

SYNDIAKONIA

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ΜΕΤΑΜΟΡΦΩΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ

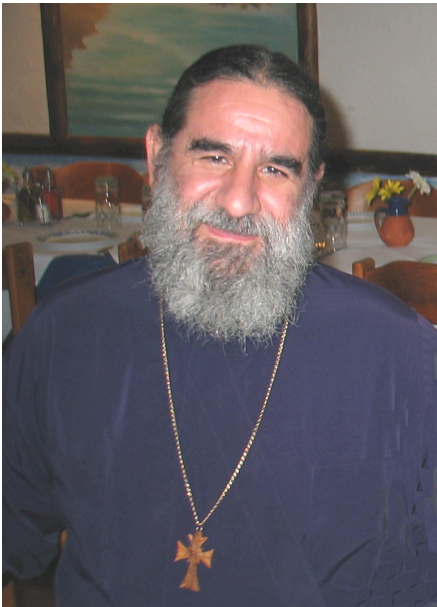
DECEMBER 2007
MERRY CHRISTMAS!



THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Fr. Panayiotis' Message

The Healing of Wounds



As we come closer to the great feast of the Nativity of Christ, questions may arise in our minds regarding this incredible event. I would like to take a few minutes to ponder over a few of them with you today.

The Church presents this feast as a celebration of the birth of the Son of God. This, of course is a tremendous miracle. How can the divine be born of a human being? How can God become man and yet remain God? How does this unity of the human and the divine work and function without the divine absorbing and obliterating the human, or the human confining and limiting the divine? We can ponder over this mystery for a long time, we can read the theological debates of the first few centuries of Christianity and try to

understand, but after a certain point we need to surrender to the mystery of the miracle; and yet, the birth of Christ is also presented to us as a promise from God for peace and love.

What I would suggest today is that we consider how this event can relate to our own lives on a personal level. How can the coming of Christ become for us a source of peace and love? Of course, if we treat this feast only as an opportunity to rest from work, eat a lot of good food drink, dance and sing, then the benefits from the birth of Christ will be minimal. If we see it, however, as a chance to heal our wounds from the warfare of the devil against us; if we grasp it as an opportunity for reconciliation with those around us, if we try to understand it as it was meant to be, "that God became man so that we may become 'God-like'" (St. Athanasios); if we see it the way through which our human nature may be healed as it unites itself to the Divine nature in Christ, we may begin to truly benefit from the Feast of Christmas.

The Orthodox Church has established various ways to help us be healed, find peace and experience God's love. Confession of sins is the place and time where we humble ourselves and surrender to God's Mercy; through this act of humility we open up the heavens for the light of God to shine into our hearts and heal us. Prayer, both individual as well as communal is the way we connect to the Divine and allow Him to unite Himself to us, heal us and grant us His Joy. Holy Communion is where we finally become one with Him and offer Him our whole being in order to transform and perfect us. It is necessary to take all three of these steps. We can't skip one and jump to the next.

Please consider seriously these tested ways with regard to the healing of your soul as you would consider the best tested treatments that a doctor would offer you for the healing of your body. No one goes to the doctor and begins to give him advice as to how he might treat their particular disease. You respect the opinion of the doctor because he has knowledge through training, he has treated others before you and has acquired the experience to treat the specific ailment. In the same way, we need to trust the Church and the Wisdom given to Her by God. We need to trust the experienced spiritual fathers and allow them through the sacrament of Confession and spiritual guidance to prescribe for us the medicine specific to our need. That is the only way for a speedy recovery from any spiritual ailment and restoration to peace and joy in Christ.

God Bless You,

Fr. Panayiotis



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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

December 2007

December 1, Saturday, Blessing of the water 10:00 am. Ἀγιασμός 10:00 πμ

December 2, Sunday, 14th Sunday of Luke, ΙΔ΄ Κυριακή Λουκᾶ.

Orthros 8:45 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am. Ὁρθρος καί Θεία Λειτουργία.

December 5, Wednesday, Evening: Great Vespers for Feast of St. Nicholas, 6:00 pm

December 6, Thursday, Feast of St. Nicholas bishop of Myra of Lycia

Orthros 9:00 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am. Ὁρθρος καί Θεία Λειτουργία.

December 8, Saturday, Great Vespers, 6:00 pm

December 9, Sunday, Tenth Sunday of Luke. Conception of the Theotokos by St. Anna.

Orthros 8:45 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am. Ὁρθρος καί Θεία Λειτουργία.

December 11, Tuesday, Evening: Great Vespers for Feast of St. Spyridon of Trimythus, 6:00 pm

December 12, Wednesday, Feast of St. Spyridon of Trimythus the Wonderworker.

Orthros 9:00 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am. Ὁρθρος καί Θεία Λειτουργία.

December 15, Saturday, Great Vespers, 6:00 pm

December 16, Sunday, Feast of Forefathers of our Lord Jesus Christ. Feast of St. Modestos.

Feast of St. Dionysios Archbishop of Aegina the Wonderworker (moved from December 17)

Orthros 8:45 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am. Blessing of the Animals, 3:00 pm

December 22, Saturday, Evening: **Great Vespers at 5:30 pm followed by Holy Unction**, the

Healing Service at 6:15 pm. Μέγας Ἑσπερινός 5:30 μμ. Ἀκολουθεῖ τὸ Ἅγιον Εὐχέλαιον 6:15 μμ.

December 23, Sunday before Christmas, Feast of all the Righteous people from Adam to Joseph, the betrothed to the Most Holy Theotokos.

Orthros 8:45 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am. Ὁρθρος καί Θεία Λειτουργία.

December 24, Monday, Morning: The Great Hours of Christmas, 9:00 am

Monday Evening: Christmas Celebration, The Nativity of Christ

CHRISTMAS VESPERAL LITURGY 6:00 pm, Vespereal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

A Christmas Reception will follow the Divine Services at the Church Hall.

Δευτέρα Ἑσπέρας: Ἑσπερινή Λειτουργία Χριστουγέννων, 6:00 μμ,

DECEMBER 25, TUESDAY, Christmas, The Nativity of Christ

The Birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

Ἡ κατὰ Σάρκα Γέννησις τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

Orthros 9:00 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am. Ὁρθρος 9:00 πμ καί Θεία Λειτουργία 10:00 πμ.

December 30, Sunday after Christmas. Orthros 9:00 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am.

December 31, Monday, Great Vespers 6:00 pm - Feast of Circumcision of Christ, St. Basil the Great.

CHRISTMAS: THE GREATEST GIFT FOR ALL

Paul Craig Roberts

Christmas is a time of traditions. If you have found time in the rush before Christmas to decorate a tree, you are sharing in a relatively new tradition. Although the Christmas tree has ancient roots, at the beginning of the 20th century only 1 in 5 American families put up a tree. It was 1920 before the Christmas tree became the hallmark of the season. Calvin Coolidge was the first president to light a national Christmas tree on the White House lawn.

Gifts are another shared custom. This tradition comes from the wise men or three kings who brought gifts to baby Jesus. When I was a child, gifts were more modest than they are now, but even then people were complaining about the commercialization of Christmas. We have grown accustomed to the commercialization. Christmas sales are the backbone of many businesses. Gift giving causes us to remember others and to take time from our harried lives to give them thought.

The decorations and gifts of Christmas are one of our connections to a Christian culture that has held Western civilization together for 2,000 years.

In our culture the individual counts. This permits an individual person to put his or her foot down, to take a stand on principle, to become a reformer and to take on injustice.

This empowerment of the individual is unique to Western civilization. It has made the individual a citizen equal in rights to all other citizens, protected from tyrannical government by the rule of law and free speech. These achievements are the products of centuries of struggle, but they all flow from the teaching that God so values the individual's soul that he sent his son to die so we might live. By so elevating the individual, Christianity gave him a voice.

Formerly only those with power had a voice. But in Western civilization people with integrity have a voice. So do people with a sense of justice, of honor, of duty, of fair play. Reformers can reform, investors can invest, and entrepreneurs can create commercial enterprises, new products and new occupations.

The result was a land of opportunity. The United States attracted immigrants who shared our values and reflected them in their own lives. Our culture was absorbed by a diverse people who became one.

In recent decades, we have begun losing sight of the historic achievement that empowered the individual. The religious, legal and political roots of this great achievement are no longer reverently taught in high schools, colleges and universities. The voices that reach us through the millennia and connect us to our culture are being silenced by "political correctness." Prayer has been driven from schools and religious symbols from public life. Georgetown University, a Jesuit institution, is too fearful of offending diversity to display the crucifix.

