



ΓΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ

CHICAGO METROPOLIS

MISSION, VISION, VALUES & WHY STATEMENTS

On November 2-4 2018, a group of 86 volunteers participated in a Strategic Planning Retreat for benefit of the Metropolis and achieved consensus on the following statements of identity & purpose:

“WHY” STATEMENT (why we exist)

To receive and share unconditional love, mercy, healing and peace, so that life has greater meaning and purpose.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago is a Christ-centered community that loves, guides, engages and serves all people.

CORE VALUES

- Christ-centered • Integrity • Service • Humility • Love • Merciful
- Spiritual development • Adaptable

VISION STATEMENT

In 3-5 years, we will grow our Metropolis family through greater:

- Fellowship & Welcoming
- Accountability
- Ministries & Education
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Involved Youth & Emerging Adults
- Engagement on Critical Issues
- Stewardship

We need your help!

Please visit <http://chicago.goarch.org/strategic-planning> and sign up to join a Strategic Planning Task Force by clicking the “Register to Participate” tab.

TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY PAN ORTHODOX VESPERS

Sponsored by
THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CLERGY ASSOCIATION OF GREATER CHICAGO



6:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 17, 2019

St. Andrew Greek Orthodox Church
5649 North Sheridan Road
Chicago, Illinois

Homilist:
His Eminence, Metropolitan NATHANAEL
Metropolitan of Chicago (GOA)

Responses offered by
Pan Orthodox Choir of Greater Chicago
Gordana Trbuhovich, Director



Family Synaxis

METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

together with the Pick Up Your Cross & Follow Me Ministry
Invites you to our Annual Lenten Retreat:

Blueprints for “The Little Church”

Saturday, March 30, 2019

9 am – 3pm • St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church
10309 Kolmar Ave., Oak Lawn, IL • www.stnicholasil.org

A retreat for the whole family!

- Worship time, two workshops, discussions, breakfast, and lunch
- Sessions, activities, and childcare included for children of all ages
- Parallel and inclusion programming available for children with special needs via the Pick Up Your Cross ministry



Workshops by Elissa Bjeletich

Elissa, a mother of five daughters who converted to Orthodoxy in 1999, is devoted to helping parents nurture their children in an Orthodox home, through her books, podcasts, and other online resources. You won't want to miss these practical, encouraging, and dynamic presentations!

Register now!

www.gocfamilysynaxis.org

\$90 per family by March 18
\$130 per family by March 25 (No registration after March 25)

Questions? chicago.family.synaxis@gmail.com
or Eleni Anast 708.250.0034

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago Family Synaxis



“For indeed a house is a Little Church. Thus it is possible for us, by becoming good husbands and wives, to surpass all others.”

— St. John Chrysostom

Annunciation Cathedral of Chicago
presents a
GRAND RAFFLE
at
Cafe La Cave
2777 Mannheim Rd. Des Plaines, IL 60018

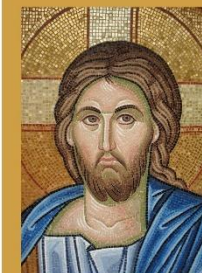
Thursday, FEBRUARY 28th
@ 6:30 PM

\$3,000 Grand Prize
\$125 per ticket
Every tenth ticket is a WINNER!

FOR TICKETS: George Stavrakas at (773) 914-6049
or Michael Hlis at (708) 975-6789

PosterMyWall.com

THE GREEK ORTHODOX
METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO
FAMILY SYNAXIS
PRESENTS THE 2019, EIGHTH ANNUAL



MEN’S RETREAT

Great Lent:
From false freedom
to true freedom

Presented by Rev. Dr. Perry Hamalis
of Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church

Friday, February 22nd, 7 PM –
Saturday, February 23rd 3 PM

Saint Iakovos Retreat Center
Kansasville, Wisconsin

Register now @
www.gocfamilysynaxis.org

Stand fast,
therefore, in the
liberty by which
Christ has made us
free, and do not
be entangled
again with a yoke
of bondage.

— Galatians 5:1

AHEPA SCHOLARSHIP

The 13th District American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association Scholarship Foundation has released the applications for the 2019 scholarship. Last year AHEPA distributed 27 scholarships totaling \$41,000 to eligible recipients. The deadline for submitting applications is March 15, 2019. For information contact the Cathedral office.

