Have you ever noticed that most popular songs are romantic in nature? They almost always are about the romantic relationship between two people. The challenge for an artist is to make his song distinctive through whatever means he can find. I am reminded of a song from some years ago with the title, I believe, “Baby, You Ain’t Seen Nothin’ Yet.” In order to make the song memorable (and have a little fun) the artist purposely stuttered the first syllable of “Baby” so that it came out “Be-Be-Be-Baby, You Ain’t Seen Nothin’ Yet.” Keep that idea in mind, that “you ain’t seen nothin’ yet”, and I will come back to it.

In the Gospel according to Mark we read, “If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and following Christ. A handy way to remember that is PDF. No, I am not talking about a file you email to someone, but an easy way to remember our path. “P” stands for Picking-up your cross, “D” stands for Denying yourself, and “F” stands for Following Christ.

...Take every blessing you have experienced in this life and expand it exponentially and you have not even begun to conceive of what the kingdom of God is like. ... Picking-up your cross means accepting the everyday burdens of this life, like homework, chores, paying the mortgage, and mowing the grass; not to mention a host of other tasks and obligations. It means accepting the burdens and pains of this life, the uncertainty, stress, and trouble that come along our way. It means accepting them, not fleeing from them. We handle them as best we can with God’s help. But picking-up your cross also involves more than the ordinary troubles of life, heavy as they can be; it also means we have to pick-up our own cross of love for God and neighbor.

This leads us to denying ourselves. This means doing what needs to be done, what should be done in loving service to God and others, instead of what we want to do. A parent does this for his/her children. A husband does this for his wife as she does for him. Sometimes we are called to do this for our parents when they can no longer do it for themselves. This means we may have to help someone at a time that is inconvenient for us. We may have to go to the grocery store when we would rather be out on a walk. We may have to attend some function when we would rather be watching TV.

But if we do these things, we are denying ourselves and more importantly, following Christ. Think about it. What did He do? He did not have to leave Heaven. He did it for our sake, not His. Look at scripture. Where did Jesus go? We see Him in the temple worshipping God. We see Him helping and healing others. We see Him witnessing to the goodness and glory of God. We see Him enduring with grace when His words are twisted out of context, when He is falsely accused, and when He is beaten and murdered. We see that before His death on the Cross, He died many small deaths in the interruptions and inconveniences of His ministry for us. Likewise, we are called to endure many mini-deaths in the sacrifice of our time, attention, and energy for the well-being and benefit of others.

If we accept our cross, deny ourselves, and follow Christ in His life, service, and death, we will follow Him in His resurrection and ultimately into His kingdom. Take every blessing you have experienced in this life and expand it exponentially and you have not even begun to conceive of what the kingdom of God is like. If you think this present life is too good to pass up, then as the songwriter said about the kingdom of God, “Be-Be-Be-Baby, You Ain’t Seen Nothin’ Yet”. Amen.
According to some, Hierotheus, like Saint Dionysius, was a member of the court of Mars Hill. Having first been instructed in the Faith of Christ by Paul, he became Bishop of Athens. He, in turn, initiated the divine Dionysius more perfectly into the mysteries of Christ; the latter, on his part, elaborated more clearly and distinctly Hierotheus’ concise and summary teachings concerning the Faith. He too was brought miraculously by the power of the Holy Spirit to be present at the Dormition of the Theotokos, when, together with the sacred Apostles, he became a leader of the divine hymnody. “He was wholly transported, wholly outside himself and was so deeply absorbed in communion with the sacred things he celebrated in hymnology, that to all who heard him and saw him and knew him, and yet knew him not, he seemed to be inspired of God, a divine hymnographer,” as Dionysius says (On the Divine Names, 3:2). Having lived in a manner pleasing to God, he reposed in the Lord.

