



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΤΑΝΤΑΣ

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

August 25, 2023



St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210

Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

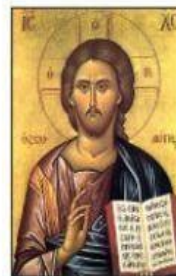
Phone: (770) 347-PRAY (7729)

Website: www.saintchristopheroc.org

Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, Pastor

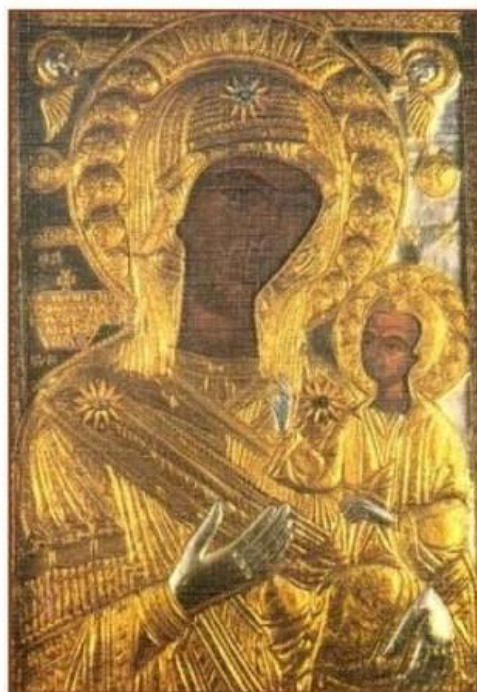
Stephen Sarantis, President, Parish Council

Jackie Sarantis, Office Administrator



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Pastoral Message from Fr. George for 8.25.23



On Wednesday, August 23rd, we celebrate the “leave-taking” (final day) of the eight-day Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos that began on August 15th. On the 23rd, we also remember the Miraculous Icon of Panagia Prousiotissa, whose history is reprinted from www.johnsanidopoulos.com.

The story goes back a thousand years to the time when the heresy against the holy icons, Iconoclasm, was raging all over the Christian world. The Byzantine Emperor Theophilos had ordered all holy icons be removed from the churches and burned. The Orthodox people were protecting and hiding

the holy icons. They put themselves at risk of exile and even death for those icons.

In the year 829 this Holy Icon of the Theotokos, which according to tradition was painted by the hand of St. Luke the Evangelist, was kept in a beautiful church in the renowned city of Prousa. Today the church still stands in the city named Brusa, which is in Turkey near Constantinople. Many miracles have taken place in this Church.

As soon as the decree of the Emperor reached the city of Proussa, a godly man, the son of an officer of the royal court, decided to disobey the Emperor's order. He took the Holy Icon and fled to the mainland of Greece, because the persecution was less violent there. The young man was on his way to the city of Callipolis (today Gallipoli or Gelibolu). On his way to the city, he lost the Holy Icon. His sorrow was great. "Alas, to me the wretched one", he wailed. "The Lady Theotokos left me because of my sins". However, he wouldn't turn back. He could not endure living amongst the enemies of the icons. He continued his journey and settled in the city of New Patra, near the northwest end of Peloponnesus. Time went by, and then one day he heard news about some miraculous events, which happened in an area of Aitola, Greece.

This area was completely unknown and inaccessible at that time. The terrain was very rugged, with steep rocky mountains and deep chasms and abysses between them. Not even a small village was there, except for a couple of shelters for the shepherds. The area was not suitable to build villages. Even domesticated animals survived with difficulty. However, Christians sometimes would hide in these remote mountains trying to escape persecution by heretics or oppression by Emperors and Kings.

According to the news, a child of one of the above-mentioned shepherds was keeping watch over his father's flock. One night the child was sleeping opposite the place where the cemetery of the monastery is now located (see photo on the right). Suddenly solemn and sweet chanting woke him. The chanting came from a cave that was behind him. Fearful, he looked around and saw a pillar of light coming out of the cave and reaching up to heaven. At first, he thought that this could be a rainbow. By God's Providence it came to him that he would not die of fear or go out of his mind. He thought that this couldn't be a rainbow because it was straight and also it hadn't rained. In great fear he went and told his father what he had witnessed. His father thought it was the child's imagination. He told him not to be afraid of things that weren't real and not to be frightened by his own shadow. The child insisted that what he had heard and seen was real.



