

Winter

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

2016



A fervent prayer, and wall most unshakable A merciful spring And shelter of all mankind; Fervently, we cry to you: Theotokos, our Lady, Come to us And from all dangers now deliver us The only protection who speeds to us.

~From the Paraklesis Service

The Messenger is the official publication of Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Chicago

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Like us on Facebook & Instagram!

Sunday Services: Orthros 8:15 a.m. and Divine Liturgy follows

CLERGY

His Eminence Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago		
His Grace Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos		
Fr. Stamatios G. Sfikas	Cathedral Dean	
Fr. Nicholas Nikokavouras	Dean Emeritus	

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS

Nicholas Hlis	President
Dean Alonistiotis	Vice-President
George Alonistiotis	Secretary
Jonathon Bacon	Treasurer

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Nicholas Gavaris	Chanter
Pangratis Papacostas	Chanter
Demetri Damaskus	Chanter
Myron Chornomaz	Chanter
George George	Choir Director
Debbie Demolaris	Organist
Kim (Ourania) Kontopoulos	Parish Administrator
Panagiotis Rogaris	Neokoros

PROGRAMS

Fr. Stamatios Sfikas	Altar Boys
Polyxeni Kapsalis	Sunday School Director
Fr. Stamatios Sfikas	Adult Religious Education
Pres. Katerina Sfikas	Mommy and Me
Stephanie Meletis	Young Adults
Georgia Gavaris	Metropolis Feed the Hungry

Beloved Stewards and Friends of the Cathedral,

I pray that this publication for our Cathedral Family will serve as an edifying source of both practical and spiritual information of the happenings at our beloved Annunciation Cathedral.

It is my hope that you will take the time to read the information that is found in this publication. Through the efforts of our devoted staff and parishioners, it is our hope to print this publication and have it sent to the homes of our paid stewards four times a year. "The Messenger" will serve as a source of information of what is taking place at the Cathedral both liturgically and socially. By providing this information to each of you it is our wish to have as many of our faithful attend the various events so that we may continue to become a closer spiritual family.

If you wish to see something added to these publications or if you wish to submit something of significance to our community publication please do not hesitate to email us and all reasonable requests will be taken into consideration by our editors.

Looking forward to many more issues to come!

Enjoy!

A certain elder, who was asked by the brothers what condemnation is and what it means to speak ill of another, gave the following explanation:

"In the case of speaking ill of someone, one reveals the hidden faults of his brother. In the case of condemnation, one censures something obvious. On the one hand, if someone were to say, for example, that such-and-such a brother is well-intentioned and kind, but lacks discretion, this would be to speak ill of him. If, however one were to say that so-andso is greedy and miserly, this is condemnation, for in this way he censures his neighbor's deeds. Condemnation is worse than speaking ill of another."



FROM THE DESK OF FR. STAMATI

Beloved Stewards and Friends!

I greet you with much joy in the new year of our Lord 2016! The year 2015 was truly a blessed year for us at the Annunciation Cathedral. The dedicated love and support of all of you, the beloved faithful of this community was truly visible. This year 2016 marks our 124th year of continuous ministry to the faithful of Chicago. 2016 will be a year of planning, growth and spiritual development as we embark on our planning for the 125th anniversary of our beloved Cathedral.

We began this year with a great event, our Winter Family Fundraiser which was hosted and sponsored at and by the Greek Islands Restaurant. Their generosity helped us raise over \$6,000 dollars! I personally express my gratitude to the Greek Islands and to the chairpersons of this event for their successful efforts. Most especially I thank each of the individuals that were presents for what was truly a memorable afternoon for all.

I am also pleased to announce that we kicked off the new year and the month of January with our first Stewardship Sunday on January 17th. This beautiful day was attended by many as we celebrated the annual cutting of our vasilopitaa but most importantly it was a day of deepening our knowledge and faith in Orthodox Stewardship ministry in its true form. I thank the newly appointed committee for their dedication and also for the countless hours of meeting times and planning for the year 2016.

