



# Nativity Epistle

December 2014

Photo from [www.windowstorussia.com](http://www.windowstorussia.com)



Greek Orthodox Metropolis of  
Detroit  
His Eminence Metropolitan  
Nicholas

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## 2014 Parish Council

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President

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*Come, worship the newborn king!*

## Apolytikion for the Feast. Mode 4.

Your nativity, O Christ our God, has caused the light of knowledge to rise upon the world. For therein the worshippers of the stars were by a star instructed to worship You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You as Orient from on high. Glory to You, O Lord.

## Ἀπολυτίκιον. Τῆς Ἑορτῆς. Ἦχος δ'.

Ἡ γέννησίς σου Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ἀνέτειλε τῷ κόσμῳ, τὸ φῶς τὸ τῆς γνώσεως· ἐν αὐτῇ γὰρ οἱ τοῖς ἄστροις λατρεύοντες, ὑπὸ ἀστέρος ἐδιδάσκοντο· σὲ προσκυνεῖν, τὸν Ἥλιον τῆς δικαιοσύνης, καὶ σὲ γινώσκειν ἐξ ὕψους ἀνατολήν, Κύριε δόξα σοι.

## The Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ December 25



The incomprehensible and inexplicable Nativity of Christ came to pass when Herod the Great was reigning in Judea; the latter was an Ascalonite on his father's side and an Idumean on his mother's. He was in every way foreign to the royal line of David; rather, he had received his authority from the Roman emperors, and had ruled tyrannically over the Jewish people for some thirty-three years. The tribe of Judah, which had reigned of old, was deprived of its rights and stripped of all rule and authority. Such was the condition of the Jews when the awaited Messiah was born, and truly thus was fulfilled the prophecy which the Patriarch Jacob had spoken 1,807 years before: "A ruler shall not fail from Judah, nor a prince from his loins, until there come the things stored up for him; and he is the expectation of the nations" (Gen.49:10).

Thus, our Saviour was born in Bethlehem, a city of Judea, whither Joseph had come from Nazareth of Galilee, taking Mary his betrothed, who was great with child, that, according to the decree issued in those days by the Emperor Augustus, they might be registered in the census of those subject to Rome. Therefore, when the time came for the Virgin to give birth, and since because of the great multitude there was no place in the inn, the Virgin's circumstance constrained them to enter a cave which was near Bethlehem. Having as shelter a stable of irrational beasts, she gave birth there, and swaddled the Infant and laid Him in the manger (Luke 2:1-7). From this, the tradition has come down to us that when Christ was born He lay between two animals, an ox and an ass, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: "Between two living creatures shalt Thou be known" (Abbacum 3:2), and "The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib" (Esaias 1: 3).

But while the earth gave the new-born Saviour such a humble reception, Heaven on high celebrated majestically His world-saving coming. A wondrous star, shining with uncommon brightness and following a strange course, led Magi from the East to Bethlehem to worship the new-born King. Certain shepherds who were in the area of Bethlehem, who kept watch while tending their sheep, were suddenly surrounded by an extraordinary light, and they saw before them an Angel who proclaimed to them the good tidings of the Lord's joyous Nativity. And straightway, together with this Angel, they beheld and heard a whole host of the Heavenly Powers praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men" (Luke 2:8-14).

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

As we prepare to celebrate the feast of our Lord's birth and welcome in 2015, I am pleased to report that with God's help we have once again overcome some recent challenges. To list a few, successfully hosting our 10th annual festival, saying goodbye to Father Sean, Presbyteria Pamela and Savva, closing the Ed Center and resulting difficulties, creating a joint Greek School and now awaiting a full time priest.

Of course, many in our community are dealing with more serious difficulties, health problems, family troubles or other personal issues that put our community challenges in perspective. Still, I mention the above to remind us that relying on God and each other through difficult times can provide strength, comfort and healing and for that reason a community prayer list is currently being implemented.

On the topic of a full time priest, Metropolitan Nicholas has mentioned numerous times that he is waiting to find a good fit for us, so let's wait and pray he finds a good fit for us. In the mean time, His Eminence will be celebrating Vespers Liturgy here on Christmas Eve starting at 5pm. Unfortunately, we will not be having Christmas Day service this year so please go to St. Cons or Holy Cross. I apologize for the inconvenience. Also, thanks to recent celebrants Reverend Father Peter Bistolarides and Reverend Father Philemon Karamanos.

Additionally, at last months general assembly all ministries reported including an impromptu report by the book club (which *will* be included on the agenda from now on!). The book club meets monthly and recently purchased their latest book so now is a good time to join. Also, during the general assembly discussion items worth mentioning were brought up. First, a request was made for a parish photo directory which could be an invaluable aid in getting to know each other better. Another request was made for an all English language service once a month to help enrich the Divine Liturgy for our children and those who don't understand liturgical Greek. Last, a ministry was initiated to address parents desire to send loving care packages to our young adults who have left home and parish while moving on in life. Please call the office for more information on any of the above.