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** IN OUR PRAYERS **

Mary Alexis Anita Asimos Pat Baker Sylvia Belk Jodie Boyce Sandy Brewer Marie Callahan
Nikki Chornakos Kathy Clewell Dee Cockinos Barbara Cook Sam Dedes Cleo Demopoulos
Shannon Elliott Ted Gillis Catherine Kalivas Nick Kefalas Helen Keramidas Dan Kiser
Peter Mannering Catherine Mantos Casey Martinez Iris Medvid Calliope Millos
Christina Nixon Kay Owens Barry Dale Price Jr. Irene Rodriguez Mary Roupas
Teziah Stalling James Tekin Mary Thayer Lily Trakas Ernest Tsitouris
Johnny Tsitouris Steve Tsitouris Joey Woodruff Marion Zablotsky
And the persecuted Christians in the Middle East and the non-Christian World

** AND FOR THOSE IN SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY **

Helene Carras Buddy Craft Jordan James Dunn Krassimire Ivanov
Michael Mentavlos Zack Millsaps Matthew Millsaps Amanda Moril
Elias Nickolopoulos Anton Savin Danielle Zervakos

** Please note: We began a new list of persons in our prayers in the September issue. Please submit your names to the office to be included in the next issue. **

** CONGRATULATIONS **

To Elissa Williams and Andrew Bahanyovich on their marriage
To Hannah Shephard and Peter Proukou on their marriage
To Deme and Teddy Poulos on the baptism of Vasi and Evanna’s brother, Yanni
To Nicole and Miguel Guidry on the baptism of Sophie’s sister, Emma
To Kim and George Hilal on the Baptism of Faith and Ana’s brother, Asher
To Joanne & Nicholas Sitaras on the 40 day blessing of John Nicholas’ brother, Anthony Nicholas
To Rachel & Nathan Pierce on the 40 day blessing of Eliza’s brother, Daniel Cohen
To Nadya Ivanova and Chris Hristov on the 40 day blessing of Victoria’s sister, Vera
To Dr. Gus Gianakopoulos, Dr. Evan Miller, and Dr. Taso Roupas for being named Top Charlotte Dentists” in the November issue of the Charlotte Magazine

** SYMPATHY **

To the Vashakidze family on the passing of Nino’s father, Omari Japaridze
To the Dedes and Vandeur families on the passing of Sam’s sister, Efrosini Dedes

** IN APPRECIATION **

“Words cannot begin to express the warmth we felt when we entered your church. We feel honored and blessed to have had Asher baptized at St. Nektarios. Please accept this donation as our way of saying, “Thank You” for welcoming us into your amazing parish and helping to make a beautiful occasion all the more special.”

With Love, The Hilal Family ~ George, Kim, Faith, Ana & Asher

Dear Members of St. Nektarios,
It is with great gratitude and love that we wish to thank everyone for their good thoughts, prayers and support you have given Christina and the whole family. The last few years have been pretty rough but with God’s blessings we are here and Christina is doing better. Though we will travel back and forth to Cleveland for a while, it’s because of God’s blessing & your prayers and support we stay strong.

Thank you with all our Love, Respect and Gratitude
Christina, Georgia and Spero Nixon
To our St. Nektarios Church Family,
Thank you so much for the outpouring of love to our family at the passing of Kathy’s mother, (Betty) and our son, Michael. Your support has been overwhelming and has truly touched our hearts.

Thank you for your great kindness.
Mike & Kathy Clewell

Thanks to Diane Gilbert and Copycat for printing the Church Bulletin and Newsletter.

Please contact the church office with information we may share with the community or to add someone to the prayer list.
Also please contact the office when someone is in need of a clergy visit.

On behalf of our parish, Kabee and Dennis Kokenes present an icon of St. Nektarios to The Elatos Park chapel in appreciation of them hosting our Council of Ministry Retreat.

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St. Nektarios of Aegina, The Wonderworker
Our Patron Saint — Commemorated on November 9

By George Tatsis

Our beloved patron saint was born October 1, 1846, in the small village of Silyvria in the region of Thrace, Greece. He was the fifth of six children. His parents were simple and pious Orthodox Christians named Demos and Vasiliki Kephalas. His baptismal name was Anastasios. Since his family was very poor, at the age of 14 it was decided that Anastasios should go to Constantinople in order to work and go to school. Upon arriving in Constantinople, he found a job as a merchant apprentice. At the age of 20, he left Constantinople and went to the island of Chios where Anastasios was given a position as a teacher. It was during his years on Chios that he developed a strong love for monastic living and visited the monasteries located on the island.

