

the testament

EDITORIAL STAFF

REV. FATHER PATRIC LEGATO

MICHÉL-GABRIÉLLE LEGATO

E: TESTAMENT@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

DESIGN

MICHÉL-GABRIÉLLE LEGATO

THIS EDITION INCLUDES DESIGNS BY THE LATE HELEN SOKARIS

WEBMASTER

CHRISTOPHER PAPPIS

E: WEBMASTER@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

church staff

CLERGY

PROTOPRESBYTER

REV. FATHER PATRIC LEGATO

E: FRPATRICLEGATO@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

RETIRED CLERGY

FR. DENNIS L. NAGI, PH.D

CHURCH OFFICE

MARGARET DANES

MARY PATELOS

E: PARISHOFFICE@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGER

ALFREDO RAMOS

BOOKKEEPING

HELEN (ELENI) VASILAKOS

E: STSOPHIABKG@GMAIL.COM

CHANTER

GEORGE LENARES

ICONOGRAPHER

EFTHIMIOS STOJA

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY-FRIDAY

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

(518) 489-4442

parish council

PRESIDENT

MICHAEL CHRISTAKIS

E: PCPRESIDENT@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

VICE-PRESIDENT

SULTANA VARVAROUSIS

RECORDING SECRETARY

CHRISTINE HARVEY

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

ANASTASIA VASILAKOS

TREASURER

MARK STEVENS

PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS

YIANNI GOOGAS

ROBERT HAHN

KEATHER PAPA

PETER PAPPAS

GEORGE PAPPIS

MARIA PIDGEON

BESSIE SOKARIS

adult ministries

ST. SOPHIA SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

GEORGIA MELAS, COMMITTEE CHAIR

FROSINE STOLIS

JAMES STOLIS

HELEN TOMASO

CHRISTINE PRUDENTE

FOTI RANTZAKLIS

CHOIR

HARRY ERMIDES

FAMILY PROMISE

PETER MELAS

PHILOPTOCHOS

DEMETRA XYTHALIS VANN

MAKARIA

DORA MOKHIBER

ELAINE SOKARIS

SENIOR CITIZENS

JAMES STOLIS

youth ministries

ACOLYTES

JAMES DIAMANTOPOULOS

SUNDAY SCHOOL

MICHÉL-GABRIÉLLE LEGATO

E: SUNDAYSCHOOL@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

GREEK SCHOOL

LAINIE DAMASKOS-CHRISTOU

IOANNA LOULA

E: GREEKLANGUAGEACADEMY@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

GREEK FOLK DANCE

DIANE COHEN

MARIA PIDGEON

E: STSOPHIADANCERS@GMAIL.COM

JOY

SIA GOOGAS

KEATHER PAPA

LEA STEVENS

E: JOY@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

GOYA

MARY GOOGAS

MICHAEL KOUTELIS

SOULA LANDI

SOPHIA PALLONE

E: GOYA@STSOPHIAALBANY.ORG

ahepa family

AHEPA

PRESIDENT

ANDREW CHAKMAKAS

DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE

PRESIDENT

VASSO POTTER

E: DOPALOPE158@GMAIL.COM

SONS OF PERICLES

PRESIDENT

CHRISTO MELAS

MAIDS OF ATHENA

PRESIDENT

ZEFFI KONDOPRIAS

E: SOPHIA48MAIDS@GMAIL.COM

THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ST. SOPHIA IS A PARISH UNDER THE SPIRITUAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL SHEPHERDING OF HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS OF AMERICA OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA, UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE.



COVER PHOTOS: VARIOUS PHOTOS FROM THE 2005, 2006, AND 2009 GREEK FESTIVALS

Dear Ladies of Philoptochos,

We would like to thank you for your incredibly generous gift and for the love and compassion shown by you and the community.

Knowing that so many people came together to support us means more than we can express. The effort that went into organizing the luncheon, raffles, and all other contributions reflect the kindness, faith, and strength of all of you. We feel blessed to be surrounded by such love.

We pray that God blesses each of you for the kindness you have shown. May the Lord grant you continued strength and return your generosity many times over.

With heartfelt gratitude and prayers,

*Angelo & Andrea
Bousbouras*



FROM THE EDITOR

Dearest Parishioners of St. Sophia and friends,

Christ is Risen! I hope everyone had a wonderful Pascha with your family and with friends. It was such a joy seeing how packed the church was throughout Holy Week services and the Agape/Easter Sunday services.

The month of May has always been my favorite time of year growing up at St. Sophia's. It's Greek Festival season! I remember as a kid going on the rides with friends, setting the glassware and silverware in the dining room on Friday nights to becoming a full-time weekend dancer in the St. Sophia Folk Dance group until I graduated High School.

Many in our community work hard year-round preparing for Greek Fest. It's a labor of love to the people who love St. Sophia and to the Capital District who enjoy attending and learning about our Greek heritage. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the parishioners heading the preparation for the biggest event of the year!

