



ΙΕΡΟΣ ΝΑΟΣ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΙΑΣ ΜΑΓΔΑΛΗΝΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΑΡΚΕΛΛΗΣ



STS. MARY MAGDALENE & MARKELLA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

2019 SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER



3714-16 Dublin Road, Darlington, MD 21034

PRESIDING PRIEST

THE REV. FR. ELEFTERIOS PLEVRAKIS

Office: 410-457-0303

Email: frelefterios@gmail.com

Website: stsmm.org

OFFICE HOURS

TUESDAY - FRIDAY

10:00 A.M. - 2:45 P.M.

QUESTIONS? CALL OR VISIT US

(FOR OFFICE VISITS PLEASE CALL IN ADVANCE)

LETTER FROM THE PRIEST

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I hope all of you had a wonderful summer and you enjoyed your time with your family and friends. I want to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year in our Church. As we all know, September 1st is the beginning of the Ecclesiastical New Year, which means we are entering into another year of opportunities to develop our faith and to become spiritually strong.

Our parish showed great progress throughout the summer with many new families coming to visit our church. With our hospitality and strong service to our guests, many people left happy and shared many compliments. Weekly events such as "Mystery Meze" proved to be a hit and brought many smiles to peoples' faces. Our stewardship is growing and people's involvement is becoming stronger. Furthermore, we are adding Greek School to our ministry list this year and hosting many more fundraising events to help the church. We had our first Parish Council meeting for this year and it was fruitful and productive with new ideas.

I want to remind everyone that as our efforts continue to grow, so will our successes. I ask that everybody be patient and strong willed in helping where there is a need. Also, I ask that people give a stronger effort to come to church and be a part of the Divine Services. It is extremely important that we show to God that our love for Him is not a distant love, but one that makes us want to be close to Him. It is through this love that we may know what truly the image of God is.

To finish, I want to thank Fotini Kaminaris, our Parish President, the Parish Council Officers, and all the faithful for their continuous support through their hard work, pledges, and other generous donations. I pray to God that He keeps all of you safe and in good health.

Fr. Elefterios

Αγαπητοί αδελφοί και αδελφές εν Χριστόν,

Ελπίζω όλοι να είχατε ένα θαυμάσιο καλοκαίρι και απολαύσατε το χρόνο σας με την οικογένεια και τους φίλους σας. Θέλω να ευχηθώ σε όλους έναν ευτυχισμένο και υγιή Νέο Έτος στην Εκκλησία μας. Όπως όλοι γνωρίζουμε, η 1η Σεπτεμβρίου είναι η αρχή του Εκκλησιαστικού χρόνου, που σημαίνει ότι μπαίνουμε σε ένα άλλο έτος ευκαιριών για να αναπτύξουμε την πίστη μας και να γίνουμε πνευματικά ισχυροί.

Η ενορία μας έδειξε μεγάλη πρόοδο όλο το καλοκαίρι με πολλές νέες οικογένειες να έρχονται να επισκεφθούν την εκκλησία μας. Με τη φιλοξενία και την ισχυρή εξυπηρέτηση των φιλοξενουμένων μας, πολλοί άνθρωποι αποχώρησαν ευτυχισμένοι και μοιράστηκαν πολλά συγχαρητήρια.

Θέλω να υπενθυμίσω σε όλους ότι, καθώς οι προσπάθειές μας συνεχίζουν να αυξάνονται, θα είναι και οι επιτυχίες μας. Ζητώ από όλους να είναι υπομονετικοί και ισχυροί για να βοηθήσουν όπου υπάρχει ανάγκη. Επίσης, ζητώ από τους ανθρώπους να καταβάλουν ισχυρότερη προσπάθεια να έρθουν στην εκκλησία. Είναι εξαιρετικά σημαντικό να δείξουμε στον Θεό ότι η αγάπη μας για Αυτόν δεν είναι μια μακρινή αγάπη, αλλά μια αγάπη που μας κάνει να θέλουμε να είμαστε κοντά σ' Αυτόν.

