A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

September marks not only the end of the summer, but the beginning of the school year and the start of a new church year. For us in our Saints Constantine and Family community, it also marks the time of our annual Greek FESTIVAL.

Each of these events is special in its own way, yet in this reflection I want to focus on the unique opportunity we have with our annual Festival. This is one of the most beautiful times of the year when we come together as a Church family in such harmony. Many people volunteer for a few hours, our chair-people, Lisa Healy and Marie McNally, along with the festival committee offer countless hours in preparation leading up to the main event, almost everyone comes out to support the festival and delight in the atmosphere, food, and entertainment, and then we get hundreds of visitors from the larger community who love tasting our Greek food and pastries, while enjoying the warm and welcoming spirit we offer. What a special time!!!

Of course, this event is also a major fundraiser for our community, helping to cover around 16% of our operational budget. And yet, I don’t want us ever to think of our festival as simply a fundraiser. Instead, we need to look at it as a special part of the overall ministry of our Church.

On the last Sunday of August, I offered a sermon entitled “Living Out the Mission of the Church,” which highlighted the Mission Statement of our Church Family (which you can read on the other side of this page). Specifically, I noted the five central characteristics of what it means to “Be the Church,” to live out our calling as the Body of Christ. These five central characteristics are WORSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, EDUCATION, SERVICE and WITNESS.

If anyone ever asks you, “Why do you go to Church?” or “What do you do as an Orthodox Christian?” what do you say? Well, I want you to respond by sharing our Mission Statement.

We come to Church to encounter and glorify God through our WORSHIP, through the LOVING FELLOWSHIP we share with one another, by learning our faith through Christ-centered EDUCATION and then spiritually growing closer to God and allowing His Spirit to transform our lives into becoming more Christ-like. Within our Church Family we also learn and are inspired to SERVE one another in Christ-like humility and self-sacrifice, as we offer a WITNESS of God’s love and hope to the larger community in Webster, Central Mass, and Northeast CT, as well as around the world!
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

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Grounds: Nick Popiak
A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

I want us to also remember this Mission Statement of our Church as we put on our annual Festival, because the Festival gives us a wonderful opportunity to put into practice several of these five central characteristics of the Church.

For example, throughout our two day festival, we share in wonderful FELLOWSHIP. It is so beautiful for me to see how all of you come together, working side by side, doing whatever menial job is necessary, while smiling throughout the weekend. It is a fun two days, even though it can be very exhausting. And inevitably, I will hear comments from various visitors who will congratulate me on what a warm, loving, and beautiful community we have.

Of course, I agree with them, and tell them that this is what a Church family is all about! We are the family of God, and thus, it is only natural to be a warm, hospitality, loving family!!!

During our Festival, along with fellowship there are also moments of EDUCATION and learning. Of course, everyone comes primarily for the food and fun. Some of these people, however, will stop by the Church and enter in for our Church Tours. They will come up to me and ask me about our Orthodox Christian faith. Simultaneously, we have others going to the Book Store and Gift Shop, purchasing religious material, and getting into spiritual conversations there.

I hope, though, that it’s not just me and the book store people talking about our Faith. Every one of YOU should also look for opportunities to share with our visitors what your faith means to you. Tell them why you are a member of this Church Family, and who you are as followers of Jesus Christ. Share with them your favorite part of our rich Orthodox treasure. Encourage them to go inside our Church and see our magnificent icons, and let them know I’d love to talk with them if they have any questions.

This leads us to a third characteristic of our Mission Statement which I want us to put into practice during the Festival! We are all called to WITNESS for our faith. That means we want to show our faith by the way we work during the Festival, by the way we live our lives, as well as by the way we share our faith with our words. If we have hundreds of people visiting us this weekend, can each of us try to share our faith with at least new five people and talk to them about the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ? Can we invite them to come to a Divine Liturgy the following weekend, and even offer to sit with them so that they feel comfortable while you explain to them what is happening? Invite them even to try out a Bible Study, or to come back for some other special event in our Church.

Ideally, our festival can be the impetus to invite our guests to come again, not only to taste our delicious Greek food, but to even taste something incomparably better - a meal at the banquet table of the Kingdom of Heaven!

The fourth characteristic that we will see quite clearly throughout our festival weekend is that of SERVICE. The Festival exemplifies service - each of us ready to do whatever is needed, to give up our weekend to serve others for the glory of God and for the support of His holy church! May we spend the weekend serving one another and serving all our guests with a joyful spirit, a grateful heart, and without complaining at all.

Our annual festival is a beautiful opportunity to put our faith into action. Please come out and help as much as you can! (If you don’t know where or how to help, see Lisa Healy or Marie McNally) Invite your neighbors, your co-workers, your friends, and everyone else to join you and to enjoy a delicious meal, blessed fellowship and a wonderful time!

I look forward to seeing all of you on September 8th and 9th!

With love and gratitude in Christ Jesus,

+Luke
WHAT I AM LEARNING FROM PROJECT MEXICO

Theodora Veronis

This past summer, I had the opportunity to experience some really uncommon things for an 18 year old just out of high school. Project Mexico puts its interns in some unique situations which have forced me to grow in many aspects - physically, mentally, and spiritually. We enter an environment with 20 other young adults, knowing maybe only one or two of them, and live, work, and lead with these people 24 hours a day. This summer, we’ve overseen 675 volunteers who dedicate one week of their summer, and built 30 homes. I have been constantly interacting with and learning from so many intriguing people. We are placed in this leadership role where people constantly ask us how to do things, and seek out our opinions on which is the right or wrong way to do something. As an 18-year old young woman, it was initially difficult for me to give instructions to adults and those older than me, but it surely forced me to grow and gain more confidence in myself.