For this edition of the Testament, it's a trip down memory lane, in honor of someone special to St. Sophia.

Last year, our former Co-Editor of the Testament, Helen Sokaris passed away during festival weekend. Helen also loved this time of year. You'd often find her and her late sister Mary, working hard at the Souvlaki/Gyro stand.



PHOTO ABOVE:
SOUVLAKI/GYRO CREW AT THE 2006
GREEK FESTIVAL

Helen was born and raised in Albany and St. Sophia was her home parish. She was active in our community from the time she was young to late in her life. While compiling files for this special edition of The Testament I got to see just how much time and service she volunteered to St. Sophia, many of us never knowing all that she had done.

For 30 years Helen worked in conjunction with Father Pat editing and designing The Testament, but what many people don't know is she also created many of the marketing materials our community used for a long period of time in the 1990's and early 2000's. Helen's attention to detail was evident going through her very organized data backups. I discovered years of archives including old Festival materials, photo albums, every Testament edition Father Pat and Helen had ever produced together and all the youth, adult ministry and AHEPA family flyers you could find.

We miss her very much here at St. Sophia.

Please enjoy this "retro" edition of The Testament, in her honor.

May her memory be eternal.



Sam and Eleni had just moved into their new home. It was much more spacious than they had previously gauged when they had attended the open house a few months earlier. Three bedrooms, two and a half baths, a two car garage, a three-season room in the back with an outside deck attached, a giant family and recreation room in the basement, and many other amenities and features which they did not have in their previous house. The best feature of all, however, was their proximity to the Greek Orthodox Church. It was within walking distance and the tree lined roadway was less than two hundred yards away. Sunday was just a day away. They were looking forward to their first of many Sunday morning strolls to church.

That night, they slept soundly in the master bedroom just off of the formal living room. It was a cooler than normal spring evening, so they lit the gas fireplace which added a special ambiance and colorful hue to the room.

Sunday was Pentecost, and with a restful night, and the sun gleaming through the bay window, they decided to walk to church. Fr. Demetrios gave a stirring sermon. He spoke about the rush of the wind and the tongues of fire with a powerful description. "The wind was as if a freight train had encircled the room and was constant for an endless amount of time. The roar of the wind was as if it was a Category 4 hurricane. It was a powerful and deafening sounding super cell descending upon all who witnessed the event. The neighborhood shook with a thunderous roar. The fiery flames which descended from the sky and alighted on the heads of the apostles was intensely bright, but without the hazard of consuming them in flames, but rather blessing them with unseen power." Then suddenly, Fr. Demetrios stopped waving his arms and his bellowing voice decrescendoeed into a quiet, calming whisper. "The people stopped in their tracks and made wonder of the phenomenon, until they too came upon the room and witnessed the event.

The Holy Spirit enveloped them all and those who witnessed became true believers, and the apostles found courage and strength, threw off the fear of the crucifixion and put on the armour of righteousness which no evil can overcome.

INSIGHTS

Father Pat

They spoke and onlookers from throughout the known world heard the words proclaimed, each in their own native tongue. There was no bewilderment, but a crescendo of joyous tidings and the acceptance of the true faith of Jesus Christ and the beginning of the Christian Church we know to this day!"

The sermon was truly inspiring and when Fr. Demetrios. finished, he was both emotionally and physically drained as was everyone in the congregation. Even the children remained quiet and still for the entire oration and description of the Pentecostal Event.

As they walked home, Eleni and Sam were stirred as well and imbued with a kindling of fire within them. They had received the Holy Spirit as well, and Fr. Demetrios had brought it to life. That evening, they sat in their backyard barbecuing dinner and sipping wine filled with excitement and mused what it must have been like on that 50th day after the Resurrection.



And then...

...Early the next morning, they heard it. They felt it. They experienced it like over two thousand years before. It was happening in real time, the bellowing and thunderous roar, the house shaking, not to the point of destruction, but it felt like the house surely moved on and off its foundation. As they tumbled out of bed, they were dazzled with wonder. Eleni and Sam both thought that Pentecost was reviving a repeat performance! The rumble and the sound quickly passed, as they hurriedly dressed and literally ran to the church. It was too early for anyone to be there, so they sat on the front steps of the church to await anyone's arrival. Then the earth began to tremble once again and the noise was deafening. Maybe it was an earthquake? No, earthquakes are not known to exist here. A tornado? The sky was clear and blue so it could not be the case either.

Fr. Demetrios arrived at about 10 o'clock that morning. He saw Eleni and Sam sitting on the steps of the church and came over to greet them, or rather Sam and Eleni ran to him excitedly, with overlapping conversation, and told him that they too had experienced the Pentecost event in the flesh. There was a reenactment about the rumble in the house, the rush of air, the shaking ground, the noise not once, not even twice, but several times that morning. Father listened and had a broad smile on his face. He must have been pleased with their absolute acceptance of yesterday's Event.

