

Volume 26, Issue 1
January - February, 2022

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THE NEWS FROM ST. NEKTARIOS

GET READY TO CLIMB

By Fr. Andreas G. Houpos, Proistamenos

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the course of the last several weeks, despite the intensity of the ongoing pandemic’s most recent surge, it has been a true joy and blessing to be invited to your homes to bless them. As the season for house blessings comes to a close, and as we stand on the brink of the Great Fast, allow me a reflection.

On the Feast of Theophany, when we offer the Great Blessing of Waters (Ὁ Μέγας Ἀγιασμός), the voice of the Church offers a petition for “those who are sprinkled with [the sanctified water] and take it for the blessing of homes”. Indeed, the faithful take holy water home with them and may bless their homes and one another, keeping some to sip just a little each morning before taking any other drink or food. In this way, the blessing of the Church quite literally seeps into our homes in a tangible way.

One way this is magnified is by calling a priest to the home to

offer particular prayers, and to go through the house sprinkling it with the sanctified water. He may then visit with the individual or family and get to know them, and allowing them to get to know him. In this way, the bonds of the Church are cemented both sacramentally and socially, providing new veins through which the Grace of our Lord can course to his Body.

After Jesus proclaimed salvation upon the house of Zacchaeus, he said he came “to seek and to save the lost”. Brothers and sisters, he is looking for us.

When a home is being blessed for the first time, a special prayer is offered:

“O God our Savior, the True Light, who were baptized in the Jordan River by John, and deigned to enter under the roof of Zacchaeus, bringing salvation to him and his household: You, the same Lord, also keep safe from

harm those who dwell herein; grant them your blessing, purification, and bodily health, and all their petitions that are unto salvation and life everlasting.”

This linking of the house blessing with our Lord’s encounter with Zacchaeus is an important moment. Our Lord did indeed enter Zacchaeus’ house and say “Today, salvation has come to this house”. However, he did so after Zacchaeus showed himself to be zealous for God and confessed his sins (and their restitution) publicly and boldly: “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold.”

The blessings bestowed upon us by the Lord are freely given. However, we accrue them as debt when we do not act like Zacchaeus. As we reflect on the blessings we have been freely given during this season of house blessings, with the Lord coming into our homes to bless them, the Church is now

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

gradually guiding our gaze into the Great Fast. She usually does this by proclaiming the Lord's encounter with Zacchaeus from the pages of the Holy Gospel six weeks before the beginning of the Fast. This year, however, the reading was eclipsed by that for the celebration of the Three Hierarchs (Sts. Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and John Chrysostom) on January 30.

Be that as it may, we can take the opportunity to reflect on all the blessings God has given us, and how we have responded. Have we thanked him in person, by coming to church services? By being compassionate towards others? By confessing our sins? By righting our wrongs, and forgiving those who have wronged us? By humbling ourselves? By supporting the work and needs of our parish? If we do not do these things, can salvation truly come to our house?

After Jesus proclaimed salvation upon the house of Zacchaeus, he said he came "to seek and to save the lost". Brothers and sisters, he is looking for us. He had also been looking for Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus made himself conspicuous by climbing a sycamore tree. What are we doing to make ourselves conspicuous to the Lord? What is our equivalent of Zacchaeus' tree? If we can't think of anything, the Church gives us the Great Fast: a time of increased opportunity to worship, pray, fast, exert self-control, and to do good deeds—in other words, every opportunity to catch a glimpse of Jesus and to get his attention. Let's get ready to climb!

+Fr. Andreas

FOCUS ON OUR COMMUNITY

Celebrations, Milestones, Comfort & Support

In our prayers

Aphroula John Pat KS Joe Kim Johanna Edward Tina Theona Helen & Richard DG Chuck
Handsel Mason Robin & Benny John & Elaine Jennifer & family Eleftheria Mary Catherine Grant
Jack Phyllis Melton family Tish Joanne Christina Stephen Gloria
Phil & Ronnie John & Michelle & family MP MSR Glen Cheryl & Brian Paul
John T. John D. Terry Dorothy Erma (Hermione) Phyllis

Our First Responders, those on the front lines during this Pandemic and those suffering from Covid-19 and other illnesses throughout the entire world

FOR THOSE IN SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

Helene Jordan Krassimire Nicholas Michael Constantine Zack
Matthew Amanda Danielle Anton Jimmy

Congratulations and best wishes

To John Sarantou on being selected by the Founders of FAITH: An Endowment for Orthodoxy and Hellenism, as a 2021 FAITH Scholar for Academic Excellence.

