SYNDIAKONIA

THE MONTHLY BULLETIN

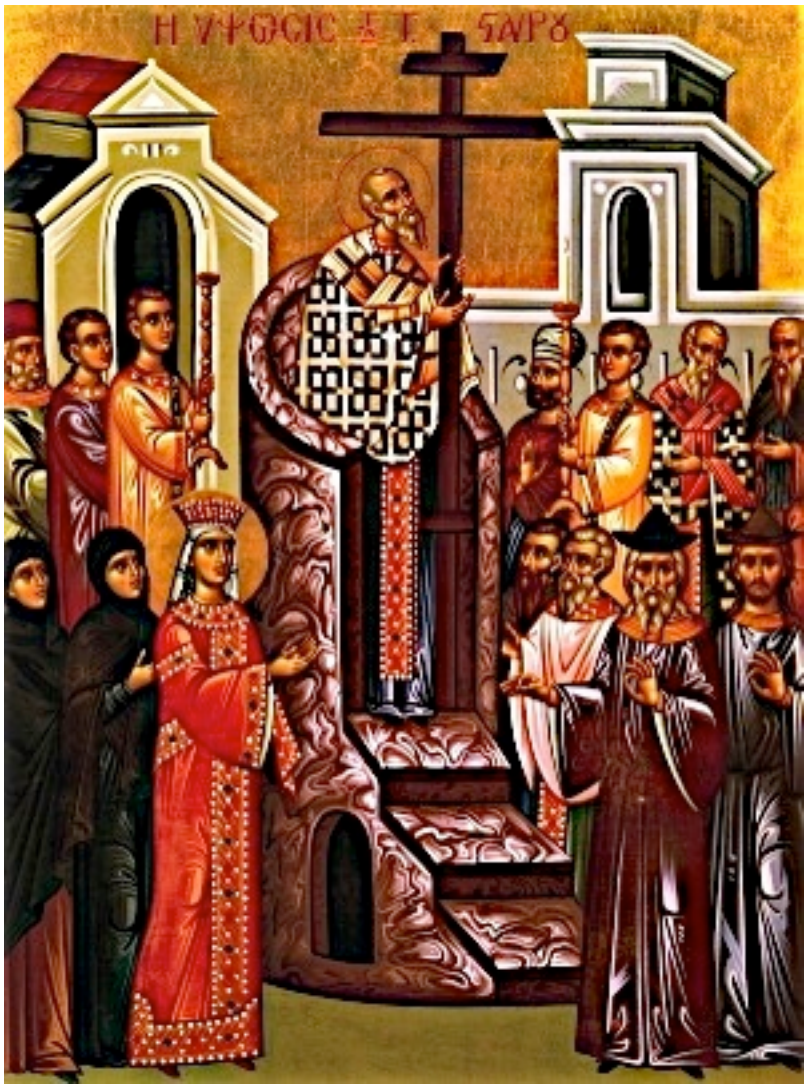
OF THE

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΜΕΤΑΜΟΡΦΩΣΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ

Marietta, GA

SEPTEMBER 2012



Elevation of the Holy Cross

We venerate your Cross, O Lord and praise and glorify your Holy Resurrection

Holy Transfiguration

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

3431 Trickum Road
Marietta, GA 30066

Tel. 770 924-8080
Fax 770 924-3030

Website: www.holytrans.org

CHURCH OFFICE

Open Monday-Friday, 9:30 am - 5:30 pm

E-mail: holytrans@comcast.net

SUNDAY SERVICES

Orthros..... 8:30 am Divine Liturgy..... 10:00 am

PARISH CLERGY

Rev. Father Panayiotis Papageorgiou, Ph.D.,
Presiding Protopresbyter

Rev. Father George Pallas, Protopresbyter

Pastoral Assistant: Paul Lundberg

PARISH COUNCIL-EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President.....Maria Alberts
First Vice-President.....Pete Bilson
Recording Secretary.....Randy Rogers
Treasurer.....Steve Steffas
Assistant Treasurer.....Christopher Hansard

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cathy Costarides, Ellen Linebaugh, George Lopos, Alex Miltiades, John Moustoukas, Jim Tidwell, Athan Tsarouhas

Directions to our Parish:

FROM I-75 Exit at 267-A. At 1st light, turn right (Sandy Plains Road). Continue for 3-4 miles until you see a CVS Pharmacy on your left. At that light turn left onto Trickum Rd. Proceed approx. 1/2 mile. Church will be on your left. Can't miss it!

http://www.holytransfiguration.info/directions/

Is Gay Marriage Just About Civil Rights?

Gay marriage has been in the news recently more frequently than ever before, since our President, the leader of the most powerful country in the world, threw his weight in with those who support the legalization of gay marriage. The question I raise here is whether this is just an issue of civil rights of a minority group or whether there are other issues associated with it that should concern us as Orthodox Christians.

On his behalf, the president of the United States made clear his intentions as he hurriedly announced his endorsement of gay marriage on the morning of that historic Thursday, while he was preparing to address a group of very liberal Hollywood actors and actresses who had pledged to his campaign 15 million dollars. It is clear to me that his decision to announce his support for gay marriage at that particular moment had very little to do with the civil rights of gay people and a lot more to do with campaign funds controlled by the ideological crowd that he was trying to placate that evening. His decision, certainly, had everything to do with his desire to be re-elected president. The final outcome is that the issue of gay marriage has now been fully politicized, which creates a problem for those of us who are trying to remain non-political or politically neutral. Yet the problem is not any less a moral and spiritual one and will have tremendous repercussions in our lives and the lives of those we try to lead spiritually.

As we venture to discuss this issue, however, we need to recognize that there has been an ideological cultural war going on in this country for the last 40 years in an effort to control the path of history and the ultimate shape of American society. Many of the religious leaders have been engaged on the conservative side struggling to at least maintain the status quo. On the liberal side, this war has been spearheaded by Hollywood elites in two major ways: (a) In the messages propagated through the movies and TV programming beamed directly into every living room of every American household and around the world, and (b) through the lifestyles of the Hollywood stars, which the media gossip engines are constantly glamorizing. Thus, chipping away constantly on the moral conscience of the nation, they have set us all on a moral slippery slope. Promiscuity and sexual activity outside of marriage have moved on our moral gauge from unacceptable to being the norm. Divorce has become commonplace and a social inevitability for many of us. Substance abuse and addiction are now seen as part of the American lifestyle, and pornography has gradually taken the place of daily entertainment. In the meantime, the concepts of "marriage" and "family" are being drastically reshaped.

Of course, I do not want to sound too simplistic by proposing that this is all a matter of an orchestrated conspiracy. I am merely trying to point out that there are powerful people pushing hard for a culture change, pouring millions of dollars into this effort like never before, as we saw in the recent events.

This cultural war at some point spilled over into the politics of the nation, as well, and has been polarizing the country for decades. Time after time, we are being called to side with one or the other political parties based on the moral issues raised in front of us. The politicians follow the polls and act according to the crowd they are addressing. They also follow the money offered by special interest groups and decide accordingly as to what position they should support in their desire to be elected into office. In the meantime, the rest of us struggle to sort out whom to vote for, but also which of the moral issues at play are worth holding on to and which ones are not. Most of the time we find ourselves compromising in one or the other way as we either vote for people we don't trust or even vote against our moral conscience, giving in to the ever sliding moral standards of the people who govern us.

Coming back to the issue at hand, the President's sudden endorsement of gay marriage shocked the majority of the people of this country and caused ripple effects throughout the world, more powerful than

any other social issue has caused in recent history. Here he was, the leader of the most advanced society, leading the way into new territory for humanity, declaring that homosexual union should be accepted through the laws of this great nation as a legitimate family unit, declaring that the right to legal marriage of these individuals was more important than the established norm of "marriage" and "family" as we have known it for thousands of years in every culture and every religion of this planet. Through this declaration, the understanding of "marriage" and "family" is now being redefined, leaving us wondering what will be the next iteration of proposed legal marriage. (Would it be polygamy, union of siblings or perhaps an other absurd form? The possibilities are endless!) And, of course, this forceful redefinition of marriage was made not because any scientific anthropological or sociological development or any religious theological revelation has brought about the necessity for a radical change in humanity's view of marriage and family, but only in order that this candidate may win a second term as president. It all happened because of the self-serving purposes of a politician.

This announcement by President Obama has left many of us, who hold to the more traditional concept of marriage, totally speechless. We are at a loss as to how we should react. If we stand with him, we are faced with many anthropological, theological and spiritual problems to solve. If we stand against him, we may seem to be backward and unenlightened, homophobic or prejudiced. Worse of all, we may seem as taking an opposing political position to a sitting president seeking re-election, or even worst, we may be seen as racists as we stand opposed to the first black president of this country!

So, how should we react? How do we address this issue from the theological and spiritual perspective as Orthodox Christians? Why should we even care whether gay marriage is made legal or not. Shouldn't there be a separation of Church and State? Does it really matter what the state does, as long as it does not forbid us to practice our religion the way we understand it?

I should begin to address these questions by first declaring that the Orthodox Church has held to its theological beliefs and the high standards of moral values through hundreds of years of persecutions and enslavement by hostile governments and malevolent monarchs. We will continue to do the same until the end of time when the Lord comes again in Glory!

