

MOSAIC

Coming together, we form an icon of God's Kingdom

Vol. 12, No. 9

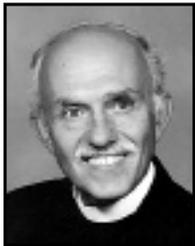
Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church 2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, IL

January, 2008

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From Father Bill



a New Opportunity

An advertising firm often presents a truth in a way that causes readers to stop and think. For example, one message was designed to shock people into realizing the priceless value of time. The ad stated in bold letters: **YOU HAVE 24 HOURS TO LIVE!** Underneath, in very fine print, appeared these words: Today, that is. The sign served as a catchy reminder that we should live each day as if it were our last, for it might be!

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, we are once again made aware of the relentless march of time. Every minute carries us inevitably towards eternity. For this reason, the Apostle Paul warned us in his letter to the Ephesians (5:15-16) to be careful how we walk life's pathway. We must be sure we are utilizing every opportunity to glorify God by helping others and keeping ourselves unspotted from this evil world.

Each moment holds an opportunity for prayer, kindness, self-control, or personal growth. No doubt this truth motivated the poet to write:

I've only just a minute,
Only sixty seconds in it,
Forced upon me I can't refuse it,
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it,
But it's up to me to use it.
But eternity is in it!

With the observance of a new year, we are overcome with a great feeling of joy. As we turn the last page on our 2007 calendar, we receive a clean slate. The sound of those words brings encouragement, and perhaps that is the reason most of us welcome a new year with open arms. We have fifty two unencumbered weeks that have not been soiled by sin or fractured by failure. I don't know of



Nia Dillon has a private chat with Santa during the annual Christmas Communion Breakfast.

anything that can be compared to the relief that comes from having our sins forgiven and forgotten. The same is true when it comes to forgiving the wrong someone else has done against us. God truly honors such actions.

Today we are consumed with the safety of our men and women in Iraq. The economy is causing foreclosures on homes, loss of jobs, bankruptcies and moral decay abounds in our neighborhoods. What better time is there than the first day of the new year to give God's involvement in our lives the highest priority? The New Year's Day Divine Liturgy, which should be a must for every Christian, has been sadly neglected. After late night festivities, to rise early and be in God's house on January 1st is to be spiritually uplifted. As we glorify Him, we pray that He bless the whole world,

so that all will live in peace and harmony.

Here are some more suggestions for seizing the opportunity to make a difference in this life: make a genuine effort to stay in touch with family and friends; resolve to stop magnifying small problems and shooting from the lip; find the time to be kind and thoughtful; declare war against gossip; people long to be appreciated, so give credit when it's due; walk tall and smile more and you will look 10 years younger; and don't be afraid to say "I love you."

Let us start the new year with cries of joy, praise, and thanksgiving. Let us seize the opportunity to go forward without fear and partake gladly in what lies ahead, for we are Christian soldiers and follow where Christ leads!

From Father Nicholas



Finding Our Way Back Home

It is hard to believe that Christmas has come and gone. One of our Christmas family traditions is preparing our home for the festal season. Our family works and decorates together. This year something out of the ordinary happened. We unknowingly left our front door open. In the midst of decorating, our little dog, Lou, decided he wanted to be free. The warmth and security of the house were not exciting enough for him. Lou bolted out into the cold, winter air and took off down the street. By the time I noticed he was gone, all I could see was a little white tail at the end of the street. I yelled and desperately chased after our beloved Lou.

Although Lou seemed confused and lost, he kept running. Finally, I caught up with him! He tried to run away again. Fortunately, I had some bait. "Lou, do you want a snack?" The offer of food is music to a dog's ears. Lou quickly ran to me. I scooped him up, fed him the snack and brought him home!

Our lives, if we really reflect on them, may not be that much different than Lou's dilemma. Sometimes we can be confused about our purpose in life, our values, marriages, relationships and priorities. Just like Lou, when we get too far away from our home, the Church and the Kingdom of God, things start to look strange and foreign. Some of us have abandoned communion with God and the joy of His dwelling. At times we may feel uneasy, confused, frustrated or alienated. Although we have everything, we want more. Some of us are not walking with God. We eagerly seek our way back home.

