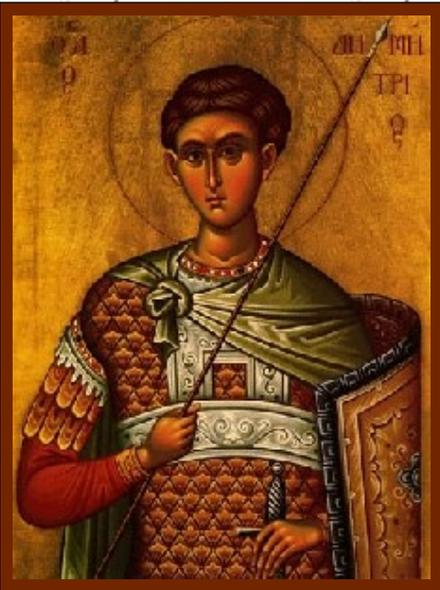


Christian Light

October 2021 — Vol. 33



Fr. Philip's October Message

God is Not a Punisher in the Sky!

We have been brought up with a very superficial, simplistic and wrong idea of God. While the Gospel says that “God is love,” we often see him as a punisher who is out to get us. This is even what we teach our children in Sunday School when we try to explain the first chapters of Genesis. We teach them that everything was perfect in “Paradise” but once the human being sinned God himself sent down a whole bunch of punishments that have affected all of humanity ever since. It turns out that the Bible is so much more profound than that and that what seems like a simple story actually points to much greater things. In fact, all of the Old Testament and especially the book of Genesis, is actually pointing to the ultimate fulfillment of all things in Christ and therefore can only be understood in the light of Christ. This can be illustrated by a careful look at the figure of Eve and childbirth. By looking at the original languages and the passages referring to this subject, we find

how profound the Bible is and can realize how easily it's real message actually goes right over our head!

The simplistic interpretation of what happens to Eve in chapter two and three of Genesis is a great example of how we usually just don't understand what the Bible is actually saying. The commonplace interpretation is that “after” the “fall” she is punished by God who sends down pain in childbirth: “To the woman he said in **pain** you shall bring forth children” (Gen. 3:16). It turns out that the original language does not say this at all and a wrong interpretation has been imposed and perpetuated for generations through a wrong translation. The passage actually says: “To the woman he said in **sorrow/sadness** you shall bring forth children.” It is very significant that the word *λύπη*, which can only be translated as “sadness” is used here, rather than *όδύνη*, which is translated as physical pain. It makes sense that physical pain is NOT referred to here because such physical pain, as well as pleasure, is a given of physical life connected with the laws of nature and these natural phenomena have nothing to do with sin. In fact, without them, we could not survive long as physical, created beings. So this passage, for some reason, is clearly referring to

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Orthros 8 A.M. and Divine Liturgy 9:30 A.M.

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psychological sadness rather than physical pain. Why would a woman have “sadness” at the happy event of the birth of a child? The physical pain soon subsides and is forgotten but the “sadness” referred to here is a profound and universal human sentiment that comes from the fact that everyone who is born in fact dies, and therefore there is an underlying existential sadness or void throughout our life. This is a universal human condition regardless of whether we are male or female and therefore it is not connected with the literal act of childbirth. As long as we don’t really know how the riddle of death will be resolved we live with this subconscious angst throughout our life since death, as the “ultimate enemy” comes no matter what we do. This frustrating enigma is only resolved in Christ and that’s why the use of “sadness” rather than “pain” in this Genesis passage is so profound.

The Gospel of John refers back to this Genesis passage in order to resolve the riddle. In this Gospel, before his passion Christ gives a very long and enigmatic discourse which explains the meaning of the Cross. In this discourse, out of the blue, we hear the following words which seem out of place but are clearly referring back to the existential sadness of Genesis and forward to the ultimate victory of the Cross: *“When the woman is in labor, she has **sorrow** because her hour has come, but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish for joy that a **human being** has been born into the world”* (John 16:21). Note that here the same word that is used in Genesis “λύπη” - “sorrow” is used here on purpose to connect with the sorrow of Genesis, and, at least here, (thankfully) it is translated correctly in most (but not all!) English editions of the Bible! *“Her hour”* that *“has come”* actually refers to the hour of the Cross. Note also that the child born is referred to as a *“human being”* (again wrongly translated in English as “man”). This is a reference to the true human being who is Christ on his way to the cross as Pilate exclaimed when he saw Christ right before His crucifixion, not knowing that he had uttered a great truth: *“Behold the **human being**”* (John 19:5). This little