Finally, some notable additions to the monthly Epistle have been implemented recently. A Nativity News page was added to supplement the weekly bulletin keeping you informed of current happenings. New this month, the Nativity Voice page is intended as a parish forum for creative expression so please consider contributing. Last, a parish wish list has been added and current photos to fill the photo page are always welcome.

Have a wonderful Christmas and happy New Year!

Yours in Christ,  
Louis Poulos  
Parish Council President

# NATIVITY NEWS

**ED CENTER REPAIRS:** Mold remediation is completed! Thank you for your patience and cooperation during repairs. Special thanks to Sunday School directors Jerry Takis and Michelle Hunsinger, Greek School Director Anna Liakou- Hentnick and all teachers for their graceful handling of the difficult conditions. Also thanks to Father Teodor at Sts. Constantine and Helen Church for the temporary use of their facilities and generous offers of assistance.

**SPECIAL THANK YOUS:** Thank you to **Mark Sojacki** of L&M Supply Co. who will donate labor to install the new vinyl siding at the Ed Center. Thank you Mark, please say a prayer for him and his family! Also, thank you to **Alec Tzelepis** for assisting Nick Varlamos and our parish in so many ways it's impossible to list them all... Thank you Alec!



**ICON TEACHING WALL IS PLANTING SEEDS:** Created by Sunday School Director Jerry Takis and family, the icon teaching wall has been recognized as the creative inspiration for a community project at Ascension Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Oakland, CA. Please visit the Ed Center to see the beautiful display after Divine Liturgy. It's truly a unique Nativity treasure.

**PHOTOS FOR THE EPISTLE:** If you have captured any photos showing parish life, please forward them to [nativityvmphotos@gmail.com](mailto:nativityvmphotos@gmail.com) for publication in the Epistle.

**THREE HIERARCHS GREEK SCHOOL** - The joint Greek School of Nativity & Sts. Constantine and Helen Parishes returns to the Nativity Ed Center on Wednesday and Thursday nights. For more information please contact Anna Liakou-Hentnick at 248-425-2321 or email: [nativity\\_greek\\_school@yahoo.com](mailto:nativity_greek_school@yahoo.com)

**STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY:** Scheduled for December 7th after Liturgy. Please remember that according to our archdiocese a "Parishioner in Good Standing" is an adult who lives their life according to the Orthodox Faith, fulfills their financial obligations and is current on their stewardship. More information on this subject will be available on Stewardship Sunday.

**BAPTISMS:** Nativity hosted 3 baptisms in the month of November! Congratulations Koumbara Vasho Thrushman, Koumbaro John Rodopoulos and parents John & Vicki Leone who's twins Rocco Giavanni & Valentina Vasho were baptized by Reverend Father James Stathakios. Also, congratulations Koumbara Jessica Minock and parents Jason & Tiffany Altenburg who had daughter Emily baptized by Reverend Father Teodor Petrutiu. *"For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ"* (Galatians 3:27 NIV)

**40 DAY BLESSING (CHURCHING):** Our Nativity parish family welcomed our newest member to the community last month, Athanasios Katramados, newest born son of Dr. Angelos and Theodora and brother of Michali. Congratulations!

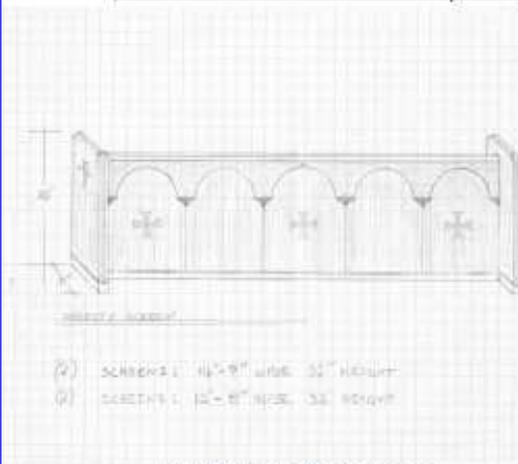
**ALTAR BOYS:** The altar boy schedule has been distributed to all families with boys serving in the altar. If your child age 7 and up would like to begin serving in the altar, please contact Georgia Koumariotis at 248-767-0214 or [georgiah@sbcglobal.net](mailto:georgiah@sbcglobal.net) to be added to the schedule.

**NATIVITY PRAYER LIST:** Please submit your name or those of loves ones who approve and would like to be prayed for by our community to the office. Names will be listed in the weekly bulletin and monthly Epistle.

**PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS:** Nominated are **Georgia Koumariotis** and **Charlene Galbraith**, current parish council vice president and secretary, respectively. The parish council is a vital ministry which requires a 2 year term of service. If needed, elections will be held on Stewardship Sunday, December 7th after Divine Liturgy. For more information on parish council ministry: <http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/parishcouncil/parishcouncil>

## NATIVITY WISH LIST

Item	Goal	Given	Item	Goal	Given
<b>BEAUTIFICATION</b>			<b>MAINTENACE - CHURCH</b>		
Candle Sand Boxes - 2 pc.	\$16000	\$12,500	Chanter Microphones	\$500	
Pew Screens - 4 pc.	\$13,450	\$1000	Parking Lot Asphalt Replace	\$150,000	
Panagia Icon Stand	\$12,500		Garage Replace	\$30,000	
Iconography	TBD		<b>MAINTENACE - ED CENTER</b>		
Stained Glass Windows	TBD		Carpet on Main Floor	\$6000	
Basketball Court Repairs	\$5000		Deck Repair/Replacement	\$5000	
Landscaping	\$10,000		Ceiling Tile & Insulation	\$1000	
Fathers Office Furniture	\$3000		Roof Repair - Ed Center	\$1600	
Floor Tile - Narthex	\$6000		Carpet Cleaning Basement	\$400	
Chanter Book Shelf	\$800		Glass Block Windows	\$400	
<b>MAINTENACE - CHURCH</b>			Door Replacement	\$500	
Carpet Church	\$20,000	\$6000	Dry Wall Repairs	\$500	
Ceiling Tile - Narthex	\$2000		<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>		
Roof Repair - Church	\$2000		Mortgage Payoff	\$138,000	
Lighting Supplies Outdoor	\$1000		Web Site Update	\$3000	
Paint Office	\$1000		<b>LITURGICAL</b>		
Kitchen Make Up Air	\$15,000		2nd Chalice Replacement	\$3000	
Church Window Replace	TBD		St John Camandaria Wine 6ea	\$160	
Office Blinds	\$750		Altar Boy Robe Repairs	\$500	
Church Sound System	\$20,000		Epitafion	\$1250	
			Beeswax Candles - 6 mo. supply	\$1000	



Pew Modesty Screen

2000 2000 2000 2000



Candle Sand Box



Panagia Icon Stand

# Nativity Voice

BOOK REVIEW: *Mary As the Early Christians New Her*  
AUTHOR: Presbytera Frederica Mathews-Green

Have you ever wondered how many churches are named for the Nativity of the Virgin Mary? There are only two in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of the United States, according to a Goarch.org search. There is a "Nativity of the Theotokos" church in Fredricksburg, VA, which for all intents and purposes is the only other parish by the same name as our parish here in Plymouth, Michigan.

We, at our humble parish, carry the torch for the feast day of St. Mary's nativity, September 8, which is one of the 12 Great (or Major) feast days in the Orthodox Church. Why is it important? What does the Blessed Theotokos, the Most Holy Lady and Ever-Virgin Mary mean to us?

I have had Protestant friends ask why we "worship Mary" and wonder out loud why we pray to her instead of directly to Jesus himself. As parishioners of our church family, we should all be able to answer such questions and musings. And, as a cradle Orthodox member, it is for me an unhappy circumstance that I have not known more of these answers until I recently read "Mary as the Early Christians Knew Her," by Frederica Mathewes-Green. It is also why I would recommend the book.

There are other books on the Theotokos, but I like the direct and plain English approach of Presbytera Frederica. She shows us the Mother of Jesus in three ancient texts: The Protoevangelion of James, a prayer called "Under your compassion," and the Akathyst Hymn.

The Protoevangelion of James gives us more detail about Mary's conception and early life as well as her betrothal to Joseph and the miracles that brought these events about. In this work, we see many aspects which are shown in the Festal icon of our Church. It gives us the image of another Feast which is the Presentation of Mary in the temple (November 21). It explains why we believe that Mary was a virgin before, during, and after the birth of Jesus. In short, it gives us a vision of our Savior's human heritage which our Protestant brethren rarely see!

"Under Your Compassion" is a prayer currently used which, until recently, was undated. Thanks to a recent parchment found with a personal prayer to the Theotokos, this prayer can now be dated at least back to the middle of the third century. Presbytera Frederica rightly points out that early Christians also prayed to the Theotokos for her intercessions.

Presbytera beautifully explains the soulful depth of the Akathyst Hymn and why, to this day, some consider it the most beloved service of our church. She clarifies why we do not worship, but venerate Mary, and why we pray to her for protection. She explains that we prefer the term "Theotokos" instead of "St. Mary," because it conveys her uniqueness among the saints and it makes a statement about Jesus which emphasizes His divinity from the time of His conception.

I will try to have more copies of this book in our Bookstore by the printing of this review. I wish you all to learn more about the namesake of our church. The nativity of the Virgin Mary was quite miraculous and was very important for our salvation. We should agree with the words of St. John of Damascus when he says, "Her hands steadied the first steps of Him who steadied the earth to walk upon; her lips helped the Word of God to form his first human words."

By Jerry Takis

## The 7 Habits of Happy Orthodox Christians

For those who have children in public elementary schools, part of their curriculum may be learning the 7 Habits of Happy Kids, as my daughters did. To list a few, they learned how to be proactive, to synergize (work together) and to "sharpen the saw," which as the girls explained, means taking care of mind, body, soul and heart. Tax dollars well spent? Only time will tell... Regardless, the term synergize brought to mind the Orthodox teaching of Synergia and "sharpening the saw" as defined is certainly a worthy undertaking.

Nonetheless I wondered how, when discussing subject matter so closely connected with God as the soul, mind, heart and body, could the mention of God be neglected? Moreover, as we watch our Lord get all but forgotten by media/society during His birthday season, it becomes evident that removing God from places He undeniably belongs is commonplace.

Desiring to bring God into this discussion with the kids, I suggested we create our own 7 Habits list and title it, **The 7 Habits of Happy Orthodox Christians**. Well...Why not? Aren't time tested fruits of the Holy Spirit such as love, joy, peace and kindness what people are *really* after when seeking the highly coveted goal *happiness* anyway? Is *true* happiness even attainable without having Christ somewhere in the mix? Anyway, below is our 7 Habits list in no particular order, with no claims of comprehensiveness, brought to you in a spirit of lighthearted family fun:

1. Pray
2. Go to Church
3. Read the Bible
4. Hang with Friends - I prefer to call it Fellowship but... the Teenager spoke!
5. Do Good Deeds
6. Participate in Sacraments
7. Be Thankful

Additionally, the Orthodox concept of Synergia mentioned above is nicely "unpacked" on the website of St. George Cathedral South Carolina in the presentation **Orthodox Way of Life**:

<http://stgeorgegreenville.org/OurFaith/Foundation%20of%20Faith/6.%20Way%20of%20Life.pdf>

It explains Synergia as the Orthodox way of salvation through cooperation (working together) with God, seeking union with Christ, accepting His gifts and cooperating with His grace. Achieved through spiritual warfare, struggling against our passions and thirsting for virtue, it is a way of life fully supported by our Faith and is the basis for a life of repentance.

May The Lord bless us with happiness *and* repentance this fasting season as we proactively struggle to attain habits that synergize with God's Will through the help of the Holy Spirit.

By Louis Poulos

If you would like share something you have created, whether it's an article, book review, poetry, photography, short story, drawing, song written or any other talent, please submit to [nativitymvoice@gmail.com](mailto:nativitymvoice@gmail.com) to be included on this page in the monthly epistle. Thank you!



## Philoptochos Poinsettia Sale

In the spirit of the season, parishioners may purchase a poinsettia plant to decorate the Altar during Christmas. They can be purchased in remembrance of a loved one or for the health of a friend or family member. The cost is \$20.00. If you would like to purchase a poinsettia, please complete the form below and return it to the Church office by December 11<sup>th</sup>. Please include your check or money order payable to

Philoptochos of the  
Nativity Church of the Virgin Mary  
If you have any questions,  
please feel free to contact  
Vessa Fefopoulos @ 248-347-4389  
or the Church Office @ 734-420-0131.

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Poinsettia

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Loved One \_\_\_\_\_

Please check

In Loving Memory \_\_\_\_\_ For Good Health \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

## ***AUCTION SPONSOR FORM***

The Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church is proud to host its **23rd annual** fund-raiser on Friday, December 12, 2014 to begin at 6:30 p.m. in our Church Fellowship Hall.

Currently, we are in need of sponsors for this event and ask that you help us with either an item to be auctioned or one of the following donations:

***GOLD.....\$300***

***SILVER.....\$200***

***BRONZE...\$100***

Your contribution will entitle you to have your name placed in the evening program. Please help us by sending a check or an item to be auctioned to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church by no later than December 1st.

We encourage you to join us on Friday, December 12th, at 6:30 p.m. for an evening of enjoyment and fellowship. Please come to see how your contribution will help us in producing a successful event.

Sincerely,

The Nativity Church  
Auction Committee

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***I AM PLEASED TO SUPPORT THE NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY CHURCH***

***COMPANY NAME:***

***CONTACT PERSON:***

***ADDRESS:***

***CITY, STATE, ZIP:***

***PHONE:***



Nativity of the Virgin Mary

Greek Orthodox Church

39851 Five Mile Rd, Plymouth, MI 734-420-0131

23 rd Annual Christmas Auction

Friday, December 12, 2014

6:30pm

Church Fellowship Hall

Silent & Live Auction

Raffle

Fish Fry

Hors D'oeuvres

Cash Bar



*From God*  
every family in heaven  
and on earth is named.

Ephesians 3:15

When we speak of stewardship and family we must also consider stewardship *of* family. Most often, we stress the importance of stewardship of the great gifts of God's material world, but which of God's gifts is greater than family?

Throughout our life's journey, our family will take many forms. For a child, the family is parents, siblings, grandparents, cousins, godparents and individuals with significant roles in the child's life. As we mature, we become stewards of our parents as they also are of us. We are stewards of our siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins and more. We are called to encourage and support our family members to grow in the faith. We are also called to encourage and support them in developing their God-given gifts and talents to the full for the glory of God. If we are blessed with a spouse, our concept of family expands and our stewardship of family expands with it.

As our role within our family evolves, we become stewards of the authority and influence which we hold in the family. This requires balance tempered by love and respect. A spouse or parent with authority must also relate to family members with respect and humility. St. Paul writes to the Ephesians, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (5:21). St. Paul further instructs us, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (5:25). And in Colossians 3:21, St. Paul instructs, "Parents, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged."

We are stewards of our family through the influence that we have upon them. This influence may be for good or for evil. In *The Moral Intelligence of Children*, Robert Coles writes, "... the child is an ever-attentive witness of grown-up morality – or lack thereof; the child looks and looks for cues as to how one ought to behave, and finds them galore as we parents and teachers go about our lives, making choices, addressing people, showing in action our rock-bottom assumptions, desires, and values, and thereby telling those young observers much more than we may realize." We exercise our stewardship of family by our actions more than our words.

Throughout our lives and the roles we assume within the family, we are stewards of the love, authority, trust and respect that exist among members of the family. Unlike material possessions, these are not diminished by use. But if mishandled, they can be lost. Love, authority, trust and respect require the most diligent stewardship, because once they are lost, they are most difficult to recover.

The Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great includes beautiful silent prayers expressing the Church's concern for the family: "... remember, Lord, the people here present and those that are absent with good cause. Have mercy on them and on us according to the multitude of your mercy, fill their store-houses with every good thing; maintain their marriage-bonds in peace and concord; nurture the infants; instruct the young, strengthen the aged, encourage the faint-hearted, gather together again those that are scattered; bring back those who went astray and unite them to Your holy, catholic and apostolic church; defend the widows; protect the orphans..."

As Orthodox Christians, we are also stewards of our Church family – those with whom we worship, fellowship and serve the community. In the same way that we care for our immediate family, we also care for our Christian brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, sons and daughters. In his book on the Eucharist/Divine Liturgy, Fr Alexander Schmemmann explains that in the early church, the Eucharistic sacrifice was offered by all the members of the church. Each person coming to the gathering of the Church brought with them everything they could spare for the needs of the Church. This meant for the sustenance of the clergy, widows and orphans, for helping the poor, and for all the good works of the Church. This is the Church that we as Orthodox Christians claim to be.

In the Gospel of Saint Matthew (6:19), Jesus instructs us, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ..." Often in life, we pursue and collect those things that do not last. We must ask, "One hundred years from now, where will our possessions be?" Our greatest blessing is our family. As Orthodox Christians, we are called to be stewards of this great gift. If we are faithful to this calling, perhaps our Lord will say to us as he did to the faithful steward, "Well done good and faithful servant" (Mt 25:23).

# Northville Civic Concern

**We will again be helping the Northville Civic Concern**

**Please bring them to church by December 21  
Here are some suggestions:**

## **PERSONAL CARE ITEMS**

### **\*Feminine hygiene products**

- \*Hair care products/supplies, especially for women of color
- \*Comb/brush sets
- \*Full-size hand sanitizer
- \*Full-size bar soap
- \*Full-size shampoo & conditioner
- \*Full-size deodorant
- \*Full-size hand lotion
- \*Toothbrushes/Toothpaste

## **NEW KITCHEN ITEMS**

- \*Dish sets
- \*Pots/pans sets
- \*Plastic cutlery
- \*Kitchen utensils
- \*Laundry and/or Dish soap
- \*Garbage bags
- \*Handy wipes

## **NEW LINENS**

- \*Bath towels
- \*Hand towels

**Thank you for your kind donation  
Ladies of Philoptochos**

## **BABY ITEMS**

### **\*Diapers especially 4,5,6**

### **\*Baby wipes**

- \*Baby lotion & powder
- \*Baby formula
- \*New infant/toddler toys
- \*New kids' puzzles & books

## **Hotel/sample-sized products**

## **Non-perishable food items**

## **That can be prepared microwaves or stove-tops**

- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Applesauce
- Mac & Cheese
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Chicken Noodle soup
- Boxed mashed Pot.
- Pancake Mixes
- Tuna Fish
- Baby Food
- Bottled water
- Juice Boxes
- Pop Tarts, Protein bars
- Jell-o cups

## **PAPER PRODUCTS**

### **Paper towels**

### **\*Toilet paper**

- \*Facial tissue
- \*12 oz. paper cups
- \* Paper plates, bowls
- Napkins
- 

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- \*New Pay-As-You Go Phones
- \*New Pay-As-You-Go Phone Cards
- \*Movie passes (Emagine/AMC)
- \*Digital TV conversion boxes

### **\*Used Ink cartridges**

### **\*Used cell phones**

## **GIFT CARD SUGGESTIONS:**

- \*CVS, Rite-Aid, Walgreens
- \*Meijer / Target / Wal-Mart
- \*Payless Shoes, SMART bus cards
- \*McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's

# Sunday School Corner

## Sunday Church School – Teaching Face to Face

As I sit here a couple of days late for the Epistle deadline (poor Kathy, I'm always late), I am pondering today's Epistle reading and realizing that St. Paul is speaking to us as well as his contemporaries.

*BRETHREN, if you stand fast in the Lord, what thanksgiving can we render to God for you, for all the joy which we feel for your sake before our God, praying earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? (1 Thessalonians 3:9-10)*

This implies that our faith, like the Thessalonians' faith, may not be complete. We may lack understanding. We may have gaps in the faith of Christ. Yet Christ tells us that faith as small as a mustard seed can grow. Growing is not a single point in time, but a process. Furthermore, growth does not guarantee maturity and maturity does not guarantee good fruit!

So, what is it that is lacking in our faith and why was it so important to St. Paul that he and St. Timothy see the faithful face to face to supply what was deficient? When I think about what our children can learn face to face, I remember what a great responsibility we have as teachers to impart our faith completely and personally. How is it that we could think of leaving our children deficient in our Orthodox faith, the faith of the Apostles, the faith of Christ???

It could be that any of us are missing patience in our faith. It may be we are missing love, gentleness or kindness. In the progression from Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, we hope our students will grow from recognition of Christ, to knowing who He is, to what He means, and to emulate the way that He shows us.

We as faithful parents and teachers are in a cooperative to give our children the best start they can have in life. As we are now lacking a spiritual leader of our parish, we should remember that our bishop, Metropolitan Nicholas, is an Apostle of Christ who can provide face to face what is lacking in our faith! Ask him questions when the opportunity arises. We should cling to God and to one another through our unsettled times. As Sunday Church School teachers, we will continue to try our best and it is my fervent hope that, with the parents who bring their children to SCS classes, we can provide that personal instruction on our faith. I encourage you to bring your students as often as you are able.

Michele and I are thankful for the Education Center re-opening and for all you parents who were helpful and patient in the process. Please remember that our Nativity Pageant will be on December 21<sup>st</sup> with a "dress rehearsal" the week before on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Those who have children in roles will need to be available on these two days. We think you will enjoy their performance!

In Christ,  
Jerry Takis

# 2014 Community Christmas Card

It is time to think about your Christmas card list. The Nativity of the Virgin Mary Ladies Philoptochos Society is once again sponsoring our annual Christmas card for 2014. For just \$10 per family or \$25 per business, you can send holiday greetings to families in our community.

**Please** take the time to complete the order form below. Include your check or money order and mail or bring to the church. **Only** those whose order forms are received with payment by the deadline, November 29, 2014 will be included in our card. If you have any questions, please contact: **Betsy Basoukeas** of the Philoptochos. ***Please don't delay. Send in your form today!***

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Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 per family

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 minimum

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Return form before November 29, 2014. Print your family or business name as you wish it to appear on the card. Make checks payable to:

**NATIVITY PHILOPTOCHOS**

DEC

5

Saint

Nicholas



Guest Homilist:

*Roman Catholic Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron*

## ECUMENICAL VESPERS SERVICE FOR THE FEAST OF SAINT NICHOLAS

His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit invite you to celebrate the Feast of Saint Nicholas together with our Guest of Honor: His Excellency Most Reverend Allen H. Vigneron, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Detroit at the...

**SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
3109 Scio Church Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2014**  
**7:00 PM**





THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF DETROIT  
COUNCIL AND THE METROPOLIS PHILOPTOCHOS  
INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THE...

# FEAST OF ST. SPYRIDON

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2014

GREAT VESPERS FOR  
THE FEAST OF ST. SPYRIDON  
6:30PM (RECEPTION TO FOLLOW)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2014

HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY FOR  
THE FEAST OF ST. SPYRIDON  
10:00AM (RECEPTION TO FOLLOW)

METROPOLIS CENTER - 2560 CROOKS ROAD - TROY, MI

PHONE: 248.823.2400

[WWW.DETROIT.GOARCH.ORG](http://WWW.DETROIT.GOARCH.ORG)



OPEN HOUSE & RECEPTION FOR THE

# *Feast of Saint Nicholas*

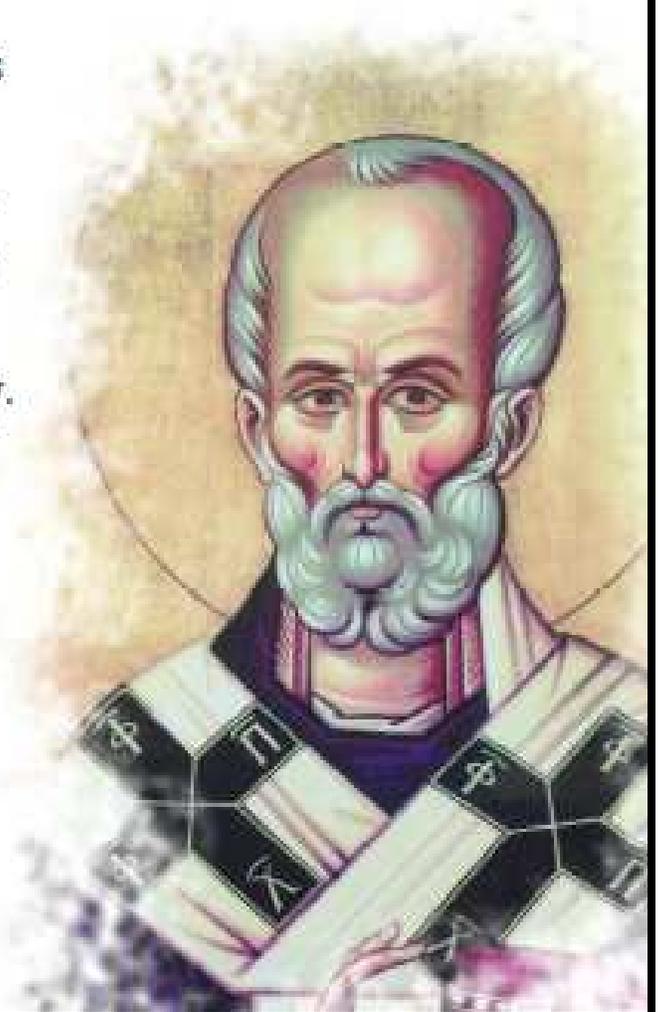
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2014

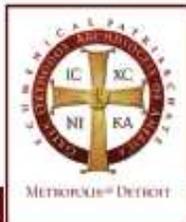
1:00—5:00PM

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis  
of Detroit Council and the  
Metropolis Philoptochos invite  
you to join us at the Metropolis  
Center on the occasion of  
Metropolitan Nicholas' name day.



METROPOLIS CENTER  
2560 Crooks Road—Troy, MI  
[www.detroit.goarch.org](http://www.detroit.goarch.org)





## GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF DETROIT

# FRIENDS OF THE METROPOLIS

### Dear Friends of the Metropolis:

God has called us to do mighty deeds for the glory of His name and for the love of His people.

You are called upon to join in this reality of "faith working through love" as we continue to manifest the love of God for His Church and His people.

When you support the Friends of the Metropolis Campaign, you are part of a greater outreach that proclaims with one universal voice that God is truly our hope and our rock of salvation.

Because of your devotion and help to the Friends program, ministries and programs are implemented on a Metropolis-wide basis which strengthen and enhance our faith and our joint ministry of service.

If you have not yet become part of the Metropolis-wide effort, I would like to invite you to join forces with the faithful throughout the Metropolis in support of the ministries which are part of the Office of the Metropolitan.

Thanking you for your kind and generous response, I remain, with paternal blessings and prayers,

+NICHOLAS  
Metropolitan of Detroit

### WHAT DOES FRIENDS OF THE METROPOLIS SUPPORT?

#### GENERAL

Fully fund the expenses of the Metropolis office, program and travels.

#### EDUCATION

Enhance scholarships and adult education programs, as well as support the Metropolis students at Hellenic College/Holy Cross.

#### SUPPORT

Develop and provide educational and instructional seminars and services to clergy and parishes.

#### YOUTH

Maintain and support the youth office and activities of a full-time Youth and Young Adult Ministries director.

#### OUTREACH/MISSIONS

Create opportunities to introduce our faith to society, participate in inter-Christian and inter-faith activities as well as provide quick responses to national disasters.

#### HELLENISM

Develop programs for Hellenic Cultural Outreach, including language, history and arts.

#### LEADERSHIP

Organize Metropolis Clergy-Laity Conferences, Oratorical Festivals, Christmas Pageants, and Adult Education Programs.

#### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Website development, hospitality to visiting dignitaries and guests, Charity and Philanthropy.

PLEASE SEND THE FOLLOWING FORM IN AN ENVELOPE TO THE ADDRESS BELOW



I am pleased to support the work of Metropolitan Nicholas and the Metropolis through the Annual Metropolis Stewardship "Friends" Program

GREEK ORTHODOX  
METROPOLIS OF DETROIT

2560 CROOKS ROAD  
TROY, MI 48084

Phone: 248-823-2400  
Fax: 248-823-2401

E-mail: office@detroit.goarch.org  
Website: www.detroit.goarch.org

NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

PARISH AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_ CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_

\$25     \$50     \$100     \$250

\$500     \$1000     OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

#### METHOD OF PAYMENT

- Check Enclosed (payable to Metropolis of Detroit)  
 Please Charge My Credit Card (MC or VISA ONLY)

CREDIT CARD # \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_



## PHILOPTOCHOS

---

Dear Nativity Family,

The Philoptochos is selling poinsettias for the health of or in memory of a loved one. There will be a Trisagion ceremony on December 21<sup>st</sup> to honor them. Don't miss out to be in our parish Christmas card. Look for flyers on these events in this issue.

We have two more bake sales in December selling frozen pitas and galaktoboutiko. Stock up and be ready for those last minute guests.

In lieu of a meeting we will be having our Christmas party on December 1<sup>st</sup> at Tommy's Parthenon in Novi. We have adopted families and Senior citizens for Christmas from the Northville Civic Concern.

The Ladies of the Philoptochos Society would like to wish all of you a wonderful and blessed Christmas season filled with love and health. We thank all of you for supporting us in our endeavors. We hope you consider joining us in the fight against hunger, homelessness, illness and other philanthropic works in the coming New Year.

God Bless and Merry Christmas!

Betsy Basoukeas

# BASKETBALL

## ***Nativity OYAA Basketball*** ***Hillside Middle School Gym in Northville***

***Practice Every Sunday***  
***4:30pm to 6:00pm***  
***Please arrive 15 minutes early!***

***Players Needed!***  
***Ages 6 to Adult***

***If you have any questions, please contact:***  
***Mike Fafalios at 734-905-4482***  
***Or***  
***Nondo Basoukeas at 248-974-7637***



# G.O.Y.A



Our Nativity **GOYA** will be holding a toy drive for the Christmas Holiday now through December 7<sup>th</sup> for the Westland **Goodfellows**.

The toys will be distributed to over 1,000 children in the Westland area alone. So please bring a new unwrapped toy to be given to those in need.

## *Sunday School*

Our **Sunday School Classes** will be collecting hats, mittens and scarfs that will be given to a local charity for those less fortunate.



There will be a tree set up in the **Ed Center** where our teachers will be collecting these items, for all ages.

Thank you all in advance for your generosity and God Bless!!

## *Senior Citizens Gathering*

The senior group had a great turnout for their Thanksgiving luncheon. Again there was delicious food and a great time had by all. They would like to thank Mike Manolakis and all those who helped to put this luncheon together, for all their hard work.

The Senior Group would like to invite all the Nativity Seniors to join them on Tuesday, December 9th for their annual Christmas Party at Mama Mia Restaurant at  
12:00pm

## ***DID YOU KNOW?***

There is an easier and more environmentally friendly way to fulfill your stewardship pledge! Sign up for **DIRECT WITHDRAWAL** and transfer funds electronically to our church on a weekly or monthly basis. No more writing checks, bringing envelopes or falling behind on payments. Forms are available in the Narthex or call Kathy in the church office for more information.



## ***Thoughts on a Prayer***

If we pray, and learn little by little to live in the spirit of prayer, we create an atmosphere in which children taste prayer and God's presence. If we dwell in this spirit, even without words, even before children can speak, they can acquire a natural taste for prayer, and the desire to know God.

-Sister Magdalen  
Children in the Church

# Nativity of the Virgin Mary – December 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Philoptochos Christmas Party @ Tommy's Par- thenon @ 6pm	2	3 Greek School @ 6pm	4 Greek School @ 6pm	5 Ecumenical Ves- pers Service for the Feast of St. Nicholas at St. Nicholas GOC in Ann Arbor @ 7pm	6
7 10th Sunday of Luke  Stewardship Sun- day. 40 day Memorials: James Bazakis Mike Andrews Open House at Metropolis Cen- ter for the Feast of St. Nicholas 1- 5pm	8	9 Seniors Christ- mas Lunch at Mama Mia @ 12pm  Parish Council Meeting @ 7pm	10 Greek School @ 6pm	11 Greek School @ 6pm  Great Vespers for the Feast of St. Spyridon at the Metropolis Center @ 6pm	12 23rd Christmas Auction @ 6:30pm  Hierarchical Divine Liturgy for the Feast of St. Spyridon at Metropolis Cen- ter @ 10am	13
14 11th Sunday of Luke  Christmas Pageant Practice following services	15	16	17 Greek School @ 6pm	18 Greek School @ 6pm	19	20
21 Sunday before Nativity  1 yr. Memorial Stavros Moustakeas  Christmas Pageant	22	23	24 Nativity Eve  Vesperal Liturgy @ 5pm  Church Office Closed	25 Nativity of the Lord  No Liturgy- Services will be held at Holy Cross & Sts. Constantine & Helen Church Office Closed	26  Church Office Closed	27
28 Sunday after Nativity	29	30	31 New Years Eve  Church Office Open	Jan 1 Circumcision of the Lord HAPPY NEW YEAR! Church office closed	Jan 2  Church Office Closed	

Sunday Services

8:45 am Orthros

10:00 am Divine Liturgy



Please send photos to [NativityVMPhotos@gmail.com](mailto:NativityVMPhotos@gmail.com) - Thank you!



*Nativity Ministries*

*Philoptochos*  
*Betsy Basoukeas*  
*President*

*Religious Education*  
*Michele Prokos Hunsinger*  
*Jerry Takis*

*Nativity GOYA*  
*Irene Kaplantzes*  
*Fay Mili*

*Senior Citizen Group*  
*Kostantine Kassapis*

*Protopsaltis*  
*Dr. Panayiotis Mitsias*

*Greek School*  
*Anna Liakou-Hentnik*

*Fellowship*  
*Georgia Koumariotis*

*Stewardship*  
*Evans & Diane Bageris*  
*Cleo Demetriou*  
*Angela Kheir*  
*Charles Prokos*  
*Christina Tzilos*

*OYAA Basketball*  
*Nondo Basoukeas*  
*Michael Fafalios*

*Fundraisers*  
*Angela Kheir*

*Book Club*  
*Marc Rentis*

*Book Store*  
*Jerry Takis*

*Usher Coordinator*  
*Michael Fafalios*

*Nativity Dancers*  
*Peggy Collias*

*Boy/Girl Scouts*  
*Mary Takis*

*Hope/Joy*  
*Alyssa Galbraith*  
*Denise Stein*

*Building/Grounds*  
*Nick Varlamos*  
*George Zervos*

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