LET US FOLLOW THE MAGI

Come, believers, let us see the place where Christ has been born.
With the Magi, those three kings who from Orient are, now let us follow
to where the star is proceeding. Ceaselessly do Angels sing praises there.
Shepherds in the field sing a worthy song, saying, “Glory in the highest be to Him
who was born today in the grotto from the Virgin and Theotokos, in Bethlehem of Judea.”

IN THE NATIVITY NARRATIVE OF SAINT MATTHEW, we are introduced to the shadowy
and mysterious figures known as the Magi, or Wise Men, “who studied the stars and
came from the East to Jerusalem” (2:1). If we are willing to reflect for a moment, I
think that we can catch glimpses of ourselves in the journey of these men. In a deep
sense, they reflect the many dimensions of our own individual journeys of faith.

It is not difficult to imagine the many real dangers of their long journey—the re-
sistance of their families, the efforts of colleagues to discourage them, the unbearable
heat and freezing nights of the deserts they crossed, the danger of marauding thieves.
And yet, they felt compelled to answer the call of the beckoning Star of Bethlehem,
to worship the newborn King and lay their gifts at His feet. In this act of faith and
obedience, “how happy they were, what joy was theirs!” (2:9). Upon finding the
child “. . . they knelt down and worshipped him. They brought out their gifts of
gold, frankincense and myrrh and presented them to him” (2:11).

In this same way, that Star calls each of us to begin a life-long journey to meet
Jesus Christ, to acknowledge Him and make Him a part of our lives. In doing so,
however, we need to acknowledge with honesty and forthrightness the difficulty of
following Christ. However, as with the Magi, we must undertake the journey know-
ing of its difficulty.

In the Christian life, discouragement comes in many forms. There is discourage-
ment when it seems our prayers are not answered; when we work with honesty and
integrity, but see others, who cut corners, prosper and advance; when we endure
personal separation and loss; and when we need compassion and affirmation and they
are not to be found.

Through the mystery of faithful obedience, the Magi offered themselves and their
gifts to Christ, transcending at that moment the difficulties and discouragements of
their journey. Having met Christ they were changed men and went home by another
route, symbolizing their confidence and trust in the new direction their lives had taken.
This same opportunity is given to the wise men and women of every age each
Christmas when the star returns again to shine anew in the heart of each of us.

In this way, brothers and sisters, we are reminded that Christmas is nothing if it is
only a one-day occasion for the exchange of gifts and hearty eating. For Christmas to
be truly celebrated, it must also transform the days and weeks of our lives that fol-
low. If they, too, are filled with all that we have come to regard as the spirit of
Christmas, then we will truly celebrate the birth of Christ.

(Continued on page 14, column 1)
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey
Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church
www.saint-katherines.org
3149 Glen Carlyn Road
Falls Church, VA 22041
703-671-1515 phone
703-671-1385 facsimile

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Secretary, Bill Polizos 571-434-7790 polizos@att.com
Treasurer, Maria Vargas 703-812-0286 maria@chrisandmaria.com

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Catechetical (Sunday) School, Youth Bill Porter 703-901-2404 weporter1@fcps.edu
Women’s Book Club Despina Raizes 703-216-8176 2draizes@gmail.com

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AHHEP #438 (P. Derzis) John Papathanassiou 703-732-6329 j_m_papas@hotmail.com
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Book Reviews Gregory McKinney, Contributor 571-338-6929 dintym@hotmail.com
Daughters of Penelope Helle #283 Karen Polizos, President 571-434-7790 kpolizos@naifa.org
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Facebook Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church Gregory McKinney dintym@hotmail.com
GOYA (ages 13-18) Theo Karounos, President 703-321-3009 goya@stkchurch.com
GRACE Fr. Costa Pavlakos, Spiritual Advisor 703-671-1515 frcostas@stkchurch.com
Greek Dance Aris and Anna Yortzidis, Instructors 757-218-6991 greekdance@msn.com
Greek School Auxiliary Martha Lampros, President 703-536-4860 mmlampros@msn.com
Hellenic Education Center Greek School and Paideia Preschool 703-671-7715 http://www.stkhec.org
HOPE (ages 7 and under) Vaitis Bousbouras HOPE_St_Katherine@yahoo.com
JOY (ages 8-12) Toula Christou, Director 703-533-0055 tmchristou@yahoo.com
Listserv (email list) Presv. Pauline Pavlakos, Administrator 703-239-2627 przpauline@stkchurch.com
Missions and Outreach Dr. John Demakis, Chairman 703-319-1610 demakis9931@gmail.com
OCF (College Ministry) Fr. Costa Pavlakos, Spiritual Advisor 703-671-1515 frcostas@stkchurch.com
Philoptochos Eleni Kanakos, President 703-938-8360 ekanakos@aol.com
Prison Ministry (Kairos) Dennis Garbis 202-437-7299 djgarbis@envdes.com
Single Parent Fellowship Angela Kallas-Miller agapiang@gmail.com
Website Presv. Pauline Pavlakos, Webmaster 703-239-2627 przpauline@stkchurch.com
YAL (Young Adult League) Faye (Fotini) Anson fanson38@yahoo.com
As we end one year and look to the beginning of the next, I am increasingly reminded of what a precious commodity time is and how important it is to utilize that time wisely. Each year has its own set of challenges and events that distinguish it from others. This year’s challenges have ranged from perennial and varied maintenance issues, to termite and rodent infestations, to the loss of an assistant priest we worked many years to secure and ultimately having to revert to a single Liturgy as a result. We learned lightning doesn’t have to actually strike your facility to damage it as evidenced by the computer network switch, fire alarm panel and phone system we had to replace due to “proximity lightning strikes.” We endured horrendous weather during our Fall Festival and overcame multiple other obstacles placed before us. While we draw a certain measure of justifiable pride, accomplishment and satisfaction in dealing with these challenges over the year, our greater joy derives from our community’s multiple blessings.