On November 7, 1876, Anastasios was tonsured a monk and received the name of Lazaros. He was ordained a deacon, and received the name Nektarios on January 15, 1877, the anniversary of his baptism. The deacon went to Athens to complete his high school education and later to enter the School of Theology. During his studies of the faith and Church Fathers, he began to write spiritual books and pamphlets. Following the completion of his studies, the Patriarch of Alexandria invited him to Egypt. The people loved him and soon Nektarios was ordained to the priesthood by Patriarch Sophronios IV in March of 1886.

He worked with humility, meekness, simplicity, self-control, and compassion. The Christians of Alexandria loved him greatly. Three years later, Nektarios became Metropolitan of Pentapolis. Some clergy around the area grew jealous of Nektarios’ popularity and began to spread rumors about him, especially to the Patriarch. The slanderous talk eventually caused Nektarios to be removed from his position in the church. With tremendous grief, he departed quietly and returned to Greece. He arrived poor, because Nektarios either gave his money to the poor or used it to publish his writings. After returning to Athens, the false rumors from Egypt followed him. For a long time he could not receive a position in the Church.

In all of these difficult times Nektarios remained patient, increasing his prayers and trusting that God would direct his path. In 1894, he was appointed Director of the Rizarios Ecclesiastical School where he taught classes of theology and served as an example of true virtue. His students loved him. Many people in the area came to hear his sermons. In 1908 at the age of 62, Nektarios retired and returned to the monastic lifestyle. He helped to establish the Holy Trinity Convent on the island of Aegina. He served as spiritual father to the nuns. Sometimes during prayers, he was seen lifted above the ground. At times he prayed for rain, and it came. He healed the sick and cast out demons.

On November 9, 1920, after a painful illness, he gave up his soul to God. At the moment of his repose, the entire hospital was filled with a beautiful and divine fragrance. An article of Nektarios’ clothing was placed upon a sick man who had been paralyzed for many years, and immediately the man was healed. This was one of the many miracles attributed to the holy relics of St. Nektarios. The relics of the saint were returned to Aegina to the Holy Trinity Convent and have remained there. The holy relics remained incorrupt during the first 20 years after his repose. Many people have been healed of diseases such as cancer, heart trouble, arthritis, and epilepsy when anointed with oil from a lamp burning before his icon. People continued to flock to the Holy Trinity Convent. Eventually, the Patriarchate of Constantinople proclaimed Nektarios a Saint in 1961. He is commemorated on November 9.

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PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS IN PROGRESS

- Construction of Garden of the Life-giving Spring began in September and will take about two months to complete.
- Pavers for the first phase will be ordered end of October.
- Thank you to AHEPA and a private donor for funding the new front entrance sign to the property and replacing the lower entrance sign.
After two spectacular days in St. Augustine, everyone woke up early on Saturday to eat breakfast and continue with our trip. First on the schedule was the Greek Orthodox Mission Center (OCMC), so we hopped on the bus, ready for an interesting visit. Once we arrived, we were enthusiastically greeted by Mr. Kenny, a staff member of the OCMC. He spoke to us about what the mission center does and how they spread our Orthodox faith to other countries. We also watched a video and then had an opportunity to ask questions about mission trips. Afterwards, Mr. Kenny split us into two groups and we played a game that helped us understand how difficult it can be to introduce something new to people of a different culture. Each group represented a culture with very different characteristics. After spending some time in our groups learning about our culture, both groups got together for a “meeting.” It was very challenging trying to communicate and accommodate each other’s “culture” and “language” but surprisingly, we were able to reconcile our differences! We had so much fun with this activity that we didn’t want to leave! We learned so much and gained a much better understanding of what the OCMC does.

With the mission center visit over, we headed back to the hotel for a quick lunch and to get ready for the beach. We were at the beach for a couple of hours, but we had formed such a unique bond with each other and were having so much fun, it only felt like ten minutes! Although no one wanted to leave, we were all looking forward to the yummy dinner that awaited us at the St. Photios Shrine. After showers and a change of clothes, we headed back to the Shrine for dinner. Mrs. Polly had made a delicious Lenten meal which we enjoyed in a very comfortable and relaxing atmosphere. I noticed that we were all sitting with people we had not sat with at the beginning of the trip. Even though we had spent several months in Catechism class together, we really didn’t know everyone very well when we set out on this pilgrimage. It was evident that this trip had made it possible for us to not only embrace our Greek Orthodox faith, but each other. It was as if we were one big family conversing and having dinner together.