Births & Fortieth Day Blessings

To Mary & Ben Dresser on the birth & 40th day blessing of Evangeline, Thea, & Stylianos' sister, Hermione Susanna
To Rocio and Jimmy Clonaris on the birth and 40th day blessing of Nico's brother, Dimitri Gerry
To Alex and Ryan Hurst on the birth and 40th day blessing of their son, Charles Ryan
To Nina & Joshua Dzyak on the birth of Roman's brother, Ezekiel Leon "Zeke"

Chrismations

To Darlene & Derek Gray on their chrismations
To Sam Burrus on his chrismation
To Hanna and Ayoub Ayoub on their chrismations
To Lula and Safwat Wassef on their chrismations

Baptisms

To Debbie and Najib Assad on their baptisms
To Elena and Sam Burrus on the baptism of their daughter, Vaia

MARRIAGES

To Debbie and Najib Assad on their marriage
To Kaitlin Thomas and Sam Bandak on their marriage

With Sympathy on the Repose of our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ

To Dino and Sharon Kanelos and family on the repose of their son, Lucas
To Peter B. and Perry B. Pappas, Anna Dozier and Michelle Cole families on the repose of their mother, Cornelia (Neily) Rogers Pappas
To the Petrou and Couchell families on the repose of Petros' father, Polydoros "Paul" Petrou in Cranston RI
To the Malatras family on the repose of Mark's father, John Malatras
To Sylvia Anton on the repose of her brother, George Anton
To the Sohoritis family for the repose of Evangelia's husband, George Sohoritis
To the Giannakakos, Karantonis, Papanikolaou, Bournas and Sarolas families for the repose of their mother and Fr. Nektarios' s grandmother, Evangelia P. Giannakakos

In Appreciation

Thanks to Diane Gilbert and Copycat for printing the Church Bulletin and Newsletter.
Thank you to all who allowed us to use your photos for this issue — Fr. Nektarios, Fr. Andreas, Kim Braswell, Elizabeth Kleto, Sam Kleto, Jim Keown

Please contact Kim Braswell at kclewell@stnektarios.org with information we may share with the community or to add someone to the prayer list. Please contact the office to request a clergy visit.

2022 PARISH COUNCIL



2022 Parish Council pictured left to right:
 Elissa Bahanovich, Joanne Kiser, Despina Gallis, George Harris,
 George Bacogeorge, Aka Vashakidze, Chris Mortis and Mike Burgan
 Not Pictured: Mark Malatras



Thank You
 to our outgoing Parish Council members
 who have faithfully served our parish.
*Christina Bonderer, Nadia Francis,
 Nadine Rosekrans, Doug Sistare
 & Dimitri Triantafyllides*

The Parish Council is comprised of 11 individuals seeking to serve God as servant-leaders to our clergy, our ministries, and our community. While Parish Council members come from diverse backgrounds and skills, all members share a joy of working together to build a Christ-centered parish of faith and love. As servant leaders, they are key participants in setting the future direction of the community and maintaining the principles of our Mission and Vision.

Duties and responsibilities of Council members range from ensuring the good governance of the community, short and long range planning, implementing sound fiscal policies, and helping with church-wide events to promote strong ministry programs and activities. They strive to connect with our parishioners, ushering during worship services and building our church family.

The members of the 2022 Parish Council were installed on January 30. Officer elections took place in a special meeting immediately after the Service. ❖

ST. NEKTARIOS STAFF CHANGES

At the end of service on Sunday, January 2, we wished a blessed farewell to Niki Kleto, who, for nearly seven years, faithfully served as Administrative Assistant. We will miss her dedicated, resourceful, and helpful presence very much!

Niki became a vital part of the St. Nektarios staff, teaching herself the website and live-streaming among her numerous office responsibilities. She will continue to work remotely and part-time for now as she has relocated to be close to her family in Georgia.

While at St. Nektarios she volunteered her time and talent as a chanter, blood drive coordinator, and member of the Board of Elections. She gave many **more hours of service to the Ladies'**

Philoptochos which included 2 years as **president. We ask for God's blessing** on her journey and look forward to seeing her soon.

We also welcomed Jim Keown as sexton. Until now Jim has been helping in the church on a volunteer basis. In his new capacity, he will have a more formal role in the care of the church building and in support of our various liturgical services. ❖



Pictured above: Niki Kleto with Fr. Andreas on January 2 and in various volunteer roles
 Pictured left: Jim Keown with Fr. Andreas

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

We were pleased to welcome His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa for the service of the Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Metropolitan Gregory is one of the founders of our parish and it is always a blessing to have him join us. His Eminence is in the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the United States of America, and is located in Pennsylvania. ❖



FROM FR. ANDREAS' CHRISTMAS VIDEO MESSAGE

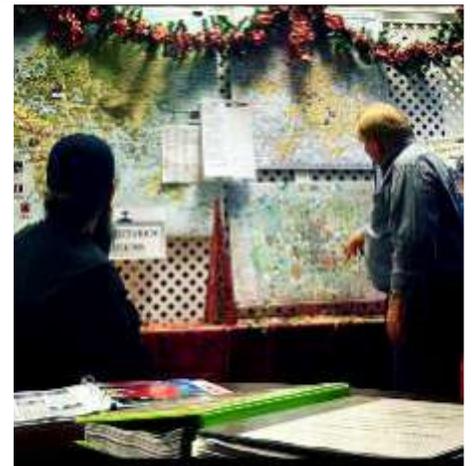
We want to send a special greeting this year to those of you who have been away from your church for too long. We know that it's been a struggle for you and we know you are in sorrow missing your church and community and, most importantly, your connection with our Lord. Please know you are in our prayers, we embrace you and we look forward to seeing you as soon as possible. Of course, we extend our availability to you as well, should we be able to visit you at home. God bless you all . . . A Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year! ❖

VISIT FROM FR. ANASTASIOS



Closing out his visit to the United States, Fr. Anastasios wanted to come to our parish to learn about our missionary activities and also to include us as part of the network he is expanding for the support of the Cameroonian Church.

We thank him for sharing his work, stories and lessons with us, and wish him safe travel and blessings always in his continued work.



Fr. Anastasios and Tim Klund

On the evening of December 18th, we were pleased to welcome Fr. Anastasios, a missionary hieromonk (priest-monk) who serves in Cameroon.

If you are interested in The Missions and Philanthropy Ministry at St. Nektarios, please contact ministry leader, Tim Klund for more information at tklund@carolina.rr.com. ❖

NEW YEAR'S DAY VASILOPITA SERVICE



We brought in the new year with a doxology after the liturgy in honor of our Lord's circumcision and naming on the eighth day from his birth, and of our father among the saints, Basil the Great.

Our New Year's Day tradition at

St. Nektarios includes the blessing and cutting of the Vasilopita (St. Basil's Bread) following Divine Liturgy on New Year's Day. Various members of our ministry groups participate in this annual event. Pictured are those who came forward to receive for their ministry, eagerly looking for the coin and blessing.

We blessed, cut and distributed the traditional Vasilopita. May God show special blessings to His Eminence, Metropolitan Alexios and little Eleanor, the recipients of the coins this year!

Thank you to our Philoptochos ladies, (pictured far right) who baked the bread following the tradition from the 4th century. A band of pirates stole from the townspeople and St. Basil retrieved the items from the pirates. There was a dispute as to who owned what piece of property. In order to resolve the dispute, St. Basil commissioned women to bake bread in

which the gold coins, jewelry, etc. were placed into the dough before baking. The legend says that as each person was given a slice of bread, his or her own items were received back in the piece of bread.

Fr. Andreas blessed the bread and distributed slices to the representative of each ministry group:

Costa Vrettos – (Archons of the Patriarchate)

Gerry Clonaris -- (Archdiocesan Council Member)

Evelyn Klund -- (Metropolis Council Member)

Christina Bonderer (Parish Council)

Silva Awaimrin (Staff)

Maryann Zitsos (Adult Religious Education)

Kathryn Mason (Bookstore)

Sam Kleto (Endowment and Property Management)

Doug Sistare (Capital Fund Development)

Safwat Wassef (Hospitality)

Teresa Jacob (Holy Unmercenaries Medical Society)

Joan Davis (Life and Family)

Caleb Clewell (Liturgical)

Seminarian from HCHC (Holy Cross Seminary)

Joanne Kiser (Missions and Philanthropy)

Dina Marinakos-Oara (Music)

Helen Clonaris (Outreach and Welcoming)

Madalina Lowen (Philoptochos)

Petros & Anastasia Couchell (St. Hermione Home)

Theona Gallis (St. Phoebe Ministry)

Michaelina Franks (Youth and Young Adult Ministry.)

Steve Constantelos (Young at Heart)

Our appreciation goes out to the many volunteers who serve in the various ministries of St. Nektarios. ❖



Baking of the Vasilopita bread for
New Year's Day

THEOPHANY

Our Lord's baptism was an act of God's supreme love and grace, a moment of disclosure of himself to the world as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As the principal hymn of the feast puts it:

"As you were baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, then the worship of the Trinity was made manifest, for the voice of the Father bore witness to you, naming you the beloved Son, and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, confirmed the certainty of the word. O Christ our God, who appeared and illumined the world, glory to you!" ❖



A Message from His Eminence for Theophany

January 6, 2022

Beloved in the Lord,

I greet you with love and joy in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Today we are blessed to **commemorate our Lord's Baptism** in the Jordan River by St. John the Forerunner.

This feast, commonly known as Epiphany in English, is called in Greek, **Θεοφάνια**: that is, a Theophany, or an appearance of God.

Before the coming of Christ into the world, there were several instances of God making Himself known among His Creation, as when He appeared to Moses in the form of the Burning Bush.

However, the feast of Theophany represents a wondrous moment when all three Persons of the Holy Trinity—

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—were made known to mankind. We hear in **the Great Blessing of the Waters**, "**The Jordan turned back and the mountains skipped, looking upon God in the flesh; and the clouds gave voice, marveling at Him who was come, the Light of Light, true God of true God.**"

When we perform the Great Blessing of the Waters, we understand that this great mystery is a day of joy which is forever renewed. Our sinless Creator not only condescended to take on our flesh, but to be baptized as example for all, and to purify this world as He undertook His ministry to save humanity.

The miracle of Theophany is a reality for all who open their hearts and receive the power of God into their

lives. Therefore, I pray that the grace and light of this beautiful Feast will inspire us to serve our Triune God with joy and gladness today and always! I remain,

With paternal blessings and with much love in our Lord,

+ALEXIOS Metropolitan of Atlanta



CHURCH MOUSE KIT-N-KABOODLE

I finally had the opportunity to visit this store in early January and talked with JoAnne Kiser for a bit. What a wonderful set of volunteers we have ready to serve Thursday and Friday from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Saturday from 10:00 am - 4:00 p.m.

The Church Mouse Kit-n-Kaboodle just celebrated its 3rd anniversary. The location was given to us by the kindness of the Pete Couchell family in 2019. The store was closed for two months of 2020 when Covid-19 arrived but was able to re-open in June of 2020.

We have three main volunteers, Dee Drobonick, Joanne Kiser and Tim Klund who share the duties of opening and closing the store each week. We are thankful for volunteers such as Sandra Capousis, Bess Vrettos, Ana Levantis and Helen Clonaris to name a few but are still in need of volunteers. If you are available to work during those hours, please let us know. We are looking for a volunteer with retail experience who could manage the store alone once per week and also for volunteers

to help sort and process items on a day when the store is not open.

The store has done quite well over the last 2 years despite its opposition. Donations were made from 2020 net proceeds to Child of God, Philoptochos and Monroe Road Advocates. Monroe Road Advocates gives back to the community that has supported the store and helps other businesses along Monroe Road. 2021 donations will be determined within the next month and distributed as approved by the store board. The Church Mouse Kit-n-Kaboodle made even more money in 2021 than it did in 2020 **but it's not really about the money. It's about giving to those in need.** I think Tim Klund said it best in an article he wrote last year. He was working on Christmas Eve and a lady came in at the last minute to shop for her family. As **she checked out at the register she said, "It looks like we will have Christmas after all."** That really touched my heart when I read it. Many are in need and this is truly what giving is about, not making money. However, God has blessed this store abundantly through



Joanne Kiser on duty at the Church Mouse Kit-n-Kaboodle

your many donations and would like to say thank you. The majority of the items sold in the store are donated by our very own parishioners. Without these generous donations the store would not be as successful as it is. Church Mouse thanks all current and future donors for their contributions! If you have not had a chance to visit, please come on out and bring any unused items you would like to donate. Remember, someone else may be in need of them but without money to buy them. That is the purpose of giving after all.

Kim Braswell

ARCHANGEL MICHAEL AWARD

On Jan. 9, Fr. Andreas presented Theodora Sexstone with her Archangel Michael Award. Metropolitan Alexios was here on



November 8th and presented awards to 2020 and 2021 recipients.

Theodora was unable to attend on that day.

Congratulations to Theodora. Axial!



CHURCH MOUSE
RESALE STORE

9010-D Monroe Rd. Charlotte, NC 28270
704-443-7083

STORE HOURS
Thursday & Friday | 10:00 am — 6:00 pm
Saturday 10:00 am — 4:00 pm

**DONATIONS OF HOUSEWARE AND
KNICK-KNACKS ARE NEEDED**

We are always looking for volunteers
to assist during store hours
in sorting donations.

Days and times are flexible

If you are interested please contact:
Dee Drobonick at deedrob519@gmail.com

Outreach and welcoming ministry

Following divine services on February 2nd, Fr. Nektarios hosted a visit by members of the Providence Meadows Retirement community, teaching them about our faith. Our doors are open to groups and individuals who would like to schedule a reverent, guided visit of our

sacred temple, in an effort to help educate the greater community about its Orthodox Christian members, and to give people an opportunity to be exposed to the saving faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as expressed and lived in Orthodoxy. ❖



FINANCIAL MATTERS ~ BURNING THE MORTGAGE

What a great way to start the New Year by burning the sanctuary mortgage.

Before we launched the “Building for Generations” campaign to build the Ministry Center, the Capital Campaign Executive Team always knew that of foremost importance to our parishioners was to pay off the mortgage balance due on the sanctuary. It was the number one priority in the parish-wide readiness survey we conducted and always remained at the top of the “to do” list.

And now we, the community of St Nektarios, are blessed to be able to fulfill that promise. Glory to God. Building and funding The Sanctuary was huge undertaking joyfully begun by all of us---over 600 donors came together and gave to the best of their ability---gifts ranged from \$10 to over \$1M—and each individual gift, no matter how large or small, helped us build this magnificent sanctuary.

It speaks to what is possible when we work together as a family to fulfill God’s ministry. Now we can turn our full attention to the next task at hand, building the Ministry Center. Our goal remains to break ground by the end of this year so we may celebrate our 25th anniversary as a parish next year with the opening of the Ministry Center. We know with God’s continued blessings we will achieve this goal as well.

We would also like to thank and acknowledge the past parish council presidents who have guided us to this moment and to ask them to join us on the Solea to burn the mortgage.

Theodora Sexstone

Present: Gus Gianakopoulos, Jim Thomas, John Lowen, Deidre Lepkowski, Christina Bonderer

Not Able to join us: Metropolitan Gregory, Steve Flaherty, Peter Keretsis, and Charles Hubbard

Those of blessed memory: Frank Cockinos and Karen Gardner

Representing our youth and our future: Theona Gallis and Noah Kellen.



CONSTRUCTION DESIGN REVIEW

On December 15th, several members of our Construction Design Committee met to review, discuss, and refine concept drawings, taking us one step closer to having actionable plans for our expanded ministry center.

Many people are working hard behind the scenes to make this vision a reality. God has already given us gifts, and we must make the effort to bring them to fruition. You can help our parish continue to take steps to firmly plant our Orthodox Christian presence here in South Charlotte.

If you’ve yet to make a pledge or contribution toward our “Building for Generations” capital campaign, you can do so easily by visiting our website.

But the best way to contribute? It’s not to visit the website, or to ‘like’ the post. Be present. Come and see. Come and be. Worship here. Pray here. Repent here. Cry here. Laugh here. Struggle here. Serve here. Make friends here.

Make family here. Love and be loved here. Meet Christ here. And let’s work together to help future generations meet Him here, too. ❖

FINANCIAL MATTERS

OPERATING FUND

Your Generosity provided total income of **\$1,033,229**, an all-time-high. The Operating Fund provides the foundational support for all of our ministry efforts within and beyond St. Nektarios.

We navigated another challenging year and kept our total expenses within our budget at **\$1,098,042**.

We were able to cover our shortfall of **\$64,813** with the unrestricted Discretionary Savings Fund. This allowed us to continue our Lord's ministry and His mission.

DONATIONS CHANGING LIVES

In addition to the Operating Fund, **Your Generosity of time, talent, and treasure** provided:

- ⇒ \$270,000 to our Dedicated Fund— support includes
 - Child of God- **feeding** hundreds of children in Kenya,
 - St. Anastasia Medical Assistance Fund offering **financial assistance**
 - 5K and St. Hermione House **supporting homeless** women and children in Charlotte
 - St. Dionysius Hospital, Matthews Help Center, Prison Ministry
 - And more
- ⇒ \$10,000 to our Altar Benevolence Fund

STEWARDSHIP

INVESTING IN OUR SPIRITUAL HOME
\$ 814,262 — First time Stewardship surpasses \$800,000

Results in:

- ⇒ Expanded worship opportunities
- ⇒ Enhanced streaming of services to reach our church family local community and brothers and sisters globally
- ⇒ Greater witness of our faith on social media
- ⇒ Growing attendance for Adult Religious Education
- ⇒ Resumption of in-person events like Agape Picnic, All-In/Fr. Steve Celebration, Youth catechism and enrichment
- ⇒ Addition of the sexton position to provide liturgical support

BUILDING FUND

Your Generosity
Investing in our Future

\$2.8 MILLION CASH RECEIVED
which
Burned the Sanctuary Mortgage
and
Moved us closer to building
the Ministry Center and renovating the
Spiritual Life Center

BUILDING FOR GENERATIONS

PHASE ONE filled with blessings

- ⇒ **Your Generosity** offered commitments out of love
- ⇒ Over \$5.5 million in commitments received and 1/3 in cash coming in
- ⇒ Thank you to outpouring of time and talent from volunteers

PHASE TWO filled with anticipation and excitement.

We are ALL IN . . .

- ⇒ To break ground in 2022 for the Ministry Center
- ⇒ To celebrate our 25th Anniversary with the door opening in late 2023.
- ⇒ To secure 100% participation
- ⇒ To receive \$3.3 million in additional commitments
- ⇒ To secure lender financing
- ⇒ To obtain construction permits



ENDOWMENT

\$60,000 IN GRANTS
OVER FIVE YEARS

to over 30 individuals and charities supporting youth.

Select the St. Nektarios
Endowment when you shop on
Amazon Smile



FULL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Available at the Church office beginning February 15th

To be presented at the Spring Parish Assembly
On March 20, 2022
Following the Divine Liturgy

2022 STEWARDSHIP

OUR CHURCH
OUR SPIRITUAL HOME

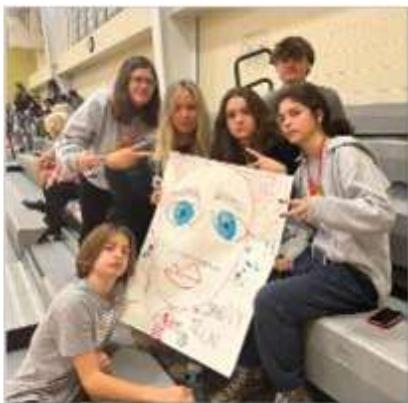
Packets and auto-renewal notices
will be mailed around mid-February

YOUTH MINISTRY ~ WINTER YOUTH RALLY

On December 28th, we said farewell to our youth for the Winter Youth Rally after a prayer from Fr. Andreas! Thanks to our Metropolis Youth committee (@atlmopolisyouth) for making this possible. ❖



Our Spartans! Second place in the Senior Boys' Division for our Metropolis! What a joy it was to watch them play this week! Many thanks to all the players, parents, fans, and a special thank you to Coaches Elias Kalariotes and Simon Tekin for an amazing tournament.



WYR wouldn't be possible without our very own Ritsa and Mike Neary! They take such good care of us at every Metropolis event, cooking for and serving so many. We love them both so much and are so grateful for all they do for us here at home, at St. Stephen's Camp, and at Winter Youth Rally.

Our Bible Bowl Team

YOUTH MINISTRY ~ SCOUTS, JOYHOPE & CATECHISM

SCOUT SUNDAY

In addition to the sacred ecclesiastical observances of the Sunday of the Canaanite Woman, St. Photios the Great, and Sts. Barsanuphius and John, our local community marked February 6th with "Scout Sunday".

We spoke about the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting and the benefits of engaging in scout programs—while always keeping our faith front-and-center. We also recognized one of our Eagle Scouts, Chris Bacogeorge. The Scouts held a food drive and BBQ fundraiser as well. Thank you for the generous support. ❖



YOUTH CATECHISM



Following the Divine Liturgy on February 6th, our high school catechism students came back into the church to explore its architectural and iconographic meanings with Fr. Andreas. We missed Fr. Nektarios that day, but he was with us in spirit as he served the Divine Liturgy at our sister parish, St. Luke's, in Mooresville. Glory to God in the highest! ❖

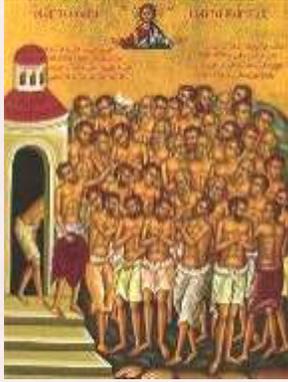
JOY/HOPE

Our Joy Hope catechism students gathered together for our first "First Fridays" of 2022 on February 4th. It was a blessing to be able to gather together for fun and fellowship. Please join us on Fridays for this special event. Check your missal, website or youth Facebook schedule for our next event. ❖



The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia

March 9



The martyrdom of the Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebasteia is a powerful lesson in Christian faith, perseverance, sacrifice, and friendship. The story of this martyrdom begins in the early part of the 4th century when the persecution of Christians was still active. There were 40 soldiers of the Roman army who possessed sincere faith in Jesus Christ. When it was realized that they would not deny their belief in the Lord, they were brought to trial before their commander who threatened to have them discharged from the military dishonorably. **One of the soldiers responded: "Do not take only our military status, but also our bodies; nothing is dearer or of greater honor to us than Christ our God."** Following a number of failed attempts to torture them, they were finally stripped, tied, and thrown into a lake. It happened to be wintertime and the temperature was extremely cold. To tempt the soldiers to deny Christ, the torturers lit fires near the lake to entice them to deny Christ. One soldier actually did come out of the water and headed for the fire, but before he could get there, he died. During the night, a light from heaven came down and heated the lake and warmed these Christian witnesses. At the same time, thirty-nine crowns were sent from heaven and rested upon each of them. One of the soldiers torturing them saw this and, moved by this event, confessed the Christ as Lord and Savior and joined the others in the lake. A fortieth crown appeared and descended upon him at that very moment. In the morning, the commander was furious when he learned of the events and ordered that their legs be broken and they be thrown back into the lake. On the third day following their drowning, the martyrs appeared to the local bishop and told him to search beneath the water and recover their relics. In the middle of the night, the bishop, along with his priests, went to the lake where they found the relics glowing in the water and, gathering them together, they gave them a proper burial. ❖

<http://www.goarch.org>

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OUR MISSION:

St. Nektarios Greek Orthodox Church is dedicated to the continuation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ's ministry of salvation through the proclamation and teaching of the Gospel; through Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and through loving service to God and to mankind.

