

## St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210

Peachtree City, Georgia 30269

Phone: (770) 347-PRAY (7729)

Website: [www.saintchristopherhoc.org](http://www.saintchristopherhoc.org)

Very Rev. Fr. George Tsahakis, Pastor

Stephen Sarantis, President, Parish Council

Jackie Sarantis, Office Administrator

Pastoral Message from Fr. George December 3, 2025

GM: The Gospel  
According to  
Acronyms!



Yesterday, I opened my inbox and saw an email that began with two letters: **GM**. Being a Priest and not a cryptographer, I thought perhaps this was a secret code—maybe “God’s Message”? Or “Greek Miracle”? Alas, when I asked, the sender replied, “Sorry” and then wrote: “It means *Good Morning*.”

**Good Morning?** Two words, three syllables, reduced to two letters. I sat back and thought: *How busy have we become that even greetings now come in shorthand?* Once upon a time, a greeting was a sacred pause—a way of saying, “I see you, I value you, and before we talk business, let’s acknowledge our shared humanity.” Now, it’s as if we’re racing through life so fast that even courtesy must be streamlined like a factory assembly line.

I grew up in the 1960s, when “Good Morning” was spoken with a smile, maybe even followed by, “How are you today?” Now, we have GM, LOL, BRB, and my personal favorite, SMH (which I first thought meant “Send Me Home”). Acronyms have become the new language of efficiency. But what have we lost in translation?

Let me illustrate with a humorous story. Imagine if the Prodigal Son texted his father instead of returning home in person:

**Son:** “OMG Dad, I’m coming home. TBH, I messed up. SMH at myself.”  
**Father:** “NP son, ILY. BBQ tonight. :)”

No robe, no ring, no fatted calf—just emojis and abbreviations. The Gospel According to Acronyms!

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## When Acronyms Touch the Holy

This trend doesn't stop at greetings. Even the most sacred moments risk abbreviation. I've seen people write **Xmas** for Christmas, and now even **HNY** for Happy New Year. But imagine reducing the Holy Nativity of our Lord—the Incarnation, the mystery of God becoming man—to a mere acronym like **HNOL** (*Holy Nativity of Our Lord*). It sounds more like a corporate merger than the greatest event in human history!

When we abbreviate the sacred, we risk abbreviating its meaning in our hearts. The Nativity is not a quick text message—it is the eternal Word made flesh, dwelling among us. That deserves more than four letters. It deserves reverence, time, and awe.

Of course, I'm not against progress. Technology helps us connect faster. But as Christians, we know that relationships—and faith—thrive not on speed, but on presence. A greeting is more than a formality; it's a small act of love. When we take time to say "Good Morning," or "Merry Christmas," we affirm that the person before us is not just a task to complete, but a soul to cherish.

So next time you're tempted to type GM or Xmas, pause. Spell it out. Maybe even add a blessing: "Good Morning! May God grant you peace today." Or "Merry Christmas! Christ is born—glorify Him!" It takes a few extra seconds, but those seconds might be the holiest part of your day.

**After all, the early Christians greeted one another with a holy kiss—not a holy acronym. So, let's keep our greetings full-**

## **length and full-hearted; because ‘Peace be with you’ sounds a lot better than ‘PBWY.’**

It is easy to move through life focused on our own plans, ambitions, and needs. In doing so, we often look past the individuals we encounter—seeing them not as persons created in God’s image, but as background to our story. Too often, we pause only when we need something from them or when engaging with them seems to advance our personal goals and agenda. This selective attention diminishes the sacredness of human connection and blinds us to the grace present in every encounter. Each person we meet is an opportunity to reflect Christ’s love, not a steppingstone for our own pursuits.

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*“Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.” — Colossians 4:6*

St. Paul’s words remind us that **speech** is not neutral—it shapes relationships, influences hearts, and reflects the character of Christ within us. **“To speak graciously”** means more than being polite; it means allowing God’s grace to permeate our words, so they become instruments of healing, encouragement, and truth. Grace-filled speech acknowledges the dignity of the person before us, even when we disagree or face conflict.

The phrase **“seasoned with salt”** adds depth. In the ancient world, salt preserved and enhanced flavor. Likewise, our words should preserve what is good and add savor to life. They should never be bland, careless, or corrosive. Salted speech resists gossip, harsh criticism, and

empty chatter. Instead, it brings wisdom, clarity, and hope—qualities that make conversations life-giving rather than draining.

Finally, St. Paul calls us to discernment: “**so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.**” This requires listening before speaking, understanding before responding. It means tailoring our words to the needs of the moment—sometimes offering comfort, other times truth, always with humility and love. In a world of quick texts and abbreviations, this verse challenges us to slow down and speak with intention, because every word can either build up or tear down.

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### **For Personal Reflection**

Before you speak today—whether in person, by email, or text—ask:

- *Is this gracious?*
- *Does it preserve goodness and add flavor?*
- *Does it reflect Christ’s love to the person I’m addressing?*

Take a moment today to reclaim the beauty of words. Write out a full greeting to someone—no shortcuts, no acronyms. If it’s Christmas season, say the whole phrase

**“Merry Christmas! Christ is born; Glorify Him!”**

Let your words be a gift of presence, not just convenience.

### **Prayer:**

*Lord Jesus Christ, Word made flesh, teach us to honor Your presence in every word we speak. Help us slow down, greet others with love, and never abbreviate the sacred mystery of Your Incarnation. Amen.*

## **A Call to Christmas Philanthropy:**

### *Offering Back to God and Those in Need*

Beloved in Christ,

As we prepare to celebrate the Holy Nativity of our Lord, let us remember that Christmas is not only about receiving gifts—it is about giving back to God and sharing His love with those in need. The weeks before Christmas offer us a sacred opportunity to reflect Christ's generosity through acts of philanthropy.

#### *Why is our support needed?*

Many families in our community and beyond face hardships—struggling to afford food, shelter, and necessities. By offering our blessings to others, we become instruments of God's mercy and light. As St. Paul reminds us:

*"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt..."*

(Colossians 4:6)

and let your actions reflect that same grace. Every gift we share—whether time, resources, or prayer—becomes a living testimony of Christ's love.

#### *How can you help?*

- **Donate** non-perishable food items, warm clothing, or gift cards for families in need.
- **Volunteer** your time to assist with parish outreach programs.
- **Offer financial support** for our Metropolis Philoptochos initiatives and local charities.

Here are three local charities in Peachtree City, GA, that welcome volunteers, talents, and financial support—perfect for parish involvement this holiday season:

### **1. Midwest Food Bank – Georgia Division**



- What they do: Distributes donated food to nonprofits and disaster relief efforts at no cost.
- Why help matters: Families here face rising food insecurity; this pantry ensures steady, dignified access to meals.
- Get involved: Donate non-perishables, pack orders, or help with delivery logistics.
- Contact:

220 Parkade Ct, Peachtree City, GA 30269  
 (770) 486-1103

### **2. Real Life Center**



- What they do: Offers holistic care—food, rent/utilities assistance, counseling, education, and more—for Fayette & Coweta families.
- Why help matters: Their support keeps families housed, nourished, and stable—especially critical during winter.
- Get involved: Volunteer at the mobile pantry; donate groceries or funds.
- Contact:

(770) 631-9334 ext. 0  
 rlc@reallifecenter.org

### 3. Clothes Less Traveled Thrift Shop



- What they do: Retail thrift store that donates 70+ local charities—focusing on mental health, foster care, special needs, housing, and more.
- Why help matters: Sustained financial support enables smaller ministries to serve those in need.
- Get involved: Drop off donations, shop to support the mission, volunteer with store operations.
- Contact:  
459 Highway 74 S, Peachtree City, GA 30269  
(770) 486-8517 | [info@clotheslesstraveled.org](mailto:info@clotheslesstraveled.org)

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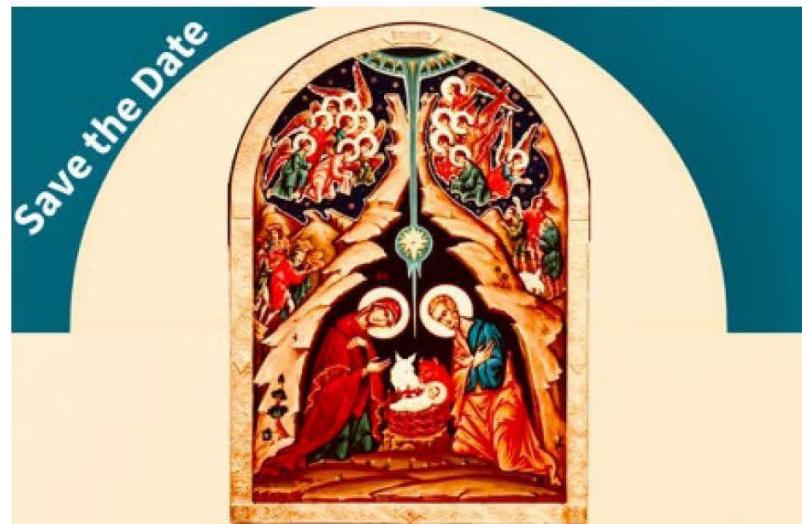
Each of these ministries is meeting urgent needs—food, shelter, dignity—and your participation will help light up lives this Christmas season. May our parish be a blessing to others, as God richly blesses us.

Together, we can make this season a true celebration of God's love by lifting up those who need hope and joy. Let us give generously—not out of obligation, but out of gratitude for the greatest gift of all: Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

*"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for Me." — Matthew 25:40*

May your offerings bring peace to others and blessings to your own heart. Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ this period leading up to the Nativity of our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

- *Fr. George, on behalf of our parish family*



# *The Night That Changed Everything*

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

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Today, journey to Bethlehem through  
the eyes of Aaron, a young shepherd  
who witnesses the miraculous birth of Jesus.

St. Christopher Church

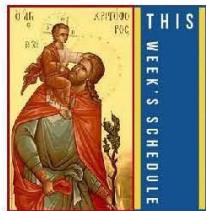
Peachtree City, GA

Sunday, December 21, 2025 10:30, a.m.

*Youth and Adults – join us for Religious  
Education combined session THIS SUNDAY for  
us to rehearse our lines and choose costumes.*

*Parents, please join us also to know how to rehearse  
with your children at home and learn their lines.*

## Join Us Often with Your Family



### Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup> – St. Barbara the Great Martyr

8:00 Orthros & 9:00 Divine Liturgy at Archangel Michael Chapel

### Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> – St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

9:00 Divine Liturgy, Community Breakfast, & Invitation for youth and adults to decorate Christmas Tree

### Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday of St. Luke

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy, Blessing of Five Loaves & December Commemorations  
(*We thank Helen & George Psihountas for offering the 5 loaves*)

11:00 Religious Education (all ages) – youth and adults will rehearse Christmas Pageant

### Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>

9:00 Divine Liturgy at Archangel Michael Chapel

### Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> – St. Lucia the Virgin Martyr

9:00 Divine Liturgy, followed by Sacrament of Holy Reconciliation (Confession) -no appointment needed. Come and pray as you wait.

### Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday of St. Luke

7:45 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Prayer Shawls

10:45 – 12:45 Parish Council Elections

11:00 Religious Education (all ages) – youth and adults will rehearse Christmas Pageant

11:45 Philoptochos General Meeting

12:00 Parish Council Meeting



## ST. CHRISTOPHER HELLENIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

313 DIVIDEND DRIVE, SUITE 210

PEACHTREE CITY, GA 30269

770/347-PRAY OR 770/347-7729

PASTOR: VERY REV. FR. GEORGE TEAHAKIS

December 3, 2025

Dear Parishioners:

We, the Board of Elections Committee, invite all Parishioners in Good Standing of St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church to vote in the upcoming Parish Council Elections in order to fill three (3) current vacancies on the Parish Council.

**Elections shall take place Sunday, December 14, 2025, at St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church from 10:45 a.m. to 12:45 pm.**

A Parishioner in Good Standing who is eligible to vote in this election is defined as a person who is:

- a). At least 18 years of age or older.
- b). Baptized/Chrismated according to the rites of the Orthodox Church, who lives his/her life and activities according to the Orthodox faith and canons of the church.
- c). Current in his/her stewardship and other financial obligations to the Parish.

A new parishioner of the Parish may vote in the election if he/she has become a member in good standing at least three (3) months prior to the election.

A Sample Ballot for your review is included.

If you have any questions regarding the upcoming elections, please feel free to contact any Board of Elections Committee member: Aimee Panos, Chairman, Julie Torres, Angelique Soulakos and Marcus Sprague. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, December 14, 2024.

Yours Faithfully,

The Board of Elections Committee

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313 Dividend Drive, Suite 210, Peachtree City, Georgia 30269 Telephone: 770-347-7729

Web: [www.saintchristopherhoc.org](http://www.saintchristopherhoc.org) Office E-mail: [info@saintchristopherhoc.org](mailto:info@saintchristopherhoc.org)

Priest E-mail: [chancellor@zimmetropolis.org](mailto:chancellor@zimmetropolis.org)

## SAMPLE PARISH COUNCIL BALLOT

On Sunday, December 14, 2025, from 10:45 am –12:45 pm,  
Parishioners in Good Standing can

**VOTE TO FILL 3 (three) OPEN POSITIONS  
FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL OF  
ST. CHRISTOPHER HELLENIC  
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

*(You may vote for no more than three persons.)*

Kirk Panayis

George Psihountas

Stephen Sarantis



## Nativity Card 2025

**Deadline December 7<sup>th</sup>**

All donations go to Philoptochos charities

Please include your name exactly as you want it to appear on the card.

[Click here to donate online](#)

### Nativity Card

Or

See Suzanne Marshall at Church to sign up

Forms are available in the narthex

**Christ is Born- Glorify Him!**





*General Philoptochos  
Meeting  
Dec. 14*

*Refreshments and  
Information!*

*Come one, come all!  
Check out what your Philoptochos  
chapter has in store for 2026!*



## Prayer Shawl Blessing December 14th

To bring comfort and joy to the  
women at Promise Place

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church's

# YOUNG ADULT LEAGUE KICKOFF

Parishioners and friends ages 18-35(ish) are invited to join us on Saturday, December 20 at 3-7 pm for our first YAL social at Angelique's house. RSVP for the address. Bring a drink or snack to share if you'd like!

Email Angelique ([asoulakos77@gmail.com](mailto:asoulakos77@gmail.com)) to RSVP.

Join our GroupMe to stay connected!



# Christmas Luncheon



Please a Bring  
Lenten Dish  
to Share

**December 21**

**After Christmas Pageant**



*The Angel Tree is here!  
Take a look in the back  
of the sanctuary  
and:*

*Take home an angel ornament from the tree  
as a keepsake to remind you to share your  
blessings this **Christmas**! You can also email me to  
Anna Naydenova : [anna\\_nayd@yahoo.com](mailto:anna_nayd@yahoo.com)*

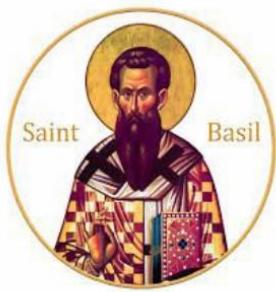
*Take an angel, be an angel to a child this Christmas! Donate to  
or volunteer for a charity of your choice. These are some  
opportunities that come to mind:*

*USPSOperationSanta.com;  
St.Nicholas-Tele-Santa.com and  
Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots-ToysforTots.org*

**USPSOperationSanta.Com**

Dear Santa  
My name is Tatja  
I am 2 years old what I want for  
Christmas is  
Bluey Toys  
Middle Middle Toys  
Clothes  
Lacquered Toys  
Shoe  
@ Books

Books	Books
Shirts	37-41 grds
Pants	37-41 grds
Socks	5-7 grds



YOU'RE INVITED TO OUR ANNUAL

# VASILOPITA !

LIVE AUCTION & DINNER!

**SATURDAY JANUARY 10<sup>TH</sup> : 5-8PM**

**FREE ENTRY FEE!**

**PLEASE BRING A SIDE DISH FOR 8**

**(MEATS, BEVERAGES, and DESSERT PROVIDED)**

All proceeds will benefit:

**ST. BASIL'S ACADEMY, BLOOM OUR YOUTH & PARADISE 4 KIDS**

**ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH- 149 EBENEZER ROAD**

# Schedule a Zoom Call with Jolly St. Nick! ... It's FREE!



An Orthodox Christian Ministry

... for ALL children!

Scan QR Code  
for a Video!

Scan QR Code  
for details!

Visit us at:

[www.StNicholas-Tele-Santa.com](http://www.StNicholas-Tele-Santa.com)



The Department of Religious Education (DRE) and the Saint Nicholas Tele- Santa Program launch Kids Nativity Series collaboration

In the spirit of giving, the Department of Religious Education (DRE) is pleased to announce a new collaboration with the Saint Nicholas Tele-Santa Program to present a new seasonal series: the Kids Nativity Series, a special holiday initiative designed to bring the true meaning of Christmas into the hearts and homes of our children and their families everywhere.

This holiday season, our Kids Nativity Series offers 12 short stories that celebrate both the Incarnation of our Lord and the life and legacy of Saint Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra. Designed for children, parents, and Sunday School teachers alike, the series connects the Christmas spirit to the meaning of Salvation and the familiar figure of Santa Claus to the real-life saint. Each story offers a meaningful way to help children understand the more profound significance of the holiday, bridging the secular traditions they know with the timeless teachings of the Church.

Families participating in the Saint Nicholas Tele-Santa Program can use the Kids Nativity Series alongside their scheduled calls from "Saint Nicholas." Parents are encouraged to read the Nativity-themed stories with their children before the call. At the same time, the Saint Nicholas stories serve as extraordinary selections for Santas to share during their conversations, creating a truly faith-filled and memorable experience for children.

Each story is available in both English and Greek. Click the link below.

[Nativity Series | StNicholas TeleSanta](http://www.StNicholas-TeleSanta.com)

# PAN-ORTHODOX CANDELIGHT SERVICE AND CHRISTMAS CONCERT

presented by the  
Atlanta Inter-Orthodox Parish Association (AIOPA)

**Sunday, December 21**  
**5:00 pm**

**Annunciation Cathedral, Atlanta, Georgia**



**Homily Offered by Fr. Elias Dorham**  
*Melkite Catholic Church*

*"O Bethlehem Prepare: Welcoming Christ into Our Hearts"*

*Featuring Choirs from*

*Annunciation Cathedral Men's Choir*

*Annunciation Cathedral Mixed Choir*

*Holy Transfiguration Mixed Choir*

*St. Elias Mixed Choir*

*Sts. Constantine and Helen Mixed Choir*

*St. John the Wonderworker Mixed Choir*

*St. Mary Romanian Orthodox Church Mixed Choir*

*Sts. Raphael, Nicholas, & Irene Mixed Choir*



**Refreshments to Follow in Carlos Hall**

## Building Our Future: Join Our \$1.5M Capital Campaign

Dear Parish Family,

We are excited to announce the launch of our \$1.5 million Capital Campaign, a five-year endeavor to build our future home. This is an incredible opportunity for us to come together as a community and create a space that will serve and inspire for generations to come.



To make this vision a reality, we encourage everyone to fill out pledge cards now. Our lenders are looking for a strong show of commitment from the parish, and your early pledges are crucial to meeting their requirements. As we consider discussions with outside donors, our ability to demonstrate the Parish Family's commitment to the capital campaign is an integral part of the process and success to raise funds from outside our parish. During our last campaign, we raised an impressive average of \$264K per year, and with your continued support, we are confident we can do it again.

Your participation is vital. Please continue your existing commitment to the stewardship fund and start giving to the new capital campaign or consider increasing your existing building fund pledge amount. Together, we can turn our dreams into reality.

Let's build our future home with faith, dedication, and collective effort. Please consider completing the online pledge card today, [St. Christopher Capital Campaign Pledge Card Link](#) so we can show the lenders our unwavering commitment and take the next steps toward our shared goal.

Here are some examples to consider:

### GIVING SCENARIO 1:

Currently giving \$100/month  
• \$40 to Building Fund  
• \$60 to Operations

*During the Building Fund Campaign*

- **\$80** to Building Fund
- **\$60** to Operations

Total Giving Increase = 40%

### GIVING SCENARIO 2:

Currently giving \$200/month  
• \$100 to Building Fund  
• \$100 to Operations

*During the Building Fund Campaign*

- **\$200** to Building Fund
- **\$100** to Operations

Total Giving Increase = 30%

### GIVING SCENARIO 3:

Currently giving \$300/month  
• \$100 to Building Fund  
• \$200 to Operations

*During the Building Fund Campaign*

- **\$200** to Building Fund
- **\$200** to Operations

Total Giving Increase = 33%

Please consider giving with your heart.