A huge part of this experience has been connecting with the 19 boys who live here at St. Innocent Orphanage. When I first arrived, I felt the boys holding back whenever I tried to interact and connect with them. This really didn’t surprise me since they meet hundreds of people every summer, and most everyone leaves them after one week. I could see how some of the boys were afraid to get too attached to anyone because as soon as they created a friendship, they had to say goodbye. When the boys realized, however, that I was here for the entire summer, a perceivable shift occurred in their interactions with me. Even the language barrier seemed to matter little. They are so silly and fun to be around, and I’ve begun to treat them as my little brothers.

Along with the intermediate amount of Spanish I speak, we’ve found other ways to communicate. Mother Gavrilia, a Greek Orthodox missionary to India, was once criticized because she didn’t learn any of the languages in India. After praying to God and asking Him if she was a terrible missionary, God revealed to her that she did know five languages - the language of smile, laughter, touch, tears, and love. With these languages, along with the language of sports, I’ve really connected with the boys.

The families for whom we build homes are another major aspect of this experience. Each week, the families have been unique and special in their own ways, but they all have one common spirit of gratitude and appreciation towards us, and often, towards God. We visit the sites the day before the volunteer groups arrive to make sure all is ready for building each week. My first week here, José, the father of the house who happened to have some construction experience, leveled out the entire property for us by himself. This normally takes a team two hours on the first build day to accomplish. José was filled with excitement and joy when he saw us, because he wasn’t sure if we’d actually show up. He told us that he worried we might have been a scam, and he and his family had been praying it was not. After the house was built at the end of this week, the family cried and thanked us over and over again. José even apologized, saying “Mexico is ugly” and “I’m sorry this must not have been a good vacation for you.” I was heartbroken to hear...
him say these things, and we reassured him that we felt so blessed to be here and that there is such beauty in Mexico and among the Mexicans we’ve met. At the end of each build, we often make a little door step for the families and ask them if they want anything written in the cement, or if they want to put their children’s handprints in the cement. One family asked us to write “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15) and another asked for Psalm 23.

One of the greatest lessons I’ve learned is the difference between the “real world” and what is often perceived as the real world. At Project Mexico & St. Innocent’s Orphanage, God is brought into every small aspect of what is done, and all is dedicated to Him. There is a simplicity that is emboldened here, which forces one to find great pleasure and excitement in the littlest things, such as sunsets overlooking the ocean, campfires under the stars, and quality time with loved ones. This way of looking at life has helped me discover what is the real world! Joy and happiness can always be found, even in the midst of extreme poverty.

Now, I’m not saying everything is perfect here at Project Mexico. There have been plenty of misunderstandings and mishaps, and the longer people stay in one place, the “perfect bliss” we dreamed of often disintegrates, causing people to become comfortably negative. Unlike secular American society, however, such negativity is not encouraged, and we always look for new opportunities to refocus. For example, the night before any new group arrives, we interns would pray the Paraklesis service and end the service with each of us asking one another for forgiveness. Any problems, misunderstandings or harsh words we had with one another suddenly vanished. And at the end of each work week, we would pray, with all the volunteers, the Thanksgiving Akathist service “Glory to God for All Things.”

We thank God for everything we have, and we remember that all the service we do is our gift back to Him in gratitude for the gift of salvation He gave to us.

**BUILDING HOMES AND RELATIONSHIPS**

*Olivia Neslusan*

As I sit on an old wooden bench, warm Mexican sun beating down on my hair, and the laughter of young boys playing on the soccer field in the distance, I cannot fathom the fact that my time here at the ranch is winding down. This summer has gone by in the blink of an eye, but contrastingly, it feels like I have been here forever. Looking back at this time last year, I was an eager group member dreaming about being accepted into this internship position. One week simply just wasn’t enough for me, and I couldn't wait to apply and spend three months here at this incredible ranch.

I had so many expectations of what I thought this summer would be like based on my past experiences here and what I heard from past interns, but quickly I learned that it is so important when doing mission work similar to this, to have no expectations and have an open mind. The summer was full of laughter and tears, and certainly was exhausting at times. Building a new home every week and having the energy to greet each new team like it was your first is something that is both beautiful and challenging. But more than the
build, this place and this summer for me has been about building relationships.

Theodora and I arrived two weeks later than the rest of the young adult interns that would dedicate their summer to leading home building. In my journal on the first day of arrival I wrote about how I was nervous that close relationships and friendships had already formed, and perhaps we wouldn't get to know the other 17 interns as well. This trivial worry quickly faded within the first couple days. It is so beautiful and easy to connect with other young Orthodox Christians. Growing up in the faith and sharing the same values is something that allows us to truly connect on a deeper level, and I know that these will be people I stay in contact with long after this summer is over.

Connecting with the 19 boys here at the orphanage, though, has been by far the most rewarding part of this experience. Boys ranging from eight years old all the way to eighteen years old live on this ranch, and each of them have their own vibrant and inspiring personalities and stories. Between group activities and home builds, we get the opportunity to spend as much time as we please with them. Despite their backgrounds of neglect, these boys are some of the most loving people I have ever met. They are eager to learn more about you, make you laugh, and if you are lucky, they sometimes share some of their personal stories about their past and what it has been like to grow up.

This summer the ranch was blessed with three new little boys ranging from eight to ten years old. Immediately after arriving here in this foreign and new home, these boys were always so eager to participate in church and had so many questions about the faith. It was truly something special to see how they transitioned with such grace. It is a challenge, however, especially with these three new little boys, to connect with them without getting too close and allowing them to get too attached. It is so obvious that they need love from the way they run up to almost any female who they are familiar with and cling to them calling each one “Mama.” Although this can be tough at times, it is comforting to know that this ranch will indeed give them the love and permanency they so desperately need and want.

