

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

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Very Rev. Fr. George Tsahakis, Pastor
Stephen Sarantis, President, Parish Council
Jackie Sarantis, Office Administrator

Pastoral Message from Fr. George for Friday, May 9, 2025



Blessed Feast
of Saint
Christopher
on May 9



Join Us This Sunday for Mother's Day Services & Luncheon



Before matriculating to Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline, MA, I served as a hospital administrator for 15 years. In planning for this vocational change with my family, I visited the school one year in advance and met a senior named Luke Veronis.

*I have never forgotten his extraordinary kindness of taking time out of his daily routine to guide me on a school tour and answering many of my questions about what my future life at Holy Cross School of Theology would entail. Since then, I continue to be inspired by Fr. Luke Veronis and his family who have served the church in many sacrificial ways. **

The following reflection written by Fr. Luke Veronis is a source of inspiration for all of us as we seek to honor our mothers on Mother's Day. I encourage you to share it with your family.

A teacher asked her class a question: "Suppose your mother baked a pie and there were five of you-- two parents and three children. What part of the pie would you get?" Quickly a little boy shot up his hand to answer, and then confidently responded, "One fourth."

"No. You didn't understand the question, or you don't know your fractions," said the teacher. "Remember, there are five of you."

"Yes, I realize that," said the boy, "But you don't know my mother. My mom would say she didn't want any pie so that everyone else could have more."

How many of us have mothers like this? I know that I grew up with a mother who possessed such a sacrificial and giving spirit, and I have a wife who expresses the same spirit with my children, and with many others!

If one phrase summarizes many mothers, it would be "sacrificial love." She is the one who is always ready to give of her time and her very self, and often she gives in quiet, humble ways. She is the one who will get up early and be the last one to sleep making sure that everything is in order. She is the one who gets up at all hours of the night taking care of a sick child, making sure that their child is feeling the loving presence of their mother. She may be a stay-at-home mom

who works more than many others with a profession, or she may be a working mom, who works her 40 hours a week only to come home and then continue her second job which is even more demanding. Moms are people who constantly give of themselves, often without thinking of themselves.

Moms are more often the rock of faith in families. They are the ones who instill the Christian faith in their children, reading them Bible stories, teaching them the traditions of our faith, taking them to Church, and modeling for them the Christian life. I guess this is why the Spanish proverb says, **“An ounce of a mother is worth a ton of priest.”** Of course, this proverb doesn’t downplay the role of a priest but highlights the daily and continual influence that a Christian mother can have!

In many ways, moms epitomize the true Christian spirit and ideal which we all should strive for in our lives – unconditional love, sacrificial giving, humble service, and rock-solid faith.

Maybe no influence on earth can impact a child in the same way! Abraham Lincoln confessed, *“I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life. All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel Mother.”* George Washington, noted, **“My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her.”**

How true to acknowledge the blessing that mothers can have upon their children. The mother-infant bond is an intense relationship of unparalleled human affection – the foundation of a child's emotional, spiritual and physical survival. **Mothers sacrificially and lovingly give of themselves from the moment that a child enters their lives!** Mothers will lose countless hours of sleep, sacrifice their time, their schedules and their ambitions, all for the purpose of incarnating love for another being and helping mold the likeness of God into them. Throughout their lives, mothers act as nurses, doctors, psychologists, and counselors. Mothers serve as teachers, guides, disciplinarians, and coaches. Mothers act as chefs, cleaning ladies, and chauffeurs. Mothers develop

personalities, cultivate attitudes, nourish faith, and build up spirits. Mothers constantly give, and give, and then give even more! They don't think of themselves too often but willingly place the needs of others before their own.

And motherhood doesn't end with childhood or adolescence but continues throughout one's life. Mothers sacrificially and willingly offer constant love and care, never-ending prayer and guidance, limitless forgiveness and concern, no matter how their children respond and no matter how old their children become. In many ways, ideal motherhood strives to mirror the divine and unfathomable love and grace that God showers upon us all.

This is why a Jewish proverb so beautifully states, *"God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers."*

Of course, by lifting up and honoring the precious mothers in our lives, we should not only remember our biological mothers, but we should celebrate all the women who reflect the purest of motherly virtues. Remember, motherhood does not simply mean to bear children. There are some women who bear children, yet default on their responsibility of motherhood. While there are other women who never bear children, yet who truly offer motherly compassion, love, encouragement, faith, care, hope, and inspiration to those around them. I can look around at our Church Family and see many special women who so beautifully exemplified the blessings of motherhood.

Let us also remember the role and witness of the most beloved mother of all history – the Virgin Mary. She is a unique mother – giving birth in a miraculous way, trying in the best manner she could to raise the Christ-child according to God's will, and yet always realizing that her child was not her own, but One who belonged to the entire world.

She is the ultimate example of a mother whose faithful, selfless, tenderhearted, compassionate, loving, giving, patient, and concern reached out far beyond her own Son and stretches out to all peoples of the world. She is the mother of orphans and downtrodden, the mother of the needy and the helpless, the mother

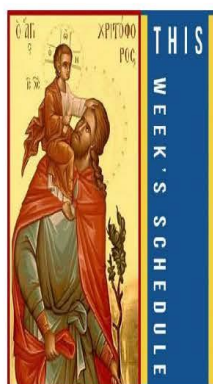
of the hopeless and the defenseless. She is a mother ready to intercede and help everyone who calls upon her. She reflects best the noble spirit of motherhood.

We can see in Christian motherhood unconditional love, unconquerable hope, and undying faith! No matter what children do, or how far they stray from the straight and narrow path, the mother will continue to love them, never lose hope in them, and always place their faith in them. How many of our mothers realize that this is the greatest legacy one can leave our children – faith, hope and love.

Let me conclude with another children's story. One day, a little boy forgot his lines in a Sunday school play. His mother was in the front row trying to prompt him with the right words. She gestured and formed the words silently with her lips, but it did not help. Her son's memory was blank. He couldn't remember what to say. Finally, his mom leaned forward and whispered the cue, "*I am the light of the world.*" The child seemed to suddenly remember his lines, and with great expression stated with loud clear voice, "*My mother is the light of the world.*"

On this Mother's Day, let us lift up and honor all our mothers who have been "the light of the world" in our lives!

**Fr. Luke A. Veronis and his wife Presbyteria Faith have served Sts. Constantine and Helen Church in Webster, MA, since December 2004. Fr. Luke also serves as the Director for the Missions Institute of Orthodoxy Christianity, which is located at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology and teaches as an Adjunct Professor at both Holy Cross and Hellenic College. He taught for four years at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in NY, and has guest lectured at St. Herman's Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska and St. Tikhon's Seminary. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) in St. Augustine, FL.*



Friday, May 9th – Feast of St. Christopher the Martyr

9 am **Divine Liturgy**

Sunday, May 11th – Sunday of the Paralytic, Mother's Day/Name Day (from Friday)

8:15 am **Orthros**, with Dr. Constantine Kokenes, Chantor & Our Chantors

9:30 am **Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Metropolitan Sevastianos Presiding**

11:00am **Mother's Day Luncheon (everyone invited – no charge as we honor our mothers)**

Sunday, May 18th – Sunday of the Samaritan Woman

7:45 am **Orthros**

9:00 am **Divine Liturgy, followed by Religious Education Graduation**

11:00 am **Religious Education Classes** (*Last Day of classes for 2024-2025 year*)

11:45 am **Philoptochos Board Meeting**



Pentecost Picnic

St Philothea Greek Orthodox Church

3761 Mars Hill Road, Watkinsville, GA



Saturday, June 7
3:00 pm Vespers
& Picnic

Indoor & Outdoor Seating

Blessed are You,
O Christ our God,
who made fisherman all-wise,
by sending down upon them
the Holy Spirit, and through them,
drawing all the world into Your net.



RSVP: Please scan the QR code

Or go to: StPhilothea.org

For more information call 706-340-6366

This is a Pan-Orthodox AIOPA Event
Everyone is invited and encouraged to bring their families!



This is a cherished memory
from our 2024 Pan-Orthodox
Vespers & Picnic at Saints
Peter & Paul Serbian
Orthodox Church, in Lilburn,
GA. Fr. George invites you
and your family to join us this
year in Athens, GA!



Dear Saint Christopher Family,

Please join us Sunday, Mother's Day to honor our mothers for the Saint Christopher annual Mother's Day Luncheon. This year's menu will include Eggs Benedict, Waffles, Bacon, Baby Spinach salad, Fruit and of course Mimosas! No charge to eat, bring yourself and your family. His Eminence Metropolitan Sevastianos will also be visiting. The men of Saint Christopher look forward to this opportunity each year and hope you will share in this celebration of our parish Mothers.

Faithfully yours,

Stephen Sarantis
Parish Council President



New Philoptochos Board



Congratulations to our new board members!
Your board officers are:

****Spiritual Advisor Very Rev Fr. George Tsahakis**

President

Helen Psihountas

Vice President

Paula Price

Recording Secretary

Julie Torres

Corresponding Secretary

Pres. Marinda Tsahakis

Treasurer

Aimee Panos

Asst. Treasurer

Claudia Sliwinski

Chapter Advisor

Dedee Panayis

***Metropolis Board Member Julie Skouteris**

Calendar of Upcoming Events:

June	1	General Meeting for all
	8	Prayer Shawl Blessing
		Guest: Bloom Our Youth
	19	<u>Batter Day!</u> For GreekFest 8:30
	21	Folding Day! 9:00
	22	Bonus Father's Day Luncheon
	26	<u>Batter Day!</u> For GreekFest 8:30
	28	Folding Day! 9:00



HELP US LIVESTREAM OUR SERVICES

Would you like to help Livestream our Church services.

It is a very simple process to turn the system on and off.

The only requirements are:

- * Be above the age of 18.
- * Be at Church before the start of Orthros or
Divine Liturgy depending on the schedule.
- * Attend a 3 minute tutorial of how to do it.

If interested, please email or text

Kirk Panayis

Cell: 347-203-9324

kpanayis@yahoo.com

Thank you,

Kirk Panayis

Audio / Livestream Ministry

FRANK'S



WELLNESS CHAMPION WALK

Join us for a meaningful walk in memory of Mary Ramsaier-Kirk, honoring her spirit and passion for wellness. All proceeds benefit Ignite Living Senior Living, supporting our mission to integrate the 8 dimensions of wellness into our fitness programs and gyms. Walk with us as we celebrate life, health, and community!

MAY 17, 2025

9 AM

519 Perkins Road, Palmetto, GA
30268

770-463-2460

www.igniteliving.com



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





Midwest
FOOD BANK



During this time of giving, we have the opportunity to offer
monetary donations for our month of May "Hands of Love"
charity partner: Midwest Food Bank in Peachtree City

Midwest Food Bank (MFB) is a faith-based, non-denominational top-ranked charity in Peachtree City with a 4-star rating by Charity Navigator. Those of us who volunteered last year will be happy to learn that MFB has expanded with the completion an 8,000 sq.ft. addition, as the service they provide is much needed and well managed.

Since 2003, when the Kieser family began serving ten food pantries in McLean County, IL, the food bank has grown to more than ten distribution centers in the US, as well as overseas - in Africa and Haiti.

The Georgia distribution center was established in Peachtree City in 2011 and it now supplies food items to over 320 agencies in 52 counties throughout the Southeast.

We thank you for your continuous support and, as always, please place your donations in the "Hands of Love" RED BOX in the church entryway, online at:

<https://stchristopherphiloptochos.square.site/product/hands-of-love/57?cs=true&cst=custom>

or mail to 313 Dividend Dr, Suite 210, Peachtree City, 30269

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



Big News! More Rooms, More Time – But Don't Wait!



2025 Clergy-Laity Assembly including the Philoptochos, Southeastern
Choir Federation & Sisterhood of Presvyteres Conferences

Thanks to overwhelming interest, we sold out of our original room block — so we've added more rooms for our convention!

(***Heads-up:** this came with a slight (~\$34/night) price bump for new hotel bookings — but if you've already booked, you're locked in at the original rate.*)

To help offset the increase we're postponing the Registration Fee increase from May 1st to May 16th!

That's right — you now have two extra weeks to register at the current rate. But don't delay:

- **Book your room ASAP** before the new block fills up!
- **Register by May 16th** to save on your fee!
- **Final Deadline:** Absolutely NO Registrations after June 1st.

Don't miss this chance to connect, learn, and grow together in faith!

Clergylaity2025.org

Faith Family Love
Fulfilled in the Holy City

Greek Orthodox
Metropolis of Atlanta
Clergy Laity 2025



SUMMER 2025 CAMPER REGISTRATION

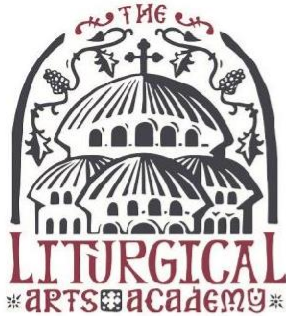
St Stephen's Summer Camp offers teens of the Metropolis of Atlanta entering 8th through 12th grades when school begins in the fall, an opportunity to spend a week at our Diakonia Retreat Center.

REGISTER TODAY!



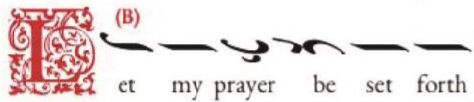
amazon
wishlist

St. Stephen's Camp Wishlist



Now accepting applications for The Liturgical Arts Academy August 17 -23, 2025

Diakonia Retreat Center, Salem, SC



Byzantine Chant

This is a 1-week intensive in-person training that offers Intermediate, Advanced and Master Class levels.

Instructors: John Boyer, Samuel Herron
and Photini Downie Robinson



Byzantine Iconography

A week of intensive instruction in gilding and painting an icon at the Intermediate and Advanced levels.

Instructors: Fr. Anthony Salzman

Visit TheLiturgicalArts.org

info@theliturgicalarts.com



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[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.

[Click here](#) for Online Giving Instructions



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



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