

**Christ is Risen ! Χριστος Ανεστη !
Truly the Lord is Risen ! Αληθως Ανεστη !**

"Let all mortal beings keep silent, and stand in fear and trembling, giving no thought to earthly things. For the King of kings, the Lord of lords, comes forth to be sacrificed, and given as food for the faithful. Before Him go the choirs of the angels, with all the principalities and powers, the many-eyed Cherubim and the six winged Seraphim, covering their faces as they sing the hymn: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia."

*(They hymn of the Great Entrance,
from the Liturgy of St. Basil on Holy Saturday morning)*

The holiest time of the year is upon us! We have preparing ourselves physically and spiritually for the Feast of Feasts, Holy PASCHA! What a blessing that the entire Christendom celebrates Pascha together this year (April 20th). These sacred days are given to us each year that we might put aside the cares of the world for a few short moments and enter into the great mystery of Christ's final days upon the earth, in the flesh. Our Holy Week begins with the raising of Lazarus from the tomb (April 12th) and the entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday). We stand in awe of the Lord's patience and obedience to the will of the Father. Shortly after the Mystical Supper where the Lord gave us the sacrament of His Kingdom, Christ is betrayed by one of His chosen disciples.

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church

Holy Week 2025– Schedule of Services

Lazarus Saturday – April 12

8:30 am – Orthros and Divine Liturgy

Followed by Palm Cross Making, Confessions, Church Cleaning

5:00 pm – Vespers of Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday – April 13

8:15 am – Orthros and Divine Liturgy

5:00 pm – Orthros of Great Monday (First Bridegroom Service)

Great and Holy Monday – April 14

9:00 am – Presanctified Liturgy

6:30 pm – Orthros of Great Tuesday (Second Bridegroom Service)

Great and Holy Tuesday – April 15

9:00 am – Presanctified Liturgy

6:30 pm – Orthros of Great Wednesday (Third Bridegroom Service)

Great and Holy Wednesday – April 16

9:00 am – Presanctified Liturgy

3:00 pm – Sacrament of Holy Unction (Ἱερόν Εὐχέλαιον)

6:30 pm – Orthros of Great Thursday (with second anointing)

Great and Holy Thursday – April 17

9:00 am – Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil (The Institution of the Eucharist)

6:30 pm – Orthros of Great Friday (Service of the Passion and Twelve Gospels)

10:00 pm – Vigil by the Cross, and GOYA making sandwiches for the homeless

Great and Holy Friday – April 18

9:00 am – Royal Hours

3:00 pm – Vespers (Taking down from the Cross/Ἀποκαθήλωσις)

6:15pm Trisagion by tomb

6:30 pm – Orthros of Great Saturday (With Praises at the Tomb of Christ (Ἐγκώμια), and Procession of the Epitaphios)

Great and Holy Saturday – April 19

9:00 am – Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil (“First Resurrection”)

10:00 pm – Nocturnes

10:30 pm – Receive the Light/Procession, Paschal Orthros/Divine Liturgy
AGAPE MEAL

Great and Holy Pascha – April 16

12:00 Noon – *Agape* Vespers (Reading of the Gospel in various languages)

We fervently request the entire Holy Cross parish family to share fully in the fasting, prayer, and liturgical observance of Holy Week and in the celebration of the Lord’s Resurrection on Pascha night.

No other parish activities will take place during Holy Week.

Please keep this schedule of services posted for easy reference.

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church

123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228

Crossroads, published monthly Volume 25 Issue 3

Under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and His Eminence Metropolitan SAVAS of Pittsburgh

The mission of Holy Cross is to keep and proclaim, pure and undefiled, the Orthodox Christian faith and traditions in conformity with the doctrine, canons, worship, discipline and customs of the Church.

Fr. Michael Kallaur, Presiding Priest

Fr. Daniel Korba, Presbyter

Dn. Frank Dickos, Deacon

Elias Diamond, Pastoral Assistant

Philip Yamalis, Cantor

Nena Jovonovich, Secretary

Website: holycrosspgh.org

Office (412) 833-3355 FAX (412) 833-3357

Community Center Phone:(412) 854-6001

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

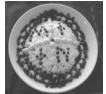
***Services:**

Sundays:	8:15am Orthros
	9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Mondays:	6:30pm Paraclesis
Wednesdays:	7 pm Bible Study and via Zoom
Weekdays:	8:30am Orthros
	9:30am Divine Liturgy
Saturdays:	Vespers 5pm

*See monthly calendar for all services.

Funeral/Memorial information:

For Kollyva, you may bring your own or contact Denise Melis directly (412) 341-9264.



Use of the Community Center is available for parishioner funeral lunches at no charge. Parishioners may contact any caterer they choose to purchase and prepare their **Makaria (Mercy Meal)**.

Church School	Elias Diamond	(412) 833-3355
Philoptochos Pres.	Thea Manos	(412) 600-8640
Phil. Membership	Adrienne Dickos	(412) 833-4980
Circle of Angels	Carol Halkias	(412) 276-5002
	Christine Peters	(724) 693-9290
	Dina Hartlep	(412) 720-9383
Landscaping	Frank Kalogeris	(412) 855-4155
	Rebekah Krakora	(412) 728-4842
Greek School	Dena Yamalis	(412) 343-8355
Junior Dance	Marina Bouzos	(412)-736-7455
Senior Dance	Rachel Facaros	(412) 323-6298
Choir		
First Steps	Sophia Alfarns-Melainis	(412) 251-3209
JOY	Elias Diamond	(412)413-7427
Young Adults	Elias Diamond	(412)413-7427
GOYA	Denise Melis	(412) 341-9264
Golden Club	Cynthia Kostelnik	(412) 833-9423
	Rene Koett	(412) 831-3142
Bookstore	Mary Portellos	(724) 941-8699
House Committee	Constance Zotis	(412) 736-7145
Building Comm.	Michael N. Zervos	(412) 833-6843
Sts. Mary & Martha	Adrienne Dickos	(412) 833-4980
Interior Design Committee	Laura Zervos	(412) 287-5679

Parish Council 2025

- President: Nicholas Ambeliotis
- Vice President: Rachel Kartofilis
- Fin. Secretary: Socrates Zacharias
- Treasurer: Anthony Cuneo
- Secretary: Stephen Yamalis
- Bryan Elderkin
- George Liadis
- Eleni Maneta
- Sophia Milinkovic
- Tom Mourtacos
- Jim Mustakas
- Jordan Nicholas
- Ted Sofis
- Sadie Stang
- Constance Zotis

Coffee Hour fellowship is an extension of our Divine Liturgy! Please gather with family, koumbari or friends to sponsor/prepare one Sunday. See the calendar on website for open dates, and call the church office to confirm.



The beatings, whippings, mockery of a crown of thorns, the trials, Pilate, then Herod, then Pilate again; all leading up to the Crucifixion. The great moment of forgiveness and the thief stealing paradise by his confession on the cross. Finally death, the burial, and the tomb. The Soul departs from the body and descends into Hades, destroying the power the devil. Read an account of Adam and Eve with the Risen Lord.

St. Epiphanius, Bishop of Cyprus wrote:

Something strange is happening. There is a great silence on earth today. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and He has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and Hell trembles with fear!

He has gone to search for our first parent, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, He has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, He who is both God and the Son of Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the Cross, the weapon that had won Him the victory. At the sight of Him Adam, the first man He had created, struck his breast in terror and cried out to everyone, "My Lord be with all of you." Christ answered him, "And with your spirit." He took him by the hand and raised him up saying, "Awake O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

"I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. Out of love for you and for your descendants I now by My own authority command all who are held in bondage to come forth, all who are in darkness to be enlightened, all who are sleeping to arise. I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in Hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the Life of the dead. Rise up, work of My hands, you who were created in My image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in Me and I am in you; together we form only one person and we cannot be separated.

