

# THE MESSAGE TO MHNHYMA

August 2021 Newsletter



## HOW TO LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME

Living the Teachings of  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
Strengthens  
Me and My Family

Some years ago a book was published under the title: *How to live 365 Days a Year*.

Perhaps the most important bit of practical spiritual advice that can be given to people in the world

today is contained in the title: *How to Live One Day at a Time*.

Living one day at a time doesn't mean that thoughts of the future should never be permitted to enter a person's mind. At times, every intelligent human being is bound to think seriously of death, and of heaven and hell: all future realities that should affect a person in important ways. Yet, to earn a happy death, win heaven, and escape hell, no one needs to worry today about the problems, temptations and responsibilities of next week, next month, or next year. It is only necessary to give God each day, each hour, as it comes along.

It is only natural for human beings to have thoughts about their material and temporal future here in this world. It is an impossibility to live without hopes, dreams, and plans. The sick person looks forward to being well. The student looks forward to their graduation and to using the education they have acquired. Engaged couples look forward to their marriage. The poor person looks forward to being released for their debts and privations.

The motto of the person who lives one day at a time is suggested by God Himself in the Bible: **"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble"** (Matthew 6:34).

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), Jesus introduces the kind of life those who seek the Kingdom of God must lead. His homily could properly be called, *"The Righteousness of the Kingdom."* God tells us: **"Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?"** and the succeeding words that rebuke all who worry inordinately about food, drink, clothing and status for tomorrow (Matthew 6:25-34). Physical growth and length of life is dependent upon the providence of God more than upon food, drink, and clothing. Persistent anxiety over the things of this world demonstrates internal insecurity and a weak or superficial faith.

It is good, then, for everyone who finds themselves subject to anxiety and worry to ask themselves frequently: "How much of my worry springs solely from concern about future possible events? How much can I eliminate completely by concentrating simply on using this day rightly and well?"

Each day that God gives to any one of us is only the latest in a long series of good things He has given to us in the past. It should be looked upon not as a threshold to a doubtful and uncertain and worrisome future, but as one more day which might be the last gift on top of thousands of past benefactions.

One of the greatest gifts given is the ability to smile. Smiles breed smiles. A positive attitude is as contagious as the flu. Unfortunately, so are frowns, sighs, and harsh words. Whatever you deposit in the bank of life, you withdraw in return, sometimes with interest.

I bring to you a story that will hopefully put a smile on your face.

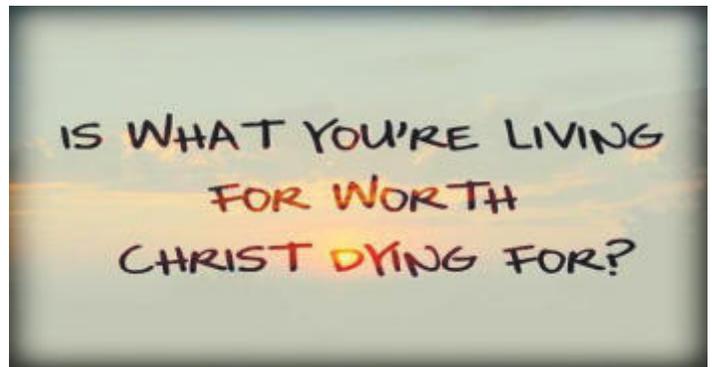
A missionary was sitting at her second story window when she was handed a letter from home. As she opened the letter, a crisp, ten-dollar bill fell out. She was pleasantly surprised but distracted by the movement of a shabbily dressed stranger down below, leaning against a post in front of her building. Thinking that he might be in

greater financial stress than she was, she slipped the bill into an envelope on which she quickly wrote, "Don't despair," and threw it out the window. The stranger below picked up the envelope, read it, looked up and smiled as he tipped his hat and went on his way.

The next day she was about to leave the house when a knock came at the door. She answered the door and found the same shabbily dressed man smiling at her as he handed her a roll of bills. When she asked what they were for, he replied, "That's sixty dollars you won at the horse races, lady! Don't Despair paid five to one."

Live one day at a time and attempt to do so with a smile on your face, love in your heart and faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

† Fr. Ted



## FAITH: POSSIBLE OR IMPOSSIBLE

The famous preacher Spurgeon once said: "A little faith will bring your soul to heaven; a great faith will bring heaven to your soul."