"Welcome to Long Island. You just met the commuter train which runs every weekday from 5:00 AM to 12:00 AM. It goes right through your back yard and even behind our church. Just how long have you been here?"

Sam and Eleni still believe that it was the Lord who brought to life Pentecost to them. They no longer hear the train or feel the rumble, but every time someone comes out to visit for the first time, they jump up and hurriedly think the house is falling down and that the noise is deafening, to which they explain that it's just God reminding us of Pentecost. Sit down and enjoy the ride!

Have a blessed Pentecost!





PARISH COUNCIL

Michael N. Christakis Ph.D

Christ is Risen!

As Fr. Pat prepares to conclude his ministry at St. Sophia after 37 years, we do so with a deep appreciation for the steady leadership and commitment he has brought to our community, particularly in his work with our young people.

Axios!

That impact was clear at last month's Lenten Retreat. It was great to see so many of our youth gathered with Fr. Pat—engaged in their faith and connected to one another. Watching them make prosphoro and seeing the hall filled with their energy was a wonderful reminder of the strength of our parish and the foundation that has been built over time.

Looking ahead, **St. Sophia's Greek Festival** will take place **May 15, 16, and 17**. This is our largest fundraiser of the year. We need volunteers across all areas of the festival, and I encourage you to find a way to contribute—whether it's a few hours or multiple shifts. Your time and effort directly support the success of our festival each and every year.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I am delighted to invite you to join us on Sunday, June 7, immediately following church services, for a **special luncheon honoring Fr. Pat and celebrating his extraordinary 37 years of service** and impact on our community.

This will be a joyful opportunity for us to come together in gratitude, share memories, and recognize all that Fr. Pat, Presbytera Eva and their family have meant to St. Sophia. The luncheon is open to all. We kindly ask that you RSVP by June 1st, either online or during coffee hour after church.

A suggested donation of \$50 for adults and \$30 for children is appreciated, though please give as you are able. All proceeds will go toward a gift in honor of Fr. Pat.

On June 12 at 6:30pm, we will host **St. Sophia Night at the ValleyCats game** at Joe Bruno Stadium. We have reserved a pavilion in the ballpark, and we will provide dinner. Tickets are \$16.50 each (including fees) and can be purchased online. This will be a great opportunity to come together as a community. I hope you'll consider joining us.

Finally, I want to recognize Robert Hahn, who has been elected Deputy Treasurer, and Bessie Sokaris, who will serve as Deputy Financial Secretary. Thank you both for stepping into these roles and for your leadership.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Sophia.

SAVE THE DATE
SUNDAY, JUNE 7

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING DIVINE LITURGY



Honoring Father Pat

CELEBRATING 37 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

Lunch & fellowship
Special tributes
Community celebration

Luncheon registration link: <https://bit.ly/FrPat37>, or scan the QR Code:





PHILOPTOCHOS

Demetra Xythalis Vann

Xristos Anesti Everyone!

I hope you had a wonderful Easter celebration with your family and friends. Thank you to all that donated toward the Epitaphio. Pia Lascaris and her lovely crew did an amazing job again this year.

The spring weather is upon us and you know what that means? Festival Time!! We are back and I can't wait to be part of it again. Are you planning on working at a booth on May 15th, 16th or 17th? If you haven't signed up yet, please call the church office or see a board member during coffee hour. Let's make this the best one ever!

May 6th is our church's name day. Please join us for some light refreshments following church service and celebrate our lovely church Saint Sophia.

Philoptochos is always looking for new members with new ideas for helping those in need. Our last meeting of the year will be June 23rd, we will be celebrating Father Pat and giving a recap of our year. If you are not a member and are thinking about joining, please come see what we are all about!

Hope to see you all at the Festival!



MID-PENTECOST

WEDNESDAY - MAY 6TH

DIVINE LITURGY AT 9:30 AM

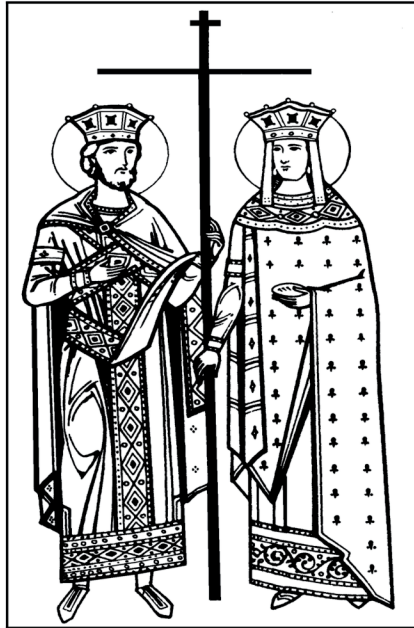
ST. SOPHIA'S NAME DAY

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS TO FOLLOW

OFFERED BY PHILOPTOCHOS

SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELEN

(May 21)



The tricennial anniversary of Christianity, when dated from the actual birth date of Jesus, had passed by a dozen years before it came to be recognized as the true Faith by an emperor, the ruler of the civilized world comprised of the Roman Empire. It was in the year 312

Ascension, as well as at others. For this and her son's equally pious work, the mother and son have been recognized as equal to the apostles and are so commemorated in a common feast day of the Church.