We continue to benefit from a robust spiritual program. Our Proistamenos Fr. Konstantinos Pavlakos remains the bedrock of our Liturgical celebrations and our community’s sacramental life continues to prosper. I also wish to personally thank Presvytera Pauline for all the many things she does for us all—often “behind the scenes”—she is one of our parish’s greatest blessings!

As always, our Ladies Philoptochos Chapter was a beacon of love and generosity, hosting multiple events over the year including the popular Seniors Thanksgiving Luncheon. This year also marked our first opportunity to host the Metropolis of New Jersey Byzantine Choir Lenten Concert—an event thoroughly enjoyed by everyone in attendance. Holy Week observances were again magnificent and enjoyed by all parishioners. Our second annual Easter Lamb Roast after the Agape Services on Easter morning was a fitting way to conclude our Easter celebration. Almost 400 people gathered to enjoy a live band and a menu featuring roast lamb, pig, pastitsio and many other delights.

Although our Fall Festival was plagued with inclement weather, our Spring Festival in June was highly successful and as always, a band of dedicated volunteers paved the way to success. Late this summer, with help from the Peter N. Derzis AHEPA Chapter 438, we instituted a new and exciting Seniors Ministry featuring a Seniors Kentro (Kentero) providing our senior citizens a place to gather with friends, watching the news from Greece, or attend planned Lectures, Bible Studies and health and wellness activities.

Our Hellenic Education Center continues to be a major blessing to our community. Motivated and inspired faculty members are wholly and passionately committed as they educate and cultivate the minds of our next generation of parishioners. Our teachers and students are a constant source of pride as they strive to adhere to the school’s motto ἄλλη δριστεύειν or “Ever to Excel.” Our innovative approach to language education has received many accolades and our staff has been made multiple presentations at various academic conferences. In a recent exciting development, we have aligned our curriculum with the state of Virginia standardized language exams based on the American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards. In so doing, we not only ensure our children are prepared to pass the exam, but also enable them to earn high school language credit and a seal of biliteracy on their diplomas.

Our ministries continue to thrive with over 50 opportunities for parishioners to further participate in the life of our church. And just last month, in November, our community gathered for another successful annual Dinner Gala and we took great pleasure in honoring Sophia Tsangali and Nick Larigakis for their distinctive service to the community.

As we take stock of our many blessings, we also remain cognizant that our responsibility to maintain and continue to improve our physical plant is ongoing. Future projects include landscaping, resurfacing our church parking lot, replacing the roof at the base of the church dome, improving lighting and flooring systems within our Meletis Charuhas Center, acquiring mobile refrigeration units for festival operations, constructing sidewalks and repairing retaining walls around the church, renovating bathrooms in Founders’ Hall and addressing the continuing need for additional storage.

The end of the year also marks the departure of John Demakis, Pierre Tavoularis, Daphne Vaccarello, George Moshos, Chris Christou and Artemis Dimopoulos, who have faithfully served on our Parish Council over the years. I thank all of you for your dedicated service to your church and our community.

Our job tending to the needs of our community is an ongoing and immensely rewarding ministry. On behalf of our Parish Council, I wish to thank the entire community for your support and for giving us all the opportunity to serve our parish. We wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Prosperous and Healthy New Year! Κάλα Χριστούγεννα και Ευυγές το Νέο Έτος!