After dinner (and of course, cleaning up), we gathered downstairs in the hall to play “Stump the Priest” with Fr. Steve and Fr. Seraphim. This was a “game” that involved asking questions about our faith in the hopes that we could come up with a question that they could not answer. They told us we could ask any question that we had always wanted to ask, but never did. Nothing was off limits. Now you could probably imagine the kinds of questions a bunch of high school kids might ask, but this trip had actually inspired us to ask intriguing, but heartfelt questions about the Greek Orthodox Faith, and the conversation that resulted was amazing. Not surprisingly though, none of us could stump either of them! It was getting late (we asked a lot of questions), so we left to go back to the hotel for confession with Fr. Steve. While each of us waited to do confession, we played a fun game of volleyball in the hotel parking lot. After confession, we all hung out to talk some more until lights out.

Sunday morning we piled on the bus to attend church service at the St. Photios Shrine. Along with Mrs. Polly, we were the only ones there. Fr. Steve did the Liturgy, and Fr. Seraphim and some students chanted. It was a beautiful service; the acoustics were amazing, and the iconography all around the small chapel seemed to embrace us. I could actually feel God’s presence and His arms around us. At the end of the service, our Catechism teacher, Mr. Clonaris, gave us two envelopes—one from him, and the other from our parents. Each of us opened the letters, and in complete silence, we read and took in the beautiful and heartfelt words written to us. It was a very special moment in this pilgrimage. In the small confines of the St. Photios Shrine, I felt rejuvenated; I felt so much love, not only from my parents, but also from the church, God, and my friends. My trust and confidence in our faith grew in that moment and when I think back to the service and letters in the shrine, a warm smile appears on my face. It was the perfect way to end our spiritual journey on the trip. Before we left, our amazing and tireless host, Mrs. Polly, treated us to donuts and juice. Soon it was time to go, so we said our goodbyes to Mrs. Polly and went back to the hotel to change and pack our things to head back home. We all boarded the bus one last time and talked about all of the fun and adventure we had on the trip…all the way back to Charlotte. We had all exchanged phone numbers and were looking forward to our new friendships.

For me personally, it is an experience that I will forever treasure. Not only did I make new friends, but, most importantly, my faith was reaffirmed and strengthened. I think that this pilgrimage taught us valuable lessons about the importance of family (which includes our church and our friends) and to always trust God and keep Him in the forefront of everything we do. ✝️
Neither rain nor shine could stop us from selling our Greek pastries at the Waxhaw Fall Treasures event October 10 & 11. This was our first real vendor event with the Town of Waxhaw and we hope to sell pastries during some of their future festivals as well.

Even though the rain continued to come down most of the day that Saturday we were still selling pastries. Sunday turned out to be a beautiful sunny Fall day and that is when we sold most of our goodies. The assorted box pastries, which sold for $5 each, was the biggest hit – we sold 37 boxes! Of course, the Baklava was everyone’s favorite and cost a little more, but we sold over 20 boxes. We also sold koulourakia, melomakarona and koulourakia with $587 in total sales over the two days. We would have sold even more if Saturday’s weather had been more cooperative.

On Saturday afternoon one of the Waxhaw town employees bought a box of the Baklava and came hurrying back to us a bit later with an empty box. He started exclaiming how wonderfully delicious the Baklava tasted. He began to tell us how he is from “up North” and that the Baklava up there is awesome. He went on to say he had never had good Baklava in Charlotte until that day! He suggested we create some business cards and give them out when we sell our pastries so others will know how to contact us to find out when we will sell these pastries again. He also suggested we bake and sell them for private parties. This gentleman could be our marketing director. He was so excited! He promised to come back the next day to buy more Baklava and he did.

Look for our schedule listing when we will be selling our pastries in Matthews (on some Saturday mornings in November and December) and also for when we will be selling them for our own church community during those months as well.

Many thanks go out to Ritsa Neary and her baking crew for creating such awesome pastries! Thanks also go out to all our volunteers working the booth in rain and shine!

The Ladies organized the church’s participation in this year’s Crop Walk. Thank you to Helen Clonaris for being our contact person. Eleven walkers represented the church. Page 9 of this issue includes photos and information on the great work of the Crop Walk organization. Donations can still be made on the Crop Walk website.

