

Parish Life

NOVEMBER 2015

SAINT NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

467 GRANDVIEW AVENUE, WYCKOFF, NEW JERSEY 07481

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201 652 4774 volume 16, ISSUE 11



PASTOR'S PULPIT: THE EUCHARIST



Rev. Economos Basil C. Gikas

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Special Points of Interest

- Youth Sunday: November 1
- Kali Parea: November 10
- Stewardship Sunday: Nov. 15
- General Assembly: Nov. 22

Enclosures/Flyers

- Philoptochos Christmas Card Flyer
- DOP: Kontos Baked Goods Order Form
- DOP : Vasilopita Order Form
- Saint Catherine's Vision Conference III flyer

On November 26th we will again celebrate Thanksgiving. We are familiar with the practice of giving thanks very well as we gather with our families and friends around the meal table and give thanks to God for all His blessings. The Church also has a means for us to give thanks at each Divine Liturgy, around God's table. In the first century, Saint Paul instructed the Corinthians concerning the **giving of thanks- the Eucharist**. Paul wrote: "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same manner Jesus also took the cup after supper saying, 'this cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me'" (1 Co 11:23-25). According to the **Orthodox Study Bible (OSB)**, there are at least three different interpretations of Saint Paul's words. I quote them directly from the OSB:

"When the church was one for the first thousand years, the Body and Blood of Christ were received as just that: His Body and Blood. The Church confessed this as a mystery: The bread is truly His Body and that which is in the chalice truly His Blood, but one cannot say how they become so."

Then the Age of Reason, the scholastic era, arrived during the 11th and 12th centuries in the West. The Roman Church West was separated from the Eastern Church in 1054 AD and tried to explain how the transformation occurs. They used the word *transubstantiation*, meaning a change of substance. The elements are no longer bread and wine as they are changed into flesh and blood. Thus the sacrament

which is only comprehensible by faith was subjected to a philosophical definition. This second view was unknown in the ancient Church.

One issue of disagreement then between Rome and the 16th century reformers was transubstantiation. The radical reformers would not accept this explanation of the sacrament and took up the opposite point of view: the gifts are nothing but bread and wine, period. *They represent Christ's Body and Blood only they have no spiritual reality.* This third view- symbol only- explains partly the infrequency with which some Protestants partake of the Eucharist.

What do the Scriptures teach about the Eucharist?

1. Jesus said "this is My body...this is My blood" (Luke 22:19, 20). He does not mention symbols.
2. In the New Testament, those who receive Christ's Body and Blood unworthily are said to bring condemnation upon themselves. "for this reason many are weak and sick among you and many sleep" (literally are dead; 1 Col 11:30). A mere symbol could hardly have the power to cause sickness and death!
3. Historically from New Testament days on, the central act of worship the very apex of spiritual sacrifice, took place "on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread" (Acts 20:7). The Eucharist has always been that supreme act of thanksgiving and praise to God in His Church.

Thus we give thanks at each spiritual meal at the Divine Liturgy at God's banquet. The food for life is there- always eaten yet never consumed. The Food for life is Jesus Himself.

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FALL/WINTER HOURS

Orthros 9:00 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Rula Thasites, Parish Administrator
E-mail: office@stnicholasnj.org

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AHEPA: TBA
Daughters of Penelope: Effie Stratis-Tefarikis
Youth Corner: Sam Williams

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WORSHIP SERVICES FOR NOVEMBER

SUNDAY SERVICES

NOVEMBER 1ST, 8TH, 15TH, 22ND AND 29TH

9:00am Orthros & 10:00am Divine Liturgy

WEEKDAY SERVICES

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21ST: ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

9:00am Orthros & 10:00am Divine Liturgy

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH: SAINT KATHERINE

9:00am Orthros & 10:00am Divine Liturgy

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH: THANKSGIVING DAY

9:00am Orthros & 10:00am Divine Liturgy

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH: SAINT ANDREW

9:00am Orthros & 10:00am Divine Liturgy

CHRONIA POLLA (MANY YEARS) TO ALL WHO CELEBRATE !

PARISH COUNCIL

Dear Parishioners of Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church:

It has been a fantastic month for our community. Thanks to the effort and generosity of our community, and the nice weather provided by up above, our Greek Festival was truly revived and was a great success. During a beautiful, sunny weekend, our parishioners, both young and old, were able to work together to achieve a fun, lively and profitable Greek Festival. Our parishioners baked and cooked and our youth danced while the Greek music that filled the air made us smile with pride. We received positive coverage in community newspapers and residents and officials from The Town of Wyckoff and surrounding areas were complimentary and truly happy that our Festival returned as a Fall event. Bravo to all that were involved in working and supporting this enormous event!

More good news: During the past few weeks our gymnasium complex received new air condition units, lighting and a refurbished gym floor. Amazingly, due to the generosity of a parishioner and New Jersey State rebates, the expense to our church was minimal. We are proud of our facility and look forward to our parishioners and youth enjoying the new additions to our gym. Thanks to all that worked on this project.

God Bless Our Saint Nicholas Community!
Evans C. Agrapidis
Parish Council President

JOIN OUR ACOLYTE MINISTRY !

“The role of the altar boy remains a genuine and vital one in the Eucharistic Assembly of the faithful, as well as in other services. He stands ready to serve God in this capacity. It is a stewardship of young men; a service that they offer to God as their regular Sunday offering of talent and ability.”

Source www.goarch.org

If you are interested and would like to join this important ministry, contact Fr. Bill Gikas at frbill@stnicholasnj.org or Sam Williams at youth@stnicholasnj.org.

ORTHODOX LADIES PRAYER GROUP

The Orthodox Ladies Prayer Group welcomes anyone interested to attend our prayer meetings held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday evening of each month at 7:30pm in the Theotokos chapel. We spend a dedicated time of informal prayer lifting up our nation, church community and our families and friends. All prayer requests are kept confidential. Please feel free to call either the church office or Irene Ayvas 201-803-2307, with any urgent or ongoing prayer requests you would like added to our list or submitted through the “Email Prayer Chain”.

“EMAIL PRAYER CHAIN” SIGN-UPS

This may be one of the easiest things you can do to serve your community. With today’s technology the majority of people read emails on a daily basis. We are simply asking for members of our congregation to sign up for our “Email Prayer Chain”, and they will receive occasional urgent prayer requests when a need arises for someone in immediate crisis. We ask only that you take a moment and pray for that person. It’s that simple, yet so powerful. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, please email Irene Ayvas at iayvas@yahoo.com with your email contact information or call at 201-803-2307.

PRAYER TO HEAL THE SICK

Lord have mercy.

O Lord Almighty, the Healer of our souls and bodies, You Who put down and raise up, Who chastise and heal also; do You now, in Your great mercy, visit our brother (sister) (*Name*), who is sick. Stretch forth Your hand that is full of healing and health, and get him (her) up from

his (her) bed, and cure him (her) of his (her) illness. Put away from him (her) the spirit of disease and of every malady, pain and fever to which he (she) is bound; and if he (she) has sins and transgressions, grant to him (her) remission and forgiveness, in that You love mankind; yea, Lord my God, pity Your creation, through the compassions of Your Only-Begotten Son, together with Your All-Holy, Good and Life-creating Spirit, with Whom You are blessed, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Source: www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/sick

PHILOPTOCHOS

Last month, the Philoptochos had their first general meeting of the year. I’m very happy to say the meeting was well attended.

We discussed the rebuilding of the St. Nicholas National Shrine at the World Trade Center. As the Hierarchs stated:

“The new Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church at Ground Zero will be much more than a rebuilt parish. It will be a National Shrine of our Holy Archdiocese and a place of pilgrimage for our Nation and the whole world.”

