

from Fr. Nicholas

Salvation as Transformation, Not Transaction

Great Lent begins almost quietly. The calendar turns, the hymns change, and today we find ourselves in the midst of the most sacred season of the Church year.

Some of us step into it eagerly; others wonder what it is really about. Is Lent a religious obligation? A spiritual reset? A season of guilt? Or something much deeper?

Some people imagine salvation as a courtroom drama: humanity on trial, Christ paying the penalty, the verdict announced, the case closed.

But the Orthodox Church invites us to see something far more profound. We are not defendants awaiting acquittal - we are patients in need of healing.

Great Lent is not about satisfying divine justice; it is about restoring divine life within us.

It is not about a debt being canceled, but about death being destroyed. It is not about God changing His mind about us, but about God changing us.

Salvation is not a legal transaction but a transformation - a healing and renewal of our life in Christ. The season of Great Lent is about becoming new, not simply being declared forgiven.

(continued, pg. 3)



FEED 6 - Over 1 Million Meals!

On January 24, Holy Apostles hosted our eleventh Feed6 meal packing event where 228 volunteers packed 76,464 meals for the less fortunate.

Since 2017 Holy Apostles has raised over \$330,000 and packed a total of 1,037,352 meals.

Let that sink in. Holy Apostles has packed more than 1 million meals for food-insecure kids, families, seniors, and veterans in our neighboring communities.



This milestone was so significant that the event was covered by NBC5 News.

Thank you all for volunteering your time, talent, and treasure to help those in need.



Celebrating
An Extraordinary Partnership

1,037,352 Meals Since 2017!

With the packaging of 76,464 meals during our meal packaging event on January 24th, 2026 at Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church in Westchester, IL Feed6-Outreach and the Holy Apostles congregation have now partnered in packaging and distributing 1,035,888 nutritious meals to local food-insecure families, kids, veterans, and seniors, through 11 separate collaborations since 2017 - a remarkable accomplishment!


www.Feed6.org


(continued, pg. 4)



Godparents Luncheon

Thank you to co-chairs Marianna Bannos, Deanne Chiganos & Pamela Pontikis and all the wonderful volunteers for making this year's Godparent Luncheon on Sunday, February 1st such a wonderful and memorable event for all the families!

The Holy Apostles annual Celebration of Books will take place on Sunday, March 8 at 8:00 PM following our 6:30 PM Solemn Vespers, and a second presentation on Tuesday, March 10 at 7:00 PM.

This year's Sunday theme is "Is the 21st Century the Century of Orthodoxy?" and will be presented by His Eminence Metropolitan Ambrosios of Korea and Ex-arch of Japan.

Apart from his hierarchical diakonia, His Eminence, served for 25 years as a full-time Professor at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFSS). He is the author of more than 30 books and academic articles on topics ranging from Patristics, to Byzantine Iconography, to Orthodox Evangelism and Witness.

Then on Tuesday, March 10 at 7:00PM, His Eminence, along with Deacon Perry Hamalis, Ph.D., will present "Orthodox Witness in Korea".

The Celebration of Books Reception and Presentation will be held at Holy Apostles, and we would be delighted to welcome all of you. The event is open to all. Please join us.

The event is open to all.
Please join us.

CELEBRATION OF BOOKS

HOLY APOSTLES GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



SUNDAY, MARCH 8TH
6:30 PM SOLEMN VESPERS
8:00 PM PRESENTATION

“SELF-EMPTYING (KENOSIS) AND ORTHODOX WITNESS”

PRESENTED BY HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN AMBROSIOS OF KOREA AND EXARCH OF JAPAN

TUESDAY, MARCH 10TH
7:00 PM

“ORTHODOX WITNESS IN KOREA”

CO-PRESENTED BY HIS EMINENCE MET. AMBROSIOS AND DN. PERRY HAMALIS, PH.D.

Salvation as Transformation *(continued)*

Our deepest problem is death, corruption, and our separation from God. *"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world" St. Paul writes, "and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned"* (Romans 5:12).

Death is the consequence of sin and Christ comes to destroy it. As St. Athanasios teaches, *"God became man so that man might become God"* (On the Incarnation).

Salvation is not God changing His attitude toward us but God restoring humanity to life. It is being restored to communion with God and sharing in His life by grace. **Christ does not come to merely cancel a debt but to enter our broken condition and heals us internally.** He restores humanity to life!

