

from Fr. Nicholas

St. Patrick, Enlightener of Ireland

On March 17th, we remember St. Patrick, the Bishop, and Enlightener of Ireland.

There is much more to St. Patrick's Day than leprechauns, shamrocks, and Irish food. The life of Ireland's patron saint is chronicled in the autobiographical book "The Confession of St. Patrick of Ireland."

It was written in the fifth century and demonstrates his missionary fervor for the Irish people.

He came from a wealthy British family; his father was a deacon and his grandfather a priest. Irish raiders abducted Patrick at the age of sixteen and sent him to Ireland as a slave.

Patrick suffered while serving as a shepherd throughout his six years in prison.

In the fields, he found strength and comfort in the Lord. Like the Psalmist David, Patrick desperately cried out to the Lord: *"After I came to Ireland – every day I had to tend sheep, and many times a day I prayed – the love of God and His fear came to me more and more, and my faith was strengthened. And my spirit was so moved that in a single day I would say as many as one hundred prayers, and almost as many at night, and this even when I was staying in the woods and on the mountain; and I would rise for prayer before daylight, through*
(continued, pg. 3)



Sunday of Orthodoxy - March 9

Did you know the Sunday of Orthodoxy celebrates the restoration of icons and their veneration?

The first Sunday of Great Lent is called the Sunday (or Triumph) of Orthodoxy because it commemorates the "triumph" of true doctrine over heresy regarding the creation and veneration of holy icons.

For over 100 years, there was disagreement and war over the issue of depicting Christ and the Saints in a work of art. The iconoclasts (those against icons) falsely accused Christians of idolatry and superstition.

The 7th Ecumenical Council in 787 AD officially confirmed the rightness — even the necessity — of honoring holy icons because icons express the theology of the Orthodox Faith.

Iconoclasm was finally defeated on the First Sunday of Great Lent in 843. Iconoclasm is rooted in a dualistic point of view that falsely claims that all matter is corrupt and only "spiritual" things are pleasing to God.

It is also an implicit denial of the human nature of Christ. God alone is to be worshipped, but icons and Saints can be venerated because created objects reflect God, their Creator.

Man was "created in the image and likeness of God" (Genesis 1:26) and thus is an icon in the truest sense. God became man while remaining God and thus is an icon of the highest order. In the God-Man, Jesus Christ is the epitome (perfect archetype) of God and man, in Whom the spiritual and the material world are united and blessed. Icons are not idols — they are "windows into heaven" through which God descends to earth and man's mind and heart ascend to God.



Godparents Luncheon



Thank you to co-chairs Deanne Chiganos, Marianna Bannos & Pamela Pontikis and all the wonderful volunteers for making this year's Godparent Luncheon on Sunday, February 2nd such a wonderful and memorable event for all the families!"



St. Patrick *(continued)*

snow, through frost, through rain, and I felt no harm" (The Confession).

True faith is tested in suffering. Our hardships can be turned into opportunities for deeper prayer and reliance on God.

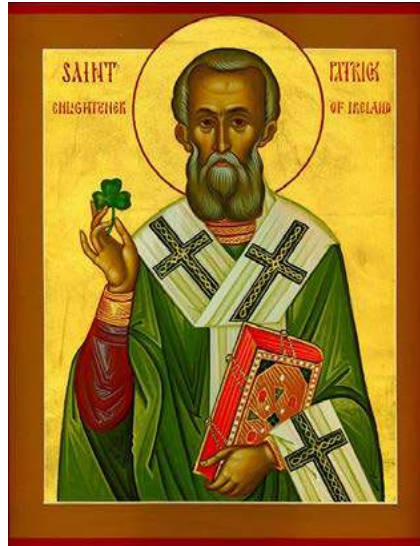
The Lord instructed him to flee to Britain where he was reunited with his family. He endured hardships in the monastic life at Auxerre, Gaul, before Bishop Germanus consecrated him a bishop.

"Come and walk among us once again," the Irish people's voice called to him.

In answer to the Lord's call, Patrick went back to Ireland as a missionary and apostle of Christ, not as a slave. He preached to the traditionally pagan Irish people, converting many.

Prayer, humility, and divine grace were the cornerstones of his ministry. Patrick founded schools, churches, and monasteries while preaching with love!

In "The Confession," the saint shares that his devotion to the Irish people and his deeds were motivated by obedience to the Lord's calling.



Patrick persisted in his goal in the face of strong opposition and several obstacles. Through prayer and fasting he defeated the forces of evil (druidic paganism).

Patrick demonstrated the Holy Trinity to the locals by displaying a three-leaved shamrock unified in a single stem. One divine essence (ousia) in three persons (hypostases).

He fell to his knees under perilous circumstances as he clung to the words: *"Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise"* (The Confession).

His difficult, challenging mission was a blessing leading to spiritual growth. God's mercy, protection and guidance sheltered him.