Secondly, I need to point out that we view homosexuals as all other human beings created and loved by God. The Church as a spiritual hospital does not reject them and receives them like everyone else with open arms into the journey to God's Kingdom, attempting to help them (as everyone else) to come closer to God and ultimately enter the Divine Kingdom. From a pastoral perspective, we are all in the same fallen condition and we all need to come closer to God seeking to experience His love and spiritual healing. God's mercy is the same for all of us despite our particular state of existence or sexual inclination. All He wants from us is "a broken and contrite heart" in order to unleash His healing mercy.

Having said that, I need to point out that from an Orthodox perspective there is a specific path to the Kingdom of God, understood and lived by millions of Christians before us. That path involves conquering our passions, taking control over our urges and calming down these unbridled forces that have overtaken us as we distanced ourselves from God. The holy men and women of the Church that we call "the saints" have done exactly that. Invoking their Faith, they took hold of their passions; they did not focus on their sexuality; they surpassed their shortcomings by God's Grace. This is what we know as ***"ascesis"*** in Orthodox spirituality, which is aided by the Grace of God. ***The ascetic life (appended to Faith) is the only path to God's Kingdom!*** *God's loving presence is only experienced through the spiritual struggle aimed at taming and controlling our desires and urges, not by immersing ourselves in them and trying to satisfy them.*

The difficulty here, however, comes from the pressures we are faced within our modern secular society. We are being bombarded with the idea that we should seek as much pleasure and satisfaction from the world as possible. One has to turn on the TV for only a few minutes and watch the commercials or any of the movies coming out of Hollywood in order to quickly realize that contrary to the experience advocated by the saints we are encouraged to feed our passions and desires. Our worth as human beings is directly connected to the material things we own. Our eyes are flooded with images that

aggravate our passions. Sexuality is at the center of all the pleasures. Pornography (a 100 billion dollar a year industry) is only a click away, while a multitude of products are offered everywhere with the promise to enhance and extend our ultimate sexual experience.

Hence, this discussion is not just about homosexuality. Both heterosexual as well as homosexual behaviors are being pushed beyond the boundaries. People are being encouraged to try all kinds of things in order to find more pleasure. Sexuality has become the center goal of human experience. Ascesis and self-control (as proposed by the saints) seem out of place in this world of hedonistic endeavor. The message of the Church is so different that it gets trampled by the noise of our passions.

In such a world it is only logical that the discussion becomes one of rights. The rights of people to their own view of pleasure are being invoked. Who can deny a person the right to his/her own pleasure if this is at the center of our human experience? Who has the right to tell someone that they have to restrict their own sexual inclinations or chosen path of sexual expression if that seems to be what makes them happy? And for what reason should one place a limit on sexual experimentation when the whole society is seeking love and happiness in the same way? (Love and sex have become synonyms in this context). It would certainly be unfair for homosexuals to be restricted when heterosexuals are free and encouraged to seek ultimate pleasure in sexuality. The conclusion is, that If marriage for heterosexuals is about fulfilling their sexual desires, why should it be prohibited for homosexuals?

As Orthodox Christians, however, we have an alternative approach to offer. Marriage, according to our Faith, was given by God for procreation and the cultivation of unconditional *love that transcends sexuality* and leads us to His Kingdom. Even within marriage, we are called to exercise ascesis and self-control as we struggle to attain perfection in the likeness of God. Marriage is not about satisfying our unbridled passions. ***Our bodies were not made to be instruments of pleasure but Temples of the Holy Spirit*** (1Cor 6:19). Marriage is a sacred bond between a man and a woman that safeguards the structure and propagation of human society and provides a harbor of salvation from the tempest of the world and a sacred place where spiritual love is perfected through self-sacrifice in the image of Christ.

In other words, our objection to the legalization of gay marriage does not constitute a denial that people may have varying sexual inclinations, but stands, rather, as an objection to the encouragement of human enslavement to the passions and desires that will deprive us from the ultimate experience of the Love of God, a far greater source of joy and pleasure than anything our unbridled sexuality can provide.

Following St. Paul we need to accept that *"all things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful." All things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything."* 1Cor 6:12; 1Cor 10:23). St. Paul forsook his right to take a wife as the other Apostles did (1Cor 9:5), as he chose to serve the Lord with all his life. Sexual pleasure was not on his agenda, as a higher love, the love of God, consumed him completely (Cf. Rom 8:39).

If we were to learn anything from the mystical experience of the saints, it would be that sexuality is not at the center of human experience. ***On the contrary, humanity is actually called to transcend sexuality:*** *"For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven"* (Mat 22:30).

If we were to learn anything from the last two thousand years of Christian experience we should realize that healthy families, built on the foundation of stable Christian marriages and centered on God's Love, have produced many great spiritual and civic leaders that benefited society and the human race. The family has constituted the fundamental structural unit of human society. Some nations survived wars and natural disasters, succeeded and thrived because of the strength of their family unit, while others collapsed and disappeared as the foundation crumbled because of the weakening of the family.

Civil rights can be granted to any group of people without redefining the institution of marriage, for we need to understand that it is dangerous for humanity to tamper with marriage, as the many significant benefits that come from it will be lost with severe consequences for this great nation. Above all, we run the risk of losing the Kingdom of God. Then, no earthly pleasure will satisfy our fallen human desires. No river, nor ocean will be able to quench our thirst for the Divine Love that will be lost forever.

Holy Transfiguration
Greek Orthodox Church

3431 Trickum Road
Marietta, GA 30066
Tel. 770-924-8080, Fax 770-924-3030
Rev. Fr. Panayiotis Papageorgiou, Ph.D., Protopresbyter

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
September 2012

September 1, Saturday, Beginning of Ecclesiastical Year. Blessing of the Water 11:00 am
Evening: Great Vespers 5:00 pm

September 2, Sunday. Thirteenth Sunday of Matthew. Sunday of prayer for the Environment
Orthros 8:30 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am.

September 7, Friday Evening, Great Vespers for the Nativity of the Theotokos 6:00 pm

September 8, Saturday, The Nativity of the Theotokos.
Orthros 8:45 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am.
Evening: Great Vespers 5:00 pm

September 9, Sunday, Sunday before the Elevation of the Holy Cross.
Remembrance and Prayers for the victims of the 9/11/ attacks
Orthros 8:30 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am.

September 11. Tuesday, Prayer for the victims of the 9/11/ attacks 11:00 am

September 13, Thursday, Great Vespers for the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross 6:00 pm

September 14, Friday, The Universal Elevation of the Precious and Lifegiving Cross
Orthros 8:45 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am.
Strict Fast, No oil or wine are allowed.

September 15, Saturday, NO Great Vespers today

September 16, Sunday, Sunday after the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross
Orthros 8:30 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am.
Artoclasia for Feast of St. Euphemia, after Divine Liturgy (Philoptochos)

September 22, Saturday, Great Vespers 5:00 pm

September 23, Sunday, First Sunday of Luke. Conception of St. John the Baptist.
Orthros 8:30 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am.

September 29, Saturday, NO Great Vespers today

September 30, Sunday, Second Sunday of Luke
Orthros 8:30 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am.

The Mission Statement of our Parish

Our Parish is the local eucharistic community of the Church in this locality;

The aims and purposes of our Parish are to keep, practice, and proclaim the Orthodox Christian Faith pure and undefiled.

The *diakonia* (ministry) of the Parish includes proclaiming and teaching the Gospel in accordance with the Orthodox Faith; sanctifying the faithful through God's grace in worship, the Divine Liturgy and the other sacraments; enhancing its parishioners' spiritual life; and adding to the numbers of the faithful by receiving persons into the Church through instruction, Baptism and/or Chrismation. In addition, the Parish has established educational and philanthropic activities to foster the aims and mission of the Parish and to edify its parishioners in the Faith and ethos of the Church.

The ultimate goal of the Parish is to lead its members into the Kingdom of God.

See UNIFORM PARISH REGULATIONS. CHAPTER ONE, ARTICLE 15

The Birth of the Virgin Mary the Blessed Theotokos

Celebrated on September 8

On September 8 we celebrate the birth of Mary the Virgin Theotokos, the one who gave birth to our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

This is an important feast of the Church because the birth of the Virgin marks the beginning of our salvation. She was chosen by God among all women to bear His Son, and thus participate in the process of salvation of all humanity. She was chosen from among all women because of her faith and obedience to God. She has become an example for all of us to follow. This is one of the reasons she is honored by the Church and raised up for us to see. She is Blessed among women because the fruit of her womb is blessed.

Hymn of the Feast

Your birth, O Theotokos, has brought joy to all the inhabited earth: for from you has shone forth the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God. He has loosed us from the curse and given the blessing; He has made death of no effect, and bestowed on us eternal life.