Christ is called a physician. *"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."* St. Mark writes *"I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance"* (Mark 2:17).

Sin is sickness and repentance is healing. The Church calls us to fast not to punish the body but to restore order in it. *"That which He has not assumed He has not healed"* (St. Gregory the Theologian – Epistle 101).

If our salvation was merely transactional, the Cross would be sufficient. But, for us, Christ's Holy Resurrection is central!

"If Christ is not risen" St. Paul writes "your faith is futile, you are still in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17). The Resurrection reveals what salvation really is: new life!

During our Lenten journey, we walk toward Pascha not to remember the payment that was made for us but to prepare ourselves to enter Christ's victory over death! "Christ is Risen" and life reigns we proclaim!

Lent can be a wonderful time of transformation but requires synergy - cooperation between us and the Lord's divine grace. God initiates, empowers, and completes salvation.

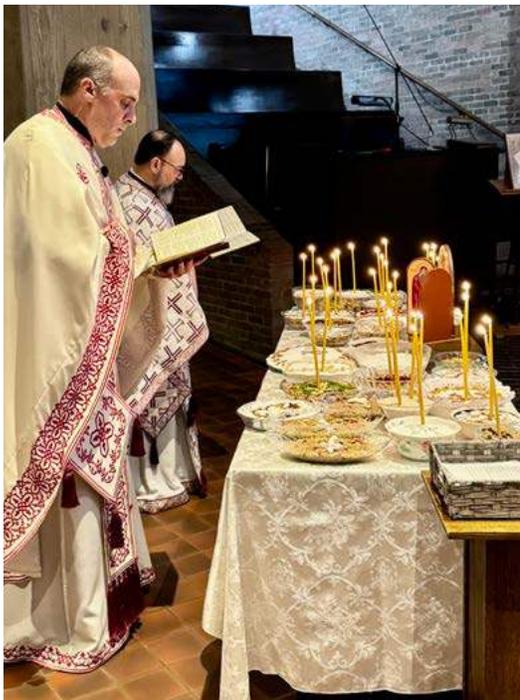
"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you both to will and to do" (Philippians 2:12-13).

We are not passive recipients of a legal verdict but active participants in a life of repentance and growth. Fasting, prayer, confession and almsgiving are not attempts to earn salvation but responses to grace and opening ourselves to God's healing work.

Salvation is restoring the human will into harmony with God's will. **Lent trains us to reorient our desire away from self and toward God.** It can be a wonderful time of healing!

The Church is a spiritual hospital, not a courtroom. Sacraments are medicine! Confession is diagnosis and treatment and Holy Communion is the medicine of immortality! Transformation unfolds over time! The transactional model subtly shapes our image of God as being offended and angry. Our Orthodox vision reveals God as self-giving love who enters human suffering to rescue and restore us!

+ Fr. Nicholas



Saturday of Souls February 14



Feed 6



228 volunteers



**76,464 meals
packed on
January 24**





HOLY APOSTLES PHILOPTOCHOS EASTER

Drive-by Food Sale

**KOULOURAKIA | KOURAMBIEDES | BAKLAVA
 PASTITSIO | SPANAKOPITES | TIROPITES
 TSOUREKIA | MELOMAKARONA**



How to Order:

Order during coffee hour March 1, March 8, March 15

Online: www.tinyurl.com/haphilo2501

ALL orders can also be placed online February 15 - March 18

Baked goods **only** can be placed online through March 25



Forms of payment:

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

Pick up order day/times:

Pick up orders at the front of Holy Apostles Church on **Saturday, April 4 from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM**. Please enter via the South parking lot.

For further information:

Contact Karen Anagnos at kanagnos1@gmail.com or call 312-305-1116

ITEM	SERVING	PRICE	ORDER BY
SPANAKOPITES	24 PIECES/TRAY	\$25	March 18
TIROPITES	24 PIECES/TRAY	\$25	March 18
PASTITSIO	10X12 INCH PAN	\$40	March 18
TSOUREKI	1.5 LBS	\$15	March 25
KOULOURAKIA (homemade)	1 DOZEN	\$10	March 25
KOURAMBIEDES (homemade)	1 DOZEN	\$10	March 25
BAKLAVA (homemade)	1/2 DOZEN	\$15	March 25
MELOMAKARONA	1 DOZEN	\$15	March 25

>>Proceeds benefit Operation Classroom Initiative<<



PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JANUARY 2026 PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

PC SECRETARY: PATTY PAPPAS EDITED BY: VAL DRANIAS

The meeting was called to order by President James Maragos at 7:35 PM. The opening prayer was offered by Father George Dokos.