PRE-COMMUNION PRAYERS

Whenever we are expecting an important visitor, we put a lot of effort into cleaning our homes, making sure everything is neat and tidy, and really put our best foot forward to make sure everything looks nice for our guest. When we receive Communion, the King of all creation comes and visits our very hearts – how much more should we work to make sure our hearts and lives are cleaned and tidied for Him! It is very important that we prepare our souls to receive our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. This preparation includes giving a recent confession, observing the fasts of the church (most importantly, a complete fast from all food and drink from midnight the night before receiving communion), and saying the special Prayers of Preparation beforehand. These prayers can be found in both the large red Liturgy book and in the smaller maroon book, beginning on Page 29, and should be prayerfully recited before approaching the chalice. Many people prefer to say these prayers at home on the evening or morning before receiving communion – the full service of Preparation can be found online at <https://www.goarch.org/-/the-synekdemos-daily-prayers-for-orthodox-christians>, under “Service of Preparation for Holy Communion”. There are also Prayers of Thanksgiving to be said after we have received Communion – these can be found on Page 40 of the maroon book and on Page 48 of the red book.

2019 CALENDARS AVAILABLE NOW!

Our 2019 Calendars are now available for pick up. Stewards of the Cathedral may pick up their calendars from the Office during normal business hours or from a parish council member on Sunday.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL!

The Parish Council met February 12th and elected the 2019 Executive Council. The Executive Council for this year is:

- Mr. Nicholas J. Hlis, *President*
- Mr. Dean Alonistiotis, *Vice-President*
- Mr. Jonathan Bacon, *Treasurer*
- Mr. Nick Milissis, *Secretary*

Please join us downstairs following the conclusions of the Divine Liturgy for Coffee Hour and fellowship! Coffee Hour this week is sponsored in honor of Rosalia Siedlecki and for the benefit of the entire Cathedral family.

COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS NEEDED

There are many Sundays throughout February and March that we do not have anyone signed up to host Coffee Hour. If you would like to host a coffee hour in a loved one’s memory, or for a special occasion (nameday, birthday, anniversary) please contact the Cathedral office and book your day today! The beauty of sharing in fellowship with our friends and fellow stewards allows us to grow closer to one another within our parish life. Please help us continue this important ministry by booking a date for your family to host!

TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY PAN-ORTHODOX VESPERS

The Orthodox Christian Clergy Association of Greater Chicago is sponsoring a Pan-Orthodox Vespers service for the Sunday of Orthodoxy. The service will be held at **6.30pm on Sunday, March 17th** at St Andrew Greek Orthodox Church (5649 N Sheridan Road). His Eminence, Metropolitan Nathanael will give the homily.

FAMILY SYNAXIS

The annual Metropolis of Chicago Family Synaxis Retreat will be held Saturday, March 30th, at St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Oak Lawn. The theme for this year is “Blueprints for the Little Church”. Registration is \$90 per family if you register by March 18th, or \$120 per family if you register by March 25th. Register now at www.gocfamilysynaxis.org!

LENTEN MEN’S RETREAT

The Metropolis of Chicago Family Synaxis will be hosting a lenten men’s retreat Friday and Saturday, February 22nd and 23rd, at the St Iakovos Retreat Center in Wisconsin. The theme for this retreat is “Great Lent: From False Freedom to True Freedom”. Register now at www.gocfamilysynaxis.org!

GRAND RAFFLE

The Cathedral will be hosting a Grand Raffle on Thursday, February 28th at 6:30pm at Cafe la Cave in Des Plaines. Tickets are \$125, and the Grand Prize is \$3,000! Tickets can be purchased from George Stavrakas (773-914-6049) or Michael Hlis (708-975-6789) or on our website. Winner need not be present to win. Even if you cannot be present for the dinner, please consider purchasing a ticket and supporting this event.

LET’S STAY IN TOUCH!

