



## Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral Pittsburgh, PA



419 S. Dithridge Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 412-682-3866

### JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

**JANUARY 6, 2026**

The Theophany of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ



At the beginning of His thirtieth year, John the Forerunner, who according to the flesh was about six months older than our Lord and had dwelt in the wilderness from his youth, received a command from God and came to the region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then our Savior Himself came from Galilee to the Jordan and sought baptism from John, though He was the Master and John but a servant. In this moment of divine condescension, wondrous deeds took place. The heavens were opened, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and the voice of the Father was heard from heaven, bearing witness that this is His beloved Son.

Through these events, the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and the great mystery of the Holy Trinity were revealed to the world. The Father speaks from heaven, the Son stands in the waters, and the Holy Spirit descends, manifesting one God in three Persons. For this reason, the Feast is called Theophany, meaning the manifestation of God, His appearance among humankind. From ancient times it has also been known as the Feast of Lights, for Christ, the true Light, has come to enlighten those who sit in darkness.

On this venerable day, the mystery of Christian Baptism is also revealed. Though sinless, Christ enters the waters to sanctify them, renewing all creation and opening the way for our own illumination and rebirth. From this moment begins the saving proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven, and we are called to remember with gratitude our own baptism, by which we were cleansed, enlightened, and united to Christ.

### Our Mission & Vision Statements

The **MISSION** of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral is to Proclaim **the Gospel** of Jesus Christ in a Spirit of Unity and Love for All through Worship, Service, Education, Fellowship and Outreach.

Our **VISION** is to be a Welcoming and Growing Parish, Striving to Live the New Life in Christ according to the Teachings and Traditions of the Greek Orthodox Faith.

**ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL**  
**419 S. Dithridge Street Pittsburgh, PA 15213**  
**412-682-3866 (Office) 412-683-4960 (fax) church@stnickspgh.org**

**Reverend Father Eleftherios Constantine, Dean**  
**fr.ec@stnickspgh.org**

+

**Reverend Deacon Robert Lykos**  
**412-736-2762**  
**robertlykos@gmail.com**

<b>Barbara Manners</b>	Office Manager	412-682-3866
<b>Mary Olszewski</b>	Events Coordinator	412-682-4000
<b>Vincent Nelson</b>	Maintenance	412-537-4073

**2025 Parish Council**

Michelle Marie Kotsagrellos, President (412-680-1416)  
 Victor Bertolina, Vice President (412-860-2315)  
 James Machin, Treasurer (724-413-3607)  
 Robin Day, Assistant Treasurer (917-569-8622)  
 Lee Katsafanas, Secretary (412-215-6089)  
 William Gary, Assistant Secretary (412-889-4795)  
 George Bellios (412-897-5354)  
 Vasili Copetas (412-352-9323)  
 Alexandra Davides (412-956-6325)  
 John Frentzos (412-287-0275)  
 James Hages (412-523-7937)  
 Peter Krelis(412-370-2809)  
 Van Paras (412-527-4248)  
 Constance Paras-Jennings (412-302-8960)  
 Peter Tsudis (412-915-7006)

**Service Schedule**

**All Year Round**

Orthros 8:15 a.m.  
 Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

**Hall Rentals**

If you are interested in renting either our small or large hall, please contact our Events Coordinator, Mary Olszewski, at 412-628-9466 or events@stnickspgh.org for more information and availability.

<b>Metropolis</b>	412-621-5529	www.pittsburgh.goarch.org
<b>Archdiocese</b>	212-570-3500	www.goarch.org

**CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB**

**www.stnickspgh.org**  
**www.stnickscathedralroom.com**

**And look for us on our Facebook page:**

**https://www.facebook.com/Saint-Nicholas-Greek-Orthodox-Cathedral-Pittsburgh-PA**

Watch Sunday services streaming live from St Nicholas Cathedral at www.stnickspgh.org/ and click on "Live Streaming Click Here".

On-Line Giving donations are up and running on our web page **www.stnickspgh.org** by clicking please donate button - or you may access the donation page by using **https://abundant.co/stnickspgh/give**

**ORGANIZATIONS**

<b>Church School</b>	Michelle Kotsagrellos	412-680-1416
<b>Greek School</b>	Maria Stamoolis	412-963-7283
<b>Philoptochos</b>	Maria Bardakos	412-519-8684
<b>GOYA Advisors</b>	Maria Coutris	412-915-7838
	Linda Hages	412-523-7938
<b>Little Angels/HOPE/JOY</b>	Stavroula Doris	STAV828@gmail.com
<b>60 Club</b>	Fran Hanna	412-731-0790
<b>Garden Club</b>	Elaine Andrianos	412-731-4334
<b>Choir</b>	Steve Andrews	412-561-9102
<b>Organist</b>	Brett Wells	
<b>Chanter</b>	Amy Hogg	amyjhogg@gmail.com
<b>Sexton</b>	Jimmy Machin	724-413-4309
<b>Profora</b>	Argy Darakos	412-319-7330
	Jim Hages	412-523-7937
<b>Kolyva</b>	Tulla Velisaris	412-889-1648
<b>St Nicholas Dancers</b>		
<b>GOYA</b>	Kelly Gary	412-741-8567
<b>JOY</b>	Aimee Walker	412-398-6094
<b>Boys Basketball:</b>	Nicholas Hages	412-523-9885
	Alex Lountzis	610-743-0903
<b>Girls Basketball:</b>	Nikki Lykos	412-897-8208
	Lenna Cominos	412-370-8181

**PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**Cemetery** - Constance Paras-Jennings  
**Community Center & Catering** - George Bellios  
**Facilities** – Victor Bertolina  
**Finance** - James Machin  
**Food Festival** - John Frentzos  
**Operational & Administration** - John Frentzos  
**Parish Sustainability** - Vasili Copetas  
**Religious & Greek Education/Greek Affiliations** - Lee Katsafanas  
**Social** - William Gary  
**Stewardship, Outreach & Evangelism** - Alexandra Davides  
**Technology & Communications** - Robin Day  
**Youth & Young Adult Ministries** - Lee Katsafanas  
**AD HOC Committees**  
**Beautification** Deacon Robert Lykos  
**Bylaws/Legal**

## FATHER'S MESSAGE

January 2026

*When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water,  
and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove...  
and a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'*  
(Matthew 3:16–17)

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The new year begins for us not simply with new calendars and new goals, but once again with the blessing of the waters at the feast of Theophany. During this feast, the Feast of Lights, we stand before one of the most common elements in the world—water, which covers so much of the earth—and the Church proclaims something astonishing: in Christ, even the ordinary is filled with holiness.

Water is everywhere, and that is precisely why its blessing matters. The Lord does not save us in some theoretical or abstract way, but in the very place in which we dwell: within creation, within time, and within the daily rhythms of our homes and lives.

Theophany is also a feast of beginnings. It marks the start of Christ's public ministry, when He steps forward to reveal His Kingdom and to gather the world to Himself. Yet it is not merely the beginning of something Christ does, it is the unveiling of who Christ is: the Son of God. For this reason the feast is called "Theophany"—the manifestation of God—because at the Jordan we are granted a radiant revelation of the Holy Trinity: the Father's voice bearing witness from heaven, the Son in the waters, the Spirit descending in the form of a dove. The Jordan becomes, as it were, a living symbol of the faith we confess: one God in three Persons, drawing near to humanity in love.

And the Church teaches us to see even more deeply. The Baptism of Christ is not a moment of mere symbolism, as though Jesus simply "sets an example." In our Tradition, Theophany stands alongside Christmas and Pascha as a great feast, with an intentional "rhyming" of sorts in our hymnography and iconography. Our services boldly proclaim that the mysteries of Christ's life are one saving work: His Nativity already points to the Cross; His Baptism already shines with the light of Pascha. Even the structure of the pre-feasts and the Royal Hours echoes Holy Week, teaching us that the Jordan cannot be separated from Golgotha and the Empty Tomb.

## *FATHER'S MESSAGE, Con't*

One image especially helps us grasp this: Christ enters the waters as the One who goes down in order to lift us up. He steps into the river not because He needs cleansing, but because we do. He descends into the depths where we are drowning, beneath the waves of fear, sin, chaos, and death...and He meets us there. His salvific work goes even beneath the surface: Christ comes under the waves to rescue those of us who are sinking, and He makes the waters themselves a place of deliverance.

This is where our Cathedral's theme for the year speaks with special force: "Rise Up and Build." We rise up first by rising from the waters. How? By constantly remembering our Baptism, continually renewing our repentance, and drinking again from the cup of salvation that Christ offers to us. And then we build: not only buildings and programs, but a life in Christ, a household of prayer, a community of mercy, a fellowship of unity, and a place that becomes a home for those struggling to keep their heads above water. Practically, this might mean offering a warm meal to a stranger, reconciling with someone from whom we have been estranged, or simply showing up faithfully week after week to pray together. These small acts become the foundation of something enduring, making our Cathedral walls not merely a building, but a living shelter.

If Christ has entered the waters for the life of the world, then our calling is to join Him there: to extend His help, His peace, His patience, His welcome, and especially His love, so that others may breathe again.

May the light of Theophany illumine our hearts, the blessing of the waters sanctify our homes, and the revelation of the Holy Trinity strengthen us in faith. And may God grant us grace, in this new year, to rise up and build together—until our Cathedral shines ever more clearly as a beacon of the living Christ.

Prayerfully yours,



† Fr. Eleftherios Constantine

## *SACRAMENTAL LIFE*

### **FUNERAL**

OUR CONDOLENCES to the family of *Argiro "Argie" Xilas* who fell asleep in the Lord on Tuesday, December 16, 2025. Her funeral was on Monday, December 22, 2025, at St. Nicholas Cathedral. May her memory be eternal.