St. Patrick's hymn captures his blessed life: *"From slavery you escaped to freedom in Christ's service; He sent you to deliver Ireland from the darkness of paganism, You planted the Word of the Gospel in their hearts; O Holy Bishop Patrick, Apostle of Ireland!*

Pray that we may walk in the light of Christ" (Kontakion).

+ Fr. Nicholas


EASTER LAMBATHES SALE

Purchase your decorated Easter Lambathes after Sunday liturgies 3/23 thru 4/13 and following Holy Unction services on Holy Wednesday, April 16th

Candles are \$15 each and make beautiful gifts for children/godchildren
Cash - check -online
www.tinyurl.com/haphilo2501



If you have any questions or would like to decorate or sell candles, please contact Angela Karras Neboyskey at arkarras@gmail.com or (773) 719-2619


HOLY APOSTLES
 GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

CELEBRATION OF BOOKS

"WHAT DO ANGELS HAVE TO DO WITH SALVATION?"

MARCH 16TH

6:30 PM SOLEMN VESPERS

8:00 PM PRESENTATION BY

FR. ANDREW DAMICK
 (CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER AT ANCIENT FAITH MINISTRIES)

The Celebration of Books Reception will be hosted on Sunday, March 16th following Vespers. To assist with this event, contact Yvonne Fawell, (630) 234-4666, yfawell@gmail.com, or Mary Maragos, (708) 712-4421, mem123@ameritech.net



2025 Project HOPE
Senior Visit Initiative UPDATE!
Friday, April 4, 10 am - 2 PM

The Metropolis Project HOPE Team is encouraging parishes to visit and engage with low-income senior citizens. The request is for each parish to fill 50 HOPE bags and to also provide a team of 10 individuals to pass out the food bags and to engage the seniors in an activity. We have decided on a simple craft project.

Philoptochos is THRILLED to announce that funds have been donated which will cover the cost for ALL of the food needed for 50 HOPE Bags.

We are still looking for more individuals to join our team.

Our visit is scheduled for Friday, April 4th. Here is a general idea of how the day will go:

- A bus will pick our volunteer team up at 10:15am for arrival at 11:15am at the Pilsen Satellite Center 2021 S. Morgan St Chicago, IL 60608
- Carts will be available to load the 50 HOPE bags for transport into the center
- Opening statement from either a Pilsen Satellite Center or a HOPE representative
- Senior activity (craft) from 11:30-12:30
- Bag distribution by the volunteer team
- Bus return to Holy Apostles – arrival around 2pm

The **bags will be packed at the 5th Saturday Serve Day on March 29th** and stored at Holy Apostles until the visit on April 4th. All are welcome to assist on March 29th.

Father George has graciously agreed to lead the volunteer team on this visit. The Metropolis has also suggested that it might be helpful to have someone who is fluent in Spanish on the team.

We realize this is quite an undertaking, but we are confident that Holy Apostles will rise to this challenge. Please consider being a part of this team. There will be a link in the Weekly News to sign up for the April 4th team.

Thank you for your support!



GRADUATE SUNDAY / CHURCH PICNIC



SUNDAY, JUNE 1

Join us in celebrating our Holy Apostles Graduates and celebrate their graduation and accomplishments at our Church Picnic





HOLY APOSTLES PHILOPTOCHOS EASTER

Drive-by Food Sale

**KOULOURAKIA | KOURAMBIEDES | PASTITSIO |
SPANAKOPITAS | TIROPITAS | TSOUREKI**



How to order:

Order during coffee hours March 23, March 30, & April 6.

Orders can also be placed online at www.tinyurl.com/haphilo2501 **March 1 - April 6** (no later than 6 pm)

Form of payments:

Payments accepted are cash, check (payable to Holy Apostles Philoptochos) or credit card online at www.tinyurl.com/haphilo2501

Pick up order days/times:

Pick up your order at the front of Holy Apostles Church on **Saturday, April 12 (11am - 12:30 pm)**. Enter via the south parking lot.

For further information:

Contact Laura Pepke (laurapepke@gmail.com) or call 630-291-7685) or Debbie Chiganos (debbchig@att.net).

scan to order ▶



ITEM	SERVING	PRICE
KOULOURAKIA	1 DOZEN	\$10
KOURAMBIEDES	1 DOZEN	\$10
PASTITSIO	10 X 13 INCH PAN	\$35
SPANAKOPITAS	1 DOZEN / TRAY	\$15
TIROPITAS	1 DOZEN / TRAY	\$15
TSOUREKI	1.5 LBS.	\$15

>> *Proceeds benefit Operation Classroom Initiative* <<



PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JANUARY 2025 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

PC SECRETARY: PATTY PAPPAS EDITED BY: VAL DRANIAS

Call to Order: James Maragos at 7:33 PM. **Opening Prayer:** Father Dokos. **Recite Mission Statement:** Nicole Ostendorf.

