"You appeared to the world today, and Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us."

We hear these words in a hymn we sing on the feast of Epiphany on January 6. “Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us.”

Is this a true statement? Have each of us allowed the light of Jesus Christ to leave His mark on our lives? And what does it actually mean to have the light of Christ shine upon us? What impact should His divine light have in our lives?

These are some important questions to reflect upon as we begin a new year. Every Orthodox Christian should desire to have the divine light of our Lord shine within our hearts!

This prayer that we say at every Divine Liturgy teaches us that the light of Christ opens up our minds to the holy mysteries of God. Too often our eyes are focused solely on superficial and worldly things, instead of on meaningful and eternal precepts. We fill our minds daily with the mundane we hear on radio, TV, and the internet. Yet the light of Christ opens our minds to what is pure, holy and truly good in the world around...
The mission of Sts. Constantine and Helen Church is to proclaim the Good News of Salvation through the Orthodox Christian Faith for the glory of our Triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We are a community of believers who journey towards our Lord Jesus Christ and one another through our WORSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, SPIRITUAL GROWTH, WITNESS, and SERVICE. We invite all people to join us on this journey in the Kingdom of Heaven.

We are under the jurisdiction of
His Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew
His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of America
His Eminence, Metropolitan Methodios of Boston

Father Luke A. Veronis
Telephone: (508) 949-7623 (h)  (774) 230-6985 (cell)
email: veronis@verizon.net

2014 PARISH COUNCIL
President: Lisa Healy
Vice President: Garry Ross
Secretary: Lorna McWilliam
Treasurers: Nick Popiak, Cynthia Johnson
Members: Victor Apostolou, Leah DiDonato, Chris Geotis, Sandi Kunkel, Del Monroe, Mary Papageorge, Helen Pappas, Deborah Raymond

PHILOPTOCHOS
President: Evelyn Pappas
Vice President: Elizabeth Vriga
Secretary: Marie McNally
Treasurer: Sandi Kunkel
Church Secretary: Jaime Ross
Festival Chair: Joey Gliniecki, & Zack Gianaris

Cantor: Demetrios Milios
Choir Directors: Tony and Nike Beaudry
Greek Dance Group: Nike Beaudry

YOUTH: Pres Faith Veronis
Seminarians: Ron Burkhard, Nick Mueller, Steve Sarigianis, Brian Stefanovic
Ecclesiarch: Bill Anthopoulos,
Bookstore: Lorna McWilliams
Sexton: Katya Sidorchuk, Drew Kladas
Continued from Front Cover

us. This light then gives us a positive perspective through which to see the world.

This prayer also shows how the light of Christ guides us to respect and even revere the blessed commandments of God. How often do people look at God’s Commandments as some unwanted burden instead of special blessings. Well, the light of Christ opens up our eyes to understand that these commandments our Creator gave us are guidelines which will bless us and help us get the most out of life. Doesn’t it make sense that the one who created us knows what is best for His creation? Living under the light of Christ helps us appreciate and even love God’s Commandments. They will not be seen as a burden, but as a true blessing that enriches our lives!

A third fruit coming from the light of Christ, which we see in this prayer, is that His light helps us conquer our sinful desires. When we live under the light of God, we no longer live under the delusions of this world. Nothing can be hidden, and therefore, we see our sinful habits and ways more clearly - as habits that hurt and corrupt our soul, and separate us from our loving, heavenly Father.

Ultimately, the light of God is the light of divine love. When we live under God’s light, we live in love and harmony with God, with our neighbor, and with the world around us. Divine light does not allow the darkness of hatred, anger, hurt, bitterness, resentment, guilt, greed, or impurity to reside in us.

As we begin a new year, may we sincerely seek out, and pray for this divine light. May it shine in us brightly, and may we become mirrors radiating His light back to the world around us.

With love in our Lord Jesus,

+Luke

HOUSE BLESSINGS

In memory of Christ’s Baptism on the Feast of Epiphany, when Jesus sanctified all the waters of the world, the Orthodox Church follows an ancient tradition of holding the SERVICE OF THE BLESSING OF THE WATERS on January 6. The Church asks God’s blessing to come upon the water, which we then share with all believers. Through this water the grace of God comes upon us!

Following the service, the priest blesses all the believers in the Church with the holy water and offers them a bottle to take home and drink each day, or whenever they feel a special need for God’s grace. The Church also has the beautiful tradition of the priest taking the holy water into the homes of all believers and blesses their home. Through this ritual we ask for God’s blessings to come upon the household for the new year.