St. Paul lists faith among the gifts of the Holy Spirit. He writes: **"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control"** (Galatians 5:22). The Greek word in the New Testament is *"pistis"*, meaning trust, which can be translated as faith or faithfulness. St. Paul regarded faith not simply as a gift given mechanically, but as a gift that is given according to the degree of our openness to God. He counsels: **"Be modest in your thinking, and judge yourself according to the amount of faith that God has given you"** (Romans 12:3). And again: If our gift is to speak God's message, we should do it **"according to the faith that you have"** (Romans 12:6). While faith is a gift, it has also to do with the quality of our response to God. On one hand faith is a free gift of the Spirit, but on the other hand the power of this gift is also dependent on the receptivity of human hearts. Jesus set down this remarkable principle: **"Everything is possible for the person who has faith"** (Mark 9:23).



## YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

### “EVERYBODY’S DOING IT”

**Remind yourself that you don't have to do what everyone else is doing.**

We know that the devil always tries to remain anonymous. If he appeared as the devil, no one would follow him. So he takes on many disguises. One of the devil’s favorite tactics is to make you believe that “everybody’s doing it,” that it’s the spirit of the times. And, if you’re not doing it, you’re not cool, you’re behind the times, you’re weird. The tempter will never say, “Come, I’ll teach you a sin.” He will always say, “Look let me show you something pleasurable, something that will enrich your life, make you really popular.” In doing so, the tempter works on one of our weaknesses, namely peer pressure.

The Christian lives in the world, yet is not of the world. Where the world goes opposite to Christ, the Christian opposes the world. A Christian doesn’t swim with the current but against it. He/she doesn’t behave as the world behaves but is different. The Christian is different because he/she is “in Christ.”

**BEDTIME BIBLE STORIES:** Our “summer camp” for Pre-K and Kindergarteners will be taking place on Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday, August 5<sup>th</sup>. Sign-ups for registration are taking place by visiting [tinyurl.com/sschbedtimebible](http://tinyurl.com/sschbedtimebible) or in person on Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup> after worship in the lobby of the Great Hall or during the week in the church office. If you are someone who loves the Church and inspiring faith in young people, contact Fr. Dimitri to learn more about assisting with this ministry opportunity.

**HELLENIC DANCERS UPDATE:** Our Cathedral Hellenic Dancers will NOT practice on Wednesday evening, August 4<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> due to the August 15<sup>th</sup> fast period. Dance practice will resume on Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00pm-8:00pm (Jr. Group 6:00-7:00pm and Senior Group 7:00pm-8:00pm). For details or to sign up, contact Taki Zarakas at 219-746-9569.

**LEARN GREEK:** Our Cathedral Greek Education program is back! Registration for the 2021-2022 Greek School year is underway. Registration forms are available from our Cathedral website or in the church office. Greek School begins Saturday, September 11<sup>th</sup>.

**COLLEGE STUDENT ADDRESSES WANTED:** With the coming of August many of our college age students are making their plans to return to school. As in the past, our clergy are asking for our College Students’ Mailing Addresses and/or Emails to be submitted to the church office by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Information can be phoned in or may be done in person by filling out the form available in the church office. New college students or students with new contact info can also submit their information online at [tinyurl.com/sschcollege](http://tinyurl.com/sschcollege).

**YOUTH ADVISORS MEETING:** Anyone interested in assisting with our various Youth Programs (JOY, Jr. GOYA, & GOYA) for the 2021-2022 year are asked to attend the meeting scheduled for Sunday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> after worship.

**SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS:** As we enjoy what is left of summer, our Church School Committee is planning its program for the new school year. We need to have a committed staff of teachers. Anyone wishing to be a Sunday School teacher, assistant or staff member is asked to attend the Sunday Church School meeting to be announced in the Sunday Bulletin. We thank Michelle Massow for offering to serve as Sunday Church School director. For further information, contact Fr. Dimitri at the church office.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL SIGN-UPS** will take place on the Sundays in August following worship services in the lobby of the Great Hall or during the week during regular business hours in the church office. Registration fee is \$20 per child. Don’t wait to the last minute to register your children. Do it today!

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** God doesn’t call us to be successful. He calls us to be faithful.

## GREEK FEST DRIVE-THRU MEMORIES



**GREAT JOB EVERYONE!  
LOVE ALL THE SMILING FACES!  
THANK YOU!!!**

## AUGUST: A TIME OF SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

### PARAKLESIS TO THE THEOTOKOS



The first fifteen days of August presents itself to Orthodox faithful with the opportunity to prepare for the revelation of the mystical Repose (Dormition) of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary. It is this time of year that Orthodox welcome the opportunity to change pace from their earthly summer activities and reflect within themselves the true blessings that come from a close personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The Virgin Mary assists us in that relationship through her constant intercession. This is why we offer prayers to her during the services known as Supplications or Paraklesis.