There is plenty of room for cultural diversity in the world, but not within a single country. A Tower of Babel has no culture. A person cannot be a Christian one day, a pagan the next and a Muslim the day after. A hodgepodge of cultural and religious values provides no basis for law — except the raw power of the pre-Christian past.

All Americans have a huge stake in Christianity. Whether or not we are individually believers in Christ, we are beneficiaries of the moral doctrine that has curbed power and protected the weak. Power is the horse ridden by evil. In the 20th century, the horse was ridden hard. One hundred million people were exterminated by National Socialists in Germany and by Soviet and Chinese communists simply because they were members of a race or class that had been demonized by intellectuals and political authority.

Power that is secularized and cut free of civilizing traditions is not limited by moral and religious scruples. V.I. Lenin made this clear when he defined the meaning of his dictatorship as "unlimited power, resting directly on force, not limited by anything."

Christianity's emphasis on the worth of the individual makes such power as Lenin claimed unthinkable. Be we religious or be we not, our celebration of Christ's birthday celebrates a religion that made us masters of our souls and of our political life on Earth. Such a religion as this is worth holding on to even by atheists.

Paul Craig Roberts is a columnist for The Washington Times and is nationally syndicated.

<http://www.washtimes.com/commentary/20011225-60524294.htm>

Who is Saint Dionysios?

by Dr. Allen Macris

He wrote no books of literature; wrote no theological treatises; amassed no great fortunes; lead no armies into victory against the infidels. Simply stated, he did nothing for which he would still be remembered some five hundred years after his death. Saint Dionysios did, however, live an exemplary and un-impeachable Christian existence. He lived during the turbulent years of the 16th century. At a time when the Ottoman empire had put a huge navy at sea to conquer Italy and the rest of Europe. (His father had, in fact, served as captain of his own ship and fought on the side of Venice during the battle of La Ponte.)

As a young man, after he had been ordained into the priesthood, he gave up his inheritance and chose the monastic life. He did not, however, withdraw from life. He was always called upon to help someone with their earthly or spiritual problems. His involvement in the daily life of the people of Zakynthos is attested by the extant of many official Documents with his signature inscribed on them.

Early in his career as priest, Saint Dionysios, on an aborted trip to the Holy Land, arrived in Athens. While in Athens, he was elevated to the rank of Bishop. Hence, he adopted the name of Saint Paul's first and only convert, Dionysios Aeropagitis. Thusly, Dragonicos Seguros became henceforth known as Dionysios.

Saint Dionysios was known for his wise council and his willingness to help those in need. Indeed, when a stranger knocked on his door at the monastery of Anaphonitria late one night, asked for help and forgiveness, for he had killed a man, Saint Dionysios forgave him. The murdered had killed Constantino Seguro, the only remaining brother of Saint Dionysios. This act of forgiveness stands as the ultimate Christian gesture in the life of the saint. And so writes the poet... “και αγιαζη ο αναμαρτητος την ορα που αμαρτανη”. Freely translated: He who had not sinned becomes a saint with the commission of sin. For the saint had not only forgiven the man, but had also lied to the authorities who had come to search for the murderer; he had given him food and wine and helped him escape in a dinghy to Cephalonia.

As alluded to above, Saint Dionysios lived a life of service among the inhabitants of the island. He was known for his goodness of heart, but also for miracles that he had performed. He died at the age of 75. He died after a long illness while in the care and in the home of his sister, Segura Macris.

According to his wishes, Saint Dionysios was buried at the monastery of Strophades where he had been the abbot. Years after his death, as it was the custom of the monastery, his tomb was opened and his body exhumed. His body was found intact. The remains emitted the scent of sainthood. The undecomposed body was then moved into the church where it was kept for some 150 years.

During the eighteenth century, marauding Turks landed on the island of Strophades and after putting the monks to the sword attempted to destroy the saint's remains. They placed the body in a barrel of gun powder and then ignited it. The resulting huge explosion failed to destroy the body of Saint Dionysios. The few surviving monks hailed a passing Venetian frigate and transferred the remains to Zakynthos. The day was August the 24th. This day was declared an official holiday by the Senate of Venice. Ever since then, this day in August has been celebrated with much ado on the island. After the body was in Zakynthos, a delegation was organized by the inhabitants of the island to be sent to Constantinople to petition the then Patriarch for sainthood. And so, when the testimonials were recounted and other facts presented, Saint Dionysios became the Patron Saint of Zakynthos.

I began my commentary in the present tense because even today the presence of the Saint is alive and in the conscious of the people throughout the island. He is revered by young and old alike. To the Zakynthenians who live on the island and, indeed, the world over, his is a source of comfort, for his is often asked to pray and intercede for us. To this day, the ultimate assurance that one can give of his truthfulness is to say “μα τον Αγιο” (ma ton agio). No one needs to ask which saint. That expression is equivalent to placing ones hand on the Holy Bible.

On a visit to the island, one experiences the natural beauty of the place, the aroma of the flowers, the gentile and courteous manners of the people, not to mention their song and wit. But also a feeling of mysticism prevails. Traditionally the saint is afforded a new pair of slippers yearly. The reason: he wears them out walking about the island (according to common lore).

On December 17, we commemorate the Death of Saint Dionysios.

The above synopsis is abstracted from a 1998 English translation of Dino Konomos' biography. The biography was first published in 1969 in Greek from material obtained from the archives of the Church of St. Dionysios and the monastery of Strofades.



Wanted: Qualified Candidates for the Parish Council

by

Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis

Ah, 'Tis the season for Parish Council elections. Every year as November and December roll around, many Orthodox parishes hold elections for their Parish Councils. In my ten year ministry, I've had Parish Council members who are shining examples of what it is to be an Orthodox Christian, who genuinely care for the mission of the church, who made a weekly habit of receiving Holy Communion, who came to confession, in addition to coming to Parish Council meetings, serving on committees and organizing community events. I've also had Parish Council members who did not attend church, who laughed when I told the Parish Council that all members should go to confession at least once a year, who came to church each Sunday only in time to pass the tray, who weren't faithful in keeping the fasts of the church and who generally did not set a good example.

In my parish, in addition to a seminar for Parish Council candidates held in the local area, last year I instituted an additional one hour private session in my office so that I could have an opportunity to dialogue with each candidate one on one. The other day, in conducting one of these meetings, a candidate asked me "Father, what is your number one goal for next year?" Without even thinking about it, I replied, "To have 11 Parish Council members (the number of my Parish Council) who will worship in church each Sunday." This person replied, "Do I have to come on time?" I guess a priest can dream, but as we approach another year of Parish Council elections, I scratch my head and wonder is it really that hard to find 11 people for a Parish Council who will commit to coming to church on time each Sunday? And is our method of choosing our parish leaders something that needs to be revised?

Picking versus Electing

History shows that leaders have traditionally picked those who work closest with them. Kings chose their men of court, Presidents choose their cabinets, Hierarchs choose their councils, coaches choose their assistant, managers hire their own secretaries, but the parish priests have their councils voted in. (In fact, the priest isn't even allowed to cast a vote for the Parish Council.) Why is that? Some say, this is to serve as a check and balance for the priest, make sure he doesn't get too much power. If we are worried that a priest will wield power in a dictatorial and oppressive way, perhaps that person is not an appropriate candidate for ordination and should be screened out during Seminary. However, the priesthood is a position of authority. The priest serves as the Icon of Christ at the altar in his community. The priest serves as the leader of his community. Many Parish Council members will argue that the priest leads only the spiritual part of the community, with the Parish Council doing the business part. To which I counter, is there any part of the community life that isn't to be considered spiritual? Just look at your own personal life. Is there a separation between the spiritual and secular parts of your life? Does Christ only lead part of our lives, or is He supposed to be leading at all times, even when we are engaged in "secular" things like sports or socializing? Likewise, there is no secular part of a church -- Christ, through the priest, leads all aspects of community life. If there is a sinful or ungodly segment to community life, like running a bingo business, that aspect of community life needs to be eliminated, not have the priest turn a blind eye to it.

And what happens more often than not, is that rather than serving as a check and balance to temper a priest who "wields too much power," a Parish Council serves as an obstacle and handicaps the enthusiastic priest who is trying to grow his parish in the image and likeness of Christ.

What is the purpose of an Orthodox Church?

