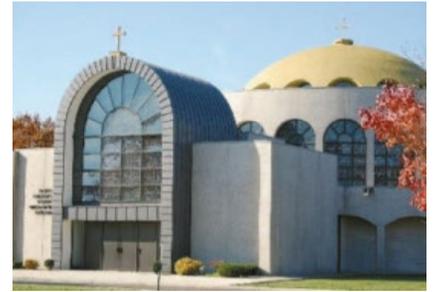


# THE MESSAGE TO MHNHYMA

October 2021 Newsletter



## HOPE – THE BELIEVERS STRENGTH



Faith and love are powerful virtues, basic qualities of the Christian life. First Corinthians 13:13 speaks of **“faith, hope, love, these three.”** St. Paul wrote: **“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ”** (1 Thessalonians 1:3).

Faith and love challenge and move people. Volumes have been written about them, and the clergy frequently expound on them from the pulpit.

But what about the third member of the big three - hope? Have you read anything or heard any sermons lately on hope? It, too, is an essential dynamic in the life of the believer, and our Orthodox Christian Faith with the teachings of Scripture, the lessons from the Church Fathers, our theology, prayers and hymns, contain a full development of this mighty truth. Yet for some reason we tend to neglect her. We do not usually see her standing in her proper place alongside her two sisters.

Perhaps the major reason is the impediment of the word “hope” in the English language. In modern usage hope carries a connotation of uncertainty. When we say, “I hope so,” we mean we are not sure. But that idea is the opposite of the meaning of the word in the Bible. The biblical doctrine of hope is the anticipation of the certainty of the ultimate triumph in Christ. It is a certainty in itself and therefore in us.

Hope is future; faith is present. **“Faith is the substance of things hoped for”** (Hebrews 11:1). Hope is knowing where we are going; faith is what keeps us going; love is the path that leads us there. All three work together. Each needs the other two. And love leads the way, bearing, believing, hoping, enduring all things (1 Corinthians 13:7).

Hope is keeping the ultimate victory in view. It would be like viewing the film of a game in advance of the game itself, seeing yourself playing with all your heart, and winning. You would go into the game charged up to give it your best because you know you are sure to win.

The big difference, of course, is that the believer’s hope is not based on self-effort or on circumstances. These can be disappointing. **“Hope deferred makes the heart sick,”** says Proverbs 13:12. As Christians our hope rests in God alone. **“And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You”** (Psalm 39:7).

We have been begotten to a living hope in baptism (1 Peter 1:3, 21), and this hope is not limited or voided by circumstances. We are given a new life in Christ and we have a new hope by which to live. This grace of God sustains us in the trials of life. Abraham **“against hope believed in hope”** (Romans 4:18).

This hope is detailed for us in the Scriptures. **“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope”** (Romans 15:4). It is by the grace of God for He has **“given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace”** (2 Thessalonians 2:16).

Now, just what is included in hope’s broad embrace? First, salvation. We are admonished in 1 Thessalonians 5:8 to put on **“as a helmet, the hope of salvation.”** To be aware of the primacy of God’s Kingdom and to have full control over our spiritual faculties so that we may stand before Christ righteously on the Day of Judgment.

Our hope includes the return of Christ and the resurrection of our bodies. What is Christianity without the resurrection, both of Christ’s and ours? His death does us no good without it. What use is forgiveness if we remain dead? His disciples were transformed by His Resurrection, and this they preached above all. On Easter we Orthodox Christians sing, *“Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.”*

Because our hope in Christ is steadfast, we have an unshaken hope regarding His Church. St. Paul assured the Corinthian church, which was experiencing internal problems, **“Our hope for you is steadfast”** (2 Corinthians 1:7). That is that the communion of saints, spiritual solidarity, is to begin now in the pains of this life. And to the Thessalonian believers he declared triumphantly, **“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?”** (1 Thessalonians 2:19). This passage shows that all the trials and disappointments of the Christian life and ministry are worthwhile. In spite of everything, the Church will triumph!

With this glorious hope dwelling in us, how should we live in the present world? The believer’s hope produces patient, steadfast, disciplined, confident living. This is not idle living, rather, the glorious certainties of the Christian hope motivate us to the utmost diligence. They set us in motion, as we read in Hebrews 6:11-20. Our hope gives us the boldness in witnessing. St. Paul declared, **“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech”** (2 Corinthians 3:12). And we are admonished in 1 Peter 3:15 to **“be ready always to give an answer to everyone that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”**

A central focus of our hope is the assurance that we shall be conformed to the image of Christ. **“And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure”** (1 John 3:3).