In the first several weeks of the new year the dedication of our ministry heads and also stewards is truly remarkable. As your priest I continue to remind us all that the Cathedral is one family, an extension of each of our immediate families. As we know when one within our immediate family is not well we all feel it. This is true in our Parish Family as well. Without all of our family members present, active, devoted and without their love and gift of stewardship, the church cannot grow in expressing the message of our Lord and most importantly in bringing salvation to us personally and as a whole. For this reason I ask you to continue to pray for the progress of your spiritual home, your parish family and for our continued growth in faith and love this year. This is our New Year Resolution as a community and I pray you join us in making this resolution an ultimate reality.

I hope to continue to see all of our ministries, new and existing continue to prosper through your participation. There is truly something for everyone to get involved with at our church so don't miss out on doing so today!

Looking forward to a truly blessed year with all of you!

+Fr. Stamati



FROM THE CHOIR LOFT

Do you like to sing? Why not sing with the Annunciation Cathedral Choir? I would like to invite you to share your musical talents and join us· We meet, warm up our voices, and review the special hymns of our Church on Sunday mornings at 9:15 a·m· in the Cathedral Hall· (We do not have weeknight rehearsals)· We typically sing three Sundays a month· The Chanters of our community chant the first Sunday of the month· We are off in July and August·

As a musician, my goal is to enhance the liturgical experience for everyone in the church \cdot I am very proud of the very talented, dedicated and faithful singers in the choir \cdot

Once again, I invite you to share in the music making experience. If you like, come up to the choir loft, meet some of the members, and follow along until you feel you are ready to sing out loud!

Thank you! George George Choir Director





Our Sunday School Students always enjoy the fellowship and lessons they share together with their teachers! We thank all of the parents who bring the children to church on a constant basis so that they may enrich their knowledge of our precious faith through the efforts of our religious education programs.

If you are interested in enrolling your children in the Sunday School program please do so by contacting our director, Polyxeni Kapsalis, or the Cathedral Office. Enrollment is ongoing!

It is never to late to get involved!



2016 Stewadship

The newly formed Annunciation Cathedral Stewardship Committee welcomes you to a blessed new year. We have come together to work with our Cathedral community and visiting parishioners to have an on-going dialogue about stewardship.

The Archdiocese has some wonderful materials on their website (<u>http://www.goarch.org</u>) talking about what the word "stewardship" means and how we can all participate to support the efforts needed to sustain our family - the Church. Some thoughts are..."Stewardship is the call of the faithful to share willingly the gifts that God has bestowed on them, including their gifts for God's work...time, talent and treasure."

The time to pledge your stewardship for 2016 is now so that the Annunciation Cathedral can budget for the year, and have funds available for the ongoing operations of the Church, and the commitment we have to our Archdiocese. Making your commitment can be done on an annual basis, with quarterly or monthly payments and even by check, cash or credit card. The pledge cards note the various giving levels for you to choose from.

We will select one Sunday each quarter to focus on "Stewardship Sunday" so that the dialogue about what it means to be a steward can be on-going, and opportunities on how to be more engaged with all the programs at our Cathedral can be more well-known. Personally, I thank you for considering your 2016 pledge now.

I had the pleasure of working with Faye Peponis and Caroline Pappas on our January, Vasilopita celebration to mark our first Stewardship Sunday. Our next one is planned for *April 3, 2016*. If you would like to join us on the Stewardship Committee, please let Father or one of our committee members know.

Wishing you a blessed new year! Ellen Best, Stewardship Chair

STEWARDSHIP STATISTICS AS OF FEB. 1st 2016		
2016 Stewardship Goal: \$125,000		
Amount still needed to reach 2016 goal: \$75,335		
80 families have pledged		
Ve have 300 families as registered stewards which means that 220 families of the Cathedral have not yet paid or pledged for 2016Please make your pledge today!		
Pledged Amount: \$49,665.00		
Total amount of Stewardship paid to date: \$40,455.00		
Average pledge of the 80 families combined \$620,81		



Parish Council News

As our community enters the one hundred twenty-fourth year of Orthodox Christian Ministry, I write as Parish Council President to bring you up to date on the work of the Parish Council and the growth of our Parish this past year.

The replacement of the front steps of the Cathedral, a major project approved by the Parish Council and the General Assembly, has just been completed along with the lampposts which illuminate the front of the Church. Our thanks to our stewards, donors, and friends who contributed to the stair project and now we await the installation of the new front doors to complete the exterior restoration project. We anticipate work to be done to correct interior maintenance needs in the nave and narthex of the building to begin late this winter, weather permitting.

I would like to inform you of the carpeting of the rear stairs and painting of the Sunday School classroom, initial activities recognizing the need for expanding the facilities of the community for the ministries of education, choir, Philoptochos, youth and family. I thank the officers and members of our Council for their cooperation and support. Elected by the stewards of the community they are a cross section of the Cathedral family, responsible to the Parish Assembly and our Hierarch for conducting all Parish affairs in keeping with the mission, aims and purposes of the Church as set forth in the Charter and the Uniform Parish Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Most especially I thank Father Stamati for his dedicated efforts to lead, and expand a most meaningful liturgical and sacramental life for the faithful, bringing the love of our Lord and Savior into every life in the celebration of the sacred and Holy Mysteries of the faith.

And so, as the new year begins, I ask you to pray and worship with us in liturgy and participate in the ministries and auxiliaries that comprise the mission of our community, embracing Christian Stewardship as a life-style which acknowledges our accountability and responsibility before God. Actively engaged in the life of the Church, make your personal commitment of time, talent and treasure to support our Parish and affirm that every aspect of our lives comes as a gift from God.

Nicholas J. Hlis, Parish Council President

2016 Parish Council Election Results			
Nick Hlis, President Dean Alonistiotis, Vice President George Alonistiotis, Secretary Jonathan Bacon, Treasurer			
<u>Council Members</u> Michael Hlis Ted Mitsakopoulos Joseph Poulos Evangelia Dallas			
Taso N. Devetzis St	teve Kapsalis	Dimitra Galanis Knoch	Harold Peponis
Stavros Salapa	tas Constance N	Aarinakis La	kis Nikokavouras
+Jack Mitsakopoulos			





Join the Cathedral YAL

Friday, February 26th at 8:30 p.m.

For a night of fellowship and fun at

Zanies Comedy Club on wells street in Old Town!

We have 10 tickets left that are given to us by the comedy club - they are good for \$1 admission to the event (tickets are actually \$25 for this event) plus a \$2 service fee. You must buy 2 items once inside (can be food or drink).

Since we must have an accurate head count please RSVP by *Feb 19th* by contacting the cathedral office or at frstamati@annunciationcathedralchicago.org

Become an Altar Boy of the Cathedral!



All boys and young men are welcome to join Fr. Stamati in the Holy Altar every Sunday morning for Divine Services.

If you wish to have your children or grandchildren become part of this ministry of our church please contact Fr. Stamati.

Social gatherings and retreats will take place for all altar boys throughout the year! Join us!



FAMILY NIGHT FUN!



CATHEDRAL!





PARISH LUNCHEON IN HONOR OF ST. NICHOLAS & FUNDRAISER FOR ST. NICHOLAS SHRINE





A VISIT FROM COLLEGE STUDENTS FROM GREECE!











FAMILY SUNDAY AND WINTER **FUNDRAISER FUN!**











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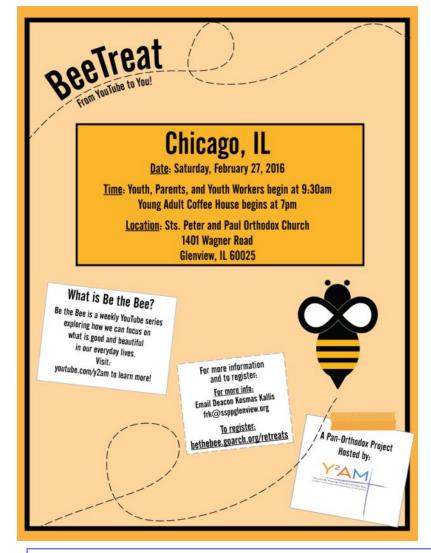
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SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON



SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2016

IMMEDIETLY AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY IN THE CATHEDRAL HALL

MORE INFO TO COME SOON!

CHILDREN AND ADULT MEALS WILL BE AVAILABLE

Save the Date and join us for the

Annual Holy Friday Youth Retreat

Friday, April 29, 2016

12:00 noon - 2:30 p.m.

Ages 4 - 8th Grade

An excusal letter for school will be available to parents.

For more info or if you would like to help with the retreat please contact Fr. Stamati

PLACE AN ADVERTISMENT HERE TODAY!

Would you like to help us offset the cost of the printing and mailing of the Messenger?

Please consider placing an advertisement in our publication!

For information please contact the Cathedral Office at 312-664-5485

ANNUNCIATION CATHEDRAL HOLY WEEK DONATIONS – 2016

In an effort to help offset the cost of the various items needed for Holy Week we are prayerfully asking for your support. If you are able to donate towards any of these items below please contact Fr. Stamati or the Church office

	Church office.		
ITEM:	<u>COST:</u>		
Daffodils for Sunday of the Holy Cross	\$100.00		
Flowers for icon for Saturday of Lazarus	\$200.00		
Palms and Palm Branches for Palm Sunday	\$600.00		
Flowers for icon on Palm Sunday	\$200.00		
Flowers for the Nymphios Icon	\$250.00		
Flowers for icon of the Last Supper	\$200.00		
Flowers for icon of the Crucifixion	\$200.00		
Wreath for Crucified Lord	\$250.00		
2 Wreaths on Stands on two sides of Crucifixion	\$175.00 each (\$350 total)		
Flowers for icon of the Apokathelosis	\$200.00		
2 Bags of Rose Petals for the Epetaphion	\$100.00		
Flowers for the Kouvouklion	\$1,500.00		
4 large baskets of flowers for First Anastasi	\$125.00 each (\$500 total)		
2 Icons of the Anastasi	\$220.00 each (\$440 total)		
2 Flower vases for Altar Table on Anastasi Night	\$120.00 each (\$240 total)		
2 Decorated Anastasi Candles	\$250.00 each (\$500 total)		
Flowers for Anastasi Banner	\$225.00		
25 pots of Easter Lilies	\$20 each (\$500 total)		
Oil for Kandelia for the week	\$100.00		
Candles for the Crucifixion	\$100.00		
Incense for the week	\$75.00		
Flour and 7 candles for Holy Unction	\$50.00		
Rosewater (4 bottles)	\$50.00		

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUD LOVE AND SUPPORT!

Please join us in Celebration of our Parish Feast Day

<u>Thursday, March, 24</u> 7:00 p.m. - Higrarchical Grgat Vespers A reception will follow in the Cathedral Hall

Friday, March 25

8:30 a.m.- Orthros followed by Higrarchical Diving Liturgy A reception will follow in the Cathedral Hall

Free Valet Parking will be available on both days





PHILOPTOCHOS

Dear Annunciation Cathedral Stewards,

It's my joy to present this letter to you from our strong and vital Philoptochos Chapter.

We finished the year 2015 with a fundraiser for St. Nicholas Ground Zero in New York. We had our annual Christmas Bazaar and bake

sale. We also had a holiday party at Plateia in Glenview.

This year on *March 6th* we will be celebrating our annual Macaronada luncheon. We will also be having a celebration of our church's namesday on March 24th & 25th.

We look forward to the peaceful time of our lent period, making crosses and red eggs, our special bake sale, decorating the Kouvouklion (Epitafio) and celebrating our glorious and beautiful Holy Easter.

Thank you to all who continue to support our Philoptochos.