Introduction of newly elected Parish Council members: George Antonopoulos (Treasurer), Dr. Peter Bell, Terry Chiganos, Ted Dres, Bill Leider, Dr. James Maragos (President), Steven Milak, Nicole Ostendorf, Patty Pappas (Secretary), Michael Parafink, Christopher Pepke, Sandra Pihos (Vice President), Michael Thiakos, Nicole Voelz, Valentia Vourlos. Past President Norm Pomrening introduced himself as Advisor to the Parish Council. Administering of the Affirmation of Office to Steven Milak, Patty Pappas and Christopher Pepke by Father Georgiou.

Approval of Minutes: Patty Pappas presented the updated minutes of the December 19, 2024 meeting. Sandra Pihos moved that the Parish Council approve the updated version of the December minutes; Terry Chiganos seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Correspondence: Patty Pappas reported that handwritten thank you notes were received from Father Dokos, Father Georgiou, Deacon Perry and Diakonissa Pat and Nick Paloumpis for Christmas gifts. Outreach Corporation provided Statements of Contribution totaling \$55,500 for the contributions made in support of the Holy Apostles Feed 6 event. Metropolitan Nathanael sent correspondence expressing his gratitude for our hospitality during his visit to celebrate Divine Liturgy at our 65th Anniversary. Bishop Timothy sent correspondence ratifying the Parish Council elections held on 12/8/24 and recognizing the new members of Parish Council as validly elected.

Ecclesiastical Report: Father Dokos presented a Patristix video regarding the Feast of the Holy Theophany for discussion. He also reported that Nick Koumis has digitized a total of 665 sermons of Father Bill Chiganos; plus Awaken to God. These are being uploaded onto the Holy Apostles website.

Ministries

Finance: George Antonopoulos presented a brief review of the 2024 financials. The budgeted revenue was \$1.21 million. Our actual revenue totaled \$1.36 million, with fundraisers and donations accounting for the difference. On the expense side, the budget was for \$1.074 million. The actual expense totaled \$1.25 million, exceeding the budget by \$176,000. Overall, total revenue exceeded expenses by \$110,000. The Finance Committee will meet to further analyze the financial performance.

Stewardship & Welcoming: Sandra Pihos provided a report on stewardship pledges.

METRIC	DEC. 2024 YTD	DEC 2023 YTD	% CHANGE
# of pledges	717	677	6%
Total pledged	\$883,817	\$783,274	13%
Amount collected	\$865,433	\$771,007	12%
Median pledge	\$600	\$600	0%
Average pledge	\$1,233	\$1,157	7%

She also reported a restructuring so that 'Stewardship and Parish Development' will become a committee under the Parish Council. The ministry formerly known as 'Stewardship', due to its philanthropic and family focus, will be renamed, tentatively as 'Parish Family Ministry'.

Building and Grounds:

- a. Chris Pepke is submitting a report to the Metropolis of Chicago for approval to rebuild/repair the front door.
- b. He will be receiving bids for cleaning of the duct work, and will also then prepare and submit this report to the Metropolis of Chicago for approval as well.
- c. He reported that the choir loft carpet has now been replaced.
- d. Chris reported that the large shrubs surrounding the air conditioning units on the south end of the church were removed. A brick wall will be built around the perimeter of the units to match with the aesthetics of the church building.

e. Other projects to be reviewed in 2025: evaluation of the parking lot and the need to resurface it, remodel of the front office, replacement/restoration of our signage and cross along Wolf Road, updating the lighting within the church, replacing the security camera system.

Technology: Steven Milak is seeking to renegotiate the terms of our Wi-Fi service contract. He is also preparing an application for a technology grant.

Ushering: Ted Dres has requested all Parish Council members to provide their availability for ushering through the month of April. He reported that Google Sheets has been updated with all future liturgy dates, and he will create the ushering schedule utilizing that software program.

Missions: Peter Bell reported that annually we support three principal missions/missionaries: Nathan Hoppe in Albania, Jesse Brandow in Central America, and the Archdiocese of Korea.

Peter Bell moved that Holy Apostles support the following Missions in 2025: Jesse Brandow (Central America) for \$6,000; Nathan Hoppe (Albania) for \$12,000; Archdiocese of Korea for \$18,000. Steven Milak seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Old Business:

Employee Handbook: Sandra Pihos reported that the Employee Handbook is reviewed annually and approved at the December Parish Council meeting.

Office Reorganization: Sandra Pihos reported that Lou Kafkes has extensive responsibilities, and we are looking to support him through the hiring of a part time associate. We are spreading information relating to the job opening on all communication channels.

Holy Apostles Foundation: Patty Pappas provided an overview of the progress and achievements made toward the establishment of the Holy Apostles Foundation, which will be a 501(c)(3) corporation. Joan Berg is now coordinating the initial meeting of the Board of Directors so that the formation documents can be signed and then subsequently filed with the IRS and the Illinois Secretary of State.

