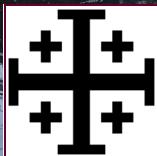


Holy Cross Crossroads



Beloved Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

**Christ is born! Glorify Him!
Χριστός Γεννάται! Δοξασάτε!**

"O Christ, what shall we offer You for coming on earth as a Man for our sake? Every creature that has its being from You gives thanks to You: the angels offer hymns of praise, the heavens give a star; wise men present their gifts, and the shepherds, their wonder; the earth provides a cave and the desert a manger. As for us, we offer You a Mother, a Virgin Mother. O God who are from all eternity, have mercy on us!"

(Great Vespers – Nativity of Christ)

What can we offer to the Lord for all that He has done for us? The greatest gift we can offer Him is ourselves! We can offer the King of Kings and Lord of Lords the most precious gift of all, "Let us commend ourselves and one another, and



Landscape Committee

Many have wondered about the Church grounds recently and in the ongoing efforts to communicate what is being planned, as well as done in the last few seasons, we on the Landscape committee will be putting regular updates in the Crossroads and weekly bulletin on a much more regular basis.

The Committee has been at work through the last two years, though the work has mostly been in the Planning part. The committee is made up of 10 persons, and 5 advisors, and chaired by Frank Kalogeris. Also, Frs. Michael and John have been involved, as well as Parish Council by way of their liaison. (Bill Poutous)

An initial budget was allotted of \$75,000 and the committee took recommendations and bids from landscapers to do necessary pruning and removal of many plants and trees—especially those too close to the buildings which were doing damage and causing mold issues. At a cost of approximately \$21,000, work was done to prune and cut down and cut back trees and bushes and weeds.

It was agreed that the landscaping over the last 50 years of the church's history and nearly 28 for the Hall had been done on an 'ad-hoc' and reactive basis. Maintenance was a key issue (and the lack thereof) and the biggest expense each year was adding mulch around the time of the Food Festival. (An average of \$7 to \$8,000 was spent annually for that!) A LONG TERM PLAN was needed to address many issues besides mere appearance. Storm water run-off, drainage, mold and deterioration, hard and soft surfaces, as well as Community usage all had to be comprehensively addressed.

With a 'campus' of over 11 acres and 13 'zones' around our grounds and building, it was clear to the committee that we had quite a need for longer range planning and an objective look at how our community could better use the spaces we have. So, a study and Landscape Master Plan was sought. This Plan is meant to be broad and comprehensive in scope, addressing all the key areas and issues, with an eye to keeping maintenance manageable, addressing storm water run-off and erosion issues, and especially creating better usage for our parishioners to worship, celebrate, pray and enjoy.

Laquatra Bonci Associates were hired to develop our Landscape and Maintenance Master Plan, utilizing the committee's input and valued advisement from the Western PA Conservancy.

This plan is now completed. (Copies are available by request, and have been shown at Coffee Hours on 2 consecutive Sundays in June of 2021.) The Plan includes renderings, photos, and contractual costs if all work were done by outside contractors. Laquatra met with the committee and advisory volunteers for 4 meetings, and they surveyed the property many times besides. Cost for this Long Term Plan was \$26,400.

The committee next is preparing to go forward with two of the areas/zones by getting bids for work needed, and fundraising as well as determining allocation from funds that have been devoted to some of these projects or dedicated by past Assemblies. We hope to have some work started in Spring and Summer of 2022.

Look for continued updates in General Assembly, Board Minutes, and our Church bulletins. Questions may be emailed to the Committee via this email:
HCLAsuggestions@gmail.com

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church

123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228

Crossroads, published monthly Volume 21 Issue 12

Under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and His Eminence Metropolitan SAVAS of Pittsburgh

The mission of Holy Cross is to keep and proclaim, pure and undefiled, the Orthodox Christian faith and traditions in conformity with the doctrine, canons, worship, discipline and customs of the Church.

Fr. Michael Kallaur, Economos

Fr. Daniel Korba, Presbyter

Dn. Frank Dickos, Deacon

Elias Diamond, Pastoral Assistant

Nena Jovonovich, Secretary

Website: holycrosspgh.org

Office (412) 833-3355 FAX (412) 833-3357

Community Center Phone: (412) 854-6001

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

Organizations & Committees

Church School	Elias Diamond
Philoptochos Pres.	Thea Manos (412) 600-8640
Phil. Membership	Adrienne Dickos (412) 833-4980
Circle of Angels	Carol Halkias (412) 276-5002
	Christine Peters (724) 693-9290
Garden of Love	Stacie Metrose (412) 833-5164
	Didra Kirschner (412) 561-2892
Greek School	Dena Yamalis (412) 343-8355
Junior Dance	Kristina Gzikowski (412) 257-5015
Senior Dance	Georgia Yamalis (412) 728-2259
Choir	Thespina Christulides (412) 608-6418
First Steps	Denise Sokos (412) 257-1610
JOY	Christine Chapas (724) 986-2082
Young Adults	Thespina Christulides (412) 608-6418
GOYA	Denise Melis (412) 341-9264
Golden Club	Cynthia Kostelnik (412) 833-9423
	Rene Koett (412) 831-3142
Bookstore	Mary Portellos (724) 941-8699
House Committee	Konrad Mayr (412) 877-7780
Building Comm.	John Conomos (412) 831-7997
Sts. Mary & Martha	Adrienne Dickos (412) 833-4980
Interior Design Committee	Janet Conomos (412) 831-7997

*Services:

Sundays: 8:15am Orthros
9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Mondays: 6:30pm Paraclesis

Wednesdays: 7 pm Bible Study [via Zoom](#)

Weekdays: 8:30am Orthros
9:30am Divine Liturgy

Saturdays: Vespers 5pm

*See monthly calendar for all services.

2021

Parish Council

Dean Stambolis, President

Jordan Nicholas, Vice President

Nicholas Chakos, Financial Secretary

Jennifer Liokareas, Treasurer

Constance Zotis, Secretary

Dena Galie

John Hoenig

Frank Kalogeris

Rachel Kartofilis

Bob Kirschner

Deno Pappas

Christine Picard

Bill Poutous

George Sokos

Donna Staub

Funeral/Memorial information: Use of the Community Center is available for parishioner funeral lunches at no charge. Parishioners may contact any caterer they choose to purchase and prepare their **Makaria** (Mercy Meal). Contact the church office for suggestions if you need a referral. For **Kollyva**, you may bring your own or contact Denise Melis directly (412) 341-9264.

Coffee Hour fellowship is an extension of our Divine Liturgy! Please gather with family, koumbari or friends to sponsor/prepare one Sunday. See the calendar on website for open dates, and call the church office to confirm.



our whole life unto Christ our God.” (Conclusion of our petitions in the Divine Liturgy) This is the prayer of the Church and this is our prayer. Whatever blessing in life we have been granted, whatever earthly station we have reached, whatever gifts have been bestowed upon us, whatever crosses and wounds we carry, whatever sins and passions have broken us down, God wants it all! He alone can take that which has been poisoned by the darkness of sin and bring it into the Light. He alone can restore the image that has been broken. He alone can bring joy and healing to those that are suffering. He alone can bring Resurrection to the dead.