I am looking forward to visiting all the homes of parishioners from January 6 - 22. The following schedule gives an idea of when I will try to visit your area. I will visit the elderly and shut-ins during the morning hours. For those of you who work, I will come between 5:00-8:00 pm. If you have a specific time that you want me to visit, call me (774-230-6985).

If you are not home when I visit your house, I will leave a Church calendar and a bottle of Holy Water at your door. If you want me to return to your home for a blessing, please call me so that we can arrange another time.

HOUSE BLESSING SCHEDULE

Jan 5-8 - Webster
Jan 9-10 - Dudley/Charlton
Jan 11 - Oxford, Auburn, Sutton
Jan 12 - Thompson, Fabyan, N.Grosvenordale Quinebaug
Jan 13 - Putnam, Danielson, Woodstock
January 14 - 18 - Other Areas
THE “TRUTH” PROCLAIMED BY SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

In our society today, how often do we compromise the “Truth,” whether consciously or unconsciously, in order to appease public opinion? How often do we allow countless survey polls that inundate our lives to sway our belief of right and wrong, instead of relying on the unchangeable truth of the Gospel and the Church. If we see a survey which says 80% of the public believe that abortion is a right of the mother, does that make it true in God’s eyes? If in the United States today, 40% of babies are born out of wedlock and that the majority of young couples today choose to live together before getting married, does that make it something good, or right, or true in the eyes of God? Unfortunately, many people adjust their attitudes according to what is supposed to be politically correct according to latest Gallop or Pew Polls.

Public opinion polls even drown out serious and mature debate on crucial issues, like stem-cell research. The media focuses on the public’s passions and emotions, and turn the issue into a utilitarian debate, instead of wrestling with any moral or ethical implications. As Christians, we must welcome and encourage the advances of modern science, while challenging judgments based solely upon utilitarian benefits from the moral and ethical perspective.

As Orthodox Christians, and as the Church, we need to proclaim the eternal truth of the Gospel whether the message is popular or not, whether it makes people comfortable or uncomfortable. Remember, more often than not the Truth is not something comfortable and easy to hear. The Gospel constantly challenges our worldview and our lifestyle. The Orthodox Faith rejects the popular utilitarian approach to life, where people say that “the greatest good for the greatest number of people should be the main consideration in making a choice.” We need to base our choices on God’s will, on God’s plan of salvation, on God’s understanding of what is holy and pure and sacred and right. And when society deviates from this path, then the Church needs to act as a prophetic voice in speaking for the Divine, even when people prefer to ignore this voice!

On January 7th, we celebrate the memory of St. John the Baptist, “the greatest man born of woman,” who during the time of Jesus Christ helped prepare the way of the Lord by calling out to all, “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!” Repent, “metanoite,” means “to turn around,” or “to change the direction” you are presently going and return back to God’s path. St. John the Baptist preached to people who had forgotten the eternal truth, and who had compromised or found justifications to live according to society’s norms. Thus, he boldly proclaimed, “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!”

St. John captured the attention of huge crowds in the deserts of Judea precisely because people realized that the prophetic voice of God once again spoke in their lands. Israel had not seen an authentic prophet for centuries, and here came a man living in the desert a life of poverty, asceticism and self-denial, while communing with God and proclaiming His word! Although today’s society would look upon such a character and misunderstand him at best, or consider him strange or crazy at worst, precisely because he rejects and stand in contrast to the self-centered, narcissistic, materialistic life we know, still in ancient Israel the people had the sense to realize that John was a prophet, a man who radically and wholeheartedly devoted his life to God, and thus acted as His messenger and mouthpiece. The emphasis of St. John as God’s messenger can even be seen in the iconography of our Church, where you’ll notice that John has wings like an angel, which symbolizes John’s role as God’s messenger.
Well, as we commemorate St. John, all of us need to pause and reflect upon His witness and message pointing to what truth is, which is a message as relevant for us in our contemporary society as it was in preparing the way of the Lord in Israel 2000 years ago.

St. John prepared the people to receive the Christ by simply preaching the truth, by getting everyone to realize the lie and deception they lived under, and to return once again to the ways of the Lord. He did not believe in compromising the message of the Gospel in order to attract crowds, or to make people feel good or comfortable about themselves. To the contrary, as he preached, he ended up offending people who did not live according to the truth. He understood that he acted as a mouthpiece of God, and thus, he never based his preaching on public opinion. He knew quite well that the eternal message of the Lord and the truth of the Gospel stood on its own, whether people liked it or not!

