

August 2015

KOINONIA



The Koinonia is the monthly newsletter of:
Holy Trinity - Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Cathedral

307 19th Street South
Birmingham, AL 35233

CHURCH ADDRESS/CONTACT INFO:

307 19th Street South
 Birmingham, AL 35233
 (205) 716-3080 – Telephone
 (205) 716-3085 – FAX
 Website: www.holytrinity-holycross.org
 Email: cathedral@holyltrinity-holycross.org

CATHEDRAL STAFF:

Dean – Rev. Fr. Paul Costopoulos, ext. 302
 Assistant Priest – Rev. Fr. Micah Hirschy, ext. 314
 Pastoral Assistant – Alexis Pappas, ext. 322
 Rev. Fr. Ernesto Obregon
 Fr. Dcn. Tikhon Cobb
 Administrative Assistant – Elizabeth Dennis, ext. 0
 Bookkeeper – Sherry Glover, ext. 304
 Daycare Director – Katherine Staursky, ext. 303
 Custodial Supervisor – Frank Ivory - (205) 960-4397

2015 PARISH COUNCIL

Rev. Fr. Paul Costopoulos, Dean
 Rev. Fr. Micah Hirschy, Assistant Priest
 Jimmy Cosmas, President (205) 999-6577
 Alex Yearout, Vice President (205) 914-0282
 Keith Deason, Secretary (205) 382-7559
 Tommy Yearout, Treasurer (205) 969-1828
 Derek Gaylard, Assistant Treasurer (205) 337-7653
 Pete Lafakis, Assistant Treasurer (205) 733-8372
 Billy Valekis, Assistant Treasurer (205) 243-5744
 Mark Boardman (205) 871-2216
 Greg Burge (205) 979-0024
 Nick Erben (205) 908-5057
 Dwight I. Greene (205) 919-7619
 Alex Kontos (205) 919-3581
 Leon Tranos (205) 908-4925
 Joey Valekis (205) 222-9780
 Dr. George Zaharias (205) 902-1908

CATHEDRAL MINISTRIES:

Acolytes: Mark Mercer (205) 663-5931
 Nursery: Lindsey Alsobrook (205) 538-5250
 Sunday School:
 Kathy Ronderos (205) 915-1780
 HOPE/JOY: Lisa Miller (205) 427-3927
 Jr. GOYA: Elaine Lyda (205) 243-9492
 GOYA: Fr. Micah Hirschy (205) 716-3080
 OCF: Dcn. Tikhon Cobb (205) 553-2570
 Athletics: Steve Nickolson (205) 907-7022
 Philoptochos: Chum Atkins (205) 410-3010
 Outreach & Evangelism:
 Penny Kovakas (205) 669-4565
 Bookstore: Dawn Manakides (205) 612-3038
 Choir: Tim Vakakes (205) 482-6348
 Organist Nicky Velotas (205) 982-2075
 Assistant Organist:
 Nadya Bogdan (205) 982-5181
 Altar Guild and Makaria:
 Irene Tracy (205) 967-8258
 Adult Education Enrichment Class:
 Helen Bekrakis (205) 822-4146
 Banquet Hall Coordinator:
 Nick Erben (205) 908-5057
 Firehouse Shelter:
 Bill Gulas (205) 985-1518
 Marilyn Wilson (205) 681-2529
 Prosforo Committee:
 Nicki Jovaras 205-942-2681
 Inquirers:
 Rev. Fr. Paul Costopoulos (205) 716-3080
 Bible Studies:
 Rev. Fr. Micah Hirschy (205) 716-3080
 Greek Language and Dancing:
 Katherine Staursky (205) 823-2312
 AHEPA: Dino Pihakis (205) 276-1131
 Daughters of Penelope:
 Kia Paulson (205) 982-0660

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES TO THE KOINONIA IS THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH.

**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION
 FOR THE WEEKLY BULLETIN IS NOON ON WEDNESDAY.**

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER SUNDAY VOLUNTEERS

PARISH COUNCIL:

August 2: **G. Zaharias**, B. Valekis, M. Boardman
 August 9: **L. Tranos**, K. Deason, D. Greene
 August 16: **P. Lafakis**, Joey Valekis, N. Erben
 August 23: **D. Gaylard**, A. Yearout, G. Burge
 August 30: **T. Yearout**, J. Cosmas, A. Kontos
 September 6: **B. Valekis**, M. Boardman, G. Zaharias
 September 13: **K. Deason**, D. Greene, L. Tranos
 September 20: **J. Valekis**, N. Erben, P. Lafakis
 September 27: **A. Yearout**, G. Burge, D. Gaylard

Bold – early duty

EPISTLE READERS:

August 2: Christo Jebeles
 August 9: George Kustos
 August 16: Leon Tranos
 August 23: Charles Valekis
 August 30: Bill Gulas
 September 6: Georgia Hontzas
 September 13: Paul Liollo
 September 20: Alexis Cain
 September 27: Steve Nickolson

NURSERY:

August 2: Christina Eady
 August 9: Celia Grammas
 August 16: Helena Vakakes
 August 23: Victoria Qaqish
 August 30: Victoria Qaqish
 September 6: TBA
 September 13: TBA
 September 20: TBA
 September 27: TBA

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:

August 2: **Lauren Yearout**, Rhonda Yearout, Kim Yearout, Audrey Dupont, Myra Leigh Gerontakis
 August 9: **Irene Tracy**, Becky Kampakis, Carol Zaharias, Nerrin Zaharias, Stephanie Knisely
 August 16: **Lori Graphos**, Tena Sarris, Chum Atkins, Sue Graphos
 August 23: **Renee Adams**, Sonthe Burge, Katie Burge, Sophie Burge, Helen McEwen
 August 30: **Lynn Denton**, Nina Pilouris, Margaret Ann Denton, Katherine Long
 September 6: **Hala Valekis**, Adelle Valekis, Brenda Taylor, Melanie Valekis
 September 13: **Cathy Boardman**, Cathy Velotas, Dawn Crim, Adriana Morros

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP CONTINUED:

September 20: **Renee McMinn**, Alexis Pappas, Becky Kampakis, Elene Giattina, Dorothy McDaniel
 September 27: **Melodie Kovakas**, Penny Kovakas, Irene Chiotakis, Thea Kovakas

GREETERS:

August 2: Michael & Mary Saddekni; Tena Sarris
 August 9: Cindy Sfakianos; Aimee Elizabeth Simonton
 August 16: Irene Tracy; Despina Triantos
 August 23: Adelle Valekis; Billy Valekis
 August 30: Charles & Hala Valekis; Presvy. Garnette Vasilakis
 September 6: Cathy Velotas; James Warren
 September 13: Debra Walters; James Warren
 September 20: Danny & Kathy Watkins; Zoe Whitaker
 September 27: Marilyn Wilson

BOOKSTORE VOLUNTEER:

August 2: Tasos Touloupis
 August 9: Chase Stephenson
 August 16: Stacy Chiotakis
 August 23: Linda Coleman
 August 30: James Cortright
 September 6: Hala Fawal
 September 13: Deno Jovaras
 September 20: Presvy. Catherine Kalariotes
 September 27: Aleksa Babic

ACOLYTES:

Team 1	Luke McEwen, Arthur Triantos, Alex Gulas, Stavros Pappas, George Kolettis, Brooks Gaylard
Team 2	Parker Hilburn, Nick Lyda, Joseph Kaloc, Luke-Lyda, Paul McMinn, Kamp McMinn, Angelo Kartos
Team 3	John Touloupis, Alexios Touloupis, Dean Triantos, Johnny Leara, Davis Deason, Nick Velezis, Christian Tsimpides, Robbie Edmonds
Team 4	Constantine Hontzas, Eli Pappas, George Kolettis, Kristopher Knisely, George Cothren, Zachary Costopoulos, Christos Argyropoulos

Team 1 – 1st & 5th Sundays; Team 2 – 2nd Sunday; Team 3 – 3rd Sunday; Team 4 – 4th Sunday

Please call Mark Mercer at (205) 663-5931 for any omissions, additions, or deletions.

FROM THE DESK OF +FR. PAUL COSTOPOULOS



LATE FOR LITURGY...

Why is it that Greek Orthodox Christians are notoriously late for the Divine Liturgy? This is the question I asked myself after having had the privilege of concelebrating the Divine Liturgy at my hometown Parish of Holy Trinity in Camp Hill, PA on Sunday, July 19.

To serve Liturgy as a priest at the Parish whereat one was baptized and grew up is always very special. For me it was a day of emotion and joy. But I must confess. My joy on this day was tempered by a modicum of sadness at the tardiness of those who gathered for worship. The Liturgy witnessed the gathering of over 250 people. At the Liturgy's beginning, however, there could not have been more than 20 people present.

Sadly, being late for Liturgy is a problem that is prevalent in practically all Greek Orthodox churches in America. Though in recent years we at our Cathedral in Birmingham have gotten much better, still there are a number of people in our own Parish like the many in Camp Hill on July 19, who straggle in late. Why is that?

The reasons are varied and many. "It is hard to get the family and children together", some say. Others aver that distances to the church and work commitments the day before make it difficult to come on

time. And still others will say, "It is better to come late than not at all." But are these reasons not justifications and excuses?

Rarely are we tardy at events that we love. Football games, movies, plays, dinner engagements, dates and weddings witness our promptness. In fact, for many such occasions we even come early. Are we, therefore, late for Liturgy because we love it less, or because we simply think that it is OK to be late? I like to think that the reason is the latter.

Let me state it unequivocally. It is **not** OK to be late for Liturgy. The Divine Liturgy is a Divine Banquet. The host is Christ Himself. The food that is offered is Holy Communion, and the Word of God as it is proclaimed scripturally, hymnologically and sermonically. If the President of the United States were to invite us to dinner, would we be late? Then why be late to the Banquet to which we are invited by God?

Fr. Michael Varvarelis, the pastor of the Holy Trinity Parish, asked me at the beginning of the Liturgy if I would preach that morning. Though he allowed me no time to "prepare", I agreed, knowing that I could share some reflections on the sermon that I had preached in Birmingham, the week before, while tying in some meaningful thoughts on the topic of tardiness and the importance of coming to Liturgy on time.

My message that morning I believe was well received. However, I must confess. I felt badly that I scolded - I hope lovingly - the congregation for being late. Who was I as a visiting priest to do that? Gratefully, my feeling badly was short-lived. At the conclusion of my message Fr. Michael piggy backed upon my message. He gave the congregation another 5 minute loving talk on the importance of promptness. Like mine his message was a simple one. It is never good to be late for Liturgy. God loves us. It is important that we in turn show our love for Him by being on time at His Banquet.

+ Fr. Paul

FROM THE DESK OF FR. MICAH HIRSCHY

THE THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVER-VIRGINITY OF THE THEOTOKOS

There are innumerable historical evidences, if not proofs, of the Theotokos' ever-virginity. It is also worth remembering that it has only been in the last two centuries that the opinion contrary to the ever-virginity has been voiced. In fact the early reformers even concurred with the belief in Panagia's ever-virginity!

One of the most common arguments that some modern "Christians" use to deny the ever-virginity of the Theotokos is Matthew 1:24 & 25. Here we read, "²⁴ *When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until (ἕως) she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.*" This has been read as meaning that Joseph consummated the marriage after the birth of Christ which is the actual language used by some modern translations of the Bible. The original Greek actually says no such thing but is merely emphasizing that Joseph had no relations with the Theotokos before Christ's birth that could have led to confusion over our Lord's paternity.

We see a similar use of the word ἕως which above was translated as until in the last chapter of Matthew where we read that Christ will be with us, "even until (ἕως) the end of the age." Now if we were to read this as people who deny the ever-virginity of the Theotokos read Matthew 1:25 we would have to interpret this verse as saying the Jesus is with us now but will leave us after the end of the age. This of course is untenable. Again, ἕως is used here to stress the presence of Christ before His second coming.

The many references to Christ's brothers and sisters in are also easily explained, as well as having been historically understood, as references to Christ's step brothers and sisters i.e. the chil-

dren of the blessed Joseph from his previous marriage. At the same time the term brother was also commonly applied to other familial relations such as cousins.

This is supported by St. John the Theologian's account of the Crucifixion where we see the Lord telling His mother that her new son is John the beloved. He was placing His mother in Saint John's care. This would have been untenable if Mary had other children not to mention inexcusably insulting towards them.

With all of this being said few if any could argue against the ever-virginity of the Theotokos. On the other hand we might be tempted to think of the "ever-virginity" of the Theotokos as part of our tradition but at the same time having very little relevance or not having any real theological implications.

The ever-virginity of the Theotokos is significant because it reveals to us that both motherhood and virginity are sacred and that the path of salvation is walked both by those living in the world and monastics. The Theotokos unites within herself both virginity and motherhood becoming an example for both and an intercessor of all.

Finally and most importantly the importance of the ever-virginity is precisely because Mary is the Theotokos, the God-bearer and Mother of God. The Tabernacle and Temple of the OT were simply a foreshadowing of Panagia who is the true and living Temple of God. As unacceptable as it would be for an ancient Judean to even imagine an idol in the Holy of Holies, so too and more so, must we reject the presence of any but our Lord in the Womb of the Theotokos, the true Holy of Holies.

By: Father Micah Hirschy



PRIMETIMERS

LUNCH & MOVIE EVENT

JUNE 30, 2015

A SPECIAL THANK YOU:

On June 30, 2015 the PrimeTimers gathered for their monthly activity. The morning began with Orthros and the Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Synaxis of the Twelve Holy Apostles. After the liturgy, parishioners enjoyed coffee and fellowship while they waited for pizzas to arrive from Papa John's. In addition to pizza, a delicious salad was prepared by Nicki Jovaras. Dessert consisted of several flavors of Sherbet.

Door prizes were available thanks to Despina Vondantis, who contributed CDs on behalf of Alabama Public Television. Congratulations to the following prize winners: Presvytera Catherine Kalariotes, Louise Gerontakis, Elizabeth Koulourides, and Parish Council member Dwight Greene!

Following lunch, the feature presentation, "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," was shown. A variety of popcorn flavors were enjoyed during the movie.

Many thanks to Loretta Garrigan, Lynita Caudill, and Elizabeth Dennis for contributing their time and expertise. We are also grateful to all who attended this event. Without the presence of each of them, we would not have enjoyed this special time as much.

If you have a suggestion for an activity for the PrimeTimers, or if you wish to host an event for the PrimeTimers, please contact Penny Kovakas, (205) 365-6001.

ATTENDEES:

- Penny Kovakas
- Fr. Micah Hirschy (Blessed the food)
- Nicki and Deno Jovaras (Prepared salad)
- Lynita Caudill (Manned concession stand)
- Loretta Garrigan (Chairperson)
- Elizabeth Dennis (Staff)
- Sherry Glover (Staff)
- Dwight Greene
- Mihai Dumitrica
- Jackie Eastman
- Marilyn Wilson
- Kathy Staursky
- Dorothea Staursky
- Dimitri Staursky
- Donald Gann (Security guard)
- Millie Slaughter
- Presvytera Garnette Vasilakis
- Elizabeth Koulourides
- Louise Gerontakis
- Georgia Cosmas
- Zoe Whitaker
- Irene Tracy
- Katina Pappas
- Angie Pappas
- Helen Bekrakis
- Alycia White
- Despina Triantos
- Aimee Elizabeth Simonton (Photography)
- Frank Ivory (Staff)
- Tommy Ivory (Staff)
- Alfonza Rivers (Staff)



PRIMETIMERS

JUNE LUNCH & MOVIE EVENT

(Photos are from the event)



CLERGY-LAITY CONFERENCE

JUNE 24 - 26, 2015 IN COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

BY: PENNY KOVAKAS



The conference theme: Proverbs 29:18 "Where there is no vision, the people will perish." The conference opened with such a strong theme and it got my attention right from the start. However, I must admit I was a little frightened; this was my first attendance to a Clergy-Laity Conference, as a delegate. But I was thankful to attend and have the opportunity to represent my home church and to be challenged with the great task that lies ahead for our Metropolis of Atlanta Parishes.

Our facilitator, Mr. Bill Marianes, did an outstanding job presenting **WHY**, and **HOW** we are living in exponential times. With the numerous statistics, charts, study materials, and over a year and

a half of dedicated work done by our Metropolitan Alexios, and the 65 faithful that joined him, we have a Strategic Plan for the Metropolis of Atlanta and its parishes.

- **Why do we exist?**
- **Where are we now?**
- **Where do we want to be?**
- **How will we get there?**

Our mission statement tells us **WHY**. "The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta and its Parishes welcome all people seeking salvation, love, truth and fulfillment." **WHERE** are we now? The data gathered from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America said there are 1,043,300 Orthodox Christian members in the United States. Unfortunately, funerals are increasing; weddings are decreasing; chrismations are declining; and baptisms are declining. This is not according to where God wants us. In Jeremiah 29:11-12, we hear: "For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans for well-being, and not for calamity, in order to give you a future and a hope. When you call out to me and come and pray to me, I'll hear you." **WHERE** do we want to be? Following God's calling. Acts 1:8, says, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Witness to Me in Jerusalem, (in our homes); in Judea (all Orthodox Christians); in Samaria, (all unchurched and non-believers) and to the ends of the earth (missions).

HOW will we get there? The Strategic Plan. This plan will cover the following areas which are identified alphabetically: Administration, Clergy, Communication, Education, Family, Finance, Outreach & Evangelism and Philanthropy, Spiritual Growth, Stewardship, Technology, and Youth. The core values established will guide the Metropolis and its Parishes. They are: Christ-centered, Love, Sacred

CLERGY-LAITY CONFERENCE

CONTINUED.....

Apostolic Traditions, Education, Outreach and Evangelism, Integrity, Family, Service and Philanthropy, Stewardship, Hospitality, Acceptance, Welcoming, and Embracing Spiritual growth.

The Strategic Plan is BIG! It is published in detail, over 90 pages. +Fr. Paul commented to me, "a lot of information to digest at one time!" He was absolutely right! But with God all things are possible. We thank God we have a holy, dedicated, God-fearing leader in the Metropolis, Archbishop Alexios. With faithful and fearless men like Bill Marianes, and with each of us becoming disciples for our Lord, we can do this. The Strategic Plan will be introduced into the Parishes in August, 2015. Updates will be posted on the website at:

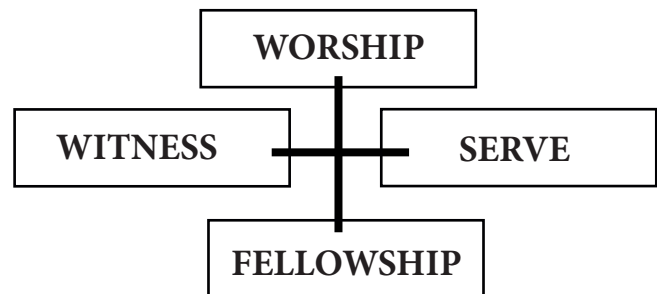
www.atlstrategicplan.org

Meeting Metropolitan Alexios, on a one on one level, was a great opportunity for me to see, feel, and know the love He has for us, as God's children, and as His children. He is full of Joy and Love for us all and for our Nation, which was demonstrated at the Grand Banquet by having us sing "God Bless America" three times (It was beautiful!).

The host church, Holy Trinity Church, in Columbia, South Carolina did an outstanding job of planning, entertaining, and welcoming us to their fair city. Thank you Holy Trinity Church and to all your faithful people who made this Clergy-Laity Conference a wonderful experience.

In my break-out sessions for Outreach & Evangelism I had to identify our individuality and distinctiveness as an Orthodox Christians. We are to **"REPENT, FOR THERE IS NO ONE WITHOUT SIN, EXCEPT OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST"** (Matthew 4:17). We are to **"IMITATE JESUS CHRIST. AND DO NOT CONFORM YOURSELF TO THE STANDARDS OF THIS WORLD"**

(Romans 12:2). Orthodox practices and worship are the up-right and Doxa opinion, glory expressions of praise to God. There are four Elements in which we are to reach out to all in these areas:



Suggestions:

- Invite colleges/universities to tour our Church.
- Invite the people who live across from your Church to attend Liturgy.
- Invite your friends and neighbors to attend Liturgy with you.
- Give our newly married couples free membership to Philoptochos for one year. Give them a Cook Book from our Parish.
- Stay connected with our Seniors. Have the Youth teach them about computers.
- Have a live stream of our Liturgy or a DVD of our Liturgy available.
- Family Life Ministry: Where the professionals, doctors, lawyers, carpenters, plumbers, etc. can be available to assist our parish members when needed.

In closing, I am grateful to our Parish and to my Husband, Jim who made it possible for me to attend this conference. I would like to leave this one thought; ***Outreach is not a person, a committee, a mission center, or a project. Outreach is an ATTITUDE and a person-to-person process.***

Love in Christ,
Penny O. Kovakas
Outreach & Evangelism Coordinator

CATHEDRAL NOTES & NEWS

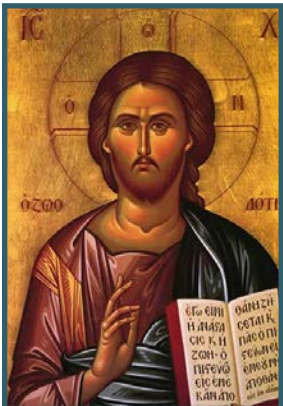
Attention 2015-2016, Church School Staff: There will be a Mandatory Meeting & Training Session on Saturday, August 15 (Feast Day of the Dormition of the Theotokos). This is for all teachers, and catechists, 2 yrs. – 12th Grade. The Schedule is as follows:

- 8:30/9:30 a.m. Orthros/Divine Liturgy – Cathedral
- 11:00 a.m. Brunch – Outside the Chapel
- 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Training Session – Parish Council Boardroom

Candles: Both paraffin (white) candles as well as beeswax (yellow) candles will be available in the Narthex on Sundays. When making your offering, we ask you to remember that the Beeswax candles are more expensive.

Interested in Learning more about the Orthodox Faith?: Contact the church office (205) 716-3080. Father Paul is in the process of organizing an Inquirers' Class. It will commence meeting in October and will meet for 8, sessions on Sunday afternoons at the church, following the Divine Liturgy, from 12:15-1:15 p.m. The first class will meet on Sunday, October 11.

Archangel Michael Award Honorees: Our warmest congratulations go out to Deno Jovaras (adult honoree) and John Touloupis (youth/young adult honoree) who have been designated as this year's "honorees" from our Community. They will be honored together with other designated honorees from parishes throughout our Metropolis at a special banquet that will be held on Saturday, November 14, 7:00 p.m. at the Cathedral Center in Atlanta. Medals of recognition will be awarded by Metropolitan Alexios, and both will have their photos, and brief biographies, included in a special commemorative album that is being published by the Metropolis. The cost of the banquet is TBA. Persons who would like to attend may make reservations by calling the church (205) 716-3080, after October 15.



PARISH REGISTRY:

Births:

- **Adelyn Zoe Polizos** - Born July 14, 2015.; Proud parents are Pete & Ashli Polizos.

Baptisms:

- **Isabella Irene Vakakes** - July 25, 2015; Daughter of Alexis & Tim Vakakes
- **Phoenix Sage Dimitri Lowthert** - July 27, 2015; Daughter of Christopher Lowthert & Sophia Dallair. Grandson of Grace (Petelos) Dallair.

Churchings:

- **Athena Victoria Tom Qaqish** - July 12, 2015; Daughter of Tom & Victoria Qaqish, & proud big sisters Alianna & Amira.

Weddings:

- **Peter Scarmoutsos & Jeanette Lowe** were married on April 18, 2015 in Tarpon Springs, Florida.
- **Steven Weaver & Reagan Dickey** - July 18, 2015
- **Michael Coggins & Jackie Hontzas** - July 26, 2015

Funerals:

- **Neelie Frost Melonas** fell asleep in the Lord on Wednesday, July 1, 2015; the funeral was Friday, July 3, 2015. May her memory be eternal!
- **Magdalene Varsamas Liollo** fell asleep in the Lord on Friday, July 3, 2015; the funeral was Monday, July 6, 2015 in Pensacola, FL. Mrs. Lilollo is the mother of Paul Liollo. May her memory be eternal!
- **Miles Alston Callahan** fell asleep in the Lord on Saturday, July 4, 2015; the funeral was Tuesday, July 7, 2015 at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Miles is the son of Dr. Michael Callahan and his wife Teresa. May his memory be eternal!
- **Louis Pihakis** fell asleep in the Lord on Friday, July 10, 2015; the funeral was Friday, July 17, 2015. Louis is the father of Ted Pihakis and the brother of Jamo Pihakis. May his memory be eternal!

CATHEDRAL NOTES & NEWS

"WORDS THAT CAN LEAD
TO INNER PEACE"

BY: ST. BASIL THE GREAT



St. Basil like the other Fathers of the Church teaches that inner peace and sanctification come from spiritual exercise. For St. Basil spiritual exercise is synonymous with strengthening the heart. It is certain that if one could but practice by God's grace what he teaches, he would be certain to know inner peace and sanctification. Read what St. Basil says!

"Preparing the heart means unlearning evil prejudices. It is dusting off the tablet before writing on it. Now solitude is most useful for this purpose. It quiets our passions and makes room for holiness to cut them out of our heart...so then, set aside a place for yourself, separate from contact with other people so that your spiritual exercises won't be interrupted."

"Pure devoted exercises nourish the soul with godly thoughts. What can be better than imitating angel choruses on earth or beginning the day with prayer and honoring our Maker with songs and hymns or as the day brightens, praying throughout our duties and seasoning our works with hymns as with salt? Soothing hymns compose the mind, bringing it into a calm, cheerful state."

- *So then, as I have said, quiet is the first step in our sanctification.*
- *It (i.e. quiet/inner peace) is the tongue that has been purified of the world's gossip.*
- *It is the eyes that are unexcited by beautiful color or lovely shape.*
- *It is the ear that doesn't relax the tone or mind by worldly songs, nor talk flippantly and joke about people.*
- *In this way, the mind is saved from external sensations. It falls back on itself and not on worldly senses. As a result, the mind rises up to contemplate God.*

GREEK FESTIVAL NEWS



Greek Festival: This year's Greek Festival will be held from Thursday, October 1 through Saturday, October 3. Circle your calendars! The help of all is needed. Remember to support the Giving Tree and/or Ad Book. We are grateful to Pete Lafakis for again graciously consenting to serve as this year's Greek Festival Chairman. The Ad Book Chairman is Nick Erben and The Giving Tree Chairman is Irene Tracy.

Workshops: Workshops for Pastichio and our pastries are being planned. Information about dates for these workshops will be communicated soon. Volunteers for these workshops are very important. Please help if you can.

Drive-Thru: The City of Birmingham is allowing us to block off 19th Street for the entire Festival. This will give us the opportunity to improve the drive-thru service.

Food Line: The food line in the garage area has been modified so that efficiency of service can be improved. A special thank you to Teddy Hontzas, Jimmy Dikis, Art Garikes, Jimmy Cosmas, Pete Graphos, Tom Constantine and Neely Denton for their advice in this area.

Equipment: Additional equipment has been purchased to insure that food safety will be at the highest level. Also, thanks to an idea by Jimmy Cosmas, we have converted one of our refrigerators into a freezer. This will give us more freezer space and allow us to order more products so that we will not run out of any food items.

We will continue to try and make improvements, but the most important part of the Festival is our volunteers. **Without your help, the Festival would not be possible.** We hope to see everyone October 1-3!

GREEK FESTIVAL NEWS

Our Greek Festival is fast approaching. Preparations have been underway for several months. We want to thank all of those who have already made donations to the "Giving Tree". These donations help defray a large portion of our costs to operate the Festival.

2015 GIVING TREE DONATION FORM



Donations to The Giving Tree can be made either by donating towards the cost of an item or by donating the item. The goal amount of \$75,000 does not represent the total cost of expenses for the festival. To make a donation, please fill out the form below, and return it to the Church Office, or contact Irene Tracy: itracy10@gmail.com or (205) 249-0704. Thank you!

Name: _____

Or in memory of: _____

Item to be donated: _____

Amount: _____

THE GIVING TREE (CURRENT AS OF 7/30/15)

ITEM	GOAL	DONATED	NEEDED	DONORS
PRODUCTS				
Spices & Seasoning	1,500.00	1,500.00	0	Katina, Jimmy, & Angela Pappas in memory of Billy Pappas; Mr. & Mrs. Eli Stevens in honor of George Stevens
Butter & Margarine	1,000.00	100	900.00	Toni Nordan in memory of Charles S. Spanos
Pecans & Walnuts	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Grape Leaves	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Tiropetas	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Spanakopetas	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Honey	1,200.00	1,200.00	0	Anonymous; Maria Kantargis in memory of Andrew Kantargis, Athanasios & Maria Kantargis, & Efstratios & Efstratia Variami
Milk	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Filo	500	500	0	Billy Valekis; John & Linda Balabanos & Gavin Cox; Mrs. Spiro G. Mastoras in memory of Spiro G. Mastoras
Eggs	1,000.00	1,000.00	0	Chris P. Tomaras
Flour	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Oil	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Lemon Juice	250	250	0	Anonymous
Macaroni	500	500	0	Georgia Cosmas in memory of Gus D. Cosmas
Sugar	500	500	0	Patsy Bouloukos in memory of George Bouloukos
Lamb	2,500.00	0	2,500.00	
Chicken	2,500.00	0	2,500.00	
Ground Beef	2,500.00	0	2,500.00	
Gyro Meat	1,000.00	300	700	Maria & Terry White; Phyllis Ellard
Wine	1,300.00	100	1,200.00	Anonymous in memory of Jimmie J. Mitchell & Andy Tsimpides & in honor of Cameron
Beer & Truck	3,000.00	3,000	0.00	Harry Kampakis - Birmingham Beverage Co.
Rice	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Cheese	1,500.00	0	1,500.00	
Salad Dressing	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Greek Coffee	400	400	0	Bella Graphos & Maria Grammas in memory of Hrisanthe Velotas; Mary Calamas in memory of the Scoolis Family
Chocolate Chips	300	300	0	+Fr. Paul Costopoulos & Family
Pita Bread	1000	1000	0	Najwa Bateh in memory of Fred Bateh; Paul Liollo
Bread (Buns)	500	500	0	Georgia Flesser in memory of James, William, Louis & Zoe
Bread	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Lettuce	1,500.00	0	1,500.00	
Olives	500	500	0	Mary Helen & Ron McCoy & Tula Hagestratou Fulford in memory of Helen & Xenophone Hagestratou
Onions	500	0	500	
Beef Flavor Base	500	0	500	
Feta Cheese	1,050.00	1,050.00	0	In memory of Eleftheria Pournaras; Jackie Eastman in memory of her mother Sally Fisher
Romano Cheese	500	0	500	
Cloves	500	300	200	May & Souheil Saddekni; Sammy & Nikki Derzis; David & Elaine Michaels
Ground Pepper	200	200	0	Jane N. Mitchell
Garlic	300	300	0	Thonmas Weeks

AUGUST KOINONIA

Fruit Drinks	500	500	0	The Morros Family
Salad Peppers	500	500	0	Elizabeth Hontzas
Tomato Puree	500	0	500	
Ice	1,000.00	1,000.00	0	Nerrin & George Zaharias
Cherry Tomatoes	1,500.00	0	1,500.00	
Tzatziki Sauce	800	0	800	
Coke Products	1,700.00	1,700.00	0.00	Coca - Cola Company
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES				
Advertising	3,000.00	0	3,000.00	
Ad Book Publication	1,000.00	330	670	Tena Sarris; William C. & Christy Wood in memory of Dean & Christine Sepsas; Elizabeth Carnes in memory of Robert H. Carnes; Patricia Kanellis
Computer Supplies	3,000.00	0	3,000.00	
Credit Card Fees	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Festival Parking	2,000.00	0	2,000.00	
Maintenance Repairs	1,500.00	0	1,500.00	
Maintenance	800	0	800	
Baklava Cutter	200	200	0	Jimmy & Stephanie Dikis in memory of Georgia Dikis
Equipment Rental	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
T-Shirts	1,000.00	1,000.00	0	Michael & Christine Velezis
Meals for Volunteer Workers	700	0	700	
Publications and Pamphlets	300	100	200	In memory of Angelica G. Goulielmi, Paul Goulielmi, & Athanasion Krahtopoulon
Police/Security	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	"In memory of Miles Callahan, We love you man!"
Band	3,000.00	3,000.00	0	Julia & Dean Assimos
SUPPLIES				
Beverage Cups & Logo	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Aluminum Pans	1,000.00	1,000.00	0	Hala Fawal; Joseph & Zoe Whitaker; Billy Valekis; Dennis & Patricia Pappas; Mary & Don Melof
Glasses	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Plastic Utensils	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Kitchen Supplies	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Trash Can Liners	500	0	500	
Baking Cups	200	200	0	Elsie Triantos in memory of Arthur Pete Triantos; Lula Christ & Gina, Hal, & Evan Caplan in memory of Chris & Mary Kathryn Christ
Foam Plates	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Clear Plastic Trays	400	400	0	In memory of Irene & Nick Petelos
Plastic Table Cloths	1,000.00	0	1,000.00	
Charcoal	600	600	0	Claudia, Dennis, & Keith Deason in memory of Harold Deason. Dwight I. Greene in memory of Benjamin & Annie L. Greene; In memory of E.J. & Frances Vakakes & Sammy Triantos
Dinner Napkins	300	300	0	In memory of Ted Lafakis & Christo & Maria Vodantis; Dimos Triantafillu
Plastic Take-Out Bags	800	800	0	Beba & Tasos Touloupis
Paper Towels	400	0	400	
Aprons	200	0	200	
Gloves	100	100	0	Lula Christ in memory of George, Eugenia, & Constantine Koutroulakis
TOTALS	\$75,000	\$26,230	\$48,770	

AUGUST 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Wine/Oil Allowed Dekapentaugousto begins 1:00 p.m. Baptism: Elijah Papajohn (Son of Ashlyn & Paul Papajohn) -Cathedral 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral
2 Wine/Oil Allowed 9th Sunday of Matthew Memorials: Cameron P. Grammas (1-yr.) Steven Grammas (27-yrs.) Rose Liddy (15 - yrs. Mother of Hala Valekis) Churching: Emily Grace Bryant (Daughter of Robert & Angie Bryant)	3 Strict Fast Firehouse Shelter 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral	4 Strict Fast 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral	5 Strict Fast 9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting – Conference Rm. 5:30 p.m. Vespers – Cathedral	6 Fish Allowed Holy Transfiguration 8:30/9:30 a.m. Orthros/Divine Liturgy – Cathedral 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral	7 Strict Fast 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral	8 Wine/Oil Allowed 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral
9 Wine/Oil Allowed 10th Sunday of Matthew	10 Strict Fast 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral	11 Strict Fast 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral	12 Strict Fast 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral	13 Strict Fast 5:30 p.m. Paraclesis Service – Cathedral	14 Wine/Oil Allowed 5:30 p.m. Vespers – Cathedral	15 Dormition of the Theotokos 8:30/9:30 a.m. Orthros/Divine Liturgy – Cathedral Sunday School Teacher Training: (after Liturgy) 11:00 a.m. – Brunch outside of Chapel 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Training Session – PC Boardroom
16 11th Sunday of Matthew	17	18	19 Strict Fast 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. ANASTASI Meeting – Board Room	20	21 Strick Fast	22
23 12th Sunday of Matthew Sunday School Kick Off Churching: Adelyn Zoee Polizos (Daughter of Pete & Ashli Polizos)	24 9:00 a.m. Pastichio Workshop – Banquet Hall	25 9:00 a.m. Pastichio Workshop – Banquet Hall 4:30 p.m. Calendar Planning Meeting – Conference Room 6:00 p.m. Parish Council Meeting – Board Room	26 Strick Fast 9:00 a.m. Pastichio Workshop – Banquet Hall	27	28 Strick Fast	29 Strict Fast Beheading of John the Baptist 8:30/9:30 a.m. Orthros/Divine Liturgy – Chapel
30 10th Sunday of Matthew	31 9:00 a.m. Pastichio Workshop – Banquet Hall					