That is what is so special about this place. It is a community where everyone is a part of the family that makes up St. Innocent Orphanage and Project Mexico. It is going to be bittersweet to leave this country and its people, but I leave knowing that this was one of the best decisions I’ve ever made, and also knowing that it was not really me who made it, but rather God who called me to be here.
LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION
By Rodney Marsh

Everyday we pray the Lord’s Prayer and say, “Lead us not into temptation.” Another translation of this passage from the Lord’s Prayer could be “And do not bring us to the time of trial....”

A crisis seems to be rapidly developing in the Western democracies. At the recent Garma Festival, Richard Flanagan said, “The world is being undone before us. History is once more moving, and it is moving to fragmentation on the basis of concocted differences....... The bonfire of our vanities is fully loaded with the fuel of growing inequality, fear and division.” I hear the ‘ring of truth’ in his prophecy.

In his day, Jesus often spoke of an imminent, destructive, worldwide crisis or trial. So, when Jesus taught his followers how to pray, he taught them to ask Our Heavenly Father, “Lead us not into the time of trial.” By this He meant, “Don’t, please God don’t push us into the time of crisis before you’ve made us ready for it. Don’t push us until you’ve given us what we need to face whatever temptations and trials will come” (Rowan Williams).

Therefore, our daily prayer, “Do not bring us to the time of trial” is not motivated by the desire to avoid inevitable suffering nor is it a desperate plea filled with fear. Rather it is a request for the courage and strength and peace to face what is coming. It is a prayer made in faith that our Father will see us through whatever trials and challenges lay ahead.

When we teach our children to pray, “Do not bring us to the time of trial,” we are joining with them to travel together through dark valleys and well as the light plains. We can face with confidence whatever life may bring us, whatever unforeseen, and often uncontrollable, frightening circumstances may come in our lives because we know we never travel alone. God is with us. And our prayer is for us to always stay with God.

As the storm clouds were gathering around Jesus, his own daily prayer was “Do not bring us to the time of trial.” He even prayed, “Take this cup away from me” but ended His prayer with the words, “Your will be done.” Consequently Jesus became strong to face what was to come and he told his followers, “When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, You will soon be set free.”

Perhaps, when a coming firestorm fueled with “growing inequality, fear and division” can be seen approaching us, and our nation, it is the time to teach our children to pray, “Do not bring us to the time of trial.” God is with us and will never abandon us, we therefore always live with faith and hope.

Offer this Prayer:

Our Father, it seems there are storms ahead today. Please let the storm pass, but if it does not, stay with us. In the storm, strengthen us. Grant faith to replace fear. Then enable us to stand up, and lift our heads to welcome whatever comes our way. Amen.
PARISH COUNCIL
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The Legend of Ben Macnee and St. Vincent of Lerins Orthodox Church

In Matthew 19:23-26, Jesus tells His disciples that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, and the disciples express astonishment and doubt over if any of the human race can be saved. Jesus gives them hope and encouragement by saying, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” This month I want to tell you about a parish and a man whose efforts to live that promise, “but with God all things are possible”, have yielded hope, love, and fellowship.

As you know, our parish once again made our yearly trip to Project Mexico and the St. Innocent Orphanage. In last month’s bulletin you read our reports, you saw the pictures, and you shared in our discussions at church. I have a confession to make. I did not work at all on the yellow house our team built! Instead a great man from Canada, from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, interceded in my time down there and I am ever so grateful for that intercession.

The gentleman’s name is Ben Macnee and he comes from St. Vincent of Lerins Antiochian Orthodox Church in Saskatoon. Saskatoon is in the middle of the plains of Canada about 1000 miles directly north of Denver, Colorado. Like in the plains region in the United States, the plains region of Canada is characterized by big farms growing all kinds of grains. Imagine the Dakota’s but much colder in the winter.

I first ran into Ben about three Project Mexico trips ago when his church was again teamed up with ours on a build. I fondly remember working with him and his son Tony on our build. On the first day of this year’s trip during dinner I overheard a tall man who was vaguely familiar saying, “I don’t work on the houses anymore, I just go through the neighborhood and find someone who needs help on their house and I help them instead, because we have enough kids to do the Project Mexico house.” My mind remembered his voice and I reintroduced myself to him and we politely chatted and caught up with one another.

The next day, I was surprised to find Ben and the team from St. Vincent’s at our build site, or rather at the build site next door to us as we were building two houses for two members of an extended family. Ben saw me and pulled me aside and said the same thing to me that he had said last night, “Hey, if you’re game would you like to find someone around here who needs help, and help them out instead of doing the house?” I agreed and within 10 minutes Ben had found a man working with his son on a house about 1/8 mile away and within sight of our two Project Mexico houses.

Ben found the man and his 14 year old son trying to put up roof rafters on an elderly woman’s house. The woman (named Maria) lived on the first floor but she had originally built the house many years ago to accommodate a second floor. Her family friend, a man we called “Gus” (short for Augustino), and his eldest son were helping to frame out and build the second floor which was to be a living area for Maria’s daughter’s family. You can see Ben and Gus and Gus’ son in this picture taken on the second floor of Maria’s house.

