

# The Light To Φως



Greek Orthodox Parish  
of Loudoun County

Volume 9, Issue 3  
May — June 2015

*The bi-monthly newsletter of the Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County*

## A Message from Father George Alexson



### WHY PENTACOST MATTERS

Fifty days following the Resurrection of our Lord, we celebrate the glorious feast of Pentecost. What happened on that day in the Upper Room in Jerusalem was pivotal in the life of the Apostles and for the Church they were about to establish. The details are recorded by St. Luke in Acts 2: 1-47. This powerful event, however, is not confined to that singular moment in history when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles, as promised by Christ. The out-pouring and gift of the Holy Spirit is repeated at every Divine Liturgy, Chrismation, ordination, whenever two or three are gathered in His Name, or, whenever we gather to worship Him as His church, or in our individual prayer life. Truly, the Spirit “blows where it will” (John 3:8), renewing creation and enlivening souls in their quest for perfection and the Kingdom of Heaven.

It might seem strange, *prima facie*, but the Church, in Her liturgical celebration of Pentecost, draws a line between this feast and the Tower of Babel. In the doxastikon from Vespers we read: “Once tongues were confused through the presumption of building the tower; but now tongues have been made wise through the glory of the knowledge of God. There God condemned the impious for their offense; here Christ has enlightened the fishermen with the Spirit. Then discord was wrought for punishment; now concord is renewed for the salvation of our souls.”

Why this connection between the “Tower of Babel” and Pentecost? Here, we need to connect some lines in biblical narrative. What did Satan promise Adam and Eve in the Garden if they disobeyed God? He told them, “your eyes will be opened, and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3:5). It is one thing, however, to know good and evil and quite another to know what to do about it; a task for which Adam and Eve were spiritually immature, otherwise they would not have fallen for Satan’s ruse. They exchanged life for death, paradise for the grave. They separated themselves from the Source of life, having embraced the father of lies, and ended up in a platonic cave where shadows pose for reality—such was the sting of death self-imposed by the evil spirit of pride.

In the Tower of Babel we encounter another tragic attempt to outdo God. Why did God confuse the tongues at Babel? Because its inhabitants thought they could actually build a tower that would reach heaven itself and, by so doing, “would make a name for ourselves” (Gen. 11: 1-9). Another way of saying, to be like God. But for what purpose? Power, wealth, knowledge, world domination; foolish presumptions all too common in human nature that continue to reap so much sorrow, destruction and confusion on our world.

In both cases, the Garden and the Tower, pride leads to disobedience, which leads to alienation from God and one another (consider Cain and Abel), which leads to two kinds of death: spiritual and physical. Conditions for which there is no remedy except in the Risen Christ.

Pentecost matters, because it verifies Scripture: we are called to be “gods,” as St. Peter reminds us in his second epistle (1:4). Or, as God demands of the Hebrews, “You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy” (Lev. 19:2); a command repeated by our Lord, “Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (Mt. 5:48). Holiness and perfection are gifts from God, given that we may correspond to being in His image and likeness. They cannot be stolen or grasped by an exercise of perverted self-will. To be God-like is our true destiny, but one for which we must work hard, in cooperation—synergy—with the grace of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is given to the Church to guide Her and Her people in all truth regarding Christ. His truth alone makes it possible for us to do what Adam and Eve could not: discern good from evil and make the right choices in life. To ignore this gift, its message, is to repeat the evils of Eden and Babel: to exchange obedience for disobedience, Christ-like humility for demonic pride. What then shall it be for us this Pentecost? Will we walk in Truth, which brings concord and joins us in love to Christ and one another. Or, will we continue to invent more lies and opt for death for which there is neither healing or repeal. Pray, let us choose life, harmony and Truth and in all things give glory to God.

Fr. George

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### Highlights:

- Greek School and Sunday School Graduations — Sun. June 7
- Parish Spring General Assembly — Sun. June 14
- Vacation Church Camp — June 22-26 (registration ends June 7)
- Parish Picnic — Sat. June 27 at the Ashburn Farm Pavilion



# Message from the Parish Council President – Marina Blair



*“God rests within gentle hearts. The gentle and merciful shall sit fearless in His regions, and will inherit Heavenly glory” - St. John Climacus*

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Many gentle hearts came to our Church and offered their time, talent, presence and love during our Lent, Easter preparations, Holy Week and Easter celebration! Our church was filled with our Lord’s presence. It was adorned with spectacular flowers, the nostalgic smell of Easter beeswax candles, our faithful parishioners and plenty of visitors. A heartfelt “thank you” to Father George who, along with Father Michael, celebrated with us through a full schedule of services during Lent and Holy Week. Deacon Harry, sub deacon Michael, and all of our altar boys were present and supported the Fathers with great devotion. The Parish Council members steadfastly ushered throughout the Lenten and Holy week services.

During the Salutation services the special prayers to the Virgin Mary and our Lord were read or chanted beautifully by Alexis Cleveland, and Mathew Cleveland, Liz and John Emch, Galina Repin and Luke Kendrat, Alexandra Dacey and Yanni Kouiroukidis. All of our Ministries offered beautiful flowers for the decoration of the blessed Icon of our Theotokos.

On March 28th, a “little army” of the faithful came together to clean and beautify our church. We have never had so many devoted parishioners answering our call! Thank you for all your hard and humble work.

Mariana Korulaki, our Epitaphios Committee Chair, Presvytera Joanna and their team went above and beyond the call of duty. Never before have we

had over 30 parishioners participate in lovingly decorating our glorious Epitaphios. George Mokhiber, Angelo Tjoumas, John Canakarlis and Robert Blair solemnly carried the Body of our Lord around our church on Holy Friday evening, supported by Peter Thomas, Bill Caras, Bill Bakopanos, and members of the Parish Council.

Elpida Skuce and her team, along with Angie Gillas prepared and dyed over 200 red eggs for our Parish. Elina Dimitropoulos was in charge of our beautiful Myrofores, who placed the rose petals on our Lord’s tomb. The heavenly chanting of our Choir under the direction of Elpida Skuce lifted up our hearts! Over 400 Palm Crosses were made by GOYA and our faithful for Palm Sunday!

We are filled with gratitude for everyone who brought Prosfora, and for those who continue to bake throughout the year, supporting our parish’s annual requirement for 220 Prosfora.

Philoptochos had a warm gathering during Lent at the home of the Philoptochos Vice President, Lisa Orphanides, in order to demonstrate how to make Prosforo. The Ministry’s annual Easter tsourekia bake sale was enjoyed by many.

Lia Economou, our office manager diligently prepared the material and programs that we used to follow the services.

On Easter Day, with God’s grace, the Walter and Blair families welcomed many of our parishioners to our homes for traditional “lamb on the spit” and plenty of other delicious treats prepared by all! We thank our church family for coming and sharing this blessed day of Orthodoxy with us!

*Continued on page 3...*

## FOR SALE: Belmont Country Club, Ashburn



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## President's Message Continued

Congratulations to our Sunday school students, Anamaria Kendrat, Luke Kendrat, and Marlene Ortiz, who participated in the Oratorical Festival and advanced to the Metropolis level. God bless you, you made us all very proud!

Another team that made us very proud is our GOYA Boys' Basketball team, Raymond Abousamra, Michael Pollatos, Yanni and Alexandros Kouiroukidis, Angelo Dacey and coach Dimitri Stratakos. They delighted us with their participation in and victory at the St. Katherines' Basketball tournament! Go team!

The Stewardship Committee organized a very fun night for all of us at Nick's Taverna on April 25th where we all enjoyed delicious food and lots of fellowship!

On April 26th, our Presvytera Joanna was the blessed recipient of a sanctified icon of the Panagia Portaitissa, which was given by our Philoptochos as an incentive during their membership drive. The "Love Your Neighbor, Feed Your Neighbor" drive was a success.

I am pleased to report that our Future Planning Committee (FPC) continues to intensely explore opportunities to find land for our future home in Loudoun County. On May 7th, I accompanied the FPC to a meeting with the owner of several properties that are for sale in Loudoun County. We truly appreciate all of our parishioners who have been providing land suggestions, and encourage everyone to continue reporting any land opportunities they may discover to our Future Planning Committee.

Thanks to our GOYANs who supported our Building Fund with their very successful bake sale!

On April 29th our church was well represented at the 41st Biennial National AHEPA Banquet.

Our outreach and fellowship opportunities continued with our Fundraising Committee organizing a Chick-fil-A fundraiser on May 5th.

Our PAREA's blessed May luncheon at Amphora was filled with fellowship as our church family got together again to celebrate birthdays and name days. PAREA also announced its second bake sale on June 7th.

It was a true joy for me to attend our HOPE and JOY end of the year gathering! The participants were given new T-shirts, which were received by all with great enthusiasm!

On May 10th, Father George, Nick Kass, Andrew Kaffes and yours truly, drove to New Jersey in order to represent our Parish at the three day annual Clergy-Laity Assembly. It was a successful event as we had the opportunity to recount and present a lot of what we do here at our Parish. Several of our ideas were presented and discussed in workshops and other presentations.

And, last but certainly not least, I would like to welcome Greg Joiner to the Parish Council, as he was elected to fill the vacancy created during the last elections. Welcome on board Greg! Also, a welcome to Sofia Kouiroukidis, who graciously accepted the offer to oversee the Orthodox Book Club (OBC). The OBC is open to all our parishioners and it provides an excellent opportunity to study and discuss our Orthodoxy through the reading of wonderful spiritual books chosen by Father George and the club members.

As I have recounted, throughout the weeks, I have had the humble honor to attend almost all of our church's events through our dedicated Ministries and devoted Committees, as well as other events where our Parish

needed representation. These have been great opportunities to see the hard work of all the people involved, acknowledge the countless volunteer hours, and recognize the successes and fervent love for our place of worship.

We are a small parish and we do not gather yet in a Byzantine Cathedral to pray to our merciful Lord. Marble steps do not lead to our doors, but we are a church in every sense of the word. We have Father George, who is fulfilling our spiritual needs, over 17 vivacious, inspirational and powerful Ministries and Committees that are constantly busy with charity work, organizing fundraisers, gathering for fellowship, and above all promoting Orthodoxy throughout their events. We have a Parish Council that is vibrant and dedicated, a Future Planning Committee which is constantly on the lookout for land availability and ready to vet properties. And we have our church family, you, our faithful parishioners who loyally attend our parish services and events. For our friends who come and visit once in a while, please come and join us! Become our stewards! Our church's doors are made of glass and they do not look like the ones of a traditional church, however, when you open them and enter you will be welcomed and you will find not only the deep spiritual fulfillment of our Orthodoxy but also your new Orthodox Christian church family.

I wish you all a blessed, safe and healthy summer. Please keep your Parish Council in your prayers and kindly remember that I am always available to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the other Parish Council members with your questions or comments.

If you plan to travel, please remember that your church will be here, waiting patiently for your return, like our own Holy Mother, our Theotokos is waiting to embrace us again with open arms as her beloved children. May God protect you.

In His Everlasting Mercy,

**Marina A. Blair**  
Parish Council President  
[blairmarina@gmail.com](mailto:blairmarina@gmail.com)  
(703-349-1842)

**Please mark your calendars  
for our  
Spring General Assembly  
on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015!**

## Congratulations and God Bless to our Graduates!

- ◆ Anastasia Baldinger, daughter of Ron and Mina Baldinger, on her graduation from Hayfield High School. Anastasia plans to attend James Madison University.
- ◆ Alexia J. Blair, daughter of Robert and Marina Blair, on her graduation from William and Mary with a Bachelor's Degree in History and a Minor in Eastern Asian Studies. Alexia has been accepted for a Master's Program in Art History at George Mason University.
- ◆ Lindsey Cherpes, daughter of Greg Cherpes, on her graduation from UVA. Lindsey will pursue a career in Editing and Journalism.
- ◆ Alexandra Dacey, daughter of Panayiotis and Athanasia Dacey, on her graduation from Battlefield High School. Alexandra will pursue an education in the health field/health management.
- ◆ Maria Dacey, daughter of Panayiotis and Athanasia Dacey, graduated from George Mason University with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. Plans to pursue a Master's Degree in Counseling and Development.
- ◆ Michael "Mick" Glakas, son of Jim and Cynthia Glakas, on his graduation from Chantilly High School. Michael plans to attend Virginia Tech.
- ◆ Christina Kangelaris, daughter of Alex and Debbie Kangelaris, on her graduation from George Mason University with a Master of Science in Management.



At Left: Many friends from our church family honored the Blair and the Walter families by sharing Easter Sunday with us at our homes. We give thanks for everyone who came, and for all the delicious food and fellowship! God willing, we pray that our Lord will grant us many more such blessed gatherings in the future! Above: Pictures from Great and Holy Pascha.



### Easter Flowers

We would like to thank our Parishioners for their dedication and support in helping us decorate our beautiful Epitaphio. We would also like to thank everyone for their generous donations which helped us make this Easter a memorable one. A special thank you to all of the Ministries/Committees of our Church for their donations and all of their help.

The Epitaphio Committee would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who dedicated their time and effort to help clean and beautify our Church; God Bless all of you!

Parishioners who participated in decorating our Epitaphios in random order:

Presvytera Joanna Alexson, Lisa Puertas, Mariana Korulaki, Elpida Skuce, Faye Anson, Angelos Dacey, Olivia Morris, Mea Danigelis, Larissa Sivy, Nellie Louh, Zoe Skuce, Dwaine Thomas, Sofia Kouiroukides, Lillian Funk, Christina Dimitropoulos, Cleo Dimitropoulos, Ergini Batistatos Martnishn, Lisa Orphanides, Sofia Ortiz, Marina Blair, Dimitri Stratakos, Sofia Kesari, Elina Dimitropoulos, Eleni Malliaros, Irene Thomas, Loula Lagadinou, Athanasia Dacey, Iliana Dendrinou, Katerina Sparkman, Elaine Nejadian, Lia Economou & Yasamine Nejadian.



### Easter Flowers Committee



*Parish Council Vice President Andrew Kaffes, Father George Alexson, Parish Council President Marina Blair and Parish Council Member Nick Kass, at the Clergy Laity in New Jersey, May 10- May 12, 2015*



*Parish Council President Marina Blair with Anne Michals, President of the Philtochos of New Jersey at the Clergy Laity, May 10-May 12.*





# Stewardship

Christos Anesti! Christ is risen! I hope you all had a wonderful and blessed Easter.

Our church continues to grow in amazing ways. We currently have 90 pledged Stewardship families, which is close to our goal of over 100, and almost \$130,000 pledged. However our budget is \$230,000, so please complete a pledge card today if you haven't already and commit financially to our church. Your Stewardship allows us to not only keep our church open but also offer over 17 Ministries. You can also now pay your Stewardship via PayPal on our website at [www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org](http://www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org). Thank you for your financial support!

We had a wonderful time at Nick's Taverna on April 25 for GOPLC Adult Night. Over 40 people came and enjoyed an evening of fellowship. A special thank you to Stewardship Committee member Kristina Ayoub for helping plan this event. If you have ideas for a future adult event, contact me at [liaecon@comcast.net](mailto:liaecon@comcast.net) and the Stewardship Committee will be happy to help plan it.

The Mother-Daughter Tea held on May 17 was also fun! The best part was watching the girls play together, and of course enjoying some mommy-time with the other ladies. Thank you to Steward Sophia Ortiz for hosting this event, especially since she was in New Jersey the day before for her daughter's participation in the New Jersey Metropolis Oratorical Festival!

Coming up is the Parish Picnic on Saturday, June 27 at 11:00am sponsored by the Stewardship Committee at the Ashburn Farm Windmill Pavilion, 21400 Windmill Dr., Ashburn, VA 20147. There will be food and fun activities for the entire family! See the flier in this newsletter for the website link to RSVP.

As we begin to plan for summer, don't forget our Vacation Church Camp being held Monday, June 22 through Friday, June 26. Registrations will be accepted until we reach 40 students or June 7, whichever comes first. Please see the VCC registration form in this newsletter. The kids will learn about our faith and have fun!

Thank you for all you do for our church. I hope you have a wonderful summer!

In God's Service,

**Lia Economou**  
Stewardship Chair  
[liaecon@comcast.net](mailto:liaecon@comcast.net)



**GOPLC Adult Night at Nick's Taverna in Ashburn.**

## STEWARDSHIP PLEDGES

Shown below is a list of individuals and families who have made their Stewardship pledge for 2015 as of May 10, 2015. Thank you for your financial commitment to our parish. If you have not submitted a pledge for 2015, please complete the pledge card in this newsletter and return it to the church. Questions can be directed to Lia Economou at [liaecon@comcast.net](mailto:liaecon@comcast.net).

Father George & Presvytera Joanna Alexson	Pete and Sylvia Karageorge
Nicholas and Katarzyna Abousamra	Mercina Karagiorgis
James and Frances Apistolas	Nicholas and Constantina Kass
Bill and Nancy Aubin	Bill and Kathy Kendrat
John and Kristina Ayoub	Dimitri and Jolanda Kesari
Vasilios Bakopanos	Nikolaos and Sofia Kouiroukides
Daniel and Angela Bell	Michael and Effie Koutsourais
Alexandra Lampros and Hal Hallett	Robert and Naruba Blair
Tim and Diane Boone	Nikoleta Lelis
Penelope N. Broening	John and Christina Lisciandro
Chad and Julie Burke	Patrick and Eleni Malliaros-Levy
Greg and Marilena Cherpes	Angelike Maoury
Ed and Alexis Cleveland	Steve and Ergini Martnishn
Matthew Cleveland	Demitra Megalis
Dean and Maria Coulopoulos	Theodorou and Alki Meyer
Constantin and Viorica Curelaru	George and Debra Mokhiber
Panayiotis and Athanasia Dacey	Olivia Morris
Aristos and Anna Dimitriou	Paul and Lisa Orphanides
Michael and Aspacia Dintini	James and Daphne Papageorge
Elias Panagiotis Papasavvas & Christine Bump	Craig and Marianna Dodson
Elda Dodson	Maria Pappas
David and Susan Dorn	Christos and Evanna Petrakis
William and Penny Douskalis	Jerry and Helen Pollatos
John and Maria Drapas	Argilea and Najlinda Polo
Dean and Lia Economou	Terry and Christine Poulias
Vasilis and Joan Fotopoulos	Despina Psomiades
Ms. Frehiwot	Raul and Lisa Puertas
James and Christine Freire	Keith Pullman
Cookie Freire	Vladimir and Galina Repin
Gary and Lillian Funk	Matthew Skuce
Bill and Evelyn Gacis	Thomas and Elpida Skuce
John and Patricia Galanis	Jeff and Cynthia Smith
John and Patti George	Constantine Sofologis
Anthony and Carol Georgelas	Nicholas and Liba Spyros
Angeline Gillas	Paul Spyros
Jim and Cynthia Glakas	Sarah Spyros
Evangelia Gonzales	Moska Stratis
Michael and Eleni Hadjimichael	Dwayne and Irene Thomas
Richard Haylor	Peter Thomas
Marek Hejmo and Charikleia Zouridaki	Angelo and Anna Tjoumas
Gabriel and Julia Iliadis	George Tjoumas
Greg and Ashley Joiner	Todd and Ava Walter
Nicholas and Helen Jougras	George and Timea Zangos
Andrew and Vasiliki Kaffes	Maria Zangos
	Nick and Carol Zangos



## Parishioners in the Community

Andreas Voyages won the poetry contest at his school with the poem below...full of nostalgia for Greece. He will get the award along with three other children from the entire school whose poems were also awarded at a special luncheon.

### Oh, how I'd love to be in Greece

*Oh, how I'd love to be in Greece right now,  
the skies bright blue and shimmering.  
To soak up the bright blue waters,  
that toasty sand beneath me glimmering.*

*I'd love to go to the Parthenon,  
and see the view of the nation's capital.  
To see that old, historic site,  
Where the Turks and Greeks used to battle.*

*I'd love to take a walk in grassy fields,  
which I daily used to pass through.  
Maybe take the long way,  
which is a mile or two!*

*I'd love to go to the restaurants,  
and taste the profoundly yummy food.  
Gyro, Calamari, Fries, Tzatziki,  
Everything you can imagine! It will "up" your mood!*

*I'd love to once more visit the marvelous beaches,  
and play in the warm sand.  
To play in the aquamarine waters,  
To listen to the wonderful beach band!*

*Oh, how I'd love to be in Greece right now,  
to be by Santorini Bay.  
Maybe I'll get a chance to go,  
On a hot, summer's day!*



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Circle areas of expertise or interest:

Youth Groups and Classes

- Hope & Joy
- GOYA
- Greek Dance Instruction
- Greek School
- Sunday School

Groups and Ministries

- AHEPA
- Altar Service
- Bible Study
- Choir
- Ladies Philoptochos
- Orthodox Book Club
- PAREA lunch group
- Parish Newsletter
- Social Events
- Stewardship Committee
- Visiting Elderly

### 2015 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE (ALL PLEDGES THROUGH DECEMBER 2015) GREEK ORTHODOX PARISH OF LOUDOUN COUNTY

In faith, prayer and sacrifice, my family and I wish to share in the support and work of the Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County. We would like to pledge the amount of

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Your pledge is **strictly confidential**.

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## With Contributions Small and Large, Momentum Builds for Our Vision

With sincere thanks to our generous parishioners, and by God’s grace, the GOPLC Memorial Building Fund balance is slightly over \$106,000, including pledges. Although the Fund’s growth is encouraging (a \$35,000 increase from a year ago), we must build upon this momentum to reach our ambitious Stage 2 goal of \$250,000 by March 31, 2016. To do so will require some creative out-of-the-box thinking and hustle. Nevertheless, the Future Planning Committee (FPC) welcomes any ideas, best practice examples, or success stories that you have to share.

In a more traditional manner of fundraising, GOYA held a May bake sale with some of the proceeds benefiting the Building Fund. The committee appreciates GOYA’s donation, which serves as an inspiration. The commitment of our youth ministry to the future of our Orthodox Community in Loudoun County is to be admired and applauded. Now it’s time for us to demonstrate the same commitment our youth has made to our future by supporting the Building Fund. An investment in the Building Fund is an investment in our future—our youth. Materials are available if you are interested to learn more about Our Vision and would like to make a tax-deductible donation or pledge to the Building Fund.

Also, the FPC is reviewing land opportunities that are brought to its attention. All opportunities are considered; however, properties zoned for churches and possess the ability for revenue generation to aid in its payment, receive top consideration. The committee is encouraged by a few developments on this front. For example, thanks to a parishioner’s assistance, a May 7 meeting was held with an owner of several different properties for sale in Loudoun County, ranging from 10 to 60 acres. Another example brought to the committee’s attention by a parish council member is a 20-acre vineyard that is for sale. These are just two examples. There are others to consider as well. The committee’s task will be to prioritize them, have them vetted, and eventually bring an option or two to a future General Assembly for consideration and action.

Please feel free to outreach to Andrew Kaffes ([akaffes@verizon.net](mailto:akaffes@verizon.net)), Paul Orphanides ([porphanides@myselectproperties.com](mailto:porphanides@myselectproperties.com)) or Father George Alexson ([frgeorgeandrew@gmail.com](mailto:frgeorgeandrew@gmail.com)) about the Future Planning Committee

**Future Planning Committee**



## How You Can Help



- **Become involved. Stay involved. Help fulfill Our Vision.**
- **Volunteer** your professional talents. Share your expertise.
- **Publicize** our Parish whenever you can.
- Increase your **Stewardship** commitment.
- **Make a Pledge and/or Contribute to our Building Fund**—Please remember to keep it in mind when developing your Charitable Giving or Long-term Financial or Estate Plans.
- Help us identify donors for a **Capital Campaign** and other major fundraising drives.
- **Share Your Ideas & Suggestions with Us. . . Together. We Can Do It!**



## Hope / Joy

Hi everyone! We hope this finds all of you well as we wind down the school year! Hope and Joy is now on hiatus, activities and meetings to resume in September. This was a big year for Hope/Joy, and it is worth recapping everything we have done.

First and very importantly, we welcomed Ava Walter as a co-director and Elpida Skuce as musical helper and art helper, serving alongside Eleni Hadjimichael. We would not have been able to accomplish what we did without their help.

Second, we did a lot of activities: In September, we did the walk for the homeless. In October we had a meeting and made a Halloween craft. In November we visited Tall Oaks Assisted Living and sang songs and brought treats and crafts for the residents (special thanks to Elpida Skuce for teaching our children songs!) In December the children visited a Youth Shelter in Leesburg. We brought sweets and gifts to the residents. In January we went ice-skating. In February we had a general meeting and made a Valentine's Day craft. In March we returned to Tall Oaks for another concert. Again, Elpida taught our children songs! The children also made an Easter craft in March. In April we had a potluck meeting, and the children wrote letters to our deployed troops. At our last meeting in May, we had a pizza party and family game night. The children also received their very own Hope/Joy t-shirts and they can wear for our activities! Also check out the lovely Hope and Joy bulletin board in the church hall, created and updated by Elpida!

So you can see how busy we are! Hope and Joy has a lot to offer your elementary-aged children (K-6). Ava and Eleni would be happy to speak to anyone who is interested or has questions. Please contact us at [avamwalter@gmail.com](mailto:avamwalter@gmail.com) or [eleniadamis@gmail.com](mailto:eleniadamis@gmail.com).

Have a happy summer!



*Hope/Joy members in their new t-shirts.*

# Barakat

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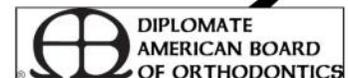
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## Sunday School

Dear Parishioners,

Below please find a hymn in Greek and English, which is the Theme for our Sunday School end of the year event. This event will take place on Sunday, June 7, following the Divine Liturgy. Using their God given talents, creativity and imagination, our Sunday School students will share with us their thoughts, feelings and ideas explaining how this hymn inspired them. Please join our Sunday School and enjoy this unique effort of our young ones. Our GOPLC is blessed with gifted children!

Blessings,

**Ergini B. Martnishn**

*Sunday School Director*

<http://greekorthodoxloudoun.org/catechetical.html>

**Συ που κόσμους κυβερνάς  
και ζωή παντού σκορπάς  
άκου τούτη τη στιγμή των  
παιδιών σου τη φωνή.**

O Lord our God,  
All things in heaven and earth obey to your wisdom;  
Dear Lord,  
Please, accept this hymn from your children,  
Please, listen to the voice of your creation

**Φώτιζε μας την ψυχή  
στο καλό , στην αρετή  
δίνε μας από ψηλά  
θάρος, δύναμη, χαρά**

Holy God,  
Allow the pure light of the Knowledge of Thee to shine in our soul  
Open the eyes of our minds so we look for things that are good and right and true  
O Lord,  
Please, send down upon us your blessings, strengthen us, give us courage to make the right choices, enable us to rejoice in Your Name

**Για να ζούμε εδώ στη γή  
με γαλήνη, με τιμή και  
να υμνούμε αιώνια σε,  
πάνσοφε Δημιουργέ**

O Master, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe,  
Protect and direct us, help us to do our best in all aspects of life, give us peace, give us tranquility of mind and spirit in order to glorify You, Lord, our Master, Creator of heaven and earth

## 2015 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

The 2015 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival, Metropolis level competition, was held at St. George church in Clifton, NJ on May 16. Pictured are GOPLC participants Anamaria Kendrat (2nd place, Senior Division), Luke Kendrat (Honorable Mention, Senior Division), and Marlene Ortiz (3rd place, Junior Division). Congratulations!





## GOPLC Fundraiser at Chick-Fil-A

On Tuesday May 5, we held the first of our twice-yearly fundraisers at the Chick-Fil-A Dulles Town Crossing, located at the Sam's Club and Lowes Shopping Center near our Church. We had a good crowd, and shared some good food and fine Orthodox Christian fellowship. Thanks to all who came out to join us. We want to encourage everyone who supports our parish to attend, so please stay tuned for information regarding the next Chick-Fil-A fundraiser, to be held later this year!



## Annual Dinner Dance Gala – Save the Date!

Please plan on joining your friends for an elegant dinner gala at the Belmont Country Club November 14, 2015. All proceeds from event ticket sales as well as the silent auction will benefit our church! Look for more details in the coming weeks and months, but please save this important date on your calendars now.



GOPLC PARISH PICNIC

Saturday, June 27, 2015  
11am-3pm

Ashburn Farm Windmill Pavilion  
(located next to the Windmill Community Center)  
21400 Windmill Dr.  
Ashburn, VA 20147

There will be food and fun activities for the whole family!

Go to our website at [www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org](http://www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org) to  
RSVP and sign up to bring a side dish, drinks, or sports  
equipment.



## GOYA

Dear GOYA Parents and Parishioners,

Xristos Anesti! Christ is Risen!

On behalf of all the Goyans, we wish you and your family a blessed year full of good health and peace of mind. Thanks to the grace of our Lord, we have much wonderful news to share with you. We hope we don't burden you with too many details.

First, we would like to congratulate the GOYA Boys' Basketball Team for taking the 3rd place in St. Katherine's Basketball Tournament in April. We are so proud of not only their accomplishment, but also their sportsmanship, perseverance and bringing their spirituality on court as they prayed before commencing each game. We wish them all the best for the next season.

Congratulations to GOYA graduating High School Seniors: Lauren Funk, Alexandra Dacey and Anna Baldinger. Father George gave his blessing to them on June 7th and so we wish them success as they embark on a new adventure. We remind them to always stay connected with their faith wherever they may go. God and their guardian angel will guide and protect them.

Bravo to Anamaria Kendrat, Luke Kendrat and Marlene Ortiz for advancing to the Metropolitan level for the Oratorical Festival. Congratulations on your accomplishments!

Our gratitude and deepest appreciation goes to all our wonderful GOYA Parents and Parishioners for their amazing support for our Spring Bake Sale Fundraiser. The parents and the Goyans contributed with ingredients and efforts to bake at Sofia's house and the Parishioners purchased the baked goods without any hesitation. We were able to raise \$413.00, half of which is donated to our Church's Building Fund. What a great team effort!

We hope that all mothers enjoyed their Mother's Day gift. It was a hand-made scrub made and packaged by our Goyans to sooth mothers' hard working hands. Goyans are currently working on Father's Day gifts that will be handed out on June 21st after Liturgy.

After the last GOYA Monthly Meeting on May 24th, the Goyans held their end of the year party at the Zone where new GOYA Officers were elected. We look forward to a fruitful and exciting next year that will unite us to stand strong to serve our Lord by benefiting our church and its community.

Please visit our website and check out the GOYA slideshow of year-long activities compiled by our Historian, Yanni Kouiroukidis. Thanks to Maria Zangos, the GOPLC Computer Magician, this year's slideshow will be uploaded by the end of June 2015.

With gratitude,

**Sofia Kouiroukidis** ([kkouirouk@gmail.com](mailto:kkouirouk@gmail.com))

**Lillian Funk** ([lilyfunk@hotmail.com](mailto:lilyfunk@hotmail.com))

GOYA Advisors

<http://greekorthodoxloudoun.org/goya.html>





# GOYA Boys' Basketball

The St. Katherine's GOYA Basketball Tournament held on April 18-19, 2015 was one of our best tournaments yet. My team played to their top performance, and we know that this isn't the end, but only the beginning to a BIG and GREAT journey ahead.

My team and I were really looking forward to the St. Katherine's tournament this year. We took complete advantage of every practice to continually strive for excellence. We wasted no time in preparing for this event. The tournament consisted of four B league teams including us to make it five. The ages ranged from 13 to 15 years old. The other teams present at the tournament were St. Katherine's in Falls Church, St. Sophia in D.C., St. George in Bethesda, and Annunciation in Norfolk.

At the start of the tournament and before every game we took a minute and prayed. Before each game I would remind them to have fun, not to be nervous, scared or hesitant in any way and to have good sportsmanship towards each other and the opposing team. Even though this is basketball, let us not forget that this is a Church league and that we are one mind and one body under God. During each game, I would continue to encourage my players to keep going, to focus, to work together, to have faith and to not quit. I also had the support of all of the parents cheering us on. Seeing the way they played together and how they acted brought me much joy. It was their character that made them true winners and I couldn't be any more proud of them.

We played three games total and won two out of three. Our first victory was against St. Katherine's with the final score 38 to 11; following with our second victory against Norfolk with the final score of 41 to 9. Our last game was against St. George, which we lost 32 to 27. My team fought a good fight and kept their faith intact. They stood tall that day and no matter the outcome they did not allow each other to become discouraged. Even though I only had five players, God gave me all that I needed. It goes to show you that when you keep God in first place and you put your trust in Him, all things can be done. This tournament was a glorious experience for the players, the parents and me.

This was the boys' last B league tournament. All of my players will be moving up to A league starting next year. In that time I hope we will gain a few more new players. Please contact me if your son is interested.

With gratitude,

**Dimitrios Stratakos** ([dimitrstratakos@verizon.net](mailto:dimitrstratakos@verizon.net))  
GOYA Boys' Basketball Team Coach



*From top to bottom: Raymond Abousamra, Michael Pollatos, Yanni Kouiroukidis, Angelo Dacey, and Alexandros Kouiroukidis; Yanni Kouiroukidis, Alexandros Kouiroukidis, Michael Pollatos, Angelo Dacey, Raymond Abousamra with Deacon Harry and their coach Dimitrios Stratakos. Go team! (not pictured: Luke Kendrat); Players with Coach Dimitrios Stratakos; Players huddling before the game.*



Dear fellow parishioners,

We are pleased to announce that the GOPLC will once again be offering our Vacation Church Camp for 2015! The camp will be from June 22 through June 26. Please see the details below.

When - Monday, June 22 - Friday, June 26, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Theme - "Going for the Gold" concentrating on Palm Sunday, Ascension, Pentecost, and Exaltation of the Cross.

Cost - \$40 for 1 child, \$75 for family of 2 children, \$100 for family of 3, \$125 for family of 4 (Family members include siblings only)

Volunteer to get a discount! Parent volunteers will get a 20% discount off the week's tuition. We are also in need of youth volunteers, ages 6th grade through high school.

The camp will provide a morning snack, camp materials, and lots of fun!

**Registration forms are now available in this newsletter and on our website. Registration ends June 7 and we can only accommodate the first 40 students so register today!** Contact Lia Economou at [liaecon@comcast.net](mailto:liaecon@comcast.net) with any questions.

We are excited for another year of VCC!

In God's service,  
Lia Economou  
2015 VCC Director



## 2015 GOPLC Vacation Church Camp

Dates: Monday, June 22 – Friday June 26, 10:00 AM – 1:30 PM

Location: Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County, 21580 Atlantic Blvd, Bldg D, Unit 160, Dulles, VA 20166

Cost: \$40 for 1 child, \$75 for 2 children, \$100 for 3 children, \$125 for 4 children (prices are for siblings only)

Ages: pre-K/age 4 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade

Theme: Going for the Gold!

Registration Deadline: June 7, 2015

Limited to the first 40 students.

Questions? Please contact Lia Economou (703-421-3812); email – liaecon@comcast.net.

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child \_\_\_\_\_

Who has permission to pick up your child? \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name	Birth Date	Age	Grade Next Fall	Allergies?

**Yes, I would like to help. Please place an X in the areas of interest below:**

- Classroom Helper (Teenagers welcome!)
- Crafts (Organize the craft materials for each teacher prior to the start of camp)
- Snacks (Help procure snacks prior to the start of camp for the daily snack time)
- Decorations (Decorate the classrooms and coffee hour area with provided materials)
- Music (Help children learn our church hymns)
- Missions (Create a poster for the IOCC Mission and/or lead the mission discussion. Leading the discussion requires only 30 minutes each day!)
- Games (Help plan games for the children during Recreation Time)



## Greek Folk Dance Group

The Greek Folk Dance Group will regroup in September and hope to show off their dancing skills to the Parish in the Fall!

For more information, please contact Smaro Karakatsanis, dance group coordinator, at [smaro.k@hotmail.com](mailto:smaro.k@hotmail.com) or 301.455.1531.

## Byzantine Music Lenten Concert

On April 4th, His Eminence Evangelos attended the Byzantine Music Lenten Concert offered by The Byzantine Choir of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey under the Direction of Dr. George Bilalis, Protopsaltis of the Metropolis of New Jersey. The concert took place at St. Katherine's Greek Orthodox Church. Father George and Presvytera Joanna, the President of the Parish Council Marina Blair and Mr. Blair and several of our parishioners attended this great event.



## Philoptochos

Christos Anesti! Christ Is Risen! I hope everyone had a blessed Easter.

A special thank you to Carol Zangos and Maria Mollo for their tireless efforts to sell tsourekia. It was a successful sale for us as well as the monastery. We couldn't have done it without you.

Our National Philoptochos asked each chapter across the USA to participate in helping to "Feed The Hungry." Our parish joined in a countywide multi-faith food collection (LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR - FEED YOUR NEIGHBOR) to benefit all Loudoun County food pantries. We collected 268 lbs. of food which was donated to Loudoun Interfaith Relief. Thank you to everyone who brought in food for this important cause.

The month of May finds us collecting gift cards for our annual LAWS (Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter) fundraiser. Your donations to the shelter make a difference to the women and children who need help and services that the shelter provides. Each person who contributed received a lovely handmade pin lovingly crafted by our Philoptochos ladies as a thank you. Many thanks to Debbie Kangelaris for lending a helping hand and guidance.

I hope everyone has a restful and fun summer. Remember to mark your calendars for our fall TAVERNA NIGHT on Saturday, September 19th. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Alexis Cleveland**

*President Ladies Philoptochos*

<http://greekorthodoxloudoun.org/philoptochos.html>

## Greek Independence Day Celebration

Christina and Cleo Dimitropoulos proudly represented our church at the Greek Independence Day celebration at the Hellenic Center by reciting Greek poems! In the picture, Cleo and Christina are with the President of Prometheus, Mr. Eleftherios Karmiris. Bravo Christina and Cleo, you made us all very proud! The event was also attended by the President of the Parish Council, Marina Blair, the Director of our Sunday School, Mrs. Ergini Batistatos-Martnishn, and by many of our parishioners and friends.



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### PAREA

We pray that you had a wonderful and spiritually fulfilling Easter! Our May PAREA was at Amphora in Herndon. It is always a true joy to break bread with our church family, but also with new friends! We celebrated birthdays and name days! Our June 2nd PAREA will be at the Mediterranean Breeze Restaurant in Ashburn. God willing, please remember that after our June gathering, PAREA will be on hiatus until we gather again around our PAREA table on the 1st of September at Mimi's Café at Dulles Town Center. With God's grace we will have much to share after the summer months! Please come and join us!

“Let everyone give as his heart tells him, neither grudgingly, nor under compulsion, for God loves the man that gives cheerfully. (II Cor. 9:7)

As we are joyfully preparing ourselves for summer, and everything around us is changing after a long winter, we feel deeply humbled by the blessings that our Lord has bestowed on us. With our PAREA's bake sale, which will take place on Sunday June 7th, let's try to give back a small gift for all His blessings by donating our bake sale funds to our beloved church. Please support PAREA's cause with your baking or your purchases! Questions? Call Kristina Ayoub (703-627-0792) or Marina Blair (703-349-1842).

We wish all our parishioners and friends a blessed and safe summer. See you back in September!

In His Everlasting Mercy,

**Marina Blair**

*PAREA Chair*

[blairmarina@gmail.com](mailto:blairmarina@gmail.com), 703-349-1842 (H)



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## Colonel Ronald B. Baldinger Retires from the US Air Force

After 25 years of distinguished service in the US Air Force, Colonel Ronald B. Baldinger, a Steward of our parish, retired as the Deputy Director of Policy and F-35 Security Cooperation Lead, International Affairs, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force. Col Baldinger is a Command Pilot with over 3,000 flying hours. He has been deployed to Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq. Col Baldinger's major decorations include Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross with "V" device, and a Bronze Star Medal among many others. Col Baldinger and his family currently reside in Lorton, VA.

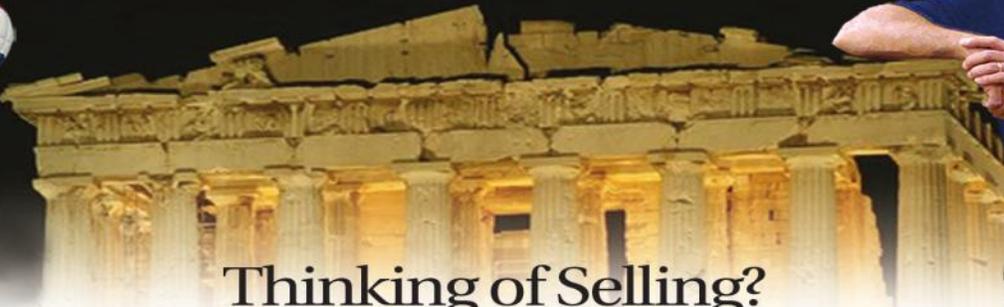


Col Baldinger (Ron) with his wife Mina and their children Anna, Michael and William.



Col Baldinger receives a certificate of appreciation from retired Major General Richard L. Comer during Col Baldinger's retirement ceremony on April 17, 2015 at the Pentagon.

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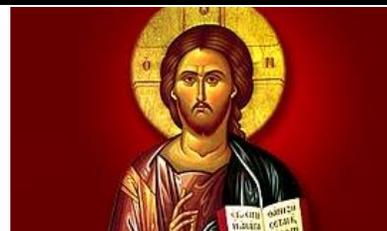




### The Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County

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Dulles, VA 20166

[www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org](http://www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org)



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