The Birth of the Theotokos

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - SEPTEMBER

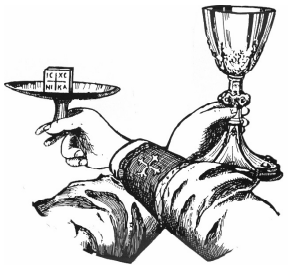
9/1/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy 2:1-7	Gospel: Luke 4:16-22
9/2/2012	Matins: Mark 16:1-8	Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 16:13-24 Gospel: Matthew 21:33-42
9/3/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 12:10-19	Gospel: Mark 4:10-23
9/4/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 12:20-21; 13:1-2	Gospel: Mark 4:24-34
9/5/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 13:3-13	Gospel: Matthew 23:29-39
9/6/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 2:2-10	Gospel: Luke 10:16-21
9/7/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:6-10	Gospel: Mark 5:22-24, 35-43; 6:1
9/8/2012	Matins: Luke 1:39-49, 56	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 2:5-11 Gospel: Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28
9/9/2012	Matins: Mark 16:9-20	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 6:11-18 Gospel: John 3:13-17
9/10/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:11-16	Gospel: John 3:16-21
9/11/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:21; 3:1-7	Gospel: John 12:19-36
9/12/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 3:15-22	Gospel: John 11:47-54
9/13/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 3:1-4	Gospel: John 12:25-36
9/14/2012	Matins: John 12:28-36	Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 1:18-24 Gospel: John 19:6-11, 13-20, 25-28, 30
9/15/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 1:26-31; 2:1-5 Gospel: John 8:21-30	
9/16/2012	Matins: Luke 24:1-12	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 2:16-20 Gospel: Mark 8:34-38; 9:1
9/17/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:28-31; 5:1-10	Gospel: Luke 3:19-22
9/18/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 5:11-21	Gospel: Luke 3:23-38, 4:1
9/19/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 6:2-10	Gospel: Luke 4:1-15
9/20/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 6:10-17	Gospel: Luke 21:12-19
9/21/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 1:7-17	Gospel: Luke 4:22-30
9/22/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 10:23-28	Gospel: Luke 4:31-36
9/23/2012	Matins: Luke 24:13-35	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:22-27 Gospel: Luke 5:1-11
9/24/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to Timothy 3:10-15	Gospel: Luke 10:38-42, 11:27-28
9/25/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:19-22; 3:1-7	Gospel: Luke 5:12-16
9/26/2012	Matins: John 21:14-25	Epistle: St. John's First Universal Letter 4:12-19 Gospel: John 19:25-27; 21:24-25
9/27/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:14-17	Gospel: Luke 6:12-19
9/28/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 4:6-15	Gospel: Luke 6:17-23
9/29/2012	Epistle: St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 14:20-25	Gospel: Luke 5:17-26
9/30/2012	Matins: Luke 24:36-53	Epistle: St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1 Gospel: Luke 6:31-36

You Are a Member of the Church?
Are you a Steward also?

A question always asked by our parishioners is "How can I be a member of the Parish? I am already an Orthodox Christian. Isn't that enough?

The answer to this is very simple: All people baptized and chrismated (confirmed) in the Orthodox Church are automatically members of the Church, but it takes a little more to be "members in good standing" in the Orthodox Church and in the Parish. First, it is required that a person be married in the Church and live his/her life as an Orthodox Christian, participating in the Holy Sacraments, in order to be in good standing within the Orthodox Church. If one has been married outside the Orthodox Church or has gone through a civil divorce and has not obtained a Church divorce, he/she may not be in good standing with the Church. Please check with the priest of the parish in order to find out where you are.

How can one be a member of the Parish?
It takes participation in the parish by supporting the operation and ministries of the parish to be a member in good standing. In order to do that, you have to fill out the Membership/Stewardship Form and indicate on it how you are going to participate in the Parish with your Time, Talents and Treasure. When you join the Parish in this way, you make a Pledge to God that you will support the work of the Church with the gifts He has given you so that the Gospel may be preached and people may be saved through the ministries of the Church. **Please join us at Holy Transfiguration and serve God with us!**



"Your own gifts,
of Your own,
we offer unto You."

WHAT IS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE PARISH'S STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY?

Most of the parishioners seem to think that the primary purpose of the Stewardship Ministry is to collect money for the operation of the parish. However that is not what Stewardship is about – the collection of funds is a secondary purpose of stewardship.

Stewardship is about our relationship with God and our desire to connect with Him. It is about our Love for God and His work of Salvation. It is about our salvation and the salvation others.

Stewardship is also about our sharing of what God has given us to spread the Gospel and help others to come to Him. We do this by donating our time and talents to serve His Church, but we also donate money to support the ministries of the Church for the salvation of all. Our Stewardship enables the Local as well as the Universal Church to do the work of salvation.

The Necessity of Stewardship

Our Parish depends on the Stewardship of its members. Our Parish is funded by us.

Let us offer to our Parish from the Gifts of God to us. Let us offer in proportion of His Gifts to us. Let us bring our offering with a joyful heart.

You will be Blessed greatly if you support the work of our Parish and the work of His Church.

Have you submitted your Stewardship Form? If not, please do so today.

WHAT IS A STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE AND TO WHOM IS IT MADE?

As our parish approaches the 2013 Membership/Stewardship Drive, which will kick off with the Thanksgiving Luncheon on Sunday, November 18th, we believe that this Drive could be completed faster and more successfully if we all had a better understanding as to what a pledge is and to whom the stewardship pledge is made.

A *PLEDGE* is the commitment to a person or an organization to do something over a period of time or by a certain date.

When you complete and return a Membership/Stewardship Form to Holy Transfiguration, are you making a pledge to our parish? The answer is **NO, you are actually making a Pledge to God Himself whose Gifts you are returning back to Him out of Love and recognition of His Blessings to you.**

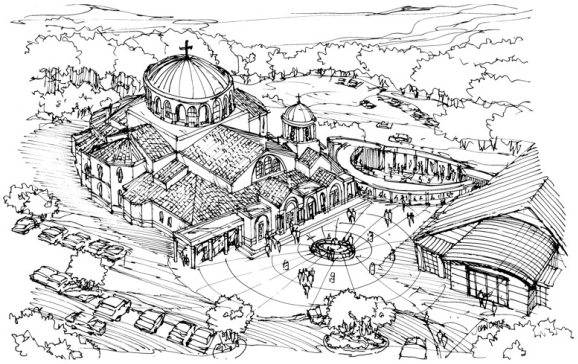
Of course, returning a Membership/Stewardship Form to the Parish makes you an active member of the Parish with the privilege of being able to participate in committees and be elected in leadership positions.

Why then, are you asked to indicate what amounts you are likely to contribute to the General, Building, and Iconography Funds respectively? You indicate these Funds so that the Parish Council can plan next year's budget and manage the parish expenditures during the year. If you provide an accurate estimate, the Parish Council will be better able to do these two things effectively – however if the estimates you give are inaccurate in terms of what you will actually donate during 2013, the Parish Council is more likely to err in managing the parish's expenditures.

The Time and Talent indications that you check are to be used by the ministry heads as they search for parishioners to assist them in order to execute their assigned responsibilities.

Our actual pledge of Time, Talents, and Treasure is made <u>to God</u> out of love for Him, out of love for our fellow human beings, and in thanksgiving for the blessings He has bestowed and will continue to bestow upon us. Through our Pledge, we are promising Him that we will donate these things throughout 2013 – **the more that we have been blessed with, the more we should commit in order to continue His work here on earth** primarily through His Church, which has as its mission to maintain and spread the Christian faith as well as to assist those who are in need.

As we prepare to make our 2013 commitment to God, we should bear in mind that it is to Him that each of us is accountable. The parish provides the space and community where we manifest our love and obedience to His call to serve Him.



Come and See

STEWARDSHIP FOR 2012

THANK YOU TO THE FAITHFUL STEWARDS WHO HAVE SUBMITTED FORMS FOR 2012!