Paraklesis Services will be chanted (in Greek and English) in our Chapel on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:30pm. Names for our living loved ones are submitted, along with a donation for the less fortunate to the priest and they are commemorated during the service for their health and well-being, both physically and spiritually. Come and pray with us as well and ask for Christ's healing grace through the prayers and intercessory supplications of the Person who touched His life more than anyone else.

### PROCESSION OF THE PRECIOUS CROSS



This Feast Day, celebrated on August 1<sup>st</sup>, was created simultaneously by the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches during the time of Emperor Maunel to celebrate the victories of the Greeks over the Saracens and the Russians over the Bulgars. Both armies had carried the crosses radiant into battle. The actual Holy Cross of Jesus, which had been kept at the imperial palace in Constantinople, was taken each year to Agia Sophia (the church of the Holy Wisdom) on July 31<sup>st</sup>. On August 1<sup>st</sup>, the Holy Cross would be carried around in side the cathedral then through the streets to consecrate the area so that all could venerate it. St. John Chrysostom said that even the

sign of the cross drove out demons and aided healing. St. Julian made the sign of the cross over a glass of poison and drank it without harm. St. Vasilissa crossed herself and stood in flames without harm. Ss. Audon and Senis crossed themselves in the presence of wild animals and they became meek. Jesus made the cross, once a sign of shame, defeat and death, the vehicle of His power for hope, victory and life.

### EYEWITNESSES TO GREATNESS



The Transfiguration of our Lord, celebrated on August 6<sup>th</sup>, is one of the major feasts of our Holy Orthodox Church. This mysterious event occurred late in our Lord's public ministry. In fact, the noted Church historian Eusebius, as well as St. John of Damascus were of the opinion that the transfiguration took place 40 days prior to Christ's death upon the Cross.

While heading for Jerusalem, Jesus took the Apostles Peter, James and John to the top of Mt. Tabor. Suddenly, **"His face shone like the sun and His garments became as white as snow"** (Matthew 17:2). Appearing with the

Lord at this awesome moment were Moses and Elias, proving that He was, indeed, the fulfillment of all that had been written in the Law and foretold by the Prophets. Any doubts of Christ's Divinity were dispelled by the thunderous voice of God the Father: **"This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased"** (Matthew 17:5).

The Apostle Peter would later describe his role on Mt. Tabor as being *"eyewitness to greatness."* The Evangelist John beautifully captures the feeling of that moment in the first chapter of his Gospel: **"And we beheld His glory, the glory as it were of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"** (John 1:14).

The hymns of our Orthodox Church prescribed for the Transfiguration offer further explanation of the significance of this holy day: *"You*

*were transfigured upon the mountain, O Christ our God, and your disciples beheld as much of Your glory as they could bear. So that when they would see You crucified, they might know that Your suffering was voluntary, and proclaim to the world that You are truly the brightness of the Father."*

### FALLING ASLEEP OF THE VIRGIN



Tradition has woven for us the story of the Holy Virgin's last days and departure from this life. Our Lord, at the time of His death on the Cross, instructed St. John the Beloved Apostle to care for His Mother, the Virgin Mary.

As we know time doesn't stand still for anyone, and this was also true for the Panagia. The Theotokos felt the weakness of the flesh and after a heavenly vision she gave instructions to be buried

at Gethsemane, and then *"fell asleep"* in Christ. The Apostles and Disciples of the Lord gathered to honor her.

As tradition tells, the Apostle Thomas was not present at the time of the Theotokos' burial. After three days he arrived, asking to see the Virgin Mother and impart the *"last kiss of parting."* The Apostles opened her tomb, and were astonished to find that her body was gone. It is from this tradition that the term *"assumption"* has been associated with this event. The body of the Virgin Mary was resurrected, as will be the case for all who have believed in the Lord.

On the occasion of the feast day (August 15<sup>th</sup>), the pious Orthodox Christian turns his/her thoughts to the closing of their earthly journey, and prays that their falling asleep in the Lord will be like that of the Theotokos. So it is that at every Divine Liturgy we pray: *"For a Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense at the judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord."*

### A MAN NAMED JOHN



Among all the countless men and women who are venerated as saints in the Orthodox Church, there is one who towers over all the rest: ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST. He is remembered on our Church Calendar no less than seven times, as we commemorate his Conception (9/23), Nativity (6/24) and Beheading (8/29), as well as the first, second and third finding of his head. The day after the Feast of Theophany (1/7) is designated as the *"Synaxis of St. John the Baptist."*

St. John the Baptist is viewed by the Church as the *"bridge"* between Old and New Testaments. In a real sense, he is considered the last of the prophets. He was the **"voice crying in the wilderness"** of whom Isaiah foretold: the one who would prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah. Even before John was born, the Archangel Gabriel revealed to his father Zacharias just exactly what role his son would play in God's plan for salvation: **"He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God."** (Luke 1:16).