The Mission Statement was read aloud by Valentia Vourlos: "The mission of the Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church is to proclaim and live our Orthodox faith as One Church and One Body of Christ through worship, ministries, education, and youth guidance. For we walk by faith, not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7)."

A motion to approve the December 18, 2025 Parish Council Meeting Minutes was made by Bill Leider and seconded by Sandra Pihos. Motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence: Thank you cards were received for Christmas gifts from Father George, Father Nicholas, Deacon Perry & Diakonissa Pat, Sophia Pappas, Eleni Geanon and Peter Dimas. Thank you letter dated December 11, 2025 was received from Metropolitan Nathanael to Father George for attending the 3rd Annual Dinner benefiting the Metropolis of Chicago Hellenic College Holy Cross Scholarship Fund. Thank you letter dated December 14, 2025 was received from Metropolitan Nathanael to Father George and the Parish Council for hospitality during his recent pastoral visit.

Father George presented a Patristix video on Saint Moses the Black. A brief group discussion followed. A movie regarding Saint Moses the Black will be released soon in theaters.

Ministries

Finance: Report by George Antonopoulos

Year-to-date financial results are ahead of budget, driven in part by increased cemetery plot sales. Operating expenses are in line with the budget; additional building repairs were offset by underspending in other categories. Capital projects are under budget due to several projects still in progress. Weiss currently performs a compilation of financial statements annually at a cost of \$3,700. This is not mandated by the Archdiocese and provides limited value. Consensus that the contract with Weiss not be renewed. It was noted that audit-related work has been transitioned to Lou Kafkes, Director of Parish Operations, and that oversight will be provided by the Audit Committee that has been appointed.

Stewardship: Report by Steven Milak

Stewardship numbers are down by 16 stewards year-over-year (2024–2025), while the average pledge increased by 4%.

A Stewardship Strategy and Execution Plan was presented, including monthly steps and educational materials focusing on fair-share and proportional giving. The parish currently meets operating needs but not capital needs through pledges. Of approximately 710 pledges, only 80 stewards give at fair-share levels, indicating a long-term sustainability concern.

Educational efforts will include coffee hour sessions, website updates, email communication, and leadership by example.

METRIC	DEC. 2025 YTD	DEC 2024 YTD	% CHANGE
# of pledges	701	717	-2%
Total pledged	\$895,417	\$883,817	1%
Amount collected	\$881,167	\$865,433	2%
Median pledge	\$600	\$600	0%
Average pledge	\$1,277	\$1,233	4%

Building and Grounds: Report by Chris Pepke

There are four furnaces and two boilers that heat the entire church building. Heating issues were reported in classrooms. Furnaces are operational but aging and will require replacement at an estimated minimum cost of \$40,000. Discussion included replacing units one-for-one or upgrading to commercial-grade systems. The boiler systems serving the multi-purpose room were overhauled in 2021; however, ongoing issues persist, and further replacement planning is required.

Quotes will be obtained. Any furnace replacement exceeding \$20,000 would require a Special Parish Assembly Classroom wing bathroom renovations, including ADA accessibility, remain a priority at an estimated cost of \$50,00 Completion of remaining 2025 projects may need to be re-prioritized depending upon the costs of furnace/boiler replacements. At present, funding is not sufficient to support a complete renovation of the parking lot. Sidewalk and parking lot ice management procedures were reviewed. Lighting adjustments will be made to better mark the church entrance.

Ushering: Report by Ted Dres

Ushers were asked to assist with salting sidewalks when necessary. The responsibility for doing so is with the Usher in Charge. Parish Council members are expected to attend Sunday services and were asked to attend Vespers services as well.

Missions 2026 Budget: Report by Peter Bell

Holy Apostles supports various missionaries on a regular basis. The Missions ministry has a budget but requires official authorization for expenditures. Mission support allocations were proposed as follows:

- Church of Korea/AOK Foundation: \$1,545/month
- Jesse Brandow (Central America): \$1,000/month
- Hoppe Missionary Support Fund (Albania): \$250/month

While the Hoppes are now living in the U.S., Gabriela Hoppe is continuing her missionary work in Albania. This is funded by the Hoppe Missionary Support Fund, which is run through OCMC. Deacon Perry's income, by his request, is to be paid to the AOK Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) private foundation dedicated to advancing Orthodox Christianity in Korea.

Motion by Peter Bell to approve mission support to the Church of Korea for \$1,545 per month, Jesse Brandow for \$1,000 per month, and Hoppe Missionary Support Fund for \$250 per month; seconded by Sandra Pihos. Motion carried unanimously.

Hellenic Academy: Report by Nicole Ostendorf

An adult Greek School class will begin January 28 and run through May. The Valentine's Glendi is scheduled for February 15, hosted by PTO. The Greek Heritage Parade will be held on April 19th. Hellenic Academy students will be marching in the parade.

Old Business:

FEED 6: Report by Norm Pomrening

The Feed 6 event is scheduled for January 24, with two shifts producing 75,000 meals. Fundraising exceeded the set goal of \$30,000. Registration will be closing on January 16, 2026.

Fundraising Campaign Strategy: Report by James Maragos

Recommendation to hire a fundraising consultant and appoint a campaign chair to oversee all aspects. A feasibility study costing approximately \$25,000 was discussed prior to launching a potential \$5 million campaign. Fundraiser proposals will be reviewed by a select committee, with recommendations given by the committee before seeking approval.

Chapel Hill Cemetery Plots: Report by Patty Pappas

Since the last meeting, two additional plots have been placed under contract: 200 D1 and 200 D2. Alicia Magas, a former Parish Council member who was involved with the Chapel Hill program, has been contacted to assist in review and reconciliation of historical plot records.

Youth Worker Protection and Sexual Harassment Training: Report by Patty Pappas

Six Parish Council members were noted as out of compliance and must complete training immediately.

Safety Committee: Report by Steve Milak / Mike Parafink

Motion to spend up to \$2,000 on situational awareness training was made by Steven Milak and seconded by Patty Pappas. The motion was approved unanimously. Security camera system planning is underway, including badge readers and expanded coverage. A \$10,000 grant is expected to be applied toward technology/safety needs.

New Business:

Calendar Committee: Report by Sandra Pihos

Reviewed 2026 dates for the Parish Council schedule. Fr. Bill Chiganos Memorial Coffee Hour tentatively scheduled for May 3. Golf Outing scheduled for July 13. Aleka Ernst will be the chairperson. Holy Apostles Open House tentatively scheduled for July 18. Parish Council elections tentatively scheduled for December 6.

EASTER LAMBATHES SALE

Purchase your decorated Easter Lambathes after Sunday liturgies 3/15 thru 4/5 and following Holy Unction services on Holy Wednesday, April 8th

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

Communing with the Saints



Fridays at 8:00 PM following Salutations

February 27: St. Moses the Black

March 6: St. Xenia of St. Petersburg

March 13: St. Nicholas of Japan

March 20: St. John Climacus



SAVE THE DATE

JOIN US FOR OUR
**34TH ANNUAL IOCC
CHICAGO GRAND BANQUET**
Thursday, May 7, 2026
Cocktails 6:00 pm | Dinner 7:00 pm
EMPRESS BANQUETS
200 E Lake Street, Addison, IL 60101

Please join us for an amazing evening of fellowship and learn how your generosity helps those in need in places like Greece, the Holy Land, Ukraine, and right here in the US. Please consider contributing to IOCC by becoming an IOCC Banquet Benefactor, Sponsor, Patron, or Friend.

\$125 per person | \$1,250 per table
RSVP by Friday, April 24





SCAN ME

Register at iocc.org/Chicago

The fair market value (FMV) for each ticket is \$70. Only the portion of the payment that exceeds the FMV is deductible as a charitable contribution.





YAL BIBLE STUDY

2 Timothy
3:16-17

Every Thursday

7:30pm

For all young adults!



ORTHODOX ROUNDTABLE
for young adults
February 18, 2026 @ 6:30 pm

Speaker: Fr. Paul Jannakos
Topic: Growing Up Without Growing Apart:
Navigating Family Dynamics as Adults

📍 St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox
Church- Niles, IL

For more information, contact Adrianna at
adrianna.daskalopoulos@gmail.com



MONASTERY PILGRIMAGE
ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOMOS MONASTERY
PLEASANT PRAIRIE, WI
MARCH 21ST 2026

OCF will be traveling by bus from Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox
Church (10050 Ivanhoe Ave, Schiller Park)

Please arrive to Holy Trinity by 2:30 PM

The trip includes:

- Vespers
- A light meal provided

The group is expected to arrive back at Holy Trinity around 8 PM

Purchase your ticket today - only \$10!
Available while spots last






**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 10
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 8x8-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.

The Akathist Hymn is a profound, devotional poem, which sings the praises of the Holy Mother and Ever-Virgin Mary.

It is one of the most beloved services in the Orthodox Church. It was composed in the imperial city of Constantinople, "the city of the Virgin," by St. Romanos the Melodist, who reposed in the year 556.

The Akathist Hymn has proven so popular in the liturgical life of the Church that many other hymns have been written following its format. These include Akathists to Our Lord Jesus Christ, to the Cross, and to many Saints.

The Akathist hymn consists of praises directed to the Mother of God, beginning with the salutation of the Archangel Gabriel: "Rejoice."

As the hymn is chanted all of the events related to our Lord's Incarnation pass before us for our contemplation.

The Archangel Gabriel marvels at the Divine self-emptying and the renewal of creation which will occur when Christ comes to dwell in the Virgin's womb.

The unborn John the Baptist prophetically rejoices. The shepherds recognize Christ as a blameless Lamb, and rejoice that in the Virgin "the things of earth join chorus with the heavens."

The pagan Magi following the light of the star, praise Her for revealing the light of the world.

The word "akathistos" means "not sitting," i.e., standing; normally all participants stand while it is being prayed.

The hymn is comprised of 24 stanzas, arranged in an acrostic following the Greek alphabet. The stanzas alternate between long and short. Each short stanza is written in prose and ends with the singing of "Alleluia." Each longer stanza ends with the refrain: "Rejoice, O Bride Unwedded."

The first part of the hymn is about the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary by the Angel. It describes Mary's surprise at the news, her visit to her mother and Joseph's doubts as to her innocence.

The second part is about the birth of Christ, the worship of the Shepherds and Magi, the flight to Egypt and the visit to Saint Simeon in the Temple.

In the third part the hymn directs our attention to the renewal of the world by Christ's coming, and the amazement of the Angels and the wise men at the sight of the Incarnation of God's Son.

The fourth and the last part is once more a lyric and rhetorical appraisal of Virgin Mary, whom the poet adorns with the most beautiful of adjectives asking her to accept his poetical offering and to intercede for the salvation of human race from the earthly sin.

ΠΑΝ - ORTHODOX AKATHIST HYMN

Sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Clergy Association of Greater Chicago



**TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026
7:00 PM**

2 SERVICES WILL TAKE PLACE; NORTH SIDE AND SOUTH SIDE:

NORTH:

**Holy Resurrection
Serbian Orthodox Church
3062 W Palmer Square
Chicago, Illinois
Homilist: V. Rev. Stavrophor
Dr. Milos Vesin**

Professor of St. Sava Orthodox School of Theology

Responses by
The Pan-Orthodox Choir of Greater Chicago

SOUTH:

**Ss. Peter and Paul
Ukrainian Orthodox Church
8410 131ST St.
Palos Park, Illinois
Homilist: V. Rev. Fr. Mousa Haddad**

**Pastor, St. Mary Orthodox Church,
Palos Heights, IL**

Responses by
Choir of Ss. Peter and Paul Church

ALL ARE WELCOME! COFFEE FELLOWSHIP FOLLOWS SERVICE

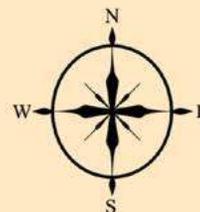
Outdoor Orthodoxy

An Initiative of Orthodox Youth & Young Adult Ministries (OYM)



An Orthodox Outdoor Ministry that invites families to step away from the noise and distractions of daily life and enter into the rhythm of prayer, presence, and pilgrimage.

A Hike with the Saints



Join us for a **Prayer Hike** where children learn about powerful stories of saints who prayed outdoors!

Use QR Code to Register
or email Chicagoland
Ministry Support
Coordinator, Peter Savas
at psavas@theoym.org



Scan the QR Codes to get the **hike location** sent directly to your maps:

Apple
Maps:



Google
Maps:



Schiller Woods South
(W. Irving Park Rd just east of
River Rd)



Saturday, Mar. 28th
10:00-11:00am



Families
with children ages 5-12



Please Bring:
water bottle, proper shoes,
layers as needed



www.theoym.org/outdoor-orthodoxy

“The heavens declare the glory of God.” (Psalm 19:1)

Understanding Vestments and Altar Cloth Colors During Lent

from St. John the Evangelist Orthodox Church, Beaver Falls, PA and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America



PURPLE - During Lent

Purple is worn during Great Lent to denote the season's penitential character. Sundays are still celebrations of the resurrection, so bright colors are worn instead of purple.



GREEN OR GOLD - Palm Sunday

Green vestments and cloths are worn on Palm Sunday, as they are a connection to the branches brought by the crowds. Gold can also be worn on Palm Sunday.



WHITE - Pascha

White is a paschal color, associated with themes of baptism, light and joy. This joy is present in all the feasts of Christ. But red is also appropriate for Pascha as it is a color of royalty, given its richness and boldness.



FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

Philoptochos is volunteering at Feed My Starving Children in Aurora (border of Aurora and Naperville) on Saturday, March 7 from 9-10:45 am. They will pack specially formulated meals for malnourished children from around the world at this Lenten service project. There are also some seated jobs available attaching labels to food bags. This is a great opportunity to earn service hours. Families with children ages five and older are also invited to help. To volunteer or get more information, please contact Emily Rehn at platovalentine@hotmail.com or 708-369-9365.



Fanari Summer Camp is just around the corner! This is a wonderful opportunity to engage Orthodox Christian youth in an exciting, Christ-centered camp experience that brings them closer to God, the Church, and their community.

Families registering for Fanari Camp this year who need financial assistance should note that, in addition to applying for a camp grant, the Holy Apostles Philoptochos Society awards scholarships each year to two campers. Scholarship consideration is handled directly through the camper's registration with Fanari Camp.

Meeting Highlights (con't)

Parish Directory: Report by Lou Kafkes

A total of 105 families have participated in directory photography sessions to date. Additional photography dates have been added for the months of February and May. An additional 18 photos have been submitted by families for the new parish directory. Approximately 250-300 database and directory update responses have been received.

Parish Mini Survey: Report by Steven Milak

A survey will be distributed by the Parish Council to solicit parishioners' feedback on the Council's work and performance. A committee consisting of Chris Pepke, Sandra Pihos, Steven Milak has been appointed to draft, review and finalize the survey questions. Upon completion, the survey will be distributed electronically to parishioners.

Hiring of Parish Director: Report by Sandra Pihos

Discussion was held regarding the formation of a hiring committee and transition planning. The Parish Council is seeking to hire a new Parish Director by June 1 to allow sufficient time for training. The contract of our current Parish Director, Lou Kafkes, expires on August 31.

Macaronatha Luncheon: Report by Sandra Pihos

The Luncheon will be hosted by the Parish Council on Sunday, February 22. Setup for the Luncheon will take place on Saturday, February 21. Mike and Antella Thiakos have generously agreed to donate numerous items for the Luncheon.

Proceeds from the Luncheon will benefit the Holy Apostles Project Mexico team for Summer 2026.

Church Contribution to Leadership 100 Foundation: Report by James Maragos

Discussion postponed.

Trivia Night: Report by Lou Kafkes

Scheduled for February 7. There will be 6-8 people per team. Proceeds will benefit the Westchester Food Pantry.

YAL Collection Basket for this Sunday

A basket will be placed at the back of the church to collect contributions toward the YAL Convention. The Parish Council will coordinate the collection and distribution of the funds.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, February 19, 2025 at 7:30 PM

Key Dates to Remember : Saturday, January 24 – FEED 6; Sunday, February 1 - Godparents Luncheon after Divine Liturgy; Saturday February 7 - Trivia Night 7:00 PM; Sunday, February 15 - Hellenic Academy Valentine's Glendi 4:00 PM; Sunday February 22 - Macaronatha Luncheon after Divine Liturgy - All Council members needed

Closing Prayer: Offered by Father Nicholas.

Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn made by Steven Milak, seconded by Bill Leider. Motion approved unanimously.

President James Maragos officially adjourned the meeting at 9:24 PM. Council dismissed to Executive Session.

GRADUATE SUNDAY / CHURCH PICNIC



SUNDAY, MAY 31

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

Save the Date!