God knows that we may be lost. He experienced people running from Him many times. In the Old Testament, the Israelites were captives in Egypt. They worshipped false gods. These people lost sight of their ultimate destination, the Promised Land, and forgot about God. As Saul traveled to Damascus, he completely lost his vision. He was blinded by his zeal to persecute Christians. The Prodigal Son was blinded by greed and pursuit of pleasure and wandered far away from his home.

What can we do if we find ourselves moving away from God or feel like we are lost? Even though Lou knew he was not home, he could not figure out how to get back. We must do what Lou was unable to do, that is, to see the signs and follow the path that leads us



Gavel to Gavel



BY CHRIS ZURALES

Parish Council meeting of Thursday, November, 20

Present: Fr. William Chiganos, Fr. Nicholas Georgiou, George Alex, Chrissy Banakis, Sandy Fiascone, James Fotopoulos, Mara Georges, James Kapolas, Nick Kirkeles, George T. Mannos, Stephen Melonides, Steve Savas, Peter Tomaras, and Chris Zurales.

Financial Report

+ George T. Mannos Jr. reviewed the financial report dated October 31, 2007 and the bank balances as of October 31. James Fotopoulos moved to approve the financial statement and the motion passed unanimously.

Stewardship

+ Stephen Melonides reviewed the Stewardship Report for October 31.

Correspondence

+ Chris Zurales read a letter from Archbishop Demetrios thanking our parish for its donation to the Greek Fire Relief Fund, and a letter from the OCF house at the University of Illinois. There was also material reviewed on the St. Iakovos retreat center.

Meditation

+ Father Bill discussed the diocese Clergy - Laity Conference. He said he saw real progress; however he does not see people understanding the finances of the Church. The OCF house should not have the financial troubles that it does. He asked us to look at the parish in Rochester, Minnesota and see what they have done with the Philoxenia House. He said that we need to let friends and family know about these needs. The next Clergy-Laity Conference for the diocese will be in Sioux City, Ia.

Building and Grounds

+ Sandy Fiascone said that the multi-purpose room remodeling should be completed shortly.

+ Nick Kirkeles said that Mr. Tonelli will be returning soon to do some clean up on the narthex ceiling icons.

Other Business

+ James Fotopoulos reported that he has

looked into new folding chairs and roll away racks. He had a sample for members of the Council to try out.

- + Nick Kirkeles advised that we will no longer store food in the cabinets next to HARC. When the food pantry is filled, we will call a local shelter or pantry to pick it up for distribution.
- + Nick Kirkeles suggested that the Council host at least two fellowship hours a year. He recommended that we split into two groups and each group take one.
- + The General Assembly meeting will be held December 17. The minutes from last year's meeting are available in the Church office. They will not be read in their entirety at the meeting.
- + George Alex reported on the progress of the demographic survey for our parish. A long discussion followed regarding what questions should be included on the survey. Some suggested that household income might be asked about. A spirited discussion followed. James Kapolas made a motion to keep any questions regarding income off of the survey. The motion passed unanimously.
- + Nick Kirkeles reported that we need to give the Westin Hotel a deposit for the 50th Anniversary party. Chris Zurales made a motion to approve the funds for the deposit and the motion passed unanimously.
- + Nick Kirkeles suggested that we make the support of IOCC a permanent budget line item. There was a consensus for this approach. It will be discussed at the budget meeting.
- + George Alex gave a report on the Clergy - Laity Conference and handed out material that he had received. He said that the Hellenic Foundation will have family counseling available in six months. Nick Kirkeles reported on the Clergy Laity Conference and then discussed the retreat center at length. He wants the Council to have a one day retreat at the facility next spring.

home. God places many signs and markers in our daily lives that can lead us back to Him if we allow it!