The Orthodox Church has but one purpose, to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As subgoals under this overarching theme are mission statements taken directly from the Gospels themselves. "To seek and to save the lost," (Luke 19:10); To call sinners to repentance (Matthew 9:13) ; and "to baptize all nations." (Matthew 28:19) Every priest, parish council member and parishioner should be actively working towards these goals in their own lives and in the lives of their peers. Some have distorted the purpose of the church to include providing a social life and preserving a certain culture and language. There are certainly social and cultural elements present in every parish, but should not be the focus of that parish. The focus of every parish is Jesus Christ.

What is the role of the Parish Council?

Archdiocese regulations in various Orthodox jurisdictions provide a legal job description of the parish council which is to ostensibly help administer the parish in cooperation with the parish priest. Some interpret that as making sure the parish is on solid financial footing, counting money in the tray, running the parish festival, or selling raffle tickets. But if the primary focus of the parish is supposed to be furtherance of the Gospel, then the primary focus of the Parish Council Member is supposed to be assisting the priest to further the Gospel. This means that first and foremost, the Parish Council member must be a supportive example of what it means to be an Orthodox Christian. If Parish Council members are not worshipping in church or receiving the sacraments or going to confession, what kind of message does this send? That these things are important for the "regular people" of the parish but not for its leadership? By not being a good example IN the church, not only does the parish council member not further the message of Christ or work in cooperation with the priest, but actually works in opposition to the priest. Because the regular member of the church is going to think, "If our priest can't convince his own Parish Council that worship and the sacramental life are important, he must be a real bozo." Yes, the parish council has an administrative role in the church. The church festival is generally organized by someone on the Parish Council. Someone on the parish council is usually in charge of the buildings and grounds, the stewardship committee, the outreach committee and acts as a liaison to the various ministries of the church. But the primary role of the parish council is to be leading by example, in worship, in speaking positively about the future spiritual growth of the church.

What constitutes a Member in Good Standing? -- A hypothetical case study

In the parish of Holy Trinity, in Anytown, USA, there was a rule that to run for the parish council, one had to be a member for one full year prior to the election. So, if the election was December 9, 2005 for the parish council of 2006, in order to run, one had to be a member on December 9, 2004. It turns out that one year, George Smith wanted to run for Parish Council. He was a very pious man, in church every Sunday, one of the top stewards of the parish, who also did a lot of volunteer work at the parish festival. In November 2005, George Smith was nominated for parish council and was very excited about the prospect of serving his church. George had moved to the area in January of 2005 from a parish where he had served on the Parish Council, and filled out his membership form on January 2 of 2005. George was disqualified from running because he hadn't been a member of the parish for a full year (he was three

weeks short of a year), and hence wasn't a member in good standing. Mike Johnson, on the other hand, who rarely attended church, who pledged only a nominal amount, was nominated and elected. His great-grandfather, after all, had been one of the founding members of the parish. And for the 90 year history of the church, a Johnson had always been on the Parish Council. Perhaps it is time to redefine what is a member in good standing.

An Uninformed Electorate

In most parishes, members of the congregation do not know all the members who are running. Since we don't have debates or public forums for candidates to introduce themselves before the elections (hmm, there's an idea, a debate on the stage in the parish hall after church), members are told to vote for a slate of candidates they may not even know. And so the voting goes like this. Nick Jones picks up his ballot. It says vote for 6 of these 8 candidates. Nick knows five of the candidates, so he votes for them. He evaluates which of the other three to vote for and finds one of the remaining candidates is named Nick Smith. So he thinks, "My name is Nick, that's a good name, I'll vote for him." And so Nick Smith is qualified in the eyes of Nick Jones merely because his name is Nick. Then you have a good number of parishioners who show up only to vote -- they don't even attend church on election Sunday but come afterward to vote. They bring their checkbooks to make sure they are caught up on their membership for the year, filling out their stewardship form or paying their dues in December, just so they can vote. You have parishioners who themselves are not members in good standing, because they don't live an Orthodox Christian life, voting for people they don't know. An uninformed electorate voting for people they don't know -- is this a functional system?

What motivates people to run for the Parish Council?

There are many answers here. Some are motivated by a desire to help the church grow and to help others grow in their faith. If that's not a motivation to run, you probably need to evaluate why you are running. Some run because "we need responsible people to make sure the church is on solid financial footing." Or "we need to make sure the priest doesn't get too powerful." Or "I've been on the Parish Council for 25 years so I'll run again." Or "my father was on the parish council and now that he's passed away, I'll take my family's seat on the parish council." How many qualified people stay away from the parish council? In my years as a priest, when I've approached people who I think would make excellent parish council members, I have often been turned down by them because "there is too much politics" on the Parish Council, or "I don't know enough people to get elected." If you are running for parish council, you need to clearly examine why you are running. If it's for any reason other than I want to help my priest spread the Gospel in this parish, then please reconsider running. That's not to say that a parish council member does not need an administrative skill set -- yes, people on the parish council need to be good with numbers and balancing checkbooks, should understand stewardship and fundraising and will be doing administrative jobs like making sure the church roof gets repaired. But the primary job of the parish council member is to be a good example of a faithful Orthodox Christian, and being faithful to this role must be a motivating factor for the parish council candidate.

What we need on the Parish Council?

Committed Christians, plain and simple. We need people who will serve as examples to the rest of the community, who will come faithfully and punctually to church each Sunday, who will receive Communion, who will go to confession, who will attend a Bible study or religious retreat, who can talk with some competency about Orthodoxy. What we do NOT need are people who spend the liturgy in the hall, who

come at 11:00 a.m. in time to pass the tray, who discourage parishioners from going to confession, who engage in gossip about the priest, or each other. How do these things help in spreading the Gospel of Christ?

The time has come to reexamine how we select leaders in our parishes. If Jesus Christ could choose illiterate fishermen and repentant tax collectors and make them into heralds of the Gospel who founded the Orthodox Church which still exists two thousand years later, if a priest were allowed to choose 9 or 11 (or whatever the number) committed Christians in his parish to serve as its leaders, I'm quite confident that the results would be positive. Since there is virtually no chance that that will ever happen, all I can hope for is that if you are nominated for the Parish Council and aren't committed to regular church attendance, if you don't have a regular prayer life, if you don't receive Communion often, keep the fasts, go to confession periodically (if ever) or are engaged in serious habitual sin, that you will withdraw your name from the ballot. And if there aren't enough qualified people to run in your parish, perhaps the priest will end up getting to appoint one or two people to the parish council. Would that be such a bad thing? He, above all, should know who is qualified.

Several years ago, at summer camp, one of the staff members also happened to be the parish council president of her church community. One morning, as we were beginning the Orthros (Matins) service before the Divine Liturgy, there was one person in our camp chapel (a tent outdoors covering a slab of concrete). In the back row of the chapel, it was this woman who was kneeling on concrete and praying. After Liturgy, I told her how moved I was to witness this scene of a parish council president on her knees praying at the beginning of Orthros in an empty church. I told her thank you for giving me a healthy image of a parish council member to have in my mind. At a time when many parish council members are the last ones in church, it was refreshing to see one be the first. We always picture the parish council members passing the tray, taking sign-ups for something, or hawking tickets to the dinner-dance. It's time for parish council members to step up and change that image, into images of holiness rather than images of business. After all, what is a church, a place of holiness or a place of business? And as Orthodox Christians, we are supposed to be being led by our priests and parish council members to become images of holiness, not merely consumers, customers and constituents.

Fr. Stavros Akrotirianakis is the Priest of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Tampa, FL and is director of [St. Stephen's Summer Camp](#) for the Metropolis of Atlanta.

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<http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/articles7/AkrotirianakisCouncil.php>

The New Age Movement and Spiritual Deception: The Uncreated Light or the “Angel of Light” in Disguise?

Christ has told us, “*I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*” (Jn. 8:12) Obviously this light is divine light as was witnessed at Christ’s Transfiguration in Matt. 17:2: “And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light,” and is referred to in Orthodox literature as the *uncreated* light—uncreated because it is the light of *God*, who is *not* created, but *is* the *Creator* of all things. It is God appearing as light. We can read of experiences that saints have had with the uncreated light in such books as In the Light of Christ, Chap. XVI: “The Vision of Light” (about St. Symeon the New Theologian) by Archbishop Basil Krivocheine and Modern Orthodox Saints: St. Seraphim of Sarov (Chapter: “A Wonderful Revelation to the World”) by Constantine Cavarnos.

