

# Desert Springs

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Newsletter of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral

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Rev. Alexander Eliades  
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Monday–Friday, 9:00am–3:00pm

**Sunday Worship**

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9:30am Divine Liturgy

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The 25th of each month

**Sunday Bulletin Deadline**

Wednesdays, 12 noon

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## Attention Organizations:

Please check the listings on this page and confirm that the information is correct. Email is the default contact type, but listings can be changed to text or phone if preferred. Email any changes to both the Office at [AdminAssist@holytrinityphx.org](mailto:AdminAssist@holytrinityphx.org) and Kristen at [kristen.vasilarakos@outlook.com](mailto:kristen.vasilarakos@outlook.com). **It is the organization's responsibility** to inform Heidi, Yvonne, and Kristen of any updates to your listing.



# A Message from Father Apostolos

## The Bells of Christmas Day



The American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was acquainted with tragedy. Rising to prominence in the years before the American Civil War, Longfellow's gifts were skillfully deployed to assuage his own grief of personal loss and that of the nation writhing under the lash of destructive violence. Twin catastrophes struck the Longfellow home when his beloved 2nd wife of 18 years perished in a house fire, and when his eldest son, Charles, enlisted against his father's wishes in the Union army.

Among the many poetic contributions of Longfellow's career, the carol "I heard the Bells on Christmas Day," published in February of 1865, retains its place in American hearts. The carol begins with a hopeful note;

*I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
and mild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

*And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

But the wrenching impact of a country at war with itself cannot be ignored as Longfellow describes the mockery being made of any appeal to the Prince of Peace whose birth is celebrated at Christmas.

*It was as if an earthquake rent  
The hearth-stones of a continent,  
And made forlorn  
The households born  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!*

*And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said;  
"For hate is strong,  
And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"*

Indeed, hatred, biases, bigotries, and divisions seems unassailably strong and deeply entrenched, now as then, and violate the sacrifices made by many of our forebears who valiantly served in the US armed forces to neutralize the fetid wells that periodically gush forth such darkness. As we espy the many conflicts raging within and without our nation, we can relate to the lines "*And in despair I bowed my head, 'there is no peace on earth,' I said...*"

And yet, we hear the stirring words of the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ announced by angels to shepherd boys "*Glory to God in the highest, Peace on earth, goodwill to all people.*" Are such words as these just maudlin pleasantries or do they still apply? Jesus comforted His Disciples when He told them, "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*"

Despite such assurances, fear stalks the land as hatreds abound in the breathtaking idiocy of public discourse.



# A Message from Father Apostolos, continued

If we read Jesus' words carefully, however, we note the difference between the world's "peace" and the Peace He gives us. The Beatitudes include the blessing *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God."* Peace, then is not the mere absence of conflict, but the positive presence of the Divine. Indeed, Peace is included in the spiritual gifts listed by St. Paul; *"But the Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, patience, gentleness, and self-control."*

Upon reading this list, we are struck with the realization that these Divine Gifts are frequently disparaged nowadays as weak, outmoded, and insufficient. The *Pax Romana*, or the "Peace of Rome," was experienced very differently by those who wielded violent authority and those against whom it was wielded. Yet, Jesus promises us that even as the world, having rejected Him, or - worse, having crafted a false "christ" in its own shattered image - shudders under the consequence of this rejection, we can still walk in His peace.

*"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."* Our peace rests in the sure knowledge of how the story ends. If the summation of our every hope and dream is mundane and earthbound, then anxiety and dread are the logical response to the events that cast long shadows over humanity today. But as citizens of the *"city not made by human hands, eternal in the Heavens,"* we can live in the grace of the Prophet Isaiah's encouragement; *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is fixed on Thee because he trusteth in Thee."*

Just as Peter strolled across the roiling surface of the Sea of Galilee in the storm, his eyes fixed on Jesus Christ in the deep darkness, we too can walk on the waves amidst the tempest so long as we keep our eyes on Him. And, like Peter, we will begin to sink under the waves if, instead, we look away from Him and fix our gaze on the waves. Likewise, if we cast our eyes back to Sodom and Gomorrah as did the wife of Lot, for which glance she was - as God had warned - turned into a pillar of salt, there is a price to be paid.

Finding shelter in any storm is essential. Coherent souls do not remain outdoors in the gale, but seek shelter and safety as lightning strikes. The Holy Church of Jesus Christ is our shelter and to remain outside this shelter in the teeth of the storm now upon us bespeaks an astonishing lack of coherence and sanity. We can rest secure in the embrace of Mother Church as devoted children in the healing atmosphere of prayer.

Wadsworth's carol finishes on a hopeful note as he recalls that God reigns supreme and His position on the Everlasting Throne is secure. Peace will win out in the end after wayward humanity has exhausted itself in pursuit of conflict and self-flagellation.

*"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The Wrong shall fail, The Right prevail, With peace on earth, good-will to men."*

May we embrace this season of the Coming of the Prince of Peace in positive and sensible ways. Unplug! Filter out the many sources of contrived and curated "news" which only unsettle us and keep us locked in a dreadful space of dispirited hopelessness. Give yourself and your family the gift of Peace this Christmas. Choose not to be manipulated by the algorithm of Meta and Google. Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote "Sooner or later, we will all sit down to a banquet of consequences." Quote so. But we need not be spectators to this grim spectacle.

*"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; the wrong will fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, goodwill to men."*



# From Our Congregation

November 24, 2024

Good morning, my name is Daniel Valenzuela. Fathers Apostolos and Alexander has asked me to speak with you all about stewardship today. I want to begin by letting you know that I do not plan on saying anything new about stewardship, I want to mostly describe the amazing things that I have witnessed as a newer member of this community that can be attributed to stewardship.

As some of you may remember, I started attending Holy Trinity back in 2015 when I returned from university in Salem, Oregon. I was welcomed into this parish with open-arms and was Chrismated by Father Apostolos Hill in 2017 on the Sunday of the Paralytic. The love I have experienced from being here is overwhelming and continues to remind me of God's presence in my life. Holy Trinity is a vibrant community that has grown substantially since the Pandemic restrictions ended. We are truly blessed by God to have families born into the church, stay in the church, and seek out our church in their quest to find, be healed, and know Christ.

