



The Light To Φως



Greek Orthodox Parish
of Loudoun County

Volume 7, Issue 3
May—June 2014

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

A Message from Father George Alexson



"Where there is no vision..."

One of the most popular scriptural verses available for constructing a parish mission statement, is also one of the most loosely translated and misapplied. I refer to the verse from Proverbs 29, 18: "Where there is no vision the people perish," as it is mis-translated in the King James Version. The Hebrew Bible (there is no equivalent verse in the Septuagint translation) actually says, "Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint; but he that keeps the law, happy is he."

I don't know what the translators of the KJV had in mind when they decided on this translation, but it is not the latter part of the verse that interests me here. I want to focus on the concept of "vision." The Greek word for vision, used in both Old and New Testaments, is "optasia." It can mean sight, appearance or vision. It is related

etymologically to the verb, "orao," meaning, "to see, look," and, when in reference to the mind, "to discern, perceive." In the Gospel of Luke (1:22), for example, the context in which "optasia" appears helps us understand that Zacharias's vision was God-given; that is, the vision is not attributable to any innate power of Zacharias to perceive, but it is something that God let him see. This is important, because too often we trust in our own powers of perception on any given subject, and too little on what it is that God wants us to see.

On Sunday, June 8, all Stewards of our Parish will be invited to join the Parish Council for our Spring General Assembly. Several subjects important to the life and work of our parish will be presented for discussion. The most important, I believe, is our VISION for the future. Perhaps Sunday following the Liturgy is to some an inconvenient time. Allow me to suggest that there is no better time than that, in which the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has taken place on us and the Gifts we have offered, the Eucharist, which constitutes the very essence of our life as Church and Body of Christ. As we prepare for this Assembly, it would do us all well to pray about this: what is it that God wants us to see? What does He want us to accomplish as an assembly of His faithful in Loudoun County? Are we to remain in our present circumstances; or, do we really want to acquire land and build a church facility of our own?

We need to face these questions honestly. The only way we can do that, is by a full gathering of our Stewards engaged in an open and frank discussion regarding the challenges that face us as we look to the future. Will we be able to grow as a community if we remain in our present circumstances? How can we possibly enhance our parish ministries if we continue to be constrained by what have quickly become inadequate facilities? These are but a few of the questions that need to be answered as we struggle to work out our understanding of God's vision for us.

I pray, indeed, I urge all of you to join us for the Liturgy and Assembly on June 8th. A handful of members cannot take it upon themselves to govern the life of our parish, not when some of the most momentous decisions in our history now face us. It is our responsibility to collectively determine the road we will take. Let us not forget that future generations will judge us by the courage or cowardice with which we entered the arena of this great battle for a brighter and better future. May our Lord bless us all with the healthy spiritual eyesight we need, to perceive His will for our wonderful parish. Peace and love always!

Father George

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Highlights:

- General Assembly Meeting on June 8th. Make sure to submit your 2014 Pledge Card to vote!
- Register for Vacation Church Camp by June 8th; camp starts June 23rd.
- The 2014 Church Picnic will be held on June 28th at the Leesburg Douglass Community Center Pavilion.



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President's Message



Χριστός Ανέστη – Christ has Risen! I would like to thank Father George and Father Michael for providing us with a full schedule of services as well as those behind the scenes that helped beautify our church. Thank you to all the volunteers that worked so hard during “Spring Cleaning Day”, everyone that prepared the palms for Palm Sunday and Chairwoman Mariana Korulaki, Presvytera Joanna

and the Epitaphios Committee. I have so many fond memories of my childhood when preparing the church for Easter. These are the type of memories we should build for our children, too. Also, thank you to the young men who so humbly carried the Body of Christ around the church: Dimitri Stratakis, Matt Skuce, George Blair, and Matthew Cleveland, as well as Mariana Voyiatzis and Elina Dimitropoulou for all their help with the beautiful Myrofores. Last but not least, Effie Koutsourais and team for providing the red eggs for Holy Saturday, our altar boys, Parish Council members for ushering, and Nick Grivas for directing all the chanters.

Congratulations to our GOYA basketball team and their first “WIN” during the recent GOYA basketball tournament held at Saint Katherine’s. I am so proud! Our boys showed great sportsmanship and desire under the leadership of Coach Dimitri Stratakis, Kathy Kendrat and Bill Aubin, who volunteered their time to train our boys in their inaugural year and bring home a win.

Mark your calendars for the GOPLC Parish Picnic on June 28, to be held at the Douglass Community Center Pavilion off E. Market Street in Leesburg.



Photos from Holy Week: Myrofores, above, and the carrying of the body of Christ, below.



The 2014 Stewardship year is full speed ahead, and we have some big goals in order to continue our expansion. So, if you have not yet filled out a 2014 Stewardship Card, please do so as soon as possible.

In His service,

Con Sofologis
Parish Council President

Sacraments Performed

Baptisms

Thomas, Elpida, Matthew and Zoe Skuce were baptized on Saturday, March 29th. The Skuce family joined our parish as catechumens and were instructed in the Faith during the period of Great Lent. We welcome them and pray that our Lord will continue to pour His grace upon them as they grow in faith and life.

Jack Anthony Hawes, the son of Johnathon P. and Alexandra (Orphanides) Hawes, was baptized on April 26th. Sponsor, Elaina Orphanides. May our Lord bless the newly-baptized with good health and long life. Na sas zisi!

Funeral

Nick C. Harris of Haymarket, VA, passed away on May 5, 2014 and was buried from our church on May, 15th. We extend our deepest condolences to his wife, Dorothy, his son, Brian, and to all the members of his family. May our Lord grant him rest eternal in His Kingdom.

Graduation Announcements

Congratulations to Christos Alpos, who graduated from Washington Lee High School and will be attending Virginia Tech.

Congratulations to Jon Emch, who graduated from Stone Bridge High School and will be attending the NOVA Honors Program for 2 years followed by 2 years at JMU.

Congratulations to Evan Kalaris, who graduated from Broad Run High School and will be attending Christopher Newport University where he will be playing on their soccer team.

Congratulations to Katherine Kalaris, who graduated from The College of William and Mary.

Congratulations to Christina Kangelaris, who graduated from George Mason University with a B.S. in Business Management, and has applied to George Mason's Master's in Management.

Congratulations to Melanie Kangelaris, who graduated from Trinity Christian School and will be attending Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, studying engineering.

Congratulations to Nicholas James Koutris, who graduated from the University of Virginia and will be attending Wake Forest School of Business for a Graduate Degree.

Congratulations to John Panagides, who graduated from Thomas Jefferson HS Science & Technology and will be attending the University of Virginia.

Congratulations to Irina Anastasia Sivy, who graduated from Tuscarora High School and will be attending NOVA, Loudoun Campus.

Congratulations to Paul Spyros, who graduated home schooling and will be attending the NOVA Associate Program.



Stewardship

Christos Anesti! I hope you had a wonderful and blessed Easter.

Being out of town with family and celebrating Easter at another Greek Orthodox church made me think about the relationship between family and church. Truth be told, while I loved being with our extended family, I missed celebrating Easter with our church family.

What does it mean to be a member of a family? Are blood relatives the only part of your family? This is not the case at our church! At our church you are family even if there is no blood relation, although in many cases we are related only by a few degrees of separation!

There are many benefits to being a member of our church family:

- ◆ Voting rights at our General Assembly meetings so you can have a say in our parish's future. The next General Assembly is June 8.
- ◆ Eligible to become a Godparent or Koumbaro/Koumbara at an Orthodox baptism or wedding
- ◆ Enrollment for your children in Sunday School classes
- ◆ Significantly reduced registration fees for Greek School
- ◆ Invitation to certain "Steward-only" events sponsored by the Stewardship Committee

Please submit your pledge card and be current in your Stewardship payments so you are eligible to vote at the next General Assembly on Sunday, June 8. Have a say in the future of our parish!

Also join us for our PARISH PICNIC on Saturday, June 28 from 11am-2pm at the Douglass Community Center Pavilion at 407 E. Market St, Leesburg, VA 20176. The Stewardship Committee is planning many fun activities for children of all ages. Go to our website at www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org for the online signup link. We hope you can join us!

We look forward to having you as a member of our family and enjoying fellowship at our upcoming Parish Picnic. If you have any questions about our events or Stewardship, please email me at liaecon@comcast.net.

In God's Service,

Lia Economou
Stewardship Chair

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGES

Shown below is a list of individuals and families who have made their Stewardship pledge for 2014 as of May 11. Thank you for your financial commitment to our parish. If you have not submitted a pledge for 2014, 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.

Katarzyna Abousamra & Nicholas Adams	Nick and Dina Kass
Father George & Presv. Joanna Alexson	Bill and Kathy Kendrat
James and Frances Apostolas	Mariana Korulaki
Bill and Nancy Aubin	Michael and Niki Kyriacou
Tom and Pattie Ayers	Bill and Loula Lagadinou
John and Kristina Ayoub	Alex Lampros and Hal Hallett
Bill and Kelli Bakopanos	Niki Lelis
Robert and Marina Blair	Eleni Malliaros Levy
Tim and Diane Boone	John and Christy Lisciandro
Chad and Julie Burke	Angelike Maoury
Pete and Elena Chambers	George and Debra Mohkiber
Greg and Marilena Cherpes	Maria Zangos Mollo
Ed and Alexis Cleveland	Olivia Morris
Matthew Cleveland	Paul and Lisa Orphanides
Panayiotis and Athanasia Dacey	Maria Pappas
Paul and Mea Danigelis	Katerina Paskaris
William and Helen Demestihis	Jonathan and Janet Perezous
Michael and Aspacia Dintini	Terry and Christine Poulis
Craig and Marianna Dodson	Despina Psomiades
Elda Dodson	Keith Pullman
David and Susan Dorn	Travis and Christie Rebok
John and Maria Drapas	Vladimir and Galina Repin
Dean and Lia Economou	Thomas and Archelles Skuce
Vasilis and Joan Fotopoulos	Jeff and Cynthia Smith
Gary and Lillian Funk	Constantine Sofologis
Evelyn Gacis	Nicholas and Elizabeth Spyros
John and Patricia Galanis	Paul Spyros
Peter and Barbara Garbis	Sarah Spyros
Angeline Gillas	Stavros Stephanakis
Richard Haylor	Moska Stratis
Christopher Jesuele	Peter Thomas
Neil and Alexandra Jesuele	Angelo Tjoumas
Andrew and Vasiliki Kaffes	Michael and Maria Tsapos
Alex and Trisha Kantsios	Nicholas and Carol Zangos
Mercina Karagiorgis	



PARISH PICNIC

Saturday, June 28, 2014

11am-2pm

Douglass Community Center Pavilion

407 E. Market St.

Leesburg, VA 20176

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

Go to our website at

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10CoA48A5AE22AA8-parish

to RSVP and sign up to bring a side dish, drinks, or sports equipment.

2014 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE GOPLC

Name: _____

Total Amt: \$ _____
(for Jan 2014 – Dec 2014)

Payment frequency:
☐ Annual ☐ Semi-annual
☐ Quarterly ☐ Monthly
☐ Weekly

CUT and KEEP
this portion
for YOUR RECORDS

2014 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE – 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, Virginia.

Out of our love and gratitude for all His blessings, we would like to pledge AN HOUR'S PAY PER WEEK (i.e. 2.5% of annual household income) or the amount of \$_____ for the year 2014.

This amount will be paid as follows:

☐ Annually ☐ Semi-annually ☐ Quarterly ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Your pledge is strictly confidential.



Sunday School

As we come to the close of another successful Catechetical school year, we look back from September 2013 to May 2014 and see how we have grown and how we have been involved in the ministry of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In December 2014, the Catechetical school children were involved in, once again, presenting a magnificent Christmas Pageant under the direction of Effie Koutsourais.

In February 2014, we held our St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival and sent three of our children (Eleni Papageorge, Annamaria Kendrat, and Alexandros Kouiroukidis) to the District finals in Richmond, Virginia. Annamaria was successful in representing the District of Virginia and advancing to the Metropolitan Finals, in New Jersey. There she presented her speech in front of Metropolitan Evangelos and the competitors from his entire Metropolis, where she won honorable mention. In addition, Marlene Ortiz submitted an essay to the Metropolis Finals and received second place award amongst all the Metropolis Junior essay submissions. Both of these girls have to be commended!

During Great Lent, in March 2014, the Catechetical school staff sponsored a Lenten Retreat featuring Igumen Hiermonk, Fr. Sergius, the Abbot of St. Tikhon's Monastery. We all received a special blessing, not only by his words, but also through the veneration of the Miraculous Working Icon of St. Anna along with the Relics of St. Joaquin and St. Anna and, the blessed belt of the Theotokos.

In carrying forth our Lord's Great Commission beyond Loudoun County, the Catechetical school children raised and donated \$350.00 to the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) for Pascha. We received an acknowledgement from Fr. Ritsi, the director of OCMC, thanking us for the contribution and the plans they have to spread the Gospel to various countries throughout the world. Special thanks to Mrs. Carol Zangos who coordinated this effort with OCMC.

None of these endeavors would have been made possible without the dedicated loving teachers, staff and, all those who helped to make our Catechetical school year successful including, of course, the parents and guardians of our beloved children.

Have a safe and blessed summer!

Nick Zangos, Catechetical School Director

Maria Zangos Mollo, Catechetical School Assistant Director

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



HOPE / JOY

HOPE/JOY had a wonderful year providing children with many opportunities to meet, socialize and interact with one another. The HOPE/JOY program had over 30 children, ages 4-11, registered for the 2013-2014 school year!

This year's events were geared towards encouraging friendships and bringing together the youth of the Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County, in a fun and educational manner, to lay the foundation of faith, stewardship and charity. The children participated in many events. A few of the events included: a Walk for the Homeless, holiday crafts, religious discussions, a visit to the Loudoun Youth Shelter, ice-skating and making Palm Crosses. We concluded the year with a potluck and family game night.

We would like to thank Father George for his spiritual guidance, the parents for their assistance and encouragement and the children for their enthusiasm!

If you are interested in volunteering or leading HOPE/JOY for the 2014-2015 school year, please contact Eleni Hadjimichael or Maria Drapas.

HOPE/JOY wishes everyone a safe and blessed summer!

Eleni Adamis Hadjimichael & Maria Drapas

Hope/Joy Co-Directors

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



Above: Students enjoying Hope/Joy.

At Left: Sunday School Graduation.



Greek Independence Day

On March 23, 2014, our Greek School students participated in the Greek Independence Day Observance. Students of all ages memorized in Greek, numerous and various traditional songs and poems. It brought memories and tears in our eyes. We should all be very proud of their outstanding performance. Congratulations to everyone! The positive feedback, continuous emails, and phone calls which I had received were overwhelming. It was very touching and I thank you.

Vasilia Ravaris



Greek School

On May 18th, 2014, Greek School Graduation, students sang a year-end song beautifully and received their certificates and various awards. It was another fulfilled and successful school year. I was very pleased and proud of all the students and would like to acknowledge them for their dedication, eagerness to learn, their efforts and for their hard work. A big applause, a handshake, a hug and congratulations seems not enough. They deserve so much more. Each and every one of them is a RISING STAR! I wish all the students good luck and continued success in all their studies.

A special recognition to the following students who received awards for their superb achievements throughout the year - CONGRATULATIONS!

Christina Dimitropoulou, Georgia Drapas, Paraskevi Economou, Stefanos Economou, Dionysios Hadjimichael, Andreas Kolazas, Eleni Liakakou, Sophia Maria Panagopoulou, Andrianne Papalabarakopoulou, Nikolaos Ravaris and Katerina Walter.

Thank you,

Vasilia Ravaris

Greek School Director

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



Above: Greek School graduation.

At Left: Celebrating Greek Independence Day.



Greek School Welcome Letter

Can't believe another school year came to an end! I would like to extend my gratitude to Father George, Parish Council, teachers, parents, grandparents, family and friends for their continued support, involvement and commitment towards our Greek School. I would like to acknowledge the parents, for their continued dedication on enrolling and bringing their children to our school. Without you, we could not have a productive and successful school year.

One of our main goals is to help families of Greek and Non-Greek heritage backgrounds raise bilingual children; which in this day and age as we all know and are aware is a "big" challenge. We all share the passion for our Greek Language and are committed to teach and help each of our students reach their growth potential and succeed in a fun and structured environment. Our emphasis is based on teaching our children the Hellenic Language, history, culture, reading, writing, and values with a Greek Orthodox background.

We will continue to offer the Greek Language to children starting at age 4 and older. Adult classes are also offered. Classes will be held the same days and time as in the past; one of two days, Wednesday, starting October 1st or Thursday, October 2nd from 5:00 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.. Important and various information such as the Registration Form, Policy/Procedures and School Calendar, can be found on the website and at the Greek School Bulletin.

Our students will be offered a challenging, high quality and beneficial Greek/English developmental curriculum which would be age and level appropriate. We will continue to use the Papaloizos textbooks and workbooks as these books are developed for the teaching of Greek as a Second Language as well as a different book series as supplement for others. In addition to the books, various and numerous handouts will be provided.

At every class, the students are encouraged to interact and participate with one another and converse in Greek. They will be given the opportunity to learn and to recognize the Greek alphabet and their sounds, creating syllables which conclude to words, phrases, sentences and compositions. They will be involved in listening and learning: songs, stories and the Greek Culture and Faith; learning the colors, counting, identifying flashcards, playing educational games, conversations, grammar, reading/writing skills and a lot more. They will participate in different conversations and dialogues. It's not only reciting a word, reading a page and completing their class work but it is beneficial for each one to comprehend and applying what they've learned. Different activities and methods have been carefully selected to appeal to the appropriate levels. This will enhance their comprehension, self esteem and will develop positive self concept and attain new skills in an easier way, by being in a class environment and learning all together. Each student will be evaluated through testing; as recommended by the Archdiocese.

I believe that a good parent-teacher relationship is necessary for maximum school success. By all of us working together, we can make this, another successful school year. This will enable each of us to establish procedures that enhance learning and contribute to a safe, orderly and positive place. We will help every student achieve their full potential and ensure success throughout the school year. I will gladly answer any questions, and welcome your suggestions and valuable feedback.

I am looking forward to welcoming back our old students and meeting new ones and their families. Please take the time to read and complete the Registration form as enrollment has begun. I am truly looking forward to this year. It will indeed be beneficial and successful for everyone. I hope you and your families have a great, safe and enjoyable summer. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Vasilia Ravaris
Greek School Director
vasilia@live.com



The Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County Greek Afternoon School Registration Form 2014 – 2015 School Year

www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org

Registration Information: Please complete entire form. Payment in full must be attached, unless otherwise discussed with the Director. If you are registering more than one child, kindly complete a separate registration form for each child. If you have any questions, you may contact Vasilia Ravaris (vasilia@live.com).

Student's First and Last Name: _____

Student's First and Last Name in Greek: _____

Allergies: _____

Student's age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Name Day: _____

Student's grade in school for 2014-2015 school year: _____

Student's Address: _____

Parent's Names: _____

Parent's Home Phone: _____ Parent's Cell Phone: _____

Parent's E-mail Address: _____

Greek Language Information:

Is Greek the child's first language? _____ Yes _____ No

Is Greek spoken at home? _____ Yes _____ No

Has the child attended Greek school in the past? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, how many years? _____ Years

Greek school classes will be offered one of the two days.

Wednesday 5:00-6:45 p.m.

Thursday 5:00-6:45 p.m.

Adult Class is also offered, please inquire

Payment Information:

CHECK # _____

Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County Stewards:

*\$350 for first child plus \$ 50 for Books (if do not have books from previous year)

*\$300 for each additional child plus \$50 for Books (if do not have books from previous year)

Non-Stewards:

*\$550 for each child plus \$ 50 for Books (if do not have books from previous year)

Make checks payable to the Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County, please write "Greek School" in Memo section. Please address all registrations to:

The Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County
Attention: Vasilia Ravaris, Greek School Director
21580 Atlantic Boulevard, Bldg D, Unit 160, Dulles, VA 20166



GOYA

Dear GOYA Parents and Parishioners,

Christos Anesti! We can't believe that a year full of wonderful activities is coming to a halt as the summer approaches! We have enjoyed being the advisors for our talented, dedicated, committed and faithful GOYAns. We look forward to working with them again next year and hear their exciting and heartwarming ideas to reach out and offer help wherever and whenever is needed.

The GOYAns handed out their handmade Mother's Day gift on Mother's Day after Liturgy. They are currently working on a Father's Day gift to be handed out on June 15th after Liturgy.

We congratulate Annamaria Kendrat for participating in the Oratorical Festival Essay Competition at the state level on May 17th. She was awarded an Honorable Mention.

Father George offered his blessings to our High School GOYA graduates, Melanie Kangelaris and Jon Emch. They both have been actively involved in GOYA and church activities for many years. We wish them both the best of luck as they embark on new adventures as college students. I am sure we will be seeing more of them no matter what college or university they will attend, as it has been the case of former GOYAns. The Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County will always be the GOYAns' home far away from home.

The GOYA end of the year party and election of new officers will be held at King Pinz in Leesburg on June 8th after Liturgy. Detailed information on this event will follow soon. Unfortunately, our Monastery Trip to Agia Skepi and St. Tikhon has been postponed to next September. We faced difficulties scheduling a weekend that suits everyone due to Easter, SAT exams, end of the year finals and the GOYA Basketball Tournament.

Last but not least, we would like to thank Kathy Kendrat, Coach Dimitri Stratakos and Coach Bill Aubin for all their efforts in forming a GOYA Basketball Team that represent our church among all the churches, training our GOYAns and getting them ready to participate in the recent tournament that took place at the Trinity Christian School in Fairfax.

Some of our GOYAns are looking forward to assisting in our church's second Vocational Bible Camp during the last week of June. Way to go GOYAns!

Have a safe and a blessed summer!

Sincerely,

Sofia Kouiroukidis (kkouirouk@gmail.com)

Lillian Funk (lilyfunk@hotmail.com)

Goya Advisors

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



Our graduating GOYAns, Jon Emch and Melanie Kangelaris, receiving blessings from Father Geroge.



GOYAns passing out flowers for Mother's Day.



The GOYA Basketball Team enjoying a meal together.



Philoptochos

Christos Anesti! I hope everyone had a glorious Easter. Thank you to Ergini Batistatos-Martnishn and Maria Mollo for a successful tsourekis sale.

The month of May found us collecting gift cards and cash donations for the Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter. LAWS assists victims of domestic violence and their children in Loudoun County. Thank you for your generous donations.

Our membership drive has ended, but we encourage you to consider becoming a member. Come to a meeting, join us in a project and share your ideas and talents. We welcome you! Our last meeting before summer vacation is Sunday, June 1st. We will resume our meetings in September. Rest up this summer because our first Taverna Night is coming and we want you to be there! Music, dancing and fun for the whole family. Save the date --- Saturday, September 6th.

Happy summer to all!

Alexis Cleveland

President Ladies Philoptochos

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



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AHEPA

Our local AHEPA Μολών Λαβέ Chapter 542 is only five months old, but it is already having an impact on our community. Not a big impact yet, but a good start nonetheless. Investing on our youth and our future is always a good idea, and in our vibrant youth ministries the need is great.

The Chapter Athletic Committee Chairman, brother Dimitri Stratakos, recently identified a need in the GOYA basketball team that our Chapter was able to support. It was great satisfaction to be a small part of the GOYA team's success as many watched the team record its first tournament win in the metro area competition.

Another opportunity to be of assistance came when Chapter 542 helped defray travel costs of one of our parish competitors at the annual Oratorical Festival. It takes a lot of work and determination to prepare essays and present them in front of an audience and judges. We commend all participants in the Oratorical Festival and pledge our continuous support in their competition.

May is graduation month for our youth, and on May 18 AHEPA had a chance to recognize the efforts of a few of the best in effort and achievements. Four members of the Greek School received AHEPA certificates of Achievement and medals for their academic achievements in learning the Greek language. The deserving recipients of the awards are Paraskevi Economou, Sophia Maria Panagopoulou, Andrienne Palabrakopoulou, and Georgia Drapas. The Chatechetical school's graduating seniors, brother Jon Emch and Melanie Kangelaris, received small monetary awards in recognition of their successful completion of our church's chatechetical school. An anonymous donor enabled AHEPA to recognize two more chatechetical school students for their exemplary efforts and achievements. Elizabeth Emch and Lauren Funk are the deserving awardees.

Also on May 18, two excellent high school seniors from our church community were recognized at the Annual AHEPA Washington Metro Scholarship Banquet. Melanie Kangelaris and Jon Emch were among the more than twenty scholarship recipients from the Washington metro area honored at the banquet. Both Emily and Jon distinguished themselves with their many achievements and great promise for the future. Their great achievements have made all of our community and their parents very proud. Our AHEPA Chapter wishes them many more successes in

At Right: AHEPAns gathering at St. Sophia's in Washington, DC for the annual Memorial Day wreath laying at Arlington National Cemetery.

Below: AHEPA recognizes students and parishioners for their achievements.

the future.

Another effort planned for Chapter 542 was the participation in the placing of wreaths and honoring the Greek American heroes resting at Arlington National Cemetery. As a Chapter with many military veterans and a number of active duty military members, it is especially important for our members to give honor to those we owe so much. In what has become a tradition for our community, entire families participated on Saturday, May 24 at Arlington. More than 30 parishioners of all ages came to pay their respects and honor our fallen heroes. Following the wreath layings, all participants were invited to attend a barbecue at the AHEPA National Headquarters rooftop venue in Dupont Circle in Washington. Brother Dean Economou is the coordinator for our community and our chapter. Dean and his family have been attending this great event at Arlington for a number of years.

As great the feeling of being of service to our church, our community and our fellow mankind, the reality is that to undertake all these activities 542 needs the support of all men in the community to give of their time and energy to make our chapter stronger and our community better. We are looking for a few good men to make Leonidas proud.

Vasilis Fotopoulos
President
Μολών Λαβέ Chapter 542
Order of AHEPA
<http://ahepa.org/ahepa>





Vacation Church Camp

The G.O.P.L.C. is excited to announce that we will be offering the 2014 Vacation Church Camp for the week of June 23rd - 27th, 10:00am - 1:30pm.

This summer's camp theme will be 'The Ark of Salvation' and will concentrate on the 4 major Feast days of the Theotokos, (The Nativity, The Entrance into the Temple, The Annunciation, and The Dormition).

The children will enjoy:

- ◆ Crafts
- ◆ Assemblies
- ◆ Games
- ◆ Spiritual lessons
- ◆ Snacks
- ◆ Fellowship
- ◆ Singing
- ◆ Worship lessons w/ Father George

It will be a week packed with fun and learning! We are looking forward to an exciting week.

Registration ends Sunday, June 8th. The maximum capacity is 40 children. We have 22 students already registered! Attached, you will find the registration form and curriculum. Please send registration forms or questions to em-koutsis@aol.com. Thank you!

Effie Koutsourais

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Vacation Church Camp Schedule

Dates: Monday June 23 - Friday June 27

Times: 10:00 am- 1:30 pm

Theme: The Ark of Salvation

Schedule

- ◆ 10:00 am – 10:30 am – Morning prayer and discussion with Father George
- ◆ 10:30 am – 12:00 pm – Lesson and craft
- ◆ 12:00 pm – 12:30 pm – recess - snack/bathroom
- ◆ 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm – music/activity downstairs
- ◆ 1:30 pm – Dismissal

Overview: The Ark of Salvation

The Four (4) Major Feast Days of the Theotokos:

- ◆ Day 1 – Nativity of the Theotokos (September 8)
- ◆ Day 2 – Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple (November 21)
- ◆ Day 3 – Annunciation of the Theotokos (March 25)
- ◆ Day 4 – Dormition of the Theotokos (August 15)
- ◆ Day 5 – Finish and Review/Presentation

Worship Lesson Topics with Fr. George

- ◆ Day 1 – Services of 8-Day and 40-Day Blessings
- ◆ Day 2 – Services of Baptism and Chrismation & the Nativity of St. John the Baptist
- ◆ Day 3 – All About Angels
- ◆ Day 4 – Church Behavior
- ◆ Day 5 – Fr. George's Choice Topic



2014 GOPLC Vacation Church Camp

Dates: Monday, June 23 – Friday June 27, 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: 4-12 (pre-K through 6th grade)

Theme: The Ark of Salvation!

Registration Deadline: June 8, 2014

Limited to the first 40 students.

Questions? Please contact Effie Koutsourais (703-771-2082); email – emkouts1@aol.com.

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 _____



Orthodox Book Club

"Just as the springtime sun drives away fog and warms the earth, so the elder, with his gift of comforting others, drove away affliction, comforting each tormented soul that drew near him. Many took refuge in him, mainly for the sake of solace. They would come to him fretful and leave completely changed. Just by seeing him, they would receive strength and joy. Those who had the blessing of speaking with him would feel a joy like never before and leave as different people. [...] He managed to take human pain and grief to himself and transfuse others with joy and solace. He would taste bitterness, while the people would be filled with sweetness and joy." ("Elder Paisios of Mount Athos" by Hieromonk Isaac, p. 540)

"The elder helped many young people prepare to become monks. [...] His practical and graceful words refreshed them, comforted them, answered their questions, and drove away their temptations; and they left renewed, cheerful, and ready for new struggles. Monks, ascetic elders, and even abbots from all over the Holy Mountain would go to the elder. He was a trainer of monastics, because he was able to bear and to heal their thoughts. [...] Many monks and abbots from monasteries in the world came to consult with him as well, some of whom he corresponded with. He did not seek this; on the contrary he avoided taking monks and monasteries under his guidance. He didn't want to seem like an elder. Rather, he counseled all those who questioned him for the sake of their benefit, as a brother and in a humble way." ("Elder Paisios of Mount Athos" by Hieromonk Isaac, pp. 625-626)

"The elder's radiant example alone was a form of instruction and evangelism. In fact, this example was his most important contribution. He showed himself to be a model of Christian life: he put off the old man and made the image of God in him to shine forth; and he became an imitator of Christ, "an example of the believers," and a living image of first-created beauty. With his life, he verified the truth of the Gospel and confirmed the existence of the supernatural events described in the Holy Scriptures. This feat is a valuable and timeless offering, and it legitimized what he said and did, endowing his words and actions with grace. Whatever the elder said, he had lived first." ("Elder Paisios of Mount Athos" by Hieromonk Isaac, pp. 628-629)

As we can see from the above passages, Elder Paisios possessed the gift of comforting, which, coupled with his patience and ability to empathize with his fellow man's joys and sorrows, enabled him to help many of his brothers and sisters in Christ. He was also a great advisor for young people, in both spiritual and practical matters. Yet, he did not proclaim himself to be a teacher, a mentor, or a healer; on the contrary, he stayed away from such titles. If he was able to help a soul, he did so "as a brother and in a humble way". The more we read about the elder, the more we see that his humility was always present, accompanying both his relationships with others and his own spiritual accomplishments.

How can we begin to emulate this incredibly genuine model of Christian life, that almost sounds "too good to be true"? Is there anything in our daily life, in the expectations that this world places on us, that can stop us? Are such Christian role models easily found in our society? These are just some of the questions that come to mind when reading this wonderful book, and they help generate great discussions during our meetings.

The Orthodox Book Club meets at Church twice a month, on Friday at 6 pm. Our next meeting is on June 13. You are always welcome to stop by if you're interested in joining or just curious to attend one of our meetings! For more information, please contact Ana Balan at ahnonay15@gmail.com. May Elder Paisios' prayers be with you and us all!

In Christ,

Ana Balan

Book Club Coordinator



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Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study, led by Father George Alexson, meets on the first and third Tuesday of the month. We currently have 29 members and the average class size is approximately 10 men. The meetings address the teachings, history and practical applications of the verses to our lives as husbands, fathers, brothers and sons to make us better men. Father George brings his knowledge regarding the history of the time and the nuances of language to reveal an accurate translation and truly salient message of the verses. Our remaining meetings are on June 3 and June 17. We will take a brief hiatus during the summer months and resume again in September. Please join us for a night of fellowship. You may contact either Father George at frgeorgeandrew@gmail.com or Nick Spyros at nlspyros@yahoo.com.

Nick Spyros



Parishioners in the News

Our fellow parishioner Julia Iliadis, a fashion stylist and wardrobe consultant, was recently recognized in a formal competition organized by the National Association of Professional Women and was selected from among four finalist businesswomen to receive the 2013 "Girl on Fire" Award. The National Association of Professional Women (NAPW) is the largest and most recognized network of female professionals.

Julia moved from Greece to Leesburg, VA in 2011. Having worked in the fashion and beauty industries for the past 12 years and after working as a Fashion Stylist at the NIVEA headquarters in Greece, it was natural that she would continue in this area of work. In 2012 Julia founded JI Fashion Styling to help women look and feel great about themselves. JI Fashion Styling specializes in putting together an active wardrobe that suits her clients' body shape, lifestyle and budget. In the past two years Julia has diligently and passionately built her fashion styling business.

Julia is also an artist, who draws and paints as a way of expressing her emotions and perception of reality. Examples of her art can be seen at www.artistrising.com.

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A Labor of Love

Christos Anesti! Christ has Risen!

We would like to thank all of the Parishioners for contributing to the success of beautifying our Church throughout the Pascal season by not only volunteering their time and talents but also with their generous Easter Flower contributions.

With the help of our Lord and the direction and guidance of our beloved Presvytera Ioanna and the members of the Easter Flower Committee as well as our Parishioners, we were all able to come together and decorate our lovely Parish with gorgeous, elegant floral arrangements and create another stunning and memorable Epitaphio. Decorating our Epitaphio was a labor of love and we would not have been able to accomplish this feat without the help of all those volunteers who showed up to offer their support and love!

Mariana Korulaki

Pictures of the Church decorated for Easter.





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A Labor of Love *continued...*





PAREA

A heartfelt thank you to all who supported PAREA's bake sale for "Feeding the Hungry". PAREA will be on vacation during the months of July and August but will return in September! Please check the website for more information!

Have a blessed and safe summer!

In His everlasting mercy,

Marina Blair
PAREA Chair
571-969-9234

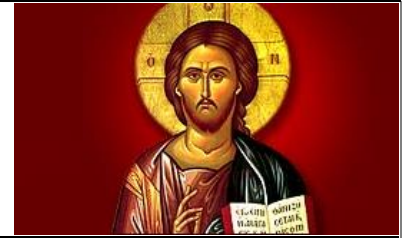




The Greek Orthodox Parish of Loudoun County

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www.greekorthodoxloudoun.org



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Advertising: Paul Orphanides (porphanides@myselectproperties.com) If you are interested in advertising in the next issue of The Light, please contact Paul Orphanides.

Member in the Spotlight — Skuce Family (Thomas, Elpida, Matthew and Zoe)

Where are you from (in the U.S. and your roots)?

Thomas: Born in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, but raised in Aiken, South Carolina. Roots trace back to Ireland via Norway.

Elpida: Born in New Castle, IN and raised in Denver, Colorado; New Castle, Indiana; and Sacramento, CA. Euro-mutt! English, German, Hungarian, Scottish, who knows!!

Matthew: Born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and raised in Lompoc, CA; Antelope, CA; Raleigh, NC; and Ashburn, VA.

Zoe: Born right here in Leesburg, VA and raised in Ashburn and Round Hill, VA.

Who is in your family?

Thomas, Elpida, Matthew, and Zoe

Any interesting facts about you, your family or your ethnicity?

Thomas: Is a United States Air Force Veteran of the first Gulf War and has traveled a great deal professionally. He has been to 268 different locations across the Globe but has never been to Greece (Turkey was the closest he got).

Elpida: Married 30 years to my hero and husband! Our first three years married, we lived in the Philippines and traveled to Korea and Japan while there. When Matthew was 11, Indian friends of ours took us on a one-month trip to India where we visited many places in Punjab, and saw the Taj Mahal. Zoe and Matthew are God's blessing to Tom and me. They teach us love, grace, joy, and redemption. Where I did not have strong family ties growing up, God is teaching me what it means to have healthy, strong, loving family relationships. He is healing me through His beautiful gifts of husband, and children.

Matthew: Has been fortunate enough to have traveled overseas rather often: Peru, Scotland, England, India, China, Thailand, and Cambodia. He studied Drawing and Design in college and is currently doing freelance design work. He has also written and drawn professional comic books. His fiancée is currently finishing up her Master's degree in Experimental Psychology and will soon be Chrismated into the Orthodox faith.

Zoe: Has a natural gift for theater, dance, and voice. She has been in several local productions with the Sterling Playmakers, Run Rabbit Run Productions, and Loudoun Lyric Opera Company (Elpida too). She also has a remarkable gift for memorization, which comes in pretty handy when she's doing theater.

What are your interests/hobbies?

Thomas: Music, working with tools in his shop, loves watching movies, particularly sci-fi.

Elpida: I love making my environment beautiful! I paint walls and furniture, sew curtains and tablecloths for our home, I look for beauty in thrift and antique stores. I love to cook nutritious, beautiful food to serve on a table surrounded by friends and family! I love music, drama, dance, reading, gardening, travel and cultures. I love prayer, God's Word and His Church, quietness, and the exuberant joy I receive from His Presence!

Matthew: Comic books, airsoft, guns, hunting.

Zoe: I love sparkly things and rainbows, paper crafts, jewelry-making and drawing. I also like dress-up, and playing with friends.

How did you come to our Parish?

Tom's family was Catholic, then when he was about 12, they converted to Pentecostal religion. I was born into Christian Science, my mother and her mother were Christian Scientists. I don't know what they believe now. Anyway, when Tom and I met, neither of us were in any church to speak of. We began our spiritual walk together as mainline Protestants. Through the years of traveling, we experienced Baptist, to Pentecostal churches. Through it all, my love for God's Holy Word grew and grew. I was in prayer groups and bible studies throughout the 30 years I thought I was "saved." It was in the past 5 years or so a growing wonder, especially in the area of worship, that I wondered, is there more, are we missing something? Don't get me wrong, there were plenty of times I believe we experienced His Presence, it was what kept me going. The teaching was great! We learned how to apply God's principles to our lives and treat one another with grace and love. We learned a lot. But, something seemed missing still. We decided to stop going to the church where we had been members locally for about 11 years, to search for what, we didn't know. It

Continued on next page...



Member in the Spotlight *Continued...*

made sense to just go back to our “spiritual roots,” find where we might have gotten off the trail, maybe a Messianic Jewish congregation. We just didn’t know where to search, just knew we had to do something. Then we met Annamaria Kendrat! She was playing the lead in the show Zoe and I were also in, “Little Women.” We got to talking together and Annamaria said she was Greek Orthodox. I was intrigued! What’s that?! At the cast party, after the show, Annamaria’s mother, Kathy, spent time sharing with me church history! This was what we were looking for! God has heard and answered our prayers!! He who seeks will find! Our first service we attended was in December, just before Christmas. It’s hard to write simply what we felt, saw, experienced. I liken it to driving in a car in England! It’s the same as driving here in America, but sooooo different too!! There had always been a disconnect in our spirit with Christ’s body, His Church. It is always talked about in our Protestant churches. They don’t know what to do about it either. Their answer is to do life groups, cell groups, and more meetings. We have found the answer is deeper, richer, it’s an eternal home we long for, an eternal family connection through worship, liturgy, veneration of Saints, all this I didn’t know. Yes, we were missing something. While I will never speak anything but blessing for the experience I’ve had, the people and pastors I’ve met along the journey, I can now say with tears of joy, we are home. We are home. Thank you Holy Father! Thank You for loving us so much to lead us here where we can truly find You, know You and Your People. Thank You Church for taking us, strangers in. With tears of thanksgiving, I am overwhelmed! Thank you. Thank you!

What aspects or ministries of our Parish are you involved with?

Thomas: Aspiring to become a Chanter in our Parish. I was in Protestant Worship Teams for the past 15 years and really enjoy being part of Church Worship.

Elpida: I loved working with the ladies on the Pascha flowers! When we can, Zoe and I attend the PAREA lunches. I’m looking forward to working with the choir, maybe learning to chant at some point. Also, Effie Koutsourais taught me to make the Prosfora, and I’m looking forward to serving at VCC in June! And, I’m thoroughly enjoying our book club lead by Ana and Mitchell Balan!

Zoe: I’m in Effie’s Sunday School class, and am going to help with the VCC this summer. I love singing in church too.

What other activities are you involved with?

Tom: Running my Small Consulting Business! Takes up a lot of my time.

Elpida: I home school Zoe. We enjoy activities together like theatre, and Irish dance! I am also now and then involved with an opera. I like to be involved in our neighborhood ladies coffees and book club too. I also lead Zoe’s “American Heritage Girls” unit.

Matthew: Working on my comic series and freelance art commissions.

Zoe: American Heritage Girls, Irish Dancing, drama productions. Currently Zoe is doing a summer production of “Sound of Music.”

What are your hopes for the future of our Parish?

Tom: I’d really love to see our Parish get a Saint Name (St. Thomas would be good), then get started building our church. I love the architectural drawings of the new parish on the fellowship hall wall and would love to see that vision fulfilled. I would also like to see some sort of community outreach that introduces the Eastern Orthodox faith to the region.

Elpida: I just so thoroughly enjoy our beautiful church! It is the womb we were birthed from! My hope is that Christ in His mercy, through His Spirit may find us good soil. I want to bring baskets of harvest to His feet when I see Him! Basket upon basket, whatever that looks like, I’ll do!

Matthew: Love to see the choir grow.

Zoe: More people come to church and learn the Orthodox way.

What have you enjoyed most about our Parish?

Tom: For me it’s been the people. I’ve been a lot of places in Christendom but I haven’t had as many folks welcome me and my family in their church the way this Parish has. I would say that this has helped a great deal in our conversion process. The folks in this Parish are extremely kind, friendly, and welcomed us with open arms. It’s pretty remarkable in this day and age.

Elpida: It is a place where all that is necessary for healthy growing of the human spirit in God is. There is spiritual food and drink through our dearest Father George in the liturgy, communion, confession and teaching. There is family, and there are opportunities to use the gifts of service, humility, forgiveness, repentance, grace, encouragement and love in all our activities and relationships with each other. We have all that we need to fight the good fight, to persevere and grow in faithfulness and holiness.

Matthew: I appreciate the sense of reverence and worship as well as Father George’s teachings. He’s a great man and I’m honored to know him.

Zoe: Worshiping God and attending Sunday School. I like Father George a lot. I also love my church family, my God-parents/siblings, and friends.



Bella Gagliano (Matthew’s Fiancée), Zoe, Matthew, Elpida, and Thomas Skuce.