Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Shrine Church

November 15, 2026

Rev. Economos Aristidis Garinis, Proistamenos

Rev. Presbyter Alexandros Douvres

Office (718) 357-4200 - Email info@stnicholasflushing.org -www.stnicholasflushing.org

Η΄Λουκᾶ΄ - 8th Sunday of Luke

Ἀπολυτίκιον Ἀναστάσιμον

Κατέλυσας τῷ Σταυρῷ σου τὸν θάνατον· ἠνέῳξας τῷ λῃστῇ τὸν Παράδεισον· τῶν Μυροφόρων τὸν θρῆνον μετέβαλες, καὶ τοῖς σοῖς Ἀποστόλοις κηρύττειν ἐπέταξας, ὅτι ἀνέστης Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός, παρέχων τῷ κόσμῳ τὸ μέγα ἔλεος.

Τῶν Ἁγίων

Τὰ θαύματα τῶν ἁγίων σου Μαρτύρων, τεῖχος ἀκαταμάχητον, ἡμῖν δωρησάμενος Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός, ταῖς αὐτῶν ἱκεσίαις, βουλὰς ἐθνῶν διασκέδασον, τῆς βασιλείας τὰ σκῆπτρα κραταίωσον, ὡς μόνος ἀγαθὸς καὶ φιλάνθρωπος.

Κοντάκιον

Ὁ καθαρώτατος ναὸς τοῦ Σωτῆρος, ἡ πολυτίμητος παστὰς καὶ Παρθένος, τὸ ἱερὸν θησαύρισμα τῆς δόξης τοῦ Θεοῦ, σήμερον εἰσάγεται, ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ Κυρίου, τὴν χάριν συνεισάγουσα, τὴν ἐν Πνεύματι Θείῳ· ἣν ἀνυμνοῦσιν Ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ· Αὕτη ὑπάρχει σκηνὴ ἐπουράνιος.

Resurrectional Apolytikion

You destroyed death by Your Cross, You opened Paradise to the Robber. You turned the Myrrh-bearing Women's lament into joy, and You commanded Your Apostles to preach that You rose, O Christ God, granting the world the great mercy.

For the Saints

You have given us the miracles of Your holy Martyrs as an impregnable fortress, O Christ our God. At their entreaties, frustrate the plots of foreign enemies, and strengthen our nation, for You alone are good and benevolent.

Kontakion

The Savior's most pure and immaculate temple, the very precious bridal chamber and Virgin, who is the sacred treasure of the glory of God, on this day is introduced into the House of the Lord, and with herself she brings the grace in the divine Spirit. She is extolled by the Angels of God. A heavenly tabernacle is she.

ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ (Εφ. 2:14 – 22)

Ἀδελφοί, Χριστός ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν, ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν, ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασι καταργήσας, ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν ἑαυτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην, καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ Θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ· καὶ ἐλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἐγγύς, ὅτι δι᾽ αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφότεροι ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. ἄρα οὖν οὐκέτι ἐστὲ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι, ἀλλὰ συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἐν ᾧ πᾶσα ἡ οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη αὔξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν Κυρίῳ· ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν Πνεύματι.

EPISTLE READING (Eph. 2:14 – 22)

Brethren, Christ is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΟ ΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑ (ΛΟΥΚ. 10:25 37)

