On March 25, we celebrate the feast of the Annunciation, when God Himself descended from the heights of heaven to come and dwell among us. The eternal and almighty Creator of the Universe left His glory and became one of us, to show us how much He loves us. He loves us so much that He willingly came to save us from the fallen world in which we live.

One of the feastal hymns says, “How shall He whose throne is heaven and whose footstool is the earth be held in the womb of a woman? He who cannot be contained is contained.... The Creator becomes a creation.... God self-emptied himself because of his compassion for humanity.”

What an incomprehensible mystery – the Creator of the universe entering inside the womb of a young virgin, becoming a helpless child, and putting on the humility of humanity. And yet, as strange and incomprehensible as this miracle sounds, we must remember the Archangel Gabriel’s words to the Virgin Mary, “For nothing is impossible with God.” When God so wishes, even the order of nature is overcome.

And through this great condescension, “Our restoration is now made manifest to us: God is ineffably united to humanity and the world is freed from the ancient curse of death.”

This feast of the Annunciation reveals the beginning of our salvation. The salvific work of Christ was a process, which began when God entered into the womb of the Virgin Mary, continued throughout his life of miracles and teachings, and ended with His victory through the Cross, Resurrection and the sending of the Holy Spirit upon His followers.

Our Lenten journey leads us to Holy Week and the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. Although these events are the most important and earth-shattering events of history, the process begins at the Annunciation, on the day when Christ enters into the fallen world, takes his place among his creation and begins the restoration of fallen humanity.

This feast of the Annunciation reminds us that we are not alone in this harsh world. God has not for-
Sts. Constantine and Helen
Greek Orthodox Church
37 Lake Parkway, PO Box 713
Webster, MA 01570
Church Telephone: (508) 943-8361  website: www.schwebster.org
Facebook: St Constantine Helens (Church)
Church Office Hours: Monday, Fridays 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

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

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gotten us or abandoned us. We do not need to face the mystery of life, with all its struggles and uncertainties, by ourselves. For God is with us!

As we read the daily newspapers and look around the world, we see so much suffering, pain, sorrow, tragedy. To balance the ‘bad news’ of each day, this feast reminds us of the Good News. The Annunciation announces that God has come in our midst. God has entered into this troubled world to participate and transform our suffering, sorrow, and despair. We do not believe in a God who lives far away in the heavens. But we believe in a God who is near us, ready to help us!

St. Paul explains it this way: “We do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weakness, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:15 -16)

What greater message can we proclaim than to know that the Almighty Creator of the universe lived among us, experienced life as we know it, faced the same temptations and dangers, felt abandoned and rejected by the world, and yet overcame the world! As our Lord Jesus comforted his followers, “In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.” (Jn 16:33)

In others words, God has totally identified with our human nature. Yet in the end, He not only participated in our humanity, but lifted up our human nature and allowed it to participate in His divinity! A life in Christ offers us His ultimate victory over all pain, suffering, despair and evil, even allowing us to unite with Him in his eternal glory.

We all need to remember this Good News again and again. If we wait for good news from political systems or powerful individuals, we’ll only find disappointment. As the Psalmist says so beautifully: “Do not put your trust in princes, in sons of men, in whom there is no help. When their breath departs, they return to the earth, and on that very day their plans perish.” Our only and sure hope is in God Himself!

And that is the message of the Annunciation. God has come. God is with us. God is one of us. And with that knowledge, we can face whatever mysteries life will bring us. Let us take comfort and rejoice in this good news!

In Christ’s love,

+ Fr. Luke

P.S. On a separate note, the renovations of our Church Hall and Kitchen are moving along, although they have been slowed a bit by the weather and some unforeseen delays. Lord willing, we will be near completion by Palm Sunday, and be able to use the hall for our annual Palm Sunday meal, as well as our Pascha luncheon! Please prayerfully reflect on how you can support and participate in the Capital Campaign for our “Vision for the Future.” See more on page 11.
Beloved in Christ, we have to see ourselves as being *different* than the world around us! As Christians we are called to be “in the world, but not of the world.” (John 15:19). The Scripture says “come out and be *separate*…..” (2 Cor. 6:17)

Yet this can be very difficult in a world that pressures us to conform to its ways and to be *connected* to it at all times. We live in this age of the 24hr news cycle, which most of the time is not really “news,” but entertainment, shock factor, blog/twitter commentary of usually trivial information. We live in the age of text, twitter, snapchat, Facebook, etc., and we’re pressured to feel we have to be connected constantly or we’ll miss something.

And yes, we are missing something - we’re missing Jesus and a relationship with Him. We’re missing silence, prayer, stillness, reflection. And instead, we’ve become impersonal, impatient, addicted, nervous if we don’t have our iPhone “on us” at all times. Is this human advancement? Is this progress of civilization?

