



THE LOGOS

Nativity of The Virgin Mary

October 2017, Volume 1, No. 7

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Feast Day
Liturgy
September 8th

Strong Faith Requires Much Effort...

My beloved in Christ,



“Your Word is a Lamp to my Feet and a Light to my Paths”
(Ps 118:105)

This month we will be continuing the Orthodox Faith class in the evenings. Our first class was Thursday, September 21st and we spoke about the existence of God in our lives and why we believe in Him. We had a very thought filled and lively discussion. The class takes place every other week in the church hall on Thursdays at 7:00-8:00 PM. As many of you know, Bible Study is on Tuesday mornings at 11:00AM-12:00PM (unless otherwise stated in the bulletin). Our “Tuesday Group” has been a great joy to meet with and study the Scriptures.

It is essential, as Orthodox Christians, to experience the fullness of the faith. In addition to the Sacraments of the Church, we experience God through the reading of the Scripture. In the Scripture,

we find the Holy inspired words of our Lord. Through the Gospel writers, we experience His life that leads to salvation and we can ask ourselves the question: Where do we fit in with His plan? Our lives are busy. Many of us have not formed the habit yet of reading the Bible every day. Sometimes we need a little push. Bible studies and orthodox faith classes help us to answer difficult questions in our lives.

Just recently the Gulf Coast of Texas and our Eastern states seaboard, especially Florida and the Island countries, suffered from Hurricanes. The states and countries, all prepared for whatever catastrophe would come. We know that after the bombardment of water and high winds many lost everything, even their lives. Just like the winds that blew during the hurricane, each of us in our lives are like the grasses of the field that are being blown about. When our faith is weak, we are no different than all the people who did not prepare for the hurricane. We are caught off-guard when
(Continued on page 12)

Our Unsung Hero: Costas Kassapis

Interview on Page 10

Visit our Website:

www.nativitygochurch.org

For announcements, monthly calendar, photos and more!

St. Theophan the Recluse - On Prayer

Part 2 of 4 homilies.

See Page 7



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 Summer Hours**

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

**NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**
39851 West Five Mile Road
Plymouth, Michigan
www.nativitygochurch.org

The Logos - Volume 1, No. 7





Dear Volunteers,

This has been a banner year for “A Taste of Greece” festival. It was beyond all of our expectations. Our success was realized through the good weather, social media, and the blessings of our Lord and the Panaya. Of course, all of our volunteers met the challenges of our blessings throughout the weekend. You all shined and worked incredibly hard. Thekla and I are very grateful for being a part of this event and to Louis and his entire team for making our “food” as always, the best ever!!

In Christ,
Thekla and Angela
Festival Co-Chairs



There was so much activity these past month's and many great photos to share. Thank you to Cleanthe Milojevic, Presbytera Liza, the Metropolis of Detroit website, Steve Julin, and all who captured the wonderful moments pictured in this month's edition of The Logos.

Email the editor, Louis Poulos at navityvmvoice@gmail.com

Parish News Reel

- Men's Club cigar social night hosted 70 men under the main festival tent on August 19th. See photos on page 14.
- The Nativity Byzantine Choir will be holding monthly practices, the next practice will be October 18th at 6:30pm.
- **EXCITING NEWS!** As our parish has been growing, it is time for a pictorial church directory. Our dates for photography will be October 23, 24 & 25 from 2:00pm-8:30pm, by appointment only. Each participating family will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a Directory. Option to purchase additional portraits is available. Sign up will be at church and online. Contact the office for more info or to volunteer for this project.
- Nativity hosted a booth for the 3rd straight year at the Plymouth Fall Festival downtown on Sept. 8-10th. Proceeds to benefit hurricane relief and Project Mexico.
- The Council of Ministries met at Karl's Cabin on Sept. 12th to plan the 2017/2018 church schedule.

FINANCE CENTER as of September 1st, 2017

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

Parish Offerings*

June: \$20,851
YTD: \$203,069

Stewardship

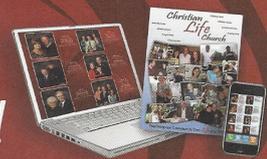
Pledged: \$191,028
Pledges: 161
Families 266
Members: 548

Mortgage (4% APR)

Paid Monthly: \$1557
(\$1057 + \$500 principal)
Balance: \$109,357.56

*includes candle offerings

Dear Church *family,*
It's time for a New Directory!



*Celebrating faith.
Connecting families.
Sharing hope.*

When people enter the doors of our church they are looking for a place to belong. Our directory brings us together to develop new relationships, connect with our own families and reconnect with those we haven't seen in a while. Join us for this "Connections Event" and be part of what God is doing right here at our church!

Directory Committee

Connections Event

Our church directory will not be complete without you. Join us to celebrate faith and family with our new church family album.

- Schedule your professional photography session when you stop by the sign-up table at church or simply go online and follow the instructions below. If we don't see your name on our list of appointments, you will receive a phone call inviting you to participate.
- Everyone who is photographed by Universal will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a directory!
- Universal provides a complete professional portrait studio right here at our church! You'll enjoy a variety of poses, backgrounds, portrait sizes, finish and framing options AND have the opportunity to purchase portraits to give to family and friends.

Families will be photographed on **October 23, 24 & 25** from **2:00pm-8:30pm** at the Church. Please schedule your session by signing up at Sunday coffee hour or calling the office.