passage, therefore, placed right before the passion, is not referring merely to childbirth as a simple illustration of sadness turned to joy. Rather it is a parable referring to the general sadness caused by the riddle of death which is resolved only on the Cross. The existential sadness of our life when we are unaware of the solution offered by the cross turns to joy only when the truth of the cross is revealed to us. As Christ told the disciples: *"So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you"* (John 16:22). For in the cross death is conquered and we are born as *true human beings* like Christ who cannot die. In Genesis 4:1 when Eve gave birth to Cain she said *"I have acquired a human being through God"* (this is translated wrongly as "man" in most English translations), but he was a murderer and later also died. So Eve, who was called *"life"* (Genesis 3:20) was supposed to be the mother of "all the living" but she really wasn't - she was merely a poor sketch of what was to come later. The real "mother of the living" is not Eve who symbolically came from the side of Adam but didn't give birth to living beings, rather, the real "Eve," the real *"mother of the living,"* is the Church, the true bride of Christ (who is the true Adam) who came out of his side when he was on the cross in the form of blood and water (Eucharist = Church). After the passion the Church can finally give birth to real human beings who live forever, human beings that are born through baptism and through the laying of their life for others like Christ. For this reason at Holy Friday vespers, once the crucifixion has taken place, the prophecy of Isaiah is read referring to the true mother of the living, the Church who has been waiting from the beginning of time but, finally, after the passion can begin giving birth to real human beings that live forever: *"Rejoice o barren one! You who did not bear, break forth and shout, you who were not in pain of labor! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband!"* (Isaiah 54:1). Note that this time the original Greek does not use the word *λύπη* - "sorrow," but *όδύνη* - physical pain, referring to the fact that what is involved here is a true birth. Once Christ opened the way through the passion the Church, through baptism, can give birth to real human beings who follow the way of Christ and become witnesses-martyrs to this new life that kills death through death. This is a "birth" that involves real struggle and pain and is not a mere psychological "sorrow." The taking on of this kind of life allows us to become true human beings: the pain leads to the resurrection and, as Christ said, *"no one will take your joy from you."*

May we live out the joy of this cross-carrying life that allows us to be born as never-dying children of our mother the Church and of our Father God, who certainly is not a punisher in the sky!



Όκτωβριανό Μηνιαίο Μήνυμα π. Φιλίππου

Ο Θεός δέν είναι ένας έπουράνιος τιμωρός!

Έχουμε ανατραφεϊ με μία άπλοϊκή και λανθασμένη αντίληψη για τόν Θεό. Ένω τόν Εύαγγέλιο λέει ότι ό Θεός “άγάπη έστί,” συχνά τόν βλέπουμε σαν έναν μπαμπούλα που θέλει νά μάς τιμωρήσει. Αυτό συνήθως διδάσκουμε και στα παιδιά μας στό κατηχητικό στίς έκκλησίες μας όταν προσπαθοΰμε νά εξηγήσουμε τά πρῶτα κεφάλαια τής Γενέσεως στό Βίβλο. Διδάσκουμε δηλαδή ότι όλα ήταν τέλεια στό “παράδεισο,” αλλά, από τή στιγμή που άμάρτησε ό άνθρωπος, ό Θεός ό ίδιος έστειλε στόν άνθρωπο τιμωρίες που έχουν συνέπειες για όλους τούς μετέπειτα ανθρώπους μέχρι και σήμερα. Στην πραγματικότητα ή Βίβλος είναι πολύ πιο έκλεπτυσμένη και πάει πολύ πιο βαθιά από τέτοιες έπιπόλαιες έρμηνείες: αυτό που φαίνεται έδῶ σαν μία άπλή ιστοριούλα αναφέρεται τελικά σε μεγαλύτερα νοήματα. Συνήθως δέν καταλαβαίνουμε ότι όλη ή Παλαιά Διαθήκη, και ιδίως τόν βιβλίό τής Γενέσεως, αναφέρεται στην τελική ολοκλήρωση όλων τών πραγμάτων έν Χριστῶ, και όλη ή Αγία Γραφή μπορεί νά κατανοηθεϊ μόνον κάτω από τόν φῶς τοΰ Χριστοΰ. Αυτό μπορεί νά γίνει σαφές με μία σύντομη αναφορά στην μορφή τής Εΰας, και τόν τρόπο με τόν όποιο γεννά παιδιά σύμφωνα με τή διήγηση. Όταν ανατρέχουμε στό πρωτότυπο κείμενο ανακαλύπτουμε πράγματι πόσο βαθύ είναι τόν μήνυμα που θέλει νά έπικοινωνήσει και πόσο εύκολα μπορούμε νά είμαστε έντελῶς άνυποψίαστοι στό μήνυμα αυτό.