Your Servant in Christ,

[Signature]
President, Parish Council
CATECHETICAL (SUNDAY) SCHOOL
Thank you to the Sunday School families who raised $1,500 for much-needed snacks at Carlin Springs Elementary School! You are all Hunger Heroes!
Thank you, students, for participating in National Make a Difference Day by writing notes of appreciation and support to our military. What a blessing you are to our community!
On December 6, the Giving Tree will be set up by the entry of our Hellenic Education Center. Students may provide a wrapped gift for an adult at the Bailey’s Crossroads Community Shelter. A full Christmas Pageant rehearsal is scheduled to take place from 9:00am-10:00am, during the Sunday School hour.
The Christmas Pageant on December 13 will be presented in coordination with the Greek School program. Parents, we need your help with food provisions for the reception afterwards! On this date students will also be assembling Survival and Hygiene Kits as part of our OCMC ministry to the homeless.
December 13 is also Youth Church Duty Sunday, with Zoe Gould as Epistle Reader during the 10:00am Teaching Liturgy in the Meletis Charuhhas Hall. Thanks to Eleni Rouvelas and all the volunteers for their service in October!
We will help GOYA with their annual Feed and Clothe the Homeless on Christmas Day ministry. Starting at 6:30pm on December 23, we will make sandwiches and package lunch and gift bags. At 8:00am on Christmas morning, we will meet in the Meletis Charuhhas Hall, pack vehicles, and drive into DC, and distribute the bags. We will be back in time for the 10:00am Christmas Liturgy.
Many GOYAns still need to submit a health/registration form (available on the GOYA webpage at www.saintkatherines.org under “Ministries | Youth Groups”). Others still owe $30 dues. An online calendar and other information are available on that above-mentioned page as well.
Some GOYA dates to put on your calendar are:
January 10: GOYA Church Duty and Meeting
January 12: Feed the homeless at Bailey’s Shelter
January 17-18: Trip to NYC
February 6-7: SS. C&H, Richmond Tournament
March 26: Cosmic Bowling at Bowl America, Burke
April 8-10: Lock-In, Camp Piankatank, Hartfield, VA
May 7-8: Our Basketball Tournament
If you would like more information on GOYA or would like to receive GOYA emails, please send your request to GOYA_St_Katherine@msn.com.
Christ is born! Glorify Him!

HOPE
Mark your calendars for HOPE’s next event on Saturday, January 23. We will go see Norm of the North at AMC Tysons Corner. More information will be available in the January DOXA.

GOYA
GOYA will once again Feed and Clothe the Homeless in DC on Christmas Day. We will start at 6:30pm on Wednesday, December 23, by signing Christmas cards stuffed with McDonald’s gift cards, making sandwiches and filling bags with those cards and sandwiches, cookies, drinks, chips, gloves, hats, socks, and sweat pants. More items are pending at the time this issue goes to press. A list of donors will be in next month’s DOXA. Then, we will meet at 8:00am in the Meletis Charuhhas Hall on Christmas morning to pack vehicles, drive into DC, and distribute the bags. We will be back in time for the 10:00am Christmas Liturgy.

KALANDA
Singers
On December 5, the Greek School will be around the town for their annual Kalanda fundraiser. We invite families and businesses to host our singers. To arrange a time, please contact Toula Christou at tmchristou@yahoo.com.
Thank you!

The Byzantio Greek Dance and Cultural Arts Program offers Greek folk dance lessons at Saint Katherine Church on Tuesdays, 6:30pm-7:30pm, for all youth ages 4 and up. The adult performing group practices on Sundays, 6:00pm-7:30pm.
Please contact Aris and Anna Yortzidis at greekdancedc@gmail.com for more information or visit the website at www.byzantio.org to download registration forms.

Christ is born! Glorify Him!
HELENIC EDUCATION CENTER

Seal of Biliteracy: A Credit-by-Exam Language Program recently implemented by the World Language Office in all Arlington Public Schools

WE ARE SO EXCITED that Arlington Public Schools is implementing an exam for earning language high school credits including the Greek Language. Students can earn up to four credits depending on their level of proficiency as demonstrated by the exam.

If students wish to graduate with an Advanced Studies Diploma (ASD), they will need to earn three world language credits. These are earned by taking three years of one language (3X1) or two years each of two different languages (2X2). The successful participation in the exam will allow students to earn up to four credits towards the ASD.

Students in grades 7-12 are eligible to take the exam. Students interested in receiving credit by taking a language proficiency test should at least be at the Novice Mid Level and be able to:
- Ask and answer simple questions.
- Make simple statements in a conversation.
- Communicate basic information about oneself, people they know, and daily activities.
- Express likes and dislikes in writing and speaking.
- Fill out a form with basic information.
- Read and write a list of daily activities.


Three years ago the HEC staff worked on researching for the best methods, practices and tools teaching the Greek language. Students’ needs demanded a program fit to address the teaching of Greek as a second, foreign or heritage language.

Approved by the Board of Education and Fr. Costa Pavlakos, the new curriculum implemented is based on the ACTFL (American Council for Teaching Foreign Languages) standards recommending that a new language be taught in a level-based system exercising four specific skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). These skills and levels are the ones Arlington Public Schools Seal of Biliteracy program is using to base its exams.

Most importantly, our teachers after attending seminars and workshops, are able to prepare the students on acquiring the following four ACTFL skills. A greater emphasis has been placed on the listening and speaking at the lower levels versus a more equal emphasis on all four skills at the higher levels Intermediate and up.

This is wonderful news for all HEC students and our language programs. Progress is being made so that students who meet the criteria and graduate from a public high school across the Commonwealth in 2016 shall be awarded the diploma Seal of Biliteracy.

Please note: Registration closes on January 8th for the February 1st test. Students can register online at: http://www.apsva.us/worldlanguages or at http://google/forms/CKDH23eRPF. For more information, please contact the HEC director at ealexopoulou@stkchurch.com.

