GOOD NEWS

Voice: (585) 244.3377

From the Desk of Rev. Fr. Angelo Maggos Parish Registry, Progress Report Upcoming Church Services and Events Youth Ministry and Organizations News

From Fr. Angelo

In his April 2023 article 10 Reasons Church Attendance Is Declining (Even for Committed Christians), Carey Nieuwhof listed off several very well known reasons for declining attendance, however two in particular were very pertinent and often overlooked: Self-Directed Spirituality and Failure to See a Direct Benefit.

These two in particular are products of not only a post-modern world but also the result of the classically American trait of placing disproportionate importance on achieving an objective. The consequence of this is to view everything, both products and services, as commodities whose value is based on their ability to achieve our human-centered objectives.

Self-Directed Spirituality

In an age where technology has given us unprecedented and instant access to information, there has been a progressive erosion in the desire to seek out knowledgeable in-person guidance. Nieuwhof gives an example of this in the medical profession.

We live in an era in which no parent makes a visit to a doctor's office without having first googled the symptoms of a child's illness and a recommended course of treatment. Just ask any family physician. It drives them nuts. (Google, doctors will tell you, is not a complete replacement for medical school.)

He states, and I would agree, that we live in "an age where we have access to everything, [so that] more and more people are self-directing their spirituality..." and in the process causing people to reshape the Word of God in their image.

Here the individual takes Jesus' words in Luke 4:23 "Physician, heal thyself" not only too literally but in a totally inverted manner. Jesus' statement is meant as a warning that before one ventures out into the world to heal others, they should first recognize their own "ills", ie. shortcomings and flaws. However, many recognize this statement as a call to self-medicate without recognizing their lack of skill in knowing how to separate the poison of their "cure" from the healing. In Christian language we would say separating the acts which lead to separation from God and those which lead to salvation.

I have encountered people in both my parishes who tell me that while they love our church, they have formed their own "truths" regarding Christianity demonstrating the clear impact of a pluralistic society that encourages individual interpretation and calls for endless re-examination of fundamental Christian Truths. Unfortunately, we often, perhaps unconsciously, reinforce those ideas when we either remain silent or passively agree under the guise of not wanting to offend or insult someone else's "truth." By succumbing to this societal pressure, we deny, in the words of Fr. John Romanides, the *deposit of faith* left to us.

This deposit of faith [in the form of Holy Tradition] existed before the creation of the world. It was revealed to the Prophets of the Old Testament and was fulfilled by the incarnation of the Word. It activates the purification, illumination and defication of the faithful in the Church.

The Apostolic Tradition is the life that the Apostles received from Christ in the Holy Spirit, principally on the day of Pentecost, when they attained to divine vision, and they taught it to the Christians and passed it on to the saints through words and through the sacraments that they performed.

Thus, we must realize our accountability in failing to be attentive to those who practice self-directed spirituality. It is our sacred responsibility to present to them this "deposit of faith" given to us by the prophets, apostles and saints in an understandable language. In the vacuum of ignorance people will "fill in the blanks" of our Faith and Tradition with a theology that is not anchored to Christ's Truth which He gave to us as the One Sent from the Father.

Failure to See a Direct Benefit

We often complain about the excuses we hear for declining attendance; kid's sports, work, the need for "one day off, etc., but these are all symptoms and not the root cause of the problem. Returning to my previous comment about people to-day viewing everything, both products and services, as commodities, we need to readjust our responses so that they address the root cause of the decline in attendance. In the same article Nieuwhof states that

"People always make time for the things they value most. If they're not making time for church, that tells you something. Even among people who say they love the church and who say they love your church, if declining attendance is an issue, chances are it's because they don't see a direct benefit. They don't see the value in being there week after week.

When we encounter family or friends who don't attend church our typical response is "You should attend church more often." To which the response, when you get past the guilt, is "Why should I?" This is what Nieuwhof is saying. Our response is not tuned to what the issue is. A better counterresponse would be to discover why they fail to see value in attending church and, based on their answers, work to develop an environment that responds to those needs. I have found that our most engaged people, those who serve, offer their time volunteering, invite others to join them, and who gather together in communion, are the most frequent attendees.

This is not to say that we change our theology to suit individual needs but that we use the knowledge of our faith to show others how the Truth of Christ is relevant and salvific to us and in turn how it can be relevant and salvific to them. Returning to Christ's words of "*Physician*, *heal thyself*" we must first understand how we perhaps do not adequately express the joy and healing we receive from being part of both church worship and the relational value of gathering as a community.