Cemetery Plots: Patty Pappas provided a brief review of HA's ownership of cemetery plots at Chapel Hill Gardens West in Oakbrook Terrace. We have been negotiating with Chapel Hill to formalize an exchange of 24 unusable plots for usable ones. Chapel Hill has now emailed us the signed contracts, which we will review for completion. Next, we will begin to actively market the sale of the remaining plots owned by HA.

Youth Worker Registration: Patty Pappas reported that the Archdiocese regulations require that youth workers must register annually, train annually, and have a background check performed every two years. At last check, 16 out of 90 youth workers were noncompliant. However, Lou Kafkes will review the official database because the list is constantly changing. If the up to date list indicates any noncompliant youth workers, we will require those workers to complete their training at an in person session, or they will no longer be youth workers at HA.

Feed 6: Norm Pomrening reported that we assembled 154,078 meals, for a total of over 961,000 meals since we began Feed 6 in 2017. The goal for next year is to assemble 150,000 to 200,000 meals. We would like to involve GOYA and Junior GOYA members to serve as our table captains. Feed 6 will next take place on 1/24/26.

Holy Apostles Directory: Norm Pomrening reported that we are deciding whether to compile another printed church directory. Methods of communication have changed, and more churches are shifting to an online format for their directories, if they have one. Nicole Voelz will explore the options and prepare a report.

New Business:

Macaronatha Luncheon: Sandra Pihos reported that the Macaronatha Luncheon will be hosted by the Parish Council on 3/2/25. She will serve as the chair. There is no ticket fee to attend the luncheon but attendees have the opportunity to make a donation. The Missions Ministry will decide the beneficiary of the donations from this event.

Leamus Maintenance Contract: James Maragos reported that the contract with Leamus expired at the end of 2023. Leamus did not receive a compensation increase in 2024 and there was no written contract renewal. We are very pleased with the quality of their service and would like to negotiate a new contract for 2025. Terry Chiganos moved to negotiate a one year contract with Leamus not to exceed 6% and 3% every year thereafter that it is negotiated. Bill Leider seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

The Unyielding Faith: Resilience of Christians Under Communist Albania

By Emilia Linardakis

In a land where religion was once driven underground by an oppressive communist regime, faith endured against all odds. Growing up in Albania during this era meant that spiritual devotion had to be hidden, and the cost of openly practicing one's beliefs was immeasurable.

For families like mine and many others in the Orthodox Christian community, faith was more than a personal conviction - it was our identity and legacy, worth every risk and sacrifice. Despite the regime's relentless efforts to erase religion from public life, our faith persevered through whispers, secret gatherings and acts of silent defiance.

Under Enver Hoxha's rule, Albania became the world's first officially atheist state. Churches were demolished, religious symbols outlawed, icons confiscated, and clergy imprisoned, executed, or forced into silence. Worship was punishable by exile, torture, or death. Many priests who had once served as spiritual guides were arrested, never to be seen again. Some were executed as traitors; others were condemned to harsh labor camps. Their crime? Unwavering devotion to their faith. Yet, belief endured - not in grand cathedrals or public gatherings, but in the quiet determination of those who refused to let it be erased. My family was among them.

Despite the suffocating oppression, faith did not die. It went underground, nurtured by families who risked their lives to pass it on to their children. In our home, prayers were whispered rather than spoken aloud. There were no church bells to signal worship, no public gatherings for Easter or Christmas. Yet, faith thrived - in secrecy, in darkness, and most importantly, in hope.

One of the most defining moments of my childhood was my baptism. Father Kosta Kotnani, one of the few priests spared by the system due to his old age, remained steadfast despite the dangers. He had witnessed fellow clergymen disappear into labor camps and had lost friends to the brutality of the regime. Yet, he continued to serve in secrecy. Early one morning, under the cover of darkness, we embarked on a clandestine journey. Father Kotnani's hands trembled—not from fear, but from the weight of the sacred duty he was about to fulfill. In the quiet of a hidden room, with only two trusted witnesses, I was baptized. He did not wear his robes in public or ring church bells - those days were long gone. But in secret, in the quiet corners of hidden rooms, he carried out his sacred duty.

In a regime that criminalized religious practice, baptizing a child was a perilous act of defiance. My parents knew the risks: imprisonment, labor camps, or worse. Yet, they believed that preserving our spiritual life was worth any danger. Even as a child, I remember the mixture of emotions on the adults' faces: relief that the ceremony had been completed and defiance against a regime that sought to erase our faith.

At the time, I did not fully grasp the magnitude of their bravery. As I grew older, I came to understand the depth of their courage and the sacrifices they made to ensure that faith would live on in us. Their resilience was not unique; countless other families across Albania made similar sacrifices ensuring that Orthodoxy would survive even in the darkest of times.

Today, standing freely in a church without fear of persecution, I often reflect on those dreadful days. I think of the generations who endured unimaginable hardship to preserve their beliefs. For them, religion was not something to be taken for granted - it was a treasure safeguarded through resilience and courage.