OUR VISION:

The community will provide a loving, caring and welcoming environment where all belong and grow in the faith through worship, service, witness, and fellowship.

DIRECTORY

Church Office: 704-708-4669
Church Fax: 704-846-6094
Email: office@stnektarios.org
Website: www.stnektarios.org
5108 Kuykendall Rd. Charlotte, NC 28270

Clergy

Father Andreas Houpos, Proistamenos
Mobile: 980-333-9563
Email: fr.andreas@stnektarios.org
Father Nektarios Karantonis, Ephemerios
Mobile: 980-829-5215
Email: frkarantonis@stnektarios.org
Father Steve Dalber, Pastor Emeritus
Mobile: 704-451-6524
Email: frdalber@stnektarios.org
Father Paul Tsahakis, Presbyter
Mobile: (704) 608-1112
Email: frtsahakis@stnektarios.org

Parish Staff

Parish Administrator - Evelyn Klund
Administration Staff
Silva Awaimrin, Kim Braswell, Samara Clewell
Niki Kleto, and Sofia Nicolopoulos
Director of Youth Ministries - Helen Giles
Property Manager - Tim Shelton
Sexton - Jim Keown
Music Directors - Jeff Clewell,
Dina Marinakos-Oara

2022 Parish Council

President: Despina Gallis
Vice President: Mike Burgan
Treasurer: Elissa Bahanovich
Assist. Treasurer: Chris Mortis
Secretary: George Harris
Assist. Secretary: Joanne Kiser
Members: George Bacogee, Mark Malatras, Aka Vashakidze

Philoptochos Board

President: Charlotte Nickolopoulos
1st Vice President: Madalina Lowen
2nd Vice President: Deidre Lepkowski
Recording Secretary: Sharon Koutroumpis
Corr. Secretary: Michaelina Franks
Treasurer: Evelyn Klund
Ass't. Treasurer: Dee Hatjioannou
Advisor: Niki Kleto

Members: Helen Bakos, Katherine Cestrone,
Phyllis Gianakopoulos, Renee Keretses and
Christine Malatras
(Email: philoptochos@stnektarios.org)

SUNDAYS AT SAINT NEKTARIOS

Worship

Matins 8:00 a.m. and
Divine Liturgy 9:15 a.m.
Fellowship Coffee:
Following Divine Liturgy

Prosfora

Please contact the church office or
Christie Asimos at 704-756-1512 if you
would like to provide or sponsor
Prosfora.

Coffee Hour

Please contact the church office if you
would like to host or co-host a Coffee
Hour on Sunday. Your Stewardship
pays for the coffee hour refreshments
provided by the Hospitality Ministry
Team.

Flowers

You may donate flowers in honor of a
family member's feast day, in memory
of a loved one or friend, on the occasion
of a holiday, or simply as a gift to the
community of St. Nektarios. To donate
flower arrangements to be placed at the
Iconostasis, St. Nektarios Shrine or in
the Narthex for Sunday Services,
please contact the church office to
reserve a Sunday.

Sacramental Wine & Pure Olive Oil

You may make a financial gift to help
defray the cost of the sacramental wine
that is used for Holy Communion.
Please note on the memo line of your
**check or on the envelope "Communion
Wine"**. You may also donate a bottle or
can of pure olive oil which is then
blessed at the Shrine of St. Nektarios
and is offered in the anointing kits.
Please feel free to bring this with you to
any of our services and give to an usher
on duty. For additional information
contact the church office.

UPCOMING DEADLINE

Newsletter & Bulletin Due Dates:
Information Due: February 25, 2022
Published: March 22, 2022