For your sake I, your God, became your son; I the Lord,

took the form of a slave; I whose home is above the heavens, descended to the earth and beneath the earth. For your sake, for the sake of mankind, I became like man without help, free among the dead. For the sake of you, who left a garden, I was betrayed to the Jews in a garden, and I was crucified in a garden.

See on my face the spittle I received in order to restore to you the life I once breathed into you. See there the marks of the blows I received in order to refashion your warped nature in My image. On My back see the marks of the scourging I endured to remove the burden of sin that weighs upon your back. See My hands, nailed firmly to a tree, for you who once wickedly stretched out your hand to a tree.

I slept on the Cross and a sword pierced My side for you who slept in Paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side has healed the pain in yours. My sleep will rouse you from your sleep in Hell. The sword that pierced Me has sheathed the sword that was turned against you.

Rise let us leave this place. The enemy led you out of the earthly Paradise. I will not restore you to that Paradise, but I will enthrone you in Heaven. I forbade you the tree that was only a symbol of life, but see, I who am Life itself am now one with you. I appointed cherubim to guard you as slaves are guarded, but now I make them worship you as God. The throne formed by cherubim awaits you, its bearers swift and eager. The Bridal Chamber is adorned, the banquet is ready, the eternal dwelling places are prepared, the treasure houses of all good things lie open. The Kingdom of Heaven has been prepared for you from all eternity.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, as we approach these holy days let us hasten to the Church and heed these beautiful words. Christ has come to save us! Christ is with us! Christ is risen! Salvation is given to all who desire and seek it!!!
Christ is risen! CristoV Anesth!

With love in the Risen Lord,
Fr. Michael

Venerable John of Damascus

Commemorated on December 4



Saint John of Damascus was born about the year 680 at Damascus, Syria into a Christian family. His father, Sergius Mansur, was a treasurer at the court of the Caliph. John had also a foster brother, the orphaned child Cosmas (October 14), whom Sergius had taken into his own home. When the children were growing up, Sergius saw that they received a good education. At the Damascus slave market he ransomed the learned monk Cosmas of Calabria from captivity and entrusted to him the teaching of his children. The boys displayed uncommon ability and readily mastered their courses of the secular and spiritual sciences. After the death of his father, John occupied ministerial posts at court and became the city prefect.

In Constantinople at that time, the heresy of Iconoclasm had arisen and quickly spread, supported by the emperor Leo III the Isaurian (717-741). Rising up in defense of the Orthodox veneration of icons [Iconodoulia], Saint John wrote three treatises entitled, "Against Those who Revile the Holy Icons." The wise and God-inspired writings of Saint John enraged the emperor. But since the

author was not a Byzantine subject, the emperor was unable to lock him up in prison, or to execute him. The emperor then resorted to slander. A forged letter to the emperor was produced, supposedly from John, in which the Damascus official was supposed to have offered his help to Leo in conquering the Syrian capital.

This letter and another hypocritically flattering note were sent to the Saracen Caliph by Leo the Isaurian. The Caliph immediately ordered that Saint John be removed from his post, that his right hand be cut off, and that he be led through the city in chains.

That same evening, they returned the severed hand to Saint John. The saint pressed it to his wrist and prayed to the Most Holy Theotokos to heal him so that he could defend the Orthodox Faith and write once again in praise of the Most Pure Virgin and Her Son. After a time, he fell asleep before the icon of the Mother of God. He heard Her voice telling him that he had been healed, and commanding him to toil unceasingly with his restored hand. Upon awakening, he found that his hand had been attached to his arm once more. Only a small red mark around his wrist remained as a sign of the miracle.

Later, in thanksgiving for being healed, Saint John had a silver model of his hand attached to the icon, which became known as "Of the Three Hands." Some unlearned painters have given the Mother of God three hands instead of depicting the silver model of Saint John's hand. The Icon "Of the Three Hands" is commemorated on June 28 and July 12.

When he learned of the miracle, which demonstrated John's innocence, the Caliph asked his forgiveness and wanted to restore him to his former office, but the saint refused. He gave away his riches to the poor, and went to Jerusalem with his stepbrother and fellow-student, Cosmas. There he entered the monastery of Saint Savva the Sanctified as a simple novice.

It was not easy for him to find a spiritual guide, because all the monks were daunted by his great learning and by his former rank. Only one very experienced Elder, who had the skill to foster the spirit of obedience and humility in a student, would consent to do this. The Elder forbade John to do anything at all according to his own will. He also instructed him to offer to God all his labors and supplications as a perfect sacrifice, and to shed tears which would wash away the sins of his former life.

Once, he sent the novice to Damascus to sell baskets made at the monastery, and commanded him to sell them at a certain inflated price, far above their actual value. He undertook the long journey under the searing sun, dressed in rags. No one in the city recognized the former official of Damascus, for his appearance had been changed by prolonged fasting and ascetic labors. However, Saint John was recognized by his former house steward, who bought all the baskets at the asking price, showing compassion on him for his apparent poverty.

One of the monks happened to die, and his brother begged Saint John to compose something consoling for the burial service. Saint John refused for a long time, but out of pity he yielded to the petition of the grief-stricken monk, and wrote his renowned funeral troparia ("What earthly delight," "All human vanity," and others). For this disobedience the Elder banished him from his cell. John fell at his feet and asked to be forgiven, but the Elder remained unyielding. All the monks began to plead for him to allow John to return, but he refused. Then one of the monks asked the Elder to impose a penance on John, and to forgive him if he fulfilled it. The Elder said, "If John wishes to be forgiven, let him wash out all the chamber pots in the lavra, and clean the monastery latrines with his bare hands."

John rejoiced and eagerly ran to accomplish his shameful task. After a certain while, the Elder was commanded in a vision by the All-Pure and Most Holy Theotokos to allow Saint John to write again. When the Patriarch of Jerusalem heard of Saint John, he ordained him priest and made him a preacher at his cathedral. But Saint John soon returned to the Lavra of Saint Savva, where he spent the rest of his life writing spiritual books and church hymns. He left the monastery only to denounce the iconoclasts at the Constantinople Council of 754. They subjected him to imprisonment and torture, but he endured everything, and through the mercy of God he remained alive. He died in about the year 780, more than 100 years old.

Saint John of Damascus was a theologian and a zealous defender of Orthodoxy. His most important book is the Fount of Knowledge. The third section of this work, "On the Orthodox Faith," is a summary of Orthodox doctrine and a refutation of heresy. Since he was known as a hymnographer, we pray to Saint John for help in the study of church singing.

Saint Cosmas the Hymnographer, Bishop of Maiuma

Commemorated on October 12



Troparion & Kontakion

Saint Cosmas the Hymnographer, Bishop of Maiuma, was a native of Jerusalem. He was raised by the parents of Saint John of Damascus (December 4) together with their son, and he received a fine education. When Saint Cosmas came of age, he set out to one of the monasteries of Palestine, where he attained renown for his monastic exploits.

During a time of persecution against holy icons Saint Cosmas, and the venerable John, came forward to defend Orthodoxy. In the year 743 Cosmas was made Bishop of Maiuma. He died in old age, leaving behind many canons for feast days and a Triodion for four days of Holy Week.

In Slavic usage Saint Cosmas the Hymnographer is commemorated on October 12, but on October 14, according to Greek usage.