The story of Albania's Christians is one of spiritual strength in the face of overwhelming adversity. It is a testament to the determined human spirit and the power of faith. Despite the regime's best efforts, it could not extinguish the flame of belief. Faith, when deeply rooted in the heart, can never be eradicated - not by fear, not by persecution and certainly not by oppression.

This legacy of perseverance is a beacon for future generations, a reminder that faith, when nurtured by love and fortified by hope, can withstand even the most brutal attempts to destroy it. It is a story worth telling, not only to honor those who lived it but to inspire those who continue to cherish their faith in freedom.

In January 1991, as Albania's communist regime crumbled, Father Kosta Kotnani, then in his 90's, became the first priest to lead a public Theophany service in Korça after decades of religious suppression. Encouraged by the local faithful, he stepped



Pastoral Guidelines - Marriage *(continued from February Mosaic)*

Inter-religious Marriages

Canonical and theological reasons preclude the Orthodox Church from performing the Sacrament of Marriage for couples where one partner is Orthodox and the other partner is a non-Christian. As such, Orthodox Christians choosing to enter such marriages fall out of good standing with their Church and are unable to actively participate in the life of the Church. While this stance may seem confusing and rigid, it is guided by the Orthodox Church's love and concern for its member's religious and spiritual well-being.



Prohibited Marriages

The following types of relationships constitute impediments to marriage:

1. Parents with their own children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren.
2. Brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law.
3. Uncles and aunts with nieces and nephews.
4. First cousins with each other.
5. Foster parents with foster children or foster children with the children of foster parents.
6. Godparents with godchildren or godparents with the parents of their godchildren.

DIVORCE

The parish priest must exert every effort to reconcile the couple and avert a divorce. However, should he fail to bring about a reconciliation, after a civil divorce has been obtained, he will transmit the petition of the party seeking the ecclesiastical divorce, together with the decree of the civil divorce, to the Spiritual Court of the Archdiocesan District or Metropolis.

The petition must include the names and surnames of the husband and wife, the wife's surname prior to marriage, their addresses, the name of the priest who performed the wedding, and the date and place of the wedding. The petitioner must be a member of the parish through which he or she is petitioning for divorce.

Orthodox Christians of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese who have obtained a civil divorce but not an ecclesiastical divorce may not participate in any sacraments of the Church or serve on the Parish Council, Archdiocesan District Council, Metropolis Council or Archdiocesan Council until they have been granted a divorce by the Church.



FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

Holy Apostles parishioners are invited to join Philoptochos for a Lenten service project on **Saturday, April 5 at Feed My Starving Children in Aurora from 9-10:45 am**. We will pack specially formulated meals that will be sent to children in need around the world. In addition to packing the meals there are also seated jobs attaching labels to food bags. Please contact Emily Rehn at platovalentine@hotmail.com or 708-369-9365 to volunteer or ask questions.

The Unyielding Faith: Resilience Under Communist Albania *(con't)*

forward to conduct this historic celebration, marking a powerful moment of spiritual reawakening. The event signified the beginning of Albania's religious revival, as churches reopened, long-silenced prayers were spoken freely and the Orthodox faithful could once again worship without fear.

I am profoundly thankful for people like Nate and Gabriela Hoppe, whose missionary work in Albania continues to nurture and strengthen the Orthodox Christian faith in this land. They carry on God's work in a place where, not too long ago, practicing religion was unimaginable. Their dedication and love for this mission are a living testament to the enduring power of faith and the hope for a brighter, freer future.

COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE

MARCH 23
12:15PM-3:45PM

FIELD TRIP

LUNCH & VISITING NEW GRACANICA & ST. SAVA TO VENERATE ST. MARDARIJE
BUS PROVIDED! YOU MUST RSVP!



QUESTIONS? EMAIL ALEXA AT
YOUTHDIRECTOR@HOLYAPOSTLESCHURCH.COM

We are excited to announce a **FREE special field trip on Sunday, March 23rd**, to explore the sacred relics of St. Mardarije of Libertyville.

Throughout the month of March, we are focusing on learning about Local Saints, and this trip offers a wonderful opportunity for our children to connect with the life and legacy of St. Mardarije, our March Saint of the Month.

After Divine Liturgy, we will gather for lunch before departing promptly at 12:15 PM (either by bus or individually).

Our first stop will be the New Gracanica Serbian Monastery, where we will take a brief yet awe-inspiring tour of the church and its beautiful icons. We will then continue on a short 12-minute drive to the St. Sava Monastery, where we will have the opportunity to venerate the relics of St. Mardarije.

This field trip is open to all families, and it promises to be an enriching and spiritually meaningful experience.

We expect to be finished at the Monastery by 3:00 PM, or if taking the bus, return to Holy Apostles by 3:45 PM.

We request all families RSVP so we know how many will be on the bus and how many for lunch. Note: Parents are not required to attend, but are more than welcome to come!

Please RSVP by March 20th!

We look forward to sharing this blessed journey together!