Planning is underway for our annual Christmas Brunch and Fashion Show on Saturday, Dec. 5. Look for our fundraiser flyers coming out within the next week. Our recipients this year will be Dress for Success Charlotte and A Child’s Place. We will be collecting women’s clothing and accessories and new children’s pajamas as well. We will have our donated centerpiece contest again this year and sold through silent auction. Lots of prizes are coming in for our raffle ticket sales too. Details to follow soon!

Did you know that the Metropolis Philoptochos now publishes the White Dove electronically. To read the latest issue go to: http://atlantametropolisphiloptochos.org/white-dove-fall-2015/

See you at our next meeting on Oct. 29th. We’ll be packing snack bags for the Neighbors at St. Peter’s Soup Kitchen.

Dee Drobonick

October 28th 1940 — 75th Anniversary of “OXI” Day
By Dr. John Bellios P.H.D.

When Hitler started World War II in 1939 he subdued Poland in 30 days. He then conquered Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium quickly. Next was France which took about 2 weeks to surrender. Hitler next turned his attention to Russia (USSR). Where his troops were met with bone-chilling weather and fierce resistance. Hitler never conquered Russia.

In October 1940, Hitler’s Axis partner Benito Mussolini amassed Italian troops on Greece’s northern border. Mussolini then sent Greece an ultimatum: surrender or be conquered! The Greek leader Iohannis Metaxas replied on October 28th 1940, with a one word telegram “OXI” (NO!) Mussolini was furious and attempted to invade Greece. “OXI” became a rallying cry of resistance. For the next seven months there was fierce fighting with the Italians in northern Greece.

Mussolini could not overcome the Greek’s determined resistance. In the spring of 1941 he called on his Axis partner Adolph Hitler to send troops. The Germans defeated the Greeks and began their occupation. *(This caused a critical delay and diversion of German troops designated for the Russian front helping the Russians to stop them at Stalingrad.)*

All Greeks suffered during the occupation. *806,000 Greeks died during WWII, many of starvation, this is over 10% of the pre-war population. 67,000 Greek Jews were sent to Auschwitz, few survived.* To this day the rich, centuries old Jewish culture of Greece has never been re-established.

In 1940 “OXI” became a rallying cry for Greeks. Today it resonates through history as a proud symbol of the Greek heritage and resistance to tyranny. The Greeks remember October 28th 1940 with honor and pride.

*Editorial modifications or additions to original text.*
The Young at Heart group met on Thursday, September 10th after a hiatus of two months. It was well attended. After the prayer and blessing of the food, we were treated to a delicious dinner of roasted chicken followed by dessert of fruits and cakes in honor of Father Steve’s and Father John’s name days. Thanks to our hosts and hostesses: Aphroula Anderson, Anita Asimos, Don & Sylvia Belk, Connie & John Bellios, Morphia Bouboulis, Aliki & John Bugg, Kathy & Steve Constantelos, Anna & Peter Kanelos, Christala & Costas Paraskeva, Tina & John Peroulas, Georgia Pouler, Diane Rogers and Madeleine & Shari Solomon. Gus Stamas, the new president, announced the names of the new committee for the coming year. We wish them the best of luck and hope that they will invigorate the group and introduce more activities and programs. Gus welcomed to Young at Heart, two new visitors Ted and Jackie Panagiotopoulos who moved recently from Connecticut. Ted is a Fire Chief/Marshall.

Several announcements were made: (1) the group was reminded to pay their dues of $18 per person, this will cover all dinner expenses and cleaning for the entire year, (2) a Christmas program in Myrtle Beach was introduced to the group. This will take place in November at the Fairfield Inn. The package includes a two night stay at the inn with two breakfasts, two dinners and two holiday shows. The cost is $175 per person in a double room and $245 for a single room. A minimum of 10 couples / rooms are needed to get this promotion. Those interested should decide by the November meeting. (3) Elham Flaherty is planning to bring a group of women (around twenty) from Raleigh to celebrate St. Nektarios’ feast day with us. They will arrive on Sunday, November 8th and celebrate the feast day of St. Nektarios on Monday the 9th, then depart on Tuesday the 10th. Elham is looking for hosts to accommodate these women for the two nights (preferably in down stairs rooms, since many of these women are elderly) and bring them to church on Monday. After all the business issues were covered the group enjoyed an evening of bingo. The night of fellowship ended by wishing all safe travels.  