Sermon – Cheesefare Sunday March 2, 2025

It starts tomorrow! That, of course, refers to Great Lent, that beautiful time that the Church sets aside for preparation and anticipation of the glorious feast of feasts, the Resurrection of our Lord, and God, and Savior, Jesus Christ. And this day, Cheesefare Sunday, always seems to be a day of contrasts in the faces of the congregation. So it may come as no surprise that today's topic concerns those very differences which you have selected to wear in addition to your Sunday attire, the expressions of your countenances which declare how you view the upcoming season.

The first expression is one of surprise. What, lent already?! Actually, that is the one least likely to be present here. But there may be one or two who just didn't see it coming. And in all honesty, it's no ill reflection if it had escaped your attention. The most important aspects of the Christian life are timeless, they require no calendar. Seraphim of Sarov used to greet everyone with "Christ is Risen!" no matter what time of the year. So you could be forgiven for losing track of the liturgical calendar, besides all this, now that you are aware of it, you will immediately move on to one of the other countenances that are to follow.

Perhaps your face is one of indifference. Maybe lent for you is nothing special, not really different from any other time of the year. Certainly non-Christians feel this way, and indeed, many reformed Christians do as well. Even many Catholics, aside from deciding what do give up, or attending a fish fry in Fridays, don't look at lent any differently. What's the big deal? Jesus rose from the dead, the victory is already won. Why put ourselves through all this? And while it's certainly true that the battle is won, perhaps you should reconsider your indifference. Because even though the Lord has trampled down death by death, the same Lord said to us, "He who would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." If there was nothing left to do after the victory, why would He have said that? Was He lying? Of course not! But for us to participate in the victory, we need to become part of the struggle. Remember that God is calling us to become like Him. To do that, we must learn from His example, which was one of preparation, discipline, and dedication. Do indifferent athletes win Olympic medals? Certainly not. They are on fire, just as you should be. Few if any enjoy the training, but you can't enjoy the results without it. So shake yourselves out of complacency and join us. Spring training camp is about to begin.

Some may have faces of dread. That is understandable. This can be a grueling time of year. We have jobs and responsibilities, and we have barely enough time for those, how can we add the burden of lent to all

that? But to tell you from experience in the work force, there is no better way to unwind from a rough day than to attend the evening lenten services. For this is a time that calls for simplicity, and coming to compline, or pre-sanctified liturgy, or salutations, is a way to rediscover a simpler life, a quiet time to relieve the stress of the modern world. And fasting is also a way to simplify our lives by returning to a simple, healthy diet. We probably know a coworker who is vegetarian or vegan not for religious or even animal activist reasons, but simply because he feels healthier without all that meat or processed foods in his diet. Why should we dread something that makes us feel better? Yes, it can be hard at times, but without it, the world is even harder. So cast aside your fear, pluck up your courage and move on.

Then there are those who are visibly excited. That is easy to understand. It's a wonderful time of year and you are already braced for the contest. Good for you! Enter into this blessed season with fortitude, and your perseverance will bring you a special spiritual gift, a secret reward that the Lord will place in your soul because of your joyous struggle. Let no one despise your enthusiasm. It is a proper attitude which should dwell in the hearts of all Christians.

But there is one other countenance that is present, one which many feel in their heart this year and that is relief. There is a shelter to be found in Great Lent, and those who have experienced many years of it find comfort in its refuge. It is a time for struggle; yes, it is the time to simplify, to fast and pray and refocus ourselves on the Kingdom of Heaven, and this takes effort. But the Church has put structure around all of it, and in this routine we find a certain peace that escapes us at other times of the year. It's as though the whole world has become a monastery, and we are on an extended retreat. Everything else in our world is still there, it just feels as though everything is in focus, and as a result, somehow more relaxed even with the extra struggle.

But my brothers and sisters, regardless of whether our faces show surprise, indifference, dread, excitement, or relief, we should press on into this most holy season with courage and anticipation. Pascha may be joyous indeed, but lent has its own joys and rewards. If you have not yet experienced them, then you are cordially invited to join us in our journey this year. For it is not a journey into hardship and despair, but one of hope and triumph. And remember we do not struggle in vain; rather, we press on to behold the glorious light of the Resurrection of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory, now and forever. Amen.

~Fr. Frank Dickos

Saints Mary & Martha Women's Fellowship 2024-2025 God's Plan For Creation

Tuesday, April 29, 2025

Ecology and the Orthodox Church

Speaker: Elias Diamond

Hostess: Vasso Paliouras, 114 Hoodridge Dr Pgh 15228 RSVP 412-606-4314

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Created Matter and Worship. How the two go together.

Speaker: Fr. Michael Kallaur

Hostess: Pres. Eleni Kallaur, 3100 Eastview Road Bethel Park 15102

RSVP 412-443-5873

NOTES:

7pm Fellowship/7:30-8:30 Program

8:30-9pm Fellowship

All above subject to change. Thank you.

Adrienne Dickos, Chair akdickos@verizon.net

412-833-4980 call 412-400-4290 text



Circle of Angels,

Pascha Outreach requests koulourakia, paximadia, cookies and candy. NO nuts or powdered sugar! We will be assembling the baskets on Thursday, April 10 at 10:30am in the community center kitchen. Please take items to Nena in church office by Wednesday, April 9th.

Thank you for your generosity, Carol, Christine and Dina

GOLDEN CLUB MEMBERS:

Please join us on Wednesday, April 30 as we travel by van to BICYCLE HEAVEN on Pittsburgh's Northside. Tucked away in an industrial park along the edges of the Ohio River sits the world's largest bicycle museum with close to 6,000 vintage to new bicycles. *"Even if you're not a big cyclist, it's worth a visit just for the experience!"*

Admission is ten dollars at the door; any form of payment is accepted.

Following the tour we will enjoy lunch at a nearby restaurant.

Please arrive at the church no later than 9:00 a.m.

Please RSVP no later than April 21 by calling or texting Rene, cell# 412.559.1721(no home #) or Cynthia at #412.722.9512.

Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas

Every day, we experience the sun and its light. Even when the nights are longest, the daylight is never far away, and perhaps that is why we so often take it for granted. Yet, without the sun and its light, our crops would not have the energy to grow and thus to feed us and the animal kingdom. Without the sun, we would not have warmth, and our world would be as a perpetual winter. And of course, without the light of the sun, we would be helpless creatures, crawling about in the darkness, blind to one another and blind to the world around us.

The sun sustains our physical life, but in the same way, God is like the sun of our spiritual life. The Saint we commemorate today, that we commemorate always on the second Sunday of Lent, is Saint Gregory Palamas, a great teacher of prayer in the Orthodox Church. Saint Gregory wrote quite a bit, some of which can be quite obscure, yet the heart of his teaching can be understood through this reference to the physical sun. Saint Gregory teaches us that, even if God *seems* infinitely above us and far away, just as the sun itself is 92 million miles away from us, God's energy is here in creation with us, is all around us, warming us, illuminating us, just as the sun's rays reach us even here, 92 million miles away. Saint Gregory calls this the distinction between God's essence and God's energies – God's essence is infinite, incomprehensible to humanity, the source of all things, while God's energies, radiating throughout all of creation, can be experienced by us even in this life.

The takeaway is this: God is with us, as we recite over and over during Monday night's Compline service. Even if we feel God is far away, His energy is here on this earth, waiting for us to make the effort to receive it. After all, the reason we may feel God to be distant amidst the chaos and ugliness of the world is no fault of God, but rather, it is the fault of our sinful nature.

