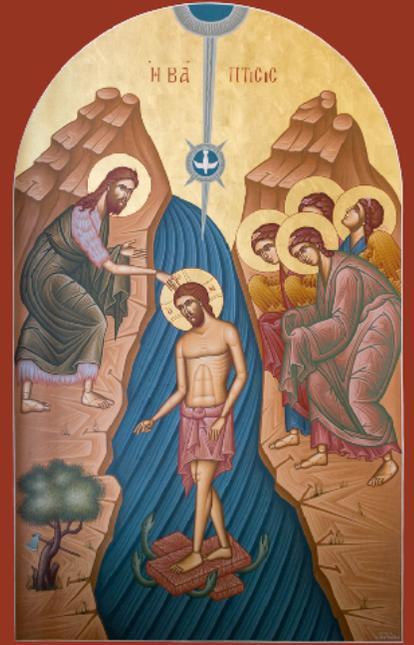


# The Word

January 2023

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



*“Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible.” – Tony Robbins*

Visible and tangible are not the first terms to describe faith and God. However, setting goals is a tool we can use to gauge our own spiritual growth for our faith in God. As our community enters the 2023 New Year, let us take the time to reflect and set goals for our Christian living for the upcoming calendar year. It promises to be an exciting and fulfilling year for the community where I hope we all experience spiritual, ministerial, and physical growth.

### *Spiritual Growth:*

Our Orthodox Christian living is grounded through the worship of our Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Coming to worship services and partaking of the sacraments is a critical component of our spiritual lives. There are additional disciplines that help us grow spiritually: stopping to pray before our

icons, consistently reading holy scripture, fasting, and increasing our charitable works. It is through these actions that we can “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.” (2 Peter 3:18)

### *Ministerial Growth:*

At Nativity of Christ, we offer 17 ministries ... 17! The goal of providing a wide variety of ministries is for each steward to feel welcomed and encouraged to become active participants in the life of the Parish community; to connect, engage, and grow with our brothers and sisters in Christ as one family. If each steward participated in at least two ministries, imagine the type of connection we would feel to our fellow Christian. Imagine the sense of Christian unity we would attain when we gather to “be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Mak(ing) every effort to keep the unity of

the Spirit through the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:2-3)

### *Physical Growth:*

If we grow spiritually through the sacraments and our ministries, then our physical growth is inevitable. The 2023 year will mark the culmination of our Beyond 50 Plan as we are engaging with the City of Novato and finalizing plans for our Narthex Gateway. This addition will add tremendous function and beauty to our place of worship, inspiring us to increase our apostolic responsibility to invite neighbors, friends, and colleagues to our worship services. The new physical presence of our church will be an exciting reason for us to exclaim, “come and see!” and for us to grow our Christian family.

As we reflect upon our New Year resolutions in 2023, let us also set goals as Orthodox Christians to make our invisible faith in God, visible for all to see.

# January Services and Readings

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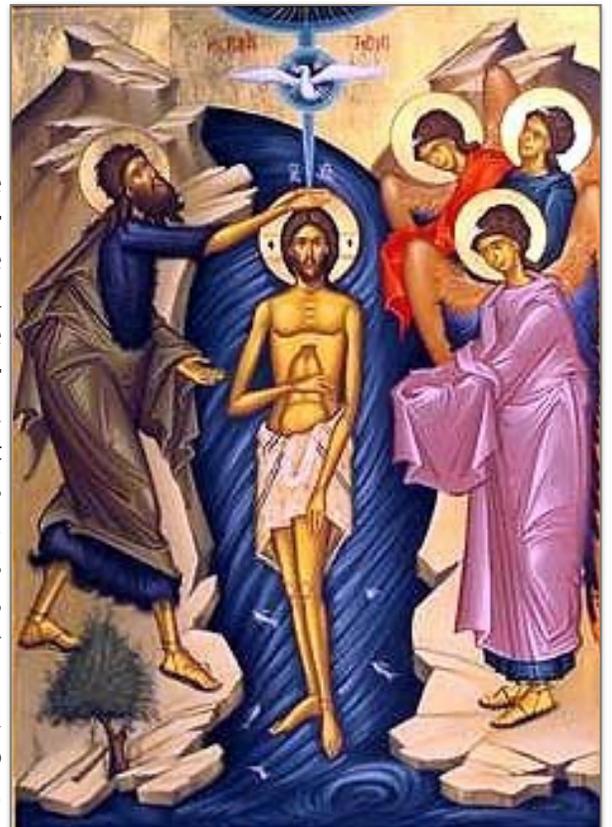


All Divine Services on Sundays and weekdays begin with Orthros at 8:30 am followed by the Divine Liturgy. All services will be streamed. [Stream Services Here.](#)

Jan 1	Sun	Sunday before Theophany	Colossians 2:8-12	Luke 2:20-21, 40-52
Jan 5	Thurs	Royal Hours	I Corinthians 9:19-27	Luke 3:1-18
Jan 6	Fri	Holy Theophany	Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7	Matthew 3:13-17
Jan 7	Sat	Synaxis of John the Baptist	Acts 19:1-8	John 1:29-34
Jan 8	Sun	Sunday after Theophany	Ephesians 4:7-13	Matthew 4:12-17
Jan 15	Sun	12th Sunday of Luke	Colossians 3:4-11	Luke 17:12-19
Jan 17	Tues	St. Anthony	Hebrews 13:17-21	Luke 6:17-23
Jan 18	Wed	Sts. Athanasios and Cyril	Hebrews 13:7-16	Matthew 5:14-19
Jan 22	Sun	15th Sunday of Luke	I Timothy 4:9-15	Luke 19:1-10
Jan 25	Wed	St. Gregory the Theologian	Hebrews 7:26-28; 8:1-2	John 10:9-16
Jan 29	Sun	Sunday of the Canaanite	II Corinthians 6:16-18; 7:1	Matthew 15:21-28

