is not determined by whatever is popular, easy, or appealing. As those created in God's image and likeness, we will never be fulfilled by the false gods of this world, such as indulgence in money, power, and pleasure in its various forms. We are called to something much higher, for Christ told

Nathanael that he would “see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” (John 1:51) He comes to make us all participants in the divine glory by grace.

At the end of the day, the only way to answer that calling is by becoming better icons of Christ, better visible and tangible witnesses of His salvation. That is why we must fast from whatever keeps us from radiating the holy light of God. It is why we must refuse to feed our tendencies to dwell on the failings of others. It is why we

must starve our inclination to speak words of self-righteous judgment and condemnation. It is why we must abstain from indulging in actions that harm, weaken, or take advantage of anyone. It is why we must refuse to nourish our passions by allowing into our eyes, ears, and stomachs anything that enslaves us to self-centered desire.

Even as we turn away from what diminishes us in the divine likeness, we must also feast on what helps us embrace more fully our true identity in



Christ. That means putting our souls on a steady diet of prayer; of reading the Bible, the lives of the Saints, and other spiritually edifying works; and of mindfulness in all things such that we remain alert to the spiritual significance of what we think, say, and do. The more that we fill ourselves with holy things, the less appetite we will have for unholy things.

The journey of Lent is not about punishment or legalism, but instead about helping us grow personally into our exalted identity as those called to share in the eternal life of our Lord. It is about turning away from the

idolatry of self-centeredness in order to become a more beautiful icon of the divine glory. It is about refusing to set our sights low concerning what it means to be a human being in God’s image and likeness. It is about crucifying our self-centered desires so that we may enter into the holy mystery of Lord’s cross and resurrection. For it is through His Passion that we will “see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

[Search for "Venerate Icons by Becoming One: On the Sunday of Orthodoxy" | A Russian Orthodox Church Website \(pravmir.com\)](#)

Our Church has partnered with St. John’s Ukrainian Church in Whippany to collect items for the people and children of Ukraine. They frequently ship to Ukraine and have allowed our Church to drop off items.

They desperately need new or gently used

HEAVY COATS, SHOES, & BLANKETS

Please drop off in our social hall through February and March.

Αγαπητοί μας ενορίτες του Αγίου Ανδρέου του Morris County,

Ευχαριστίες και δοξολογίες οφείλουμε στον Άγιον Θεόν και Ιησούν Χριστόν που μας αξίωσε να γιορτάσουμε τα εξήντα χρόνια της φιλάτης μας κοινότητας. Οι παλαιοί σαν και εμάς θυμούνται με πόσες θυσίες φθάσαμε εδώ που είμαστε σήμερα.

Ξεκινήσαμε με 27 μόνον οικογένειες και οι περισσότεροι συνάδελφοι πίστευαν ότι ο Άγιος Ανδρέας δεν είχε δυνατότητα να ζήσει και να αναπτυχθεί. Οι περισσότεροι περιμέναν πως σύντομα θα κλείσει και θα διαλυθεί η κοινότης. Μόνον ο αείμνηστος Πατήρ Αλούπης έλεγε: «Ο Άγιος Ανδρέας θα γίνει μία μεγάλη κοινότης και καλή κοινότης». Και όλοι όσοι ευρέθησαν τις ημέρες αυτές παρόντες στις γιορτές διεπίστωσαν την προφητεία του Πατέρα Αλούπη.

Πράγματι ήταν ένας άθλος η Κοινότης του Αγίου Ανδρέου. Οι παλαιότεροι θυμούνται την μικρή εκκλησιούλα (Union και River Street του Dover). Μετά από ένδεκα χρόνια φύγαμε από το Dover και κτίσαμε πρώτα την εκκλησία. Δεν πέρασαν πολλά χρόνια και αναλάβαμε την ευθύνη για την κατασκευή του Κοινοτικού Κέντρου που απολαμβάνετε τις ευκολίες του σήμερα. Τα κτίρια βέβαια είναι να εξυπηρετούν τις πνευματικές και κοινωνικές ανάγκες όλων μας. Δεν έχετε σήμερα να ασχοληθείτε με κτίρια. Πρέπει να ευχαριστήτε τον Θεόν και τον Άγιον Ανδρέα που ευλόγησε την μεγάλη προσπάθεια όλων μας.