Simply because Mark Zuckerberg says this is the way we should live, think, interact, then must it be so? Who is he anyway - a prophets, a saint? Meanwhile, like the national heroin epidemic, we have the smart phone/screen addiction epidemic. Yet people are in denial as their texting thumbs ache from carpal tunnel. Is all this natural? We’re all high on information overload and our minds are not wired to handle it.

In his book *The Shallows*, Nicholas Carr explores the impact that our perpetual internet connection is having on the way we think. Numerous studies point to the same conclusion, he writes: “When we go online, we enter an environment that promotes cursory reading, hurried and distracted thinking, and superficial learning. We’ve grown quite adept at scanning and skimming, but what we are losing is our capacity for concentration, contemplation and reflection.”

Yes, we need the technology to function, but how much have we allowed it to control us? Are we able to take breaks, step away and be *separate* – and make a connection with God without a screen in front of us?

**GREAT LENT**

Now more than ever, Lent is a great way to feel that *separation* during these 40 days of prayer and fasting; to feel that things are different; to slow down, put the phone aside, and turn inward and in God’s presence.

Beloved, don’t let trendy modern gadgetry rule and ruin your life! Use moderation and self-discipline. Take breaks from your home/office computer and smart phone. Get some exercise; take a walk; communicate face to face with your spouse and children; come to church more often to pray and get connected with the “spiritual network,” not just the social network. Rather than constantly gaze at the icon apps on your computer screen at home, come to Sunday Liturgies and the Lenten services and gaze at the Iconostasion.
icon screen and enter into true connection and real prayer.

I certainly realize the importance of networking and messaging, etc. But I also believe that as modern Orthodox Christians we have a responsibility, whether its through banners on our texts, tweets, emails, websites, etc, to not only spread the truth of Christ and the Gospel, but to communicate the message to use less technology, in order to remind people to take significant breaks from “the screen.”

Yes, we enjoy new technology to function, but how much have we allowed it to control us?

Less is more. Less screen means more worship time; it means more time alone reading the Bible, in prayer, in reflection, without all the beeps and buzzing. It means more quality family time, more time in communication and interaction with your spouse; more real conversations and human interaction with real people; more eyes off the screen and contemplating the beauty of nature and God’s presence in all things with our natural eyes.

Do not conform to this world, but be transformed (Romans 12:2). Social media has a highly addictive and time consuming effect which can negatively affect our marriages, families and relationships. Therefore we should not feel pressured to conform to all the jinglism of the technology lingo. Certainly it’s fine to do so in moderation, but I submit that its also ok if you do not choose to like us or friend us or follow us….and it doesn’t mean that you’re not hip or cool. And, though it may be a bit extreme, I declare it’s also ok if you want to throw your phone out the window and say enough!

I believe that we are way beyond society simply “adjusting” to the new technology, as we have in the past to the advent of radio, television or the remote control. We’re in a spiritual and contemplative free fall. Just google “screen addiction” and read for yourself.

I also think its fascinating that as we “advance” with the larger HD 3D TV’s and ever more vivid images of “the screen,” we have very little that is good (noble, just, pure, lovely) to display (Philippians 4:8). Most modern movies and TV shows lack creativity, art, joy and beauty. Without God, is that not the result? We have fantastic screens, but terrible entertainment. It seems modern man has lost his soul as fast as the speed of technology advances.

And so therefore beloved in Christ, during this beautiful Lenten season, may we “consider our ways.” (Haggai 1:7). Let us come out and be separate - not conforming to the world but transforming the times. And let us consider some serious fasting from the gadgetry that controls us, and focus on disconnecting…… so that we may truly connect, and commit ourselves, and one another, and our whole life, to Christ our God.
The Annunciation!

At one time this was one of the brightest and most joyful days of the year, the feast which consciously, and even unconsciously, was connected with a jubilant intuition, a radiant vision of the world and of life. The Gospel of St. Luke records the story of the Annunciation. (Luke 1: 26-38).

Of course, viewed from the perspective of so-called “scientific” atheism this Gospel story supplies plenty of reasons for speaking of “myths and legends.” The rationalist will say, “When do angels ever appear to young women and hold conversations with them? Do believers really think that people of the twentieth century, living in a technological civilization, could believe this? Can’t believers see just how silly, unscientific and impossible this is?”

The believer always has only one answer to this kind of contentious debate, disparagement and ridicule: yes, alas, it is impossible to fit this into your shallow worldview. As long as your arguments about God and religion remain on the superficial level of chemical experiments and mathematical formulas you will always easily win. But chemistry and mathematics are of no help whatsoever in proving or disproving anything at all in the realm of God and religion. In the language of your science, the words angel, glad tidings, joy and humility are of course completely meaningless. But why limit the discussion to religion? More than half of all words are incomprehensible to your rationalist language, and therefore in addition to religion you will have to suppress all poetry, literature, philosophy and virtually the whole of human imagination. You desire the entire world to think as you do, in terms of production and economic forces, of collectives and programs. Yet the world does not naturally think in this way and must be handcuffed and forced to do so, or rather, appear to do so. You say that all imagination is false because the “imaginary” does not exist, and yet the imagination is what people have always lived by, live by now, and will in the future as well. For everything most profound and most essential in life has always been expressed in the language of imagination.

