



THE LOGOS

Nativity of The Virgin Mary

June 2017, Volume 1, No. 4

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Spring General Assembly
May 7th

The Mission of the Church

“And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, ‘which,’ He said, ‘you have heard from Me; for John amen baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’” Acts 1:4-5



The last words our Lord spoke to His disciples before His Ascension, promised the Holy Spirit would come upon them charging them that they would be witness of Him, not just in Jerusalem, but in all the world. The disciples had been prepared to go out into the world as His ambassadors preaching the “Good News”. The Holy Spirit came upon them bringing the Gifts of Love, Mercy, and Forgiveness. This was their weapon and strength to change the whole world starting with the Roman Empire.

From that time, until the conversion of Constantine, the Church that is established was related to all aspects of life: culture, education, family, and all

society. The church was not separate from life itself, but was the purpose for each man, woman, and child. It was, and is, the Faith for all men, for all countries, and for all cultures. If this is it true, then what St. John Chrysostom stated in the 4th Century holds true as well; the parish is not the universe, but “the universe is my parish”. The Great Commission to mission to all the world, confirms St. John’s words.

To mission the world means to look beyond the walls of our community. Our mission is not just to simply convert people who come to discover Orthodoxy in our parish of the Nativity. It is to reach out as individuals living in prayer, standing before God as His children living in the experience of “Heaven on Earth”. We must live the faith in thought, word and deed not just at church but in our everyday life. The foundation of our Christian belief needs to move with us no matter where we walk in life. In the Creed it states: “...One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.” Apostolic means

(Continued on page 9)

Visit our Website:

www.nativitygochurch.org

For announcements, monthly calendar, photos and more!

Veterans Memorial

John Pappas brings his War Memorial Exhibit to Nativity

See photos on PAGE 7

First Look: New Festival Ad!

For the Detroit Free Press

See Page 15



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

Commentary on “The Letter”

It was exactly one week after Pascha, Sunday April 23rd, when I received “the letter” via email from the previous board of auditors. It was an unauthorized mailing, sent on what appeared to be Nativity letter head, under the guise of being official. Maybe you received it, maybe you didn’t, regardless it was an unfortunate and illegitimate attempt to incite suspicion against the parish council, Father Nick, and myself being parish council president. The content of the letter was such that legal council advised possible defamation of character under the law, but what Christian good would going to court over this incident accomplish?

The real question is, why do incidents like this happen at all in God’s Church? Why, when things are obviously going well in our community does activity take root that causes division and hinders progress in Christ? Certainly our community has made progress in the last decade and is poised for even more growth. We have completed countless renovation and maintenance projects in recent years culminating in the roof replacement project last month, which highlighted the collective generosity of our parishioners as we quickly raised the \$55,000 needed. Yet, we still have much more to accomplish as strategic plans for the future are envisioned and action items are prioritized and completed by the parish council. Therefore, unity is needed more than ever as we proceed.

The truth is, “the letter” had no business reaching the eyes and hearts of the faithful Christians in this community, and it was upsetting and disheartening that the previous audit board so recklessly mailed it out. It left many parishioners confused and scratching their heads upon reading it, but equally as many people were offended by the letter’s indecent tone. Among those are parishioners Ari Papadakos, Dragan and Cleanthe Milojevic, and past council president Thek-

la Szlinis, who wanted it known that they wholeheartedly support the current parish council and Father Nick.

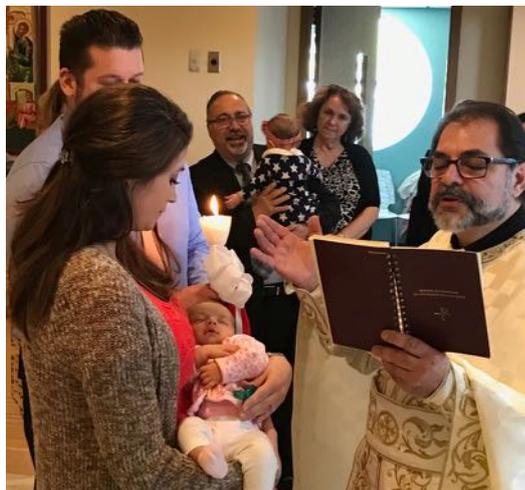
Following the realization that the letter had been sent to most parishioners, the parish council convened an emergency meeting and unanimously decided to relieve the board of auditors of it’s duties. A letter was drafted and sent to everyone informing of this decision and within a matter of days, a new audit board was selected consisting of Ari Papadakos, Larry Stassinis, and Ted Boloven, CPA. They completed the official audit and presented it to the spring general assembly last month, to the glory of God. Please read it on the following page.