Συνήθως νομίζουμε ότι μετά τήν “πτῶση” ό Θεός “τιμωρεϊ” τόν άνθρωπο, “στέλνει,” παραδείγματος χάριν, πόνο στή διαδικασία τής γέννας. Στα νέα Έλληνικά τόν σχετικό χωρίο συνήθως έχει ως έξής: “...στή γυναίκα είπε:’με **πόνους** θά γεννάς τά παιδιά σου” (Γένεσις 3:16). Τόν πρωτότυπο κείμενο όμως δέν λέει αυτό, αντίθετα λέει: “...Και τῆ γυναικί είπε....έν **λύπαις** τέξη τέκνα.” Τόν πῶς οι μοντέρνες μεταφράσεις τής Βίβλου, άκόμη και στα νέα Έλληνικά, μεταφράζουν τήν “λύπη” ως “πόνος” είναι άνεξήγητο και μάλλον έπιβλήθηκε σταδιακά

άπό άδράνεια λόγω τής λανθασμένης αντίληψης που έπικράτησε ότι ό Θεός είναι τιμωρός. Πρέπει νά τονιστεϊ ότι ό ὅρος “λύπη” στό πρωτότυπο κείμενο σημαίνει κάτι πολύ διαφορετικό. Η λέξη “λύπη” σημαίνει μία ψυχολογική κατάσταση στενοχώριας και όχι σωματικό “πόνος” που θά άποτυπωνόταν στόν ὅρο “όδύνη”. Η λανθασμένη αυτή μετάφραση που έπικράτησε σε όλες τις μοντέρνες γλώσσες έχει διαιωνίσει μία λανθασμένη έρμηνεία για τόν νόημα τοΰ χωρίου τούτου. Αν τόν σκεφτεϊ καλά κανείς είναι λογικό ότι τόν πρωτότυπο κείμενο δέν αναφέρεται σε σωματικό πόνο άφοΰ ό πόνος μαζί με τήν ήδονή είναι έγγενή στοιχεϊα τής σωματικής ζωής συνυφασμένα με τούς φυσικούς νόμους. Δέν συνδέονται δηλαδή καθόλου με τήν έννοια τής άμαρτίας, μάλιστα ως κτιστά όντα δέν θά μπορούσαμε καν νά έπιβιώσουμε χωρίς τούς περιορισμούς και τις πληροφορίες που μάς παρέχουν για τόν γύρω μας περιβάλλον ό πόνος και ή ήδονή. Όποτε τόν κείμενο, για κάποιον λόγο σαφῶς αναφέρεται στή ψυχολογική κατάσταση τής λύπης και όχι στόν σωματικό πόνο. Και όντως ό σωματικός πόνος υποχωρεϊ και ξεχνιέται, ένῶ ή λύπη ή όποια αναφέρεται έδῶ είναι συνεχής και αυτό συμβαίνει γιατί πάει πιο βαθιά και συνδέεται με τόν κοινό ύπαρξιακό ανθρώπινο κενόν που προκαλεϊται από τόν γεγονός ότι όλοι οι άνθρωποι που γεννιοΰνται πεθαίνουν. Η μυρωδιά αυτή τής θανατίλας είναι κοινό ανθρώπινο φαινόμενο - ή εικόνα τής μητέρας που θλίβεται είναι σύμβολο για όλη τήν ανθρωπότητα. Όσο δηλαδή δέν ξέρουμε πῶς λύνεται τόν αίνιγμα τοΰ θανάτου, βιώνουμε ένα συνεχές ύποσυνείδητο κενόν και άγχος, έφ’όσον ό “έσχατος έχθρός” έρχεται ανεξάρτητα από τόν τι κάνουμε έμεις. Τόν πρόβλημα τοΰ θανάτου λύνεται μόνον έν Χριστῶ και γι’αυτό ή χρήση τής λέξεως “λύπη,” και όχι “όδύνη” στή διήγηση τής Γενέσεως είναι ή κατάλληλη και τόσο γεμάτη με νόημα.

Τόν Κατά Ιωάννην Εύαγγέλιον παραπέμπει σ’αυτό τόν χωρίο τής Γενέσεως για νά λύσει τόν πρόβλημα. Στο Εύαγγέλιο αυτό, πριν από τόν πάθος Τοΰ ό Χριστός βγάξει ένα μεγάλο λόγο που εξηγεί με σύμβολα τόν νόημα τοΰ Σταυροΰ. Μέσα στό λόγο αυτό, στα καλά καθούμενα, παρεμβάλλεται τόν έξής χωρίο που παραπέμπει ταυτόχρονα πίσω στην ύπαρξιακή λύπη τής Γενέσεως και μπροστά στην νίκη τοΰ

