

GOOD NEWS

Voice: (585) 244.3377

September/October, 2025

From Fr. Angelo

The Cost of Discipleship

In today's world, we're flooded with two drastic images—one which is the continued turning away from God visible by an outright rejection of God and the disappearance of Scripturally grounded morality and ethics, and two, a resurgence of people seeking to return to God and discover His truth among an everchanging moral landscape. 2000 years has dulled the true impact of Christ's words to His disciples and the Early Church:

“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you...you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you.”

For the Early Church, these words became a violent reality as many Christians discovered the high cost of discipleship as they stood up for their faith, even unto death.

Today most of us do not suffer persecution for our faith but this does not mean it is absent from our modern world, as seen in events such as the 400-year Ottoman occupation, oppression under Nazism and Soviet dictatorships, ISIS kidnappings and executions of hundreds of Assyrian Christians, and the victims of Columbine many of whom died defending the Christian faith.

One of my modern personal heroes is the German Lutheran Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) who, through his book *The Cost of Discipleship*, (based on Luke 14:25-34) reminds us all of the high cost of standing up for our faith. Bonhoeffer, who was living as a pastor in America, saw what was happening in his home country and despite the dangerous anti-Christian sentiment, returned to Germany to preach the Gospel and fight the Nazi regime. This ultimately led to his death by hanging.

In his book, Bonhoeffer laid out his "*seven costs of discipleship*," emphasizing the significant personal sacrifices required to follow Jesus Christ, all of which are based in Scripture.

- 1) Prioritizing Christ above all else, including family and life itself
- 2) Bearing one's own cross (suffering)
- 3) Forsaking possessions and resources
- 4) Denying self and one's own will
- 5) Facing opposition and persecution
- 6) Living in constant obedience and action
- 7) Living a life of intense giving of time, energy, and attention

But this is not new to us as Orthodox. The Patristic Fathers viewed each of these as requirements of discipleship, stressing that we must practice them in a *holistic, lifelong* way by continuously growing in spiritual formation and in the Body of Christ. While this includes worship and celebration of the Divine Liturgy, partaking of the Eucharist and other Sacraments, and fellowship with the church community, it most certainly includes facing opposition and persecution by courageously upholding our Christian beliefs in the face of oppression, heresy, and hatred.

Oftentimes today when Christian statements of faith on politically charged topics such as abortion, gay marriage, or politics can be potentially offensive in the climate of changing societal norms, it can be difficult to

Continued on page 2

steadfastly proclaim the Truth of Christ. But Christ commands us to be the Salt of the Earth. And He warns us of the peril of being silent in the face of adversity saying, “...if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is fit neither for the land nor for manure; men throw it away.”

St. John Chrysostom points out this cost of discipleship when he comments on Jesus’ words to His disciples, “If any man will come after me, let him renounce himself, and take up his cross and follow me,” observing that Christ did not hinder the trials that the disciples faced (or that we will face).

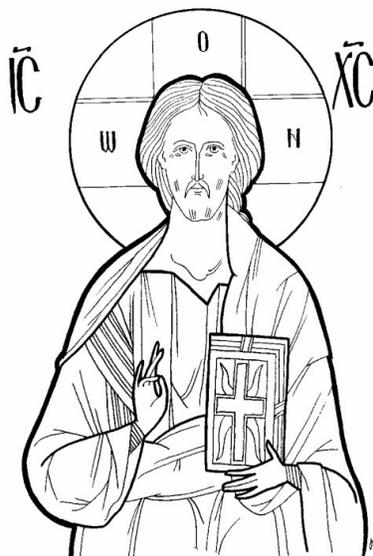
Wherefore Christ compels not but urges. For since they [the disciples] seemed to be murmuring much, being secretly disturbed at the saying, He says...I use no force, nor do I compel, but if any be willing to follow, him I call.

For do not by any means imagine that this is your following of Me; I mean, what you now do attending upon me. You have need of many toils, many dangers, if you are to come after me. For you ought not, O Peter, because you have confessed me Son of God, expect crowns, and to suppose this enough for your salvation, and for the future to enjoy security, as having done all. For although it be in my power, as Son of God, to hinder you from having any trial at all of those hardships; yet such is not my will, for your sake, that you may yourself also contribute something, and be more approved.

Homily 55 on Gospel of Matthew

If we truly take our Christian faith seriously, then let us speak out against all injustices, regardless of political stance and boldly proclaim what is Truth, recognizing that opposition may come. This is especially important as we witness the increase of converts to our Orthodox faith. To them we must serve as examples of what an Orthodox life is thus allowing ourselves to be, as Christ commanded, the “light of the world...letting our light shine before men, that they may see our good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:14-16)

History shows us that this task is certainly not an easy one and fear can overtake us. However, we can take comfort in knowing that Christ promised to always be with us, as we endeavor to serve as a beacon of hope and guidance for others, leading them to God.





REGISTRY



WEDDINGS:



Taylor Brophy & Lucille Raptis – August 30, 2025
 Alexandra Mitris & Francesco Profita – September 27, 2025



FUNERALS:



Helen Sarantis – August 25, 2025
May her memory be eternal.



CHURCH SERVICES AND EVENTS:

- 11 Oct. Drosopigi Gerontiko Dinner 2-10 pm
- 15 Oct. Young Adult Meetup – Iron Smoke, 6:00 pm
- 23 Oct. Sunshine Club with Jessica from JCC, 11:00 am
- 23-24 Oct. Metropolis Clergy-Laity Conference
- 26 Oct. Trunk or Treat, 4:00pm
- Oct TBA GOYA Kickoff Event

Sunday School resumed on September 7

Greek School Classes (4th-7th) resumed on September 20

On-going adult Orthodox study programs:

- Bible Study resumed on September 23
- Orthodox Questions and Answers every Thursday, YouTube, 7:00 PM.
- On-Line Orthodox Catechism on our website under the EDUCATION tab.

PHILOPTOCHOS

Join Us in Helping Our Neighbors at Asbury First United Methodist Church

Did you know that our neighbors at Asbury First United Methodist Church are doing incredible philanthropic work? Their Community Outreach Center (COC) provides a variety of essential services for those in need — from hot meals to hot showers, medical care and so much more! Last month, Philoptochos had the pleasure of touring the COC and learning more about how our parish can support their critical programs. Stay tuned for more details about upcoming donation collections!

It's wonderful to partner with our neighbor to serve our neighbors in the spirit of Christ's love. Asbury First is looking for more hands, help and support, with opportunities to serve in a variety of ways. Even an hour or a single donation drop off can make a big difference! You don't have to have a lot of time or experience — just the desire to put our Orthodox faith in action by improving the lives of those facing hardship. Plus, with so many ways to serve or support Asbury First's COC, there's something for everyone. Interested? Visit asburyfirst.org/coc to learn more, review their list of needs, and sign up!

Asbury Community Outreach Center Wish List

1010 East Avenue, Rochester New York 14607

Your donations of goods and services, as well as financial support and volunteering your time, are greatly appreciated. Help keep our doors open, our cupboards and pantry supplied, so that we can continue to offer our radical hospitality and loving support to our friends and neighbors in need. Please make checks payable to *Asbury First Outreach*.

Donations may be dropped off with the reception desk when the Community Outreach Center is open or in the red brick donation shed near the entrance. For more information, please call 585-271-1050, x137 or send an email to asburystorehouse@asburyfirst.org.

Thank you!

FOOD

Coffee (beans or ground; unflavored; No K-cups)
White sugar
Brown sugar
Powdered non-dairy creamer
Powdered hot chocolate packets
Powdered creamer
Artificial sweetener packets
Pancake mix
Maple syrup
Grits
Cold cereal
Granola bars, snack bars, protein bars

Peanut butter (creamy)
Jelly (strawberry, grape)
Canned soups (tomato, chicken noodle, typically Campbell's or store brand)
Canned tuna
Canned vegetables (corn, green beans, mixed)
Canned fruit (peaches, mixed), smaller (<16 oz) cans, ideally
Boxes of mac and cheese
Pasta (spaghetti, noodles)
Pasta sauce
Rice

HYGIENE & PERSONAL CARE SUPPLIES

Deodorant
Disposable razors
Hand sanitizer (Personal size)
Shampoo or shampoo with conditioner (travel size)
Hand or body lotion (travel size)
Lip balm
Bar Soap (travel size)
Hair combs
Nail clippers

Toilet paper
Tissue packs (personal size)
Toothbrushes (individually wrapped)
Toothpaste (travel size)
Shaving cream/gel (travel size)
Bath towels
Laundry detergent (Pods, only)
Hand warmers

CLOTHING

New underwear for women, men and children
Children's clothing sizes 6 – 18
Men's clothing in all sizes especially jeans and casual wear
Women's clothing in size 1X and larger, especially casual wear
Gently used children's shoes/sneakers (size 13 and under)
Some urgent needs as the colder weather is approaching are for boys and girl's sizes 0-9 months, boy's size 12 months, Women's sizes 2x and up and Men's size small.

PHILOPTOCHOS

**PHILOPTOCHOS BAKE SALE
NOVEMBER 23**

Proceeds Will Be Donated to Help Veterans and Families In Need



Pre-Order Form

Name _____

Phone (____) _____

ITEM	PRICE	#TOTAL	\$TOTAL
Whole Pie Pita (Spanakopita, Prasopita or Tiropita - Approximately 30 pieces)	\$50.00	_____	_____
1/4 Pita (Spanakopita, Prasopita or Tiropita)	\$15.00	_____	_____
Baklava (Greek Dessert Pastry - 8 pieces)	\$20.00	_____	_____
Koulourakia (Greek Butter Cookies - 10 pieces)	\$12.00	_____	_____
Tsoureki (Greek Sweet Easter Bread)	\$17.00	_____	_____
Kourabiedes (Greek Cookies with Sugar - 12 Pieces)	\$15.00	_____	_____
TOTALS		_____	_____

Orders due Wednesday, November 12

Drop off forms **with payment** at Church Office or Coffee Hour
 Cash and/or Checks **Made Out To: Philoptochos**
 Pre-orders to be picked up in the Church Hall the Sunday
 Before Thanksgiving - November 23, 10 am to 1 pm

Please contact Ethel DiGiugno (729-8074 or
 exdcst@rit.edu) with any questions regarding pre-orders

FROM THE DESK OF THE ANNUNCIATION YOUTH DIRECTOR

UPCOMING YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS OCTOBER 2025 – DECEMBER 2025

October 2025

Wednesday, October 15 – Young Adult Meet-Up: Iron Smoke Distillery (Young Adults)

Saturday, October 18 – Blessing of the Animals, 1:00 pm

Sunday, October 26 – Trunk or Treat 2025, 4-5:30 pm

November 2025

Saturday, November 8 – **Disney Movie Night: The Nightmare Before Christmas (All-Age)**

Wednesday, November 12 – Young Adult Meet-Up: TBA (Young Adults)

TBD – Seneca Park ZooMobile (Youth, Teens)

December 2025

Friday, December 12 – **Christmas Movie Night Celebration (All-Ages)**

Wednesday, December 17 – Young Adult Meet-Up: Whiskey & Eggnog Night (Young Adults)

Please visit our website for more information

Keep a look-out for more upcoming events to be announced!



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Dear Parishioners,

September was a great month for Sunday School. We have 62 students registered so far for the year! We are happy to see our program growing and our classes full. This year a curriculum focuses on the early church, sacraments of the church, and orthodox saints. We are excited to explore these topics throughout the school year!

We have a lot of fall events coming up in our Parish. These are events for all youth to participate in (not just Sunday School)!

October:

10/18	Pet Blessing at 1:00 pm- bring your pet and enjoy pizza and a lesson on the importance of animals and the nat-	All ages
10/26	Trunk or Treat from 4:00pm -5:30pm in church parking lot	All ages

November:

11/8	Disney Movie Night: The Nightmare Before Christmas	All ages
11/16	Christmas Play Practice Starts	Sunday School Children must attend if they want to participate

We are always looking for more help in our Sunday School program. You don't have to be a parent or have teaching experience to get involved. We are looking for substitutes for our Sunday School classes and volunteers for different events. If you are interested please contact us!

