



from Fr. Nick

Too Busy For Christ

While visiting Starbucks the day after Halloween, I was shocked to see the Christmas decorations and menu.

The commercial Christmas season starts so early! One day after Halloween, stores begin decorating for Christmas and advertising so that we can scan the ads and find what we "need" this year.

Christmas no longer appears to be about Christ. **When discussing Christmas, many people do not even mention Jesus or His birth.**

"Put Christ back into Christmas" was a popular slogan a few years ago. We can become so preoccupied with decorating our homes, attending parties, purchasing gifts, and preparing meals that we lose sight of Christ.

"Holiday" distractions can drown out the simplicity of Christ's birth.

Most people missed Christ's birth two thousand years ago. "And she brought forth her firstborn Son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes" according to Luke, "and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7).

When the pregnant Virgin Mary and Joseph arrived at his door, the innkeeper in-

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A Packed House + \$113,000 Raised!

Hearfelt congratulations to Philopotochos Luncheon & Fashion Show Chairwomen, Pam Crouthamel and Anthoula Pomrening, and President, Diane Dietz, and their committee for a phenomenal event, "A Mediterranean Adventure" on Saturday, October 21.

A total of 715 guests enjoyed a delicious meal at Drury Lane, followed by a spectacular presentation of fashions by Tracey Tarantino and Zzazz Productions.

Tracey Tarantino has been a significant force in the fashion industry. Her staff's expertise combines the best of choreography, fashion production and live talent performances with the best designers.

Our event would not be possible without the loyalty of our sponsors, pa-



trons, donors and guests who made this event extraordinary. Through their support and generosity, **the fashion show profits netted approximately \$113,000**

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▲ Our wonderful Holy Apostles children models. ►



◀ Greek Goddesses welcome all to a Mediterranean Adventure



▲ Stacy Kinnas, Val Dranias, Artemis Anos and Patty Pappas greet attendees.



A Packed House + \$113,000 Raised! (con't)

which was allocated to our primary beneficiaries, the Hydrocephalus Association and Greek American Rehabilitation & Care Centre and will enable us to continue our many varied philanthropic endeavors throughout the year.

Tremendous work and coordination of talents come together every year as our Philoptochos chapter hosts its annual fashion show fundraiser.

Your continued love and support enables us to continue our mission of helping those in need.

◀ Admiring and bidding on our fabulous raffle prizes.

Too Busy for Christ *(continued)*

formed them that there was no room for them and sent them away.

The King of Kings was born in a feeding trough for animals. Bethlehem was most likely packed with people arriving for the census. **The innkeeper was preoccupied with his guests.** He wasn't hostile, unloving, unfeeling, or indifferent; he was simply distracted. **We, too, can become preoccupied with numerous distractions.**

"Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me that I may come and worship Him also" (Matthew 2:8).

Jesus, the King of the Jews, terrified, troubled, and panicked Herod because his kingly position was threatened. He made no room for Jesus because he was afraid of losing his throne to another king who could command and direct him. **We, too, are afraid to give up our lives and kingdoms. We miss Christmas because of fear.**

The Jewish people were looking for a Messiah to deliver them from Roman oppression. Because they had all the facts but didn't care, these learned ones didn't even bother walking to Bethlehem to see if this was the Messiah.

These people were self-righteous, perfect, and kept the law, but they were unaware that they were sinful and in need of a Savior to save them. **We can miss Christmas because of our prideful indifference.**

The Romans also missed Christmas. Caesar was the Roman Emperor and the Romans worshipped him. **Today money, cars, materialism, occupation, sports, houses, prestige, popularity, fame and many others are false idols that we worship. By worshipping false idols and gods, we will miss Christmas.**

Nazareth residents even missed Christmas. "They returned to their own city, Nazareth" we read. "And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, full of wisdom, and God's grace was upon Him" (Luke 2:39-40).

They missed Jesus, the Son of God, returning to Nazareth and spending 30 years there. People think Jesus is joking when He tells them He is the Messiah. "Isn't this not Joseph's son?" they inquire.

Later, Jesus declares that "no prophet is accepted in his own country" (Luke 4:24). **Because of familiarity, Nazareth missed Christmas.** They knew Him so well that He was not special to them.

Hopefully this Christmas will not pass by us. **Distractions like preoccupation, fear, prideful indifference, false gods and idols, and familiarity can creep into our lives and we will miss Christmas.**

Put Christ back in Christmas this year! Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

+Fr. Nick



H.A.R.C BOOKSTORE



Something for Everyone On Your List!