St. John the Baptist clearly reminds us that eternal and divine truths are not to be determined by people’s opinions. Media, television, music and today’s superstars bombard us with the message that it is perfectly ok for two consenting adults to sleep together, to have an affair, or to fulfill their desires in any way they like – yet God’s truth says something radically different! As Tax Season approaches, much of society justifies that it is ok to cheat a little on your taxes - yet God’s truth says something different. Maybe the majority of our society accepts abortion as a legal means of birth control – yet the truth of our Church has always been that abortion is murder and evil, even if in some circumstances it may be the lesser of two evils.

Bishop Fulton Sheen once said, “Sins do not become virtues by being widely practiced. Right is still right even if nobody is doing it, and wrong is still wrong even if everyone is practicing it.”

By following our own standards, and forgetting about Divine Truth, people in society have become confused as to what exactly is right and wrong, and have thus fallen away from the straight and narrow path that leads to salvation. How many people today live confused lives filled with a false pursuit for superficial entertainment and happiness that will supposedly fill their lives with excitement, yet in the end realize that their lives continue to remain meaningless, bored, and empty. The Lord invites us to walk a very different path. When we strive to walk according to His divine truth, even though it may be a difficult and narrow path, we will discover a life of meaning and purpose, of divine love and joy, of inextinguishable peace and hope.

Our Lord Jesus promised, “I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly.” Each one of us has been created for greatness in Him. St. Paul describes this by saying “if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation” (2 Cor 5:17). St. Peter tells us how God invites all believers to become “partakers of his divine nature” (2 Pet 1:5). St. Luke describes how God made “known to us the ways of life, and he will make us full of gladness and joy” (Acts 2:18). By walking this narrow and straight path of Truth, contrary to the world’s deceptions, we may discover the fulfilling lives that God desires each of us to experience!

May we begin this New Year of 2014 renewing our commitment to live life and walk according to our Orthodox faith and the truth of God. May we re-examine the priorities, goals and direction of our lives and re-orient them towards Jesus Christ and His Gospel. And finally, may the memory of St. John the Baptist warn us not to be deceived and misled by the latest opinion polls of society, and not to follow their lead into deception and darkness, but instead may we truly repent and enter into the Kingdom of Heaven here and now!

A blessed New Year to all!
THE DIVINE LIGHT OF JESUS

Close your eyes and keep them closed. Imagine what it would be like to live in complete darkness. Imagine trying to walk around. Imagine being blind from birth, and never having seen what the world looks like. Never to have seen colors, or faces of people you loved. Living in darkness is hard to fathom! And yet, so many people live in darkness, in a deep spiritual darkness.

Now open your eyes and take in the sights all around. The Evangelist Matthew says, “Those who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.” St. Matthew takes up a common theme we read about throughout Holy Scriptures.

The Psalmist said, “You have delivered my soul from death and my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the LIGHT OF LIFE.” Psalm 56:13

Our Lord Jesus stated, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” (Jn 8:12) and “Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Mt 5:14-16

The Apostle Paul reminded us that “God is light and in him is no darkness” (1 John 1:5) and admonished us to “Shine as lights in the world in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil 2:14-15) and to “Walk as children of light” (Eph 5:5-16)

This theme of light comes up again and again. Maybe that’s because too often in the world around us, darkness seems to prevail – whether the darkness of hatred, anger, and violence; cheating, corruption and greed; impurity, lust and immorality; pride, self-centeredness, and self-love. We live in an age of unbelievable technological, medical and scientific advances, yet in a world where the same centuries-old vices of darkness plague us.

In the midst of this world’s darkness, Christ appears and proclaims loudly “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” What a beautiful promise to carry with us throughout this New Year. If we choose to follow Jesus, we no longer need to walk in darkness, but can have the light of life!

“The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom do I fear. The Lord is my life and my refuge, of whom am I afraid.” Psalm 27:1

Christ offers a radically different perspective than the world’s - one full of light, full of love, full of joy, full of promise, full of hope, full of meaning.

Of course, dark influences may always tempt us. We will face challenges, struggles, sorrow, disappointments, and difficulties. Yet when we walk intimately with Jesus Christ at our side, we won’t be blinded by the dark evil all around us. When we walk with our Lord daily, than nothing, can take away His divine light of love, joy, hope, promise and meaning!