How can we know when such experiences are the *true* uncreated light or the *counterfeit* light of Satan disguised as an “Angel of Light”? (II Cor. 11:14)? Deceptively, both can produce an ecstatic sense of removal from the world. As in all instances of spiritual deception, however, the purpose of the “Angel of Light” is to *separate* us from God. He is frighteningly successful. The uncreated light *unites* us with God.

One of the most significant differences between the two experiences of light is that the uncreated light of God comes usually only to a person whose heart has been greatly *humbled*, though not exclusively, through strict ascetic practices. By contrast, experiences with the *counterfeit* light are from the Evil One (Satan) and are visited upon the *proud* person, who is *the most easily deceived*. The presence of the true, uncreated light permeates the whole being of the person, effecting a state of inexpressible joy and “throbbing” love for God, with a complete loss of consciousness of one’s existence in the world. It is experiencing God in the purest way possible on Earth. When surrounded by the uncreated light, as described by St. Seraphim of Sarov as the “warmth of the Holy Spirit,” one sees one’s own sins more clearly and weeps in repentance. Conversely, the pride of the person who experiences the deceptive light of demonic origin increases, such that the person supposes to have been “illuminated” and to have achieved the height of (self-) righteousness. Such self-deception is soul endangering.

Of special note is that a faithful Christian person who is in an unusually stressful situation (cancer, car accident, loss of a loved one, etc.) may have some of the experiences or spiritual visions described here. In such cases the person must **test** the experience for authenticity by both prayer (especially the “Jesus Prayer”) and consultation with their spiritual father.

Some of the specific phenomena of the New Age Movement that camouflage themselves as the uncreated light include out-of-body experiences, astral projection and near-death experiences*, the last of which can be of divine or demonic origin. Contrasted with the state of overwhelming divine love and repentance produced by the uncreated light, the demonic light ultimately leaves the person in a void of nothingness and confusion or a spiritual mirage in the form of bright white light at the end of a tunnel. When they reach the light, it seems to surround them with a feeling of (false) love. The light then diminishes, revealing a garden-like setting, possibly with deceased loved ones present. As opposed to the nothingness left by the false light, the “*true* light...*enlightens* everyone.” (Jn. 1:9)

The person who has experienced the uncreated light is spiritually as a result of divine love and repentance; whereas, the deceived person may feel some short-lived remorse, but remains spiritually unchanged. The withdrawal of the uncreated light leaves the person in a state of deep loss and grief. The deceived person is left in a state of false bliss and confusion. Applicable to all forms of the spiritual deception of the New Age Movement is always Christ’s unchanging and infallible test of authenticity: “You will know them by their fruits.” (Matt. 7:16)

--An Orthodox Christian--

* For information about these and other New Age/occult phenomena, go to: http://cana.userworld.com/cana_occultTerms.html . Books like Life After Life by Raymond Moody and Embraced by the Light by Betty Eadie present the false light. For a telling critique of the Eadie book, see: <http://www.leaderu.com/orgs/probe/docs/eadie.html> Hands of Light and other books by Barbara Ann Brennan also present a false Christ.

DAILY BIBLE READING-DECEMBER

12/1/2007	Gospel: Luke 12:32–40	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 5:22–26; 6:1–2
12/2/2007	Gospel: Luke 18:35–43	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 6:10–17
12/3/2007	Gospel: Luke 20:27–44	Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 2:20–26
12/4/2007	Gospel: Mark 5:24–34	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 3:23–29; 4:1–5
12/5/2007	Gospel: Matthew 11:27–30	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 5:22–26; 6:1–2
12/6/2007	Gospel: Luke 6:17–23	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 13:17–21
12/7/2007	Gospel: Luke 21:37–38, 22:1–8	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to Titus 1:15–16; 2:1–10
12/8/2007	Gospel: Luke 13:19–29	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 1:16–23
12/9/2007	Gospel: Luke 13:10–17	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:22–27
12/10/2007	Gospel: Mark 8:11–21	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 3:5–11, 17–19
12/11/2007	Gospel: Mark 8:22–26	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 4:1–13
12/12/2007	Gospel: John 10:9–16	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 5:8–19
12/13/2007	Gospel: Mark 9:10–15	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 7:1–6
12/14/2007	Gospel: Mark 9:33–41	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 7:18–25
12/15/2007	Gospel: Mark 2:23–28; 3:1–5	Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 1:8–18
12/16/2007	Gospel: Luke 14:16–24; Matthew 22:14	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:4–11
12/17/2007	Gospel: Mark 9:42–50; 10:1	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:33–40; 12:1–2
12/18/2007	Gospel: Mark 10:2–12	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 9:8–23
12/19/2007	Gospel: Mark 10:11–16	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 10:1–18
12/20/2007	Gospel: Mark 9:33–4	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 10:32–38
12/21/2007	Gospel: Mark 10:24–32	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:8–16
12/22/2007	Gospel: Luke 13:19–29	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 3:8–12
12/23/2007	Gospel: Matthew 1:1–25	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9–10; 32–40
12/24/2007	Gospel: Luke 2:1–20	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 1:1–12
12/25/2007	Gospel: Matthew 2:1–12	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:4–7
12/26/2007	Gospel: Matthew 2:13–23	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 2:11–18
12/27/2007	Gospel: Mark 11:27–33	Epistle: Acts of the Apostles 6:8–15; 7:1–5, 47–60
12/28/2007	Gospel: Mark 12:1–12	Epistle: St. James' Universal Letter 1:19–27
12/29/2007	Gospel: Matthew 2:13–23	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 2:11–18
12/30/2007	Gospel: Matthew 2:13–23	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11–19
12/31/2007	Gospel: Mark 12:13–17	Epistle: St. James' Universal Letter 2:14–26

FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Fellow Parishioners,

I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous and Happy New Year! It has been my honor to have served on the Parish Council this year. I pray that I have met your expectations and will continue to do so in the upcoming year.

This past year has been an exciting year. Our parish continues to grow-we installed the iconostasion in the Sanctuary; we installed iconography in the chapel; we have begun installation of the Platytera in the Sanctuary. Actually, the Platytera should be completed when you get this letter. We are also close to paying off our construction loan. This will be done in February. All of this has been done because of your gifts of time, talent and treasure. The Lord has blessed us all in so many ways and it is proper and right to return those gifts. We still have so much more to do, and I pray that we will continue to be blessed.

I have heard from many people of how busy they are. It seems that, with all we have going on outside the Parish, it is difficult for us to participate inside the Parish. The Parish Council will review all the activities we have in the Parish and will try to see if we can concentrate activities in certain areas. Regardless of how many activities we do have, I challenge you, in the upcoming year, to refocus your priorities and make the Parish life number one. Participate in as many services, social activities, etc, you can. Bring your entire family and make the Parish your home away from home.

In everyone's life we go through cycles. Let's make 2008 the cycle where you spend more time with your Parish family.

May God bless you and your family.

In His service,

Alex Miltiades
Parish Council President

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGES FOR 2007



THANK YOU TO THE
FAITHFUL STEWARDS
WHO HAVE
SUBMITTED PLEDGE
CARDS FOR THE
2007 PLEDGE YEAR!