## The Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

About the beginning of our Lord's 30th year, John the Forerunner, who was some six months older than Our Saviour according to the flesh, and had lived in the wilderness since his childhood, received a command from God and came into the parts of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins. Then our Saviour also came from Galilee to the Jordan, and sought and received baptism though He was the Master and John was but a servant. Whereupon, there came to pass those marvelous deeds, great and beyond nature: the Heavens were opened, the Spirit descended in the form of a dove upon Him that was being baptized and the voice was heard from the Heavens hearing witness that this was the beloved Son of God, now baptized as a man (Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:1-22). From these events the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and the great mystery of the Trinity were demonstrated. It is also from this that the present feast is called "Theophany," that is, the divine manifestation, God's appearance among men. On this venerable day the sacred mystery of Christian baptism was inaugurated; henceforth also began the saving preaching of the Kingdom of the Heavens.



# Stewardship

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## Stewardship

Stewardship is our response to God's grace and moves us from grace to gratitude. Just as we love because God first loved us (I John 4:14), we give because God first gave to us. The question of the Psalmist "What shall I give to the Lord in return for all His benefits towards me?" (Psalm 116:2), is answered in every liturgy when we pray, "Let us offer ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God."

Please take time to fill out your 2023 Stewardship Commitment Form so we can all participate in the work of God. We offer our deepest gratitude for your love and dedication to our parish. 2023 Stewardship forms are available [online on our Giving page](#) and at fellowship hour through January 22, 2023.



## AmazonSmile and eScrip Donations



In 2022, Amazon donated \$234.90 to Nativity of Christ through 49 parishioners using the smile program. Imagine what that amount could be if we all used AmazonSmile when we do our Amazon shopping.

It is easy to use AmazonSmile to support Nativity of Christ. Start your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church.

Sign up at [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) so a percentage of all purchases made at eScrip merchants will be donated to Nativity of Christ. Participating merchants contribute each time your family makes a purchase. There are no receipts to collect or vouchers to buy. It is hassle-free, and every purchase counts! The Group ID for Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church is 500021821.



## How to donate to the Nativity of Christ from your IRA if you are over 72

Using a **Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)** is a great way for folks over 72 with an IRA who need to withdraw funds to meet a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) to contribute to Nativity's Beyond 50 campaign or Stewardship fund. The money you contribute to Nativity using a QCD is not included in your adjusted gross income on your tax return, which is a better option than listing the donation as a simple charitable contribution. According to the IRS:

*A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) is generally a nontaxable distribution made directly by the trustee of your IRA (other than a SEP or SIMPLE IRA) to an organization eligible to receive tax deductible contributions. You must be at least age 72, when the distribution was made. Also, you must have the same type of acknowledgment of your contribution that you would need to claim a deduction for charitable contribution.*

## A Lasting Gift for the Church – (Planned Giving)

A bequest or gift through your will is one of the simplest ways to make a lasting gift to the Church. Please consult your financial advisor for advice. A suggested wording: *I hereby bequeath the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ as a charitable bequest to the Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church of Novato (Tax ID23-7122395) to be used for charitable purposes of the Church.*

# Beyond 50

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## The Beyond 50 Plan

As reported at the Fall Parish Assembly on October 23, we have either completed or commenced work on all aspects of the original Plan, with the exception of three remaining facility enhancement projects - the Narthex Gateway, ADA Accessibility, and the Small Hall. We are currently finalizing plans and costs for all three. Renderings have been submitted to the City of Novato to begin a design review process. Here is a closer look into these exciting projects:

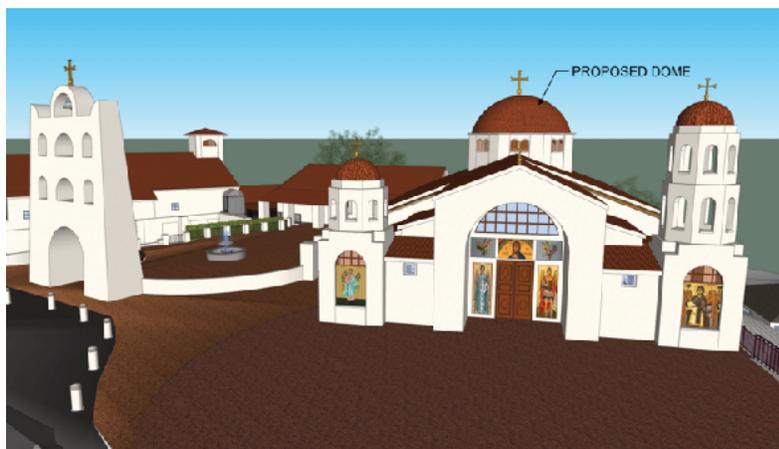


## A Front Entrance and Drop Off

“Where is the church?” Where is the bathroom?” These are common questions by visitors, and the Narthex Gateway will provide a divine presence for our house of worship with a safe drop-off area to be used for our seniors, limousines for weddings, or hearses for funerals.