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, νομικός τις προσῆλθε τῷ Ἰησοῦ πειράζων αὐτὸν καὶ λέγων· διδάσκαλε, τί ποιήσας ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσω; ὁ δὲ εἶπε πρὸς αὐτόν· ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τί γέγραπται; πῶς ἀναγινώσκεις; ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· ἀγαπήσεις Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου, καὶ τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν· εἶπε δὲ αὐτῷ· ὀρθῶς ἀπεκρίθης· τοῦτο ποίει καὶ ζήσῃ. ὁ δὲ θέλων δικαιοῦν ἑαυτὸν εἶπε πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν· καὶ τίς ἐστί μου πλησίον; ὑπολαβὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· ἄνθρωπός τις κατέβαινεν ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλὴμ εἰς Ἰεριχώ, καὶ λῃσταῖς περιέπεσεν· οἳ καὶ ἐκδύσαντες αὐτὸν καὶ πληγὰς ἐπιθέντες ἀπῆλθον ἀφέντες ἡμιθανῆ τυγχάνοντα. κατὰ συγκυρίαν δὲ ἱερεύς τις κατέβαινεν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἐκείνῃ, καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἀντιπαρῆλθεν. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ Λευΐτης γενόμενος κατὰ τὸν τόπον, ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ἀντιπαρῆλθε. Σαμαρείτης δέ τις ὁδεύων ἦλθε κατ᾽ αὐτόν, καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ἐσπλαγχνίσθη, καὶ προσελθὼν κατέδησε τὰ τραύματα αὐτοῦ ἐπιχέων ἔλαιον καὶ οἶνον, ἐπιβιβάσας δὲ αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ ἴδιον κτῆνος ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς πανδοχεῖον καὶ ἐπεμελήθη αὐτοῦ· καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν αὔριον ἐξελθών, ἐκβαλὼν δύο δηνάρια ἔδωκε τῷ πανδοχεῖ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἐπιμελήθητι αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὅ τι ἂν προσδαπανήσῃς, ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ ἐπανέρχεσθαί με ἀποδώσω σοι. τίς οὖν τούτων τῶν τριῶν πλησίον δοκεῖ σοι γεγονέναι τοῦ ἐμπεσόντος εἰς τοὺς λῃστάς; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔλεος μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ. εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· πορεύου καὶ σὺ ποίει ὁμοίως.

GOSPEL READING (LK. 10:25 – 37)

At that time, a lawyer stood up to put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

EORTOLOGION

NOVEMBER 2026

Christmas fast begins and the 40 days of Liturgy
Αρχίζει η νηστεία των Χριστουγέννων και το Σαρανταλείτουργο.

Daily services /Καθημερινές
Orthros 8:30 a.m. Liturgy 9:30 a.m.
Σάββατα 8:00 π.μ. Saturdays 8:00 a.m.

Stay in the loop! 📰✨

Did you know we have a digital newsletter featuring updates from all our parish ministries? Head to stnicholasflushing.org and click on St. Nicholas Ark to read the latest issue.

Own a local business? Connect with our church family by advertising with us! Email **stnicholasark@gmail.com** to learn more.

Also, scan this QR code to get parish updates and event news straight to your inbox and check out our website at www.stnicholasflushing.org

Nov 15 SUN	**8th Sunday of Luke** **Η′ Κυριακή του Λουκά** 7:30 a.m. Orthros/ 8:45 a.m. Liturgy **One Liturgy**
Nov 18 WED	**Evening Divine Liturgy** Θεία Λειτουργία **6:00 p.m.** **Discovering Orthodoxy Class**
Nov 21 SAT	**Entrance of the Theotokos** **Εισόδια της Θεοτόκου** 8:00 a.m. Orthros / 9:00 a.m. Liturgy
Nov 22 SUN	**9th Sunday of Luke** **Θ′ Κυριακή του Λουκά** 8:00 a.m. Orthros / 9:15 a.m. Liturgy
Nov 25 WED	**St. Catherine the Great Martyr** **Αγ. Αικατερίνης** 8:30 a.m. Orthros / 9:30 a.m. Liturgy **7:00 p.m. Discovering Orthodoxy Class**
Nov 29 SUN	**13th Sunday of Luke** **ΙΓ' Κυριακή του Λουκᾶ** 8:00 a.m. Orthros/ 9:15 a.m. Liturgy
Nov 30 MON	**Holy Apostle Andrew** **Αγ. Απόστολου Ανδρέου** 8:30 a.m. Orthros / 9:30 a.m. Liturgy

GOYA Thanksgiving Food Drive

Give thanks. Give back.

The Following non-perishable items are needed:

- **Canned Goods: Vegetables, Soups, Gravy, Cranberries etc.**
- **Boxed Goods: Pasta, Mashed Potatoes and Turkey Stuffing**
- **Sweet Potatoes**
- **Bags of Potatoes**
- **5 pound bags of Rice**
- **Jars of Tomato Sauce and Gravy**
- **Bags of Sugar**
- **Bags of Flour**
- **Liters of Soda or Iced Tea**
- **Frozen and non Frozen Turkeys**

Please drop off food donations outside Sarantakos Hall by 11/24/2026

We kindly ask that no donations be left in the Church or School Lobby.

Thank you for your cooperation!

END-OF-YEAR STEWARDSHIP APPEAL

Help Us Reach Our Stewardship Goal

Dear Parish Family,

As we approach the end of the year, we are reminded of the many blessings God has bestowed upon us and the importance of giving back in gratitude for all that we have received.

Our parish continues to be a place of faith, worship, fellowship, and service. Through your generosity, we are able to sustain our ministries, maintain our church, support our community, and preserve our spiritual home for future generations.

As we enter the final weeks of the year, we are asking every parishioner to prayerfully consider making an end-of-year stewardship pledge or an additional contribution to help us fulfill our parish goal. Every gift, regardless of size, makes a meaningful difference. Together, we can reach our goal and ensure that our parish continues to thrive.

Your year-end contribution may also offer potential tax advantages. Depending on your individual circumstances, charitable contributions to our parish may be tax-deductible. If you are considering a larger gift, please consult your tax advisor to determine how your contribution may benefit you.

We respectfully encourage you not to wait until the last days of December to make your commitment. Your timely generosity will help us plan responsibly and meet our financial obligations as we close out the year.

Thank you for your continued faith, dedication, and generosity. May God bless you and your family abundantly for your support of our beloved parish.

With sincere gratitude and prayers,

The Parish Council
On behalf of our Parish Community

ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX SHRINE CHURCH

REQUESTS THE HONOR OF YOUR PRESENCE AT
THE

Agape Gala

Honoring our
St. Nicholas Parish Ministries

Saturday, January 30, 2027

LEONARD'S PALAZZO OF GREAT NECK, NY

6:00 P.M. FELLOWSHIP- 7:00 P.M. DINNER

ADULTS: $175 YOUNG ADULTS (13-17): $125 CHILDREN (under 12): $75

ROOTED IN *Faith* UNITED IN *Christ*

Music by: International Sounds
Black Tie Optional
Featuring Chance Auction

Make your reservations online:

Irene Hotzoglou: 516-330-2299
Eleni Stathopoulos: 917-273-8084

https://www.stnicholasflushing.org/upcoming-events

SAINT NICHOLAS
GREEK ORTHODOX SHRINE CHURCH
FLUSHING • NEW YORK

Agape Gala

Honoring our St. Nicholas Parish Ministries

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30TH, 2027

LEONARD'S PALAZZO OF GREAT NECK, NY

	Sponsorship Level	Price	Complimentary Tickets	Benefits / Journal Listing
☐	Great Benefactor	$10,000	10	Listing in Program as Great Benefactor
☐	Benefactor	$5,000	6	Listing in Program as Benefactor
☐	Grand Sponsor	$2,500	4	Listing in Program as Grand Sponsor
☐	Sponsor	$1,000	2	Listing in Program as Sponsor
☐	Platinum	$500	0	Listing in Program as Platinum

YOUR DONATION IS 100% TAX DEDUCTABLE

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Payment Information	Please make checks payable to St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church		
Payment Method (cirlce one)	Cash	Check	Credit card

Your generous support and sponsorships will help our beloved St. Nicholas Church restore its historic roof and other much needed repairs. Our cherished church needs our help to protect its future.

If you wish to pay for your tickets or sponsorship by credit card please scan the QR Code or visit our website.
https://www.stnicholasflushing.org/upcoming-events

CONTACT: Christopher Fillos (646) 678-2892 - • Harry Yanakis (718) 545-3570

196-10 NORTHERN BLVD, FLUSHING, NY 11358
WWW.STNICHOLASFLUSHING.ORG | INFO@STNICHOLASFLUSHING.ORG
T 718.357.4200 | F 718 357.5692

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

Christmas Celebration

hosted by

St. Nicholas Ladies Philoptochos

Thursday, December 10, 2026 | 7:00 pm

Sarantakos Hall

196-10 Northern Boulevard
Flushing, NY 11358

Enjoy Buffet Dinner, Wine and Cocktails
Music by DJ Gus Ballas
Donation $85.00 per person

RSVP by November 30th

Karen Kalkanis
917-584-2322

Aleka Tsinias
347- 753-1976

For credit card payments,
Scan the QR Code

Welcome Breakfast for Fr. Theofanis Papantonis

With great joy, we invite our parish community to welcome our new Proistameno, Fr. Theofanis Papantonis, along with Presbytera Maria and family, on Sunday, November 22. Please join us as we greet our new spiritual father and his family! Following the Divine Liturgy, a welcome breakfast will be held in his honor in the parish hall. Come enjoy fellowship, share a meal, and introduce yourself to Fr. Theofanis as we greet him and offer our loving support as he begins his ministry with our church family.



Stephen and Areti Cherpelis Hellenic School

OF ST. NICHOLAS

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For questions, contact Eleni Damoulakis (eleni1129@gmail.com).