Σας παρακαλούμε να εκτιμήσετε τις θυσίες που έκαμαν όλοι εκείνοι που σας ετοίμασαν αυτά που έχετε εσείς και οι γενεές που έρχονται. Ο σκοπός της εκκλησίας είναι να μας φέρει κοντά στο Θεό. Αυτό σημαίνει να ζήσουμε όπως θέλει ο Θεός ο οποίος είναι όπως λέγει η Αγία Γραφή: «Ο Θεός αγάπη εστί» και ο μένων εν τω Θεώ μένει εν τη αγάπη του Χριστού, ο οποίος θυσιάστηκε και απέθανε στον Σταυρό γιατί μας αγάπησε όλους και μας edίδαξε ο ένας να αγαπά τον άλλον μέχρι θυσίας.

Αγαπητοί μου, οι εκκλησίες δεν είναι μόνον να μαθαίνουν τα παιδιά μας την Ελληνική γλώσσα και τους Ελληνικούς χορούς, αλλά προπάντων να

δημιουργούν χαρακτήρες και να προβάλλονται σαν παράδειγμα μέσα στην κοινωνία. Να είναι οι καλοί εργάτες και με το καλό τους παράδειγμα να κρατούν το μέτωπο ψηλά για να ακολουθούν και οι ερχόμενες γενεές.

Οι γονείς να προσπαθούν να δίδουν το καλό παράδειγμα στα παιδιά τους, που είναι το μεγαλύτερο αγαθό στον άνθρωπο. Είναι μεγάλο λάθος να βάζουμε τα χρήματα σαν σκοπό ζωής. Γιατί εάν ζουν με χριστιανικό παράδειγμα, θα κάνουν χρήματα, τα οποία με κόπο και τιμιότητα θα έχουν αποκτήσει. Κανείς δεν παίρνει τίποτε μαζί του. Μόνον ό,τι καλό ή κακό έχουμε κάνει, αυτό μας ακολουθεί μετά θάνατον. Και γι' αυτό θα έχουμε είτε αμοιβή, είτε τιμωρία.

Αυτό το τελευταίο δεν είναι και δεν πρέπει να περάσει απαρατήρητο. Είναι το πιο σοβαρό και αληθινό γεγονός. Ο μεγαλύτερος θησαυρός είναι να μπορέσουμε να οδηγήσουμε τα παιδιά μας στο δρόμο του Θεού. Γι' αυτό το παράδειγμα των γονέων είναι εκείνο που βοηθά τα παιδιά μας. Οι γονείς να σέβονται ο ένας τον άλλο γιατί όλοι μας είμαστε εικόνες του Θεού. Ο Θεός έπλασε τον άνθρωπο «κατ' εικόνα Θεού και ομοίωση». Εάν αυτό μένει στη σκέψη μας, τότε δεν υπάρχει ποτέ κίνδυνος να διαλύονται οικογένειες, αλλά θα επικρατεί ο σεβασμός του ενός προς τον άλλον.

Αγαπητοί μας ενορίτες, αγαπήστε τον Χριστό με την καρδιά σας και ο ένας τον άλλον. Αυτό είναι το μυστικό της Χριστιανικής και Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας. Μετατρέψτε το Morris County σε ένα κομμάτι του παραδείσου. Ας γίνει η Κοινότης του Αγίου Ανδρέου το καλό παράδειγμα για όλους. Θα θέλαμε η πρεσβυτέρα μου και εγώ να σας ευχαριστήσουμε για την αγάπη σας με την οποία μας περιβάλατε τις λίγες αυτές ημέρες. Εκείνους που μας οδήγησαν με τα αυτοκίνητά τους σε διάφορες εκδηλώσεις, εκείνους με τα δώρα τους και όλους για τον ενθουσιασμό που μας δεχτήκατε. Εμείς δεν θα παύσουμε να προσευχόμαστε για όλους σας είτε είμαστε στη ζωή είτε όχι.