MARCH 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Sunday of Orthodoxy 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy (Sunday School following Communion) 11:30 am Fellowship Hour 6:30 pm Triumph of Orthodoxy Pan-Orthodox Vespers	2 6:00 pm Great Compline	3 11:15 am Feed the Hungry 4:30 pm Greek School 7:00 pm Philoptochos Board Meeting	4 5:30 pm 9th Hour / Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Dinner Hosted by Youth Ministries	5 1:00 pm Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School 5:30 pm Greek School PTO Meeting 7:30 pm YAL Bible Study (GOYA Room)	6 7:00 pm Salutations to the Theotokos 8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm Communing With the Saints	7 9:00 am Feed My Starving Children 4:00 pm Open Confession 5:00 pm Vespers 6:00 pm Vespers Lenten Potluck Dinner
8 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy (Sunday School following Communion) 10:45 am Oratorical Festival 11:30 am Fellowship Hour 6:30 pm Solemn Vespers 8:00 pm Celebration of Books Reception	9 6:00 pm Great Compline	10 1:00 pm Caregivers Support Meeting 4:30 pm Greek School 6:15 pm Greek School Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Celebration of Books presentation	11 10:00 am TOTS 5:30 pm 9th Hour / Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Dinner Hosted by	12 6:45 am Brotherhood of St Peter the Apostle 1:00 pm Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School 7:00 pm Women's Book Club 7:30 pm YAL Bible Study (GOYA Room)	13 7:00 pm Salutations to the Theotokos 8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm Communing With the Saints	14 10:00 am Choir Federation Board Meeting 10:00 am Family Retreat at SIRC 4:00 pm Open Confession 5:00 pm Vespers
15 Sunday of the Holy Cross 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy (Sunday School following Communion) 11:30 am Fellowship Hour	16 6:00 pm Great Compline 7:00 pm Lenten Service Project	17 4:30 pm Greek School 6:15 pm JOY	18 1:00 pm Bereavement Group Meeting 5:30 pm 9th Hour / Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 7:00 pm Jr GOYA Meeting 7:00 pm Pre-Sanctified Dinner Hosted by Philoptochos	19 1:00 pm Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School (MPR Stage Rehearsal) 7:30 pm Parish Council Meeting 7:30 pm YAL Bible Study (GOYA Room)	20 6:00 pm Youth Lock-In 7:00 pm Salutations to the Theotokos 8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm Communing With the Saints	21 8:00 am Youth Lock-In 4:00 pm Open Confession 5:00 pm Vespers
22 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy (Sunday School following Communion) 11:30 am Fellowship Hour 11:45 am Sunday School Staff Meeting	23 6:00 pm Great Compline	24 4:30 pm - 6:15 pm Greek School (MPR Stage Rehearsal)	25 Annunciation of the Theotokos Greek Independence Day 8:00 am Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am TOTS 6:00 pm Great Vespers	26 6:45 am Brotherhood of St Peter the Apostle 1:00 pm Bible Study 4:30 pm Greek School Independence Day Program 7:30 pm YAL Bible Study (GOYA Room)	27 7:00 pm Akathist Hymn 8:00 pm Choir Rehearsal	28 4:00 pm Open Confession 5:00 pm Vespers
29 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 11:30 am Fellowship Hour	30 6:00 pm Great Compline	31 4:30 pm Greek School 5:30 pm Greek School 6th Grade Parents Meeting 6:30 pm GOYA/Jr GOYA Confession & Palm Folding 7:00 pm Philoptochos Board Meeting 7:00 pm YAL Confession & Palm Folding	Philoptochos Easter Candle Sale March 15 – April 8			

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

FEBRUARY

Chrysavgi Antoniou
Michael & Bess Peterson
Nora & Antonis Kyriacou
Nathan & Katherine Principato
Eleftheria (Liberty) Poteres
Vasiliki (Bessie) Kovatchis
Demetrios Papadimas
Christos Natsis

MARCH

Elaine Katziouris

FUNERALS

Thomas Tsoutsouris
Elaine Varven



This video, produced by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, is part of a series named "Journey to Pascha" by the Department of Religious Education of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Learn about how the date of Pascha is determined each year, how the Lenten season evolved through history, the shifting of Orthos and Vespers during Holy Week and more.

View video: <https://youtu.be/KelFkWYVyB0>

