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October 2014

2014

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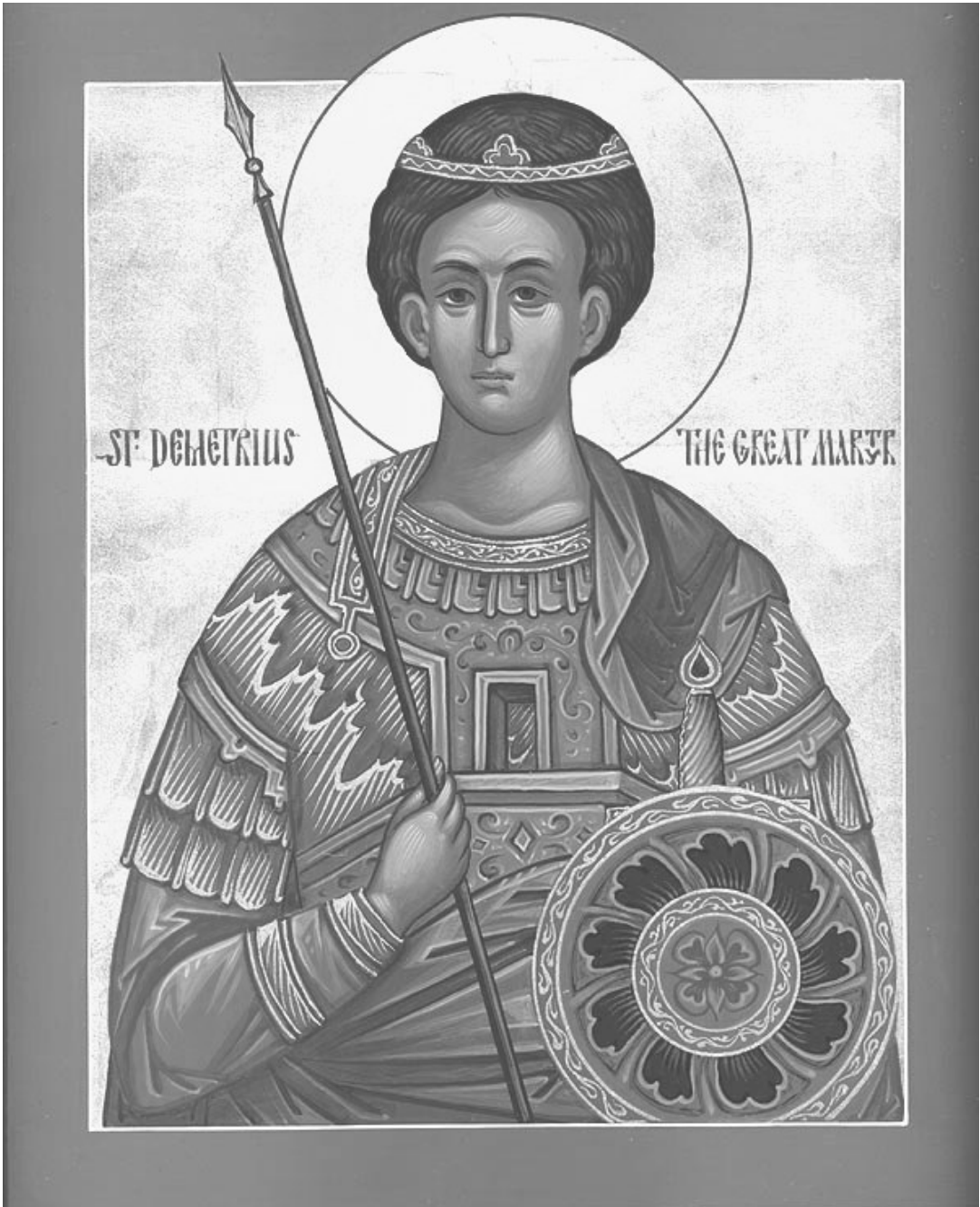
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OCTOBER 26TH



## Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church

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Ch. Phone: (239) 481-2099 Fax: (239)-481-0504 email: [officeagoc@gmail.com](mailto:officeagoc@gmail.com)

Fr. Dean's cell: (239) 322-7553 email: [revfrdean@gmail.com](mailto:revfrdean@gmail.com)

[www.annunciation.fl.goarch.org](http://www.annunciation.fl.goarch.org)

Office Hours: Monday-Friday ~ 9:30 am-3 pm

Administrative Assistant: Kelsie Gregware

**Rev. Fr. Dean Nastos, Proistamenos**

**Fr. Deacon John Howard**

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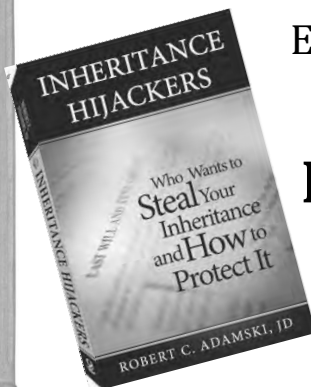
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## From the Desk of Our Proistamenos...

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2014

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."*  
Philippians 4:6

In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln officially proclaimed the last Thursday of November as the day set apart for the national giving of thanks unto Almighty God (Thanksgiving Day). For the most precious meaning of Thanksgiving we must look to one person, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Because of Him, Thanksgiving can be more than a day on a calendar with a deeper significance than "turkey and trimmings." Because of Him, we can cry out in praise and worship: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15).

Thanksgiving Day owes much to the love, grace and mercy of Him who gave Himself on Golgotha. Everything about Him is marked with the grace of giving. He gave up heaven for earth. He gave Himself into the hands of sinful men that He might give out His unfathomable love to all. He gave, and gave, and gave, until He had given all, and could cry, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

And now upon such a day, with such a remembrance, do you know Him personally? His had been the "giving." Where is your personal "thanks" through repentance and faith, so that for both Himself and for you, there may be that blessed bond of true "thanks...giving"? He offered thanks for you in the very face of Golgotha. Now He is waiting softly and tenderly for your word of thanks in return, by your heartfelt confession, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

As we gather on Thanksgiving Day with family and friends, let us all offer up our own prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ thanking Him for all He has given us, unworthy though we be. Let us all speak to one another following the meal about how blessed we all are and how we should share our blessings with all. Let us recount all the times we have received greater blessings by our Lord when we offer our best in His Name. May we all have a Blessed and Happy Thanksgiving Day.

In Christ's Service,

*Fr. Dean*



## A Message from the President , Nick Karras

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2014

As President of the Parish Council, I would like to congratulate Father Dean and his lovely wife, Presvetera Carolyn for their first year anniversary in our Annunciation parish. We are honored to have them here with us to guide and support all of us. Many new ministries and projects have transpired. We all should continue to support their efforts and ideas. May we be blessed to have them both for many more years to come.

Our classroom project is progressing due to the efforts of John Simons & Michael Peceri. Please continue to financially support this project. It will be a huge improvement for our Annunciation family that we all will enjoy as well as our children and grandchildren. Your continuous support is greatly needed and appreciated!

The next event coming soon is The Little Taste of Greece October 11-12. This first annual event is chaired by Maria Mourgis, Carol Palantine and our Presvetera Carolyn. Everyone's help, support and talent is needed to make this event successful. If you have not signed up to help and be a part of this, please do so. Also, talk about it to all your friends and family to get the word out. Any means of communication helps to market the event. Reach out to all the office people you know to call our church office for carry-out on Friday during the day. Our awesome Effie Vlahos will be back in town to help receive any phone calls.

Again, your continuous support in all events and activities that are sponsored by our church is greatly needed and appreciated by all of our parishioners. We need each and everyone of you.

We are looking for new potential Parish Council members with a positive attitude who are energetic, hard working and dedicated to our Annunciation church. Please contact Father Dean or myself if you are interested.

God Bless you all.  
In Christ's Name,

*Nick Karras*

Parish Council President




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## ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

### 2014 STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM PLEDGES


This listing contains the names of those Stewards of the Church who have signed the, blue, pledge cards for 2014. Pledge cards are available in the Church Narthex or Church office. If you feel your name has been omitted please contact: Kelsie Gregware, Administrative Assistant in the Church Office (481-2099) or Michael Peceri, Stewardship Committee Chairman.

Jimmy & Jennifer Achkar	Constantinos & Barbara	Richard & Cheryl Johnson
Nicholas & Varvara Alexiou	Dionysopoulos	Eleni Kaklis
Eve & Alex Alves	John & Caken Dopoulos	James & Theresa Kalogridis
Michael & Popi Ambazis	Dr. Thomas & Frances Drakos	William & Helen Kaltsas
Rev. Albert & Ginny Amend	Jurijus & Rita Dukinas	George & Dorothy Kantarze
Dr. Paula Apostolou	Charles Eliopoulos	Effie Kapetan
James & Katie Avtges	Niki Fagerline	Elizabeth (Bess) Karabetsos
Dr. Andrew & Jen-Hope Belis	Robert & Aileen Fenton	Jimmy & Despina Karras
Athena Belis	Athena K. Fisk	Nick & Stella Karras
Vassiliki & Joel Berends	Anastasia Frangakis	Apostolos Karydas
Angelo Bitsis	Helen & Tom Gallian	William & Sophia Katsaris
Golfo Bitsis	John & Arlene Generales	Marianthi Kazakos
George & Tracie Blake	Joyce Gladis	Dale & Helen Keating
Joseph Boisvert	Mary Sue Gladis	Richard & Barbara Keene
Dr. Theodor & Dorothy Bonstedt	Maria Gorrell	Patricia Kemp
Robert & Helene Boucher	John & Elaine Green	Panos Klentzeris
Victor Brust	Paul & Roda Guenther	Richard & Georgia Kline
George & Elaine Chakonas	Thomas & Marlene Haley	Nikos & Anna Kontakos
Donald & Irene Cheek	Danny & Ann Halvatzis	Presb. Aspasia Kontinos
Jodi Chupak & James Anderson	Ed & Mimi Hardgrove	John & Bella Kontinos
Penny Churchman	Richard & Matia Hawks	Nicholas & Penelope Kontinos
Lois Colagrossi	Les & Emily Haynes	Thomas & Chandra Kontinos
Elwood & Lea Collier	Donald & Virginia Headley	Konstantinos & Marie Kostouros
Angelo & Anastasia Constan	Peter Hernandez & Poly Mavridou	Ann Kotsalis
Kristin Cooper	James & Bess Hord	Nicholas & Mary Koukos
George & Georgia Copulos	Deacon John & Lanette Howard	Theo & Nancy Koupelis
Katerina Coumbos	Demetria Hughes	Michael & Christine Kouvelis
Katherine Del Monico	Alexander & Hope Hunter	Ann Kratsios
Johanna DiMartino	Charles Johnson	Adam & Sandra Krotov

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**\*Voucher must be presented to get credit for the sale.**



Continued on Next Page



Joseph & Heidi Kubiak	Marilyn Necak	Jamie & Anastasia Scime
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Cynthia Kyriacou	Frieda Nicholas	John & Joanie Simon
John Lampiris	George & Helen Nicolaidis	Helen Sotiropoulos
Michael & Evangeline Lemonakis	Donald & Dorothea Nicholson	Bessie Spiridakis
Emanuel & Rana Levenderis	John Noufrios	Mary Spiropoulos
Peter & Jean Licopantis	Rich & Carol Palatine	Spero & Ruth Stergiotis
Thomas & Eugenia Loughney	Theodosios & Margaret Palis	Dr. Douglas & Bridget Stilian
Dino & Jennifer Magas	Basil & Linda Pappas	Thomas & Pamela Strikis
Jimmy & Valerie Magas	Presvytera Evangeline Pappas	Cornelia Talabac
Mikes & Minna Mailakakis	John & Amelia Pappas	George & Lourdes Taliforos
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Maria Mason	Pauline Poulos	Angie & Jack Weaver
Ellen Matic	Peggy Poulsen	Artemis Welsh
Victoria Matic	Patricia Reardon	William & Andrea Wolfe
Helen Mavrelis	Michael & Nikoletta Reynolds	Peter & Sia Wouralis
Helen Messerotes	Lyudmyla Robinson	Grammati Xiromeritis
Marilena Midgley	Albert & Darlene Romanosky	Marion Zachariades
Fotini Mirones	Tony & Cathy Rubinski	Sue Zatezalo
George & Maria Mourgis	John & Olympia Ruppe	
Rev. Fr. Dean & Pres. Carolyn Nastos	Mitchell & Christina Samuels	

STEWARDSHIP DATA

<b><u>Total Stewardship Pledged:</u></b>	<b><u>2014 Stewardship Goal:</u></b>
\$134,083 (as of September 7th, 2014)	\$200,000
<b><u>How many possible Stewards:</u></b>	<b><u>Total amount given (recorded):</u></b>
290	\$90,572 through September 7th, 2014.
<b><u>Total # of Stewards Pledged:</u></b>	Some of this charged to Stewardship but given by Parishioners who have not signed Pledge Cards.
211	



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## Greek Fest 2015 by Jen-Hope Belis

Save the Dates for February 20, 21 & 22!

**DO YOU WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED???** We would love to have you! There are holes that we need to fill and would love to see new faces get more involved with the planning. Please let Jen-Hope Belis know at [jhbelis@yahoo.com](mailto:jhbelis@yahoo.com)

We are looking for people to fill these roles....

**VOLUNTEER LEAD:** This is one of the most important jobs of the Greek Fest! Without volunteers, we can not make this festival a success! The volunteer coordinator should be computer savvy and attend church on a regular basis in Jan & Feb since that is when most of our parishioners confirm their roles. This is a great way to meet so many of our parishioners and friends of the church!

**HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEER LEAD:** This person would reach out to HS counselors to promote volunteer opportunity. Currently, HS volunteers register online using google survey but we could change format if preferred. They would work with Volunteer Lead to schedule HS volunteers over the weekend. AFTER, the festival, they would need to create list of HS volunteers to provide to counselors at each school.

**PAPER PRODUCT LEAD:** They would make sure outlets have what they need and that they don't use products they are not supposed to. For example, saganaki should not use silverware packages but simply knife & fork. They would also start combining boxes for return on SUNDAY so that Tom & Marlene are not doing this on Monday morning by themselves

**CARNIVAL LEAD:** Would love to find someone to help with the presales. Doing it all online via PayPal made it simple but there is still some emails that have to be sent and vouchers to mail too.

**DINING TENT LEAD:** Manage volunteers who are assigned to dining tent busing including high school volunteers. Make sure volunteers wash trays and are taken to Aegean & Yassou lines. Like last year, we plan to secure different High School groups who will be bring 8-10 kids (Plus 2 chaperones) to bus tables on Friday night, Saturday day, Saturday night & Sunday. We will be offering them a \$250 donation to their organization for their efforts. We still need a parishioner (or 2) to lead this area and work with those groups.

**PEPSI LEAD:** Oversees the high school volunteers who work the Pepsi Trailer, Pepsi stand with coffee and Pepsi and Yassou line. Make sure that all areas have ice & all product is flowing properly. There are Pepsi representatives onsite who change out product and help but need a person to oversee these areas.



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City	State	Zip
Email Address	*Checks & Money Orders: Payable to ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH If sending a check or money order, it MUST be received by the church prior to February 19. Office will not be responsible for lost or delayed mail.	
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## GOYA by Heidi Kubiak

GOYA List for this year so far:

**Prepare for New Year**

**Make plans**

**Set goals**

**Have fun together**

**Meeting at least first Sunday of every month**

**Thankful to our Church family for their support**

**Had successful fund raiser already**

**Going to volleyball tournament in St. Pete**

**Going to Skyzone, Ice skating and ??**

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES!



Pictured to the Left  
**GOYA Kick-Off Meeting**  
*Crystal, Katerina Hernandez and Athena Mason*



Pictured Above:  
**GOYA Kick-Off Meeting**  
*Gabrielle Kubiak, Hallie Fenton, Chris Samuels and Sam Walsh*

Pictured to the Left:  
**Community Yard Sale**  
*Angelika Kontakos, Katerina Hernandez and Ryan Hall*



## Classroom Capital Campaign by Michael B. Peceri

A monk was once asked: "What do you do there in the monastery?" He replied: "We fall and get up, fall and get up, fall and get up again." This quote is ascribed to Tito Calliander and it is found in the book "The Orthodox Way."

As I read the quotation and reflected on my work as Campaign Chair for the Classroom Capital Campaign that quotation had a significant meaning to me and gave meaning to my work for the building fund. From the initial approval of the classroom project when the Parish Assembly granted the Parish Council authority to go forward with the construction of the classroom/office building your support was solicited in the way of pledges and cash contributions. Each time an article in the VOICE appeared contributions grew and when the second tray passing for the building fund was initiated tray cash contributions became abundant. And now the post card initiative. The post card has been sent to every person, who at anytime, was a member of or attended our Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church. The results of this plea for funds will hopefully bear fruit in the coming weeks.

How did the monk's quotation impact me as Chair of the Classroom Capital Campaign? As pledges dropped off, cash contributions became sparse, and the second tray Sunday funds dwindled to a trickle it was discouraging. However, I consider the Classroom Capital Campaign one of the most important projects I have ever undertaken on behalf of our Church. I will find ways to re-energize contributions to the Capital Campaign and like the monastery monks, "fall and get up, again," seeking support from every source possible.

The classroom building will meet the many urgent needs of our Parish; classrooms, offices, additional Ministry meeting space, storage facilities and most important provide our children and their children with a modern facility in which they can learn and understand the Orthodox Faith. The building will be a building we can all be proud of and enjoy. If you do take the time to read this article vow to sacrifice something you enjoy in your daily life but is really not essential, something you can easily do without. Take that small amount of money you spend daily or weekly on nonessentials, put that money aside and contribute it to the Capital Campaign. It will surprise you on how much more you can contribute to the Capital Campaign Building Fund than you thought possible.

## Miracle's Baseball Game & Fireworks



**Pictured to the left:**

Annunciation Families and Friends at the Baseball Game & Fireworks event on Saturday, August 16th

10/01/2015



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## ***Nativity Fast Begins November 15th***

We as Orthodox Christians prepare to receive the Incarnate Lord into our souls, mind, body and entire being by participating in the 40 day Fast before His Nativity on December 25th. The Nativity Fast is also called the "Fast of St. Philip" because it begins on the day after the Feast of St. Philip the Apostle. The Nativity Fast originally lasted only 7 days. It was not until the 12th century at the Council of Constantinople (1166 A.D.) that it was decreed that there would be a fast of forty days, beginning on November 15th. The Nativity Fast is similar to the Great Lent before Pascha but also different in the regulations of fasting.

The Nativity Fast is not the same as the Western Church's Advent period. The word "Advent" means "coming". This means that

in the Western Church, the faithful await the coming of the Lord in the flesh at His Incarnation. We as Orthodox Christians are not waiting for the Lord to come in the flesh because we know that Christ is already with us. We read this in Matthew 28:20 "...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." We are called to prepare for His Birth by making ourselves aware of His presence rather than waiting for Him to come.

If you have any other questions about the Nativity Fast, please see Fr. Dean. May the Nativity Fast be filled with spiritual exercises that bring the Lord not only into the flesh for our salvation but that our preparing to receive Him will be filled with peace, joy and love.

## ***October 28—OXI Day***

### **Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

Our commemoration of OXI Day, October 28, provides our Greek Orthodox community with a special day to remember and affirm the unique relationship between our heritage and faith. This day marks a brilliant moment in history when the nation of Greece responded through word and action to the forces of fascism and occupation during World War II. The response of "NO" ("OXI") delivered by the Greek People to the demands of the Axis forces on October 28, 1940, echoed in the bravery and sacrifice of many, and it exemplified the deep Hellenic love of freedom and independence. It also demonstrated the stalwart commitment of our Hellenic forebears to the faith and their country.

Faced by the threat of a brutal aggressor, our fathers and mothers drew upon their rich heritage which provided them with courage and determination. They acted in accordance with this heritage as they strived to strengthen and sustain persons, families, communities, and even life itself

in the terrible conditions of war. Further, this heritage enabled them to resist, and ultimately prevail over, the huge military machine and power of the Fascist aggressor.

It is with this example of the interrelationship of our faith and heritage that we commemorate this day known as "OXI Day." Today, we look back to a significant moment in our history and the history of the world, and we remember those who embodied Hellenism and Orthodox Christianity in a definitive way, and heroically felt in the battlefields. As Greek Orthodox Christians in America we also commemorate this day in thankfulness to God for the blessings of our faith and heritage. We fully understand the depth and relevance of this relationship between faith and heritage. May we forever cherish this relationship; and may our remembrance of our heritage and our faith in God embolden us always to say "NO" to anything that threatens freedom, justice, and peace.

## ***Hellenic-American Social Club of S.W. Florida, Inc. By Ann Constan***

Fall is in the air and our dear "snowbird" friends are returning, one by one. We look forward to enjoying our first meeting and socializing with all our friends; this will be held on October 14th in the Fr. Arthur Kontinos Community Center at 7:00 p.m. A review of the events scheduled will be presented and reservations and payment will be taken for the various outings.

First on the Club's agenda for the season is a picnic to kick-off the festivities. This will be held at the Jay-Cee Park in Cape Coral on October 28th - "OXI" Day Picnic - and will be chaired by Kleopas and Irene Polyviou. BBQ Chicken and all the good fixin's will be served, including soft drinks, coffee and desserts. This fun day is open to all members and friends in our Parish. Please contact Irene & Kleopas (242-0270) to save your spot. Reservations are required. The cost this year is \$6 per member and \$7 per guest. Payment is expected by our meeting on October 14th. All carry-outs will be at the same cost. Please remember to bring your plates and tableware, as well as a comfy chair if you wish.

Also planned is a bus trip to the "Singing Christmas Trees" in Orlando for November 18th. Transportation will depart the Church at 8 a.m. and return at approximately 6 p.m. Inasmuch as this trip will be open to all members and friends, seating will be on a "first-come" basis, and it will be extremely important that those interested in joining us make reservations as soon as they are being taken. Seating is limited as it is not planned to have a large bus at this time. The cost (to be determined) will include lunch and will be announced in future Sunday Bulletins, and in the Club's monthly Newsletter mailed to members. Since the date of this excursion is just around the corner, payment to save your seat will be expected at the

October 14th meeting. If you have questions, please contact Phyllis Mino at (631) 838-1492.

Other up-coming events include a trip to Broadway Palm Dinner Theater for the annual Christmas Show, which this year will be "A Christmas Carol" on Sunday, November 30th. Kitty Avtges will be taking reservations at the October 14th meeting and payment will be expected before tickets are purchased. Also on the agenda is the Club's Annual Christmas Party for members. This is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, December 9th, at "Marker 92" - Tarpon Point Marina. More details will follow.

We are a social club and enjoy day trips to new and exciting places. More events planned are a trip to the "Holy Land" in Orlando in January 2015, as well as our annual Greek (Paniyeri) Picnic on February 5th, to which all are invited. A major portion of the proceeds from this picnic will be donated to the Annunciation School & Meeting Room Building. We hope that all our members and parishioners will support this major endeavor.

During the year, we also invite guest speakers to our monthly meetings to keep us current on many topics of interest to us all. Our annual dues are \$20 per year to defray various expenses, but you can join us now for only \$10 which will enroll you until the end of 2014. We are also anxiously looking forward to the privilege of holding our meetings in the new Classroom & Meeting Room Building now under construction. Plan on attending our meetings to stay on top of all activities so that you don't miss out. Please contact our President Barbara Dionysopoulos at 267-2014 or 826-1655 for further information.



## ***Ladies Philoptochos Society by President, Ginny Amend***

We got off to a good start with a combined Board & General Meeting on Monday, September 8th, (The Nativity of the Theotokos), at 11:30AM with a light luncheon served. Our Spaghetti Luncheon for the Benefit of Holy Cross Seminary brought in just over \$700. Thanks to the Kalogridis family and those members of Philoptochos, especially Barbara D, and Marilena, who deliciously prepared the luncheon.

Our monthly Bake Sale will begin on Sunday, September 28th, and continue throughout the year. On our schedule for the coming year is our Special Bake Sale on November 22, followed by our Silver tea on December 6th. As we look forward to 2015, we plan for our Fourth Annual Antiques and Collectibles Auction on Saturday, March 14th, 2015. All of these events require much needed help, planning and participation. More information will be given as each event approaches.

## ***Liturgy in the Park and Kick-Off for Religious Education—Sept.21,2014***

It rained quick enough to allow the sun to come out for a blessed day at our Liturgy & Picnic at Lakes Park last Sunday. We so appreciate the Co-Chairs Olympia Alexis-Ruppe and Polly Mavridou-Hernandez for making it a memorable outdoor event! The Grill Team prepped some awesome hot dogs, burgers, chicken and sausage to go along with tables full of side dishes and desserts you all brought. This WILL BE AN ANNUAL EVENT! There were plenty of games, water balloons, egg toss competition, races, bubbles and wet clothes under our pavilion. Over 100 members of our Parish Community attended.



## ***Sunday School News by Jen-Hope Belis***

We would like to thank everyone who came out to the Liturgy in the Park! What a great way to kick off the Sunday School year.

We have new parishioners who have offered to give of their time and talent to help in the Sunday School classrooms. Without the willingness of our teachers and assistants to volunteer, the Sunday School program would not be successful.

<b><u>Religious Education Teachers</u></b>	<b><u>Contact Name</u></b>
<b>PreK &amp; K Grade Teacher</b>	Olympia Ruppe
<b>PreK &amp; K Grade Assistant</b>	Elaine Greene
<b>PreK &amp; K Grade Assistant</b>	Victoria Todd
<b>1-3 Grade Teacher</b>	Dorothy Bonstedt
<b>1-3 Grade Assistant</b>	Dr. Cheryl Johnson
<b>1-3 Grade Assistant</b>	Hallie Fenton
<b>4-6 Grade Teacher</b>	Jen-Hope Belis
<b>4-6 Grade Assistant</b>	Poly Mavridou-Hernandez
<b>7-12 Grade Co-Teacher</b>	Tina Kucera
<b>7-12 Grade Co-Teacher</b>	Faith Miller
<b>Floater Assistant (PreK-6)</b>	Joanna Hoch

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...for Sunday School Fall Open House! We invite all parents to attend our Open Houses for their particular class. This is an opportunity for parents to meet teachers as well as see what your child is learning every Sunday.

**October 5** Fall Open House for 7-12th Grade Class  
**October 12** Fall Open House for PreK & K Grade Class  
**October 19** Fall Open House for 1-3rd Grade Class  
**October 26** Fall Open House for 4-6th Grade Class

SAVE THE DATE for the Christmas Pageant on December 21. More details to follow!

## ***Baptism***



**Pictured to the left:**

Baptism of Robert Fenton Jr. into the Orthodox faith, husband of Aileen. Godparent: Vickie Berends. Congratulations and welcome to the Orthodox Faith!



Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church

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*Movie Synopsis: "In the beginning, there was nothing." So starts this version of the story centered on Noah (Russell Crowe), the man entrusted by God to save the innocent animals of Earth as the rising floodwaters cleansed the planet of mankind's evil. Decades later, as a father of three, Noah experiences a vision foretelling the great flood that will wash over the Earth, destroying every living thing that stands on the soil. That vision leads Noah to seek out his grandfather, Methuselah, in order to understand his mission.*

MOVIE SHOWING at the Arthur Kontinos Community Center.

Movie begins at 6:00p.m. Join us for a fun & fabulous night!

## Saints Demetrios and Nestor

The names of Demetrios and Nestor are so linked in the annals of Christianity it would be almost sacrilegious to mention one without the other in any account of the story of these two beloved men of God, who are now as inseparable in church archives as they were in life. It was their combined defiance of early fourth-century tyranny which brought them to a martyrdom, which individually they may not have attained, but which placed them on equal footing in the final judgment. While Demetrios was the better known of the two, it was the quiet courage of his friend, Nestor, added to the complete piety of Demetrios, that assured their immortality.

Demetrios was a native of the city of Thessaloniki, the city established by Alexander the Great, who named it for a sister very dear to him. In the tradition of the great thinkers of ancient Greece, Demetrios honed his keen oratorical power in the public forum, where the debates of the great minds of the day drew the spirited Christians as much as the gladiatorial games attracted pagans. As the second leading city of the empire, Thessaloniki had a reputation for providing the brightest intellectuals on the public platform and the most fearsome gladiators in the arena, strange bedfellows, indeed, and, oddly enough, in both of which the power of Demetrios was to find expression.

Demetrios was in the military service as well as a devout Christian, a study in contrast that was countenanced in Thessaloniki, but when it came to the attention of the Emperor Maximianus, who had come for an annual exhibition of gladiatorial prowess in the arena, the dual nature met with royal displeasure. For his part in the Christian cause, Demetrios was stripped of his military rank and cast into prison to await an uncertain fate. It was at this point that the friendship of Nestor came to light. At great personal risk, Nestor visited his friend in prison regularly and sought to interceded in his behalf, a move which availed him little but the aroused suspicions of those who surrounded the emperor. This provided the setting for one of the finest displays of the power of God through the friendship of two gallant Christians.

It seems that one of the favorite of the arena, admired particularly by the emperor, was a giant man named Lyaeos, a seven-foot brute who destroyed every hapless gladiator he ever faced, and for whom the pagans sought an opponent who at least had the courage to walk up to Lyaeos and give a good account of himself before succumbing to the inevitable.

It was during one of his visits that Nestor heard from Demetrios that the power of the Lord could be transmitted through him to any man and make him invincible against any foe in the arena. The youthful Nestor, with the spirit of the true believer welling within him, agreed to hurl a challenge to the best of the gladiators with a declaration that the power of God would, thanks to his friend, Demetrios, prevail against all comers. Buoyed by the assurance of Demetrios, he stepped into the arena and shouted his defiance in the name of the Lord.

The pagan crowd, thinking this was some practical joke, roared with laughter, but when Nestor strode to the royal box where Maximianus had looked on with amusement and heard the young man invoke the name of Demetrios and the awesome power of God, his smile turned to a snarl and the audience joined him in derision, whereupon the scowling Lyaeos was brought into the pit. The crowd settled back to witness the anticipated cat and mouse match, which the giant would conclude when it pleased him. But, they were brought to their feet in disbelief when the supposed victim withstood the withering attack of the gladiator who had never tasted defeat, and, in due course, turned the table and soundly defeated the greatest of the gladiators. Nestor scorned the thumbs down signal of the mob who now screamed for death, and the young Christian walked away from his prostrated foe.

The frustrated Emperor now ordered the deaths of both Christian companions, and they were executed without delay by the Roman soldiers. Not all who left the arena that day remained pagans.





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## The Feast of Saint Andrew

In the gospel according to Saint John, Philip calls his friend Nathanael to "come and see" Jesus, but it is Jesus Himself who invites Andrew to "come and see" where He dwells and to spend the day with Him, together with another disciple of John the Baptist, who is probably the evangelist himself.

Come and see! You will witness the mystery of Christ's birth from the Virgin, His manifestation at the Jordan in His baptism by John, His victory over the devil in the desert, His proclamation of good news to the poor, His announcement of liberty to the oppressed, His declaration of the acceptable year of the Lord's grace. You will witness His accomplishment of the signs of His messiahship: the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the dumb talk. You will see the winds cease and the seas calmed. You will behold the table spread "in the wilderness" in the feeding of the multitudes (Ps 78:19). You will witness the casting out of demons. And, most glorious of all, you will see the dead being raised by the word of His power. You will know indeed that "the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Mt 12:28), and you will testify truly that "something

greater than Jonah" and "something greater than Solomon is here" (Mt 13:41). You will see what "many prophets and righteous men longed to see... And did not see it, and to hear... And did not hear it" (Mt 13:17). And ultimately you will see the Son of God Himself being lifted upon the Cross in order to give His broken body as food for His people, and His shed blood as their drink, that their hunger and thirst for peace and joy and righteousness, and indeed for life itself, might be forever satisfied. You will "sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" which is brought to the world by the glorified Messiah (Mt 8:11).

To go the way of the Winter Pascha is, according to Saint Gregory the Theologian, to "travel without fault through every stage and faculty of the life of Christ." It is to enter into the mysteries of the Messiah, "all of which have but one completion: my perfection and return to the first condition of Adam." It is to "see and be seen by the great God who in Trinity is worshipped and glorified, and whom we now set forth before you as clearly as the bonds of flesh permit, in Jesus Christ our Lord."

## Thanksgiving

Lord, let my thanks not be confined to just one day a year  
When friends and family gather round to share Thanksgiving cheer.

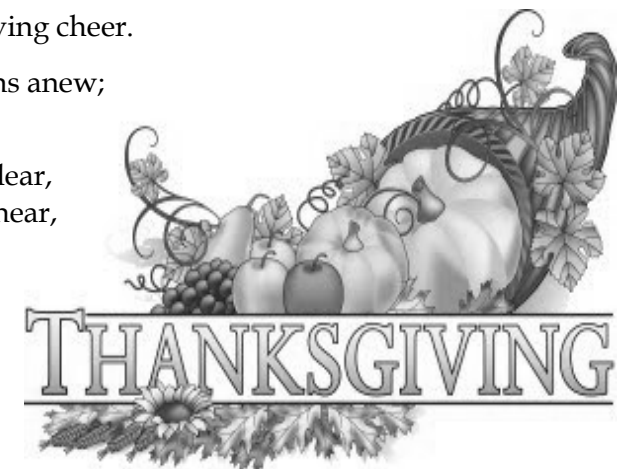
Thou heapest blessing round my door each day that dawns anew;  
It's only fitting to kneel and give my thanks to you.

For shelter, warmth and ample food, for family ties held dear,  
For love that makes a house a home, and friendship ever near,

For all the beauty of the earth, in sky, on sea, or land,  
For seed time and for harvest, rich bounty from thy hand.

It matter not the hour or day, the season of the year,  
Everywhere I look, dear Lord, Your blessings do appear.

Seated at the festive table, I bow and humbly pray:  
Give me a heart that overflows with "Thanks-living" everyday.





2014 Flowers for Feast Day Icons

Flowers always add beauty to whatever they adorn. It has always been a tradition among our Orthodox Churches to decorate Holy Icons with flowers when the Feast Day is being celebrated.

Please contact the Church Office and donate towards the flowers you would like as soon as possible. As always, this will be done on a first come, first serve basis. The names of those who donate the flowers will be listed in the “VOICE” Newsletter the month after the Feast Day is celebrated. Thank you for your support in this project and may our Lord continue to bless you. Please make your check payable to: ANNUNCIATION CHURCH

Flowers for St. Luke Icon - Oct. 19th	\$45.00
Flowers for St. Demetrios Icon - Oct. 26th	\$45.00
Flowers for SS. Kosmas & Damian Icon - Nov. 2nd	\$45.00
Flowers for St. Nektarios Icon - Nov. 9th	\$45.00
Flowers for St. Matthew Icon - Nov. 16th	\$45.00
Flowers for Entrance of Theotokos Icon - Nov. 21st	\$45.00
Flowers for St. Katherine Icon - Nov. 25th	\$45.00
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Flowers for St. Stephen Icon - Dec. 28th	\$45.00

Donated Flowers for Feast Day Icons



Flowers for Paraklesis Service Icon -  
August 13th  
Donated by James & Terry Kalogridis in honor of PEACE ON EARTH

Flowers for Falling Asleep of Theotokos Icon -  
August 15th  
Donated by Maria Gorrell

Flowers for Nativity of Theotokos Icon -  
September 8th  
Donated by Bridget & Doug Stilian in loving memory of Bridget’s God Mother Bess Karabetsos

Flowers for Exaltation of Holy Cross Icon -  
September 14th  
Donated by Theodor & Dorothy Bonstedt in memory of their mothers.

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ALL INDOORS  
\*\*\*CARRYOUT TOO

IT'S HERE. . . GREEK FRIES - POTATOES SPRINKLED WITH SEASONING AND SPLASHED WITH FETA CHEESE.

Every volunteer who has contacted me, Maria Mourgis, please watch for an email next week to confirm your day of helping. PLEASE WEAR: **DARK BLUE OR BLACK PANTS, CAPRIS OR SKIRTS and WHITE SHIRTS/TOPS. PLEASE NO SHORTS!**

It will be ALA Carte Dining as you pass through the food line. Life's uncertain EAT Dessert first!

Our Greeters will guide you into our hall through the courtyard, direct you to get your food and drink and help you find a seat. We will have Table setters ready to help make dining a pleasure and live music during dinner hours. Pastry will be the top favorites. Greek beer, soda, water and back by popular request -- FRAPPES!

Menu

- BASKET OF GREEK FRIES \$4
- OVEN ROASTED 1/2 GREEK CHICKEN COMPLIMENTED WITH RICE, GREEK SALAD & ROLL. \$13
- LARGE SIZE SPANAKOPITA (SPINACH PIE) \$4
- GREEK SALAD BOWL \$4
- GYROS SANDWICH WRAP \$7

We'd like to thank Sunflower Café, Summerlin Road; 2 Culver's Restaurants, Ft. Myers; Pita Pit and McDonald's McFrederic Corp., Fort Myers; Farmer Boy Restaurant, Clearwater, WMYR Radio 106.7, Ft. Myers and Coca-Cola, Ft. Myers for their donations in making this a success.

See you the week of the OCTOBER 10th,

Maria Mourgis and Carol Palatine

Co-Chairwomen

ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH PARISH COUNCIL  
Little Taste of Greece 2014