I don’t pretend to understand what an angel is, nor, using the limited language of rationalism, can I explain the event that occurred almost two thousand years ago in a tiny Galilean town. But it strikes me that mankind has never forgotten this story, that these few verses have repeatedly been incorporated into countless paintings, poems and prayers, and that they have inspired and continued to inspire. This means, of course, that people heard something infinitely important to them in these words, some truth which apparently could be expressed in no other way than in the childish, joyful language of Luke’s Gospel.

What is this truth? What happened when the young woman, barely past childhood, suddenly heard — from what profound depth, from what transcendent height! — that wonderful greeting: “Rejoice!” For that is indeed the angel’s message to Mary: Rejoice!

The world is filled with countless books on struggle and competition, each attempting to show that the road to happiness is hatred, and in none of them will you find the word “joy.” People don’t even know what the word means. But the very same joy announced by the angel remains a pulsating force, that still has power to startle and shake the human hearts.
Go into a church on the eve of Annunciation. Stay, wait through the long service as it slowly unfolds. Then the moment comes when after the long wait, softly, with such divinely exquisite beauty the choir begins to sing the familiar festal hymn, “With the voice of the Archangel, we cry to You, O Pure One: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with You!” Hundreds and hundreds of years have gone by, and still, as we hear this invitation to rejoice, joy fills our heart in a wave of warmth.

But what is this joy about? Above all we rejoice in the very presence of this woman herself, whose face, whose image, is known throughout the world, who gazes upon us from icons, and who became one of the most sublime and purest figures of art and human imagination. We rejoice in her response to the angel, to her faithfulness, purity, wholeness, to her total self-giving and boundless humility, all of which forever ring out in her words: “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.”

Tell me, is anything in this world, in any of its rich and complex history, more sublime and more beautiful than this one human being? Mary, the Most Pure One, the One who is full of grace, is truly the One in whom, as the Church sings, “all Creation rejoices.” The Church answers the lie about man, the lie that reduces him to earth and appetite, to baseness and brutality, the lie that says he is permanently enslaved to the immutable and impersonal laws of nature, by pointing to the image of Mary, the most-pure Mother of God, the One to whom, in the words of a Russian poet, “the outpouring of sweetest human tears from overflowing hearts” is offered in unending stream. The lie continues to pervade the world, but we rejoice because here, in the image of Mary, the lie is shown for what it is. We rejoice with delight and wonder, for this image is always with us as comfort and encouragement, as inspiration and help. We rejoice because in gazing at this image, it is so easy to believe in the heavenly beauty of this world and in man’s heavenly, transcendent calling.

The joy of Annunciation is about the angel’s glad tidings, that the people had found grace with God and that soon, very soon, through her, God would begin to fulfill the mystery of the world’s redemption. The joy of Annunciation is about the angel’s glad tidings, that the people had found grace with God and that soon, very soon, through her, God would begin to fulfill the mystery of the world’s redemption. There would be no thunder and no fear in His presence, but He would come to her in the joy and fullness of childhood. Through her a Child will now be King: a Child, weak, defenseless, yet though Him all the powers of evil are to be forever stripped of power.

This is what we celebrate on the Annunciation and why the feast has always been, and remains, so joyful and radiant. But I repeat, none of this can be understood or expressed in the limited categories and language familiar to “scientific” atheism, which leads us to conclude that this approach willfully and arbitrarily has declared an entire dimension of human experience to be non-existent, unnecessary and dangerous, along with all the words and concepts used to express that experience. To debate this approach strictly on its own terms would be like first climbing down into a black underground pit where, because the sky can’t be seen, its existence is denied. The sun can’t be seen, and so there is no sun. All is dirty, repulsive, and dark, and so beauty is unknown and its existence denied. It is a place where joy is impossible, and so everyone is hostile and sad. But if you leave the pit and climb out, you suddenly find yourself in the midst of a resoundingly joyful church where once again you hear, “With the voice of the Archangel, we cry to You, O Pure One: Rejoice!”
Would you like me to list several paths of repentance? They are numerous and quite varied, and all lead to heaven.

A first path of repentance is the condemnation of your own sins: "Be the first to admit your sins and you will be justified." For this reason, too, the prophet wrote: "I said, I will accuse myself of my sins to the Lord, and You forgave the wickedness of my heart." Therefore, you too should condemn your own sins; that will be enough reason for the Lord to forgive you, for a man who condemns his own sins is slower to commit them again. Rouse your conscience to accuse yourself within your own house, lest it become your accuser before the judgment seat of the Lord. This, then, is one very good path of repentance.