Reserve Sarantakos Hall

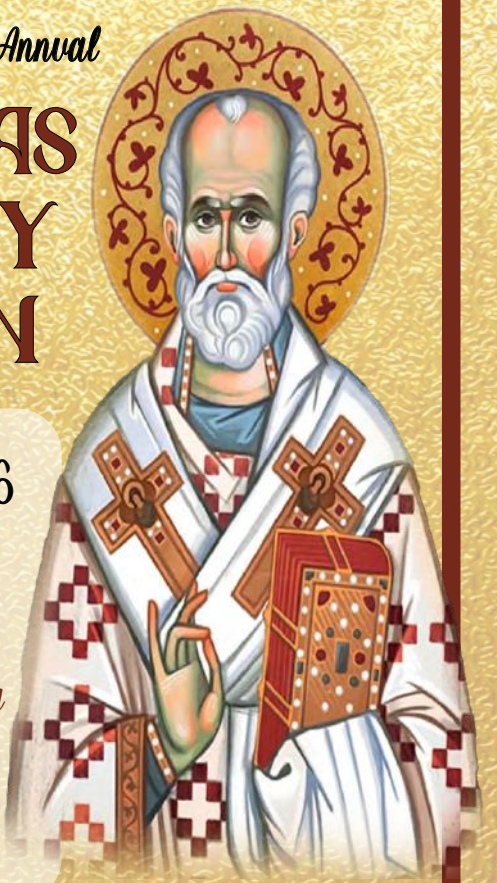
Looking for the perfect spot to celebrate? **Sarantakos Hall** at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Shrine Church in Flushing is open for rentals! From baptisms and milestone birthdays to big family celebrations, we've got the space to host your special day—without the heavenly price tag.

📞 Ready to party? Call the church office today 718-357-4200 to reserve your date!

THE PARISH OF SAINT NICHOLAS
GREEK ORTHODOX SHRINE CHURCH
196-10 Northern Blvd., Flushing, New York

Cordially Invites You to Attend Our Annual

SAINT NICHOLAS FEAST DAY LUNCHEON



Sunday, December 6, 2026

Following Divine Liturgy

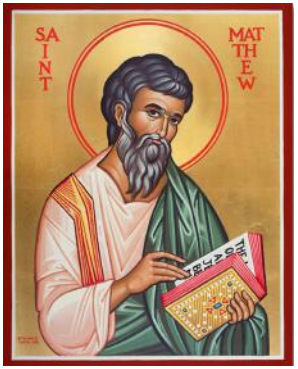
Hosted by

The Saint Nicholas Ladies Philoptochos Society

DONATION:
Adults $75
Children 12 and under $25

RESERVATIONS:
Kalitsa Fillos - 917-864-2889
Irene Hotzoglou - 516-330-2299
Church Office - 718-357-4200

KIDS BULLETIN PAGE



Matthew's Great Trade: A Story for Kids

Once upon a time, there was a man named Levi. Most people knew him as Levi, but after he met Jesus, he became known as Matthew. Before his great adventure started, Matthew had a busy job: he was a publican, sitting at his booth by the road collecting money.

His booth was called the custom house. Day after day, he would sit there counting coins, and he often felt very lonely.

One sunny morning, Jesus walked right past the custom house and looked at Matthew. "Follow Me," Jesus said.

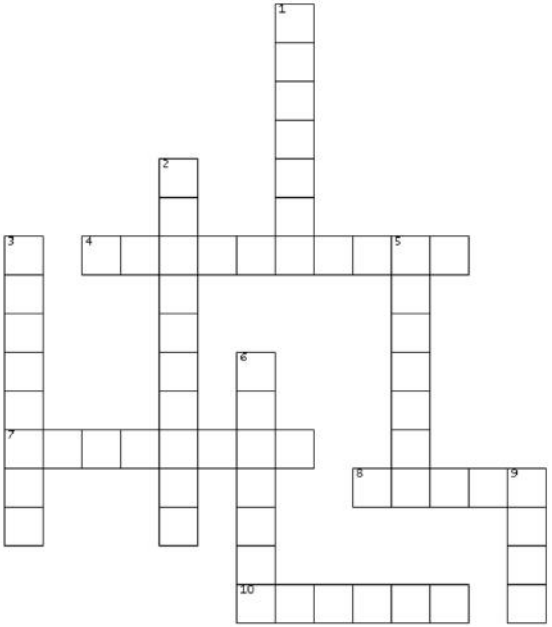
Matthew didn't hesitate for a second. He left all his money behind and jumped up! He joined Jesus and became one of the Twelve Apostles.

