



THE LOGOS

Nativity of The Virgin Mary

April 2017, Volume 1, No. 2

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Mid-Lent;
Sunday of The
Holy Cross

For if You Forgive...God Will Forgive You



One of the general themes of Great Lent is forgiveness. Our enemy, the evil one, the father of all lies, takes every opportunity to harden our hearts towards each other. He hardens our hearts and separates husbands and wives, parent and child, brothers and sisters, neighbor and friend. He drives out from us faith and hope in God. He separates us from the Lord of love and removes forgiveness from our thoughts and very being. We each know the stories whether in our own lives or in others of people who cannot forgive even unto death!

is repeated often in scripture because the Lord knows that pride ultimately interferes with our ability to forgive.

“Then Peter came to Him and said, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’” Forgiveness in the Church is the way to freedom as we are told by the monastic Fathers and Mothers. As human beings made in the image and likeness of God, each of us longs for perfect love in our lives. We search for it through our relationships with each other, and with all of God’s creation (including animals, plants, everything). Our hearts have the capacity through design from above to love perfectly and to love perfectly means that we must forgive.

The Lord warns us in the scripture if we cannot forgive others then we run from His forgiveness! “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 6: 14-15) Our Lord is insisting we forgive each other. His teaching of forgiveness

In the earlier quote from Matthew 18:21-22, Peter asks Jesus how many times we

(Continued on page 7)

Visit our Website:
www.nativitygochurch.org
For announcements, monthly calendar, photos and more!

**Strategic Planning
Retreat Scheduled**
Planning our future parish
See PAGE 4 for details

**Congratulations to
Nondo Basoukeas!**
Detroit Basketball Hall of
Fame Inductee, See PAGE 11



Parish Priest

Rev. Father Nick Marcus

Cell (616) 328-3143
 frnickmarcus@gmail.com

Services

Sunday
 8:45am Orthros
 10:00am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday
 7:00pm Paraklesis

Office

Kathy Kyriacou, Admin

Office (734) 420-0131
 secretarynm@yahoo.com
 Monday - Friday, 10am to 2pm

Nativity Bookstore & Fr. George Vaporis Library Hours

Tues - Sat, 10am to 2pm
 Tuesday, 6pm to 8pm
 Thursday, 5pm to 8pm
 Sunday, 12noon to 2pm

NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

39851 West Five Mile Road
 Plymouth, Michigan
 www.nativitygochurch.org

The Logos - Volume 1, No. 2

Responses to *The Logos*...

The first edition of *The Logos* went out smoothly last month and the response from parishioners was great, Glory to God. Many thanks to Greko Printing in Plymouth for handling the printing, addressing, mailing, and for being the first to advertise in our new monthly.

As you may know, advertising is very important because with enough ads, the cost of producing and mailing *The Logos* can be completely covered. The ads are sold on a yearly basis and are very affordable, if you would like to advertise, please contact the email address below or the church office. Donations in support of this ministry are also accepted if you prefer to be a benefactor rather than advertise. It costs \$800 a month to produce and mail the current run of 400 copies.

Last, thank you to the following people who shared their response to *The Logos*:

"I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate Louis, Father Nick, Kathy, and all those involved for their work on *The Logos*--Nativity's new monthly newsletter! Stavros and I received it in the mail the other day, and we were so impressed with everything about it; the content, the layout, and

the great attention to detail. I can only imagine the how much work went into producing such a high-quality newsletter, and Stavros and I thank you and everyone involved for your time commitment and dedication to bring back this wonderful ministry for the enjoyment and benefit of all Nativity parishioners. :) God Bless you all. :) I am very excited for its future and to see where it will lead!"

Irene Melabiotis

"DEAR LOGOS TEAM, I would like to congratulate you on such a fantastic publication. George and I received the LOGOS yesterday and we are so impressed! I read it cover to cover."

Lisa Zervos

"...this is a very impressive newsletter -- my family and I really enjoyed it! Great work to all involved, may it continue to be fruitful for our parish!"

Golfo Tzilos

"The Logos is wonderful! I was so happy to receive the publication, to stay in the know about Nativity! You've done an amazing job!"

Irene Christy

Email the editor, Louis Poulos at [navitymvoice@gmail.com](mailto:nativitymvoice@gmail.com)



Father Nick chrismates Jerad (Gerasimos) Becker on March 4th, the feast day of Saint Gerasimos the Righteous; with fiancée Faith Makris, family, and friends.



From Left: Margarita Makris, Demetra Makris, Fr. Nick, Jared (Gerasimos) Becker, Faith Makris

Pascha in Prophecy

2017 Holy Friday Retreat

By Jerry Takis



A blessed Great Lent to you! Pascha is fast approaching and I am thinking ahead to our annual Good Friday Retreat and making another memorable experience for our students. This year's retreat theme is *Pascha in Prophecy*.

Looking Back

Some of you may not be familiar with what we've done in years past. Let me briefly explain that we try to make our retreats fun and interactive for the children while teaching them as much about Holy Week and Pascha as we are able. Last year's theme was "Good Friday, Good Folks" which introduced the persons who are key in Holy Week. In 2015, our theme was "My Holy Week Bucket List" which taught the children about our Orthodox Traditions throughout Holy Week. The year before that, "Passport to Jerusalem" was a fun way to connect everything we hear about the places in Holy Week with pictures and memories about the actual sites in and around Jerusalem. The objective was to impress upon the students that the events remembered in the Bible and in our icons are not fictional and can be tied with actual places.



This Year

Our objective this year is to show our students that Christianity is not based on a chance happening of amazing events, but instead, that the wisdom and will of the Lord can be seen in the Old Testament as well. In which many instances point to the coming of the Christ, in particular, the events of Holy Week and Pascha. We will also have a stop that will touch on the future Prophecy of "...the life of the ages to come."

Vantage Points

Below is a list of the Vantage Points which I have tentatively planned for this year's retreat. At each Vantage Point, students grouped together by age are taught by an adult volunteer teacher for 5 minutes using assigned props. Then they proceed as a group to the next vantage point. After each group has been to every vantage point the retreat proceeds into the social hall where lunch is served and craft activities begin. We have invited Fr. Teodor to help this year, and he and his students from Sts. Constantine & Helen are looking forward to being with us!

Retreat Vantage Points (5 minutes each)

1. What is Prophecy? - Familiarize the students with what makes a prophecy.



2. Entry to Jerusalem - Jesus tells where the donkey is, people shout "Hosanna!"
3. The Bridegroom - The Bridegroom Cometh hymn.
4. The Betrayal - Judas' 30 pieces of silver fulfill the prophecy of Jeremiah.
5. Passover Hymns - Jesus and the Disciples sang Hymns after the Passover meal.
6. Jesus's Predictions - In Matt, 3 times Jesus predicts His betrayal and death.
7. The Prophecy of the Cross - The Cross and Christ's crucifixion fulfill many prophecies.
8. Jonah - The 3 days in the great fish prefigure Jesus's three days in the tomb.
9. Dry Bones - Ezekiel's dry bones prophecy and the Resurrection.
10. Bright Week and the Life of the Ages to Come - Prophecy of the future.

Agenda

(April 14, 2017 coincides with Western Good Friday)

12:00 p.m. Teacher and Helper Set Up -

- Set up poster boards, icons, videos, tables in Church.

12:30 p.m. Retreat Start -

- Register unrecorded students. Write names on program. Sort students into groups.

12:45 p.m. Destinations In Church

- 5 minute intervals, two minutes move time (70 min. total).

2:00 p.m. Craft and/or Movie

- Start movie "King of Kings" or "Greatest Story Ever Told" starting from the priests and council bringing Jesus to Pilate. Serve lunch for students. Have children decorate a Paschal candle. If they do more than one, they may be sold to benefit the Sunday catechism school.

3:00 p.m. Taking Down from the Cross Service

Request

Please register your children using the Holy Friday Retreat sign up form which will be available at the Church. If you would like to volunteer, we will need help with the Pascha Candle activity and snack



planning and distribution. If you have any questions or ideas, please feel free to call me (734) 262-5143. Thank you and have a blessed Great Lent!

Parish News Reel

- Nativity Men's Club enjoyed a wild game dinner and fellowship while raising \$1500 for altar boy robes on February 16th. Kenny Vlahadamis won the shotgun raffle. Thanks to all who provided food and services.
- Basketball program fund-raiser at Big Tommy's Parthenon was a laugh-a-thon with Greek comedy by Basile. Special thanks to Basile, Dennis Ford, and club owners Andy and Eleni Stylianou for hosting. The event raised \$1800
- The final Inter-Orthodox Sunday Lenten Vespers will be held on April 2nd at Holy Transfiguration in Livonia. The homilist will be Michael Manos from St. Nicks Troy.
- The Orthodox Christian Women of Michigan (OCW) will be hosting Fr. Nick to speak on "Dealing with Secularism." April 24th, 7pm at St. Clement Ohdriski Church in Dearborn.
- Metropolitan Nicholas will also be speaking on May 15th, 7pm at St. John Sterling Heights. He will be giving a recap of the Holy and Great Council held last year.
- Our 13th Annual Taste of Greece Festival Sponsorship Forms are now available! Save the dates - August 25, 26, 27.
- As a security and liability precaution, the parish council had the Church re-keyed at a cost of \$300. New key sets were handed out and new alarm codes assigned as part of the process.
- HAVE NEWS YOU WANT TO SHARE? Submit your family news, celebratory events, congratulations, awards, or life moments you wish to share to nativitymvoice@gmail.com.
- Subscribe to the Nativity Calendar on your smart phone or computer. Go to our web site and click on the appropriate link (either icalendar or google) to subscribe. The calendar will automatically update.
- Spring General Assembly is scheduled for Sunday, May 7th after Liturgy.
- The St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival competition date has changed to Wednesday, April 5th following Presanctified Liturgy. Student winners receive \$100

each in the junior and senior divisions!