(Continued on page 14, column 1)

BOOK REVIEW

Gregory McKinney


IT’S A GIVEN that book reviews for a church newsletter should generally focus on uplifting and edifying works. But in our daily walk through the world, we face situations that are the opposite: uncomfortable, unclear, and unbalanced. And sometimes, these queasy and grey situations may be in fact of our own making as we stumble misguided and oblivious toward moral quicksand. There is a place for cautionary tales.

Tobias Wolfe’s stories provide an opportunity to reflect on ourselves. Wolfe’s deft storytelling makes for sharply-drawn characters and situations that generally feel unforced, being painfully normal, yet deeply revealing. The people we find growing in his word garden are rather weedy. They’ve planted themselves in thin and rocky soils and their roots are shallow. We feel a familiarity with Wolfe’s protagonists, perhaps as casual acquaintances we lost track of over time, but unsuccessfully forgot. Or maybe once I was such a person in such a situation and my failure to make the better choice was my shame.

In Maiden Voyage, a cruise celebrating a fiftieth wedding anniversary forces the husband to act on his investment in his marriage and he comes up short. A souped-up used car and an earnest, but disingenuous insurance adjuster, weave their way into a man’s mid-life crisis in Worldly Goods. In Smokers, one “scholarship boy” at an elite boarding school is desperate for acceptance by his privileged schoolmates. He ultimately buys his way in by allowing another boy to be expelled instead of the guilty rich roommate. In the title story, a PhD, who played it safe and oblivious toward moral quicksand. There is a place for cautionary tales.

And Brooke’s wife, unpacking the clothes, smelled perfume on his necktie. Then she went through the laundry hamper and discovered the same heavy scent all over one of his shirts. There had to be an explanation, but no matter how long she sat in the edge of the bed and held her head in her hands and rocked back and forth she could not imagine what it might be. And her husband was so much himself that night, so merry and warm, that she felt unworthy of him. The doubt passed from her mind to her body; it became one of those flutters that stops you cold from time to time for a few years, and then goes away (p. 43).

These twelve stories are portraits of lives lived with little self-awareness, little charity, and little faith. Let those who have ears, hear.

Tobias Wolff teaches English and creative writing Stanford University. He has received multiple honors and prizes, including the PEN/Malamud Award for excellence in the short story.
A FOUR-DAY WEEKEND took place from October 15-18 at Greensville Correctional Center in Jarratt, Virginia. Forty-two (42) able bodied to me or the Kairos team because one never knows what’s going on inside a person’s heart. On the outside one can began to open up on the third day. Some of the guys appeared only partially interested or were very passive. This is not trou-

Another part of the Kairos program is being introduced at Greensville Correctional Center. The offenders can now receive e-mail through a system called JPay. Saint Katherine will be part of a pilot program on how to manage outsiders communicating with an offender. There are many challenges that must be considered. Just as a potential Kairos team member must undergo training it is the opinion of the undersigned that some training must be given to those who might desire to communicate with an offender through JPay. As an example, one of the reasons is that many of the guys are very manipulative—and very good at it. It’s not a huge problem, but one has to be aware of the dynamics. Great good can come out of this program, particularly to an offender who has no one in the world who cares about him. I have discussed this e-mail opportunity with Fr. Costas and, sometime in January, we will have a meeting after church to discuss this opportunity in more depth.

PRISON MINISTRY
Dennis Garbis

The four-day weekend took place from October 15-18 at Greensville Correctional Center in Jarratt, Virginia. Forty-two (42) men were selected by the Prison Chaplain to attend the event. As usual, there were some amazing stories. Most of the men began to open up on the third day. Some of the guys appeared only partially interested or were very passive. This is not troublesome to me or the Kairos team because one never knows what’s going on inside a person’s heart. On the outside one can easily present at attitude of acceptance while his heart is rejecting everything. And, of course, the opposite can be true. The truth is none of us knows what’s inside a man’s heart. Only God knows that. Also consider it might take a week, a month, a year or tens of years before there is acceptance of God’s way to Salvation through His Son Jesus Christ. We, on the Kairos team, see our job is to inform and, very mildly, to warn.

Another part of the Kairos program is being introduced at Greensville Correctional Center. The offenders can now receive e-mail through a system called JPay. Saint Katherine will be part of a pilot program on how to manage outsiders communicating with an offender. There are many challenges that must be considered. Just as a potential Kairos team member must undergo training it is the opinion of the undersigned that some training must be given to those who might desire to communicate with an offender through JPay. As an example, one of the reasons is that many of the guys are very manipulative—and very good at it. It’s not a huge problem, but one has to be aware of the dynamics. Great good can come out of this program, particularly to an offender who has no one in the world who cares about him. I have discussed this e-mail opportunity with Fr. Costas and, sometime in January, we will have a meeting after church to discuss this opportunity in more depth.
REGISTRY

Wedding
Mary Elizabeth Lowell
and
George John Harocopos
Koumbaroi: John and Demetra Davis
(at Saint Nicholas, St. Louis, MO)

Congratulations!

Baptisms
Gianna Barbara (November 22)
daughter of David Richard and
Angela Kapetanakis Pishioneri
Godparent: Petros and Constance Drosos

Konstantin (November 28)
son of Evangelos Vassalos and Maria Palerm
Godparent: Dimitris Thiraios

Congratulations!