Emile Khuri
The Young at Heart group met on Thursday, October 8th. A delicious meal of spaghetti and meatballs with wine and various desserts was prepared or sponsored by our gracious hosts: Mary Alexis, Andrew Boukidis, Helen & Pete Douglas, Florence Hatzis, Catherine Kalivas, Gus & Pitsa Karres, Nick & Cathy Kefalas, Eleftherios & Helen Keramidas, Toula & Helen Kontoulas, Steve & Georgia Mantekas, Catherine Manthos, Michael & Ritsa Neary, Demetra Stamatakos and Lilly Trakas.

Our special guest speaker for the evening was Ted Panagiotopoulos, Fire Marshall. He gave a short seminar on fire prevention for business and residence. Gus Stamas sang the national anthem and also sang “God Bless America”. We then discussed the upcoming Myrtle Beach outing Nov. 17-19 and Christmas Party on Dec. 10th. There is still time to sign up for both events. Please contact Gus Stamas for more information.

The Scouts of St. Nektarios’s Troop 490 headed for the hills in September, for a weekend of camping and fly fishing on the Cain River, outside of Burnsville, NC. Accompanied by Fly Fishing Merit Badge Counselor Tripp Gabriel, the Scouts managed to catch a fish or two on dry flies in the shadow of Mount Mitchell. A post-fishing game of football and fellowship around the campfire in the cool mountain evening air made the weekend complete. Well done, Scouts! *
Financial Update
Presented to the Parish Assembly on October 11, 2015

**Operating Monthly Income and Expense**

- **Summer Offerings Dip** and impact church cash flow

- Announced push to complete Stewardship Offerings by 11-30-15

**Financial Update -- Operating**

2015 Stewardship -- Year-end Goal = $717,000
As of 10/6/15

- Pledges Received: $698,957 from 553 families.
- 66 of those are new pledges.
- Offerings against pledge YTD = 457 families = $535,867

Each year, 5-9% of pledged $ are not received by 12/31.

*In an effort to reduce this percentage, Stewardship Ministry is requesting all stewards to complete their pledge by November 30, 2015.*

To date, 204 of the 553 stewards have completed their pledge.
Another 104 are on track to complete their pledge by end of the year.

**Sanctuary Mortgage**

1. As of 9/30/15, $542,944 balance due from 131 pledges from 2004 and 2011 capital campaigns.
2. We have met with representative of First Citizens concerning balloon payment of approximately $1.8 million (Assuming all pledge balances are received) by 5/2016. We talked about a bridge loan at projected 5 3/4% or 3 1/2% over 1-2 years. Terms of this bridge loan are dependent on cash raised and new pledges received. Campaign to begin January 2016.

**Ministry Center**

1998-2018 *Fulfill the Promise*

20 years of Worship, Witness, Fellowship, and Service

- Capital Needs Taskforce continues to assess future needs.
- It has identified a need for the Ministry Center and has received preliminary construction estimate of $4.2 million, based on current pricing for the revised 2008 drawings. This does not include HE or necessary improvements to the Spiritual Life Center.
- We have entered into the quiet phase of the campaign.
- A parish-wide campaign would begin in January 2016, if deemed feasible.
- All initial monies would first be used to pay down the sanctuary mortgage. Some early cash commitments have been received.
- Our goal is to break ground in 2018 on our 20th anniversary of the parish.
An estimated 4,000 walkers walked in the 37th Annual Charlotte CROP Walk on Sunday, October 18, including eleven walkers from St. Nektarios, organized by the Ladies Philoptochos. Organizers estimate the walk raised approximately $300,000. Proceeds from the Charlotte walk, “still the largest and most generous of the country’s 1,300 CROP walks, will go to three local agencies – Loaves & Fishes, Crisis Assistance Ministry and Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina – as well as to global projects to feed hungry people and help refugees and others in need.” Charlotte has raised $8 million in its 37 years walking.

“Since the last crop walk, Crisis Assistance Ministry helped over 20-thousand families keep their homes and keep the lights on. Loaves and Fishes fed over 78-thousand people, that’s enough to fill Bank of America Stadium... And Second Harvest Food Bank distributed over 10 million pounds of food and household items in Mecklenburg County,” said Executive Director Shay Merrit.

St. Nektarios has a long history of supporting Charlotte CROP Walk, from our very earliest years. This year our team raised approximately $1,100 to contribute the ZERO HUNGER goal. (At right, BRIANNA CLEWELL and ALEX DROBONICK at one of our first Crop Walks back in 2001.)
The storm clouds were gathered in Charlotte and a hurricane threatened days and days of rainy weather for the whole East Coast, but our intrepid 6th-9th graders and their chaperones headed off on Friday afternoon anyway. Four hours later they arrived in Paradise—Fripp Island, just off the SC coast from Beaufort.

Saturday dawned beautifully, so we loaded up all the golf carts for a full day on the beach, even eating lunch there. In the late afternoon, we headed back to the beautiful beach home provided to us by Chris Miller and her family, for some rest, some dinner and then a lesson on “What DID Jesus do, and what WOULD he do today?” Dividing into teams, each group, led by one of our 9th graders, acted out a scene from the days of Jesus’s ministry—like the feeding of the 4,000—then offered a modern day version of the same lesson. Great work by all! After the skits, there was a round of basketball, golf cart exploring of the island and then a winding down time for the evening. We headed back to Charlotte early on Sunday, with our sunburned faces, our memories and the friendships we built.

Thanks to chaperones Heidi Sarantou and Aka & Nino Vashakidze!!
Everybody loves O-Life!! Or so it seems. Our Sunday evening program for 6th—12th grades kicked off on September 27, with record attendance of 37 GOYANS! This program—intended to offer ways to take our Orthodox Life out of Catechism Class and into our daily lives—is led by Michaelina Antahades, advisor, and the GOYA Leadership Council [GLC] made up of 10th-12th graders who have volunteered their time and talents.

We begin with a very short devotion, then there’s always an ice breaker, led by one of the GLC members. The activities which follow change from Sunday to Sunday. Sometimes we do service projects—make sandwiches for the Urban Ministry Center Uptown or take on a clean-up project for the church. Sometimes we meet offsite for a movie or dinner out. Sometimes we break up into teams and see who knows the most about a topic Micha has chosen. We always end with food and fellowship—usually Pizza and Wings! Join us for faith, fellowship, food and FUN!!

A report by Christina Bonderer, 2nd grade teacher:

Today’s lesson was about confession and forgiveness. What you see here are envelopes containing the confessed sins of 2nd graders ~ Nailed to the Cross ~ And forgiven.

As far as the east is from the west,
So He removes our transgressions from us.
Psalm 102:12 (103:12)

In case you can’t see it, the "nails" are red to remind the kids of the Blood of the Savior. We are leaving the Cross up all year in case the children want to add anything to their envelopes.

For more info email Elaine Miller at SNYouth@stnektarios.org
Symeon the New Theologian  
October 12

Saint Symeon became a monk of the Studite Monastery as a young man, under the guidance of the elder Symeon the Pious. Afterwards he struggled at the Monastery of Saint Mamas in Constantinople, of which he became abbot. After enduring many trials and afflictions in his life of piety, he reposed in 1022. Marveling at the heights of prayer and holiness to which he attained, and the loftiness of the teachings of his life and writings, the church calls him "the New Theologian." Only to two others, John the Evangelist and Gregory, Patriarch of Constantinople, has the church given the name "Theologian." Saint Symeon reposed on March 12, but since this always falls in the Great Fast, his feast is observed on October 12.

Lucian the Martyr of Antioch  
October 15

This Saint was from Samosata, the son of pious parents. He established a catechetical school in Antioch, and taught the correct doctrines of the Faith and made clear the parts of the divine Scriptures that were difficult to understand. He edited the Old Testament translation from the Hebrew tongue, and published it in an excellent edition, free from every heretical corruption and interpolation. He travelled to Nicomedia to strengthen the faithful there in their contests for Christ, and was accused before Maximinus, with whom he conversed openly. When he had made a defense of the Christian Faith, he was condemned to imprisonment where, in 311, he died of hunger and thirst.

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