Σταυροῦ: “*Ἡ γυνὴ ὅταν τίκτη λύπην ἔχει, ὅτι ἤλθεν ἡ ὥρα αὐτῆς, ὅταν δὲ γεννήσῃ τὸ παιδίον, οὐκέτι μνημονεύει τῆς θλίψεως διὰ τὴν χαρὰν ὅτι ἐγεννήθη ἄνθρωπος εἰς τὸν κόσμον.*” Καὶ συνεχίζει μετὰ τὴν ἐξήγηση τῆς παραβολῆς: “*Καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν νῦν μὲν λύπην ἔχετε, πάλιν δὲ ὄψομαι ὑμᾶς, καὶ χαρήσεται ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία, καὶ τὴν χαρὰν ὑμῶν οὐδεὶς αἴρει ὑμῶν.*”

Νὰ σημειώσουμε ὅτι, τουλάχιστον σ’αὐτὸ τὸ χωρίο, τὸ πρωτότυπο “λύπη” συνήθως μεταφράζεται σωστὰ στὶς νέες γλῶσσες καὶ σαφῶς παραπέμπει πίσω στὴ λύπη τῆς διηγῆσεως τῆς Γενέσεως. Νὰ ποῦμε ἐπὶ πλέον ὅτι τὸ ὅταν “ἤλθεν ἡ ὥρα αὐτῆς” παραπέμπει μπροστὰ στὴν ὥρα τοῦ Σταυροῦ, καὶ ὅτι τὸ “παιδίον” ποὺ γεννιέται ἀναφέρεται ἀμέσως μετὰ ὡς “ἄνθρωπος.” Ὁ ὅρος “ἄνθρωπος ἀναφέρεται στὸν Χριστὸ καὶ στοὺς ἀνθρώπους ποὺ ἀκολουθοῦν τὸν Χριστό: ὁ μόνος γνήσιος ἄνθρωπος εἶναι ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ αὐτοὶ ποὺ ἀκολουθοῦν τὴν ὁδὸ Του καὶ βαδίζουν πρὸς τὸ Σταυρό, ὅπως - ἀθελά του - ἀναγνώρισε ὁ Πιλάτος: “*Ἴδου ὁ ἄνθρωπος*” (Ἰωάνν. 19:5). Ὅποτε τὸ χωρίο αὐτὸ ποὺ βρίσκεται πρὶν τὸ πάθος εἶναι μία παραβολὴ ποὺ ἀναφέρεται στὴν γενικὴ ὑπαρξιακὴ λύπη ποὺ λύνεται μόνο στὸν σταυρό, στὸν ὁποῖο σταυρὸ μπορούμε νὰ γεννηθοῦμε πιά ὄχι γιὰ νὰ πεθάνουμε, ἀλλὰ ὡς γνήσιοι “ἄνθρωποι” ποὺ δὲν πεθαίνουν ποτὲ ὅπως ὁ Χριστός. Στὴ Γένεση 4:1 ὅταν ἡ Εὐὰ γέννησε τὸν Κάϊν εἶπε “*ἔκτησάμην ἄνθρωπον διὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ,*” ἀλλὰ αὐτὸς ἦταν δολοφόνος καὶ πέθανε. Ἐπομένως, ἡ Εὐὰ, ἡ ὁποία ὀνομάστηκε “ζωή” (Γεν. 3:20), διότι ἐπρόκειτο νὰ εἶναι “*μήτηρ πάντων τῶν ζώντων*”, στὴν πραγματικότητα γεννᾷ παιδιά ποὺ πεθαίνουν. Ἀπεδείχθη ὅτι ἡ Εὐὰ δὲν ἦταν αὐτὸ ποὺ λέει τὸ ὄνομά της, ἦταν ἀπλῶς μία προτύπωση, ἕνας τύπος ποὺ παραπέμπει στὴν ἀληθινὴ μητέρα “*πάντων τῶν ζώντων*” ποὺ στὴν πραγματικότητα εἶναι ἡ Ἐκκλησία. Ἡ ἀληθινὴ μητέρα δηλαδή δὲν εἶναι αὐτὴ ποὺ συμβολικὰ βγῆκε ἀπὸ τὴν πλευρὰ τοῦ Ἀδάμ σύμφωνα μετὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπομορφικὴ διήγηση τῆς Γενέσεως, ἀλλὰ αὐτὴ ποὺ στὴν πραγματικότητα βγῆκε ἀπὸ τὴν πλευρὰ τοῦ νέου Ἀδάμ, δηλαδή τοῦ Χριστοῦ, στὸν Σταυρὸ ὡς “*αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ*” (Εὐχαριστία = Ἐκκλησία). Αὐτὴ εἶναι ἡ πραγματικὴ νύφη τοῦ πραγματικοῦ Ἀδάμ καὶ ἔτσι εἶναι καὶ ἡ πραγματικὴ μητέρα τῶν ζώντων. Μετὰ τὸ πάθος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ Ἐκκλησία, ποὺ προυπήρχε καὶ “*περίμενε*”, ἐπὶ τέλος μπορούσε νὰ γεννήσῃ ζωντανούς ἀνθρώπους διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ θυσιαστικῆς ζωῆς στὴν ὁποία τὸ βάπτισμα ὁδηγεῖ. Γι’αὐτὸν τὸν λόγο, τὴν Μεγάλῃ Παρασκευῇ στὸν ἑσπερινὸ τῆς Ἀποκαθλώσεως, ὅταν πιά ἔχει γίνῃ τὸ πάθος, ξαφνικὰ διαβάζεται ἡ προφητεία τοῦ Ἡσαΐα ποὺ ἀναφέρεται στὴν πραγματικὴ μητέρα τῶν ζώντων, τὴν Ἐκκλησία, ἡ ὁποία ἐπὶ τέλος μπορεῖ νὰ γεννήσῃ γνήσιους ἀνθρώπους ποὺ δὲν πεθαίνουν: “*Εὐφράνθητι στεῖρα, ἡ οὐ τίκτουσα, ῥῆξον καὶ βόησον ἢ οὐκ ὠδίνουσα, ὅτι πολλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐρήμου μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς ἐχούσης τὸν ἄνδρα*” (Ἡσαΐας 54:1). Αὐτὴν τὴν φορὰ τὸ πρωτότυπο κείμενο δὲν χρησιμοποιεῖ τὴν λέξη “λύπη” ὅπως στὰ ἄλλα χωρία ποὺ εἶδαμε, μᾶλλον χρησιμοποιεῖται ὁ ὅρος “ὀδύνη” (σωματικὸς πόνος) διότι ἐδῶ πρόκειται γιὰ ἀληθινὴ γέννα καὶ ὄχι μία κοινὴ ἀνθρώπινη ψυχολογικὴ κατάσταση. Διὰ τοῦ Σταυροῦ ἄνοιξε ὁ δρόμος νὰ γεννιοῦνται ἀληθινοὶ ἄνθρωποι ποὺ “*ἐνδύονται*” τὸν Χριστὸ στὸ βάπτισμα καὶ μαρτυροῦν γιὰ τὴν καινὴ αὐτὴ ζωὴ σηκώνοντας τὸ προσωπικὸ τους σταυρό. Ἔτσι γίνονται γνήσιοι ἄνθρωποι, οἱ ὁποῖοι διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ πιά ἔχουν σκοτώσει τὸν θάνατο διὰ τοῦ θανάτου ἐν Χριστῷ - ἡ ὁδὸς αὐτὴ ἔχει ὀδύνη ἀλλὰ ὁδηγεῖ σὲ γέννα: ὁδηγεῖ σὲ ζωὴ καὶ ἀνάσταση!