*PARISH COUNCIL*

I have been reflecting on the important work St. Nicholas Cathedral has done this year. I am proud of this parish, of each of you, and of the direction the parish is heading. Thank you for everything you have done to contribute to this success, because we did it together.

Here is a brief recap of 2025:

The GOYAns had a successful athletic season. The Little Angels, HOPE & JOY had several fun and philanthropic events. Greek School continued to be the best in the area. And where would we be without Philoptochos' philanthropic spirit helping those in need (including the Weekend of Service Project for Birthday Smiles).

We had a beautiful Great Lent (with Wednesday Potluck Dinners & Speakers) and Holy Week. Marcie McGuire & Art Velisaris were honored at the Metropolis of Pittsburgh's St. Photios Awards Banquet. We had a very successful Food Festival. Hosted the National St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival and 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Synaxis of Orthodox Women Byzantine Cantors. Psalteria Amy Hogg and the Byzantine Youth Choir continue to use their angelic voices chanting. Father restarted a Bible Study (Gospel of Luke) and is the Spiritual Advisor for the Pitt/CMU OCF (where they meet weekly at St. Nicks). YAL plays basketball (weekly) and volleyball (bi-weekly) in the gym. The parish planned a Thank You Luncheon/2<sup>nd</sup> Year Anniversary for Fr. Eleftherios Constantine as our parish priest, another College Welcome (still the talk of the Metropolis), Parish Picnic, Ministry Sunday event, Inaugural Pancakes for a Purpose, 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual College Friendsgiving Dinner, and St. Nicholas Nameday Festivities (Vespers, Liturgy, and Bazaar).

Wishing you a Happy & Healthy 2026!

Yours in Christ,

*Michelle Marie Kotsagrelou*

P.S. As we look to 2026 there is more ahead for us. However, I know that this parish has the people and commitment to face them. Thank you for everything you are doing to keep St. Nicholas moving forward. It has been a pleasure serving on Parish Council the past 18 years. I have learned a lot about myself and the workings of the church, as a whole. And I thank you.

**Vasilopita Cutting**  
Sunday, January 4, 2026

**Theophany**  
Monday & Tuesday, January 5 & 6, 2026  
(See calendar for details)

**Happy 250 USA/Philoptochos Membership Drive/Oratorical Sunday**  
Sunday, January 25, 2026  
(See attached flyers)

**Homewood Cemetery**  
St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral Greek Section

There are currently 23 graves available for purchase.

Cost per grave:  
\$2,800.00 per grave for a member of St. Nicholas.  
\$3,300.00 per grave for non-member.



## STEWARDSHIP

### STEWARDSHIP AND OUTREACH 2025

Saint Nicholas ended the year with positive Stewardship results. The Stewardship theme for 2025 was ***Give Your Own***. Our parishioners heeded the call and more. Your giving of one's treasures as thanks to God, enabled our parish to keep our parish ministries running: Sunday School, Little Angels, Hope & Joy, GOYA, Catechism, Bible Study, Greek School, YAL Basketball & Volleyball, Sixty Club, having a base for our Philoptochos chapter and so much more.

This year, our parish establish a new ministry: ***Pancakes for a Purpose***, a free-will offering/ fundraiser. A Pancake Breakfast was served to the parish with the focus highlighting an organization which offers help for those with specific needs. *No costs were incurred by the parish.* Our first spotlight was on the Lending Hearts organization, run by Vasso Paliouras. Nearly \$4000 was raised in one hour! For a first-time event, the generosity of our parish shined, and our parish looks forward to hosting another Pancakes for A Purpose next fall.

For those who have not completed your 2025 Stewardship, please do so by completing it by making a payment online, or by check, given in person or mailed into the office.

Our beloved church would not exist were it not for the generosity of our St. Nicholas stewards. St. Nicholas thanks you and may God shine his grace over you.

*2025 STEWARDSHIP*

"Your Own from Your Own"

**We offer back to God  
that which He has given us.**



<b>2025 STEWARDSHIP</b>		<b>12/30/2025</b>
<b>Total Stewards</b>		<b>304</b>
<b>Total Amount Pledged</b>		<b>\$168,223.00</b>
<b>Average Pledge</b>		<b>\$ 966.80</b>
<b>% Parish Participation to Date</b>		<b>101%</b>
<b>2025 Stewards (GOAL)</b>		<b>300</b>
<b>% of Total Budget to Date</b>		<b>65%</b>
<b>2025 Budget (GOAL)</b>		<b>\$ 255,000.00</b>
<b>Total Giving to Date</b>		<b>\$270,564.67</b>
<b>As of:</b>		<b>12/17/2025</b>
<b>Income: Envelopes &amp; Pledges, Basket Collection &amp; Food Festival</b>	<b>\$648,113.00</b>	
<b>Expenses: Salaries, Utilities, Maintenance, Commitments, etc.</b>	<b>\$673,920.00</b>	
	<b>(\$ 25,807.00)</b>	

Many of you have been contributing, but  
**PLEASE** complete a Stewardship Card.

Our website may be used to fill out a Stewardship Card and make a payment  
<https://www.stnickspgh.org>

## 2025 STEWARDSHIP



Fr. Eleftherios & Presvytera Elizabeth Constantine	Mrs. Alexandra Copetas	Mrs. Aphrodite Halleran
Dn. & Mrs. Robert Lykos	Mr. Charles G. Copetas	Mrs. Christina Hammerling
Mr. Alexander Abrams	Mr. George Copetas	Dr. & Mrs. Dean Hanna
Mrs. Michelle Ackerman	Mrs. Helen G. Copetas	Mrs. Frances Hanna
Mr. William J. Adams and Ms. Constance Petros	Mrs. Helen M. Copetas	Dr. John Haretos
James & Electra Agras	Mrs. Maria Copetas	Mr. Theodore Haretos
Mr. & Mrs. Rudy Agras	Mr. & Mrs. Dino G. Copetas	Mrs. Dena Haritos Tsamitis
Dr. & Mrs. Konstantinos Alfaras-Melainis	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Copetas	Mrs. Rania Harris
Mr. Emanuel Amorgianos	Mrs. Theodora Copetas	Ms. Maria Hnarakis
Ms. Anna Andrews	Mr. Vasili Copetas	Mr. & Mrs. Charles Hogg
Mr. Steven Andrews	Mrs. Vasso Copetas	Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Janis
Mrs. Elaine Andrianos	Mr. & Mrs. William Copetas	Mr. & Mrs. Nick Kakavis
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Mrs. Jeanne Antonuccio	Mr. & Mrs. George Darakos	Mr. Peter Kamaras
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Mr. Arthur Baker	Mr. & Mrs. Robin Day	Mr. & Mrs. Foster Kartsotis
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Balouris	Mr. & Mrs. Petros Delivorias	Dr. & Mrs. Yianni Karvounides
Mr. & Mrs. Simon Barber	Mr. Anthony DeMatteo	Mr. Konstantinos Kasamias
Ms. Maria Bardakos	Mrs. Christine DeMatteo	Mrs. Georgia Katsafanas
Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Baughman	Ms. Victoria Dionisos	Mr. Lee Katsafanas
Mr. & Mrs. Eric Baughman	Mr. Arthur J. Dordas	Mr. Andron Kavouras
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Ms. Andrea Beldecos	Mr. & Mrs. Sotirios Doris	Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Kefalos
Dr. George Bellios	Mr. & Mrs. Randy Eberhardt	Mr. & Mrs. Steven Kefalos
Ms. Sophia Bender	Steve & Lydia Economou	Ms. Elaine Keim
Mr. Christopher Bennett	Mr. John Edgos	Mrs. Sandra Kemrer
Mrs. Alexandra Bergstrom	Dr. & Mrs. Demetrius Ellis	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Kleissas
Mr. & Mrs. Victor Bertolina	Mrs. Elaine Ellis	Ms. Nicole Klidas
Ms. Pamela Bertos	Mr. & Mrs. James Elsen	Mr. Peter Kolios
Mrs. Rebecca Bertos	Ms. Carol Elsesser	Mr. Konstantinos Koromvokis
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Mrs. Elaine Bolanis	Mr. George Epitropoulos	Ms. Michelle Marie Kotsagrelou
Mr. & Mrs. Panagiotis Bouzos	Dr. & Mrs. Mike Epitropoulos	Mr. Chris T, Kouklis
Mrs. Mary Brahos	Mr. & Mrs. George Faines	Ms. Christine Krelis <sup>†</sup>
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Mr. Phillip Contacos	Mrs. Jamie Gori	Mr. & Mrs. Louis Langas
Mrs. Eleni Contis	Mrs. Alexandra Gregory	Ms. Constantina Lardas
Ms. Jamie Contis	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Gregory	Mr. & Mrs. Emmanuel Lardas
Mr. & Mrs. George Contis	Dr. & Mrs. Constantinos Hadjipanayis	Mrs. Kalliope Lardas
Mr. & Mrs. Nick Contis	Mr. & Mrs. James Hages	Mr. & Mrs. Kleanthis Lardas
Mrs. Sandra Contis	Mr. Nicholas G. Hages	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas D. Lardas
		Ms. Shqipe Latifi

## 2025 STEWARDSHIP, Continued



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Mr. & Mrs. John C. Leventis  
Mr. Peter Leventis  
Mr. Dean Leventopoulos  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Leventopoulos  
Mr. Panagiotis Lidos  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Lipecky  
Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Lountzis  
Mrs. Janet Lykos  
Mr. & Mrs. James D. Machin  
Mr. & Mrs. James L. Machin  
Dr. Nicoletta Machin & Dr. Suman Yadam  
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Mrs. Kay Mandalakas  
Mr. Christopher Mandros  
Mrs. Eugenia Manganas  
Mrs. Barbara Manners  
Ms. Electra Markopoulos  
Mr. Gregory Markopoulos  
Mr. & Mrs. Michail Marthas  
Mrs. Helen Mastro  
Mr. & Mrs. Costa Mastro  
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Mr. & Mrs. George Mellis  
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Mr. & Mrs. Eric Mitchell  
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Mr. & Mrs. Dean Pantages  
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Dr. George Pappas  
Mr. John C. Paras  
Mrs. Katherine Paras  
Mr. Van Paras  
Mrs. Constance Paras -Jennings  
Ms. Maria Patterson  
Mrs. Roy Parlour  
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Paul  
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Persinger  
Mr. & Mrs. George J. Peters  
Mrs. Stamatia Peters  
Mr. & Mrs. John Peterson  
Mr. & Mrs. John Petrolias  
Mrs. Amal Philopes  
Ms. Eleni Pikounis  
Mr. George Pilafas  
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Mr. William Sfamenos  
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Mr. Corran Smith  
Mrs. Gloriann Snyder-Aneja  
Mr. George Sockos<sup>+</sup>  
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Mr. & Mrs. Constantine Stamoolis  
Mrs. Toula Stathopoulos  
Dr. & Mrs. Samuel Stepanow  
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Mrs. Stella Stratigos  
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Mr. & Mrs. Pat L. Strauch  
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Mr. Christopher Thompson  
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Mr. Athanasios Tsourekis  
Mr. Sotirios Tsourekis  
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Mrs. Joanna Tzortzis  
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Mr. John Vitsas  
Mr. Theodoros Vlahoyiannis  
Ms. Jane Voros  
Mr. Sarantos Vrettacos  
Mrs. Helen Waskoskie  
Mr. Brett David Wells  
Mrs. Debra Wiesen  
Mr. & Mrs. David Williard  
Ms. Franceska Xhakaj  
Mr. Anthony Xyftis  
Dr. & Mrs. Leo Yannopoulos  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Yannopoulos  
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Zaras  
Dr. Katerina Zavaras  
Mr. & Mrs. Demetri Zervoudis  
Mr. Michael Zikos  
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Zotis



*2026 STEWARDSHIP*



Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral  
Pittsburgh, PA

**2026 ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL  
CONFIDENTIAL FAMILY STEWARDSHIP CARD**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*(Alternate address if applicable)* \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

***PLEASE provide pertinent information on reverse side about your family members-THANK YOU!***

**TREASURE-** Total Gift for 2026 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution Frequency:  Weekly  Monthly  Quarterly  Annually

Please send Stewardship Envelopes  I don't use envelopes Statement delivery:  US Mail  Email



Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral  
Pittsburgh, PA

**TALENT-** Please check the items below that you or a family member has some expertise or interest. Place initials of the specific family member after each item checked.

- |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Language School _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Church School _____     | <input type="checkbox"/> Office/Newsletter _____          | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Choir _____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visitation of Elderly _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach Ministry _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Website Mgmt. _____              | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking/Festival _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry _____        | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening _____         | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction/Mechanical/Plumbing |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Philoptochos _____          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____             |   |   |

***TIME-*** St. Nicholas Cathedral is grateful for our many volunteers. *Thank you!*

Name & relationship i.e., self, spouse, child, etc.    Date of birth    Marital Status    Occupation OR school/grade

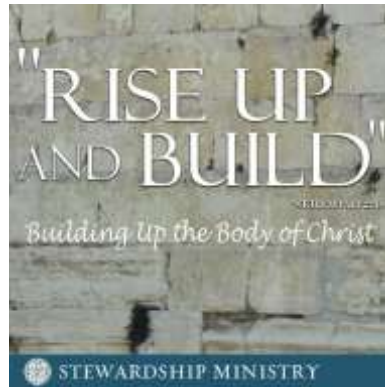
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## 2026 STEWARDSHIP



Dn. & Mrs. Robert Lykos  
Mr. Emanuel Amorgianos  
Mr. Steven Andrews  
Mrs. Elaine Andrianos  
Mr. & Mrs. Spilios Argiropoulos  
Ms. Maria Bardakos  
Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Baughman  
Mrs. Alexandra Bergstrom  
Mr. & Mrs. Victor Bertolina  
Mrs. Elena G. Cerri  
Mrs. Dee Chronis  
Mr. & Mrs. Spencer Cominos  
Ms. Jamie Contis  
Mrs. Sandra Contis  
Mr. & Mrs. Taki Darakos  
Mrs. Alexandra Davides  
Mr. & Mrs. Petros Delivorias  
Mrs. Elaine Ellis  
Dr. & Mrs. Demetrius Ellis  
Mrs. Alice Gary  
Drs. Athan & Lydia Georgiades  
Mrs. Frances Hanna  
Ms. Maria Hnarakis  
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Janis  
Dr. Diane Karnavas & Mr. Bart Bodkin  
Mr. & Mrs. Foster Kartsotis  
Mr. Lee Katsafanas  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Kleissas  
Mrs. Demetra Kontoulis  
Michelle Marie Kotsagrelos  
Mr. & Mrs. John C. Leventis  
Mr. & Mrs. David Levine  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Mastro  
Mr. & Mrs. Eric Mitchell  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Mitrakos  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Menniti  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McGuire  
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Pantages  
Mrs. Constance Paras -Jennings  
Mr. William Sfamenos  
Mrs. Stella Stratigos  
Mr. & Mrs.. Stephen Thomas  
Mr. Peter Tsoukalas  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Tsudis  
Mr. & Mrs. David Williard

*St. Nicholas Vespers, 12.5.25*



*St. Nicholas Feastday, 12.6.25*



*St. Nicholas Bazaar 12.7.25*



**Santa & Parish Council**



**Santa & Philoptochos Board**

*St. Nicholas Bazaar, Con't. 12.7.25*



*St. Nicholas Bazaar, Con't. 12.7.25*



*Neighborhood Resilience Project Christmas Angels*



## *St. Nicholas Church School*



Now that the New Year has begun, it is time to say thank you for the jobs well done in 2025 and to look forward to the rest of the Church School year!

Church School, organized by Sophia Bender, had a very successful Bake Sale and sponsored a Balloon artist at the **St. Nicholas Day Bazaar**. Thank you, Sophia, for your efforts!

The Church School children presented their **Christmas Pageant** under the direction of Joanna Darakos on Sunday, December 21, 2025. It was a beautiful program enjoyed by the whole congregation. Thank you, Joanna!

Many hats, mittens/gloves, scarves, socks, and coats will be delivered to **Neighborhood Resilience Project** for their **Project Bundle-up**. Thanks to all who contributed to this worthwhile cause.

The St. Nicholas Church School teachers and students want to wish our GOYANs (and Church School students) Good Luck at their upcoming **GOYA Basketball Tournaments** at Annunciation Cathedral (Columbus, OH) on 01/16-18/26, and at Sts. Constantine & Helen (Cleveland Heights, OH) on 01/30-02/01/26.

The **Metropolis of Pittsburgh's Oratorical Education Sunday** will be Sunday, January 25, 2026. Previous St. Nicholas Cathedral Oratorical Festival participants will pass a special tray to benefit the Metropolis of Pittsburgh's Peter Clyde Papadakos Memorial Oratorical Scholarship Fund. Proceeds from the tray will be used to award cash scholarships to the top two (2) finalists in each Division (Junior and Senior) at the Metropolis Festival Saturday, May 2, 2026, at the New Metropolis Center (Washington, PA).

I appreciate the support from all of you and thanks for sharing your children with us every Sunday!

Yours in Christ,  
*Miss Michelle*

# ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVAL EDUCATION SUNDAY

Sunday  
January 25, 2026



*Church School Christmas Pageant, 12.21.25*



*GREEK SCHOOL*

The last day of the 2025 classes ended on a joyous note! After shortened classes the children, their families, and teachers enjoyed the Christmas season together with children singing Christmas Carols in Greek. Then the children played various carols on different musical instruments such as flute, harp, keyboard, and violin, which was followed by everyone enjoying each other's company in a fun-filled Christmas Party. All the children received a touching Christmas gift made by Mrs. Maria Menas.

The **start of classes for 2026** will be on **Saturday, January 3**, and will include singing of the New Year's Carol of St. Basil in Greek and cutting of the Vasilopita to see who will get the "flouri." January will be packed with learning about the Three Hierarchs, making projects to go on display on our Annual Celebration of the **Three Hierarchs/Greek Letters Day which will be on Sunday, February 1**. This Annual celebration consists of an Artoclasia Blessing for the health of our school and community, a Trisagion Service for those who were instrumental in starting our school or key figures in its continuance. A presentation recognizing those students who passed International Proficiency Exams will be done, and a short presentation of the children and alumni chanting "Fos Iaron" in memory of Archon Peter Clyde Papadakos, who promoted Greek Education and Chanting across our Metropolis. Downstairs during coffee hour we will hold our Annual Bake Sale and Children's Exhibit. Keep the date, Sunday, February 1, and come and support St. Nicholas Greek School.

We wish to everyone a Blessed 2026!



*GOYA NEWS*

This December, Goya held the annual St. Nicholas Bazaar. Thank you to everyone who came. We hope everyone had a great time! We are looking forward to our first two basketball tournaments in January, one in Columbus, Ohio the other in Cleveland and also our winter Christmas party in Boyce Park as well.



*GOYA, Con't*

**Volunteers Needed - Metropolis GOYA Basketball Tournament  
Hosted by St. Nicholas Cathedral,  
February 13-15, 2026**

Our St. Nicholas GOYA is looking forward to hosting the upcoming Metropolis Basketball Tournament the weekend of February 13-15, 2026. This is the last basketball tournament of the season and all the graduating seniors from all the participating parishes will be recognized on Sunday after Liturgy. We have planned a social for Friday evening after registration, a Dinner/Dance on Saturday evening and Sunday Brunch along with all the basketball games played all day Saturday. The championship games will be played Sunday after Liturgy.

We provide a hospitality room with baked good and pastries for the parents, chaperones, coaches, and advisors. Many volunteers are needed over the weekend including score keepers, clock keepers, medical support at the courts, decorators, servers, set up and clean up for all the meals. If you would like to donate your time during the weekend or would like to just bake an item for our hospitality room, please contact Linda Hages at 412-523-7938 or Maria Coutris at 412-915-7838.

In order to help with the expenses of the tournament, there will be a Tournament Program Book. Please consider supporting our tournament by placing an advertisement or line sponsor. Please look for more information and the submission form in this Newsletter.

Thank you to all of our parishioners for your continued support of our youth programs.

## *GOYA NEWS, Con't*



St. Nicholas GOYA

### **AD BOOK**

Dear Parishioners

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral's youth group (GOYA) is thrilled to be hosting a Metropolis Basketball Tournament at our church this year. We are hoping that you will consider placing an advertisement in our tournament book, to help support our youth. Given the escalating costs of hosting these tournaments, the Tournament Program Book contributes greatly to the essential revenue needed as part of our overall cost raising efforts.

The tournament will be held the weekend of February 13-15, 2026 and we are expecting over 500 people from across PA and OH to attend! The program book serves as a great way to advertise local businesses and recognize our GOYANS. Attached you will find our submission form, which has all of the information you need to place the ad. The deadline for advertisements is February 4th.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at (412)915-7838.

Thank you for your consideration and support!

Sincerely,

*Maria Coutris*

Maria Coutris

# GOYA NEWS, Con't

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral  
Pittsburgh, PA

GOYA METROPOLIS BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT  
FEBRUARY 13-15, 2026

## TOURNAMENT PROGRAM BOOK SUBMISSION FORM

---

Please support our youth by placing an ad in the tournament book. Advertisements may include business as well as personal wishes to the groups and/or individual players.

Please check your choice below:

- Centerfold \$250.00
- Full Page (5 ½ X 8 ½) \$150.00
- Half Page (5 ½ X 4 1/4) \$100.00
- 1/4 Page (2 ¾ X 4 1/4) \$60.00
- Line sponsor (maximum of 60 characters/line) \$30.00

- One photo may be included in FULL or HALF page ads
- Additional photos are \$5.00 each
- Submission MUST BE .jpg format
- All ads are BLACK & WHITE, no color options

Ads may be submitted in hard copy or through email by FEBRUARY 4th to:

Maria Coutris  
mvcoutris@gmail.com

8551 Ivy Hill Drive #9  
Poland, OH 44514

Please make checks payable to:  
St. Nicholas GOYA (mail to address above)  
If you have questions, please call: (412)915-7838

Thank you for your continued support!



**KEEP KIDS SAFE**

**ARCHDIOCESE POLICIES**



# Are You a Youth Worker?

All Clergy, Altar Helpers, Sunday School or Greek School Teachers, Folk Dance Instructors, Oratorical Festival Chairs, GOYA Advisors, Basketball Coaches, Chaperones, JOY Advisors, etc! Parish Council Members too.

If so, you must register or log-in to your account each year.

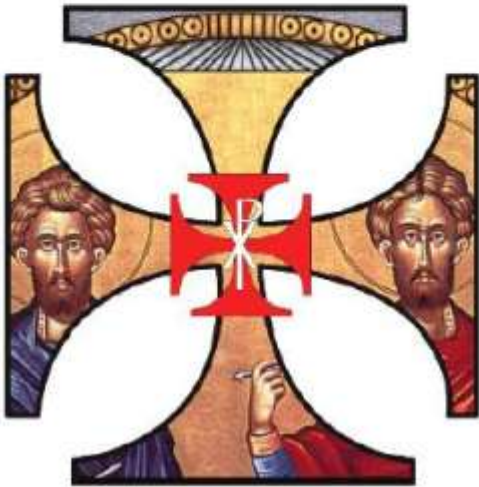
**[youthsafetyplatform.goarch.org](https://youthsafetyplatform.goarch.org)**

Note: PA Law has additional requirements. For more info, search Keep Kids Safe PA on the internet.