The result was 5 days of framing the roof rafters, putting up plywood for the roof, and putting sheathing around the second floor exterior walls. Andy Higgins and Bill Thompson from our build team helped out on some days as well as a guy or two from Ben’s Canadian team. We even did a mini house blessing with Maria, Fr. Luke and Fr. Nick (from St. Innocent’s) and left Maria with a beautiful icon of the Theotokos donated by Pres. Faith.
The entire effort was incredibly rewarding, as I’m sure Andy and Bill would agree, but what especially impressed me was the spirit of Ben and how that spirit changed our trip. You see, Ben is a professional carpenter and builder (more about that later). He instantly knew we had enough kids on both house build teams to easily finish the houses in time. His desire to just help those in need moved him beyond the comfort zone of just participating in the Project Mexico house build, and into the unknown of finding someone in need in the neighborhood and helping them. By the way, Ben doesn’t speak a lick of Spanish, so he had that complication as well. Luckily Gus spoke a little English.

“With God, all things are possible”, and with God on our side we were able to help out Maria and her worker Gus.

It took effort, and frankly it took some money too. You see, Maria was purchasing material for Gus to work with as her and her daughter’s finances would allow, and that took time. But we only had 5 days. Ben pulled me aside and looked into my eyes and said, “Hey, in order for us to do this right we need to buy some lumber, how about if we split the cost?” It may have been the fact that Ben is 6’5” and I’m only 6’3”, but I rather think that the Holy Spirit and the spirit of Ben convinced me to immediately agree. Besides, what’s a few hundred dollars when you can fundamentally change someone’s life? Because with God, all things are possible!

It turns out that Ben and the Macnee family, and the greater parish family of St. Vincent’s is well known to Project Mexico. As I mentioned earlier, Ben is a professional builder. About 10 years ago or so, Ben brought down a big crew of workers from Saskatoon and built the big pavilion that we use during Project Mexico. The pavilion is an open air room with a full roof. It serves as our meeting room and meal hall as well as our church. Ben and his crew from St. Vincent’s also had a hand in pouring much of the concrete roadways that are on the St. Innocent Orphanage, especially useful during the rainy season where everything turns to mud. In addition, Ben and the St. Vincent’s crew also built the shower houses at St. Innocent’s used by the Project Mexico build teams, and also some of the housing used by the full time workers there. Finally, the youth of St. Vincent’s has continually come down to Project Mexico to build, to be interns, and even in the case of Ben’s son Tony, to be the build coordinator for two full years. Yes, St. Vincent’s parish has done much for Project Mexico.

My wife Charlotte ended up speaking to one of the women from St. Vincent’s parish at dinner one night and she told Charlotte a bit of the history of St. Vincent’s involvement with Project Mexico and St. Innocent’s Orphanage. It turns out that about 20 years ago or so, Project Mexico had fallen on hard times financially (this is before our parish had gotten involved with them). The word was put out to the supporting parishes throughout North America and immediately five families from St. Vincent’s had raised $60,000 to help out the Orphanage. Now I’m going to tell you the most amazing part of this story…

St. Vincent of Lerins Antiochian Orthodox Church in Saskatoon, SK, Canada is a small parish, a very small parish. It is less than half the size of our parish as measured by contributing members. It is not a parish filled with millionaires but rather filled with working folk from Saskatoon. How can this small church in the plains of Canada continually send folks down to Project Mexico to build houses, to build structures for St. Innocent’s Orphanage, and even to run and manage part of the Project Mexico effort? How can this tiny church raise so much money so quickly in an emergency for St. Innocent Orphanage? How can such a small parish come back to Mexico year after year and live God’s lessons with those in need? By the way, when this church comes down to Project Mexico, they do not fly down like we do. They pack up all their stuff in a trailer and attach it to the back of a 15 person van that holds the parishioners and drive the nearly 2000 miles from Saskatoon to Rosarito, Mexico. How can they do all this? There is only one answer, “With God, all things are possible!”

I tell you this story as a story of encouragement. While our outreach efforts have clearly grown over the years, I’m sure many of you, if you’re like me, wonder “can we do more?” The answer is clearly, “yes”. We should be proud of how we’ve expanded our outreach efforts but we should not be satisfied. Let’s look at St. Vincent’s parish as a possible model. Let’s use them as the measuring stick if we ask, “are we doing enough?” And let’s remember that with God, all things are possible!

With love in Jesus Christ,

Neal Neslusen

With love in Jesus Christ,
Beauty can lead one to God. And for anyone who enters our Church, they are taken aback by the beauty within. The icons that now adorn the walls of our Church give all who enter a glimpse into the Kingdom of God. Icons are truly “windows into heaven.” Through them, one can see our Lord Jesus Christ blessing us. We see the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God watching over us. Then we can learn the life of Christ and some of the central events in the history of salvation through icons. And of course, we look around at icons and see ourselves “surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1, the saints of the Church. When one enters our Church, we will never feel alone. If we have eyes that see, we will notice all the holy men and women from throughout the ages all around us. These faithful believers, old and young, look down upon us, inviting each one of us to join their ranks as we continue our own journey striving to walk into the kingdom of God.

Well, just last week we added two beautiful, new icons to adorn the walls of our church, and each icon adds another powerful reminder and lesson for each of us.

First, we have a stunning icon of St Nicholas, Bishop of Myra. St. Nicholas will be better known to many of our little children as Santa Claus, but now we have a wonderful visual reminder to all our kids about who the real Santa Claus is! St. Nicholas is one of the great Fathers of the Church from the 4th century, who suffered in prison for the faith, who became a priest and then a bishop standing up for the truth of God, who became a model of kindness and love through his works of charity, helping all who were in need. Now, every time we pass by this icon of St. Nicholas, may we remember who he is, especially at Christmas time and on his feastday on December 6th.

The next new icon we have is of St. Sophia, and her three children, Faith, Hope and Love. As everyone looks at this icon, I want everyone to remember that saints come in all ages and sizes. St Sophia’s children were 8, 10 and 12 years old when they bravely stood up for their faith and accepted a terrible martyrdom rather than denying their love and faith in Jesus Christ. What a powerful witness and remind to all of us. No matter how difficult it may be to stand up for our faith in our contemporary, secular society, we have role models who lived in all the centuries before us, setting great examples for us to follow, no matter how difficult.