Last week, I was speaking with Anna at the Holy Cross Seminary Table in our beloved hall, and she was distracted by all the sights, she would periodically stop and laugh at the children running around and playing boisterously. After we depart from peace from the Liturgy, we are living out our faith and being liturgical in how we live and relate to others. Anna asked me if it is like this every week. I told her that over the last few years it has, and it has been a blessing to see so many people in our church services, people volunteer there time to support valuable ministries, and all the people that stay for coffee hour. I remind myself not to take any of this for granted. To be in the presence of people practicing their faith in a meaningful way and partaking in the sacramental life is an inspiration to me and helps me stay committed to the spiritual journey and to embrace my cross.

To cut to the point, we are a eucharistic community by nature of being Christian and a universal church. We are Holy, Catholic, & Apostolic as the creed states. We give thanks, by giving back what we've received, whether that is our time, our talent, and our treasure. All the amazing opportunities for fellowship and services are made possible by the financial contributions and sacrifices you all make daily. The Cathedral refresh, which was the product of stewardship and a community decision, was a necessary way for us to preserve this space for the worship of God and to house the future generations of Orthodox Christians, who will continue that legacy.

I have a lot to learn from you all about stewardship. The contributions I see people at this church make inspires me to do better than I did in previous years. People in this church remind me I belong here and they care for my soul. With that being said, it is clear that everyone belongs here, and when we know that we belong and are loved, we want to give whatever we can because we are inspired to do so; we do not do it out of envy or jealousy, but out of love. So, giving money is great, 10% is what we've been told as a standard, but let that percentage not deter us from all the ways we can give back in Thanksgiving for what we are blessed to have. Let us not take for granted what we have, especially in this time of the year. The ability to worship as often as we do, to enjoy the bountiful opportunities to engage in fellowship, and the programs created for your kids to one day be active stewards of this church community, should inspire us all to want to give as much as we can. Please continue to support this church through your stewardship. Thank you, for giving me the opportunity to speak this morning.



Andrew Pappas  
First Speaker



Daniel Valenzuela,  
Second Speaker &  
Article Author





# Stewardship

By Sandy Meris



## STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY AND GRATITUDE LUNCHEON Sunday, December 8th

Please join us for our annual Stewardship Sunday as we gather as a church family to complete our Stewardship commitments for 2025 and celebrate with a FREE Gratitude Luncheon in the Community Center.

### “YOUR OWN FROM YOUR OWN”

The theme for Stewardship 2025 is “Your Own from Your Own,” from the Divine Liturgy as we offer back to God that which He has given us. He receives our humble offering of bread and wine and returns them to us as His Body and Blood in Holy Communion.

### HOW DO I PREPARE FOR STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY?

**Step 1:** Open the Stewardship mailer you will receive at the end of the month. Read the letter and review the pledge card.

**Step 2:** Discuss with your spouse or family and prayerfully consider your 2025 pledge. We ask that you please increase your pledge over last year by at least 1%.

**Step 3:** Complete the paper pledge card and mail to the church office or bring to Stewardship Sunday to be blessed at the altar.

OR

Complete the online Pledge Card on the Holy Trinity website.

**Step 4:** Update your ShelbyNext account to accurately reflect your 2025 pledge if you use our auto pay online payment portal.

## Easy Stewardship Sign Up!

**WeShare is easy!**  
Go to  
[www.holytrinityphx.org](http://www.holytrinityphx.org)  
and then click on  
**Stewardship.**



# Stewardship, continued

By Sandy Meris

## STEWARDSHIP 101 FAQs



### **Q: Why do I need to fill out a new pledge card every year?**

**A:** This is a question I get asked a lot by both new and established parishioners. While it may seem repetitive to some, there is a method to the madness I promise you!

First, it's important to understand that this is standard practice at most churches and definitely the established protocol at all Greek Orthodox churches. This is an expectation set forth not by Holy Trinity, but by the Archdiocese.

Why is this an Archdiocese protocol, you may ask? Because it is important that once a year we take a moment to reflect and take stock on our financial commitment to our church.

Our circumstances change. We may move, change jobs, start a family, become empty nesters or retire and thus, our financial situation changes as well. Our annual commitment should reflect this.

### **Q: How much should I pledge?**

**A: The Bible is clear and asks us to tithe which is giving 10% of our income to the church.** We lovingly ask that each of us give our "fair share." If you can afford to give more we hope you feel called to do so. For those who are unable then we ask that you give what you can. Each year, it is important that we take a moment to truly reflect on our financial commitment and give sacrificially. This is one of the most significant aspects of why our Stewardship is done on an annual basis.

### **Q: Why do I need to be a Steward?**

**A: In order to be a "steward in good standing" one must complete a pledge card each year and make a financial contribution toward that pledge.**

One must be a "Steward in good standing" in order to vote during a parish assembly, run for a seat on the parish council or be an officer in a church ministry.

The Archdiocese understands that when we are invested financially in our parish we are more active and involved.

***"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."***  
**Matthew 6:21**

### **Q: Is Stewardship just about financial giving?**

**A: Stewardship is made up of three components - time, talent and treasure.** In order to be fully engaged and committed to our parish we are called to give not just financially but also of our time and lending our talents to the church when and where they are needed. When we are regularly attending services, active in the ministries and life of the parish and practicing sacrificial financial giving, we then realize the full benefits of being an Orthodox Christian.