Ευχαριστούμε όλους εκείνους που με κάποιον τρόπο μας πρόσφεραν τα δώρα τους και όλους εκείνους που μας ευκόλυναν με το αυτοκίνητό τους στις διάφορες εξόδους, γιατί εμείς πλέον ούτε άδεια οδήγησης έχουμε, ούτε αυτοκίνητο οδηγούμε.

Και πάλι σας ευχαριστούμε για την αγάπη σας και για τα δώρα σας και ευχόμεθα ο Θεός να ευλογεί τον καθένα σας, τις οικογένειές σας και την κοινότητά μας. Ο Θεός και ο Άγιος Ανδρέας να είναι οδοδείκτες και να σας οδηγούν στον δρόμο του Θεού. Ο Θεός να σας ευλογεί όλους σας. Καλές γιορτές και καλή χρονιά!



*Με αγάπη Χριστού
Πατήρ Κωνσταντίνος, Πρεσβυτέρα Σπυριδούλα*

Our dear parishioners of Saint Andrew in Morris County,

We should thank and glorify our God and Jesus Christ for allowing us to celebrate the 60th anniversary of our beloved community. The elder ones like me remember the many sacrifices it took for us to be here today.

We started with only 27 families and most of my colleagues believed that Saint Andrew would not be able to live and grow. Most of them expected the community to close and disperse. Only the memorable Father Aloupis said: “Saint Andrew will become a big community and a good community”. And all who were present at the celebrations these days realized the truth in Father Aloupis’ prediction.

Indeed, the Community of Saint Andrew was an achievement. The older ones remember the little church (Union and River Street in Dover). After eleven years we left Dover and built the church first. Not many years later we took up the responsibility to construct the Community Center which you are now enjoying. Of course, the purpose of the buildings is to serve the spiritual and social needs of all. There is no need to worry about

the construction today. You should thank God and Saint Andrew who blessed our great effort.

Please appreciate the sacrifices made for you and the generations to come. The purpose of the church is to bring us close to God. This means we should live according to the will of God, who as the Holy Scriptures say “God is love and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him”. Jesus sacrificed himself and was crucified because He loved us all and taught us to love one another and make sacrifices.

My beloved, churches are not only a place where our children learn the Greek language and the Greek dances, they are mostly a place where characters are built and make a good example to society. Characters who are good workers and who with their good example keep their head up high for the generations to come and follow.

Parents, try to make a good example for your children, who are most precious to you. It is a big mistake to have money as the only purpose in life. Because if you live according to Christian beliefs, you will make money with hard work and honesty.

Nobody can take anything with him. The only thing that follows us after death is whatever good or bad we have done. And for that we will either be praised or punished.

What I mentioned above is something which you shouldn't pass by. It is a serious and real issue. The biggest treasure is to be able to guide our children to God's path. The parents' example is what helps our children. Parents should respect one another because we are all icons of God. God created man "in the image and likeness of God". If we keep that in mind, then there is never the danger of families breaking up, the respect of one towards another will prevail.

Our beloved parishioners, love Jesus with all your heart and love each other. This is the secret of the Christian and Orthodox Church. Transform Morris County to a piece of paradise. Let the Saint Andrew Community set the good example to all.

My presbytera and I would like to thank you for the love with which you surrounded us these past few days. We would like to thank those who drove us to various events, those who offered us presents and all of your excitement to welcome us. We will never stop praying for all of you either we are in this life or not.

Thank you for the gifts we received and for making it easy for us to go to various places by driving us in your own cars as we do not have a driver's license any more nor do we have a car to drive.

Thank you again for your love, your gifts and we pray that God blesses each one of you, your families and our community. May God and Saint Andrew guide you to God's path. God bless all of you! Happy holidays and Happy New Year!.

In God's love,
Father Konstantine, Presbytera Spiridoula

Adaptation by Maria Kirittsis of Athens GR



2022 has been the best year for helping the US Marines

"Toys for Tots" program

Saint Andrew has collected and delivered just under
500 toys to the Marines on Saturday December 17th

Thank you for everyone who contributed and helped with this
worthy cause.

PARENTS' CORNER

By Alexandra Protopapas

DATING: "Ma. I said Ma! Why can't I go on a date?"

