



# August 2024

## Inside

Spiritual Message from Elder Ephraim	1-4
Parish Monthly Calendar	5
Parish Recent Pictures	6
Youth Events	7-10
Meet our Newly Illumined	11
Service & Outreach	12
Senior Fellowship Mtgs	13
Our Faithful Homebound	14
Parish Donations	15
2024 Bulletin Boosters	16-17
Metropolis Newsletter	18-20
HOPA Golf Outing	21
Regional Events	22-26
Updating the Ads Pages	27
Sponsor Ads	28-41

# The Kimisis Tis Theotokou Greek Orthodox Church Monthly Bulletin



The Church of Transfiguration of our Saviour  
In Thessaloniki, Greece.  
Celebrates every August 6th

## The meaning of Transfiguration

What is it that makes the Feast of Transfiguration so important to Orthodox Christians? What is the meaning of Transfiguration for modern people living in the modern world?

There are a few important things that the Transfiguration of Christ reveals to us. First, it confirms the divinity of Jesus once again. It shows us that He was sent by the Father. It was especially important for the disciples to understand. It was meant to strengthen their faith and make them truly understand that Christ's passion was voluntary.

Moses and Elijah, two of the greatest figures of the Old Testament, appear next to Christ to further prove that He is in fact the Messiah, Who came to fulfill the law.

Secondly, it reveals to us that every human being can go through the process of theosis - becoming united with God again, becoming transfigured like Christ, achieving holiness. We are all called for it: "The Son of God became man, that we might become god." (*St. Athanasius of Alexandria*)

The meaning of Jesus' Transfiguration is simple. It motivates us to strive to be illumined by the Divine Light, just like Christ on Mount Tabor. It encourages us to be better Christians, to love one another and to love God, moving one step closer to our main goal of Salvation every single day.

*From: <https://obitel-minsk.org/en/the-feast-of-transfiguration>*

Kimisis Tis Theotokou Greek Orthodox Church  
• 2111 Davidson Street • Aliquippa, PA 15001 •  
• Parish Website: [www.theotokou.org](http://www.theotokou.org) •

Kimisis Tis Theotokou Greek Orthodox Church 2111 Davidson Street, Aliquippa, PA 15001

Office: 724-375-5341

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**Parish Priest**

Fr. Theodosios Palis

Email: [theodosiospalis@gmail.com](mailto:theodosiospalis@gmail.com)

Parish Website: [www.theotokou.org](http://www.theotokou.org)

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/dormitionaliquippa>

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Anthony Thomas

2<sup>nd</sup> VP: George Kazas

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George Papas

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Mike Siget

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G.A.P.A. President..... Violet Rubino

H.O.P.A. President..... George Kazas

**Contact Numbers**

Community Center .....Tula Kakiou 724-375-1560

Buildings and Grounds..... Mike Siget 724-413-5498

Prospora... ..Angelique Avdellas 724-728-2128

## A TRANSITION TO LIFE: THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

Elder Ephraim of Arizona

Every time we celebrate the Dormition of the Mother of God, it's as if we're having Easter – the Easter of the summer. Our Lady the Mother of God prepares Easter for us. A glorious crossing “from death to life”. A second Easter, holy spotless, life-giving for the human race, because today “the laws of nature are overcome.”

“How the source of life goes towards life, passing through death”, says Saint John the Damascene. The death of the life-giving Mother of the Lord transcends the concept of death, so that it's not even called death, but “dormition” and “divine transition” and an emigration and immigration towards the Lord. And even if it's called death, it's a life-bringing death, since it transports to a celestial and immortal life.

The transition of the Mother of God, as an indisputable fact preserved by sacred Tradition, has been incorporated into the teaching of the Orthodox Church and has nothing to do with the ----pietistic beliefs of the Westerners concerning the conception without seed and life without death of the Virgin Mary.

The Virgin was the particular creation of God who surpassed all people and the angels. She is the only mortal ever to have lived a spotless life and to have become what is beyond the understanding of all reasoning beings—the Mother of God. Because she never sinned, never gave in to sensuous thoughts, it was proper that she lived on earth without the pains of the flesh, or illnesses. Even though she had a life-giving body, still, as a human being she was subject to the sickness of death and she did, in fact, die. But her body and soul were not separated from God. For a short time, the connection binding them together was loosed, as was the case with Christ.

After her death, her soul was united immediately with Christ. Because at the time of the Dormition of His Mother, attended by the celestial ranks of the angels and the saints, He took her holy soul, not merely to heaven, but “to His royal throne, to the heavenly Holy of Holies,” as John the Damascene tells us. And the life-giving and God-receiving\* body of Our Most Holy Lady, after three days, was transported to the

celestial realms, uncorrupt, to her Only-Begotten and beloved Son. In other words, we can speak of the resurrection of the Mother of God in the flesh. But this resurrection was not activated by Our Lady herself, but by her Son and God.

One witness of this resurrection/transportation of the Mother of God was the Apostle Thomas, who had not been present at her interment. He arrived late, as usual—three days late, in fact—and requested the other apostles to open the grave, only to find that the God-glorified body was not there. They did, however, see the Mother of God ascending into the heavens and giving the Apostle Thomas her Precious and Holy Belt, as proof of her ascension, rather in the same way as Christ allowed the same apostle to touch His wounds after the Resurrection.

The body of Our Lady—like that of her Son—did not undergo any corruption in the grave, that is it was not altered, it did decompose into the material elements that constituted it. In any case, since Christ's resurrection, the bodies of many of His saints have not decayed and have become, in part, undecomposed relics. How much more reasonable it is that the God-receiving body of the Mother of God would not decay.

Saint Andrew of Crete says that the fact that the Mother of God did not lose her virginity at Christ's birth had, as its natural concomitant, that her body did not decompose at the time of death. "The birth avoided despoilment and the grave did not accept decomposition."

After her Dormition, Our Lady the Mother of God became the mother of the new creation, the Church of Christ. Because she had the central position in the dispensation of salvation, since it was from her that the Head of the Church, the Lord, took His human flesh. Now, in the celestial Church, she has the fullness of Grace and glory and boldness. She has become the benefactress of the whole of nature and creation, which is why all creation venerates her as Lady and Maiden and Queen and Mother of God.

Through the Mother of God and because of her, the history of the whole world entered another orbit, incomparably more magnificent and superior to what had existed before her. No creature could have or could ever be more perfect than her, nor

could she have been more perfect than she was. According to the Fathers, there are three things that Almighty God could not have made more perfect: the incarnation of the Divine Word, the Virgin Mother of God and the bliss that the saved will enjoy.

After the resurrection of Christ, Our Lady was the support of the apostles and of the newly-founded Church of Christ. She taught the new Christians, guided them and consoled them in their sorrows. In the expanded version of her Life, we read that the Archangel Gabriel visited her three days before her Dormition, as he had done at the Annunciation, and told her of her glorious transition from death to life. The Holy Spirit, in miraculous wise, then gathered all the apostles in Gethsemane, in the house of the Mother of God, so that they could be present at her interment and take her blessing. After they had lauded the greatly-praised Mother of God, they asked her to pass on to them a final teaching, as a legacy. The Mother of God then told them a parable, in which this world was compared with a trade fair at which whoever does best at trading will be the who gains the greatest profit. She went on to explain that so it is also in matters of the spirit. Whoever observes Christ's commandments with the greatest zeal and heed will gain the greatest profit and will be glorified more greatly in the kingdom of heaven. And she urged them to persist in the "good fight."

And, indeed, how greatly pleased Our Lady is when she sees us struggling for our salvation. What satisfaction this brings her! And she herself, while on earth, how hard she struggled in her quiet way—though, since she was sinless, there was no need for her to do so—so as to leave us with an example of perfect asceticism. After her dormition, they found in Gethsemane where she lived, slabs where had preformed her prostrations and they were deeply indented from all the wear and tear she had subjected them to.

Let us also imitate her direct obedience, her endearing humility, her secret, internal, spiritual effort, her ardent prayer, the constant watchfulness which she showed, her divine love, and the spiritual pain she felt as a knife at the Cross of her Son.

To those who struggle, she becomes a "supportive ally," even if they have previously lived prodigal lives. Let's remember that the Mother of God "stood bail" for

Mary the Egyptian after the latter's repentance. And when Saint Mary retreated into the desert to take on her relentless struggle, Our Lady herself consoled her with her divine appearances.

As novice-mistress of monastics, the Mother of God is also the provider of divine gifts to them, especially those on the Holy Mountain. It was she who gave the gift of the prayer of the heart to Saint Maximos Kavoskalivis, Gregory Palamas, Silouan the Athonite and also to the late Elder Iosif the Hesychast, who is directly linked to our brotherhood. Another reason why today is of particular importance to us who are the spiritual grandchildren of Elder Iosif the Hesychast is that it was on this day, in 1959, that he fell asleep in the Lord. He loved Our Lady very much our sweet little mother—as he called her—and he received so many insights, divine appearances and gifts from her. And, indeed, one particular characteristic of the blessed Athonite Fathers is their love of the Mother of God. At the sound of her name, they were unable to restrain their tears which came from pure love for the Virgin Mother. Merely on hearing her name, a soul that loves God is moved to wonder, gratitude and thankfulness. So even the recollection of the Mother of God, that is recalling the person of Our Lady to the mind, sanctifies the person who does this. The late Fr. Athanasios Iviritis used to say that love of the Mother of God saved people, even if they didn't have any works to show.

People today have to use the mediation of the Mother of God, which is for our salvation. In every one of our sorrows and problems we mustn't forget "the help of the saddened, the protectress, defender, comfort of the faint-hearted", to whom we can have recourse and find consolation, immediate release and response. We pray that Our Lady the Mother of God, who has been "transported to Life", will always give her blessing to all of us, so that we may spend the present life as safe and sound as possible from the deceits and wiles of the Evil One, and that she will make us worthy of the heavenly kingdom of her Son. Amen.



# August 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>Grey Blocks = Fasting Days</i>						
				1 1p Senior Fellowship Mtg.	2	3 <i>Passing of Gerondissa Taxiarchia</i>
<b>4 6th Sunday of Matthew &amp; 7 Sleepers of Ephesus</b> 8a Orthros 9:30a Divine Liturgy	5 6p Vigil at Holy Transfiguration Monastery	<b>6 Feast of Transfiguration</b> <i>(Fish allowed today)</i> 9:30a Akathist, Procession & Divine Liturgy at Holy Transfiguration Monastery	7 6p Regional Youth Paraklesis at Dormition Oakmont, PA	8 6p Vespers & Great Paraklesis	9 6p Vespers & Small Paraklesis	10 5:45p 9th Hour, Vespers, & Compline
<b>11 7th Sunday of Matthew</b> 8a Orthros 9:30a Divine Liturgy	12 6p Vespers & Great Paraklesis	13 5p Vespers & Great Paraklesis 7p Parish Council Mtg.	14 6p Parish Feast Day Vespers & Procession	<b>15 Kimisis Tis Theotokou - Our Parish Feast Day!</b> 8:30a Orthros 10:00a Divine Liturgy	<b>16 Feast of St. Joseph the Hesychast &amp; St. Gerasimos of Kephallonia</b> 8:30a Orthros 10a HOPA Annual Golf Outing	17 11a-9p GOMOP Palooza at St. Demetrios, Warren, OH
6p Vespers & Great Paraklesis	6p Vespers & Small Paraklesis	5p Vespers & Great Paraklesis 7p Parish Council Mtg.	6p Parish Feast Day Vespers & Procession	10a HOPA Annual Golf Outing		
<b>18 8th Sunday of Matthew</b> 8a Orthros 9:30a Divine Liturgy	19	20 <i>Fr. Pails on Vacation</i>	21 <i>Fr. Pails on Vacation</i>	22 <i>Fr. Pails on Vacation</i>	23	24 10a Young Adult Sand Volleyball Tournament at Sandbox Volleyball Club, OH
<b>25 9th Sunday of Matthew</b> 8a Orthros 9:30a Divine Liturgy	26	<b>27 Feast of St. Phanourios</b> 8:30a Orthros 9:30a Divine Liturgy 1p Senior F. Board Mtg.	28 6p Vespers for the Beheading	<b>29 Beheading of John the Baptist</b> 8:30a Orthros 9:30a Divine Liturgy	30	5:45p 9th Hour, Vespers, & Compline

The "live" version of this calendar can be found on the Parish website: <https://www.theotokou.org/calendar/monthly-view-calendar/>

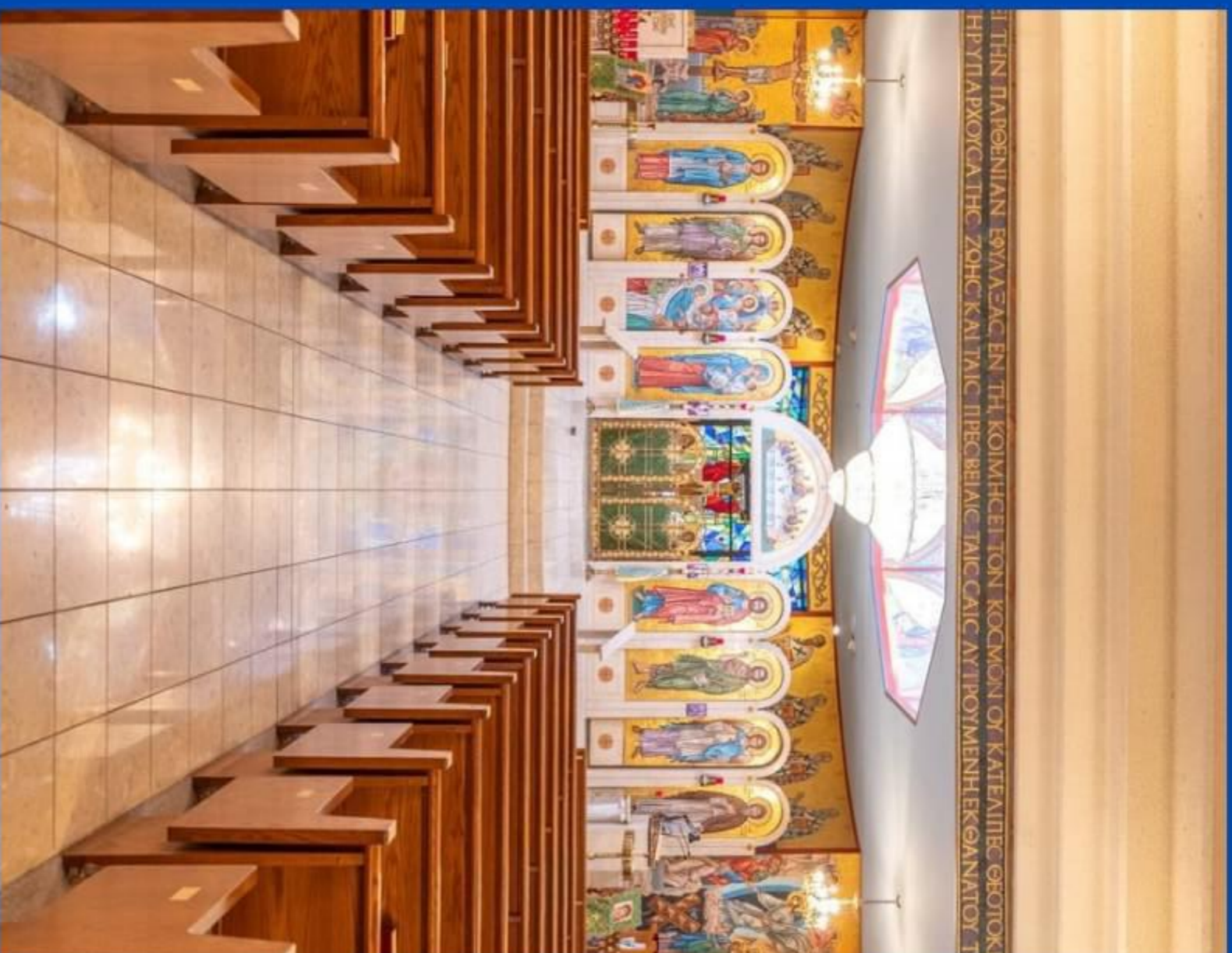
# Parish Recent Pictures!





2024 REGIONAL  
 YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT  
 PARAKLESIS SERVICES

*Join us!*



WESTERN REGION

ST. NICHOLAS  
 LORAIN, OH  
 FRI. AUGUST 2  
 6:00 PM

CENTRAL REGION

DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS  
 OAKMONT, PA  
 WED. AUGUST 7  
 6:00 PM

EASTERN REGION

HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL  
 CAMP HILL, PA  
 TUES. AUGUST 13  
 6:30 PM

# Young Adult Sand Volleyball Tournament

hosted by the Metropolis of Pittsburgh

**Saturday, August 24, 2024 at  
SandBox Volleyball Club**

**1 Eagle Valley Ct, Broadview Heights, OH 44147**

*Grab your crew and meet us on the courts!*

Rules and registration information can be found on our website:  
<https://tinyurl.com/YASandVBall>



**A fundraising event for our  
upcoming YAL Conference!**

# Metropolis of Pittsburgh Family Camp

at Camp Nazareth

## Growing in Gratitude

SEPTEMBER 20-22, 2024

Open to families  
of all sizes  
and ages!



Join us for a  
beautiful weekend  
where your  
relationship with  
Christ and one  
another will grow  
and flourish.

Registration Opens  
July 12 at 12 pm:

[tinyurl.com/MPFC2024](https://tinyurl.com/MPFC2024)



### Adult Track Keynote Speakers

Dr. Peter and Theanne Gagianas



### Youth Track Keynote Speaker

Pres. Sarah Mandeville, MDiv

Questions? Fr. Joe DiStefano - [frjdistefano@yahoo.com](mailto:frjdistefano@yahoo.com)

# YAL

## PITTSBURGH CONFERENCE OCT 18-20

24

GREEK  
DANCING

ORTHODOX  
SPEAKERS

SERVICE  
PROJECT



Join us in the beautiful city of Pittsburgh for a weekend packed with opportunities to grow your faith and make new connections with around 300 Orthodox young adults ages 18-35!

See why so many from across the country love our conference!

For more information, check out our website:

<https://tinyurl.com/YALPGH2024>

If you would like to support the conference, you can do so by scanning this qr code. We greatly appreciate your generosity!

venmo



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# Meet our Newly Illumined:

## Vasiliki (Jazmyn) Phillips

Patron Saint: St. Basil the Great who celebrates every January 1<sup>st</sup>

Entered the Holy Orthodox Church on 9/9/23 (Feast of The Holy & Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna)



### **Why I chose my Patron Saint:**

I chose the name Vasiliki because Saint Basil is an amazing saint with an amazing story, and he inspires me every day to be my best self! It is also the same day as my grandmother's birthday, and she has always been a spiritual teacher of mine, so it seemed fitting.

### **One thing I have learned along the way:**

The biggest thing I learned through my process as a catechumen and as a newly illumined so far is that the spiritual

struggle is constant and should be embraced with open arms and is not something to be afraid of. God is very forgiving, and he will catch every one of us when we stumble along the way. We just have to keep trying!

### **Favorite Spiritual Book to read:**

The Orthodox Faith, Worship & Life – this was a part of the Orthodoxy 101 curriculum, and it really helped me as a catechumen!

### **Favorite Fasting Food:**

Beans of all variety shape and size ...

### **Favorite Fasting Recipe:**

I LOVE FAKI (lentil soup)! I use a recipe from an old Greek cookbook that my mother-in-law shared with me.

*The Service and Outreach Committee is honoring our priest, **Father Theodosios Palis**, on the Second Anniversary as **Kimisis Tis Theotokou's** spiritual leader on Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup> after the Divine Liturgy!*



*“Be there or be square!”*

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP  
SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS & EVENTS – 2024

NO MEETINGS IN JANUARY OR FEBRUARY

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27-----BOARD MEETING 12:30 PM

THURSDAY, MARCH 7-----REGULAR MEETING 1:00 PM

TUESDAY, MARCH 26-----BOARD MEETING 12:30 PM

THURSDAY, APRIL 4 –**POTLUCK LENTEN LUNCHEON MEETING 1:PM**

TUESDAY, APRIL 23-----BOARD MEETING 12:30 PM

THURSDAY, MAY 16--- **MOTHER’S DAY & FATHER’S DAY LUNCH 1 PM**

**NO REGULAR MEETING IN JUNE**

TUESDAY, JUNE 25-----BOARD MEETING 12:30 PM

THURSDAY, JULY 11-----REGULAR MEETING 1:00 PM

TUESDAY, JULY 30-----BOARD MEETING 12:30 PM

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1-----REGULAR MEETING 1:00 PM

TUESDAY, AUGUST 27-----BOARD MEETING 1:00 PM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5-----REGULAR MEETING 1:00 PM

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24-----BOARD MEETING 1:00 PM

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3-----REGULAR MEETING 1:00 PM

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29-----BOARD MEETING 1:00 PM

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7 -**THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON – 1:00 PM**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26-----BOARD MEETING 12:30 PM

NO REGULAR MEETING IN DECEMBER

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7 -CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON – 1:00 PM**

**SHADOW LAKES**

# Our Faithful Homebound

**Our faithful homebound members appreciate a visit, a phone call, a letter or card, our prayers, a gesture to show they are remembered and loved.**

- 1. Georgia Yamalis**  
2327 Ritchie Street Aliquippa, PA  
724-375-7239
- 2. Marie Poulis**  
*Cambridge Pointe*  
160 Chapel Road Beaver, PA  
724-728-6257
- 3. Elaine Keriotis**  
2116 Ritchie Aliquippa, PA  
724-375-3704
- 4. Emilio Valsamidis**  
1416 Imperial Drive  
Aliquippa, PA 15001  
724-378-0733
- 5. Helen Kairis**  
2508 Minton Drive  
Moon Township, PA  
15108 724-457-1457
- 6. Lena Settle**  
319 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Beaver Falls, PA  
15010 724-624-7922
- 7. Katherine Palazzi**  
2401 W. Irwin  
Street Aliquippa,  
PA 15001  
724-375-5039
- 8. Lorraine Macroglou**  
7 Nickum Drive  
Aliquippa, PA 15001  
724-378-1744
- 9. Mary Birris**  
*Tapestry Senior Living Center*  
550 Cherrington Parkway  
Room 229,  
Coraopolis, PA 15108  
412-461-0655
- 10. Christina & Jacqueline Drakos**  
241 Richard St,  
Ellwood City, PA 16117, USA  
Anthony Drakos: 724-378-0702
- 11. Koula Kakiou**  
2021 McMinn Street  
Aliquippa, PA 15001  
724-378-1424

*If you know any homebound members who would like to be added to this list, please email [Kimisis724@gmail.com](mailto:Kimisis724@gmail.com) to have them added.*

*Updated 6/4/2024*



DONATIONS JUNE 23, 2024 TO JULY 14, 2024

- \$ 100.00 Donation to the Church  
Aleka Costianis
- \$ 50.00 Donation in Memory of Marcia Lasky  
David & Marina Gibson
- \$ 65.00 Donation in Memory of Olga Moniodes  
Andrea Passodelis  
Nancy Koutoulakis  
Dorothy Kakiou
- \$ 35.00 Donations in Memory of Kay Platoniotis  
Andrea Passodelis  
Kathy Neophytou

\*\*\*\*\*

A Big "Thank You" to the Stewards of our Kimisis Theotokou for remembering Your Church and sending in your 2024 Fair Share.  
We ask that you please continue supporting your Church through Your 2024 Stewardship, Purchasing Candles, Donations.

JUST A REMINDER – HAVE YOU RETURNED YOUR 2024 PLEDGE CARD????  
Any questions, contact Lynne Kakiou.

**“Thank You” to the following Bulletin Booster Supporters of Our  
Monthly Community Newsletter for 2024**

**Athena Bilotto  
Frances Cantakis  
Mark J. Cantakis  
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Artemis Chirgott  
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Nick & Kay Chirgott  
Paul & Sharin Chirgott  
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John, Vicki & Xrisafina Kaffenes  
Lynne, Tula & Margie Kakiou**

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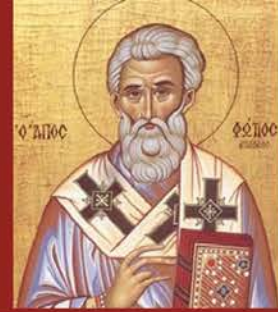
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Peter & Alexxis Kopar  
Kathy Neophytou  
George Pantelakis  
Andrea Passodelis  
Melissa, Adam, Mateja & Miladija Pavlovich  
John & Pam Phillips  
Nico & Vasiliki Phillips  
Gary & Kay Rygielski  
Reed, Sherri, Jonathan & Rena Shaffer  
Melissa Siget & Children Adam, Mateja & Miladija  
Michael, Meredith, Madelyn & Mason Siget  
Mike & Sophia Siget  
Rena Simantiras  
Sisters of The Nativity of the Theotokos Monastary  
Eric & Stephanie Smith  
John & Linda Tsagdis  
Gary & Renie Wadding  
Bobby & Roda Williams  
Georgia Yamalis**

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# A Good Word - Λόγον Αγαθόν

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH



### Philoptochos Delegates Participate in 47th Clergy-Laity Congress

Philotimo, philoxenia, friendship, festivities and fabulous weather – delegates at this year’s biennial convention experienced it all. Fourteen delegates represented the Metropolitan of Pittsburgh Philoptochos Society (5 of which were National Philoptochos Board members) in San Diego, CA from June 30th – July 4th for the 47th Clergy-Laity Congress and National Philoptochos Assembly. Our Metropolitan delegates, along with almost 400 Philoptochos members from across the Archdiocese, participated in meetings, listened to speakers, watched presentations, held discussions and participated in voting. Valuable information was presented, and changes were made for the betterment of the organization.



Metropolis of Pittsburgh Delegates

On Tuesday morning at the AGAPE Breakfast, our Melissa Chapter #6003 from the Annunciation in Akron, OH was recognized as the recipient of the award from our Metropolitan of Pittsburgh. Mary O’Connor and Torie Crockett, along with Fr. Dean Kokanos, were present to accept the award. The AGAPE Award received its name from the acronym “All Generations Accomplishing Philanthropic Endeavors.” On Thursday, the Chapter Challenge videos were presented, and everyone present saw the beautiful and blessed work of our St. Xenia Chapter #6039 from Sts. Constantine and Helen in Reading, PA. For two years, the chapter has raised funds totaling close to \$35,000 through various events, dinners, bake sales, etc. to build a room at the Lite House Women and Children’s Shelter in Reading. This room will house a woman

and up to two children. A plaque outside the furnished room gives thanks to the St. Xenia Chapter. President, Mary Dialectos, and National Board member, Sharon Whitman, both from the Reading chapter were in attendance and recognized along with recipients from the other eight metropolises.

Chapter Awards were also presented on Thursday, and our Philoptochos chapter from St. John the Divine in Wheeling, WV #6049 received second place recognition in the Chapter Project category for their “Orthodox Baby Shower.” Chapter President, Amy Filler submitted the project for consideration, but could not attend the convention. Our delegates attended two fabulous events during the week. The first was a tour and dinner on the awe-inspiring USS Midway Naval ship and the other was the culminating grand banquet held outdoors on the lawn of the Sheraton for a perfect view of San Diego’s spectacular fireworks show, “The Big Bay Boom.”

It was a wonderful week. Our hope is that at the next convention in 2026, we have 100% representation from each of our Philoptochos chapters. It is difficult to comprehend what you miss until you attend.

**Metropolitan Savas invites YOU to the First Annual**

Are You a Musician, Band or Artist?

Want to Perform or Display Art?

Contact Fr. Joe DiStefano  
frjdistefano@yahoo.com

**MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL**

**GOMOP-ALOOZA**

All Proceeds go to the GOMOP Youth & Young Adult Ministries

**St. Demetrios Community Center**  
3223 Atlantic St. NE  
Warren, OH

**Saturday August 17th**  
11am - 9pm

Free Admission & Parking

Fun for All the Family!

- 2 Music Stages
- Karaoke
- Art & Craft Exhibits
- Food & Beverages

Scan me!

It's Finally Here!



# Metropolis of Pittsburgh St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has earned the title of the Green Patriarch and was named one of Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World, for His teachings about humanity's spiritual responsibility for taking care of God's creation — planet earth. His All-Holiness stands on the shoulders of Saints, who taught that the world is a gift from God, and that taking care of His creation is a way to connect with God. Explore and discuss the teaching of His All Holiness and the Saints on the creation of the world. What are some of our practical responsibilities as stewards of our planet, and how does that enrich our lives as Christians?

Please consider donating to the Metropolis Scholarship Fund so that we may continue to offer scholarships to our talented youth. Please visit:

<https://onrealm.org/GreekOrthodoxMe/give/oratorical>

Donations can also be mailed directly to the Metropolis to the attention of Alyssa Kyritsis. Please write "Oratorical Scholarship" in the memo line of your check.



## Junior Division Poetry Winner: God's Painting by Theofania Vasilios Nacopoulos Koimisis Tis Theotokou, Erie

Our planet is a gift.  
Not like a present you get from your family at Christmas.  
This gift from God has a *purpose*.  
The Earth is a canvas, and God is the artist.  
Beautiful greens and blues, different hues of colors.  
Each adding detail and beauty to God's landscape of life.  
Humanity is *tarnishing* His painting, discarding it in a darkened room,  
Changing its previous purpose.  
As the world *strips* the color from God's painting, the Orthodox must *replace* it.  
As the world erases an evergreen, we must paint another.  
We must *reuse* and *recycle* the resources of Earth.  
We must restore God's painting.

Earth is our home.  
Let us keep our home clean so we can use and live in it.  
Why?  
Because it is God's *gift* to his children.  
Something to *enjoy*, *cherish*, and *use*,  
For the benefit of all people.  
God's people.  
The home *He* created is the home we live in.  
The roads we travel.  
The painting we *embellish*.  
Painting along with God.  
Into the *future*.  
In restoring the paint of the past,  
We paint a *new beginning*.

## CLERGY-LAITY ASSEMBLY

Philoptochos Assembly: September 21  
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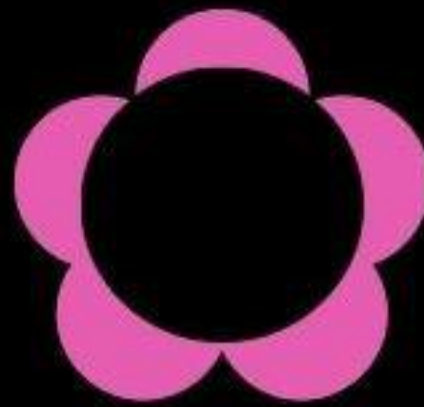
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# SAVE THE DATE

Retreat on September 7, 2024  
at St. Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Cathedral

Frederica Mathewes-Green is a prolific author and commentator, with work featured in diverse publications such as the Washington Post, Christianity Today, Smithsonian, First Things, and the Wall Street Journal. She has been a regular commentator for NPR, a columnist for various religious news services, and a podcaster for Ancient Faith Radio, in addition to publishing 11 books and over 800 essays. Frederica has spoken at prestigious universities like Yale and Harvard, and she lives in Johnson City, TN with her husband, Rev. Gregory Mathewes-Green, enjoying their three grown children and fifteen grandchildren.

**Retreat schedule  
and registration  
details to follow.**



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*Over their many years of existence, Philanthropy and Volunteerism have been pillars for both AHEPA and the Daughters of Penelope. From natural disaster relief, to raising funds to eliminate life threatening diseases, to making significant contributions to our local municipalities, they are there to help.*

*It is also their civic responsibility to provide affordable housing to senior citizens. The AHEPA Housing Corporation has been awarded over \$400 million from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The total number of senior housing complexes stands at 91, with 4,753 units complete, and more in development.*

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Our Director of Operations & Community Engagement works with local teams to develop and enhance the Church's service to the wider community.

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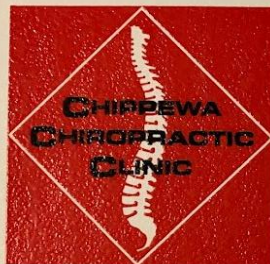
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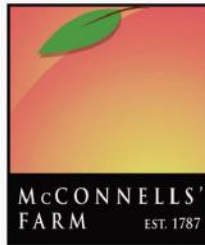
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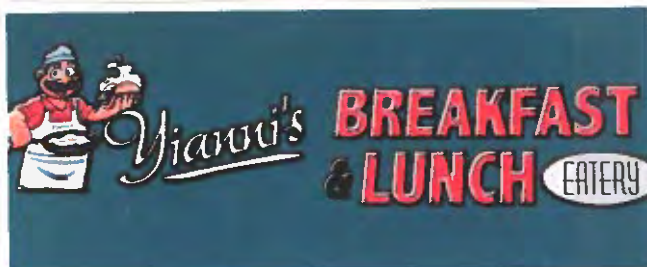
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**CHAPTER #324**



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