Matthew was now an Evangelist, which means he was a messenger of the best news ever—the Evangelion! He helped share the story of Jesus with everyone.

When Matthew first wrote down his Gospel, he wrote it in Aramaic, the language many people spoke at the time. Later, it was shared and translated into Greek so the whole world could read it.

Matthew's preaching took him far away, even to places like Ethiopia. He shared God's love with everyone he met. Because Matthew wrote the Gospel that shows Jesus's human family and how he was sent to save us, his special symbol in church art is the angel (or a winged man).

The Church remembers and honors Saint Matthew's life every year on November sixteen. He taught us that no matter how ordinary your job might be, when Jesus calls, you should follow!



EVANGELIST
EVANGELION
ANGEL
PUBLICAN
SIXTEEN
CUSTOM
LEVI
ARAMAIC
APOSTLE
ETHIOPIA

ACROSS

4. St. Matthew is one of the four, a writer of a Gospel.
7. St. Matthew's original profession before following Christ.
8. St. Matthew's symbol in iconography (winged man/angel).
10. St. Matthew was called by Jesus while sitting at the receipt of this.

DOWN

1. He was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus.
2. The Greek name for the Gospel, meaning "good news" (singular).
3. St. Matthew preached the Gospel in places like Palestine, Persia, and ___.
5. St. Matthew's feast day in the Eastern Orthodox Church is November ___. (Number)
6. The language his Gospel was originally thought to be written in (later translated to Greek).
9. St. Matthew's original name was ___.

MEMORIALS

Maria Alexandrou
Maria Daniela Caruso
Eleni Christoforides
Nikolas Christoforides
Taxiarhis Gizas
Violetta Gizas
Gregory Hatzmihail
Eleni Karacostas
Nikolaos Karacostas
Alexandra Karapanagiotides
Panagiotis Karapanagiotides
Venita Lorras
Helen Misthos
George Misthos
Ekaterini Sakarellou
George Sakarellos

ΜΝΗΜΟΣΥΝΑ

Μαρίας Αλεξάνδρου
Μαρίας Δανιέλας Caruso
Ελένης Χριστοφορίδη
Νικολάου Χριστοφορίδη
Ταξιάρχη Γκίζα
Βιολέτας Γκίζα
Γρηγορίου Χατζημιχαήλ
Ελένης Καρακώστα
Νικολάου Καρακώστα
Αλεξάνδρας Καραπαναγιωτίδη
Παναγιώτου Καραπαναγιωτίδη
Βενετίας Λόρρα
Ελένης Μίσθου
Γεωργίου Μίσθου
Αικατερίνης Σακαρέλλου
Γεωργίου Σακαρέλλου

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Son of Nicole & Steve Sinanis
Saturday, November 21, 2026 at 12:00 P.M.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Following the Divine Liturgy this morning everyone is invited to the Sarantakos Hall for coffee and fellowship. Sponsored by the Parish Council in honor of Fr. Aristidis & Presbytera Vasileia.

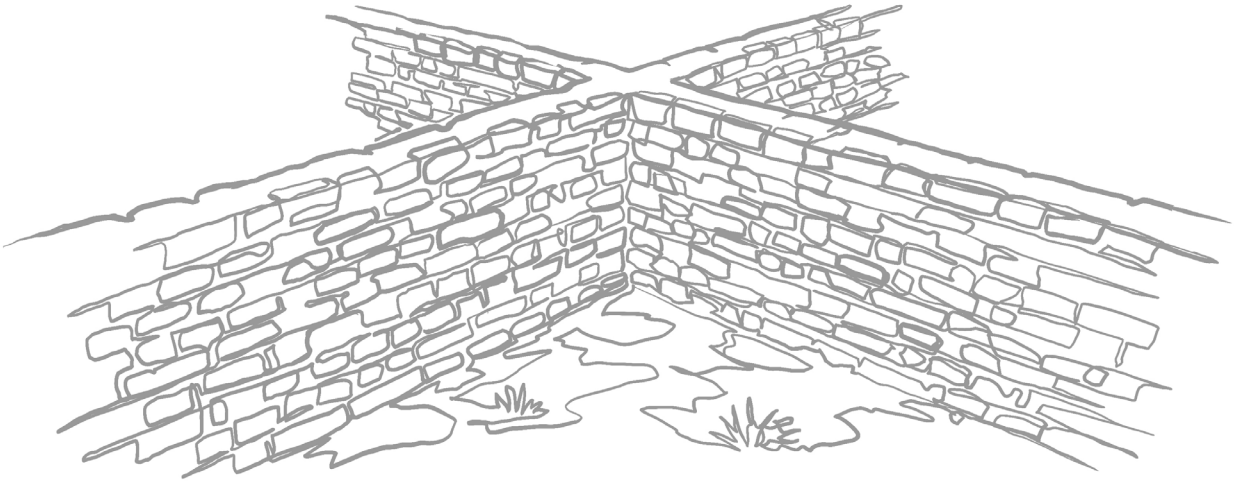
Sunday, November 15, 2026 | Eighth Sunday of Luke