It has been said that Constantine the Great turned to Christianity for political convenience, but that hardly is the case. An emperor with his power and stature had little to gain from currying the favor of the Christians, which were at best of minor importance to the community and had become so weakened by the divisiveness in their own ranks that they were threatened with extinction. Constantine told of having seen a cross of light in the sky just prior to his successful campaign against Maxentius and from that moment forward embraced the Christian faith, becoming a servant of God chosen to kindle the flame of Christianity to a brilliance it would not have otherwise known. From a weak and divided community, Christianity burst forth under the leadership of Constantine to become the official religion of the realm and swelled in numbers that assured its power and permanence.

that Constantine, who was to become known as the Great, displayed to all the world his conversion to Christianity when his legions defeated the rebellious forces of Maxentius in Rome under the banner of the Cross. Also, while in York, England, he made his mother, Helen, the dowager empress. This she remained throughout her lifetime, having a mother-son influence on Christianity that has never been duplicated.

Helen, reputed to have been a British princess and the daughter of the King Cole one hears of in song, gave birth to her illustrious son at Naissus in the lower valley of the Danube on February 17 in the mid 280s.

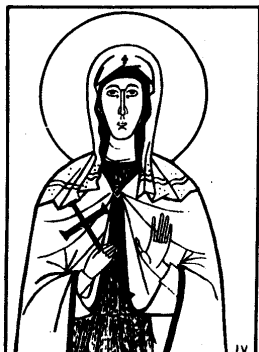
Because of her lineage she is as much revered in Great Britain, as is evidenced by the many churches, principally of the medieval era, dedicated to her memory. She is also said to have discovered the cross of Christ during a tour of Golgotha. In her declining years her pilgrimage was in part motivated by the mysterious death of her grandson Crispus and brought about the erection of beautiful Christian churches at the sites of the Nativity, the Holy Sepulchre, and the

The doctrine of Arianism that so divided the Christian family was met with firm action by Constantine, who called for an ecumenical synod at Nicaea held on 20 May 325. It was attended by an imposing array of church dignitaries, all of whom, however, were overshadowed by the dominant figure of the great emperor, and whose great influence brought about the signing of the historic Creed. Although the unity with which the Synod had formed was to meet with resistance in some corners, subsequent councils and meetings with church greats are the legacy of Constantine, who so piously gave the Christian faith the great strength that in later years enabled it to survive the onslaughts of such as Julian the Apostate.

Helen died in 328. Her son Constantine died on 21 May 337 A.D. The reign of Constantine has proved to be the greatest of any ruler in history, not only for Christianity but for the entire world as well.

ΜΝΗΜΗ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΓΛΥΚΕΡΙΑΣ

(13η Μαΐου)



Η αγία μάρτυς Γλυκερία ανήκει εις τας φάλαγγας των ενδόξων μαρτύρων της πίστεως των πρώτων αιώνων. Έζησε κατά τας αρχάς του 2ου αιώνου έως το 141 μ.Χ. ότε και εδέχθη το φωτοστέφανον του μαρτυρίου. Πατρίδα της ήταν η Τραϊανούπολις της θράκης. Εκεί έδρασε, εκεί εκήρυξε θαρραλέα τον Χριστόν, εκεί υπέστη τα πρώτα μαρτύρια, εθαματούργησε με την χάριν του Κυρίου και εθανατώθη τελικώς.

Το άγιον λείψανόν της ετάφη εις την Ηράκλειαν της Θράκης και πολλά θαύματα επιτελούσε εις τους μετά πίστεως προσερχομένους. Θα αναφέρουμε λίγα λόγια σχετικά με το Ιερόν Λείψανον της Αγίας, που αναφέρει ο Δοσίθεος εις το βιβλίον του <Δωδεκάβιβλος>. Αναφέρει λοιπόν εις τον τάφον της αγίας υπήρχε μία μεγάλη χάλκινη λεκάνη, μέσα στην οποία ετελούσαν τον αγιασμό επί του τάφου της μάρτυρος και είχε γίνει

