

Christian Light

December 2021 — Vol. 33



Fr. Philip's Christmas Message

The Nativity: the Love of Limitation

The major feast we celebrate in December is the Nativity of our Lord on December 25th. There is joy in the air that seems to begin as early as the end of October nowadays. And there is a good reason for this: God has become man and has initiated a new intimacy and unity with human beings. Many cities and towns are decorated with Christmas trees and cute manger scenes. There is a special charm in seeing the “bambino” Christ (the cute baby) in the manger. The irresistible charm of the season seems to be located in the crazy premise that the infinite, all-powerful God has become small and limited for us.

Why is this so appealing? All societies seem to understand that there is a value and beauty in being vulnerable that simply evaporates when there is no vulnerability and limitations. In the end, an all-powerful hero is an impossibility and a contradiction in terms. A game with no rules (no limitations) is a boring game. When taken to its logical conclusion, this insight really leads straight to the beauty of ultimate vulnerability, which is the Cross of Christ. For this reason, the feast of

Christmas goes way beyond the charming manger scenes and is ultimately a prophecy of the Cross and resurrection. In a mysterious sense, all cultures - both ancient and modern - in their instinctive acknowledgement of the irresistible beauty of the weak and limited who, despite their limitation and weakness, stand up for what is right - intuitively predict the Cross of Christ.

This was a clear premonition in ancient Greek literature. In the *Odyssey*, the Greek goddess Calypso fell in love with Odysseus and offered him immortality if he would only marry her. In the end, he preferred to return to his mortal wife Penelope and continue to live as a vulnerable human being rather than adopt the untroubled life of an immortal god. He preferred the human mortal life with all its vulnerability, tribulation and its certainty of death. What could possibly justify this decision?

If he had stayed with Calypso, the *Odyssey* would have come to an abrupt end. He would no longer have the opportunity to demonstrate the virtues and achievements that made this story worthwhile, those traits which are characteristically human. He would no longer have the opportunity to fall in love. This intuition is clear in Greek mythology because whenever the gods fall in love, it is only with mortal humans! Part of the irresistible beauty of human excellence is its vulnerability. Despite all our attempts

*Assumption of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church
97 Walcott Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860*

Reverend Dr. Philip Zymaris
Protopresbyter



E-mail: pzymaris@hchc.edu
(401) 725-3127 Phone (401) 725-9270 Fax
(857) 204-9021 Emergencies
Web Site: www.assumptionri.org

SUNDAY SERVICES

Orthros 8 A.M. and Divine Liturgy 9:30 A.M.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 8:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.
Elizabeth Lazouras
secretary@assumptionri.org

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to avoid this, THIS is what constitutes human excellence and beauty! The good news of the Gospel is that - beyond all sorts of ancient and modern mythologies that intuitively point to this in different ways - in actual fact the *true* God of the Trinity has *really* fallen in love with human beings in our limitation and vulnerability, and has adopted this reality for Himself in the Incarnation so He can be on a common playing field with us, his beloved. This is really what Christmas is all about.

The central values of love, courage, heroism, generosity and friendship entail sacrifice and an unlimited being who has everything and is in everything by definition cannot sacrifice anything! Very simply, the self-sacrificial concepts of love and heroism work only in a context subject to risks, needs, vulnerability and limitation. If Odysseus' preference of Penelope to Calypso impresses us, how much more should the incarnation of Christ, which is God's abandonment of the "comfort zone" of unlimitedness totally astound us? If the example of the heroism in an imperfect hero like Odysseus who preferred human limitation means anything, then intuitively this heroism and love taken to the ultimate degree leads to the taking on of ultimate limitation which is the suffering and death of the Cross. In order for God to be the ultimate hero and savior worthy of worship he cannot but be a God who also knows limitation and vulnerability to the ultimate degree. This is precisely the archetype of the Cross: the worst suffering and limitation for the best and most unlimited man. We can't go any further than this. This is why not only Christmas, but every moment of Christ's life, finds its ultimate meaning in the Cross and is colored by this reality. But the Cross, as the ultimate heroism and ultimate love, cannot but be the ultimate sign of life. The Cross IS at the **same time** the Resurrection, and this is why we say that Christ conquered death **BY** death!

This is very clear in the hymnology and iconography of the Nativity. Our Orthodox icons never depict one isolated historical moment, they never show just one slice of history, rather, they always tell the whole story in one picture. In the Christmas icon, then, we see that the shadow of the Cross and the joy of the resurrection are already evident. In this icon the halo of Christ always has a cross inscribed into it, he lies in a manger that looks more like a coffin, and he is wrapped up like a mummy. At the same time, the three magi coming from the East in this icon are seen already as a prediction of the three-day burial that led to the joy of the resurrection and the Second Coming which we believe will come from the East.

The appropriation of life and death in the world by God Himself, then, is the only loving affirmation of the value of the human situation. All of Christ's life, from the Nativity, to the Cross to the Resurrection, shows us who God is while at the same time affirming what it means to be truly human. He showed us the way to be a true human being not through being powerful but through weakness, just as Odysseus and others showed us that heroism and love can't exist in the untroubled life of a god who knows no limitation. The key conviction of the Nativity behind all the cute manger scenes is the fact that only through daily death witnessing to Christ can we Christians attain the full stature of a true human being: *"to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Eph. 4:13)

This Christmas and throughout our life may we follow the example of the unlimited God who took on limitations for us so we can become truly human as He did.



Merry Christmas!

Χριστουγεννιάτικο Μήνυμα π. Φιλίππου:

Τὰ Χριστούγεννα: ἡ Ἀγάπη τοῦ Περιορισμοῦ

Ἡ σημαντικότερη γιορτὴ τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου εἶναι ἡ Γέννηση τοῦ Χριστοῦ στὶς 25 Δεκεμβρίου. Ὑπάρχει χαρὰ στὴν ἀτμόσφαιρα πού φαίνεται νὰ ξεκινᾷ στὶς ἡμέρες μας ἀκόμη ἀπὸ τὸ τέλος Ὀκτωβρίου. Πολλὲς πόλεις καὶ χωριὰ εἶναι στολισμένα μὲ χριστουγεννιάτικα δέντρα καὶ χαριτωμένες φάτνες. Ὑπάρχει μία ἰδιαίτερη χάρη στὸ θέαμα τοῦ μικροῦ Χριστοῦ (τοῦ χαριτωμένου μωροῦ, δηλαδή) στὴ φάτνη. Καὶ αὐτὸ γιὰ ἕναν λόγο πού συχνά δὲν συνειδητοποιοῦμε: ὁ Θεὸς ἔχει γίνει ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἔτσι ξεκίνησε μία καινούργια ἐγγύτητα καὶ ἐνότητα μὲ τὸν ἄνθρωπο. Ἡ ἀκατανίκητη χάρη τῆς Χριστουγεννιάτικης ἐποχῆς φαίνεται νὰ ἐντοπίζεται στὴν τρελὰ ἀγαπητικὴ πρόταση ὅτι ὁ αἰώνιος, ἀπεριόριστος, παντοδύναμος Θεὸς ἔγινε γιὰ μᾶς μικρός, θνητός, ἀδύναμος καὶ πεπερασμένος.

Γιατὶ εἶναι τόσο ἐλκυστικὴ αὐτὴ ἡ φαινομενικὰ παράλογη πρόταση; Φαίνεται ὅτι ὅλες οἱ κοινωνίες εἶχαν μία αἴσθηση ὅτι ὑπάρχει μία ἀξία, χάρη καὶ ὁμορφιὰ στὴν τρωτότητα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἡ ὁποία ἐξαφανίζεται ὅταν δὲν ὑπάρχουν τέτοιοι περιορισμοὶ καὶ τέτοια τρωτότητα. Τελικά, ἕνας παντοδύναμος ἥρωας εἶναι μία ἀντίφαση ἢ μία βαρετὴ κατάσταση χωρὶς νόημα. Παρομοίως, ἕνα παιχνίδι χωρὶς κανονισμοὺς (περιορισμοὺς) δὲν προσφέρει καμία πρόκληση καὶ καταντᾷ βαρετό. Ἡ πραγματικότης αὐτὴ, σὲ τελικὴ ἀνάλυση, ὁδηγεῖ λογικὰ στὴν ὁμορφιὰ τῆς τέλει τρωτότητας, πού βρίσκεται στὸν Σταυρὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Γι' αὐτὸν τὸν λόγο, ἡ γιορτὴ τῶν Χριστουγέννων, ἡ ἀνάληψη δηλαδή τοῦ περιορισμοῦ ἐκ μέρους τοῦ Θεοῦ, πᾶει πολὺ πιὸ πέρα ἀπὸ τὶς χαριτωμένες φάτνες καὶ ἀποτελεῖ τύπο τοῦ Σταυροῦ καὶ τῆς Ἀναστάσεως. Μὲ ἕνα τρόπο περίεργο ὅλες οἱ κουλτούρες - ἀρχαῖες καὶ μοντέρνες - μὲ τὴν ἐνστινκτώδη ἀναγνώριση τῆς ἀκατανίκητης ὁμορφιᾶς τοῦ εὐάλωτου προσώπου πού, παρ' ὅλη τὴν ἀδυναμία καὶ τὸν περιορισμὸ του, ἐπιμένει στὸ σωστό, τὸ δίκαιο, καὶ τὸ ὁμορφο, παραπέμπουν στὸν Σταυρὸ χωρὶς νὰ τὸ ξέρουν.

Αὐτὴ ἡ ἰδέα εἶχε ἤδη διατυπωθεῖ μὲ σαφήνεια στὴν ἀρχαία Ἑλληνικὴ λογοτεχνία. Στὴν Ὀδύσσεια ἡ θεὰ Καλυψὼ ἐρωτεύθηκε τὸν Ὀδυσσεύα καὶ θὰ τοῦ προσέφερε τὴν ἀθανασία ὡς ἀντάλλαγμα ἂν θὰ τὴν παντρευόταν. Τελικά ὁ Ὀδυσσεύας προτίμησε νὰ ἐπιστρέψει στὴν θνητὴ γυναῖκα του, τὴν Πηνελόπη καὶ νὰ συνεχίσει τὴν ζωὴ του ὡς εὐάλωτος, θνητός ἄνθρωπος ἀντὶ νὰ υιοθετήσῃ τὴν ἀτάραχη ζωὴ ἐνὸς αἰωνίου θεοῦ. Προτίμησε δηλαδή τὴν ἀνθρώπινη, θνητὴ ζωὴ μὲ ὅλη τὴν τρωτότητα, τὴν ταλαιπωρία καὶ τὸν ἐγγυημένο θάνατο πού περιέχει. Τὶ θὰ μποροῦσε νὰ δικαιολογήσῃ μία τέτοια ἀπόφαση;

Ἄν ὁ Ὀδυσσεύας ἔμενε μὲ τὴν Καλυψὼ ἡ περιπέτεια τῆς Ὀδύσσειας θὰ τελίωνε ἀμέσως. Δὲν θὰ εἶχε πιά τὴν εὐκαιρία ὁ Ὀδυσσεύας νὰ δείξῃ τὶς ἀρετὲς καὶ τὰ εὐγενῆ κατορθώματα πού χαρακτηρίζουν τὸν ἄνθρωπο στὶς

πιό εξαιρετικές του στιγμές. Δεν θα είχε την δυνατότητα να έρωτευθεῖ. Αὐτὸς ὁ οἰωνὸς εἶναι σαφὴς στὴν Ἑλληνικὴ μυθολογία ἀφοῦ ὅποτε ἐρωτεύονται οἱ θεοὶ εἶναι μόνον μὲ τοὺς θνητοὺς ἀνθρώπους! Μέρος τῆς ἀκατανίκητης ὀμορφιάς τῆς ἀνθρώπινης ἀριστείας εἶναι ἡ τρωτότητά της. Παρ’ ὅλες τὶς ἀπόπειρες νὰ τὴν ἀποφύγουμε, **αὐτὴ** ἀκριβῶς εἶναι ἡ οὐσία τῆς ἀνθρώπινης ἀριστείας καὶ ὀμορφιάς! Τὰ καλὰ νέα τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου εἶναι ὅτι - πέρα ἀπὸ τὶς ποικίλες ἀρχαῖες καὶ μοντέρνες μυθολογίες ποὺ θέλουν νὰ διατυπώσουν αὐτὴν τὴν ιδέα μὲ διαφορετικοὺς τρόπους - στὴν πραγματικότητα ὁ ἀληθινὸς Θεὸς μᾶς ἔχει ἐρωτευθεῖ μὲ ὄλὸν τὸν περιορισμὸ καὶ τὴν τρωτότητα ποὺ μας χαρακτηρίζει, καὶ ὁ ἴδιος τὴν ἔκανε πράξη: ὁ Θεὸς ἔχει ἐνδυθεῖ αὐτὴν τὴν κατάσταση καὶ ἐμπειρία μὲ τὴν Ἐνσάρκωση του νὰ βρίσκεται στὸ ἴδιο ἐπίπεδο μὲ μᾶς, ποὺ εἴμαστε τὸ ἀντικείμενο τῆς ἀγάπης Του. Αὐτὸ εἶναι τὸ ἀληθινὸ θαῦμα τῶν Χριστουγέννων.

Οἱ κεντρικὲς ἥρωικὲς ἀξίες τῆς ἀγάπης, τῆς γενναιότητας, τῆς γενναιοδωρίας καὶ τῆς φιλίας προϋποθέτουν θυσία. Ἐνα ἀπεριόριστο ὄν ποὺ κατέχει τὰ πάντα καὶ ποὺ εἶναι μέσα στὰ πάντα ἐξ ὀρισμοῦ δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ θυσιάσει τίποτα διότι θὰ σταματήσει νὰ εἶναι αὐτὸ ποὺ εἶναι! Πολὺ ἀπλά, οἱ αὐτοθυσιαστικὲς ἔννοιες ὅπως ἡ ἀγάπη καὶ ὁ ἥρωισμὸς δουλεύουν μόνον σὲ πλαίσια ποὺ ὑπόκεινται σὲ ρίσκο, ἀνάγκη, τρωτότητα καὶ περιορισμὸ. Ἄν ἡ προτίμηση τοῦ Ὀδυσσεῆ γιὰ τὴν Πηνελόπη μᾶς κάνει θετικὴ ἐντύπωση καὶ τὸν καθιστᾷ ἥρωα, πόσον μᾶλλον θὰ ἔπρεπε ἡ Ἐνσάρκωση τοῦ Χριστοῦ - δηλαδὴ ἡ ἐγκατάλειψη ἐκ μέρους τοῦ Θεοῦ τῆς ἀνετης ἀταλαίπωρης ζωῆς - νὰ μᾶς ἐκπλήσσει; Ἄν τὸ παράδειγμα ἥρωισμοῦ σ’ ἕνα ἀτελὴ ἥρωα ὅπως ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς ποὺ προτίμησε τὴν ἀνθρώπινη ἀδυναμία σημαίνει κάτι, τότε ὁ ἥρωισμὸς αὐτός, ἂν τὸν ἀναγάνουμε λογικὰ στὸ ὑψιστο του βαθμὸ, αὐτὸ μᾶς ὀδηγεῖ στὴν τέλεια ἀνάληψη τοῦ πεπερασμένου ποῦ εἶναι ὁ πόνος καὶ ὁ θάνατος τοῦ Σταυροῦ ἐκ μέρους τοῦ αἰώνιου Θεοῦ. Γιὰ νὰ εἶναι ὁ Θεὸς ὁ τέλειος ἥρωας καὶ σωτὴρ ποὺ ἀξίζει τὴν λατρεία μας, δὲν μπορεῖ παρὰ νὰ εἶναι ὁ Θεὸς ποὺ γνωρίζει τὸν περιορισμὸ καὶ τὴν τρωτότητα στὸ μεγαλύτερο δυνατό βαθμὸ. Αὐτὸ ἀκριβῶς σημαίνει τὸ ἀρχέτυπο τοῦ Σταυροῦ: ὁ καλύτερος καὶ ἄπειρος ἄνθρωπος νὰ ὑποφέρει τὴν χειρότερη

ταλαιπωρία καὶ τὸν περιορισμὸ. Μεγαλύτερη κίνηση ἀγάπης ἀπὸ αὐτὸ δὲν ὑπάρχει. Γι’ αὐτὸν τὸν λόγο ὄχι μόνον τὰ Χριστούγεννα, ἀλλὰ ὅλη ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ βρίσκει τὸ τελικὸ νόημά της στὸν Σταυρό. Ὁ Σταυρὸς, ὅμως, ὡς δείγμα ὑψιστοῦ ἥρωισμοῦ καὶ ἀγάπης, δὲν μπορεῖ παρὰ νὰ εἶναι ἡ τελειότερη πηγὴ τῆς ζωῆς. Ἐπομένως, ὁ Σταυρὸς εἶναι ταυτόχρονα ἡ Ἀνάσταση, καὶ γι’ αὐτὸ ψάλλουμε τὸ “**θανάτω** θάνατον πατήσας”!

Ἡ ἀποκάλυψη αὐτὴ εἶναι σαφέστατη στὴν ὑμνογραφία καὶ στὴν ἀγιογραφία τῶν Χριστουγέννων. Οἱ Ὁρθόδοξες εἰκόνες ποτὲ δὲν παριστάνουν μόνον μία τομὴ τῆς ἱστορίας, μᾶλλον μᾶς διηγοῦν ὅλην τὴν ἱστορία σὲ μία εἰκόνα. Στὴν εἰκόνα τῶν Χριστουγέννων λοιπὸν, βλέπουμε τὴν σκιά τοῦ Σταυροῦ καὶ τὴ χαρὰ τῆς Ἀναστάσεως ἤδη ἀπὸ τὴν γέννηση. Μέσα στὸ φωτοστέφανο τοῦ Χριστοῦ πάντοτε ὑπάρχει ἕνας σταυρὸς, ξαπλώνει σὲ φάτνη ποῦ θυμίζει τάφο καὶ εἶναι σπαραγμένος σὰν μούμια. Ταυτόχρονα οἱ τρεῖς Μάγοι ἐξ ἀνατολῶν παραπέμπουν στὴν τριήμερη ταφὴ καὶ ἀνάσταση καὶ στὴν δευτέρα παρουσία ποὺ θὰ ἐρθεῖ ἀπὸ τὴν ἀνατολή.

Ἡ ἀνάληψη τῆς γήινης, ἀνθρώπινης ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου στὸν κόσμον ἐκ μέρους τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι ἡ μόνη ἀγαπητικὴ ἐπιβεβαίωση τῆς ἀξίας τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. Ὁλη ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀπὸ τὴν γέννα μέχρι καὶ τὸν Σταυρὸ καὶ τὴν Ἀνάσταση ταυτόχρονα μᾶς δείχνει ποιὸς εἶναι ὁ Θεὸς καὶ ἐπιβεβαιώνει τὴν ἔννοια τοῦ γνήσιου ἀνθρώπου. Μᾶς ἔδειξε ὁ Χριστὸς πὼς νὰ γίνουμε ἀληθινοὶ ἄνθρωποι ὄχι διὰ τῆς παντοδυναμίας του ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἀδυναμίας, ὅπως ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς καὶ ἄλλοι ἥρωες μᾶς ἔδειξαν ὅτι ὁ ἥρωισμὸς καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη δὲν μποροῦν νὰ ὑπάρχουν στὴν ἀτάραχη ζωὴ ἐνὸς Θεοῦ ποὺ δὲν ξέρει τὸν περιορισμὸ καὶ τὴν ταλαιπωρία. Ὅποτε ἡ καίρια σημασία τῶν Χριστουγέννων πίσω ἀπὸ ὅλες τὶς χαριτωμένες φάτνες εἶναι τὸ γεγονὸς ὅτι μόνον σὲ μία ζωὴ καθημερινοῦ θανάτου καὶ μαρτυρίας γιὰ τὸν Χριστὸ μποροῦμε ἐμεῖς οἱ Χριστιανοὶ νὰ φθάσουμε στὸ ὑψος ἐνὸς γνήσιου ἀνθρώπου: “*εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ*” (Εφ. 4:13).

Μακάρι τὰ Χριστούγεννα φέτος καὶ σὲ ὅλη τὴ ζωὴ μας νὰ ἀκολουθήσουμε τὸ παράδειγμα τοῦ ἀπείρου Θεοῦ ἔγινε πεπερασμένος γιὰ μᾶς γιὰ νὰ γίνουμε ἄνθρωποι ὅπως ἔγινε αὐτός.

Καλὰ Χριστούγεννα!



December 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	2 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	3	4 1pm Philoptochos Christmas Party
5 10th SUNDAY of Luke 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Sunday School Choir Practice 10am to 1pm PC Elections GOYA Meeting and Christmas Card Deadline	6 ST. NICHOLAS 8am Orthros 9am Divine Liturgy 7 to 8:30pm Adult Class Seminar	7 6pm Parish Council	8 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	9 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	10	11 6pm GOYA Folding of Christmas Cards, GOYA Yankee Swap, and Christmas Party for GOYAns
12 11th SUNDAY of Luke 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Sunday School General Assembly PTO Fundraisers Raffle Tickets and Cards & Ornaments	13 7 to 8:30pm Adult Class Seminar	14	15 Bread Baking 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	16 Bread Baking 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	17 Bread 6:30pm PTO Pajama Movie Night with Pick-Up anytime before 10pm	18 10am to 1pm Bread Pick-Ups
19 SUNDAY before Nativity 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy Bread Pick-Ups Greek/Sunday School Christmas Program and PTO Reception GOYA Meeting PTO 50/50 Raffle and Cards & Ornaments	20	21	22 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	23 4:30 to 6pm Greek School	24 DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS 8am Pre-Christmas Orthros and Royal Hours CHRISTMAS EVE Christmas Vesperal Liturgy 7pm	25 HOLY NATIVITY of Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ 8am Orthros 9:15 Divine Liturgy CHRISTMAS DAY
26 SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY 8am Orthros 9:30 Divine Liturgy	27 ST. STEPHEN THE PROTOMARTYR 8am Orthros 9am Divine Liturgy	28	29	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE	January 1 NEW YEAR'S DAY



Philoptochos Christmas Bread



ORDER PICK-UPS
Saturday, December 18th (10am to 1pm)
Sunday, December 19th (After Church)

Elaine Sioras
401-617-7950
401-724-1031
elainesioras@gmail.com



**Merry Christmas
 from Philoptochos!**

Wishing Everyone the Joy & Blessings of the Season!

Our Pastry & Frozen Trays fundraiser was a success in November. Thank you to our volunteers and our community who support us.

Christmas Bread is being baked and distributed in December. We are keeping the kitchen busy!

Our Christmas luncheon will take place on Saturday December 4th at Tumblesalts Café & Restaurant in North Providence. Members and guests are welcome.

We hope to plan a chicken dinner in the near future. We are working hard to increase our treasury to meet our obligations to our parish and community.

We welcome anyone who might be interested to attend a monthly meeting. Our meetings have been fewer due to Covid restrictions. In the next few months, hopefully we will be back to a regular schedule.

Philoptochos will continue to make koliva for memorial services when requested. The price of all ingredients has increased, and some are more difficult to find. Beginning on January 1, 2022, the price will increase to \$150 per tray.

We wish everyone a Happy and Healthy Christmas as we head into the New Year!!!




2021 Christmas Program
Grzech School and Sunday School

The Students and Teachers
Cordially Invite You to Attend Their
Christmas Performance

Sunday, December 19, 2021
In the Community Center following Divine Liturgy

Reception to Follow Hosted by
Assumption Parent Teacher Organization



CHRISTMAS CARDS & ORNAMENT SALE!

Please support our kids' efforts to raise money for our PTO! Their beautiful creations will be for sale in December, during coffee hour!

We hope to see you there!



ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY PTO

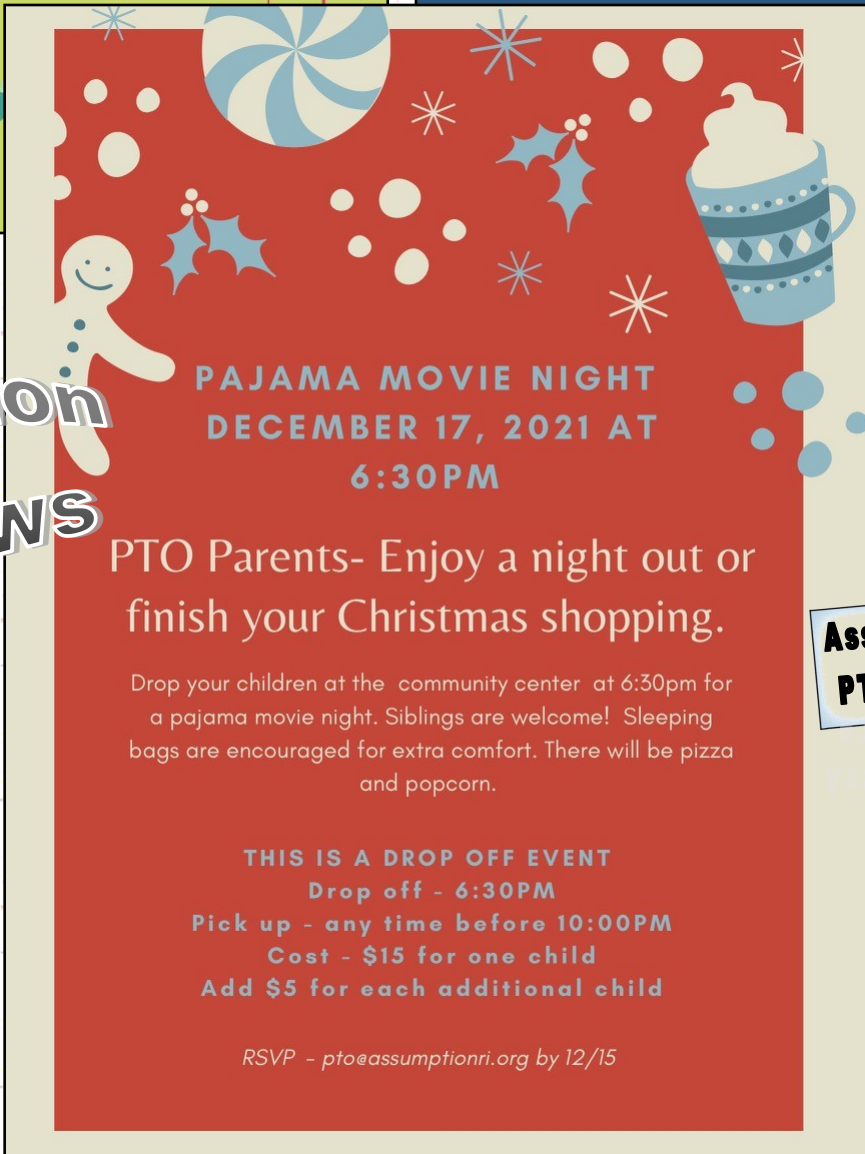
50/50 RAFFLE

\$5 per ticket OR
3 tickets for \$10

DRAWING ON 12/19

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE PTO SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Assumption PTO News



PAJAMA MOVIE NIGHT DECEMBER 17, 2021 AT 6:30PM

PTO Parents- Enjoy a night out or finish your Christmas shopping.

Drop your children at the community center at 6:30pm for a pajama movie night. Siblings are welcome! Sleeping bags are encouraged for extra comfort. There will be pizza and popcorn.

THIS IS A DROP OFF EVENT
Drop off - 6:30PM
Pick up - any time before 10:00PM
Cost - \$15 for one child
Add \$5 for each additional child

RSVP - ptoassumptionri.org by 12/15



SOPHOCLES' MASTERPIECE
"OEDIPUS THE KING"
Adult Class Seminar



Last Two Classes
Monday December 6th
Monday December 13th
7pm to 8:30pm

As part of our introduction to Greek civilization, this Fall we will continue our study in Greek tragedy with the reading of Sophocles' classic masterpiece, "Oedipus the King"

For More Information
John Lyssikatos 401-728-4452

*Much Appreciation for Your
Thanksgiving Offerings*

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Merry Christmas
Καλά Χριστούγεννα
and Happy New Year
to our Assumption Community
from Fr. Philip Zymaris
And the Parish Council

Let Us Help Our Endowment Fund Grow

As church membership dwindles in many places while ever-growing maintenance fees rise, many parishes are establishing endowment funds to meet their needs and secure their financial survival. Here at Assumption in Pawtucket, thanks to the foresight and vision of past parishioners and parish councils, we are blessed because we already established such an endowment fund many years ago.

We are also blessed here at Assumption in that, having established our Endowment Fund, many parishioners generously contributed to it in the past and to this day. Indeed, some parishioners were even kind enough to endow sizable funds through their wills to our community in order to guarantee the continuity of our beloved parish. We are where we are today thanks to such people and we should never let their generosity be forgotten.

Our Endowment Fund's value is \$864,470.69 as of November 29, 2021. As our community's By-Laws stipulate, half of our Endowment Fund's annual return goes towards the budget expenses of our community and the other half is re-invested.

In realizing the needs of our community and sharing the great vision of these benefactors, it behooves us to imitate them and to make whatever contribution we can – small or great – to continue their tradition and to help the fund grow. In this way we will secure the future of our beloved Assumption Church. For this purpose, each month we will include this new column dedicated to the Endowment Fund in our monthly newsletter. We will be posting the current value of the fund to keep you abreast regarding its growth and we will list the names of past parishioners as well as new donors who contribute to the fund in memory of loved ones. For the sake of confidentiality, names will be included but not the monetary amounts.

Let us all honor our benefactors by imitating them, sharing in their dreams for the future and by fostering with them the continuation of our church into perpetuity.

Recent Donations to the Endowment Fund

**Mr. John Lyssikatos in Loving Memory of
Nick Georgitsis, Maria Lyssikatos and Thomas Soukas
on the 15-Year Anniversary of their passing**

Mr. John Lyssikatos

Mr. John Kontekakis

**Mr. George Vastis in Loving Memory of
his parents Andrew & Vasiliki Vastis**

**Mrs. Panagiota Vastis in Loving Memory of
her parents Vasilios & Vasiliki Vergakis**

***Consider including the Endowment Fund in your will and be a
supporting pillar to secure the Assumption's survival in perpetuity.***

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Cemetery Fund

Assumption Church is in the process of having work performed by landscapers on our grounds at Walnut Hill Cemetery on Armistice Boulevard in Pawtucket. It would be greatly appreciated if you would consider making a donation to help with the upkeep and beautification of the grounds where so many of our deceased loved ones are buried. If you have not already done so, please contribute to the Cemetery Fund so that completion of the work can take place. Thank you to those parishioners who have already made donations as well as to the following parishioner who made a recent donation:

Ms. Lygere Panagopoulos



Visit the homepage of our
Assumption Church website:

<https://www.assumptionri.org/>

Click "**VIRTUAL CANDLE**" to light a glass candle
Click "**VIRTUAL TRAY**" to make an offering

Thank you for your continued support!!!





Thank You!



All the AHEPA Brothers would like to extend a **BIG Thank You** to those who helped us and supported the Fall Foliage Festival! Good time to get together and to support our community and our AHEPA Chapter at the same time! We extend our thanks to the Parish Council for its support and cooperation. Let our joint effort be an example to our community as well as others on how we can work together, to bring people together, knowing in our hearts that we are only stewards of our Church, parish, and buildings. And as stewards of what God has provided to us, we will all need to work together for the common good putting aside anything else which at the end of the day is only noise!

AHEPA Pawtucket Chapter Continues CASA 2021 Drive!

Thank you to all who supported our **CASA (Coats and Sustainability from Assumption!)** effort! Many donations were dropped off of your used clothing for men, women, and children! Many dry food items dry such as pasta, rice, beans were also dropped off. Your donations are helping people in need this winter. All donated items have been delivered to homeless shelters!

AHEPA Honors His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (Order of AHEPA) hosted its 45th Biennial Congressional banquet in honor of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, and to mark the commencement of his historic third Apostolic Visit to the United States at the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., Oct. 24, 2021. His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon represented His All-Holiness who felt unwell Sunday morning and was hospitalized overnight for observation. His All-Holiness was released from the hospital Monday morning.

“AHEPA promotes all the values and principles that are the rich legacy of Hellenism – Ancient, Byzantine, and Modern,” His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel said during his toast. **“And the Holy Archdiocese, as the daughter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, embodies these values and principles as they have been baptized into Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. For the Omogeneia, the Archdiocese and AHEPA are two hands of one body, and we are grateful for their cooperative spirit.”**

In his remarks in honor of His All-Holiness, Supreme President Jimmy Kokotas spoke about the effectiveness and meaning of the Ecumenical Patriarch’s message of unity, love, and compassion, and he pledged AHEPA can do more to amplify the Ecumenical Patriarch’s message. Tonight, we celebrate the 30-year anniversary of His All-Holiness’ election to Ecumenical Patriarch,” he said. “Thirty years of service preaching love, unity and

compassion to the world.” Kokotas added, “We also must make sure His All-Holiness’ ministry, his message and his spiritual home — the Ecumenical Patriarchate — are safeguarded from the plight they face daily. They must be sustained . . . it must flourish.” His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America received AHEPA’s presentation of \$100,000 to become a Founding Member of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation: For the Sacred See of Saint Andrew. Supreme President Jimmy Kokotas and Chairman of the Board Nicholas A. Karacostas, PSP, made the presentation, along with a gift to His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel.



Have a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!

We Must Preserve the Legacy We Inherited!

We need you to join our AHEPA A121 (Pawtucket) Chapter!

We ask all of you to join and support your AHEPA Pawtucket chapter. You can get as much involved as you have time or desire. Please keep in mind that just by becoming a member and through your yearly membership fee you help us to . . .

***Απ’ τα κόκκαλα βγαλμένη
Των Ελλήνων τα ιερά ...
Ελευθερία, 1821 - 2021
A121, Pawtucket Chapter***



- ***Support AHEPA activities and publications!***
- ***Give strength to our Pawtucket chapter!***
- ***Provide academic and athletic scholarships!***
- ***Make our voice heard for things that matter!***
- ***Make a difference in every community!***

This is an invitation to everyone – we need all of you! Your opinion will always count! For membership information, applications please see Yianni Apostolakis, Tom Andrikopoulos or Nick Bitsakis. For more information, please visit www.ahepa.org.



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IOCC Sunday, November 21st!



November is designated as IOCC month, especially the last Sunday before Thanksgiving November 21st. We encourage you to support and embrace the work of IOCC which benefits so many people around the world. Many people around the world are in need. Please keep them in your hearts, thoughts, prayers and hopefully support them in any way that you may be able to make a difference in this world in the name of Orthodox Christianity.

We encourage you to put IOCC on your Christmas gift list and please remember that even the smallest donation can make a big difference. If you would like to donate, please donate online at iocc.org, or mail a check payable to IOCC to: Ioannis Apostolakis, 770 Ware Street, Mansfield, MA 02048

Hope after Greece's Wildfires - Families, Small Businesses Receive Aid for Recovering, Rebuilding

Since 2012, IOCC has worked with Apostoli, the humanitarian arm of the Archdiocese of Athens, on the Give for Greece program to provide business and livelihoods support, reliable food access for families in need, medical supplies, and education programs for Greeks and refugees. In addition, IOCC has also offered relief following emergencies. This summer, wildfires raged across Evia, Attica, and the Peloponnese, destroying homes, businesses, and livelihoods as about 300,000 acres burned. Evia, Greece's second-largest island, was especially hard hit, with one-third of its forests burned, including valuable pine trees — the basis of traditional beekeeping, honey, and resin-collecting industries.

When a seaside community of east Attica was destroyed by fire in 2018, IOCC response focused on meeting the immediate basic needs of those who had lost their only homes. After the devastating 2007 fires, IOCC helped farmers in the Peloponnese start over by providing livestock feed and other supplies.

In response to the latest fires, IOCC began with an on-the-ground needs assessment which the team is using to custom design response in affected areas. Programming began in the municipality of Ileia, in the western Peloponnese, an area that also saw widespread fires in 2007. IOCC collaborated with local Church

authorities, the Primary School Teachers Association of Pyrgos-Ancient Olympia Municipalities, and partner Apostoli to distribute school-supply vouchers and school kits to full-time local residents affected by this year's disaster. The items ensured that families in some of the hardest hit areas could buy what their children needed to start the school year.



Leveraging its experience of both emergency response and long-term development aid in Greece, especially helping small-holder farmers and microbusinesses, IOCC is committed to long-term assistance for survivors of this summer's fires. As families and communities rebuild their homes and livelihoods, watch for more news of how your generous support is reaching those in need.

Metropolitan Germanos of Ilea blessed students and school before local families in this fire-affected community received school-supply vouchers and school kits.

Here is How YOU Can Help More!

- **Become a monthly donor to IOCC**
- **Send a donation to IOCC for a cause that touches your heart!**
- **Give a donation to Ioannis Apostolakis, payable to IOCC, for any occasion you would like to make a difference!**

Help Us Provide For Those in Need!

And remember, 92 cents of every dollar you give goes to our humanitarian work. The other 8 cents is for administration and fundraising costs. Charity Navigator gives IOCC a 4-star rating (highest possible) for financial health, accountability and transparency. Plus, every dollar you give helps us secure \$7 more in support from governments, foundations, and other sources.

IOCC is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States. Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has delivered \$650 million in relief and development programs to families and communities in more than 50 countries. IOCC is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy. To learn more about IOCC, please visit our website at iocc.org.

Yiannis Apostolakis

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You can help to beautify our church grounds. Donations towards our church grounds are always very much appreciated so that our property can remain beautiful year round. Appreciation and many thanks to **Roula Vellopoulou, Nick Vellopoulos, Anastasia Vellopoulou, Ioanna Wright, and Charoula Xoulei Campos** who are our church gardeners spending endless hours cutting the grass, watering, and trimming the beautiful flowers and shrubs surrounding our premises.



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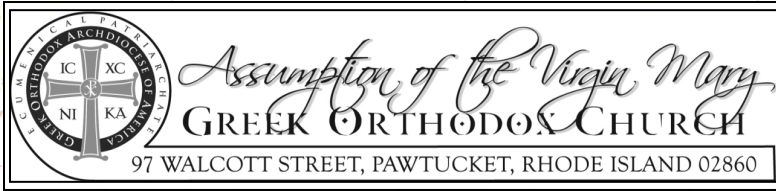
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