The life of St. John the Baptist was one of sacrifice and penance. He preached a baptism of repentance, proclaiming the presence of the Savior to a people who had long awaited His coming. It can also be said that his blessed life was crowned by his noble death; his beheading was a direct result of his fearless condemnation of Herod's sinful, scandalous behavior.

It is no wonder that our Lord had this to say about St. John the Baptist: **"Amen, I say to you, among those born of women, there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist"** (Matthew 11:11).



**TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY** during the fast period of Dekapentavgousto (first 15 days of August) not only to fast and pray, but participate in the Sacraments of Holy Confession and Holy Communion. Appointments for Holy Confession may be made with Fr. Ted through the church office. Make good use of this time for self-examination and spiritual growth. The blessings you will receive are greater than any earthly reward.

**ATTENTION ALL GOLFERS  
SAVE THE DATE!  
FRIDAY, AUGUST 27, 2021**



Mark your calendars and get ready for our "Annual Cathedral Golf Outing", which will be held this year on Friday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, at the Innsbrook Country Club in Merrillville. Tee-off time (shotgun start and best ball format) is 8:00am. Cost is \$100 per golfer before August 14<sup>th</sup> and \$120 after. This price

includes green fees, plus two drink coupons, cart, Bloody Mary breakfast and lunch at Innsbrook, as well as prizes and awards. For details and directions to register, see the enclosed flyer or email: [tasi@ssconstantineandhelen.org](mailto:tasi@ssconstantineandhelen.org).

In the mean time, the Golf Committee is seeking donations for corporate (\$500), drink (\$300) and hole (\$150) sponsors, as well as raffle and door prizes along with other items on our wish list. If you could be of assistance in one or more of these areas, please contact Jeff Mills at [jdsmills1070@yahoo.com](mailto:jdsmills1070@yahoo.com) or Dr. Jim Siatras at [jsiatras@gmail.com](mailto:jsiatras@gmail.com).

Come one, come all for a great day of fundraising through fun and fellowship. See you on the links!

**GOLF CHUCKLE:** A golfer hit a drive straight down the middle of the fairway longer than he had ever done before. Pleased with himself, he strode off after the ball, but found another golfer about to hit it.

"Pardon me," he said, "But that's my ball." The other golfer insisted, "No, this is my ball."

The other golfer persisted, "If you pick up the ball you will see that it has my name on it."

The stranger scooped up the ball, examined it, and haughtily said, "And what's your name doing on my ball?"

**HEROES OF THE FAITH: THE 7 MACCABEANS**

The names of the Holy 7 Maccabean Martyrs celebrated on August 1<sup>st</sup> are Abim, Anthony, Guria, Eleazar, Eusebona, Achim, and Marcellus. They were Jews by race and exact keepers of the Laws of the Fathers. They lived during the reign of Antiochus, who was surnamed Epiphanes ("Illustrious"), the King of Syria and an implacable enemy of the Jews. Having subjugated their whole nation and done many evil things to them, not sparing to assail the most sacred matters of their Faith, he constrained them, among other things, to partake of swine's flesh, which was forbidden by the Law. Then these pious youths, on being apprehended together with their mother and their teacher, were constrained to set aside the Law, and were subjected to unspeakable tortures: rackings, the breaking of their bones, the flaying of their flesh, fire, dismemberment, and such things as only a tyrant's mind and a bestial soul is able to contrive. But when they had endured all things courageously and showed in deed that the mind is sovereign over the passions and is able to conquer them if it so desires, they gloriously ended their lives in torments, surrendering their life for the sake of the observance of the divine Law. The first to die was their teacher Eleazar, then all the brethren in the order of their age. As for their wondrous mother Solomone, "filled with a courageous spirit, and stirring up her womanish thoughts with a manly wrath" (2 Maccabees 7:21), she was present at her children's triumph over the tyrant, strengthening them in their struggle for the sake of their Faith, and enduring stout-heartedly their sufferings for the sake of their hope in the Lord. After her last and youngest son had been perfected in martyrdom, when she was about to be seized to be put to death, she cast herself into the fire that they might not touch her, and was thus deemed worthy of a blessed end together with her sons, in the year 168 before Christ. These martyrs inspired a revolt several years later. Outnumbered ten to one, the Jews defeated the army of Antiochus. The remembrance of this event come to be known as Hanukkah.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** Hope is putting faith to work when doubting would be easier.