χαριτόβρυτος. Αλλά ο τότε επίσκοπος Ηρακλείας βρήκε στην Κωνσταντινούπολι μία ολόχρυση και ωραιότατη λεκάνη και την αγόρασε και αντικατέστησε με αυτήν την χάλκινη της αγίας Γλυκερίας. Με έκπληξι όμως είδαν και ο επίσκοπος και ο λαός, ότι εσταμάτησαν τα θαύματα της αγίας. Καταθλιμμένος τότε ο επίσκοπος Ηρακλείας ήλθε στην Κωνσταντινούπολι και εξωμολογήθη τα συμβάντα εις τον τότε άγιον Πατριάρχην Ιωάννην τον Νηστευτήν. Και εκείνος μετά από θερμές προσευχές και νηστείες μεγάλες και έρευνες πολλές, ανεκάλυψε ότι την χρυσήν λεκάνην την είχε κατασκευάσει κάποιος βρωμερός καλλιτέχνης, μάγος και αιρετικός, γι' αυτό και η θαυματουργική χάρις της αγίας δεν επενεργούσε διά της χρυσής λεκάνης. Αλήθεια· τι μεγάλο και σοβαρό δίδαγμα είναι αυτό! Δεν είναι αρκετό να καλλιτεχνούμε τους ιερούς ναούς και να προσφέρουμε βαρύτιμα αφιερώματα. Το άριστον είναι τα αφιερώματα να προέρχωνται από ορθοδόξους και μάλιστα ευσεβείς και εναρέτους. Προσοχή λοιπόν στις εικόνες που αγοράζουμε και στα ιερά σκεύη που προσφέρουμε. Πρέπει να προέρχωνται από πιστούς και εναρέτους, διότι υπηρετούν αγίου σκοπούς.

ΜΝΗΜΗ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ ΚΩΝ)ΠΟΛΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΜΥΣΤΙΚΟΥ

(16η Μαΐου)

Ο σήμερον τιμώμενος άγιος, είναι από τις μορφές που έπαιξαν σπουδαίο ρόλο και στην Ιστορία του Έθνους και στην Ιστορία της Ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας. Εγεννήθη το 852 μ.Χ. αγνοούμε όμως την ιδιαίτερα του πατρίδα. Ήτο προικισμένος με σπάνια πνευματικά προσόντα και εμορφώθη με όλα τα μέσα της εποχής, γι' αυτό και αναφέρεται, ότι έφθασε στα ύπατα πολιτικά αξιώματα, έγινε δηλαδή, συγκλητικός και γενικός γραμματεύς των ανακτόρων. Μέσα στην ψυχή του όμως, έκαιγε άλλος πόθος ιερώτερος, που τον ανάγκασε να εγκαταλείψη τις υψηλές πολιτικές θέσεις και να γίνη μοναχός στο Μοναστήρι των Γαλακρινών, το όποιον ο ίδιος έκτισε στην Ανατολική Παραλία του Βοσπόρου. Εκεί υπεβλήθη σε μεγάλες νηστείες και προσευχές και από εκεί εκλήθη και χειροτονήθη Πατριάρχης Κωνσταντινουπόλεως γνωστός με το όνομα Νικόλαος ο Μυστικός. Εποίμανε την Εκκλησίαν της Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, με σπανίαν πνευματικήν και διοικητικήν δύναμιν, ήλθε όμως σε ρήξι με τον αυτοκράτορα Λέοντα τον Σοφόν, που εστοίχισε την καθαίρεσί του.

Το περιστατικόν όμως αυτό τον ύψωσε περισσότερο στην συνείδησι της Εκκλησίας, διότι εφάνη ανυποχώρητος, και ασυμβίβαστος στις παράνομες αξιώσεις του Αυτοκράτορος, που εξητούσε να του επιτραπή ο τέταρτος γάμος. Και όχι απλώς δεν υπέκυψε στους εκβιασμούς του ανωτάτου άρχοντος, αλλά και τον αφώρισε διά την παρανομίαν του και καθήρεσε τον ιερέα, που τον εσεφάνωσε.

Αργότερον επανήλθε και πάλιν στο θρόνο του και απεβίωσε στις 15 Μαΐου του 925. Κατά το διάστημα της Πατριαρχίας του δεν έπαυε να παρακολουθή και να επεμβαίνη ευεργετικώς και στα κρατικά ζητήματα, δεδομένου άλλως τε ότι ήταν έμπειρος στα θέματα αυτά, σώζονται δε επιστολαί του, απευθυνόμεναι σε διάφορα επίσημα πρόσωπα της εποχής του, από τις οποίες φαίνεται καθαρά η μεγάλη προσωπικότης του. Εκείνο όμως που τον κατέταξε μεταξύ των αγίων είναι ο Ορθόδοξος προσανατολισμός του και η αγία ζωή που έζησε μέχρι τέλους.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Michél-Gabrielle Legato, Director

Dear Sunday School Families,

Xristos Anesti! We had another wonderful Easter celebration at St. Sophia. We celebrated Father Pat's Nameday, held our Annual Easter Egg Hunt and even had the Easter Bunny stop by! The children had so much fun.

As we approach the end of the 2025-2026 School year, I'd like to provide some updates to our calendar. Previously, Sunday School classes were to conclude on Mother's Day. The last day of Sunday School will now be Sunday, June 7th with Sunday School Graduation following the Divine Liturgy. Father Pat's celebratory luncheon will also be held on that day. Please view the flyer in this edition of The Testament to make sure you RSVP before the deadline!

I want to take this time to thank all of our teachers, Youth Sunday School assistants and substitutes for helping out this school year. As I close out my year as Sunday School Director I want to say it's been a pleasure working with you all this year.



Teachers

Leigh Brockmann
Sia Googas
Anne Hadjioannou
Michél-Gabrielle Legato
Evangelia Miszko
Maria Neaton
Maria Pidgeon
Stratton Sokaris
Maria Ziamandanis



Thank you to our Youth Sunday School Assistants:

Katerina Christakis
Ryleigh O'Sullivan
Angelina Pidgeon
Anthi Sokaris

and to our Substitute Teachers:

Stacey Gouvitsas
Bessie Sokaris
Lea Stevens

Sunday School Calendar

Sunday, May 3rd - Classes in Session

Sunday, May 10th - Classes in Session

Sunday, May 17th - Greek Festival, No Class

Sunday, May 24th - Family Worship Sunday,
No Class

Sunday, May 31st - Classes in Session

Sunday, June 7th - Last Day of Sunday School,
Sunday School Graduation



IN THE COMMUNITY

BAPTISM CHRISMATION



Baptisms

Mason Thomas Radliff | April 11, 2026 - Sponsor, Nicholas Vann
Ryan Lawrence Radliff | April 11, 2026 - Sponsor, George Marinopoulos
Teddy George Cobstill | April 25, 2026 - Sponsor, Alexandra Mitsios

Chrismations

Laura Ann Engel | April 11, 2026 - Sponsor, Christine Harvey
Eric David Radliff | April 11, 2026 - Sponsor, Michael Christakis

EASTER DONATIONS



There were so many beautiful flowers, palms, and other symbolic items to mark the arduous journey of Jesus through the 40 days of Lent, to the Friday of immeasurable sorrow, and finally to the joyful love of the Resurrection. Our thanks to everyone who helped make this journey so incredibly special.

Akathist Hymn—In Memory of George Jeoney

Palms for Palm Sunday—Anonymous

Service of the Bridegroom Icon—Anonymous

Holy Oil, Cotton Balls, Q-tips for Holy Unction—Anonymous

Hand Towels and Linen Sheet—In Memory of Sevasti Demas

Last Supper Icon—In Memory of John and Virginia Cholakis

Crucifixion Crown of Roses—In Memory of Thano Jeoney

Red Carnations for the Unnailing Service—"The Three Sisters"

Epitaphio Flowers—

In Memory of Danny Anagnost

Anonymous

In Memory of Andris Beiniks

In Memory of Raymond Jefferson

In Memory of Theodore Brotsis

Barbara Burke & Family

In Memory of John & Eleftheria Googas

Rita Jeoney

In Memory of Athanasios & Dorothea Kontogiannis

In Memory of Jim & Chrissy Sokaris

Helen and Betty Vasilakos

Easter Lilies—In Memory of Nicholas & Irene Glinos

Resurrection Candles—In Memory of Steve, Tom, and Mary Sarris

Resurrection Icon—Thecla and Michael Philip

Resurrection Lavaros—Anonymous

Forty Dozen Easter Eggs—In Memory of Mary Ann Gregor, Victoria and Spiro Lembesis

ST. SOPHIA NAMEDAY



On Wednesday, May 6th we are celebrating Mid-Pentecost which is also the Nameday of the Church. Divine Liturgy begins at 9:30 AM followed by light refreshments sponsored by the Ladies Philoptochos Society.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

As part of our ongoing desire to receive all who enter with warmth, clarity, and Christ-centered hospitality, St. Sophia is strengthening our Outreach & Welcome Ministry. Beginning this spring, we are looking for volunteers of all stages in their faith to join and assist with this effort. All are encouraged to partake, from young catechumens to lifelong community members. Committee volunteers will greet newcomers, establishing a first point of connection for everyone who enters our church, and ensuring all are warmly invited to light a candle and enter into prayer. Improved signage throughout the church will also assist first-time visitors in navigating the space with ease.

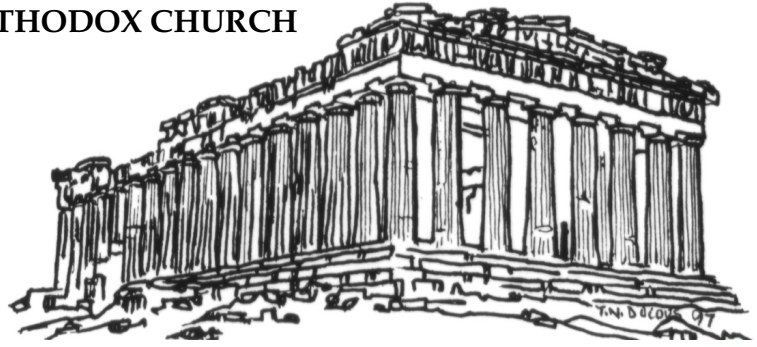
Additionally, a dedicated Welcome Table will be staffed each week during coffee hour by members of the Outreach Committee. These volunteers will be available to establish community, answer questions, and just converse, helping newcomers feel at home as they become acquainted with parish life. **To sign-up copy this website into your browser: <https://signup.com/go/dFjRvpZ>**



Family Promise of the Capital Region (FPCR), which St. Sophia is a member of since 2015, is a community-funded 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to helping children and families experiencing homelessness achieve lasting stability. FPCR is one of 174 affiliates of the national Family Promise organization, which operates across 40 states and has a strong record of success. Nationally, 78% of participating families secure stable housing, often within three to four months. FPCR has secured stable housing for 95% of participating families. **If you are interested in learning more about Family Promise contact Peter Melas at 518-949-6049, biggolos@gmail.com.**

ST. SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
440 Whitehall Road
Albany, N.Y. 12208
Phone: (518) 489-4442

Celebrating in 2026
54th anniversary



GRECIAN FESTIVAL

FRIDAY May 15 6 - 10 P.M.	SATURDAY May 16 Noon - 10 P. M.	SUNDAY May 17 Noon - 6 P.M.
--	--	--

**"E Kouzina" Casual Dining ✧ Agora Marketplace with
Jewelry ✧ Souvenirs ✧ Church Tours
Greek Coffee Shop**

**Serving Greek Appetizers - Pastry, Coffee and Drinks...
✧ Under the Tent - Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, French Fries, Souvlakia,
Greek Salad, Loukoumathes & MORE!**

**ENJOY LIVE GREEK MUSIC & GREEK DANCING ALL WEEKEND
\$5 ADMISSION PER DAY**

******* Free Parking *****
***** Thank you to our Sponsors! *******

Visit: www.stsophialbany.org for more information

Original Flyer Design by the Late Helen Sokaris



GREEK SCHOOL

Lainie Damaskos-Christou, Director

On behalf of the students and staff, I would like to extend to the community our gratitude for their wonderful support of our Greek Independence Day Program. We were so happy to see the hall filled with family and friends. Our students and staff worked diligently to honor the legacy and the heroes of the 205th Greek Independence anniversary. What more relevant symbolism is there in today's world than our human freedom and independence from any tyrannical rule? Long live Greece and Cyprus!

The continuation of our Greek Education at St. Sophia in Albany has been flourishing! Our diverse community has embraced the challenge of learning a new language and maintaining a vibrant culture with all its worthy traditions. We will continue to pursue our mission statement as we end our school year at the St. Sophia Greek Language and Culture Academy.

I would like to extend our gratitude to our teachers, Ioanna Loula, Nicole Xythalis Nikos Sarilakis. The responsibility they have is great. We know that for parents there is a need to preserve our Greek identity, language and culture as well as to honor the various vibrant cultures that our students inherit as well.

However, if we want the Greek School Program at St. Sophia to continue, grow and prosper and meet the educational, developmental and social needs of its students, it requires all of your support. We need enrollment to grow! We are committed to doing just that, as it is essential to strengthen the program.

As a community that believes that multiculturalism and education go hand in hand, we look forward to working with all stakeholders to promote the benefits of this excellent program since 1922! We remain optimistic that you too will demonstrate your commitment to bilingual education with our program and register your children again in September 2026.

With my best wishes,
Lainie (Ελένη) Damaskos-Christou, Director

"Those who give good education to children, should be honored more than those who gave birth to them, because their parents only gave them life, but educators the ability to live well"

Aristotle



Greek School Calendar

Saturday, May 2nd - Classes in Session

Saturday, May 9th - Classes in Session

Saturday, May 16th - Greek Festival, No Class

Saturday, May 23rd - No Class

Saturday, May 30th - Classes in Session, Last Day Celebration and Moving Up Ceremony



Εκ μέρους των μαθητών και του προσωπικού, θα ήθελα να εκφράσω την ευγνωμοσύνη μας στην κοινότητα για την υπέροχη υποστήριξη τους στο Πρόγραμμα της Ελληνικής Ημέρας Ανεξαρτησίας. Είμασταν τόσο χαρούμενοι που είδαμε την αίθουσα να ξεχειλίζει από οικογένεια και φίλους. Οι μαθητές και το προσωπικό μας εργάστηκαν επιμελώς για να τιμήσουν την κληρονομία και τους ήρωες της 205^{ης} επετείου της Ελληνικής Ανεξαρτησίας. Τι πιο σχετικός συμβολισμός υπάρχει στον σημερινό κόσμο από την ανθρώπινη ελευθερία και ανεξαρτησία μας από κάθε τυραννικό κανόνα; Ζήτω η Ελλάδα και η Κύπρος!

Η συνέχιση της Ελληνικής μας Παιδείας στην Αγία Σοφία στο Άλμπανι, ανθίζει σταθερά! Η ποικιλόμορφη κοινότητα μας έχει αγκαλιάσει την πρόκληση της εκμάθησης μιας νέας γλώσσας και της διατήρησης μιας ζωντανής κουλτούρας με όλες τις αξιόλογες παραδόσεις της. Θα συνεχίσουμε να επιδιώκουμε τη δήλωση αποστολής μας καθώς τελειώνουμε την σχολική χρονιά μας στη Ακαδημία Ελληνικής Γλώσσας και Πολιτισμού Αγίας Σοφίας.

Θα ήθελα να ευχαριστήσω τους δασκάλους μας, την Ιωάννα Λούλα, την Νικολέττα Ξυθάλη και τον Νίκο Σαριλάκη. Η ευθύνη που έχουν είναι μεγάλη. Γνωρίζουμε ότι για τους γονείς υπάρχει ανάγκη να διατηρήσουμε την ελληνική μας ταυτότητα, γλώσσα και πολιτισμό καθώς και να τιμήσουμε τους διάφορους ζωντανούς πολιτισμούς με τους οποίους κληρονομούμε επίσης οι μαθητές μας.

Ωστόσο, εάν θέλουμε το πρόγραμμα να συνεχιστεί, να αναπτύσσεται και να ευημερεί, χρειάζεται να καλύψει τις εκπαιδευτικές, αναπτυξιακές και κοινωνικές ανάγκες των μαθητών του. Εμείς στην κοινότητα της Αγίας Σοφίας δεσμευόμαστε να το κάνουμε αυτό ως το μόνο ουσιαστικό τρόπο για την ενίσχυση του προγράμματος και κάλυψης των αναγκών των μαθητών.

Ως κοινότητα που πιστεύει ότι η πολυπολιτισμικότητα και η εκπαίδευση συμβαδίζουν, είμαστε πρόθυμοι να συνεργαστούμε με όλους τους ενδιαφερόμενους για να προάγουμε τα πλεονεκτήματα αυτού του εξαιρετικού προγράμματος από το 1922! Παραμένουμε αισιόδοξοι ότι και εσείς θα επιδείξετε τη δέσμευσή σας για τη δίγλωσση εκπαίδευση για άλλη μια φορά και να εγγράψετε τα παιδιά σας ξανά αυτόν τον Σεπτέμβριο του 2026.

Με τις καλύτερες ευχές μου,

Κυρία Ελένη Δαμάσκου-Χρίστου, Διευθύντρια

*«Εκείνοι που δίνουν καλή εκπαίδευση στα παιδιά, θα πρέπει να τιμάται περισσότερο από εκείνους που τους γέννησαν, γιατί οι γονείς τους τους έδωσαν μόνο ζωή, αλλά οι εκπαιδευτικοί, οι δάσκαλοι την ικανότητα να ζουν καλά» **Αριστοτέλης***

St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Church

BASEBALL GAME



Outing

**TRI-CITY
VALLEYCATS**



**FRIDAY, JUNE 12TH
AT THE JOSEPH L. BRUNO STADIUM
6:30 P.M.**

\$16.50/PERSON*

Purchase tickets by scanning the QR code below:



***WHEN SELECTING TICKETS PLEASE ENSURE
YOU CHOOSE BETWEEN ADULT & CHILDREN
FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE PICNIC PAVILION
FEES INCLUDED IN TICKET PRICE**

May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Greek Language & Culture Academy 9:00 am
3 Sunday of the Paralytic Divine Liturgy 9:30 am 10:00 AM Sunday School	4 Men's Basketball 6:30 pm	5 Senior Program 12:00 pm	6 Mid-Pentecost Divine Liturgy 9:30 am	7	8	9 Greek Language & Culture Academy 9:00 am
10 Sunday of the Samaritan Woman Divine Liturgy 9:30 am 10:00 AM Sunday School	11	12	13	14	15 Greek Festival 6:00 pm	16 Greek Festival 12:00 pm
17 Sunday of the Blind Man Divine Liturgy 9:30 am Greek Festival 12:00 pm Family Worship - No Sunday School	18 Men's Basketball 6:30 pm	19 Senior Program 12:00 pm	20	21 Holy Ascension Divine Liturgy 9:30 am AHEPA 7:00 pm	22	23
24 Fathers of the 1st Council Divine Liturgy 9:30 am Family Worship - No Sunday School	25 Memorial Day Divine Liturgy at Graceland Cemetery 10:00 am	26 Senior Program 12:00 pm	27	28 Senior Lunch 12:30 pm	29	30 Greek Language & Culture Academy 9:00 am Saturday of Souls Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
31 Holy Pentecost Divine Liturgy 9:30 am 10:00 AM Sunday School						