With gratitude and hope,

Tom Farmakis





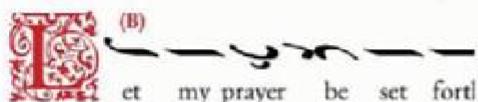
## The Liturgical Arts Academy

Winter Academy - for Beginners  
Summer Academy - for Upper Levels  
at The Diakonia Retreat Center in Salem, SC

WINTER ACADEMY: FEB 8 - 14, 2026 \* Registration opens 09/23/25

SUMMER ACADEMY: AUG 23 - 29, 2026 \* Registration opens 03/23/25

### Byzantine Chant



A week of intensive in-person training in Byzantine notation, modal theory, ornamentation and rubrics. Students are accepted into Beginner thru Master Class levels based on their application. Instructors: J.M.Boyer, S. Herron, G.Cremeens, P.D Robinson

### Byzantine Iconography



A week of intensive instruction in line drawing, color theory, gilding, painting, and varnishing. Beginners learn the basics of the Byzantine technique; Summer Academy is for more advanced icon painting. Instructor: Fr. Anthony Salzman



### Foods in Faith

Learn to make and offer Proshpora, Artoklasia, and Koliva for the worship life of the Church.

Winter Academy only.

Instructor: Presvytera Meredyth Houpos

Visit [TheLiturgicalArts.org](http://TheLiturgicalArts.org)

info@theliturgicalarts.org



## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS OF HELLENIC DESCENT!



# SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION 2025-2026

## \$250,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

**20 Awards of \$10,000 each**  
based on academic achievement, financial  
need, & Hellenic engagement  
\*\$20,000 allocated to music or arts majors

**20 Awards of \$2,500 each**  
based on academic achievement & Hellenic  
engagement

### In order to apply students must:

- Be U.S. Citizens/U.S. Permanent Residents and living in the U.S
- Be of Hellenic descent
- Have a minimum GPA of 3.6
- Be enrolled at an accredited U.S. college or university for Fall 2025 and actively in your sophomore, junior, or senior year
- Be full-time students who are pursuing a four-year bachelor's degree

**Applications are due  
January 31, 2026**

The application, criteria, requirements, and guidelines are available at  
**[www.panhellenicsf.org](http://www.panhellenicsf.org)**

For inquiries please email  
**[scholarships@panhellenicsf.org](mailto:scholarships@panhellenicsf.org)** or  
call our office at **(312) 357-6432**



PANHELLENIC  
SCHOLARSHIP  
FOUNDATION

PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation  
8501 West Higgins Road • Suite 210  
Chicago, Illinois 60631

312.357.6432  
312.872.0090  
[panhellenicsf.org](http://panhellenicsf.org)  
[scholarships@panhellenicsf.org](mailto:scholarships@panhellenicsf.org)



10  
Days to Explore  
& Connect!

11TH & 12TH GRADE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

## YOU BELONG AT CROSSROAD!

Join youth from across the country to explore your faith, purpose, and the Orthodox tradition.

CrossRoad is designed to give students:

- A deeper understanding of faith **and** purpose
- Transformative experiences in the Orthodox tradition
- New friendships with other Orthodox Christians



Session 1 | Boston  
(SENIORS ONLY)  
June 06-16, 2026



Session 2 | Boston  
June 20-30, 2026



Session 3 | SoCal  
June 22-July 02, 2026



Session 4 | New York  
July 06-16, 2026

**Apply by December 20, 2025**  
**SAVE \$50!** Hear by January 15, 2026

**Apply by January 20, 2026**  
Hear by February 15, 2026

**Final Deadline:**  
**Apply by February 20, 2026**

LEARN MORE  
AND APPLY!



qrco.de/CR-Summer

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

-online-  
*giving*

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fast. simple. secure.

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[Click Image for Online Giving](#)

For questions, please email [communications@saintchristopherhoc.org](mailto:communications@saintchristopherhoc.org)

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

**[Click here for Online Giving Instructions](#)**



[Click image to view our parish calendar](#)



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