



THE VOICE

AUGUST 2025 - VOLUME No. 403
SAINT SPYRIDON HELLENIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

12307 SOUTH RIDGELAND AVENUE, PALOS HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS 60463
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Philoptochos Cancer Walk

VCS 2025



thank you
ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΩ

**We thank all of our volunteers for making
the 2025 Saint Spyridon Greek Festival
such a success!**

**This event requires the efforts of so many people,
and we greatly appreciate all who came to support,
organize, volunteer, and enjoy our festival!**

THANK YOU! ΣΑΣ ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΟΥΜΕ!

FLOGA DANCE TROUPE

The Saint Spyridon Floga Hellenic Dance Troupe had a fantastic summer! Both the Wonder Workers and Floga Dance Troupes proudly showcased their talents during our St. Spyridon Festival, performing on both evenings. The kids truly enjoyed taking the stage and even incorporated some exciting new φιγούρες into their routines.

As we wrap up this season, we'll be taking a short break from practices. Please keep an eye out in August or September for registration information for the new dance season. Competition group practices will begin earlier, starting in August, so be on the lookout for updates and messages.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who makes this program possible—our incredible teachers, administrators, committee members, and especially Fr. George for his unwavering support.

Wishing everyone a joyful and restful summer. See you in the fall!

Sophia Christofer



FATHER'S MESSAGE

The Gift of Holy Silence

Beloved Faithful,

Let's be honest—silence makes many of us uncomfortable. Our culture doesn't value stillness. In fact, it seems determined to avoid it. We fill our lives with constant noise, constant movement, and constant connection. Even when we go on vacation to "get away," we bring our distractions with us: music, movies, social media, and endless scrolling. Quiet may come for a moment, but then we quickly plug back in. We live in a world that never stops talking—and we're afraid to stop and listen.

Think about it. We have access to more information, entertainment, and technology than any generation before us. Smartphones, tablets, computers, smart-watches, headphones, video games, streaming apps—the list goes on. It's no wonder that we often say things like, "I don't know how I lived without it." But we did live without it—and many people still do. The real question is: what have we lost along the way?

This constant stream of input has affected how we relate to God, to others, and even to ourselves. In the midst of all the noise, we forget how to be still, how to reflect, and how to listen to the quiet voice of God. And without silence, without stillness, our attention gets scattered. We're pulled in a hundred different directions at once, and our spiritual life begins to suffer.

The Gospel reading for the Dormition (Falling-Asleep) of the Theotokos gives us a beautiful example of what it means to truly focus on what matters. Jesus visits the home of two sisters, Martha and Mary. Martha is busy preparing the house and serving, while Mary simply sits at Jesus' feet and listens. Martha becomes frustrated and asks Jesus to tell Mary to help her. But Jesus gently responds,

"Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her."

Martha wasn't doing anything wrong. She was being hospitable and hardworking. But her attention was divided—she was missing the moment. Mary, on the other hand, was fully present. She wasn't distracted. She was listening. And Jesus honored that.

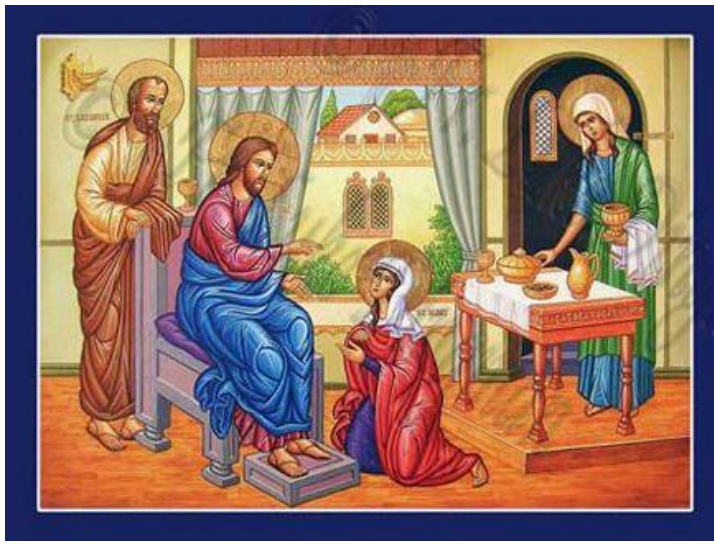
This is a lesson for all of us. Our lives are often filled with so many tasks, responsibilities, and distractions that we forget the one thing needful: to be with Christ, to listen to His words, and to keep them in

our hearts. We aren't called to stop working or stop serving, but we are called to give our full attention to God. Without that, even our good efforts can lead us to feel anxious, tired, and spiritually dry.

It's easy to see how distraction can hurt us in physical ways—like someone getting into a car accident because they were texting. But distraction

can also harm us spiritually. It numbs our awareness of what truly matters. It makes it harder to feel God's presence, to pray with depth, and to care for others with compassion. Sometimes we even dismiss spiritual things with a simple, "Whatever." Not because we hate God, but because we've stopped paying attention.

Even worse, many people today treat their faith like a checklist. Get baptized—check. Go to church a few times a year—check. Maybe donate or volunteer—check. But the spiritual life isn't a box we tick off. It's a relationship. And just like any deep relationship, it needs time, attention, and love. Being a Christian is not about having a certain "status." It's about giving our hearts fully to Christ.



FATHER'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

In another part of the Gospel reading, a woman calls out to Jesus and says, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts that nursed You!" She was praising His Mother, which sounds right. But Jesus replies, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it." The Virgin Mary is honored not simply because she was His mother, but because she heard God's word and kept it—she responded with her life. And that is what we are called to do.

So, how can we begin to reclaim some silence in our lives? How can we push back against the noise of the world?

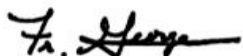
Here's a challenge: try spending one weekend without your devices—no phones, no social media, no streaming, no music, no entertainment. Don't go away. Just live your regular life, but without the distractions. Be present with your family, read Scripture, take a walk, pray, and listen. If you're feeling brave, try it for a week. Or go on a pilgrimage—visit a monastery, a quiet chapel, or even a special place in nature where you can meet God in silence.

Recently, I took a short trip where I had very little connection to technology, and there were days when I didn't speak to anyone. It was hard at first, but it changed my life. It reminded me how to listen. It broke some of my habits of always needing noise. I still struggle with distractions—don't we all? But I know the value of silence and the peace it brings.

The truth is, people who learn to make space for quiet in their lives are often the ones who best hear God's voice. He doesn't shout. He speaks with a still, small voice. And if we want to hear Him, we have to be still enough to listen.

We don't need to reject all technology to follow Christ. But we do need to learn how to step away from time to time. To unplug, to be quiet, and to turn our attention fully to God. That is the "one thing needful."

To God be all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of Fr. George and from the bottom of my heart, we would like to thank everyone that participated in the festival preparation, festival operations, and all of the cleanup that occurred thereafter.

We had a wonderful showing of support, with all departments fully staffed, and many new participants contributing.

Thank you to Chairman and Master Architect Dean Eliacostas for planning, organizing and running a wonderful festival once again this year. His attention to detail, focus on quality, and customer experience is second to none.

Additionally, I want to thank Fr George for his guidance, love, and support for our parish community.

I want to also thank the younger generation that showed up in droves, led by Zachary, Eraklis and Tasia. The outside kitchen staff operations ran smoothly. It was great to see this younger generation and the enthusiasm that they brought to the festival. Big thanks to Zachary and Eraklis and all that joined for prep prior, and clean up on Sunday night and Monday morning.

The souvlaki grill, which we were concerned would not be properly staffed had 6 to 8 people present at all times, and many new faces, including Adam Collopy, John Farsatis, and Pete Kavvadas.

The bar had entirely new staff and was run this year by Demetri Marines and Nick Tsinoukas, taking over from George Papadopoulos. Our thanks to Jim Xeros for securing the delivery of Fix Beer, everyone's favorite, and for manning the bar.

The inside kitchen had additional support and ran seamlessly. Thanks to Panagiotis Stamus, Peter Sotiropoulos, Bill Perakis, Dana Vasilakos, etc.

The office operations also ran efficiently led by Caryn Chibucos, Frank Kopanis, Kalli and Alexia Tuhaimer, along with Labros Malfas and Michael Tuhaimer helping make runs and reconcile. This team worked closely together throughout the night, accounting for receipts, and balancing both nights and record time.

The Philoptochos ladies, led by Zoe Kopanis, had a beautiful set up for their pastries, and had another successful year. Everyone seems to love our pastries. Thank you to Mrs. Roula Karamelas, Sophia Kopanitsanos, Morfo Bountinas, etc.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We had a wonderful new addition this year with "Painting at the Paralia" led by Christina Kiliyas and Bloom Art Studio (Mokena). This new edition was very well received with participation at all ages, and a nice positive buzz for something new added to the festival.

