

The Testament

SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH | ALBANY, NY

Volume 37 | February/March 2023



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT



Celebrating 100 Years



Parish Directory

CLERGY

Proistamenos
Rev. Fr. Patric Legato
e: frpatriclegato@stsophiaalbany.org

PLANT MANAGER

Alfredo Ramos

NEOKOROS

Evangelos Anton

CHANTER

George Lenares

CHOIR

Harry Ermides

ICONOGRAPHER

Efthimios Stoja

ACOLYTES

James Diamantopoulos

PHILOPTOCHOS

Maria Sokaris

EDITORIAL STAFF

Rev. Fr. Patric Legato
Michél-Gabrielle Legato

BOOKKEEPING

Jennifer Kline
bookings@stsophiaalbany.org

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
(518) 489-4442

PARISH COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT

Michael Christakis

VICE-PRESIDENT

Peter Melas

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Anastasia Vasilakos

RECORDING SECRETARY

Christine Harvey

TREASURER

George Pappis

Lainie Damaskos-Christou

Dina Fisher

Stefan Kalogridis

Theodora Mokhiber

Peter Pappas

Francisco Soler

Sultana Varvarousis

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Theodosia Legato
e: sundayschoole@stsophiaalbany.org

CHURCH CONTACT

Margaret Danes
p: (518) 489-4442
e: stsophia@nycap.rr.com

SENIOR CITIZENS

James Stolis

MAKARIA

Dora Mokhiber
Elaine Sokaris

GOYA

Mary Googas
Sophia Pallone
Soula Landi
Demetra Xythalis

JOY

Rev. Fr. Patric Legato

GREEK FOLK DANCE

Diane Cohen
e: stsophiadancers@gmail.com

HELLENIC EDUCATION

Lainie Damaskos-Christou

e: greeklanguageacademy@stsophiaalbany.org

WEBMASTER

Christopher Pappis
e: webmaster@stsophiaalbany.org

EMAIL ALL TESTAMENT SUBMISSIONS TO: TESTAMENT@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

Deadline to submit: **For April/May Edition Monday, March 6th**

© **Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church 2023**

Church Website: www.stsophiaalbany.org



contents

- 04** Fr. Pat's Insights
- 20** Parish Council
- 25** Philoptochos
- 27** Orthodox Saints
- 32** Sunday School Scoop
- 34** Greek Language & Culture Academy
- 38** Church Calendar

Front Cover Image: View from the Mountain of Temptation, Jericho in the Judean Desert, West Bank
©Michél-Gabriëlle Legato



Fr. Pat's Insights

The Great Lenten Period is often equated with the five Sundays of Lent. We, as Orthodox Christians, actually begin much sooner. It all begins when the Triodion commences. This year, February 5th is dedicated to the Gospel lesson of the Publican and the Pharisee and our commencement on a journey to Pascha on April 16th...



This is a very special time for us in which we will be asked to examine our place and actions as Christians. Will we choose to be the Publican or the Pharisee? Will we be prideful and stubborn, or will we choose to emulate the Prodigal Son and renounce our proud actions and admit our shortcomings and mistakes? And what of our final days or our willingness to forgive? The first four weeks of the Triodion are the examples we shall use to lead us to attitudinal changes and guide us through the five weeks of Great Lent.

This will be a most challenging time and not an exercise for the faint of heart or weak in faith. We will be asked to examine our actions and life. We will be asked to make it our examination and personal to us and mature in our faith, rather than checking out everyone else, making excuses, and running from the evil sways which often hold us in their grasp. This is a time of self-examination, not recrimination. This is a time of introspection and a way of finding a way to the Light and Victory of the glorious Resurrection of Jesus. This is a time of rectification and the rededication of our lives to our Christian spiritual and moral values.

The Church will allow us several weeks of inspiring lessons and stories to help us along the path to salvation and enunciate the virtues necessary to stay the course to inherit eternal life. The subtle reminders encapsulated in the Biblical lessons will help us to discover humility, contrition, forgiveness, love, and ultimately faith. The Church understands the transformation of the person is not easy and not accomplished overnight. Therefore, we are afforded these timeless weeks to begin the process of change and enlightenment, and the Triodion Period will be our guide.

I hope and pray this Period will serve as our inspiration and guide our quest to the ultimate reward of theosis. Bearing in mind the difficulties associated with change, and dispelling the philosophers proclamation that a zebra cannot change its stripes, nor a leopard its spots, this edition of the Testament will contain a series of thoughts and meditations to guide us and to help us live the Triodion. Please take the time to read this edition each and every week, and may it be an inspiration to each and every one of us. Now, let us begin.

TRIODION

The Triodion is the penitential season of our Holy Orthodox Church which consists of movable feasts from the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee to Great and Holy Saturday of Holy Week. Our spirit should be enlivened with the following hymn of our Church during these days:

When I think upon the multitude of my evil deeds,
I tremble for the terrible Day of judgment.
But trusting the compassion of thy mercy,
Like David. I cry out to Thee:
Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to Thy Great Mercy!

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE TRIODION THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE FEBRUARY 5, 2023

Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15

Gospel: Luke 18:10-14

The Holy Fathers of our Church, knowing that within a few weeks, we shall enter into the quest of spiritual contests of virtue and that humility is an efficient weapon for becoming virtuous, whereas pride is an obstacle for living a dedicated life, have proclaimed the next few weeks to herald in the Fast. They decreed the Parable of the Publican and the Pharisee as a prelude to the Great Fast and exhort us not to pride ourselves in self-satisfaction, nor boast and exaggerate, as the proud Pharisee, but rather to see him as an example of self-proclamation and bloviation which drives away the Grace of the Holy Spirit within us. The Fathers contrast this with the humility of the Publican and invite us all to imitate this humility and grow in our relationship with Christ.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

O Lord, You did reproach the Pharisee when he justified himself,
Boasting of his deed; and justified the Publican when he approached humbly,
Seeking forgiveness with sighs; for You did not draw near to arrogant thoughts,
Nor turn away contrite hearts.
Wherefore, we also kneel before You meekly,
You Who did suffer for our sakes.
Grant us forgiveness and Your Great Mercy!

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

When the Pharisee went up to the temple in his vainglory, and the Publican bowed his head in repentance, they both stood before You, O Master. The one lost his reward through his boasting, while the other won Your blessing through his sighs. Because I too am sighing in Your presence, strengthen me, O Christ our God, for You are the lover of Mankind.