A church that views attendance as the marker of a strong Christian community is doomed in the longterm to become irrelevant since people see the church as a relic of the past, continuing to maintain archaic rituals that seemingly offer no benefit or relevancy in helping me to accomplish my goals or aid me in my time of suffering.

Both of these reasons, *Self-Directed Spirituality* and *Failure to See a Direct Benefit* are related, and we overlook the significant impact these have, especially in today's America. While this "deposit of faith" which has been given to us is a great inheritance, it is one which requires work on our part to remain relevant and is not an inheritance to be squandered as did the Prodigal son. As Christ commands us, let us be both "the salt of the earth" and "a candle that gives light unto all."





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When you support the Friends of the Metropolis campaign, you are part of a greater outreach that proclaims with one universal voice that God is truly our hope and our rock of salvation. The devoted stewards of the Friends program become coworkers in Christ's vineyard - assisting in the development of ministries and initiatives which strengthen our faith and our joint ministry of service.

If you are not already a Friend of the Metropolis, I invite you to join us in supporting the ongoing ministries of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit.

Thank you for your kind and generous response. With paternal blessings and prayers, I remain,

> +NICHOLÁS Metropolitan of Detroit

MORE INFO AT: WWW.DETROIT.GOARCH.ORG/FRIENDS



SUPPORT HELLENIC COLLEGE HOLY CROSS

Thanks to the Friends of the Metropolis, we continue to support our students at Hellenic College Holy Cross School of Theology. We were also able to give \$25,000 to support the school and its efforts.



SUPPORT YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

The Friends of the Metropolis fully support the work of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries - from the regional youth and young adult ministries events and summer camps to youth worker educational workshops.



SUPPORT OUTREACH AND EVANGELISM

Through the generosity of our Friends, the Metropolis has begun the important work of reaching out to the greater community to share the "Good News" of the Gospel through our new outreach and evangelism efforts.

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Make checks payable to Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit. Fill out this card and send it with payment to the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit - 2560 Crooks Road - Troy, MI 48084





CALENDAR OF CHURCH SERVICES AND EVENTS:

1-4 June - Annunciation Greek Festival

+4 June - Orthros 8:00 AM; Divine Liturgy 9:00 AM - PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE

10 June - Greek School Seabreeze Picnic

12 June - PC Meeting, 6:00 PM

15 June - Good News Submission Deadline

20 June - Office closed.

22 June - Seniors' Meeting, 11:00 AM

26 June – 1 July – St. Timothy's Summer Camp

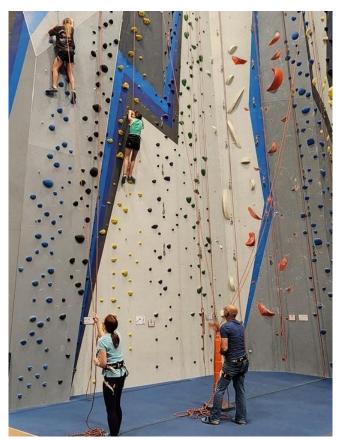
Sunday School every Sunday after Holy Communion September through May.

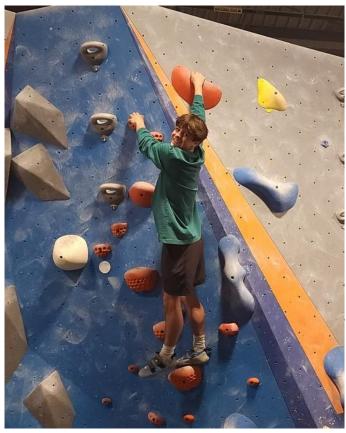
On-going adult Orthodox study programs:

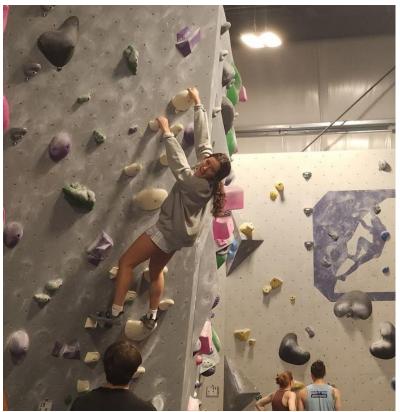
- Bible Study every Tuesday, Zoom, 7:00 PM
- Orthodox Questions and Answers every Thursday, YouTube, 7:00 PM
- On-Line Orthodox Catechism on our website under the EDUCATION tab