For the Gift of God, our relationship with Him, and the invitation to salvation, we cannot but rejoice! The Virgin Mary represents the moment at which the Godhead came into direct communion with humanity since the fall of Adam and Eve. She is the living temple and brings all the triumphant joy of Christmas. The communion between God and man has been re-established. God who had driven out Adam and Eve from Paradise, now has come to mankind again and the barrier between heaven and earth has been dissolved.

“Today Christ is born in Bethlehem of the Virgin.
Today He who is without beginning, begins.
And the Word is made flesh.
The powers of Heaven rejoice,
The earth and her people are jubilant;
The Wise men bring gifts to the Lord,
The shepherds marvel at the One who is born;
And we sing without ceasing: Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace,
God’s good will toward men.”

(From the hymns before the Great Doxology, Matins of Christmas)

In the Christmas hymnography, the Star is a sign and symbol of God’s incarnation. Just as the Cross has become they symbol of victory over death and darkness, so too, the Star is a symbol of Christ Himself, “the Star that rose from Jacob.” (Canon of Christmas, Ode 6)

Our life must have a purpose, if we are to be alive in Him and not just exist. Life must have a goal to which we continually aspire. There must be something shinning ahead of us, pushing us forward toward the goal and giving us direction. Travelers by boat have often seen lights in the area of Alaska and Siberia. These Northern Lights sparkle as though they were very near. The travelers hurry toward these lights thinking they are close at hand, thinking they have arrived at their destination. However, these false lights disappear and appear in another location. In our own lives, we must be careful not to be distracted by “false” lights. We initially are drawn toward them, but then they leave us disappointed, because they do not lead us to Light of Christ. Still, like a moth who cannot resist the light, we must be vigilant to follow the path that leads to Life. For over 20 centuries, Christ has been shinning down upon mankind as a guiding star, not as a myth or mirage, but as the Living God who has come down and walked, talked, taught, established His presence and the means of communing with Him, when He lived upon the earth. There have been many times in history where there have been attempts to obscure the Light of Christ, the Star of Bethlehem, in the human consciousness. Yet the

hymns of Christmas continue to resound each year in the churches throughout the world. God's presence, light, and joy cannot be extinguished upon the earth because He wills it to be so. As these hymns of Christmas are sung and prayed like the generations of faithful before us, we pray that the Light of Christ will be deeply planted in each of us and shine undiminished before those who are looking for Him.

Recently on November 5th, 2021, in Milwaukee Wisconsin, a group of young students (grades 1-4) gathered at a local hospital (St. Luke's Medical Center) to sing hymns and songs of praise to a teacher, Carol Mack, who has cancer. Ms. Mack had taught at the elementary school for 45 years and now was leaving the hospital for hospice care. The children wanted to offer her some hymns of encouragement and express their gratitude for her love and dedication to teaching. Ms. Mack was very moved by the kindness and love of the children. She commented, "I hope people see how much these kids and their teacher loved each other and how our school community came together." What a beautiful witness to behold. A teacher being serenaded by her students as she faces the final days of her life on this earth. What a gift of joy and of self. What could be offered at such a moment. Only love and only Christ! For this very purpose, Christ took on our flesh to save and redeem us.



"Your Nativity O Christ our God has brought joy into all the world. For by it, those who worshiped the stars, were taught by a star to adore You the Sun of Righteousness, and to know You, the 'Day Spring' (Orient) from on high. O Lord we give glory to You." (Apolytikion for Christmas)

My brothers and sisters in Christ, let us joyfully sing out the good-news of our salvation in Christ! Let us not be distracted by false lights that lead us away from the True Light, Christ our God. Let us offer the most precious gift we can give, the gift of self. Let us give first to God, our spouses, our children, our families, and our Church unselfishly of our time and talent. We will never regret sacrificing of ourselves for the sake of another. I wish you all a blessed Feast of our Lord's Nativity!

With love and prayers,
Fr. Michael

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

WILL BE HELD FOLLOWING DIVINE LITURGY ON

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021

VOTE FOR UP TO 5

SAMPLE BALLOT AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CAN
BE FOUND ONLINE UNDER
"CROSSROADS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER"
AS A DECEMBER SUPPLEMENT.

HOLY CROSS PARISH COUNCIL BALLOT FOR 2020

DECEMBER 12, 2021

THE FOLLOWING PARISHIONERS (IN RANDOM ORDER) HAVE STEPPED FORWARD TO SERVE ON THE HOLY CROSS PARISH COUNCIL:

5 POSITIONS ARE NEEDED TO BE FILLED.

PLEASE VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN FIVE.

CANDIDATES FOR 2022 PARISH COUNCIL:

- FRANK KALOGERIS
- GEORGE LIADIS
- TOM MOURTACOS
- MARK HUMMEL
- CHRIS CHANEY
- ANNE URSO
- NICK TRIPODES

Saints Mary & Martha Women's Fellowship

Everything Old is New Again:

The New Testament revealed in the Old Testament

January 25, 2022

The Cross revealed in the Old Testament

Fr. George Callas, speaker

At the home of: Domenica Merante
43 Ridgewood Drive
McDonald 15057
RSVP Text 412-302-9093

February 22, 2022

The Theotokos revealed in the Old Testament

Fr. Michael Kallaur, speaker
At the home of: Irene Zotis
76 Woodland Drive
Mt. Lebanon 15228
RSVP Text 412-721-0146



**Remember,
all meetings run
from
7-9pm.**

March 22, 2022

Christ revealed in the Old Testament

Fr. Daniel Korba, speaker

At the home of: Vasso Paliouris
114 Hoodridge Dr.
Mt. Lebanon 15228
RSVP Text 412-606-4314

April 12, 2022

Pascha revealed in the Old Testament

Fr. Paul Abernathy, speaker
At the home of Vasso Paliouris
114 Hoodridge Dr.
Mt. Lebanon 15228
RSVP Text 412-606-4314

May 24, 2022

Baptism revealed in the Old Testament

Elias Diamond, speaker
At the home of: Adrienne Dickos
1840 Kent Road
Upper St. Clair 15241
RSVP Text 412-400-4290

RENEW OR JOIN PHILOPTOCHOS for 2022 *online!*

Or you can still send in a check using the

Philoptochos Membership form below:

TO RENEW OR JOIN PHILOPTOCHOS for 2022, please complete and return to church or to *Adrienne Dickos, 1840 Kent Rd. Pittsburgh 15241*

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

*From your Philoptochos Stewardship donation, \$15 is sent to National Philoptochos in NYC, and \$10 is sent to the Pittsburgh Metropolis Philoptochos. Anything over \$25 goes to Holy Cross Philoptochos.