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Adamson
Mr. Michael Adare
Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Alberts
Mr. & Mrs. George Andros
Mr. & Mrs. John Asimakos
Mr. & Mrs. Gianis Asprakis
Mr. & Mrs. Amir Azarvan
Mr. & Mrs. Ben Azimzadeh
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Bafas
Miss Dorian Bafas
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Bakatsas
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Barke
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bass
Mr. & Mrs. Gerard Basto
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Bates
Mr. & Mrs. Rick Bell
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Bennett
Mr. & Mrs. George Bilson
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Bilson
Mr. & Mrs. Pete Bilson
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Bilson
Mr. & Mrs. Tony Blasetti
Mr. & Mrs. Terry Bliss
Mr. & Mrs. George Bogdan
Mr. & Mrs. Rodney Bond
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Botni
Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Bourgeois
Mr. & Mrs. John Brewer
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Bridgers
Mr. & Mrs. Lee Brooks
Mr. & Mrs. Theodoros Brotsis
Dr. & Mrs. Dan Brown
Mr. & Mrs. Travis Brown
Mr. & Mrs. Kerry Buchan
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Bundros
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Burke
Mr. & Mrs. Constantine Bylos
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Cable
Mr. & Mrs. George Caras
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Carlos
Ms. Helen A. Carlos
Mr. & Mrs. Allen Castro
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Catrakilis
Miss Irene Ceisel
Miss Johanna Ceisel
Mrs. Mary Anne Chanos
Mr. & Mrs. Sotir Christopher
Mr. & Mrs. Grigorios Chryssopoulos
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Clement
Ms. Marianna Constantinou
Ms. Cherie Cookorinis
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Copses
Mr. Arthur Costakis
Ms. Cathy Costarides
Ms. Margaret Csonka
Mr. & Dr. Shawn Dalton
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Danos
Mr. & Mrs. Constantinos Dascalos
Mr. Mike Davino
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Davis
Mr. & Mrs. William Dennison
Ms. Eleni Dodys
Mr. George A. Dracos
Mrs. Marty Driscoll
Mr. & Mrs. Drew Dudley
Mr. & Mrs. Cedric Dunkerly
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Duvlaris
Ms. Marjorie Economopoulos
Ms. Marilyn Eleftheriou
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Elias
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Farina
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Farrey
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Fernandez
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Fleshman
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Frangis
Mr. & Mrs. Stratton Frank
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Frank
Ms. Eva Gaitanoglou-Arp
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Gavalas
Mr. Michael Gavalas
Mr. & Mrs. Victor Gavalas
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Gavrielides
Mr. & Mrs. Evan Gekas
Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Georgacopoulos
Mr. & Mrs. Leslie George
Dr. & Mrs. Larry Gess
Mr. & Mrs. George Gianaris
Mr. & Mrs. Philip Giannaris
Mr. John Gianopoulos
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Gilbert
Miss Martha Gingles
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Gormanos
Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Haggart
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Hairetis
Dr. & Mrs. James Hammond
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Hanes
Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Hansard
Ms. Catie Harrah
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Harrah
Mr. Patrick Hartnett
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Hayes
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Hennenfent
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Hondras
Mrs. Diana Honey
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Houstoulakis
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Isaac
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Jacobs
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Jacobs
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Johansen
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Johnston
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Jones
Mr. & Mrs. Radostin Jordanov
Mrs. Niki Kakissis
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Kanelos
Mr. & Mrs. Ioannis Kapsalis
Ms. Michele Karetas
Dr. & Mrs. Steve Kargas
Mr. & Mrs. David Kay
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Kipreos
Mr. & Mrs. Manolis Kipreos
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Kipreos
Mrs. Irene Kipreos
Mr. Steve Kipreos
Mr. & Mrs. Phil Kiritsy
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Klementzos
Mr. & Mrs. Alan Knuchel
Mr. Scott Knuchel
Mr. & Mrs. Athanasios Kollias
Ms. Connie Kollias
Mr. & Mrs. Zach Kollias
Ms. Natalie Konstadinidis
Mrs. Athena Kontrafouris
Mr. James Kontrafouris
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kopsias
Mrs. Mary Koss
Dr. & Mrs. Michael Kostas
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Kourafas
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Koutouzis
Mr. & Mrs. Dionyssios Koutsoukalis
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Krause
Ms. Amanda Kudratov
Mr. & Mrs. Cristos Kyprianou
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Lake
Dr. Anne Lambros
Mr. Brian Lasenyik
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Lawson
Ms. Anna Lerios
Mr. & Mrs. Stamatis Levantis
Mr. & Mrs. Smith Levenson
Mr. & Mrs. Alan Levine
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Lilly
Mr. & Mrs. David Linebaugh
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Linos

STEWARDSHIP FOR 2012

Mr. George Lisgaris
Mrs. Sylvia Lisgaris
Mr. Drew Logothetis
Mr. & Mrs. Elton Longshore
Mr. & Mrs. George Lopos
Mr. & Mrs. Carlos Lozano
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Lozier
Mr. & Dr. David Lukens
Mr. & Mrs. Demetrius Lymberopoulos
Dr. & Mrs. Allen Macris
Mr. & Mrs. Bobby Macris
Mr. & Mrs. Craig Mallie
Mr. Angelo Mallis
Mr. & Mrs. Panagiotis Maniatis
Mrs. Xenia Mantgiaris
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Marianos
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Markley
Mrs. Xanthippe Marsico
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Mavridis
Mr. & Mrs. Filipos Mavromatidis
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Mavromatidis
Ms. Melissa Maya
Mr. & Mrs. Francis McAteer
Ms. Judie Johnson McCall
Mr. & Mrs. John McCarty
Mrs. Sophia McClurd
Mr. & Mrs. Glenn McCollum
Ms. Autilia McGovern
Mr. & Mrs. Michael McLean
Mr. John McQueary, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Melissas
Mr. & Mrs. John Miller
Mr. & Mrs. Alex Miltiades
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Miltiades
Mr. & Mrs. Demetri Miltiades
Mr. & Mrs. Leo Modenos
Miss Megan Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Moorehead
Mr. & Mrs. John Moraitakis
Mr. Paul Moustoukas
Dr. Michael Moustoukas
Mr. & Mrs. John Moustoukas
Mr. & Mrs. Theofilos Moyssiadis
Mr. & Mrs. Erik Musto
Mr. & Mrs. George Nakos
Mr. & Mrs. George Nasr
Mr. & Mrs. Costa Neocleous
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Niarchos
Miss Katina Niarchos
Mr. Iancu Nica
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Nichols
Mr. & Mrs. Evans Nichols
Mr. & Mrs. Marc Nichols
Mr. & Mrs. Caryl Nielsen
Mr. & Mrs. Michael O'Brien
Mr. & Mrs. Bill O'Connor
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Olympiadis
Mr. & Mrs. Gus Orologas
Ms. Nikki Palamiotis
Fr. George and Presbytera Pallas
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Pallas
Mr. Tasi Pallas
Mr. & Mrs. Jon Papadimitriou
Mr. & Mrs. Spyros Papadimitriou
Mr. & Mrs. Konstantine Papadimitriou
Mr. & Mrs. Aristotle Papadopoulos
Mr. & Mrs. Pete Papadopoulos
Fr. Panayiotis and Presbytera Papageorgiou
Mr. Stephen Papastavrou
Mr. & Mrs. Jon Papastrat
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Papleacos
Miss Christina Pappas
Ms. Elizabeth Pappas
Mr. Dean Pappas
Dr. Maria Paradisis/Walter Dorawa
Mr. & Mrs. Casey Pater
Mr. Alex Paulson
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Paulson
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Paulson
Mr. & Mrs. Keath Paxten
Mr. & Mrs. George Pentzakis
Mr. & Mrs. John Peppas
Mr. & Mrs. James Peters
Mr. & Mrs. James Pierce
Mr. & Mrs. Brandon Pittman
Mr. & Mrs. Scott Pohlman
Mr. & Mrs. Tony Porter
Fr. George E. Prassas
Ms. Vickye Prattes
Mr. & Mrs. Francesco Quinterno
Mr. & Mrs. Eric Richards
Dr. & Mrs. Lambros C. Rigas
Mr. & Mrs. Randy Rogers
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Rury
Dr. & Mrs. Angelo Sambunaris
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Sampanes
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Sarmir
Mr. & Mrs. Emmanuel Sarris
Mr. & Mrs. George Sarris
Mr. & Mrs. Gheorghe Schipor
Mr. & Mrs. Constantine Seraphim
Mr. Mike Serkedakis
Ms. Pamela Server
Mr. & Mrs.Vasileios Sfyris
Mr. & Mrs. David Shelby
Mr. & Mrs. Takanori Shoji
Mr. & Mrs. Antonios Sideris
Ms. Nicole Sigalos
Ms. Patricia Simms
Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Skarpelis
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Smallwood
Mrs. Mary Smith
Mrs. Vasiliki Smith
Ms. Robbin Sotir/Alton Simms
Mr. & Mrs. Dimitri Soulios
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Sprouse
Mr. & Mrs. Ben Starks
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Steffas
Mrs. Mary Stiakakis
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Strakes
Mrs. Connie Stratigos
Mr. & Mrs. Brett Strauch
Mr. & Mrs. Stoyan Sugarliev
Ms. Christina Synoyannis
Mr. & Mrs. Zack Taoushiani
Mr. & Mrs. Tim Tassopoulos
Mr. & Mrs. Ovidiu Teodorescu
Mr. & Mrs. John Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Thomas
Mr. & Mrs. Steven Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. Zachary Thornbury
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Thorne
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Tidwell
Mrs. Helen Tiliacos
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Tiller
Mr. Steve Tingas
Mr. Athan Tsarouhas
Mr. Diamandis Tsirnikas
Mr. & Mrs. Dimitrios Tsoukalas
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Tucker
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Turner
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Turner
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Tyra
Mrs. Eleni K. Tzortzis
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Vachtsevanos
Dr. & Mrs. George Vachtsevanos
Ms. Rebecca Valagohar
Mr. & Mrs. Plutarch Vamvakias
Ms. Elaine Vasilas
Mr. & Mrs. Dimitri Vastakis
Mr. & Mrs. Vaios Vlachos
Dr. Phillip Vodas
Mr. Tim Voulopos
Mr. & Mrs. Marc Westmoreland
Mr. & Mrs. Barry Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm Worden
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Wysmierski
Ms. Peggy Yeotis
Mr. & Mrs. Anastasios Yiannovits
Mr. Basile Zafiroulis
Mr. & Mrs. Matt Zakreski
Mr. & Mrs. Marco Zavala

Total Members: 318

Membership in the Parish has its Privileges

If you have submitted your Membership/Stewardship Form to the parish you are entitled to participate in the Parish Assembly and vote for decisions regarding the life of the parish. You may also be eligible to become a member of a committee or even a member of the Parish Council.

Please submit your Membership/Stewardship Form today and serve God in the way you are able.

Happy New Ecclesiastical Year!

We are excited to see everyone coming back from summer vacation and settling their families in for the new school year. This is a time for new beginnings with respect to the Ecclesiastical New Year. Please remember to sign up for Catechism, Youth Ministries, Hellenic Studies, etc. through September 9th during each Coffee Hour or by contacting the church office.

Here is what's been happening and what is going on with your Parish Council:

Council of Ministries – We held a workshop on August 21st for the Parish Council members and ministry leaders and found it to be a valuable experience. Our workshop focused on the church's mission statement and how the ministries fulfill the mission of the church through outreach and welcoming. I would especially like to thank Paul Lundberg for a great job as moderator. The main take-away from this evening is that we need to be engaged in the activities and ministries of our church in order to achieve the mission of our church and find salvation.

Outreach and Welcoming – Becky Gess Valagohar has been working diligently as the new leader of the Outreach & Welcoming ministry to develop new strategies for Outreach and Welcoming and needs our help. It is the responsibility of all of us to always introduce ourselves to people we do not know; find out who they are and what they are interested in. Let's all work diligently to make sure that we make everyone feel welcome. It is also important to remember to keep in touch with old friends whom we may not have seen recently at church.

Homecoming Picnic - Don't forget about our annual Homecoming Picnic on September 9th right after Liturgy. This is a great chance to reconnect with old and new friends as well as talk with us about our various ministries. There will be food and fun activities for all, plus opportunities to find out more about ministries in which you might be interested in. If you know of friends whom you have not seen in a while at church, please invite them. This is a great opportunity to reconnect.

East Cobber Parade and Festival – This event, which is hosted by the East Cobber magazine, will be held on Saturday, September 15th on Johnson Ferry Road in East Cobb, Marietta. The Parade starts at 10:00 am; the festival runs from 11 am to 3 pm. We have decided to participate in this fun event as a means of reaching out to the community and letting them know about what things we have to offer to the community as a church. We will have several parishioners marching in the parade (including "Miss Greece" and "Miss Cyprus") and will also showcase our dance performers. In addition, there will be a booth which will have information about our church and our ministries (including Festival). For more information on this event, please visit the East Cobber website at www.eastcobber.com. If you can help out, please contact me at mariaalberts@comcast.net. Please come out and support us in this fun activity.

Look for more information about our ministries in the next coming weeks. Please, let's make a commitment to join a ministry and serve our church in some way so that we may all feel connected to God and to one another.

Your Sister in Christ,

Maria Alberts

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CROWN THEM WITH GLORY & HONOR

Rolf (Aristotle) and Beth (Elizabeth) Hunt - Aug. 16, 2012

Don't forget to register for ministry involvement this fall! Sign up and join in parish life!!

"As Iron Sharpens Iron, One Man Sharpens Another" (Proverbs 27:17)

Upcoming Events--BLOCK YOUR CALENDAR!

Sept. 11 Fall Kick Off Meeting w/traditional steak dinner-PLC

Questions about AHEPA? Interested in being a member of this great organization? Please contact any Board Member.

Your Board: Harry Kipreos, Jim Tidwell, Zack Kollias, and Dr. Phil Vodas
Vice-Presidents: Alan Levine, Michael Gavalas, Theodore Georgacopoulos, and Ron Sprouse

UPDATE ON THE PEW FUND

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

We have completed the installation of pews in our sanctuary. Through our Lord's blessings and your generous donations, this work has been accomplished in record time. We are still planning to install appropriate seating in the choir area and purchase some chairs. Both will compliment the pew design and complete the seating needs of the sanctuary. We hope to have all of this completed by late Fall. To date, we have spent $87,373.32, and we have raised $68,385.00. Pledges towards the total campaign are now at $85,700.00. When all is complete, we expect to have spent $100,000 which was our initial projection.

As you can see, the pledged amount of $85,700.00 will not cover the total campaign amount of $100,000. We have a short fall of $14,300. If you have not made a pledge to this campaign, please do so if you are able. We are all enjoying the pews, and it would be great if we all contributed.

In His service,

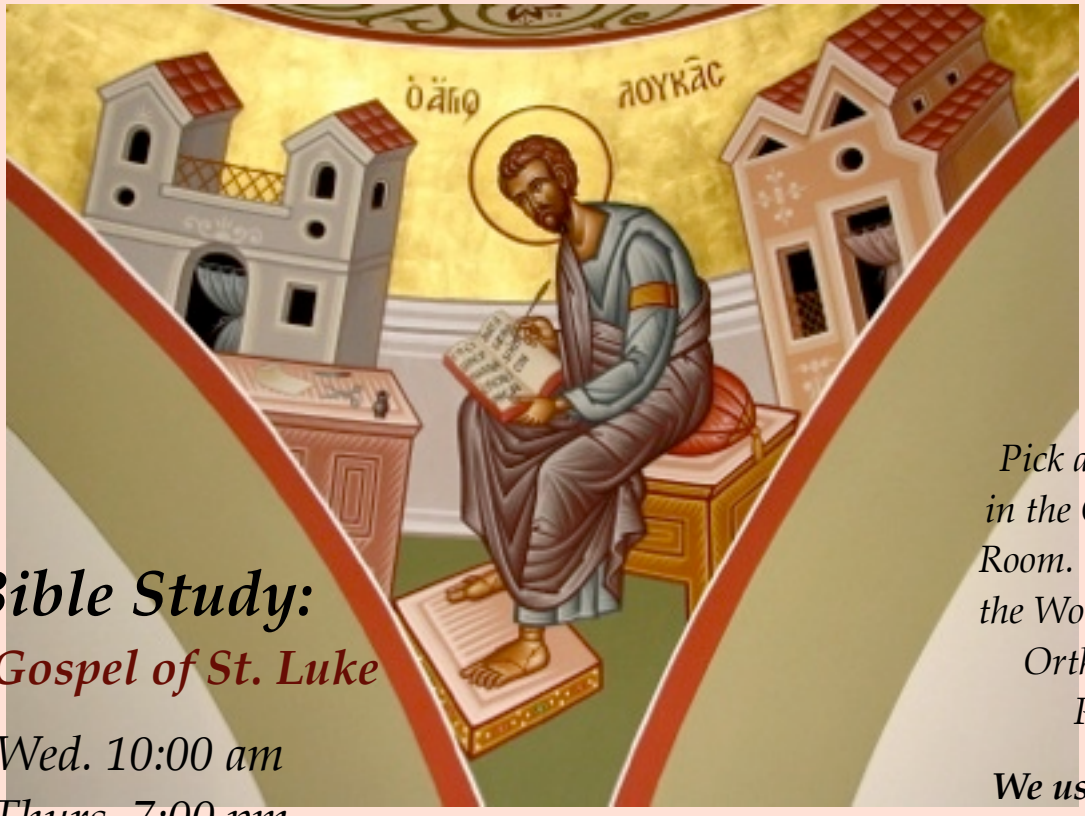
Jimmy Carlos and Alex Miltiades

Holy Icons Enhancing our Worship

We would like to give an opportunity to all parishioners to participate in completing the first stage of the iconography of our sanctuary. Several icons are being planned including large Icons of **St. Demetrios, St. Vasilios, St. Athanasios, St. Spyridon, Sts. Gregory the Theologian and Gregory of Nyssa, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril and St. Nicholas.**

Holy Icons are the offering of the people of God to the Glory of God; they constitute an eternal prayer from us. Through the offering of an icon we also establish a legacy for our children, grandchildren and for generations to come; we establish a connection and a continuity between them and us through the perpetuation of Orthodox Worship.

Please consider dedicating an Icon for our church. It is both a privilege and a blessing. Please speak to Fr. Panayiotis or Maria Alberts, Parish Council President.



Bible Study:

The Gospel of St. Luke

Wed. 10:00 am

Thurs. 7:00 pm

Starting September 19

Pick a day and join us in the Office Conference Room. Read and discuss the Word of God from an Orthodox Patristic Perspective!

We use the Orthodox Study Bible, available at our Bookstore.

Holy Transfiguration

Spiritual Book Club

Do you

-Enjoy reading spiritual books about the Orthodox Faith
-Like talking about what you have read
-Want to expand your knowledge about our faith

If so,

Your are invited to join our Church's very own

Spiritual Book Club

-We meet **once a month**, on a Sunday afternoon (see announcement).
-**Time** : 6.30pm till 8.30pm
-**Where:** At the Hall of the Church (PLC).
-Light refreshments and soft drinks will be served, as well as coffee and dessert. Members can contribute to refreshments if they so wish.

Meeting Format

- Food and fellowship for the first half hour, followed by reading and discussion.
- The discussion leader is Fr. Panayiotis, but other people present and propose themes and topics.
- Each participant should try to read as much of the assigned book as possible and bring their questions/topics or a favorite passage to talk about.

Currently

- The Book: ***Unseen Warfare***, edited by St. Nicodemus of The Holy Mountain and revised by St. Theophan the Recluse.

- **The Date of the next meeting :** Sunday, October 14, 2012

Under the guidance of a spiritual father, spiritual book clubs are a great way to enhance one's spiritual growth, challenge oneself to examine new ideas, and get to know others better on a journey where deeply personal ideas are shared and explored together.

Any questions can be directed to Fr. Panayiotis at fr.panayiotis@comcast.net or Elene Catrakilis at elenecat@yahoo.com.

Excerpt from the Book, *Unseen Warfare, Chapter On Prayer*:
Therefore, when you beg God to grant you something, and He is slow in hearing you, continue to pray keeping firm trust in His help alive in your heart. . . . If you do not receive what you ask, believe that you are receiving or will receive another good in its place. . . . For when He gives, and when He does not give, He does it for your good. *(page 204)*

Book Review

The Book: *Unseen Warfare*, *edited by St. Nicodemus of The Holy Mountain and revised by St. Theophan the Recluse.*

If anyone has found themselves lately wondering "what is going on in the world?" or "has the whole world gone mad?" then I urge you to do yourself a favor and get hold of a copy of this book.

This book is like a handbook that teaches us not about "the art of visible and sensory warfare and not about visible, bodily enemies but about the unseen and inner struggle, which every Christian undertakes from the moment of his baptism when he makes a vow to God to fight for Him."

It's a very difficult thing to fight an invisible enemy. If you don't understand who or what your enemy is, and you don't know from which side the next blow is going to come from, how are you going to protect yourself or fight back? It's worse than trying to fight al-Qaeda.

In the world in which we live today, we are doing ourselves a disservice if we do not try to arm ourselves in the fight to save our souls. It would be something like sitting on the sidelines in a war zone, getting shot at from every angle, and doing nothing.

Is this an easy book to read? No. Are the weapons with which we are urged to arm ourselves easy to acquire? No. For example, we are told that our helmet is total disbelief in ourselves and complete absence of self-reliance. This is contrary to what modern society teaches and therefore hard for us to swallow. But the book reminds us that in the battle, our Commander-in-Chief is our Lord Jesus Christ. What more encouragement do we need?

We have just recently watched the Olympic games. Think about how hard those athletes consistently train and abstain from all things which might harm their performance. They do this to win a gold medal which can easily be lost or stolen. When it comes to our spiritual lives, we have been given an opportunity through Christ to receive an incorruptible gold crown in the kingdom of heaven which cannot be lost or stolen. Yet we spend our lives in negligence and carelessness because it's hard for us to maintain the effort that is required in order to be a true Christian.

This book "combines the insights of West and East on that spiritual combat which is the road to perfection and the stripping away of all that militates against it." I cannot recommend it highly enough. Try to get a copy from our Book Store, and even if you cannot make it to our next Spiritual Book Club on October 14, it doesn't matter. Once you have read the book, you are going to want to talk about it. You can speak to Fr. Panayiotis about it at any time. You can even start a conversation about it with members of your church family whom you know have already read it. It is the type of book that will make you want to share your thoughts and reactions with others.

Elene Catrakilis

Note: This book is available in the Church Bookstore.

CATECHISM CORNER -
(WHAT OTHERS MIGHT CALL SUNDAY SCHOOL)

Welcome back from summer, and welcome to the start of a new school year for our Holy Transfiguration Catechism Program! On September 9th, at the end of the Divine Liturgy, Father will conduct a kickoff Agiasmos, or blessing of the water, to signify the formal start of our 2012/2013 school year. After that service, the students will be dismissed to their classes for a brief introductory lesson before we all partake in the Homecoming Picnic festivities that afternoon. The following Sunday, September 16th, will be the first full day of classes in the classrooms.

Some general information for all:

- Registration will start on Sunday, August 26th, during coffee hour in the PLC.
- We have students from preschool to 12th grade; preschoolers must be 3 by Sept 1st.
- We meet immediately following Holy Communion, students leave the church after receiving Communion, or when Communion starts, if they're not receiving, and go to their classrooms. We dismiss around 12:10 p.m.
- Classrooms for preschool through 6th grade are in the basement of the PLC (Parish Life Center), signs are on the doors.
- 7th/8th grade meets in the basement of the house, please enter from the outer basement door on the lower level.
- High School meets in the house conference room, carport level.

We are very excited to start this new year; we have just completed an excellent teacher training workshop led by Dr. Tony Vrame, the Director of the Archdiocese's Department of Religious Education, where we learned about engaging our students and improving the classroom experience. Also, we have shuffled our teacher roster around a bit, so if you came last year, you might see different teachers in your grade than you were expecting. We think this will be a growing and learning experience for both our teachers and students. Here's our lineup:

Pre-K – Maria Tingas, Christina Sarmir, Tina Isaac
Kindergarten – Ann Zakreski, Nancy Porter
1st/2nd Grade – Charles Miltiades, Linda Sampanes, Mary Wysmierski
3rd/4th Grade – Debra and Kerry Buchan, Pam Starks
5th/6th Grade – Cedric Dunkerly, Tom and Lara Bundros
7th/8th Grade – Tim Voulopos, Mike and Annette Jacobs
High School – Tim Tassopoulos, David Linebaugh, Paul Lundberg
Snack Ladies – Carol Adamson, Maria Tassopoulos (they will be contacting you!)
Staff Resources – Connie Kollias, Elene Catrakilis

As always, we welcome and encourage parent feedback, feel free to contact myself (David Linebaugh), Father Panayiotis, a teacher, or Anne at the office if you have any feedback for us. We look forward to seeing everyone on September 9th!

David Linebaugh
Catechism Program Director

Outreach Ministry

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

As Assistant Chairperson of the 2012 Marietta Greek Festival, I would like to join our Chairperson, Steve Tingas, in thanking those of you who helped make this year's event the most successful ever! We could never have prepared for, entertained and enlightened over 16,000 people without so many tireless and dedicated volunteers. You are all a blessing to our Church and community. And thank you to Steve Tingas, who is returning as our Festival Chairperson in 2013.

Personally, I have recently agreed to return to chair one of the Church Ministries on which I worked more than a decade ago – that of Outreach. I would like to give you my thoughts on what I think the role of the Outreach Committee should be and what it can, and should, mean to our Church family.

In John 15: 12 – 15, we read, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." I, along with the Outreach Assistant Chairperson, Dorian Bafas, invite you to join us in reaching out and sharing our love and faith with "new and old friends and neighbors," especially inactive Orthodox Christians and the unchurched. We are in the process of putting together a plan to respond to the needs of those inquiring about our parish and our Orthodox faith.

We all need to give thanks for the blessings we have been given – in particular, our wonderful parish family at Holy Transfiguration. In my travels and contacts with sister parishes across the country, it is rare to find a Church family that approaches the warmth and closeness we have here in Marietta, Georgia. We must continue to nurture and cultivate this culture by continuously reaching out to all current, past and potential parish members. God calls each and every one of us to reach out to and love each other. Every parishioner should personally accept this responsibility. Reaching out to visitors and newcomers to our Church shows that we care about their spiritual wellbeing and happiness. And let us not neglect those who have fallen away from us.

The Outreach Ministry at Holy Transfiguration is one that is often misunderstood and underappreciated. It should go further than merely publically recognizing our visitors following the Sunday Liturgy. That should be just the beginning of witnessing our faith to, and showing our love for, those reaching out to us. Through the Outreach Ministry, we will enhance our follow-up efforts beyond Sundays and the Church grounds. We will expand our ministry into their homes. We will open our hearts to those who have left our church family, for whatever reason. Our outreach efforts will be interwoven within each and every other ministry of our church, including Youth, Stewardship, the Festival and Philoptochos, to name a few.

Reviving and expanding our Holy Transfiguration Outreach Ministry is key to our salvation and to the continued growth and success of our parish. So, please open your hearts and minds to our solicitation of your help in the coming months, as our mission and plans unfold. We look forward to working together with all of you to continue to build and enhance our Parish family.

In His Service,

Becky Gess Valagohar

Hellenic Dance

Clockwise from top: Youth from our parish attend an Hellenic dance workshop, taught by an instructor of the visiting dance troupe; Theophilos and Vaios prepare a tasty meal; our guests from Greece dance into the night.

Lykion Megara

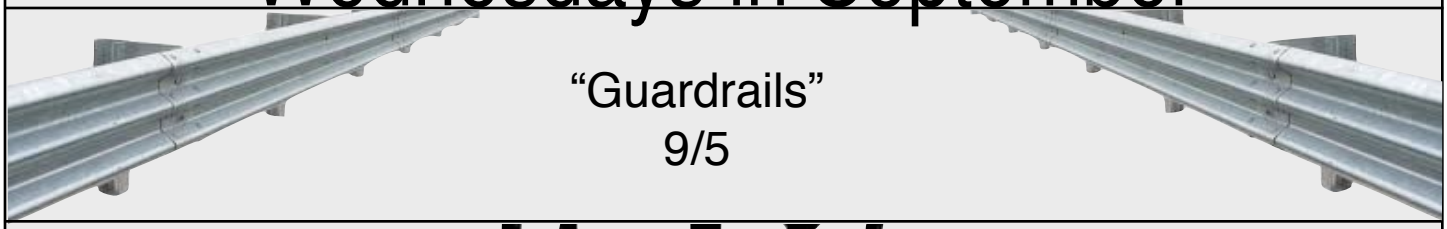
GOYA

Above: Evans at the oven, and Eli getting help with his apron with Michael and Vasili warming food.
Below: Yeoryia, Katie, Marika, and Ensley at the serving line.

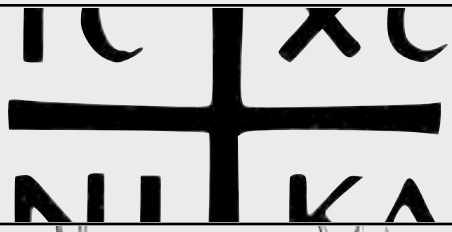
GOYA Activities

Fall Events

Wednesdays in September



"Guardrails"
9/5

9/12  "The Cross"

9/19 "The Hunter"

9/26 "Apologia"

HELLENIC DANCE NEWS

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

All dancers in the 6th – 12th grade have begun practicing.
We are keeping things relaxed and *fun*…so don't be shy…jump in and join us!!

↓↓↓

PRACTICE SCHEDULE for SEPTEMBER

• September 16th (from 1:00 – 3:00pm) in the Amphitheater •
→ *Fall practice kick-off and cookout* ←
• September 23rd (from 1:00 – 3:00pm) in the Amphitheater •
• September 30th (from 1:00 – 3:00pm) in the Amphitheater •
(Practice will move indoors to the PLC in case of bad weather)

↓↓↓

PERFORMANCES in SEPTEMBER

ATTENTION ALL DANCERS (2nd grade and up)
On Saturday, September 15th – Holy Transfiguration will be participating in the EAST COBBER Parade (www.eastcobber.com/parade)

We are looking for volunteers to take part in the parade, and *especially* for dancers who can perform (three) *very simple* dances at this event.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact:
Peggy Dunkerly (greekpd@comcast.net) *or* Dorian Bafas (dorianbafas@yahoo.com)

↓↓↓

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

Agios Nicholaos List (aka…the "Santa" list)

If you are inclined to make a donation to the Hellenic Dance program (to help us prepare for the festival)…we have a *great* opportunity for you!

The Hellenic Dance Ministry has started a "wishlist" of music CDs that we need to add to our library for our festival performances. Simply go to http://www.greekmusic.com/WishCart.asp?WishCode=464 to browse the list and consider placing an order. All donations are appreciated!

Donate gently-used dance shoes!!!
If you or your child have dance shoes that are in good condition, please consider donating the shoes to our program. They will be kept in the dance closet and used for performances throughout the year. Contact Dorian Bafas, Paulina Vastakis or Tasia Kipreos to schedule a drop off.

Hellenic Studies
Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church
Marietta, GA

Below are some updates regarding our Hellenic Studies program…
Please check in with us frequently at: www.holytransfiguration.info/hellenic-studies/

It's back to school time!

Youth and Adult language classes begin on Tuesday, September 18th at 5:30pm. We will begin with a blessing from Father, followed by registration and class assignments. Students will stay until 7:00pm.

→Some important information to note:

- We will *continue* to offer **Biblical Greek** on Saturdays – beginning September 22nd (see separate flyer in this issue of Syndiakonia)
- For those who cannot attend our classes during the given time periods or would like to learn at an accelerated pace, we are developing a program to *match you with a tutor* who can provide private lessons, at an hourly rate – please contact Eleni Clement if you are interested.

Tuition for the 2012-2013 academic year:

Adults - $250
Youth (first child in family) - $225
Youth (second child in family) - $200
Youth (third, fourth child, etc) - $175
Biblical Greek - $275

→Please note – the amount listed above is a one-time fee for the **entire school year**. Tuition is due by Friday, September 30th. A limited number of scholarships are available to anyone experiencing financial hardship. To enquire about a scholarship, please contact Eleni Clement at liebel7@yahoo.com. Payment plans are also available – please contact Eleni Clement if interested.

→Minimum enrolment for any class (Youth or Adult) will be 5 students. If we cannot fill a class for your language level, we will make arrangements to place you in another class accordingly.

→We will be focusing this year on keeping our **website** up-to-date with the latest news and announcements. Please check back frequently: www.holytransfiguration.info/hellenic-studies/

Looking forward to an amazing year!
Eleni Clement, Program Director

Introduction to New Testament Greek

Instructor: Fr. Panayiotis Papageorgiou, Ph.D.

Assistant Instructor: Eleni Clement, M.S. Education

We are offering a course in New Testament Greek for those who are interested in learning to read the New Testament in its original language.

This is an Introductory Course that will begin with the Greek Alphabet and basic structure of the Hellenistic form of Greek, including basic Grammar that will enable the student to read and translate the New Testament.

The main textbook for the course will be the New Testament itself. A grammar book and lexicon will also be assigned.

Meeting Place: Office Classroom - Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church
3431 Trickum Road, Marietta, GA 30066

Time: Every Saturday from 10:00 - 11:30 am

The class will begin on September 22, 2012

Tuition for the Academic Year: **$275**

ΕΝ ΑΡΧΗ ΗΝ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ
ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ
ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΣ
ΗΝ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ.

Holy Transfiguration - Hellenic Studies

New Testament Greek Class

Registration Form:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Please make your check Payable to **Holy Transfiguration - Hellenic Studies**

Remittance: _____

Please return this Registration Form with payment to the Office of Holy Transfiguration
Address: 3431 Trickum Road, Marietta, GA 30066. Tel. 770-924-8080 Fax. 770-924-3030
E-mail: holytrans@comcast.net or fr.panayiotis@comcast.net

Holy Transfiguration

Veterans Wall of Gratitude

For those who have fought for it, freedom has a taste the protected will never know.

In observance of Veteran's Day in November, Holy Transfiguration would like to honor those who have ever served in the military.

We would like to present a Wall of Gratitude in the PLC.
If you are currently serving, or have ever served in any branch of the military, in war or peace time, in any country, we need your help.

We would like to post a photo of you, (preferably in uniform, but if that's not available, any clear photo will do), so that we can start to build our wall.

Please list:

Your name and rank
Branch of the military
Country served
And the dates of service

Digital pictures are preferred, but if you only have a hard copy, please send it in, but please do NOT send the original. You can email the electronic pictures to Ellen Linebaugh at thelinebaughs@bellsouth.net, or mail a COPY of your original to Ellen Linebaugh, 2525 Arthur's Court, Marietta GA 30062.

If you have any questions, please call Ellen at 770-509-2517
Thanks and a HUGE thank you to those who have served or are serving.

Consecration of our Sanctuary

April 26-27, 2013

As we all are starting to prepare for a new Ecclesiastical Year, there is a small but hard working core group of people who are already planning and looking ahead to April of 2013. That's when we will celebrate the once in a lifetime event of the life of our church…its Consecration.

The Consecration is when the relics of a saint(s) are placed into the altar table during the service and the altar, the church building, and the ground it sits on are blessed and forever made hallowed. This happens once in the life of a church, and many people never have the opportunity to witness it.

It will be an honor and a blessing for us to see and experience it. How fitting for us to all work together for our church, as we ARE the church!

In the next few months, we will be looking for more support. You may be approached to help with the event, or you may wish to volunteer to help with it. Please prayerfully consider working alongside one another to make this a truly memorable time in the life of Holy Transfiguration.

Thank you and I look forward to working with all of you!

Ellen Linebaugh
Consecration Chair

Young cannabis smokers run risk of lower IQ, report claims

By Dominic Hughes

Health correspondent, BBC News, **27 August 2012**

Young people who smoke cannabis run the risk of a significant and irreversible reduction in their IQ, research suggests.

The findings come from a study of around 1,000 people in New Zealand.

An international team found those who started using cannabis below the age of 18 - while their brains were still developing - suffered a drop in IQ.

A UK expert said the research might explain why people who use the drug often seem to under-achieve.

For more than 20 years researchers have followed the lives of a group of people from Dunedin in New Zealand.

They assessed them as children - before any of them had started using cannabis - and then re-interviewed them repeatedly, up to the age of 38.

Having taken into account other factors such as alcohol or tobacco dependency or other drug use, as well the number of years spent in education, they found that those who persistently used cannabis suffered a decline in their IQ.

The more that people smoked, the greater the loss in IQ.

The effect was most marked in those who started smoking cannabis as adolescents.

For example, researchers found that individuals who started using cannabis in adolescence and then carried on using it for years showed an average eight-point IQ decline.

Stopping or reducing cannabis use failed to fully restore the lost IQ.

The researchers, writing in the US journal **Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences**, found that: "Persistent cannabis use over 20 years was associated with neuropsychological decline, and greater decline was evident for more persistent users."

"Collectively, these findings are consistent with speculation that cannabis use in adolescence, when the brain is undergoing critical development, may have neurotoxic effects."

One member of the team, Prof Terrie Moffitt of King's College London's Institute of Psychiatry, said this study could have a significant impact on our understanding of the dangers posed by cannabis use.

"This work took an amazing scientific effort. We followed almost 1,000 participants, we tested their mental abilities as kids before they ever tried cannabis, and we tested them again 25 years later after some participants became chronic users.

"Participants were frank about their substance abuse habits because they trust our confidentiality guarantee, and 96% of the original participants stuck with the study from 1972 to today.

"It is such a special study that I'm fairly confident that cannabis is safe for over-18 brains, but risky for under-18 brains."

Robin Murray, professor of psychiatric research, also at the King's College London Institute of Psychiatry but not involved in the study, said this was an impressive piece of research.

"The Dunedin sample is probably the most intensively studied cohort in the world and therefore the data are very good.

"Although one should never be convinced by a single study, I take the findings very seriously.

"There are a lot of clinical and educational anecdotal reports that cannabis users tend to be less successful in their educational achievement, marriages and occupations.

"It is of course part of folk-lore among young people that some heavy users of cannabis - my daughter callers them stoners - seem to gradually lose their abilities and end up achieving much less than one would have anticipated. This study provides one explanation as to why this might be the case.

"I suspect that the findings are true. If and when they are replicated then it will be very important and public education campaigns should be initiated to let people know the risks."

Quote: "There are a lot of clinical and educational anecdotal reports that cannabis users tend to be less successful in their educational achievement, marriages and occupations."

Professor Robin Murray
Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-19372456

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

All Ladies and Gentlemen of the Parish are welcome in Philoptochos. Come join the fun, fellowship and philanthropy!

Dates to remember:

September 7: Scholarship Award

September 8: Name Day of Father Panayiotis. Join us for coffee and muffins after the Divine Liturgy.

September 16: St. Euphemia (Patron Saint of the Philoptochos Metropolis.), Artoklasia

September 16: College Student Sunday

September 17: Board Meeting at 7 pm in the OCR

September 24: General Meeting

September 27: Book Club at the home of Lori Kollias

September 27: Soup Kitchen

September 30: Social Services Brunch

Soup Kitchen, headed by Athena Burke, would like to acknowledge the following for their Must Ministries service:

May: **Michael and Donnis Gavalas, Anna Lerios, Dorothy Macris, Pam Starks, Julie Orologas, Lois Bafas, Tina Vamvakias, Margaret Kollias, Michelle Broussard-Hanes and Tina Isaac.**

June: Our wonderful youth from GOYA prepared and served the food for 123 homeless: **Katie and Paul Jacobs, Evans and Ansley Nichols, Eli Nichols, Yeoryia and Marika Papadopoulos, Leslie Hansard, Paul Lundberg, Basile Zafiroulis and Michael Gavalas.**

Cooking/Donating Food: **Smith Levenson, Cathy Costarides, Donnis Gavalas, Dorothy Macris, Anthea Nichols, Lee Nichols, Annette Jacobs, Kally Niarchos and Jennie Miltiades.**

July: 89 homeless were served with the help from the school teachers at HTGOC, who are unable to help during the school year, as well as other parish members. Thanks to **Stephanie Lukens**, **Elena Kay**, **Donnis Gavalas**, **Kally Niarchos**, **Evelyn Bilson**, **Vicki Thorne**, **Rosemary Peppas**, **Linda Lopos, Lea Gormanos**, and **Liz Azimzadeh**.

Anyone who would like to help cook, serve or make a monetary donation, please contact Athena Burke at ibgreek@bellsouth.net or 770.973.3111.

Save the Date!! The **Philoptochos Fall Fundraiser** will be October 27th in the PLC. See flyer for details!

Panagia Chapter, Philoptochos Society

Presents a...

Radio Mystery Dinner Theater

Saturday, October 27, 2012

6:30—11:00 P.M.

Parish Life Center

Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church

3431 Trickum Rd., Marietta, GA

$35.00 per person (includes appetizers, dinner, dessert, beverage)

Cash Bar

Valuable Prize Drawings

Proceeds to benefit:

- Philoptochos Social Services
- HTGOC (our parish) Seminarians
- Andrew C. Carlos MS Institute at Shepherd

Limited Seating
Purchase tickets By
October 21, 2012

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Volunteers needed in following areas:

- **Building sets, props, sound effects, light boxes, platforms**
- **Costume design**
- **Photography & videography**
- **Singers**
- **Show Board**

For more information, contact:

Linda Lopos: 678-445-3556

Pat Koutouzis: 770-514-1337

Prime Timers BBQ

Sat.,Sept. 8, 2012
(Rain or Shine)

4:00 P.M.

$10/person

(Payment due by Sept. 1)

Parish Life Center or Patio
Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church

RSVP by Aug. 25

Dorothy Botni 770-971-9956
Linda Lopos 678-445-3556

September 2012

- Sacraments
- US Holidays
- Social Events/Rentals
- Ministry Meetings
- Divine Services

August 2012

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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September 2012

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30						

October 2012

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Twelfth Sunday of Matthew 8:30 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 11:30 AM 40 day Blessing 1:00 PM Phoenix/Eleftheria and 2 more...	27	28 6:00 PM Great Vespers, Be-heading of St. John the Fore-Runner	29 Remembranc...ner (Baptist) 9:00 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 7:00 PM GOYA Meeting	30 7:00 PM Hellenic Studies Teacher's Meeting	31 10:30 AM Prime Timers' Board Meeting	1 11:00 AM Blessing of the Water 5:00 PM Great Vespers
2 Thirteenth S...Environment 8:30 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy	3 Labor Day	4 6:30 PM Parish Council Meeting	5 7:00 PM Facilities Develop-ment Meeting 7:00 PM GOYA Meeting	6	7 6:00 PM Great Vespers for the Nativity of the Theotokos	8 Nativity of the Theotokos 8:45 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 2:00 PM Prime Timers' Pic- 2:00 PM Altar Boy Work- 5:00 PM Great Vespers
9 Sunday befo...9/11 attacks 8:30 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Catechism 12:00 PM Homecoming Picnic	10	11 11:00 AM Prayer for the victims of the Sept. 11 at-tacks 7:00 PM EYC Meeting	12 7:00 PM GOYA Meeting	13 6:00 PM Great Vespers for the Feast of the Elevation of the Holy Cross 7:00 PM Outreach Meeting	14 The Universa...giving Cross 8:45 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 5:00 PM Ceisel/Baleno Wedding Rehearsal	15 4:00 PM Ceisel/Baleno Wedding
16 Sunday after...e Holy Cross 8:30 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Catechism 12:00 PM Philoptochos Ar- and 4 more...	17 7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting	18 5:30 PM Hellenic Studies Cook-Out 6:30 PM Parish Council Meeting 7:00 PM AHEPA Kick-Off Meeting	19 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:00 PM Outreach Meeting 7:00 PM GOYA Meeting	20 7:00 PM Bible Study	21	22 5:00 PM Great Vespers
23 First Sunday...hn the Baptist 8:30 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Catechism 1:00 PM Phoenix/Eleftheria Dance Practice	24 7:00 PM Philoptochos Gen-eral Meeting	25 5:30 PM Hellenic Studies 7:00 PM Intro. to Ortho-doxy	26 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:00 PM GOYA Meeting	27 11:30 AM Soup Kitchen 6:30 PM Philoptochos Book Club 7:00 PM Bible Study	28 5:00 PM Lisgaris/Johnson Wedding Rehearsal	29 4:30 PM Lisgaris/Johnson Wedding
30 Second Sunday of Luke 8:30 AM Orthros 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 11:15 AM Catechism 12:00 PM Philoptochos 1:00 PM Phoenix/Eleftheria	1	2 5:30 PM Hellenic Studies 6:30 PM Parish Council Meeting 7:00 PM Intro. to Ortho-doxy	3 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:00 PM GOYA Meeting	4 Atlanta Greek Festival 7:00 PM Bible Study	5	6 2:00 PM Harrah/Paris Wed-ding 4:00 PM Harrah/Paris Wed-ding Reception

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
3431 TRICKUM ROAD
Marietta, GA 30066-4660

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United We Stand

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 9:30 am-5:30 pm
770.924.8080, Fax - 770.924.3030
Email: holytrans@comcast.net
Web Page: www.holytransfiguration.info/
Web Page: www.mariettagreekfestival.org

Rev. Fr. Panayiotis Papageorgiou, Ph.D., Protopresbyter
Rev. Fr. George Pallas, Protopresbyter
Paul Lundberg, Pastoral Assistant
Anne Willcocks, Parish Secretary

Scan to view our Website

DATE	PARISH COUNCIL DUTY	ACOLYTES	GREETERS	PROSFORO
Sept. 2, 2012	R. Rogers/S. Steffas	Team I	D. Botni/P. Koutouzis	A. Lerios/N. Porter
Sept. 9, 2012	J. Moustoukas/A. Tsarouhas	Team II	N. Gess/L. Kollias	S. Tidwell/M. Tingas
Sept. 16, 2012	E. Linebaugh/J. Tidwell	Team I	A. Johansen/L. Sampanes	I. Steffas/T. Vamvakias
Sept. 23, 2012	C. Costarides/A. Miltiades	Team II	TBA	N. Barke/F. Tucker
Sept. 30, 2012	P. Bilson/G. Lopos	Team I	R. Peppas	A. Burke/Y. Turner

Team 1: Chris Alberts, Nicholas Azimzadeh, Christopher Bilson, Anthony Bundros, Yanni Costarides, Chris Danos, Leo Frangis, Nicholas & Alex Gekas, Alexander Georgacopoulos, Yanni Gormanos, Paul Jacobs, Morgan Lilly, Michael Marianos, Zach Melissas, Michael Papadimitriou, Evan Papadopoulos, Will Papleacos, Matthew Paulson, Stratton Paulson, Dylan Rogers, Matthew Shanahan, Alex Skarpelis, Yianni Turner

Team 2: Alex & Nick Brewer, Chris, Daniel, & Michael Bridgers, Christos Costarides, Nick Danos, Alex Elias, Jacob & Stephen Harrah, Eli & Evans Nichols, Dean Papastrat, Lucas Porter, Michael Sarris, Mike Steffas, Luke & Nicholas Tassopoulos, Nicholas Zakreski