Consequently, days after “the letter” was sent out, one of the two remaining auditors at the time resigned from the audit board, apologizing profusely and regretting his involvement altogether. He acknowledged he was wrong and asked forgiveness for believing that anything good could come out of sending such a letter to our community. Sadly though, some damage was already done, as evidenced by an anonymous parishioner who withdrew previously pledged funds after reading the letter. Further, who knows if any others may have lost a little faith or found reason not to come to church as a result of reading it, but hopefully this is not the case.

I pray that any further “collateral damage” possibly resulting from this incident is curbed by our Lord through the intercessions of the Theotokos, and that in peace we continue to move forward in personal and collective growth in Christ, unto the salvation of our souls.

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy,
 Lord have mercy.

*Email the editor, Louis Poulos at
 nativitymvoice@gmail.com*



Congratulations to Greg and Chelsey Georvassilis on the 40 Day Blessing of their daughter Thalia Michelle Georvassilis.

Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church • Plymouth, Michigan
Board of Auditors • Financial Audit 2017

We have audited the financial statements of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church, which comprises the consolidated statement of financial position as of December 31, 2016, and the related consolidated statements of revenues, expenses and other changes in net assets. This is in accordance with Article 33 Section 2 of the Uniform Parish Regulations Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Parish Council Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Parish Council is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the official financial statements. This includes the design, implementation, preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the official financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in past Parish General Assembly meetings. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

In selecting the procedures to use for the audit we considered the Parish Council's preparation and fair presentation of the official financial statements to design audit procedures that are fair and appropriate for the circumstances. One of those considerations is that the Parish council members and others are volunteers who are giving freely of their time, talent, and treasure to manage the financial operations of the church.

Background and Procedure

A financial audit is typically performed once a year during a 2 to 3 hour meeting to analyze how the cash inflows, operating expenditures are recorded and the accuracy of data in the church's financial records. As has been its standard procedure for several years, the board randomly selected several months to review financial activity in depth.

Typically, the church's current treasurer and/or comptroller/bookkeeper is present during the audit and provides the board with access to the church's financial records, from which the board of auditors can review balance sheets, income statements, list of transactions and, if necessary, the QuickBooks accounting system. The board also has access to bank reconciliations and cash deposit records prepared during the year under audit.

Documents Inspected during the audit:

The following is a list of documents that were inspected:

1. Financial folders organized by month
2. Contents of the Financial folders were for each month:
 - a. Profit and Loss Summary Detail
 - b. Balance Sheet Detail
 - c. Reconciliation Details for all Bank Accounts Managed by the Parish Council from QuickBooks
 - d. Banking Statements for all Bank Accounts Managed by the Parish Council
 - e. Checking Detail from QuickBook Receipts
3. Folders containing receipts for the Auction and the Festival
4. Binder containing the offering collection sheets by month

Opinion/Assessment

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred above present fairly the financial position of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church as of December 31, 2016.

It is also our opinion that the financial position of Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church as of March 2017, is in extremely strong shape.

The financial records were generally in good order. There are books containing the financial records on a monthly basis. The months that were audited in detail were January, June, December of 2016 and February, July, August of 2015. Additionally, the Festival 2016 folder was

inspected and the month of March 2017 was inspected to review the current financial position of the Church.

Each book contains a Profit and Loss Report, Balance Sheet Report, Reconciliation Detail with Bank Statements, and Check Detail with Receipts. There are also separate books with receipts for the Auction and Festival.

There is a separate offerings book which has records of the funds that are offered to the Church for deposit recorded by date and sectioned by month.

Recommended Actions:

Although the Parish Council is responsible for the design and implementation of the finances the Board of Auditors offers the following recommended actions:

1. Create a deposit form for the weekly and monthly deposits that are done electronically to be put into the offerings binder.
2. Document the procedure on how the offerings are counted and deposited. This should include who should be handling and counting the offerings (especially cash), how should it be stored (perhaps a safe), and who should deposit it.
3. The Board of Auditors plans to inspect the financial statements of the church at a more frequent cadence, for example, every 3 months or at the Boards discretion with some notice. This will help keep the audit schedule prescribed by the by-laws, increase transparency and accountability.
4. Include the payroll receipt report in the monthly folders.
5. Include the receipts for Fundraising in the monthly folders with the checking detail instead of only in its own folder.
6. It is recommended to reduce the detail of the Fixed Assets of the church to make it easier to manage.

Other Matters

The quotes for the roof were also inspected. There were 4 quotes in total. The contract and work detail for the chosen quote was reviewed by legal counsel and the original architect of the church. The auditors found that the selection of the chosen firm was reasonable, was based on a competitive quote, references to similar projects, and based on the quote that had the best level of detail describing the work to be performed.