The POS System, which has been a huge help in capturing sales throughout the festival worked well. And many thanks to our food cashiers, Caryn Chibucos, Patricia Vythoulkas, Alecia Scott etc for their participation and help in this crucial area.

Cafe Opa was once again a huge hit and popular stop for festival visitors. Many thanks to Pam Labrakis for leading this area and for the energetic staff that greeted customers.

We had outdoor entertainment for our younger festival goers, which included games and jumpers. Our thanks to Vicky Argyropoulos for her dedication and patience running this area.

Loukoumades received rave reviews. They were smaller and delicious. Many thanks to Christine Alexopoulos, Eleni Bizoukas, Maria Baltsas, and the entire Loukoumades team.

Floga had a beautiful dance presentation both nights. Kudos to our young adults and to Sophia Christofer for leading them.

The Kentro bookstore led by Jimmy Korbakes and Kyrio Kosta was beautifully presented. Our thanks to them for their love and support of this mission. This is an area that we get significant positive feedback on our offerings. Additionally, the church tours led by Fr. George and Kyrio Kosta are also very well received, as we all work to make the festival a religious mission in addition to an annual celebration.

At the front door, we had great participation. The team was led by Tim Georgiopoulos. We made some changes this year offering shots of wine and Loukoumades. We had many guest greeters, including Nick Christy and Tony and Nick Xydakis. In addition, we added a donation box and offered an entrance option of \$2 or free-will donation.

During the two days we made a significant push to sell raffle tickets. At the front door we made every effort to maximize sales (as people paid for admission), while in the back Nick Kournetas and Spiros Tzanetakos did the same. On Sunday alone we sold and/or collected over 100 raffle tickets.

While we had wanted to pare down security at the front, we switched gears on Saturday and with the help of Nick and Jimmy Argyropoulos, Pete Hristakos, and Spiros Tzanetakos, we were directing traffic to the appropriate locations for parking. Please note that this is no small task given the amount of traffic that comes through. Our thanks to this team for stepping in and making sure that everything ran smoothly and that everyone was safe entering and leaving the festival.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Litsa Tsarouhis for all of her help promoting the festival on social media, setting up the sign-up genius, and also jumping into to lead classes at Painting at the Paralia.

Also, we once again benefited from the significant contributions of Bobby Papadatos (including donations of gyros, refrigeration truck, etc.), as well as Dino Labrakis and George Theoharis.

And we cannot forget all of the wonderful donations from business, stewards, and members of the Greek community and the community at large.

Lastly, Caryn and Gus are working tirelessly to finalize the festival results. We are blessed to have treasurers that are CPAs, detail oriented, and make sure that things are accounted for properly. Please look for a report soon.

If I missed anything or anyone, please accept my sincere apologies. In the end, while we were all worried about who was "not going to be there" for the festival, ultimately we should've been focused on "who was going to be there" because everybody showed up in great numbers and we had a wonderful weekend. Thank you again for all of your contributions and your love and support.

Switching gears, I have some good news to report. The church carpet has arrived and will be installed, along with the hearing loop, the week of July 28. The installation should be completed by Thursday, July 31.

Σας εύχομαι καλό Δεκαπενταύγουστο. Ας πάρουμε αυτή την ευκαιρία να τιμήσουμε την Παναγία μας. Πάντοτε να μας προστατεύει και να φέρνει αγάπη και ειρήνη σ' όλο τον κόσμο.

Καλή συνέχεια με υγεία

Bill Kiliyas, Parish Council President

MANY THANKS TO ALL THE INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES THAT DONATED TO THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL

Thank you to all our Festival Raffle donors for supporting our parish. The drawing was held on July 13th at 10:00 p.m.

95th St. Produce	Cuculich Joseph	Georgiopoulos Ted	Karampelas D & P
Alemis Alex	Dagres Kostas	Georgiopoulos Tim	Karones Stella
Alemis Chris	Dagres Niko	Georgios Banquets	Karopulos Kathy
Alemis T & A	Dalmases Christos	Georgiou Alex	Karoubas Evaggelia
Alexakos Dimitri	Dangles George	Georgiou Buzo Alik	Karountzos Thomas
Alexopoulos Chris	Danos Gus/Plutarchos	Georgiou Buzo Maria	Karuntzos Jim
Alexopoulos Katerina	Dean Roula	Georgiou Maria	Karuntzos Troy
Alexopoulos Kostas	Deligiannis Anastasia	Georgiou Mariamni	Katsenis Bill
Alikakos Gus	Deligiannis Helen	Georgoulis Christos	Katsoulakis Nick
Andersen Wally	Deligiannis Mike	Glikis Andreas	Katsoulakis Tarsi
Andricopulos Nancy	Deligiannis Sophia	Glikis P & M	Katsoulis Dina
Angelos Leonidas	Demacopoulos Tom	Golden Griddle	Kefi Restaurant
Argyropoulos James	Deolitsis George	Golfis Dimitri	Keller Katie
Argyropoulos Nick	Dino & Pete	Golfis John	Keorpes Dean
Argyropoulos Tony	Discount Meats	Goutos & Panagiotop.	Kilias Christina
Argyropoulos Vicky	Drikos George	Grapsas Ekaterini	Kilias James
Arvanitis John	Eggmans George	Green A & T	Kilias Pat
Assumption GOC	Eliacostas Y & K	Haddad Jehan	Kilpatrick Eleni
Athenian Body/Bobby	Eliacostas D & J	Halikas James	Kladis Danny
Bandes David	Eliacostas G & A	Halikias Christina	Kladis Loula
Barkoulies Family	Eliocostas Irene	Haniotakis Andonis	Kladis Pavlos
Bastas Dino	Eliopulos Christina	Hartman Domenica	Klioris Louis & Joanne
Biga John	Eliopulos M & C	Hasapis Paraskevas	Klioris Stavroula
Bisbikis Jim	Evangelopoulos Georgia	Hatzidimitriadis Aristidis	Kolyvas Gus
Bizoukas Eleni	Evangelou Peter	Heffernan Lou	Kolyvas Pete
Bobis Nick	Expo Cris	Hiotis Demetri	Kopanitsanos Sophia
Bouhoutos Panagiotis	Faklis Ruth	Hiotis Paul	Korbakis John
Bountinas Gigi	Falcone Rena	Hohlastos Dina	Korbakis Perry
Bourmias Thomas	Ferguson Martin	Hohlastos Sava	Korbos S & F
Bousis Jimmy	Flaskos D & M	Hohlastos Vasili	Korolis
Briseno Connie	Flaskos Kaliopi	Hristakos Marianna	Kottaras Demetrios
Brown John	Florek Nick	Hristakos Stacia	Koucitis Pet & Sue
Cali Phil	Fotsis Alexander	Iovino Nick	Kournetas Nick
Catsogiannis Christos	Franklin Roxanne	James Curt	Koutsoubas Pat
Catsogiannis Jim	Frieling Tom	Jan S	Kras Kathy
Caulfield Jack	Gabris Jerry	Jaskowiec P, G & J	Kurth Randolph
Charalampous Teddy	Gatses Family	Jullianni's Pizza	Kyres Tom & Pamy
Chibucos Caryn	Gatsios George	Kailis Tom	L & P Foods
Chioros George	Gavrilos George	Kakos Toula	Labrakis Eraklis
Christos Anthony	Gavrilos Savvas & Mary	Kalatzis Spiros	Labrakis Politimi
Christy Nick	Geanos Eleni	Kameras Nikki	Lalezas Georgia
Collopy Gabriel	Georgelos George	Kanellakes Efrosine	Lamberis Gus
Colompos Thalia	Georgelos Sofia	Kapsaskis G & J	Lambridis Orestis
Corasis Peter	Georgiopoulos B & T	Karamagianis Dimitrios	Landis

MANY THANKS TO ALL THE INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES THAT DONATED TO THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL

Laris James
Les Bill
Les George
Les Joanne
Les Peter
Lidoriki Society
Limperis/Kopanis
Lundeen Lee
Malfas Angela
Malfas Labros
Manasses Ted
Manasses Tina
Manolas Dafni
Manolis Chris
Manolis Katherine
Manolis Taso
Marines Alexa
Marines Demetrius
Marines Jaimie
Marines Penelope
Marines Sue
Marinos Eustratios
Matsas Demetri
Matsas Kostas
Matsas Thanos
Mavrages Dennis
Mazarakos John
Mckinnas Doug
McNulty Beth
Midas Joan
Mihos Bessie
Molony Jayne
Mota Shelley
Murray
Napoles Jorge
Nassis Angelo
Nicky's Gyros
Nicolulis Dimitrios
Nikolopoulos A & A
Nonaka S & Limperis G
Orlando Imports
Panagiotaros Georgia
Panagiotopoulos G
Panagiotopoulos P & K
Papadatos Anthony
Papadatos Bob