Funerals
Vasilios A. Voliotis (October 6)
Stavros Kolas (October 28)
Gus Johnnides (November 7)
Aggie Capsalis (November 20)
Alexandra Diapoulis (November 23)

May their memory be eternal.

Saint Katherine Ladies Philoptochos
upcoming bake sale dates:

Christmas & New Year
Sunday, December 13, 2015
Sunday, December 20, 2015

Easter
Sunday, April 17, 2016
Sunday, April 24, 2016

For more information, please email
LPbakesale@yahoo.com or call
Mary Varlas, 703-965-4161

2015 COMMUNITY
CHRISTMAS CARD

You are invited to participate in the annual Christmas card of our parish. It will be mailed by the Church Office to everyone on our mailing list for only $25. Please send your name, as you wish it to appear in the card, in English or Greek, and a check payable to Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church, to the Church Office no later than Monday, December 7. Thank you.

AHEPA #438
CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

The Peter N. Derzis AHEPA Chapter #438 is proud to announce our 8th Annual Community Christmas Ornament. This whimsical multi-layered Evzone Snowman is sure to be a favorite with young and old alike! Your children and grandchildren will cherish it! These high quality ornaments are manufactured by the same firm that creates the famous White House Christmas ornaments. The decorative boxed packaging makes them ideal for gift giving...they are the perfect stocking stuffer. The cost remains at $20 each with proceeds supporting our AHEPA Charities such as Vacation Bible Camp, Hellenic Education Center, Church missions, and college scholarships. Please support our chapter’s charitable endeavors on behalf of our community with your purchase of these highly collectable and sought-after ornaments.

You may place your orders by contacting us at either antovi@verizon.net or jstoucker@verizon.net, or by calling 703-671-1515, 703-671-7225, or 703-929-6110.
**Saint Katherine Ladies Philoptochos**

**CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE**

**December 13th and 20th after Liturgy**

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<tr>
<th>NAME __________________________</th>
<th>TO ORDER, PLEASE EMAIL</th>
<th><a href="mailto:LPBAKESALE@YAHOO.COM">LPBAKESALE@YAHOO.COM</a></th>
<th>OR CALL MARY VARLAS</th>
<th>AT 703-965-4161</th>
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**PLEASE MAIL CHECKS TO:**

SAINT KATHERINE LADIES PHILOPTOCHOΣ

ATTN: MARY VARLAS

3149 GLEN CARLYN ROAD
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041
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<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<td>8:00pm HEC Basketball</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6:30pm GOYA Girls’ Basketball 7:00pm Adult Int. Greek</td>
<td>4 Barbara the Great Martyr 9:30am Orthros 10:30am Divine Liturgy 5:00pm Greek School 5:00pm Adult Conversational Greek</td>
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<td>6 10th Sunday of Luke Nicholas the Wonderworker 9:00am Orthros and Catechetical School 10:00am Divine Liturgy 9:00am Single Parents Stewardship Sunday Diaper Drive 6:00pm Adult Greek Dance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8 5pm Conversational Grk 6:30pm Adult Beg. Greek 6:00pm Grk Folk Dance 7:30pm Missions Meeting</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8:00pm HEC Basketball</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6:30pm GOYA Girls’ Basketball 7:00pm Adult Int. Greek</td>
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<td>13 11th Sunday of Luke 9:00am Orthros 10:00am Divine Liturgy (Children’s Liturgy in the Meletis Charuhas Hall) Philoptochos Bake Sale Parish Council Elections 12pm Christmas Pageant 6:00pm Adult Greek Dance</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15 2:00pm GMU OCF 7:30pm Deuteri Deutera</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7:30pm Parish Council 8:00pm HEC Basketball</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6:30pm GOYA Girls’ Basketball 7:00pm Adult Int. Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Sunday before Nativity 9:00am Orthros and Catechetical School 10:00am Divine Liturgy Philoptochos Bake Sale 6:00pm Adult Greek Dance</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23 6:30pm GOYA Making Sandwiches and Packing Bags for DC Homeless</td>
<td>24 Eve of the Nativity Christmas Eve 9:30am Orthros and Great Hours 7:00pm Vesperal Liturgy</td>
<td>25 Holy Nativity Christmas Day 9:30am Orthros 10:30am Divine Liturgy 8:00am GOYA Feeding the Homeless in DC</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please check the online calendar, [http://saint-katherines.org/calendar](http://saint-katherines.org/calendar), for the most current information.
PHILOPTOCHOS (by Eleni Kanakos, President)

I HOPE THAT ALL OF YOU had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday! It’s the season of giving thanks, so it’s only appropriate that I thank Irene Burton and Pantel and Ioanna Firippis, all of you who donated food, and all the volunteers who made our Seniors’ Thanksgiving Luncheon a wonderful event. Many thanks to Diane Argerson and all the volunteers for a beautiful reception for the Saint Katherine nameday celebrations.