Another and no less valuable one is to put out of our minds the harm done us by our enemies, in order to master our anger, and to forgive our fellow servants' sins against us. Then our own sins against the Lord will be forgiven us. Thus you have another way to atone for sin: "For if you forgive your debtors, your heavenly Father will forgive you."

Do you want to know of a third path? It consists of prayer that is fervent and careful and comes from the heart.

If you want to hear of a fourth, I will mention almsgiving, whose power is great and far-reaching.

If, moreover, a person lives a modest, humble life, this takes sin away. Proof of this is the tax-collector who had no good deeds to mention, but offered his humility instead and was relieved of a heavy burden of sins.

Thus I have shown you five paths of repentance: condemnation of your own sins, forgiveness of our neighbor's sins against us, prayer, almsgiving, and humility.

Do not be idle, then, but walk daily in all these paths; they are easy, and you cannot plead your poverty. For, though you live out your life amid great need, you can always set aside your wrath, be humble, pray diligently, and condemn your own sins; poverty is no hindrance. Poverty is not an obstacle to our carrying out the Lord's bidding, even when it comes to that path of repentance which involves giving money (almsgiving, I mean). The widow proved that when she put her two mites into the box!

Now that we have learned how to heal those wounds of ours, let us apply the cures. Then, when we have regained genuine health, we can approach the Holy Table with confidence, go gloriously to meet Christ, the King of Glory, and attain the eternal blessings through the grace, mercy, and kindness of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
**Fasting & Health**

“It is puzzling why fasting has fallen into disrepute,” says Dr. Claude Miller, a New York psychiatrist who specializes in weight problems. “From a medical point of view, fasting can be very beneficial. Not only from the weight loss aspect, but spiritually and psychologically.”

Of course, few people can endure a total fast - not eating anything and drinking only water - or even a near total fast. This total fasting incidentally, like that of the saints, produces “in the terminology of our times, a natural “high.” In the initiation rites of some Indian tribes, the young braves used to fast to the point of euphoria and expanded consciousness.

But the average person who is five to ten pounds overweight and wants to lose it fast can benefit by a far less ascetic fast. The Lenten season is a traditional time of fasting for Christians all over the world.

A practical and effective fasting diet could be to eat one meal a day, or to limit your intake to 1000 calories per day. The benefits of fasting are many. It is good for your digestive system. It helps to lower your blood pressure. It can create an “aliveness” when you stop using food as a tranquilizer.

Dr. Miller says “contemporary Americans have tried to actualize the myth “every day is a happy day and every hour a happy one. This is absurd for without contrast, life deteriorates into a pattern of boredom . Fasting is good for the body and the soul.”

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**10 SIGNS YOUR DEVICES ARE HURTING RELATIONSHIPS**

1. You cannot get through a meal without texting, checking emails, or talking on your phone.
2. You are looking at more than one screen at a time, i.e. checking email while watching television
3. You regularly email or text while talking with someone else
4. You check your email or texts while in bed
5. You log onto your computer while in bed
6. You have had an argument with a loved one about your use of technology
7. You text or email while driving
8. You no longer go outside for fun
9. You never turn off your phone.
10. When you spend time with your family (for a meal, a drive, hanging out) each person is looking at a different screen.
Human beings have accumulated in their coffers gold and silver, clothes more sumptuous than useful, diamonds and other objects that are evidence of greed; then a foolish arrogance hardens their hearts; for they show little pity to their brothers and sisters in distress. What utter blindness! Attend not to the law of the strong but to the law of the Creator. Help nature to the best of your ability, honor the freedom of creation, protect your species from dishonor, come to their aid in sickness, rescue them from poverty. Seek to distinguish yourself from others only in your generosity. Be like gods to the poor, imitating God’s mercy. Humanity has nothing so much in common with God as the ability to do good.

St Gregory the Theologian

If a person’s deeds are not in harmony with his prayer, he labors in vain. The brother said, "What is this harmony between practice and prayer?" Abba Moses said, "We should no longer do those things against which we pray. For when a man gives up his own will, then God is reconciled with him and accepts his prayers.

St. Moses the Ethiopian

It is not always easy to love those close to us. It is easier to give a cup of rice to relieve hunger than to relieve the loneliness and pain of someone unloved in our own home. Bring love into your home for this is where our love for each other must start.

Mother Teresa

A strange illness has appeared in our days – the passion for distractions. Never before was there such a desire for distractions; people have forgotten how to lead a serious life for the good of others; they have no spiritual life and are bored. They exchange the profound content of a spiritual life for distractions! What madness! It is here that pastors must deploy their strength: they must re-introduce into life its lost meaning and give back to the people the knowledge of the true purpose of life.

St. John of Kronstadt

Words of Wisdom

Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival.

C.S. Lewis

When you have thought of criticism... judging others, ask God to take hold of you at that hour so that you can love that person as He loves. Then God will help you see your condition. If Christ were visible, could you criticize?