Papadatos/Valaveris
Papaioannou George
Papamakarios Phil
Pappas Alec
Pappas Nick
Pappas Sam
Pappas Ted & Helen
Paras Leo
Paraskevopoulos Ath
Paraskevopoulos Christos
Paraskevopoulos George
Paraskis Peter & Mary
Patio Food
Patras George
Pavlou Maria
Paxinos Peter
Petinatos Greg
Petinatos Nick
Petrakos Jim
Phil Cali
Pisios P & A
Pliagos Jim
Podgorski D & R
Poulos Pat, Kon. & Pam
Poulos Spero
Poulos S
Prassas Maria
Rehani Nabeela
Reyes Juan
Riley Family
Rollberg Alexa
Rollberg Gianna
Roumeliotis Anastasis
Roumeliotis Family
Roumeliotis H
Roumeliotis Petros
Rousonelos Stanley
Russo Donna
Ryan Ed & Athena
Salumine Walter
Samargin Frank
Scott Judi
Searl G & S
Shamma Penny
Shizas N & G
Skiadopoulos George

Skiadopoulos Christie
Skiadopoulos Frankie
Skiadopoulos Leo
Skyline Restaurant
Spano Tom
Speralakis Rita
Spirrison Glenn
Stamatoglou
Stamison Ted
Steve
Strouzas & Karagan
Sweis Luka Saba
Synadinos Georgia
Tassos
Tasty Waffle
The Pit Rib House
Thiakos Alex
Thiakos Efthimia
Thiakos Olivia
Thiakos Vicki
Torrijos Armando
Toulios Family
Treantafeles Leah
Triantafyllou Fotini
Triantafyllou Georgia
Trinity
Tsagalis Angelo
Tselepatiotis Eve
Tsevis Athanasios
Tsinoukas Athena
Tsinoukas Nicholas
Tsiumas Sam
Tsokole Dimitrios
Tsonis Anestis
Tsonis Vasiliki
Tsoukalas John
Tuhaimer Samir
Tzaferis - Kolios
Tzanetakos Family
Valaveris Elias
Vardalos Patricia
Vasdekis Vicky
Vougas Nancy
Vournazos Carrie
Vythoulkas Vasilis
Webb Mike

Werner Eloise
Wilson Rita
Wilson Roger
Windy City Hot Dogs
Winters Jeff
Wonogas Richard
Xando Café
Xirafakis Goldie
Xydakis Anthony
Yannis Café



Congratulations to the our Raffle Drawing Winners:

1ST PRIZE: (\$7,500)
Deborah Avgerinos

2ND PRIZE (\$2,000)
Stavro Matsas

3RD PRIZE (\$1,000)
Paul Hiotis

4TH PRIZE (\$1,000)
Peter Kavvadas

5TH PRIZE (\$1,000)
Xando Cafe

*We apologize for the
misspelling or omitting
of any names.*



FESTIVAL PICTURES



St. Spyridon Hellenic Orthodox Church

GOYA gatherings 2025-2026

Calling all 6th graders - High School

Join us for fun ministries, activities and outreach projects
Meetings on Wednesdays at 7:00p.m.-8:30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 9/10 - Ice Cream Social 9/24 - Gathering *** Cake Bake off to benefit Philoxenia Charities in MN (9/20 or 9/21)	OCTOBER 10/1 - Gathering 10/22 - Pumpkin Carving *** Volunteer Opportunity: Treats on the Trail *** 50/50 raffle fundraiser	NOVEMBER 11/12 - Gathering 11/19 - Gathering *** Volunteer Opportunity: Thanksgiving Food Basket assembly and distribution
DECEMBER 12/3 - DCFS shopping @ Target 12/17 - Christmas Party *** Volunteer Opportunity: Christmas Food Basket assembly and distribution	JAUNUARY 1/14 - Gathering 1/28 - Gathering ***tentative ski trip MLK weekend *** Superbowl Square Fundraiser	FEBRUARY 2/11 - Gathering 2/25 - Gathering ***tentative lock in 2/27-2/28
MARCH 3/11 - Pre-sanctified liturgy/Meeting 3/25 - Pre-sanctified liturgy/Meeting *** Volunteer Opportunity: Easter Food Basket assembly and distribution	APRIL Let's gather for all the Holy Week services - Altar and Handmaiden Opportunities 4/22 - Gathering	MAY 5/13 - Gathering 5/27 - End of year celebration
SUMMER Volunteer opportunities: Church camps, cancer walk and festival Possible Fundraiser: Car Wash	<i>Dates and events are subject to change</i>	Sign up for GOYA Notifications through the REMIND APP TEXT @jrgoyag to 81010 You will receive a text to confirm you are signed up

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In an effort to save money and protect the environment hard copies of the VOICE are only mailed to the parishioners that request it. Please contact the Church office if you like to receive copy of the VOICE by e-mail. The VOICE is always available on our website, Saint-Spyridon.net.

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 Palos Heights, IL 60463

Rev. Fr. George Lamberis
PARISH PRIEST
Church Office

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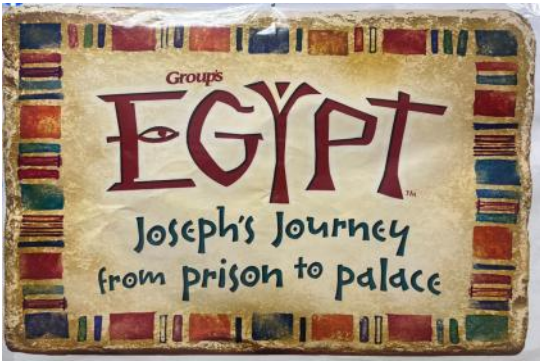
Parish Council Officers

Bill Kilias	President
Nick Kournetas	Vice-President
James Korbakes	2nd Vice-President
Spiros Tzanetakos	Secretary
Panagiotis Stamus	Assistant Secretary
Caryn Chibucos	Treasurer
Gus Kolyvas	Assistant Treasurer

Auxiliary Officers

Alexia Tuhaimer	Chanter
Kathy Korbakes	Philoptochos
Vicky Argyropoulos	P.T.A.
Gus Rougas	Kentro
James Korbakes	Kentro
Marianna Haniotakis	Plutarchos
Sofea Malamis	Archangels
Denise Skiadopoulos	Cherubs
Zoe Kopanis	Sunday School
StacyVallianatos	G.O.Y.A.
Stephane Collopy	G.O.Y.A.
Pres. Diana Lamberis	Family Night
Ria Hronis	Family Night
Viaian Tzanetakos	Family Night
Labros Malfas	Altar Boys
Zachary Chibucos	Altar Boys
Vicky Argyropoulos	Handmaidens
Demetrius Marines	Athletics
Nick Tsinoukas	Athletics
Stella Parhas	Food Pantry
Kalli Theodoropoulos	Church Office
Marianna Haniotakis	Church Office
Litsa Tsarouhis	Church Office
Soteria Simantirakis	Custodian
Pete Mihalopoulos	Iconography
Sophia Christofer	Flaga Dance
Evi Marouda	Flaga Dance
Anastasia Deligiannis	Flaga Dance
Patty Pappas	Flaga Dance
Olga Baroudos	Flaga Dance

VCS 2025



This year's Vacation Church School was an incredible week filled with energy, learning, and laughter! We were blessed to welcome 51 children and 23 dedicated volunteers who helped bring our program to life!

Throughout the week, the children journeyed through the inspiring story of Joseph from the Old Testament—a tale of perseverance, forgiveness, and God's guiding hand. Each day was packed with meaningful lessons, hands-on crafts, joyful music (including beautiful Liturgical hymns), drama, athletics, and, of course, some delicious snacks!

Parents shared how much their children looked forward to each day—and we could see it in their smiles, songs, and spirited participation. The joy was truly contagious!

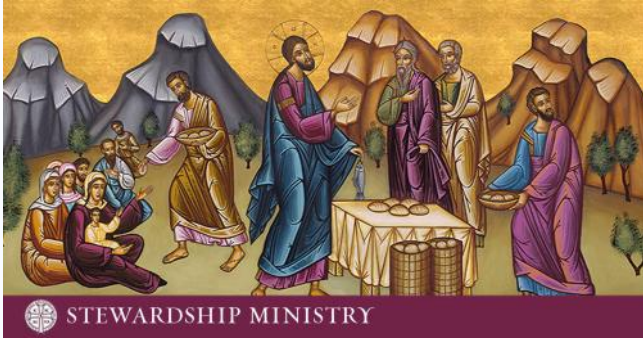
We are deeply grateful to all the families who participated and to our amazing team of volunteers whose love and effort made this week unforgettable. Thank you for helping us plant seeds of faith in the hearts of our youth.