Our Christmas Luncheon and Fashion Show will be held at the Westwood Country Club in Vienna on December 12, 11:30am-3:00pm. Spouses and friends are welcome. For reservations, call Trish Kapsidelis at 703-356-5906. The deadline for your reservation is December 1.

Our Christmas Bake Sale is on Sundays, December 13 and 20 following Liturgy. Please contact Mary Varlas (703-965-4161 or LPbakesale@yahoo.com) to place your order.

Our Washington Metropolitan Philoptochos Tea will be hosted by Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral on Saturday, January 23, 2016 from 2:00pm-4:00pm. The snow date is Saturday, January 30. The speaker will be our own Fr. Costa Pavlakos, who will discuss The Freedom of Orthodoxy in Cuba. If you would like to attend, please RSVP, by January 15, to Mary Dimos at 202-244-5935.

On behalf of our Philoptochos, thank you to all of you who donated jackets this winter for the homeless children.

A special thank you to Presvytera Pauline for revising and printing the new Philoptochos directory which was handed out at the Thanksgiving luncheon. Thanks also for donating the colorful paper on which it was printed.

There will not be a meeting during the month of December. Our next meeting is on January 17, 2016 after Liturgy. Please mark your calendars.

Just a friendly reminder to send in your stewardship, if you haven’t already done so. I hope that you and your families have a wonderful Christmas holiday and a blessed, healthy, and happy New Year! Looking forward to a successful 2016 for the ladies of Philoptochos!

SINGLE PARENT FELLOWSHIP

SINGLE PARENTS (MALE AND FEMALE) are encouraged to come together on Sunday, December 6, 9:00am-10:00am (during Sunday School). We will meet in the Meletis Charuhas Hall. Please contact Angela Kallas-Miller (agapiang@gmail.com), for more information.

WOMEN’S BOOK CLUB

THE MEMBERS OF THE WOMEN’S BOOK CLUB have decided to wait until the fall of 2016 to resume meetings because of their busy schedules and commitments this year.

BOOKSTORE

PLEASE VISIT SAINT KATHERINE BOOKSTORE after Liturgy for all your Christmas shopping needs. We have Orthodox Christmas cards and ornaments, as well as calendars, gift books, special items for children, CDs, and icons.

As the year draws to a close, we wish to thank you for your continued patronage of Saint Katherine Bookstore. May Our Lord grant you all many blessings in the New Year!

DAUGHTERS OF PENELope (by Karen Polizos, President)

HELLE CHAPTER will not hold a monthly meeting in December. Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 10, immediately following Liturgy. We conducted initiations at our November meeting and warmly welcomed five new Helle Sisters: Karen Aldana, Evie Cavros, Kathy Jatras, Martha Lampros, and Patricia Radar! Please contact Rosalie Georgeadis (rgeorgeadis@hotmail.com), if you are interested in learning more about the Daughters of Penelope.

Helle Chapter’s 60th Anniversary Jazz Brunch was lovely. We honored founding sisters, Mary Summers and Sylvia Psarakis, and welcomed DOP Grand President Connie Pilallis.

In the spirit of Christmas, Helle Chapter will gather for dinner on Sunday, December 20 at the Greek Taverna. The cost is $40 per person. spouses, guests, and our AHEPA brothers are invited to join us. Contact Lynn Francis (elfran2@verizon.net or 703-978-4370), if you would like to go.

Planning is underway for Helle Chapter’s 2nd Annual Tastes of the Mediterranean, which will be held Friday evening, February 5, 2016. This was a very successful fundraiser last February and we look forward to another wonderful event. Please contact Karen Polizos to help with this fundraiser.

On behalf of the Daughters of Penelope, we wish you and your families a Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON & FASHION SHOW

Hosted by Saint Katherine Philoptochos

Saturday, December 12 | 11:30am
Westwood Country Club
800 Maple Avenue East
Vienna, VA 22180

Donation: $45 | Children 12 and Under: $15
All proceeds to benefit Philoptochos charities

Raffle and Door Prizes

Fashions by Bloomingdales

Contact Trish Kapsidelis (703-356-5905) for more information and raffle donations
**Diaper Drive, December 6.** On the feast day of Saint Nicholas, Sunday, December 6, we will collect diapers for local food pantries. Federal food stamps cannot be used to buy diapers, so this is a great help to mothers with infants. Collections will take place in the foyer of the Meletis Charuhas Hall. Please bring unopened packages, sizes newborn to 6. No pull ups, please.

**Food Pantry.** On Sunday, October 25, we broke our previous record and collected almost 1,500 lbs. of food. Please read Pastor Greg’s letter to Fr. Costa below:

Dear Father Costas,

We want to thank you most sincerely for another successful food drive; 1,486 lbs. of great food donated to Columbia’s Spend Yourself® Food Pantry. The food was delivered, weighed, sorted and shelved by 12 outstanding volunteers from St. Katherine! This food will be an enormous help in our shared mission of helping needy families in our community, and is especially welcome this time of year, when seasonal work is ending and many more people need our help.

Our partnership with St. Katherine is a wonderful example of churches working together to help the community, and we are very thankful for all of you.

**Culmore Clinic.** The Culmore Clinic is located in Columbia Baptist Church, down the street from Saint Katherine. It is the only medical clinic in the area for people without health insurance. It is an interfaith clinic and Saint Katherine has been a contributor since its beginning. Both Fr. Costa and Dr. John Demakis are on the executive committee of the Clinic. Because of the great need in our area, the clinic has decided to expand and stay open another day a week. We are in the process of fund raising and writing grants for the expansion of the wonderful clinic. If you would like to contribute, please make a check out to Saint Katherine and in the lower left corner write “Culmore Clinic.” The Saint Katherine website lists specific needs of the clinic. Please help.

**OCMC Benefit Dinner, May 15.** Our annual fund raising dinner to support Orthodox missionaries around the world has been set. It is Sunday, May 15 and the location is Saints Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church in Bethesda Maryland. Please put the date on your calendar. More details will be shared when they become available.

**Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage, July 14-20, 2016.** This summer we have the opportunity to once again join other Orthodox Christians from around the country to assist in building a home for a needy family in Mexico. We will stay at the St. Innocent Orphanage where we will provide ministry to the orphans, as well as spend time with them playing games and doing arts and crafts. A team from Saint Katherine, headed by Eleni Porter, will be going from July 14-20. If you are interested in going on this life changing mission trip, please contact Eleni Porter (beporter1@verizon.net).

**BAILEY’S CROSSROADS HOMELESS SHELTER**

**Hygiene and Survival Kits.** Every December, Saint Katherine puts together about 300 Hygiene and Survival Kits for the Bailey’s Crossroads Homeless Shelter. These kits are used during the winter months when there is not enough space in the shelter for all who would like to stay. These people are given a hot meal and the kits, and then they must leave. Thanks to all the church organizations that contributed items for the kits. The items have all been collected and, on Sunday, December 13, the Sunday School children put the various items into each kit. We will then deliver over them to the shelter.

**Cooking Schedule.** Our Missions committee provided dinner at the shelter in October and will also serve in December. Thanks to GOYA, Daughters of Penelope, Philoptochos, and the Adult Bible Study group, we have the first four months in 2016 covered. Contact Dr. John Demakis at demakis9931@gmail.com, if your group would like to cook and serve dinner at the shelter. It is a wonderful experience.

**Clothes and Toiletries.** We continue to collect new or clean used clothes and unopened toiletries for the shelter year round. As the weather becomes colder, the shelter is in special need of warm clothing (coats, hats, gloves, etc.) Please be generous. Bring your donations to our community center year round. We take them to the shelter every Sunday.

**OCMC NEWS.** The Orthodox Christian Mission Center has released the list for short-term teams for 2016 Below is the full list of all teams: Albania—work with youth leaders in Tirana (Mar 19-27), Mexico—youth and adult catechism in San Esteban and Pisafloros (Mar 26-Apr 2), Guatemala—health care in Aguacate (Apr 8-17), Indonesia—health care outreach in Medan (May 9-21), Uganda—health care in Kampala (May 9-21), Albania—study Orthodox missiology in Albania (May 23-Jun 10), Albania—youth programs in Shen Vlash and Tirana (Jun 7-20), Guatemala—church school program outside Nuevo Conception (Jun 15-28), Indonesia—family and youth outreach in Bali (Jun 28-Jul 11), Indonesia—teach Orthodox doctrine at schools in Medan (Jun 28-Jul 11), Alaska—youth and young adult retreat in Kwethluk (Jul 1-11), Alaska—help restore the St. Sophia Church in Bethel (Jul 7-21), Alaska—youth camp near Pilot Station (Jul 20-30), Alaska—camp program in Old Harbor (Jul 27-Aug 5), Kenya—camp at the Makarios Children’s Home orphanage in Nyeri (Aug 10-22), Kenya—retreat and youth camp in Lodwar (Aug 10-22), Guatemala—health care in Aguacate (Aug 26-Sep 4), Albania—continuing education in Tirana (Aug/Sep 2016), Albania—womens’ retreats in Trina (Oct/Nov 2016).

(Continued on page 14, column 2)
### DECEMBER CHURCH DUTY ROSTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Captain</th>
<th>9:00am</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 6, 2015</td>
<td>Jim Stoucker, Captain</td>
<td>Dr. Jerry Rich</td>
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<td>Artemis Dimopoulos</td>
<td>Pierre Tavoularis</td>
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<td>Bill Polizos</td>
<td>Maria Vargas</td>
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<td>Bill Porter</td>
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<td>December 13, 2015</td>
<td>Peter Karounos, Captain</td>
<td>Bill Polizos</td>
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<td>Kelly Alexis</td>
<td>Pierre Tavoularis</td>
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<td>Chris Christou</td>
<td>Daphne Vaccirello</td>
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<td>Nick Larigakis</td>
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<td>December 20, 2015</td>
<td>Nick Larigakis, Captain</td>
<td>Mallamo Mavromatakis</td>
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<td>Kelly Alexis</td>
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<td>Jim Stoucker</td>
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<td>Peter Karounos</td>
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<td>December 27, 2015</td>
<td>Dr. Jerry Rich, Captain</td>
<td>George Moshos</td>
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<td>Dr. John Demakis</td>
<td>Maria Vargas</td>
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<td>Artemis Dimopoulos</td>
<td>Mary Varlas</td>
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<td>Mallamo Mavromatakis</td>
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Among the most important things we do for our departed loved ones is honor their memory with our traditional Memorial Service. In an effort to more effectively meet your needs during these special occasions, we have engaged the support of our Saint Katherine Ladies Philoptochos Society to assist you with sponsoring your Memorial Service Coffee Hour. In order to ensure that your Memorial Service Coffee Hour request will be fulfilled, please contact Mary Varlas (703-965-4161) or Eleni Kanakos (703-969-8364) 72 hours prior to the occasion. Donations should be made directly to Saint Katherine.

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION: HELP FOR GRIEF (cont’d. from October DOXA)

MOVING ON WITH LIFE
Mourning the loss of a close friend or relative takes time, but research tells us that it can also be the catalyst for a renewed sense of meaning that offers purpose and direction to life.

Grieving individuals may find it useful to use some of the following strategies to help come to terms with loss:

**Talk about the death of your loved one** with friends and colleagues in order to understand what happened and remember your friend or family member. Denying the death is an easy way to isolate yourself and will frustrate your support system in the process.

**Accept your feelings.** People experience all kinds of emotions after the death of someone close. Sadness, anger, frustration, and even exhaustion are all normal.

**Take care of yourself and your family.** Eating well, exercising and getting plenty of rest help us get through each day and move forward.

**Reach out and help others dealing with the loss.** Helping others has the added benefit of making you feel better as well. Sharing stories of the deceased can help everyone cope.

**Remember and celebrate the lives of your loved ones.** Possibilities include donating to a favorite charity of the deceased, framing photos of fun times, passing on a family name to a baby, or planting a garden in memory. What you choose is up to you, as long as it allows you honor that unique relationship in a way that feels right to you. If you feel stuck or overwhelmed by your emotions, it may be helpful to talk with a licensed psychologist or other mental health professional who can help you cope with your feelings and find ways to get back on track.

**HOW PSYCHOLOGISTS CAN HELP**
Psychologists are trained to help people better handle the fear, guilt, or anxiety that can be associated with the death of a loved one. If you need help dealing with your grief or managing a loss, consult with a psychologist or other licensed mental health professional.

Psychologists can help people build their resilience and develop strategies to get through their sadness. Practicing psychologists use a variety of evidence-based treatments, most commonly psychotherapy, to help people improve their lives. Psychologists, who have doctoral degrees, receive one of the highest levels of education of any health care professional.

This Help Center article was adapted from a March 2011 post by Katherine C. Nordal, PhD on APA’s Your Mind Your Body Blog.

Fr. Costa will meet with GMU Orthodox Christian students and staff on Monday, December 14, 2:00pm to 5:00pm, in room 239H of the Johnson Center at GMU. Please stop by.

Merry Christmas!

**STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY**
**DECEMBER 6**

Join us for breakfast and fellowship! We appreciate your joyful giving in support of our Church and her ministries.

St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church offers a grief support group, GRACE (Grief Recovery: Accepting, Coping, and Evolving). For further information, please call Fr. Costa Pavlakos at 703-671-1515. Thank you to Maria Papageorgiou for contributing articles nearly every month for the last 10 years.
SHOWN BELOW is a list of families and individuals who participated in the 2015 Saint Katherine Stewardship Program through October 31, 2015. Thank you for responding to the needs of our church.

If you have not yet submitted your 2015 pledge, please complete the stewardship form on the next page and return it to the Church office as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may pledge online today at www.saint-katherines.org/stewardship. Your Church and community depend on your stewardship commitment.

Any questions? Please contact Lori Nelson at lnelson@stkchurch.org or 703-671-1515.
Your nativity, O Christ our God, has caused the light of knowledge to rise upon the world. For therein the worshippers of the stars were by a star instructed to worship You, the Son of Righteousness, and to know of knowledge to rise upon the world. Therefore today, having been enlightened by the light that has come to us from the stable, Your nativity, we joyfully gather to honor Your birth and spread Your light to the whole world. We pray that Your light may not be quickly forgotten the next days, but may they fill our homes and hearts with laughter, and the love of Christmas. May all of these gifts be multiplied, and may they also call 301-977-7297.

The Monroe Arts Walk, 716 Monroe St. NE #7, Washington, DC 20017, offers an artistic spectacle and meeting place for artists and art enthusiasts. The event features a variety of art exhibits, performances, and workshops. It is a great opportunity to experience the beauty and creativity of the local artistic community.

Many of our Saint Katherine parishioners have participated in teams over the last few years. They can tell you that it can be a life-changing experience. Contact Dr. John Demakis at demakis9931@gmail.com, for more information.

For those interested in following along with the Orthros and other church services, you can view and print pdf files of the texts (in English and Greek) for most church services by going to http://agesinitiatives.com/dcs/public/dcs. Links to musical scores are also available. DCS works on computers and mobile devices.

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