Therefore, the next night, the child took his Christian father to the same place he had seen the pillar of light, to verify and confirm the vision. There, he saw what the child had told him, but would not dare go and see what was in the cave. The next day he took with him some other people and returned again. All saw the vision. Afterwards they searched the area and found the Holy Icon in the cave, radiant and shining. They then venerated the Icon, and being joyful on finding this treasure, they arranged the area in order to keep the Icon there as a blessing. Every day they brought candles and incense. How the icon came there is known only to him who took Prophet Avvacum

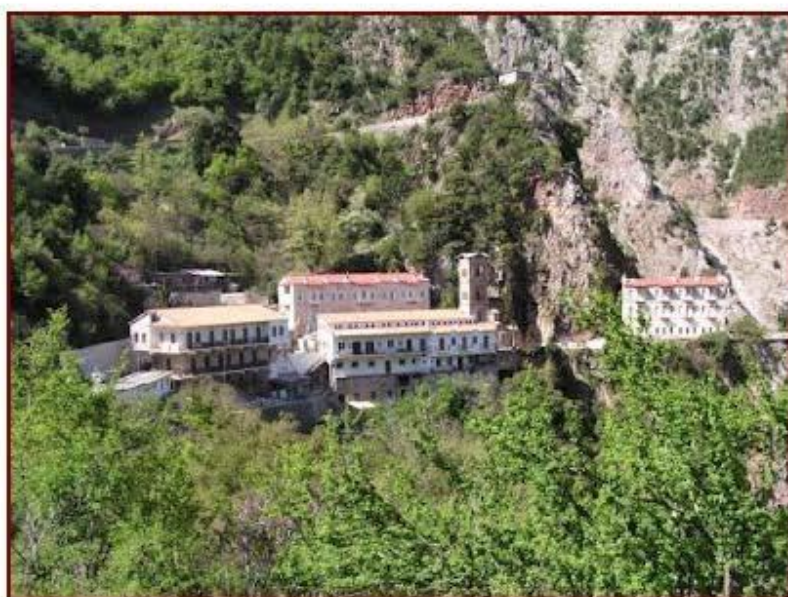
from Jerusalem to Babylon, where Prophet Daniel was, and then brought him back. This is the first great miracle of the Lady Theotokos, the finding of Her Holy Icon.

Soon, the young man who had lost the Icon, and was now living in New Patra, heard that an Icon of the Theotokos was discovered by the vision of a pillar of light. Not wasting time, he took his servants and after two days arrived at the cave of the Icon. Upon seeing the Icon, he knew it was the one he had lost. After kissing and venerating the Icon, he gave gifts to the shepherds and headed back to New Patra with The Holy Icon. The shepherds' joy turned to sorrow because of this deprivation, and they pleaded with the young man to leave the Holy Icon behind. He explained that the Icon belonged to him, and that he had given them rich gifts. He also told them that the area was unsuitable to build a church and accommodate pilgrims. Having said this, he took the Icon and left. When he and his company were tired and needed to rest from their long journey they stopped in a certain place. They soon fell asleep and when they woke up, they couldn't find the Icon. Thinking that the shepherds stole it while they slept, they turned back. Arriving at a narrow spot near the river, the young man heard a voice:

Oh, young man, be saved, go in peace, and do not toil anymore. I am pleased to remain here in this rugged wilderness with the shepherds and peasants and not to be in the cities with people who preach heresies: and if you wish to stay with me come to where you have found me. This will be good for you.

Only the young man heard the voice. Obedient to the divine calling, he freed his servants, abandoned all his possessions, and with one of his servants, who decided to stay with him, went back to the cave where he had found the Holy Icon. He was certain that the will of the Lady Theotokos was that she live there. The young man built a chapel in the cave for the Holy Icon. He and

his servants were both tonsured monks by the Priest monk Raphael who was from the nearby hermitage of St. Demetrios. He received the name Demetrios, and his servant received the name Timothy. Afterward he built a cell opposite the chapel in a quiet place away from the noisy pilgrims. He peacefully reposed there having lived a life pleasing to God. His disciple Timothy in the church he had built buried his body, and his blessed soul flew to heaven. This was the beginning of the Monastery of the All-Holy Mother of God of Prousa (or Prousiotissa).



The Monastery has existed for one thousand years and still stands today. It has withstood the ravages of natural and manmade disasters. The main church, dedicated to the Dormition of the Theotokos, is in the cave. The ancient and incense-darkened Icon remains in the inner cave,

surrounded by countless precious offerings. The offerings are truthful witnesses to innumerable miracles of times past and present. The village of Proussos has been built near the Monastery.

The Icon awaits the crowds of pilgrims who flock there from the 15th to the 22nd of August, which are the days of the feast. In olden times the quiet of the mountains was disturbed by the voices of groups of people going to the feast. They had to walk on goat paths, among ancient chestnut, fir and plane trees. The journey was 15 hours long and the people carried baskets of food

and bundles of blankets balanced on their heads. Riding on horseback was reserved for the old and the infirm. Some of them could be seen walking barefoot or crawling on their knees, fulfilling a promise given for a miraculous healing. The pilgrims would go there, light their candles of faith, and stay overnight in the monastery's guesthouse or out in the open. In the morning people would attend a very early church service and then depart hoping to return next year.

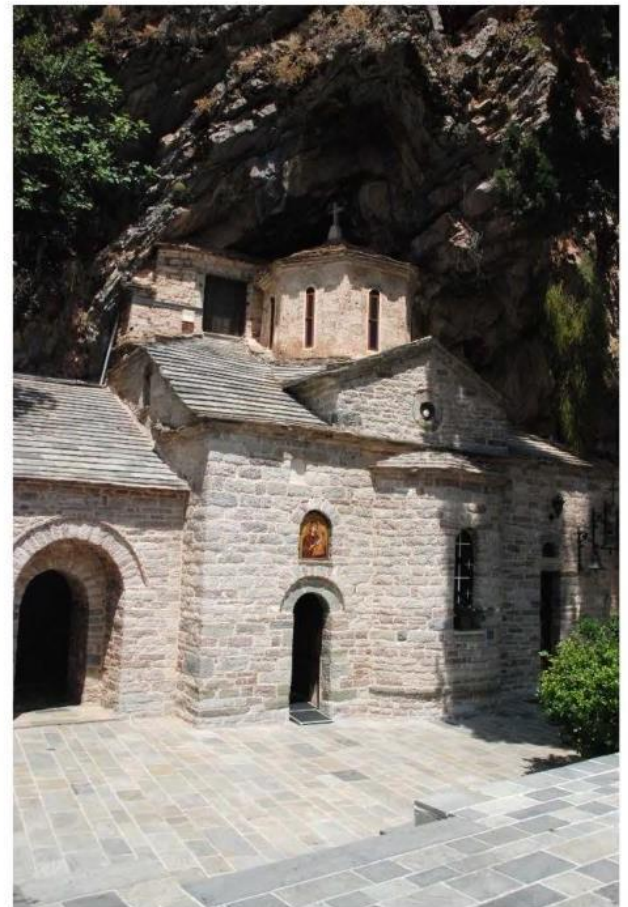
Today the monastery is accessible by car. The car inches patiently along the winding dirt road, which is carved on the steep mountain slope. The road from the south comes to an elevated area called Stavros, from there the monastery can be seen perched on a recess of a precipice at the northwest corner of a narrow valley surrounded by mountain peaks. The pilgrim's patience is rewarded with a great blessing, the veneration of the Icon of the All-Holy Mother of God of Prousa.

Festal Hymn in 1st Tone

By your icon of Prousa you are shown as the great protectress of Greece and a worker of dread wonders All-Pure Virgin Mariam; for you grant sight to the blind, you cast out wicked demons and heal all that flee unto you while crying: Glory to your childbirth without seed. Glory to Him that made you wondrous. Glory to Him that work such manner of marvels through you.



Update: Before publication deadline, Pete Kleto was kind to send Fr. George the following update related to this Miraculous Icon. Pete wrote:

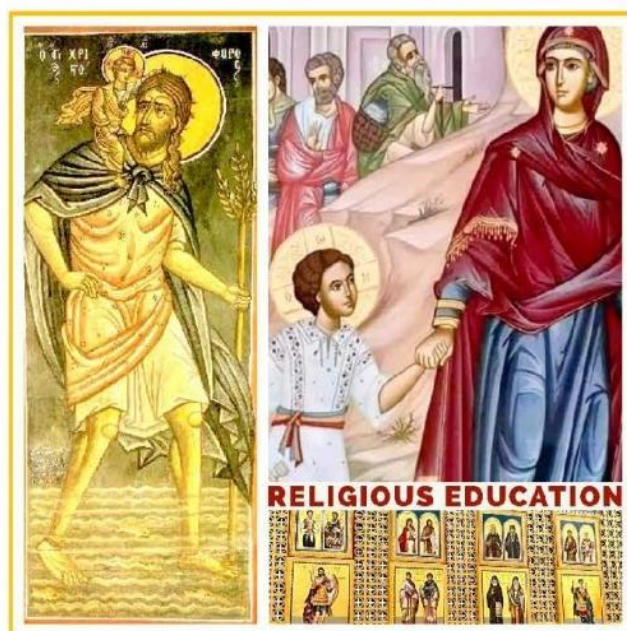


On Sunday you mentioned plans to write an article on the Monastery of Prousou. If you are in need of photos, I have a few and I have attached two from 2016. The one of the mountainside shows the hole through the rocks that it is said that the icon returned to the monastery after it was removed. My mother (currently age 95) rode by horseback as a little girl with her mother and siblings to venerate the icon.



We thank our Golf Classic Committee for our successful event on Monday, August 21st. Likewise, we thank all our volunteers, players, sponsors, and contributors.





Religious Education 2023-2024

Teachers:	Grade Levels:	Location:
Susan Kleto Jackie Sarantis	3yr- Kindergarten	Back Classroom (Between restrooms)
Presbytera Marinda Tsahakis Jeanie McGee	1st-4th Grade	Upstairs Classroom
Becky Butler Angelique Soulakos	5th-7th Grade	Bookstore
Katie Wilson Dedee Panayis	8th-12th Grade	Conference Room
Fr. George Tsahakis	Adults	Church Nave

<u>First Semester Religious Education Class Dates:</u>	
<u>August Classes:</u> August 20, 27	*Blessing and First Class August 20, 2023
<u>September Classes:</u> September 10, 17, 24	*No Classes September 3, 2023
<u>October Classes:</u> October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	*Classes every Sunday in October
<u>November Classes:</u> November 5, 12	*No Classes November 19, 2023 *No Classes November 26, 2023
<u>December Classes:</u> December 3, 10, 17	*December 17 is the Christmas Pageant *No Classes December 24, 2023 *No Classes December 31, 2023

To ALL Students Returning to School

If you see any of the following:

- another student struggling to make friends
- another student being picked on
- a student who is new, shy, or not with the "in crowd"
- a student who is eating lunch alone

Be a Leader! Be a Warrior!

Say hi. Smile at them. Ask if you can sit with them.

Include them. You never know what that person is facing inside or outside of school.



College Student

SUNDAY

AUGUST 27, 2023

Orthodox Christian Fellowship offers college students rich community in Christ, inspiring a life-long love of God and neighbor. Through national programs, weekend retreats, virtual gatherings, and over 250 on-campus chapters, OCF is an invitation to thrive during school.



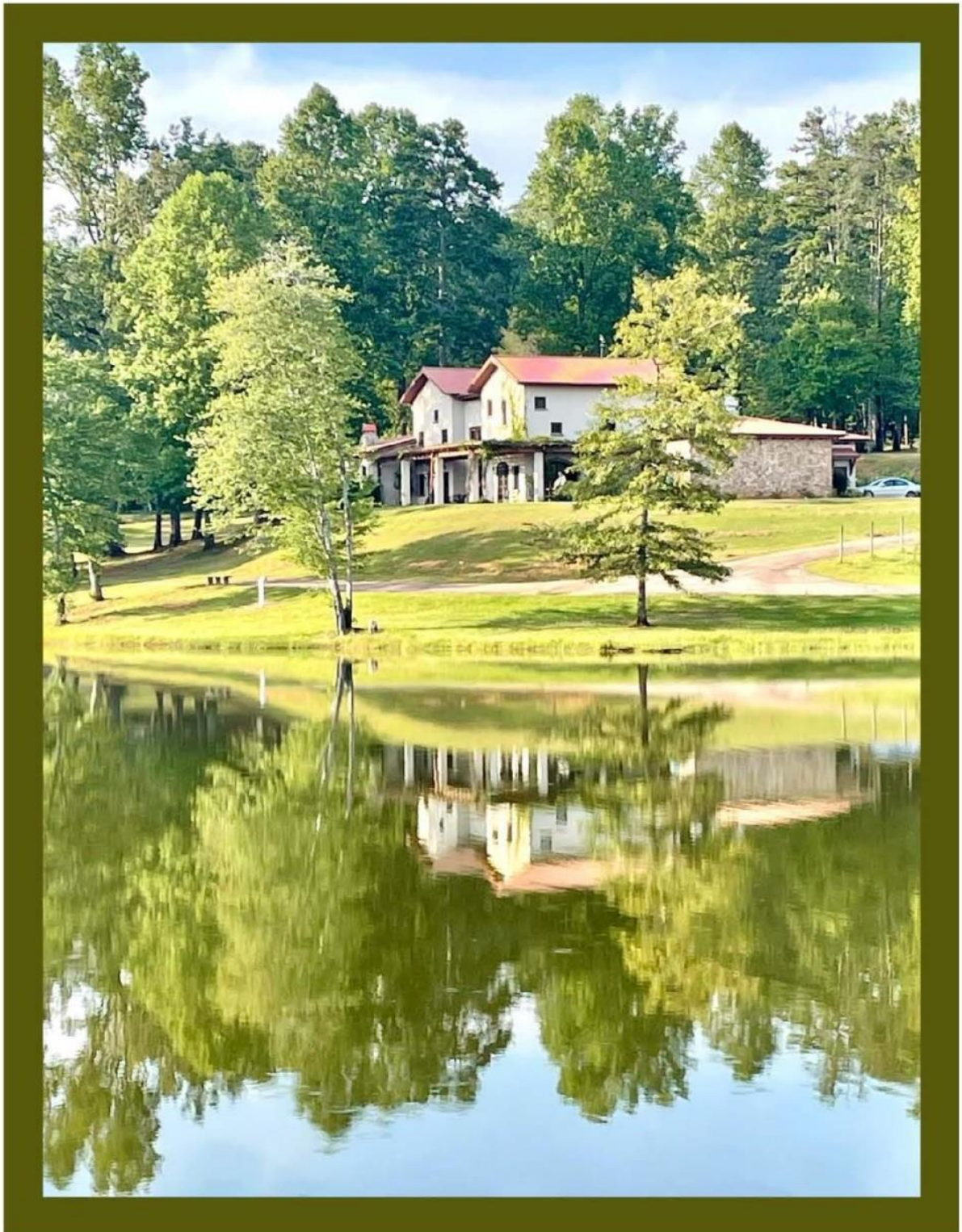
DONATE TODAY AND HELP OCF OFFER COLLEGE STUDENTS AN INVITATION TO THRIVE DURING THEIR TIME IN SCHOOL.

Scan the QR code or visit OCF.net to give.

@OCFministry



www.OCF.net



Send Fr. George your suggestion for a caption for this photo by [clicking here](#)

PLAYGROUND WORKDAY

This Saturday, August 26 from 9:30 to 12 noon, we will be staining and sealing the swing set to preserve it for more years of fun by our youth. Application materials will be provided. Wear clothes worthy of stain and bring your water bottle. Please park in the parking lot and walk around the front of the building to the gate just outside the playground.

We will wrap up at noon knowing that the afternoon will be hot – sooner if we have enough workers. If you have questions please contact Pete Kleto, phone 678-877-9105 or email pkleto@gmail.com. Thank you ahead of time for your efforts.

Below is the original look from 5 years ago. Let's see how close we can return it to that splendor.



Thank you to Faye Georgeo for these great pics from our
South Atlanta Golf Classic!





On behalf of Philoptochos, I would like to extend my utmost gratitude to all of you and your hard work the last few weeks. Thank you for generously volunteering your time to help with Spanakopita and Tiropita not only for "Pastry Sale" but "Greek Fest" also.

"Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless."

Your willingness to give your time and talent is greatly appreciated. With your support of Philoptochos it allows us to continue to fulfill our mission and serve the people in our community each year. Thank you!

Faithfully,
Dedee Panayis
Philoptochos President

Thank you to Jeanie Ellinas for sharing these great pics she took while making batter and rolling Tiropita!





Fanouropites Silent Auction



Sunday, September 17
Begins at Coffee Hour
Ends at 11:30



Benefits Youth Activities in our Metropolis

We will have a **kids \$1 table**, too!!

****Philoptochos members are asked to bring a
Fanouropite or homemade sweet treat!!
Contact Helen Psihountas at (770)-298-4493**

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." ~Galatians 6:9



Baking Dates Greek Fest and Bake Sale

We are warming up the mixers and ovens for our Greek Fest and Bake Sale! We need everyone to volunteer this year!

Spanakopita and Tiropita are up first:

Please sign up [here](#)

Great Opportunities Coming Up~ Mark your Calendars!

September 9-

Making Koulourakia

Look for the Sign-Up Genius

September 23-

Making Kourambiedes

Look for the Sign-Up Genius

October 7-

Making Baklava for Festival

Look for the Sign-Up Genius

More Baking Dates TBA



Wellspring Living



All Sundays in August 2023:

Wellspring Living

Wellspring Living transforms the lives of girls and boys 12-17 and young women 18-32 in our area, who are at risk, or are victims of sexual exploitation.

Headquartered in Atlanta, the non-profit organization has provided restorative services through its residential and community-based programs for more than 20 years.



"Hands of Love" ministry will be accepting monetary donations in the red box in the church narthex; and in kind - in the bin in the church entryway.

To donate online: stchristopherphiloptochos.square.site

The "Wellspring Treasures" store on 116 Peachtree City East Shopping Ctr. in Peachtree City is also accepting gently used furniture and clothes.

For more information and to volunteer: <https://wellspringliving.org>

Faithfully, Anna Andreeva-Naydenova, "Hands of Love" Ministry Chair

SERB FEST ATLANTA

Sat, Sep. 30th
(11am - 10pm)



Sun, Oct. 1st
(12pm - 6pm)



Learn About and Experience Serbian Culture

Delicious Serbian Food
Live Music
Traditional Folklor Performances
Church Tours
Prize Raffles
Fun for all ages!



Sts. Peter and Paul Serbian Orthodox Church
1558 Hewatt Road Southwest Lilburn, GA 30047



PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE
2ND ANNUAL PAN-ORTHODOX CROSS DIVE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2023

HOSTED BY

HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ATLANTA INTER-ORTHODOX PARISH ASSOCIATION (AIOPA)

- FELLOWSHIP ON THE BEACH AT LAKE TOBESOFKEE
- BBQ DINNER
- CROSS DIVE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
- HOTEL BLOCK FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO CELEBRATE THE DIVINE LITURGY WITH US SUNDAY MORNING



PURCHASE YOUR
TICKET TODAY!

FOR MORE
INFORMATION, VISIT
WWW.HOLYCROSSGA.ORG





Who Are We?

The [Loaves and Fishes food ministry](#) began in the late 1980's by Archpriest Jacob Myers out of St. John the Wonderworker Orthodox Church. It grew into a

pan-Orthodox ministry that currently serves Atlanta's homeless and needy 40 meals a day on average, five days a week (roughly 12,000 meals a year!).

Today the ministry is overseen by Reese Martin, a parishioner of St. John's, and continues to function through the financial and volunteer efforts of the Orthodox community in the Atlanta area.