- The wind storm on March 8th caused damage on the roof. It's possible an insurance claim may need to be filed, more details to come.
- The Three Hierarchs Greek School will be on Pascha break from April 1st through April 17th. Classes will resume on Bright Tuesday, April 17th.
- Greek movie night was held on March 18th and "Little England" was shown on the big screen in the fellowship hall. Proceeds to support the Nativity Dancers.
- CONGRATULATIONS to Nativity's Bidy B basketball team (ages 10-12) coached by John Floros and Steve Perakis, taking 3rd place in the consolation championship of the O.Y.A.A Detroit Tournament! Go Nativity! Also to Gracie Droz for being named an All-Star at the tournament!

FINANCE CENTER as of March 1st, 2017

2017 Budget: \$360,000
Monthly Budget: \$30,000

Parish Offerings

February: \$20,736
YTD: \$50,991

Stewardship

Pledged: \$176,518
Pledges: 137
Families 256
Members: 537

Roof Project

Pledged: \$55,000
Recieved: \$49,612

Mortgage (4% APR)

Paid Monthly: \$1557
(\$1057 + \$500 principal)
Balance: \$116,702

Strategic Planning Retreat Scheduled

Parish Council News

The parish council has scheduled a strategic planning meeting for Saturday April 22nd, hosted by Mama Mia Italian Restaurant on Plymouth Road in Livonia. Fr. Nick expects all Parish council members and Nativity ministry heads to attend the retreat and invites and encourages all interested parishioners to join as well. The meeting will initiate the planning process to develop a vision for the future of Nativity.

Mama Mia restaruant was selected as part of standard vision planning protocol, which recommends off site meetings locations. The council thought it an honor to conduct the inaugural meeting at the restaurant of Nativity Church founding member and past parish council president John Vardouniotis, who has been an intrumental leader and visionary throughout the history of the parish.

John and his family have owned and operated Mama Mia since 1976 providing decades of great food and service to loyal patrons. Daughter and current parish council treasurer Nancy Vardouniotis suggested their family business as the meeting site for the strategic planning meeting which will be conducted from 8am-2pm.

The meeting will be spearheaded by council vice president Dr. Angelo Patsalis and council member Peter Tsaprazis, who both have experience in strategic planning.

To reserve a spot, please call Kathy in the church office; your support and vision are needed to successfully determine Nativity's future.

THE LOGOS

Nativity of The Virgin Mary

Next Deadline: April 15

Please submit all schedules, events, information and photos by **April 15, 2017**
for April edition to:
nativitymvoice@gmail.com

~ Tuesday Group Invitation ~

We invite you to please consider joining the *Tuesday Group*. Following Bible study the group enjoys lunch, fellowship, fun, and cards? This gathering is for and about fellowship. There is no cost to you! Stop in for as long as you are able. We have a lot of laughs and this is a great opportunity to get to know each-other better. We look forward to seeing you there! God Bless you!

~ EVERY TUESDAY ~
11am..... Bible Study
Noon.....Fellowship Lunch

Fr. Nick and Presbytera Liza

Ὁ Ἐξάψαλμος Ψαλμὸς Γ'(3)

Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις Θεῶ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη, ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία. (ἐκ γ')

Κύριε, τὰ χεῖλη μου ἀνοίξεις, καὶ τὸ στόμα μου ἀναγγελεῖ τὴν αἴνεσίν σου. (δίς)

Κύριε, τί ἐπληθύνθησαν οἱ θλίβοντές με; Πολλοὶ ἐπανίστανται ἐπ' ἐμέ. Πολλοὶ λέγουσι τῇ ψυχῇ μου: Οὐκ ἔστι σωτηρία αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ Θεῷ αὐτοῦ. Σὺ δέ, Κύριε, ἀντιλήπτωρ μου εἶ, δόξα μου καὶ ὑψῶν τὴν κεφαλὴν μου. Φωνῇ μου πρὸς Κύριον ἐκέκραξα, καὶ ἐπήκουσέ μου ἐξ ὄρους ἁγίου αὐτοῦ. Ἐγὼ δὲ ἐκοιμήθην καὶ ὑπνωσα· ἐξηγέρθη, ὅτι Κύριος ἀντιλήφεται μου. Οὐ φοβηθήσομαι ἀπὸ μυριάδων λαοῦ τῶν κύκλῳ συνεπιθεμένων μοι. Ἀνάστα, Κύριε, σῶσόν με ὁ Θεός μου, ὅτι σὺ ἐπάταξας πάντας τοὺς ἐχθραίνοντάς μοι ματαίως, ὀδόντας ἀμαρτωλῶν συνέτριψας. Τοῦ Κυρίου ἡ σωτηρία, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν λαόν σου ἡ εὐλογία σου.

Ἐγὼ ἐκοιμήθην καὶ ὑπνωσα· ἐξηγέρθη, ὅτι Κύριος ἀντιλήφεται μου.

The Six Psalms of Orthros Part 1 - Psalm 3

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men. (3)

O Lord, You shall open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise. (2)

O Lord, why do those who afflict me multiply? Many are those who rise up against me. Many are those who say to my soul, "There is no salvation for him in his God." but You, O Lord, are my protector, my glory and the One who lifts up my head. I cried to the Lord with my voice, and He heard me from His holy hill. I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who set themselves against me all around. Arise, O Lord, and save me, O my God, for You struck all those who were foolishly at enmity with me; You broke the teeth of sinners. Salvation is of the Lord, and Your blessing is upon Your people.

I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord will help me. *New King James Version (NKJV)*

Wisdom of the Saints

"All who truly believe in Christ and cleave to Him with all their soul, are changed into His image by the power of His Resurrection"

St. Theophan the Recluse

"Blessed is he that has eaten the Bread of Love which is Jesus. While still in this world, he breathes the air of the Resurrection, in which the righteous will delight after they rise from the dead."

St. Issac the Syrian

"If we have true love with sympathy and patient labor, we shall not go about scrutinizing our neighbor's shortcomings."

St. Dorotheos of Gaza

"Life, of course, is no summer camp; it has it's joys, but also it's sorrows. The Resurrection is always preceded by the Crucifixion. The blows of life's trials are essential for the salvation of the soul, for the soul is refined through them. Just as with cloths: the more we rub them in the wash, the cleaner they become."

St. Paisios the New of Mount Athos

"Humility is constant forgetfulness of one's achievements."

St. John Climacus

"We have a continuous need for the full armor of the Scriptures"

St. John Chrysostom

"If you begin to guard your wealth it will not be yours. But if you begin to distribute it, you will not loose it"

St. Basil the Great

"Despair is a mortal sin. Flee from it. And believe in the Merciful God, our Mediatrix the Theotokos and the Saints. They can do all things. But it is absolutely necessary to humble oneself and be patient."

St. Anatoly of Optina

"If you cannot find Christ in the beggar at the church door, you will not find Him in the chalice."

St. John Chrysostom

"If we were humble the Lord in His love would show us all things, would reveal to us all mysteries, but our trouble is that we are not humble. We puff ourselves up and boast over trifles, and so make both ourselves and others unhappy."

St. Silouan the Athonite

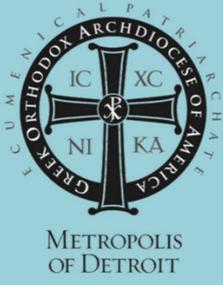
Your Martyr's Spirit Elder Aimilianos of Simonpetra

Show your martyr's spirit in the daily arena of your life, in your home, with your husband, with your wife. When your husband comes home tired from work and speaks to you without being polite, don't get angry. If he swears at you, don't answer him back. Show him love, tolerance, patience. If your wife has burnt the food, don't shout at her; eat it. Put a little lemon juice on it to make it more tasty, and tell her it's fine. Let love reign in your house. When you see that your spouse has wronged you, don't start shouting about how you are in the right. It doesn't matter whether your in the right or not. It doesn't matter what is correct, but what the other person wants. Get out of the way. Deny yourself. Put the other person first. This is life-conquering death, this is soul saving martyrdom.

NATIVITY PRAYER LIST

Please Pray for:

Fr. George Vaporis
Soula Metropoulos
Sandy Zembylas
Nick Zembylas
Georgia Theophelis
Jacob Espinosa
Elaine Galbraith
Katherine Beeny
Cleo Demetriou
Alexander Nichoff
Steve Kaplantzes
Gus Photsios
Sheri Wilkins
Aristoile Zarkin
Vasiliki Biselas
Eva Kocoves Fink
Taylor Zembylas
Anastasia Kyriazako
Evangelos Bourouris
Maria Espinosa
Maria Kalas
Eleni Vrahnos
Theodora Bageris
Nick Kyriakou
Michali Malfis
Angeliki Dellas
Andrula Loisodes
Jody Stockdale
Bessie Shell
Nick Morakeas
Mia Grace Zembylas
Catherine Dillon
Panagiotis Korellis
Catherine Vardouniotis
Carlo Nichoff
Gail Koumariotis
Anna Kyriakou
Helen Photsios
Maria Rifat
Parthena Papadopoulou
William Fitzgerald
Frank Maroudis
Project Mexico Team
Metropolitan Paul
Archbishop John
(call the office to be added)



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Week Zero June 25 – July 1, 2017

Programs for Youth Entering Grades 3-11

- Week 1** July 2 – July 8, 2017
- Week 2** July 9 – July 15, 2017
- Week 3** July 16 – July 22, 2017
- Week 4** July 23 – July 29, 2017
- Week 5** July 30 – August 5, 2017



248-909-MDSC [6372] | gomdsc@gmail.com

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Hellenic College
HOLY CROSS
 Greek Orthodox School of Theology



MINISTRY

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DIACONATE PROGRAM
 at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

Annual Summer Session
 July 29-August 6, 2017



THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

LITURGICAL PREPARATION

PREPARING DEACONS TO SERVE

The Diaconate Program is an educational and formational initiative of the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. The program is intended for individuals who are interested in serving the Church and is designed to prepare these candidates for service to the Church as deacons. Do you or someone you know hear this call? If yes, please call or go online today!

Application forms are available online:
www.hchc.edu/academics/diaconate_program

For more information, contact Fr. Gregory Floor at 617.850.1285 or gfloor@hchc.edu.

National Ministry Spot Light

OCMC - Orthodox Christian Mission Center

220 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086
 Phone:(904) 829-5132 | Toll Free:1-877-463-6784
 Fax:(904) 829-1635 | E-mail:missions@ocmc.org

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Mission

As the official missions agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States it is OCMC's mission to make disciples of all nations by bringing people to Christ and His Church.

Vision

That all people may come to know the saving love of our Lord: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Above info and more at their website
www.ocmc.org

Parish Ministry Spot Light

The Three Heirarchs Greek School

One of the largest Greek education centers in the area, the Greek School Ministry is a joint program between Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church and Nativity of the Virgin Mary. This system teaches both our youth and adults the beautiful language and culture of Greece. Classes are held on Tuesday morning from 10am to noon, and Tuesdays and Thursday evenings from 6pm to 8pm. The school year begins in early October and concludes at the end of May. The program is open to children as young as four years of age. Classes range from the Pre-K/Kindergarten level to Advanced Greek with private instruction available upon request. The staff includes four teachers, Angela Galanos, Irene Melabiotis, Evangelos Skoures and Anna Liakou-Hentnik, and one assistant, Theodora Grias. They take pride in providing a creative learning environment for all and this year there is a total of 54 students. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to be involved. For more information contact Anna Liakou-Hentnik (248) 425-2321.

Scouts of America

If you're a parent, there is no need to convince you of the importance of scouting in teaching our children good values and service to God and country. Although there are no troops that meet at Nativity, we have organized our scouts for various religious activities and awards.

From the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, our scouts get involved in several service activities which include food and/or clothing collections for the needy. Toiletries are collected and stuffed into a pair of socks for men and women who arrive at shelters with nothing but the clothes on their backs and children in their arms. Every spring, we rally the scouts together to beautify our church grounds. These activities frequently can earn a service patch which they would not be able to earn through their secular troop activities. Scouts can also earn religious awards developed by the Eastern Orthodox Council on Scouting (EOCS). The St. George award is for grades 1 through 3, the Chi-Rho for grades 4 through 6, and the challenging Alpha-Omega award for grades 6 through 12 for the most dedicated scouts. For more information contact Mary Takis (734) 459-9311.

(Fr. Nick, from page 1)

must forgive and Jesus says 70 x 7. Does this mean 490 times? As being Orthodox, we understand that this is a way of speaking used to make a point. It can be taken literally, but most of the time it is not. Forty days could mean 40 days, or just a long period of time; 10,000 talents that was forgiven a servant in the parable of the unforgiving servant, by his Master, literally is an amount that no servant could possibly earn in several lifetimes. It is an impossible amount to forgive yet, the Master forgives him out of compassion (Matthew 18:23-27). To forgive 70 x 7 means to forgive and forgive and forgive without end. Do we not say in the Lord's Prayer "forgive us (Lord) our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us...?"

Forgiveness is an essential part of our development as children of God - God who is perfect love alone. Human beings are plagued

by the sin of pride. When we cannot forgive our brothers and sisters, we become hypocrites and disfigure that image and likeness of Him. We are broken and cannot come to the realization that we are being prideful when we cannot forgive. God has forgiven us "... forgive them Father for they know not what they do..." (Luke 23:24). He died on the cross to show us how much He loves us. How much He forgives us.

This is impossible for us to grasp that someone can love us so much, that even if you don't know them, they will give up their very life for you. Forgiveness is real freedom and shows us the path to holiness. Forgiveness leads to reconciliation with others and ultimately with God. Forgiveness holds families together no matter what they are experiencing. Forgiveness is the fertilizer of the garden of our hearts that allows us to grow and blossom and produce the fruit of

love. Forgiveness is what makes a community steadfast and growing. Pride continuously gets in the way with our desire to be loving creatures of God. A person is imprisoned only when they cannot forgive. Freedom in our life is achieved when ego, anger and demands for justification are released and forgotten. When I can say "I love and forgive my enemy, my neighbor, my friend, my loved one" then we are truly forgiven. And most importantly, we must also forgive ourselves. God is all Forgiveness. God is all Love.

During Great Lent make confession part of your Lenten journey. The way to repentance starts with forgiveness through confession.

May the God who is Love grant each of us the strength to forgive.....

Καλή Ανάσταση!
Good Resurrection!

Fr Nick

The Holy Angels

By William Smith



Everyone has a guardian angel entrusted to them by God. From the time we were baptized and until our final end, glorifying in paradise God, our guardian angel is watching over us. In today's society, we live in a world that is fascinated with unsolved mysteries. Our society is marveled by ghosts, spirits, and mysteries that cannot be explained. The existence of angels is one of the most popular beliefs in a Judeo-Christian world. We get a sense of protection because our guardian angel is looking out for us. We gain a feeling of comfort because we are never alone, our guardian angel is always with us. What exactly is an angel, what is its relationship with God, and what is its relationship with humanity according to the Orthodox church?

First of all, the word Angel means "messenger" "ἄγγελος" from the Greek implying service to God and mankind.

From the first days of Adam to our own age, angels have played a major role in the human life. In the Old Testament angels served as guides and protectors to God's chosen people. The Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah and Ezekiel saw visions of the angels in the heavenly kingdom.

The New Testament gives us more information about the activity and roles of the angels. The two most significant moments concerning the activities of angels were: the Archangel Gabriel bringing the message to the Theotokos she would bear the Messiah; and the angel(s) who brought the message to the Myrrhbearing women of our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection. Angels strengthened Christ while He fasted and prayed in the desert (one can read about the activity of the Angels as protectors in Acts 10:3-7, 27:23-24).

There are nine orders of angels with hierarchy within the order – from highest to lowest order. In the highest order are included the three ranks of angels: the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones. Closest to the throne of God, the Most Holy Trinity, stand the six winged Seraphim - meaning fiery one (Isaiah 6:12) They blaze with love for God and guide others to His love.

After the Seraphim, there stand before the Lord the many-eyed Cherubim (Genesis 3:24) Their name means: outpouring of wisdom, enlightenment. Through them, they radiate the light of Divine knowledge and the mysteries of God are revealed and are sent down through wisdom and enlightenment. Next to stand before God in service are the Thrones (Colossians 1:16)



mysteriously and incomprehensibly they uphold God's righteousness and justice.

The Middle Angelic Hierarchy consists of three ranks: Dominions, Powers and Authorities.

Dominions: hold dominion over the successive ranks of Angels. They instruct the earthly authorities, established from God, to wise governance. The Dominions influence rule by miracles, they subdue sinful impulses, subordinate the flesh to the spirit, and provide mastery over the will to conquer temptation.

Powers: fulfill the will of God. They work the miracles and send down the grace of wonderworking and clear vision to the saints pleasing to God. The Powers give assistance to people bearing obedience, encourage them in patience, and give them spiritual strength and fortitude. We sing a hymn to God acknowledging that he is Lord of the Powers during Great Compline: Lord of the Powers, be with us. For in times of distress, we have no other help but you, Lord of the Powers have mercy on us.

Authorities: (Peter 3:22, Colossian 1:16) have authority to subdue the power of the devil. They repel from people demonic temptations, uphold ascetics and guard them, helping people in the struggle with evil ponderings.

In the lowest Hierarchy are included the three ranks: Principalities, Archangels and Angels.

Principalities: have command over the lower angels, instructing them in the fulfilling of Divine commands. To them are entrusted to direct the universe, and protect lands, nations and peoples. Principalities instruct people to render honor to everyone, as becomes their station. They teach those in authority to fulfill their necessary obligations, not for personal glory and gain but out of respect for God and benefit for neighbor.

Archangels: (1 Thessalonians 4:16) announce about the great and most holy, they reveal the mysteries of the faith, prophecy and understanding of the will of God, they intensify deep faith in people, enlightening their minds with the light of the Holy Spirit.

Angels: (1 Peter 3:22) This is the category of guardian angels and are the closest to all people. They proclaim the intent of God, guiding people to virtuous and holy life. They protect believers, restraining them from falling and they raise up the fallen; never do they abandon us and always they're prepared to help us, if we so desire.

Angels surpass us in their spiritual powers but have their limitations because, just like humans, angels are created beings. Even though angels can travel through vast spaces of physical distances, they cannot be everywhere at once. Also, angels are not omniscient - knowing everything. Angels are the messengers and deliver only that which God reveals. It is for us to respond to them and to imitate them. It is said that we have learned to smile from the angels, and to love, as they work in perfect love together, and we have learned to pray from them as they pray in constant unceasing prayer. We respond to them in prayer.

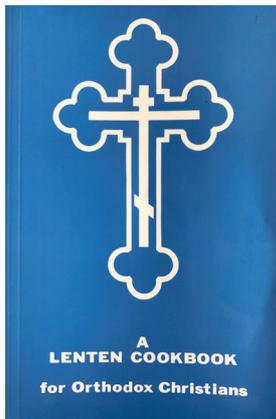
During this time of repentance, let us pray to our Guardian Angels to protect us and guide us to our Lord and Savior's Resurrection.



A Prayer to the Guardian Angel

O Holy Angel, that keeps guard over my despondent soul and passionate life, leave me not, a sinner, nor depart from me to my undoing; grant not a place to the crafty enemy to overcome me by the force of this mortal body; strengthen my weak and feeble hand, and set me on the path to salvation. Yea, Holy Angel of God, guardian and protector of my hopeless body and soul, forgive me everything wherein I have offended you every day of my life, and what I have done amiss this past night; protect me during the present day, and preserve me from every attempt of the enemy. May I not anger God by any sin. Pray for me to the Lord, that He may establish me in His fear, and prove me a servant worthy of His kindness. Amen.

Applesauce Raisin Bread



- 1 cup applesauce
- 1/4 cup melted margarine
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 2 cups unsifted all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp soda
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 cup seedless raisins
- 1 cup coarsly chopped pecans or walnuts

In a bowl combine the applesauce, melted margarine, granulated sugar and brown sugar, blending well. Stir in the flour, baking powder, salt, soda, cinnamon and nutmeg. Stir until smooth. Stir in the raisin and chopped nuts. Turn batter into a well-greased 5x9 inch loaf pan or fluted mold with tubes that holds about 1 quart. Bake in 350 degree oven for 1 hour. Cool. This quick bread slices best the second day. Makes 1 large loaf.

Recipe from *A Lenten Cookbook for Orthodox Christians*, available for purchase at the Nativity Book Store.

Coffee Hour

- April 2ndNativity Dancers Bake Sale
- April 9thPalm Sunday Luncheon
- April 16thPascha
- April 23rdHope/Joy
- April 30th.....Open
- May 7thSpring General Assembly

Volunteer

Consider volunteering at THE LOGOS if you have any experience or desire to help with this ministry. Please email: nativityvmvoice@gmail.com

- **Advertising Sales Representative**- direct the sale of advertising.
- **Graphic Designer**- assist in creating sales ads, flyers, layout.
- **Journalist**- To interview parishioners and write a monthly column that highlights their life story.
- **Photographer**- capture photos of ministry events and services.
- **Research Assistant**- Research the internet for current, usable content.



GOYA News

On March 11th the Goyans attended the Metropolis of Detroit Lenten Retreat. It was held at Assumption in St Clair Shores. There were over 150 kids from the Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana churches. It was so great to see so many kids attending. The theme was "Why Orthodoxy?" We were put into groups and we had different stations with different facilitators. We learned about confession, about religion and technology and a few more interesting sessions. (The food was pretty good too.) Our next event is bowling and we are planning a Cedar Pointe trip as soon as school is out in June. Kali Anastasi!

Jonathan Marcus
GOYA President



TENTATIVE DATE

Saturday, April 29

Sunday School would like to invite everyone to join them for a visit to **Holy Trinity Monastery** near Port Huron.

We will have a short service, lunch, a tour of the grounds, a talk with Geronda Joseph, and free time.

Transportation is being arranged. More information will be coming soon or please contact Michele Hunsinger or Fr. Nick.



Lenten Services

March

25th..... 8:45am, Annunciation
 26th..... **Sunday of St. John Climacus**
 28th..... 7pm, Great Compline
 29th..... 6pm, Presanctified Liturgy
 30th..... 7pm, Great Compline
 31st..... 10am, Presanctified Liturgy
 7pm, Akathist Hymn

April

2nd..... **Sunday St. Mary of Egypt**
 4th..... 7pm, Great Compline
 5th..... 6pm, Presanctified Liturgy
 6th..... 7pm, Great Compline
 7th..... 10am, Presanctified Liturgy
 8th..... 8:45am, Saturday of Lazarus

Holy Week

April 9th-16th

Sunday..... **Palm Sunday**
 7pm, **Bridegroom Matins**
 Monday..... 10am, Presanctified Liturgy
 7pm, **Bridegroom Matins**
 Tuesday..... 10am, Presanctified Liturgy
 7pm, **Bridegroom Matins**
 Wednesday..... 10am, Presanctified Liturgy
 7pm, **Holy Unction Service**
 Thursday..... 7:30am-8:30am, Communion
 9am, **Vespertal Liturgy of St. Basil**
 6pm, **12 Gospels of the Crucifixion**
 Friday..... 10am, Holy Hours
 12:30pm Holy Friday Youth Retreat
 3pm, **Vespers of the Apokathelosis**
 6:30pm, **Lamentation Services**
 Saturday..... 10am, The Protoanastasis
 11pm, **Resurrection Service**
 Sunday of Pascha..... 11am, **Agape Service**



Palm Sunday Luncheon Sunday, April 9, 2017

Please join us in the Church Social Hall For a Delicious Fish Dinner!

Ticket prices are as follows:

Adults \$15.00

\$5.00 children 12 & under

Macaroni & Cheese for children

See any Parish Council member to purchase tickets.

Lenten Events

Palm Sunday Luncheon

April 9th, Following Liturgy

Enjoy a delicious fish dinner sponsored and served by the Nativity Parish Council. Tickets are \$15 per adult and \$5 per child age 12 and under. Purchase tickets in advance from any parish council member or from the Church office. Limited seating available.

Holy Friday Youth Retreat

April 14th, 12:30pm-3pm

Religious Ed's annual retreat for all Church School youth of all ages. An important experience learning the theology, symbols, and hymns of Holy Week. Followed by the Apokathelosis (Taking Down from the Cross Service). Please register your child today in the Church office.

Calling all Myrrh-bearers

April 14th, Lamentations Service

Inviting all daughters and young ladies to represent the faithful and holy women who went to the tomb to dress Jesus's body with sweet herbs and spices. It is a position of honor and love. To participate:

- Girls must arrive at church by 5:45pm.
- Wear all white modest, appropriate dresses.
- No unduly tight fitting or revealing clothing.

Please call **Mary Takis** before Palm Sunday at (734) 459-9311.

Paschal Fellowship Meal

April 15th, Following Paschal Liturgy

Enjoy a complimentary meal and Paschal egg cracking tournament for the kids.

Easter Egg Hunt

April 16th, after Agape Service

Hunt for candy filled eggs on the church grounds after Agape service.

Lenten Prayer

St. Ephraim the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life, remove from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, lust of power and vain talk (prostration).

But give rather the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love to your servant (prostration).

