



From Father Anthony

God's Gift to Us

God has given us a great gift that we celebrate at the end of this month, namely “Christmas”. But He has given us another great privilege and honor, the gift of being co-workers with Him. Time, talent and treasures are the three gifts that we mention when we talk about stewardship. We know about giving treasures. A tithe was the Old Testament standard for calculating the minimum amount of our resources that we should dedicate to God’s work. But we also focus on time and talent. These two acts of stewardship are less measured when it comes to giving back to God for His generosity to us. God knows who we are and what talents He has given each of us, because He knows each of us intimately. We each understand to some degree the talents that God has given to us.

If we were to mark on our stewardship card in pencil all the gifts that God has given to us, and then mark those that we are actually exercising for His Body the Church, we may discover new opportunities for ministry we had not previously considered.

As we look back on the 4 ½ years since we opened our doors we see many accomplishments of our community. Many people have taken on vital and important ministries within our Church. Those people have blessed us greatly by their stewardship and in return been blessed by the joy of serving. As we look to the coming year and to our vision for the next 5 years, it is critical that we look at the needs of our St. Philothea community and our greater community and begin to plan for the future, *especially as we face tough economic times*. We look to our mission statement to help us decide what direction to go; this helps make our decisions concrete and to shape us for the future.

Our purpose is to be the Body of Christ in the World. *Our mission is to continue His ministry of baptizing, making disciples of all nations, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and visiting those who are in prison.* All that we do as a community should have these two statements as our guiding principles. With them as our guide we will be able to make plans for the coming year and develop a 5 year plan. For example, I would like to see 60 pledging families in 5 years. I would like to see the mortgage cut in half. I would like to see a full time salary for a priest. If we do not set goals and make a plan we will not reach our destination.

With this in mind I would like to take ½ day Saturday Jan 17th for a “Ministry Planning Day”, beginning with the Divine Liturgy for the feast of St. Anthony, followed by breakfast, and then meet as ministries to plot out the coming year with concrete goals and plans. In this way we will make definitive steps towards shaping our future.

Christ has come to give us life and to give it more abundantly. We try and find it in many different places but He tells us “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.” (Mat. 16:25) In other words if we set aside our little opinions and ask God to direct our paths, then we will be optimally suited for the most fulfilling life we can have. We will have meaning, purpose, and a fruitful life. But if we ignore God and reject the Holy Spirit moving in our lives then eventually if we will not obey God freely, then He will obey us and shut the door of His kingdom to us. ***Please put Jan. 17th from 8-12 p.m. on your calendar and plan to shape the future of St. Philothea for the coming year and beyond. Your input is vital to the future of our Church.***

Parish Happenings

Choir: The choir has been meeting on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. at the church. We could use a few more voices. Please consider joining us as we worship God with the beautiful Byzantine music found in our Divine Liturgy hymnals. If you have any questions or would like to get involved please contact Nina Lamson.

No Covered Dish on December 7th due to the OCAF Holiday Market (Dec. 6th & 7th). There will be a coffee hour.

Philoptochos has a booth selling Greek pastries at the OCAF Holiday Market, December 6 & 7 and. This is our main fundraiser for our charitable giving and we are looking forward to another successful campaign. Please contact Presbyteria Christine to help on the following days:

Mon, Dec 1: 2:00– 9:00 Prep & Packaging
Sat & Sun Dec 6 & 7 OCAF
Holiday Market

*PLEASE SIGN UP TO WORK A 3 HOUR SHIFT

St. Philothea will host a food booth this year at the OCAF Holiday Market on Dec. 6 & 7. Volunteers are needed to “man” the grills and run the booth both days. Please speak to Steve Demas to see how you can help.

Dec. 11th GOYA Fundraiser: Teens will volunteer at the spaghetti dinner and get 50% of profits for the Winter Youth Rally. Please plan to attend and bring friends.

December 14th is the Christmas Pageant, Stewardship Sunday and **Parish Council Election Day.** The

Parish Council will be hosting brunch on Stewardship Sunday.

Parish Council Candidates Training Seminar is Dec. 6th in Marietta.

Sunday School Full Rehearsal for the Christmas Pageant is planned for December 7th following the liturgy. Families please plan to stay after coffee hour.

Sunday School Christmas Program will be Sunday December 14 immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

DYCE Meeting Dec. 11th 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Schedule: Dec. 24th 8:30 a.m. Royal Hours, 8:00 p.m. Orthros and Divine Liturgy followed by Champagne Reception.

Epiphany Schedule: Monday Jan. 5th, Royal Hours, 8:30 a.m. Orthros, Divine Liturgy, and Blessing of the Waters 5:00 p.m. *House Blessings:* Sign up to have your home blessed Jan. 10th, Jan. 17th, afternoon, Jan. 24th.

Spaghetti Dinners are every Thursday night from 6:00 to 8:00 pm and are open to the public. *Please plan to come and bring your friends.* \$6 for adults include a generous and delicious entrée of spaghetti with meat or marinara sauce, salad, garlic bread, beverage and gourmet desserts by Ken. Also remember to distribute the promotional cards to your local doctors' offices and retail shops. They can be picked up during coffee hour every Sunday. Please plan to come support our spaghetti dinner crew by setting up or cleaning up once a month...or once a quarter. Many hands make light the work—and it is fun too!
****Set Up is from 4:00 to 6:00 pm
****Clean Up is from 7:30 to 8:45 pm

Children's Bulletin: Each week you can print out an educational and fun booklet for your children to enrich their Orthodox faith and knowledge. This is a wonderful activity for parents to use at home with their children. The link can be found on our website under "Parish Life" or at <http://www.stphilothea.ga.goarch.org/ParishLife.htm>

Narthex Furniture Report: We have \$2,500 set aside for Narthex furniture. The cost is estimated to be \$5,000. If you would like to contribute towards this project please help us complete our goal, we are almost there.

St. Philothea is high tech!

See the on-line parish calendar for all the latest information. You can find it through the St. Philothea homepage: <http://www.stphilothea.ga.goarch.org/>
*Marswood Hall Calendar
<http://calendar.goarch.org/cgi-bin/calweb/calweb.exe?level=marswo odhall>

Parish News: Much parish information is shared through the parish listserv. All you need is an e-mail address!

The Bookstore: The Bookstore is open every Sunday after the Divine Liturgy and has a wonderful collection of resources to enrich our spiritual lives.

*Announcements for the bulletin can be emailed to Greekgirl1087@aol.com

FOOD FROM THE FATHERS AND MOTHERS

The Son of God, Who in His compassion became man, died so far as His body was concerned when His soul was separated from His body, but this body was not separated from His divinity, and so He raised up His body once more and took it with Him to heaven in glory. Similarly, when those who have lived here in a godly manner are separated from their bodies, they are not separated from God, and in the resurrection they will take their bodies with them to God, and in their bodies they will enter with inexpressible joy there where Jesus has preceded us and in their bodies they will enjoy the glory that will be revealed in Christ. Indeed, they will share not only in resurrection, but also in the Lord's ascension and in all divine life. But this does not apply to those who live this present life in an unregenerate matter and who at death have no communion with God. For though all will be resurrected, yet the resurrection of each individual will be in accordance with his own inner state.

St. Gregory Palamas, The Philokalia, Vol. IV.

ACTS FOOD DRIVE INFORMATION FOR ST. PHILOTHEA

The following is some important information regarding the ACTS Food drive. For further information please contact Marianne Svoronos.

#1) Volunteers are needed for the ACTS Food Drive: On Friday December 12th there will be a need for people to help with the sorting of cans. A huge delivery is expected resulting from the high school's food drive. Time: 9am till completion (usually by lunchtime). Even 30 min. of your time it will be appreciated!

#2) Shift Volunteers needed for ACTS Food Pantry: A shift has opened up at ACTS: The third Tuesday of every other month, from 9am till 1pm. Our first shift would begin on Dec. 16th with the next shift being Feb. 17th. Only 1-2 people are needed per shift. I will commit for December - is anyone else interested? Please call me and thank you in advance for your help.

#3) Food Drive Appeal: I would like to thank everyone for your response to our Food Drive Appeal. We will be asking for your donations each week until after the holidays so that the children in our local area will have food to eat during the holidays when the schools are closed. In addition to the canned meats, the pantry is asking if our congregation can be a source for macaroni and cheese. So please keep this in mind when you are out shopping, especially when they go on sale!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

COFFEE HOUR HOST

| | |
|--------|---|
| 7-Dec | Mahoney |
| 14-Dec | Covered Dish Majsztrik & Moore |
| 21-Dec | Pagonis & Papadopoulos |
| 28-Dec | E. Pappas |
| 4-Jan | Covered Dish Parthemos & Manzione |
| 11-Jan | Pottier |
| 18-Jan | Ragan |
| 25-Jan | Salzman |
| 1-Feb | Covered Dish Shih |
| 8-Feb | Shurdha & Seiss |
| 15-Feb | Spring |

| | |
|--------|---------------------------------|
| 22-Feb | Stiles |
| 1-Mar | Covered Dish Svoronos |
| 8-Mar | Great Lent Tseggai |
| 15-Mar | Vlahos |
| 22-Mar | Volk |
| 29-Mar | Wright |
| 5-Apr | Covered Dish |
| 12-Apr | |
| 19-Apr | Holy Pascha |
| 26-Apr | |
| 3-May | Covered Dish |

Nativity Word Search

C A N O I T A V L A S D N S H S
 Q S H E P H E R D S R F A L L U
 R A T S A M T S I R H C T E J S
 N E M E S I W S H E E P I G O E
 J G N I K M A R Y G I U V N S J
 M O S Y I H X Q U R Q W I A E T
 D O N K E Y R E G N A M T D P M
 Z I L I N N K E E P E R Y O H F



angels
 Christmas
 donkey
 innkeeper
 Jesus
 Joseph manger
 king Mary
 nativity
 salvation
 sheep
 shepherds
 star
 wisemen

Gospel & Epistle Readings

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 12/7/2008 | Matins: Mark 16:9-20 | Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 4:1-7 |
| | Gospel: Luke 13:10-17 | |
| 12/14/2008 | Matins: Luke 24:1-12 | Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:4-11 |
| | Gospel: Luke 14:16-24; Matthew 22:14 | |
| 12/21/2008 | Matins: Luke 24:13-35 | Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40 |
| | Gospel: Matthew 1:1-25 | |
| 12/28/2008 | Matins: Luke 24:36-53 | Epistle: St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 1:11-19 |
| | Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23 | |

St. Philothea Directory:

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prchristine@imageandlikeness.com

Parish Council:

President: Stacey Cramer

Treasurer: Andrew Shih

Secretary: Ann Volk

Panos Dekazos, Nina Herrington, Paul Lavelle, Constantine Wright, Steve Demos

Sunday school:

Director: Presbytera, Christine Salzman

Philoptochos Board:

President: Ann Volk

Secretary: Rose Lieffring

Treasurer: Presbytera, Christine Salzman

Advisor: Karen Kimberis

Building Maintenance Chair:

Bill Mahoney

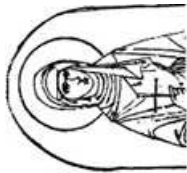
Hospitality Chairs:

Georgia Parthemos and Lynn Manzione

Bulletin:

Writer: Kacina Lamson

Editor: Father Anthony



St. Philothea Greek Orthodox Church Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta

December 2008

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 30 Andrew the First Called Apostle 9:00a <u>Orthros and Divine Liturgy</u> | 1 2:00p <u>OCAF Holiday Market, Pastry prep</u> | 2 6:15p <u>Services</u> | 3 6:15p <u>Services</u> | 4 St. Barbara the Great Martyr 6:00p <u>Spaghetti Dinner, \$6 Adults, \$3 Children under 12</u> 6:30p <u>Catechumen Class</u> 7:00p <u>OFC Christmas Dinner, The Grit</u> | 5 St. Savas the Sanctified 12:00p <u>Corly rehearsal (Ken)</u> | 6 <u>OCAF Holiday Market St. Nicholas</u> 12:00p <u>Corley Lauren- wedding-c-reception (Constantine)</u> |
| 7 <u>OCAF Holiday Market</u> 9:00a <u>Orthros and Divine Liturgy</u> 12:00p <u>No Covered Dish</u> | 8 6:15p <u>Services</u> | 9 6:15p <u>Services</u> | 10 6:15p <u>Services</u> | 11 6:00p <u>GOYA Spaghetti Dinner</u> 6:00p <u>Spaghetti Dinner, \$6 Adults, \$3 Children under 12</u> 6:30p <u>Catechumen Class</u> 7:30p <u>DYCE Meeting</u> | 12 St. Spyridon | 13 12:00p <u>Hanes reception</u> |
| 14 9:00a <u>Orthros and Divine Liturgy</u> 11:00a <u>Christmas Pageant, Stewardship Sunday & Brunch, Elections</u> | 15 7:00a <u>Divine Liturgy</u> | 16 8:00a <u>Divine Liturgy</u> | 17 7:00a <u>Divine Liturgy</u> 6:15p <u>Services</u> 7:00p <u>Parish Council</u> | 18 8:00a <u>Divine Liturgy</u> 6:30p <u>Catechumen Class</u> | 19 7:00a <u>Divine Liturgy</u> 12:00p <u>casper rehearsal</u> | 20 12:00p <u>Casper, Emma- wedding-reception-chapel- c</u> |
| 21 9:00a <u>Orthros and Divine Liturgy</u> | 22 7:00a <u>Divine Liturgy</u> | 23 8:00a <u>Divine Liturgy</u> | 24 8:30a <u>Great Hours and Vespers</u> 8:00p <u>Christmas Orthros and Divine Liturgy, Champaign reception</u> | 25 <u>Christmas</u> | 26 | 27 St. Stephen <u>WYR and CC South</u> 12:00p <u>Goodwin- Reception</u> |
| 28 9:00a <u>Orthros and Divine Liturgy</u> | 29 <u>WYR and CC South</u> | 30 <u>WYR and CC South</u> | 31 CC South 6:15p <u>Services</u> | 1 | 2 | 3 |

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