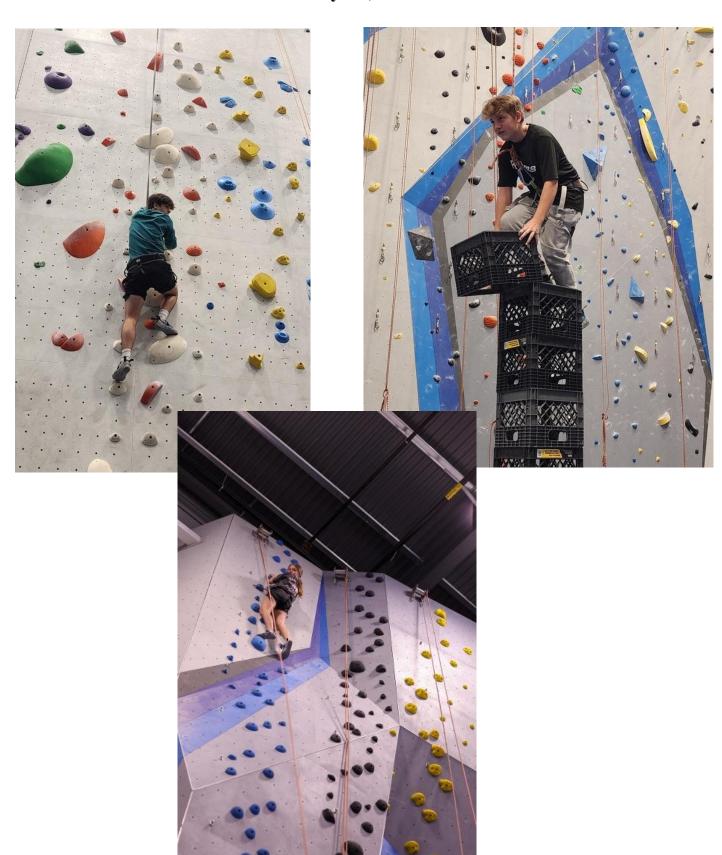
Greek School every Saturday, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM September through May

















JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Continued donations are greatly appreciated!

All donations and dues contribute to sponsoring the philanthropic work of Philoptochos

Please submit payment to:

Maria Economides 23 Blue Pine Circle Penfield, NY 14526

Check payable to: Philoptochos Society

Dues: \$30.00 (\$25.00 for Seniors)

Thank you for your continued support



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We had an amazing Sunday School year. Thank you to all the parents, teachers, children, and community for all of your support throughout the year. We had a really fun last day with the ice cream social and attendance awards. We are so proud of our three students who came EVERY single Sunday School day this year. Great job to Athanasia, Damianos, and Stefanos! We are also proud of all the other children who earned attendance awards this year!

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey that was sent out March 3rd on Vacation Church School. We would like the parish's feedback on volunteers, ideas, and times that work for people to be able to participate. If you haven't given us feedback yet, it is not too late! We will be sending out more information on this, so please be on the lookout!

Important Dates:

August date TBD: Summer Vacation Church School

We have many Sunday School videos. Be sure to check them out if you missed a week with your child! Please see "Bringing the Church Home Resources" section on the next page for more information! Most Days in Attendance RE School Year:

Preschool	Evangeline Gashlin	
Kindergarten	Stefanos Tzogas	
1st	Thanos Matakos	
2nd	Daniel Collins	
3rd	Brennan Collins	
4th	Damianos Tzogas	
6th	Athanasia Tzogas	
8th	Vasilios Koupas	

With Love in Christ, Karina and Lauren Religious Education Directors



Bringing the Church Home - Resources

St. John Chrysostom famously taught that our homes are to be a "little church" and we hope that this new section will help our Annunciation families to make Christ and His Church a part of our homes and everyday lives. Suggestions are welcomed!

Virtual Sunday School Videos: Available on Annunciation YouTube Channel, Annunciation website or QR code to the right!

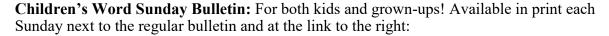


Let Us Attend: Good for the drive to church or for anywhere that you happen to be driving! This is a great way to help prepare your children (and yourself) for the Gospel reading of the day.