Hope is the anchor for the soul (Hebrews 6:19). Hope keeps us on a steady course. Therefore we must never allow ourselves to be **“moved away from the hope of the gospel”** (Colossians 1:23). Because we are His **“house, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end”** (Hebrews 3:6). The glory of the building goes to the architect rather than to the structure itself. Thus the Church is consecrated to the glory of God, whose house we are. **“Let us hold fast the confession in our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful”** (Hebrews 10:23). Let us have the full assurance of faith, with no doubts or second thoughts as was proclaimed at our baptism.

Our Orthodox Christian hope is not a private, isolated hope. Each believer in Christ is united in Christ through Christ. **“There is one body and one Spirit, just as we were called in one hope of your calling”** (Ephesians 4:4). No wonder St. Paul prayed that God would grant to the Church, **“the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling”** (Ephesians 1:18). Understanding should be translated “heart.” The prayer that Orthodox Christians pray before reading the gospel begins, *“Illumine our hearts, O Master who love mankind, with the pure light of your divine knowledge.”*

God wants to fill us **“with joy and peace in believing,”** so that we shall **“abound in hope”** in the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13). Thus we are to be **“rejoicing in hope”** (Romans 12:12) always!

† Fr. Ted

WHEN WE PUT  
OUR PROBLEMS IN  
GOD’S HANDS,  
HE PUTS HIS PEACE IN  
OUR HEARTS.

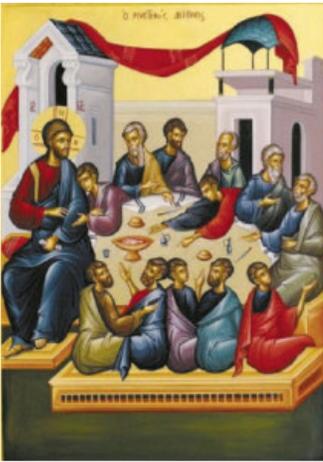
## FATHER WHY?

**QUESTION:** What is the Divine Liturgy? Is it important to attend on Sunday?

**ANSWER:** The Divine Liturgy is the culmination of public prayer. Before the early days of the Church, the word "liturgy" implied a service for people which pertained to philanthropy. In the Old Testament it means prayer or worship offered by the priests of the Mosaic Law. During the Christian era the word liturgy came to signify the performance of Holy Communion. The Divine Liturgy is the most perfect form of worship. It is a reenactment of the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost interwoven with common prayer, the study of scriptures and communion with God.

The Divine Liturgy is a Sacrament. It is a sacred mystical action between God and man. It originated at the Mystical (Last) Supper. The Apostles, obedient to the Lord's command, "Do this in remembrance of Me," observed it very regularly. St. Paul, gives a description of this service in his First Epistle to the Corinthians 11:23-24. Before the Gospels were written, sacred tradition provided the basis, authority and the method for the observance of the liturgy.

Words and phrases were gradually added to the emerging liturgy. Some came from the Old Testament, some from the New, and still others from Sacred Tradition. More prayers and supplications were added to the original liturgy as time went on. However, since the beginning of the fourth century, when St. John compiled the present form of the liturgy, we have had no substantial variations. Throughout the centuries the Divine Liturgy has preserved its original features:



- It is the remembrance: A remembrance of the Life, the Cross, the Resurrection and the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

- It is the Sacrifice: "*This is My Body which is broken for you... This is My Blood, which is shed for you and for the many... for the remission of sins.*" Unlike the primitive forms of sacrifice, this service is the perfect sacrifice offered by the Only begotten Son of God.

- It is a Communion: "*Take, eat, this is My Body... Drink of it all of you, this is My Blood...*" Worthily

approaching the Holy Cup we receive Christ in our hearts. Rather, we should say, we are received by Christ. We receive forgiveness of our sins and we reconcile with God.

It is a Eucharist: Because the Divine Master offered a thanksgiving (*Eucharistia*) to God the Father, before He instituted the Sacrament. Whenever we receive Holy Communion, we gratefully recall the love of Him Who died for us.