It's February – the month of love for many. New Generation, new ideas, social networking, new "DATING" ideas? Adolescents - Teens!!! (Just remember you were one too!) What is a date? Is it a romantic dinner with candlelight, a walk in the park, or attending a football or basketball game? Maybe playing a game together online? Is it a connection online only, with the possibility of meeting? Do you, as a parent, see danger in this? Could all these things be called a date? Dating is a social activity in which a *couple* spends time together getting to know each other. Dating can be formal or informal. Formal dating is when one person invites another to a planned event. This type of date is more structured. This could be a dance, a prom, or an awards dinner. Most teen dating is informal. This is when they spend time together in a relaxed environment usually in a group rather than alone as a couple. Your teen may not even call going to a game with a member of the opposite sex a date! Dating styles have become more casual, and today even the girls ask the boys out for dates and make the arrangements. Teens date to develop close relationships with members of the opposite sex and by doing so, they learn how others think and feel. They get to know others as individuals with their own unique characteristics.

Today, social networking is how adolescents communicate and it is not a bad way to connect with people. They connect with friends from church, school, and family gatherings, but sometimes they connect with people they have never met! Warn your teens about connecting with "strangers" as someone who may say they are 16 may be much



older! There are predators out in the "social media world" so warn them about certain sites.

As a parent, you must decide when your teen asks to go on a *couple only* date. I know what you are worried about! The kissing and hugging may progress to something you don't want to think about. However, your teen is going to mature and eventually through dating, he or she will learn more about other people, themselves, and the qualities they eventually will desire in a marriage partner. They learn how to communicate, negotiate, and increase their social skills. Some dating relationships develop into friendships, and some end after one date. A dating relationship that becomes more serious may develop into what you worry about – that your teen may feel pressured to deal with his or her sexual feelings. Learning to control these feelings can help them avoid serious psychological and physical risks. As a parent, when you communicate with your teens "about the birds and the bees", it is important to teach them that saying no is a healthy, responsible, and mature response. Discuss not only pregnancy, but the risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases, (STDs). Encourage social group interaction with other teens in GOYA or school activities and do not shelter your teen because they will sneak behind your back. When your teen has a special someone – you will know it. After all, maybe you went through the dating process yourself, and this is the time to go back in time and think how painful and wonderful infatuation was when you had a crush on someone of the opposite sex. Teens today are exposed to a lot more than we were when we were teens, and

they are more educated about the risks of being sexually active. The word date isn't even used anymore, but I like the sound of it when it involves "going out" with a person of the opposite sex.

Valentine's Day is coming, wait, it is here! Do you not think that every teen dreams about having someone special for that box of chocolate, flower, teddy bear? Not every teen will have that, but the desire is there. As your adolescent grows and

matures, he or she will learn about the differences between infatuation and love. There is nothing wrong with talking and communicating with your teens about dating and infatuation and love! That time will come for them, so for now, give them time to meet different people and trust their judgment that they will make correct choices. Finally, don't take the fun of Valentine's Day away from your teens, and let them know that it is a day to share as "friendship" not necessarily "Love".

My Table Prayer Guide prayer this month is from:

*Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow –
Nineteenth Century*

(Daily prayer for the beginning of the day)

O Lord, grant me to greet the coming day in peace. Help me in all things to rely upon Your holy will. In every hour of the day, reveal Your will to me. Bless my dealings with all who surround me. Teach me to treat that all who come to me throughout the day with peace of soul and firm conviction that Your will governs all. In all my deeds and words guide my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events let me not forget that all is sent by You. Teach me to act firmly and wisely without embittering or embarrassing others. Give me strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day with all that it shall bring. Direct my will, teach me to pray, pray Yourself in me. Amen.

Feel free to e-mail me with your comments and suggestions for our "Parents' Corner" at: alexandraproto@gmail.com - Have a good month!

I would like to wish you all a Healthy and Happy New Year, 2023, and a great month of February!

(You can also find me on FACEBOOK under my name, Alexandra Alex Protopapas)

Alexandra Protopapas M.Ed.

Certified Teacher of the Handicapped and Social Sciences - Retired. Educational Services Commission of Morris County, (ESC) and currently assigned to Academy of St. Elizabeth part-time.

IONIAN VILLAGE
2023

GLYFA, GREECE

IV NEXT: JUNE 2 - JUNE 13
SESSION ONE: JUNE 19 - JULY 8
SESSION TWO: JULY 19 - AUGUST 7

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HISTORICAL AND PASTORAL RESPONSES TO THE FORTY-DAY CHURCHING OF INFANTS

PART TWO: PASTORAL RECOMMENDATIONS

by *Rev. Dr. Stelyios Muksuris*

In the **last segment**, (*the January 202 issue*) we examined the manuscript tradition that addressed the established practices of the churching rite within the Byzantine liturgical tradition. I now proceed to make my own suggestions for a uniform practice that is theologically sensible and pastorally sensitive.



Theological Reflection and Practical Recommendations

In accordance with the Church's theological stance as expressed by Symeon, and as Foundoulēs rightly affirms, all human life is sacred and worthy to be offered as a gift to God. In fact, an examination of the three pre-baptismal rites of the Church (First Day, Eighth Day, Fortieth Day) are replete with references to the praise of God for the gift of new life that has entered the world. All of humanity, represented by Adam and Eve, is redeemable and deserving of salvation. God grants a family and the Church a new life. In turn, the community of faith expresses great joy at this hope and reciprocates back to God her thanksgiving and glorification by offering the infant, God's ultimate expression of innocence and holiness, back to Him before His throne. It is

compelling to perhaps extend the meaning of "Thine own of Thine own gifts we offer to Thee, in all and for all" to this pre-baptismal rite. Every gift (*δῶρον*) from above deserves a gift in return (*ἀντίδωρον*) from below, which perpetuates the divine-human fellowship that constitutes our life in the Church.

Foundoulēs likewise adds, and rightfully so, that the issues at hand have absolutely nothing to do with an all-male priesthood, for "all of us are 'one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28), participants in the same blessings and inheritors of the same promises". Hence, it appears that the most ancient custom of the Church called for all children, baptized or not, to enter the sanctuary.

In response then to the questions raised by clergy with regard to the rubrical specifics of churching, based upon my own liturgiological research and

the data provided in the previous part, my recommendations are the following:

1. **The children should be brought into the holy altar by the priest.** According to the manuscript tradition, *ἐκκλησιασμός* was not simply their debut entrance among the faithful in the nave but an actual dedication of the children to God within the altar. There is no issue of clean or unclean; even the Catechumens entered the church and were then dismissed before the beginning of the Eucharistic Liturgy, as evidenced by the *Apostolic Constitutions*.
2. **Both genders should be brought into the altar.** However, the later modified practice of only males being carried before the altar table and females only to the three sides should be tweaked so that neither gender is carried in front of the altar table. That place is best reserved for the celebrant clergy. Consistency for both genders is important and corrects the biased practices that appeared in later Byzantium.
3. **Following the reading of the two couplet prayers in the churching rite (2 for the mother and 2 for the infant), the priest should carry the infant into the holy altar via the south door of the iconostasis, make three stops or bows with the child on the south, east, and north side of the holy table, and then exit through the north door of the icon screen, reciting the dismissal from the *solea* or first step of the *bema*.**

Allow me to add that it is pertinent for the prayers to move away from the language of condemnation of the mother (as if she has committed a heinous crime in giving birth to a new child). This sensible effort has already been done by others, and it moves away from the Old Testament stigma of uncleanness in blood flow,

which is theologically incompatible with the spirit of the Church's teaching on the sanctity of life.

In addition, I personally would like to see a prayer added that takes under consideration the role of the father and his reincorporation, if applicable, to the sacramental life of the Church, if he also has been absent with good cause from the assembly in order to assist his wife with the duties of the first forty days. The prayers referring to the mother, insofar as they talk about forgiveness and cleansing, are reminiscent of Old Testament kosher laws, but in fact they seek to reincorporate her into the communal life of the church, since she "intentionally violated" Canon 80 of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (Penthekte — Trullo, 681 AD), which excommunicates the faithful for absenting themselves from the Eucharist for three consecutive Sundays. The references in the first couplet of prayers for the mother speak about this reintegration. I believe eventually that these prayers need to be edited to include the father somehow. This will then definitively disconnect the Church's practice from the Old Testament misunderstanding.

Finally, although Foundoulēs believes this rite should not be done during the Divine Liturgy (*Ἀπαντήσεις εἰς Λειτουργικὰς Ἀπορίας [Answers to Liturgical Questions]*, volume 1, question 85), I think the appropriate place should be before the communion of the faithful, for the simple reason that the prayers offered here for the mother (and hopefully one day, for the father) lead immediately into the portion of the service that seals their reintegration into the community of faith, that is, their reception of Holy Communion. Foundoulēs' reservation, I believe, stems from his belief that the solemnity of the Eucharistic Liturgy is compromised when this rite is inserted into the greater liturgical context. However, there is ample historical precedent that at times, the prayer couplet for the mother was said at different times

from the prayer couplet for her child, usually in adverse circumstances. Hence, the child's churching could occur outside of the Eucharist, such as at Vespers and the mother could be blessed and immediately communed in the Divine Liturgy. Of course, this creates complications and is not always practical.

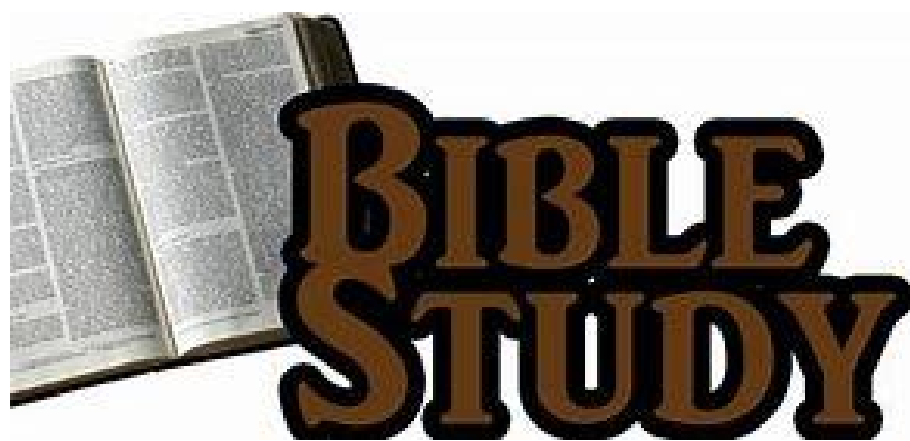
What I have done in the past in the parishes I have served is conduct the churching during the Eucharist, just prior to communion and in the presence of the people. I would then invite the parents, if both are Orthodox and have fasted properly, to receive the Eucharist first before the rest of the congregation, as the orders of the penitents and possessed did when they were led by the bishop from the narthex into the nave to assume their rightful place again among the faithful.

In closing, another suggestion that may sound like a radical innovation (I have not seen evidence for it in the manuscript tradition of the Church) but remains, I believe, in the spirit of the Orthodox Church's "creative continuity with the revered past", is to have the parents wear their wedding crowns during the churching, so the worshiping community may rejoice in seeing the fulfillment of their sacred marriage in the new life they have brought into the world—their new son or daughter. This would not only incorporate the father into the rite more visibly, but it would also celebrate the sanctity of the family before God and the worshiping community to which they belong.

But we'll leave this particular proposition to a future discussion.

*Fr. Stelyios Muksuris, a Protoperbyter of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, holds an MLitt and a PhD in liturgical theology and history from Durham University in the UK, and is completing his ThD at the University of Athens in Greece in the same area of specialization. He is Professor and Chair of Liturgical Studies and Languages at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, PA, a prolific author and lecturer, and a frequent consultant on liturgical matters for the Orthodox Church. His monograph is entitled: *Economia and Eschatology: Liturgical Mystagogy in the Byzantine Prothesis Rite* (Boston: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2013).*

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It is with great sadness that we wish to announce of the loss of a good and faithful servant. **Christos P. Tsilios** of Branchville N.J. Passed away on Tuesday, December 27, 2022, at Karen Ann Quinlan Home for Hospice, following a long and courageous battle with Cancer, at age 80.

Christos was born in a small village Pokista, Naupaktias Greece, to Panagiotis and Diamanto Tsilios on August 07, 1942. Christos was a devoted member of Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox church in Randolph, N.J. Where he also served helping inside the Sanctuary Father Konstantinos Tsigas and continued his help with our present Priest Father John Theodosian. Christos loved God and the church.



Christos was predeceased by his parents Panagiotis and Diamanto Tsilios and his loving wife Ioanna Tsilios. Christos is survived by his loving brother Konstantinos Tsilios and his wife Maria, his brother Athanasios Tsilios, his sister Georgia and husband Gary Nice, his sister Athena and husband Konstantinos Gizas in Greece, his nephew Panagiotis Tsilios and wife Tara and niece Diamanto and husband Tommy Puzio, and his nephew Athanasios Giza and niece Antonia Gizas.

Visitation was on Friday, December 30, 8 A.M.-10 A.M. at Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox church 1447 Sussex Turnpike, Randolph NJ followed by the the Funeral service for the repose of his soul also, is at Saint Andrew on Friday, December 30, at 10 A.M. the **Internment** followed at the St. Michael's Cemetery 72-02 Astoria BLVD., East Elmhurst, N. Y. 11370 at 1:00 PM

Donations: In lieu of flowers, a donation may be made in his memory to: Saint Andrew Greek Orthodox Church, 1447 Sussex Turnpike, Randolph NJ 07869, or website: <https://www.standrewgonj.org/> and choose PayPal / online WeShare or via **ABUNDANT APP**

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The names offered during the "**SATURDAYS OF THE SOULS**" (**February 18th, 25th and March 4th**) at the beginning of the Lenten season will be commemorated.

Also remember your loved ones by not only submitting their names, but by attending the holy services to offer your own prayers for their eternal rest.

Anyone wishing to do so may also bring or order a dish of memorial wheat ("**kollyva**") for use during the service.

Please, bring your **list of names to the service**, or if not able to attend, call the Church Office 973-584-0388 ahead of time or send it by email to info@standrewgonj.org

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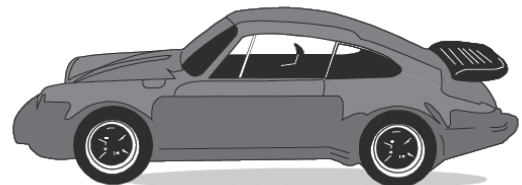
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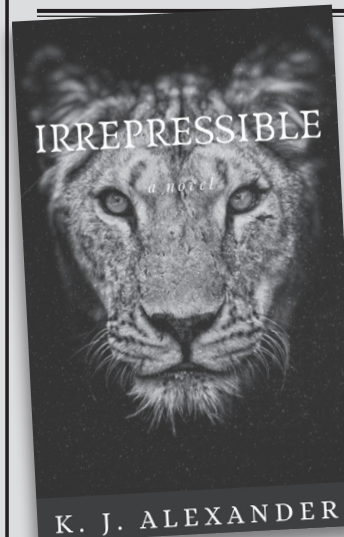
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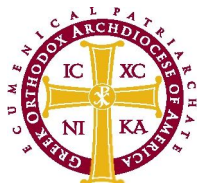
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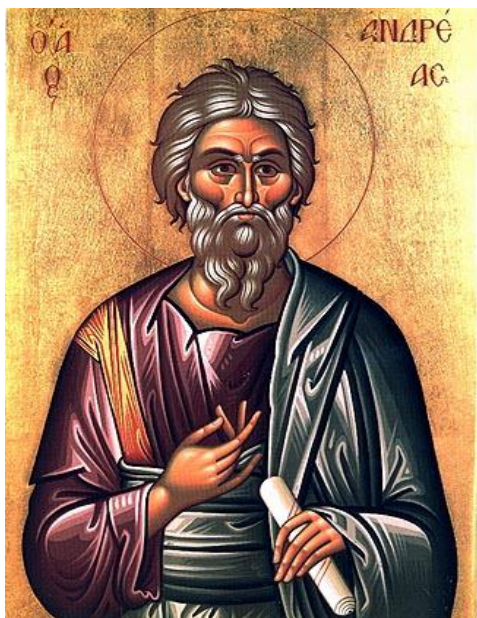
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and to our souls His great mercy.

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ειρήνην τη οικουμένη δωρήσασθαι,
και ταις ψυχαίς ημών το μέγα έλεο

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