Along with the two icons we just put up this past week, we put up the icon of St. Romanos the Melodist a few months ago. We placed this icon in the balcony, so that our choir members will see it each week when they sing to the Lord and glorify Him with their voices. St. Romanos wrote many beautiful hymns for the church, and because of this, along with the holy life he lived, he is remembered and honored. May we imitate him by lifting up our voices to praise the Lord!
PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

Here we go again with our annual Greek Festival 2018. Let’s make this another successful year. And our Philoptochos ladies contribute to offer so much every year towards its success. Since we sold out of everything last year, we are going to increase our numbers a bit.

Here is our schedule:

- Tuesday Sept 4 8:30 mixing filling for petas. In the afternoon making the baklavas.
- Wednesday baking the petas.
- Thursday baking sweet breads at 8:30 in the morning.
- Tuesday August 28th Eleni would like to make the koulourakis and finikia too at 8:30.
- If anyone would like to make other pastries from home and bring in please do. Kadaife, kouroubiades, pantespani, yaourtini, etc. We will use this variety of pastry to make assorted packages. They sell very well at $10.00 a package.

- On Friday morning we will be cutting over 150 petas and packaging.

Please help us with the cost of ingredients with a monetary donation or items. See me with a list such as butter, flour, sugar, etc.

We have our Wheelbarrel of Cheer at the entrance of our Church hall. Please help fill it with a variety of cheer. Also don’t forget gifts for the center table. Also put together new ideas for thematic baskets. This table needs a little help. A few ideas for baskets could be a food basket, a basket full of cleaning supplies, a candle basket, a fall or Halloween basket, Christmas basket, movie basket etc. Use your imagination!

Please let me know when you can volunteer during the two days of the festival. I will have a schedule so any one can sign up for working. I will have it when we are baking.

Thank you for all your continued support! You ladies are amazing in what you do!

With much love and affection,
Evelyn Pappas

AUG PARISH COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

- Our operational budget is ahead of schedule for the year
- Golf Tournament profited $2050
- Gyro Fest profited $6510
- Parking Lot project is complete
- The front and side landscaping will be completed before the festival
- Outside Front door and large cross will be sanded and re-stained before the festival
- Leaking roof in back of church has not leaked during the last few rainfalls. We will continue to monitor the situation. There is a new roof leak in the altar area that needs to be addressed.
- Philoptochos is donating a new shed, which will be delivered by end of the month
- Parish House foundation work will begin in October
- Emphasis that all people need to help more for the festival preparation. We have been getting a low turnout at our festival meetings.
Opa!!!
Greek Festival

BUY A FESTIVAL BANNER
Buy a $100 Banner that will be hung up inside the Festival Tent.
You can buy a banner to greet the community from your family, or put it in memory of a loved one.

SEND IN YOUR GIFT RAFFLE TICKETS
($5 each or Book of 5 for $20)

PRIZES:
1st - Bose Radio and CD
2nd - 55’ Plasm HDTV
3rd - 4 Burner Gas Grill
4th - $300 Gift Certificate

PAstry DROP-OFF
Friday, Sept 7 BEFORE 2pm

CENTER TABLE
Please bring in items for the Center Table.
Contact Dhimitra Adamopoulos or Celia Milios with questions.

GIFT SHOP & BOOK STORE
Traditional Greek Items, Jewelry, Religious Books,

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!
Please volunteer for as many hours as you can on the weekend of the Festival!
We also need people to help in the preparations and the clean up afterwards. Don’t wait to be asked, but contact co-chairs.

THEMATIC BASKETS
Contact Evelyn Pappas (508-259-5453) or Sandi Kunkel (508-943-7227) about making a thematic basket, or donating anything towards a basket.

Bring Your Families and Help at the Festival

Invite your Neighbors
WATCH OUR GREEK DANCERS

Our youth Greek Dance Troupe will perform traditional dances on Saturday, 1:00 and 5:00 and Sunday at 1:00.

LIVE GREEK MUSIC
with “ARION”
Saturday 2:00 - 9:00pm
DJ Sunday 12:00-5:00pm

HELP NEEDED FOR TENT SET-UP
Come Sat, Sept 1
Mon, Tue, Wed, Thur, or Fri Before the Festival to Help!!!

CLEAN UP
NEED LOTS OF HELP on Monday AFTER the Festival!
Talk with Chris Geotis.

CHILDREN’S BOOTH & BOUNCING HOUSE
All Day Saturday and Sunday

GREEK “KAFENEIO” COFFEE SHOP
Try our “Baklava Sundays”, Greek Coffee, Frappes, and other special-

GREEK KAFENEIO COFFEE SHOP
Try our “Baklava Sundays”, Greek Coffee, Frappes, and other special-

CANT’ WAIT FOR MOUTH-WATERING LOUKOUMADES, BAKLAVA, & OTHER PASTRIES!!!

DONATIONS Welcome!
For the KID’S BOOTH contact Sara Darlagiannis

Donations for PASTRY LINE Contact Evelyn Pappas

Donations for FOOD LINE Contact Lisa Healy or Marie McNally
Scenes from the Metropolis of Boston Summer Camp
THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

The one who forgives always wins. Whatever the occasion may be, if you forgive, you immediately cleanse your soul and become fit for paradise.

If you have forgiven those who plotted to murder you, you have become equal to the martyrs. If you have forgiven an insult, you have gained peace and won the Kingdom of Heaven. If you have generously overlooked the rumors and slanders against you, you have dulled the sting of your foe.

If you have returned good for evil, you have shamed your enemy. If you have swallowed a sarcastic insult to your honor, you have become worthy of heavenly honors. If you have asked the pardon of a lesser man, you have not only NOT disgraced yourself, but you have furthered your spiritual maturity.

If you are not to blame but ask the offender to forgive you, you have thus helped his soul to be delivered from the hell of hatred and have covered many of your own sins too.

If you have abased your pride, you have exalted your humility.

Remember, the one who forgives always win. You cleanse your soul and become fit for paradise.

Archimandrite Seraphim Aleksiev

LIVING BREAD LUNCHEON DONORS

The September Luncheon was offered in loving memory of Antigone Steffa from her daughter Paulette

We are looking for Donors to sponsor a “Living Bread Luncheon” meal each month. You can honor some special person or event, or offer the meal in loving memory of a beloved one.

We serve approximately 80 guests each month, as well as deliver meals to the elderly of our parish.

A $400 donation will cover expenses for each month.

We love Him because He first loved us. If someone says, “I love God and hates his brother or sister, he is a liar, for he who does not love his brother or sister whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother and sister also.

1 John 19-21
A SAMPLE SCHEDULE OF OUR PILGRIMAGE

Day 1: Depart for TEL AVIV
This afternoon, we will depart for an unforgettable and fulfilling spiritual odyssey!

Day 2: TEL AVIV / TIBERIAS
Welcome to the Holy Land! We will travel to Tiberias, a drive of approximately two hours. En route to Tiberias, visit the Church and Tomb of St. George in Lydda, the birthplace of St. George. Venerate the tomb and chain of St. George. Some believe that the church was built on the very spot where St. George was chained and tortured in an attempt to convince him to renounce his faith. Others believe that the church was built in the place where he was buried after he was martyred in Nicomedia.

Day 3: TIBERIAS / RIVER JORDAN / CAPERNAUM / TABGHA / TIBERIAS
Enjoy a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus met Simon, Peter, James and John, his first disciples, and performed many miracles here. He stilled the raging storm on the Sea of Galilee that was about to flood their boat and walked on the stormy sea to His Apostles. In Capernaum, walk in the same village Jesus did. It is here that our Lord and Savior chose and called forth His Apostles, and where He preached and performed miracles such as the healing of the paralytic, the mother-in-law of Apostle Peter, the servant of the centurion and many others. See the remains of the House of Saint Peter, one of the very few exact sites we know Jesus visited. See the ruins of the Synagogue where Our Lord preached. Continue to the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Apostles, the very place Jesus called His first disciples. Enjoy the peaceful setting of this beautiful church with its red domes. We will go to the Mountain of Beatitudes, where Jesus Christ preached the Sermon on the Mount and where the Lord’s Prayer was said for the first time. Then, on to Tabgha (Seven Springs) and the Church of the Multiplication of Fishes and Loaves. It is here that the miracle of the loaves and fish took place. Over 5,000 men, women and children were fed from the miraculous multiplication of the five loaves of bread and two fish. Our last stop will be Yardenit on the River Jordan, the site for Spiritual Baptism and Water Blessing. Experience an affirmation of your baptism in the same river that our Lord was baptized by Saint John the Baptist 2,000 years ago.

Day 4: TIBERIAS / MT. TABOR / CANA / NAZARETH / JERUSALEM
We will visit the Church of the Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor. At the top of Mt. Tabor, there, see an utterly commanding view of all of lower Galilee and the valley of the Armageddon. It was here that Jesus revealed the wonderful power of presence in communion with the Lawgiver and prophets of the past (Moses and Elijah). This also became immediate evidence of Communion with His Father. At the foot of Mt. Tabor is the little village of Naim, where Jesus raised the only son of the poor widow from the dead. In Cana our Lord performed his first public miracle turning water into wine at the request of His Blessed Mother the Virgin Mary to spare the bridegroom the embarrassment of running out of wine at his wedding party. A special service for married couples will follow.

In Nazareth, the home of Mary, Joseph and Jesus until the beginning of His ministry. Nazareth is also where Jesus spent some years of His youth after returning to Israel from Egypt and until His public ministry began. Visit the Virgin Mary’s Well where the Angel Gabriel announced the “good news” to Mary that she would give birth to Our Lord, Jesus Christ. The Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation is built over this site.
Day 5: JERUSALEM / BETHLEHEM / JERUSALEM
In Bethlehem is the birthplace of our Lord and Savior and the cradle of biblical history. Bethlehem is located five and half miles from Jerusalem. Visit the Shepherd’s field and the Church of the Nativity. A Greek Orthodox Church has been built over the birthplace of Our Lord by the Emperor Justinian and is over 1,500 years old. It is the second oldest Orthodox Church in existence. On the way back to Jerusalem, visit the Monastery and Church of the Prophet Elias and the Church and Tomb of St. Symeon, the Just.

Day 6: JERUSALEM
We will walk through old Jerusalem to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and enjoy a private audience with His Beatitude Theophilos III, then continue with a visit to the Church of Saint Anna (birthplace of the Theotokos). Archeologists have uncovered all of the pools and the five porticoes, as was reported by St. John in the Gospel. Then, we will walk along the Way of the Cross. Venerate at the same cell the Lord was held prisoner before His crucifixion. It is located deep in a dungeon. There is a slab of stone with two holes through which His legs were passed and ankles shackled together. The cells of Barabas and the two thieves, who were crucified with Him, are here. We will continue with a visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the site of our Savior’s death and resurrection. This is the most important church for Christians. We will continue with a visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the place of our Savior’s death and resurrection. A small chapel has been built over the sacred place under the watch of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. In the first small room is the great stone that sealed the tomb. It was here that the Angel of the Lord sat proclaiming the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The next small room contained the slab of stone on which the dead body of the Lord was placed, entombed and resurrected. It is a truly incredible experience to be in this church! It is from this tiny room that the Holy Light of the Resurrection emanates.

Day 7: JERUSALEM
Visit the Monastery of St Mary Magdalene to venerate the relics of St Elizabeth, the 20th century Russian Martyr and St Stephen’s Church. Then we visit the Chapel of Ascension, the site our Lord ascended from the earth to Heaven. Continue to Gethsemane. Visit the Church of All Nations and the Garden of Agony. It is here our Lord prayed with great passion before He was to endure the selfless sacrifice to come. Continue with a visit to the Tomb of the Virgin Mary. It is from this site that the holy body of the Virgin Mother was taken into Heaven by her Son and God. We will visit the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) on Mount Moriah, where it is said the Patriarch Abraham was ready to sacrifice his son. Here also stands the Dome of the Rock, with its marble and multi-colored mosaics, quotations from the Koran and the Golden Cupola. Continue on to Mt. Zion to visit the Room of the Last Supper, King David’s Tomb and the Church of the Dormition. Return to the hotel for dinner. Those who wish may attend midnight Liturgy at the Holy Sepulcher for a truly unforgettable and spiritually-fulfilling evening.

Day 8: JERUSALEM / JERICHO / JERUSALEM
Visit the Mount of Temptation, where the Lord was tempted by the devil and fasted for forty days and forty nights. There is an altar built over the same slab of stone where Jesus prayed and fasted. The Monastery was built over this site, and there is only one elderly monk who takes care of it. He is truly inspirational. En route to the Dead Sea, stop in Qumran, the area where a Jewish sect thought to be the Essenes wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls. Continue to the Church of St. Elisseos and Zacchaeus’ Tree. This is the tree upon which Zacchaeus climbed in order to see the Lord walk by. From here, drive to the Judean Desert to the Monastery of St. Gerasimos. It is one of the oldest monasteries in the world, built by Abbot Gerasimos in 455 A.D. Continue to Martha and Lazarus Tomb in Bethany where Lazarus was raised from the dead by Jesus after 4 days in the tomb. The Lord wanted to establish His power over death and waited until Lazarus was confirmed dead before raising him from the dead.

Day 9: JERUSALEM / USA—Return Home

SAVE THE DATES FOR NEXT YEAR AND HAVE A ONCE IN A LIFETIME SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE!!!
Contact Fr. Luke today to reserve your spot!
COME AND TRY A BIBLE STUDY

10:00am WEDNESDAY MORNING
(at the Church starting Sept 12th)
or
6:30pm THURSDAY EVENING
at the home of Fr. Luke and Pres. Faith
(41 Noble Street, Dudley starting Sept 27th)

We will be using the video series
“Drive Thru History with Dave Stotts”
to discover the
Extraordinary Life of Jesus of Nazareth

WEEKDAY SERVICES
Sept 8 - 9:30 Liturgy for Birth of the Theotokos
Sept 14 - 9:30 Liturgy for Exaltation of Holy Cross
Sept 17 - 9:30 Liturgy for St. Sophia and Children
Sept 26 - Liturgy for St. John the Evangelist

Saturday Vespers - Every Saturday 6:00pm

SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS
Sept 16th

Bring your kids to Church by 9:30 to hear the Children’s Sermon.

Sunday School follows
Holy Communion

Let’s have a great year of growing in our faith!!!

JOY Apple Picking
Sunday, Sept 16

GOYA/Teen Meeting
5:00pm at Home of Fr. Luke and Pres Faith
Sunday, Sept 16th
USHERS & GREETERS SCHEDULE

Sept 2  Nicoleta Cojocaru, Arthur Darligiannis, Zach Gianaris, Jared Quill, Nikitas Zagoras
Sept 9  Arthur Bilis, Chris Geoti, Thomai Gatsogiannis, Trish Lareau, Ron Sanderson
Sept 16 Marie McNally, Matt Benoit, Lisa Healy, Nick Seferi, Bill Thompson,
Sept 23 Neal Neslusan, Jimmy Karapanos, Tasi Vriga, Tatyana Zhuk, Mike Chito
Sept 30 Nicoleta Cojocaru, Arthur Darligiannis, Zach Gianaris, Jared Quill, Nikitas Zagoras

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP SERVING GROUPS

Sept 2 - Donna Cooney, Leah Didonato, Rena Klebart, Betty Tonna,
Sept 9 - FESTIVAL SUNDAY
Sept 16 - Marie McNally, Christa Benoit, Sandi Kunkel, Mary Seferi,
Sept 23 - Kathy Bilis, Sara Darligiannis, Marie Monroe, Charlotte Neslusan, Stephanie Quill
Sept 30 - Thomai Gatsogiannis, Trish Lareau, Deb Raymond, Vange Wilson, Alexandra Koulax

Coffee Fellowship Supply Pastries/Donuts Groups

These groups will bake or bring in pastries/donuts and/or fruit and veggies for our coffee fellowship. We are looking for more volunteers to help!!!

Sept 2 – Sara Darligiannis, Sissy Darligiannis, Helen Constantine Alexandra Koulax
Sept 9 - CHURCH FESTIVAL
Sept 16 – Lisa Healy, Marie McNally, Despina Condos, Trish Lareau
Sept 23 – Charlotte Neslusan, Evis Jordanoglou, Dolly Sosnowski, Annalisa Dunning
Sept 30– Lynn Purcell, Rayne Purcell Sophia Foisy, Kelly Vosnakis
Oct 7 Titi Chito, Rina Sgouritsas, Lorna McWilliam, Pres. Faith Veronis
Oct 14 – Sandi Kunkel, Evelyn Pappas, Gulapka Kostovski, Betty Tonna,
Oct 21- Kathy Bilis, Marie Monroe, Eleni Sgouritsas, Tina Collelo
Oct 28 - Leah Didonato, Mary Seferi, Olga Pouloukhine,

YOUTH EPISTLE READERS

Sept 2 - Maia Beaudry
Sept 9 - Zach Beaudry
Sept 16 - Kiera MacKenzie
Sept 23 - Lily Mueller
Sept 30 - Helen Mueller
Oct 7 - Panayiota Veronis
The Light - September 2018

Remembering Our Church Family

Important Dates in SEPTEMBER:

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

BIRTHDAYS:

Sept 6  Gus Zahariadis
Sept 7  Maria Zhuk
Sept 8  Scott McWilliam
Sept 9  Irene Mountzouris
Sept 10 Nick Popiak
Sept 10 Kristina Mironidis
Sept 11 Zachery Beaudry
Sept 12 Evelyn Pappas
Sept 12 Barbara Pappas
Sept 13 Kiera Mackenzie
Sept 15 John Neslusan
Sept 16 Madison McWilliam
Sept 16 Chuck Pappas
Sept 18 Bob Mirandola
Sept 18 Nicholas Thompson
Sept 22 Kathy Kunkel
Sept 24 Niko Totolos
Sept 24 Jared Quill
Sept 25 Marie McNally
Sept 26 Olga Pappas
Sept 26 Christos Atsales
Sept 27 Diane Atsales
Sept 28 Titi Chito
Sept 28 James George
Sept 29 Paul Veronis

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:

Sept 3 Lorna and Scott McWilliam
Sept 3 Gary and Tina Colello

NAMEDAYS:

Sept. 1 St. Antigone
Ann Chito

Sept 5 Prophet Zacharias
Zachery Beaudry
Zach Giannaris
Zach Giannaris

Sept 7 St Kassianie
Lorna Kassianie McWilliam

Sept 14 Feast of the Cross
Laurie Stavroula Manthos
Stavros Pappas
Stephen Stavros Pappas

Sept 15 St Nikitas
Nikitas Zagoras

Sept 17 St Sophia
Sophie Apostol
Sophia Foisy
Sophia Koulax
Sophia Mackenzie
Sophia Quill
Sophia Stephanidis

ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

Sept. 17 Fr. Luke Veronis
MARRIAGES:

“Crown them with honor and glory!”

God grant many years to John and Katya Grzyb!

God grant many years to Loucia and Michael Scafidi!

BAPTISM:

“As many as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ!”

Congratulations to John, the son of Said & Bozena Khozami

COMMIT TO 20 MINUTES WITH GOD EACH DAY

Use Fr. Luke’s Daily Email to help you spend 20 minutes every day connecting with God throughout the new year.

You can sign up to the daily email at the Church’s website www.schwebster.org. On the left column of the main page you will find a place to sign up.

Look for our safe and convenient at bottom left of Church webpage at www.schwebster.org

Learn your Orthodox Faith from Orthodox podcasts, music, teachings at www.myocn.net

www.AncientFaith.com
Thank You to those who sponsor our monthly bulletin!
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| Sept 30  
8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy | 2  
8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy  
7:00 AA | 3 Labor Day  
Come and help out with the setting up of the tent | 4  
8:30 Peta Mixing  
1:00 Baklava  
Help with Tent Set up | 5  
Baking Pitas  
Help with Tent Set up  
| 6  
Making Sweet Breads  
Help with Tent Set up | 7  
Bring in Pastries  
Come and help with last minute details for the Festival | 1 Beginning of New Church Year  
12:30 Living Bread Luncheon |
| 8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy  
11:00-6:00 GREEK FESTIVAL | 9  
8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy  
10 | 10 | 11  
10:00 Bible Study  
6:30 Holy Lands Meeting | 12  
8:30 St Sophia & Her Children  
8:45 Matins  
9:30 Liturgy | 13  
10:00 Bible Study  
6:30 Bible Study at Home of Fr. Luke & Pres Faith | 14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross  
8:45 Matins  
9:30 Liturgy | 15  
6:00 Vespers |
| 16  
8:00 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy  
SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS !!!  
Apple Picking  
5:00 GOYA Meeting | 17 St Sophia & Her Children  
8:45 Matins  
9:30 Liturgy | 18 | 19  
10:00 Bible Study  
6:30 Bible Study at Home of Fr. Luke & Pres Faith | 20  
| 21  
Youth Excursion to Beach  
5:00 JOY Girls  
6:00 Vespers | 22 | 23  
8:30 Matins  
9:30 Divine Liturgy  
7pm AA | 24 | 25  
26 St John the Theologian  
8:30 Matins  
9:15 Divine Liturgy  
10:00 Bible Study | 27 | 28  
5:00 JOY Girls  
6:00 Vespers | 29 |
THE PROJECT OF MARRIAGE
Fr. Andrew Stephen Damick

Marriage is a skill.
We'd probably do better at it if we stopped evaluating it with words like "happy" and start thinking of it as a project.

You don't have a good marriage on your wedding day.
You've started a new project, learning a new skill that can contribute to mutual healing and growth.

That picture-perfect wedding picture is not a picture of a perfect marriage. It's a picture of a project that's just begun.
It's the first day of school. It's a path of transformation.

God doesn't give us the spouses we want for our happiness and comfort. He gives us the spouses we need for our salvation.

When you discover that your spouse has qualities that challenge you, those are the areas where God is saying you need the most work.

When marriage reveals our sins, we haven't "lost" anything -- that means it's working. And we get a chance to change.
And we can grow more and more into the likeness of the One Who created marriage.