This good news of LIGHT is a central part of the feasts which we celebrated these past weeks. At Christmas we rejoiced at the light God brought into the world by becoming human. Twelve
days after Christmas we celebrated the Feast of Epiphany, when we focus not only on Christ’s baptism, but on how Jesus revealed the true and full light of God into the world. After being born in a miraculous manner in Bethlehem, and living a humble life as the son of a carpenter for 30 years in Nazareth, now comes the moment when Jesus of Nazareth reveals his true identity, and the true identity of God Himself. Christ begins to proclaim the “good news of great joy” which the angels told the shepherds about on the night of Christmas. And “the people who sit in darkness saw a great light. On those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death, light has arisen!”

In the midst of this darkened world, Christ came and shined forth His light of eternal and divine love. Jesus is basically saying I am the light of the world that has come to overpower darkness. And I begin, not by casting out the darkness in society, but by casting out the darkness deep within every person. I begin by shining my light within you, my followers, to enlighten every part of your mind, your heart and your soul! I will fill you with my presence, and once you have my light shining brightly within you, than you will never be afraid of any darkness the world may bring.”

With the light of Christ, we can better understand his promise, “In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world!” Or as the Psalmist so aptly believed, “The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom do I fear. The Lord is my life and my refuge, of whom am I afraid.” (Ps 27:1)

Jesus is the light of life who enlightens our lives! He came as the light which breaks the darkness of death. Death, the frightening darkness of humanity, is destroyed by Christ. As St. Paul says, “O death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory?” Through Christ, the darkness of death is turned into a peaceful doorway into heaven.

Christ came as the light of divine knowledge which shine in the midst dark ignorance. He is the light of knowledge, revealing to us the truth about God and the truth about life. Christ has revealed to us that we are God’s children, created for eternity. We have a purpose on earth – to receive God’s love in our lives, and then to be His instruments sharing His love with other people.

Jesus Christ came to shine His love in the midst of the dark hatred that surrounds our lives. Jesus revealed that love is greater than hate, and good is greater than evil. As a light within each one of us, he teaches us to allow His light of love to chase away the shadows of hatred, bitterness, and injury that dwell deep within us. No matter how dark any darkness is, His light is always greater!

Finally, Christ came to shine His light as a guiding beacon to direct our lives. He shows us the way to live in harmony with others, in service to others, in peace with others, in love with others. Our Lord’s light can be seen through His example and teachings.

May we all learn to walk in His light and with His light, and allow Christ to open our eyes and experience life through His divine light.
The Light—January 2014

THEOPHANY - The Feast of Lights
And The Blessing of the Waters

The feasts of Christmas and Epiphany were known in the early Church as “The Feast of Lights,” since both feasts revealed Jesus Christ to the world. Our Lord is the true light that enlightens the entire world!

Christ’s entrance into the world is a new beginning for all people. No longer do people have to live in the darkness of ignorance, in the darkness of fear, in the darkness hatred, in the darkness of evil and sin, and even in the darkness of death. The true light of God has been revealed, and now those who choose to enter into that light, who allow the light of Christ to shine brightly within their hearts and minds, may see the world from an entirely new and fresh perspective!

The light of Christ lifts us up from our fallen, distorted nature – our tendency to hate, to be jealous, to be proud and arrogant, to be self-centered, to be unkind, unforgiving and unloving. The light of Christ shows us the path to an abundant life of godly peace and joy, divine love and mercy, contagious compassion and kindness, and ultimate meaning and purpose.

At Christmas, God takes on human flesh and reveals himself as the perfect God-man, fully divine yet fully human. Simultaneously, at the Baptism of our Lord, Theophany, God again reveals Himself to the world as the Holy Trinity – God the Father speaking from the cloud, God the Son in Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus in the form of a dove. Both events help the world come to a clearer and better understanding of who God is, and how He has dramatically entered into our world to help humankind!

We can understand this idea from this hymn we sing on January 6: “You appeared to the world today, and Your light, O Lord, has left its mark upon us. With fuller understanding we sing to You, “You came, O unapproachable Light, and made yourself known to us!”

In memory of Christ’s baptism, when He sanctified all the waters of the world, the Orthodox Church follows an ancient tradition of holding the SERVICE OF THE BLESSING OF THE WATERS on January 6. The Church asks God’s blessing to come upon the water, which we then share with all believers. Through this water the grace of God comes upon us!