Θέλω να ευχαριστήσω τη Φωτεινή Καμινάρη, τον Πρόεδρο της Ενορίας μας, και όλους τους πιστούς για τη συνεχή τους υποστήριξη μέσω της σκληρής δουλειάς τους, των υποσχέσεων και άλλων γενναιοδωρων δωρεών. Προσεύχομαι στον Θεό να σας κρατά όλους ασφαλείς και σε καλή υγεία.

Εν Χριστον,
Π. Ελευθέριος

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Parishioners,

The Parish Council would like to wish everyone in the parish a Happy Month of September. The summer has come to an end, vacations are over, kids are back to school and life is becoming a routine again. But our church will be celebrating the beginning of a New Ecclesiastical Year on September 1st. So far, this year has been a great year filled with anticipation and success. As we look forward to starting a New Ecclesiastical Year together, there are a few things that the Parish council is focusing on this year with you.

The first is making sure that our Parish body is whole. Over the years, members of the flock tend to stray away for many different reasons. Our new plan for the parish is for our Stewardship Committee to begin an Outreach program for those parishioners who are not involved in the life of the Church and encourage them to come back once again to the home that everyone is an important part of. We must be a worshipping Church and we can only be strengthened and truly flourish with everyone's involvement.

The second focus that is very important for the Parish Council is the "YOUTH". The gift of faith that we have inherited is the greatest gift that we can offer to our children, and keeping them involved is critical to the life of our Parish. We, as parents, play a very important role in the spiritual future of our children. We need to instill in our children the presence of our Lord. We need to teach them how to worship God in the Church. God is everywhere, but we can only worship Him in the church.

This September choose a spiritual New Year's resolution. A small change in your spiritual life can be turned into a habit and eventually a life-long practice. Participation in the church at all levels is highly encouraged and joyfully received. Let us continually ask God to give us the strength to endure, for His glory. Again, we would like to welcome everyone back to a new and exciting Ecclesiastical Year and may our Lord bless all of you and bring you abundant joy and energy for this new and exciting challenging year.

With Love in Christ,

Fotini Kaminaris

LADIES OF PHILOPTOCHOS SUNDAY MEETING

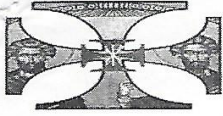


THE LADIES OF PHILOPTOCHOS WILL BE HAVING THEIR FIRST MEETING FOR THE NEW ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY.

SILVER STARS CRAB LUNCHEON

JUST AS A REMINDER, THE SILVER STARS WILL BE HAVING THEIR ANNUAL CRAB LUNCHEON IN OCTOBER, SO START BUILDING YOUR APPETITE FROM NOW.

MORE INFO TO COME SOON.



Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella Ladies Philoptochos Society, #1043

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc., is the duly accredited women's philanthropic society of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Society shall be:

- To help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts; and
- To promote the charitable, benevolent, and philanthropic purposes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through instructional programs, presentations, lectures, seminars and other educational resources;

2018 Philoptochos Membership

The ladies Philoptochos society of Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella is a very active and integral part of our church supporting her growth and charitable projects in a variety of ways.

Becoming a member of our Philoptochos does not require a lot of your time, nor does it require that you attend every meeting and/or event. Please consider joining the Philoptochos and experiencing the true meaning of Philoptochos - philanthropy, fellowship and faith in action.

Member Name: _____

Member Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Home telephone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Stewardship Amount: \$ _____ **

** Please note that for each paid member \$15 will be sent to National Philoptochos and \$8 will be sent to our Metropolis on NJ Philoptochos to support national and regional initiatives. Any stewardship amount over \$23, will stay with our chapter and be applied to our many local and charitable projects. **

Please complete the form and mail your stewardship check to: Sts Mary Magdalene & Markella Ladies Philoptochos, #1043, Attention: Tina Stavrou, Treasurer, PO Box 1575, Bel Air, MD 21014.

The Orthodox Celebration of the Power of the Cross

 johnsanidopoulos.com/2009/09/orthodox-celebration-of-power-of-cross.html

The Exaltation of the Cross celebrated on September 14 is one of the twelve great feasts in the yearly Church cycle. It commemorates two historical events: first, the finding of the Life-giving Cross in the year 326, and second, its recovery from Persia in 628.

History of the Feast

In the first centuries of Christianity, during the years of persecution, the pagans wished to destroy all evidence of the life of Jesus Christ, and the Cross on which He was crucified disappeared. With the conversion of Emperor Constantine the Great, Christians were at liberty to worship openly and build churches. The emperor's mother, St. Helen, longed to find the True Cross of Christ. She traveled to Jerusalem and was told by a very old Jew that the Cross was buried beneath the temple of the pagan goddess Venus, built in 119 AD by the Roman Emperor Hadrian.

The temple was torn down, and digging in the earth below uncovered three wooden crosses. The small board which had hung over Christ with the inscription "Jesus King of the Jews," had long since fallen off, and there was no way of telling which was the True Cross and which were the crosses of the two thieves crucified on either side of Christ. A sick woman was brought and likewise a dead man who was being carried to burial. The three crosses were laid in turn one by one upon the sick woman and upon the dead man. Two of the crosses had no effect, but through contact with the third cross, the sick woman was healed of her infirmity and the dead man came to life. These miracles clearly indicated which of the three was Christ's Cross.

Hearing of this discovery, all the faithful desired to see the Cross of the Lord and to venerate it. The Patriarch of Jerusalem, Makarios, took the Cross onto a raised platform and lifted it on high, "exalting" it, for all to see. The people fell to their knees, bowing down before the Cross and crying out repeatedly: "Lord, have mercy!"

To house the relic of the True Cross, St. Helen had a church built over the Holy Sepulcher. The church was consecrated on Sept. 13, 335, an event also commemorated in the service hymns of the Feast. The finding and exaltation of the Cross was appointed to be celebrated annually on the following day.

The Life-giving Cross was kept in Jerusalem until the year 614 when the Holy City fell to the Persians who looted the Church of the Resurrection and took the True Cross back with them to Persia. Fourteen years later Emperor Heraclius concluded a peace with the Persians, and the Holy Cross was brought to the imperial capital of Constantinople. The Emperor, taking off his shoes and his imperial robes, carried the Cross into the Church of Holy Wisdom (Agia Sophia) where it was once again

triumphantly exalted. It was then resolved that the Feast be celebrated by the Church in all parts of the world, for which reason it is called the Universal Exaltation.

The Service

The Vigil for the Feast, one of the most moving and impressive services of the year, contains several distinguishing features. After Vespers the Cross, decorated with flowers and sweet-smelling herbs, is placed upon the altar. Following the Gospel reading in Matins, the faithful sing "Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ..." usually sung only during Saturday night vigils. At the end of the Great Doxology, to the slow singing of the Trisagion –"Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us"– the priest, carrying the Cross on his head, brings it out from the altar and places it on an analogion in the center of the church. He censes the Cross on all four sides, and everyone prostrates before it to the singing of the hymn: "Before Thy Cross, we bow down, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection we glorify." Then the faithful, following the celebrants, venerate the Cross in turn, making three full prostrations, and receive anointing. The Cross remains in the center of the church until the Apodosis or "leave-taking" of the Feast on September 21.

In cathedrals and monasteries the adoration is preceded by the ceremony of exalting the Cross. After the Cross is brought out from the altar, the bishop or archimandrite takes it up in his hands and raises it on high. Then, as the people chant "Lord have mercy" a hundred times, he slowly lowers the Cross nearly to the ground and just as slowly raises it. This is done five times as the celebrant faces first east, then west, south, north and east again, signifying that "the Cross is the guardian of the whole world" and through it "the world is sanctified." In some churches the Cross has rose water poured over it during these exaltations. The rose water is caught in a basin of flowers held by the acolytes, and the flowers are distributed to the faithful at the end of the service.

Although it is one of the major Church Feasts, the Exaltation is always kept as a fast day, because together with the joy of the finding of the Cross, this great "weapon of peace and sign of victory," we are also reminded of the sufferings which our Lord endured in being crucified.

On the Sign of the Cross

The Orthodox Christian ends his evening prayers with a prayer to the Venerable Cross:

"As wax melts from the presence of fire, so let the demons perish from the presence of those who love God and who sign themselves with the Sign of the Cross...."

When properly applied, the sign of the Cross is a most formidable weapon in a Christian's armor.

The power of the Cross in the unseen warfare with the demons is illustrated in countless lives of Saints. One of the most striking examples is found in the life of the holy martyrs, Sts. Cyprian and Justina (Oct. 2). An expert sorcerer before his conversion, St. Cyprian was asked by a pagan youth to use his magic in order to seduce the Christian maid Justina. But even with the help of the prince of demons, the sorcerer was powerless before the maiden who "fled to the defense of the Cross of the Lord and placed its honorable sign on her forehead," causing the demons to depart in shame. This brought Cyprian to his senses, and he railed at the evil one whom he had served for so long: "O

destroyer and deceiver of all.... Now I have discovered your infirmity. For if you fear even the shadow of the Cross and tremble at the name of Christ, then what will you do when Christ Himself comes to you?" Furious at Cyprian's rebuke, the devil began to beat and strangle him. Already scarcely alive, Cyprian "remembered the sign of the Cross, by the power of which Justina had opposed all the demons' power, and he cried out: "O God of Justina, help me!" Then, raising his hand, he made the sign of the Cross, and the devil immediately leaped away from him like an arrow shot from a bow.

The power of the Cross is given to each and every Christian. But just as a soldier must learn to properly wield his weapons in battle, so a warrior of Christ must learn how correctly to make the sign of the Cross. A shield has no effect if carelessly waved about in the air. Likewise, there are many who receive no benefit from the sign of the Cross because they make it mechanically or haphazardly.

Some time ago we were justly taken to task by one of our readers for an all too common inaccuracy in describing the making of the sign of the Cross: "We touch the forehead, the breast..." Our reader pointed out that the first edition of the widely used Orthodox catechism, Archpriest Seraphim Slobodskoy's *Law of God*, contained the same error which was corrected in the second edition with the following explanation: in making the sign of the Cross from forehead to breast and then shoulder to shoulder, "the lower end of the Cross turns out to be shorter than the upper one; i.e., the Cross comes out upside-down." Man thereby inverts the Cross of Christ "to which only the demons rejoice." The Holy Fathers taught that the sign of the Cross should be made by touching first the brow (the forehead), marking the upper part of the cross, secondly the womb (the stomach), marking the lower part of the cross, thirdly the right frame (shoulder) and fourthly the left frame, representing from end to end the horizontal bar of the cross.

This is not to say that the correct external formation of the sign of the Cross of itself carries the power to wound demons, it must be made with faith. St. John of Kronstadt cautions: "In order that the unbelieving heart should not think that the sign of the Cross and the name of Christ act miraculously by themselves, apart from, and independently of Christ Himself, this same Cross and name perform no miracles until I see Jesus Christ with the eyes of my heart...and believe with my whole heart all that it has accomplished for our salvation."

The Cross, once a tool of death, has become a means to life, an instrument of our salvation; it gives strength to resist temptation, to refrain from gossip or harsh words; it dispels fear. If we learn to use the Cross effectively, we shall come through experience to understand the Apostle's words:

"But God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2019 September Schedule of Services

September 8: Nativity of the Theotokos

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

September 14 : Saturday - Exaltation of the Holy Cross

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

September 15: Sunday after Holy Cross

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

September 22: 1st Sunday of Luke

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*

September 29: 2nd Sunday of Luke

- † 9:00 a.m. - *Orthros*
- † 10:00 a.m. - *Divine Liturgy*



“Mystagogy” Resource Center

-By John Sanidopoulos

If one was to attend our Orthodox Services during great lent, they would immediately notice the emphasis we put in prayer and spiritual watchfulness. A great deal of effort and struggle is needed in order to properly prepare so one can experience the great mystery of the Holy Resurrection. Mr. John Sanidopoulos has been working for years in building his blog with hundreds of articles and translations of writings by current Orthodox Theologians and the Saints of our Church. Please take the time to refer to this treasure chest of knowledge so we can strengthen our faith in God .

<http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2011/03/great-lent-resource-page.html>

GREEK SCHOOL

HAS JOIN JOINED OUR PARISH MINISTRY LIST

We are very excited to announce that our parish is starting its Greek School program again. Do not miss out on the opportunity to learn our beautiful Greek Language.

Presbytera Efstathia will be teaching the class. She will be using various resources and teaching styles to make learning Greek fun for the youth. Along with grammar, the students will learn poems, various traditional songs, and cultural dance.

We will begin the school year on **Saturday, September 14th** from 10:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Classes will be held every Saturday in our classrooms until late spring. Keep in mind that some classes might need to be rescheduled due to Presbytera's availability and feast day liturgies.

To cover the cost of the program's expenses, we are going to have a \$50 per child registration fee.

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!

BLESSING OF THE CLASSROOMS & BACKPACKS



Come and join us on **September 8th** as Father blesses the classrooms and the backpacks of our Youth. May our children have a blessed New Year in school!

**YOUTH MINISTRY ANNUAL REGISTRATION
&
BEGINNING-OF-THE YEAR YOUTH BARBEQUE**



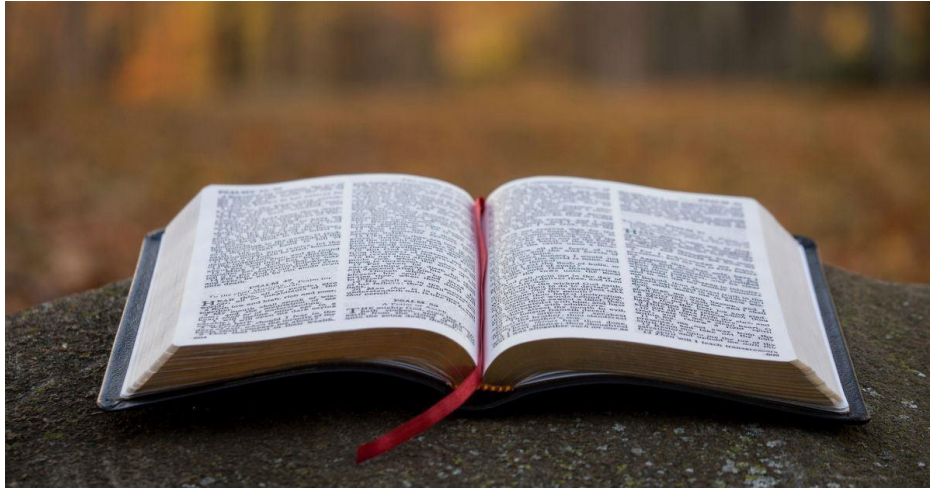
JOIN US ON **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH** FOR OUR YOUTH
MINISTRY REGISTRATION.

THE MINISTRIES FOR THIS YEAR ARE SUNDAY SCHOOL,
GREEK SCHOOL, AND ALTAR BOY.

THERE WILL BE FORMS TO FILL OUT AND WE WILL BE
COLLECTING THE REGISTRATION FEE FOR THE GREEK SCHOOL.
TO KICK OFF THE SEASON, WE WILL HAVE A DELICIOUS
BARBEQUE FOR ALL THE PARISHIONERS.

COME ENJOY OUR SWING SET AND SLIDE, BASKETBALL HOOP,
AND PING PONG TABLE.

ORTHOPRAXIA BOOK CLUB SESSION



WE ARE EXCITED THAT THE ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR IS FINALLY HERE. THAT MEANS OUR CLASSROOMS WILL BE ONCE AGAIN FULL WITH CHILDREN AND LEARNING. IT IS ALSO THE TIME THAT FATHER STARTS THE BOOK CLUB SESSION.

BECAUSE IT IS THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR, FATHER WILL BE STARTING OFF BY TEACHING THE **GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN**. THIS IS THE GOSPEL THAT BEGINS WITH ***"IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD."***

COME JOIN US AT THE CHURCH HALL ON **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH** AT 7:00 P.M. WE WILL HAVE COFFEE/HOT TEA AND SOME PASTRIES. SEE YOU THEN!

Paint n' Sip Night

Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella Greek Orthodox Church
presents...

It's 1st Paint Night

Friday, September 27, 2019

\$35.00 per person
(all materials included)

from 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Follow an Easy Step-by-Step
Painting Demonstration in a
Comfortable Environment
&
Leave With Your Own Masterpiece!
No Experience Necessary!



Limited Seating!

Pre-registration and payment

REQUIRED by

contacting Christina at
cvarkarota@gmail.com

Sts. Mary Magdalene and Markella G.O.C., 3714 Dublin Rd, Darlington, MD 21034

www.stsmm.org • 410-457-0303

"OI LEVENDES" PARISH MEN'S CLUB



HEY GUYS, ARE YOU UP FOR SOME DELICIOUS FOOD AND GREAT FELLOWSHIP? WELL, IF YOU SAID YES, JOIN US AT **STEELEFISH GRILL** ON **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD** AT 7PM.

NEW AND IMPROVED PARISH WEBSITE

Sts. Mary Magdalene and
Markella Greek Orthodox
Church

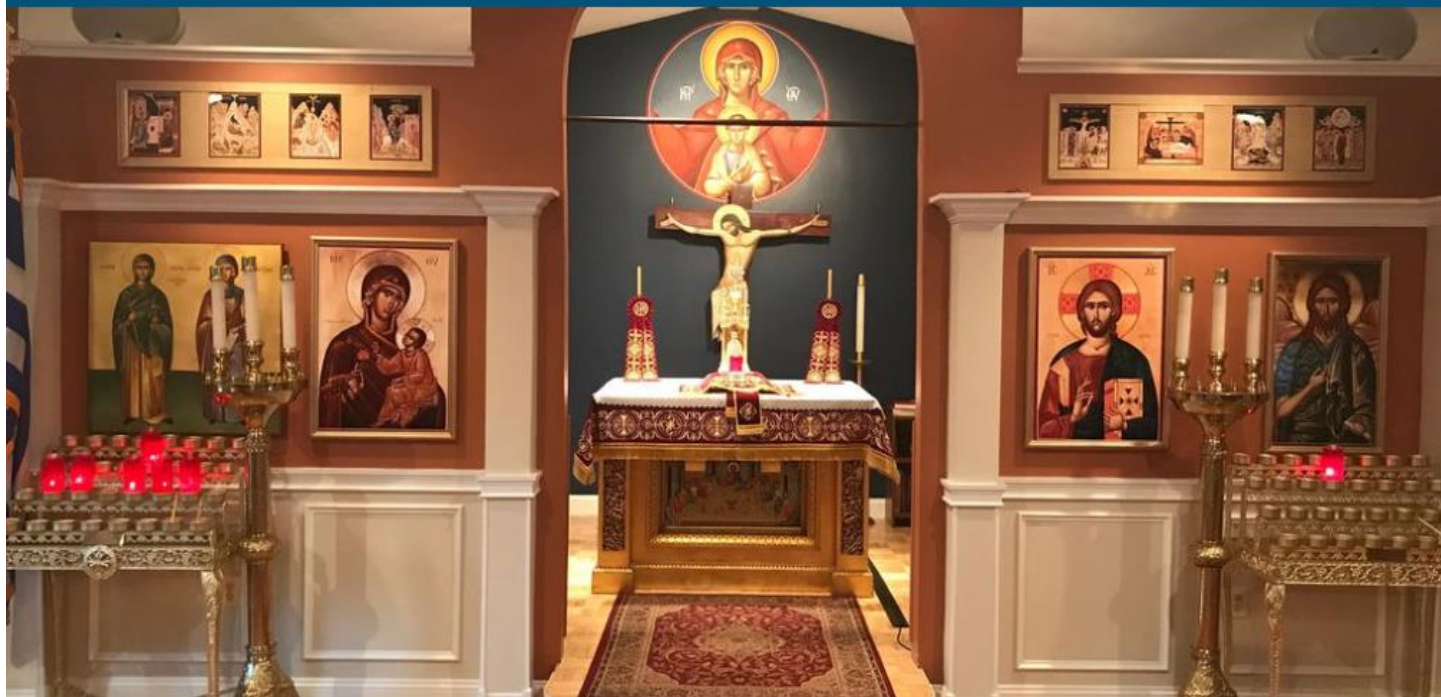
[HOME](#)

[OUR PARISH](#) ▾

[OUR FAITH](#) ▾

[CALENDAR](#)

[MORE](#) ▾



WE HAVE UPDATED OUR PARISH WEBSITE. CHECK OUT THE
LATEST UPDATES ON THE CALENDAR AND CHURCH
RESOURCES.

2019 PLEDGED STEWARDS

Alatzas, George & Rene

Alatzas, Triffon & Stacia

Alivizatos, Asimina & Karl, Robert

Alsup, Andrew & Vasilias

Bahadouris - Walters, Demetra

Babiak, Christopher & Leslie

Batis, Nikolaos & Maria

Batsis, Meropi & Komninos Psaros

Batsis, Nick & Nomiki

Bilis, Amalia

Bontzos, Stylianos & Kalliopi

Butterworth, Greg & Kalia

Caprinolo, Lee & Mary

Cioloa, Bogdan & Anca

Conway, Joseph & Jennifer

Demedis, Olympia

Dermatis, Minas & Panagiota

Diamandaras, Helen

Englesson, Jeanette

Fafalios, Ava

Fokianos, Konstantinos & Maria

Giannaras, Chris

Giannas, Apostolos & Maria

Giannas, Erene

Giannas Stylanos & Maria

Giannas, Yianni

Gikas, John & Lola **

Gyoni, Llambros & Kaliopi **

Harris, Christina

Harris, Gus & Jacklyn **

Hondrelis, Padelis & Effie **

Hyde, Michael & Maryann

Kaitis, Dr. Angela

Kalamaras, Efstatis & Milicent

Kaliakoudas, Evangelos & Eleni

Kaminaris Gus & Fotini

Kanaras, Louis & Eleni

Kanaras, Thomas & Penny

Karas, Aimee

Karas, Andy

Karas, Bethany Anne

Karas, Daphne **

Karas, John & Belinda

Karas, Katie

Karas, Michael & Linda

Karas, Peter & Kim

Karas, Scott

Karas, Steven **

Karellas, Eugenia

Kechagias, John & Noni

Kinder, William & Michelle

Kioutas, Nick & Shellie

Konstant, Eugenia

Konstant, Gus

Kornias, Christos & Irene

Kougianos, Alex **

Kougianos, Dionisios & Argiro **

Kramer, Bernie & Marsha

Logothetis, Nikolaos & Maria

Mayer, Francis & Maria

Mimaros, Dimitrios & Argie

Mojarrad, Deanna

Nikas, George & Diane

Nikitaras, Andreas & Nicole **

Nikitaras, Spiro

Pappas, Basil & Linda

Perdikakis, George & Zoe **

Pikounis Emmanuel & Helen

Plevrakis, Fr. Elefterios & Esther

Prapas, Spiros

Rahaniotis, Takis & Ioanna

Rajewski, Leonard & Anastasia

Saliaris, Panagiotis & Evangelia

Sarris, Gregory

Sarris, Sam

Sitaras, Dr. Peter & Diane

Stakias, Stellios & Tina

Stavrou, George & Tina

Stavrou, Stamatios

Steber, Christopher

Steber, Paula

Stelato III, James **

Sudeck, Virginia

Tillman, Ezra

Trikoglou, Carole

Tsambikos, Irene

Tsiatsoulis, Leonidas & Eirini Anastasiou **

Varkarota, Christina

Yiannouris, Ioannis & Shawn

Total 2019 Stewards: **89**

Number of New Stewards for 2019 (**): **12**

Pledged: **\$69,670.00** / Collected: **\$54,835.00**

Outstanding Balance: **\$14,835.000**

Average Stewardship Pledge: **\$ 782.81**