OPEN Every Sunday
During Coffee Hour

Are you stumped for ideas on what to give a special gift to a friend or family member this holiday season? HARC (Holy Apostles Resource Center) can help you out!

Special gifts for all ages ... from children to seniors with prices for every budget. Come see our special gifts not just during this holiday season but year round.

Don't forget the HARC Customer Rewards program. During the Book Fair Sale in the spring, all loyal customers who are registered will receive an extra \$5 coupon to use at the book fair. When you purchase 10 items or more you will receive 10% off your order, applied automatically if you are registered as a customer. Questions? See Presbytera Michelle.



FOR THE TREE:
Ornament: \$10



FOR STOCKING STUFFER:
Theotokos Key Chain: \$2.25



FOR SOMEONE SPECIAL:
Incense burner: \$10; Incense: \$3



FOR THOSE HARD TO BUY
FOR: Gift Card!



FEED THE CHILDREN



▲ Sophia Pappas, Tula and Deanne Chiganos and Jim Bobis.

"A generous person will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor." ~ Proverbs 22:9

Holy Apostles Philoptochos and parishioners, ranging in age from children to seniors, volunteered at Feed My Starving Children on November 4th.

Their efforts contributed to providing a daily meal to 128 children for one year. The destination of these meals is not yet known, but meals packed in August were shipped to Zambia later that same month.

Thanks to all the volunteers!



▲ Pete Coumas, Diane Dietz and Christopher Chiganos



◀ Nikos Vranas, Yvonne Fawell, Anita Ekonomou, Jim Ekonomou, Presvytera Christa Dokos, Nikodimi Dokos and April Huspen.

Pop Up Kafe Benefiting Greece and Cyprus

Philoptochos Pop Up Kafe held on September 24 benefited people in need in Greece and Cyprus. Congratulations to everyone who participated to make the event a success.



Volunteers shown from left to right: Stacy Kafkes, Emily Rehn, Diane Dietz, Faye Adams, Sundry Urban, Kathy Obmascik, Maria Patt, Eleni Poteres, and Bess Shizas.



HOLIDAY FOOD COLLECTION - EXTENDED

THROUGH DECEMBER 10

The Hillside Food Pantry is so grateful for the donations the Holy Apostles parish made for their Thanksgiving Food Giveaway. We collected close to 400 pounds of food!

Unfortunately, the **Village of Hillside forgot to put the flyer publicizing the food drive in their monthly bulletin which has negatively impacted the food the Pantry has been able to collect.** The Holy Apostles HOPE Team and parish clergy have agreed to extend the food collection through Dec. 10th in an effort to help them. The Pantry has added canned fruits to their list and is short on instant mashed potatoes.

ANY donation is greatly appreciated.

A turkey themed collection box will be set up in front of the HOPE collection counter to receive donations. This holiday collection is in addition to our on-going HOPE bags.

Please feel free to contact either Maria Patt (mdpatt59@comcast.net) or Faye Adams (geofaye.adams@gmail.com) with any questions.

Suggested Donation Items:

- NEW to the list: Canned fruits (pine apple, oranges, peaches, pears, etc.)
- Boxed stuffing
- Instant mashed potatoes
- Canned cranberry sauce
- Canned or packets of turkey gravy (*no glass jars please*)
- Canned pumpkin
- Biscuit or cornbread mix
- Pasta/spaghetti sauce – *They run out of this on a regular basis. Although not a traditional "holiday food", donations are greatly appreciated. NOTE: The only item that they accept in glass jars is pasta sauce..*

"Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help." ~ Isaiah 58:7

METROPOLITAN FAMILY SERVICES HOLIDAY SHOPPE

Family Shelter Service of Metropolitan Family Services DuPage is grateful for the donations from our Holy Apostles Community.

The collection brings joy and the spirit of the season to local community families affected by domestic abuse.

Many of the families impacted lack the means to provide the most basic needs, making shopping for gifts an extravagance that they can only dream of.

Your donations, purchased gift cards, toys, hygiene items and clothing/winter gear give these families an opportunity to receive meaningful gifts.

Thank you to Marion Karras and Angela Neboyskey for organizing the collection.

Thank You!



OCTOBER COAT DRIVE

Thank you all for your generosity of gently used children and adult coats. **Holy Apostles parishioners donated close to 200 coats!**

The youth coats will be given to Warm Coats for Cool Kids in Elmhurst. Adult coats will be donated to Repeat Boutique, an all-volunteer Christian Charity in the western suburbs.

We appreciate your assisting the Holy Apostles Philoptochos in giving back to the community during this winter season.