Mother Gavrilia

He who gives what he would as readily throw away, gives without generosity; for the essence of generosity is in self-sacrifice.

Sir Henry Taylor

Repentance is the renewal of baptism. Repentance is a contract with God for a second life. A penitent is a buyer of humility. Repentance is constant distrust of bodily comfort. Repentance is self-condemning reflection, and care-free self-care. Repentance is the daughter of hope and the renunciation of despair. A penitent is an undisgraced convict. Repentance is reconciliation with the Lord by the practice of good deeds contrary to the sins. Repentance is purification of conscience.

St John of the Ladder

Never confuse the person, formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him: because evil is but a chance misfortune, an illness, a devilish reverie. But the very essence of the person is the image of God, and this remains in him despite every disfigurement.

St. John of Kronstadt
OUR ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN LEGACY
What Will We Leave Behind for our Church Family?

Do you have a will? Seventy percent of Americans don’t. Although you may not want to consider preparing a will, it will save your heirs significant time and money and even heartache.

With a will you ensure that your family, charitable and financial wishes are carried out. There is no more personal gift than one given through estate planning. Personal and family concerns, matters of life and death, and other profound issues must all be considered.

Most people who prepare a will also have planning directives. These documents, known as powers of attorney, letters of instruction, and living wills provide guidance about one’s wishes for

- Medical Care consistent with your own desires and according to your Orthodox teachings
- Tax-advantaged and charitable financial planning
- Distribution of personal property

For most people, the greatest financial gift we are able to give is what we leave behind when we fall asleep in the Lord. How can we make such a gift? Through arranging for a donation of

- Cash or securities
- Life Insurance
- Gift Annuities
- Bequests/Wills
- Real Estate or Other Investments

70% of Americans DO NOT have a will…
Yet annually, we give $250 billion to charitable organizations. Think about leaving a legacy to your Church!

Americans give generously to charitable organizations in this manner. In 2011, more than $250 billion was given by individuals through their estates. The two greatest recipients were

- Religious Organizations ($90 billion)
- Education Institutions ($41.6 billion)

Planned giving can be very rewarding, allowing you to see your gift at work while receiving tax benefits now

Giving to the Church is an opportunity to examine your priorities and values. It is an opportunity to express your gratitude, to give of yourselves and to grow in grace.

Think and pray about your future, and about your desire to leave a lasting legacy. You have an opportunity to give something that will touch and bless future generations.
FR THEODORE PETRIDES was born in Worcester, MA, Fr. Ted grew up in the suburbs of Philadelphia, PA. He attended Washington & Lee University in Lexington, VA majoring in Drama. Reading the Holy Scriptures the way he had been trained to read a play script, he found that God was the greatest dramatist of all and had an awakening to the Lord and to the Orthodox Christian Faith of his childhood. He and Pres. Cristen (Williams) were engaged at Pascha and married on Aug. 24, 1985 in Philadelphia, PA.

They moved to Boston when he enrolled at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School in Brookline, MA where he graduated in 1990 with a Masters of Divinity. They then travelled to Thessaloniki, Greece (with three little children) where he continued his studies and preparation for ordination. After Greece they moved to Chicago, IL where he served, first, as a lay assistant, then as a deacon, and finally as the assistant priest at St. Andrew’s Greek Orthodox Church.

A parish priest for 22 years, he is also currently president of the HC/HC Alumni Association board, co-chair for the Stewardship committee and the eastern region coordinator for the Clergy Syndesmos of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh. He occasionally writes plays, for ministry purposes, and regularly travels in America as well as Greece (especially the Holy Mountain), Cyprus, and the Holy Land as a pilgrim, guide, and speaker.

He and Pres. Cristen have six children ages 29 to 15 and have lived the last 18 1/2 years in Stroudsburg, PA growing in the faith along with the faithful parishioners of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church. He has taken six groups to Project Mexico since 1999. He even visited Fr. Luke once, when he working as a missionary in Albania, and they have a long friendship dating back to their years together at the Seminary. His oldest son, Alexandros, who is married and has two children, is the assistant priest as St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Bethlehem, PA. and his next-to-youngest daughter, Despina, is currently studying at Hellenic College.
A VISION FOR THE FUTURE
OFFERING A VIBRANT HOUSE OF FAITH AND
WORSHIP FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

ARCHANGELS ($100,000)
- Charlie and Helen Pappas

ANGELS ($50,000)
- In Honor of their parents Despina and Bill from the Condos Children (George, Lisa, Maria, Ann)
- Emmanuel James Pappas
- Olga Pappas
- Sam and Evelyn Pappas

PRINCIPALITIES ($45,000)
- Sandi and Gerry Kunkel
- Stavros and Evangelia Pappas
- Mary Fatsi, Eleanor Teguis, Dina Teguis

GOOD SHEPHERDS: ($20,000–30,000)
- Michael and Titi Chito
- Van Thomas
- Foisy Family