PIN	Name	PIN	Name	PIN	Name
0002.01	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Adamson	0096.01	Mr. & Mrs. Read Davis	0207.01	Mr. & Mrs. Harry Kipreos
0001.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Alberts	0099.01	Dr. & Mrs. Evangelos Demestihias	0208.01	Mrs. Irene Kipreos
0010.01	Dr. & Mrs. George Andros	0661.01	Ms. Eleni Dodys	0682.01	Mr. Manolis Kipreos
0669.01	Ms. Alexandra Aperges	0641.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nick Donkar	0209.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mike Kipreos
0523.01	Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Basto	0644.01	Mr. George Dracos	0684.01	Mr. Steve Kipreos
0014.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Asimakos	0106.01	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Driscoll	0610.01	Mr. Gregory Kirbabas
0017.01	Mrs. Irene Athanas	0108.04	Miss Alayna Dunkerly	0211.01	Mr. & Mrs. Philip Kiritry
0019.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ben Azimzadeh	0108.01	Mr. & Mrs. Cedric Dunkerly	0213.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Klementzos
0022.01	Mr. & Mrs. Tom Bafas	0109.01	Mr. & Mrs. James Duvlaris	0215.01	Mr. & Mrs. Alan Knuchel
0023.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nick Bakatsas	0113.01	Dr. Marjorie Economopoulos	0216.01	Miss Constance Kollias
0026.01	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Barke	0598.01	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Elias	0585.01	Mr. & Mrs. Zacharias Kollias
0030.01	Mr. & Mrs. Bob Bates	0294.01	Mr. and Mrs. Paul Farina	0219.01	Ms. Natalie Konstadinidis
0616.01	Ms. Andrea Beneda	0565.01	Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Farrey	0222.01	Mrs. Athena Kontrafouris
0033.01	Mr. & Mrs. Greg Bennett	0675.01	Miss Kate E. Ferguson	0221.01	Mr. James Kontrafouris
0034.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Bilson	0541.01	Mr. & Mrs. Edward Fernandez	0223.01	Ms. Marilyn Kontrafouris
0035.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ken Bilson	0121.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Fleshman	0648.01	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kopsias
0036.01	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Bilson	0125.01	Mr. & Mrs. James Frangis	0226.01	Dr. & Mrs. Michael Kostas
0554.01	Ms. Miranda Black	0128.01	Mr. & Mrs. Stratton Frank	0227.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nikolas Kostopoulos
0040.01	Mr. & Mrs. Tony Blasetti	0134.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ignatios Gaitanoglou	0674.01	Mr. George Koulouris
0041.01	Mr. Terry & Dr. Irma Bliss	0561.01	Ms. Eva Gaitanoglou-Arp	0229.03	Miss Alexa Kourafas
0042.01	Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Bond	0688.01	Mr. & Mrs. Majed Gebara	0229.01	Mr. & Mrs. James Kourafas
0043.01	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Botni	0144.01	Mr. & Mrs. Evan Gekas	0232.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Koutouzis
0612.01	Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Bourgeois	0146.01	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Georgacopoulos	0664.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dionyssios Koutsoukali
0611.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Brewer	0148.01	Mr. & Mrs. Leslie George	0233.01	Mr. & Mrs. Elias Kouvelas
0048.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mark Bridgers	0149.01	Dr. & Mrs. Larry Gess	0234.01	Mr. & Mrs. Cristos Kyprianou
0050.01	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Brotsis	0150.01	Drs. Peter & Jennifer Gess	0695.01	Mr. & Mrs. Van Kyrias
0051.01	Dr. & Mrs. Dan Brown	0151.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Gianaris	0236.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Lake
0052.01	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Brown	0155.01	Miss Martha Gingles	0511.01	Mr. & Mrs. Blake S. Lawson
0560.01	Mr. & Mrs. Kerry Buchan	0595.01	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Gormanos	0237.01	Mr. & Mrs. Stamatias Levantis
0054.01	Mr. & Mrs. Tom Bundros	0163.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dino Hadjikyriakou	0652.01	Mr. & Mrs. Walter S. Lewis
0055.01	Mr. & Mrs. D. J. Burke	0693.01	Mr. Michael Hairitis	0240.01	Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Lilly
0057.01	Mr. & Mrs. Constantine Bylos	0165.01	Mr. & Mrs. David Hammond	0241.01	Mr. & Mrs. David Linebaugh
0058.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mark Cable	0166.01	Dr. & Mrs. James Hammond	0517.01	Mr. & Mrs. James Linos
0060.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Caras, Jr.	0577.01	Mr. & Mrs. Steven Hanes	0500.01	Ms. Sylvia Lisgaris
0572.01	Mr. & Mrs. Chris A. Carlos	0170.01	Mr. & Mrs. James Harris, Jr.	0244.01	Mrs. Florence Lockmuller
0063.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Carlos	0690.01	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Hayes	0245.01	Mr. & Mrs. Elton Longshore
0068.01	Mr. & Mrs. Greg Cassimus	0173.01	Mr. & Mrs. Charles Holderness	0623.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Lopos
0070.01	Mr. & Mrs. Harry Catrakilis	0174.01	Mr. & Mrs. Christ Hondras	0248.01	Mr. David & Dr. Stephanie Lukens
0570.01	Ms. Irene S. Ceisel	0175.01	Mrs. Diana Honey	0250.01	Dr. & Mrs. Allen Macris
0683.01	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Christofil	0676.01	Mr. & Mrs. Serkan Hurioglu	0251.01	Dr. & Mrs. Bobby Macris
0075.01	Mr. & Mrs. Sotir Christopher	0594.01	Mr. & Mrs. Constantin Hutanu	0252.01	Mrs. Catherine Macris
0667.01	Mr. & Mrs. James E. Clement	0647.01	Mr. Romeo Ibrahim	0254.01	Mrs. Irene Macris
0672.01	Mrs. Nancy Copeland	0656.01	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Isaac	0256.01	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Maduros
0658.01	Mr. & Mrs. Peter J. Copses	0681.01	Ms. Anna L. Jackson	0259.01	Mr. Angelo Mallis
0696.01	Mr. Arthur Costakis	0183.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mike Jacobs	0263.01	Mrs. Xenia Mantgiaris
0081.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Coundouriotis	0187.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jason Johnson	0267.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dean Marianos
0087.01	Mr. Shawn & Dr. Despina Dalton	0188.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Johnston	0537.01	Mrs. Marjorie Marinos
0089.01	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Danos	0663.01	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Jones	0691.01	Mr. & Mrs. Paul J. Markley
0094.01	Mr. & Mrs. Michael T. Davino	0663.03	Mr. Richard Erik Jones Jr.	0501.01	Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Markopoulos
0621.01	Mr. Christopher Davis	0701.01	Ms. Maria Kalamas	0269.01	Mrs. Xanthippe Marsico
		0194.01	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Kandilakis	0272.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Matthews
		0703.01	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Karacalidis	0273.01	Miss Michelle Matthews
		0201.01	Mr. & Mrs. David Kay	0274.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mike Mavridis
		0637.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ivan Kelivanov	0278.01	Mr. & Mrs. Frank McAteer

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGES FOR 2007



THANK YOU TO THE
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PIN	Name	PIN	Name	PIN	Name
0279.01	Mr. & Mrs. John McCarty	0367.01	Dr. & Mrs. Dorel Radivoj	0467.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dimitri Vastakis
0631.01	Mr. & Mrs. Sam R. McClurd II	0371.01	Mr. & Mrs. Eric Richards	0469.03	Miss Maria Vatzakas
0281.01	Mr. & Mrs. Glenn McCollum	0372.01	Dr. & Mrs. Lambros Rigas	0702.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Vatzakas
0283.01	Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Melissas	0376.01	Mr. & Mrs. Randy Rogers	0640.01	Mr. & Mrs. Terrence Voelker
0284.01	Mrs. Krystalia Metropoulos	0383.01	Miss Christina Sampanes	0475.01	Mr. & Mrs. Tim Voulopos
0286.01	Dr. & Mrs. Kyriakos Michaelides	0384.01	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Sampanes	0476.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jamie Wagner
0289.01	Mr. & Mrs. Alex Miltiades	0386.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jay Sarmir	0666.01	Mr. & Mrs. Michael R. Wilborn
0290.01	Mr. Charles Miltiades	0387.01	Mr. & Mrs. Emmanuel Sarris	0665.01	Mr. & Mrs. Barry Williams
0291.01	Mr. & Mrs. Demetri Miltiades	0388.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Sarris	0484.01	Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm Worden
0292.01	Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Miltiades	0392.01	Mr. & Mrs. Marc Schaub	0486.01	Mr. & Mrs. Greg Young
0293.01	Mr. & Mrs. Leo Modenos	0689.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ken Scherer	0493.01	Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Zakreski
0650.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Moraitakis	0536.01	Mr. and Mrs. Gheorghe Schipor	0185.01	Mr. and Mrs. Marco Zavala
0301.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Moustoukas	0394.01	Mr. & Mrs. Constantine Seraphim		
0301.03	Mr. Michael Moustoukas	0396.03	Miss Mari Shoji		
0304.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Nakos	0396.01	Mr. & Mrs. Takanori Shoji		
0692.01	Mr. James Nakos	0400.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Sigalos		
0706.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Nasr	0620.01	Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Skarpelis		
0633.01	Mr. & Mrs. James Niarchos	0410.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mike Slocum		
0307.01	Mr. & Mrs. Iancu Nica	0411.01	Mr. & Mrs. Francis Smith		
0308.01	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Nichols	0412.02	Mr. James Smith		
0309.01	Dr. & Mrs. Evans Nichols	0412.01	Mrs. Mary C. Smith		
0311.01	Mr. & Mrs. Marc Nichols	0607.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Soublis		
0313.01	Mr. & Mrs. Caryl Nielsen	0416.01	Mr. & Mrs. Elias Sparagis		
0318.01	Mr. Nick Nixon	0700.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jon Spivey		
0320.01	Mr. & Mrs. William O'Connor	0420.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ron Sprouse		
0679.01	Mr. George Olympiadis	0422.01	Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Starks		
0323.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nick G. Olympiadis	0423.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Stathis		
0324.01	Mr. & Mrs. Gus Orologas	0426.01	Mr. & Mrs. Steve Steffas		
0678.01	Ms. Nikki Palamiotis	0428.01	Mrs. Mary Stiakakis		
0326.01	Mr. Dean Pallas	0627.01	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Strakes		
0327.01	Rev. & Mrs. George Pallas	0558.01	Mrs. Constance Stratigos		
0328.01	Mr. Tasi Pallas	0685.01	Mr. & Mrs. Zacharias Taoushiani		
0331.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jon Papadimitriou	0435.01	Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Tassopoulos		
0332.01	Mr. & Mrs. Konstantine Papadimitr	0698.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ovidiu Teodorescu		
0333.01	Mr. Spyros Papadimitriou	0438.01	Mrs. Betty G. Thomas		
0335.01	Mr. & Mrs. Aristotle Papadopoulos	0506.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dean Thomas		
0657.01	Rev. & Mrs. Panayiotis Papageorgi	0439.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Thomas		
0339.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jon Papastrat	0441.01	Mr. & Mrs. Steven Thompson		
0341.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Papeleacos	0445.01	Mrs. Helen J. Tiliacos		
0639.01	Dr. Maria Paradisis	0446.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nick Tiliacos		
0344.01	Mr. & Mrs. Casey Pater	0447.01	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Tiller		
0646.01	Mr. & Mrs. James Patterson	0448.04	Mr. Arthur Tingas		
0347.01	Mr. Alex Paulson	0448.01	Mr. & Mrs. Steve Tingas		
0349.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dean Paulson	0449.01	Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Titus		
0351.01	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Paulson	0453.01	Mr. & Mrs. Athan Tsarouhas		
0352.01	Mr. & Mrs. Keath Paxten	0668.01	Mr. & Mrs. Constantine Tselios		
0528.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Peppas	0455.01	Mrs. Maria Tsifopoulos		
0354.01	Mr. & Mrs. Arestedes Petaros	0507.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dimitrios Tsoukalas		
0677.01	Ms. Sophia Philippopoulou	0458.01	Mr. & Mrs. James Tucker		
0357.01	Mrs. Athena Pickett	0460.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ray Turner		
0358.01	Mr. James Pickett	0461.01	Mr. & Mrs. Lester Tyra		
0361.01	Mr. & Mrs. William Porter	0694.01	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Vachtsevanos		
0584.01	Mrs. Katherine Prattes	0465.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ben Valagohar		
0364.01	Ms. Vickye Prattes	0466.01	Mr. & Mrs. Plutarch Vamvakias		

278 Pledges received

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGES FOR 2008

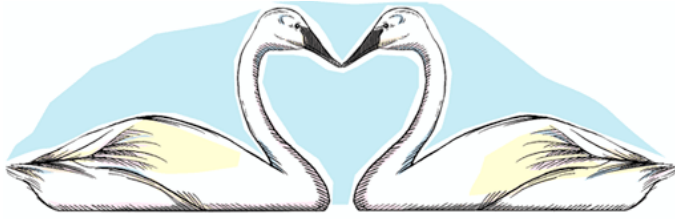


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PIN	Name	PIN	Name	PIN	Name
0001.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Alberts	0234.01	Mr. & Mrs. Cristos Kyprianou	0422.01	Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Starks
0712.01	Miss Melissa C. Alexander	0236.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Lake	0426.01	Mr. & Mrs. Steve Steffas
0523.01	Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Basto	0608.01	Dr. Anna Lambros	0558.01	Mrs. Constance Stratigos
0707.01	Miss Dorian Bafas	0241.01	Mr. & Mrs. David Linebaugh	0435.01	Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Tassopoulos
0022.01	Mr. & Mrs. Tom Bafas	0244.01	Mrs. Florence Lockmuller	0445.01	Mrs. Helen J. Tiliacos
0023.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nick Bakatsas	0245.01	Mr. & Mrs. Elton Longshore	0448.01	Mr. & Mrs. Steve Tingas
0030.01	Mr. & Mrs. Bob Bates	0623.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Lopos	0453.01	Mr. & Mrs. Athan Tsarouhas
0035.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ken Bilson	0248.01	Mr. David & Dr. Stephanie Lukens	0455.01	Mrs. Maria Tsifopoulos
0043.01	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Botni	0250.01	Dr. & Mrs. Allen Macris	0461.01	Mr. & Mrs. Lester Tyra
0612.01	Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Bourgeois	0251.01	Dr. & Mrs. Bobby Macris	0466.01	Mr. & Mrs. Plutarch Vamvakias
0048.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mark Bridgers	0252.01	Mrs. Catherine Macris	0475.01	Mr. & Mrs. Tim Voulopos
0051.01	Dr. & Mrs. Dan Brown	0259.01	Mr. Angelo Mallis	0666.01	Mr. & Mrs. Michael R. Wilborn
0560.01	Mr. & Mrs. Kerry Buchan	0267.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dean Marianos	0493.01	Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Zakreski
0054.01	Mr. & Mrs. Tom Bundros	0274.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mike Mavridis		
0055.01	Mr. & Mrs. D. J. Burke	0278.01	Mr. & Mrs. Frank McAteer		
0572.01	Mr. & Mrs. Chris A. Carlos	0631.01	Mr. & Mrs. Sam R. McClurd II		
0075.01	Mr. & Mrs. Sotir Christopher	0281.01	Mr. & Mrs. Glenn McCollum		
0667.01	Mr. & Mrs. James E. Clement	0283.01	Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Melissas		
0658.01	Mr. & Mrs. Peter J. Copses	0284.01	Mrs. Krystalia Metropoulos		
0696.01	Mr. Arthur Costakis	0286.01	Dr. & Mrs. Kyriakos Michaelides		
0089.01	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Danos	0289.01	Mr. & Mrs. Alex Miltiades		
0661.01	Ms. Eleni Dodys	0289.03	Mr. Andrew Miltiades		
0641.01	Mr. & Mrs. Nick Donkar	0292.01	Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Miltiades		
0644.01	Mr. George Dracos	0293.01	Mr. & Mrs. Leo Modenos		
0106.01	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Driscoll	0304.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Nakos		
0709.01	Mr. & Mrs. Drew Dudley	0307.01	Mr. & Mrs. Iancu Nica		
0108.01	Mr. & Mrs. Cedric Dunkerly	0309.01	Dr. & Mrs. Evans Nichols		
0113.01	Dr. Marjorie Economopoulos	0313.01	Mr. & Mrs. Caryl Nielsen		
0598.01	Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Elias	0324.01	Mr. & Mrs. Gus Orologas		
0128.01	Mr. & Mrs. Stratton Frank	0326.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dean Pallas		
0134.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ignatios Gaitanoglou	0327.01	Rev. & Mrs. George Pallas		
0144.01	Mr. & Mrs. Evan Gekas	0328.01	Mr. Tasi Pallas		
0149.01	Dr. & Mrs. Larry Gess	0335.01	Mr. & Mrs. Aristotle Papadopoulos		
0155.01	Miss Martha Gingles	0657.01	Rev. & Mrs. Panayiotis Papageorgi		
0595.01	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Gormanos	0639.01	Dr. Maria Paradisis		
0166.01	Dr. & Mrs. James Hammond	0344.01	Mr. & Mrs. Casey Pater		
0577.01	Mr. & Mrs. Steven Hanes	0347.01	Mr. Alex Paulson		
0174.01	Mr. & Mrs. Christ Hondras	0349.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dean Paulson		
0656.01	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Isaac	0528.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Peppas		
0183.01	Mr. & Mrs. Mike Jacobs	0354.01	Mr. & Mrs. Arestedes Petaros		
0188.01	Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Johnston	0357.01	Mrs. Athena Pickett		
0201.01	Mr. & Mrs. David Kay	0361.01	Mr. & Mrs. William Porter		
0711.01	Mr. & Mrs. Curtis Kimble	0367.01	Dr. & Mrs. Dorel Radivoj		
0215.01	Mr. & Mrs. Alan Knuchel	0372.01	Dr. & Mrs. Lambros Rigas		
0216.01	Miss Constance Kollias	0384.01	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Sampanes		
0585.01	Mr. & Mrs. Zacharias Kollias	0387.01	Mr. & Mrs. Emmanuel Sarris		
0219.01	Ms. Natalie Konstadinidis	0388.01	Mr. & Mrs. George Sarris		
0223.01	Ms. Marilyn Kontrafouris	0689.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ken Scherer		
0232.01	Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Koutouzis	0394.01	Mr. & Mrs. Constantine Seraphim		
0710.01	Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Kretsedomas	0395.01	Mr. & Mrs. John Shanahan		
		0396.01	Mr. & Mrs. Takanori Shoji		
		0708.01	Dr. & Mrs. Michael Skardasis		
		0620.01	Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Skarpelis		
		0420.01	Mr. & Mrs. Ron Sprouse		

117 Pledges received

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Engagements

Congratulations!