# House of Stewards

As of 12/01/2024

Calli Allman  
Alexandra (Alex) Anagnopoulos  
Dina Anagnopoulos  
Nikki Anest  
John & Sandy Annos  
Carla Antypas  
Elaine Apostle  
Argyro Apostolou  
Chris Athens  
Christina Bakavelou & Chris Perry  
Constantine & Eleni Balanis  
Joanna Bankson  
Crisanne & Scott Bansner  
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Dean Bass & Liz Beckman  
Sam & Heidi Bass  
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Chris & Rita Bruskas  
Kristen Bruskas  
Connie Burkhart  
Betty Carras  
Kathy Carras  
Dawn & Casey Cartier  
Michael Cartier  
Chad & Amanda Carver  
Haralambo Charitou  
Laurel Charnas-Schiller & Todd Schiller  
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Jamie Contes  
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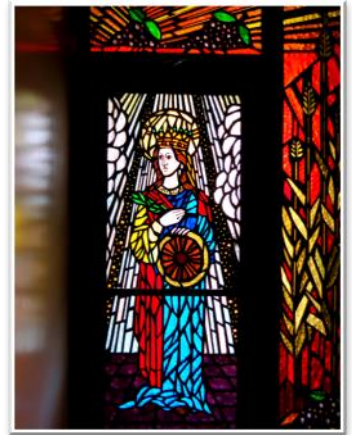
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Terry & Chris Seretis  
Lainie Seretis  
George & Traci Sgouros  
John Siavelis  
Robert & Donna Sioles  
Christopher & Marilyn Sonier  
Elyse Sioles & Robert Stamm  
George & Evi Skintzis  
Elias & Phyllis Skoubis  
Peter Skoubis  
David & Alisha Solheim  
Constantin Solomon  
Angelo & Marie Spanos  
Leo & Rachel Speliopoulos  
James A & Christina Speros  
James L & Karen Speros  
Vasilios & Diana Speros  
Jim & Kathryn Stamadianos  
Nitsa Stamataletos  
Andrew & Christine Stamatis  
Jonathan Stamatis  
Jimmy & Lisa Sterio  
Tristan & Alana Stoutenburg  
Robert Stuart  
Steven & Jean Talkington  
Despina Taularides  
William & Rebecca Taularides  
Nick & Effie Theodore  
Gus Theodoropoulos  
Jim Thomas  
Deac. John & Diak. Mary Thrasher  
Andrew Touvannas  
Nathaniel Tropea  
Thaddeus & Katherine Tropea  
Basilios & Mary Tsakiris  
Stacy & Gerri Tsantilas  
Stella Tsantilas  
Dean & Breenda Tseunis  
Dimitrios Tsioutsiopoulos  
Matthew & Eva Turgeon  
Costa & Koko Tzavaras  
Daniel Valenzuela  
Kristen Vasilarakos  
Argyro Vasquez  
Michael Vaughn & Audrey Lewter  
Scott & Terri Vaughn  
Stacy Vaughn  
Leah Venetis  
Peter & Maria Vlahos  
Andrew & Sandy Vlahoulis  
Zach Vouros  
Steve & Mary Vrahas  
Kenneth & Angela Walker  
Colin & Paula Walsh  
Paulina & Doug Watson  
Zach & Mary Kladis Wilhelm  
Connie M. Williams  
Dan Williams  
Anne & William Wilson  
Mike & Christina Wombacher  
Richard & Katina Wood  
Joseph & Athina Yadush  
Zachariah Yoon & Elizabeth Hong  
John & Andreanna Zafiroopoulos  
Anthony & Karen Zaman  
George & Katherine Zannis  
Jerry & Amanda Zannis  
Dimitrios & Eugenia Zannis  
Zella Zannis  
Evangelia Zikos  
Dimitrios Zistatsis  
Eleanna Zistatsis  
Michael & Christina Zistatsis

## 2024 PLEDGED FAMILIES

We offer you our thanks for your dedication to our parish and your participation in Christ's work of salvation. If you have not filled out a Pledge Card for 2024, please pick one up in the Church Narthex or [visit holytrinityphx.org](http://visit.holytrinityphx.org). If you have filled out a 2024 Pledge Card but your name does not appear on this list, please know any omissions are unintentional. Please call the Church office immediately and we will resolve the situation.

# Holy Trinity's St. Katherine Philoptochos

Kristen Vasilarakos, President



St. Katherine faceted glass icon in the south wing of the Narthex.



**Next Meeting on Thursday,  
December 5, 2024 at 6:00 pm**

**in the Small Hall of the Speros Community Center**



**Below is a highlight of what our chapter supports on a quarterly and yearly basis.** We work tirelessly to ensure that we offer a large *local community footprint* in addition to Metropolis and National causes.

#### FOCUS

- HTC - Circle of Angels
- HTC - Benevolent Fund
- HTC - Scholarship Fund
- Holy Cross/Hellenic College
- IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities)
- Local - Arizona Free Arts for Abused Children
- Local - Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation
- Local - Arizona Women's Recovery Center
- Local - Circle the City
- Local - St. Joseph the Worker
- Local - Thrive
- Local - Wheel Chair Drive
- Metropolis - Emergency Relief Fund
- Metropolis - Kids'N'Cancer
- Metropolis - Women's Wellness
- National - Autism Fund
- National - Retired Clergy Fund
- National - Sisterhood of Presvyteras
- National - Social Services Fund/Cancer
- National - Social Services Fund/Major Illness
- National - St. Basil's Academy
- OCF (Orthodox Christian Fellowship)
- OCMC (Orthodox Christian Mission Center)

## What is Philoptochos?

The translation is Philo = Friend and Ptochos = Poor. It is literally "Friend of the Poor".

The Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos has 59 parish chapters and over 4,000 members who are motivated by the words of the Lord, "I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me... inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."

# Holy Trinity's St. Katherine Philoptochos

## Collecting for St. Nicholas Ranch on December 8

Philoptochos will have collection trays in the Narthex and after the Liturgy on **Sunday, December 8 for St. Nicholas Ranch.**

This tray is one of six collections organized by Philoptochos each year in support of Orthodox causes. Please make checks payable to "Philoptochos".



## Check in on a Parishioner—Circle of Angels

Do you have a family member or friend who has not been able to come to church lately? Please let us know! Call or Text Julie at 850-225-4978.

## Coffee in the Conference Room



Tuesdays at 9:30 am

For those with a flexible schedule:

Join us for coffee and talk. Included within the social are activities related to Philoptochos' Circle of Angels, other chapter support, sometimes church office support, and just plain hanging out with friends. We'd love to see you!