TORCH BEARERS: ($11,000–$15,000)
- Fr Luke and Pres. Faith Veronis

REMAINING NAMING OPPORTUNITIES (donation over three years):

- Classroom Building: Naming opportunities at $45,000
- Hall and Classroom Furnishings/Sound System: Two Opportunities at $25,000 each
- Stain Glass Windows in Interior of Church:
  - Large Interior South Wall $36,000
  - Small Narrow South Wall A $6,000
  - Small Narrow South Wall B $6,000
  - Back Wall Window $20,000
  - North Wall Window $18,000
  - North Wall Narrow A $3,000
  - North Wall Narrow B $3,000
  - Altar Window $18,000
- Church Sound System: Naming Opportunity at $20,000
- Parking Lot Resurfacing: Naming Opportunity at $30,000
- New Parking Lot (20 additional spaces): Naming Opportunity at $25,000
- Bell Tower Restoration - Naming Opportunity at $25,000

FUNDRAISING GOAL: $700,000
TOTAL CASH AND PLEDGED: $542,170
# 45 LESSONS LIFE TAUGHT ME
Regina Brett of The Plain Dealer (Cleveland)

1. Life isn't fair, but it's still good.
2. When in doubt, just take the next small step.
3. Life is too short – enjoy it.
4. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends and family will.
5. Pay off your credit cards every month.
6. You don't have to win every argument. Stay true to yourself.
7. Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
8. It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it.
9. Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
10. When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.
11. Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present.
12. It's OK to let your children see you cry.
13. Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
14. If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
15. Everything can change in the blink of an eye, but don't worry, God never blinks.
16. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.
17. Get rid of anything that isn't useful. Clutter weighs you down in many ways.
18. Whatever doesn't kill you makes you stronger.
19. It's never too late to be happy. But it's all up to you and no one else.
20. When it comes to going after what you love in life, don't take no for an answer.
21. Burn the candles, use the nice sheets, wear the fancy lingerie. Don't save it for a special occasion. Today is special.
22. Over prepare, then go with the flow.
23. Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.
24. The most important sex organ is the brain.
25. No one is in charge of your happiness but you.
26. Frame every so-called disaster with these words 'In five years, will this matter?'
27. Always choose life.
28. Forgive
29. What other people think of you is none of your business.
30. Time heals almost everything. Give time time.
31. However good or bad, it will change.
32. Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
33. Believe in miracles.
34. God loves you because of who God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.
35. Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.
36. Growing old beats dying young.
37. Your children get only one childhood.
38. All that matters in the end is that you loved.
39. Get outside every day. Miracles are waiting everywhere.
40. If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.
41. Envy is a waste of time. Accept what you already have, not what you need
42. The best is yet to come...
43. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up.
44. Yield.
45. Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.
PARISH COUNCIL

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I hope everyone has managed through this cold, snowy winter. I’m sure it’s been difficult with the costs of heat and snow removal.

Lent began on Monday 2/23, but I wanted to share my experience on what happened on Sunday, February 22, also known as Forgiveness Sunday.

In the past, I’ve been to evening vespers where, before leaving, each of us would approach every other person in the Church and say “Forgive Me”. For those of you that were in Church this past Forgiveness Sunday morning, you know we did this “ritual of forgiveness” after Liturgy. My experience with this was very special in many ways and I wish our whole community was there to share this. Asking for forgiveness can be difficult, but the feeling afterwards is much better than what was there before! It clears the air, cleans the heart, and hopefully can move us past any “ill feelings.”

In the whole scheme of things, the ill feelings, the anger, the hurt, or whatever it might have been, doesn’t really matter and is unhealthy for our body, mind, and soul. Rather than carry that heavy load on our chest, getting rid of it will leave more room for positive things, healthy attitudes, and most important, love.

I hope those who were there had the same positive experience that I had. If you were absent, please consider my message and make amends with whomever you need to.

Looking forward to a beautiful spring and Lenten season.

Many blessings and good health to all of you

With love,
Lisa Healy
Parish Council President

Philoctochos News

Hope all is well with all of you with this unusually cold and snowy winter. Renovations on our new kitchen and hall are finally moving along. A few unforeseen problems arose and due to the wintery conditions, they got off to a slow start. But please be patient. It is going to be a beautiful addition to our church! I have the utmost confidence in everything we are doing!

I am putting on my two hats now as Chairperson of the Building Committee and President of the Philoptochos by asking all of you that have not yet donated to our Building Fund to please do so. No amount is too big or small. We want our new renovations and new building to be a parish effort, and we need everyone’s support.

Look at the Naming Opportunities on page 11. There are also miscellaneous items that have to be purchased for the kitchen. We are looking into used and new items. Thank you in advance to all!

Due to the conditions of the hall, we are pushing our March meeting to March 30th to discuss our plans for Easter. However, don’t forget to see Sandi or myself for your dues.