DIAKONIA

A National Ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

REFLECTIONS FROM TODAY'S READING | *Ephesians 2:14-22*

Fr. George Parsenios (HCHC '96)



"Breaking Down the Dividing Wall of Hostility"

Today's Epistle reading from the Letter to the Ephesians announces that Christ has "broken down the dividing wall of hostility." The meaning of this phrase is debated, but each possible interpretation sheds light on how Christ has saved us. The first possible interpretation argues that the "dividing wall" is a literal wall in the Temple in Jerusalem that kept Gentiles out of the Temple precincts, because their presence would pollute the sacred space. This literal stone wall separated Jews and Gentiles. In Jesus Christ, however, all people can enjoy the blessings of God together—the Jew first and also the Greek—so the dividing wall has been removed. A second reading argues that the dividing wall is not a literal one that separates Jews and Gentiles, but a figurative wall that separates heaven and earth, dividing us from God. In Jesus Christ, however, God has become man, and so heaven and earth are unified once more. A final interpretation argues that the dividing wall does not separate two types of people (Jews and Gentiles), nor two types of existence (heavenly and earthly). It separates human beings from the life they were meant to live and creates an internal confusion and division in every human soul. Each of these interpretations sheds light on what Christ has done to save us. In the sin of Adam, we are separated from God, and do not know why we are here or the meaning of our lives. We are separated from each other and live in constant strife with our neighbors. And we are separated within ourselves and do not know why our feet speed toward evil. In Jesus Christ, however, these dividing walls of hostility have been torn down, so that we are united to God, united to our neighbors, and united within ourselves.

Fr. George Parsenios *is Professor of New Testament at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.* ***www.hchc.edu***

Diakonia *is made possible by a generous grant from* ***Leadership 100***

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FROM THE ORIGINAL GREEK: Katêchêsis (Κατήχησις)

What does "Catechesis" mean?

Fr. George Parsenios (HCHC '96)



Our parishes are growing in size every year as people flock to join the Orthodox Church. Because of this influx of new believers, we are paying renewed attention to theological education. The Greek word for this is ***κατήχησις*** (***katêchêsis***), based on the word echesthai, meaning "to echo back" or "repeat," as when students repeat or echo back what their teachers have just spoken. And if catechesis means "education," then a catechumen is someone who is being educated. In the New Testament, catechesis seems brief or nonexistent. The earliest Christian converts appear to have been baptized immediately after their profession of faith, with fuller instruction coming afterward. The Church soon changed this practice in order to ensure that people were fully educated in Christian doctrine and behavior before baptism. St. Justin Martyr says in the 2nd century that baptism is only for those who have been taught the Gospel fully and have agreed to live by it. By the 4th century, the Church had developed a lengthy and well-established period of catechesis for all newcomers. To this day, the Church uses the comprehensive catechetical orations that come down from figures like Saints John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, and Cyril of Jerusalem.



National Philoptochos Biennial Convention, July 2026. National Philoptochos/Mac Creative LLC.

THIS WEEK'S LOOK AT CHURCH HISTORY

The National Ladies Philoptochos Society

During the Fourth Clergy-Laity Congress held in New York City in November 1931, Archbishop Athenagoras signed the charter creating the National Ladies Philoptochos Society out of more than 300 existing women's philanthropic organizations. These "friends of the poor" immediately set about helping the country weather the economic hardships of the Great Depression and mobilize the homefront for World War II. In 1944, the Ladies Philoptochos purchased what would become St. Basil's Academy, a teacher's college and orphanage that played a major role in amplifying the impact of the Greek Orthodox Church in America.

Over almost a century of institutional activity, the Ladies Philoptochos Society has supported numerous Church ministries through its fundraising, volunteering, and organizing efforts. Donations to the Ladies Philoptochos Society fund life-changing programs like Make-A-Difference, One Warm Coat, Feed the Hungry, and Operation Classroom. Today, the Ladies Philoptochos Society boasts more than 400 chapters and 26,000 active members, making it the largest Christian women's organization in America. Registered as a non-governmental organization with the United Nations, it now also maintains an international presence.

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Going Beyond Awareness

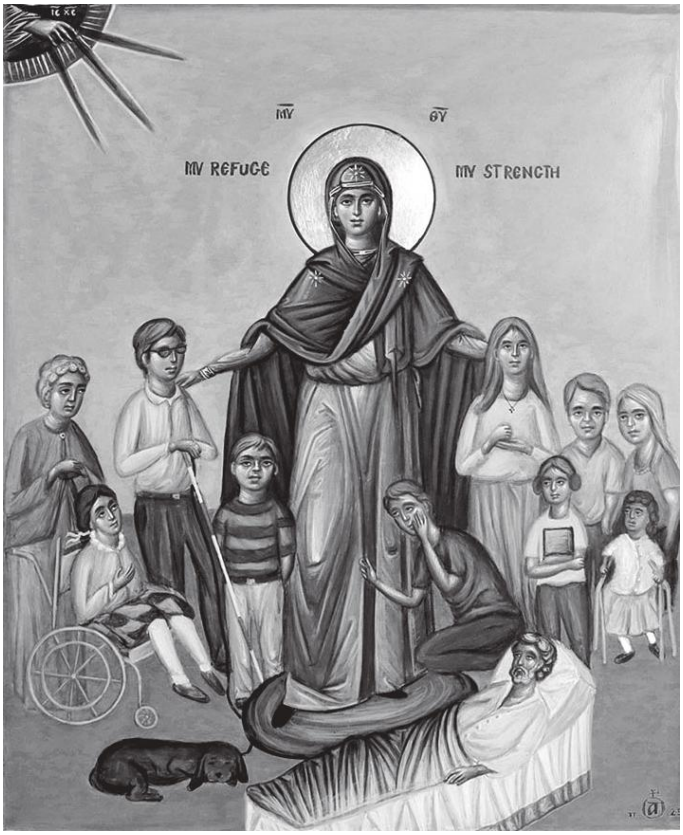
By Jeremy Swartz
Assistant Director, On Behalf Of All Initiative

October was Disability Awareness Month for the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, a moment of spotlight on a topic which affects many in the Church yet is rarely discussed. When we hear terms such as 'disability' or 'accommodations,' many think of targeted programs, 'extra' efforts, or 'special' ministries, but these are products of the actual goal: the inclusion of all Orthodox Christians in community and worship. October's "Just Say…" campaign offers four simple ways to integrate accessible practices into our lives and parishes.

Beginning with "Just Say Hi," we are encouraged to never overlook or speak past any person, particularly because of our personal discomfort. A simple greeting and kind face go a long way in showing people that not only are they welcomed to enter a space, but that their presence is appreciated.

Next is, "Just Say Disability." Some have personal discomfort with the word, others fear of offending with its use; this can lead us to avoid it or soften it with alternative language. Some people with disabilities may prefer other terms like 'special needs,' and we should respect their preference. However, calling another 'special' can stigmatize their needs as something other than 'normal,' when all needs are simply human: to eat, to sleep, to have mobility, to communicate, to form friendships, to love and be loved.

Third is, "Just Say Yes,"—yes to accessibility and accommodations. If we, as the Church, welcome people, inclusive of those with disabilities, and recognize their common human needs, we must be prepared to ensure that the welcome does not end at the door. Though



Icon of 'My Refuge, My Strength' by Rev. Aristidis Garinis, copyright Huffington Ecumenical Institute at HCHC

our bodies and abilities have limitations, the call of the Church is to remove existing physical, educational, social, or cultural barriers to worship, participation in the Holy Mysteries, or fellowship.

Finally, "Just Say You're Invited." Our parish communities exist beyond the celebration of the Divine Liturgy—we are the family of Christ. Inviting and including all members also includes the assurance that the invitation is to a place or for an activity where all can participate with joy and dignity. When we embrace and integrate all believers in the Church, the Body is made stronger, genuine and meaningful connections are made, and the love of Christ is exemplified. The Gospel is shown to be real.

To evaluate what barriers may be preventing people with disabilities from joining worship and community life, access On Behalf of All's Accessibility Assessment tools at https://www.goarch.org/oboa or scan the QR code.

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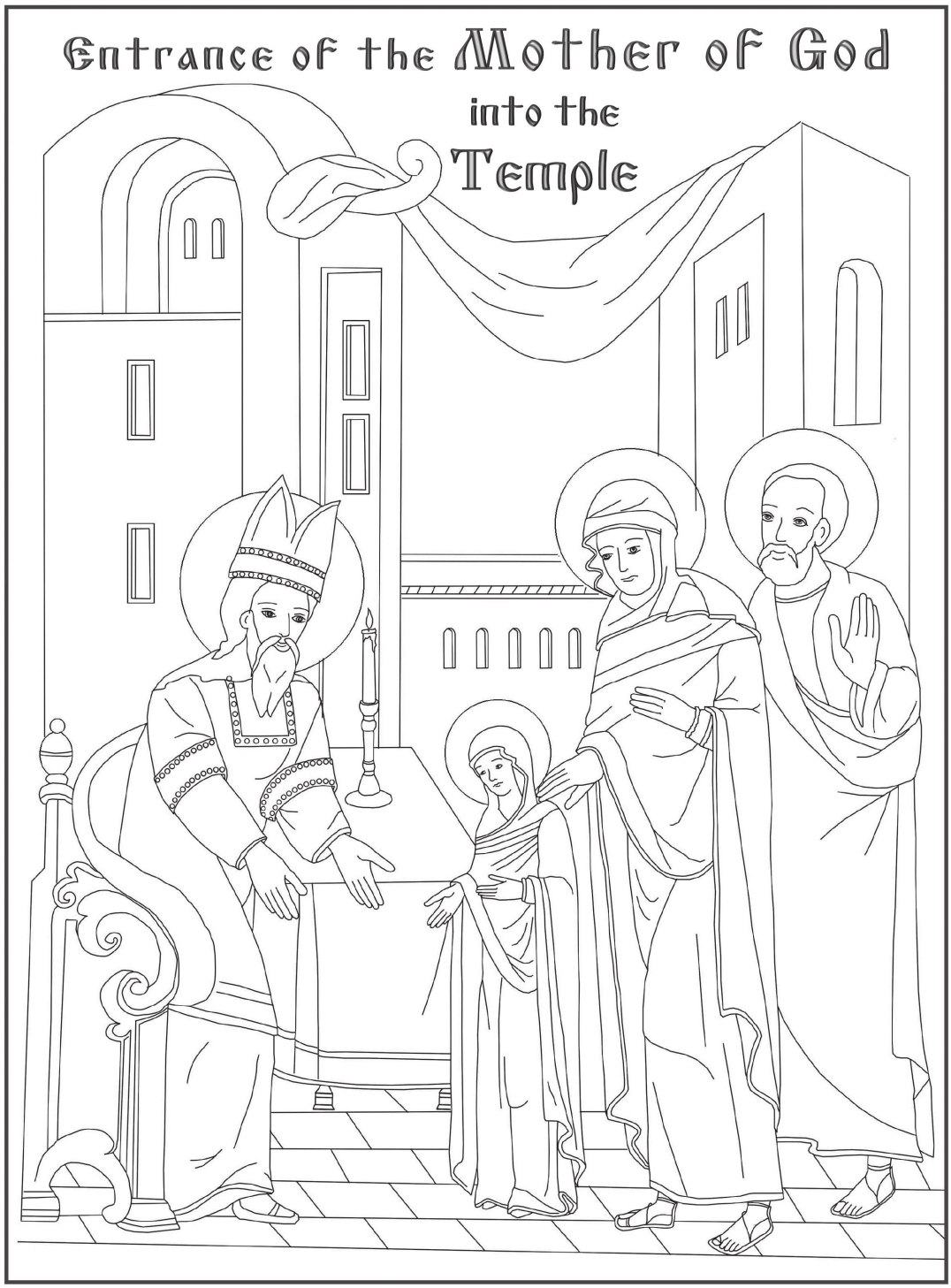
Just For Kids!
(...and the young at heart)

COLORING SHEET

Presentation of the Theotokos to the Temple

On November 21, we celebrate the Presentation of the Theotokos to the Temple. When the Virgin Mary was three years old, her parents, Sts. Joachim and Anna, brought her to the Temple to dedicate her to God. Mary joyfully entered and spent her childhood praying, learning about God, and preparing for the special role God had chosen for her. Mary loved and trusted God from a young age, and through her faith she became the Theotokos, the Mother of our Lord.

Like Mary, we can grow closer to God through prayer and worship, no matter how young we are! Thank you to ByziKids for this beautiful coloring sheet of the feast's icon.



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