As always please reach out to us with any questions or comments at recagocny@gmail.com.

With Love in Christ,
Karina and Lauren

GREEK SCHOOL

Dear Parishioners and Greek School Families,

Welcome to the 2025-2026 Year! We are so happy to see our classrooms full and students excited to learn Greek!

We are excited to share that we have 56 students registered this year and joining us to learn and grow their Greek language skills, 10 of those are in Kindergarten. It's wonderful to see our young parishioners joining for the first time and making new friends that might last a lifetime.

Great thanks to our teachers, who come prepared with their learning lessons, teach our children, and create an environment of curiosity, learning and growth.

Our teachers this school year are:

A1 (Kindergarten): Nia Pike & Athanasia Tzogas

A1-A2 (1st Grade): Diana Hristodoulou

A2-A3 (2nd Grade): Danielle Marou

A3 (3rdA Grade): Lisa Tzogas

B1-B2 (3rd-B Grade): Kristi Motra

B2-B3 (4th & 5th Grades): Walter Bubie & Kostas Matakos

Γ1-Γ2 (6th & 7th Grade): Niki Ioannidis & Tina Ioannidis

We have changed our books for this year to the Papaloizos edition, which includes a new online platform for the teachers and kids. It is an engaging online platform that allows students to enhance their Greek language learning by playing games, watching videos, and completing fun activities. The biggest advantage is that it aligns with the curriculum the books include. Teachers will be assigning homework based on their class content.

As a reminder, our school day begins at 9:30 am and ends at 1 pm each Saturday. Please arrive and pick-up your children on time. For safety reasons, we do not allow children to exit the building without an adult.

As always, feel free to contact us with any questions. We look forward to seeing your children's smiley faces each Saturday!

Ευχαριστώ,

Elina Kokorotsis

Greek School Director agreekschool@gmail.com



GREEK SCHOOL

Enjoy some pictures from our first day of Greek School 2025-2026



GOLF OUTING

September 26, 2025



GOLF OUTING

September 26, 2025



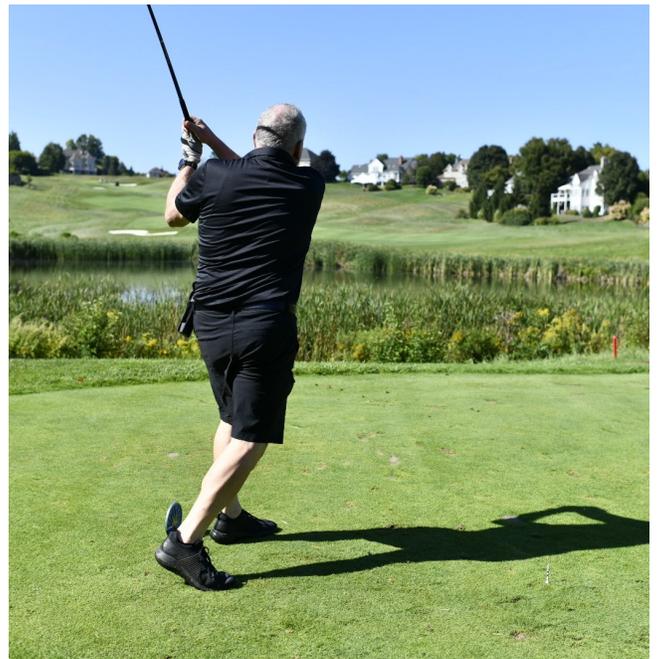
GOLF OUTING

September 26, 2025



GOLF OUTING

September 26, 2025







2025 -2026 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

Atlantic Family Restaurant
Arbor at the Port
Arbor Loft
Bay Front Restaurant
Bill's Long Pond Diner
Blue Ridge Grill
Dog Town
Eastridge Diner Steakhouse
Highland Market Bakery & Deli
Highland Park Diner
Jays Diner
Johnny D's Restaurant
Konstantinou's Restaurant
Log Cabin Restaurant & Catering
Mels Diner
Olympia Restaurant & Lounge
Park Place Restaurant
Parkside Diner and Miniature Golf
Riki Family Restaurant
The Distillery
The Nutcracker Family Restaurant
The Original Steve's Diner - 4 Locations
The Peppermill Restaurant
Town and Country Family Restaurant
Uncle Danny's Family Restaurant
Union Street Coffee House
Voula's Sweets
Yia Yia's Ice Cream Shoppe
Yianni's

PRODUCTS

AG Foodservice
Ajay Glass Co.
Alpha Ironworks
Goodman Glass and Mirror
Konstantinou's Liquor
Rain or Shine Tent Rental
Regional Distributors Inc
Rhino Trunk and Case
Ridge Coin & Jewelry
Rochester Auto Glass
Rochester Meat
Walworth Wine & Spirits

SERVICES

Akropolis Agency
Averdi
Better Relationships Counseling
Delta Advisory Group, Dimitrios Manou, CPA
EMS
First POS
Metropolitan Window Cleaning
Ontario Family Dentistry, Dr. Elias Konstantinou
Philoptochos
ReMax Plus
Roxanne Stavropoulos Realtor
Howard Hanna Real Estate Services
Vay-Schleich & Meeson, Funeral and Cremation
Chapels

ANNUNCIATION FAMILIES

Frank and Patty Cost
Mary Manou
Clayton, George and Dr. Joan Laura Nardone
Nassis Family
Jennefer & Perry Noun, Bill Noun

Have a wonderful fellowship

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 [Hall reservation form](#),¹ 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
- b) 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.

Angelo E. Maggos

Fr Angelo E. Maggos
Priest, Annunciation GOC

Eric Vangellow

Eric Vangellow
President, Annunciation GOC

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

Hall Rental Rates + Info

To book please email 962eastevents@gmail.com or fill out form on 962east.com

NOTE: All booking included access to tables, chairs, and ivory linens

	Church Organization	Church Parishioner	Non Parishioner
Hall Lease Fee	No Charge	\$500	Starting at \$1,600
Hall Lease Deposit	N/A	Full amount required at booking	\$500 Deposit
Hall Balance	N/A	N/A	Due 2 weeks prior to event
Hall Lease Time	Must end by 10:30pm	Must end by 10:30pm	Packages start at 8 hours, all events must end by 10pm
Kitchen Privledges	Full Privledges	Warming + Storage privledges, \$350 fee for full use	None, \$350 fee for full use
Cancellation Policy	Please notify at least 2 weeks in advance if possible	Please notify 2 weeks in advance in order to receive fee back	Please notify 2 weeks in advance in order to receive deposit back
Use Of Caterers	At discretion of organization	At discretion of parishioner, please let hall manager know 2 weeks prior to event	Must be an insured vendor + with proof of insurance provided 2 weeks prior to event
Set/Clean Up	Responsibility of the church organization	Responsibility of the parishioner	Responsible of the leasee or set up can be added for a fee

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 Stefanos are sold out - Lena does have catalogs for Stefanos in the Office if anyone is interested in shopping on-line.

BAPTISMS:

We also have baptismal candles, \$30 for the large plain candle. A decorated candle is \$50.00.

MEMORIALS:

The family which is sponsoring the Memorial is asked to:

1. Contact the Parish Secretary to arrange scheduling the memorial for that day.
2. Coordinate the preparation and delivery of Koliva (if used). The Church Office can provide information on persons who can prepare Koliva. The standard rate for the preparation of Koliva is \$150.
3. Provide Coffee Hour food items.



GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH of the ANNUNCIATION

962 EAST AVENUE
ROCHESTER, NY 14607

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Rochester, N.Y.

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

2025 PARISH COUNCIL

Eric Vangellow, President
Karen Balta, Vice President
Dimitrios Kolokouris, Treasurer
Helen Eisenberg, Secretary
Zachary Graham
Anastasios Kolokouris
Ronald Wiegand
Evangelos Yannas

CLERGY:

Rev. Fr. Angelo Maggos, Presiding Priest

Email: agocny@gmail.com

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS;

Monday and Tuesday - 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Wednesday through Friday - 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Secretaries: Lena L. Livecchi and Leslie Fitzsimmons

Office Email: Office@agocroc.org

Voice: (585) 244-3377