In preparation for this special blessing, Orthodox Christians hold January 5 as a strict fast day. Our fasting is a tool which, when properly used, helps us focus more clearly on God and prepares us to enter into the celebration of the feast in a more intimate manner.

Following the service, the priest blesses all the believers in the Church with the holy water and offers them a bottle to take home and drink each day, or whenever they feel a special need for God’s grace. The Church also has the beautiful tradition of the priest taking the holy water into the homes of all believers and blesses their home. Through this ritual we ask for God’s blessings to come upon the household for the new year. Fr. Luke will come into all the homes of our Church Family throughout the month of January, and bring you this blessing. Look on page 2 for the Blessing Schedule.
May we all enter into the New Year with a sound resolution to walk according to the ways of the Lord!
Here are some suggestions on how to live each day:

ALWAYS BE HONEST
Proverbs 12:22

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS
Psalms 34:1-3

BEAR ONE ANOTHER’S BURDENS
Galatians 6:2

FORGIVE AND FORGET
Micah 7:18

BE KIND AND TENDER HEARTED
Ephesians 4:32

COMFORT ONE ANOTHER
1 Thessalonians 4:18

KEEP YOUR PROMISES
Romans 4:21

BE SUPPORTIVE OF ONE ANOTHER
Acts 20:35

BE TRUE TO EACH OTHER
Revelation 15:3

LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER
Deuteronomy 15:11

TREAT EACH OTHER LIKE YOU TREAT YOUR FRIENDS
Matthew 7:12

but most important

LOVE ONE ANOTHER DEEPLY FROM THE HEART
1 Peter 1:22

A DAILY PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

O Lord, grant me to greet the coming day in peace.
Help me in all things to rely upon Your holy will.
In every hour of the day reveal your will to me.
Bless my dealings with all who surround me.
Teach me to treat all that comes to throughout the day with peace of soul and with firm conviction that Your will governs all.
In all my deeds and words, guide my thoughts and feelings.
In unforeseen events, let me not forget that all things are under Your care.
Teach me to act firmly and wisely, without embittering and embarrassing others.
Give me strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day with all that it shall bring.
Direct my will according to Your will.
Teach me to pray.
Pray Yourself within me.
Transform my life into a living prayer to you. Amen.

Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow
A Different New Year's Resolution

By Father Hector Firoglanis

For many people, New Years is a time to make resolutions in their lives—to make changes or to recommit themselves to something in order to improve their lives. For example, New year’s Resolutions may include quitting smoking, losing weight, or spending more time with the family.

These are good goals, but rarely do we hear of repentance and re-dedicating our lives to God as a New Year’s Resolution. This is exactly what the Church is calling each of us to do as we begin the New Year with the Feast of Theophany.

By repenting, we turn away from our sins and bad habits, and re-orient ourselves back into communion with God and our neighbor.

St. John the Forerunner, before baptizing the Lord, came to preach repentance, to turn the attention of the people towards Christ. Without repentance, everything we do and experience in our lives loses meaning, because it is only with repentance that we maintain God as the center of our lives.

The same is true when we participate in the Sacraments (or Mysteries) of the Church. Without a life of repentance, they are out of context and lose their meaning.

We may want the benefits of Holy Water, Holy Communion, and Prayer, but without repentance, without the effort of turning away from our sins and re-committing our whole life to Christ our God, we will not get their full benefit.

The Mysteries of the Church are not magic. In order for God’s grace to manifest its power through the waters of Epiphany and the Holy Eucharist of the Divine Liturgy, we must first repent and approach these mysteries with faith.

In fact, St. Paul warns that if we receive Holy Communion unworthily - that is, without preparation, repentance and faith - we may harm ourselves spiritually and may even become physically sick (1 Corinthians 11:28-30). The same applies for Holy Water, Holy Unction, and every other Mystery of the Church.

During this month of January, the Church is reminding us again to begin the New Year with repentance. For example, if we are in the habit of skipping the Divine Liturgy on some Sundays, or coming late, let us make a resolution to try coming to Church on time every Sunday.

If we have not spoken with a family member or friend due to an argument or a grudge, let us embrace this person in a spirit of forgiveness and love this year.

If over the years we have become accustomed to gossiping and speaking negatively about others, let us begin this year to resist the malicious urge to speak evil of others.