With love and respect,

Dimitra Galanis Knoch Chapter President

To become a steward of the Philoptochos please call 312/787-6282

Have you heard of the various ways you could stay informed about what's happening at the Cathedral?



Like us on our Facebook Page at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Chicago



Follow us on Instagram

Instagram



Contact the Cathedral office to be added to our email server

Family Care Concerns & Issues

by Fr. Constantine Sitaras

Easy on Sunday Mornings

"I don't know about your house, but in my household Sunday mornings are chaotic! Can you offer any suggestions as to how I can get my children ready for church in a timely fashion and without so much disorder?"

This is perhaps one of the most asked questions of me. Parents tell me how Sunday mornings are chaotic . It doesn't seem to matter how early the parents wake up to get everyone ready for church, there always seems to be turmoil.

The call for help has come from parents of all ages. Even when younger children are easy to get ready on Sunday morning, some in their pre-teen and adolescent years become troublesome. Indeed, this was the situation in my own home.

It isn't very clear to me why this happens in what seems to be quite a few families, often I think that the evil one interferes and causes disruption when our intentions are to seek God.

Let's not look for blame, but rather look towards being resolute with our goal of family worship within the family of our Lord, which is His Church.

When dealing with younger children, don't give up on getting ready and going to church. Create a routine.

The night before set the clothes out for yourself and your children. Let them know what they will be hearing. Explain to them that tomorrow is Sunday and that you will go to church as a family—make certain you do go. Again, explain the morning routine. The time everyone will wake up. What you will do, what happens at the Divine Liturgy; and what plans, if any, there are for after church.

A large part of sharing in the Divine Liturgy is the fellowship with each other within the parish and being part of a community. Yes, the friends we make in Jesus Christ because of our common faith experience are very meaningful.

Remember, if your children are very young, establish evening and morning routines getting ready for church and stick to them. Be gentle but firm and always loving. Consistent behavior and patterns are very important, children need to know what to expect and consequences of their behavior.

If your child is a pre-teen or teenager they may rebel against the status quo lifestyle of your family. This is a difficult time for youngsters and their parents.

This age of "in-between" childhood and adulthood can cause a great deal of distress on a family. Children have the need to develop their own value system as independent people.

Hopefully, it will be our own Orthodox Christian value system. It has been my experience that this process, though difficult and trying for both parents and teens, is a growth opportunity that ends up being most beneficial in the life of the teen.

It is, at times, an unavoidable, necessary part of growing up. Certainly attending church and making a commitment to one's faith is part of that growth experience.

It helps if the teen has friends and looks forward to seeing them and being with them at church. Ideally you want your children to look forward to going to church, to fasting, and praying, and to preparing to receive Holy Communion. For some and hopefully for many families this is the reality. My suspicion is that for quite a few it is not.

What to do? First of all hang in there and be patient, calm and respectful, Teens can be obnoxious in their behavior and their attitude.

Be firm and consistent with some flexibility. Some things for you may be negotiable.

If children grow up going to church on a regular basis, the probabilities are good they will continue to do so in their adult life. They need to come to that on their own. Even if we try to force them, in the long run they will do what they want.

Oh yes, keep them in your prayers. Parents' prayers are very powerful.

Within our St. Basil Academy community, the children have learned to be at church on time and to participate.

For the most part, they are attentive and fairly well behaved. There is, on occasion, a youngster (usually a teenager) who will excuse himself and go the bathroom or sit when they should stand.

It's called being passive and teens can be masters of this behavior, which is intended, I think, to torment their parents. They do cause stress to us adults, but calmly addressing the behavior and the issue of respect does much more good than "yelling and screaming" at them.

Staff knows that they are teaching healthy behaviors by their actions. Be patient and hang in because it does get better. We have seen the fruits of our efforts at St. Basil. It takes time but there is success.

My own son was a teenager with a pretty strong personality. He is now in this second year of graduate school and living in a different city away from home.

I asked him, "Why did you torment us about going to church on Sunday mornings when you were a teenager?"

He said,. "It's not that I didn't want to go to church, Dad, it's just that I didn't want to do anything. I wanted to sleep in and do nothing. Besides, I go to church now as an adult. You should be pleased about that." Needless to say I am. There is hope.

Is it easy on Sunday mornings at your house? Hopefully it is, if it isn't, know that it can improve.

Behaviors of children can change for the better. It takes patience, guidance, a sound plan and prayer most important of all If we are committed to being Orthodox Christians and to raising our families as Orthodox Christians then one of our goals might be; "going to church is easy on Sunday mornings."

Following are some practical suggestions:

- Set up evening and Sunday morning routines.
- Layout your children's clothes the night before.
- Prepare them for the morning plan of family activities.
- Please, be consistent, calm and flexible.
- Pray
- Remember, there is hope just continue to do what needs to be done.

(Reprinted from the Orthodox Observer)

Liturgical Calendar

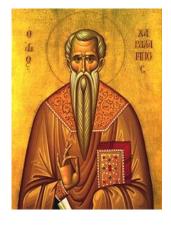
February 2 6:00 p.m. Vigil Service of the Presentation of our Lord & Savior

- February 10 9:00 a.m. Orthros & Divine Liturgy +St. Haralambos
- March 5 8:30 a.m. Orthros & Divine Liturgy 1st Saturday of Souls
- March 12 8:30 a.m. Orthros & Divine Liturgy 2nd Saturday of Souls
- March 14 6:00 p.m. Great Compline LENT BEGINS - STRICT FASTING
- March 16 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy
- March 18 7:00 p.m. Salutations to the Theotokos
- March 19 8:30 a.m. Orthros & Divine Liturgy 3rd Saturday of Souls
- March 23 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy
- March 24 7:00 p.m. Great Vespers (Parish Feast)
- March 25 8:30 a.m. - Orthros & Divine Liturgy +THE ANNUNCIATION (Parish Feast Day)

7:00 p.m. - Vespers with Salutations to the Theotokos

- March 30 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy
- April 1 7:00 p.m. Salutations to the Theotokos
- April 6 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy
- April 8 7:00 p.m. Salutations to the Theotokos
- April 13 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy
- April 15 7:00 p.m. The Akathist Hymn
- April 20 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy
- April 23 8:30 a.m. Orthros & Divine Liturgy +Saturday of Lazarus











Every Sunday Orthros begins at 8:15 a.m. followed by the Divine Liturgy The Schedule for Holy week & Bright week will be mailed to your homes with the 2016 Pasha mailing.



LaSalle Drive Front Steps Completed!

As you enter the Cathedral from the LaSalle Street entrance you cannot help but notice the beautiful new entrance which has been completed with new steps landing and most importantly hand railings! With much excitement this project was completed with the installation of our LED Light Posts which illumine our Cathedral from dusk to dawn!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Without the continued generosity, love and support of our entire Cathedral Community we would have not been able to complete this project!

God Bless You!

Cathedral Main Entrance Doors.....

We thank all those who have generously offered their donations to our front door renovation pro-

ject we are still currently seeking donations for the doors. Total amount that is still needed is \$8,000.00. Please offer your love to our beloved and historic Cathedral!

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Sanctuary Project Donations

Below is a list of items that we are seeking donations for

- Epetaphion of the Panagias Kimisi
- Epetaphion of the Burial of Christ
 - Censor
 - Bi-lingual Gospel Book
- Purple Altar Coverings (Lent–Holy Week)
- White and Gold Altar Coverings (Anastasi)
 - Wooden Carved Gospel Stand

If you would like to make a donation towards the beautification of the Sanctuary/Altar to help offset the cost of the above listed items please contact Fr. Stamati directly.

Donations may be offered and listed in loving memory or for the health and well being.

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Chicago The Messenger 1017 North LaSalle Drive Chicago, IL 60610

SAVE THE DATES! 2016 GOLD COAST GREEK FEST IS COMING!

JUNE 24, 25 & 26