Or see any Board Member to pay your dues!



The Philoptochos Annual Christmas Party

Tuesday, December 7th at 6:30 pm ~ Tickets are \$35

Please contact Ria Kartsonas at rizkarts@gmail.com

for your reservation and your food selection of Chicken Florentine, Cod or Filet by December 1st.

Entertainment by The Meraklides



You're invited to join the
Holy Cross Ladies Philoptochos for

AN AFTERNOON WITH GERONTISSA

Enjoy a special opportunity for
conversation with Gerontissa Theophano,
fellowship, Mediterranean Lenten treats &
Christmas shopping all to support
the Nativity of Theotokos Monastery

Saturday, December 11
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Community
Center

123 Gilkeson Road

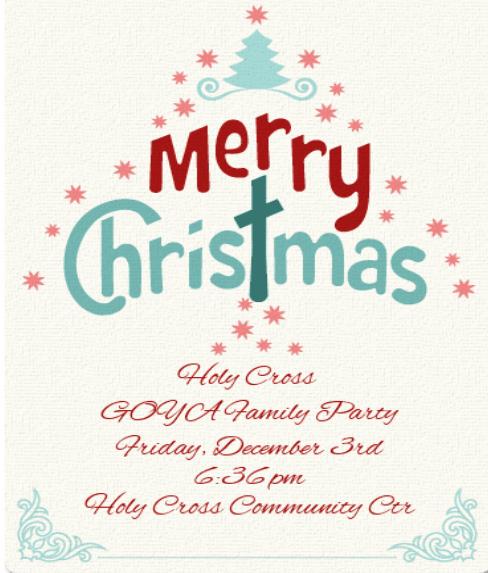
11 AM - 2 PM

\$40/person

Register at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/an-afternoon-with-gerontissa-tickets-196512332677>

Philoptochos Christmas Bread Making is BACK! Save the date! Christmas bread will be prepared on Thursday, December 9th. Kitchen help is needed at 8am. Rolling and twisting will be done at 10am. Egg washing at 11:30am. Wrapping of bread will be about 1:45-4:00pm. Selling of bread will be 2-4:30pm. The Christmas bread, \$10 a loaf, will be sold on baking day, December 9th and Sundays, December 12 and 19. Your help is needed and appreciated! Thank you for supporting Philoptochos in the return of this Annual Fundraiser. Co-Chairs Elaine Sofis, esofis@comcast.net and Domenica Merante, merantebboys@comcast.net



Goyans and their Family
are invited for an evening of Fun, Food and Fellowship

Please bring:

7th , 8th Desserts
9th, 10th, 11th Appetizer(meatless)
12th grade 2- 2 liter drinks

After Party: Bowling 10:15pm - 1:00am
\$15.00

Optional Gift Exchange
\$20.00

Hosted by Holy Cross GOYA
(412) 855-5661

ATTENTION High School Seniors and Parents! The application for the Popi Hagelios Memorial Philanthropy Award of the Philoptochos Society of Holy Cross is available in the Narthex beginning on Sunday, December 12, from Elaine Sofis, electronically, esofis@comcast.net or Denise Melis, electronically, dmelis@comcast.net The application is due by Sunday, March 13, 2022. The award is available to a 2022 PLEDGED Holy Cross family member who is a graduating high school senior in 2022. A similar application is available at Mt. Lebanon High School. You may apply to both awards but will only be eligible for one \$1500 award.

GOYA Fellowship at Top Golf in November



Metropolis GOYA Basketball Tournament

Hosted by Holy Cross

February 25-27, 2022



AD FORM

Deadline: February 1, 2022

**Please attach to this form or email your message to
ADGOYA2020@gmail.com**

Quarter page \$25.00, Half page \$50.00, Full page \$100.00

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Ad size and amount paid: _____

Please make check payable to **HOLY CROSS GOYA and mail along
with this form to:**

**Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church
ATTN: Basketball Tournament
123 Gilkeson Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15228**

Any questions, call Denise Melis at 412.341.9264

Please return no later than February 1, 2022.



Are you ready for some **BASKETBALL?!!!**



Holy Cross GOYA is honored to host the 2020 GOYA Regional Basketball Tournament **February 25, 26, 27, 2022**

This year, there will be over 300 GOYAns participating in our tournament. Hosting a Diocese Basketball Tournament is truly a community effort. Much help and many items are needed. Please choose to help in whatever way you can. In doing so, you will not only be supporting our youth, you will be helping Holy Cross be the best we can be in welcoming our young people from our Diocese.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Sponsor:

<input type="checkbox"/> Friday Night Social Event Snacks..	\$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Concession Stand.....	\$200
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday Night Paper Products.....	\$150	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Breakfast Food.....	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday Night Beverages.....	\$125	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Paper Products.....	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Night Event Snacks.....	\$250	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Beverages.....	\$125
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Night Paper Products	\$150	<input type="checkbox"/> Coffee Supplies	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Night Beverages.....	\$125	<input type="checkbox"/> Bottled water for all players....	\$125

Or for those desiring to make a substantially larger donation.... Various opportunities exist for underwriting the larger costs of renting gyms, paying referees, buying trophies and providing the DJ for the social events. Please contact Denise Melis 412.341.9264

All donors will be acknowledged in the Tournament Program Book.

Give of your time:

Set up and Clean upHelp set up Thursday night at 6pm, Saturday at 5pm before dance, and clean up Sunday after breakfast

Monitor Gyms....Spending 2 hours at gym representing Holy Cross to make sure everything goes as planned

Chaperone Dance....Saturday night from 8:30pm in the Community to watch young people having a good time

Score Keepers....3 hours of keeping the score book or time clock at local gyms

Hotel Security...Walking halls at Crowne Plaza hotel Friday and Saturday nights

Registration....Friday 4pm in the Community Center registering players

Call Denise Melis if you would like to *volunteer your time* 412.341.9264

I have enclosed \$ _____ as a TAX DEDUCTIBLE donation to Holy Cross GOYA.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Please return this form no later than January 30, 2022.

Holy Cross GOYA 123 Gilkeson Road Pittsburgh, PA 15228

GOYA ATHLETICS

We have received several requests asking which GOYA Basketball Tournament each Church has been assigned. The lists have been held off because we still have two host parishes who have not been able to secure gyms. As you can imagine, many facilities are not renting to outside organizations due to COVID which has forced us to be creative in a lot of ways.

Below, please find a list of all assignments. However, we ask that you please keep an open mind in case they will need to change.