Stay warm and healthy!

Love,
Evelyn
During the Lenten Season, visit our elderly or those closed in their homes during winter; send them a note of love.

WEBSTER MANOR - Lorraine Vesho
Fruit Street in Worcester
John Nicholopoulos
WESTVIEW (Dayville, Connecticut)
Dina Teguis
THOSE WHO WOULD APPRECIATE
A CALL OR VISIT
Bertha Constantine
Jennie Manthos
Georgette Nicholopoulos
Demetra Obrien
Charlie/Helen Pappas
Stavro Pappas
Sophie Talbot
Vassy Tanko
Helen Tsigaridas
Edna Vogel
Betty Vriga

The Pre-Sanctified Liturgy &
& Pot-Luck Dinner
Every Wednesday

THE PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY
(6:00pm - 7:00pm), is an opportunity to receive the life-giving and spiritually nourishing Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the middle of the week. We will also hear a reflection to educate and inspire us in our Lenten journey.

Following the Liturgy enjoy a delicious LENTEN POT-LUCK DINNER AND FELLOWSHIP (7:00-8:00), which all who have participated before have thoroughly enjoyed!

These Wednesday evenings of WORSHIP, EDUCATION and FELLOWSHIP will enhance our spiritual journeys during Lent.
MAKE A SPECIAL DONATION DURING LENT IN HONOR OR MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE

Please see Fr. Luke or our Church Treasurers to donate and dedicate your offering to someone.

Lenten Altar Flowers - $40/week
Friday Salutations Flowers – $30/week
Cross Sunday Flowers - $75
Incense (for a year) - $200
Charcoal (for a year) - $150
Altar Candles (for a year) - $100
Garlands at Entry of Church - $40
Palms & Trees - Palm Sunday - $200
Bridegroom Icon Flowers - $40
Holy Wednesday
Unction Supplies - $50
Holy Thursday Flower Crown - $100
Holy Thursday Candles - $40
Holy Friday Epitaphio Candles - $40
Holy Friday Epitaphio Flowers - $850
Holy Saturday Rose Pedals - $75
Holy Altar Easter Arrangement - $200
Resurrection Candle - $50
Resurrection Icon Flowers - $50
Circular Resurrection Icon Flowers - $75
Easter Pew Flowers - $130
16 White Lilies for Easter - $40/each

THE CHURCH IS A PLACE OF:

Worship, not entertainment
Faith, not fear
Healing, not magic
Consolation, not conflict
Communion, not exclusion
Sacrifice not selfishness
Repentance, not self-affirmation
Dignity, not disrespect
Peace, not divisiveness
Self-denial, not self-indulgence
Hope, not uncertainty
Forgiveness, not guilt
Fellowship, not individualism
Obedience, not stubbornness
Revelation, not concealment
Hospitality, not suspicion
Dialogue, not monologue
Bridge-building, not ax-grinding
Cheerful giving, not stinginess
Gratitude, not complaining
Godly speech, not gossip
Truth not hypocrisy
Self-examination, not judging others
Liturgy, not impassivity
Acceptance, not rejection
Humility, not pride
Confession, not conceit
Love, not hate
USHERS & GREETERS SCHEDULE
March 1
Chris Constantine, Nicoleta Cojocaru, Barbara Gianaris, Zach Gianaris, Alex Seferi
March 8
Arthur Bilis, Del Monroe, Chris Geotis, Thomai Gatsogianis, Trish Laurea
March 15
Marie McNally, Eric Beland, Matt Benoit, Lisa Healy, Nick Seferi
March 22
Neal Neslusan, Mary Papageorge, Gus Koulax, Cindy Johnson, Jared Quill
March 29
Chris Constantine, Nicoleta Cojocaru, Barbara Gianaris, Zach Gianaris, Alex Seferi

OUR LENTEN JOURNEY
During this Fast, let us strive to follow the holy commandments of Christ our God, with the brightness of love and the splendor of prayer. Let us understand this season as a gift from God and as a time of repentance. May our soul wake up from the sleep of grievous laziness, and with zeal and vigilance follow the ways of the Lord. Let us not only fast in bodies, but also in spirit. Let us anoint our heads with the oil of almsgiving. Let us draw near the mountain of prayer and fasting that we may see God, like Moses and Elijah

YOUTH EPISTLE READERS
March 1 - Theodora Veronis
(Hebres 11:24-40)
March 8 - Maria Mironidis
(Hebrews 1:10-2:3)
March 15 - Olivia Neslusan
(Hebrews 4:14-5:6)
March 22 - Smaranda Cojocaru
(Hebrews 6:13-20)
March 29 - Maia Beaudry
(Romans 8:28-39)
April 5 Panayiotis Veronis
(1 Corinthians 6:12-20)
April 11 - Lily Mueller
(1 Corinthians 8:8-8:9:2)
April 19 - Hanna Kunkel
(Romans 13:11-14:4)