Yea, O Lord and King, grant that I may see my own sins and not judge my brother, for you are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen. (prostration)

Lord have mercy (twelve times)

Then the prayer of St. Ephraim is repeated with only one prostration at the end.



Missions News

Our mission trip to Tijuana at the St. Innocent Orphanage is proceeding according to schedule! We are excited to announce that we have 10 participants for our trip to Tijuana! (There is still time if anyone else is interested in the mission trip).

The deadline for our funds towards the PM is coming up on April 30th and we are reaching the goal of \$5400. We also want to thank the Nativity Boy Scouts who helped so much at the bake sale which we raised over \$330. They offered baked goods and helped set up and promote the sale.

Also, we would like to thank all the parishioners who also offered baked goods and all those who purchased our delicious lenten items in support of our mission trip. Our next project is scheduled for April, we are partnering with Kohls and making 300 health care bags (through FOCUS Detroit) for the Detroit inner city school children. Thanks again for all your prayers and support towards our missionary team. KALI ANASTASI!

Elaine Hamilton
Missions Director

Congratulations Nondo Basoukeas; O.Y.A.A. Basketball Hall of Fame!

Parish News Source

Nativity basketball program director Nondo Basoukeas was officially inducted into the Orthodox Youth Athletic Association (O.Y.A.A.) hall of fame this year by the Executive board of the Detroit O.Y.A.A.

The O.Y.A.A. web site states about the Hall of Fame, "Over the years, the Orthodox Youth Athletic Association of Metropolitan Detroit has had many individuals who have contributed, or continue to contribute, their time and efforts to the growth and prosperity of the organization. In 1974, the Orthodox Youth Athletic Association Hall of Fame was established to acknowledge these exceptional individuals"

Nondo is the second parishioner in Nativity history to be recognized as a hall of famer, the first was Alex Caryannopoulos, who was president of the O.Y.A.A. from 1983 to 1985. Nondo has been directing or co-directing Nativity's basketball program for more

than a decade, continuing to show his dedication to the program and love for the children year in and year out. A well deserved award for a truly exceptional individual.

A dinner and ceremony was held on March 18th to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the O.Y.A.A., and to honor Nondo and twelve others including Angelo Zervos from Holy Cross and Pete Souchock from Sts. Constantine and Helen. The event was held at Assumption Church in St. Clair Shores.



*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind...
You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

— Matthew 22:37-40

A MEDITATION ON ALMSGIVING

By Fr. Thomas Hopko

Christ commanded his disciples to give alms. To "give alms" means literally "to do" or "to make merciful deeds" or "acts of mercy." According to the Scriptures, the Lord is compassionate and merciful, longsuffering, full of mercy, faithful and true. He is the one who does merciful deeds (see Psalm 103). Acts of mercy are an "imitation of God" who ceaselessly executes mercy for all, without exception, condition or qualification. He is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

Mercy is a sign of love. God is Love. A deed of merciful love is the most Godlike act a human being can do. "Being perfect" in Matthew's Gospel corresponds to "being merciful" in Luke's Gospel. "Perfection" and "being merciful" are the same thing.

To love as Christ loves, with the love of God who is Love, is the chief commandment for human beings according to Christianity. It can only be accomplished by God's grace, by faith. It is not humanly possible. It is done by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Acts of mercy must be concrete, physical actions. They cannot be "in word and speech, but in deed and truth" (First letter of John and letter of James).

Acts of mercy are acts done to Christ himself who was hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, in prison and sick in the form of being wounded for our transgressions on the cross, taking up our wounds, and dying our death.

Christian acts of mercy must be sacrificial. By this, we understand that we must not simply give to others what is left over. We have to be sharing our possessions with others in ways that limit ourselves in some way (The Widow's Mite). And, acts of mercy should be done without qualification or condition to everyone, no matter who, what or how they are (Parable of the Good Samaritan).

Fr. Thomas Hopko is Dean Emeritus of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and currently serves at the Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania.

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★13th Annual



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Cultural Festival 2017



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Sponsoring businesses and individuals can reach the community by choosing from one of our many sponsorship levels which includes an ad in the festival program. Program books will be distributed to participating businesses by early August and to every guest during the festival. Last year over **4000 people** attended.

Additionally, free admission will be given each day to those who bring 3 non-perishable food items, all of which will be donated to a local charity. Please consider making a tax deductible donation and becoming a valued sponsor for this special event. With your support, we can raise the funds needed to support this event and enjoy a weekend immersed in the sights, sounds, smells, and amazing tastes of Greece.

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www.nativityfest.org

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Fr. Nick Marcus

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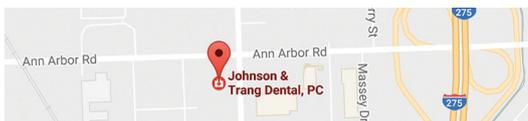
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Mission Statement - The Logos Ministry

To creatively communicate and report parish news, services, sacraments, and ministry events to all Nativity faithful; to advance the understanding of our Orthodox Faith and sacramental life while recording the history of our parish; to promote stewardship, fellowship, charity, and love in Christ our God, who is *The Logos* and sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17).

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