Loaves and Fishes Needs Your Support

- Become a financial supporter. Though the bulk of our food needs are donated from businesses such as Whole Foods, Chick-fil-A, Publix and others, we still have additional expenses that must be covered to keep this ministry operating. **Funds are needed** for the remaining food staples and paper goods as well as covering 3 part-time staff. Currently, our monthly expenses of \$5,500 exceed our normal monthly donations. Please consider becoming a regular monthly donor or make a one-time gift to this important ministry. **Make a donation:** [Tithe.ly](#) or [Venmo](#)
- We would love to have you come to volunteer. Contact Reese at reesehmartin@yahoo.com to schedule.
- Please add this ministry to your prayers!
- Find and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Here is a story of a young man benefiting from Loaves and Fishes:

This is Kentrevious. He's from East Atlanta and has been homeless off and on since 2018. He found out about Loaves and Fishes from a resource list 2 months ago. After eating with us his first time, he attended a matins service and said, "I really like the environment. I've never experienced an Orthodox Church before. The first thing I noticed was Christ on the ceiling. I don't know much about what's going on in the service, but I want to keep coming back." Regarding Loaves and Fishes, he said, "I like the fact that it is Christ centered. As the Priest was leaving, he said, that if what we're doing isn't for everyone, then we need to look inside ourselves and make a change. It really is the environment here that I like most and that I can go to a service and then get a meal." Since that time, Kentrevious has started attending the Divine Liturgy on Sunday and participating in catechism classes. He said, "It's like family, for real! A lot of days when I come, at least the past two Sundays, I've been able to sit down and talk with people here. It really means something to me. The services are engaging! I like how, can't take the Eucharist until you're Orthodox. There's something about that I like. It makes me want to really try about becoming Orthodox. I understand that you have to be ready for it. You have to be prepared. Fr. George's catechism class is a good conversation, and I like that we can ask questions. I'm learning about the different doctrines and traditions. Some of it is confusing but I can tell it's important. It's helping answer my questions."





SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2023



**THE SHIPYARD
AT TRILITH
FAYETTEVILLE, GA**

**6PM APPETIZERS
7PM DINNER**

For Information on Sponsorship Sales
Contact Tammy Soulakos
tammy@soulakos.org
404.625.4663

**PROCEEDS WILL BENEFIT
ST. CHRISTOPHER HELLENIC ORTHODOX
CHURCH BUILDING FUND AND LOCAL CHARITIES**

Thank You for Your Continued Support!

Some of the Charities We Support:

Soldiers' Angels

Fayette Samaritans

Fayette County Division of Family & Children Services

St. John the Wonderworker Loaves & Fishes Program

Operation Homefront

Orthodox Christian Mission Center

Andee's Army

Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry

One Roof Ecumenical Alliance Outreach

Promise Place

Community Welcome House

Wellspring Living

Prayer Shawl Ministry

St. Basil Academy

Souper Bowl of Caring



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August 18, 2023



CENTER
FAMILY CARE

What's New This Week



HELP US IMPROVE!

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

Your feedback is very important for our ministry! We need your help in responding to two very easy questions. [TAKE 2 QUESTION SURVEY HERE.](#)

FULLY *human*

→ **podcast**



A Conversation on
**"The Prayer
of a Broken
Heart"**

with
Fr. Paul Abernathy

What do the experiences of African American slaves have in common with those of people with disabilities and their families? Listen to find out as Presvytera Melanie DiStefano interviews Father Paul Abernathy regarding his book, "The Prayer of a Broken Heart: An Orthodox Christian Reflection on African American Spirituality." [Listen here.](#)



[On what husbands should say to their wives:]

I have taken you in my arms, and I love you, and I prefer you to my life itself. For the present life is nothing, and my most ardent dream is to spend it with you in such a way that we may be assured of not being separated in the life reserved for us.

St. John Chrysostom



Welcome



We welcome
you to join us
in person to
encounter our
Lord and
Savior!

[CLICK TO VIEW LIVESTREAMING OF SCHEDULED SERVICES](#)



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW PREVIOUSLY RECORDED SERVICES](#)



[Click Image for Online Giving](#)

For questions, please email communications@saintchristopherhoc.org

or call the church office at (770) 347-7729.

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