



St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

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Very Rev. Fr. George Tsahakis, Pastor
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Pastoral Message from Fr. George, August 13, 2025

*On Sunday, August 10, Fr. George blessed the religious educators and parish youth and adults as we begin the 2025-2026 school year. He gave everyone a daisy to remind them of his spiritual encouragement in the following message: **"Children's Sermon - The Daisy and the Divine Light"**.*



As you begin this new school year, I want you to think about a simple daisy blooming in a field. It doesn't try to be the biggest or the brightest flower—it simply turns its face toward the sun and soaks in the light. That light helps it grow strong, beautiful, and full of life.

Each of you is like that daisy. When you turn your heart toward Jesus, you begin to reflect His love and light in everything you do—whether you're learning in school, helping a friend, or being kind at home.

Now here's something special: once a week, I water the plants in my office. If I forget, they start to droop. But when I care for them, they perk up and bloom again. In the same way, each Sunday we gather in church to receive the blessings God gives us—especially through worship and the Holy Eucharist, His precious Body and Blood. That's how we stay fresh and strong in our faith, just like the daisy that needs water to stay vibrant.



So as you begin your school year, remember to turn toward the light of Christ, and come each Sunday to be nourished by His love. You are His

beautiful creation—meant to grow, shine, and bless the world around you.

+Fr. George Tsahakis, 8.10.25

Fr. George is so grateful to Jeanie Ellinas for sharing the beautiful sunflowers she and Johnny saw after hearing the above sermon. Like the daisies, the sunflowers grow facing the sun and are inspiring to view. Jeanie's Orthodox name is Alexandra... she shared: *"I pass these fields of sunflowers frequently in Turin, 1 mile from my home in Senoia. They are so beautiful! I thought you would enjoy the pictures. I am enjoying the daisies given to Johnny and I today. Thank you so much! - Alexandra*



[Priest's note: During our adult religious education lesson on Sunday, we discussed the importance of a “prayer corner” in our homes. Alexandra shared a photo of her family’s prayer area – notice her vigil light along with her cross, icons, and fresh daisies! *Thank you for helping reinforce this Orthodox tradition, Alexandra and Johnny.*]





Did you know Orthodox Christians observe the Sabbath on Sunday — the Lord's Day?



In the book of Exodus, God commands His people to keep the Sabbath — Saturday — as a day of rest, because on the seventh day, God rested after creating the world (Exodus 31). This was a holy command for the people of Israel, shaping their entire rhythm of life.

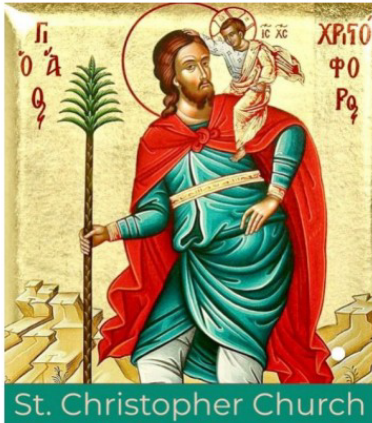
But everything changed with Christ's Resurrection. In the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 28), we read that "after the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week," the women came to the tomb — and found it empty. Christ had risen. That first day of the week, Sunday, became "the Lord's Day" (Κυριακή in Greek), the day of joy, of new creation and eternal life in the light of the Resurrection.

The early Christians, including the Apostles, gradually shifted communal worship from Saturday evening into Sunday, celebrating the Holy Eucharist (the breaking of bread — what we now know as the Divine Liturgy) and gathering in the joy of the Resurrection.

The Didache, a first-century Christian text, tells believers to gather and give thanks on "the Lord's Day." By the second century, Saints like Ignatius of Antioch encouraged Christians to worship on Sunday, not the Sabbath. By the time of the First Ecumenical Council in 325, Sunday had become the central day of Christian worship.

In Greek, we don't call it "Sunday" but Kyriake (Κυριακή) — "the Lord's Day." We don't rest because of the seventh day — we rejoice because Christ is risen. We worship the Risen Son of God, who fulfilled the Sabbath and gave us eternal rest in Him. [From Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Religious Education]

This Is A Season of Worship, Witness, Fellowship, & Service



Dear Beloved Parishioners,

As we journey through this sacred month, our parish offers many opportunities to deepen our faith, strengthen our fellowship, and serve with love. We invite you to participate fully in the life of our Church.

Sunday Services

Join us every Sunday for Divine Liturgy and spiritual nourishment. Come early for Orthros and stay for coffee hour fellowship, followed by Religious Education classes.

Paraklesis Services

Experience the comforting prayers of the Supplication to the Theotokos throughout the Dormition Fast. A time for healing, intercession, and peace.

Feasts of the Transfiguration and Dormition

Celebrate with us the Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord on August 6th and the Dormition of the Theotokos on August 15th. These holy days remind us of Christ's Glory and the Theotokos' loving protection.