In this way, with a spirit of repentance, we will experience more fully the grace of God through the Holy Waters of Theophany, through the oil of Holy Unction, through the Eucharist, and through all the mysteries of the Church.

If we make daily repentance our New Year’s Resolution, then we will grow closer to God and discover greater meaning and purpose in

The Light - January 2014
RECIPE FOR A BLESSED & HAPPY NEW YEAR

Take twelve fine, full-grown months; see that these are thoroughly free from old memories of bitterness, anger, hurt and hatred; cleanse them completely from every clinging spite; pick off all specks of pettiness, littleness, pride, and self-centered passion; in short, see that these months are freed from all the bad memories of the past.

Look at each new month with a newness and freshness of life, clean as when God brought forth each day from the great storehouse of time. Cut each of these months into 30 or 31 equal parts. Do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time (so many persons spoil the entire lot this way), but prepare each day one day at a time.

Into each day put equal parts (and a good share at that) of divine love, joy, faith, patience, courage, hope, generosity and kindness. Add a good portion of fidelity, tolerance, work (some people omit this ingredient and so spoil the flavor of the rest) and rest (leaving this out is like leaving the oil out of the salad dressing - don’t do it). And make sure not to forget a good measure of prayer, meditation, Bible-reading, and a serious attempt of Christ-like living. After every six days make sure to leave the seventh day as a day for God - going to Church and being filled with His Holy Mysteries.

Put in about one teaspoonful of good spirits, a dash of fun and relaxation, a pinch of good natured folly, a sprinkling of play, and a heaping cupful of good humor.

This is a sure-fire recipe for a most blessed and joyous New Year!
Christmas Pageant 2013

A Visit from St. Nicholas
MARTIN LUTHER KING BREAKFAST

The Churches of Webster, Dudley and Oxford will hold our annual Martin Luther King Ecumenical Prayer Service at 8:30am on January 20th at St. Roch’s Catholic Church in Oxford. This will be followed by a breakfast and our speaker, HERMAN W. HEMINGWAY, JR, the last living fraternity brother of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Hemingway is a well respected lawyer who taught criminal justice studies and law at Boston University, Boston College and the UMASS at Boston. He has lectured worldwide for the State Department, throughout Africa, and most recently in Quebec. He founded the Human Rights Commission for the City of Boston.
THANK YOU
To all those who helped our Church Family give 35 Christmas Presents to the Giving Tree for needy children; for the 10 Christmas Presents we bought for residents of Holy Trinity Nursing Home, and for the 17 Ham Christmas baskets and gift cards we gave to 25 other families!

Thank You to All Who Made Special Donations for Christmas!

The Boxwood Altar Trees - For the Glory of God from the Vriga Family
Christmas Wreath - “In memory of George Sgouritsas” from John and Eleni Sgouritsas
Christmas Wreath - “For the glory of God” from George and Helen Kerbici
“In loving memory Arthur and Tess Pappas” from Lisbeth Tonna
“For the Glory of God” from John & Eleni Sgouritsas
“In loving memory of my parents” from Rita Carabina
“In loving memory of Alex and Christine Pappas” from Sandi Kunkel
“In loving memory of Louis & Virgina Bregou” from Sandi Kunkel
“In loving memory of Loucia Christos” from Evelyn Pappas
“In loving memory of Maralyn Quillia” from Del and Marie Monroe
“For the Glory of God” from an anonymous donor
“In loving memory of our parents” from Ann and Charles Chito
“Thanksgiving for God’s Blessings” from Aristoteli and Gloria Panagiotou
“For the Glory of God” from Betty Vriga
“For the Glory of God” from Leah Didonato
“In loving memory of Bruce Condos” from Despina and Bill Condos
“In loving memory of my beloved wife Bessie” from Gus Koulax
“For the glory of God” from Demetrios and Hariklia Milios
“In loving memory of Maria Koufos” from Stephanie and Jared Quill
“In loving memory of Demetri Vesho” from Norman & Barbara Desrosier & Lorraine Vesho
Bring in the Blessing of the New Year and Come to our annual

Vasilopita Luncheon

11:15 am, Sunday, Jan. 12th following the Divine Liturgy

THE TRADITION OF THE “VASILOPITA,” which means the sweet “bread of Basil” commenced in the fourth century, when Saint Basil the Great, a bishop in Cappadocia of Caesarea (Asia Minor) in the last half of the 4th century, wanted to distribute money anonymously to the poor in his Diocese. He commissioned some women to bake sweetened bread, in which he arranged to place gold coins. Thus the needy families, in cutting the bread to nourish themselves, were pleasantly surprised to find gold coins. St. Basil is considered as one of the greatest philanthropists in Church history, who was also the first person ever to establish an orphanage for children, and is the founder of the modern day hospital. The Vasilopita tradition has been carried on until today, where special sweet bread is prepared both in Orthodox homes and in the Church community. Sweets are added to the bread which symbolize the sweetness and joy of life everlasting, as well as the hope that the New Year will be filled with the sweetness of life, health, and happiness for all who participate in the Vasilopita observance.

Mark Your Calendar:

Godparents/Grandparents Sunday

FEBRUARY 2nd

Invite Your Godchildren/Godparents and Grandchildren/Grandparents to Come to Church on this Sunday, and to Enjoy a Special Luncheon.
The Light - January 2014

Congratulations to our 2014 Parish Council

President: Lisa Healy
Vice President: Garry Ross
Secretary: Lorna McWilliam
Treasurers: Nick Popiak, Cynthia Johnson

Victor Apostolou, Leah Didonato
Chris Geotis, Sandi Kunkel
Del Monroe, Mary Papageorge
Helen Pappas, Debby Raymond

HOLY CHRISMATION
Please welcome our catechumens, TONY BEAUDRY and RAYNE PURCELL, as full members of our Church Family when they receive the Mystery of Holy Chrismation on Sunday, January 12th.

YOUTH ICE SKATING
SUNDAY JAN 19TH

GOYA DINNER DIALOGUE
SUNDAY JAN 26

WEEKDAY CHURCH SERVICES

GREAT VESPERS:
Saturday 5:30 pm, January 4, 11, 25

WEEKDAY DIVINE LITURGIES
(Liturgy begins at 9:30am)

Jan 1 - St. Basil the Great
*Jan 6 - Holy Epiphany
Jan 7 - St. John the Baptist
Jan 17 - St Anthony the Great
Jan 25 - St Gregory the Theologian
Jan 30 - The Three Hierarchs

EARLY RISERS BIBLE STUDY
6:30 am - 7:30 am
Every Saturday

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY
10:00 - 11:15
Every Wednesday
Beginning Jan 15th
All Are Welcome!
Resentment is like drinking poison, and then hoping it will kill your enemies.

_Nelson Mandela_
Remembering Our Church Family

**Important Dates in JANUARY:**

Make a visit or give a call and express your congratulations to our Church family members who celebrate special days during this month.

**BIRTHDAYS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>Kara Bilis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>Michael Pappas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>Stavros Pappas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>Eva Apostolou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 3</td>
<td>Garry Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 5</td>
<td>Smaranda Cojocaru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 5</td>
<td>Neal Neslusan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Petru Cojocaru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Gloria Panagiotou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>Mia Beaudry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 16</td>
<td>Olivia Neslusan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Ava Darligiannis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>Tessa Benoit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Tony Beaudry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 22</td>
<td>Theodora Veronis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>Maria Jordanoglou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>John Nicholopoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 29</td>
<td>Niko Milios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 29</td>
<td>George Condos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Panayiota Veronis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Sandi Kunkel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Tom Baxter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NAMEDAYS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1</td>
<td>St Basil the Great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bill Anthopoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 6</td>
<td>Epiphany - “Ta Fota”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faith Fotini Veronis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 7</td>
<td>St John The Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Baraklilis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smaranda Ioana Cojocaru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Grzyb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Milios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yanni Mironides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yianni Moutoudis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Neslusan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Nicholopoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Nikopoulos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Sgouritsas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>St. Anthony the Great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tony Beaudry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anton Cojocaru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 18</td>
<td>St Athanasios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arthur Bilis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arthur Darligiannis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Athanasisa Darligiannis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ava Athanasisa Darligiannis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>St. Tatiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tatiana Zhuk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTRIBUTIONS VS. COMMITMENT

A growing problem facing our world and the Church today is the increasing number of people who have given up commitment to become contributors. Contributions are much easier than commitments. The average person on the job contributes whatever is necessary to keep his paycheck coming in. He is not committed to his company. It is only a boring way to make money. Check the shoddy craftsmanship on a lot of items you buy and you will see what I mean. You probably already know.

Most Churches have the same problem. Members contribute enough time, effort and money to be recognized as a member and to soothe their own conscience. They are not committed to the Church or to the Lord. They will contribute to just about anything as long as it does not cost them anything but they will sacrifice nothing, especially themselves.

Jesus succeeded in His mission because He was totally committed to the task before Him. He was willing to give up everything, even His life, for the cause He believed in. No one really succeeds in life until he reaches the point that he is willing to lay down his life. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone."

If your life as a Christian has not been as meaningful as you would like for it to be, you might check your total Stewardship Commitment. If your life is only a series of small contributions, that could be your problem. Paul says that we are to offer ourselves to God as a living sacrifice."

Does your Stewardship Commitment reflect a contribution or a commitment? "Let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God?"
HOLY SCRIPTURE

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:19-20

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.

Matthew 6:33-34

Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

Matthew 7:7-8

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gage and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who follow it. But narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and few find it.

Matthew 7:13-14

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

JANUARY

Jan 1 Colossians 2:8-12  Luke 2:20-52
Jan 2 Hebrews 5:4-10  John 3:1-15
Jan 4 1 Timothy 3:13-4:5  Matthew 3:1-6

Jan 5 2 Timothy 4:5-8  Mark 1:1-8
*Jan 6 Titus 2:11-3:7  Matthew 3:13-17
Jan 7 Acts 19:1-8  John 1:29-34
Jan 8 Romans 6:3-11  John 3:22-33
Jan 9 2 Timothy 2:1-10  Mark 1:9-15

Jan 12 Ephesians 4:7-13  Matthew 4:12-17
Jan 18 Hebrews 13:7-16  Matthew 5:14-19

Jan 19 Colossians 3:4-11  Luke 17:12-19
Jan 21 Philippians 1:12-20  Luke 12:8-12
Jan 22 2 Timothy 1:3-8  Matthew 10:32-38
Jan 23 Philippians 3:20-4:3  Mark 2:23-3:5
Jan 24 Galatians 5:22-6:2  Matthew 6:22-33
Jan 25 Hebrews 7:26-8:2  John 10:9-16

Jan 27 Hebrews 7:26-8:2  John 10:9-16
Jan 29 Hebrews 10:32-38  Mark 9:33-41
Jan 30 Hebrews 13:7-16  Matthew 5:14-19
Thank You to those who sponsor our monthly bulletin!

If you would like to place an ad and support our monthly bulletin, please contact Fr. Luke or the Church Office.

$200/year or $20/month.

Dudley - Auburn - Blackstone

Robert J. Miller, Inc.
Funeral Services
366 School Street
Webster, MA 01570
Tel. (508) 943-0045
ROBERT J. MILLER  Toll Free 866-360-0045
Funeral Director  Fax (508) 943-3163
Email: miller.funerals@verizon.net   www.rjmillerfunerals.net

Sitkowski and Malboeuf
Funeral Home
340 School Street
Webster, MA 01570
508-943-1515

Roland P. Malboeuf, Funeral Director
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 St. Basil</td>
<td>9:15 Matins</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10:00 Liturgy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6:30 Bible Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5:30 Vespers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>6 Epiphany</td>
<td>7 St John</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:45 Matins</td>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>11:30 Clergy Luncheon at Church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>with Blessing of the Waters</td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>House Blessings in Webster</td>
<td>House Blessings in Dudley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blessings in Webster</td>
<td>Blessing of the Waters</td>
<td>House Blessings in Webster</td>
<td>House Blessings in Dudley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blessings in Webster</td>
<td>Blessings in Other Areas</td>
<td>House Blessings in Other Areas</td>
<td>House Blessings in Dudley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>13 House Blessings in Putnam, Danielson,</td>
<td>14 House Blessings in Other Areas</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>Woodstock</td>
<td>House Blessings in Other Areas</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>with Christmations</td>
<td>6:30 Parish Council</td>
<td>House Blessings in Other Areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11:15 Vasilopita Luncheon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blessings in NE CT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>20 House Blessings in Dudley</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>Martin Luther King</td>
<td></td>
<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>JOY Ice Skating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:30 Matins</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GOYA Dinner Dialogue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8:45 Matins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25 St Gregory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6:30 Bible Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8:45 Matins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5:30 Vespers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Daily Prayer for the New Year

THE SERENITY PRAYER
Reinhold Niebuhr

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
enjoying one moment at a time;
accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;
trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will;
that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him forever in the next.