Ἄς ἀναλάβουμε καὶ ἐμεῖς τὶς ὑποσχέσεις ποὺ κάναμε στὴ βάπτισή μας νὰ ἀκολουθοῦμε τὸ Χριστὸ καὶ ἔτσι νὰ γίνουμε γνήσια παιδιά τῆς μητέρας μας τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, καὶ γιοὶ καὶ θυγατέρες τοῦ πατέρα μας - τοῦ Θεοῦ δηλαδή - ὁ ὁποῖος ὅπωςδήποτε δὲν εἶναι ἕνας μεγάλος τιμωρὸς στὸν οὐρανὸ ἀλλὰ ὁ σωτὴρας ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου!



October 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 2nd SUNDAY OF LUKE 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Sunday School	4	5	6 ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE 8am Orthros 9am Divine Liturgy 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	7	8	9
10 3rd SUNDAY OF LUKE 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy	11 COLUMBUS DAY Church Office Closed	12	13 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	14	15	16
17 SUNDAY OF THE 7th ECUMENICAL COUNCIL 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Sunday School	18 ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST 8am Orthros 9am Divine Liturgy 7 to 8:30pm Adult Class Seminar Via Zoom	19	20 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	21	22	23
24 6th SUNDAY OF LUKE 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Sunday School	25 7 to 8:30pm Adult Class Seminar Via Zoom	26 ST. DEMETRIOS THE MYRRH-STREAMER 8am Orthros 9am Divine Liturgy	27 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	28 OXI DAY 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	29	30
31 5th SUNDAY OF LUKE 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy OXI Day Doxology and Greek School Program Sunday School						

SOPHOCLES' MASTERPIECE "OEDIPUS THE KING"

OEDIPUS REX
OEDIPUS THE KING



SOPHOCLES
ΣΟΦΟΚΛΗΣ

Adult Class Seminar

Mondays via Zoom
7 to 8:30pm

Beginning on Monday
October 18th
(ending in December)

As part of our introduction to Greek civilization, this Fall we will continue our study in Greek tragedy with the reading of Sophocles' classic masterpiece, "Oedipus the King" – Due to the continuation of the pandemic, classes will be conducted online via Zoom.

If interested in joining the class or for more information, please call
John Lyssikatos 401-728-4452 (after October 8th)

Philoptochos Greek Pastry Trays and Frozen Trays For the Holidays

Place your orders early. Pre-Orders Only. Cut-Off date is November 6th. Quantities limited.

FROZEN TRAYS: \$20 Each Pan with Cooking Instructions Included

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PASTRY TRAYS: \$15 Each — No Substitutions — 8 Pieces of Pastry
2 Baklava, 2 Kourambiedes, 2 Koulourakia, 2 Almond Rolls

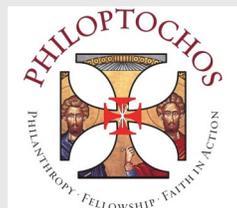
PICK-UP DAYS

Saturday, November 20th from 10am to 1pm

Sunday, November 21st after Church

TO PLACE YOUR ORDER:

Please call Elaine Sioras at 401-617-7950 or email ElaineSioras@gmail.com. A confirmation phone call or email will be provided to confirm your order has been received. Acceptable forms of payment are cash or checks made payable to St. Barbara Philoptochos Society.



Sunday School

The 2021-2022 school year for Sunday School began on Sunday, September 19th, with registration and the first day of classes. On Sunday, September 26th, there was an Hagiasmos church service during which the students, parents and teachers were blessed. The children also received some words of support from Fr. Philip. Classes took place after church.



We welcome back all of our returning students, and we are happy to have some new students. We are blessed to have Fr. Philip as our spiritual leader for our Sunday School program. We also welcome back our teachers, Stavroula Papavasiliou (PreK/Kindergarten), Stephanie Dokos and Charikleia Campos (1st/2nd Grade), and Sophia Augoustakis (3rd/4th Grade). We are looking forward to having a seminarian who will be the teacher for the 5th/6th Grade students.

Registration will continue prior to the start of classes on Sunday, October 3rd.

Greek School

The 2021-2022 school year for Greek School began on September 26th with an Hagiasmos church service during which the students, parents and teachers were blessed. They also received some words of support from Fr. Philip. Classes will be held on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 to 6pm. Registration and enrollment will continue. We welcome back our returning students and some new students. We wish all the students and their families a successful school year, and we look forward to being together throughout the year.

Parishioners will get their first look at the work of the Greek School students on Sunday, October 31st, at which time there will be a Doxology and a very brief "OXI Day" program which will take place in Church. The students, the parents and Fr. Philip welcome back our Principal, Panagiota Vastis, and teachers, Sophia Augoustakis and Stavroula Papavasiliou. We hope our teachers have great success this school year.



Let Us Help Our Endowment Fund Grow

As church membership dwindles in many places while ever-growing maintenance fees rise, many parishes are establishing endowment funds to meet their needs and secure their financial survival. Here at Assumption in Pawtucket, thanks to the foresight and vision of past parishioners and parish councils, we are blessed because we already established such an endowment fund many years ago.

We are also blessed here at Assumption in that, having established our Endowment Fund, many parishioners generously contributed to it in the past and to this day. Indeed, some parishioners were even kind enough to endow sizable funds through their wills to our community in order to guarantee the continuity of our beloved parish. We are where we are today thanks to such people and we should never let their generosity be forgotten.

Our Endowment Fund's value is \$847,603.71 as of September 29, 2021. As our community's By-Laws stipulate, half of our Endowment Fund's annual return goes towards the budget expenses of our community and the other half is re-invested.

In realizing the needs of our community and sharing the great vision of these benefactors, it behooves us to imitate them and to make whatever contribution we can – small or great – to continue their tradition and to help the fund grow. In this way we will secure the future of our beloved Assumption Church. For this purpose, each month we will include this new column dedicated to the Endowment Fund in our monthly newsletter. We will be posting the current value of the fund to keep you abreast regarding its growth and we will list the names of past parishioners as well as new donors who contribute to the fund in memory of loved ones. For the sake of confidentiality, names will be included but not the monetary amounts.

Let us all honor our benefactors by imitating them, sharing in their dreams for the future and by fostering with them the continuation of our church into perpetuity.

Recent Donations to the Endowment Fund

Mrs. Mary Samaras
In Honor of Denise Panichas' Birthday

Mr. Emanuel Terezakis
In Memory of Maria Lyssikatos

John C. Zervos and Eleni T. Pappas Zervos
In Honor of John Lyssikatos for his
excellent and caring teaching of
the online Greek Philosophy Classes

Consider including the Endowment Fund in your will and be a supporting pillar to secure the Assumption's survival in perpetuity.