Philip Sprouse & Jill Christina Kovski

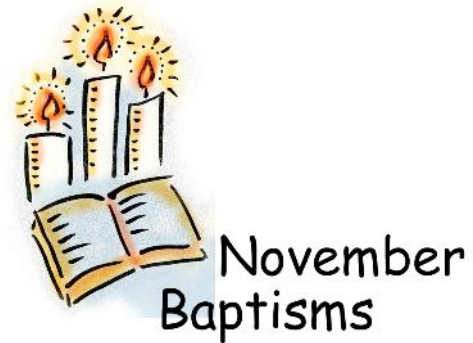
Robert (Bob) Koons & Keri Paxten

All those who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Saturday, Nov. 3 - Anthe Farina

Sat. Nov. 17 - Sofia Sambunaris

Sat. Nov. 24 - Alexandros Johnston



**The Best
Christmas
Pageant Ever!**

Date: Sunday, December 16th

Time: 6:00pm

Where: Parish Life Center

**Light Refreshments will be
served!**

PHILOPTOCHOS

2007-2009 Philoptochos Board



President:
1st Vice President:
2nd Vice President:
Recording Secretary:
Corresponding Secretary:
Treasurer:
Asst. Treasurer:
Advisor:
Membership:

Frances Mavridis
Xanthippe Marsico
Annette Jacobs
Christine Sprouse
Dorothy Macris
Mary Miltiades
Dorothy Botni
Marty Driscoll
Evelyn Bilson
Kate Lewis

Board Members:
Shirley Kiritsy
Niki Gess
Nikki Palamiotis
Connie Stratigos
Athena Burke
Mary Smith.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As we approach the holiday season, may we give thoughtful consideration to the many blessings our Lord has bestowed upon us.

We wish you and your families a blessed Christmas.

Philoptochos / Panagia Chapter

A special and heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped with our highly successful Eclectic Café. The total profit made that night is **\$9596.23!**

First of all, many thanks to Helen Carlos and Charlene Papadopoulos who co-chaired the entire event. The following are the chairpersons who planned and organized each of the committees:

Publicity: Stephanie Lukens & Penny Miltiades
Table Host Committee: Nikki Palamiotis & Kate Lewis
Big Raffle Committee: Karen Melissas
Sponsors & Donation Committee: Xanthippe Marsico & Mary Militades
Silent Auction: Evelyn Bilson
Hostess Coordinator: Dorothy Macris & Annette Jacobs
Cocktail Hour & Appetizers Committee: Marty Driscoll & Mary Smith
Bar Committee: David & Stephanie Lukens
Dessert Table: GOYA
Program Committee: Presbyteria Catherine
Set Up Committee: Frances Mavridis, Helen Carlos & Charlene Papadopoulos
Clean Up Committee: Athan Tsarouhas
Table Linens/Chair Rental Committee: Mary Miltiades
Decorating Appetizer table Committee: Anthea Nichols & Michelle Frangis

Of course, the focus of the evening were the beautifully decorated theme tables with the delicious meals! Our table hosts were:

Helen Carlos: Tailgate tables
Cathy Papadopoulos and Linda Lopos: Bit of Budapest
Theodore Georgacopoulos: Athenian
Lea Gormanos and Lisa Georgakopoulou: Cretan/Minoan
Christine Sprouse & Fran Tucker: Gladiators

Tina Vamvakias & Linda Sampanes: Men in Trees
Norma Gore: Kentucky Derby
Kate Lewis, Elizabeth Miltiades, Athena Burke: Halloween
Maria & Sophia Linebaugh & Alexa Sarmir: Harry Potter
Mary Miltiades & Ellie Turner: Under The Tuscan Sun
Mary Miltiades & Ellie Turner: Memoirs of a Geisha
Andrew Miltiades & YAL: Beach Party
Cathy Papadopoulos, Becky Valagohar, & Julie Shanahan: Dining with Dinosaurs

Finally, we would like to thank all of our donors and sponsors who helped make the Eclectic Café possible:

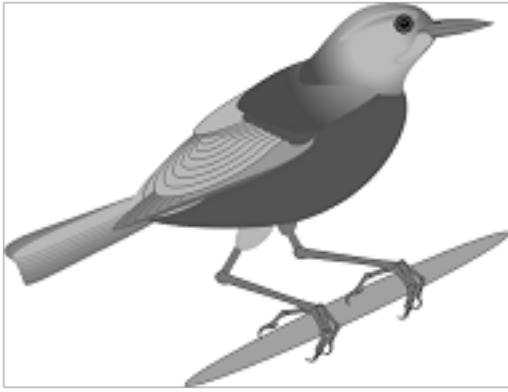
Jeff & Maria Alberts	Penny Miltiades
Jimmy & Helen Carlos	Presvytera Toulas Pallas
Alex Paulson	Ginnie Roglin
Mike & Annette Jacobs	Sophia Sarris
Pete & Charlene Papadopoulos	Thespina Spivey
Mike & Francis Mavridis	Irene Steffas
Connie Stratigos	Mary Stiakakis
Peter & Lisa Moraitakis	Drew Carlos
David & Stephanie Lukens	Christine Cassimus
Randy & Paula Rogers	Nick & Natasha Catrakilis
George & Evelyn Bilson	Eleni Davino
Shawn & Despina Dalton	Alexa & Katie Jacobs
Mary Smith	Angela Skarpelli
Cedric & Peggy Dunkerly	Yeoryia Papadopoulos
Constance Kollias	Christiana Papanastasiou
John & Rosemary Peppas	Kathy Shoji
Nancy Barke	Rania & Alexander Georgacopoulos
Curtis & Christina Kimble	Strati and Olympia Papagiorgiou
Dr. & Mrs. Kyriakos Michaelides	Cosmon & Stephanie Bylos
Xanthippe Marsico	Alexa Sarmir
Michael Marsico	Anne Willcocks
Mary Miltiades	Jeannie Paxten
Niko Miltiades	Orologos Family
The Milton Agency	AHEPA Chapter #519
Costa Liakakos Family	Book Club
Gus Tselios Family	Catechism
Angela Zimmerman	Choir
Eleni Clement	Hellenic Dance
Marty Driscoll	Hellenic Studies
Niki Gess	HOPE/JOY
Kate Lewis	Parish Council
Linda Lopos	Philoptochos
Dorothy Macris	Prime Timers

Thank you to **Father George** and **Father Panayiotis** for their constant help and support!

What a wonderful parish family/community we have! Thank you to all!

Membership: Our goal this year is 100 members. We currently have 90. There is still time to join Philoptochos and be part of the 2007 calendar year. Please pick up a membership form in the Parish Life Center and give it to any board member. Thank you for your continued support of the Philoptochos Panayia chapter.

Soup Kitchen: Thursday, Dec. 27; MUST ministries; 11:30am. Many thanks to our helpers/servers for October: Kally Niarchos, Xanthippe Marsico, Connie Stratigos, Marty Driscoll, Penny Miltiades, Pam Starks, Kathy Shoji, Michelle Broussard-Hanes, Linda Lopos, and Athena Burke. Please contact Athena Burke at ibgreek@bellsouth.net or 770.321.9948.



METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA
PHILOPTOCHOS RETREAT

RESCHEDULED!!