## Enlarged Dome

In an effort to pursue all possibilities, enlarging the dome is being researched to understand what the cost would be, and to engage the parish to see if this is desired by our stewards. Including this new idea in the drawings now will avoid having to go back to the City of Novato at a later date for approval. It will only be pursued if approved by the parish and sufficient funds are received.



## Lifted Choir Loft

To accommodate the new entrance, the choir loft will be raised and the existing narthex will become an extension of the nave. Also depicted is the interior space if the dome is enlarged.

# Beyond 50

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## “Walk of Faith”

Beginning from the new drop-off area in front of the church will be a path connecting to the back patios. This will be an opportunity to fully connect our entire campus as well as provide a path for ecclesiastical processions such as Great Friday.



To connect the elevator with the office building, a small bridge will be built from just beneath the overhang. This will allow an easy course of travel from church services to the Fellowship Hall and outdoor patios.

## Small Hall/Outdoor Pavilion

Costs were a major factor in simplifying the plans from a new Small Hall to an Outdoor Pavilion. The simplified, open-air pavilion now has a dramatically lower estimated cost.

## ADA Accessibility: Elevator

An elevator and ramp were both thoroughly researched, but an elevator is ultimately being pursued since this was the preferred solution by the majority of parishioners in need of ADA accessibility. A ramp, although also effective, would require removal and reworking of the landscaping bed closest to the Fellowship Hall with an additional 130 feet of paved walkway to ensure the legally required slope.



The new design also offers an openness to the surrounding space and has the potential of being enclosed at a later time.

## Next Beyond 50 Update

The goal is to update the community as soon as bids for the large projects have been finalized. The next formal gathering will be the Spring Parish Assembly, tentatively scheduled for Sunday, February 26, 2023.

# VIP Gatherings

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## VIP Gatherings

All seniors are invited to our monthly gathering after Divine Liturgy. A delicious meal will be provided.

**Tuesday, January 17 (St. Anthony)**  
**Thursday, February 2 (Presentation)**

Please contact Vasiliki Tzafopoulos or Erene Sotiras for more details.

## December VIP Gathering

After Divine Liturgy for St. Nicholas, our VIPs enjoyed a wonderful meal, sang Christmas carols, and wished happy birthday to our December birthdays: Erene Sotiras and Fr. John! Please join us Tuesday, January 17, for our next gathering.



## Angel Tree

Once again, Nativity of Christ partnered with the Salvation Army to generously provide Christmas gifts for local children. Thank you to all those who participated!



## GOYA Christmas

Fun times at the GOYA Christmas party on Sunday, December 18. Thanks to the Rouman family for hosting!



# December Highlights

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## Sparkle Gift Drive

On December 9 and 10, Nativity of Christ hosted the annual Sparkle Foundation Holiday Gift Drive. Hundreds of volunteers gathered on our campus to organize, wrap, and distribute gifts to 70 single mothers and their families. It always is an inspiring effort to gather the greater community on our grounds.



## Blanket Tying 2022

On December 3, Nativity of Christ parishioners gathered for our 11th annual blanket tying evening. Thank you to all who donated and helped tie blankets this evening! We made 100 blankets, which will be donated in memory of Elektra Fourakis to UCSF's Benioff Children's Hospital Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Unit.



# Christmas Pageant

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## Christmas Pageant

Our wonderful Sunday school students participated in our Christmas program celebrating the Nativity of Christ! Thank you to our wonderful parent directors, Meredith and Daphne, who led us all in giving glory to God for the birth of His Son!



## *Advent Visits*

Our visitation ministry once again spread cheer with visits and gifts from Nativity of Christ.



# December Highlights

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## Ladies Night Out

On December 9, we had our second annual Ladies Night Out at Board and Brush. It was another fun evening of fellowship and we thank all those who joined us. Join us next month on Friday, January 13 at Mamita's in Novato.



## Axios!

As we celebrated St. Spyridon, we wish many years to Dn. Spiros Xydas, ordained to the Holy Diaconate at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Troy, Michigan. AXIOS!



## Sons of Nativity

One, two, three! Always a great time as para and pizza never fail. We invite all men to join us in January on Thursday the 19th at 7 pm.



## Volleyball

Not even close! A blessing to have our students home for Christmas, but the parents continued their domination.

# Charitable Giving

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## Local Philanthropy



**Holy Monastery of the Theotokos, Dunlap: \$1,500** The Monastery of the Holy Theotokos the Life Giving Spring is a women's monastery built on a hill overlooking St. Nicholas Ranch.

Founded in 1993 by Bishop Anthony, the monastery is currently home to 21 nuns. A spiritual oasis of Orthodox Christian worship and spirituality, the monastery welcomes pilgrims throughout the year.

**Holy Assumption Monastery, Calistoga: \$1,500**

Holy Assumption Monastery is part of the Orthodox Church in America Diocese of San Francisco and the West, under the omophorion of His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin. From its home on the banks of the Napa River in Calistoga, California, Holy Assumption Monastery welcomes faithful pilgrims and visitors of all backgrounds.



**Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute, Berkeley (PAOI): \$500** The PAOI exists to educate, communicate, promote, and sustain the traditions, values, teachings, and culture of Orthodox Christianity.

The Institute advances a strong, effective, highly visible witness of Orthodoxy through the Master of Arts in Orthodox Christian studies; offering academic lectures and symposia; housing a Rare Book Room and museum; publishing; sponsoring the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at the University of California at Berkeley and the Graduate Theological Union; offering educational programs to the faithful of the Bay Area, and other activities.

**St. John Monastery: \$500** The Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco was founded in 1996 as a community of Orthodox Christian monks. Currently the brotherhood consists of about 12 monks and novices.



**Sparkle Foundation: \$200**

Sparkle Foundation's vision: Create a world where all women and children have a sparkle in



their eyes. With women helping women, they believe that can happen. Whether it is making your holiday easier on your family or using our collective resources to help you find a better situation, the Sparkle Foundation aims to help make that happen.



**Raphael House: \$500** Since 1971, Raphael House has been at the forefront of providing for homeless and low-income families in the San Francisco Bay Area. Raphael House is a 100% privately funded and community-supported organization whose goal is to achieve long-term housing and financial stability.



**Camp Taylor: \$500**

Camp Taylor was founded in 2002 with the mission to help pediatric heart patients overcome the emotional and developmental challenges that accompany the disease through medically supervised camp programs. As youth experience summer camp staples like swimming, arts and crafts, horseback riding, and archery, along with heart health education and vital emotional support, they share a sense of growth and achievement with children and families in similar circumstances. No longer feeling "different" from their peers, campers return home empowered to take charge of their health and pursue fulfilling lives.

Nativity of Christ is proud to offer this donation in loving memory of **Elektra Fourakis** who cherished her experience at Camp Taylor.



**St Nicholas Ranch & Retreat: \$1,000**

St. Nicholas Ranch seeks to provide programs for the spiritual renewal and growth of the faithful, in an atmosphere promoting the wholeness of the individual, body, mind, and spirit, and to be a resource center for parish needs, offering religious education, retreats, conferences, and leadership development programs for all ages, reaching out especially to the youth.

## National and International

**Hellenic College Holy Cross School:**  
**\$5,000**

At Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, its mission is to prepare men and women for leadership by creating an environment that fosters growth in knowledge, faith, and service.



**Orthodox Christian Fellowship: \$500**

The vision of the Orthodox Christian Fellowship is to be the loving presence of Christ and the Orthodox Church on college campuses; to be an integral part of students' spiritual formation by challenging them to explore the Faith; and to inspire students to commit to living an Orthodox Christian way of life daily.

## LOVE WITHOUT BORDERS

**Love Without Borders: \$500**

Love Without Borders provides refugees living in encampments on the Greek Islands and on the mainland a source of emotional expression and economic self-empowerment through donated art supplies distributed to all the men, women, and children. With the help of both local and global communities, art exhibitions showcase hundreds and hundreds of art pieces. One hundred percent of the refugee art sales goes directly to the artist who created the piece. Each art show includes a presentation by volunteers who share their first-hand experience with aidwork and the stories of their experiences.

**Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage: \$500**

Since 1988, Project Mexico has been building safe, secure, and weather-tight homes for some of the most impoverished families in Northern Mexico. Every home is



constructed over the course of four days and built entirely with volunteer labor. Once complete, these homes are provided so that these families can build a brighter future for themselves and their children. St. Innocent Orphanage, which is associated with an Orthodox Christian Church and supported by Orthodox volunteers, was meant to provide much more than the basic needs offered by other orphanages in Mexico. It was established to provide each boy with a sense of spiritual direction, a public education enhanced by private tutoring, an active program of athletics and extra-curricular activities, and a lasting sense of family and belonging, fostered by unconditional love and support from all of the staff and volunteers within their ministry.

**Support a Mission Priest (OCMC): \$1,000**



Support a Mission Priest

(SAMP) is a development program of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center that offers monthly financial assistance to indigenous priests in extremely poor areas around the world. Through SAMP donations, the priest is able to apply himself more fully to the needs of the parish, and hierarchs are able to ordain more clergy to meet the growing needs of their flock.

**National Alopecia Areata Foundation: \$10,000**



NAAF was established in 1981 with one clear goal; to offer support to individuals affected by alopecia areata. Though the mission has expanded over the past two decades, the importance of providing a substantial support program to people of all ages and interests has not diminished. NAAF's various support programs and resources offer different ways to create a sense of community amongst individuals with alopecia areata and their families.

# Religious Education

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## Sunday School

**Hymn of the Feast:** When You, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest! For the voice of the Father bore witness to You, and called You His beloved Son! And the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the truthfulness of His word. O Christ our God, who was revealed unto us, glory be to You!

## January Themes and Focus

Christ's Baptism; Feastday of Theophany/Epiphany; Theophany/Epiphany icon explained; Sacrament of Baptism; Blessing of the waters; Life of St. Basil

## Introducing the Hymn of the Month

**Trisagion Hymn: Agios O Theos/Holy God**

This is our beautiful hymn praising God the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for his power. We know He is without beginning or end. In this hymn we ask God to have mercy on us all because we need forgiveness and because we recognize that all glory and praise belong to God now and forever. Our hymns capture what we believe in such beautiful words!

## Greek

Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός, ἅγιος ἰσχυρός, ἅγιος ἀθάνατος ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. (ἐκ γ΄.)

Ayios o Theos, ayios ischyros, ayios athanatos eleison imas. (3)

Δόξα Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι. Καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.

Ἀμήν. Ἅγιος ἀθάνατος ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς.

Ayios athanatos eleison imas.

## English

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3)

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages, Amen. Holy Immortal have mercy on us.

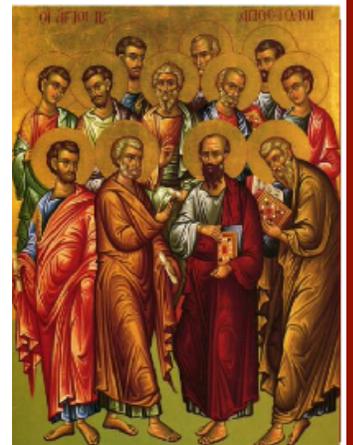


## Journey to Fullness

Since we recently completed our video series, Fr. John will now be leading discussions regarding common questions that many Orthodox Christians may have. January's Topic: "What makes everything (altar table, icons, gospel) in the church so important?" Join us as Fr. John gives both theological and historical explanations. Contact Fr. John if you have a question you'd like him to answer! Join us Wednesday, January 4 and 18 at 7:30 pm via [Zoom](#). ALL ARE WELCOME!

## Bible Study

**Tuesdays at 9 am. We are studying important aspects of the Bible via [Zoom](#). Email Fr. John for more information.**



## Christmations

Stamatia Haritoudis - February 27  
Tiffany "Anastasia" Hobson - September 11

## Baptisms

Lily "Christina" Vasilaros - January 16  
Athan "Athanasios" Kozas - May 14  
Calliope Kastoras - May 15  
Elias "Constantine" Adams-Rabb June 11  
Brandon "Mark" Page - September 2  
Jolie "Alexandra" England - September 11

## Weddings

George Fourakis and Sofia Nicklas - February 12  
Daniel Cunningham and Alexandra Kamber - June 4  
Nicholas Kostouros and Sarah Urke - June 4  
Harrison Geron and Jessie Welcomer - June 25  
Brandon Page and Collie Kassab - October 1  
Daniel Domenichelli and Konstantina Dendrinios - October 22  
Nektarios Papadakis and Iskhanuhi Matesvosyan - November 20

## Funerals

Katherine Pantazes - January 26  
Victoria Kalabokes - January 27  
Charles Marvin Jr. February 16  
Kalliope Smernes - March 3  
Penny Zachariou - April 6  
Yasmeen Farhoud- May 3  
Nicholas Tzafopoulos - June 21  
Dimitra Vellis - June 24  
Maria Pappas - September 19  
Argentina Iorga - September 27  
Amanda Vlahakis - November 18

# Godparents Sunday

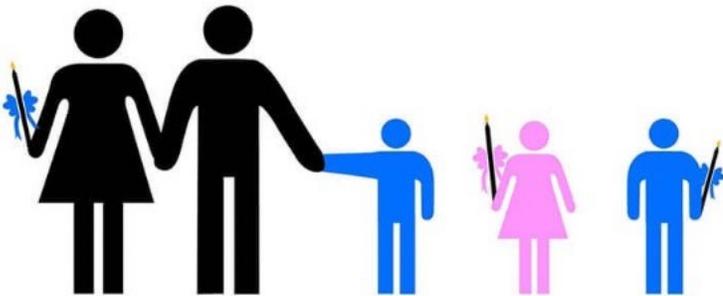
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GODPARENT / GODCHILD SUNDAY

# SUNDAY

All Godparents & Godchildren are invited to attend the Divine Liturgy & receive Holy Communion together

**Sunday,  
January 29, 2023**



NATIVITY OF CHRIST

## LADIES NIGHT OUT

*Join us for a night out full of fellowship  
& fun!*

**JANUARY 13 | FRIDAY | 7:00PM**

**MAMITA 340 IGNACIO BLVD  
NOVATO**

EVERYONE IS INVITED! PLEASE RSVP TO  
PRES.STEPHKOCOLAS@GMAIL.COM BY JANUARY 6TH

# Philoptochos

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## Next Meeting

Our next meeting is a board meeting on Tuesday, January 3. The meeting starts at 7:00 pm and will be online only.

## Join Zoom Meeting

[Jan 3 Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 831 5831 3960

Passcode: phil

## Vasilopita Bread Sales

Philoptochos will have a Vasilopita sale on Sunday, January 8, 2023. Don't miss out! Get your pre-order in to the Church Office by January 2 (please include the order form). There will be a few loaves available on the 8th. A minimum donation of \$15 is requested for each loaf.

## Philoptochos Board

Nia Kosmas	Co-president	(415) 999-0897	<a href="mailto:nia.kosmas@gmail.com">nia.kosmas@gmail.com</a>
Irene Meehan	Co-president	(415) 497-7674	<a href="mailto:imeehan715@gmail.com">imeehan715@gmail.com</a>
Gigi Medan	Treasurer	(707) 529-7441	<a href="mailto:gandd2@comcast.net">gandd2@comcast.net</a>
Karen Keller	Corresponding Secretary	(415) 250-4288	<a href="mailto:karendkeller@comcast.net">karendkeller@comcast.net</a>
Cathy Selmi	Recording Secretary	(415) 246-1760	<a href="mailto:cathyselmi@gmail.com">cathyselmi@gmail.com</a>
Dina Camamis	Advisor	(415) 456-6336	<a href="mailto:cdc2ck@aol.com">cdc2ck@aol.com</a>
Vickie Hatos	Board Member	(415) 378-6037	<a href="mailto:vickiehatos@comcast.net">vickiehatos@comcast.net</a>
Rose Hunter	Board Member	(415) 497-8300	<a href="mailto:kynegos@hotmail.com">kynegos@hotmail.com</a>
Susan Stockton	Board member	(707) 365-8184	<a href="mailto:22pies@att.net">22pies@att.net</a>



## Annual Vasilopita Sale Sunday

# January 8, 2023

All proceeds benefit the children of St. Basil Academy

Minimum donation \$15.00 each

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Loaves: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$15.00 Each

I have enclosed my donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: **Philoptochos**

Mail or take order form to the Church Office

**Pre-Order Deadline: January 2, 2023**

# St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

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## JUNIOR DIVISION

(GRADES 7-9)

### TOPIC 1

Orthodox tradition teaches that the Saints remain spiritually active beyond their earthly life. Discuss how we ask the Saints to intercede and pray for us and why.

### TOPIC 2

Orthodox Christians honor the Virgin Mary, the Most Holy Theotokos. What does the Orthodox Church believe about her and her role in our salvation?

### TOPIC 3

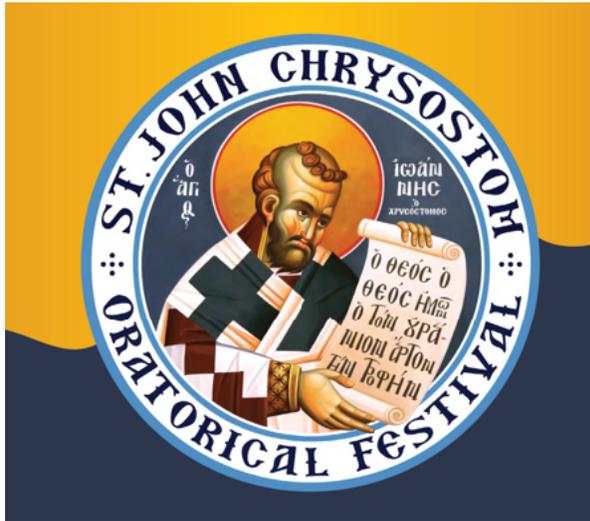
The sacraments are the mysteries of the Church through which God gives us His grace by actions, words, and material objects (for example, oil, wine, and bread). Pick one sacrament and explain its meaning.

### TOPIC 4

Jesus models and teaches humility throughout His life and ministry. Discuss the challenges of living according to Jesus' teachings in a society that does not necessarily emphasize humility.

### TOPIC 5

Consider and discuss why and how icons are central to our faith and Orthodox practice.



## SENIOR DIVISION

(GRADES 10-12)

### TOPIC 1

The Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople is the highest seat and the Mother Church of Orthodox Christians. The Ecumenical Patriarch is the spiritual leader of 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. Discuss how the Patriarchate has been a symbol of unity, a source of missionary growth, an advocate of dialogue among Christians, and a defender of the historical Orthodox Faith.

### TOPIC 2

During times of crisis, our faith is tested. How are Orthodox Christians taught to understand and manage pain and suffering?

### TOPIC 3

The Christian message in C.S. Lewis's "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," has influenced many believers of Christ. How has another work of fiction inspired people to seek Jesus Christ?

### TOPIC 4

We have lived through a pandemic and emerged with deep societal divides. How can our faith in Christ heal us and take us forward together?

### TOPIC 5

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ both transforms the relationship between God and humanity and alters the course of history. How would you explain its significance to someone who has not heard about it or is unsure if God exists?

*Do you want updates or highlights on our events?*

Follow Nativity of Christ on Facebook or Instagram.



<https://www.facebook.com/nativityofchrist>



@nativityofchrist

# Title

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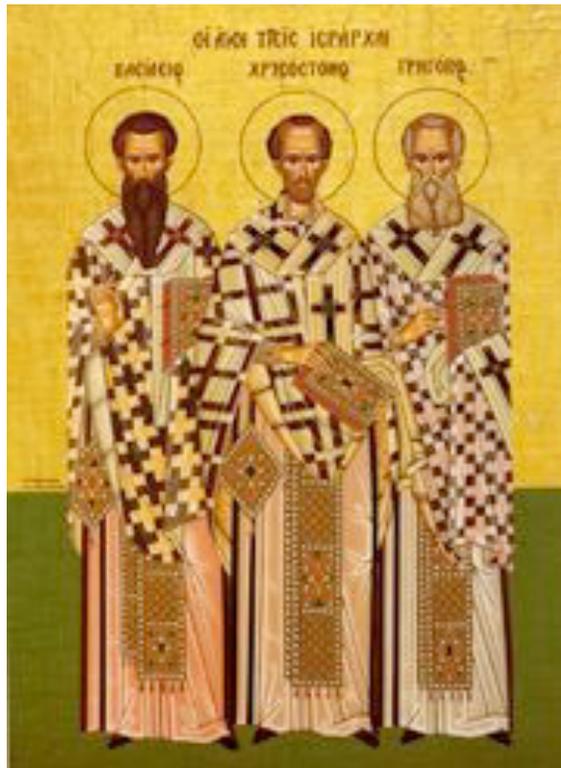
## HOST AN OCMC EVENT IN 2023

Parishes and mission supporters across the country are involved in the vibrant missionary life of the Church. They share how OCMC serves the Church's mission to "make disciples of all nations" by sending missionaries, supporting projects, and working with local communities.

In 2023, consider hosting an OCMC event to help your community develop a missionary mindset and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ around the world.

Contact Anastasia Barksdale or scan the QR code to start planning your event today!

Visit [www.ocmc.org](http://www.ocmc.org) for more information. Contact Anastasia at: Phone: (904) 529-5132 Ext. 162 | E-mail: [a.barksdale@ocmc.org](mailto:a.barksdale@ocmc.org)



## *Synaxis of The Three Hierarchs: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, & John Chrysostom*

This common feast of these three teachers was instituted a little before the year 1100, during the reign of the Emperor Alexis I Comnenus, because of a dispute and strife that arose among the notable and virtuous men of that time. Some of them preferred Basil, while others preferred Gregory, and yet others preferred John Chrysostom, quarreling among themselves over which of the three was the greatest. Furthermore, each party, in order to distinguish itself from the others, assumed the name of its preferred Saint; hence, they called themselves Basilians, Gregorians, or Johannites. Desiring to bring an end to the contention, the three Saints appeared together to the saintly John Mavropous, a monk who had been ordained Bishop of Euchaita, a city of Asia Minor, revealing to him that the glory they have at the throne of God is equal, and told him to compose a common service for the three of them, which he did with great skill and

beauty. Saint John of Euchaita (celebrated Oct. 5) is also the composer of the Canon to the Guardian Angel, the Protector of a Man's Life. In his old age, he retired from his episcopal see and again took up the monastic life in a monastery in Constantinople. He reposed during the reign of the aforementioned Emperor Alexis Comnenus (1081-1118).

# January 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!



## **Jan 1: St. Basil**

Bill Adams  
Bill Capetanos  
Vickie Diamond  
Vasilis Fourakis  
Vickie Hatos  
Vicki Lamerdin  
Vasiliki Lourdis  
Bessie Mitskaris  
William Offill  
Bill Powers  
Betty Saris  
Vasilios Soldatos  
Vicki Trapalis  
Vasiliki Tzafopoulos  
Betty Zootis

## **Jan 6: Theophany of our Lord**

Fran Corcoran  
Frank Hontalas  
**Jan 7: St. John**  
Joanne Argyres  
Ioannis Barmperis  
John Canellos  
John Capetanos  
Yianni Capetanos  
Joanna Castro  
John Cavender  
Bruce Corcoran  
Jeanette Eftimiou  
Nicholas Eftimiou  
John Ferber  
John Fradelizio

John Hamill  
John Hunter  
Jon Kakleas  
JoAnne Kambur  
Fr. John Kocolas  
John Kosturos  
John Kratsas  
Joanna Madias  
John Markatos  
John Papadopoulos  
Joan Patropulos  
Joanna Rizzuti  
John Rouman  
Yianni Simos  
Johanna Squires  
John Stockton  
Joanna Tangalakis  
John Triantafyllos  
Yiannis Valakitsis  
John Vratos  
Wyatt Jon Webber

## **Jan 15: St. Paul**

Alexandros El-Far  
**Jan 17: St. Anthony**  
Anthony Chrisanthis  
Antonios Darakis  
Antonios El-Far  
Raisa Gagas  
Antoinette Griffin  
Andoni Kocolas  
Anthonia Kosmas  
Anthony Kosmas

Antonia Lendaris  
Anthony Mancini  
Santino Mancini  
Antonette Markatos  
Leandros Antonis Mastor  
Antoni Mavrantonis  
Antonio Rishwain  
Mario Saldana  
Anthony Saris  
Anthony Scott  
Antonia Touras  
Antonios Touras

## **Jan 18: Athanasios & Cyril**

Dawne Cerecedes  
Broderick Athanasios Chester  
Tom Kozas  
Thanos Livadas  
Athanasios Papageorge  
Athanasios Cole Stainbrook

## **Jan 22: St. Timothy**

Timothy Chyrklund  
Tim Farmer

## **Jan 24: St. Xenia**

Xenia Botaitis  
Xenia Kuvelis

## **Jan 25: St. Gregory**

Grigorios Antonellis  
Greggory Keller  
Gregory Siefkas

## **Jan 28: St. James**

Dimitri Brzycki

## 2023 Stewardship Pledges (As of December 27, 2022)

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Presiding Priest	Lagios, Michael & Sheila
Fr. John & Pres. Stephanie	Lendaris, Antonia
Kocolas	Li, Robert & Stephanie Pappas
	Livanos, Nick & Patti
Priest Emeritus	Lourdes, Vasiliki
Fr. Constantine & Pres. Kay	Madias, Alexander & Robyn
Efstathiou	Mantalvanos, Alex & Maria
Pres. Evelyn Adams	Margaronis, Anastassios & Maya
	Marshall, Philip & Kathy
Adams, Bill & Lisa	Medan, Dushan & Gigi
Angelonides, James & Arlene	Meehan, Tom & Irene
Antonis, Chris & Keri	Meredith, Kent & Angela Koros
Arango, Pat	Messner, Mark & Cheryl
Argyres, Andreas & Joanne	Misthos, Eileen
Balopoulos, Michael	O'Connor Wayne & Betty Zootis
Barksdale, Anastasia	Pajcini, Marlen & Valentina
Bechaka, Sonia	Papanikolaou, George & Soula
Bizani, Alexandra	Papanikolaou, Marina
Castro, Jeff & Joanna	Passaris, Theodore & Elaine
Cerecedes, Frank & Dawne	Perivolaris, Sara
Chyrklund, Chris & Elaine	Petracopoulos, Thelma
Contos, Jeff	Pineda, Andy & Matina Seremetis
Corcoran, Bruce & Fran	Roland, George & Doris
Curelaru, Viorica	Rouman, Steve & Liz
Daifotis, Kimon & Cindy	Sandoval, Irene
Dallas, Helen	Selmi, Catherine
Degaitis, Julia	Selmi, Helen
Economy, Carol	Sideris, Stassie
Fotinos, Vivian	Smith, Evdokia
Fourakis, Vasilis & Effie	Soeten, Alexandra
Gagas, Charles & Claire	Sotiras, Fr. Pete & Angie
George, Pete & Ann	Sotiras, Maria
Geron, Diana	Stenros, Stuart & Stella
Hajopoulos, Kathy	Stratigos, Spiro & Mary Kay
Hanacek, Nick & Victoria	Tangalakis, Odysseus & Joanna
Haritoudas, Stamatia	Touras, Antonios & Antonia
Hontalas, Chris & Susan	Vallas, James & Judith
Hundley, Courtney & Marilyn	Vasilopoulos, Nick & Eileen Gordon
Hunter, John & Rose	Vassiliou, Maggie
Kalabokes, Chris	Yakumithis, Michael & Marika
Kambur, JoAnne	Yioulos, Dean & Ann
Kanas, Nick & Carolynn	Zaferiou, Paul & Phyllis
Katelanis, Olympia	Zahariudakis, Dimitrios & Haroula
Kelley, Stephen & Eleni	
Kokalis, George & Debbie	

# January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <b>Sunday before Theophany</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am Family Worship	<b>2</b> Office Closed	<b>3</b> Bible Study 9 am GEM - Zoom 4:30 - 5:30 pm Philoptochos 7 pm	<b>4</b> GEM - Zoom 5:30 - 6:30 pm Minoans Dance Practices Journey to Fullness 7:30 pm	<b>5</b> Royal Hours 8:30 am Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil GEM - Zoom 6 - 7pm	<b>6</b> Divine Services- 8:30 am Holy Theophany GEM 4-5 pm GEM 5-6 pm	<b>7</b> Divine Services- 8:30 am Synaxis of John the Baptist
Fast Free Days						
<b>8</b> <b>Sunday after Theophany</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am Sunday School Vasilopita Lunch GEM Dance Minoans Dance	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Bible Study 9 am GEM - Zoom 4:30 - 5:30 pm Parish Council 7 pm	<b>11</b> GEM - Zoom 5:30 - 6:30 pm Minoans Dance Practices	<b>12</b> GEM - Zoom 6 - 7pm Open Gym 7 pm	<b>13</b> GEM 4-5 pm GEM 5-6 pm Ladies Night Out at Manita 7 pm Fast Day	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>12<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Luke</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am Sunday School GEM Dance Minoans Dance	<b>16</b> Martin Luther King Day Office Closed	<b>17</b> Divine Services- 8:30 am St. Anthony VIPs Gathering GEM - Zoom 4:30 - 5:30 pm	<b>18</b> Divine Services- 8:30 am Sts. Athanasios and Cyril GEM - Zoom 5:30 - 6:30 pm Minoans Dance Practices Journey to Fullness 7:30 pm	<b>19</b> GEM - Zoom 6 - 7pm Sons of Nativity 7 pm Open Gym 8 pm	<b>20</b> GEM 4-5 pm GEM 5-6 pm	<b>21</b>
Fast Day						
<b>22</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Luke</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am Sunday School GEM Dance Minoans Dance	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Bible Study 9 am GEM - Zoom 4:30 - 5:30 pm	<b>25</b> Divine Services- 8:30 am St. Gregory the Theologian GEM - Zoom 5:30 - 6:30 pm Minoans Dance Practices	<b>26</b> Mailing Team 10 am GEM - Zoom 6 - 7pm Open Gym 7 pm	<b>27</b> GEM 4-5 pm GEM 5-6 pm	<b>28</b>
Fast Day						
<b>29</b> <b>The Canaanite</b> Orthros 8:30 am Liturgy 9:30 am Godparent Sunday Sunday School GEM Dance Minoans Dance	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> Bible Study 9 am GEM - Zoom 4:30 - 5:30 pm	<b>February 1</b> GEM - Zoom 5:30 - 6:30 pm Minoans Dance Practices Journey to Fullness 7:30 pm	<b>2</b> Divine Services- 8:30 am The Presentation of Our Lord VIPs Gathering GEM - Zoom 6 - 7pm	<b>3</b> GEM 4-5 pm GEM 5-6 pm	<b>4</b> Community Crab Feed



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**COMMUNITY CRAB FEED**

**A BENEFIT FOR  
 THE PAN CRETAN CHAPTER OF  
 MARIN & SONOMA COUNTIES**

**& NATIVITY OF CHRIST  
 GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**SATURDAY,  
 FEBRUARY 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2023**

DELICIOUS GREEK APPETIZERS & CRAB,  
 CRETAN WINE BAR, RAFFLE & SILENT AUCTION,  
 AUTHENTIC MUSIC FROM CRETE &  
 PERFORMANCES BY MINOAN DANCERS