SECOND SUNDAY

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

FEBRUARY 12, 2023

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Gospel: Luke 15: 11-32

Having become aware of ourselves, through the previous week's Parable, we now broach the subject of repentance. The Holy Fathers decided that the Parable of the Prodigal Son would follow in order to point us in the right direction. They realized that sometimes in our quest for repentance, we are so overcome by our sinfulness that we fall into great despair and believe that there is no hope for forgiveness. This despondency may cause us to fall deeper and deeper into committing sinful acts more hideous than the first. The Fathers understood this clearly and intended to help us to remove this feeling of utter despair by encouraging and instilling us with the power of virtuous confrontation. They, therefore, decreed the reading of this Parable. First and foremost, it illustrates the compassion of our God and teaches us that there is no sin which cannot be overcome. His kindness and love towards us is beyond measure, no matter the depth of the sin. The story also gives us pause to understand that with the power of the Spirit within us, we can courageously confront our sins and draw strength from the light within us to seek forgiveness.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Having squandered the riches of the Fatherly Gift,
I, the wretched one, grazed with dumb beasts.
I desired their food and hungered; for I had not enough.
Wherefore, I shall return to the compassionate Father, crying with tears:
Receive me as one of Your servants. As I kneel to the love of mankind
And save me!

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

What Godly things have I forsaken! From what sovereignty have I fallen! I have squandered
The riches I have received and transgressed the commandments. Woe to you, poor soul of mine, when
you shall be condemned to eternal fire! Wherefore I cry out to God:
Receive me as You did receive the Prodigal Son, and have mercy on me.

FIRST SATURDAY OF SOULS FEBRUARY 18, 2023

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 4:13- 17

Gospel: Luke 21: 8-9, 25-27, 33-36

Today and for the next two Saturdays, we shall celebrate a memorial to all of our brothers and sisters, parents, and ancestors who have fallen asleep. The Holy Fathers, moved by their zeal and love for mankind, instituted this universal celebration so that we, through the Church, may petition God to have compassion on the souls of all departed Orthodox. These services serve to remind us, the living, of death and should arouse within us remorse, reflection, and repentance.

THIRD SUNDAY
JUDGEMENT SUNDAY/MEATFARE SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 19, 2023

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2

Gospel: Matthew 25: 31-46

We proclaim, during the recitation of the Symbol of Faith (The Creed), And He will come in glory to judge the living and the dead; Whose Kingdom has no end. We already have been witness to two wonderful lessons from the previous Parables discussed in our preparation toward Great Lent. Some of us, however, will choose to continue on a sinful path rather than to begin a process of rectification. The Church Fathers chose this Sunday to remind us of the Second coming of Christ. This Event is also known as the Last Judgement, in which all, both the living and the dead, shall be deemed either worthy of the Kingdom, or be condemned for the rest of eternity. The holy icon of the Event, which is located on the apse of the western ceiling in our church, clearly depicts a delineation between both worlds and is separated by a clearly defined chasm, for which there is no bridge and no means to cross over. This depiction is not meant to frighten us into accepting our faith but is a representation of the truth as defined in the Holy Gospel according to John, read during the celebration of the Orthodox funeral service. In spite of the warning to us, some of us may choose to continue in our pursuit of sin. Only by awakening and pouring our energy into the pursuit of virtue, and by living a life of compassion, mercy, and the love for one another can we receive our just reward and live an eternal life. Let us remember that God is a righteous Judge Who loves mankind, but Who shall also recompense each one of us according to our deeds.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

When You come, O God, to earth with glory,
And all creatures tremble before You,
And the river of fire flows before the Altar,
And the books are opened, and the sins revealed,
Deliver me then from that unquenchable fire,
And make me worthy to stand at Your right hand, O Righteous Judge.
The trumpets shall blast, and the tombs be emptied, and all mankind shall arise trembling with fear.
Those that have done good shall rejoice with gladness, and those that have done evil shall tremble in condemnation, moaning and shaking as they are sent to their pain and separated from the elect. Show compassion on us, O King of Glory, and make us worthy to be counted among the good, for You are the lover of mankind.

THIRD SUNDAY
JUDGEMENT SUNDAY/MEATFARE SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 19, 2023

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2

Gospel: Matthew 25: 31-46

We proclaim, during the recitation of the Symbol of Faith (The Creed), And He will come in glory to judge the living and the dead; Whose Kingdom has no end. We already have been witness to two wonderful lessons from the previous Parables discussed in our preparation toward Great Lent. Some of us, however, will choose to continue on a sinful path rather than to begin a process of rectification. The Church Fathers chose this Sunday to remind us of the Second coming of Christ. This Event is also known as the Last Judgement, in which all, both the living and the dead, shall be deemed either worthy of the Kingdom, or be condemned for the rest of eternity. The holy icon of the Event, which is located on the apse of the western ceiling in our church, clearly depicts a delineation between both worlds and is separated by a clearly defined chasm, for which there is no bridge and no means to cross over. This depiction is not meant to frighten us into accepting our faith but is a representation of the truth as defined in the Holy Gospel according to John, read during the celebration of the Orthodox funeral service. In spite of the warning to us, some of us may choose to continue in our pursuit of sin. Only by awakening and pouring our energy into the pursuit of virtue, and by living a life of compassion, mercy, and the love for one another can we receive our just reward and live an eternal life. Let us remember that God is a righteous Judge Who loves mankind, but Who shall also recompense each one of us according to our deeds.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

When You come, O God, to earth with glory,
And all creatures tremble before You,
And the river of fire flows before the Altar,
And the books are opened, and the sins revealed,
Deliver me then from that unquenchable fire,
And make me worthy to stand at You right hand, O Righteous Judge.

NOTE: Fasting begins Monday of this week from all meat products as we ease our way into the Great Fast.

FOURTH SUNDAY
FORGIVENESS SUNDAY/CHEESEFARE SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 26, 2023

Epistle: Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Gospel: Matthew 6: 14-21

On this day, we commemorate the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. The Church Fathers set the anniversary of this exile from the Garden of Eden in order to show us by deed, as well as by word, how great the benefit of fasting is and, conversely, how harmful gluttony and disobedience are to the Divine Commandments of God. They also wished to instill us with the first ordinance of God to not eat from the Tree of Knowledge. In other words, to remain steadfast and to abstain from this forbidden fruit. Because of their disobedience, they forfeited the life of total bliss and happiness, were expelled from Eden, and would now suffer the pangs of death and from all sorts of corruption, sin, and evil machinations. Moreover, this transgression was transmitted to the whole of the human race. Today, we are the inheritors of Original sin and called upon to navigate a life filled with many obstacles, which can only be overcome through forgiveness and fasting.

NOTE: Our youth offer a CHEESEFARE LUNCHEON immediately following Church services. Please see the advertisement included with this issue of the Testament, and I thank you, on their behalf, for your support.

THE GREAT FAST
CLEAN MONDAY
FEBRUARY 27, 2023

The Great Fast is exactly 40 days from the Monday after Cheesefare Sunday through the Saturday of Lazarus, the last week of the Triodion; however, it is an additional fast that honors the Passion of our Lord and Savior and is universally known as Holy Week.