God's signposts are carefully arranged with one purpose. He desires our return to the Kingdom of Heaven and for us to live an abundant life here on earth in relationship with the Him. What are these signposts in our

lives? Every day, as the sun rises and sets, we observe the beauty of God's creation. The Church gives us the Saints, who were ordinary people, and lived extraordinary, holy lives. They are examples and encourage and point us to Heaven. God's word, the Holy Scriptures, convey the Lord's love, mercy and

...See Fr. Nicholas on P. 3

Anna Eriotes, the face of Philoptochos

Anna Eriotes became active in Philoptochos when she retired. The president at that time, Chrisy Banakis, asked Anna to be in charge of welfare projects, and the rest is history. Anna developed a welfare program that balanced outreach to Greek Orthodox people with other local people in need



Anna Eriotes

of assistance. She has been on the Philoptochos Board for about eleven years, and has volunteered for other projects, including the fashion show. Anna currently mentors the welfare chairperson, Patti McKay. Anna says, "Philoptochos is a wonderful organization where one can volunteer their services as well as meet women of all ages and share on many levels. When one stands back and takes a look at all the accomplishments of Philoptochos on a local as well as on a national basis, it is really amazing. As a group of women, we should be proud of what we have accomplished."

Upcoming events for Philoptochos

Vasilopita

On January 13 following Liturgy, Philoptochos will host the annual Vasilopita celebration in the multi-purpose room. A collection will be taken to support St. Basil's Academy, which houses and educates underprivileged children. This fundraiser is celebrated in Greek Orthodox communities throughout the United States. The Metropolis Philoptochos Vasilopita Celebration will take place on January 13 at 6 pm at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, Oak Lawn.

Godparents' Luncheon and Children's Book Drive



Godparents and godchildren are invited to take Holy Communion and enjoy a delicious lunch following the Liturgy on February 3 in the multi-purpose room. The price is \$10 per person. Infants under age 2 are free. Philoptochos will donate the luncheon proceeds to the People's Resource Center (PRC)

Fr. Nicholas from P. 2

A new year, and a new beginning in our lives of faith

grace for us. They can speak to us mystically and show us the incredible plan that the Lord has for each of us! We have our Holy Apostles community where we can worship and receive the sacramental and spiritual nourishment that we need to "fight the good fight of faith." (1 Timothy 6:12) The signposts and tools are available. Will we take advantage of them?

As we return to our work and school routine and begin a new calendar year, we have an opportunity to return to our spiritual home. We are mercifully given another opportunity to see the signposts that God has placed in

in Wheaton, IL. Philoptochos will also be collecting new children's books for the PRC Literacy Program. Please bring your new books to the luncheon or anytime during February.

The PRC serves as the first embrace for the refugee, or for those who find themselves in a difficult life situation, meeting family needs on a very low income. PRC services help bring families closer to the mainstream, overcoming the many barriers encountered in their daily struggles. In so doing, the PRC strengthens the whole community by genuinely trying to make our neighbors' lives better and more meaningful.

Please come to enjoy quality time with your godchildren and support this important cause. Reservations will be accepted in the multi-purpose room on Sundays leading up to the event, or by calling Cynthia Stathopoulos at 630/986-0630. Payment is required prior to the event to secure a reservation. Seats are limited, so book your reservation today!

General Meeting

Save the date: Philoptochos General Meeting on February 19, at 7 pm.

each of our paths. By reading the bulletins, newsletters and monthly MOSAIC, we can find those ministries where we can participate, grow and serve. As we participate in our Holy Apostles community by worshipping God and serving others, we follow the signposts to heaven. If we have strayed away, a new beginning is mercifully given to us. Our gracious Lord is like the father of the Prodigal Son. He is waiting for us to return. "Blessed are those who dwell in God's house". (Psalm 84)

This month's featured altar boy eager to learn

Nicholas Trivelas was baptized at Holy Apostles Church. He has been active in Sunday School and the choir, as well as serving in the holy altar. Nicholas attends Roosevelt Middle School in River Forest. He enjoys playing the violin in his school orchestra, singing in the choir, Irish dancing, and playing on the soccer team. He is an honor student and participates in the Boy Scouts.



Nicholas Trivelas

Nicholas has been lucky to serve with his papou, the Rev. Nicholas Trivelas in South Carolina. During his last visit there, his papou had him join the cantor in reading the Orthros service. Nicholas would like to thank Father Bill, Father Nicholas and Cots for their spiritual leadership and teaching of the Orthodox faith.

Each Sunday, I can see through Nicholas' eyes how much he enjoys serving God. He arrives early and is always ready to do whatever is needed. He enjoys talking about school and sports. He is really up on his faith when we have our altar boys' meetings, asking many questions. He is truly a wonderful person to have serving in the altar.

By Michael Cotsilis

December Registry

Baptisms

Zea, daughter of
Maria & Jason Patrinos
Sponsors: Tima & Nick Pavlidis

Andrew, son of
Rosemary & Donald Gallaway
Sponsors: Anthonia & Norman Pomrening

Behind the scene at the Christmas Pageant



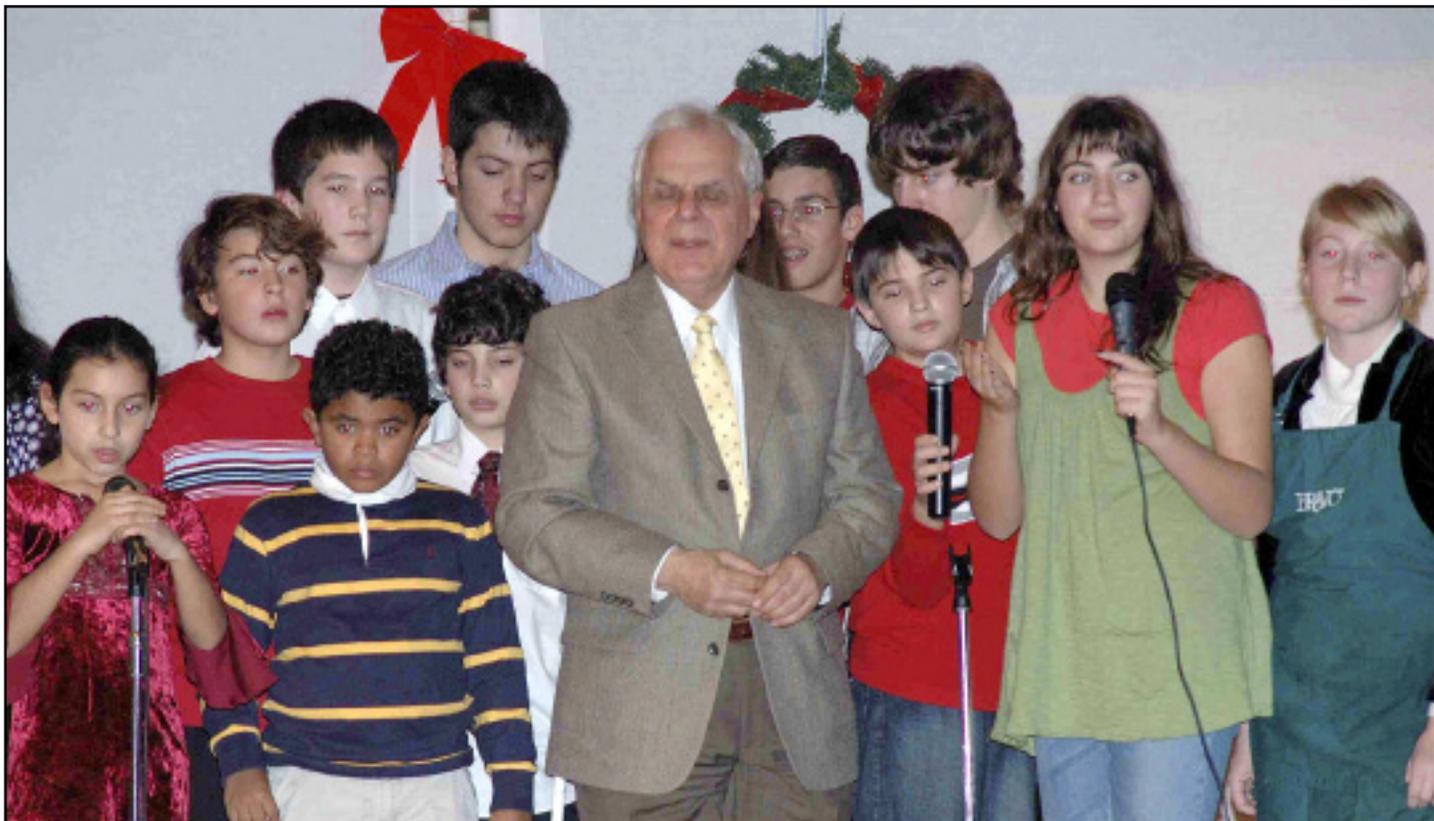
The Junior Choir members perform Christmas carols, left, December 2. Far left, Chrisie Alex helps her son Peter with his costume.