GreekFest Fayette – A Taste of Greece

Mark your calendars for our annual GreekFest on August 16th. Enjoy authentic Greek food, music, dancing, and cultural exhibits. A joyful celebration for the whole community! Invite friends and neighbors to experience the joy of our heritage!

Religious Education Classes on Sundays

Our new Religious Education year begins August 10th. Classes for all ages will deepen your understanding of the Orthodox faith and prepare hearts for Christ. Our Adult Religious Education Class is a great opportunity for catechumens – newcomers interested in becoming Orthodox through the Sacraments of Baptism and/or Chrismation.

Philoptochos Ministry

Join our Philoptochos women in acts of love, compassion, and service. From preparing baked goods to raise funds for charitable needs to making Prayer Shawls, this ministry brings comfort and hope to those in need.

A Call to Action: Reaching, Shining, Building Together

Let us reach out to our neighbors, reflect the light of Christ, and build a stronger parish family. This initiative invites every member to participate in the life and growth of our Church.

Together, let us be the Church—alive in worship, active in service, and radiant in God's love through witness and fellowship. Amen! +Fr. George Tsahakis



The Greek Orthodox Ladies
PHILOPTOCHOS
SOCIETY

Mother of Every Mother

By: His Grace Bishop Athenagoras of Nazianzos

National Philoptochos Spiritual Advisor

Model of Motherhood

Panaghia's motherhood is prayer, offering, and love. In her, every woman finds a holy example.

Mother of Every Mother

The Theotokos understands the joys and sorrows of motherhood. She raised Christ with love and watched Him walk the road to the Cross. Her motherhood is not just biological—it is spiritual, eternal, and full of prayer.

Today's challenge: Whether you are a mother, daughter, godmother, or spiritual friend—find one woman today to encourage or support.

Fr. George invites ALL our parishioners to respond to His Grace Bishop Athenagoras' challenge above. What a beautiful act!

Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos – Join us This Friday for Services – Lamentations at 8:00 a.m. and Divine Liturgy at 9:00 a.m. We will finish by 10:00 a.m.



**Join us for the Dormition
of the Theotokos**

Lamentations at Tomb, 8:00 a.m.



Join us for the Divine Liturgy of the Dormition of the Theotokos on August 15 +FGT

Divine Liturgy , 9:00 a.m.

1. In a tomb, O Pure one, you were truly interred,
as the woman who contained God within your womb
and ineffably gave birth to Him on earth.
2. Mary, as the Mother of the Giver of life,
how can you now die and dwell in a sepulcher,
since your Son has raised the dead out of decay?
3. He who set the measures of the earth, God the Word,
deigned to be contained, O Pure one, within your womb
How do you now fit within a tiny tomb?

Lamentations for the Theotokos

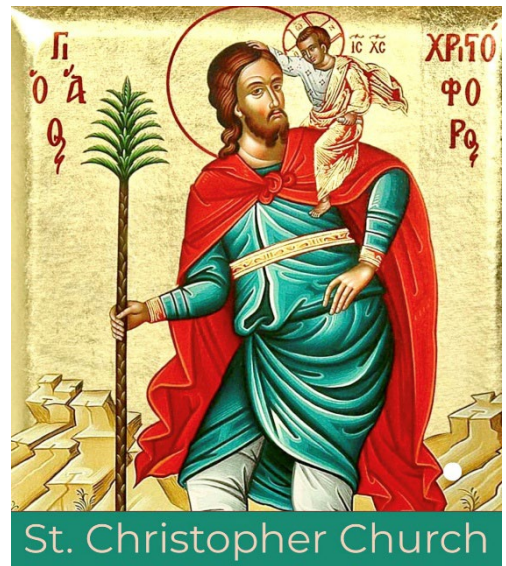


1. Right it is indeed
that we magnify you who received God;
for you are the animate treasury
of the virtues and of every grace of God.
2. She who has contained
Him who holds the universe together
and is thus perceived as the house of God
is translated now to heaven, there to dwell.

1. All generations offer,
O Virgin, hymns in honor
and praise of your entombment.
2. To death you have submitted,
O Virgin, who gave birth to
Him who dealt death to Hades.
3. In dying you went over
to the undying dwellings,
putting to death the foe death.

Beloved Parish Family,

With heartfelt gratitude, I thank each of you for your faithful and generous financial pledges to both our operating and building fund budgets. By God's grace and your unwavering commitment, we have met our budget projections year-to-date—a remarkable testament to your love for Christ and His Church.



As your Spiritual Father, I commend the sacrifices you have made to sustain our ministries and help build our future church complex. Too often, we overlook the quiet generosity of others, but today I pause to celebrate and acknowledge your stewardship and thank you.

Let us be reminded of the words of King David:

“All things come from You, and of Your own we have given You.”

— 1 Chronicles 29:14

I also ask the Lord's blessing upon our annual **GreekFest Fayette** event this Saturday. What a blessing it is to witness the many hands and hearts that have helped plan and prepare for this joyful event.

Again, I thank you for your great help and support—for our Chairs, Patrons, Sponsors, and Friends who will join us in fellowship and celebration.

May the Lord bless you abundantly for your sacrificial offerings, and may our parish continue to grow in faith, love, and unity.

With love in Christ,

+Fr. George Tsahakis

Building Our Parish Outside Its Four Walls

It's amazing what one photo can hold. Ten years ago, our parishioners and their friends were at an Atlanta Braves game—sunny skies, foam fingers, and the kind of laughter that echoes louder than a home run cheer. Looking at the snapshot below, it's like opening a time capsule filled with joy. Some of the kids in the photo are now taller than the adults were back then. Some faces have added a few laugh lines, and some are cheering us on from a different seat. But the spirit in that moment? Still alive and well. There's something beautiful about watching lives unfold. That day wasn't just about baseball—it was about being together, sharing stories, and making memories that still warm the heart a decade later. Time moves fast, but joy has a way of lingering. So grateful to those pictured and for their encouragement and support. May God bless us always.



Trust In the Lord With All Your Heart

The distant jet ascending into a thick blanket of clouds calls to mind the moments in life when our path ahead is obscured—when clarity fades and uncertainty looms. The jet, though vanishing from sight, continues its journey with purpose, guided by instruments unseen to us.



So too we can trust in God when the way forward is hidden. Our Lord does not abandon us in the fog of confusion or the weight of sorrow. Like the pilot who relies on unseen guidance, we are called to lean not on our own understanding, but on the divine wisdom of our Creator.

The clouds may be heavy, the sky may be gray, but above them shines the light of God's presence. Let us walk forward in faith, knowing that even when we cannot see the destination, God is already there—waiting, guiding, loving.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” - Proverbs 3:5–6

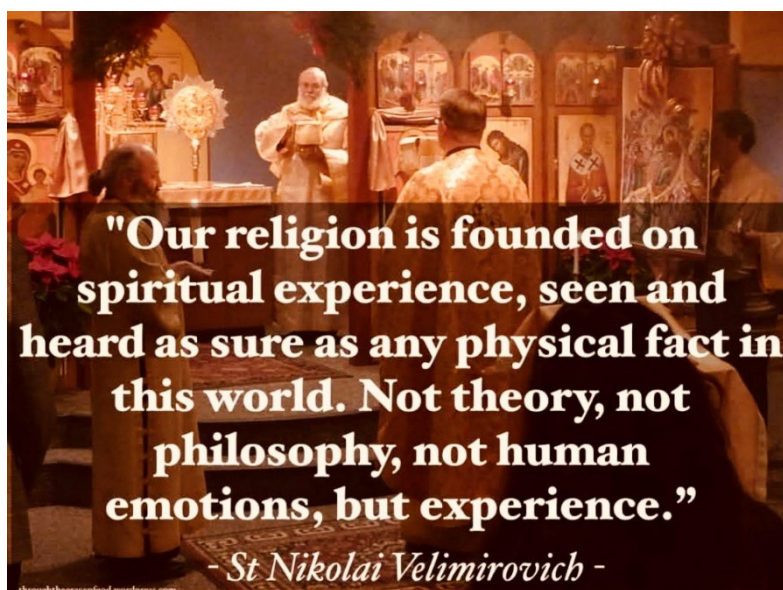
Orthodox Nun Mother Agapia Stephanopoulos is interviewed by Tucker Carlson. She is the daughter of Rev. Dr. Robert Stephanopoulos, former dean of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral in NYC, and sister of George.

She shares a candid and deeply personal account of life as a Christian in the Holy Land—navigating challenges few outsiders truly grasp.

Against the backdrop of geopolitical indifference, she exposes uncomfortable truths: how Western Christian support of Israel often ignores the struggles of local Christian believers.

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"Our religion is founded on spiritual experience, seen and heard as sure as any physical fact in this world. Not theory, not philosophy, not human emotions, but experience."

- St Nikolai Velimirovich -



Christianity is not a matter of persuading people of particular ideas, but of inviting them to share in the greatness of Christ. So pray that I may never fall into the trap of impressing people with clever speech, but instead I may learn to speak with humility, desiring only to impress people with Christ himself.

St. Ignatius of Antioch

Join Us Often with Your Family



Wednesday, August 13th

8:00 Paraklesis Service (*join us as we pray for health & welfare*)

Friday, August 15th – Feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos

8:00 Lamentations, followed by Divine Liturgy for Feast of Dormition of the Theotokos

10:30 GreekFest Preparation Day - please volunteer to help

Saturday, August 16th

6:00pm GreekFest Fayette

Sunday, August 17th – Tenth Sunday of St. Matthew

9:00 Divine Liturgy, followed by GreekFest Truck Unloading/Put Away Supplies

Sunday, August 24th – Eleventh Sunday of St. Matthew

8:00 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Prayer Shawls

10:45 Religious Education Classes (for all ages)

11.45 Philoptochos General Meeting

*Come, and be strengthened in your witness
of Orthodoxy through regular worship,
fellowship, and service with us.*