Mark your calendars! We can't wait to see you next summer for VCS 2026: June 22–26!



VCS 2025





YOU ARE THE VOICE OF CHRIST IN A CHANGING WORLD

Consider the Following Info...

Coming to worship and participating in the sacramental life sanctifies our soul and body so that we may contribute to the sanctification of the world. It is an important component of stewardship. Christ's gift to us through the Eucharist is an invitation for us to truly experience the Lord and receive Him. In grati-

tude, centered and strengthened by worship, we offer our entire life in return to Him. This is the greatest form of stewardship which fuels our souls to offer ourselves entirely to Him! With over 170 services offered annually at our parish, we encourage you to participate in 10%—20% more worship opportunities than the previous year.

We thank the 290 Saint Spyridon Stewards for your generous support. Please continue to serve our community and support our beloved Saint Spyridon parish. Your stewardship offering may be submitted by mail to the church office or on our church website (www.Saint-Spyridon.net) for one-time and periodic giving.

ΓΙΝΕ ΚΑΛΟΣ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΣΠΥΡΙΔΩΝΑ

Το Χριστιανικό πρόγραμμα της Εκούσιας Εισφοράς μας δίνει την ευκαιρία να ανταποκριθούμε στην αγάπη του Χριστού με το να διαγωνίσουμε τις διδασκαλίες του Κυρίου και την αποστολή της Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας μας. Η Εκούσια Εισφορά θέτει την ευθύνη για την υποστήριξη της Εκκλησίας εκεί που ανήκει, δηλαδή σε μας τους ίδιους. Ευχαριστούμε πολύ τις 290 οικογένειες που εκπλήρωσαν τις υποχρεώσεις τους για την φετινή χρονιά. Οι υπόλοιποι παρακαλούνται να ανανεώσουν την συνδρομή τους προς την Εκκλησία μας, συμπληρώνοντας την Κάρτα Υποσχέσεως και επιστρέφοντάς την, μαζί με το δώρο της αγάπης τους, στο γραφείο της Εκκλησίας μας.

NEW STEWARDS JUNE 9TH—JULY 26TH

Mr. Dimitris Catsogiannis

Mr. & Mrs. Niko Dages

Mr. Brendan Healy

Mr. & Mrs. Tony Karioris

Mr. & Mrs. John Karopulos

Mr. & Mrs. George Kattos

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Kilpatrick

Mr. Peter Kostopoulos

Mr. & Mrs. Dimitrios Lalezas

Mr. Nick Lamberis

Ms. Mary Limparis

Ms. Penelope Marines

Mr. & Mrs. Dino Mihos

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Miller

Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Miloshev

Mr. & Mrs. Konst. Pappas

Ms. Fotini Triantafyllou

Dr. & Mrs. Dimitrios Vasdekis

ADVERTISE IN THE VOICE

We call upon all our faithful and friends to continue to sponsor our monthly newsletter by advertising your business for the benefit of all the parishioners. Your ad will reach our 375 parish families, four hundred email addresses in our listserv, over 1,500 followers of our Facebook page, and of course everyone who picks up a copy of our Voice newsletter from the church narthex or community center. Please contact the church office for more information or to submit an advertisement for your business. The advertising opportunities are as follows:

Small—\$100/year * Medium—\$150/year * Large—\$250/year

Y. A. L.

On June 19th, we gathered at X's and O's Sports Lounge for a relaxed evening with fellow Orthodox young adults. It was a great chance to meet new people and catch up with old friends in a laid-back atmosphere. The evening was filled with laughter, engaging conversations, and a sense of community.

We are excited to announce that we will be hosting more events soon! Mark your calendars for breakfast after Sunday liturgy on August 24th. This will be another fantastic chance to come together, share a meal, and strengthen our bonds as a community.

Stay tuned for more details on upcoming events!



TREE OF LOVE

In the main hallway of St. Spyridon stands a golden and bronze **"Tree of Love"** with an icon of our patron saint at its base.

This "Tree of Love" is a symbol of our commitment to the ministry of our community. With great hope for our community's future and with love for St. Spyridon, we invite you to join the numerous supporters whose names are engraved on these golden and bronze leaves in recognition of their gifts to the Church. There are numerous ways to contribute to our "Tree of Love" such as to honor a friend or in memory of loved ones. For more information, please call the church office.



PARISH REGISTRY

Wedding

Telemahos Korbakes and Zoe Ekonomou were joined in Holy Matrimony on Tuesday, July 1st.. Their sponsors were Tony & Zoe Khoury.

Stefanos Giannouris and Eleni Alexakos were joined in Holy Matrimony on Saturday, July 5th. Their sponsor was Mr. Antonis Dromponis.

Να ζήσετε!

Funerals

Helen Dourdourekas fell asleep in the Lord on June 27th, 2025. Her funeral took place on July 1st and she was interred at Bethenia Cemetery.

Maria Meintanis fell asleep in the Lord on July 8th, 2025. Her funeral took place on July 15th and she was interred at Evergreen Cemetery.



FLOWERS FOR THE ICON OF PANAGIA

As the Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is approaching, once again we are asking for your donation towards the adornment of the icons of Panagia. Donations are accepted by mail, in the church office and in the designated donation box in the church narthex.

ΛΟΥΛΟΥΔΙΑ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΕΙΚΟΝΑ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΝΑΓΙΑΣ

Φέτος και πάλι, παρακαλούμε όλους όσους έχουν την ευχαρίστηση να προσφέρουν χρήματα για την αγορά λουλουδιών για τον στολισμό της εικόνας της Παναγίας μας για τις Άγιες ημέρες του Δεκαπανταύγουστου, να επικοινωνήσουν με το γραφείο της Εκκλησίας μας.



Memorials

June 15th: +40 days Georgia Kekempanos, +6 months Kyratso (Koula) Kintonis, and +1 year Pericles Tziavaras

June 22nd: + 40 days John Kritikos, +40 days Zoie Korbakis, and +48 years Theodore Kritikos




June 29th: +9 mos Apostolos Malfas, +4 yrs Peter K. Manasses, +1 yr Maria Georgis, +22 yrs George W. Georgis, +1 yr Sotirios (Sam) Ekonomopoulos

July 6th: +40 days Mary Paras, +1 yr Polichronis Christopoulos, +1 yr Irene Poulos, and +5 yrs Andrew Poulos

July 13th: +20 yrs Eugenia Pappas, and +20 yrs Katherine Psinias

July 27th: +3 mos for Eleni Patsakas

May their memory be eternal!



GUEST SPEAKER:
HIS GRACE
BISHOP ATHENAGORAS
OF MYRINA

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13
PARAKLESIS TO THE THEOTOKOS
TIME: 6:00 P.M.

REFRESHMENTS AND MISSIONS
PRESENTATION IN THE
FELLOWSHIP HALL
7:15 PM
PRESENTATION IN GREEK AND ENGLISH

ST SPYRIDON HELLENIC ORTHODOX CHURCH
12307 S. RIDGELAND AVE, PALOS HEIGHTS, IL

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

Friday, August 1st	Paraklesis—6:30 p.m.
Sunday, August 3rd	Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m. * Paraklesis — 6:30 p.m.
Monday, August 4th	Paraklesis—6:30 p.m.
Tuesday August 5th	Vespers at Transfiguration Monastery, Harvard, IL —6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, August 6th	Transfiguration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
	Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m. * Paraklesis — 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, August 7th	Paraklesis—6:30 p.m.
Friday, August 8th	Paraklesis—6:30 p.m.
Sunday, August 10th	Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m. * Paraklesis — 6:30 p.m.
Monday, August 11th	Paraklesis—6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, August 12th	Paraklesis—6:30 p.m.
Wednesday, August 13th	Paraklesis—6:30 p.m.
Thursday, August 14th	Gr Vespers at Assumption Chicago, Homer Glen, & Hegewisch—7:00 p.m.
Friday, August 15th	Dormition of the Virgin Mary —Orthros & Hierarchical Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m.
Sunday, August 17th	Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m.
Sunday, August 24th	Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m.
Wednesday, August 27th	St. Fanourios, Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m.
Friday, August 29th	Beheading of St. John the Baptist —Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m.
Sunday, August 31st	Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m.
Monday, September 1st	New Ecclesiastical Year—Orthros & Divine Liturgy—8:00 a.m.

ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ ΙΕΡΩΝ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΩΝ

Παρασκευή 1 Αυγούστου	Παράκλησις—6:30 μ.μ.
Κυριακή 3 Αυγούστου	Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία—8:00 π.μ. * Παράκλησις — 6:30 μ.μ.
Δευτέρα 4 Αυγούστου	Παράκλησις—6:30 μ.μ.
Τρίτη 5 Αυγούστου	Μέγας Εσπερινός στην Ιερ. Μονή Μεταμορφώσεως, Harvard, IL—6:00 μ.μ.
Τετάρτη 6 Αυγούστου	Η Μεταμόρφωσις Σωτήρος — Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία—8:00 π.μ.
	Παράκλησις — 6:30 μ.μ.
Πέμπτη 7 Αυγούστου	Παράκλησις—6:30 μ.μ.
Παρασκευή 8 Αυγούστου	Παράκλησις — 6:30 μ.μ.
Κυριακή 10 Αυγούστου	Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία—8:00 π.μ. * Παράκλησις — 6:30 μ.μ.
Δευτέρα 11 Αυγούστου	Παράκλησις—6:30 μ.μ.
Τρίτη 12 Αυγούστου	Παράκλησις—6:30 μ.μ.
Τετάρτη 13 Αυγούστου	Παράκλησις—6:30 μ.μ.
Πέμπτη 14 Αυγούστου	Μέγας Εσπερινός στους Ιερούς Ναούς Κοιμήσεως Της Θεοτόκου στο Σικάγο, Homer Glen & Hegewisch— 7:00 μ.μ.—9:00 μ.μ.
Παρασκευή 15 Αυγούστου	Η Κοίμησις της Θεοτόκου —Όρθρος & Αρχιερατική Θεία Λειτουργία—8:00 π.μ.
Κυριακή 17 Αυγούστου	Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία—8:00 π.μ.
Κυριακή 24 Αυγούστου	Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία — 8:00 π.μ.
Τετάρτη 27 Αυγούστου	Αγίου Φανουρίου, Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία—8:00 π.μ.
Παρασκευή 29 Αυγούστου	Αποκεφάλισις Αγ. Ιωάννου του Βαπτιστή —Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία— 8:00 π.μ.
Κυριακή 31 Αυγούστου	Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία—8:00 π.μ.
Κυριακή 1 Σεπτεμβρίου	Αρχή της Ινδίκτου —Όρθρος & Θεία Λειτουργία—8:00 π.μ.

ARCHANGELS ACADEMY

As summer slowly comes to a close, we're looking back on all the fun we had at this year's summer camp. Our little chefs had a great time slicing, dicing, mixing, and stirring their way through delicious cooking adventures! From making homemade pizzas to blending yummy smoothies, their creativity really shined. The laughter and friendships made will stay with us until next summer!

Now, as we enjoy the last warm days of summer, we're getting excited for the 2025-2026 school year. There are only two spots left for Fall Registration, so if you know someone looking for a caring and fun preschool, now is a great time to let them know about Archangels Academy!

We can't wait to welcome our new students and see our returning friends again. Don't forget, our first day of school is on Wednesday, September 3rd! We'll kick off the year with a special Agiasmo service. Parents, please plan to attend your child's first day, as it will be an early release day.

For more information on registration, the 2025-2026 calendar, and all the fun activities we have planned, please visit our website

at www.archangelsacademy.org. You can also email me, Sofea Malamis, at director@archangelsacademy.org if you'd like to schedule a visit or tour.

Let's get ready for a fantastic new school year filled with learning, creativity, and endless fun!

Sofea Malamis, Director



Our Philoptochos has been busy this summer!

On June 14th, we hosted our 4th annual Walk Against Cancer with an amazing 130 participants of all ages! This year we were proud to welcome our neighbors, St. Mary's Antiochian Church of Palos Heights and St. Luke's of Palos Hills, along with walkers from our southside parishes. It was a joyful day to walk for such a meaningful cause and pay tribute to those who have survived cancer, continue fighting cancer, and honor those that passed away. Congratulations to our hard working Cancer Walk Committee! Please read the article for all the details.

Another joyous event that is always highly anticipated is our annual Scholarship Presentation and Luncheon which took place Sunday, June 29th. Once again, our Philoptochos is deeply grateful to Mrs. Stamatina Manasses for her continued dedication and generosity for honoring our parish students with scholarship awards, in honor of her late husband Mr. Peter Manasses. Mrs. Manasses is proud to share her late husband's dream of his love of education and Christian philanthropy, which he proudly exemplified during his life. Please read the article from our Scholarship Chairlady Maria Baltsas. Many thanks to her and the entire committee for their dedication to this extremely important recognition that is bestowed on our worthy parish students.

A heartfelt congratulations to all our Philoptochos members and parishioners who worked tirelessly for our annual Greek Festival! It was a hugely successful weekend for our parish. We truly show how proud we are of our parish to our visitors!

Upcoming events include:

- Board Meeting -to be announced for late August.
- Visit to Greek American Rehabilitation Center- Thursday, August 28th.

To our college students & parents:

Please submit your student's contact information so they may be included in our College Outreach program and receive a special gift. Please see the special announcement in this issue.

To all of our parishioners and members of Philoptochos, a happy and restful summer!

With Agape,

Kathy Korbakes, Philoptochos President



An Invitation

from St. Spyridon Philoptochos
To

All College Students of St. Spyridon

**Let's keep in touch
with our College Outreach**

Philoptochos would like to send you
a College Outreach Package!

We want you to feel connected with
your home parish of St. Spyridon
while you are away at college or living at home.
Your package will include something fun,
something spiritual and something of
our Greek traditions!

Wishing you a great school year!

**To receive your care package,
scan the QR code to sign up**



Save the Date

The Metropolis of Chicago
Philoptochos Invites You to
The Annual September Luncheon

Spirit of Hope
Soaring through God's Strength

Saturday, September 20, 2025

11 A.M. Cocktails

12 P.M. Lunch

Concorde Banquets

Bus transportation will be provided.

Please make reservations with
Demetria Papadopoulos Call: 708-870-2783 or
email: demetriapapa@gmail.com

St. Spyridon Hellenic Orthodox Church

ST. SPYRIDON PHILOPTOCHOS STANDS UP TO CANCER



On Saturday, June 14th the St. Spyridon Philoptochos hosted their **4th Annual Walk Against Cancer**. It is an event dedicated to *"Those we've lost to cancer, those that continue the fight and those who are survivors"*. This year over 130 participated in the event. The day's activities began at St. Spyridon Church (Palos Heights) where a Paraklesis to St. Nektarios was held, and names were read for those currently fighting cancer. The group, from babies in buggies to Yiayias in their 90's, walked four blocks south on Ridgeland Avenue to attend a Memorial Service at St. Mary Orthodox Antiochian Church. There a service was held in memory of those we've lost to cancer. Finally, the group walked back to St. Spyridon where a Filotimo Luncheon of celebration was held in their community center honoring the survivors of cancer. Participants received shirts, tumblers, water bottles and PopTarts. Children under twelve each received a stuffed animal for their special participation in this fight. ALL monies collected this year will go to fighting uterine cancer.

This was the first time the event became Pan Orthodox with representatives of St. Spyridon Hellenic Orthodox Church, St. Mary Antiochian Church, and St. Luke the Evangelist Church (Palos Hills) and many contributors from neighboring area Greek Orthodox Churches participating. In past years the event donations were given to the American Cancer Society, University of Illinois/Pediatric Cancer and American Liver Foundation. Members of the St. Spyridon Philoptochos extend their sincere and deep gratitude to our sisters, parishioners, families, and neighbors that participated in this event. The committee co-chairs were Ruth E. Faklis and Georgia Xeros. Committee members include Eleni Bizoukas, Eleni Dimis, Samantha Mataragas, Stella Parhas and Thalia Colompos.

Please join us in 2026!



PETER MANASSES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Manasses Memorial Scholarships Support St. Spyridon Students



The St. Spyridon Philoptochos Society is incredibly honored by Mrs. Stamatina Manasses's continued commitment to awarding scholarships to our parish students. This year, thanks to her generosity, four deserving students were awarded with scholarships to support their education. Mrs. Manasses takes great pride in carrying forward her husband's legacy and philanthropic spirit. Her heartfelt wish is to see the next generation of student scholars thrive while honoring the memory of the late Mr. Peter Manasses. *May his memory be eternal.*

Stavroula Malamis is the daughter of Taso and Sofea Malamis. Stavroula recently graduated from DePaul University with a Bachelor's degree in Exercise Science and will be pursuing a Masters of Occupational Therapy at North Central College in the Fall. At DePaul, Stavroula was on the Dean's List and was a member of the



Hellenic Student Organization and the Delta Zeta Sorority, where she planned engaging fundraising activities to raise funds to provide hearing aids to those in need. Stavroula is a compassionate and driven student who is dedicated to pursuing a career in pediatric occupational therapy. Her long-term goal is to co-found a multidisciplinary pediatric therapy focused on community-based care. Stavroula has also served as an intern at the Neurobehavior Therapy Center in Orland Park and also volunteered at Children's Therapy Services. At St. Spyridon, Stavroula served as the President of GOYA, where she deepened her understanding of philanthropy. Stavroula has also volunteered at Fanari Camp. Through all of her experiences, Stavroula believes that "education is not separate from service- it enhances it. While volunteering has given me real insights into people's struggles, education has allowed me to understand a broader system."