- Did you know that the Cathedral can be found on Facebook and Instagram? Like us or follow us to stay in touch!
- Have you added the Cathedral Calendar to your personal Calendar so you don’t miss upcoming events and services? Visit our website and follow the link to add the Calendar to your personal digital Calendar!
- Are you receiving our weekly emails & bulletins? Visit us online to subscribe to our email server or simply visit the iPad station at the back of the church to submit your information!

Sunday, February 17th, 2019
Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee

A WORD FROM THE FATHERS

"Let your prayer be completely simple. For both the publican and the prodigal son were reconciled to God by a single phrase."
+St. John Climacus

FAST FREE WEEK

Since the chief weapon for virtue is humility, and the greatest hindrance to it is pride, the divine Fathers have set these three weeks before the Forty-day Fast as a preparation for the spiritual struggles of virtue. This present week they have called Harbinger, since it declares that the Fast is approaching; and they set humility as the foundation for all our spiritual labors by appointing that the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee be read today, even before the Fast begins, to teach, through the vaunting of the Pharisee, that the foul smoke of self-esteem and the stench of boasting drives away the grace of the Spirit, strips man of all his virtue, and casts him into the pits of Hades; and, through the repentance and contrite prayer of the Publican, that humility confers upon the sinner forgiveness of all his wicked deeds and raises him up to the greatest heights. All foods are allowed the week that follows this Sunday.

(from goarch.org)

A NOTE TO VISITORS ABOUT HOLY COMMUNION

We welcome to this celebration those Christians who are not united with us. It is a sad consequence of the divisions in Christianity that we *cannot* extend a general invitation to receive Holy Communion. We thank you, though, for joining us in prayer and invite you to partake of the blessed bread at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. We also invite you to join us for fellowship in the church hall after Liturgy.

STEWARDSHIP OF OUR CATHEDRAL

With everyone's support, we more than met our Stewardship Fundraising Goal for 2018! Our 2018 goal was \$130,000, and we raised well over \$140,000 with the help of all of our Stewards. Help make 2019 an even bigger success! Stewardship commitment cards for 2019 have been mailed, and they are also available at the pagari – please prayerfully consider your support of Annunciation for the upcoming year. However you choose to support the Annunciation Cathedral with your tithes, offerings and services through commitment or submittal – please do so whole-heartedly, prayerfully, and generously. If you submit to Christ and pay attention to His desires; His glory will surely shine through you. Come grow with us! Also, you can now donate online – visit www.annunciationcathedralchicago.org/donate to set up one-time or recurring donations!

PARKING ON SUNDAYS

Please note that our valet service on Sundays begins *at 9am*. If you arrive before 9 and park yourself, make sure that you do not park in the clergy or handicapped spots, or in front of the side door, as this is a fire hazard.

Preparing for Our Lenten Journey

by Fr John Matusiak

[Lent is on the horizon! The season of "pre-Lent" – a series of four Sundays meant to prepare us spiritually for Great Lent – begins *today* with the **Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee**. I hope you will find this article edifying as you begin your preparations for this wonderful liturgical season]

The Gospel reading for the first pre-lenten Sunday – Luke 18:10-14 – offers a striking contrast between the pharisee, a genuinely religious man, and the publican, an equally genuine sinner, a tax collector known for cheating others. In his prayers, the pharisee boasted before the Lord: "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." The publican, meanwhile, "standing afar off," begged for mercy: "[He] would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" The pharisee's religious yet boastful piety did not justify him, while the publican's humble repentance – that repentance to which we especially aspire during the season of Great Lent – is revealed as the first step in our salvation. The pharisee sought adulation; the publican sought – and received – great mercy.

On the second pre-lenten Sunday, **the Parable of the Prodigal Son** – Luke 15:11-32 – is read. In it, Our Lord reveals that our heavenly Father offers to us unconditional forgiveness and mercy if, like the prodigal son, we "come to our senses," see ourselves for who we really are, and turn away from the "hunger" of "riotous living" in a "far country." The prodigal son discerned his need to return to his true home, his father's house, and acted decisively: "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him," exclaiming "for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." In the same way, our heavenly Father unconditionally forgives and receives us, His prodigal children – but it is we who, laying aside our pride, must "come to our senses," acknowledge that we "have sinned," and return to our "true home."