## Circle of Angels

The Circle of Angels led a team at a Tuesday Coffee in decorating the bags used to distribute tsoureki and koulourakia to members of our community.





# Holy Trinity's St. Katherine Philoptochos

## Bottle Light Sale

Philoptochos continues our fundraising efforts by offering decorated champagne and wine bottles filled with lights. **Did you know that the *all* the champagne bottles decorated are from champagne poured at previous Philoptochos events?**

We will again be selling the bottles at our upcoming Christmas Bake Sale on **December 15, 2024**.



## Projects to Benefit Local Charities

On Sunday, November 3, 2024, members of Philoptochos gathered in the Lounge following Divine Liturgy to complete projects benefitting **St. Joseph the Worker, Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation**, our own parishioners, and seminarian Geoffrey Dyer. *Thank you to all who donated and participated!*



# Holy Trinity's St. Katherine Philoptochos

## Christmas Bake Sale on Sunday, December 15!

All proceeds from our annual Christmas Bake Sale benefit the numerous causes Philoptochos supports!

**Pick up your pre-ordered items here!**

(See **Order Form** on the next page/page 14)

There will be limited tsoureki and koulourakia available for purchase same day—first come, first served in addition to other holiday goodies.



## Philoptochos Room Refresh BIG Thank You!

By Eva Goodman

This summer myself and committee took on the task of doing a re-do for our Philoptochos Room, and transformed it from a storage/catch all room, to a functioning room that will not only continue to be a room to store the needs of our on going committees, but can now be used for smaller meetings for our committees, or a gathering place to work on fundraising activities, or really whatever various activities we would like to do. Having two tables and chairs in there will make it available for us to do just that. I would like to thank the people on this Committee, and they are: Georgia Lipane, Christine Sarantinos, Kathy Tropea, Kalli Schneider, Diana Scaccia, Cathy Keyser. The committee helped out in various ways, as they could, both the ones that could be there physically, or their support via texting with ideas and virtual pats in the backs to cheer us on.



Thank you to: ① Alex Anagnopoulos, Zoe Pestrivas, and Patty Davis, for helping with the decision making of what to keep, and what to discard. ② Georgia Lipane, helping me box things up for storage. ③ Kalli Schneider, helping me move everything from the Philoptochos Room to the Goya Room. ④ Kalli Schneider, Christine Sarantinos, Georgia Lipane, for Painting the room, and upgrading the electrical sockets. ⑤ Kalli Schneider for helping me get new to us file cabinets and shelving units to replace the super old stuff in the Philoptochos Room. ⑥ Kalli Schneider for helping get lots of stuff to the garbage. ⑦ Julie Karoutas for reaching out to her son, who donated Industrial Carpet, and Installation!! ⑧ Kalli Schneider for helping me get everything out of the Goya Room back into the Philoptochos Room. ⑨ Kalli Schneider for getting stuff from the educational building to the Philoptochos Room. ⑩ Zoe Pestrivas for making and installing the beautiful curtains in the Philoptochos Room. ⑪ Kalli Schneider for the blinds and installation of them. ⑫ My work at U-Haul, that allowed me to bring 2 carts that they no longer needed, so that we could give them a new home. ⑬ Terry Seretis for her donation of a used vacuum cleaner so we have one to use for our room. ⑭ Kalli Schneider for making Labels. ⑮ The Valonis Brothers that helped me get that super heavy glass table out of the room and donated. ⑯ Kalli Schneider for the Green Cushy Chair. ⑰ Kalli Schneider for reinstalling the vent for the air conditioner. ⑱ The Maintenance Committee (Peter Bilitsis) for replacing the door jam so that people can get in and out of the room better, and less chance of tripping. ⑲ Kalli Schneider for the donation of paints and supplies and for anything else I might have missed. ⑳ Eva Goodman, Donation of cleaning supplies to help keep the Philoptochos Room Clean.

I think I got everyone. If I missed someone, I apologize.



# Holy Trinity's St. Katherine Philoptochos



## ST. KATHERINE PHILOPTOCHOS CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE PRE-ORDER FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

### ITEMS AVAILABLE:

TSOUREKI – \$12 each (please specify quantity & type):

\_\_\_\_\_ PLAIN

\_\_\_\_\_ ALMOND

\_\_\_\_\_ SESAME

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

KOULOURLAKIA – \$12 dozen (how many?) \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

BAKLAVA – \$30 per 8" x 8" pan (how many?) \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**GRAND TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

### PAYMENT:

CHECK NO. \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Please make check payable to: **PHILOPTOCHOS**)

CREDIT CARD # \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_ EXP \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please **bring** this completed form to the Community Center every Sunday through December 8, 2024 (check, credit card, or cash)

OR

Mail completed form with check or credit card info to:

**PHILOPTOCHOS BAKE SALE**

5121 E. Villa Rita Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85254

**DEADLINE FOR ORDERS IS DECEMBER 8, 2024**

All orders will be available for pick up on Sunday, **December 15, ONLY** during the Christmas Bake Sale in the Speros Community Center Lounge.

**QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL OR TEXT GEORGIA at 602-291-5911.**



# Poinsettias

Please join us in remembering our beloved family and friends while decorating the Cathedral this Christmas. Forms can be found in the Narthex, as well as weekly emails. Please fill out and deposit in the offering tray or mail to the office by Sunday, December 15, 2024.

## Poinsettia Remembrance Donation

Please join us in remembering our beloved family and friends while decorating the Cathedral this Christmas.

**Donations of \$20 per remembered individual or married couple are appreciated.**

Complete this form and return with your donation to the Church office or enclose in an offering envelope, to place in a collection tray.

**Please provide your order no later than Sunday, December 15, 2024.**

Donor name: \_\_\_\_\_ Donor phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Total donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Questions? Please call the Cathedral office: 602-264-7863 | 1973 E. Maryland, Phoenix, AZ 85016



# Giving Tree

November 17th—December 29th

Let's make the holidays a little brighter by supporting the children of **Child Crisis Arizona**. CCA provides emergency shelter, foster care and adoption, early education services, counseling, classes and workshops to children and families.

Simply clip a cash, gift card or check donation to the Giving Tree in the Narthex. Visit [childcrisisaz.org](http://childcrisisaz.org) to learn more. Please only gift cards from Target, Walmart or Visa.

*Thank you!*



# Sunday School Returns!

We're excited to announce Sunday School classes back in classrooms this Fall! Led by Alexia Panagiotakopoulos as our new director, we have our four "pods" which will be:



- Pre-K-K (located in the Lounge Area)
- 1-4th Grade (located in the Goya Room)
- 5-8th Grade (located in the Conference Room)
- 9-10th Grade (located in the Chapel)

All 11-12 Graders who wish to participate will be assigned a classroom to volunteer in as an assistant teacher.

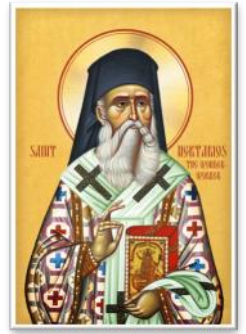
Children will be dismissed after the final Amen in Liturgy and memorials and announcements will be given after the dismissal of the students. Sunday School will be dismissed at 11:30am tentatively until we confirm this is the proper amount of time needed, adjustments may come later and you will be notified.

Email Alexia at our new email:  
[htphxsundayschool@gmail.com](mailto:htphxsundayschool@gmail.com)

REGISTER HERE: [2024-2025 Sunday School Registration \(jotform.com\)](https://www.jotform.com)

# St. Nectarios Books & Beyond

Submitted by Rita Paspayrou  
[stnectariosphx@gmail.com](mailto:stnectariosphx@gmail.com)



# The Children's Garden

## The Children's Garden at Coffee Hour

Used in conjunction with the Pre-K/K class for Sunday School, this area in the Large Hall will be available on Sundays for our little ones to play in and learn together. For any questions or if you're interested in helping please contact Mara Contes [here](#).





# Celebration Committee



## Let's Celebrate!

On the first Sunday of each month, the Celebration Committee organizes a potluck during coffee hour to celebrate all the special events in parishioners' lives and birthdays that take place in that month. Please join us every month to celebrate!

In October, we had a beautiful fall-themed celebration to celebrate Stella Glitsos' 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, Maria Maniatis' 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, Bill and Jean Miller's 68<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and Petra Pappas' baptism. The balloon garland followed a fall color scheme with shades of gold, orange, brown, and creams. Brightly colored foliage, dried corn centerpieces, and gold table overlays completed the décor.

If you or someone you know from the parish is celebrating a baby, birthday, an anniversary milestone, or any other special event, please let the Church Office or the parish Celebration Committee know so that we can celebrate as a community! You can send an email with suggestions and details to: [htcphxevents@gmail.com](mailto:htcphxevents@gmail.com).

If you are interested in volunteering or supporting the Celebration Committee efforts, please email [htcphxevents@gmail.com](mailto:htcphxevents@gmail.com) and/or talk to Terri Alexon or Mary Pardhe!

If you would like to support future Celebration Committee events with a donation, please visit <https://bit.ly/HTphxCC> or put "Celebration Committee" on the memo line of checks made out to the Cathedral.





# Celebration Committee

## December Birthdays

**HAPPY Birthday**

**Debbie Babakitis**  
**Christopher Bass**  
**Nicholas Beaty**  
**Anthony Boyd**  
**Helen Bruno**  
**Kathrene Carras**  
**Anna Chimonas**  
**Harriet Chotras**  
**Dina Chronis**  
**Andrew Contes**  
**James S. Contes**  
**Angeliki Cooper**  
**Talia Curtis**  
**Dimitrios Deligiannis**  
**Karla Delord**  
**Nathan Delord**  
**Bill C. DeMoss**  
**John DeMoss**  
**Petros Economopoulos**  
**Fr. Alexander Eliades**  
**William Ezo**  
**Andi Furlis**  
**Daniel Fraenkel**  
**Celeste Francis**  
**Dinos Georges**  
**Patty Giannopoulos**  
**Aidan Haugen**  
**Dan Horvath**  
**Steven Huff**  
**Roya Kamali**  
**Ella Kamboukos**  
**Pete Karegeannes Jr**  
**Kelley Katsanos**  
**Chris Katsenes**  
**Kyriaki Kentimenos**  
**William King**

**Matina Kokalis**  
**Hendrix Lopez**  
**Efia Mallas**  
**Pete Marudas**  
**Angela Mead**  
**Colton Mead**  
**Effie Mousses**  
**Maria Nicholas**  
**AnnaMarie Nieblas**  
**Sophia Panagiotakopoulos**  
**Stephanie Papadopoulos**  
**Olga Papamatheakis**  
**Danain Papamatheakis**  
**Spyros Papaspyrou**  
**Rita Papaspyrou**  
**William Petsas**  
**Sophia Philippis**  
**Alexi Rentzis**  
**Gregory Sackos**  
**Leonard Salvaggio**  
**Kalliopi Schneider**  
**Diane Sedlacek**  
**Traci Sgouros**  
**Jonathan Sgouros**  
**Oliver Solheim**  
**Christina S. Speros**  
**Christine Stamatis**  
**Jane Steffens**  
**Wendy Tsaninos**  
**Gerri Tsantilas**  
**Christina Tzavellas**  
**Douglas Watson**  
**Zachary Wilhelmi**  
**William Wilson**  
**Jerry Zannis**  
**Isidoros Zannis**

**December**

## Communal Cooking Event

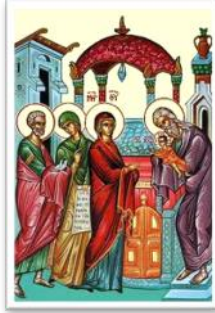
In September, the Communal Cooking crew led by Phillip Panagiotoglou served scrambled eggs, breakfast potatoes, buttermilk biscuits, sausages/bacon, watermelon, cake, ice cream, and a beautiful rice pudding by Jarmeen Constantine. If you are interested in helping out or joining us for future cooking events, please email [htcphxevents@gmail.com](mailto:htcphxevents@gmail.com). In addition, please feel free to bring a dish to share with the community on the first Sunday of every month!



# Our Church Family

## 40 Day Blessings

“One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.”  
Psalm 27:4



11/10/2024

Adeline, daughter of Eva & Matthew Turgeon  
*God's Blessings be upon her.*

11/24/2024

Lukas, son of Natalia & Elias Lingos  
*God's Blessings be upon him.*

## Baptisms

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”  
Galatians 3:27



11/02/2024

Violet, daughter of Sara & Alexi Rentzis  
Godparents: Jennifer Rentzis & Zach Vouros  
*God's Blessings be upon her.*

11/08/2024

Sebastian, son of Aphrodite & Theofilos Asimos  
Godparents: Stavroula & Panagiotis Kokonas  
*God's Blessings be upon him.*

11/15/2024

Gavin Hite  
Godparent: John Kostaras  
*God's Blessings be upon him.*

11/15/2024

Camden, son of Andriana & Gavin Hite  
Godparent: Basil Kostaras  
*God's Blessings be upon him.*



In this time more than ever we need prayer. For those not able to come to the Cathedral, we have set up this ability to light a candle virtually! Please click the link above and follow the instructions. Enter your name and the names of those you wish prayed for in the PayPal “Notes” section, and Father Apostolos or Father Alexander will light a candle and say a prayer for you.



# Our Church Family

## Weddings

“Oh Lord our God, crown them with glory and honour.”



11/16/2024

Andriana & Gavin Kostaras  
Sponsor: Basil Kostaras  
*God's Blessings be upon them.*

11/23/2024

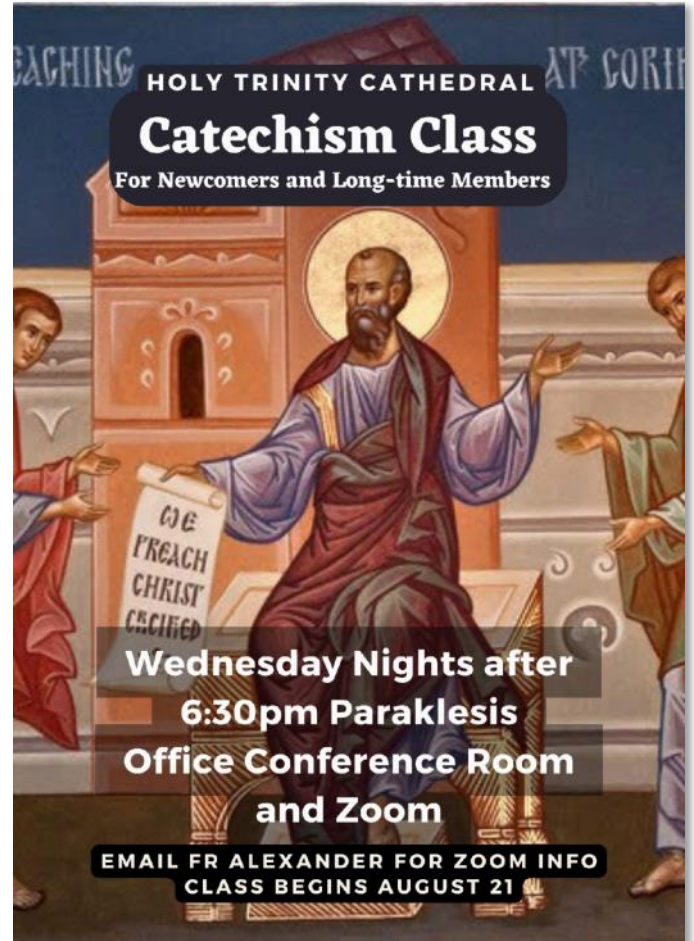
Audrey Lewter & Michael Vaughn  
Sponsor: Staci Vaughn  
*God's Blessings be upon them.*



# Annual Turkey Bowl



# Fall Catechism Class

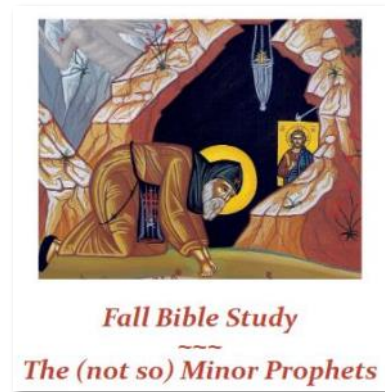


# Parish Assembly - Official Notification

Our Parish Assembly and budget meeting will be held **Sunday, December 15** following Divine Liturgy. All Stewards in good standing are eligible to vote. Please call the Cathedral office if you have any questions.



# Fall Bible Study



# Catechumen Blessing

November 17, 2024



Our Fall Bible Study series will focus on the Minor Prophets of the Old Testament. These brave saints withstood the opposition of their countrymen as they delivered the messages God gave them to proclaim. The studies occur Sunday evenings at 5:00pm via ZOOM only. Please reply to [papoulihill@gmail.com](mailto:papoulihill@gmail.com) for link.



# Upcoming Events

## METROPOLIS YOUNG ADULT WINTER RETREAT

LAKE TAHOE  
MLK WEEKEND  
JANUARY 17-20, 2025  
WWW.GOSFYOUTH.ORG

## FAMILY WINTER CAMP

Snow Play | Campfires | Family Prayer  
Monastery Visits | Arts & Crafts | Hikes & more!

December 27-30, 2024  
St. Nicholas Ranch & Retreat Center  
Dunlap, California  
www.gosfyouth.org

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

# Essay Contest

The St. Photios National Shrine 2024 Essay Contest is made possible through the generosity of The Kathie D'Anna Charitable Fund

*The St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine is a living memorial to the first Greek settlers on the American continent and to all immigrants whose love of freedom and desire for a better life brought them to the New World.*

Archbishop Iakovos, of blessed memory, looked to St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine to provide a means to honor the faith and culture of the Greek Orthodox immigrants of 1768 when articulating its mission "to witness the Orthodox faith, share the Hellenic culture and honor the memory of the Greek colonists of 1768."

He acknowledged that in America, at the time, "immigrant families lose their ethnic identity by the second generation, as they meld into the social fabric of the United States."

### 2024 Essay Contest Theme

*The St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine stands as a beacon of strength and hope to the Greek Orthodox people.*

*How can such a witness to Orthodoxy serve as an anchor and a beacon to our youth?*

#### Evaluation of Essays

Judges take into consideration the following:

- The essay is interesting and inspirational; focused and engaging
- Clarity of the essay introduction and whether or not the thesis presentation draws the reader into the essay
- Developed paragraphs with relevant points and examples
- Use of proper grammar and flow of ideas
- Artistic use of language
- Source documentation and bibliography

**Winners of each category will receive an award of \$1,000**

*All will receive a Certificate of Participation from The Archbishop of America*

#### Additional Details

- Open to all U.S. Orthodox Students 13-19 years of age
- Essay submissions deadline: December 6, 2024
- PDF Format
- Email to [info@stphotios.com](mailto:info@stphotios.com)
- Minimum 950 words  
Maximum 1,050 words
- Submission must include on separate page:
  - Author's name
  - Date of birth
  - U.S. mailing address
  - Email Address
  - Phone number
  - Home parish name, city and state
- Winners will be chosen from the following categories: 13-15 year old participants  
16-19 year old participants

*All essays become property of St. Photios National Shrine and may be shared publicly*

St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine  
41 St. George Street  
Saint Augustine, Florida  
904.829.8205 ~ [www.stphotios.org](http://www.stphotios.org)



## What YOU Can Do to Help Visitors Feel Welcome



Have you noticed new faces? We've had many visitors stop by lately. Some are Orthodox and visiting from other Parishes, some are returning to Orthodoxy after a long time away, and some are coming to check out Orthodoxy for the very first time. No matter how they come to us, let's make sure we say Hello!

"Welcome! I don't believe we've met yet. My name is (your name)" is a great start. Offer to walk with them to the Coffee Social. A personal connection goes far!



# Greek School

Irene  
Dartoozos  
Mackos,  
Director  
[phxgreeksschool@gmail.com](mailto:phxgreeksschool@gmail.com)



Are you ready to learn Greek- Classes start in November!

To sign up or learn more, visit our website [www.greeklanguagekitchen.com](http://www.greeklanguagekitchen.com)  
Look forward to welcoming you to our Greek Language Classes and hoping you explore the beauty and richness of the Greek Language!

## Church Website

Have you checked out the website lately?

[www.holytrinityphx.org](http://www.holytrinityphx.org)

Events • Services • Photos • Calendar • Stewardship



## Desert Diamonds

Julie Karoutas  
for senior parishioners and  
their guests:



Dear Desert Diamonds & Friends

We enjoyed attending the Serb Fest on  
November 3, 2024!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Julie Karoutas  
Email: [juliekaroutas@gmail.com](mailto:juliekaroutas@gmail.com)

## Scholarship Opportunity

Scholarship and internship opportunities! \$250,000 in scholarships. The application, criteria, requirements, and guidelines are available at [www.panhellenicsf.org](http://www.panhellenicsf.org). Applications are due January 31, 2025.

**SCHOLARSHIP AND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES!**

**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**  
2024-2025

**\$250,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS**

Applications are due **January 31, 2025**

The application, criteria, requirements, and guidelines are available at [www.panhellenicsf.org](http://www.panhellenicsf.org)



**NEED AN INTERN?**

**RECRUIT INTERNS THROUGH THE PANHELLENIC SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION!**

**Discover New Talent:** Tap into a pool of skilled young professionals ready to bring their perspectives to your company.

**Make a Lasting Impact:** Help shape the next generation of professionals in the Hellenic community by providing mentorship and real-world experience.

**PANHELLENIC SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION**

PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation  
8501 West Higgins Road - Suite 210  
Chicago, Illinois 60631

312.357.6432  
312.872.0090  
[panhellenicsf.org](http://panhellenicsf.org)  
[info@panhellenicsf.org](mailto:info@panhellenicsf.org)





# Coffee Socials Following Sunday Liturgies



The November Coffee Socials were sponsored by **Dance.**

The December Coffee Socials are sponsored by **Philoptochos.**

thank you  
for your  
awesomeness



# Cathedral Christmas Decorating

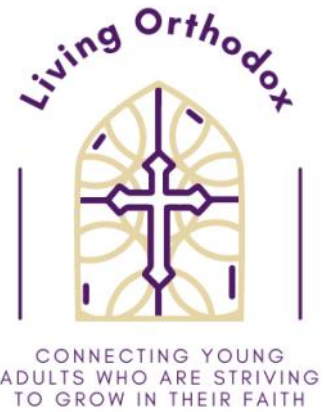




# Living Orthodox Young Adult Ministry

## Living Orthodox Young Adult Ministry

Living Orthodox is a national, pan-Orthodox ministry that is building a community of young adults (18-30s) who are striving to grow in and connect with their faith. Sign up at <https://bit.ly/LOconnect> for our email/SMS lists!



### Living Orthodox Fall Retreat

Over twenty young adults from across Arizona gathered on November 16<sup>th</sup> for the third Living Orthodox retreat. We started the retreat with coffee and a light breakfast spread followed by morning prayers with Fr. Apostolos Hill. Fr. Chris Salamy from St. George Antiochian Church gave a wonderful keynote presentation on the retreat topic "Finding Our Calling in Christ". Next, we had a fun icebreaker session and a panel discussion by Pres. Denise Hill and Pres. Laura Eliades on "Called to Faith: Creating a God-Centered Life in Every Season". Adil and Amanda Ali moderated the discussion as the presbyteras shared tangible examples on how we can focus on instilling our faith as the foundation of our lives. Mr. Phill Panagiotoglou made a delicious lunch for all the attendees. Over lunch, we had a chance to make new friends and build connections across parishes and jurisdictions. Our afternoon panel discussion, "Discerning a Calling to Church Ministry", was an overview of the many opportunities available to young adults who are considering entering church ministry at all commitment levels – ranging from the priesthood to serving a term on their local parish council. Fr. Alexander Eliades, Aleksander "Speedy" Lucic (OCF campus missionary), Anna Teodosiadis (a representative from Hellenic College Holy Cross), and Ian deGrasse (VP of Living Orthodox and parish council member at St. George Antiochian church) all shared their stories of discerning a calling to church ministry and encouraged young adults to consider getting more involved in church ministry. Next, we had a service project to serve the Arizona homeless population. Using funds graciously provided by Holy Trinity in support of our ministry, we filled 100 bags with sleeping bags, scarves, beanies, socks and supplies. Finally, we had a presentation by Anna Teodosiadis on the programs and opportunities offered by Hellenic College Holy Cross. It was a beautiful, spiritually enriching event!



*Living Orthodox continued on page 25*

*Desert Springs December 2024*

# Living Orthodox Young Adult Ministry

*Living Orthodox continued from page 24*

## November Friendsgiving

Over 50 young adults joined us for us for a fun, relaxing Friendsgiving celebration on November 25<sup>th</sup>! With everyone's contributions, we enjoyed a potluck feast on the patio as we enjoyed the cooler weather. Amanda Ali, our events chair, organized a gratitude group activity where we anonymously wrote things for which we were grateful, put them in a box, and picked a few to read aloud. Our special guest, Ella Powers, from the Orthodox Volunteer Corps gave a short talk, then we moved to the fire pit for a bonfire and a special treat of s'mores! It was a wonderful time of pan-Orthodox community building.



If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about Living Orthodox, please email us at [livingorthodoxministry@gmail.com](mailto:livingorthodoxministry@gmail.com)!

You can also visit <https://linktr.ee/livingorthodox> for links to our social media.



## FOCUS Flyer





Liturgical Services will continue to be  
**live streamed**  
by Father Apostolos  
and Father Alexander.

All services can be found on the **Home  
Page** of the Cathedral's website  
[www.holytrinityphx.org](http://www.holytrinityphx.org),  
in addition to the continued postings on  
our Facebook page.



## Desert Springs Issues Available to Our Seniors

or the computer-challenged!

In an effort to reach our whole Parish Community with Cathedral news, issues of the Desert Springs will be available for **FREE** to those in our community who do not own or use a computer, tablet, or smart phone or would prefer to read the news in hard-copy print. Submit names to the Church Office or text Kristen at 602-332-8809.

## Desert Springs Subscription

Enjoy **color** copies of Holy Trinity Cathedral's *Desert Springs* delivered to you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, ST, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to the Church Office or  
contact Kristen at 602-332-8809

## HTC on Facebook

The page offers news of our Parish Community, in addition to offering links to videos of our services.

[Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral—Phoenix, AZ](https://www.facebook.com/holytrinityphx)



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# AHEPA CHAPTER 219

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## Our Next Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, December 19, 2024  
**Location:** HT Speros Community Center  
**Time:** 6pm cocktail hour and hors d'oeuvres  
**Dinner:** 7pm  
**Meeting:** 7:45 - 8:45pm  
**Cigars on the patio:** 9:00 - 10:00pm

**RSVP: [AHEPA219@GMAIL.COM](mailto:AHEPA219@GMAIL.COM)**  
or call President Costa Tzavaras  
**(602) 999-9819**

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## Membership Information

**Contact Pete Marudas**  
**602.284.1638**  
**[Rosemar2@msn.com](mailto:Rosemar2@msn.com)**



# Daughters of Penelope

Helenos Chapter #432

Daughters of Penelope El Camino District 20

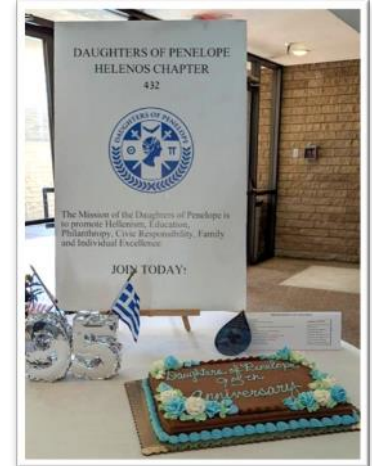


Helenos celebrated the 95th Anniversary of Daughters of Penelope with multiple events.

We held a luncheon on Founders Day, Nov 16th that was well attended.

Our guest speaker from Questers Arizona, spoke of the history of Woman's Suffrage and how to record our history for future generations.

We also held the Coffee Hour on Sunday, Nov 17th with sandwiches, baked goods and a celebratory cake.



With proceeds we are making a donation to Water by Women. This NFP's mission is to provide clean drinking water to families and children everywhere.

Next Month:

We celebrate our **10th Anniversary!**

Won't you join us for all the fun and philanthropy?

Yours in Christ and ΘΠ,  
Cynthia Bekiaris  
President, Helenos #432



# OPA—Orthodox Parents Association

Caroline Economopoulos, President



Are you getting the weekly  
OPA Newsletter?

OPA communicates primarily through email,  
via our email newsletter.

To stay informed on all of the  
youth, parent, and family happenings at Holy Trinity,  
sign up today.

It's easy, just email your information  
[ciecomom@gmail.com](mailto:ciecomom@gmail.com),  
and we'll get you added to list!

## 4F—December

### 4F Christmas Extravaganza!

Join us **Saturday, December 14 from 4:30-8pm** for our Christmas 4F Night! Grades 1-12 welcome. As usual we will enjoy our Faith, Fun, Fellowship, and Food! All are encouraged to wear Christmas outfits and sweaters. RSVP [here](#) before **December 11**.

### Upcoming 4F Nights

January 18

February 22

March 22--Lenten Day Retreat

Reserve your calendars for  
these dates!





# FDF Singing Practice

December 1, 2024



# Panigiri on November 2!