Plymouth Fall Festival ~ Sept. 7-9



THE LOGOS

Nativity of The Virgin Mary

Next Deadline: Oct. 15

Please submit all schedules, events, information and photos by **October 15, 2017** for November edition to:
nativityvmvoice@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 playing 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

‘Ο Ἐξάψαλμος Ψαλμὸς PMB’ (142)

Κύριε, εἰσάκουσον τῆς προσευχῆς μου, ἐνώπιόν μου ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ σου, εἰσάκουσόν μου ἐν τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου, καὶ μὴ εἰσέλθῃς εἰς κρίσιν μετὰ τοῦ δούλου σου, ὅτι οὐ δικαιοθήσεται ἐνώπιόν σου πᾶς ζῶν. Ὅτι κατεδίωξεν ὁ ἐχθρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν μου, ἐταπεινώσεν εἰς γῆν τὴν ζωὴν μου, ἐκάθισέ με ἐν σκοτεινοῖς ὡς νεκροὺς αἰῶνος· καὶ ἠκηδίασεν ἐπ’ ἐμὲ τὸ πνεῦμά μου, ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐταράχθη ἡ καρδιά μου. Ἐμνήσθητι ἡμερῶν ἀρχαίων, ἐμελέτησα ἐν πάσι τοῖς ἔργοις σου, ἐν ποιήμασι τῶν χειρῶν σου ἐμελέτησα. Διεπέτασα πρὸς σὲ τὰς χεῖράς μου· ἡ ψυχὴ μου ὡς γῆ ἄνυδρος σοι. Ταχὺ εἰσάκουσόν μου, Κύριε, ἐξέλιπε τὸ πνεῦμά μου. Μὴ ἀποστρέψῃς τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ, καὶ ὁμοιωθήσομαι τοῖς καταβαίνουσιν εἰς λάκκον. Ἀκουστὸν ποιήσόν μοι τὸ πρωῖ τὸ ἔλεός σου, ὅτι ἐπὶ σοὶ ἠλπίσα. Γνώρισόν μοι, Κύριε, ὁδόν, ἐν ἣ πορεύσομαι, ὅτι πρὸς σὲ ἤρα τὴν ψυχὴν μου. Ἐξελοῦ με ἐκ τῶν ἐχθρῶν μου, Κύριε, ὅτι πρὸς σὲ κατέφυγον. Δίδαξόν με τοῦ ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημά σου, ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Θεός μου. Τὸ πνεῦμά σου τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὁδηγήσει με ἐν γῇ εὐθείᾳ· ἐνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματός σου, Κύριε, ζήτησας με, ἐν τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου ἐξάζεις ἐκ θλίψεως τὴν ψυχὴν μου· καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐλέει σου ἐξολοθρεύσεις τοὺς ἐχθρούς μου καὶ ἀπολεῖς πάντας τοὺς θλίβοντας τὴν ψυχὴν μου, ὅτι ἐγὼ δοῦλός σου εἰμι.

Εἰσάκουσόν μου, Κύριε, ἐν τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου· καὶ μὴ εἰσέλθῃς εἰς κρίσιν μετὰ τοῦ δούλου σου (2).

Τὸ πνεῦμά σου τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὁδηγήσει με ἐν γῇ εὐθείᾳ. Δόξα Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι. Καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

Ἀλληλουῖα. Ἀλληλουῖα. Ἀλληλουῖα. Δόξα σοὶ ὁ Θεός.

Ἀλληλουῖα. Ἀλληλουῖα. Ἀλληλουῖα. Δόξα σοὶ ὁ Θεός.

Ἀλληλουῖα. Ἀλληλουῖα. Ἀλληλουῖα. Δόξα σοὶ ὁ Θεός. Ἡ ἐλπίς ἡμῶν, Κύριε, δόξα σοι.

The Six Psalms of Orthros Part 6 - Psalm 142(143)

O Lord, hear my prayer; give ear to my supplication in Your truth; answer me in Your righteousness; do not enter into judgment with Your servant, for no one living shall become righteous in Your sight. For the enemy persecuted my soul; he humbled my life to the ground; he caused me to dwell in dark places as one long dead, and my spirit was in anguish within me; my heart was troubled within me. I remembered the days of old, and I meditated on all Your works; I meditated on the works of Your hands. I spread out my hands to You; my soul thirsts for You like a waterless land. Hear me speedily, O Lord; my spirit faints within me; turn not Your face from me, lest I become like those who go down into the pit. Cause me to hear Your mercy in the morning, for I hope in You; make me know, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You. Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord, for to You I flee for refuge. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Your good Spirit shall guide me in the land of uprightness. For Your name's sake, O Lord, give me life; in Your righteousness You shall bring my soul out of affliction. In Your mercy You shall destroy my enemies; You shall utterly destroy all who afflict my soul, for I am Your servant.

Answer me in Your righteousness. Do not enter into judgment with Your servant (2).

Your good Spirit shall guide me in the land of uprightness. Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God (2).

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God. Our hope, O Lord, glory to You.

New King James Version (NKJV)

Wisdom of the Saints

“In their hatred of our souls, the demons sometimes prompt others to pay us empty compliments, and thus cause us to grow slack because we are praised. If as a result we give way to conceit and self-esteem, our enemies have no difficulty in taking us prisoner.”

St. John of Karpathos

“If you want to do spiritual work on yourselves, do not examine what others are doing around you. Instead, have good thoughts about both the good and the bad you see in others. Regardless of the reason that someone does something, you must put a good thought in your mind. A good thought contains love; it disarms the other person and makes him behave properly.”

St. Paisios the Athonite

“The devil downplays minor sins; otherwise he cannot lead a person on to greater evil.”

St. Mark the Ascetic

“All vice is caused by self-esteem and sensual pleasure.”