We so often seek after created things, rather than seeking the Creator Himself. A poet once wrote that our task is not to seek for love, but rather to seek and find all the barriers we have built in ourselves against love. This is our task during this Great Lent, and throughout the whole of our lives as Christians – to enter into our hearts and contend against the darkness we find there, so that we may instead be filled with God’s light. If we make this effort, God, who is ever awaiting the repentance of sinful humanity, will aid us, as His love for humanity knows no bounds.

Today is yet another opportunity for us to re-commit to the effort of the Christian life, the disciplines of prayer, fasting, and charity, and another opportunity to make God the center of our lives. The hopeful message that Saint Gregory gives us is this: God is not far away from us. He is with us in this life, and we can experience his uncreated light even now, but only if we strive with all our heart, mind, and soul to know Him. It is said that those who do not seek God in this life will not find Him in the next. Even now, the hour is later than we think. Let us therefore hasten to do the works of God.

~Elias Diamond



Philoptochos Social









2025 Philoptochos Membership Drive



Join or renew today!

Scan the QR code to join or renew online:



Or contact Dina Hartlep

412-720-9383 | dinahartlep@gmail.com

We are comprised of women of all ages and would love to have you join us!

2025 Orthodox Christian Vacation Church School

at Holy Cross

Bring your children to learn
God's word at VCS!

This year's theme is:

VCS is dedicated to teaching
our young children about Or-
thodox Christianity in a fun
and exciting atmosphere. It is
an extension of the Sunday
School experience that can

greatly enhance a child's sense of belonging to the church,
while providing our children with an opportunity to make life-
long friends in the church community.

Activities include daily skits illustrating lesson, brief classroom
instruction, religious music lessons, hands-on crafts relating to
lesson, recreation time, snack & social time.

SAINTS
ALIVE

*****Note date change to JUNE****

Monday, June 23 thru Friday, June 27
from 9am~Noon

**Monday, June 23, children should arrive at 8:30 am*

Welcoming all children age 3 years through entering 6th grade

**High School students, parents, interested adults
are needed to volunteer.**

Nominal registration fee of

\$20 per student is due by May 30th

\$30 if received by June 15th

\$40 if received after June 15th

Please register early so we can prepare nametags, snacks & crafts!

Make checks payable to Holy Cross VCS and send to:

123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228

Should you need financial assistance, please contact

Fr. Michael Kallaur (Holy Cross) at (412) 833-3355

Orthodox Christian Vacation Church School at Holy Cross

2025 Registration Form ~ Please print.

Child's First & Last Name	Age on July 30	Grade Entering Fall 2025	Allergy information (Food, Medicine, Other)

Parent's Name(s):
Home Phone:
Address:
Church Parish you belong to:
Mother's Cell Phone:
Father's Cell Phone:
Email address:

Emergency information, OTHER THAN parents

1st Emergency Contact:

Name _____ Phone _____

2nd Emergency Contact:

Name _____ Phone _____

Parental Consent: _____

I give my child(ren) listed above permission to participate in the Vacation Church School held June 23-27, 2025. I understand that my child(ren) will be responsible for obeying the rules and regulations of VCS as enforced by the directors, teachers, and staff. I hereby release Holy Cross church, its VCS teachers and staff from liability for the safety and/or conduct of my child(ren). I also give permission for emergency medical care to be administered to my child(ren) if necessary.

Signature of Parent _____ Date _____

For administrative use:

Date Received _____ Amt Rec'd/Check# _____ Amt Rec'd/Cash _____

Metropolis St. Photios Award 2025 Elaine and Ted Sofis

Married for 48 years, Elaine and Ted Sofis are the epitome of service, dedication and love for their beloved Holy Cross Church. They are the proud parents of JoAnn Sofis White, Timothy and Phillip Sofis and have been blessed with six grandchildren.

The question is; What doesn't Elaine do? She has served Holy Cross in so many ways, that it is difficult to list them all. An active Board Member of Philoptochos, Elaine had served for six years as the Holy Cross Philoptochos President from 2013-2017 and 2019-2021. She also served as Philoptochos Vice President and Advisor. For twelve years she has chaired or co-chaired the Philoptochos Autumn Greek Food Fair. It's Elaine who gets the people and runs the food lines at the Holy Cross June Greek Festival. Cheerful and dedicated, you will see her every week setting up, serving and cleaning up for coffee hours and special events. Always organized, Elaine arranges and lines up volunteers for funeral luncheons and for the baking of the Christmas and Easter bread. A pillar of the community, there are many small things that she does at church almost every week.

A life-long member of Holy Cross, Ted as a teenager, worked weekends for his father during the construction of Holy Cross. He has served multiple terms on Parish Council over five decades. First serving in 1980, Ted is currently a member of Parish Council and has previously served Holy Cross as Parish Council President and Vice President. For seven of those years, he was in charge of Stewardship. He has been a member of the Metropolis Stewardship and Evangelism Committee. Ted has helped his wife Elaine with the food lines at both the June and Autumn Greek Food Festivals. He is a member of the Building Committee, Board of Advisors and the By-Laws Committee. Today, if there is a mailing, a Makaria, or a special event, he can be seen alongside Elaine, helping in any way he can.





GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

11TH ANNUAL ST. PHOTIOS AWARDS BANQUET

Saturday May 3, 2025 - DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh-Cranberry

ST. PHOTIOS AWARDS BANQUET RESERVATIONS FORM

Address: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh-Cranberry, 910 Sheraton Drive, Mars, PA 16046

Date: Saturday May 3, 2025 **Time:** 4:00 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres | 5:00 p.m. Dinner

Tickets: Awardees: Complimentary | Adult: \$95.00 | Children 12 and under \$25.00

(Max. guests at a table is 10)

Note: There is no charge for awardees, they are guests of His Eminence. Please include the awardee/s in the reservations (for seating purposes) but do not include payment for them.

Parking: Free at the hotel.

Number of Adult Reservations: x \$95.00 =

Number of Child Reservations: x \$25.00 =

TOTAL PAYMENT =



Reserve your tickets online or to find out more information visit: pittsburgh.goarch.org/st-photios-awards-banquet or scan the QR code. Online reservations open on March 14 and close on April 15.



Or mail your reservations form together with your check to: St. Photios Awards Banquet, Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, 5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232. Please make your check payable to "Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh" and write in the memo St. Photios Awards Banquet. **NOTE: We will not accept reservations without payment.**



Anything we need to know? Any guests have dietary requirements? Young children need high chairs? Any seating request? **Please inform us of vegetarian requests on the form or contact us strictly no later than April 15.** Please list below:

.....
.....

RESERVATIONS DEADLINE: STRICTLY APRIL 15. | NO REFUNDS AFTER APRIL 15.



Like to stay overnight at the hotel? For room reservations please contact the hotel at 1-800-222-8733, visit pittsburgh.goarch.org/st-photios-awards-banquet for the hotel booking link or scan the QR code. The DoubleTree by Hilton Pittsburgh-Cranberry will offer a Discount Rate: \$134.00/night + 14% tax until Tuesday, April 8, 2025. Please provide the Group Name: "Saint Photios Awards Dinner" when booking your room. **Please do not contact the hotel with banquet questions.**



For any questions please contact Banquet Co-Chair Marianne Stearns: 412 600 2159 | mstearns@nauticom.net or Louise Henry at the Metropolis: 412 621 5529 x10 | lhenry@pittsburgh.goarch.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we move more deeply into 2025 we continue to feel the excitement in our church life. We are nearly at the door of the Resurrection – a miraculous, hopeful and joyous time in our ecclesiastical year.

“For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.” – Romans 6:5

Inside our church we continue to make progress on our major projects. Iconography will adorn our church in the glorification of Christ Jesus before the end of the summer. Landscaping is in full bloom and continues to take shape in this season of spring and throughout the summer.

Our community is blessed with many talented people who can help in various ways. I’ve observed this firsthand being involved in various projects and committees. We have builders, architects, engineers, lawyers, insurance agents, creatives, analysts, therapists, teachers and everything in between.

Whatever your talent is we need your help. Getting more involved in the Church community has been fulfilling for me personally and I would love to see new people getting involved.

We recently had our first Gyro Thursday which will continue after Lent. Soon we will be preparing for our festival. We have many dedicated people supporting activities in the kitchen. I see the same beautiful faces over and over. I thank those dedicated volunteers and welcome new ones to join. You can learn to cook many of the Greek dishes popular in our cuisine and you can also make a new friend.

There is a place for you to get involved—it doesn’t have to be in the kitchen. We have many needs throughout the parish.

I know that volunteering at nonprofits can be difficult at times - people are well intentioned but they are volunteers and their time may be limited, follow through can be sparse but we have to remember that intentions are positive.

(continued →)

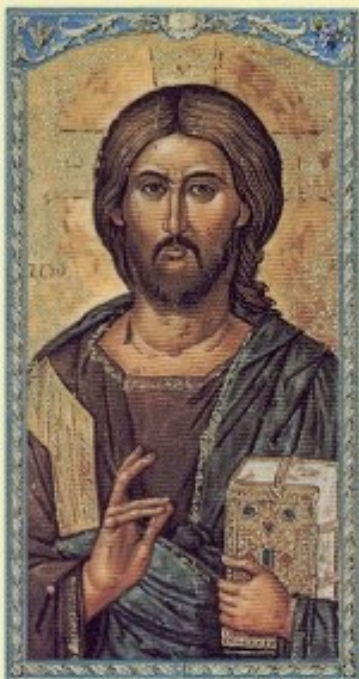
At times the wrong thing can be said in the heat of the moment. People can get offended and feel disrespected. This is our fallen human nature but we have to remember one VERY important thing – we are all here to glorify Jesus Christ.

The goal, our collective goal is to work together. To be Christ-driven and do our part to make the church a stronger body.

Let's work together, in unison to make our community stronger, and a loving place that welcomes all. People are seeking Christ, let's be magnets through our actions. Remember to be Christ driven and inspired. We need your help.

Please reach out to a Parish Council member and get involved. Helping in Christ's home gives you a joy that money cannot buy.

I wish you a blessed Lenten journey.
Nick Ambeliotis



O Lord and Master
of my life,
take from me the
spirit of laziness,
meddling, ambition
and vain talk.

But give me a spirit
of prudence, humility
patience and love.



Yes Lord and King
grant me to see my
own sins and faults
and not judge my
brother.

For You are Blessed
Forever and ever.

Amen.

(Prayer of St. Ephrem)

HOLY CROSS

Sun	Mon	Tue
		1
<p>6 <i>St. Mary of Egypt</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>7</p> <p>6:30pm Great Compline</p>	<p>8</p> <p> 8pm YAL Basketball</p>
<p>13 <i>Palm Sunday</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy <i>*No memorials</i></p> <p>5pm Bridegroom </p>	<p>14 <i>Holy Monday</i> 9am Presanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Bridegroom</p>	<p>15 <i>Holy Tuesday</i> 9am Presanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Bridegroom</p>
<p>20 <i>PASCCHA</i></p> <p>Noon ~ Agape Vespers</p>	<p>21 <i>Bright Monday</i></p>	<p>22 <i>Sts. Raphael, Nicholas and Irene</i> 10am Divine Liturgy @Dormition, Oakmont</p> <p>7pm Parish Council 7:30pm YAL Pickleball</p>
<p>27 <i>Thomas Sunday</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy <i>*No memorials</i></p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p><i>7pm Sts. Mary & Martha</i></p>

APRIL 2025

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>2</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 6pm Presanctified Liturgy followed by Lenten Potluck</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7PM CATECHISM CLASS</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9am Presanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Akathist</p>	<p>5</p> <p>JOY/GOYA/YAL Lenten Retreat in Saxonburg</p> <p>5pm Vespers & Confessions</p>
<p>9</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 6pm Presanctified Liturgy</p>	<p>10</p> <p>5pm Palm Cross Prep 7PM CATECHISM CLASS</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9AM PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY</p>  <p>5pm Palm Cross Prep</p>	<p>12 Lazarus Saturday</p> <p>8:30 am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy ~Palm Cross Making ~Confessions ~Church Cleaning ~Acolyte Preparation for Holy Week 5pm Great Vespers</p>
<p>16 Holy Wednesday 9am Presanctified Liturgy 3pm Holy Unction 6:30pm Orthros of Holy Thursday w/ second anointing</p>	<p>17 Holy Thursday 9am Vespertal Liturgy 6:30pm Passion of Our Lord/Reading of 12 Gospels 10pm-6am Vigil by the Cross & Sandwiches for the Homeless</p>	<p>18 Holy Friday <i>Office Closed</i> 9am Royal Hours 3pm Vespers/Taking down from the Cross 6:15pm Trisagion by tomb 6:30pm Praises/Orthros of Holy Saturday</p>	<p>15 Holy Saturday 9am Vespertal Liturgy (First Resurrection) 10pm Nocturnes 10:30pm Receive the Light 11pm Orthros /Liturgy of the Resurrection AGAPE MEAL</p>
<p>23 St. George 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL</p>	<p>24 Bright Thursday</p>	<p>25 Life-Giving Spring 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>26 Bright Saturday</p> <p>5pm Vespers</p>
<p>30</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL</p>	<p>1</p> <p>7PM CATECHISM CLASS</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>5pm Vespers</p>

Midway on our yearly journey to Pascha, we pause to reflect on the Cross. This is not just because we are heading to the events of the Crucifixion, but because the Cross itself is an essential element of the Christian life. It stands in contrast to a worldview that a life well lived is one in which pain and discomfort is minimized. Instead, the Lord's own call is to deny oneself, take up one's cross, and follow Him. It indicates that a life well lived is one where struggle is crucial; where pain is not to be avoided but rather embraced as a positive experience which leads to genuine freedom from the pleasures of life which would otherwise enslave us. And it calls us to be steadfast and stoic in the face of adversity.

The world may admire a stoic attitude, but has difficulty truly understanding it. For facing adversity with a grim determination is ultimately an expression of hope, and in a worldview without the metaphysical, hope is illusory. For we are undeniably mortal, and if there is nothing after death, what hope can there be in life? The only hope is that somehow we can prolong our lives, and even then, it is only worth prolonging if we can make the most of it. To the world's way of thinking, this means looking out for ourselves, since ultimately no one else matters. As such, it is to be expected that any patience on the part of the constituents of a society should be viewed with a certain degree of confusion; after all, if the members of a society will not look out for their interests, who will?

But stoicism is completely understandable to those who believe there is something after death. Hope is natural to those who see our time on this earth as only part of the journey. For if the greater part lay after death, then our own gratification is secondary to preparing ourselves for what is to come. And even though Japan is not a Christian nation, it is one that affirms the existence of the spiritual world; as such, a stoic outlook reflects the hope in the people of that land, as ravaged as it might be by natural disaster.

But that begs the question of how to prepare for the journey after death. And that is the message of the Cross. The world can only truly understand a self-oriented and self-directed life. The Cross shows us another more profound way. It is the way of selflessness, a way that puts our own interests and gratifications on hold so that we can look to the needs of others. It is subtly different than either a Shinto or Buddhist way of thinking, although they also look to the needs of others. With Shinto, the spirit world is to be acknowledged, respected, and in some ways appeased, with the implicit mindset that we must all learn to live

together, and thus serve each other's needs. With Buddhism, the acceptance that life is suffering is one of the four noble truths, and the path to remedy this lay in the denial of self. But the path of the Cross is not the denial of our sense of self, it is of our sense of self-denial. It does not seek to escape identity and thus suffering; rather, it seeks to embrace it and move on. We do not lose our identity in suffering; instead, we find it. And so our fasting helps us in our self-denial. We embrace our notion of self, but deny its centrality; instead, suppressing our own needs and emphasizing the needs of others. This is how the Lord lived when He walked among us, and our imitation of it is key to truly understanding what it means to be divine. It is implicit in His statement that "whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's will save it." Or put another way, it is in God's nature to serve, and He calls us to be the same way, because it shows us to be more like Him.

One of the fruits of this imitation is a sense of peace in our souls, and yet it is also a call to action. To be at peace does not mean to be inattentive to the needs of others, or even to claim that there is nothing left to improve within us. We must always be content, but we must never be complacent. This too is something the world often confuses, for when it denies the soul, it cannot distinguish between the two. But for the Christian, the call of Christ to "take up our cross" is to be content, while to follow Him means we cannot rest, or put another way, we cannot be complacent.

My brothers and sisters, we must avoid a worldview that requires discontent in order to effect change; instead, we must embrace a perspective in which true change can only come about when those who call for it are deeply content within themselves. This deeply seated contentment is a mark of the "peace which passes all understanding" for the world cannot comprehend how those who are at peace can still call for change or champion against injustice. But Christians understand that in taking up the Cross, we embrace contentment, while in following Him we reject complacency. We accept suffering, but never at the cost of denying our sense of self; instead, through acts of self denial, whether they be acts of charity or ascetic discipline, we affirm that some kinds of suffering are good because they in turn demonstrate the imitation of the Divine within us. Come then, my fellow Christians, and eagerly take up the cross that was given to you by the One who asks you to follow Him, the One who calls you to find yourself by denying yourself, to imitate His contentment without complacency; the One to whom is due all Glory, now and forever. Amen.

~Fr. Frank Dickos

Sunday of Orthodoxy





OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2025

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS

THEMES / GOSPEL READING

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

5th Sunday of Lent
APRIL 6th



ST MARY of EGYPT

Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14
Gospel: Mark 10:32-45

Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.

FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY!
APRIL 13th
GREAT WEEK BEGINS



.....
GREAT AND HOLY WEEK
ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM

Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9
Gospel: John 12:1-18

Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!

GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY
APRIL 18th



GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS
CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE

Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.

FEAST OF FEASTS!
APRIL 20th
NO FASTING!



.....
BRIGHT WEEK
HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!)

Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17

Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

Golden Club Lenten Luncheon with presentation by Laura Zervos on Health and Nutrition





HOLY CROSS GREEK FESTIVAL

2025 Cooking Schedule *

Dear Holy Cross Family... We invite you to contribute your time—whether a little or a lot—as we prepare for the upcoming 2025 Festival. This year, we are excited to extend the celebration to five days, so we will need additional help with preparations. We have included evening and Saturday opportunities to fit various schedules and make it easier for everyone. Please take a moment to print this message and place it on your fridge. We encourage you to consider how you can assist us in making this event a success. Thanks!

Syrup No Help Necessary	Wed 4/30 th Thu-Sun May 1 st – May 4 th will be prepped late evenings
<u>Koulourakia</u> 11,000 pieces	Saturday, March 29: 10:00a – 5:00p
<u>Tiropitas</u> 2400 pieces 100 trays	Sunday March 30th After Church March 31 st April 1 st 10am-5pm
<u>Koulourakia</u>	Tuesday April 8 th 5-9p Thursday, April 24: 5:00 pm -9pm
Baklava 6,912 pieces 144 pans	Wed April 9 th 10-5 pm Wed April 23 rd 10-3am 5-9pm <u>Sat</u> , April 26 – after 10a Sun, April 27 12p – 6a
<u>Souzoukakia</u> 2,964 pieces	Monday, April <u>28</u> 10a-5p Tuesday, April <u>29</u> 5-9p Wednesday, April 30 10a-5p
Pastitsio 2,540 pieces 127 pans	Monday, May 5 (prep) Tuesday, May 6 10a-5p Wednesday, May 7 10a-5p
<u>Galatoboureko</u> 1,449 pieces	Monday, May 12 (prep only) Tuesday, May 13 10a-6p Wednesday, May 14 (cutting)
<u>Kourambiedes</u> 3,318 pieces	Tuesday, May 20 10a-5p Wednesday, May 21 10a-5p Thursday, May <u>22</u> 10a-5p
<u>Finikia</u> 2,274 pieces	Thurs May 15 th 10a Friday May 16 th 3-9p <u>Dipping</u> <u>May</u> 29 th and 30th
Karidopita 960 pieces	Fri May 16th 10a Sat May 17th 10a Sun May 18 th <u>after</u> service
Shank sauce A Bunch	May 23 rd 10 M May 27 th 10 AM

*Reminder texts and voicemails will be sent before each prepped item.

Times and dates are subject to change

3.27.25



SAVE THE DATES FOR FESTIVAL!

MONDAY, JUNE 9 ~ FRIDAY JUNE 13



*Please call the church office to
volunteer to sponsor and host
a coffee hour!*



FIRST MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH

***Tuesday,
April 8**

Community Center gym
from 8 pm to 9:30 pm

Fellowship and food at
Primanti's in Mt. Lebanon
starting at 9:30 pm

METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH SUMMER CAMP 2025

WEEK 1 (2nd-4th grade): June 15th-21st

WEEK 2 (5th-7th grade): June 22nd-28th

WEEK 3 (7th-9th grade): June 29th-July 5th

WEEK 4 (10th-12th grade): July 6th-July 12th

Campers will attend the week of the grade level they
are completing. Registration will open Spring 2025.

More information:

y2am.pittsburgh.goarch.org/summercamp

PAN-ORTHODOX VESPERS





METROPOLIS CLERGY FAMILY RETREAT AT ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE

We are extremely grateful for the outpouring of love and support for our
Holy Cross Iconography project!

Thank you to the many who have pledged partial and full support to the icons. We prayerfully ask you to consider supporting this project and creating a legacy. All donation amounts are appreciated and can be contributed to the overall project or join with others for a specific icon. May you and your family be blessed for what you can offer.

Saints:

Icons still available include:

The Four Evangelists: St. Mark*

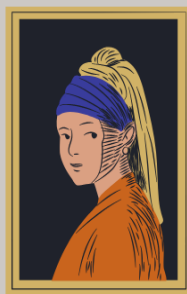
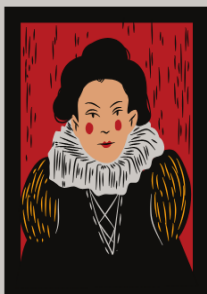
The Old Testament symbols for each evangelist:

Eagle ● Ox ● Lion ● Young Man

St. Haralambos
St. Andrew of Crete*
St. Cyril of Alexandria
St. Gerasimos of Abydos*
St. Nicholas Velimirovich
St. Innocent of Alaska
St. Raphael of Brooklyn*

Large Icons: Pentecost

Please contact Vasso Paliouras @vassopaliouras@gmail.com or 412-606-4314 or with questions or specific requests.



Holy Cross Online Art Auction in support of the

Holy Cross Iconography project

Friday, March 28 at 12 PM - Sunday, April 6 at 12:15 PM

checkout will be at 12:30 PM in the Holy Cross Community Center



scan the QR code to bid or
go to:

[https://new.biddingowl.com/
HolyCrossArtAuction](https://new.biddingowl.com/HolyCrossArtAuction)



HOLY CROSS
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



DONOR OPPORTUNITY

DONATION

CHOIR LOFT – LEFT SIDE

A	Nativity of the Theotokos	\$50,000
B	Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple	\$50,000

C	St. Kosmas the Poet holding a scroll which says, "You are a mortal woman, but yet the apostles miraculously see you as the immaculate Mother of God."	\$20,000
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CHOIR LOFT – CENTER

D	Mosaic Icon of the Dormition	\$100,000
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CHOIR LOFT – RIGHT SIDE

E	Assumption of Mary - At the empty tomb, the apostles stand around it wondering. In the midst of them is Thomas. He is holding the belt of the Panagia and showing it to them. Above them, in the sky, the Virgin rises on clouds into heaven. Thomas, again, near her in the clouds, takes the girdle from her hands.	\$50,000
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F	Panagia and Elizabeth greeting one another after the Annunciation	\$50,000
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G	St. John of Damascus holding a scroll which says "You are worthy to be received living into heaven, Holy Virgin, and appear in the heavenly tabernacles."	\$20,000
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May you and your family be blessed for what you can offer this important project. All donation amounts are appreciated and can contribute to the overall project or join with others for a specific icon.

Please contact Vasso Paliouras, Fundraising Chairperson, with any questions or specific requests at 412.606.4314 or vassopaliouras@gmail.com.

GREEK SCHOOL INDEPENDENCE DAY PROGRAM



GREEK SCHOOL INDEPENDENCE DAY PROGRAM



Festival Prep—Spanakopita



SACRAMENTS

Baptisms

January 11 ~ Michael Demetri, son of Ioannis and Georgia (nee Yamalis) Athans. Godparent is Maria Phyrillas.

February 1 ~ Michael, son of Anthony and Alyssa (nee Chaves) Ambeliotis. Godparents are Michael and Andrea Ambeliotis.

Marriages

December 29* ~ Zachary Moore and Lia Gagianas.

Koumbara is Constance Raftis. (*at St. Nicholas, Oakland)

Funerals

January 16 ~ †**Fr. William Zotis, age 87**, survived by wife of nearly 58 years, Mary DiCarlo Zotis, daughters, Litsa Zotis (Ray Middleman), Christina McArdle (John), JoAnn Hajnosz (Christopher Hajnosz); many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Later in life, Bill enjoyed the last 35+ years as a Greek Orthodox priest, feeling blessed to give back to the Greek community.



January 24 ~ **Andrew Pyros, age 87**, preceded in death by wife of 58 years, Liberty Zabetakis. Loving father of Kyrk (Kathy) Pyros, George (Karen) Pyros, Varvara Pyros and the late Marty Pyros; cherished grandfather of Kurk, Elizabeth, Sarah, Rachel, Marty and Athena; adored great-grandfather of Theo Bradley.



March 6 ~ **Athena Terzis, age 101**, preceded in death by husband of 70 years, Nicholas, as well as her beloved children Christ, Joan, and Kathryn (McCune). Athena leaves behind her devoted daughter, Nikki (Rosato), and a large extended family. She was Holy Cross' oldest parishioner.

BENVENIDOS A LOS MEDICOS

A warm Guatemalan welcome always greets incoming medical/dental teams to the Fr. Andres Giron Clinic in the village of Aguacate. This year was no exception. For the Mayan patients who crowd the clinic with long neglected ailments and undiagnosed illnesses it means access to care that is either too costly or often unavailable in the rural regions of the country. For the medical team members coming from different parts of the United States it can mean a life-changing encounter. At least six of our previous volunteers have entered medical school, inspired in part by this outreach. This year's March team included three doctors, a dentist, a Guatemalan nurse sponsored by our Philoptochos, an EMT, an all-purpose caregiver for children and our own Presbytera Lia Christulides as Spanish translator and Constantine Kallaur as documentarian and vitals intake person. Before the clinic began, the team visited the San Andres Seminary, praying with 125 catechists who serve some of the 130 villages of the Guatemalan Orthodox Church. Then on the first Sunday of Lent, team members processed through the village of Aguacate, together with 700 worshippers, each holding icons in hand. The Triumph of Orthodoxy, first celebrated some 1200 years ago, lives on in a humble Mayan village among a people, who though very poor, have discovered the hidden treasure of the Orthodox Church. Our medical team members, who selflessly came to offer their own talents, left even more enriched by the experience. To give of



Young child has decayed teeth extracted.

Mission team members serving the clinic.



ourselves in this way is never a zero sum game. We always receive more than we give in the Body of Christ. We are grateful to all Holy Cross members who have supported this ongoing outreach with their prayers and generosity KALO PASCHA!

~Fr. John



Presbytera Lia Christulides serving as translator for the doctors.

Father John greets Eulalia, a patient and life-long member of the village.



Constantine Kallaur entertains the young patients.



Alexis Pappas hugs a young girl after the ordeal of dental visit.



"TRUE FASTING LIES IS
REJECTING EVIL,
HOLDING ONE'S
TONGUE, SUPPRESSING
ONE'S HATRED, AND
BANISHING ONE'S
LUST, EVIL WORDS,
LYING, AND BETRAYAL
OF VOWS.

(St. Basil the Great)



IOCC PITTSBURGH METROPOLITAN COMMITTEE PRESENTS

BRIGHT BITES

Food & Fellowship to Benefit IOCC

Sunday, April 27, 2025 | 4:00-6:00PM

STAMOOLIS BROTHERS CO.

2020 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

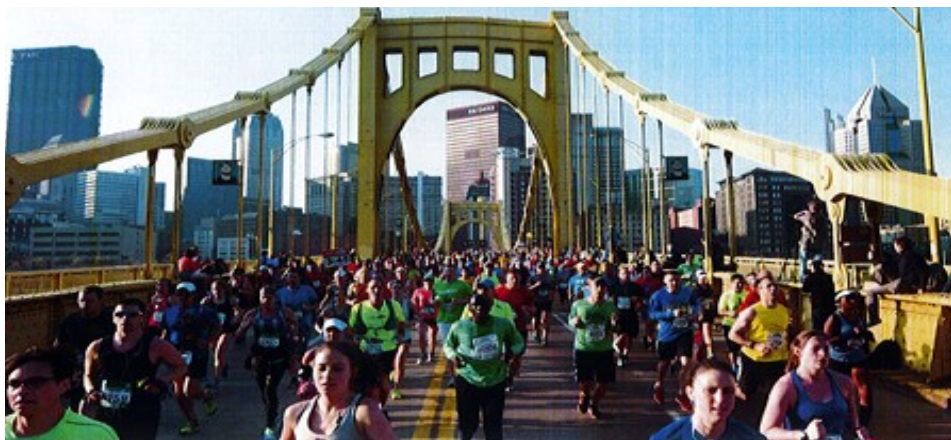
Join us for a night of fellowship and celebration of Pascha around the world. We will serve Greek, Italian, and Middle Eastern hors d'oeuvres, as well as red and white wine.

REGISTER ONLINE AT
iocccom.com/pittsburgh

RSVP by April 22nd to Alexis Cross
at azkcross@hotmail.com or 412-780-2790.
Walk in guests are also welcome.

Tickets: \$35





WALK OR RUN WITH TEAM IOCC

At the Pittsburgh Marathon Weekend

Saturday, May 3, 2025

Help change lives around the world!

Choose a Race as a Solo Participant or Form Your Own Team!

5K ★ Kids Marathon ★ Toddler Trot ★ Pet Walk
4-Mile Fitness Challenge ★ Champions Mile

SIGN UP NOW AT

iocc.org/pgh



IOCC[®]

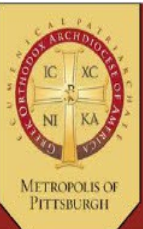
INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

Questions? Contact Dean Stambolis at DeanStambolis@verizon.net or 412.874.9572

FUN FACT, because so many
have asked...

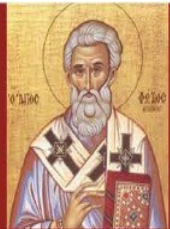
Last month's **Crossroads**
cover featured a "photo"
which was actually an original
drawing done by our own
Dean Stambolis! More of his
and others' original artwork
will be featured in the Art
Auction! See p. 34 for details!





A Good Word - Λόγον Αγαθόν

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH



3RD METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH PHILOPTOCHOS ANNUAL MEETING/RETREAT

On Friday, March 7th and Saturday, March 8th, the Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos sisters met at the Double Tree Hotel in Washington, PA for their 3rd Annual Meeting/Retreat. Close to 50 women gathered together for fellowship and prayer, to share ideas and to gain information presented by President Joyce Spanakis, Executive Officers, Anna Vedouras and Paula Makris, as well as committee chairs, Irene Sellas and Marianne Stearns. Metropolis Chancellor, Fr. George Callos addressed the women and gave an update on the New Metropolis Center.

The women also had the opportunity to copy a scripture verse and write a brief personal message on photocopied icons for the Orthodox Prison Ministry. Images of icons were photocopied in black and white according to the stringent rules for prison ministry. All pages will be sent in bulk to New York where they will be distributed to various inmates.

It was a wonderful weekend and all who attended were uplifted and inspired. Our Philoptochos sisters are eagerly looking forward to coming together again on April 5th for our Metropolis Daffodil Luncheon hosted by the women of Holy Trinity Pittsburgh benefiting both our Seminarian Our Future and Emergency Funds.




His Eminence Metropolitan Savvas cordially invites you to celebrate the dedicated volunteers of our Holy and God-protected Metropolis of Pittsburgh

ST. PHOTIOS AWARDS BANQUET

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON PITTSBURGH-CRANBERRY, MARS PA

SAT MAY 3 4:00 PM SCAN ME TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS

Tickets:
 Awardees: complimentary
 Adults: \$95.00
 Children (under 12): \$25.00
 Reservation Deadline: April 15
 No Refunds after April 15

For information on Reservations, Sponsorships and Awardee Nominations please visit:
pittsburgh.goarch.org/st-photios-awards-banquet

NET PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE METROPOLITAN'S BENEVOLENCE FUND

 Louise Henry at lhenny@pittsburgh.goarch.org
 412 621 5529 x113
  pittsburgh.goarch.org



Metropolis of Pittsburgh Camp

- Week 1: June 15-21
2nd-4th Grade
- Week 2: June 22-28
5th-7th Grade
- Week 3: June 29-July 5
7th-9th Grade
- Week 4: July 6-12
10th-12th Grade

Early Registration: April 8th at 7:00 pm - May 8th at 11:59 pm
Regular Registration: May 9th at 12:00 am - June 1st at 11:59 pm
More information: y2am.pittsburgh.goarch.org/summercamp

NEW METROPOLIS CENTER CONSTRUCTION MARCH 2025 UPDATE

With the receipt and installation of the massive, decorative trusses in the social hall, we have been able to complete the roof. Utilities routed to and within continue to be constructed. With the advent of the Metropolitan's Residence, excavation has begun on the home. Given the alternating weather (extreme cold, then rain, then cold), progress has been challenging, yet we continue to progress!



1. Left - Social Hall, Right - Chapel
2. Main Entrance in Center
3. Terrace
4. Corner to Right - Offices
5. Residence Excavation to Right
6. Social Hall Looking Into Chapel
7. Rear Outdoor Portico

"God Is Good" is a phrase we often use without much thinking but this month, we just can't say it enough! As of February, we have exceeded the \$14,000,000 mark in pledges and donations. We've worked hard to get here and are only here because God is Good! We are now down to our LAST MILLION TO RAISE!

PARISH PLEDGES = \$987,114.00
PHILOPTOCHOS PLEDGES = \$68,270.00
for a total of \$1,055,384.00!

GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

Metropolitan Savas invites YOU to the 2nd Annual **Sat. Aug. 23rd 11am - 9pm** **St. Demetrios Community Center 3723 Atlantic St. N. Warren, OH**

GOMOPALOOZA

Are You a Musician, Band or Artist? **Fun for All the Family!**

Want to Perform or Display Art? **2 Music Stages**

Contact Fr. Joe DiStefano **Kids Games**

frjdistefano@yahoo.com **Art & Craft Exhibits**

Free Admission **Free Parking**

AUG. 23 2025

MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL

All Proceeds go to the GOMoP Youth & Young Adult Ministries **Bands Solo Acts Arts & Crafts**

Scan me!

For online donations please scan the QR code below or mail donations to: New Metropolis Center, PO Box 640729, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-0729 Please make checks payable to "Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh" with NMC Donation written in the memo.



Thank you as always for your support!

Archon Nick Lekas
New Metropolis Center
Project Manager



PLEASE SUPPORT OUR METROPOLIS MINISTRIES!

It costs approximately \$1,000 per day to operate our Metropolis - including Metropolitan Savas's Archpastoral visitations, preparations for summer camp and GOYA retreats, our vital registry, and more.

Please consider sponsoring a day in the life of the Metropolis:

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, 5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232
412-621-5529 (Main) 412-465-0460 (Camp) 412-621-8543 (Youth)
pittsburgh.goarch.org info@pittsburgh.goarch.org



The following items (total cost \$3000) are needed for **Holy Week 2025**.

All donations are welcomed.

Thank you in advance for your generosity in enhancing our Holy Week services.

- * Palms for Palm Sunday
- * Flowers for the Nymphios (Bridegroom) Icon
- * Seven candles, olive oil, flour & Qtips for Great & Holy Wednesday
- * Three candles for procession with crucified one (Stavromeno) Great & Holy Thursday
- * Wreath for the Holy Cross on Great & Holy Thursday
- * Crown of Thorns (Stefani) for Holy Thursday
- * Purple Mums at the Foot of the Cross
- * Winding Sheet for Body of Christ
- * Epitaphion Candles
- * Rose Petals and Lemon Leaves for First Resurrection Service and Epitaphion Services
- * Rosewater for Great & Holy Friday
- * Roses for distribution at the 3pm Good Friday Service
- * Mirafora baskets
- * Decorated Pascha Candles for the Clergy
- * Incense for Great and Holy Week
- * Olive Oil for Perpetual Light throughout Holy Week
- * 4 Beeswax Altar candles for Holy week services
- * Communion Wine Bottle/Case

Order an Easter Lily to beautify our church for Pascha.

Circle ONE per plant:

In Honor of OR For the health of OR In memory of

From

\$20 per plant

Please return to church office by Friday, April 11

COMMEMORATION OF THE DECEASED

Good Friday Evening

For the repose of the servants of God



Please list first names only of your beloved deceased, and bring, fax or mail to the church office prior to Good Friday.

**HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
123 GILKESON ROAD
PITTSBURGH, PA 15228**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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ΠΑΣΧΑ

APRIL 20, 2025

**HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE
See Page 2**