Yours in Christ,

Alyssa Kyritsis, Y2AM Director

Dr. Jim Kyros, GOYA Athletics Committee Chair

SAVE THE DATE: GOYA ATHLETICS

St. Nicholas Cathedral, Pittsburgh - Volleyball

April 9, 2022

All Saints, Canonsburg - Olympics

May 20-22, 2022

St. Paul, North Royalton - Sand Volleyball

June 4, 2022

FIRST TOURNAMENT

JANUARY 14-16, 2022

**Annunciation Cathedral
Columbus, OH**

Annunciation, Akron
Annunciation, Cleveland
Archangel Michael, Campbell
Holy Saints,
Ambridge, Steubenville, Wheeling, Weirton
Holy Trinity, Canton
St. Demetrios, Rocky River
St. Demetrios, Warren
St. Haralambos, Canton
St. Paul, North Royalton
Sts. Constantine & Helen, Cleveland Heights

**Sts. Constantine & Helen
Reading, PA**

All Saints, Canonsburg
Annunciation, Lancaster
Dormition Theotokos/Ypapanti,
Oakmont/East Pittsburgh
Holy Cross, Pittsburgh
Holy Trinity, Camp Hill
Holy Trinity, Pittsburgh
Kimisis Tis Theotokou, Aliquippa
St Nicholas/Holy Cross,
Bethlehem/Stroudsburg
St. Nicholas, Pittsburgh

SECOND TOURNAMENT

FEBRUARY 11-13, 2022

Annunciation Cleveland, OH

Annunciation, Akron
Archangel Michael, Campbell
Holy Trinity, Canton
St. Demetrios, Rocky River
St. Demetrios, Warren
St. Haralambos, Canton
St. Paul, North Royalton
Sts. Constantine & Helen, Cleveland Heights

Holy Saints Ambridge, PA, Steubenville, OH, Wheeling, WV, Weirton, WV

All Saints, Canonsburg
Annunciation, Columbus
Dormition Theotokos/Ypapanti,
Oakmont/East Pittsburgh
Holy Cross, Pittsburgh
Holy Trinity, Camp Hill
Holy Trinity, Pittsburgh
Kimisis Tis Theotokou, Aliquippa
St. Nicholas, Pittsburgh
Sts. Constantine & Helen, Reading

THIRD TOURNAMENT

FEBRUARY 25-27, 2022

Holy Cross Pittsburgh, PA

All Saints, Canonsburg
Annunciation, Lancaster
Dormition Theotokos/Ypapanti,
Oakmont/East Pittsburgh
Holy Saints,
Ambridge, Steubenville, Wheeling, Weirton
Holy Trinity, Camp Hill
Kimisis Tis Theotokou, Aliquippa
St. Nicholas, Pittsburgh
St. Paul, North Royalton
Sts. Constantine & Helen, Reading

St. Demetrios Warren, OH

Annunciation, Akron
Annunciation, Cleveland
Annunciation, Columbus
Archangel Michael, Campbell
Holy Trinity, Canton
Holy Trinity, Pittsburgh
St. Demetrios, Rocky River
St. Haralambos, Canton
Sts. Constantine & Helen, Cleveland Heights

First Steps Fall Outing at the Pittsburgh Zoo





JOY Fall outing at Simmons Farm





Holy Cross

SUN	MON	TUE
<p><u>Coffee hours are back!</u></p> <p>Call the church office to sponsor a Sunday!</p>		
<p>5 St. Savas the Sanctified 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>7pm Vespers @ St. Nicholas Cathedral</p>	<p>6 St. Nicholas @Cathedral 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Paraclesis</p>	<p>7</p> <p>7pm GOYA Meeting 6:30pm Philoptochos Christmas Party</p>
<p>Nativity fast thru December 24</p> <p>12 St. Spyridon 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p><i>Parish Council Elections</i></p> <p>2:30pm YAL Book Club</p> <p>Christmas bread sale after Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>13 St. Herman of Alaska 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Paraclesis</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7pm Parish Council Meeting</p>
<p>Nativity fast thru December 24</p> <p>19 Sunday before Nativity 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>Christmas Pageant</p>	<p>20</p> <p>6:30pm Paraclesis</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>Nativity fast thru December 24</p> <p>26 Sunday after Nativity 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>29</p>

December 2021

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10am-Noon First Steps 4:30pm Greek School 6:45-8pm GOYA Basketball 7-8pm Bible Study	2	3 6:30pm GOYA Christmas Party	4 Great Martyr St. Barbara 8:30 Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy 5pm Vespers
Nativity fast thru December 24			
8 4:30pm Greek School 6pm JOY Christmas Party 6:45-8pm GOYA Basketball 7-8pm Bible Study	9 8am-4:30pm  Christmas bread baking 2-4:30pm Sales/pickup	10 6pm YAL Christmas Party	11 11am-2pm Afternoon with Geronitissa (see page 9) 5pm Vespers
15 Hieromartyr Eleutherius 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Div. Liturgy 10am-Noon First Steps 4:30pm Greek School 6:45-8pm GOYA Basketball 7-8pm Bible Study	16	17 Prophet Daniel 8:30am Matins 9:30am Divine Liturgy	18 5pm Vespers
22 St. Anastasia 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Div. Liturgy 6:45-8pm GOYA Basketball 7-8pm Bible Study	23 10am Royal Hours	24 Christmas Eve 5pm Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil	25 Christmas 8:00am Matins 9:30am Div Liturgy
6:45-8pm GOYA Basketball	30	31 4pm Great Vespers 5pm Matins 6pm Divine Liturgy of St. Basil	1 JANUARY 2022 St. Basil the Great
Fast free		Fast free	

Eulogy for +Gustave Diamond by grandson Elias Diamond

In the very last verse of the Gospel according to John, John observes that the life of Jesus Christ was so rich and full, that if one was to write down every deed and saying of His life, the world could not contain the number of books it would take to hold all those words. Such an assertion is especially true when it comes to a life as clearly exceptional as the life of Jesus Christ was, but I believe that this saying can apply, at least in some degree, to every human life. Even the smallest details which color the total portrait of a single life are essential to understanding that person, and yet, these details are so often tragically forgotten. And I think of this passage from the Gospel of John at this moment, because I am faced here with the task of giving a eulogy for my grandfather, my papou, someone I loved very dearly, and someone who's life was so exceptional that it certainly would take many, many, many books to contain all his worthwhile deeds and thoughts. However, unfortunately, as many people as there are here who had and still have great love and respect and admiration for this man, who probably wouldn't mind if I did go on for hours and hours about him, the bittersweet truth here is that we are here to send him on his final journey back to the Kingdom of God, and since I'm sure he is ready to go to that place of light, that place where there is neither pain, nor sorrow, nor suffering, we should not delay too long, as hard as it may be for many of us to let him go, knowing how he will be missed.

So where to begin with such a storied life? How does one choose amongst all the many accomplishments of Judge Gustave Diamond? Should I start with one of his many cases or describe the numerous awards he has received? Well, in one Old Testament passage, the Prophet Elijah encounters God first in a great wind, then in an earthquake, then in a great fire, and finally, in a pure small voice speaking out of the silence, and it is not in the great thunderous revelations, but in the small still voice, in which Elijah comes most to know God, and it goes to show that it is in the little things of a person's life, which we come to know them best. And so I wanted to share some small details which speak to me about what kind of person my grandfather was, and I'm sure we could all share many small poignant details about this man, and I hope we will continue to do so, but at least from my perspective, here are some things I remember.

When I was about seven years old, I will never forget a day my grandfather picked me up from my mom's house. Now, I don't remember what led up to this moment, but, at one point in the conversation, my papou starts explaining to me the meaning and significance of Rene Descartes famous phrase, "Cogito Ergo Sum" or, "I think, therefore I am." As you might imagine, this was a bit intense for a seven-year-old brain to handle. I remember thinking about not thinking, and worrying that if I somehow stopped thinking, whatever that may be like, that I might also stop existing, whatever that may be like. Now, I eventually overcome this youthful existential crisis, but as I reflected on this moment when I grew older I realized it revealed something beautiful about my grandfather, namely, his love of the life of the mind. In fact, he often told me that his favorite class at Duke University was his philosophy class. He introduced me to Plato,



quoted Hamlet to me, and would often read passages from a thick book he loved called the Book of Virtues.

You see, for my grandfather, his pursuit of the law was never something done for reasons as mundane as money or power. It was something that for him was always tied to these higher virtues, these God-given transcendent virtues, like truth, and justice, and reason, and liberty. This is what made him such an exceptional person, I think, in the field of the law especially - this pursuit of these higher virtues in his career. Certainly, the world abounds with lawyers for whom the law is no more than a means to an end, but to hear him speak about the law was a truly inspiring thing, as it reminded us of the fact that law is no mere dull necessity, but rather, it is a great gift that is capable of shaping the world for better or worse. And because his mind was such that he recognized this truth, he recognized the great gravity of that task, the great responsibility that came with his position, and I don't believe he ever took that for granted for a second in his life. And all this is something I began to understand ever so slightly when as I young boy I heard him with great seriousness quote, "I think therefore I am," with the ever so slightest smile on his face.

But there was another side to him as well, one apart from all that great seriousness of the law, and so I will share one other small story from my youth with him. We had a little routine, now and then, when we would walk through the big backyard he had, and we would go up to all the different trees, the pine, the dogwood, the oak, the crabapple, and he would do these different voices for each of them, and he would let me talk to the trees. It was this whimsical, fun side of him that was there too, and I think it's also telling that my favorite of the trees was this dogwood tree, because the dogwood was so gentle and sweet, and there was this side of him that was gentle and sweet as well, and also very funny. And it was this side that was also so essential to his career as a lawyer and judge because it showed the quality of his heart, that this sweet, compassionate side of himself, allowed him to really care about what happened to the people who showed up in his courtroom. He recognized the importance of justice, but he was always incredibly fair, and I believe that was because he genuinely considered the effect he could have upon the lives of those who came before him.

Now these are small details that I believe speak something about his character, but the big outlines of his life I believe most if not all of us are familiar with. Of course, it is always worth reiterating. He was born 93 years ago, in Burgettstown, Pennsylvania, and if you asked him up through the very end of his life, you might be lead to believe that Burgettstown was indeed the center of the Universe. His parents, George and Margaret, were dedicated, hardworking people, who were representative of a whole class of people and historical epoch. His father came from Greece and was emblematic of a whole group of people who came to this country with the soil of the Old World still on their boots, and they planted their roots here, looking for those streets paved with gold. And though not all found those streets paved with gold, my grandfather was certainly an emblem of the promise that this country held, the possibility of rising from nothing to heights which most men only dream of.

His first glimmers of greatness shone through in his football career in Bur-

gettstown. He was a star player, so much so, that his promise would lead him to be recruited by Duke University's football team, where he would be varsity on his first year, which is a pretty big deal. Of course, a young man, out of his small town for the first time in his life, with the doors of the world thrown wide open in front of him might be expected to not focus as much on his grades as he should, and in his case, you would be right. Of course, after his first year, he enlisted in the Navy, as a radio operator during the years immediately following World War II, and the experience certainly changed him, gave him a new level of discipline. It was a difficult adjustment at first, especially since he was in the unfortunate position of being a Navy man with seasickness, but, he overcame, and upon returning to Duke, he left the football team, and threw himself wholeheartedly into his studies.

From Duke, he found his way to Duquesne Law School, and most know how it goes from there – from law clerk, to Assistant U.S. Attorney, to U.S. Attorney, serving under U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. In 1978 he was appointed by Jimmy Carter to the U.S. District Court for Western PA, and went on to continue serving all the way up to his retirement in 2017. And certainly we could go on and on about his career. He had so many fascinating stories – I grew up hearing about mafia cases and, of course, the rather famous trial involving the Pittsburgh Pirates, and I also grew up seeing signed photos on his office wall from Jimmy Carter and Robert F. Kennedy. But to me, the most essential thing here is just how committed he was to this path, how much he loved what he did. I mean, most people want to retire as soon as possible. But he wanted to keep working all the way up nearly to the end of his life. That is truly the mark of someone who had found their vocation, found the thing that God had called them to do.

And now that beautiful, and storied road has come to an end, at least in this life. The last few months and years were especially difficult, with the health challenges he faced, and I have to commend my grandmother, Emma Diamond, for her (and I don't use this term loosely) saintly care and love for him all the way up until the end. They say that behind every great man is a great woman, and in this case, that is certainly true. One thing that was notable to me in this time, was how sharp his mind remained. Even when illness meant that he was not entirely lucid for brief periods, even in those times, he would give these beautiful, profound speeches, which just goes to show that the brilliance of this man continued to shine out even when the darkness seemed also so vast.

So now all that being said, we must recognize that we are here for the purpose of praying for him and sending him back to the Lord who was gracious enough to give him to us. And I believe that these things which made him a great judge were things that will make him dear to God – his love for virtue and truth, the compassion with which he approached his cases. God, after all, gave us law, so that we might have order in a world which so often tends towards chaos and violence. Just think how in the Old Testament, it is the laws of the Ten Commandments, and the six hundred and thirteen total commandments, which is the gift which God gives to the Israelites so that they might have a functioning society. And also consider how a book not that long after the story

of Moses in the Bible is called the book of Judges. And also consider how we often use the term “Judge” for God Himself, Who, as the Creed states, will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. Now, God is certainly the perfect judge, and my grandfather, good as he was at what he did, was still very human, as we all are, he had his flaws, believe it or not. And yet, simultaneously, in my grandfather’s pursuit of justice and fairness, and also in the mercy he had in his heart, I believe his life gives a small glimpse into some of those virtues which the Lord, the great and true judge holds as well, as we all express the image of God in one form or another, and for my grandfather, that was often through his role as a judge.