The detailed Festival report for 2016 and 2015 was reviewed.

The financial report that will be presented on May 6th, 2017 to the General Assembly was reviewed.

In 2016 all checks inspected had two signatures. There was one check (#16903) found in February 2015 with only one signature.

There was no deposit paperwork for a Special donation that was for the Carpet although it was properly recorded in Quickbooks financial software used by the church and reconciled with the bank statements.

There was a August 14, 2015 withdrawal slip that only had one signature. The withdrawal was for three separate cashier's checks to the Real Estate agents and Landlord as part of the Priest's housing allowance.

In general, with these few exceptions mentioned above, the record keeping was found to be exceptionally detailed and thorough. There appear to be reasonable controls, along with evidence of such controls that was easy to find in the monthly folders. The Treasurer and Comptroller/Bookkeeper were able to quickly provide other detail upon request and were willing to spend as much time as needed with the Audit committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Ari Papadakos
Larry Stassinou
Ted Boloven, CPA

Parish News Reel

- Our 13th Annual Taste of Greece Festival Sponsorship Forms are now available! Save the dates - August 25, 26, 27.
- Sponsor a 12"x18" sign for the festival to be hung under the main tent! For individuals, families, or your business. Sign up sheets available in the church office
- The festival committee is requesting donations of canned coke, sprite and bottled water for this years festival. Last year an anonymous donor gave \$400 that helped to purchase these items.
- Nativity Dancers will be holding a registration party with pizza and dancing on Tuesday June 6th, see page 11 for more details.
- The Three Hierarchs Greek School will host their graduation program at St. Cons on Thursday, June 8th at 6pm in their Hellenic Cultural Center.
- Sunday Church School will be hosting their graduation ceremony and picnic following liturgy on Sun., June 11th.
- Thank you to John Pappas for show-

casing his amazing Veterans War Memorial Exhibit on May 28th.

- Nativity Men's Club met for dinner at Karl's Cabin on May 10th. With 20 men in attendance, they enjoyed fellowship, food, and elected an executive board.
- Congratulations to Georgia Theophelis the new Philoptochos president, and to all the new board members!
- HAVE NEWS YOU WANT TO SHARE? Submit your family news, celebratory events, congratulations, awards, or life moments you wish to share to nativityvmvoice@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.

FINANCE CENTER as of May 1st, 2017

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

Parish Offerings*

March: \$35,401
YTD: \$119,582

Stewardship

Pledged: \$187,328
Pledges: 154
Families 261
Members: 538

Roof Project

Pledged: \$55,000
Recieved: \$57,315

Mortgage (4% APR)

Paid Monthly: \$1557
(\$1057 + \$500 principal)
Balance: \$113,228.51

*updated to include candle offerings

THE APOSTLES FAST By GOARCH.ORG

The Lenten season in honor of the 12 Apostles is a bit confusing at times for it is a "flexible season" in that it always ends on a fixed date (that being June 29) but begins on the Monday that follows All Saints Day, which is a movable date each year based on the date of Easter. When Easter is normally in mid to late April, the Apostles Lent is only a few days in length. When Easter is in early April, as with this year, then the Apostles Lent is longer. This year it begins on Monday June 12 and runs till June 29. (When Easter is late, there is no Apostles Lent at all.)

The faithful are urged to observe the usual food abstinence, expanded prayer and alms giving guideline as with the other fasting seasons of the year. The Apostles Lent takes the flavor of the first part of the Christmas Advent Lenten season (Nov 15-Dec 12) in that weddings are permitted. The guideline on restricted food is the "lighter" fasting in that only Wednesdays and Fridays are held as strict fast days and the observance of the Nativity of John the Baptist (June 24) is always a light fast (fish is permitted) no matter what day it falls on.

Let us rejoice in the ministry of these 12 great men that began the spread of Christianity to the far corners of the earth. Let us remember their sacrifice by our own sacrifice and discipline during the preparatory days ahead in which we are called upon to focus on their commitment and devotion to the Lord's commandments.

"If from one burning lamp someone lights another, then another from that one, and so on in succession, he has light continuously. In the same way, through the Apostles ordaining their successors, and these successors ordaining others, and so on, the grace of the Holy Spirit is handed down through all generations and enlightens all who obey their shepherds and teachers."

St. Gregory Palamas, "On how the Holy Spirit was manifested and shared out at Pentecost"

Ἀπολυτίκιον τῆς Πεντηκοστῆς

Ἦχος πλ. δ'

Εὐλόγητός εἶ, Χριστὲ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν,
ὁ πανσόφους τοὺς ἀλιεῖς ἀναδείξας,
καταπέμψας αὐτοῖς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον,
καὶ δι' αὐτῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην σαγηνεύσας,
φιλόανθρωπε, δόξα σοι.