Prepare your heart, and the hearts of your children, by listening to this Sunday's Gospel. The Gospel is paraphrased for younger children and read for older children, followed by engaging questions to help us think about what we've heard

This is a feature of the Antiochian Orthodox Department of Christian Education and Ancient Faith Radio and is available on Apple Podcasts or Ancient Faith App:









Dear Parishioners,

We are looking to run a Vacation Church School this summer for our youth, and we are looking for some input from all of you!

We would greatly appreciate your time in filling out our survey. Just scan the QR Code to the right of the image above.

We are interested to hear from parents, potential volunteers, and parish members in general to see what suggestions and ideas our community has for this program.

We look forward to hearing from you and starting the planning process!

With Love in Christ,

Religious Education Team

SUNDAY SCHOOL GRADUATION 5/21/2023



GREEK SCHOOL GRADUATION 5/21/2023



GREEK SCHOOL GRADUATION 5/21/2023

Dear Greek School Families and Parishioners,

Congratulations to the children for graduating and moving up a class!



A job well done by all the students; they made their teachers and families proud! Congratulations to George Dembeyiotis, Evan Economidis, Vasilios Koupas, & George Perikleous for completing their final year in Greek School.

Thank you's and deep gratitude go to our teachers for an awesome and productive Greek School year:
Nia Pike (K), Diana Hristodoulou & Stefani Nassis (1st),
Danielle Marou (2nd), Georgia Katsetos & Irene Magos
(3rd), Kostas Matakos & Jimmy Karipidis (4th), Walter
Bubie (5th & 6th), Sotiris Koupas & Katina Sekella (7th).

We also would like to thank Mrs. Katsetos and Mrs. Sakella for everything they have done for our Greek School program throughout their teaching years. Their never-ending patience, motivation, and persistence in helping the children learn and grow is deeply appreciated. They will both be missed and are welcomed to come back as substitute teachers next year!

Parent Meeting Updates: We had a great and very engaging discussion with parents on May 13th. During our time together we reviewed the results from the Parent Survey, and also shared upcoming changes to our Greek School Program. A follow up email was sent to you, along with the detailed PowerPoint. Our focus for the rest of the year will be in the following areas: (1) Curriculum Redesign, (2) Baseline Metrics for each class, (3) Teacher Professional Development, (4) Designing Activities for more Parent Involvement, (5) Hiring 2 additional teachers, and (5) Focus on activities to increase enrollment for the fall.

Important Announcement: As of August 1st, 2023 our Greek School Tuition will be \$450 for one child, \$800 for two children, and \$1100 for three children, similar to our Buffalo and Syracuse parishes. We haven't raised our tuition in 15 years, and we appreciate your support as we continue making improvements towards enriching our program. We believe this is a reasonable increase after 15 years of no tuition changes; however, if you need tuition assistance, please reach out to Maria and Elina in confidence and we will work with you and your family.

EARLY REGISTRATION: This is your opportunity to register your child(ren) early and still pay our current tuition fee, which is \$370 for one child, \$670 for two children, and \$900 for three children. Early Registration Ends on July 31st. To register, follow the instructions on this link: https://forms.gle/evJ2UAdE2FkrMiTG6

As always, feel free to reach out with your questions at agreekschool@gmail.com Ευχαριστούμε, Maria Dembeyiotis & Elina Kokorotsis Greek School Directors



SCAN TO REGISTER!

ST. TIMOTHY'S CAMP 2023 JUNE 26 - JULY 1 sttimothycamp.org







2023 ADVERTISING/SPONSORSHIP DIRECTORY

To increase awareness among our community of the broad range of experience and services available from our parishioners, we are encouraging both parishioners and any vendors to our church to advertise their business and/or family name in our monthly newsletter.

In order to help defray the costs of printing and mailing, this will be a Sponsorship Directory listing only. Advertising images will no longer be used in order to reduce the overall printing cost of the Newsletter. The Newsletter is printed each month during the year, except for one or two months that would be combined.

If you are interested in adding your business or family name to our Sponsorship Directory, the annual Sponsorship Fee is \$150.

Business or Family Name:		
Address:	City:	Zip:
Email:	Phone:	
Contact:		
Website:		

Please make your checks payable to "Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church".