The word "liturgy" (*the work of the people*) serves to underscore the corporate character of the Eucharistic Rites. At the Divine Liturgy the Church assembles to worship the Holy Trinity. The Eucharist (Holy Communion) is truly the center of the life of the Church and the manner in which we, the faithful, nourish ourselves on our journey through life. The Eucharist, at the core of the Church, is "The Way" to eternal salvation, a term which was first given to the early faithful before they were properly known as "Christians" (Acts 11:26).

To understand how important the Eucharist is in the life of Orthodox Christians, read the Gospel of St. John 6:1-71. After reading this section you will gain a new appreciation for the Sunday Divine Liturgy and begin to understand more fully why the Eucharist must be at the very center of every Orthodox Christian's life. If we do not commemorate and celebrate the Holy Eucharist every Sunday, we are denied the very essence of life itself.

**A PLACE RESERVED FOR ME:** A devout Orthodox Christian who didn't attend Divine Liturgy and had missed receiving Holy Communion one Sunday thought to herself: "There was a cup set for me at the Lord's Table today, just like the place set for me at the family table at home. The cup was there for me even when I didn't come. When I don't come for Holy Communion, my place at the Lord's Table, reserved especially for me, remains empty. And the Lord Jesus, the Host, Who prepares the table for me, must be truly disappointed that one of His invited guests didn't show up. As she thought about this, she said, "My place at the Lord's Table will never be empty again – not if I can help it."

**FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS:** "The Divine Liturgy is truly a heavenly service on earth, in which God Himself, in a particular, immediate and most close manner is present and dwells with men, for He Himself is the invisible celebrant of the service; He is both the offerer and the offering. There is on earth nothing higher, greater, more holy, than the liturgy; nothing more solemn, nothing more life-giving.

Great is the Divine Liturgy. In it we recall the life, not of some great man, but of God incarnate, Who suffered and died for us, Who rose again and ascended into heaven, and Who shall come again to judge the whole world.

The Divine Liturgy is the continually repeated enactment of God's love to mankind and of His all powerful mediation for the salvation of the whole world, and of every member of the human race separately. It is the marriage of the Lamb, the marriage of the King's Son, in which the bride of the Son of God is every faithful soul, and the giver of the bride the Holy Spirit."

- St. John of Kronstadt

## WHEN YOU CAN'T GET ENOUGH

Have you ever gone to a restaurant which had a salad bar or food buffet that was "all you can eat?" Many have enjoyed those unlimited trips to fill plate after plate.

Think about God's love and His grace. It is the same way. We have been saved and have been rescued from sin and its eternal punishment, and now can rejoice in the fact that we can realize God's love and grace on a continual basis. There is no end to His sufficiency in times of trouble and struggle in our daily Christian walk (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 12:9).

Jesus said, "**I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly**" (John 10:10). As believers, we can make many trips to the overflowing bounty of God's grace (Colossians 3:16), which is truly more than enough and more than we can obtain!

**GOD'S LAST ACT OF LOVE:** Hell is God's last act of love to people who will accept nothing else at His hands. He leaves them one corner of the universe which they can call their own and in which they can continue through all eternity to live as though He did not exist.



## FAMILY AND YOUTH MINISTRY

**SPIRITUAL STRENGTH:** “Hey guys, I’ve got to go.” “Ah come on, can’t you stay a half an hour longer? Just tell your parents we got a flat tire on the way back home.”

Now what should a young person do? They know they will get in trouble if they are late coming home. Maybe they should stay out with their friends longer, so they’ll know that they can’t be told what to do. On the other hand, they know all the consequences of lying and being disrespectful to their parents. Teenagers struggle daily to make the right decisions when they are faced with the temptations to smoke, drink, lie or cheat. The pressure to be popular, to feel more grown-up, or to do well in school makes it very hard to resist all the temptations that they face.

Temptation surrounds us, enticing us into evil doing. In a survey taken of various Goyans, over 65% admitted using alcohol, marijuana or some other type of drug. Three quarters believed that sexual intercourse between two unmarried teenagers who love each other is morally right. These numbers are based on active GOYA teenagers around the country. Imagine what a survey of youth who are not active in their churches could reveal!

You may be shaking your head by now and thinking to yourself, what’s wrong with teenagers? The answer might be: NOTHING; however, we need to realize that temptation dates back to the beginning of mankind with Adam and Eve. Temptation is Satan’s most powerful weapon in his effort to prevent us from living a spiritual life. The Bible is full of examples of man falling to temptation. The Prodigal Son was tempted by greed into a sinful life. Peter was tempted to lie about his association with Jesus to protect himself. Even Jesus was tempted by Satan during his forty days in the wilderness after His baptism.

No one is free from temptation. Our task is to resist Satan so we may follow the Lord. God permits us to be tempted, so we may realize that we can’t succeed by ourselves. At some point in our lives, we have all needed assistance to fight temptation. This strength comes from prayer. Prayer is a spiritual antibiotic that helps us fight off the disease of temptation. Moments before Jesus met His accusers, He Himself prescribed this spiritual antibiotic to His disciples when He told them, “**Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation**” (Mark 14:38). With prayer, we can fight off Satan when he comes our way. We rely on the Lord to help us resist temptations; this is exactly what the evil one does not want us to do.

The changes in our society make it more and more difficult to resist temptation. Lures like safe sex, try it you’ll like it, everybody’s doing it, entice us on TV, in song lyrics, at the movies, on the internet and everywhere we turn. The pressures to get good grades, to make the team, to be popular, to be successful and to get ahead in life tempt us to participate in immoral acts. We can use our spiritual resources to fight these temptations or we can allow Satan to govern our lives. We can either give in to temptation or give ourselves over to Christ. Which will you choose?

**SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS:** We would like to take this opportunity to remind our parents and students that Sunday School begins with the start of the Divine Liturgy and not when the children are dismissed from church to attend class after Holy Communion. Attending the Divine Liturgy is part of our Sunday Church School program. It is not optional but a mandatory part of our curriculum for all children enrolled. We kindly ask your cooperation to see to it that you and your children arrive to church on time for worship and participate fully in the Divine Liturgy.

We would also like to request from our parents and grandparents that they not wait in the hallway of the classroom wing nor remove children from their Sunday School classrooms before classes have finished at 11:00am. Younger children will be brought out by their teachers to their parents/grandparents and the older children will be dismissed and may be met in the lobby of the Great Hall.

**OUR YOUTH PROGRAMS** will be gathering on Monday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. All youth are invited and encouraged to participate in these life-changing ministries! Our youth groups this year will be as follows: HOPE (Pre-K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade), JOY (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade), Jr. GOYA (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade), GOYA (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade).

GOYA will have a second meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

**UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS:** Please plan to attend the following events: **Trunk or Treat Family Night—Sunday, October 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Pumpkin Patch Hayride—Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup>**

Specific details will be listed in the weekly Sunday bulletin.

## YOUTH FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT



## START OF GREEK SCHOOL



## SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS



## GOYA BAKE SALE



**CHUCKLE:** A surprised mother found her four-year-old son crying as he was tying his shoes. “Why are you crying?” she asked.

“I have to tie my shoes,” he sobbed. “But you just learned how. It isn’t that hard, is it?” she replied.

He answered, “But I’m gonna have to do it the rest of my life!”

**THE NOVAK FAMILY FOUNDATION** provided our parish with a church luncheon to Kick-Off the New Church Year on Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. The food was delicious and a fun time was had by all who attended. The Novak Family Foundation's mission is to strengthen the Orthodox faith and family, as well as feeding the hungry, clothing those in need, comforting the sick, and providing educational opportunities to our youth.

Thank you to the Novak Family Foundation Board Members: Fr. Ted Poteres, Mike Berta, Bill Logotheitis, JoAnn Massow & John Pangere for once again providing for this luncheon. Special thanks to Jeff Farver, Greg Logotheitis, May Logotheitis and others for their help in preparing and serving the food, as well as cleaning up afterwards. May all the members of the Novak Family's memory be eternal!



**HELLENIC DANCERS**



**Our Cathedral Hellenic Dancers** will be practicing on Wednesdays, with the Junior Group from 6:00-7:00 p.m. and the Senior Group from 7:00-8:00 p.m. For details, contact Taki Zarakas at 219-746-9569.

**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. For questions or more specific details, contact Fr. Ted.

**THOUGHT:** He who is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else.

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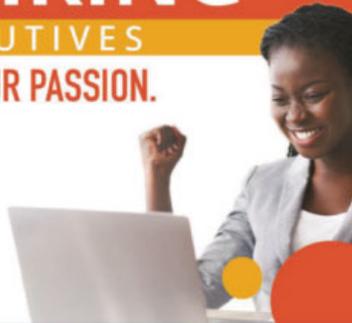
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## COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

**JC's CLOSET** will be held in the Gold Room from 9:00-11:00 a.m. on the following Fridays: October 1<sup>st</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>. We are in need of socks, underwear and bedsheets. For details, see Eva Kostides.

**HELPING HAND FUND:** Throughout the year, various individuals and institutions approach our Cathedral for financial assistance during their times of need and trouble. Only through the generosity of our faithful, along with our societies and organizations, can we be of assistance and offer a helping hand. We kindly ask that you remember those less fortunate and assist them through a monetary donation to our "Helping Hand" program. Today, you may be helping a stranger. Tomorrow it may be a loved one or even yourself. Please give generously! For specific details, contact Fr. Ted.

**SENIOR CITIZENS NEWS:** Our Senior Citizens group will once again be meeting, starting on Thursday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. place TBA. This is different from the past, so please make note of the change. Reservations are needed and may be made by calling Kalliope Dedelow at 219-588-1026.

Our Seniors Group is open to all our members, 55 years old and older. Come on out join us for a nice meal and some fellowship. For updates and further information about Senior Citizens, or how to get actively involved, contact Kalliope Dedelow.

**NOTICE OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** On Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, at 11:00 a.m., our Cathedral of Ss. Constantine and Helen will hold its Fall General Assembly. To participate in the General Assembly, one must be in Good Standing with the Parish. Good Standing is determined by both your canonical status in the Church (spiritual) as well as your financial commitment. If you have any questions regarding your standing in the community, please contact the church office or Fr. Ted.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Invocation
2. Verification of Quorum
3. Election of Presiding Officer
4. Minutes of Previous Assembly
5. Pastor's Report
6. President's Report
7. Treasurer's Report
8. Proposed Budget for 2022
9. Committee Reports
10. Election of Audit Committee
11. Election Committee Appointments
12. Nominations of Parish Council members for 2022-2023
13. Old Business
14. New Business
15. Closing and Benediction

**OUTREACH MINISTRIES: The Winter Coat Drive** is well underway. Brand new coats, sizes 4T to 2XL are needed. All coats will be distributed to children and adults in local domestic and homeless shelters and foster care. Coats can be dropped off in the Narthex on Sundays or the church office during business hours (9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.) until October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Our annual Jr. GOYA Pillow & Blanket Drive will be taking place from October 3<sup>rd</sup> to November 14<sup>th</sup>. Share the warmth this winter by donating brand new pillows and blankets for the people of the local domestic and homeless shelters, as well as for the children in foster care. All donations may be brought to the church and dropped off in the Narthex of the Cathedral or to the church office during the week (Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.).

**OUR CHURCH OFFICE NEEDS YOUR HELP!** Please help our church office keep our membership and mailing lists as accurate as possible by notifying us of changes of names, address, phone number, marital status, etc. Printing and mailing costs are expensive. Our office can only remain efficient if you give us this assistance. We thank you in advance for your courtesy.

**REMEMBER** on Sundays, Orthros begins at 8:00 a.m. and Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m. Please attend services promptly. Constant tardiness is disrespectful to the Lord and your fellow parishioners.

**THOUGHT:** Some people are willing to serve God, but only as His consultant.

## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



**MEETING UPDATE:** The next meeting of the St. Helen's Philoptochos Society takes place on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm, in the Gold Room. All ladies of our parish, 18 years and older, single or married, Greek or English speaking, are welcomed to attend.

**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!

**LOUKOUMADES SALE:** Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. The cost is \$7.00 per container. You can purchase Loukoumades to go, or sit down at a table with a cup of coffee, relax and enjoy!

**PHILOPTOCHOS SUNDAY** will be held on Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. On this day, we honor and remember all the achievements and works of our St. Helen's Philoptochos Society. An Artoklasia Service will be offered at the conclusion of the Orthros for all our living Philoptochos members, and a Memorial Service will be offered at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy for those members who have fallen asleep in the Lord. Also on this day, a special prayer will be offered for our Philoptochos members, and an extra offering will be collected in support of the hospitals, nursing homes and philanthropic agencies of our Ecumenical Patriarchate. Everyone is encouraged to attend and offer a prayer for this group of dedicated and hard working ladies who are obedient in the work of the Lord.

### PHILOPTOCHOS SUMMER OUTING

A beautiful summer day had our ladies (along with some special guests) taking a cruise on Lake Michigan, enjoying lunch and each others company while catching a glimpse of Chicago's Air Show. A fun and pleasant time was had by all!



## FALL GREEK FEST DRIVE-THRU 2021



**GREEK FEST NOTES:** Plans are well underway for the **Fall Food Fest** which will be held November 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> in our Hellenic Cultural Center. Once again we seek the support and assistance of various parishioners to help organize, staff, prepare, serve and deliver food. If you can help, please attend the Fall Food Fest meeting on Thursday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m. in the Gold Room or see Bill Logothetis for details and to see where your

time and talent may be put to good use.

**Remember - Raffle tickets** (which net the Greek Fest most of its profit) are still available and being sold through November. This year, we will be awarding \$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> and 5<sup>th</sup> Prizes) in addition to the five Early Bird drawings! Tickets are \$25 each. We urge everyone to make the effort to sell or purchase your tickets, which were mailed out to all our congregation this past May.

Our first, second, third and fourth Early Bird winners of \$200 were: Andy and Maria Kourtesis with ticket #0943, Thelma Troumouliaris with ticket #1799, Irma A. Ramirez Moran with ticket #2438 and Ron Johnson with ticket #0734. The next Early Bird drawing will be held on Sunday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, following worship. You can't win without a ticket. Buy yours today!!!

**THE SPAGHETTI BENEFIT DINNER** held on Thursday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> for the Ross Township/Cathedral Food Pantry was once again a very successful event! Final numbers are still being calculated but it looks to be one of the highest profitable events we have held. Thank you to all the ladies, men and young people, who donated raffle prizes, cooked, served, delivered and cleaned up, and to all the parishioners and locals who supported us. God bless you all!



**CHUCKLE:** A man dreamed that he died and went to heaven.

St. Peter met him at the Pearly Gates. He looked over his records. "Hold on," he said. "You have some sins that you need to pay for. You see that lady over there." He pointed to the ugliest lady the man had ever seen. Not only was she ugly, but mean as well. "Your punishment is to spend the next 400 years with that lady."

Well, the man knew he had not been perfect. Besides what is 400 years in eternity? He could live with that. At least, he thought he could. Then he saw his pastor. And he had on his arm the most beautiful, gorgeous blonde that he had ever seen. He couldn't believe it.

He went to St. Peter and protested. "It's not fair! Here I have to spend 400 years with this ugly, mean woman and my pastor gets this gorgeous blonde."

St. Peter was patient but firm. "I'm sorry," he said, "but that blonde must pay for her sins too."

**POINT TO PONDER:** No person is better than his or her principles.

## STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

A young missionary was speaking with a Bedouin man who was tending olive trees, from which he had just harvested baskets of olives. "Do you own this land?" the missionary asked. He shook his head. "The land belongs to Allah," he said.

"What about the trees?" the young man asked. "The trees, they too, are Allah's."

The missionary marveled at this man, who seemed unencumbered by material considerations, when he suddenly added. "Of course, I own the olives."

Do we really own the olives?

## STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY



The quarterly "**Pledge and Offering reports**" will be mailed out shortly. Please check and see if you have you submitted your 2021 Pledge Form to the church office? If you are you current in your pledge payment? Have you met your stewardship obligation to Christ's Church? It is only through your financial commitment can the work of Christ be done in this world. It is only through your support and love of Jesus that will enable His Word to be heard. Become a steward/member of Christ's Church. For without you there is no Church!

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). To date we have received 568 pledges for a total of \$412,274. As you can see we are \$387,726 short of our goal to raise \$800,000 through stewardship.

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). 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.

**ATTENTION PARISHIONERS:** On September 16, 2021, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America convened a regular meeting of the Holy Eparchial Synod, in order to deliberate on significant matters that affect the Archdiocese of America.

Discussing the topic of the vaccination of the faithful, the hierarchs unanimously affirmed that the Church not only permits vaccinations against diseases (e.g. polio, smallpox), but that She encourages Her Faithful, after medical tests and approbations, to be vaccinated with the approved vaccines against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19).

In addition, although some may be exempt from the vaccination for clear medical reasons, there is no exemption in the Orthodox Church for Her faithful from any vaccination for religious reasons, including the corona virus vaccine. For this reason, letters of exemption for the vaccination against the coronavirus for religious purposes issued by priests of the Archdiocese of America have no validity, and furthermore, no clergy are to issue such religious exemption letters for any reason.

The Holy Eparchial Synod urges the faithful to pay heed to competent medical authorities, and to avoid the false narratives utterly unfounded in science and perpetrated on the Church by those who have succumbed to the disinformation and conspiracy theories that are widely available on social media sites.

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**FINDING STILLNESS IN THE AGE OF NOISE**  
By Fr. Dimitri Burikas

If we were trying to give a name to the times we are living in now, we would have a lot of good choices to pick from: the COVID era, the age of civil division, the social media empire, etc. I think, though, there is a choice that supersedes them all and one that I would choose.

The age of noise.

Rare are the aspects of human life today that are not overwhelmed with noise. For example, the vast majority of people ranging from very young to very old have cell phones and carry them with them no matter where they go. It's hard to have peace when there is a chime or vibration coming from your pocket every few minutes.

If you turn your TV on (if you actually do that these days), you are introducing noise into your daily equation. When you turn it on, what do you see? COVID cases, shootings, wars, political division, protests, people demonizing each other. You then check your social media accounts, where all of your 1,237 friends are now telling you what they think about the things you just saw on TV.

It sure seems like these days we just aren't that comfortable with being still or quiet. We get in the car and turn on the radio. We are sitting in line at the grocery store and pull out our phones. We get home from work and turn on the TV. We spend most of our days either talking, posting, reading or listening.

The age of noise. Research is showing us that the age of noise has made it very difficult for many to find peace and stability. Anxiety, stress and depression among Americans are at an all time high. I know that I myself have not been immune to this, either. As I have waded through my own challenges, especially over the last two years or so, one question has risen to the forefront of my mind: how do we move forward - finding healing and wholeness - when the world seems to be trying to crush us?

We can start by breathing.

Orthodox Christians have been practicing stillness and silence for many centuries. I chuckle when I see all the hype generated for mindfulness and meditation (I can't tell you how many ads for the "Headspace" app I've been subjected to doing Duolingo) and think that these very practices have been the hallmark of Orthodox spirituality for 1,700+ years. The theory behind that practice is that through stillness we can empty ourselves of the noise permeating our existence in order to be filled by the grace of God.

We can begin to practice stillness and reap its benefits by focusing on something that we do involuntarily literally all the time - breathing. Sit in stillness (put that phone away!) and breathe, not mindlessly like we do when we are driving or checking Instagram, but intentionally. Focus on the air going in your nose. Focus on your breath as it travels down and fills your lungs. Focus on the rhythm of yourself breathing in and out again and again. Focus on letting your anxiety and stress go out with each breath and empty your mind and soul of all your noise.

Then, pray. I like the Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner) because it's easy to pray synchronized with your breathing rhythm. As you pray again and again, you can offer up your cares and anxieties to the Lord. After all, He's the one best suited to deal with them.

Best of all, this process can fit into any kind of schedule. You only need a few minutes to pray in this way and give your soul the peace and noise-free environment it needs to thrive.

**METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO TOWN HALL MEETING**



On Tuesday evening, September 21<sup>st</sup>, our parish hosted our Metropolis of Chicago with a Town Hall meeting for the Greek Orthodox parishes of Northwest Indiana and Hegewisch, Illinois. His Eminence, Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago presided and informed those attending in person or through Zoom what has transpired within our Metropolis, what programs have been developed, the status and standing of the Metropolis in the three years since he was enthroned as Metropolitan of Chicago. Following His Eminence's presentation there was a lively question and answer period.

We would like to thank Nick Kavadas for chairing this event, as well as being the moderator, JoAnn Massow for registration, Taki Zarakas for tech support, Elias Ploutis for taking minutes, as well as our St. Helen's Philoptochos Society for providing the delicious refreshments for this evening.



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO  
ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ

September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

Rev. Fr. Theodore Poteses  
Saints Constantine and Helen  
8000 Madison Street  
Merrillville, IN 46410

Dear Fr. Theodore, Fr. Dimitrios, Esteemed Parish Council Members and Parish Family of Saints Constantine and Helen,

I wanted to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your loving hospitality when I visited Saints Constantine and Helen for the Town Hall meeting. It was a joy for me to be able to connect with the faithful of our Metropolis and to enter into meaningful dialogue with them. It means so much to me to have your continued friendship, love, and support.

Once again, I thank you and pray that God bless you and your loved ones abundantly with every good thing.

With paternal love and esteem in Christ,

*Nathanael*  
+ NATHANAEL  
Metropolitan of Chicago

*Thank you for  
all that you  
do for God's people!*