St. Mark the Ascetic

“Jesus Christ voluntarily suffered and died for us. Therefore we too must not grumble when some unpleasantness befalls us but be ready to make sacrifices with humility and devotion to God. Jesus Christ not only forgave His enemies their ingratitude and animosity but wished them well. So we also must forgive our enemies, repaying them with good for their evil while blessing those who revile us”

St. Innocent of Alaska

“How much time we waste in idleness and empty activities! We roam hither and thither without knowing why. We do things again and again, without being able to give a sensible account of them. We take up one enterprise after another, and all that comes of it is fuss and bustle.”

St. Theophan the Recluse

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
Freda Nicozisis
Parthena Papadopoulou
William Fitzgerald
Frank Maroudis
Presbyteria Jenny Newlin
Project Mexico Team
Metropolitan Paul
Archbishop John
(call the office to be added)

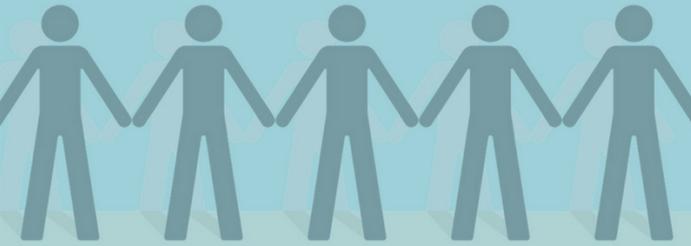


METROPOLIS OF DETROIT

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FRIENDS OF THE METROPOLIS

WWW.DETROIT.GOARCH.ORG/FRIENDS




THE ORTHODOX CHOIR OF DETROIT
VICTORIA KOPISTANSKY, DIRECTOR

come, let us worship

BENEFIT CONCERT

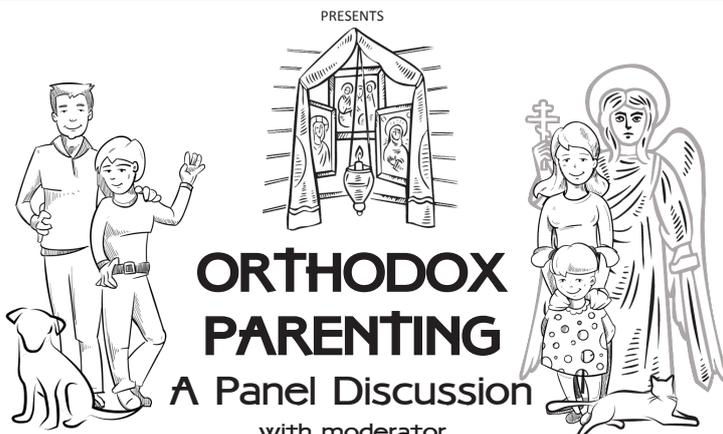
A JOINT ENDEAVOR BY CASS COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES AND THE COUNCIL OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCHES OF METROPOLITAN DETROIT

FRIDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2017 | 7:30PM
ST LAZARUS SERBIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
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DONATION \$20

COCCDETROIT.ORG
@ORTHODOXDetroit

Orthodox Christian Women of Michigan

PRESENTS



ORTHODOX PARENTING

A Panel Discussion
with moderator
Sharon Gomulka

Monday
October 16, 2017
7 P.M.

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION ORTHODOX CHURCH
36075 W. Seven Mile Rd.
Livonia, MI 48152

This discussion will be of special interest to Parents, Grandparents, Godparents, Church School Staff, & Church Youth Leaders. ALL are welcome to join us in fellowship! Refreshments will be served.

Mary Ann Dadich, OCW President
586-775-4799
mdadich811@gmail.com
www.coccdetroit.org/ocw.html

We accept contributions for ZOE For Life!, Orthodox Detroit Outreach, & South Oakland Shelter.



DETROIT'S OWN ORTHODOX RADIO

Tune in to Detroit's Own Orthodox Radio - *DOOR*, an endeavor to further benefit our parishes and the region, Sundays 4-5pm, 690AM WNZK; Live stream and archived shows are available on DOORradio.org!

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St. Theophan the Recluse: On prayer, Homily 2

Delivered 22 November, 1864

Yesterday I showed you one method of establishing a prayerful spirit in yourselves [see homily 1, last month's Logos], namely, how to pray in a way which corresponds to the meaning of the prayers. But this is only the beginning of the art (science) of prayer and it is necessary to go further. Consider the study of language, for example. First one studies words and phrases from books. But this is not sufficient, one must go further, and truly reach the point where he can correctly form phrases in the given language without the aid of the textbook. It is the same in the work of prayer. We get used to praying with prayer books, praying using prepared prayers given to us by the Lord and the Holy Fathers who were successful in prayer. But we should not stop at that, we need to continue on, and having accustomed ourselves to making petition to God for help with our minds and hearts, we must attempt to ascend to Him. We must strive to reach the point where our soul by itself begins speaking, so to speak, in a prayerful conversation with God and by itself ascends to Him and opens itself to Him and confesses what is in it and what it desires.

The soul must be taught how to ascend to God and open itself to Him. I will briefly instruct you how one should proceed in order to succeed in this art.

The skill of praying with piety, attention, and feeling according to a prayer book itself leads to this higher level. In the same way that water flows out of a bowl that is overfilled, so the soul which is filled with holy feelings by prayer begins by itself to spill out its prayer to God. But when pursuing this goal, there are particular steps which each person on this path must take.

Why is it, you ask, that one can pray for so many years with a prayer book, and still not have prayer in his heart? I think the reason is that people only spend a little time lifting themselves up to God when they complete their prayer rule, and in other times, they do not remember God. For example, they finish their morning



prayers, and think that their relation to God is fulfilled by them; then the whole day passes in work, and such a person does not attend to God. Then in the evening, the thought returns to him that he must quickly stand at prayer and complete his evening rule. In this case, it happens that even

if the Lord grants a person spiritual feelings at the time of the morning prayer, the bustle and business of the day drowns them out. As a result, it happens that one does not often feel like praying, and cannot get control of himself even to soften his heart a little bit. In such an atmosphere, prayer develops and ripens poorly. This problem (is it not ubiquitous?) needs to be corrected, that is, one must ensure that the soul does not only make petition to God when standing in prayer, but during the whole day, as much as possible, one must unceasingly ascend to Him and remain with Him.

In order to begin this task, one must first, during the course of the day, cry out to God more often, even if only with a few words, according to need and the work of the day. Beginning anything, for example, say "Bless, O Lord!" When you finish something, say, "Glory to Thee, O Lord", and not only with your lips, but with feeling in your heart. If passions arise, say, "Save me, O Lord, I am perishing." If the darkness of disturbing thoughts comes up, cry out: "Lead my soul out of prison." If dishonest deeds present themselves and sin leads you to them, pray, "Set me, O Lord, in the way", or "do not give up my feet to stumbling." If sin takes hold of you and leads you to despair, cry out with the voice of the publican, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Do this in every circumstance, or simply say often, "Lord, have mercy", "Most Holy Theotokos save us", "Holy Angel, my guardian, protect me", or other such words. Say such prayers as often as possible, always making the effort for them come from your heart, as if squeezed out of it. When we do this, we will frequently ascend to God in our hearts, making frequent petitions and prayers. Such increased frequency will bring about the habit of mental conversation with God.

But in order for the soul to begin crying out in this way, one must first teach the soul to ascribe everything to the glory of God, all of its works, whether great and small. This is the second way of teaching the soul to turn to God more often during the day, for if we apply ourselves to fulfill the apostolic commandment, that is, do all things for the glory of God, even "if we eat or drink" (1 Cor 10.31), then we will ceaselessly remember God in all that we do. Our remembrance of God will be accomplished not simply, but with care, so that in no case we would act wrongly and offend God by any deed. This will help us to turn to God with fear, prayerfully asking for help and understanding. Since we are almost always doing something, we will always be turning to God in prayer. Consequently, the art of raising up the heart in unceasing prayer to God will develop within our souls.

In order for the soul to do all things as they should be done, that is to the glory of God, one must prepare from the early morning, from the very beginning of the day, before "a man goes forth unto his work, and unto his labors until evening" (Ps. 103). This inclination leads to the contemplation of God, and this the third way of teaching the soul to turn frequently to God. Contemplation of God is the pious reflection on divine properties and actions, and about our necessary response to them. It means to reflect on God's goodness, righteous judgment, wisdom, omnipotence, omnipresence, knowledge of all things, about creation and industry, about the working of Salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ, about grace and the word of God, about the holy mysteries and about the Kingdom of Heaven. If you start to reflect on any one of these things, your soul will immediately be filled with pious feeling toward God. Consider, for example, the goodness of God, and you will see that you are surrounded by God's mercies, both physical and spiritual, and that you would have to be a stone not to fall down before God pouring out feelings of thanksgiving. Consider the omnipresence of God, and you will understand that you are always before God, and God is before you, and thus you cannot avoid being filled with pious fear. Consider the knowledge God has of all things, and you will realize, that nothing inside of you is hidden from the eye of God, and will set yourself to be strictly attentive to the movements of your heart and mind, in order not to offend the all-seeing God in any way. Consider the righteousness of

Dear Philoptochos and other Ladies of our Church,

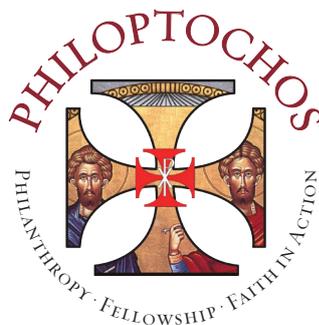
Your efforts to donate such spectacular baskets for our "Taste of Greece" festival this year need such a special mention.

Your sponsorship baskets intended for our raffle area are the "eye candy" which draws people in to our small space. Yours are the baskets that people are drawn to and are willing to place their tickets.

Your baskets are the "stolismata" which not only brighten our space, but, which also generate the excitement that the raffle area needs.

In the past, you have done it unflinchingly with only verbal thanks. This year, I would like to recognize your efforts in writing and make it personal to you. I need you to know how much your efforts are appreciated for our church and thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Sincerely,
Effie Lucas, Sponsorship Chair



Xronia Polla to All!

Nativity of the Virgins Mary's Feast Day and Vesper's Services were well attended. Metropolitan Nicholas as well as many priests from neighboring parishes presided over our vesper service. Hors d'oeuvres were served to the visiting priests. A light luncheon was

served to all guests at our Feast Day Services.

Over \$1000.00 from Philoptochos Cookbooks were sold at the 2017 Taste of Greece Festival. As we have for the past 3 years, all proceeds from the cookbook sales are donated to the festival.

On Sunday October 1, 2017, the Ladies of the Philoptochos will be hosting our Festival Appreciation Luncheon after services in the social hall. Contact Georgia Theophelis at 313-268-0746 to offer any assistance.

Monday October 2, 2017, is our first Philoptochos meeting. It will start at 6:00 p.m. Food will be served.

Project Mexico

Dear Parishioners,

The 2017 Project Mexico trip was everything I expected it to be, and more. My goal going into the mission was to watch how my group grew closer to God throughout the week, and to try to make this mission as amazing of an experience as I had last year. This house was built with Love.

This family wanted to be involved in every step of the process; the husband wanted to be involved in putting the first wall up, his father was on the build site three of the four days working right along side all of the volunteers. The wife, along with the help of some of her family members, made us coffee and juice everyday, and surprised us with red velvet cupcakes and tacos on different build days. Not only did they treat us like family while we were on site, the family wanted us to be there for a dinner once they had moved in, but, unfortunately, we would have already been back in Michigan by that time. Nonetheless, they said that their house is always open to us, no matter what.

Going into this trip, no one in our mission group knew each other well. On our last day, we were family. We have been able to become friends with people from around the country, whether in California, Utah, Pennsylvania, or Virginia. Every person who came on this mission with me, left feeling exhausted and enlightened. Over 330 Project Mexico houses have been built so far, and we are now able to say that we contributed to that number.

Because of your donations, we were able to go into town and buy the family an icon for their new home, as well as give money to help with their new life. Your donations also paid for necessary expenses throughout our week south of the border.

Thank you for sponsoring this mission, and helping us spread God's Love to those who are most thankful of it. I pray that we will be able to continue this mission again next year, and years to follow. Because of your love and support, I have been blessed with an opportunity to see Icons of Christ grow in their faith through missionary work. Thank God.

If we would like to do Project Mexico again, registration opens in October. I am currently creating a video compilation of our experience at Project Mexico this year. We will be showing it to our parish, as well as St. Nicks in Troy, and Holy Transfiguration in Livonia, because parishioners from those churches were a part of our missionary team. More information will be coming soon regarding future missions.

With Love,
Elaine Hamilton
Director of Missionary Work



(See more photos on page 15)

Welcome Back GOYA and GOYA Parents!

We are so excited about the upcoming year! We have our usual activities and new ones too!

Oct 17 - *Cedar Point HalloWeekend!



*FocusDetroit Weekend meal bag assembly - November Charity Project



*Christmas Caroling and Party (December date TBD)

Oct 14 - GOYA Dodgeball - Assumption, St Clair Shores



Nov 11-13 - Holiday Hoops - St. John, Sterling Heights

Jan 27 - GOYO (Greek Orthodox Youth Olympics) Grand Rapids

Feb 3 - Nativity Apokries Dance!

Any questions? Contact Fr Nick 616-328-3143

Hope/Joy

JOY HOPE NEWS

It was so great to see so many of our children at Family Night! In addition to yummy pizza and waffle cone ice cream (and a birthday cake!) – Fr Nick planned a very fun Treasure hunt that even the adults joined in! It was a beautiful night to be enjoying each other's company! We learned about our treasures in heaven. That everything that we do that is pleasing to God is building treasures in heaven. When we help the less fortunate (like we do with Focus Detroit) or being kind to people, we are doing just that. Please join us at the next Family Night on October 20 when JOY and HOPE will be working on a service project and of course our annual outdoor fire pit marshmallow/smores roast and outdoor games! We can't wait to see you all!

Focus Detroit: THANK YOU NATIVITY FAMILY!! Through your generosity, back in August, we were able to pack 28 school backpacks for FOCUS Detroit!! The backpacks were filled with all the essential school supplies needed for 28 children for a successful school year!! In addition, we were able to give a \$280 donation to FOCUS Detroit! May our Lord continue to bless these children and our Nativity Parish! BRAVO!!

(St. Theophan from page 7)

God, and you will believe that not one evil deed remains unpunished. As a result you will firmly set yourself to cleansing all of your sins in a heartfelt way before God with brokenness and repentance. Thus, whatever property or action of God on which you reflect, that reflection will fill your soul with pious feelings and inclinations towards God. It will align all of your human substance towards God, and it is therefore the most direct means of teaching the soul to ascend to God. The most useful and comfortable time for this is morning, when the soul is not yet burdened with many worries and work issues. Specifically, the best time is after morning prayers. Finish your prayers, sit down, and with thoughts cleansed by prayer, begin to think now about one divine aspect, and tomorrow about another, and incline your soul to this aspect. "Come", says St. Dimitri of Rostov, "come, holy contemplation of God, and let us immerse ourselves in contemplation of the great works of God", and he passed mentally through the works of providence and creation, or the miracles of our Lord and Savior, or His sufferings, or something else, and warmed up his heart, and began to pour out his soul in prayer. Everyone can do the same. The work is small; one only needs desire and resolve, but the fruits are many.

Here are three means, other than the prayer rule, by which one can teach the soul to ascend prayerfully to God: first, dedicate some time in the morning to the contemplation of God; second, turn every action to the glory of God, and third, often turn to God with short prayers. When contemplation of God goes well in the morning, it leaves a deep inclination toward thinking about God. Thinking about God makes the soul carefully order all of its actions, interior and exterior, and turn them to the glory of God. At the same time, this sets up a state in the soul that it often will be moved by prayerful cries to God. These three: contemplation of God, doing all to the glory of God, and frequent short prayers are the most active weapons of mental prayer and prayer of the heart. Each of them raises the soul to God. He who decides to practice these quickly attains the habit of ascending to God in his heart. The labor put into these leads to the heights. The higher one ascends on a mountain, the freer and easier he breathes. Thus it is also here: the more one does these exercises, the higher his soul ascends, and the higher the soul ascends, the more freely prayer can act in it. Our soul by nature is the abode of the higher divine world. Our soul should always be in this world by thoughts and feelings of the heart. But the baggage of worldly thoughts and passions leads and pulls the soul down. These methods separate the soul little by little from the earth, and then completely pull it away. When they have completely pulled the soul from the earth, then the soul lives in its own region, and will happily live on high. Here in heart and mind, and later in actual substance it will be vouchsafed to be before the face of God in the choirs of the angels and the saints. May God grant this to all of you through his grace. Amen.

