



THE VOICE

JUNE/JULY 2024 - VOLUME No. 391—PART A

SAINT SPYRIDON HELLENIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

12307 SOUTH RIDGELAND AVENUE, PALOS HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS 60463

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FATHER'S MESSAGE

*Sanctify Those Who Love the Beauty of Your House"
– The Divine Liturgy*

Towards the end of the Divine Liturgy, the Priest reads the following prayer on behalf of those present in the Church that morning: *"Lord, bless those who praise You and sanctify those who trust in You. Save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Protect the whole body of Your Church. Sanctify those who love the beauty of Your house. Glorify them in return by Your divine power."*

The Church in which we gather is not simply a gathering space. The Church in which we gather as the Body of Christ is the temple of God, His Holy House. And the Lord sanctifies – He makes holy – those who enter His House *"with faith, reverence, and the fear of God."*

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JUNIOR OLYMPICS 2024



FATHER'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

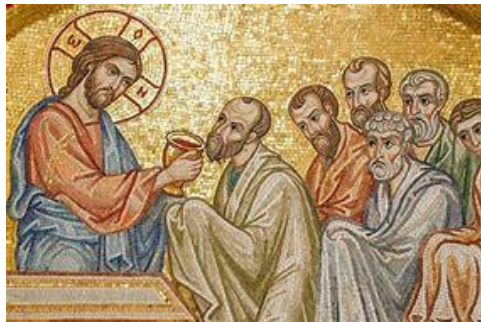
It cannot be stressed enough that everyone, from infants to the elderly, receives sanctification and the grace of God in a unique and special way when they are worshipping in God's House. We can never forget just how greatly we Orthodox Christians are blessed, for the God Who said, "Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. What kind of a house will you build Me? And of what kind is to be the place of My rest?" (Isaiah 66:1), has condescended to dwell among us in His Holy Church, the House of God. It is in the Church where the Immortal comes to the mortal, the Heavenly to the earthly, to converse and commune with us, His children.

When we gather together in Church, we receive sanctification, grace, visitation and divine power. In addition, we also receive protection against Satan and his demons. St. Ignatius of Antioch, who writes very early in the 2nd century, constantly told his flock: "Be diligent therefore and make sure to meet together more frequently for thanksgiving to God and for His glory. For when you meet together frequently, the powers of Satan are cast down; and his mischief comes to nothing in the unity of your faith." On the other hand, however, those who do not go to Church are deprived of any spiritual weaponry and spiritual defense against the enemy.

Spiritual strength is derived from participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church. Christians who are absent from the Liturgy are weakened by not going to Church. The devil therefore gains a great advantage over such people, and they become even more susceptible to his attacks. Even worse, those who separate themselves from the Church and Her gatherings prefigure the great separation that will take place by the Lord at His Second Coming, when the sheep are placed at His right, and the goats at His left. Speaking to those who voluntarily absent them-

selves from Church, St. Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain says, "The willful separation which you do now from the Church is a type of that separation which you will receive then."

For these reasons and many more, we should be desirous to come to Church. The Holy Fathers write that the Church is Heaven on earth, a beautiful city, a celebration, Paradise, a fortress, the Ark of Salvation, and salvation itself. The Church is our Mother from which we receive new spiritual life in Baptism and by whom we are constantly nurtured and nourished through Her Divine Mysteries and teachings.



The days of summer are approaching. Brothers and sisters, I pray that we remember these things. How easy it is to forget about God and His House with vacations and summer projects and so many other distractions. We all will continue to sustain our body with food and drink and also go to the doctor

when we get sick over the summer. Do not forget about your soul which needs its own spiritual food and drink to survive and maintain its health. Church is a great joy and necessary for the continuance of our life in Christ, even in the summer months as we remain locally or on vacation.

I wish you a spiritually wonderful and productive June and July! May we contemplate these inspiring words of St. Nikodemos: "If you run with desire to the earthly courts of the Lord, you will blossom there above in the heavenly courts of God. And if you frequent the earthly temple of God and worship Him with fear and devotion, know that God will make you a pillar in His heavenly temple, and you shall never leave there unto the ages: 'He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God and never shall he go out of it' (Rev.3:12)."

With love in the Risen Lord,

Fa. George

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Χριστός Ανέστη!