JANUARY 25-27, 2008

At the Diakonia Center, Salem, SC

Rev. Archimandrite Gregorios Tatsis

& Rev. Anthony Salzman

A Tranquil Mind is Health for the Body

*"And the peace of God, which passes all understanding,
will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:7)*

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 4, 2008

- The retreat planned for October 12-14 has been rescheduled to January 25-27, 2008.
- Many Philoptochos members wanted to attend but the dates were not conducive.
- **We hope that this change will prompt many to plan to come and register early.**
- The new dining facility should be completed by this date!

Call Presbyteria Christine at 706-310-1304, prchristine@imageandlikeness.com

Or visit: <http://www.atlanta.goarch.org/philoptochos/Retreat%2010.12.2007/philoptochos%20Retreat%2007.htm>

*Take time for yourself to "retreat" from busy-ness
Take time to renew and enrich your spiritual life!*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Choir Needs You!

If you enjoy Byzantine Music, enjoy singing God's praises in Church, and enjoy listening to the hymns, why not consider adding your time & talents to the Choir! All ages are welcome, all voice parts are welcome, and all levels of musicianship are welcome!

CHOIR MEMBERS NEEDED!



Joyfully Share God's Gifts



Enabling our hearts to be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches through the understanding of the mystery of God.

(Col. 2:2)

Just a reminder to send in your 2008 Stewardship Pledge Form by December 31. If you need another form, please contact Anne Willcocks at 770.924.8080.

Building Fund **GALA**

*Save the date for our next
Building Fund Gala!*

Saturday, February 9th, 2008

Annunciation Cathedral

**Mark Your Calendars - 2008 Marietta Greek
Festival, May 16, 17 and 18, 2008**



Thanks to everyone who helped make our 2007 festival
a huge success!

We need many hands and helpers during Festival weekend as
well as the weeks and months leading up to the festival. If
you can volunteer to head up a committee, please contact
Maria Alberts, 770-578-6694 or mariaalberts@comcast.net.

Please help us make the 2008 festival another great event!



**Samaria Chapter of Atlanta
Pan-Cretan Association of America**

**ΚΡΗΤΙΚΟ ΓΛΕΝΤΙ
CRETAN GLENDI**

**Saturday
January 12, 2008**

**Hellenic Community
Center Ballroom
2500 Clairmont Rd.
Atlanta, Georgia**

7:00 pm: Cocktails
8:00 pm: Dinner
9:30 pm: Dancing

Live Music
(direct from Crete)



Andreas Lilikakis
(Cretan Lyra)
Lefteris Apostolakis
(Cretan Laouto)



Dinner Dance Featuring

- Traditional Cretan Cuisine
- Live Cretan Music
- Cretan Dancing

Get your tickets early! Only 320 dinner dance tickets will be sold!
Last day to buy advance tickets is Wednesday, January 9, 2008.

Advance Tickets (dinner and dance): **\$45** (adults), **\$15** (age 12 & under)
At the Door: **\$55** (adults), **\$25** (age 12 & under), **\$25** (dance only – after 9:30 pm)

Alexandra Manos (Ticket Chairman): 770-346-0403
Kiki Missailidis: 770-518-4188
E-mail Contact: atlantasamariachapter@yahoo.com

PayPal®

December 2007

- Sacraments
- Social Events
- Divine Services
- Ministry Meetings
- Church Calendar
- US Holidays

November 2007							December 2007							January 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1st Sunday of Advent 8:45 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Catechism 11:30 AM 3 year memorial</p>	<p>2nd Sunday of Advent 6:30 PM Philoptochos Christmas Party</p>	<p>3rd Sunday of Advent 11:00 AM Greek Food to Go 5:30 PM Hellenic Studies 7:00 PM Intro to Orthodoxy 7:00 PM Phoenix/Elfhetheria Dance Practice</p>	<p>4th Sunday of Advent 10:00 AM Bible Study 6:00 PM Great Vespers for Feast of St. Nicholas 7:00 PM GOYA Meeting 7:00 PM Adult Choir Practice</p>	<p>5th Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 7:00 PM Bible Study 7:00 PM Philoptochos Book Club</p>	<p>6th Sunday of Advent 9:30 AM Parish Council Seminar 10:00 AM Blessing of the Water 3:00 PM Nasr Baptism (Vasileah) 3:00 PM Tree Trimming</p>	<p>7th Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Sweets-n-Treats Packing 6:00 PM Great Vespers</p>
<p>8th Sunday of Advent 8:45 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Catechism 11:30 AM 1 year Memorial</p>	<p>9th Sunday of Advent ... Parish Council Meeting</p>	<p>10th Sunday of Advent 5:30 PM Hellenic Studies 6:00 PM Great Vespers for Feast of St. Spyridon of Trimythus 7:00 PM Intro to Orthodoxy 7:00 PM Phoenix/Elfhetheria Dance Practice</p>	<p>11th Sunday of Advent 8:45 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 7:00 PM Adult Choir Practice 7:00 PM GOYA Meeting</p>	<p>12th Sunday of Advent 7:00 PM Bible Study</p>	<p>13th Sunday of Advent 10:00 AM Christmas Play Rehearsal 10:30 AM Brunch with Santa 6:00 PM Great Vespers</p>	<p>14th Sunday of Advent 10:00 AM Christmas Play Rehearsal 10:30 AM Brunch with Santa 6:00 PM Great Vespers</p>
<p>15th Sunday of Advent 8:45 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Catechism 11:30 AM Hellenic Studies</p>	<p>16th Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM The Great Hours 6:00 PM Christmas Vespertal Liturgy (St. Basil the Great) 7:30 PM A Christmas Reception (following Liturgy)</p>	<p>17th Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>18th Sunday of Advent 11:00 AM Soup Kitchen</p>	<p>19th Sunday of Advent 11:00 AM Soup Kitchen</p>	<p>20th Sunday of Advent 5:30 PM Great Vespers 6:15 PM Holy Unction</p>	<p>21st Sunday of Advent 5:30 PM Great Vespers 6:15 PM Holy Unction</p>
<p>22nd Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>23rd Sunday of Advent 6:00 PM Great Vespers - Feast of Circumcision of Christ, St. Basil the Great</p>	<p>24th Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>25th Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>26th Sunday of Advent 11:00 AM Soup Kitchen</p>	<p>27th Sunday of Advent 5:30 PM Great Vespers 6:15 PM Holy Unction</p>	<p>28th Sunday of Advent 5:30 PM Great Vespers 6:15 PM Holy Unction</p>
<p>29th Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>30th Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>31st Sunday of Advent 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>1st Sunday of January 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>2nd Sunday of January 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>3rd Sunday of January 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>4th Sunday of January 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy</p>

DATE	PARISH COUNCIL DUTY	ACOLYTES	OUTREACH	PROSFORO
Dec. 2	Sarmir/Tingas	Team II	M. Alberts/K. Moustoukas	K. Melissas/M. Miltiades
Dec. 9	Burke/Tucker	Team I	A. Burke/S. Kiritsy	J. Orologas/T. Pallas
Dec. 16	Gess/Gormanos	Team II	N. Gess/T. Isaac	M. Papadimitriou/R. Peppas
Dec. 23	Kourafas/Lopos	Team I	D. Botni/T. Isaac	I. Steffas/M. Tingas
Dec. 30	Matthews/Miltiades	Team II	I. Fleshman/N. Gess	F. Tucker/L. & A. Tyra

Acolyte Team I	Zach Blasetti (Captain), Nico Orologas (Captain), Strati Papageorgiou (Captain), Christopher Bilson, George Caras, Leo Frangis, Nicholas Gekas, Alexander Georgacopoulos, Charlie Honey, Paul Jacobs, Michael Marianos, Zach Melissas, Stratton Paulson, Jonathan & Nicholas Radivoj, Giovanni Ray, Dylan Rogers, Matthew Shanahan, Alex Skarpelis, Chase Smith, Yianni Turner
Acolyte Team II	Cosmon Bylos (Captain), Arthur Tingas (Captain), Nicholas Azimzadeh, Daniel, Michael & Chris Bridgers, Nick Catrakilis, Chase Eckerman, Alexander Elias, Jacob Harrah, Eli & Evans Nichols, Dean Papastrat, Lukas Porter, Michael Sarris, Nick & Michael Steffas, Luke & Nicholas Tassopoulos, Nicholas Zakreski

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:30am - 5:30pm

770.924.8080, Fax - 770.924.3030

Email: holytrans@comcast.net

Web Page: www.holytrans.org

Web Page: www.mariettagreekfestival.org

Rev. Fr. Panayiotis Papageorgiou, Ph.D., Protopresbyter

Rev. Fr. George Pallas, Protopresbyter

HOLYTRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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