Apolytikion of Pentecost

Mode pl. 4

Blessed are You, O Christ our God. You made the fishermen all-wise, by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them You drew the world into Your net. O Lover of mankind, glory to You.

THE LOGOS †

Nativity of The Virgin Mary

Next Deadline: June 15

Please submit all schedules, events, information and photos by **June 15, 2017**

for July 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 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
Ψαλμός ΕΒ’(62)

‘Ο Θεός ὁ Θεός μου, πρὸς σὲ ὀρθρίζω. Ἐδίψησέ σε ἡ ψυχὴ μου, ποσσαπλῶς σοῆ σὰρξ μου, ἐν γῆ ἐρήμῳ καὶ ἀβάτῳ καὶ ἀνύδρῳ. Οὕτως ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ ὥφθην σοὶ τοῦ ἰδεῖν τὴν δύναμίν σου καὶ τὴν δόξαν σου. ‘Οτι κρείσσον τὸ ἔλεός σου ὑπὲρ ζώας· τὰ χεῖλη μου ἐπαινέσουσί σε. Οὕτως εὐλογήσω σε ἐν τῇ ζωῆ μου, καὶ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ἄρῳ τὰς χεῖράς μου. ‘Ως ἐκ στέατος καὶ πύοτος ἐμπλησθεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου, καὶ χεῖλη ἀγαλλιάσεως αἰνέσει τὸ στόμα μου. Εἰ ἐμνημόνευόν σου ἐπὶ τῆς στρωμνῆς μου, ἐν τοῖς ὄρθροις ἐμελέτων εἰς σέ· ὅτι ἐγενήθης βοηθός μου, καὶ ἐν τῇ σκέπῃ τῶν πτερόγων σου ἀγαλλιάσομαι. Ἐκολλήθη ἡ ψυχὴ μου ὀπίσω σου, ἐμοῦ δὲ ἀντελάβετο ἡ δεξιὰ σου. Αὐτοὶ δὲ εἰς μάτην ἐζήτησαν τὴν ψυχὴν μου, εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὰ κατώτατα τῆς γῆς· παραδοθήσονται εἰς χεῖρας ρομφαίας, μερίδες ἀλωπέκων ἔσονται. ‘Ο δὲ βασιλεὺς εὐφρανθήσεται ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ, ἐπαινεθήσεται πᾶς ὁ ὀμνῶν ἐν αὐτῷ, ὅτι ἐνεφράγη στόμα λαλούντων ἄδικα.

Ἐν τοῖς ὄρθροις ἐμελέτων εἰς σέ· ὅτι ἐγενήθης βοηθός μου, καὶ ἐν τῇ σκέπῃ τῶν πτερόγων σου ἀγαλλιάσομαι. Ἐκολλήθη ἡ ψυχὴ μου ὀπίσω σου, ἐμοῦ δὲ ἀντελάβετο ἡ δεξιὰ σου.

Δόξα Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι. Καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Δόξα σοὶ ὁ Θεός.

Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Δόξα σοὶ ὁ Θεός.

Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Ἀλληλοῦῖα. Δόξα σοὶ ὁ Θεός.

Κύριε, ἐλέησον. Κύριε, ἐλέησον. Κύριε, ἐλέησον.

Δόξα Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι. Καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

The Six Psalms of Orthros
Part 3 - Psalm 62(63)

O God, my God, I rise early to be with You; my soul thirsts for You. How often my flesh thirsts for You in a desolate, impassable, and waterless land. So in the holy place I appear before You, to see Your power and Your glory. Because Your mercy is better than life, my lips shall praise You. Thus I will bless You in my life; I will lift up my hands in Your name. May my soul be filled, as if with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall sing praise to You with lips filled with rejoicing. If I remembered You on my bed, I meditated on You at daybreak; for You are my helper, and in the shelter of Your wings I will greatly rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand takes hold of me. But they seek for my soul in vain; they shall go into the lowest parts of the earth. They shall be given over to the edge of the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes. But the king shall be glad in God; all who swear by Him shall be praised, for the mouth that speaks unrighteous things is stopped.

I meditated on You at daybreak. For You are my helper, and in the shelter of Your wings I will greatly rejoice. My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand takes hold of me.

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.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. Glory to You, O God.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

New King James Version (NKJV)

Wisdom of the Saints

“Just as a basic concern is to be careful of anything that might be harmful to our physical health, so our spiritual concern should watch out for anything that might harm our spiritual life and the work of faith and salvation. Therefore, carefully and attentively assess your inner impulses: are they from God or from the spirit of evil?”

St. John Maximovitch

“A small but always persistent discipline is a great force; for a soft drop falling persistently, hollows our hard rock.”

St. Issac the Syrian

“Do we have anything to endure? In this no one is lacking. Everyone’s arena of endurance is vast, and therefore our salvation is at hand. Endure everything to the end and you will be saved.”

St. Theophan the Recluse

“The Mother of God is so much closer to God than others who draw near to Him, that she is able to intercede more powerfully than any of them; and by this I mean not just human beings, but even all the ranks of angels”

St. Gregory Palamas

“Patience is a heavenly gift, a gift from the Heavenly Father... With patience, and love for your fellow men, you become a victor in life’s continual trials.”

St. Theophan the Recluse

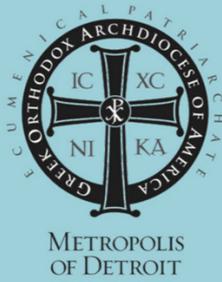
“Remembering a sin that we have committed does not mean that the sin has not been forgiven. The remembrance of our sins is only a warning to us lest we become proud and sin again. In fact, we - not God - are the ones who cannot forgive ourselves.”

Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica

**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 Loisides
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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VISIT GOMDSC.ORG TO REGISTER

Program for Young Adults [Entering Senior Year or College]

Week Zero June 25 – July 1, 2017

Programs for Youth Entering Grades 3-11

Week 1 July 2 – July 8, 2017

Week 4 July 23 – July 29, 2017

Week 2 July 9 – July 15, 2017

Week 5 July 30 – August 5, 2017

Week 3 July 16 – July 22, 2017

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

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Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit Summer Camp
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ΠΙΣΤΗ · ΦΙΛΙΑ · ΕΙΡΗΝΗ · ΑΓΑΠΗ



MINISTRY

CHURCH/FAMILY/WORK BALANCE

LITURGICAL SERVICE

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.



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!

SUNDAYS 4:00-5:00PM

690AM

WWW.DOORRADIO.ORG

Contributors, Sponsors and Advertisers are welcomed and needed! Contact us today (248 252-8184 or staff@doorradio.org)... *The DOOR is open and you invited to come in!*

Philoptochos News

Dear Parishioners and Fellow Philoptochos Members,

Our last meeting along with our elections was held on Monday May 1st, 2017 and was very successfully attended with over 35 ladies. Our new elected board and officer members are as follows:

- Georgia Theophelis - President
- Maria Dionyssopoulos - Vice President
- Vessa Fefopoulos - Treasurer
- Jennifer Adonakis - Corresponding Secretary
- Kathy Jeneras - Recording Secretary
- Theodora Bageris - Past President

- Patricia Christy, Patricia Karimalis,
- Effie Lucas, Presbytera Liza Marcus,
- Sofia Nichoff, Anna Petrou, Mary Takis,
- Magda Vlahakis, Sophia Vlahakis

Over the past two years Philoptochos has successfully funded:

- Replacement of the social hall carpet.
- Buffing of the parquet flooring in social hall.
- 18 national and metropolis annual obligations.
- Sponsor local family with monthly gas card (handicapped child)
- Breast cancer fund-raiser (Hot Diggidy Dog) donations send to local chapter Shades of Pink.
- Holiday adoptions; 2015 young women from Vista Maria, 2016, Focus Hope Families.

- Donated to both church festival and church auction.
- Brought Kohl's in to volunteer and raise money for altar boy robes and myrrh-bearers white robes.
- Brought Kohl's in to volunteer and raise money for Vista Maria.
- Organized and decorated church at Easter and Christmas.
- Decorated icons on major feast days and throughout Great Lent.
- Collected, prepared, and distributed Christmas card.
- Baked tsourekia and dyed Easter eggs for purchase and distribution after church services.
- Raised over \$3000 from Love Luncheon and Soup Sundays that the Philoptochos is eager to share with the church when the next phase of social hall improvements is finalized.

The executive board from 2015-2017 Philoptochos of the Virgin Mary would like to thank each and every person who has donated and helped make our term so fruitful.

We had a very successful 2017 Easter tsourekia baking season. As a farewell gesture the 2015-2017 executive board and Philoptochos ladies would like to donate the final amount needed to reach the church's goal to start roof repairs.

I congratulate the new board and am excited to work with them.

With Love in Christ,
Theodora Bageris

Veterans War Memorial Exhibit by John Pappas



Hope/Joy

We had another fun Family Night meeting on Friday May 19! We had yummy pizza and salad and awesome dessert! The kids made “stained glass” crosses to hang at home. They also planted flower seeds to take home and grow. Also, through the generous support of the Nativity Men’s Club, our boys will be getting new altar robes. The boys were measured for them by some of our loving yiaiyas of the parish. Our next meeting will be in September - see you then! Have a great summer!!

“The goal of the Christian life is the acquisition of the Holy Spirit! Prayer, fasting, vigils, alms-giving, are all simply ways of trying to receive the Holy Spirit in our lives. When the Spirit of God descends upon a person and overshadows him with the fullness of his outpouring ,then his soul overflows with a joy not to be described, for the Holy Spirit turns to joy whatever he touches.”

St Seraphim of Sarov

Project Mexico

Summer is almost here for many of us, and our missionary team is leaving in just a few short months for Mexico! We are so excited to depart on this amazing experience, and help change the lives of those who need a new beginning.

We would love your help through financial and spiritual needs in order for this mission to be possible for all 10 of us! Checks can be made out to ‘Nativity of the Virgin Mary’ with ‘Project Mexico’ in the subject line. We also have a gold donation box set up in the Narthex for anyone who would like to give cash donations.

Thank you all for helping make this mission possible.

Elaine Hamilton
Director of Missionary Work

GOYA News

First, we would like to congratulate Nicholas Zervos and Alexander Davis on graduating from High School! We wish them all the best!

1. Pool Party/Bonfire Chat: On Friday, June 9th we will be having a speaker: our great friend Thomas Dalton, who will speak to us about “Social Media”. He is awesome and you have got to hear what he is going to be talking about! This will be a pool party and bonfire and hosted generously by the Hunsingers! (Specific details will be sent to parents)

2. CEDAR POINTE! We have a date for Cedar Pointe: Tuesday June 20th. We are getting a group rate and we will be spending the day. Please join us! Its always a great time! There will be a parent email with more details. If you have any other ideas or questions please let me or Fr. Nick know!

**At the Ed Center
 Come and Visit!**

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

Insights from Strategic Planning Retreat

As highlighted in the May issue of The Logos, the parish council held the first annual strategic planning meeting hosted by Mama Mia’s Italian Restaurant on Plymouth Road in Livonia.

Nearly 30 parish ministry leaders participated and more than 200 ideas were generated during the meeting which went from 9am to 2:00pm on Saturday, April 22. The ideas and responses broadly fall into the following categories:

1. Just Do It, maintenance related
2. Spiritual Growth
3. Community Outreach and Greek Culture
4. Growing the size of our physical footprint
5. Fund-raisers, governance and financials
6. Iconography, beautification and choir

The ideas generated during the planning meeting are in the process of being matched into these 6 broad categories by a committee of parish council members. Initially, these ideas will be further discussed by the parish council, and in time will be used to generate the strategic plan for our parish.

Pete Tsaprazis
Parish Council

(Fr. Nick from page 1)

to speak and act in the missionary nature of the Church, not just the Priests and Hierarchy, but also of all those in her community.

Archbishop Iakovos, of blessed memory, once stated at the Clergy Laity, when it was in Detroit in the late 1970s, that our churches have become country clubs, only concerned with what is between their church walls. Fr. Luke Veronis, who currently serves as the Director for the Missions Institute of Orthodoxy Christianity, which is located at Holy Cross at our seminary, has some of the same feelings:

“...One of the most common, yet subtle, dangers – I may even say heresies – that has plagued the people of God from the time of ancient Israel until today, is the illness of parochialism in its individual and communal forms. This limiting of God’s universal vision begins when individuals allows their tiny ego to replace Almighty God in the center of their heart.

...Instead of a world-view where God the Creator is at the center, a view where all creation points to God and gives Him glory, slowly the ego – whether the individual ego: I, me, my, mine; or the communal ego: my people, my parish, my language, my culture – gradually takes over and this self-centered mentality distorts an authentic Orthodox world-view.

...Our Church Fathers represented a truly ecumenical, universal and missionary spirit that we need to practice today. Why is it that so many of our local churches, and even our national leaders too often lack a vibrant worldwide vision and outreach? Why are we, as individuals, so weak in cultivating this universal spirit in our own spiritual journeys?

The answer is simple, because it is a problem that has plagued humanity since Adam and Eve. The ego. Our little ego continually limits our world-view, poisoning not only our perception of self, but corrupting our understanding of the Church and the world around us. Our spiritual journey becomes a self-centered pursuit for individual happiness, comfort, pleasure, and self-fulfillment – ideas completely foreign to the theology of the Great Fathers.

Even many of today’s Churches reject the universal vision and become nothing more than proud, closed, social clubs.... Even if we are spending all our money on something good – like catechetical work, youth ministry, and beautification of a Church, we still have to ask ourselves, what percent of the Church’s money and time goes outside her own people?

...What a terrible distortion of God’s vision when a community focuses only on its own! Archbishop Anastasios of Albania says, ‘The opposite of love is often called hatred. But its real name is egoism. This is the denial of the Triune God who is a koinonia of love. Christian life means continual assimilation of the mystery of the cross in the fight against individual and communal selfishness.’”

Fr Luke and his family have served as missionaries in Albania and East Africa and yearly send over 25 participants to Project Mexico from his parish.

He further states: “...Some even think the whole idea of mission is just downright wrong... Unfortunately, such small-mindedness abounds in our Church. These people cannot see that

the Church in Albania is connected to the Church in America. We are one Church with the mission churches in Africa, in Indonesia, in Mexico, because we all are part of the ‘One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.’ We can never view it as ‘us and them.’

...Please understand, in order to be faithful Orthodox Christians, each of us should be asking ourselves, ‘How am I helping to fulfill God’s universal vision?’ When we hear about someone interesting in becoming a missionary, are we saying, ‘Why are you going to Albania, or Africa, or elsewhere?’ When we should be saying, ‘Great! You can be our representative there. We will be behind you, with our prayers, with our finances, with our encouragement! Godspeed!’

Are we thinking, ‘You should stay here because there are many needs in this country,’ instead of responding, ‘That’s great that you are going over there and will be a witness of God’s love. You go there, and I’ll stay in this country and offer my witness of God’s love to all the people here. TOGETHER we’ll make a great team!’

‘My parish is my universe?’ Or “The universe is my parish!’

Archbishop Anastasios of Albania has said, ‘The spirit of apostleship is indelibly wrought in the very nature of the Church and should be lived in every age... Mission is part of the Church’s genetic material, a fixed element in her DNA.’

‘The parish is my universe?’ Hopefully this will be the attitude of fewer and fewer Orthodox parishes. ‘The universe is my parish!’ This is our calling, and I pray that many of our Orthodox communities and individual Christians will make this their vision and fulfill this calling!”

Now, as a parish, we have an opportunity to continue our Lord’s vision. We are preparing to send out 10 of our own parishioners to Project Mexico. Even if you are not going, you can help support the team with your prayers, with financing and with encouragement! What a blessing this is for our people and our parish! As we prepare to celebrate Pentecost, let us live as witnesses of Christ not only here in our beautiful parish, “...and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Blessed Pentecost to all,
Fr. Nick Marcus





The Apostles Fast

By Williams Smith



Orthodox Christians observe four fasting seasons during the year. Two of these are: “The Great Fast” for forty days, and the “Dormition Fast”, for the falling asleep of the Virgin Mary during the first fifteen days of August which are considered strict fasts. The other two are generally observed as lesser fasts: the “Nativity Fast” during the forty days before the Feast of the Nativity, and the “Apostles Fast” which occurs in June.

The Fast of the Apostles is probably the least well known, but is among the oldest of Orthodox Christian traditions. The fast begins on the day after the observance of All Saints Sunday, which falls one week after Pentecost. The fast ends with the observance of the Feast of St.s Peter and Paul, which is held on June 29. In earliest practice however, the fast was probably not connected with the Feast of Peter and Paul. Rather, it was a time for fasting after the celebration of Pentecost and/or all Saints. Apparently different traditions prescribed different lengths of the fast- whether for one week, several weeks, or even only one day. Today, the fast still has a variable length because of its connection to the date of Pentecost, and therefore of All Saints.

The date of Pentecost varies with the date of Holy Pascha falling fifty days after Pascha. Therefore, the date of the Sunday of All Saints varies accordingly. This means that the length of the Fast of the Apostles also varies each year. For those churches which follow the Old Calendar, the Fast can be very long up to 42 days or very short, 8 days depending upon when Holy Pascha falls. For Orthodox churches which use the New Calendar, there are some years in which there is no Apostles Fast at all. There are different traditions regarding how strictly to follow the Fast. In most Orthodox traditions, the fast is not as strict as that during Great Lent. Fish, wine and oil are permitted on all days except Wednesday and Friday, which are strict fast days throughout the year. In other traditions, fish, wine and oil are permitted only on Saturdays and Sundays during the fast.

The Apostles Fast ends on June 29th which we commemorate St Peter and Paul who were two Apostles chief in rank and labors, the Church impresses upon us that its head is Jesus Christ alone, and all the Apostles are His servants (Col 1:18). Although certain Apostles are distinguished in Scripture and tradition, for example John, James, and Peter, none are considered superior

in honor to the rest (First among equals).