Andreana Kekempanos is the daughter of Yonna and Larry Kekempanos and will be attending the Illinois College of Optometry in the Fall. Andreana is a recipient of multiple honors, including the PanHellenic Scholarship, Trustees Scholarship, and Leadership Fellowship Scholarship, and has consistently achieved Dean's List recognition. Andreana is an active member of the St. Spyridon Young Adult Leaders and volunteers at St. Spyridon Sunday School and the Junior Olympics Girls Volleyball team for the Metropolis of Chicago. Andreana also serves on the PanHellenic Gala & Alumni Subcommittee and has gained valuable clinical experience through observational ophthalmology

shadowing and working as an Optometric Medical Assistant and Optician at Gardner Eye Care since 2022. Academically, Andreana's commitment is evident through her roles as an undergraduate research assistant and her involvement in the Orthodox Christian Fellowship and Hellenic Student Association. Andreana aspires to educate future optometrists and advance research and technology in eye care.

Mariam Xydakis is the daughter of Anthony and Karen Xydakis and is studying Anthropology at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Mariam will soon begin an academic research internship at The Asia Minor and Pontos Hellenic Research Center. Mariam is an active member of St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church, where she has demonstrated exceptional commitment through her service to both the Young Adult League (YAL) and Philoptochos. As a member of Philoptochos and an active committee member for YAL, Mariam strengthens our parish by volunteering her time, coordinating events, selling pastries and raffle tickets at fundraisers, and also helps plan monthly YAL activities and College Outreach baskets. Her contributions also support greater causes, such as fundraising for the IOCC through YAL events. In addition to her parish service, Mariam has excelled academically; she has been on the Honor Roll at the College of DuPage from 2022–2024 and was also on Dean's List at UIC. Mariam also works at Walgreens as a Pharmacy Customer Service Associate and holds a Pharmacy Technician License. Mariam is dedicated to faith, service, and leadership, and consistently strives to uplift our community.



Nicole Prassas, the daughter of Maria and Panayioti Prassas, graduated from Andrew High School. Nicole will be pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry at Butler University. Nicole graduated at the top 1 percent of her class, was an AP scholar, and an Illinois State Scholar. In high school, Nicole held numerous leadership positions including: President of Girls in Stem, Leader of Project Diversity, President of Sports Medicine, Project Diversity Leader, and also served as leader in her school's tutoring program. At St. Spyridon, Nicole was involved in GOYA, participated in the Junior Olympics, served as a Myrofora, and attended Sunday School. Nicole also assisted with our summer festival and has also attended Fanari

Summer Camp. She was also a member of the Junior Class Council, Student Council, Greek Club, and was also the captain of her soccer team, cross country, and track teams. Reflecting on her experiences, Nicole believes that "Education is the guiding light that allows me to pursue something new, powerful on this journey to achieve something extraordinary including a lifetime of service, devotion to my faith, and an *agape* for others that grows every single day."

PLUTARCHOS ACADEMY



Our Plutarchos Academy is preparing for another fun and productive school year.

Classes are offered every Monday and Friday, 4:30—6:30 p.m.

We will begin on Friday, September 5th, with an Agiasmo Service and a “Meet and greet” event. Parents are invited to visit their child's classroom, meet the teacher, ask questions and learn about the curriculum.

As we are making our final preparations for our classes, scheduling teachers and curriculum needs, lesson plans and educational material, it is essential to know the number of students at each level. Register as soon as possible.

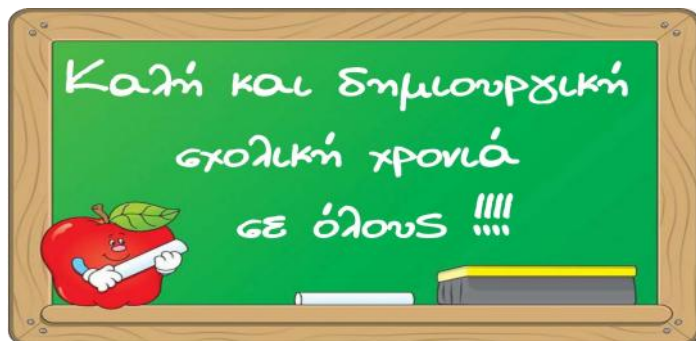
Applications are available on our Church Website and at the Church office. Please, do not wait until the last minute.

We are very excited to announce that our school is now offering online and in-person Greek language lessons tailored for adults of all fluency levels!

Whether you are a complete beginner, have some prior knowledge, or are looking to refine your advanced skills, our comprehensive program is designed to meet your needs. Adult classes will be offered on Friday evenings starting September 19th.

We are looking forward to an amazing New School Year. Feel free to call or email the Church office with any questions.

Please join us at X's & O's Sports Lounge in Palos Heights for an exciting Football game on Sunday, September 21st and help support our school. It is a great opportunity to enjoy a spirited game day, and contribute to the education of our young students. All proceeds will benefit Plutarchos Academy.



ADULT GREEK CLASSES

Enrich your Greek language skills with our immersive Greek courses, designed to make learning enjoyable and effective

Online and in-person

supportive and encouraging learning community

For more information, please contact the church office at (708)385-2311

ALL ARE WELCOME!

- COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM FOR ALL LEVELS
- INTERACTIVE & ENGAGING LEARNING
- FOCUS ON PRACTICAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS



All 6th grade Greek School graduates are eligible to participate in our Greek Language Seminar which is an interactive, conversational, and multimedia program designed to build on the students' Greek language skills, and to prepare them for their level of Elinomathia certification at the end of the year.

Elinomathia is an exam administered by the Ministry of Education in Greece. A successful 2nd level of Elinomathia certificate may be used to receive a Seal of Biliteracy which then can be placed on a student's transcripts and future resume.

THE CURRICULUM INCLUDES

- Elinomathia Preparation
- Conversational Greek
- Greek History & Current Events
- Greek Geography
- Art and Traditions
- Modern Literature
- Greek Dancing

Class Time:
Every Friday
4:30 p.m.—6:30 p.m.
September—May

For more information
contact the church at
708-385-2311

Plutarchos Academy of St. Spyridon

PLUTARCHOS ACADEMY CAMP KALOKAIRAKI 2025

This summer, we were thrilled to introduce our students to the captivating world of Greek heroes through an unforgettable week of learning and fun!

Each day, we explored a new hero. Theseus and the Minotaur, Perseus and Medusa, Pandora, Jason and the Argonauts and Achilles, bringing their epic stories to life through engaging games, creative crafts, immersive storytelling, and interactive activities.

The children left our summer camp with cherished memories, new friendships, and unique artwork to treasure at home. We are deeply grateful to all the families who entrusted us with another year of celebrating Greek culture. We're already excited for next year's adventure!

Mrs. Evi Marouda





Τον καθένα από μας τον βασανίζει το ερώτημα: τι θα γίνει με μας και τι μας περιμένει μετά το θάνατο; Μία σαφή απάντηση σ' αυτό το ερώτημα μόνοι μας δεν μπορούμε να την βρούμε. Αλλά η Αγία Γραφή και πρώτα απ' όλα ο λόγος του Κυρίου μας Ιησού Χριστού μας αποκαλύπτουν αυτό το μυστικό. Μας το αποκαλύπτουν επίσης το απολυτίκιο και το κοντάκιο της μεγάλης αυτής γιορτής της Κοιμήσεως της Υπεραγίας Θεοτόκου και οι εκκλησιαστικοί ύμνοι που ψάλλονται σ' αυτή τη γιορτή.

Θέλω όλοι σας να καταλάβετε, γιατί ο θάνατος της Υπεραγίας Θεοτόκου και Παρθένου Μαρίας λέγεται Κοίμησή της. Ο μέγας απόστολος Ιωάννης ο Θεολόγος στο 20ο κεφάλαιο της Αποκαλύψεως μιλάει για τον πρώτο και το δεύτερο θάνατο. Ο πρώτος μόνο θάνατος, ο οποίος είναι αναπόφευκτος για όλους τους ανθρώπους, περιμένει και τους αγίους και τους δικαίους. Αλλά ο δεύτερος, ο φοβερός και αιώνιος θάνατος, περιμένει τους μεγάλους και αμετανόητους αμαρτωλούς, οι οποίοι αρνήθηκαν την αγάπη και την δικαιοσύνη του Θεού και είναι καταδικασμένοι να βρίσκονται αιωνίως σε κοινωνία με το διάβολο και τους αγγέλους του.