Head angels and best friends Gabriella Lozano and Rebecca Lekatsos, left, are all ready for their performance. Above, the pageant cast sings Silent Night.



At left, pageant director Sandy Pihos and Antella Thiakos adjust Antella's daughter Olivia's Virgin Mary costume. Above, Antella and Mike Thiakos help their shepherd son Alexander.



Mr. D congratulates the Adventure Theater cast following the play, *Twas the Second Day of Christmas*, as Zoe Kafkes introduces the cast.

Parea group events

The Parea group is finalizing plans for its next event, the very popular play titled *Hizzoner*, on Saturday, January 26 at the Beverly Art Center. It has returned to our area numerous times by popular demand.

The play takes a personal look at Richard J. Daley, father of the current mayor, authoritarian politician, family man and dynasty builder. Please look for future Parea group postings, mailings and announcements.

Eighty Parea group members attended an elegant Greek Night dinner dance in the newly remodeled multi-purpose room on December 8.

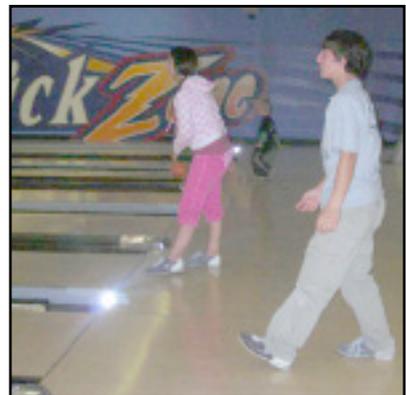


GOYA members enjoy fellowship at bowling event

Each month, GOYA has one meeting centered on a discussion of a topic relevant to its members.

Each month there is also a social outing. At the November outing, members had a chance to get to know each other better while bowling in Woodridge.

GOYA's next events will be the annual Christmas party January 3, and then the hosting of the Fanari reunion dance January 20.





Helen Kasimos helps a parishioner during the Greek School Bake Sale in November.

Greek School activities past and future

The month of December was busy with many activities for the Holy Apostles Greek School. On Sunday, December 16, the children in grades Preschool through 6th Grade performed Kalanda (Greek Christmas Carols) after Liturgy. In addition, there was a pizza party before the kids began the holiday break.

Parents will host a Teacher Appreciation dinner to thank the teachers for all their wonderful work. Please mark your calendars for

“A Fairy Tale Evening”. The Greek School Dinner Dance will be held on Sunday, February 17, at the Diplomat West in Elmhurst. Cocktails will be at 5:00 pm and Dinner is at 6:00 pm. There will be a live DJ and a performance by the Olympic Dance Troupe. Please join us for an evening that promises to be filled with food, dancing and fun.

By Karen Anagnos



Holy Apostles High School Team l-r: Steven Pierce, Alex Petrus, Peter Kallis, Elliott Danos, Strati Koulouris, and Justin Glavanovitz

Jr. High basketball team scores two consecutive wins

The Holy Apostles Youth Basketball teams have both continued to play well. Unfortunately, the high school team has yet to come up with a win, but they continue to play hard. Their two losses have come from Holy Trinity and St. Andrew. Despite their losses they still continue to play like champions. On the other hand the jr. high school team has continued to play well and has come up with two consecutive wins. Their two wins came from Holy Trinity and St. Andrew. The jr. high team ended up winning 34-12 against Holy Trinity and 24-4 against St. Andrew. These two wins prove that this year's team is going to do very well in the rest of the season. We wish both teams good luck and hope to see many parishioners at the upcoming games. Good luck and may God bless all of you.

by Fotis Pappas

The **HARC** CORNER

Orthodoxy 101 A Bird's Eye

By Fr. Evagoras Constantinides

This work would be very useful to someone who contemplates joining the Church or just wants an overview of Orthodoxy. It would also be useful for the average Orthodox Christian who needs some guidance in understanding his/her faith.