The Parable of the Last Judgment – Matthew 25:31-46 – is read on the third pre-lenten Sunday, commonly referred to as Meatfare Sunday, since it is the last day on which we partake of meat before Holy Pascha. In this parable, Our Lord reveals that, while it is important for us to desire Him, to repent and seek His mercy, to see ourselves for who we truly are, and to return to Him, we also must discern His very presence in everyone around us, in the "least of the brethren," and minister to them as if we were ministering to Christ Himself – and for the sake of Christ Himself. Our Lord reveals that our salvation and judgment depend on how we put our desire, repentance, and the mercy we receive into action, in the midst of others, for their sake as well as for the sake of the One Who feeds us, clothes us, ministers to us, and ultimately calls us to the life of His Kingdom. "Good intentions," as Our Lord reveals, are insufficient; crucial as prayer, fasting and almsgiving indeed are, they certainly are not mere "religious exercises" performed for their own sake, and surely not for the sake of acquiring a sense of "pride in accomplishment." Discerning Christ's presence in everyone – and especially in those who so often are ignored, forgotten, abandoned, or despised – while offering them the same loving kindness that He first offered to us is the ultimate "fruit" of genuine repentance.

Forgiveness Sunday – commonly known as Cheesefare Sunday, since it is the last day on which we partake of dairy products before Holy Pascha – falls on the eve of the first day of Great Lent. In the day's reading from the Gospels – Matthew 6:14-21 – we hear Our Lord's teaching about forgiveness: "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." We also hear His teaching about fasting: "When you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father Who is in the secret place; and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you openly." Like Adam, exiled from Paradise, we lament our sins. Forgiveness and mercy are ours, but if only we fast from those things, those passions that, with Our Lord's help, we can bring under control, even if we all too often allow them to control us.

The pre-lenten Sundays prepare us for our "lenten journey." They arm us with that which we need to "enter the Fast with joy," to make the most of the "time for action," for as we sing on the first day of Great Lent, "salvation is at the door."

SAINT PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY 3:10-15

TIMOTHY, my son, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconion, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT LUKE 18:10-14

THE LORD said this parable, "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN THE PLAGAL OF THE FIRST TONE

Let us, O faithful, praise and worship the Word Who is co-unoriginate with the Father and the Spirit, and Who was born of the Virgin for our salvation; for He was pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

Τὸν συνάναρχον Λόγον Πατρὶ καὶ Πνεύματι, τὸν ἐκ Παρθένου τεχθέντα εἰς σωτηρίαν ἡμῶν, ἀνομήσωμεν πιστοὶ καὶ προσκυνήσωμεν, ὅτι ἠρδόκησε σαρκί, ἀνελθεῖν ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ, καὶ θάνατον ὑπομεῖναι, καὶ ἐγείρει τοὺς τεθνεῶτας, ἐν τῇ ἐνδόξῳ Ἀναστάσει αὐτοῦ.

KONTAKION OF THE SUNDAY IN THE FOURTH TONE

Let us flee from the boasting of the Pharisee and learn through our own sighs of sorrow the humility of the Publican. Let us cry out to the Savior, "Have mercy on us, for through You alone are we reconciled."

Φαρισαίου φύγωμεν ὑψηγορίαν, καὶ Τελώνου μάθωμεν, τὸ ταπεινὸν ἐν στεναγμοῖς, πρὸς τὸν Σωτῆρα κραυγάζοντες· Ἰλαθι μόνε ἡμῖν εὐδιάλλακτε.

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Chicago

**ΚΑΘΕΔΡΙΚΟΣ ΝΑΟΣ ΙΕΡΑΣ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΕΩΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ
ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ**



Celebrating 127 Years of Continuous Ministry

Rev. Fr. Stamatios G. Sfikas – Cathedral Dean

Rev. Fr. Nicholas Nikokavouras – Dean Emeritus

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AnnunciationCathedralChicago.org

FREE VALET PARKING AVAILABLE EVERY SUNDAY!

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

Welcome to Annunciation Cathedral! We are glad you came, and we hope your visit was memorable and meaningful in every way. Our doors and hearts are always open to you. Please join us for fellowship following the liturgy and visit with our Clergy and with members of our parish council. They will answer questions you may have and provide you with information regarding the programs we offer.