In Acts of the Apostles, the labors of the Apostles Peter and Paul are most told about. The Church and the Holy Fathers always honor the name of each of these Apostles as being first among them. Peter was one of three disciples to witness the Lords divine glory on Mt Tabor. Also, His divine power at the resurrection of Jairus’s daughter (Mk. 5:37). His humiliation according to human nature by falling asleep in Garden of Gethsemane as well. Peter washed away his denial of Christ with bitter tears of repentance; he was the first of the Apostles to enter the Savior’s tomb after His resurrection. The Apostle Peter was a preacher, the strength of his word was so great that he converted many people to Christ. The Apostle Peter made five journeys, preaching the Gospels and converting many to the Lord. He finished his final journey in Rome, where he preached the faith of Christ. In Rome, the Apostle Peter rebuked the deceit of Simon the magician, who was calling himself Christ. At Nero’s command, the Apostle was crucified between the years of 64 - 67 AD. His feast is celebrated on June 29th.

St Paul was educated in the Judaic Law, he traveled continually in various countries in order to preach the Gospels to the Jews, and especially to the pagans. These travels were accompanied by amazing miracles, tireless labor, and a very holy life. The Apostle Paul endured countless sorrows for his labors. He was martyred in Rome in the year 65 AD around the same time as the Apostle Peter’s death. As a Roman citizen, he was beheaded by the sword. He is also remembered on June 29th.

At the end of the Fast we celebrate Peter and Paul together. The Church glorifies Peter’s steadfastness and Paul’s wisdom, and sees in them an image of ones who sinned and corrected themselves with Gods help. The Apostle Peter as one who denied the Lord three times and then repented and the Apostle Paul as one who resisted the teachings of the Christ and then was made to believe through his conversion on the road to Damascus.

The Fast of the Apostles is a commemoration upon the lives of the Holy Apostles. It reminds us of the Apostles as they followed the Christ. They too were weak, and doubting. The Apostles never seemed to fully understand. In their weakness we can relate to them. Then two crucial things happened to them. First was the Resurrection of Christ, the other, was the descent of the Holy Spirit. The Apostles saw Christ with their own eyes. Out of the Lord’s fulfillment and promise, they received power from on high, the Holy Spirit. The Apostles stood and preached in the temple and everywhere they went there were miracles. Sick and suffering souls received healing and illumination. The Apostles were successful beyond imagination, but they also suffered. The Holy Spirit was given to the Apostles to give them power so that they could convert the entire world, as is given to us to strengthen us as well.

During the Apostles Fast we should renew our commitment to Christ showing Him we are too His disciples. His disciples came to him, followed him and were taught by him. So too must we seek him out through prayer, obedience and following His commandments.

May our Lord through the prayers of His Holy Apostles save us all, Amen .



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Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Dancers



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 Please join John Peppes and Peggy Collias for a

GREEK DANCE WORKSHOP Sunday, June 4

- BIDDIES (grades K-2) (1pm-1:30pm)
- JUNIORS (grades 3-5) (1:30pm-2:00pm)
- INTERMEDIATES (grades 6-8) (2:00pm – 3:00 pm)
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Greek Dancers



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Greek Dance Practices

will take place

TUESDAYS

- June 6 Registration / Pizza/ Dance Party!**
- June 13, 20, 27**
- July 5 (WEDNESDAY)**
- July 11, 18, 25**
- August 1, 8, 15, 22**

- BIDDIES** (Grades K-2) 6:30-7:00 pm
- JUNIORS** (Grades 3-5) 7:00-7:30 pm
- INTERMEDIATES** (Grades 6-8) 7:30-8:15 pm
- SENIORS** (High School and College) 8:15-9:15 pm

★13th Annual



A TASTE OF GREECE

Cultural Festival 2017



Sponsorship Information

The WHO, WHAT and WHY:

Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church is a Christian Community of about 250 families of diverse backgrounds and cultures where Greek predominates. We believe every cultural heritage is unique and irreplaceable and wish to preserve ours by passing it on to our children and also sharing it with our community. By showcasing traditional Greek food, music, dance and the Orthodox Faith, our **Annual A Taste of Greece Cultural Festival** is a natural expression of our love for God, family and community.

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.

The WHERE and WHEN:

*Nativity of the Virgin Mary
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39851 Five Mile Road
Plymouth, Michigan 48170



Fri., Aug. 25th - 5:00 pm - 11 pm
Sat., Aug. 26th - noon - 11 pm
Sun., Aug. 27th - noon - 7 pm

RAIN OR SHINE: Under tent cover
ADMISSION: \$2.00 per person
Kids under 12 free
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www.nativityfest.org

The HOW: 2017 Sponsorship Levels

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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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