Softbound, \$12.50

Thirsting for God in a Land of Shallow Wells

By Matthew Gallatin

Beginning in the street ministry days of the Jesus Movement, the author devoted more than twenty years to evangelical Christian ministry. He served as a singer, worship leader, and Calvary Chapel pastor. Nevertheless, he eventually accepted a painful reality: no matter how hard he tried, he never experienced God, whom he longed to know.

In *Thirsting for God*, philosophy professor Matthew Gallatin expresses the struggles that a Protestant will encounter in coming face to face with Orthodoxy. He also discusses praying with icons, praying formal prayers, and many other Orthodox traditions, as well as the unity of Scripture and Tradition.

This is an outstanding book that will help Orthodox readers more deeply appreciate their faith and will give Protestant readers a more thorough understanding of the Church.

Softbound, \$15.00

Parables for Kids

By Danae Dobson & Dr. James Dobson

This book contains eight contemporary stories based on different biblical parables.

Beautiful full-color art by an award-winning children's illustrator depicts the story characters in a variety of realistic settings. There is a message to your child from Dr. James Dobson at the end of each story explaining the story's relationship to the biblical parable and helping your child discover how to apply the truth of that parable to life today.

Softbound, \$13.00

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church **January 2008** **2501 S. Wolf Rd. Westchester, Illinois**

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

<p>HOLY EPIPHANY 8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. JOHN 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 5:15pm The Way</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. BASIL 10:00am Divine Liturgy Happy New Year!</p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group</p>	<p>6:30pm GOYA Christmas Party</p>	<p>7:15pm YAL Christmas Party</p>	<p>4:00pm Altar Boys Meeting 5:00pm Vespers</p>
6	7	1	2	3	4	5
<p>8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Vasilopita Celebration</p>	<p>4:15pm Greek School</p>	<p>10:00am TOTS 4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group 7:30pm Catechism Instruction</p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>4:30pm Adventure Theater</p>	<p>4:00pm Altar Boys Meeting 5:00pm Vespers</p>
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<p>8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour Fanari Reunion Dance</p>	<p>5:15pm The Way</p>	<p>10:00am TOTS 4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group 7:30pm Catechism Instruction</p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. ANTHONY 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. ATHANASIOS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 4:30pm Adventure Theater</p>
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
<p>8:00am Orthros 9:15am Awaken To God 9:30am Divine Liturgy Fellowship Hour</p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF 3 HIERARCHS 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 4:30pm Adventure Theater 1:00pm Adult Christian Fellowship And Study Group</p>	<p>7:30pm Catechism Instruction</p>	<p>4:30pm Greek School</p>	<p>FEAST DAY OF ST. GREGORY 8:00am Orthros 9:00am Divine Liturgy 4:30pm Adventure Theater</p>	<p>5:00pm Vespers Paros Theater Night</p>
27	28	29	30	31		

Weekday Services

Vespers

Saturday, January 12
Saturday, January 26
5:00pm

Feast Day of St. Basil

Tuesday, January 1
10:00am Divine Liturgy

Feast Day of St. John

Monday, January 7
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Feast Day of St. Anthony

Thursday, January 17
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Weekday Services

Feast Day of St. Athanasios

Friday, January 18
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Feast Day of St. Gregory

Friday, January 25
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Feast Day of Three Hierarchs

Wednesday, January 30
8:00am Orthros
9:00am Divine Liturgy

Mosaic Deadline

The deadline for the February Mosaic is Tuesday, January 8. Please make every effort to meet this deadline.

November & December Memorials

*Georgia Ladas
Peter Ladas
Constantine Mitsos
Dr. Christos Patsavos
Harry Psimos
Anastasia Georgiou
Anastasios Siasios
Paraskevi Apostolakos
Athena Dallianis
William Dallianis
Evangelos Gianoukos*

Funerals

*Anastasios Siasios
Paraskevi Apostolakos
Jennie Jumes
George Chiampas*

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