



## **From Father Anthony**

### **PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE**

*The response to my survey at the end of my monthly bulletin message in November was 11. Six who attend and 5 who live outside of the Athens area.*

### **THE BEST POSSIBLE WORLD**

In Voltaire's Book entitled *Candide*, the 'hero' of the story thought that he lived in the "Best Possible World". However the author conspired to show his main character how naïve he was through several encounters with "the real world", meaning evil. In the end, *Candide* encounters a philosopher to try and solve this conflict between idealism and experience and he is told more or less, "don't ask, just live." As Orthodox Christians we are preparing to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. What has come to be called 'Christmas'. Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity took on flesh and dwelt among us. That is he limited Himself to a specific being with a certain hair color, a certain set of eyes and nose, a certain height. He was not every person, He was not every gender, and He was not every color. He was a specific person in time and space. Perfect God, and perfect man. This kind of specificity flies in the face of modern concepts of God. Modern views don't want to get quite that committed about who God is. He is a force; He is every where; there are many ways to God. "Jesus is one story among many equally good explanations", you may hear. Of course this kind of thinking doesn't demand much of its adherents because their only creed is "everyone is right". They act as if God is an impersonal force that has no identity, rather than a perfect personal being that wants to be in communion with other personal beings. As people, we desire to be in relationship with other people and we suffer all kinds of mental, spiritual and physical diseases if we are prevented from doing so. In the Orthros service we chant "God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." God has told us who He is in the person of Jesus Christ. In Christ, we are in the "best possible world," because it is the one He created for us, and the one in which He is redeeming and transforming us. We are not naïve as our young friend "Candide". We know evil exists in the world because we have experienced it. Or rather, we have experienced the absence of God, since in Orthodox theology, evil has no existence on its own, but is rather a cancer that only exists when people bring it into being through their acts. When the Jews were awaiting the Messiah, they were expecting God to deliver them from the oppressive occupation of the Romans. That is not what Christ came to deliver them from. He had a bigger target, 'death'. He came not to change the circumstances that they found themselves in, but rather to change 'them' "in" their circumstances. If we live our lives, waiting for our ship to come in, for the day when everything will be right in the world, when we will finally be 'happy', then we are bound to be disappointed with life much of the time. If however, we accept life's circumstances with thanksgiving and ask God for strength and wisdom to shine the light of Christ in the circumstance then we will live a miraculous life, being co-workers with God in the transformation of ourselves and by extension the world. This is the "best of all possible worlds". Through Christ's incarnation, death and resurrection, we now have the power and the means to live in it victoriously.

Have a blessed Nativity as we reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

Fr. Anthony

## Sunday Epistle & Gospel Readings

### November

### Epistle

### Gospel

December 4	St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-5	Luke 13:10-17
December 11	St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:4-11	Luke 14:16-24; Matthew 22:14
December 18	St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40	Matthew 1:1-25
December 25	St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians 4:4-7	Matthew 2:1-20

## Parish Happenings

**Email Change:** Please note that Father Anthony and I have new email addresses. Please replace our mindspring addresses with the following:

[prchristine@imageandlikeness.com](mailto:prchristine@imageandlikeness.com)

[frantonios2@imageandlikeness.com](mailto:frantonios2@imageandlikeness.com)

### **Christmas Schedule:**

- Friday December 23<sup>rd</sup> Royal Hours 9:00 a.m.
- Saturday December 24<sup>th</sup> Orthos and Divine Liturgy 8:00 a.m. and evening Vespers followed by a Lenten Reception at 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday December 25<sup>th</sup> Orthos and Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.

**Parish Council Elections:** will take place Sunday December 11 following the Divine Liturgy. Absentee voting will be accepted up until 11:30 p.m. that day. So far nominees for the 3 Parish Council positions are Andrew Shih, Stacey Cramer, Nina Herrington, and Elton Manzione.

Philoptochos: Next meeting is Wednesday December 7<sup>th</sup> at Ann Volks.

**Oratorical Festival:** The youth of St. Philothea will begin preparations for the Oratorical Festival and we will have an introductory meeting on Sunday November 13. Our parish has been chosen to host the Conference-wide festival next spring and we would like to have as many participants from our parish as possible (ages 12-18) The Oratorical Festival is an Archdiocesan event. Each parish hosts a local festival and the top two finalists in the both junior and senior divisions go on to the Conference festival. From there finalists are chosen for the Metropolis level and then on to the Archdiocesan level. Winners receive various prizes including scholarships. The topics are related to our Orthodox Christian faith and Tradition and it is a wonderful opportunity to learn. A significant part of success is the oratorical presentation and helps prepare young people for public speaking. It is a tremendous program. All participants receive an official letter that goes into their school documents stating their involvement in this national oratorical competition.

**OCAF Holiday Market** will be December 3 & 4 in Watkinsville, 10 am to 5 pm Philoptochos is hosting a pastry booth and needs volunteers to work 2 hour shifts selling sweets. This is a very nice event featuring high quality artisan work and it is a good opportunity to enjoy the Market and help Philoptochos

raise money for their charitable projects.  
Please call Presbytera Christine at 310-1304 to sign up for a shift.

Mark the following dates for the Holiday Market & check out the schedule to sign u for a shift:

### SIGN UP FOR A SHIFT TO WORK THE BOOTH:

SAT:

9:00 - 11:00 includes setting up (Market opens at 10:00 am)  
11:00 - 1:00  
1:00 - 3:00  
3:00 - 5:00

SUN:

10:00 - 12:00  
12:00 - 2:00  
2:00 - 4:00  
4:00 - 6:00 includes take down (market closes at 5 pm)

\*\*\*Call Presbytera for more info and to be scheduled!

### **Catechumen Class**

Catechumen class is held for those who would like to learn more about Orthodoxy.  
Classes are every Wednesday from 6-7 p.m. .

### **Building Maintenance:**

Last person to leave the building please check the bathrooms to make sure the toilets are not running, as well as turn the heat down to 62, and the air conditioning up to 80 and make sure the lights are off.

### **Christmas Eve Lenten Reception**

following Vespers at 7:00 p.m. Contact Presvytera Christine for what to bring.

**Christmas Program** with our youth will take place Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> following the Divine Liturgy.

### **Services in December**

St. Nicholas Orthros and Divine Liturgy, Dec. 5 5:00 p.m., Vespers Wed, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. and Dec. 21 at 6:30 p.m..

### **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=marswoodhall>

### **Hall Cleaning**

December 2<sup>nd</sup> 7:00 p.m.

### **Parish News**

Much parish information is shared through the parish listserv. All you need is an e-mail address! If interested, please e-mail Peter Gess: [pgess@mindspring.com](mailto:pgess@mindspring.com)

### **The Bookstore:**

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

*We thank the bookstore for their recent donation of \$500 to the operating fund. Through their good stewardship they were able to meet their expenses and contribute financially to the church. Thank you Lynn and Elton for your innovative stewardship.*



**St. Philothea Directory:**

Father Anthony Salzman, Presbyter  
Phone: 770-725-5033  
E-mail: frantonios2@imageandlikeness.com

**Parish Council:**

President: Dean Kimbaris  
Vice President: Kurt Knisely  
Treasurer: Bill Mahoney  
Secretary: Stacey Cramer  
Members: Frieda Dekazos, Alex Johns, Karen  
Kimbaris, Alexander Raev, Ann Volk

**Sunday school:**

Dana Johns

**Music Director:**

Angie Iakovou

**Philoptochos Board:**

President: Karen Kimbaris  
Vice President: Ann Volk  
Treasurer: Tara Mahoney  
Secretary: Nina Lamson  
Corresponding Secretary: Frieda Dekazos  
Outreach: Dana Johns  
Metropolitan Liaison: Presbyteria Christine

**Marketing and Maintenance Chair:**

Rick Volk

**Hospitality Chair:**

Georgia Parthemos

**Communications Chair:**

Tammy Andros

**Liaisons to the Caterer:**

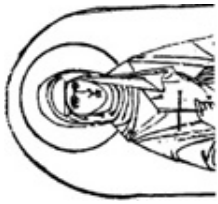
Dean and Karen Kimbaris



*Fear not: for, behold,  
I bring you good tidings  
of great joy, which  
shall be to all people.  
For unto you is born  
this day in the city  
of David, a Savior, which  
is Christ the Lord.*

*~Luke 2:10-11*

***HAVE A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS!***



# St. Philothea Greek Orthodox Church Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta

## December 2005

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
9:00a <a href="#">Orthros and Divine Liturgy</a>	28	29	30	1	2	3
		St. Andrew the Apostle, Orthros, 4:30, Liturgy 5:30 6:30p OCF Dinner and Discussion 6:30	6:00p <a href="#">Greek School</a> , 6:00 p.m., & <a href="#">Catachumen Class</a>		7:00p <a href="#">Hall Cleaning</a>	10:00p - Dec 4, 5: 5:00a <a href="#">OCAF Holiday Market</a>
10:00p - Dec 4, 5: 5:00a <a href="#">OCAF Holiday Market</a>	5	6	7	8	9	10
	5:00p <a href="#">Feast of St. Nicholas</a> , Orthros 5, <a href="#">Divine Liturgy</a> 6 p.m.		6:00p <a href="#">Greek School</a> , 6:00 p.m., & <a href="#">Catachumen Class</a>			
9:00a <a href="#">Orthros and Divine Liturgy</a> 12:00p <a href="#">Parish Council Elections</a>	12	13	14	15	16	17
	St. Spyridon		6:00p <a href="#">Greek School</a> , 6:00 p.m., & <a href="#">Catachumen Class</a> 7:00p <a href="#">Vespers</a>			
9:00a <a href="#">Orthros and Divine Liturgy</a> 12:00p <a href="#">Christmas Pageant</a>	19	20	21	22	23	24
			6:30p <a href="#">Vespers</a> 7:00p <a href="#">Parish Council</a>		9:00a <a href="#">Great Hours</a>	8:00a <a href="#">Orthros and Divine Liturgy</a> 7:00p <a href="#">Christmas Vespers, Program, and Lenten Reception</a>
Nativity of our Lord 9:00a <a href="#">Orthros and Divine Liturgy</a>	26	27	28	29	30	31
	St. Stephen the First Martyr <a href="#">Winter Youth Rally</a>	St. Stephen the First Martyr <a href="#">Winter Youth Rally</a>	<a href="#">Winter Youth Rally</a>	<a href="#">Winter Youth Rally</a>	<a href="#">Winter Youth Rally</a>	



**St. Philothea Greek Orthodox Church  
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta**

3761 Mars Hill Road

Watkinsville, Georgia 30677

For more information: 770/725-5035



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