Also, thanks to Debbie Chiganos and Laura Pepke for organizing this wonderful event again this year!!

Enjoy the holiday season!

Thank You!

*Thank You For Your Support!
Together we can make the holidays a little brighter for those in need.*



PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OCTOBER 2023 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

PC SECRETARY: VAL DRANIAS

President Norm Pomrening called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm. Father George Dokos led the opening prayer and Norm read the Mission Statement. Absent were S. Milak, P. Bell, G. Chechopoulos, T. Chiganos. Father George Dokos administered the oath of office to new Parish Council member Andrew Kraulos.

Approval of September 2023 Minutes: Val Dranias – Lena Theotikos moved and Bill Leider seconded the motion to approve the September, 2023 PC Minutes. Unanimously approved.

Sandy Pihos made the motion to amend the Holy Apostles Foundation motion to the Parish Assembly as advised by Joan Berg as follows. Bill Leider seconded. To form with the Illinois Secretary of State a not-for-profit corporation to be known as the Holy Apostles Foundation, which is to be administered in accordance with the governing instruments that have been approved by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, as may be amended from time to time.

Approval of the October 17, 2023 PC Budget Meeting Minutes. Bill Leider moved and Emilia Linardakis seconded the motion to approve. Unanimous approval.

Correspondence: Val Dranias – Thank you from the Music Ministry for our support and request from Holy Trinity to aid in their mortgage payment.

Ecclesiastical Report: Father George presented information of Saint Gerasimos of Cephalonia whose feast day we celebrate tomorrow. We have one of Saint Gerasimos' slippers in our narthex. The feast day celebrates the uncovering of his holy relics in 1581.

Ministries

Building & Grounds: Chris reported that we don't have strong contracts with our contractors. A committee is being formed to formulate a contract for projects. Joan Berg will be the legal consultant.

Finance: Norm will send out financials. Steve Milak is out of town.

Stewardship & Welcoming: Sandy Pihos. Stewardship Data: Our 529 YTD pledges are 3% less than the 649 we had received by the end of September 2022. We have achieved 84% of our 2023 Stewardship Goal to receive pledges from 750 families. Our \$768K pledged is 5% more than the \$734K we had received by the end of September 2022. We have achieved 67% of our 2023 Stewardship Goal to fund our entire operating budget of \$1,139K through pledges. Our \$688K collected is 5% more than the \$657K we had received by the end of September 222. Our median pledge is \$600, equal to the \$600 YTD September 2022 median pledge. Our average pledge of \$1,221 is 8% more than the \$1,130 YTD September 2022 average pledge.

At the last stewardship meeting, putting together an updated Ministry Booklet was discussed. The goal is to have it ready for the 2024 Ministry Fair. The committee would like to see a link in the church's website to the booklet once it is completed. The committee would like to partner with other ministries to try to increase steward involvement. The next two service projects are the Veteran's Day project on 10/28 and 12/30. The committee is looking for projects for future 5th Saturday Serve Days. They also brainstormed a few cooking/baking ideas: baking at church for Koukla's Kafenio, tutorial of Greek dishes, hosting a bake sale to raise money for 5th Saturday Serve projects.

Final Tailgate Financials – the total profit from the tailgate was \$2,252.

Missions: Peter Bell – Mr. Hoppe will be giving the sermon on Sunday. The family sees itself as part of our parish.

Candles: Val Dranias – Val posed the question of raising the price of the vigil candles from \$5 to \$10 since they have been \$5 for over 50 years and other churches are charging \$10 and even \$20 for the same candles. The Consensus was to leave it as is.

Old Business:

Employee Handbook Revision: Emilia Linardakis & Sandy Pihos – Sandy Pihos moved to approve the Employee Handbook and Emilia Linardakis seconded. Unanimous approval.

Coffee Hour: Sandy Pihos – Sandy suggested that we have a committee to look at Coffee Hour and how we can improve hosting participation.

Calendar: Sandy Pihos – Ministries need to be more aware of all events on the church calendar when planning events, especially planning events aimed at families with children when Sunday School is not in session.

Website Update: Father Georgiou – goes live next week!

New Business:

Clergy Laity Meeting Update: Norm Pomrening – attendees were Norm Pomrening, Nick Kirkeles, Steve Savas, Father George and Father Nick. The Metropolis Vision was presented along with the Budget for the Metropolis. The Metropolitan has decided that the Metropolis Center will be located in Chicago proper. The Assembly of Bishops introduced a mental health ministry. It will focus on screen time, suicide, etc. Working with Orthodox clergy to train them on how to link to appropriate resources.

TELOS Workshop: Chris Pepke – Will be held on 10/29 after church. All parishioners are invited. It will focus on how to get young adults more involved.

Pamphlets for Welcoming Area: Emilia Linardakis – Emilia discussed having Orthodox pamphlets in the welcoming area. It was decided to investigate the possibility further.

Hellenic Bar Association Donation Request: Patty Pappas – A request from Spero Demakis for a donation towards their scholarship fund. They annually give \$60,000 in scholarships. Jim Maragos moved that we give \$500, Val Dranias seconded. Yes-4, No-6. Motion failed.

Retreat Center Donation Request: Norm Pomrening – Nick Kirkeles moved that we continue our support with a \$5000 donation. Jim Maragos seconded. Unanimously approved.

Next Meeting: 11/16

Key Dates: Fashion Show – 10/21, Parish Assembly – 10/22, TELOS Workshop - 10/29, Stewardship Sunday – 11/19. Feed6 – 1/20

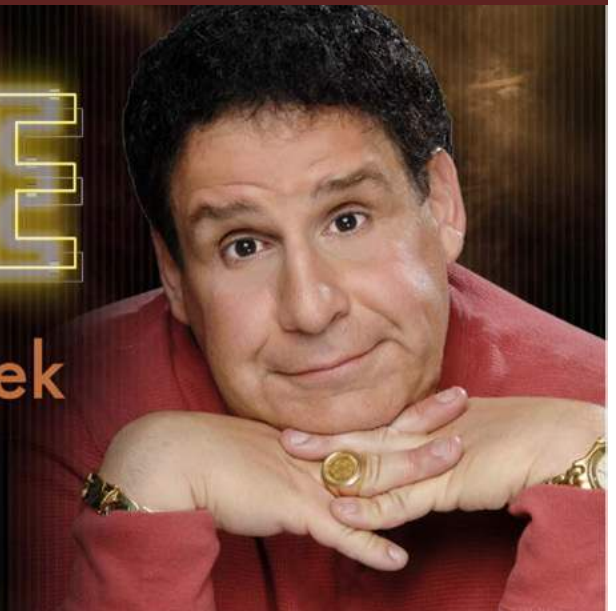
Closing Prayer: Father Georgiou

Adjourned at 9:42 pm.

SAVE THE DATE! HOLY APOSTLES FUNDRAISER!

BASILE

#EveryonesFavoriteGreek



SATURDAY, FEB. 24, 2024

We're bringing "Everyone's Favorite Greek" to town for a fun and entertaining fundraiser for Holy Apostles. Basile's comedy has been enjoyed by millions around the world with his unique blend of material, improvisation and characters. His show is Greek themed and spoken in both Greek and English.

Save the date TODAY!

Koukla's Kafenio Honors Our Veterans

Pillars & Rocks

Koukla's Kafenio Luncheon was held on November 9. A delicious luncheon was served, catered by Greek Islands, and a special entertainment was provided by "The Men of Spirito" choral group to honor our veterans.

Philoptochos is always pleased to host and celebrate the pillars of our community, who have laid the foundation for future generations.

Thank you to all the volunteers who made this event so special for our seniors! Pillars and Rocks is led by Aleka Mandelaris and Cathy Magas.



This ministry also coordinates members of Philoptochos and our community to visit and deliver goody bags of plants and sweets to many of our seniors. This fall, visits were made in September and are scheduled again in December.

We respect and honor our seniors who share their wisdom and life experiences.





Christmas Breakfast with Santa



Reserve your spot at the pancake Christmas Breakfast following Liturgy and the Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 17th.

Santa will make a special appearance in spite of his busy schedule!

Thank you to our chairwoman, Anna Fattore, and her volunteers for hosting again this year.

Cost will be \$10 for adults and children 5 and older. Children 4 and under are free.

Please make reservations **by December 14th** either online at www.tinyurl.com/haphiloptochos, in person after Liturgy on Sundays (December 3rd and December 10th) or contact Anna Fattore at afattore@aol.



◀ scan to reserve space





Philoptochos Christmas Party and General Meeting

*Please join us for the annual
Philoptochos Christmas Party and General Meeting*

*Tuesday, December 12th
7:00 pm
Multi-purpose room*

Our hostesses Helen Kasimos, Karen Anagnos, Georgia Kass, Tina Kourafas, Litsa Lekatsos, Patty Pappas, Elaine Papanton and Effie Stojka will bring us an evening filled with holiday cheer.

Director Serge Penksik and the Hinsdale High School Chamber Orchestra will return as entertainment.

We will also be collecting hats, mittens, and scarves for both adults and children for donation to People's Resource Center.

Please RSVP to Aleka Ernst no later than 12/5 at (630) 561-1660 or alekaernst@aol.com



Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

DECEMBER 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 4:30 pm Adventure Theater 7:00 pm Paraklesis	2 FEAST DAY OF ST. PORPHYRIOS 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am Adventure Theater Dress Rehearsal 5:00 pm Vespers
3 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 11:30 am Adventure Theater Luncheon & Play 11:30 am GOYA Board Mtg 3:30 pm Great Vespers for St. John of Damascus	4 8:00 am Divine Liturgy	5 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 4:30 pm Greek School 5:00 pm Greek School PTO Meeting 7:00 pm GOYA Meeting 7:00 pm Neighborhood Bible Study - Elmhurst	6 FEAST DAY OF ST. NICHOLAS 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am Bus Trip to Greek Consulate for Seniors 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	7 6:45 am Brotherhood of St. Peter the Apostle 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am TOTS 1:00 pm Adult Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School	8 8:00 am Divine Liturgy	9 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 5:00 pm Vespers 6:30 GOYA Christmas Party
10 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy	11 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 3:00 pm Clergy Syndesmos Mtg	12 FEAST DAY OF ST. SPYRIDON 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 4:30 pm Greek School 7:00 pm Philoptochos General Mtg & Christmas Party 7:00 pm Neighborhood Bible Study - Oakbrook (Zoom)	13 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm Jr. GOYA Meeting 7:00 pm Stewardship Ministry Meeting	14 1:00 pm Adult Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School 5:00 pm Greek School Christmas Party 6:00 pm Evening Divine Liturgy 6:15 pm Greek School Staff Mtg 7:00 pm Nativity Service Project	15 FEAST DAY OF ST. ELEUTHERIOS 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm Paraklesis 8:00 pm Practical Parenting	16 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 9:30 am Adventure Theater Christmas Outing 5:00 pm Vespers 6:00 pm Vespers Pot Luck Dinner 7:00 pm YAL Meeting
17 FEAST DAY OF ST. DIONYSIOS OF ZAKYNTHOS 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 11:15 am Christmas Pageant 11:30 am Philoptochos Christmas Breakfast	18 8:00 am Divine Liturgy	19 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 4:30 pm Greek School 6:15 pm JOY 7:00 pm Neighborhood Bible Study - La Grange	20 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	21 6:45 am Brotherhood of St. Peter the Apostle 8:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am TOTS 1:00 pm Adult Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School 7:30 pm Parish Council Mtg	22 9:00 am Royal Hours 6:00 pm Lampros College Student Dinner	23 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 5:00 pm Vespers
24 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Concert & Vespers	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 8:45 AM Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy	26 NO GREEK SCHOOL	27 FEAST DAY OF ST. STEPHEN 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	28 NO GREEK SCHOOL	29	30 10:00 am Fifth Saturday Service Day

318:15 am Orthros
9:30 am Divine Liturgy

HOLY APOSTLES GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
2501 S. Wolf Road
Westchester, IL 60154
(708) 562-2754

Address Service Requested

POSTMASTER: Please deliver by the 15th of December

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Anna Arianas	Christopher Malleris
Vasiliki Karegianes	Louis Malleris
Barbara Nikolas	Joseph Plepel
James (Dimitri) Papanton	George Kosmopoulos
Dorothy Pontikes	Eleni Kosmopoulos
John Rassogianis	Peter Kosmopoulos
Nicolaos Sahlas	Florence Kosmopoulos
John Katzioris	James Breslin
Nikoletta Katzioris	Marcella Breslin
Elias Katzioris	Rosemary Breslin
Athanasia Katzioris	Constantine (Gus) Grechis
Constandinos Panagos	MaryJane Grechis
Demetra Panagos	Mary Athans
Panagiota (Betty) Matsoukas	Mary Psychogios
Constantine (Gus) Wilson	Helen Alex
Bess Wilson	
John Zachery	
Panagiota (Pota) Zachery	
Stanley Malleris	
Antonea Malleris	
Frank Malleris	
Anna Malleris	
Ruth (Robin) Murlas	

FUNERALS

Known at time of publication:

Freda Bozos
Mary Athans
Jack Lordots
Peter Sigalos
Deanne Mavrick

BAPTISMS

Stella, Daughter of Michael & Kim Poulos
Sponsor: Allison Baier

Michelle Chiampas
Sponsor: Nicole Keller

CHRISMATIONS

Nicole, Rocco & Roman Chino
Kimberly Argires
Daniel Pepke