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

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY
10:00-11:15
Every Wednesdays

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:
We will NOT have coffee fellowship during the renovations of our Church Hall and Kitchen.
Remembering Our Church Family

Important Dates in MARCH:

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

BIRTHDAYS:

March 4  Nicholas Adamopoulos
March 5  Susan Rivelli
March 8  Lorraine Vesho
March 8  Tasi Vriga
March 10  Grady Ross
March 13  Marie Monroe
March 13  Nike Raymond
March 17  Liberty Brassard
March 18  Dan Healy
March 21  Betty Tonna
March 22  Gail Avlas
March 24  Jordan Bouthillier
March 25  Mary Fatsi
March 25  George Milios
March 27  Paul Xanthopoulos
March 28  Hanna Kunkel
March 28  John Grzyb
March 28  Lisa Healy
March 30  John Johnson
March 31  Zoe Cremeens

NAMEDAYS:

March 10  St Anastasia
Madison Anastasia McWilliams

March 25  The Annunciation
Evangelos Moutoudis

March 26  Archangel Gabriel
Gabriela Ross

Mark Your Calendar!
Overnight “Lock-In” JOY Youth Retreat
March 27-28
With our HC Seminarians
HONORING GOD STEWARDSHIP

Proverbs says, “Honor the Lord with your substance and with your possessions.”

When people become faithful stewards of the Lord, they accomplish many benefits for the Kingdom of God, as well as the life of the Christian. This three-fold purpose is as follows:

1. Stewardship should glorify and honor God.
2. Stewardship should advance the kingdom of God.
3. Proper stewardship will result in blessing the steward.

Ask yourself, “Does the stewardship of my finances honor God?” In managing money, do you consider and plan prayerfully, giving priority to God and the things that are of interest and importance to Him? You honor the Lord with your substance by taking a certain portion of your finances and offering it to God as an act of worship. We honor God and his work when our stewardship is a generous portion of our income.

The second purpose of stewardship is to provide the means whereby the Kingdom of God can be advanced on earth. When you value the importance of spreading the Gospel and Orthodoxy, you will be motivated to do all you can to ensure that the work of His kingdom continues on earth. We must strive to share our priceless treasure of Faith with those in Webster, Dudley, Massachuets and Connecticut, as well as nationally, and globally.

Your stewardship offering has a direct impact on continuing the ministries of our Church on the parish, metropolis, national and global level.

The third purpose of stewardship is to bring blessings into your life. “Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you receive.” (Luke 6:38)

For stewardship to be successful and acceptable, it must be done with a joyful heart.
Learning the Word of God

VERSES FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

“Be still and know that I am God.”
Psalm 46:10

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore I will not fear.”
Psalm 46:1

“Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.”
Psalm 50:15

“O taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the person who trusts in Him!”
Psalm 34:8

“You are my hiding place. You shall preserve me from trouble, You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.”
Psalm 32:7

“The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”
Psalm 27:1

DAILY BIBLE READINGS
MARCH

March 1 Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-40, John 1:43-51
March 3 Isaiah 5:7-16, Genesis 4:8-15, Proverbs 5:1-15
March 4 Isaiah 5:16-25, Genesis 4:16-26 Proverbs 5:15-6:3
March 5 Isaiah 6:1-12, Genesis 5:1-24, Proverbs 6:3-20
March 6 Isaiah 7:1-14, Genesis 5:32-6:8, Proverbs 6:20-7:1
March 7 Hebrews 3:12-16, Mark 1:35-44
March 8 Hebrews 1:10-14, 2:1-3, Mark 2:1-12
March 9 Hebrews 12:1-10, Matthew 20:1-16
March 11 Isaiah 10:12-20 Genesis 7:6-9 Proverbs 9:12-18
March 12 Isaiah 11:10-12:2, Genesis 7:11-8:3, Proverbs 10:1-22
March 13 Isaiah 13:2-13, Genesis 8:4-21 Proverbs 10:31-11:12
March 14 Hebrews 10:32-38, Mark 2:14-17
March 15 Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:1-6, Mark 8:34-38; 9:1
March 17 Isaiah 25:1-9 Genesis 9:8-17, Proverbs 12:8-22
March 21 Hebrew 6:9-12 Mark 7:31-37
March 22 Hebrews 6:13-20 Mark 9:17-31
March 26 Isaiah 42:5-16 Genesis 18:20-33, Proverbs 16:17-17:17
March 29 Hebrews 9:11-14 Mark 10:32-45
March 31 Isaiah 49:6-10 Genesis 31:3-16 Proverbs 21:3-21
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
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A DAILY LENTEN PRAYER
THE PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

Lord and Master of my life,
Take from me the spirit of laziness,
idle curiosity,
vain talk
and lust for power.

Give me instead a spirit of chastity, humility,
patience and love.

Yes Lord and King,
help me to see my own faults,
and keep me from judging what others do.
For You are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen.