

# The Word

June 2023

*“And the Word became flesh & dwelt among us, full of grace & truth.”  
~John 1:14*



Dear Stewards and Faithful of Nativity of Christ,

*“Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.” - John 17:1-13*

During Sunday's Divine Liturgy, the above scriptural passage was read which beautifully reflects our goal as Orthodox Christians in our parish community. During the Marin Greek Festival, hundreds of parishioners dedicated their time and talents to share our culture and faith with all of Marin County. But in the eyes of God, the true aspiration of the Festival is for us to come together as ONE community, ONE parish and ONE family.

Our hard work unites us as a Parish and I'm incredibly thankful to everyone who participated in this year's Festival. I particularly thank our chairs: Rose, Hunter, Nico Haris, Bill Capetanos, and Tiffany Hobson for all the hours of planning and leadership. In addition, there are over 20 coordinators who are responsible for a specific facet of the Festival and I thank all of them for committing numerous hours to ensure their area was efficiently executed.

Thousands upon thousands of people experienced our food, music, dancing, and most

importantly, our faith. I thank all the stewards of our beloved Parish for making the 2023 Marin Greek Festival a true witness to our Orthodox Christian Faith and a treasured event in Marin County. Our Festival's success is not determined by the number who attend, but rather the number of people who witness that we are ONE.

Through the support of our Nativity of Christ stewards and all those who attend our Marin Greek Festival, we were also blessed to honor the Sparkle Foundation as our 2023 charity partner with a check for \$10,000 to continue their amazing charitable work.

Out of an expression of gratitude to all of our volunteers, I invite you to Nativity of Christ this **Thursday, June 1 for our Appreciation Dinner**. Delicious food will be provided with an opportunity to cheer on the Nikola Jokic (who is Serbian Orthodox) for the first game of the NBA Finals.

May our Lord continue to bless all of us with good health so we may continue to work for the Lord so we can always truly be ONE.

In Christ,  
Fr. John

# June Services and Readings

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All Divine Services on Sundays and weekdays begin with Orthros at 8:30 am followed by the Divine Liturgy. Other services will begin as noted. All services will be streamed. [Stream Services Here.](#)



Date	Service	Time
Saturday, June 3	Divine Services: Saturday of Souls	8:30 am
Sunday, June 4	Divine Services: Holy Pentecost	8:30 am
Sunday, June 11	Divine Services: Sunday of All Saints	8:30 am
Sunday June 18	Divine Services: 2nd Sunday of Matthew	8:30 am
Saturday, June 24	Divine Services: Nativity of St. John the Baptist	8:30 am
Sunday, June 25	Divine Services: 3rd Sunday of Matthew	8:30 am
Thursday, June 29	Divine Services: Peter, Paul and the Holy Apostles	8:30 am

## Stewardship

### "Stewardship is about Joy"

We don't give out of fear of judgment in the afterlife. We give with joy as part of our spiritual growth, putting the emphasis on experiencing heaven now. Stewardship of our gifts can help shape our world and ourselves in such a way that we can experience God's grace, love and communion in the present. This perspective on Christian Stewardship emphasizes that which is possible for us as humans – now rather than later. It shifts our focus from fear to the potential for experiencing joy.

Hard work may bring power and success, but only God can bring us joy, peace and love. Greed is the mathematical truism that the more you get, the more you have. The opposite of greed – the selfless love of God and neighbor – is based on the truth that the more you give away in love, the more you are.

The true motivation for giving is joy. Giving is an act of worship is response to the generosity of God. "You are to give," says Saint Paul, "as God has prospered you." His Second Letter to the Corinthians (9 & 10) teaches us clearly, "He who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." God blesses those who give with generosity.

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[www.nativityofchrist.org/giving](http://www.nativityofchrist.org/giving)



# Beyond 50: Sharing Our Orthodox Faith

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## GETTING TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR'S FAITH

"Ask Me Anything!"

Come join the Marin Interfaith Council to get to know your neighbors and hear about their different faith traditions.