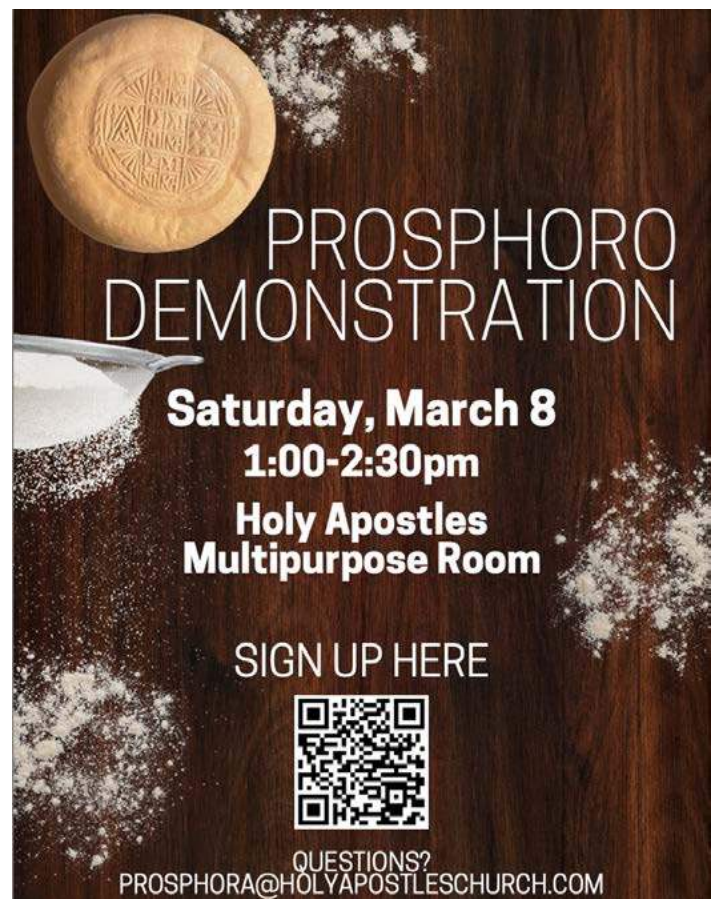
NEED A HELPING HAND?



Philoptochos is here for you, our Holy Apostles sisters, brothers, families, and parish. We want you to know that Philoptochos is available to help you with some of life's challenges that may arise.

Please reach out to Fr. George (frgeorge@holyapostleschurch.com) or Fr. Nicholas (frnicholas@holyapostleschurch.com) if you need financial help with food, utility bills, or other essential household expenses.


All requests for assistance are held in strict confidence. The love and support of Holy Apostles and our Philoptochos Chapter are here to assist you.



PROSPHORO DEMONSTRATION

Saturday, March 8
1:00-2:30pm
Holy Apostles Multipurpose Room

SIGN UP HERE



QUESTIONS?
PROSPHORA@HOLYAPOSTLESCHURCH.COM



Join us for an action-packed week where we dive into the lives of the Super Saints—heroes of faith who showed courage, love, and devotion to God! Through stories, games, and activities, kids will discover how they, too, can be faith-filled heroes in their everyday lives!

Any questions, please contact Nicole Voelz at 630-673-6635 or email: vacationbibleschool@holypostle-schurch.com

After you submit the online form, there will be a confirmation and a link that you will need to click that take you directly to a new page to pay for all children registering for VBS. We take payments through Vanco.

Each child must have their own registration form submitted, but payment can be done at one time for all children being enrolled.

Vanco Payment Link: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZADA/campaign/C-118R5>

◀ scan to register and/or sign-up to volunteer

WHO: Pre-K through 5th graders

WHEN: JUNE 9 - 13, 2025; 9:00am - 12:00pm

WHERE: Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church - Westchester, IL

REGISTRATION: \$50 per child by June 1

PLUS! Carnival: Friday, June 13th from 12-2pm (separate fee)



TO CARE FOR THOSE WHO ONCE CARED FOR US IS ONE OF LIFE'S HIGHEST HONORS.

CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP

A Holy Apostles Ministry

PLEASE JOIN US FOR
DISCUSSION & COFFEE!

Tuesday, March 11
1 PM - Philoptochos Room

Please contact Kathy Steffenson at gksteff@gmail.com or Val Dranias at valdranias@aol.com with any questions.

We hope that you will join us.



LENT: IN THE KITCHEN

Cannellini Bean Soup

Savory, creamy cannellini bean soup cooked in a rich tomato broth infused with herbs. It's thick, filling and beyond delicious! Recipe yields 5 cups in total or about 4 servings (1 ¼ each).

Prep Time: 5 minutes Cook Time: 30 minutes Total Time: 35 minutes Servings: 4 Calories: 355 calories

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil or olive oil (for Lenten, use vegetable oil)
- 1 medium-sized onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ – ½ teaspoon chili flakes
- 3 cans (15oz each) cannellini beans
- 1 can (15oz) diced tomatoes
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon dried rosemary
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 cups (480 ml) low sodium vegetable broth
- ½ teaspoon fine salt, or to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or to taste
- 1/3 cup fresh parsley or basil, chopped



Instructions

1. Open one can of cannellini beans and transfer its content (beans + liquid) to a blender or food processor. Whizz until smooth and set aside.
2. Heat the oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook, stirring frequently, until soft and translucent, about 4-5 minutes.
3. Stir in the garlic and cook for about 40 seconds until fragrant.
4. Add the pureed beans, the whole beans from the other two cans (previously drained), canned tomatoes, chili flakes, bay leaf, herbs except the fresh parsley, broth, salt and pepper.
5. Raise the heat to medium-high and bring the mixture to a simmer. Cover with a lid, cook for 25-30 minutes stirring occasionally, and reduce the heat as necessary to maintain a gentle simmer to the boil.
6. Turn the heat off, stir in the fresh parsley, taste and adjust the seasoning to your taste with more salt or pepper if desired.

Easy Vegan Brownies – Guilt-Free Treat

DRY INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt

WET INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ cup water
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

OPTIONAL ADD-INS:

- ½ cup chocolate chips
- ¼ cup nuts
- 1 teaspoon espresso powder

Instructions





1. Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). While the oven heats up, line an 8×8-inch baking pan with parchment paper.
2. In a large mixing bowl, sift together the flour and cocoa powder.
3. In a separate bowl or a large measuring cup, combine the water, vegetable oil, vanilla extract, and apple cider vinegar. Whisk until they are well mixed.
4. Pour the wet ingredients into the bowl with the dry ingredients. Using a spatula or a wooden spoon, gently fold the mixture together until just combined.
5. Pour the brownie batter into the prepared baking pan, spreading it out evenly. Smooth the top with your spatula to ensure the brownies bake uniformly.
6. Place the pan in the preheated oven and bake for 20–25 minutes.



* To check if they're done, insert a toothpick into the center of the brownies. If it comes out with a few moist crumbs, they're ready. If it comes out with wet batter, give them a few more minutes.

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2025

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 9th	 <i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 16th	 The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare FEBRUARY 23rd FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare MARCH 2nd FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent MARCH 9th	 <i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 16th	 ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent MARCH 23rd	 VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4th Sunday of Lent MARCH 30th	 ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent APRIL 6th	 ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! APRIL 13th GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 <i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 18th	 GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! APRIL 20th NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

Meeting Highlights (con't)

65th Anniversary Luncheon Recap: Sandra Pihos reported that the luncheon format was well received. Profits are not firmly established but are anticipated to be between \$64,000 to \$65,000. The transition from print to digital ad book was successful. We need to address both reservations and payment processing, as we encountered some difficulties with both. It is recommended that both the 70th and 75th anniversary celebrations begin planning 18 months in advance.

Barbara Pappas Memorial Committee: Sandra Pihos reported that a committee has been formed, consisting of Pauline Franks, Perry Hamalis, Nola Vandarakis, Sandra Pihos and Patty Pappas. The committee will meet in February to discuss and oversee a tribute to the memory of Barbara Pappas.

Holiday Schedule: Norm Pomrening recommended that we publish the holiday schedule in the church calendar. This will define the days when the church office is closed. Lou Kafkes will review the dates and report back.

Fellowship Hour: Lou Kafkes reported that we are not finding enough hosts for Fellowship Hour. He will speak with Sandra Pihos to troubleshoot solutions.

Next Regular Meeting: 2/20/25 at 7:30 PM

Key Dates: Parish Council Training 1/28/25 at 7:00 PM; Host Premarital Seminar 2/8/25; Host Clergy Syndesmos Meeting 2/11/25; Host Peace of Mind Mental Health Training 2/15/25; Greek School Apokreatiko Glendi 2/16/25; Host OCF College Day 2/22/25; Macaronatha Luncheon 3/2/25 (all Parish Council needed); Holy Apostles Special Parish Assembly 3/16/25; Special Clergy Laity Assembly 4/1/25; Holy Apostles Spring Parish Assembly 5/4/25; Fr. Bill Chiganos Memorial Service and Coffee Hour 5/11/25;

Closing Prayer: Father Georgiou. **Adjourn:** James Maragos at 9:53 PM. **Absent:** All members present.



LUMINARIA SALE

Our Holy Apostles GOYAnS will be making luminaria that will be placed in the Memorial Garden and around the outside of the church during our Good Friday Service in memory of our departed loved ones.

If you would like to have someone remembered in this way, please place your order by scanning the QR code and submitting their names.