GOOD NEWS SPONSORS

RESTAURANTS

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Highland Market Bakery & Deli

Highland Park Diner

Jays Diner

Johnny D's Restaurant

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Log Cabin Restaurant & Catering

Mels Diner

Olympia Restaurant & Lounge

Parkside Diner and Miniature Golf

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The Nutcracker Family Restaurant

The Original Steve's Diner - 4 Locations

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Uncle Danny's Family Restaurant

Union Street Coffee House

Voula's Sweets

Yia Yia's Ice Cream Shoppe

Yianni's

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Alpha Ironworks

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Regional Distributors Inc

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EMS

First POS

Metropolitan Window Cleaning

Mike Yar Photo Productions

Ontario Family Dentistry, Dr. Elias Konstantinou

Philoptochos

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Roxanne Stavropoulos Realtor

Howard Hanna Real Estate Services

Vay-Schleich & Meeson, Funeral and Cremation Chapels

ANNUNCIATION FAMILIES

Have a wonderful fellowship

Jennefer & Perry Noun, Bill Noun

Mary Manou

Nassis Family



Hall Rental Policy for 962 East.

We are excited and eager to finally be able to safely reopen our beautifully renovated church Hall to our community. However, the new renovations, along with the intent to lease the Hall to non-parishioners also, requires us to establish a higher degree of formality regarding rental of the new Hall. To assist in this transition, we have secured a dedicated Hall Manager, Sara Tone, who will be responsible for maintaining the Hall Lease calendar, process booking for both parishioner and non-parishioner, showing of the Hall and coordinating contract requirements and signatures. Our church secretary is no longer responsible for Hall scheduling or coordinating any Hall lease activities. With this in mind, we are establishing the following set of guidelines when leasing our Hall.

Attached is a pricing schedule and usage guide for both parishioners and non-parishioners. The fee to rent the Hall for a Parishioner in Good Standing is \$500 total. A signed Rental Agreement and payment of lease fee are required to reserve a date. All guests are expected to respect all Hall rules laid out in the Hall Lease Agreement. All trash and food stuffs must be disposed of properly at the end of your event. See the Hall Lease Agreement for specific information on the use of decorations.

To qualify for the parishioner rate, the person leasing the Hall must be a member in Good Standing for the current year. *Member in Good Standing* status requires a stewardship card on file for the current year and a reasonable payment amount made towards the current year's stewardship pledge.

To begin the Hall Lease process please go to the homepage of our Annunciation Church website. At the bottom of the home page, you will see a button labeled "Hall Rental." Click there to fill out the request form and you will then be contacted by our Hall Manager.

Note that use of the Hall for recognized church organizations or ministries is at no cost, however they are still required to complete the <u>Hall reservation form</u>, to ensure their dates are blocked from use by the Hall manager. This form can be accessed at the bottom of the home page of our church website.

Generally speaking, Hall rental includes the following. (Please see the HALL Contract for the full details)

- a) Six (6) hours of rental time
- b) Tables and chairs setup according to a previously agreed upon floor plan*
- c) Limited kitchen access (warming and cold storage privileges only)
- d) Hall cleaned prior to event
- e) Trash bins and bags

The six (6) hours of rental time does not count against setup time and the timing for this should be arranged with the Hall Manager. This rental does not include the following.

- a) Linens for tables, glassware, flatware, and china
- Food service utensils and dishes

Full kitchen privileges requires a \$350 kitchen usage fee if the food will be prepared using the Hall kitchen(s). If the lessee plans on using a catering service that cater, if they are not on the Approved Cater List, must be approved by the Hall Manager prior to use of the Hall kitchen(s).

* Set-up of the hall does not include taking down or removing any tables due to lack of personnel to do this.

Parishioners are free to take down tables but must reset them after the event. Taking tables down could be done through the set-up fee. For non-parishioners events set-up fees are added to the lease price.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we transition to this new policy which we believe will serve to benefit us both from a financial and community perspective.

Augelo E. Maggos Fr Angelo E. Maggos Priest, Annunciation GOC Jim Stathopoulos

President, Annunciation GOC

¹Note: The link to the *Hall reservation form* is available on our website. The form is also available in the Church Office.

HALL Rates, Access and Requirements

	Recognized Church	Parishioner in Good	Non-Parishioner
	Organization	Standing	
Hall Lease Fee			Starting @ \$1000. Final
naii Lease Fee	No Charge	\$500	price dependent on type of
	No charge	\$300	package selected.
Hall Lease Deposit	N/A, however, the Church	Full amount required at	\$500 deposit at time of
	Organization MUST	time of reservation.	reservation.
	complete the Hall		
	Registration ¹ form to	Completion of the Hall	Completion of the Hall
	secure the date/time.	Registration ¹ form to secure the date/time.	Registration ¹ form to secure the date/time.
		secure the date/time.	secure the date/time.
Hall Balance	N/A	N/A	Balance due two (2) weeks
			before event takes place.
Hall Lease Time	No later than 10pm	No later than 10pm	No later than 10pm
		6-hour event time.	6-hour event time.
		Setup time does not affect	Setup time does not affect
		this time.	this time.
		Additional time is	Additional time is
		\$100/hour	\$100/hour
Kitchen Privileges	Full privileges	Full privileges but requires	None
Ritchell Filvlieges	Tun privileges	a \$350 usage fee	None
Cancellation Policy	N/A, however Church	Hall lease fee recoverable if	Hall lease fee recoverable
	Organization MUST notify	Hall Manager is notified no	if Hall Manager is notified
	the Hall Manager 2 weeks prior to the event if their	later than two (2) weeks prior to event.	no later than two (2) weeks prior to event.
	event is cancelled.	prior to event.	weeks prior to event.
	event is cancelled.		
Use of Caterers	At discretion of the	At discretion of the	Must be selected from
osc or carerers	Organization but must be	organization but must be	church approved catering
	approved by PC.	approved by PC.	list.
Setup and Cleanup	Responsibility of the church	If the Lessee is not	Setup is included in Hall
Setup and Cleanup	ministry or organization that	providing the setup, then	leasing fee.
	is leasing the Hall.	setup fee is \$100.	
		Cotor also as a late	Setup plan required no
		Setup plan required no	later than 2 weeks prior to
		later than 2 weeks prior to the event.	the event.
		the event.	

¹Note: The link to the *Hall reservation form* is available on our website. The form is also available in the Church Office.

Annunciation Policies

MEMORIAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTION POLICY

All monies received during a funeral or memorial service that are made out to the church, that is, checks marked with "Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church" or cash with the envelope marked with "Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church" will be used for purposes in support of church operation.

These could include support of recognized church ministries, sacramental articles purchased for the church proper or for ongoing campaigns such as Hall Renovation or other capita improvements.

If it is desired that these monies are to be used for other wishes that the family may have the family must ensure that they announce that these checks or cash be designated as such.

All monies received for funerals are tracked and family members will receive a listing of those who donated, typically within 40-60 days following the date of the funeral. In addition, for all monies received designated "Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church," donors will receive a letter thanking them for their donation to the church in memory of the deceased.

POLICY FOR DOCUMENT PREPARATION:

There is a required processing charge of \$40 per document. This charge covers research, preparation and routing of documents such as Certificate of Residency, Certificate of Freedom to Marry, Reissued Marriage Certificate, Reissued Baptism Certificate and Certificate of Death. Additional documents are \$20.00 per document.

WEDDINGS:

We have wedding candles in the office for purchase which is required at the time of the ceremony. The donation for the plain one is \$30.00. \$100 would be for the decorated ones. Lena has them in the office. The Stefanas are sold out - Lena does have catalogs for Stefanas in the Office if anyone is interested in shopping on-line.

BAPTISMS:

We also have baptismal candles, \$30 for the large plain candle and \$7 each for the two (2) smaller plain candles. If you are interested in purchasing decorated candles, the larger one is \$50, the two (2) smaller ones are \$25 for the set.

MEMORIALS:

Coffee Hour scheduling for family memorials is the responsibility of the Philoptochos unless other arrangements have been made by the family sponsoring the Memorial. The family which is sponsoring the Memorial is asked to:

- 1. Contact the Parish Secretary to arrange scheduling for Coffee Hour that day. The Secretary will contact the Philoptochos President.
- 2. Arrange for or pay for Coffee Hour food items that are in excess of the standard menu (coffee, drinks, and simple snacks).
- 3. Coordinate the preparation and delivery of Koliva (if used). The Philoptochos or Church office can provide information on persons who can prepare Koliva. The standard rate for the preparation of koliva is \$150.

METROPOLIS OF DETROIT

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH of the ANNUNCIATION

962 EAST AVENUE ROCHESTER, NY 14607

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PARISH INFORMATION

CONTACT US:

Voice: (585) 244-3377

Web: AnnunciationRochester.org | RochesterGreekFestival.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/annunciationrochester

Office and scheduling requests: office@agocroc.org

Stewardship and finance related questions:

finance@agocroc.org

CLERGY:

Rev. Fr. Angelo Maggos, Presiding Priest

Email: agocny@gmail.com

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS;

Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Secretary: Lena L. Livecchi Email: office@agocroc.org

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