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## COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD



### **BACK PACK BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSING:**

With schools in our area preparing to begin their new school year, our Cathedral will have a special blessing service for our children as they return to school on Sunday, August 8<sup>th</sup>. Students, teachers and administrators are asked to be in church on this day so that a special prayer may be offered for them as they start off the new school year. Following the blessing each student and teacher in attendance will be given an icon for them to keep with them for the school year.

With the need greater than ever, we will be collecting school supplies for children who are currently in: NISEC of NWI, foster care, and shelter care. All backpacks and supplies will be distributed in Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties of Indiana. See Eva Kostides for details. Please help us out and bring a little something to church with you on Sundays or during the week. For ideas on what to bring, here's a list of things needed: New Backpacks, Folders & Notebooks (Wide & College ruled paper), Loose Leaf paper (Wide & College ruled), #2 Pencils, Pencil Sharpeners & Erasers, Pens & Highlighters, Color Pencils, Pencil Boxes, Box of 24 crayons, Hand Sanitizer, Kleenex, Binders, 2 Pocket Folders, & Rulers. Deadline for supplies is Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup>.

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:** With COVID-19 pandemic restrictions being eased, our church office hours have returned to 9:00am-4:00pm, Monday through Friday. The church office is closed on Saturday and open on Sunday following worship 10:45-11:15am.

Announcements for the Sunday bulletin and names to be commemorated for Memorials on Sunday need to be submitted to the church office by Wednesday at 12:00 noon. Articles or announcements for the monthly newsletter "*The Message*" need to be submitted to Fr. Ted by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month for the upcoming month.

Our church office staff are: Anastasia Bairaktaris and Kelly Bikos. Denise Komorowski is our Banquet and Hall Rental coordinator.

**HELPING HAND FUND:** This fund was established to help families in our parish with financial hardships. Many of our very own require financial assistance during difficult times. It is a very comforting feeling knowing that you can go "home" and find help that is given freely and with love. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Fr. Ted at the church office 769-2481.

**FOOD PANTRY APPEAL:** Our Food Pantry is seeking donations of canned or dried food items, as well as personal hygiene supplies and household cleaning supplies. Donations may be brought to church on Sundays or left at the church office during the week.

Our Cathedral Food Pantry, which is held each Friday from 9:00-11:00 a.m., is the core of our Outreach Program. Each week, numerous families and individuals come to us for assistance. Many of these families have four or more children. We try to provide the basic food stuffs for at least one week. Please, assist our Food Pantry in any way you can. You will truly be blessed for it!

**JC'S CLOSET UPDATE:** Our Outreach Project of JC's Closet will be held this month On August 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> in the Gold Room.

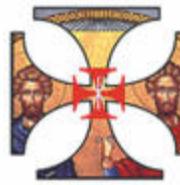
Donations of clothing and household items are being accepted again, as well as Target or Walmart gift cards. For information on this program and/or how you can assist, see Eva Kostides. Thank you!

**ATTENTION PARISHIONERS:** If you are planning to move to a new location, or if you have already moved, please inform the church office so that we may change our records. It costs our parish money for every piece of mail that is returned as "Address Change Requested." PLEASE let the church office know of any changes to your address, home or cell phones, email address, etc. Remember, before making any firm plans for baptisms, weddings, funerals or memorial services, please check with the parish priest first to see if dates and times are permissible.

Also, please refrain from scheduling baby or bridal showers during the Lenten fast, or on Sundays during worship hours.

When scheduling a Sunday Memorial Service, kolyva (boiled wheat) is needed (COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted). People are once again scheduling memorials without bringing kolyva, let alone sacramental wine (St. John Commandaria), bread, olive oil or a donation for the poor. Please follow our Orthodox practices!

## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



**PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP** is ongoing throughout the year. Philoptochos needs YOU to fulfill its mission! You can support Philoptochos either as an active member or as a supportive member. For those too busy to attend a monthly meeting or be involved in any of its ministries or activities, your yearly \$30 or more membership is a meaningful way to participate and offer your assistance. Don't be scared to get involved!

**CANCER BENEFIT WALK:** Our Philoptochos will be participating in the *Relay for Life American Cancer Society Walk* on Saturday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm at Wheeler Middle School in honor of Presvytera Tulla Poteres. Cost is \$25 per person, which includes event T-Shirt, food and drinks for all participants. To register, call Belia at 219-613-8380 or email her at cubcrazy23@yahoo.com. If you are unable to attend but would like to donate make out a check to the American Cancer Society and mail it to:

Belia Farver  
16583 Lincoln St.  
Lowell, IN 46356

**OUR PHILOPTOCHOS' SUMMER OUTING** will be held on Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> with a Lunch Cruise on the Spirit of Chicago. Bus departs from the church parking lot at 8:45am. We board the Spirit of Chicago at 10:30am and cruise the lake from 11:00am-1:30pm viewing Chicago's skyline and other attractions while enjoying a delicious lunch buffet. Following the cruise we will visit Navy Pier for some shopping before returning to the church by 5:00pm. Cost is \$75 per person with checks made payable to: St. Helen's Philoptochos. For paid reservations, contact Nicki Droza at 219-688-2036 or by email at nicki529@yahoo.com.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** the Philoptochos Annual Spaghetti Dinner that benefits our Cathedral/Ross Township Food Pantry will take place on Thursday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>. More specific details will be forth coming.

**THANK YOU!** Our St. Helen's Philoptochos would like to thank everyone (women, men, youth) who assisted in baking various foods, sweets, cookies and breads, along with packaging them and serving these delicious treats at last month's Greek Fest Drive-Thru. Once again, you all did a tremendous job in assisting our Cathedral to raise the necessary funds needed to operate and minister to our faithful. May our good Lord continue to bless you all for the work you do for His Holy Church

**PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS:** In late fall our Cathedral will be electing a new Parish Council for the term of 2022-2023. It's not too early to start thinking about serving on the Parish Council. Nineteen (19) seats will be open for election. If you want to see improvements and changes in our church leadership, you need to get involved. Sitting on the sideline doesn't help your team win. You need to get into the game and work as a team to be victorious. A candidate must be a member in good standing canonically, as well as financially for at least one year immediately preceding the date of the election and be willing to sacrificially give of their time, talent and financial resources for the good of the Church and our Cathedral of Ss. Constantine and Helen.



**CHOIR NOTES:** It's been almost a year and a half since we have had an organized choir sing the hymns of the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. We are trying to get a choir back together after the long COVID-19 layoff. Anyone interested in lifting their voices up in praise of the Lord and joining the choir for the New Ecclesiastical Year is asked to contact Paula Dranger following Sunday worship.

**MEMORIAL SERVICE UPDATE:** There will be no Memorial Service chanted on Sunday, August 15<sup>th</sup> due to the Feast Day of the Dormition of the Theotokos. Memorials in memory of loved ones, may be offered the Sunday before or after this date. For specifics, contact the church office.

**THOUGHT:** Few burdens are heavy when everybody lifts.

## SUMMER GREEK FEST DRIVE-THRU 2021



Another Greek Fest is behind us and so are many months of hard work. Different from our usual Summer Greek Festival this year's Summer Greek Fest Drive-Thru still required a lot of planning and hard work. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone, clergy and laity, men and women, young and senior, parishioner and non-parishioner, who devoted so much of their time, talent and financial resources to make our

Summer Greek Fest Drive-Thru 2021 possible. Though few volunteers stepped forward, those who did worked hard and their efforts were beneficial for our Cathedral. We are truly thankful to the Lord and to all our workers for a job well done.

**Special thanks and a deep appreciation** go to our Festival Chairman, Bill Logothetis, our St. Helen's Philoptochos, as well as to all our numerous donors of lambs, baked goods and other items on our wish list, along with our sponsors, as well as the multitude of volunteers who worked so untiringly for the Fest, either setting up, operating and cleaning up afterwards. Again, thank you to everyone for his or her support, commitment, hard work and cooperation.

**Raffle Ticket Update:** This year our Greek Festival committee tried something different with an On-Going Raffle. \$10,000 in prizes (\$5,000 – 1<sup>st</sup> Prize; \$2,000 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize; \$1,000 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize; \$500 – 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Prizes. Plus there will be five (5) Early Bird drawings of \$200 each will be given out). Tickets were mailed out to all members and super sellers of our Cathedral back in the beginning of May with Early Bird drawings each month from June-October and the Grand prizes being drawn at the Fall Greek Fest in November.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Early Bird drawing was on Father's Day, Sunday, June 20<sup>th</sup>. The winner was Andy & Maria Kourtesis, ticket #0943. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Early Bird drawing was on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. The winner of that drawing was Thelma Troumouliaris, #1799. The next three Early Bird drawings will be held on August 15<sup>th</sup>, September 12<sup>th</sup> & October 10<sup>th</sup>.



Tickets are \$25 each. We urge everyone to make every effort to sell or purchase your tickets. It is through the raffle that the Festival makes most of its profit. And remember you can't win a prize without a ticket! Purchase yours today!!!

**RAFFLE THOUGHT:** The best thing you can give someone is a chance.

**HUMOROUS STORY ON MOTIVATION:** There was a young man hitchhiking through the southern portion of the United States. A farmer driving an old pickup truck stopped to give him a lift. As they rode along, they got to talking about the local moonshine whiskey. The young man said he didn't drink very much, Moonshine would probably be too strong for his taste.

"Nonsense!" said the farmer. "You gotta try some." And with that he pulled a small jug from behind his seat.

"Here," he said handing the jug to the young man. "Take a drink!" "Oh, no, thanks," said the young man. "No, I insist," pressed the farmer. "Have some."

"No, thanks, really," said the young man. But the farmer was not going to take no for an answer. He stopped the truck and grabbed his shotgun from the rack in back. He pointed the gun at the lad and roared, "I said, take a drink!"

"Okay! Okay!" said the young man. "I've changed my mind! I guess I will have some after all." The young man took a few swallows before he realized how powerful the stuff was. His throat muscles tightened, his eyes watered, and he made a choking sound.

"What'd you think of it?" asked the farmer. "Good ain't it?"

"Yeah," gasped the young man, "I guess so."

Then the farmer handed the young man the shotgun and grinned. "Here! Now you hold the gun on me and make me take a drink!"



## STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY



There is a story in the Gospels that tells of the time Jesus went to the Temple, sat down over the collection boxes, and watched what people were giving (Mark 12:41-44). There were thirteen receptacles or offering boxes in the Temple at the time where people contributed whatever they wished above and beyond the tithe (10% of their gross income). These gifts were given voluntarily to meet the Temple expenses.

**"Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how people put money into the treasury"** (Mark 12:41). Jesus watched! He was interested in what people gave to God. He saw. He sees today. He sees the rich cast in much out of their abundance. And, make no mistake, we are rich. He sees the poor widow put in her last two pennies out of her poverty. He is impressed not by how much we give but how much in proportion to what we have. This is why He commended not the rich man but the poor widow who gave her last two pennies. There is a drama here if we care to see it. The people bringing their gifts to God, and God within the shadow keeping watch over His own – His own people and His own treasury.

Sometimes we feel that we are simply giving to a church budget. Not so! It is the Lord's Church and the Lord's budget. Everything in the Church belongs to Him. Everything in the Church is used to serve Him. He is the head of the Church and the head of the treasury. We are giving to God. He watches. He sees what we give because He cares about what we give. What we give is always a barometer of our true devotion and love for Him.

This year of 2021, our parish faces a reduced budget of \$800,000, without major repairs or costly renovations. To meet our financial obligations, we have set a goal of at least \$800,000 for our Stewardship Program to reach in pledges (average pledge \$1,500). We are \$409,503 short of our goal to raise \$800,000 through stewardship. As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, the church office has received 550 pledges for a total of \$390,497, which averages to \$709.99 a pledge. As you can see, we are not near the amount we need to operate. As a matter of fact, our average pledge is dropping. Please note that \$200 from every pledge goes to support of the Archdiocese and the Metropolis of Chicago. Please remember the goal of \$800,000 is what our community needs to operate and be vital in the lives of all our members as well as Greek Orthodox Christians in the United States and throughout the world.

When considering your pledge, please do not view it as "How little can I give?" but rather "How much can I offer to God and His Church?" Remember the sacrificial giving of the members of the early Church. Without our personal love and commitment of time, talent and resources – THERE IS NO CHURCH – and without the Church, then who will preach the Good News of Salvation in Jesus Christ?

We will never truly know the meaning of faith, unless we learn to give freely and joyously, not only of our substance, but of ourselves.

To make giving easier for all our faithful, we have established an online program called [Tithe.ly/give](https://tithe.ly/give?c=1385847). This will allow those who have internet accessibility to continue to make offerings for stewardship payments, candles, Helping Hand, Food Pantry, Fall Greek Fest and other donations that help cover the costs of operating our parish with just a click of your computer keys. Here is the link:

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=1385847>.

It is a profession of faith when we all work together and help our church to better plan for its various financial needs and expenditures. Thank you!