Of course, he wasn’t just that – he was a husband, a father, a grandfather, a brother, a son, an uncle, a friend, a golf buddy, a colleague, a neighbor, and each one of those aspects revealed a different side of the total beauty of his life. As we understand God in the Orthodox Church, we understand God to be Trinity, one in essence but three in persons, and that reveals something profoundly significant about God, namely, that God is love, because love exists between these three persons of the Trinity in an endless infinite dance of love which animates the whole Universe, from the galaxies all the way down to the subatomic level. And this also reveals something about ourselves, namely, that we, being made in God’s image, are also called to love one another, just as the three persons of the Holy Trinity love one another. And yet, when we lose someone, although we take comfort in the hope of the Resurrection and the hope of eternal life, we still hurt because that relationship we had with that person has suddenly taken on a different form, and that adjustment is often quite difficult. However, one recent saint of the Orthodox Church, Saint Porphyrios, while he was preparing to pass from this life, said something so beautiful to his disciples – he said that although they might want to miss him, they must remember that now he was going to be closer to them than ever before. In this life, we are separated by distance, by space and time. But now, he is moving towards the Kingdom of Heaven, and Christ tells us that the Kingdom of Heaven is to be found inside of us, and that means now he is as close to us, as our own heart is. And in a time like this, I believe that is a great comfort.

Please forgive me if I’ve gone on too long. I usually try to keep my sermons concise, but of course, there’s so much I could share, and I also figured that there would be many lawyers here who wouldn’t be strangers to some long-windedness. But on a personal level, our family thanks you, for your heartfelt support. We have so much love for you all, and I know he did as well. And I simply ask you all to remember him in your prayers, and if you’re not a praying person, maybe just give it a try. Because I know he is already being lifted up by much prayer. And I’ll end by one last passage from the Gospel, where Christ tells us, “Verily, verily, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it dies it brings forth much fruit.” On one level, it reminds us that, as hard as it may be for some human beings to grasp, unless we die first, we cannot get to heaven. But on another level, as I look at everyone here, I am also comforted in knowing and seeing that, indeed, through his many mentorships to those in the law, to his beautiful familial relationships, he indeed has already brought forth much fruit. May his memory be eternal.

In the prophetic book of Isaiah, we are reminded by the Lord that "Heaven is My throne, and earth is the footstool of My feet" (Isaiah 66:1). As such, every place made by His hands can serve as His habitation or resting place. While it is true that God's grandeur and glory cannot be contained in any one place, we, as his humble creatures, feel the need to set apart and make sacred certain spaces to worship Him as is meet. The Orthodox Christians in Mayaland, Guatemala, in response to this inner call of the human spirit, made answer to the Lord's query, "What kind of house will you build for me?" Through much suffering and dislocation during the years of their bitter exile (1982-1994), when they were forcibly removed or fled from their homes during a brutal civil war, the only places of worship available to them were the mountains or jungles of Ixcan. They tell of a time when the priests would find them in their places of refuge and could only use tortillas to celebrate the Eucharist.

First visit to Mayaland on May 27, 2012

During my first visit to the faithful of Mayaland, Guatemala, on May 27, 2012, I experienced their faithfulness to the Lord through their humble, but heartfelt worship in a borrowed, but simple, shanty-like structure sheltering a compacted dirt floor. A flimsy sheet metal roof crowned their sacred space with a makeshift altar, set apart with local plants and flowers. Over the next 10 years, as the community grew, the desire for a spiritual home of their own increased. Another simple, wooden structure, not unlike the first, was erected on a hilly piece of land that Fr. Andres Giron had purchased on their behalf.



A simple wooden structure is their first house of worship.

Construction begins on the new church on January 30, 2019



Fast forward to January 30, 2019, with start-up funding from a generous donor, initial work began on the Holy Protection of the Theotokos Church. Incredibly, the villagers themselves do all the work, not for pay, but as volunteers. Now, after nearly three years, on a hilly site with a deep slope, through the raging COVID pandemic with its attendant restrictions and building material shortages, a beautiful Byzantine structure now sits.

The bitter history, with all its setbacks and disappointments, has given rise to a crown jewel of Orthodoxy in Mayaland. It now stands as a testament to the resilient faith of the Mayan believers. Not only did they break the hard rock of the mountain with determined hands to raise up a house of worship worthy of the Lord, they overcame the greater mountain of despair and rejection and loss that they felt as exiles in their war torn land.



A warm welcome with fireworks and confetti greets us on our approach.

With the glowing sun of a bright Thursday morning, on November 11, 2021, the feast day of the Great Martyr Minas, Fr. Evangelos Patá and I were warmly welcomed with fireworks and confetti by the faithful.

I arrived to open the Church for it's first Divine Liturgy, a wedding, three baptisms and many confes-

sions. What a glorious reception we were given. The heavens seemed to open up for us as we cut the ribbon to the entrance of the church and walked into its sacred space. "What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord." I believe that the Orthodox Christians of Mayaland with one resounding voice and much love gave their reply; "One that is worthy of You." Quoting again from Isaiah the Prophet, I believe these poignant words of the Lord fittingly declare His judgement on that which our Mayan brethren have wrought: "...and upon whom will I show respect, but to the humble and the peaceful and to him who trembles at My words" (Isaiah 66:2).

God willing, with the completion of all the interior finishes, we will invite Archbishop Athenagoras of Mexico to consecrate the Church in due time. Together, let us pray for the growth of Orthodoxy Christianity in Central America, which has found fertile ground in the land of the Mayas.



The ribbon cutting ceremony and prayer opens the door to a new phase of the mission.

After a blessing service, we cut the ribbon before entering the new church.



The church is made ready for a traditional wedding in Guatemala



Fr. Evangelos and I stand on the site of the future altar and iconstasis.



The new church from the road.



FIRST COME - FIRST SERVED

We are eliminating the old, turquoise banquet chairs from the Community Center. There are about 250 chairs left. If you are interested in 1 - 250 chairs, please contact John Klimko (412.609.1660) as soon as possible.

GAPA

Socrates-Daphne Lodge of Pittsburgh
cordially invites you to the

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER DANCE

Friday December 17, 2021

Cocktails and Appetizers at 6 PM
Festive Dinner Buffet at 7 PM

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Fort Couch Road

Dinner and Dance \$60 Dance only \$10

*Music by the
FILARAKIA
FEATURING SOTIRI TSOUREKIS
and a performance by
THE GRECIAN ODYSSEY DANCERS*

We have missed all of you and can't wait to ring in the holiday season. Join us with your dancing shoes and don't forget your keft—Opa!

Please R.S.V.P. by December 10th to
Rebecca Bertos 412-421-9427 or Aliki Andrews 412-833-4596
Joanne Melacrinos 412-563-4609

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR !



PICTURED ABOVE: HOLY CROSS PARISHIONER ARCHON PHILIP YAMALIS[†] WITH HIS ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW,
ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS AND METROPOLITAN SAVAS

PICTURED BELOW: HOLY CROSS PARISHIONER SERCIO MEETS HIS
ALL-HOLINESS ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW AND
ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS OF AMERICA



JOY Bonfire Gathering



ADVENT RETREAT

This event is free but does require a reservation for planning purposes. RSVP'S by Dec. 6th at: 201-704-6217 or frdavidvernak@verizon.net

Date: SAT. Dec. 11, 2021

Time: 10 AM TO 1PM

Surprising Saints: Holy Peoples' Struggles and Triumphs Can Inspire Our Lives



Matushka Valerie Zahorsky will talk about groups of Saints,

Highlights

Including:

- Unmercenarys and their courage
- Those in the Matthew genealogy
- Others less known (i.e. Esther, Daniel, Genevieve & Solomon)
- Some who made certain assumptions that turned out to be wrong (i.e. Samuel, David)

Highlights

- ◆ 10 am Prayer Service
- ◆ Followed by a light Lenten continental breakfast
- ◆ Presentation is from 11am to 1pm

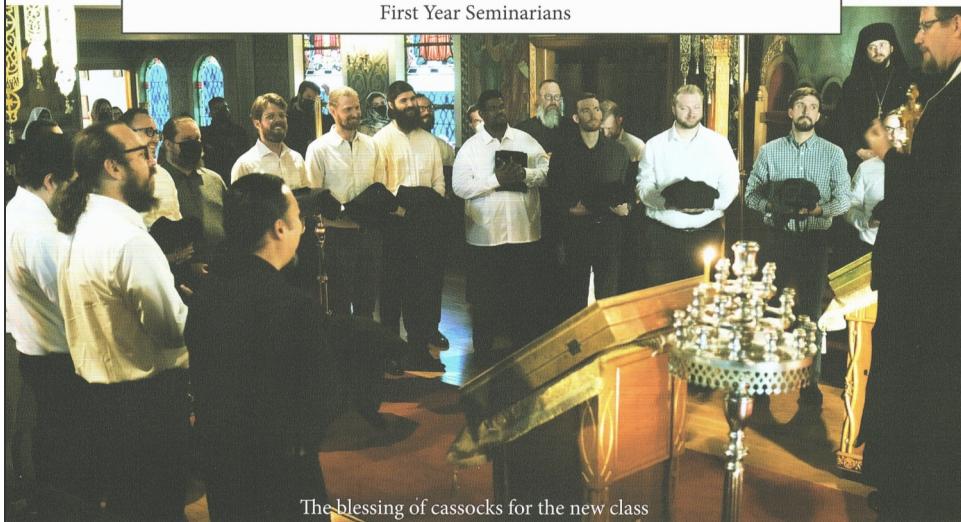
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH
601 BOONE AVE
CANONSBURG, PA 15317

Sponsored by Archdiocese of Pittsburgh
and Western Pennsylvania (OCA)

GREG FEDORCHAK, HUSBAND OF KRISTA (GALIE), IS A FIRST YEAR SEMINARIAN AT ST. TIKHON.

INCOMING CLASS

First Year Seminarians



The blessing of cassocks for the new class



Deacon Ambrose Powell
Claremont, NH

Jacob Zawatski
Wheaton, IL

Luke Wagner
Hayward, CA

Mark Solomon
Endicott, NY

Basali Matewh
Elmhurst, IL

Jonathan York
Chicago, IL

Micah Breland
Tacoma, WA

Mark Tuittinen
Williamstown, Australia

Benjamin Garcia
Phoenix, AZ

Jordan Kingery
Prescott, AZ

Michael Pak
Tacoma, WA

Timothy Paproski
Stratford, CT

Caleb Lewis
Berkeley, CA

Joshua Robertson
Milwaukie, OR

MK Chang
Tempe, AZ

Damian Kulp
Corvallis, OR

John Easo
Maharashtra, India

Nicola Nunu
Livonia, MI

Gregory Fedorchak
Lansing, NY

Kevin Pimpinelli
Ansonia, CT

Phillip Dage
Detroit, MI

DECEMBER 27 - 30

COLLEGE CONFERENCE 2021

EAST

ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE
BOLIVAR, PA

Be
transfigured.



College Conference is an annual four-day gathering of college students (ages 18 – 25) from all over the country to grow in fellowship, dive deeper into their faith through speakers and workshops around the conference theme, worship together, and serve!

Conference Theme: “Lord, It Is Good for Us to Be Here”

From Mt 17:1-8 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, “Arise, and do not be afraid.” When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

IMPORTANT! Scholarship Information

If you are applying for a need-based OCF Program Scholarship, please use the discount code **SCHOLARSHIP21** on the confirmation page before submitting payment. You will then be directed to pay your required \$65 deposit.

The scholarship application will be found in your confirmation email after registration and deposit payment. All scholarships will be reviewed and awarded based upon stated need and available funds on a rolling basis starting November 1, 2021 and concluding December 13, 2021. If you have any questions about the scholarship process, please email Peter Mansour at peter@ocf.net or Christina Andresen at christina@ocf.net.

Wondering about COVID?

One of the highest concerns for OCF is the continual safety and well-being of the students we serve. As we navigate COVID and plan College Conference, our team is aware that conditions and expert recommendations continue to change and evolve. As a result, we will announce our College Conference COVID policy closer to the event, on December 6. We will continue to monitor the situation and consult with medical professionals as we establish guidelines for attendees.

[College Conference | Orthodox Christian Fellowship \(ocf.net\)](http://College Conference | Orthodox Christian Fellowship (ocf.net))



A GOOD WORD — Λόγον Αγαθόν

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

VOLUME 5 NO. 7 (ISSUE 41) — NOVEMBER 2021



STRONG FINISH & GREAT YEAR AHEAD

Across the parishes of our Metropolis, Stewardship Sundays will be taking place in November and December. Here are some tips to finishing 2021 on a high note and setting up your parish stewardship for success in 2022:

- Review and fulfill your current year stewardship pledge; contact your parish office if you are unsure of the status of your pledge
- Prayerfully consider increasing your 2022 offering; are you giving sacrificially and not treating your support of your parish as just another bill
- Join your parish in prayer – in person, at home or in your heart – for every city, country and the world for the continued delivery from the peril of the coronavirus

Most of all, communicate with and within your parish. Talk about the ministries of your parish – how your it is caring for the least of its brothers and sisters; tell parishioners about its religious education efforts and activities that are strengthening your community.

Finally, for 2022 the stewardship theme is "Our Church,

Our
Spiritual
Home." The past two calendar years have been stressful



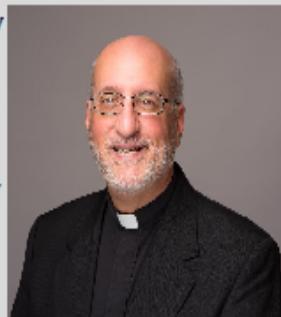
and worrisome for us all. Our churches are our homes where God the Father, His Son, the Holy Spirit and the Panagia welcome us with open arms. Let's do the same for our brothers and sisters in Christ as stewards of the Holy Orthodox faith.

IN THIS ISSUE...

- Metropolis Couples Retreats
- 2022 Stewardship Resources
- Day of Service 2022
- Fully Human Ministry for those with Special Needs
- Save the Date—Metropolis Events 2021-2022

COPLES RETREAT WITH FR. GOUSSETIS

On Nov. 6 at Holy Cross GOC in Pittsburgh, the first of four Couples Retreat co-hosted by the Metropolis Family Ministry Committee and the GOA Center for Family Care.



The theme of the event, which will be hosted by Fr. Alexander Goussetis, is "Renewal Day-by-Day: Enlivening Our Marriage Commitment."

Fr. Alex, host of the Family Matters podcast on Ancient Faith, offers video clips, couples exercises and the wisdom of church saints on the purpose of marriage – all in a joyful, interactive setting.

The schedule of these events is as follows (all are 9 AM to 2 PM EST):

- Nov. 6 – Holy Cross, Pittsburgh, PA (register at [TINYURL.COM/ST2U8R92](https://tinyurl.com/ST2U8R92))
- Nov. 13 – St. Paul, North Royalton, OH (register at [TINYURL.COM/2J4AANVH](https://tinyurl.com/2J4AANVH))
- Feb. 19 – Holy Trinity, Pittsburgh, PA
- Mar. 19 – Annunciation, Columbus, OH



"This retreat is for married couples but it's also for people who are dating or considering marriage," said Fr. Goussetis. "It's an interactive day, not solely a lecture. Couples will come away having learned a lot about their relationships and how those relationships glorify God."

SAVE THE DATE

Day of

Gewicd

March 12/13, 2022

Presented By:



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT
MINISTRIES

Metropolis of Pittsburgh



Philoptochos

SAVE THE DATE!

GOYA Fall Retreat:
Nov 19-21

St. Sava's Open House
& Vespers: Dec 4

Priests-Presidents-
Treasurers Meeting
Jan 22, 2022

Day of Service
Mar 12-13

St. Photios Awards
Banquet Apr 30

2022 Metropolis
Assembly Sep 24

FULLY HUMAN MINISTRY

The GOA Center for Family Care's Fully Human ministry for families with disabilities is launching a pilot virtual support group program. To start, 5 facilitators trained by Fr. Alex Goussetis, will guide small groups of 8 total as a way of fostering a sense of solidarity for families who often become isolated because of medical/emotional/social challenges.

You can fill out the virtual peer group survey here:
<https://bit.ly/virtual-peer-groups-survey>



fully human

Therefore comfort each other... -1 Thessalonians 5:11

Fully Human is launching a pilot program of 5 virtual peer groups for families and individuals with disabilities, led by trained facilitators. These groups aim to provide faith-based encouragement, peer support, and solidarity. Small group size is ideally 8 total; thus, there are currently 35 openings. If interested, fill out the questionnaire below. We are filling the groups on a first come/first serve basis, so don't delay!

<https://bit.ly/virtual-peer-groups-survey>

SUPPORT HIS EMINENCE AND OUR METROPOLIS MINISTRIES: It costs approximately \$1,000 per day to operate our Metropolis—including Metropolitan Sava's archpastoral visitations, preparations for Summer Camp and GOYA retreats, our vital registry, and more. Please consider sponsoring a day in the life of the Metropolis:

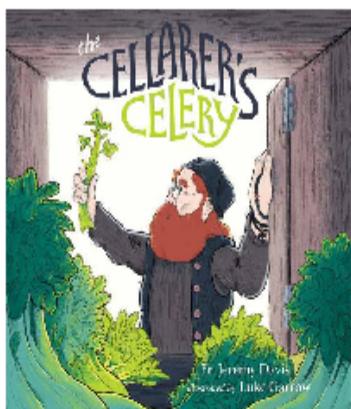
<https://pittsburgh.goarch.org/support>



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232 - <http://pittsburgh.goarch.org> - info@pittsburgh.goarch.org
412-621-5529 (Main) - 412-465-0460 (Camp) - 412-621-8543 (Youth) - 412-621-1522 (Fax)

HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX BOOKSTORE FEATURED BOOKS OF THE MONTH



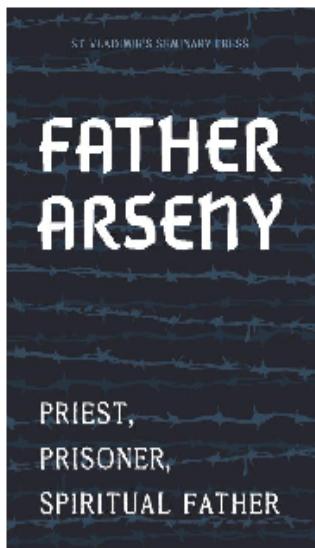
THE CELLARER'S CELERY

In a remote canyon, Saint Martin's monks seek the Lord with all their hearts. Among them is the Cellarer, whose not-so-secret love of celery helps him remember what it means to be a monk. When misfortune strikes, his friendship with the Sower lifts these spiritual brothers above momentary hardship to find joy in God. Written in exuberant verse, this endearing and whimsical tale hides a wealth of meaning. Smile at its rhymes, bounce to its rhythm, and rejoice in the blessings of Christian brotherhood. Ages 5 to 10 years.

FATHER ARSENY:

PRIEST, PRISONER, SPIRITUAL FATHER

It is one of the great mysteries of life that in atmospheres of the harshest cruelty, a certain few not only survive but emerge as beacons of light and life. Father Arseny, former scholar of church art, became Prisoner No. 18736 in the brutal "special sector" of the Soviet prison camp system. In the darkness of systematic degradation of body and soul, he shone with the light of Christ's peace and compassion. His sights set on God and his life grounded in the Church, Father Arseny lived by injunction to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). This newly updated edition contains freshly edited text, a new cover, and a new foreword by Peter Bouteneff.



Our Holy Cross Orthodox Bookstore is located in the carpeted area of the Community Center. Please be sure to stop by any Sunday following Divine Liturgy. We offer a great selection of Orthodox Greeting Cards and Books for all ages. For additional information, please contact Mary Portellos at 724-941-8699 or maryportellos@comcast.net

Order your poinsettia for the church

- ♥ *in memory of* or
- ♥ *in honor of* or
- ♥ *for the health of*

a loved one by returning the form below with your payment.

Plants are \$15 each.

Please order by Friday, December 11.

Order a poinsettia to beautify our church for Christmas.

Choose one

In Honor of _____

For the health of _____

In memory of _____

From _____

\$ 15 per plant

Please return to church office by

Monday, December 13

Total # of plants requested _____



HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
123 CULKESON ROAD
PITTSBURGH, PA 15228

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2412
Pittsburgh, PA

Friday, December 24

Christmas Eve 5pm

Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

Saturday, December 25

Christmas

8:00am Matins/9:30am Div Liturgy