Στο Ευαγγέλιο του ίδιου μεγάλου αποστόλου και ευαγγελιστού Ιωάννου του Θεολόγου διαβάζουμε τα λόγια του Χριστού, τα οποία είναι πολύ στενά συνδεδεμένα με όσα γράφει η Αποκάλυψη: «αμήν αμήν λέγω υμίν ότι ο τον λόγον μου ακούων και πιστεύων τω πέμψαντί με έχει ζωήν αιώνιον και εις κρίσιν ουκ έρχεται, αλλά μεταβέβηκεν εκ του θανάτου εις την ζωήν» (Ιωάν. 5, 24).

Το ακούτε, το καταλαβαίνετε; Νομίζω ότι ακόμα και θα πρέπει να σας κινήσει την περιέργεια το γεγονός ότι όλοι όσοι υπακούουν στο λόγο του Χριστού και πιστεύουν στον Ουράνιο Πατέρα του, ο οποίος τον έστειλε, αμέσως μετά το θάνατο

τους θα περάσουν στην αιώνια ζωή. Δεν υπάρχει λόγος να δικαστούν αυτοί που έχουν ζωντανή πίστη στο Θεό και υπακούουν στις εντολές του.

Και στους μεγάλους δώδεκα αποστόλους είπε ο Κύριος μας Ιησούς Χριστός: «αμήν λέγω υμίν ότι υμείς οι ακολουθήσαντές μοι, εν τη παλιγγενεσία, όταν καθίση ο Υιός του ανθρώπου επί θρόνου δόξης αυτού, καθίσεσθε και υμείς επί δώδεκα θρόνους κρίνοντες τας δώδεκα φυλάς του Ισραήλ» (Ματθ. 19, 28). Δικαστές και κατήγοροι θα είναι κατά την Φοβερά Κρίση του Θεού οι Απόστολοι του Χριστού και, βεβαίως, είναι τελείως αδύνατο να φανταστούμε να δικάζονται η Υπεραγία Θεοτόκος και Αειπάρθενος Μαρία, ο Βαπτιστής του Κυρίου Ιωάννης, οι μεγάλοι προφύτες του Θεού, ο Ηλίας και ο Ενώχ τους οποίους ζωντανούς τους πήρε ο Θεός στον Ουρανό, όλο το αμέτρητο πλήθος των μαρτύρων του Χριστού, οι δοξασμένοι από τον Θεό άγιοι αρχιερείς και θαυματουργοί με επί κεφαλής τον άγιο Νικόλαο, αρχιεπίσκοπο Μύρων της Λυκίας.

Είναι αδύνατον ακόμα και να περάσει από το μυαλό μας η σκέψη πως θα δικαστούν αυτοί, οι όποιοι άκουσαν από το στόμα του Χριστού: «Η βασιλεία του Θεού εντός υμών εστί» (Λκ. 17, 21). Σ' αυτούς τους μεγάλους αγωνιστές του Χριστού, σαν σε πολύτιμους ναούς κατοικούσε το Άγιο Πνεύμα. Ακόμα και ζώντας στη γη, αυτοί βρισκόταν στην άμεση κοινωνία με τον Θεό, επειδή έτσι είπε ο Κύριος μας Ιησούς Χριστός: «Εάν τις αγαπήση με, τον λόγον μου τηρήσει, και ο πατήρ μου αγαπήσει αυτόν, και προς αυτόν ελευσόμεθα και μονήν παρ' αυτό ποιήσομεν» (Ιωάν. 14, 23).

Η Υπεραγία Παρθένος Μαρία υπήρξε άχραντος ναός του Σωτήρος και σ' αυτήν κατοίκησε το Άγιο Πνεύμα και από την αγιότατη μήτρα της έλαβε το ανθρώπινο σώμα ο Υιός του Θεού, ο Οποίος κατέβηκε από τους Ουρανούς. Γι' αυτό ο σωματικός της θάνατος δεν ήταν θάνατος αλλά Κοίμηση, δηλαδή ένα άμεσο πέραςμα από τη Βασιλεία του Θεού εντός της στη Βασιλεία των Ουρανών και την αιώνια ζωή.

Μού ήρθε τώρα στο μυαλό και κάτι καινούριο. Σ' ένα από τα προηγούμενα κηρύγματα μου σάς

ΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΚΟΙΜΗΣΙΝ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ

έλεγα, ότι έχουμε κάθε λόγο να πιστεύουμε, ότι και το σώμα της Υπεραγίας Θεοτόκου με τη δύναμη του Θεού έγινε άφθαρτο και ανελήφθη στους ουρανούς. Αυτό μάς λέει και το κοντάκιο της μεγάλης γιορτής της Κοιμήσεως της Θεοτόκου: «Την εν πρεσβείαις ακοίμητον Θεοτόκον, και προστασίαις αμετάθετον ελπίδα, τάφος και νέκρωσις ουκ εκράτησεν ως γαρ ζωής Μητέρα, προς την ζωήν μετέστησεν, ο μήτραν οικήσας αιεπάρθενον».

Προσέξτε: «τάφος και νέκρωσις ουκ εκράτησεν». Σκεπτόμενοι αυτό, ας θυμηθούμε και τι γράφει η Αγία Γραφή για το θάνατο του μεγαλύτερου προφήτη της Παλαιάς Διαθήκης, του Μωυσή στο 34ο κεφάλαιο του βιβλίου του Δευτερονομίου, ότι πέθανε σύμφωνα με το λόγο του Θεού στο όρος Νεβώ και τάφηκε στη γη Μωάβ. Ο τάφος του μεγάλου αυτού προφήτη έπρεπε να είναι για πάντα τόπος προσκυνήματος για όλο το λαό του Ισραήλ. Όμως στη Βίβλο διαβάζουμε, ότι: «ουκ οίδεν ουδείς την ταφήν αυτού έως της ημέρας ταύτης» (Δευτ. 34, 6). Όμως κατά τη Μεταμόρφωση του Κυρίου στο όρος Θαβώρ εμφανίστηκε ο Μωυσής στον Κύριο και Δεσπότη του τον Ιησού μαζί με τον προφήτη Ηλία, ο οποίος αρπάχτηκε ζωντανός στους ουρανούς.

Νομίζω ότι δεν θα είναι αμαρτία αν θα πούμε, ότι το σώμα του μεγάλου Μωυσή, όπως και το σώμα της Υπεραγίας Θεοτόκου, με τη δύναμη του Θεού, έμεινε άφθαρτο. Γι' αυτό και ο τάφος του είναι άγνωστος.

Να σκεφτόμαστε, αδελφοί και αδελφές μου, την μακάρια Κοίμηση της Υπεραγίας Παρθένου Μαρίας και να θυμόμαστε τα λόγια του Κυρίου μας Ιησού Χριστού: «Αμήν αμήν λέγω υμίν ότι ο τον λόγον μου ακούων και πιστεύων τω πέμψαντί με έχει ζωήν αιώνιον, και εις κρίσιν ουκ έρχεται, αλλά μεταβέβηκεν εκ του θανάτου εις την ζωήν» (Ιωάν. 5, 24). Να μάς αξιώσει ο Θεός να γευθούμε και εμείς οι αμαρτωλοί τη μεγάλη αυτή χαρά, με τη χάρη και τη φιλανθρωπία του Κυρίου μας Ιησού Χριστού, ου η δόξα και το κράτος συν τω ανάρχω αυτού Πατρί και τω Παναγίω Αυτού Πνεύματι εις τους αιώνας. Αμήν.



ΤΟ ΕΙΚΟΝΙΣΜΑ ΣΟΥ

Παναγιά, το Εικόνισμά Σου
στ' Αυγουστιάτικο το δείλι,
ποιό ζωγράφισε απ' τ' άψη
αχειρόπιαστο κοντύλι!
Και θαμπώνει τη ματιά μας,
η Πανάχραντή Σου χάρη
κι ας την θόλωσαν του κόσμου
προβολείς και φάροι πλάνοι!

Της καμπάνας το γλωσσίδι
γλυκολάλαο το λέει:
-Κουρασμένοι στρατοπόροι,
η Παρθένα σάς προσμένει!
Κι άκου γλυκασμού τροπάρι,
που ξεχύνεται στην πλάση!...
Η Γιορτή Σου, έχει αρχίσει!
κι η ψυχή μου, άς την προφθάσει!

Χίλιοι πόνοι, χίλιοι φόβοι
μύριοι πόθοι εκεί μπροστά Σου
θ' ακουμπήσουνε, Παρθένα,
στη ποδιά Σου απ' τ' ά παιδιά Σου!
Και Σύ σαν καλή Μητέρα,
σ' όλους μάλαγμα θα ρίξεις!
Το γλυκύτατο φιλί Σου
στην καρδιά μας θα χαρίσεις!

Το γλυκό Εικόνισμά Σου
πώς μιλάει πάντα εντός μου!
Ποιές βαθιές χορδές χτυπάει
το δοξάρι των ψαλμών Σου!
Και ο νούς μου, ανοίγει σ' άλλο
φως και σ' άλλη Βίβλο,
να διαβάσει το δικό Σου
ανερμήνευτο μυστήριο!

Και στό Εικόνισμά Σου πάντα
κάθε Αύγουστο τέτοιο δείλι,
η ψυχή μας να Σου ανάφτει
της αγάπης το καντήλι!
Κουραστήκαμε στους δρόμους
μακριά απ' τήν Εκκλησιά Σου!
Την Ελπίδα Εσύ κρατάς
μοναχά στην αγκαλιά Σου.

Α. ΑΥΓΕΡΙΝΟΥ

DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD



At the time of Her blessed Falling Asleep, the Most Holy Virgin Mary was again at Jerusalem. Her fame as the Mother of God had already spread throughout the land and had aroused many of the envious and the spiteful against Her. They wanted to make attempts on Her life; but God preserved Her from enemies.

Day and night She spent her time in prayer. The Most Holy

Theotokos went often to the Holy Sepulcher of the Lord, and here She offered up fervent prayer. More than once, enemies of the Savior sought to hinder Her from visiting her holy place, and they asked the High Priest for a guard to watch over the Grave of the Lord. The Holy Virgin continued to pray right in front of them, yet unseen by anyone.

In one such visit to Golgotha, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Her and announced Her approaching departure from this life to eternal life. In pledge of this, the Archangel gave Her a palm branch. With these heavenly tidings the Mother of God returned to Bethlehem with the three girls attending Her (Sepphora, Abigail, and Jael). She summoned Righteous Joseph of Arimathea and other disciples of the Lord, and told them of Her impending Repose.

The Most Holy Virgin prayed also that the Lord would have the Apostle John come to Her. The Holy Spirit transported him from Ephesus, setting him in that very place where the Mother of God lay. After the prayer, the Most Holy Virgin offered incense, and John heard a voice from Heaven, closing Her prayer with the word "Amen." The Mother of God took it that the voice meant the speedy arrival of the Apostles and the Disciples and the holy Bodiless Powers.

The faithful, whose number by then was impossible to count, gathered together, says Saint John of Damascus, like clouds and eagles, to listen to the Mother of God. Seeing one another, the Disciples rejoiced, but in their confusion they asked each other why the Lord had gathered them together in one place. Saint John the Theologian, greeting them with tears of joy, said that the time of the Virgin's repose was at hand.

Going in to the Mother of God, they beheld Her lying upon the bed, and filled with spiritual joy. The Disciples greeted Her, and then they told her how they had been carried miraculously from their places of preaching. The Most Holy Virgin Mary glorified God, because He had heard Her prayer and fulfilled Her heart's desire, and She began speaking about Her imminent end.

During this conversation the Apostle Paul also appeared in a miraculous manner together with his disciples Dionysius

the Areopagite, Saint Hierotheus, Saint Timothy and others of the Seventy Apostles. The Holy Spirit had gathered them all together so that they might be granted the blessing of the All-Pure Virgin Mary, and more fittingly to see to the burial of the Mother of the Lord. She called each of them to Herself by name, She blessed them and extolled them for their faith and the hardships they endured in preaching the Gospel of Christ. To each She wished eternal bliss, and prayed with them for the peace and welfare of the whole world.

Then came the third hour (9 A.M.), when the Dormition of the Mother of God was to occur. A number of candles were burning. The holy Disciples surrounded her beautifully adorned bed, offering praise to God. She prayed in anticipation of Her demise and of the arrival of Her longed-for Son and Lord. Suddenly, the inexpressible Light of Divine Glory shone forth, before which the blazing candles paled in comparison. All who saw it took fright. Descending from Heaven was Christ, the King of Glory, surrounded by hosts of Angels and Archangels and other Heavenly Powers, together with the souls of the Forefathers and the Prophets, who had prophesied in ages past concerning the Most Holy Virgin Mary.

Seeing Her Son, the Mother of God exclaimed: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God My Savior, for He hath regarded the low estate of His Handmaiden" (Luke 1:46-48) and, rising from Her bed to meet the Lord, She bowed down to Him, and the Lord bid Her enter into Life Eternal. Without any bodily suffering, as though in a happy sleep, the Most Holy Virgin Mary gave Her soul into the hands of Her Son and God.

Then began a joyous angelic song. Accompanying the pure soul of the God-betrothed and with reverent awe for the Queen of Heaven, the angels exclaimed: "Hail, Full of Grace, the Lord is with Thee, blessed art Thou among women! For lo, the Queen, God's Maiden comes, lift up the gates, and with the Ever-Existing One, take up the Mother of Light; for through Her salvation has come to all the human race. It is impossible to gaze upon Her, and it is impossible to render Her due honor" (Stikherion on "Lord, I Have Cried"). The Heavenly gates were raised, and meeting the soul of the Most Holy Mother of God, the Cherubim and the Seraphim glorified Her with joy. The face of the Mother of God was radiant with the glory of Divine virginity, and from Her body there came a sweet fragrance.

Miraculous was the life of the All-Pure Virgin, and wondrous was Her Repose, as Holy Church sings: "In Thee, O Queen, the God of all hath given thee as thy portion the things that are above nature. Just as in the Birth-Giving He did preserve Thine virginity, so also in the grave He did preserve Thy body from decay" (Canon 1, Ode 6, Troparion 1).

ST. PHANOURIOS THE GREAT MARTYR & NEWLY APPEARED OF RHODES



Little is known about St Phanourios, except for what is shown in his icon which was discovered on 27th August 1500 A.D on the island of Rhodes. Hence, he is called 'the Newly Appeared'.

The icon was initially found by a gang of Arabs, who were invading and pillaging the island at the time, amongst the ruins of an ancient church. All the icons found in the rubble were in a bad state of decay, except for St Phanourios' which appeared as if just painted that day. The gang saw it of no value and abandon it; however, a group of monks who were hiding and watching from a distance retrieved the icon. The monks were astonished by the icon's state of preservation. They yearned to learn more about the Saint, but the only information they could obtain from the icon was his name, that he was a soldier and scenes which depicted his martyrdom.

The icon of St Phanourios has twelve distinct frames. In each the Saint is shown enduring cruel forms of torture in such a realism to suggest the artist must have been a witness.

St Phanourios is showed being: (1) stoned, (2) on a rack, (3) being slashed, (4) behind bars, (5) standing before a judge, (6) tied to a frame, (7) being burned with candles, (8) tied to a post, (9) thrown to wild animals, (10) crushed by a boulder, (11) holding hot coals, and (12) a demon hovering against a background of flames.

Throughout his tortures St Phanourios appears calm, peaceful and patient. This shows he was an indestructible instrument of God and proof of his sainthood.

He is commemorated on the day his icon was found, 27th August.

Our need for St Phanourios

Found after being lost for centuries, St Phanourios is the patron saint for the **recovery of things lost**. The faithful pray to St Phanourios to assist them in revealing lost or hidden:

- spiritual matters of the heart
- material objects
- directing or revealing actions that should be taken
- restoring health

St Phanourios Orthodox Custom

As St Phanourios has answered the prayers of many over the years, a custom has developed of baking a Phanouropita ("Phanourios-Cake/Bread") as a thanks-offering on the eve of the Saint's name day. It is a Greek and Cypriot tradition and still practiced today.

The cake is offered at Vespers services and/or just before the Liturgy finishes on the feast day of St Phanourios to be blessed by the priest with a special prayer. Afterwards, the cake is cut up and shared with parishioners or the poor. However, a Phanouropita can be made whenever someone needs St Phanourios' help then taken to church to be blessed and shared. According to custom, the number of ingredients should be either 7 or 9. Also, it is customary that it be shared with at least 7 people.

Phanouropita Recipe – 9 ingredients:

- 3 cups plain flour
 - 1 cup sugar
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup olive oil
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup orange juice
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brandy
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup raisins (or crushed walnuts)
 - 1 tsp. cinnamon
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. clove powder
 - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder
- 1) Beat oil and sugar with electric beaters until dissolved and creamy yellow.
 - 2) Put the baking powder into the orange juice and stir making sure there are no clumps. Add it to the sugar and oil mix. Beat until combined.
 - 3) Then add brandy, cinnamon and clove powder.
 - 4) Put the beaters on low speed and gradually add the flour. Then fold in fruit or walnuts.
 - 5) Grease a pan with oil and dust with sugar and flour. Then pour in batter.
 - 6) Bake in medium oven (fan-force 180°C) for about an hour or until inserting a toothpick into the cake comes out clean. Leave to cool on a rack.

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