Troparion of St. Theophan

O guide of Orthodoxy, teacher of piety and purity, ascetic of Vysha, divinely wise and holy hierarch Theophan: By thy writings thou didst explain the Word of God, and hast shown the way to salvation unto all the faithful. Entreat Christ God, that our souls be saved.

This homily was reprinted from Monachos.net, a web site dedicated to the study of Orthodox Christianity through its patristic, monastic and liturgical heritage.

Our Unsung Heroes: An Interview with Costas Kassapis

by Irene Melabiotis



“Would you like a coffee?” Mr. Costas Kassapis asked me in Greek as he welcomed me into his home. When I hesitated, he added, “It’s Greek coffee.” I responded delightfully that I appreciated a cup with medium sugar. As he slipped into his kitchen to prepare our coffees, I took my seat at his dining room table and gazed at the pictures adorning Mr. Kassapis’s living room wall. Mr. Kassapis noticed my interest and invited me to view the pictures up close. After carefully placing our cups of Greek coffee on the dining room table, he walked over to where I was standing looking at the pictures, and began sharing details about some of the photos. As I marveled at the pictures and the stories they told, I was reminded of how much I enjoyed looking at older photographs of long-ago moments frozen in time. I took a seat back at the dining room table and sipped a bit of Greek coffee to gather my thoughts. I came to appreciate by the end of Mr. Kassapis’s interview that his story was an unforgettable one.

What part of Greece are you from?

Cyprus, Famagusta District, village of Ashia.

When did you come to America?

January 1955. My daughter, Irene, was 1 years old. After we came, my son was born and, then, Fay.

How did you come to America?

By ship. The Queen Elizabeth from England. We left Cyprus six days earlier because back then, it was the Queen Mary that went to Greece and it was winter time. We went to Venice, Italy, by ship and, afterwards, we took a train to France and from there we caught another ship and we went to London. We stayed in London for one week and then departed for the U.S. It took five days.

Do you remember your first impressions of America?

Everything was different. The buildings, everything, it was very exciting. It was something that we had never seen before. A friend of my uncle’s picked us up and put us on a train to Detroit.

Did you come to America with the thought that you would stay forever?

Nobody who came from Greece or Cyprus wanted to stay and live here forever. Everybody’s dream was to go back to their homes.

How many years did you originally plan to stay in America?

Five years. I stayed fourteen years. At the time, we were living in Highland Park. We got out just before the riots in 1967. We moved back to our home in Cyprus. My kids had freedom and felt safe there. They made friends and started school there. We planned someday to come back. And, then, in 1974, Turkey invaded our island. The soldiers entered our village, opened our door and pointed their guns at us.

You mean, this happened suddenly? As you were sitting in your home they came inside?

Yes, and I called the American Embassy the same day, before they occupied the town—and we were told, “Stay home.” So we stayed home. By the time we heard, “The Turks are here,” there was a tank about fifty meters from our house. So we locked our doors inside, and, then, the army came. The Turks came into our home with their guns every day and each time, we would show our passports and they left us alone. For six days, we had nothing to eat. On the sixth day, two armed Turkish-Cypriots came and took my son. We never saw him again. The Turkish army then made us evacuate our home. They took my car and house keys and said, “This house is ours now.” They put us on a bus that took us to the non-Turkish occupied part of Cyprus. We left everything behind. I wanted to come



back to the U.S. right away, but my wife refused. She would say, “If we leave, we leave Andreas, too.” So, while we were in Cyprus, I decided to come to the United States by myself for one month. In 1975, I went to Washington, D.C., to Congress, and saw a lot of Senators, Congressmen, and State Department officials, to tell them the story of my son. So, then, I went back to Cyprus, and continued to communicate with the State Department, my Representatives. We stayed in Nicosia from 1974 to 1979. I rode my bike to the American Embassy twice a day to find out news of my son. They couldn’t force the Turks to give them information. The first time I saw a Councilman at the Embassy, he had no idea. I said, “I called [the Embassy] ten o’clock in the morning [the day of the invasion], and they told me to stay, stay home.” They knew I called but they covered it up. We came back in 1979. I continued to speak with Congressmen and Senators and the State Department. In 1983, I received help from Philip Christopher—he is the President of PSEKA, representing Cypriots around the world. He made my story more public and put me in contact with high officials in the Government. We prepared files with my son’s story and I would hand deliver them to any Senator, Congressman or other government officials that I would meet. A lot of promises from everyone but never anything concrete. In 1995, with the help of the Cypriot lobby, I was able to hand deliver a letter to George Stephanopoulos. I talked to him for a few minutes and he told me, “Mr. Clinton, he knows. He cares about your son, and we’ll try our best to find out what happened.” With the help of some Senators, Representatives, the Cypriot lobby and the State Department a Bill was passed to account for the fate of the missing Americans in Cyprus. In 1995, President Clinton signed it into law. A team of government officials was sent to Cyprus to search for my boy. In 1998, we received the unfortunate news. My son was brutally executed within six hours of his abduction. The team came to our home in March of 1998 to deliver the news. A series of DNA tests were completed to confirm the results. In May of 1998, [the Cypriot lobby] called me to go to Washington, D.C. I went with my daughter, Irene. Archbishop Spyridon did a Trisagion for my son on Capitol Hill. My son’s funeral was on June 20, 1998, at our beloved Church, Nativity of the Virgin Mary. Thomas Miller from the State Department and the Ambassador of Greece both attended and spoke at the funeral. Mr. Miller handed me an envelope with a letter from President Clinton. And of course the media was there to write our story. Even afterwards, there were interviews. My son was the first missing American found in Cyprus. It was tough. Believe me. God helps us get through it all. We all suffered, especially my wife. At times I would find her in our room crying. One time I said to her, “Look, think about your daughters and your grandchildren. They still need you.” She found solace in writing her poems and stories. Eleni was a very good writer. I was a lucky man to have married her. Sixty-seven years together. Despite her pain and sorrow, she always had a smile on her face.

So, where they found your son, did they find others?

No. They found his remains about a half a mile outside of our village. They killed him in a field and threw him away. My biggest complaint was the American Embassy. They knew that we were there, because I called them the same day, ten o’clock in the morning. At one o’clock the Turks were already in my town. They knew we were there, because we registered every year. Because when you’re an American citizen and you leave this country, you go and register. They knew and did nothing. They could have

prevented this from happening. Before we left the island, I went to the American Embassy, again, to say, “How about my properties, my position, and everything else?” You know what they told me? “If they solve the problem in Cyprus, you’re gonna get it back.” I said, “Now, I go back to America broke. And you’re telling me I’m going to wait?” You see, at that time Kissinger, the Secretary of State, was the one who indirectly helped Turkey invade the island. The policy of the United States was with Turkey, not the Greeks.

How come they let Turkey invade Cyprus?

Cyprus at the time was independent. Because of its strategic location the U.S. wanted a base there. In 1960, Cyprus gained its independence and England, Greece and Turkey became Guarantor powers. If the integrity of Cyprus was violated these countries had the right to invade to maintain the status quo. In 1974, there was a coup to overthrow the Cyprus Government. This allowed the Turks to make their move and invade the island. We suffered too much. For twenty-four years I would go to Washington twice a year to plead our case.

So how does it work? You go there and you book an appointment, or do you go and stand outside and you wait to speak to someone?

Everything was by appointment. There were appointments before. And when I was there, any place I was going, the Cyprus embassy had a car for me and would go to the meetings with State Representatives, Senators, and State Department officials.

What is your fondest childhood memory of Greece?

I was one of seven siblings. In those years, you know, the first son had to stay with the father to do his job and help to raise the family. So he didn’t send me to high school. My other brothers, they went to school. Everybody got a good education, good jobs. I asked my dad to send me to some kind of training and he said, “Who is going to help me?” So I stayed with him. We grew vegetables twice a year. We used to take them to Nicosia and sell them. I raised the family otherwise. So after I got married, I stopped helping my dad. I was looking for a job in construction, you know, so it was no life. I applied to the American embassy to come to America. My uncle, my father’s brother who lived in Michigan, sponsored us. Within three months, they sent me three visas: for me, my wife, and my daughter.

Do you remember any happy memories growing up?

My young life was not so good, working with my dad, even on Sundays. So I didn’t have a good life when I was young. When I was older, my friends and I would go to a bar once a week just to get out. We didn’t know anything else, and we were happy. It was the life down there. A lot of my friends were educated. I was not jealous, but they had a better life and I didn’t have a life growing vegetables.

What career did you have in America?

We suffered over here the first three years. No language, no trade. I went to school for one day to learn the language, the first year when I came over here. And, then, I found a job for two dollars more and I left. So what I speak now I learned from the people. I never went to school. I can write a bit. I can read. My uncle took me to his restaurant in 1958, and I was in charge in the afternoon—it was near the Greek Town Casino, across from the police headquarters. So I learned my language from there. Most of the customers were doctors, police officers, and they helped me a lot. [When we first came], I washed dishes for two years. Ten hours a day, six days a week, \$35 a week. That’s what they used to pay. I was paying \$70 a month for rent. It was no life. But after that, I said, “Gus, you’re not going to go back now. You better try to learn.” So I tried to learn how to cook and how to be a waiter. So I went higher. My last job was at the Rooster-tail. It was a club in Detroit with movie stars from Hollywood—like Frank Sinatra, all those. That was my best job. I was a waiter at the time. We returned to Cyprus in 1967, and when I came back in 1979, I was working for my cousins. My cousins are the owners of the Ram’s Horn restaurants. They’re my first cousins. We opened up one of them on 6 mile and Telegraph. I was running that place. I was a part-owner. I stayed six or seven years there. I retired in 1986.

Have you been involved in a hobby since 1986?

My hobby was the church on Sunday. In the old church, we were one big family.

How long were you married for?

[We got married] November 2nd, 1952. My wife passed away almost three years ago. I was with my wife 67 years.

How many children and grandchildren do you have?

I have two daughters and four grandkids—two of each, boy and girl. Glory to God, I have good kids. I gave them an education at home. And my grandkids, they have finished university. They have great jobs. I am very happy. But, something is missing: my son and my wife.

How long have you been coming to Nativity?

[Since] 1979.

What did you like about Nativity?

Actually, you know what I liked? Panagia and you feel like it’s a family. It’s not a big church. The majority of the people are very friendly and talk to everybody. In our church, you feel like home. Before [we left for Cyprus in 1967], [St. Nicholas] was our church. In the beginning, when we returned from Cyprus [in 1979], for six months every month we used to go there. It was at 6 mile and 2nd Street. But then, Cleo and Andreas—he’s from Cyprus, too—we met them. Actually, I met Andreas many, many years ago, but after we came back I didn’t know where he was. He said, “Which church do you go to?” So I told him. He said, “There’s a church over here. Come with us.” So I went to Nativity and stuck there. I was cooking for the Senior Citizens Club for twenty years and, now, I quit last year. I’m still the President.

Have you ever held an office at Nativity and, if so, what and when?

No. They have told me many times [to be involved], but I have stayed away. Well, when you have to talk, this and that, and I don’t want to argue with anybody. So I stuck with the senior citizens.

How long have you been President of the Senior Citizens Club?

[Since] after Father Michael left [in 2003]. Father Michael was the president for the Senior Citizens Club. After he left, they put me. I still am.

What is your favorite memory of Nativity?

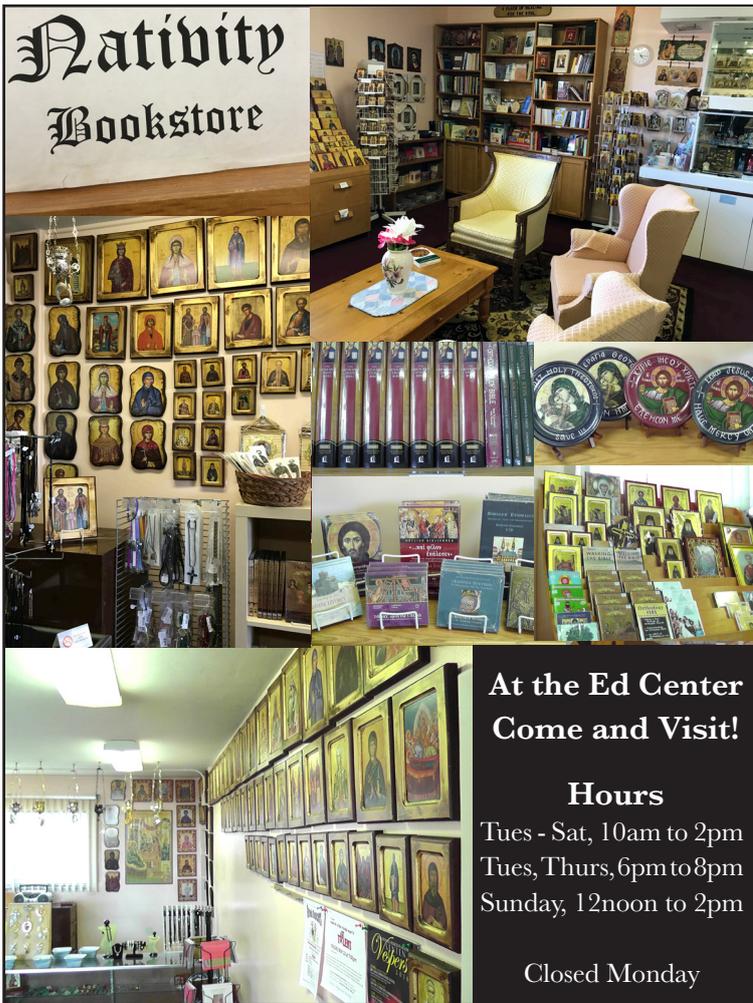
Every time we have the festival and we see our friends. Me and Andreas used to cut the meat for the shish kabob. We would cut pork tenderloin in pieces. Our job was to cut and marinate it. The secret is to marinate it. The next day, the priest would ask the people from the church to come put them on the skewer. So, during that, you see a lot of friends. You see a lot of people. The church makes money. And, also, every time I go to church I feel better. Now, after my wife passed away, sometimes I cannot go, but I miss church.

It’s so important to have people with passion and knowledge volunteer their expertise to help out in whatever way they can.

I like to help. I try to get along with everybody, you know, try my best.

Irene Melabiotis is a member of the Nativity Parish Council and teacher with our Three Heirarchs Greek School (a joint ministry with our sister parish Sts. Constantine and Helen). With Father Nick’s blessing, she will be interviewing past and present members of our parish to share their stories, record their history, and honor their experiences and sacrifices made to begin life anew in the United States of America.





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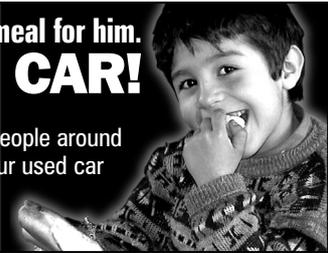
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(Fr. Nick from page 1)

we are tested. A man who has faith, is like all those who have prepared. Like those who strengthened their foundations to withstand the high winds. Strong faith requires much effort on our behalf. Studying the scriptures, learning about the faith of the Fathers can help us become strong followers of Christ. The person with strong faith is strengthened even more when the trials of life appear.

On Tuesday mornings, we do the Daily Reading which follows the Lectionary of the Church. It is a guide for those who wish to follow the Church calendar throughout the year. As we know the date of Pascha changes yearly, and the Lectionary reflects it. It is but a beginning to your own daily Bible reading.

The Orthodox Faith class will be discussing in further detail Orthodox Traditions (and traditions with a small "t"), iconography, scripture, spirituality, etc. This month, on October 5th we will be discussing through the touring of the Church our Faith and how it points to God and His existence.

I look forward to seeing you in these studies.

May the Lord open our minds and hearts to His mysterious ways,

Fr. Nick

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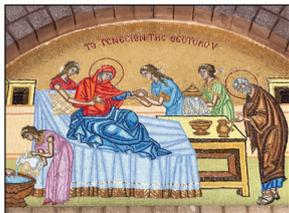
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To creatively communicate and report parish news, services, sacraments, and ministry events to all Nativity faithful; to advance the understanding of our Orthodox Faith and sacramental life while recording the history of our parish; to promote stewardship,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

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