A PRAYER FOR THE FIRST DAY OF THE FAST

Lord, when I disobeyed your Divine commandment at the counsel of the adversary,
I, the wretched one, was stripped of my God-woven robe.
And now, I have put on the mantle of skin and fig leaves,
And have been condemned to eat, in sweat, the bread of hardship.
The earth was cursed to bring forth thorns and husks for me.
Fortify me, O Lord, that I may fulfill my Fast with becoming purity,
And worship Your Divine Resurrection, and pass over into salvation.

Let us enter this Lenten Season in the spirit of joy, lending ourselves to spiritual strife, by cleansing our soul and body, and by controlling our passions. Our prayer should be to limit our food and live on the virtues and strength of the Spirit within us. May we all persevere to replace our temporal goods with the love of Christ so that we may become worthy to witness the most solemn passion of our Lord and rejoice in being filled with spiritual joy and harmony.

PRAYERS FOR THE FASTING SEASON

THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHRAIM, THE SYRIAN

Lord and Master of my life,
Grant me not a spirit of slothfulness, meddling, ambition, and vain talk.
Bestow upon me, thy servant, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love.
Yea, Lord and King, grant that I may see my own sins,
And not judge my brother, for Thou are blessed to the ages of ages. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is one of the oldest liturgical acts of the Church. It is called Presanctified because the Gifts (the Body and Blood of our Lord) are not consecrated during this service. Rather, they are consecrated or presanctified during a previous Divine Liturgy, usually performed on Sunday. The purpose of the Presanctified Liturgy is to allow the faithful to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion during the week. The composition, hymns, and mood of the Divine Liturgy, celebrated on Sundays and on feast days, is festive and joyous, and our Church Fathers deemed it inappropriate to celebrate the Divine Liturgy during the Great Lent Period, with the exception of Sunday and for the Feast Day of the Annunciation (March 25). Great Lent is a time of contrition and penitence. It is a time of personal reflection and examination of our actions which are contrary to the teachings of our Lord. Therefore, the Great Lenten Period is opposed to the festive joy and celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Lent is truly a time when we are called to mourn our sinfulness, overcome our shortcomings, and remember the Passion and death of Jesus.

That being said, the early Christians were accustomed to receiving Holy Communion frequently. In fact, they received the Sacrament of Holy Communion at every Liturgy! The Church, taking into consideration the needs of the people, ordered that during the Lenten Period, and in place of the Divine Liturgy, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts would be conducted. This meant that the Gifts previously consecrated on a Saturday or Sunday would be brought forth and offered to the people.

The Presanctified Liturgy then begins with the Divine Liturgy. At the Prothesis, where the Gifts are prepared during the Sunday Liturgy, two Lambs (Amnos), or as many Lambs will be needed during the week, (the Presanctified is also offered on Fridays in many Communities), are cut from a separate prosforo. One portion is used on Sunday the rest are used during the week. After the consecration of the Gifts, the priest then takes the second Lamb, now the Body of Christ, and takes the Blood of Christ and either dips the portion into the chalice or takes the spoon and pours the Blood from the chalice onto the Lamb. He then places this Presanctified Gift on a second paten which is placed near the Tabernacle on the Holy Altar and kept there until needed.

A PRAYER FOR THE PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY

I will exalt You, my God and my King,
And bless Your name forever and to all eternity.
Every day, I will bless You and praise Your name forever.
The Lord is great and highly praised,
And to His greatness, there is no end.
Age after age will praise Your work and will porcelain Your power.
They will tell the glorious splendor of Your holiness.
They will recount Your wondrous works.
They will speak of Your mighty and awesome deeds.
They will recount Your immensity.
My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord,
And let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever. Amen.

SALUTATIONS TO THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY AND THE AKATHIST HYMN

Beginning the first week of Great Lent, Friday, March 3, 2023, and continuing March 10th, 17th, and 24th, we are afforded the opportunity to venerate our most Holy Lady, the Theotokos, (mother of God), and ever-virgin Mary with a series of prayers known as Salutations, whereas March 31 is dedicated to the Akathist Hymn, (when translated means: without sitting), which combine all the hymns of the previous four weeks into one event. This year is most unique insofar as on Friday, March 24th, the chanting of the Salutations will be included in the great Vespers on the previous evening dedicated to the Annunciation of the Theotokos, which is celebrated on Saturday, March 25th.

We, as Orthodox Christians do not isolate Mary. She is properly depicted as the Mother of God and is always shown in Byzantine iconography with the Christ child in her arms. She is not worshiped as the Lord, most High, but venerated. Moreover, the Theotokos is seen as a light and a joy, in which our Orthodox hymnology chants, all creation rejoices.

Our Orthodox tradition calls Mary the new Eve. She did what the first Eve failed to do in accomplishing what God had intended, the result of which was that man lost Paradise. Mary, however, did not take the initiative. She accepted the initiative of God, with the joy of obedient love to God's Will, at the time of the Annunciation. In accepting the coming of God among us, the Holy Virgin Mary is praised during the Salutations and the Akathist Hymn in order to give all creation the opportunity to rejoice in her. We recognize in the Theotokos that the end and the fulfillment of life, all life, and of all love is to accept Christ and to give Him life in ourselves. We find the fullness of adoration, in Mary, and the love for Christ.

WE CHANT

An Angel, and the chieftest among them, was sent from Heaven to cry:
Hail to the Theotokos!
And beholding to Thee O Lord,
Taking bodily form, he stood marveling,
And with his bodiless voice, cried aloud to her saying:
Hail, the restoration of the fallen Adam;
Hail, the redemption of the tears of Eve.
Hail, you through whom creation is renewed;
Hail, you through whom the Creator becomes a babe.
Hail, you who ineffably gave birth to the Light;
Hail, O Bride unwedded.

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY MARCH 5, 2023

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-25, 36-40

Gospel: John 1: 43-51

The first Sunday of Great Lent is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy because, on this day, we celebrate and commemorate the restitution of the use of the holy icons in the church. The feast day was first celebrated on March 11, 843, when, after more than one hundred years of persecution by iconoclast (breakers of icons) emperors and much controversy, the Byzantine Empress Theodora ascended the throne as regent for her son, the Emperor Michael, and after the death of her husband, the Emperor Theophilus. Empress Theodora, after venerating the icon of the Theotokos, she and her son, as well as the loyal clergy, rehung the holy icons in the churches, and once again, the churches were adorned with the images of the story of Christ and the venerable saints.

A HYMN FOR THE DAY

Truly the Church has received honorable adornment:
The noble and hallowed icons of Christ the Savior,
Of the Theotokos, and of all the saints.
We lift them up with joy and gladness. As the Church exults in grace,
Happily glorifying her God, the Lover of mankind,
Who patiently suffered for her sake.

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS

MARCH 12, 2023

Epistle: Hebrews 1: 10-14; 2: 1-3

Gospel: Mark 2: 1-12

Saint Gregory Palamas was born in Asia Minor and brought up from infancy in the royal palace of Constantinople. It was there where he acquired his religious and secular education. While still a youth, he left the palace and gave himself up to asceticism on Mount Athos. It was there where he developed a system of mystical contemplation aimed at promoting union with God. His ideas found favor with the monks of the Church, but his work and his residency on Mount Athos caused him much distress. Seeking a cure from the diseases he had contracted, because of his asceticism and piety, he moved to Thessalonica where in 1350 he was elected Archbishop, and where he valiantly defended the Eastern Orthodox doctrines of Christ. Eight years after his death. In 1368, he was declared a saint by Patriarch Philotheos of Constantinople, who convened a council to consider his life and his works. From that time to the present, Saint Gregory Palamas has been remembered every year on the Second Sunday of Great Lent, in order that we may ask him to intercede for us and to give us inspiration to walk in the way of the Fast with a Christ centered obedience.

THE APOLYTIKION OF SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS

O star of Orthodoxy, support the Church and its teacher,
O comeliness of ascetics, and incontestable champion
Of those who speak in theology, Gregory the wonder worker,
The pride of Thessalonica and preacher of grace,
Implore you constantly for the salvation of our souls.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

O Holy Martyrs of the Lord, we implore you to intercede for us
All with the Lord that He save our souls.

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT- THE ADORATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING CROSS MARCH 19, 2023

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-15; 5:1-5

Gospel: Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

We mark the midpoint of the Fast with this the Third Sunday of Lent. As fatigue from the Fast begins to set in, the Holy Fathers thought it appropriate to reveal the Holy Cross to arm us surety of the Cross as being the joy of the word, power of the faithful, strength of the pious, hope of the sinners, a sure foundation, and our secure help. This triumphant day is very similar to the Feast of the elevation of the Cross, celebrated on September 14 every year. At the conclusion of the Orthros, the Holy Cross is carried in procession on a bed of daffodils, and placed on a table in the center of the church. The presiding priest or Bishop raises the cross aloft and begins the triumphant hymn: We venerate Your cross O Master, and Your Holy Resurrection we glorify.

The flowers, or in some cases basil, are then distributed to the faithful as a token of strength which comes from the power of the Cross of Christ, and encouraging us to carry on the struggles of the Great Fast until we celebrate the Holy Resurrection of our Lord and Savior.

A HYMN TO CHANT THIS WEEK

O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance, granting our rulers to
Prevail over adversaries, and protecting Your commonwealth by Your Cross.

AND ANOTHER

Rejoice, O life-bearing Cross, the unconquerable triumph of true worship,
O door of paradise, the confirmation of believers, the wall of the Church,
Through which corruption has disappeared and perished,
And the power of death swallowed, and we ascend from earth to heaven,
An incontestable weapon and adversary of Satan;
For you are the glory of the martyrs and their adornment in truth,
The haven of salvation that grants to the world great mercy.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
SAINT JOHN OF THE LADDER
MARCH 26, 2023

Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20

Gospel: Mark 9: 17-31

This Sunday is dedicated to the memory of Saint John of the Ladder, and one of the great ascetics of the Church. His book of spiritual exercises is the blueprint in the struggle of asceticism, and the various stages of living a spiritual life. The book, The Ladder of Perfection, was intended as a means of climbing to the heights of perfection. These exercises were read during the Great Lenten Period in monasteries. It is for this reason, and because of the theme of climbing from earth to heaven, and the challenging, spiritual struggle we all endure during the Fast that this Sunday was set aside in his memory.

A PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Come, let us labor in the mystical field,
Working towards the fruit of repentance.
Let us not spend ourselves in food and drink,
But reap virtues with fasting and prayer;
For these are what the Master of labor accept,
And from them, He gives us the penance by which He redeems our souls
From the debt of sin; for He alone is most compassionate.

**LOOK FOR THE CONCLUSION OF OUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY TO THE RESURRECTION IN THE
APRIL/MAY TESTAMENT.**

Have a fulfilling and spiritual journey and may God grant us vigilance.

SIGN-UP TODAY!

ARE YOU RECEIVING CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS?

If you answered no, be sure to sign-up for our mailing list!

Joining our mailing list enables you to:

- Receive Weekly Church Bulletins via e-mail
- Have quick access to the The Testament online & still receive a copy to your home address*
- Stay up-to-date with church news & events

Visit: www.stsophiaalbany.org/contact-us

and fill out the "Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church
Parish Directory & Mailing List"

For questions email: marketing@stsophiaalbany.org

*If you have opted out of receiving The Testament hardcopy, you will not receive it at your home address.

Parish Council

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as Parish Council President.

In the year ahead, I am hopeful that our shared commitment to διακονία (service) and κοινωνία (fellowship) will foster renewed interest in supporting and strengthening our community's many ministries and programs.

I invite you to **serve**.

As you will note in this issue of The Testament, the Parish Council has reintroduced committees, including Buildings & Grounds, Church, Education, Finance, and Stewardship. While these committees are led by members of the Parish Council, I invite you to consider volunteering to participate based on your interests and skills. Simply send me an email (mchristakis@gmail.com) expressing your interest.

Our community's single-largest fundraiser, our annual Greek Festival, will take place May 19, 20 and 21.



Michael N. Christakis
President, Parish Council

The success of our Festival depends on your willingness to volunteer. Peter Melas will again lead our Festival planning efforts, and will be convening a committee to help organize and coordinate this year's Festival.

Please complete the "Festival Volunteer Sign-up Form" (included in this Testament) and return to the Church office. We need your help!

I invite you to join us in **fellowship**.

Inasmuch as our Festival provides us an opportunity to serve, it also provides us an important **fellowship** opportunity. To spend time with one another, and to showcase our faith, our culture, and our φιλοξενία (love of strangers) to visitors and guests.

Similarly, next month's **Annual Valentine's Dance (February 4)** hosted by the Sons and Maids, **Cheesefare Luncheon (February 26)** hosted by the JOY & GOYA, and **Greek Independence Day Celebration (March 26)** coordinated by Lainie Christou and featuring both our Greek School and Sunday School students are all opportunities for us to come together in fellowship with one another.

I also hope you will plan to attend our **Parish General Assembly on Sunday, March 19** immediately following the Divine Liturgy to learn more about ways you can get more involved in the life of our community.

Finally, I know you join me in expressing thanks to Harry Ermides who served the past several years as Parish Council President. Harry helped our community navigate the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, guided the reintroduction of programs and services as we emerged from the pandemic, and was instrumental in leading our parish's successful centennial celebration festivities. Harry is a true servant-leader, with a deep devotion to our parish and its future.

So, what will the next 100 years look like for Saint Sophia? I invite you to play an active role in shaping our community's future.

In Orthodoxy,

Mike





GREEK FESTIVAL 2023

MAY 19 - 21, 2023

Volunteers Needed!

We're looking for volunteers for this years Festival.

Please check off the days and times you are available and a committee member will contact you with more details.

Please submit this form to the St. Sophia Church Office.

Thank you!

Name

Email Address

Phone number

Please check all available days and times

☐ Week of May 15, Festival Set-up

☐ Friday, May 19th, Evening Shift

☐ Saturday, May 20th, Day Shift

☐ Saturday, May 20th, Evening Shift

☐ Sunday, May 21st, Day Shift

☐ Sunday, May 21st, Evening Shift

☐ Festival Break Down

Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church

Parish Council Committees & Liaisons

Parish Council members shall serve on at least one (1) of the following standing committees:

Building & Grounds

The Building and Grounds Committee will maintain the current building facilities and property, and to implement building projects on behalf of the parish community.

Members: Peter Melas (Chair), Dina Fisher, Stefan Kalogridis, Peter Pappas, Francisco Soler, Costa Kontogiannis

Church

The Church Committee shall oversee scheduling of ushers to support regular Sunday services, occasional weekday services, and holidays (e.g.: Christmas, Holy Week, Easter, etc.).

Members: Dora Mokhiber (Chair), Christine Harvey, Sultana Varvarousis

Education

The Education Committee shall work in conjunction with both Directors of Sunday School and Greek Language & Culture Academy to assist in the educational activities of the community and participation for maintaining successful Sunday School and Greek Language & Culture Academy programs.

Members: Lainie Christou (Chair), Anastasia Vasilakos, Dina Fisher, Sultana Varvarousis, Theodosia Legato

Finance

The Finance Committee shall prepare a report at the scheduled monthly meetings of the Parish Council, setting forth the total receipts and expenditures for the preceding and succeeding months. The Committee shall prepare a budget for the forthcoming fiscal year to be presented to the Parish Council and General Assembly. The Committee is chaired by the Treasurer.

Members: George Pappis (Chair), Stefan Kalogridis, Anastasia Vasilakos

Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee shall be responsible for: (a) The continuing development and promotion of the Stewardship Program; (b) Consultation with individuals concerning their personal financial, ministerial, and spiritual Stewardship manner; (c) Planning for and coordinating the year-round Stewardship effort; (d) Reporting pertinent statistical information to the General Assembly and the parish as a whole. The Committee is chaired by the Financial Secretary.

Members: Anastasia Vasilakos (Chair), Lainie Christou, Peter Melas, Sultana Varvarousis

Liaison Roles

Hall Rental Liaison(s): Mike Christakis, Peter Melas

Festival Liaison(s): Stefan Kalogridis, Dora Mokhiber

Scheduling/Church Calendar Liaison(s): Mike Christakis



Albany Sons & Maids **ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DANCE**

FEBRUARY 4, 2023 • 7:00 PM

St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church
Albany, NY 12208

Door - \$35

13 & Under - \$10

Under 4 - Free

Ticket includes full buffet dinner, entertainment & more!



ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED BY





Philoptochos

Happy New Year!

I hope everyone had healthy and very Merry Christmas! 2022 was a great year for Philoptochos. We were successful in fundraising enough to assist many causes with rising cost of food, heating, gas and housing, people need more now than ever.

We continue to support:

Regional Food Pantry

Children's Café

Saint Vincent's Food Pantry

Backpack foods program for kids

Family Promise

Grassroot Givers

Double H Ranch

Ronald McDonald House

Just to list a few.

I would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to everyone that helped this Holiday season with the "Giving Tree". We were able to help 5 families this year! I appreciate and am grateful for your continued willingness to help those in need. We are truly one big family!

Bagged lunches for the homeless is an ongoing program that our community supports. We rely on donations to provide lunches twice a month. Thank you to Rita Joeney, the Phillip family and the Fishburn family for your donation. Your monetary gifts allow us to shop and our youth to prepare the lunches. Truly an entire community effort. If you would like to help offset the monthly cost of \$100, please see me.

Saint Barbara's Day party was a success once again. Sophia Pallone, Demetra Vann and Pia Lascaris did a beautiful job organizing it for the children. The kids that attended had a wonderful time.

Thank you to Kathryn Sokaris and her crew for making the Vasilopita for the New Year. Beautiful job once again.

Have a wonderful and Healthy 2023!!

Maria Sokaris

President, Philoptochos



JOY



CHEESEFARE SUNDAY LUNCHEON

Sponsored by the JOY & GOYA

FEBRUARY 26 • 12:00 PM



TICKET PRICES

CHILDREN 5 & UNDER: FREE

YOUTH 6-17: \$5

ADULTS: \$10

TICKETS ON SALE DURING COFFEE HOUR

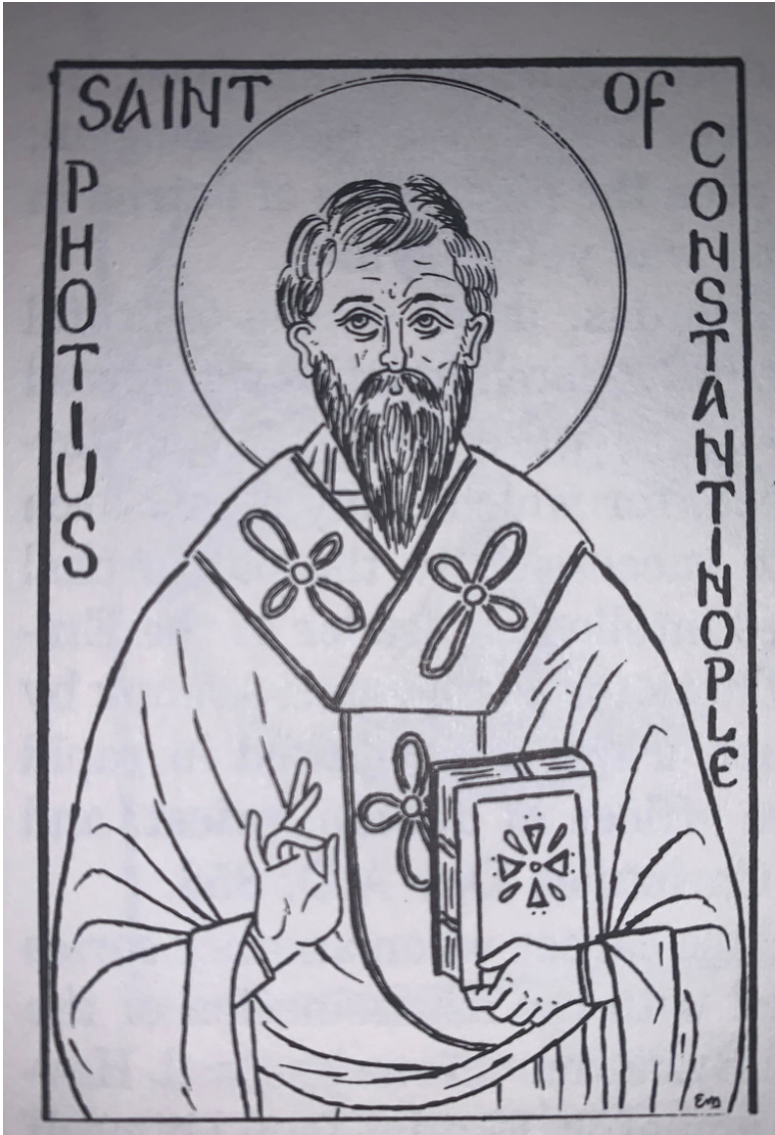
St. Photios, Patriarch of Constantinople

Poulos, G. (1990). St. Photios, Patriarch of Constantinople. In *Orthodox Saints Vol. 1* (pp. 115-116. Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Pr.

“

At any time in world history the eminent St. Photios would have been an awe-inspiring picture, but in the ninth-century he was a fantastic mirror of mankind created in the image of God.

Master of every form of human expression, a genius in militarism, politics, and theology, he tempered his every action with a genuine humility which eventuated in an ascension to the high office of patriarch. At home with prince and peasant alike, he was all things to all men, daring in political intrigue, artful in cleric and lay diplomacy, and extremely eloquent in defense of the faith in Jesus Christ.



A brilliant scholar, soldier, statesmen, and theologian, Photios was born in A.D. 820, a period when Byzantine culture was writing the brightest chapter in the world history. With prodigious talents suited to that era, his life spanned seven decades during which his glorification of God and man earned him the titles of "Great Star of the Church," "Father," "Doctor," "Confessor," "Isapostolos" (Equal-to-the-Apostles), and finally the ultimate in titles- that of "Saint." In this cultural atmosphere, however, strewn in the path of all men in public life were the many pitfalls of church-state power maneuvering; plots and counter-plots which Photios managed to survive in an unswerving approach to immortality.

The brilliant but checkered career of Photios began with military service during the reign of Emperor Michael III, son of Theophilos, and extended through the rules of Basil I and then Leo VI. From captain of the guard, a post in which he first displayed excellence, he was elevated to imperial secretary, the highest political office in the realm. This was an office whose prominence allowed Photios to display fully his abundant talents, among which were oratory, literature, philosophy, medicine, and theology. Inasmuch as church and state functions overlapped, the complete politician was of necessity a knowledgeable theologian; given this set of circumstances,

even the high office of patriarch was within reach of Photios, who was yet a layman.

In a power struggle led by Bardas, uncle of the youthful Emperor Michael III, the incumbent Patriarch Ignatios was forced to vacate his office, whereupon there were set in motion formalities compressed into one week, for which many a patriarch labored a lifetime, to assure the succession to the patriarchal throne by Photios, the undisputed intellectual leader of the Empire. In the span of seven days, Photios was tonsured a monk by Bishop Gregory of Syracuse, then a reader, followed in rapid succession daily by the successive offices of deacon, priest, and finally ecumenical patriarch on Christmas Day A.D. 858.

Photios had scarcely launched his career when another series of political maneuvers culminated with the assassination of the emperor and the succession to the Byzantine throne by Basil. Having been the favorite of the dead emperor, Photios found himself deposed by the successor, but in a short period of time was induced to return as royal tutor. Basil was not one to waste a mind such as that of the renowned Photios. When the reinstated Ignatios died, the Emperor Basil set aside all other considerations and gave the patriarch's seat to Photios, a choice he made clear should remain unchallenged by rival factions.

As the Byzantine Empire's chief vicar of Christ, Photios wrote one of the brightest chapters in the history of Orthodoxy, a chapter which unfortunately was tarnished by the troublesome dissidents whose clamorous voices all but drowned out a spokesman for Christ whose eloquence remains unsurpassed. The voice of Photios rang out loud and clear, however, when the authority of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was challenged, even threatened, by the western clerics of Rome. There ensued a power struggle within the Church equal to that of any in the state, and it was Photios' brilliant defense of the Orthodox faith that averted a subservience to the West by the East.

In the course of still another series of political intrigues under Leo VI, Photios was again forced into exile, and he retired to live out his last years as a monk in Bordi, Armenia, where he died on 6 February 891.



Pictured above: St. Photios Greek Orthodox National Shrine in St. Augustine Florida
Image from: www.stphotios.org




MARCH 4, 2023

Lenten Brunch

Sponsored by
The Ladies Philoptochos Society
of Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING
SATURDAY OF SOULS DIVINE LITURGY

An offering tray will be passed.



ΜΝΗΜΗ ΤΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ ΕΥΤΡΟΠΙΟΥ, ΚΛΕΟΝΙΚΟΥ, ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΚΟΥ

(3η Μαρτίου)

Σήμερα τιμάται η μνήμη πολλών αγίων της πίστεως, και οσίων και μαρτύρων. Ξεχωρίζουμε όμως τους μάρτυρες Ευτρόπιον, Κλεόνικον και Βασιλίσκον, διότι το κοινό μαρτύριό τους είναι συγνικνητικό και θα μας δώσει πολλά σπουδαία διδάγματα.

Ήταν και οι τρεις συστρατιώται και συγγενείς του μεγαλομάρτυρος αγίου Θεοδώρου του Τήρωνος (17 Φεβρουαρίου). Μαζύ, φαίνεται, είχαν συνεννοηθή και είχαν καταταγή στο τάγμα των Τηρώνων και αντιμετώπιζαν από κοινού τα προβλήματα της καθημερινής ζωής που ήταν, λόγω της εργασίας των, πολύ δύσκολα, αλλά και πολύ επικίνδυνα. Ήταν όμως και οι τέσσερες χριστιανοί και η θεία Χάρις τους έδινε τη μυστική εκείνη δύναμη, που στηρίζει τον άνθρωπο και τον κάνει ικανό, να υπερνικά τα εμπόδια και τις δυσκολίες. Και έπαιρναν τη χάρι αυτή στις κοινές πνευματικές συναντήσεις των και ιδιαιτέρως στις κοινές προσευχές των, που θα ήσαν τόσο θερμές και τόσο δυνατές. Ήσαν αποφασισμένοι να κρατήσουν τις

αρχές και τις πεποιθήσεις των, οτιδήποτε και αν συνέβαινε. Πρώτος από τους τέσσερες συνελήφθη και εμαρτύρησε ο Άγιος Θεόδωρος. Οι τρεις άλλοι δεν ελύγισαν μπροστά στο ηρωικό του μαρτύριο, αλλά έμειναν στο πλευρό του μέχρι τέλους, τον εστήριξαν όσο μπορούσαν και ένιωσαν μέσα τους, την αγία απόφασι που είχαν πάρει, για να δοξάσουν τον Κύριο, να ενισχύεται και να θερμαίνεται. Και δεν άργησε να έλθει και η δική τους σειρά. Επροδόθηκαν στον άρχοντα της Καππαδοκίας Ασκληπιάδην και εκείνος ύστερα από σύντομη ανάκρισι και αφού έλαβε την θαρραλέαν απάντησι των αγίων, ότι είναι χριστιανοί και έτοιμοι να πεθάνουν για την πίστι τους, διέταξε να τους αποκεφαλίσουν μετά από φρικτά μαρτύρια Το βράδυ, που ήταν δεμένοι στις φυλακές, είδαν τον μεγαλομάρτυρα Θεόδωρον που ήλθε να τους ενισχύση με τα λόγια αυτά: «Σας περιμένω στους ουρανούς». Αυτό ήταν. Ατρόμητοι αντιμετώπισαν τα βασανιστήρια και παρέδωσαν τις αγίες ψυχές των στα χέρια του Πλάστου και εκεί πρεσβεύουν συνεχώς και υπέρ ημών των αμαρτωλών.

EUTROPIOS, KLEONIKOS, VASILISKOS, ZENOS, & ZOILIS THE MARTYRS

(March 3)



These saints lived during the reign of king Diocletian in 296. They came from Amasia, the famous city in Cappadocia at the Black Sea. They were relatives and fellow-soldiers with St. Theodore of Tyre. Having been accused to governor Asclepiodotes, they were strongly beaten. St. Eutropios received wounds on his mouth, because

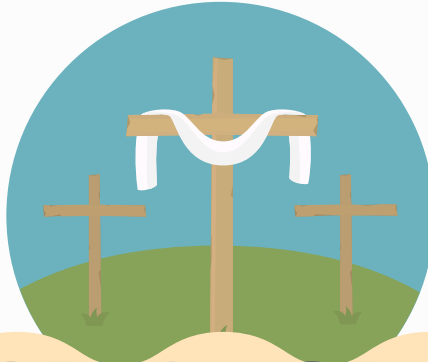
he insulted the governor. However, although the soldiers who were hitting them were paralyzed and tired, the saints were cured, because the Lord and holy martyr Theodore of

Tyre had appeared to them. When they saw this miracle, many unbelievers believed in Christ and were beheaded. When the governor saw these things, he changed behaviour and tried to move St. Kleonikos from Christ's faith with flatteries. He gave him presents and promised to give him more but not only wasn't the saint's mind changed but he even got angry and ridiculed both the governor's lack of understanding as well as the idols' weakness. So, while the governor and the rest of the Greeks were offering sacrifices to their gods, St. Kleonikos prayed and toppled Diana's idol down.

When the idolaters saw this, they burnt with anger, boiled tar and asphalt in three boilers and poured them on the three Christian martyrs' backs. However, the martyrs were preserved unharmed but the servants who were pouring the mix were completely burnt. After this Sts. Eutropios and Kleonikos were crucified, received the crown of martyrdom and went to eternal life. St. Basiliscus on the other hand was thrown to prison, where he died after he had spent quite some time there.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SCOOP

ST. SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



**KALI ANASTASI!
HAVE A NICE RESURRECTION!**

I personally want to thank everyone that helped to make the Christmas Pageant a success. The community, as well as Fr. Pat, thoroughly enjoyed watching the children in the pageant.

In this newsletter you will find information about the Lenten Journey and the upcoming Sunday School calendar.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns in regard to the program please email sundayschool@stsophiaalbany.org

Theodosia Legato, Sunday School Director

SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

**Classes Meet in classrooms at 10:00 AM
Please light a candle before coming to class.**

FEBRUARY

5th - Family Worship | No Class
12th - Classes in Session
19th - Family Worship | No Class
26th - Classes in Session

MARCH

5th - Classes in Session - Sunday of Orthodoxy Don't forget to bring your icons!
12th - Classes in Session
19th - Classes in Session
26th - Classes in Session

JOURNEY TO PASCHA

The Lenten Journey has begun! Encourage your children, especially if they are in grades 5 and up to fast. This does not mean to fast from meat and dairy for all of 40 days. Perhaps, try to fast only on Fridays or attempt to fast from only meat. It is important to attempt to do a version of a strict fast to prepare the children as they get older. Keep in mind in the Orthodox Faith we fast from dairy, meat, and olive oil. For example we DO NOT choose to fast from donuts or candy for all of lent.



Here is an excerpt from an article on the Archdiocese website titled **Why Do We Fast?**:

Fasting is a way of emptying ourselves from the cares and concerns of this world—A means of preparation and conditioning, which will enable us to serve God and grow closer to Him. The true nature of fasting shows that the rituals of a life lived faithfully before God are not empty gestures. They usually have profound meaning and can point us in the direction of realities far greater than ourselves. An important part of living our faith is in knowing our faith.

To read the article further please go to goarch.org

(Nicolakis, Theo. "Why Do We Fast? - Prayer & Spiritual Life - Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America." Go to Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, 8 Apr. 2000, www.goarch.org/-/why-do-we-fast-?inheritRedirect=true.)



St. Sophia Greek Language and Culture Academy Corner

Γωνία της Ακαδημίας Ελληνικής Γλώσσας και Πολιτισμού Αγίας Σοφίας



Fun Facts about ΑΠΟΚΡΙΕΣ



Apokries (The Greek Mardi Gras) is a time to celebrate before the solemn period of lent commences. All over Greece and Cyprus, people are getting into the carnival atmosphere. The word carnival comes from the Latin 'carnem levare' meaning 'without meat'. The word Apokries in Greek comes from the words apochi and kreas (abstinence + meat) so, it means avoiding meat. The processions, costuming and feasting all derive from ancient ceremonies honoring the Greek god of wine and divine intoxication, Dionysus. The very famous Carnivale of Patras has been held for more than 180 years and is the largest Apokries carnival in Greece. It combines circus and mask elements with public street parties. Floats, giant decorated cars, carts and colorful papier-mâché figures are watched by many people on the streets and from the balconies. The closing ceremony at Patras Harbor features the burning of the Carnival King and a huge fireworks display.

Preparing for Lent: The Greek Carnival is divided into 3 weeks, all preparing for the fasting. The first week opens the carnival and starts with a specific church celebration. The second week is called Kreatini in which one is allowed to eat meat every day.

Tsiknopemptee: The Thursday in the Kreatini week is called Tsiknopemptee. Tsikno means the smell of grilled meat and Pempti means Thursday. This Thursday is a day to take your family out to a tavern and eat grilled meat. Tsiknopemptee is also the day when the parties start and the first masquerades for the Greek Carnival make their appearance. The last week before Lent is called Cheese Week, White Week or Tyrini. Only dairy and fish are allowed during that week, no meat. The carnival celebrations end on Kathara Deftera or Clean Monday

Clean Monday and Koulouma: The carnival ends on Kathara Deftera or Clean Monday. On this day, the fasting begins and the Koulouma, traditions related to Lent, begin. On Clean Monday, most Greeks leave the city for the countryside to spend family time. The traditional food eaten on Koulouma is taramas, a red kind of caviar, halvas, a cornstarch sweet and a Clean Monday bread called lagana. Many local bakeries are open on Clean Monday and sell this special bread.





ST. SOPHIA GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY

LIGHT LUNCH SPONSORED BY ALBANY AHEPA #140

ANNUAL GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

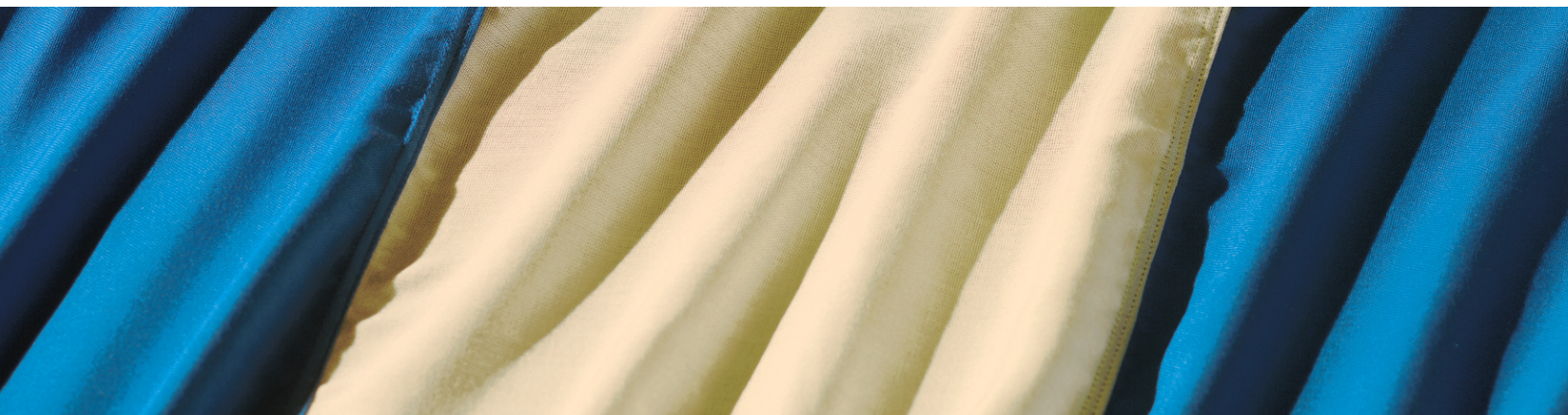
SUNDAY, MARCH 26TH, 2023

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CHURCH SERVICES

SUPPORT OUR CHURCH YOUTH WITH THEIR SONGS, POEMS, AND DANCES WITH A ONE-HOUR PROGRAM

COME ENJOY GREEK DANCING AND SHORT THEATRICAL SKITS!

ΣΑΣ ΠΡΟΣΚΑΛΟΥΜΕ ΌΛΟΥΣ ΝΑ ΓΙΟΡΤΑΣΟΥΜΕ ΜΑΖΙ ΜΑΣ!



Saint Sophia

YOUTH

JOY/GOYA LENTEN RETREAT

Begins Friday, April 7th 6:00pm

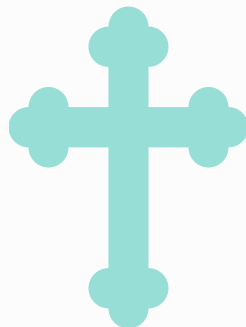
JOY & GOYA Members will make Prosforo, have a lesson, and enjoy a pasta dinner.

Saturday, April 8th 9:30am

Saturday of Lazarus (All English Liturgy)
Youth Breakfast and Palm making following Services.

Sunday, April 9th 9:30am

Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy





Come Join the PARTY!



GREEK ZUMBA

Your weekly escape to Greece!

**Weekly Dance & Exercise Class
to Greek Music**

**Every Wednesday at 6:30pm
Class is \$7 per week**

**ST. SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
440 WHITEHALL ROAD, ALBANY, NY 12208**

Proceeds donated to local charities



FEBRUARY 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2 9:30 AM PRESENTATION TO THE TEMPLE DIVINE LITURGY	3	4 GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY CLASSES IN SESSION 7:00 PM SONS & MAIDS ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DANCE
5 9:30 AM PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE DIVINE LITURGY FAMILY WORSHIP NO SUNDAY SCHOOL	6 7:00 PM AHEPA MEETING	7 6:30 PM DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE MEETING	8	9	10 9:30 AM ST. HARALAMBOS DIVINE LITURGY	11 GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY CLASSES IN SESSION
12 9:30 AM THE PRODIGAL SON DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL	13	14	15	16 6:30 PM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	17	18 9:30 AM 1ST SATURDAY OF SOULS DIVINE LITURGY GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY CLASSES IN SESSION
19 9:30 AM MEATFARE SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGY FAMILY WORSHIP NO SUNDAY SCHOOL	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY	21	22	23	24	25 9:30 AM 2ND SATURDAY OF SOULS DIVINE LITURGY NO GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY CLASSES
26 9:30 AM CHEESEFARE SUNDAY DIVINE LITURGY 12:00 PM CHEESEFARE LUNCHEON	27 CLEAN MONDAY GREAT LENT BEGINS 5 PM COMPLINE	28				

March 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 9:30 AM PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY	2	3 7:00 PM 1ST SALUTATIONS	4 8:30 AM 3RD SATURDAY OF SOULS 11:00 AM SERVICES IN GLOVERSVILLE GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY CLASSES
5 9:30 AM SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL BRING ICONS TO CHURCH	6	7 6:30 PM DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE MEETING	8 9:30 AM PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY	9	10 7:00 PM 2ND SALUTATIONS	11 GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY CLASSES
12 9:30 AM ST. GREGORY PALAMAS DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL	13 7:00 PM AHEPA MEETING	14 6:30 PM PHILOPTOCHOS MEETING	15 9:30 AM PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY	16 6:30 PM RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	17 7:00 PM 3RD SALUTATIONS	18 GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY CLASSES
19 9:30 AM SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL	20	21	22 9:30 AM PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY	23	24 6:30 PM ANNUNCIATION GREAT VESPERS	25 9:30 AM ANNUNCIATION DIVINE LITURGY GREEK LANGUAGE & CULTURE ACADEMY CLASSES
26 9:30 AM ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER DIVINE LITURGY 10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 12:00 PM GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION	27	28	29 9:30 AM PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY	30	31 7:00 PM AKATHIST HYMN	

SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
440 WHITEHALL ROAD
ALBANY, NY 12208

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Albany, NY
Permit No. 15

St. Sophia Mission Statement – St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church, Inc. is a not-for-profit religious community under the leadership of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through the auspices of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople whose mission is to: (1) maintain, practice, and proclaim the Christian Orthodox faith, enhancing the spiritual growth of its communicants; (2) develop and operate programs, activities, and services for the Parishioners which serve and further the religious educational, cultural, philanthropic, and social ministries of the community as well as to protect and continuously develop the physical buildings and religious property as deemed necessary; (3) dedicate the promotion of Christian Fellowship and values between the evolving diversity of cultures and its people.