June 21, 2023 at 6 pm,  
Greek Orthodox Christianity  
Father John Kocolas



NATIVITY OF CHRIST  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

BEYOND 50

### *Beyond 50 Goal:* *Initiate New Church* *Member Growth Strategies*

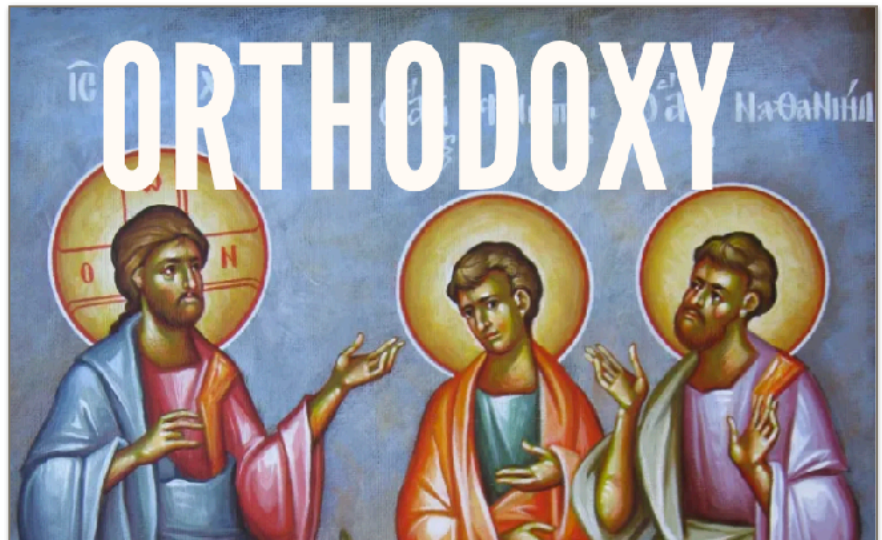
As we celebrate Pentecost on June 4, we will mimic the Apostles by sharing the Gospel in various capacities this month. At the Festival Church Tours, we had 10 individuals sign up for our 4 week discussion series to continue their interest in learning about the Orthodox faith. All are welcome! Begins at 7 pm.

May 31: What We Believe

June 7: Historical Overview

June 14: Saints and Missionaries

June 21: Orthodoxy in America and the World



"COME AND SEE" THE FAITH, HISTORY AND TRADITIONS OF OUR ORTHODOX CHURCH THROUGH A 4 WEEK INTRODUCTORY SERIES

**WEDNESDAYS AT 7:00 PM**

**5/31: WHAT WE BELIEVE**

FR. JOHN KOCOLAS

**6/7: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

FR. CONSTANTINE EFSTATHIU

**6/14: SAINTS & MISSIONARIES**

ANASTASIA PAMELA BARKSDALE, MDIV.

**6/21: ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA AND IN THE WORLD**

FR. CONSTANTINE EFSTATHIU &  
ANASTASIA PAMELA BARKSDALE, MDIV.

Contact Anastasia at [a.barksdale@ocmc.org](mailto:a.barksdale@ocmc.org) for more information.



# *Philoptochos*

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## *Next Meeting*

Our next meeting is a board meeting an online Zoom meeting Tuesday, June 6 at 7:00 pm.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83158313960?pwd=V0xTM0xEV3RMaFNZbGJ3Qy9CbNFIQT09>

Meeting ID: 831 5831 3960      Passcode: phil

## *Congratulations to our the 2023-2025 Philoptochos Board members!*

The Philoptochos board will be served some wonderful new members Laurie Madias, Vickie Mavromihalis, and Jenny Walters. All three bring a variety of valuable experiences, with emphasis on serving youth. Continuing board members are Dina Camamis, Vickie Hatos, Rose Hunter, Karen Keller, Nia Kosmas, Irene Meehan and Susan Stockton

## *Fellowship Hour - Starting June 4 - September 3.*

There are no groups assigned. for hosting Fellowship Hour. During these months regular coffee and tea and a light refreshment such as cookies and fruit are served. If you like to participate in bringing an item and making the coffee during the summer, that would be great. Please contact Irene Meehan [imeehan715@gmail.com](mailto:imeehan715@gmail.com).

## *Summer Camp at St. Nicholas Ranch*

There are still spots available for the July 16-22 session. Philoptochos is offering a one-time stipend of \$250 per child to reduce the cost of attending the Metropolis Summer Camp which has a rich tradition supporting Orthodox life. Daily liturgical services. Registration is now open See this website for more information.

<https://gosfyouth.org/summer-camp#/summer-camp-2023>

## *Supporting our Community*

Philoptochos has committed to providing dinner to the residents of Jonathan's Place on the 5th Sunday of any month that has 5 weeks. **July 30** is the next opportunity to support this Homeward Bound program which is the only emergency shelter for adults in Marin County. Johnathan's place has a capacity to house 40 people per night. If you like to be involved in providing the **July 30** meal or serving the meal, please contact Gigi Medan.

## *Marin Greek Festival*

This year, Philoptochos is sponsoring the Festival pastry booth. Pastry is part of Philoptochos history and, specifically, an important way our founding Nativity women raised funds to build the church.



## *Mother's Day Celebrations*

A small sample of the beautiful and inspiring mothers of our parish community. Happy Mother's Day!

# Religious Education

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## Sunday School

It was a wonderful Promotion Sunday as we honored our graduates and heard a presentation from each Sunday School class on what they learned this year. We are incredibly grateful to our dedicated volunteers for offering yet another educational year for our students. May we never stop learning and growing in our precious Orthodox faith! Thank you to our directors, Sara Allen and Kathy Marshall who worked harmoniously with our dedicated teachers.

**Little Learners: Xryssa Zotalis**

**K - 1st Grade: Pres. Stephanie Kocolas**

**2 - 5 Grade: Stella Stenros**

**6 - 8 Grade: Patrick Fuss and Christina Thomatos**

**High School: Michael and Marika Yakumithis**

## Scholarships

After the Sunday School presentations, Susan Stockton on behalf of our NOC Philoptochos, presented four, \$1,000 scholarships to students who have exemplified academic excellence and parish involvement:

**Alexander El-Far**

**Alexis Kamages**

**Georgia Pineda**

**James Starling**



## Sunday School 2023-2024

We look forward to the 2023-2024 Sunday School year which begins Sunday, August 20 with our Panaghia's Picnic. Registration for next year is already online.

<https://forms.gle/ALqJ9mCwRjF1fKgM9>

## May Sack Meal Project

**June 10, 2023**

**from 9 am to 11 am**

To Volunteer, click SignUp Genius link below

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DAFA82AA6FA7-june>

For more information, contact Cheryl Messner (415) 450-1440 or [clsimone123@gmail.com](mailto:clsimone123@gmail.com)

## Sack Meals

Please join us to prepare 150 sack meals for the needy in our community. We will need five sandwich makers, five helpers to assemble the sack meals, and two volunteers to deliver the meals to St. Vincent De Paul Free Dining Room in downtown San Rafael. To volunteer, please use this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DAFA82AA6FA7-june>

If you are not able to volunteer, but would like to contribute towards the meals, please send a check to the church office with a note "Sack Meal Project."

May we continue to pay our blessings forward and give glory to God through our service to those who are in need.

# SAVE THE DATES

Panaghia Picnic: August 20, 2023

Fest-to-Go Weekend: September 16 & 17, 2023

Wild West Dance: September 23, 2023

Bay Area Youth Retreat: October 14, 2023

Holiday Bazaar: November 11, 2023

# 2023 Marin Greek Festival

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It is with the spirit of Philoxenia that we welcomed thousands of attendees to the 2023 Marin Greek Festival and we shared our faith and culture with them. Visitors dined on our delicious food made from recipes passed down from generation to generation. They listened and danced to the bouzoukee beat of the Kymata Greek Band and enjoyed the performances of our own award-winning Minoan dancers. All around our grounds they found so much to see and do.

We would like to share with you comments from attendees:

“You feel the Greek Family Community at this Church. You taste it in the great food on offer. And the wine tasting was educational and good value. Thanks to these people.”

“Authenticity is usually hard to come by, but not in Marin at the Greek Festival. The echoes and rhythms of Crete, Mainland Greece, and the Greeks of the Black Sea come alive in a festival that makes everyone feel Greek for a while. But more than that, it makes everyone feel welcomed with joy, good taste and Christian spirit.”

“Wonderful group, very welcoming, entertaining & delicious food. A great way to experience the Greek culture and enjoy all the fun! Love it each year”.

**It takes a great amount of effort to make our festival possible each year and so we deeply want to thank all of our volunteers for their dedication and time. It takes a Village and our Village rocks!!**

With sincere gratitude,

Rose Hunter, Bill Capetanos, Nico Haris, and Tiffany Hobson

2023 Festival Steering Committee

## Scenes from Festival Preparation Days



# 2023 Marin Greek Festival

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# 2023 Marin Greek Festival

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# 2023 Marin Greek Festival

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# 2023 Marin Greek Festival

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# *St. John Chrysostom Festival*

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## *St John Chrysostom Festival*

On April 29, the Bay Area Oratorical Festival took place at Holy Cross in Belmont. Nativity's Georgia Pineda received First Runner-Up in the Senior division and Sophia Passaris received First Runner-Up in the Junior Division. Very proud of these two young woman for passionately expressing their faith! On May 13, our own Georgia Pineda participated in the Metropolis St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival.



## *Greek Experience Ministry*

The 2022-2023 Greek school year has concluded. We had a wonderful year with a diverse group of students in age, skill level and cultural backgrounds. We look forward to starting Greek school back up in mid-August for the year 2023-2024. Enrollment will be available the first two weeks of August. If you need more information about the classes and schedules we will be offering, do not hesitate to contact Eirini Karatzaferi or Chrissy Zotalis at [greekschool@nativityofchrist.org](mailto:greekschool@nativityofchrist.org).



# May 6 Events

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## NOC Golf Outing

The sun finally came out for our 1st annual NOC Golf Outing on May 6. A special thank you to John Stockton for organizing the afternoon while also donating the gift bags and prizes. Also thank you to Jim Kocolas for donating the golf shirts!



## NOC Ladies Night Out

On Saturday, May 6, the ladies of Nativity of Christ gathered for a night of fellowship and delicious food at Hop Monk in Novato.



# June Name Days

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It is the practice of our Church to give the name of a Saint to a newborn child. By assuming the name of a Saint, we honor the Saint, and we also provide the new Christian with an example worthy of emulation. The Saint then becomes the Patron of the child, and we pray that, through the Saint's intercessions, God will guide and protect the child throughout the child's life. Each month, we will be acknowledging in our monthly bulletin those celebrating their name day.

If by chance we accidentally missed someone's name day, we ask that you please contact the Church Office so that we may correct our records. We extend our prayers to all those celebrating their name day this month and beseech our heavenly Father to grant them many years!



## June 8: St. Kalliope

Keri Antonis  
Claire Gagas  
Collie Kassab  
Kay Simon

## June 26: St. David

David Barbieri  
David Blasingam  
Dave Flohr  
Michael David Squires  
David Stainbrook  
David Vossler

## June 29: St. Paul

Paul Efstathiou  
Paul Foster  
Peter Gikkas  
Paul Mayer  
Paula Plessas-Hall  
Paul Zaferiou



## Chian Society of California Agia Markella Annual Summer Picnic

Sunday, July 23 | after Divine Liturgy

Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church  
1110 Highland Drive  
Novato, CA 94947

\$25 Adults | \$15 kids (10 & under)

Music & Dancing!

For Tickets:

Nick Pries: (408) 398-7070

Antonia Fikaris: (510) 381-0723

Argyro Kozas: (510) 387-2057

Denna Tsatsaronis: hios85@hotmail.com

# 2023 Stewardship Pledges (as of May 31, 2023)

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Presiding Priest Fr. John & Pres. Stephanie Kocolas	Fotinos, Vivian Fourakis, Vasilis & Effie Franklin, Alexandra Friedman, Peter & Katina Pantzes	Madias, Constantine & Marti Madias, Evangelia Madias, Joanna Madias, Theodore Manesis, Alexandra Mantalvanos, Alex & Maria Manos, Michele Margaronis, Anastassios & Maya Marshall, Philip & Kathy Mavromihalis, Steven & Vickie Mayer, Paul & Diana Demetruilas Mavrantonis, Antoni & Maureen Maguire Medan, Dushan & Gigi Meehan, Nicole Meehan, Tom & Irene Meek, Gerald & Stamatina Meek, Jason Mehas, Christine Meredith, Kent & Angela Koros Messner, Mark & Cheryl Metallinos, Sophia Misthos, Eileen Morales, Marlon & Andrea Morris, Susan Morrisey, Lloyd & Anastasia Pinoris O'Connor Wayne & Betty Zootis Oetzel, Bob & Pauline Orologas, Julie Orologas, Katerina Pajcini, Marlen & Valentina Papageorge, Christos & Despina Panagotacos, James & Diane Papanikolaou, George & Soula Papanikolaou, Marina Papedo, Janice Passaris, Michael & Meredith Passaris, Theodore & Elaine Pauletto, Jeff & Alexandra Pederson, Daniela Perivolaris, Nick Perivolaris, Sara Petrapoulos, Thelma Petraakis, Steve Picras, Beatrice Pineda, Andy & Matina Seremetis Porter, Bryan & Melina Psaros, Stamatis & Helen Rishwain, Darron & Pamela Roland, George & Doris Ross, Sylvia Rouman, Steve & Liz Saldana, Mario & Jennifer Sandoval, Irene	Sarantakis, George & Susan Jensen Saris, Tony & Betty Scanagatta, Roman & Eleni Selmi, Catherine Selmi, Helen Sideris, Stassie Simon, Kay Slenkin, Alex & Nancy Smith, Evdokia Smyrni, Anna Soeten, Alexandra Sotiras, Erene Sotiras, George Sotiras, Maria Sotiras, Fr. Pete & Angie Squires, Michael & Johanna Starling, Eric & Irene Stathis, Pete & Dina Stathis, Sophia Stavrinides, Nicholas Stavrinides, Thalia Stenos, Stuart & Stella Stockton, John & Susan Stratigos, Spiro & Mary Kay Tacticos, George Tangelakis, Odysseus & Joanna Tarazi, Alex & Carla Thomatos, Dennis & Christina Touras, Antonios & Antonia Trapalis, Niovi Trevoledes, Patrice Tzafopoulos, Vasiliki Tzagarakis, Martina Vallas, James & Judith Vasilopoulos, Nick & Eileen & Gordon Vassiliou, Maggie Vlahakos, Nick & Georgia Walters, Amalia Walters, Jennifer Walters, Scott & Karen Weeks, Dan & Stacey Weipking, Ruari & Alexandra Kremer Wildermuth, Anna Xenelis, Nicholas Yakumithis, Michael & Marika Yatrakis, Christopher & Eirini Karatzaferi Yioulos, Dean & Ann Zaferiou, Paul & Phyllis Zahariudakis, Dimitrios & Haroula
Pres. Evelyn Adams	Gagas, Charles & Claire Gavallos, Victor & Brenda George, Pete & Ann Georgeson, George & Debbie Geron, Diana Gikkas, Pete & Vickie Hatos Gikkas, Stephanie Haginicols, Amalia Hajopoulos, Kathy Hall, Bryan & Paula Plessas-Hall Hamill, John & Athanasia Hanacek, Nick & Victoria Hanis, Jim & Stella Haralambopoulos, Costas & Ria Haris, George & Georgia Haris, Nico & Nicole Haritoudas, Stamatia Harris, Helen Harvey, Robert & Elaine Hontalas, Chris & Susan Hontalas, Frank & Eve Hundley, Courtney & Marilyn Hunter, John & Rose Iannios, Demetrios & Manulani Jorgensen, Eric & Mary Kakleas, Jon Kalabokes, Chris Kamages, Christ & Pat Kambur, JoAnne Kanas, Nick & Carolynn Karasz, Noula Katelanis, Olympia Kavantjas, Diane Kavouklis, Chris & Tonia Birmapakou Keller, Ed & Karen Kelley, Stephen & Eleni Kokalis, George & Debbie Kosmas, Anthony & Anthonia Kozas, Anna Kozas, Tom & Angero Kozas, Nonda & Nicole Kouvelis, Dean & Denise Kouvelis, Xenia Lagios, Michael & Sheila Lendaris, Antonia Lendaris, George Li, Robert & Stephanie Pappas Livadas, Carl & Stacy Livanos, Nick & Patti Lourdes, Vasiliki Lucas, Matt & Fei Lynn, Tom & Lucy Madias, Alexander & Robyn		

# June 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 MGF Volunteer Appreciation Dinner 5:30 pm	2	3 Divine Services- 8:30 am Saturday of Souls
4 <b>Holy Pentecost</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am	5	6 Philoptochos Board Meeting 7 pm	7 Orthodox Series: Historical Overview 7 pm	8	9 Fast Day	10 Sack Meals 9 am-11 am
11 <b>All Saints</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am	12	13 Parish Council Meeting 7 pm	14 Orthodox Series: Saints and Missionaries 7 pm	15	16 Fast Day	17
18 <b>2nd Sunday of Matthew</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am <i>Father's Day/ Philoptochos Oath of Office</i>	19	20	21 Marin Interfaith Event: Fr. John 6 pm  Orthodox Series: Orthodoxy in America and in the World 7 pm	22	23 Fast Day	24 <b>Divine Services- 8:30 am</b> Nativity of the Forerunner John the Baptist
25 <b>3rd Sunday of Matthew</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am	26	27 10 am Word Mailing	28 Fast Day	29 Divine Services- 8:30 am Peter, Paul, and the Holy Apostles	30 Fast Day	





Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church  
1110 Highland Drive  
Novato, California 94949  
[www.nativityofchrist.org](http://www.nativityofchrist.org)

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THE WORD

June 2023

# SAVE THE DATE

## 8th ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR



**NATIVITY OF CHRIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2023**

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM