



St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church

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Very Rev. Fr. George Tsahakis, Pastor
Stephen Sarantis, President, Parish Council
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Pastoral Message from Fr. George, August 8, 2025

The Light That Never Leaves



In the quiet corners of Orthodox homes and churches, a humble flame flickers within a simple glass vessel—a *candili*, the vigil oil lamp. Its form is modest: clear glass, water and olive oil, a floating cork cradling a beeswax wick. Yet its light carries a profound weight, illuminating not just the room, but the soul.

This gentle flame is more than a symbol; it is a sacred continuity. It speaks of Christ's enduring presence, of hope that survives exile, and of identity preserved through generations. Especially when placed before the icon of the Panagia—the Mother of God—it

becomes a prayerful offering, a silent invocation for her intercession and maternal protection.

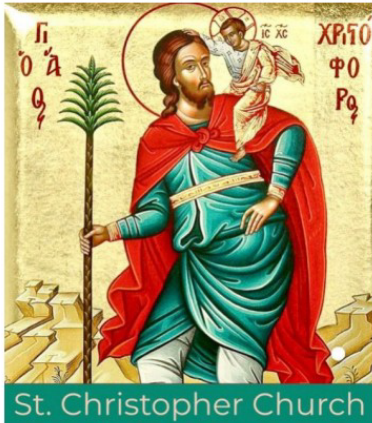
During the first two weeks of August, the flame takes on even deeper meaning. As the Orthodox faithful enter the Dormition Fast, preparing to honor the falling asleep of the Theotokos, the candíli becomes a companion in prayer and fasting. Its light reflects the purity, humility, and courage of the Panagia, who bore the Light of the World and now receives the prayers of those who seek her protection.

The candíli's light is memory and faith entwined. It burns in times of loss and thanksgiving, in displacement and return. It is the same flame lit by ancestors in distant lands, now glowing in the homes of their descendants. For more than 2,000 years, Orthodox Christians have bravely kept this flame alive—through persecution, diaspora, and silence. It is a quiet defiance against forgetting, a luminous act of devotion that transcends time and place.

Through it, the Orthodox faithful remain tethered to the divine, to each other, and to the enduring grace of the Panagia, who watches still with love.

Join us this Sunday for our Adult Religious Education Open House & First Class for 2025-2026. Fr. George will present a unique lesson involving a deeply poetic and theological meditation on memory, exile, and enduring faith, centered around a sacred icon of the Panagia (Virgin Mary) and the tradition of lighting a candíli (oil lamp) in our Orthodox Christian homes.

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

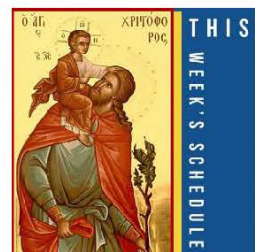
Join our Philoptochos women in acts of love, compassion, and service. From preparing baked goods to raise funds for charitable needs to making Prayer Shawls, this ministry brings comfort and hope to those in need.

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

Join Us Often with Your Family



Wednesday, August 6th –Transfiguration of our Lord

9:00 Divine Liturgy & Blessing of the Grapes

Friday, August 8th

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

Sunday, August 10th – Ninth Sunday of St. Matthew

8:00 Orthros

9:00 Divine Liturgy & Blessing of New Religious Education School Year

11:00 Religious Education Classes "Meet & Greet" Teachers/Assistants

12:00 Parish Council Meeting

Monday, August 11th

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

Tuesday, August 12th

830 Philoptochos – Dolmathes

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