Εύχομαι το ΦΩΣ της Αναστάσεως να φέρει υγεία, αγάπη, και ειρήνη σε όλο τον κόσμο!

Με αγάπη,

Βασίλης Κίλιας

Christ Is Risen!

May the LIGHT of the Resurrection bring health, love, and peace to the world!

In this month's Voice, I wanted to take some time to reflect on 'stewardship'. What is stewardship, how can we all be good stewards of the Orthodox Church, and for our beloved St. Spyridon? Ultimately, it is about 'engagement' and 'participation'.

We all lead busy lives, pulled in many directions by our work, family, and other activities and/or responsibilities. If we can prioritize our faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to ensure HE is the center of our life, i.e. THE guiding LIGHT, that is a first huge step in stewardship.

Stewardship is about how we use the gifts that we have been granted, i.e. Talents and Treasure, and how we invest our Time to engage with our church, and with our fellow faithful, to ensure the church provides a rich experience for all of us. Whether it be participating in liturgies, organizing an event (e.g. annual dinner dance, Mother's Day Luncheon, etc.) or any other annual initiative(s), every contribution goes a long way. We are all volunteers. We have our day jobs, but any amount of time we can commit to the church helps.

Time: What is the optimal time that you have available to help the church? Are evenings better, or weekends? Do you have more time in the summer or other times of the year?

Talents: Each of us has been given certain gifts. How are we applying those gifts to the church? Many of us do this already, and some may say it is always the same people doing all of the work, but our goal should be to engage everyone. If you're not applying your gifts, what are some ways that you can help?

Treasure: Yes, stewardship is about our annual commitment. Over the last few years, costs (e.g. utilities, festival, snow plowing, etc.) have continued to rise, while revenues have remained relatively flat (post Covid). We are heavily dependent on the festival financially to ensure we can cover all of our expenses. If you don't know much about our finances, I encourage you to come to a General Assembly. If you are a steward, you can also stop by the office any time to ask about our financials.

In the end, stewardship is about engagement (Time), and sharing or donating the gifts (Talent and Treasure) that we have been graciously granted. While St. Spyridon is always there to guide us and ensure a positive outcome, things don't just "happen". A conscious effort is required by all of us to ensure that positive outcome.

One excellent example of stewardship, is the passion, dedication, and hard work that all of our teachers (albeit they are employees) bring to Archangels, Greek School, and Sunday school. I want to say a big THANK YOU to all of them for their exemplary engagement and love for our schools and our children. Lastly, we can use everyone's help for the upcoming Festival on 13-14 July. Please contact the office if you'd like to help.

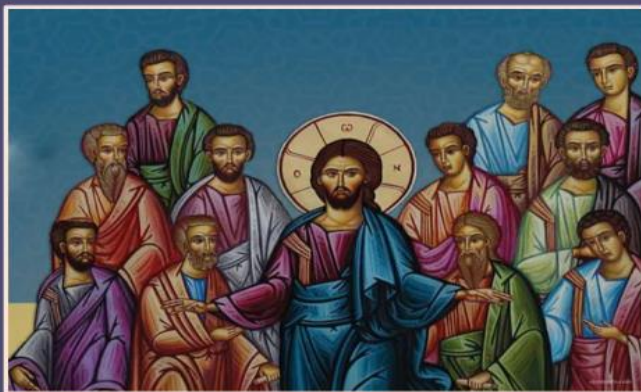
I wish everyone a healthy and safe summer.

With Love,

Bill Kiliias



STEWARDSHIP



Stewardship is our response to God's grace and moves us from grace to gratitude. Just as we love because God first loved us (I John 4:14), we give because God first gave to us. The question of the Psalmist "What shall I give to the Lord in return for all His benefits towards me?" (Ps 116:12), is answered in every liturgy when we pray, "Let us offer ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God."

STEWARDS APRIL 28TH—MAY 31ST

As of May 31st, stewardship gifts have been received for 2024 from 232 individual/families. We are so thankful to these stewards.

Have you sent in your 2024 Stewardship Commitment Form? Forms are available in the Narthex of the church and online. Thank you to our stewards who have already sent their 2024 pledge forms!!

Mrs. Chrisi Bastas

Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Bertzos

Mr. & Mrs. Felix Briseno

Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Christy

Mr. & Mrs. Angelo Giannakopoulos

Mr. & Mrs. Apostolis Hardaloupas

Mr. & Mrs. Aris Hatzidimitriadis

Mr. & Mrs. Amjad Janinah

Mr. & Mrs. Dimitris Karbo

Mr. & Mr. Peter Keorpes

Mr. Peter C. Korbakes

Mr. & Dr. Dean Korolis

Mr. & Mrs. John Koutsoubas

Mr. Sotirakis Leventis

Mr. & Mrs. Robert McNeill

Ms. Kathy Michalarias

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Miller

Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Natzikou

Mr. & Mrs. Antreas Natzikou

Mr. & Mrs. Sotirios Pappas

Mr. & Mrs. Nick Petinatos

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Petrakos

Mr. & Mrs. Tom Primbas

Mr. & Mrs. Tony Shamma

Ms. Alexandra Stolis

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Tourloukis

Mr. & Mrs. George Tsikouris

Mr. John Tsikouris

Mr. & Mrs. Konstan. Vasilopoulos

Mr. & Mrs. Angelo Velissaris

Mr. & Mrs. Devin Wise

Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Watne

Total Stewards: 232

ΓΙΝΕ ΚΑΛΟΣ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΣΠΥΡΙΔΩΝΑ

Ευχαριστούμε τις 232 οικογένειες που εκπλήρωσαν τις υποσχέσεις τους για το έτος 2024. Υπενθυμίζουμε σε όλους ότι έχουν ταχυδρομηθεί οι Καταστάσεις Υπόσχεσης του Καλού Οικονόμου για το τρέχον έτος. Σας παρακαλούμε να ανανεώσετε την συνδρομή σας το γρηγορότερο δυνατόν. Χρειαζόμαστε την βοήθεια και την υποστήριξη όλων σας.



In gratitude for God's blessings, I commit to Christ and His Church as a Steward of Saint Spyridon with my 2024 Stewardship.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Xristos Anesti!

On Sunday, June 2nd we celebrated all our graduates, and our Sunday School year came to the end.

I would like to thank everyone who helps our program thrive. To all the Sunday School teachers, who share their time and talent weekly and are committed to teaching our Orthodox faith. To the parents, or yiayia and pappou, who bring their children or grandchildren and make Sunday School a priority.

To the PTA, who are always looking for ways to connect our Sunday School and Greek School students and support us. The list goes on and on, because each of us support Sunday School in a different way. It is only together that we make it a success. Some of our Sunday School teachers have taught for over a decade! That is a true testament to their level of commitment. They serve as role models and play such an important part in the lives of their students. Students will always remember their Sunday School teacher, which is why, I think, many of our teachers choose to come back, year after year. We are truly blessed to have many students enrolled in our program.

I look forward to our Sunday School family growing and continuing to thrive. Congratulations to all of our graduates, and best wishes for summer "break."

Zoe Kopanis, Sunday School Director



GRADUATES 2024

MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADUATES

Platon Belesiotis
Stylianos (Leo) Bousies
Christos Deligiannis
Christos Drikos

Andonis Haniotakis
Spiros Demetrios Kottaras
Ares Stephen Cajas
Parskevi (Evi) Coines

Niko Korolis
Alexander Verros
Vasilis Vythoulkas

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES



Constantine (Dean) Bousies is graduating from Carl Sandburg High School and will be continuing his education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, School of Applied Health Sciences/Kinesiology. During his time at Sandburg, Dean achieved four years on the honor roll, with membership in the National Society of

High School Scholars, Illinois State Scholars, and participated in Med Club. Outside of school, Dean has enjoyed being part of the St. Spyridon community; serving in the altar, having attended Plutarchos Greek school, Sunday School, and being involved with GOYA and Junior Olympics, as well as various youth basketball teams. Dean is looking forward to this exciting next step in his academic career and hopes to continue his post-graduate studies in Physician Assistant School. Dean is the son of Zaharias and Maria Bousies. May all of our 2024 graduates be blessed!



Dionisia Maria Stamus graduated from Victor J. Andrew High School. During her time there, she was involved in many student leadership organizations like Ambassadors and Superintendent Advisory, clubs like Greek Club and Student Council, and sports like Tennis and Bowling. She earned her place in the National Honor

Society. President of HOSA (Health Occupation Student Association), and won awards in Service Learning (with over 300 hours), D230 Inspires and Outstanding Senior.

Within the church community of St. Spyridon, Dionisia has been a part of Archangels, Greek School, Sunday School, Handmaidens, GOYA, Jr. Choir, Myrofores, Jr. Olympics, and Floga Dance Troupe. She has volunteered within these programs in addition to the festival. In the fall she will be attending The University of Missouri with a major in Animal Science on a pre-Vet track.

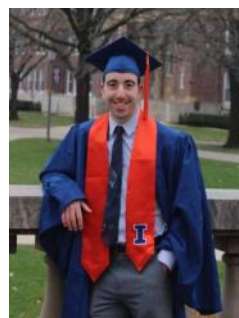
COLLEGE GRADUATES



Christina Eliopoulos will be graduating Magna Cum Laude from Missouri University of Science and Technology (S&T). She will be receiving a degree in Chemical Engineering with minors in Mathematics and Engineering Management. While at S&T, Christina was a member of the Chemical Engineering Honor Society

(OXE), the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE), Society of Women Engineers (SWE), and the Varsity Softball team. After graduation, Christina has accepted a position with Mars Wrigley in Chattanooga, TN. She is looking forward to attending services at the Annunciation Chattanooga Greek Orthodox Church.

*Chemical Engineering | Senior * S&T Varsity Softball
American Institute of Chemical Engineers | Member
Society of Women Engineers | Member
Omega Chi Epsilon | Member*



William Karopoulos

William graduated from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering in December of 2023. While at UIUC, he was a member of Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF). Within this group, he participated in weekly meetings

to discuss our faith and developed friendships through multiple OCF activities. He was also a member of Alpha Phi Omega, a service fraternity dedicated to serving the community and university. In Alpha Phi Omega, he was able to assist in feeding the homeless, helping boy scouts and girl scouts, and helping out with local high school events. Lastly, William was on the Illini Formula Electric team and built a race car, racing against

COLLEGE GRADUATES

other universities. William grew up at St. Spyridon and participated in Cherubs, GOYA, GOAL, and Altar boys. Having been baptized and grown up in the community of St. Spyridon, William is a graduate of Plutarchos Greek School, Sunday School, and he had been a member of various organizations and participated in many activities at church. Thank you to everyone at St. Spyridon who has shown him love and support throughout his years!



Athanasia (Nasia) Paraskevopoulos graduated with the highest honors from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign with a Bachelor of Science degree in Speech Pathology. She was not only listed on the Dean's List for seven consecutive semesters but was also in the James Scholar Honors Program

as well as being a member of both the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) and Orthodox Christian Fellowship. In addition, she was a member of the Kappa Kappa Gamma PanHellenic Sorority and also volunteered at a local elementary school as an after school program coordinator while working part time at the Activities and Recreation Center. In the fall, Athanasia will be attending Midwestern University where she will pursue her Masters of Science in Speech Language Pathology. She is looking forward to helping children with speech and language disorders. Athanasia would like to thank the St. Spyridon Community and her family for all of their support throughout her college career. Athanasia is a past recipient of the St. Spyridon "Manasses family" scholarship and is the daughter of Paul and Calliope Paraskevopoulos as well as the granddaughter of Christos Catsogiannis who has been a member of St. Spyridon since the Roseland years.



GRADUATE STUDENTS



Dr. Emily Kolyvas: It is with great enthusiasm to announce that Dr. Emily A. Kolyvas has successfully graduated from the University of Cambridge earning a Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Oncology. We celebrate this momentous achievement as she embarks on the next chapter of her journey. Emily will be finishing her Medical Doctor degree at the Medical College of Wisconsin

graduating in May 2025. She will continue to pursue her career goals for medical research and medicine and serve the community with commitment, dedication and compassion. Emily is the daughter of Dr. Chris and Jann Kolyvas and has been a St. Spyridon parishioner for many years.



Dr. Peter Kolyvas has successfully graduated from Georgetown University School of Medicine! We celebrate this momentous achievement as he embarks on the next chapter of his medical journey. Peter will be commencing his residency at New York University in Manhattan where he will train in Interventional Radiology. He will continue to pursue his passion for medicine and

serve the community with dedication and compassion." Peter is the son of Dr. Chris and Jann Kolyvas, and is also a former recipient of St. Spyridon's Charles C. Condes Scholarship.



Peter Panagiotopoulos will be graduating in August of 2024 with a Masters degree in Computer Science from the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Bioengineering with high honors in the Spring of 2022. During his graduate tenure, Peter studied database technologies,

data curation, software engineering, cloud computing and visualization techniques. He also completed multiple software development projects including a real estate portal website, an android application, and multiple AWS cloud based projects. In the future, he hopes to combine his degrees and pursue a software engineering role in the biomedical field.

ALTAR BOYS

The altar boys had their last meeting until next year. In the featured picture, the altar boys and handmaidens had a paper airplane throwing contest.

We thank Father George for his guidance, Zachary Chibucos and Lambro Malfas for their support



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 ORATORICAL WINNERS!

It is always such a blessing to hear about the achievements of our youth. We are delighted to announce the outstanding achievements of our students who participated in the 40th annual Metropolis Oratorical Festival.

The festival was held on Bright Saturday, May 11, at Holy Apostles in Westchester. Vasili Vythoulkas received 3rd place in Vocal Chant, and Epaminonta Stamus placed 2nd in the Junior Poetry division. Christo Deligiannis (Junior Speech) and Eleftherios Halikias (Senior Speech) also represented our parish.

Congratulations to all of our participants for sharing their insightful thoughts on their faith and identity as Orthodox Christians. The dedication and commitment of our youth is truly inspiring! We look forward to having more students participate next year and continue this wonderful tradition.





Happy Summer from the PTA



Christ is Risen! We had a beautiful month with our Bright Friday BBQ and the last day of Sunday School. Thank you to our families who volunteered and cooked up a delicious meal for our annual event!

A HUGE CONGRATULATIONS to TJ Collopy for winning our first PTA Leadership Award! Have a great time at Fanari!



Handmaidens

We had a blessed year! I pray our Handmaidens have a beautiful summer and I can't wait to see you all in September! All girls in grades 1st-12th grade are welcome to join. Please request to be added to our GroupMe to receive information about meetings. Have a great summer!



HOLY PASCHA 2024



Once again, our community of St. Spyridon came together to celebrate the beautiful services of Holy Week and Pascha. Many thanks to all who offered their Pascha donations and flower donations, the altar boys, the myrofores, the members of the parish council, the psaltes, our readers, our Agape gospel readers, the Epitaphio decorators, the ladies who prepared the red eggs, the P.T.A. for the Easter baskets, the palm crosses crew, the donors and volunteers who prepared the Lenten breakfast on Saturday of Lazarus, our custodians and office staff, all our parish organizations and all the faithful who offered their prayers and their presence by the Cross of our Lord and Risen Savior.



HOLY PASCHA 2024

EASTER FLOWER DONATIONS & PASCHA OFFERINGS

We wish to thank the following parishioners and friends for donating towards the church, the needy, the flowers and adornment of our St. Spyridon Church during the Great Lent and Pascha Season:

Anonymous
Ms. Eleni Bizoukas
Mrs. Anna Charalambos
Mr. & Mrs. Adam Collopy
Mr. & Mrs. Konstant. Demakis
Ms. Eleni Dimis
Mrs. Georgia Evangelopoulos
Ms. Ruth Faklis
Mrs. Demetrios Felecoc
Dr. Sylvia Felecoc
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Georgiopoulos

Ms. Irene Giardina
Mr. & Mrs. Andreas Glikis
Mr. George Gountanis
Ms. Anna Hidy
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Karamelas
Ms. Efrosine Kanellakes
Mrs. Roula Karamelas
Dr. Georgia Karuntzos
Mr. James Karuntzos
Mrs. Tasia Kladis
Mrs. Sofia Kopanitsanos

Mr. & Mrs. George Kyroudis
Ms. Mary Limparis
Mrs. Joanne Les
Mrs. Betty Lillios
Mr. & Mrs. Demetrius Marines
Ms. Demetria Papadopoulos
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Scarlatis
Mr. & Mrs. Christos Tsakiris
Ms. Vicki Thiakos
Ms. Evagelia Vasilakis
Mr. & Mrs. George Vasilakos