Due to the importance of this Shrine to our religion, all of the Philoptochos members across the nation have been asked to make a special contribution to the Shrine’s building fund as Philoptochos is a critical pillar of the church. This is a separate donation from what we have all donated in the church. Everyone should donate whatever amount she is comfortable about giving.

Secondly, we had the pleasure of having Paul Vagianis visit our meeting. He is running for State Assembly in New Jersey. He gave us a little insight into the workings of Trenton and provided some of his hopes if elected. He stayed through to the end of the meeting answering questions and speaking to individuals.

Also, this month we will be doing our holiday baking. We will start to sell our koulourakia and kourambedis on November 15th and continue until they are finished. Also, look for the mailing of the form for the St. Nicholas Christmas card. Although the Christmas card has been a fundraiser for our organization for many years, the primary purpose is for each of us to wish our Saint Nicholas family a wonderful and blessed Christmas.

Alexandra Pflager
Philoptochos President

KALI PAREA (GOOD COMPANY)

On October 6th, 2015, the Kali Parea met in the fellowship hall of Saint Nicholas to enjoy our annual “barbeque” of hot dogs and hamburgers (along with all the trimmings) prepared by our excellent chefs George Corniotes, John Spatidol, and Bill Alicakos. Father Bill blessed our food and we all dug in. Desserts were also served and the best part was that everything was healthy and non-fattening! Well, maybe a little fattening...but who cares we enjoyed everything. After lunch we discussed some trips we might take and what movies we might show. Helen and Andy Boulos brought a list of the many American movies they have on DVD we will see one of these movies on our next meeting on Tuesday, November 10th.

Now I would like to tell you about our first meeting that was held on September 8th. Usually our first meeting is always held at the Wyckoff Environmental Center outdoors under a pavilion. However, because of the heat we held our meeting in the conference room of our church. After lunch one by one, people began to tell such interesting stories about growing up in the thirties, forties, fifties, World War II and the Korean War. How I wish all these stories could have been taped; there is so much history to learn from our senior citizens. It was a very pleasant afternoon that brought us closer together for a brief moment. So if you enjoy friendly people, good conversation, great food and you are free the second Tuesday of every month, join us for our next meeting on November 3rd at noon. You will like us once you get to know us...we're addictive!

FESTIVAL: FLEA MARKET

The Flea Market committee would like to thank the wonderful parishioners of Saint Nicholas for their very generous donations. The women who so graciously donated their time and effort to help with set up and sales. The Parish Council for their continued support and combined expertise in helping the Flea Market achieve its goals. A special thank you to Father Bill who was always there to lend a helping hand and whose good humor and encouragement was appreciated by all. Finally to Evans Agrapidis whose leadership was an inspiration to the entire community. Without all your help The Flea Market would not continue to enjoy the success it does. Efharisto Kai Tou Chronou!

Questions or comments angiehaji@aol.com

DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE (AGAPE CHAPTER #336)

Agape Chapter's first meeting for the 2015/2016 year was on September 10th 2015. Though many of our Sisters were involved in preparation for the Saint Nicholas Festival, our turnout was excellent and we're off and running on a solid footing for the New Year. You will be happy to know that many of our successful fundraising events will continue this year—Christmas Wreath sale, Vasilopita, Tsoureki, Cakeless Bake Sale, Blue Moon and several more. A huge thank you is extended to our Saint Nicholas parishioners for your continued support in these efforts ensuring their ongoing success.

In October, our Book Club members read “... a breathtaking multigenerational love story that spans two continents, two World Wars, and the quest of two star-crossed lovers to find each other again”, *The Shoemaker's Wife* by Adriana Trigiani. This month we are enjoying another book by one of our favorite authors, *Shanghai Girls* by Lisa See.

The Knitting Crowd continues to meet every other Tuesday afternoon from 1:30pm to 3:30pm in the Conference Room. We will meet the afternoon of November 10th but not on November 24th as our knitters will be baking and preparing for Thanksgiving. Lessons are available as are patterns. Please let Athena Katsaros know if you would like to join the Knitting/Crocheting Crowd or if you would like to knit/crochet for us in the comfort of your own home. Also, let Athena know if you need yarn or if you have yarn to donate.