We kindly ask that no more than two names per bag. Each bag is \$5."

scan to order ▶



MARCH 2025

 Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Forgiveness Sundry/Luminria Sale 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 11:30 am Macaronatha Luncheon 11:45 am GOYA Board	3 10:00 am Open Confession 7:00 pm Holy Unction	4 6:45 am Brotherhood of St Peter the Apostle 4:30 pm Greek School 6:00 pm Great Compline 6:15 pm JOY 7:15 pm Philoptochos Brd 7:15 pm ECM Webinar	5 5:30 pm 9th Hour / Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Dinner hosted by Brtherhd of St. Peter	6 1:00 pm Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek Schl 5:30 pm Greek School PTO Meeting 6:00 pm Great Compline	7 7:00 pm Salutations to the Theotokos 8:00 pm Communing with the Saints 8:15 pm Choir Rehearsal	8 Saturday of Souls 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 5:00 pm Vespers 6:00 pm Vespers Potluck Dinner
9 Feast of 40 Martyrs 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 11:30 am Fellowship Hr 5:30 pm Triumph of Orthodoxy Pan-Orthodox Vespers	10 6:00 pm Great Compline	11 10:00 pm Caregivers Support Meeting 4:30 pm Greek School 7:00 pm GOYA	12 10:00 am TOTS 3:30 pm ECM Church Meeting 5:30 pm 9th Hour / Pre-Sanctified Litrgy 7:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Dinner	13 1:00 pm Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School	14 7:00 pm Salutations to the Theotokos 8:00 pm Communing with the Saints 8:15 pm Choir Rehearsal	15 4:00 pm Open Confession 5:00 pm Vespers
16 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am Oratrical Fstvl 11:30 am Fellowship Hr 12:00 pm Special Parish Assembly 5:30 pm Solemn Vespers 8:00 pm Celebration of Books Reception	17 6:00 pm Great Compline	18 6:45 am Brotherhood of St Peter the Apostle 4:30 pm Greek School 6:15 pm Greek School Staff Meeting 7:15 pm ECM Cohort Meeting	19 5:30 pm 9th Hour / Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Dinner	20 1:00 pm Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School Meeting 7:30 pm Parish Council Meeting	21 7:00 pm Salutations to the Theotokos 8:00 pm Communing with the Saints 8:15 pm Choir Rehearsal	22 11:00 am AHEPA/Project Hope Project 4:00 pm Open Confession 5:00 pm Vespers
23 Philoptochos Easter Bake Sale Ordering Philoptochos Easter Candle Sale 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 11:30 am Fellowship Hr 12:00 pm Youth Field Trip	24 6:00 pm Great Compline	25 Annunciation Greece Independence Day Program 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 4:30 pm Greek School 7:00 pm GOYA	26 10:00 am TOTS 5:30 pm 9th Hour / Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Dinner Hosted by Philoptochos	27 1:00 pm Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School	28 7:00 pm Salutations to the Theotokos 8:00 pm Communing with the Saints 8:15 pm Choir Rehearsal	29 10:00 am 5th Saturday Serve Day 4:00 pm Open Confession 5:00 pm Vespers
30 Philoptochos Easter Bake Sale Ordering Philoptochos Easter Candle Sale 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 11:30 am Fellowship Hr	31 6:00 pm Great Compline					

HOLY APOSTLES GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
2501 S. Wolf Road
Westchester, IL 60154
(708) 562-2744

Address Service Requested

POSTMASTER: Please deliver by the 15th of March

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

BELLWOOD, IL
PERMIT #157

Sacraments listed are those known at time of publication

MEMORIALS

Elaine Cardullias
Theodore Christou
Paul Franks
Pauline (Pulcheria) Hamalis
Athanasios Kyriakopoulos
Theodora Kyriakopoulos
John D Lewis
Katherine Lewis
Panagiota Panagakos
Demetrios Papadimas
Ted Patrinos
George Roussos
Georgia Rufalo
Nicholaos Sahlas
Nicholetta Sahlas
Niketas Sahlas

Panayiotos Sahlas
Georgia Spiropoulos
Demetri Vandarakis
Scott Willsey
March Known Memorials:
Nicholas Andrews
Bess Chechopoulos
Elpida (Peters) Panagiotaros
Joanne Pekras
Constance Poulos

FUNERALS

George Beshilas
Sophia Russell
Joanne Pekras
Nicholas Andrews

BAPTISMS

Mercedes, daughter of Arianna Zielinski &
Faustas Jonenas
Sponsor: Faith Koszewski

WE'RE HIRING! PART-TIME OFFICE ASSOCIATE

The Parish Council has begun a search for a part-time associate to work in the office and perform administrative functions in alignment with the needs of the parish and assist with delegated, day-to-day church responsibilities under the supervision and oversight of the Director of Parish Operations.

An outline of these responsibilities, along with the qualifications, knowledge, skills and abilities for the ideal candidate can be viewed in the full job description, which is available by scanning the QR code below, or in the office.

If you are interested in being considered for this opportunity, please submit a cover letter and resume to office@holypostleschurch.com, with ASSOCIATE RESUME in the subject line of the email, or drop it off to the office. You can also help us by forwarding this email to interested and qualified persons that you know.