**WISDOM OF THE CHURCH FATHERS:** Do not be one who holds his hand out to take, but shuts it when it comes to giving. If your labor has brought you earnings, pay a ransom for your sins. Do not hesitate to give and do not give with bad grace; for you will discover who He is that pays you back a reward with a good grace. Do not turn your back on the needy, but share everything with your brother and call nothing your own. For if you have what is eternal in common, how much more you have what is transient!  
-The Didache

**REMEMBER:** You need the Church, the Church needs you, and the world needs both.

**Ss. CONSTANTINE & HELEN GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL**  
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Merrillville, IN 46410  
Address Service Requested



**CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN OF SALVATION**  
Reflections on the Feast of Transfiguration  
By Fr. Dimitri Burikas



Forty days before His life-giving Passion, Jesus took three of His disciples - Peter, James, and John - and started hiking with them up Mt. Tabor. This probably didn't seem like too big a deal to those three, but what happened when they reached the top was something they didn't expect.

There, on the peak of the mountain, Jesus revealed the glory of His divine nature. He showed them His Godhood in the form of a bright, other-worldly light, the uncreated light that brings life, peace, and joy to every creature on this earth. The Lord revealed to them exactly Who He is: perfect God and perfect man.

This kind of knowledge of God, not the knowledge of the mind but the intimate knowing that occurs between loved ones, is the very nature of salvation. As the Lord says in the Gospel of John, **“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent”** (17:3). Experiencing this firsthand was such a powerful moment in the lives of these disciples that it literally knocked them down!

The fact that this event takes place on a mountain is significant. In the Scriptures, mountains are always a place of God's revelation. For example, Moses receives the tablets of the Ten Commandments from God on Mt. Sinai. But it's the mountains themselves that teach us about the spiritual life and our journey to knowing God in this real and intimate way.

Climbing a mountain is not easy. It takes a lot of preparation, making sure that you have the proper equipment and supplies to sustain the long and arduous climb. It takes a lot of training, building up our muscles and our lungs to endure the difficult terrain and change in altitude. And it takes a lot of effort to go from sea level up to the peak.

Our spiritual life is no different. We, too, are called to a difficult road in order to become citizens of the Kingdom. **“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it”** (Matthew 7:13-14).

Our mountain is not a large mass of rock and wildlife but the brokenness of our human nature: our sins, our inclinations to evil, our self-centeredness, and all the things that distance us from the saving grace of our Lord. The Church, in response, offers us many tools to help us make the ascent. We can call these tools the ascetical discipline of the church: prayer, fasting, almsgiving, reading the Scriptures, stillness, repentance, and the liturgical/sacrament life of the Church.

We often mistake these tools for the mountain itself. We feel burdened by these spiritual practices and neglect them, mistakenly

thinking that this kind of life is too difficult to actually live out in practice. We are comfortable with the routines of our day-to-day life, our entertainments, and the distractions that we like to engage in.

But those things are often the very things that put distance between us and the experience of God's saving love. Those things are the mountain that needs to be overcome, and the ascetical life of the Church is the tools we need to do it.

We also can make the mistake that these ascetical practices are the goal in themselves, that by fasting, reading the Bible, giving alms, etc. we are saved, scoring enough points to make God happy enough to put us in Heaven. This is a dangerous way of approaching these practices in that it can trap us into thinking that we are better or holier than others because of our ascetical way of life. Only Christ can save us, and these practices can help us draw near to Him.

Whether young or old, the time to engage in the ascetical discipline of the Church is now to train ourselves up for the long and arduous climb to the Kingdom. All the blood, sweat, and tears that we shed in the pursuit of the mountaintop, and the revelation of God's mercy and grace in our lives, will be more than worth it.



May we always struggle to climb the mountain of salvation with our Savior and share in the words of St. Peter on beholding the Transfiguration: **“Lord, it is good for us to be here.”**

**HAVING COMMEMORATED ALL THE SAINTS**



We do not pray alone during the liturgy. We pray together with all the Saints. This is expressed when the priest says, *“Having commemorated all the saints, let us again in peace pray to the Lord.”*

More than once during the liturgy the clergy call on the people to pray with the similar exhortation: *“Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed and glorified Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us commit ourselves and one another to Christ our God.”* Here we see clearly that the purpose of bringing to mind the Theotokos and all the Saints is to lead us to a deeper commitment *“to Christ our God.”* The focus is not on the Saints but on Christ. After we have remembered the saints, we move on *“to commit ourselves and one another to Christ our God.”* Having fixed our gaze on others in the family of God who have rendered perfect service to His excellent glory, we are properly inspired to offer ourselves in total surrender and commitment to Christ, our God.