Her phone number is: (201) 261-0809.

Many of the Sisters of Agape chapter attended Sammy Thomas' Testimonial Dinner in September in recognition of his remarkable and long spanning work not only in the AHEPA organization but for the benefit of Saint Nicholas-Wyckoff, as well. We extend our sincerest congratulations on this wonderful testament to all of his hard work and his genuine sincerity assisting our community.

We are planning a social event at the High Society Tea House in Wayne for our members and guests on November 15th, 2015. If you'd like to attend, please contact Valerie Vittas (valv@optonline.net).

Additionally, based on popular demand, our Christmas wreath sale began in early October. A table is set up in the Fellowship Hall every Sunday following church services with a sample wreath, brochure and order forms. Sales will continue through November 8th.

Please drop by or contact Athena Katsaros 201-261-0809.

If you would like to join our Agape Chapter, please contact our Vice President, Thalia Kalamarides, at thaliacleo@aol.com. If you would like to know more about the Daughters of Penelope or any of our charities, kindly contact President Effie Stratis at dopagapepresident@gmail.com.



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SAMMY THOMAS, PAST DISTRICT GOVERNOR**

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MAY YOU ALWAYS BE AXIOS!**

CHURCH REGISTRY

BAPTISMS

On October 4th 2015, Charlotte Irene Riccardella, the daughter of Nicholas and Alicia was baptized. Michelle Ayvas was the Nouna (sponsor).

On October 10th 2015, Niya Pelagia Theodorou, the daughter of Alexandros and Valerie was baptized. Kelly Savidis was the Nouna (sponsor).

WEDDING

On September 19th 2015, Dan Sawycky and Kristie Grammatikos were married. Andrew Grammatikos was the koumbaro (sponsor).

FUNERALS

On September 11th, 2015 George J. Kapsis, beloved uncle to John Kapsis, fell Asleep in the Lord.

On September 22nd, Charles Albanis, beloved husband to Mary and father to Dean, Billy and Gregory, fell Asleep in the Lord.

Eternal be their memory.

SAINT CATHERINE'S VISION

UNITY, SPIRITUAL RENEWAL AND EDUCATION

Saint Catherine's Vision is founded in a discipline of prayer, conciliarity and study, with roots reaching to the early 1980's. It is an international Pan-Orthodox Christian organization endorsed by the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America engaging concerns of the contemporary Church. We strive to build our efforts on a spiritual foundation, working collaboratively. We believe that it takes a disciplined village with humility to bear witness and share God's restorative and transfiguring eleos, loosely translated as Divine Compassion or Mercy, to His people and creation. Our mission is:

1. To develop and implement initiatives especially supporting women's ministries in the Orthodox Church through prayer, fund-raising, education, research, training, mentoring, and other related programming related to theology and ministry.
2. To promote spiritually and theologically sound approaches that facilitate the education, witness and service of men and women in a manner which fully supports the participation of women.
3. Central to the commitment of the organization is the practical expression of Orthodox theology and ministry "for the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12) which is His Church and share the light of Christ in today's world.

Divine Compassion Conference III

Women: Healing, Authority and Ministry

Keynote Speaker: Helen Creticos-Theodoropoulos

Saturday, November 7, 2015

9:00am—4:00pm

At

Hellenic College Holy Cross
Greek Orthodox School of Theology

(See enclosed flyer for details)

YOUTH CORNER



Sam Williams

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

STRESS AND ANXIETY

These days, it seems like being a teen is synonymous with being stressed and anxious. There's a lot going on in the life of a teen. You have the feeling that you're growing up faster than you want, yet at the same time, you can't wait to be grown up. Whether you're new to high school or you're applying for college, there's a lot to adjust to and to plan for. And then there's homework, sports, clubs, friends, family and worrying about dating. There's definitely a lot on your plate if you're a teen. So why are teens so stressed these days, and what can you do to decrease your stress and anxiety?

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Disconnect in order to connect

A contributing factor to the feeling of anxiety and stress is that teens today are more connected to technology than any generation before. You're connected to everyone and everything at the touch of a screen. It's easy to find yourself mindlessly scrolling through e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat... over and over again. Next thing you know, it's late and you still have work to do.

One way I would recommend dealing with stress is to have a period of time each day to disconnect from the phone and social media— at least when you're with family, friends and doing school work. This will give you time to actually give it your all, in whatever you're doing, and to actually be present. When we're constantly looking back at our phone, it splits our attention between too many things and it's impossible to get anything done, fully. This attempt at multi-tasking leaves us feeling even more stressed and anxious.

2. Structure your time

Think about how you structure your free time. When you get home from school and sports, do you have a schedule for yourself? Something that can help with reducing stress and anxiety is to give yourself some time each day to relax, some time to get work done, and a regular time to get to sleep. It's easy to goof off and then push school work until late at night, but this only increases your anxiety and stress. Then, you get a poor night's sleep, you're tired the next day and the cycle continues.

It's better to do work as soon as possible so that you have time to relax before getting to bed. Also, don't forget to give yourself a moment of quiet time each day to thank God for your day and to pray. There are only so many

hours in a day, so part of stress and anxiety management is learning to manage your time.

3. Invite God into your stress

Have you ever noticed that when you're stressed out, all you can do is think about everything you have to do and how impossible it is to do it all? What if I said that admitting defeat isn't such a bad thing? Not only is it okay, but it's an important spiritual lesson to realize that you cannot do everything by yourself. We need to ask God to guide us and to be willing to not be in control of every little thing in our lives. Oftentimes, our anxiety comes from a sense that we have to do everything and figure it all out on our own.

So in that moment of anxiety, when you cannot imagine how you could possibly finish all your homework, and study for all the exams, just pause and ask for God's strength. You can ask God to calm your nerves, to help you remember what you've studied for your exams, to give you clarity of thought to get your work done.

It's human nature to want to be in control and to want to do things our way, but Jesus wants us to rely on Him and to put our trust in Him. As soon as we invite Him into our stress, we realize that we are not alone in our stress and anxiety, but that Jesus is helping us get through it. In the Book of Isaiah, we learn that the peace and calm that we need when we're stressed can only come from God: "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You" (Isaiah 26:3).

There is no easy fix to anxiety and stress because they are an inevitable part of our daily experience. But that doesn't mean that we have to feel controlled by our stress. There are several things we can begin doing today to manage our stress and anxiety. We can try setting aside our phones and stop thinking that we have to be connected to everything, all the time. We can structure our time so that we actually have time to do what's most important. And lastly, we can invite God into our stress instead of thinking we have to handle everything on our own. When we do our part in decreasing our stress, trust in God, and remember Him throughout our day, He gives us peace and calm even in the midst of stress.

NATIVITY LENTEN PERIOD

November 15– December 24

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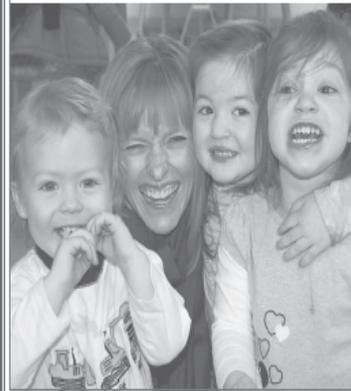


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Sunday, **November 15th** Stewardship Sunday
Sunday, **November 22nd** Parish General Assembly

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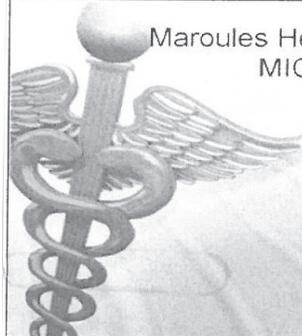
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