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Stewardship Prayer

In the name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen. Lord Jesus Christ our God, accept our offerings as You have accepted the gifts of Your people throughout the ages. We offer these gifts to Your glory, for the support of the ministries of Your Holy Church, for the alleviation of suffering and hunger, and for the proclamation of Your Gospel to the whole world. Grant us Your blessing, Lord our Savior, that we may always be faithful stewards, continuing to share the gifts you have given us, by the power of Your grace, mercy and love. May Your name be glorified forever. Amen

Cemetery Fund

Assumption Church is in the process of having work performed by landscapers on our grounds at Walnut Hill Cemetery on Armistice Boulevard in Pawtucket. It would be greatly appreciated if you would consider making a donation to help with the upkeep and beautification of the grounds where so many of our deceased loved ones are buried. If you have not already done so, please contribute to the Cemetery Fund so that completion of the work can take place. Thank you to those parishioners who have already made donations as well as to the following parishioner for a recent donation:

Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Mudge



Visit the homepage of our
Assumption Church website:

<https://www.assumptionri.org/>

Click "**VIRTUAL CANDLE**" to light a glass candle
Click "**VIRTUAL TRAY**" to make an offering

Thank you for your continued support!!!





AHEPA Family Remembers 9/11

Supreme President Jimmy Kokotas, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y., has issued the following statement on the 20th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks:



“Today, on the solemn twentieth anniversary of September 11th, we remember the nearly 3,000 people, including 39 Greek Americans, who lost their lives in the terrorist attacks against the United States. We will never forget their sacrifice and our thoughts and prayers will always be with them and their families. Their memories will be eternal.” “In times of tragedy, there are always individuals, whether they are emergency first responders or ordinary, everyday civilians, who are the first to respond. We salute and thank them for their brave acts of heroism on that fateful day in American history.”

**Supreme President Kokotas & Chairman Karacostas, PSP
in front of an illuminated St. Nicholas at ground zero in NY**

“Soon, the only House of Worship destroyed on that fateful day in American history, will rise again. Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine at World Trade Center will be a beacon for peace and a harbor for reflection for all. Proudly, the AHEPA family contributed to this most worthy endeavor to rebuild Saint Nicholas, and we look forward to its imminent opening.” “Additionally, today is a National Day of Service and Remembrance. AHEPA encourages the community to not only remember the victims of September 11, but to also honor their memories by participating in acts of service to help strengthen our neighborhood, cities, towns, and communities. Service is our essence and many of our communities have been devastated by recent natural disasters.”

“Together, we can all play an important role and provide a positive impact through volunteerism in support of service initiatives and in remembrance of September 11.” Supreme President Kokotas attended a 9/11 Memorial Service and Lighting of Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine officiated by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America that was held last evening. Daughters of Penelope Grand President Kathy Bizoukas, Chairman of the Board Nicholas A. Karacostas, PSP, and Daughters of Penelope Executive Director Elena Saviolakis also attended. Also, in the spirit of the community’s effort to rebuild Saint Nicholas, AHEPA shares an Associated Press article that appeared September 8, 2021, that reports on the significance of Saint Nicholas to those impacted by September 11 as it nears completion, titled, “Shrine to replace church destroyed on 9/11 nears completion.” Please share and distribute the article widely with family, friends, and colleagues.

AHEPA’s Emergency Relief Fund Open for Greece’s Wildfire Relief

On Wednesday, August 4th, Supreme President Jimmy Kokotas authorized the opening of the AHEPA Emergency Relief fund in an effort to provide humanitarian assistance for the victims of Greece’s wildfires. AHEPA members have mobilized in response to this call to action. As the wildfires in Greece continue to burn, we have seen our chapters and members come together to help in any way possible and we are



proud. In 2007, AHEPA donated \$250,000 worth of goods and an additional \$250,000 in financial assistance to victims of Greece’s wildfires. Following Greece’s wildfires of 2018, AHEPA was able to raise 159,000€ to complete a burn unit at Evangelismos Hospital in Athens. “The images and stories coming from Greece are terrifying,” Supreme President Kokotas said. “Our thoughts and prayers are with all who have been affected by this tragedy. We are extremely grateful to Greece’s first responders and to all nations that have offered support and assistance. We will stand with Greece as we did in 2007, 2018, and during other times of great need.” Every single bit of your tax-deductible donation to the AHEPA Emergency Relief Fund helps. Please spread the word and encourage as many as you can to assist. Visit ahepa.org/donate today

***We Must Preserve the Legacy We Inherited!
We need you to join our AHEPA A121 (Pawtucket) Chapter!***

We ask all of you to join and support your AHEPA Pawtucket chapter. You can get as much involved as you have time or desire. Please keep in mind, that just by becoming a member and through your yearly membership fee you help us to . . .



- ***Support AHEPA activities and publications!***
- ***Give strength to our Pawtucket chapter!***
- ***Provide academic and athletic scholarships!***
- ***Make our voice heard for things that matter!***
- ***Make a difference in every community!***

This is an invitation to everyone – we need all of you! Your opinion will always count! For membership information, applications please see Yianni Apostolakis, Tom Andrikopoulos or Nick Bitsakis. For more information, please visit www.ahepa.org.



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Urgent Help Needed in the US



With so many people across the country facing the impact of disasters, IOCC is coordinating with partners in affected regions and putting staff on the ground where response has begun. Following torrential rain, Tennessee has experienced some of the worst flooding in recent memory. At the same time, hurricane season is peaking as we evaluate needs in Hurricane Ida’s wake. You can help IOCC help our neighbors across the US. A gift to IOCC's US Emergency Response Fund helps address immediate needs, including emotional and spiritual care, following disasters and also supports long-term recovery efforts.

***You can make a donation at ioccc.org or you can give a check payable to
IOCC – US Emergency Response fund to Yiannis Apostolakis.***

Persevering through Crisis



In the second century, Saint Sophia and her daughters, Faith, Hope, and Love, held fast to Christ under the most severe circumstances and were given their places in heaven.

Today, IOCC is helping families persevere. A mother in Jordan who was determined to get her son the help he needed. When her son turned three, the mother noticed that he often seemed to ignore her when she spoke to him. A schoolteacher, she was sure the early diagnoses of developmental or intellectual disabilities were missing something. When Bassem saw an audiologist at an IOCC-supported clinic, testing confirmed that he had hearing loss. Through IOCC, her son received two new hearing aids. The first time he wore them, his face lit up as he fully experienced the sounds around him — and the mother broke into tears of joy. “My son is finally able to express his feelings to me,” the mother said. “Last week ... was his first time to hug me and say, ‘I love you, Mom.’”

Like Saint Sophia, the mother refused to lose faith. She persevered until she found the help Bassem needed. Families around the world face difficult circumstances each day — disease, natural disaster, and poverty. Your faith and love help foster hope as these families persevere through crisis. Will you offer those gifts to another family today?

Here is How YOU Can Help More!

- Become a monthly donor to IOCC
- Send a donation to IOCC for a cause that touches your heart!
- Give a donation to Ioannis Apostolakis, **payable to IOCC**, for any occasion you would like to make a difference!

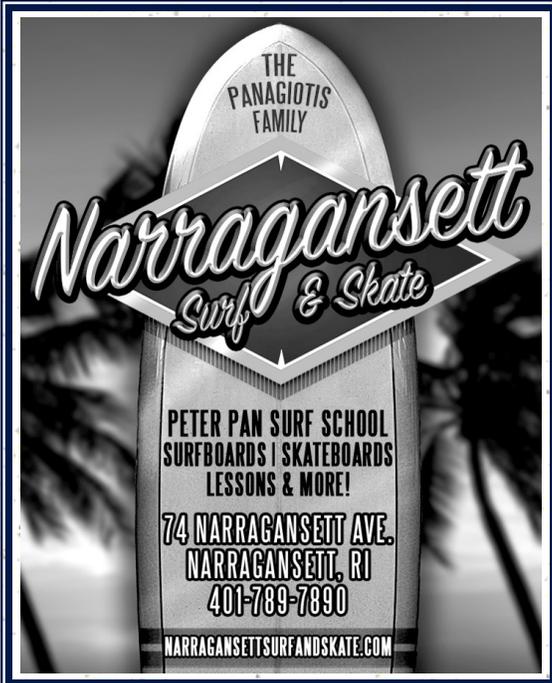
Help Us Provide For Those in Need!

And remember, 92 cents of every dollar you give goes to our humanitarian work. The other 8 cents is for administration and fundraising costs. Charity Navigator gives IOCC a 4-star rating (highest possible) for financial health, accountability and transparency. Plus, every dollar you give helps us secure \$7 more in support from governments, foundations, and other sources.

IOCC is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has delivered \$650 million in relief and development programs to families and communities in more than 50 countries. IOCC is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy. To learn more about IOCC, please visit our website at iocc.org

Yiannis Apostolakis

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Church Grounds

You can help to beautify our church grounds. Donations towards our church grounds are always very much appreciated so that our property can remain beautiful year round. Appreciation and many thanks to **Roula Vellopoulou, Nick Vellopoulos, Anastasia Vellopoulou, Ioanna Wright, and Charoula Xoulei Campos** who are our church gardeners spending endless hours cutting the grass, planting, watering, and trimming the beautiful flowers and shrubs surrounding our premises.



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