Questions? Email: [youthsafety@goarch.org](mailto:youthsafety@goarch.org)



**JOIN US**



**Saint Nicholas Cathedral  
Ladies Philoptochos Society**

**2026  
MEMBERSHIP  
CAMPAIGN**

*"You are an 'army of agape'  
that conquers pain and anguish  
through generosity and  
kindness."*

*— Archbishop Elpidophoros of America*



**2026 Membership**

You define what kind of member you will be. We are always looking for new skills, experiences and personalities, and we welcome you with open arms to join us in making a difference.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my 2026 membership donation in the amount of:

( ) \$50      ( ) \$\_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to St. Nicholas Philoptochos*

**RETURN FORM AND PAYMENT TO:**  
St. Nicholas Philoptochos  
419 S. Dithridge Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

We are so excited with the coming activities in 2026.

Our All American birthday celebration on Sunday, January 25th, to commemorate 250 years of our wonderful USA. A menu with American fare, national anthem, flags! GOYA coffee station and philoptohos membership drive. All are invited to participate and of course to join in the birthday cake cutting. Don't miss this special day.

We are also pleased to announce, by special requests, a trip to New York on August 18, 19,20 2026. This will include a Broadway show and dining experience. A flyer will be forthcoming.

Please also remember to pay your \$15 membership, this is the only way we have any way we have any revenue for expenses.



## **A Look Ahead...**

### **2026 Food Festival Preparations**

In the blink of an eye... it's here.  
We're starting up again with our 2026 food festival preparations.  
All help is appreciated. See your smiling faces soon!

**Spanakopita**, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, January 7, 8 and 9: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm  
**Souzoukakia**, Friday and Saturday, January 16 and 17: 9:00 - 4:00.  
**Pastitsio**, Tuesday and Wednesday, January 27 and 28: 9:00 - 4:00.

#### **TENTATIVE February schedule:**

**Koulourakia**, Tuesday, February 3

**Pasta Flora**, Tuesday, February 10

**Finikia**, Saturday, February 28

#### **TENTATIVE March schedule:**

**Galatoubourekio**, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, March 9, 10 and 11

**Tiropita**, Friday and Saturday, March 27 and 28

#### **TENTATIVE April Schedule**

**Kourambiethes**, Saturday, April 18

**Diples**, Monday, April 27

**Karidopita**, TBD

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM  
BOOKSTORE

# CHRIST IS BORN GLORIFY HIM!

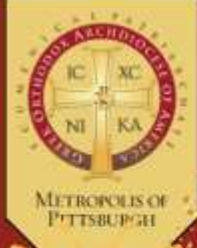

The St. John Chrysostom bookstore would like to wish you and your family all of the blessings of the newborn king and a happy and healthy New Year!

## SAINT BASIL THE GREAT JANUARY 1, 2026



VOLUME 9 NO. 9 ISSUE 84 JANUARY 2026

**A Good Word - Λόγον Αγαθόν**  
 NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX  
 METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH


**New Metropolis Center Progress - Dec 2025**



**48th BIENNIAL  
 CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS**  
**SAVE THE DATE! - JUNE 30-JULY 2, 2026**  
 Join us in Cleveland, OH at the Huntington Convention Center

Mark your calendar for...

**Oratorical  
 Education Sunday!**



**January 25, 2026**

*Sunday School programs are encouraged to utilize their class time to review and dive deeper into the topics offered. Students can also begin working on drafts and sharing past experiences!*



METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH CAMP

**SAVE THE DATE**

Staff applications for GOYA Spring Retreat & Summer Camp 2026 are opening soon!



**APPLY BY MARCH 1ST AT 11:59 PM!**

<b>Summer Camp</b> Staff applications open: February 1 to March 1	<b>GOYA Spring Retreat</b> Staff applications open: February 15 to March 1
---	--

[y2am.pittsburgh.goarch.org/campstaff](http://y2am.pittsburgh.goarch.org/campstaff)





**Spotlight on 2025 Metropolis of Pittsburgh  
St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival Winners**

**Senior Division Essay Topic 4**

*"While every church building is different, there are specific guidelines and practices that describe how and why they are built the way they are. Research them, and then explain their theological significance.?"*

**Senior Division Essay Winner - Anthony Asmis, St Paul Greek Orthodox Church, North Royalton, Ohio**

The Orthodox Christian church is deeply rooted in architecture, theology and tradition, with every element of its design reflecting key aspects of Orthodox belief and worship. The structure and layout of an Orthodox church are not merely aesthetic but serve to guide worshippers into a deeper spiritual experience. The basic layout consists of a three-part structure of the Narthex, the Nave and the Sanctuary. Most Orthodox churches follow this three-part design because each element has both biblical and theological principles but are also rooted in more traditional design styles.

The Narthex is the first of the three main parts of the Church. The Narthex represents the fallen world and the place of preparation before entering the presence of God. Its theological significance is for it to be a place of preparation, and repentance. Before Christians enter the church, the Narthex serves as a place to get ready to partake in God's teachings. That means Christians can clear their minds of all negative thoughts before asking forgiveness from God. It also serves as a practical part of the church for the lighting of candles. Candles in the Orthodox Church, serve as prayers towards God. One other thing that can be found here is the Baptismal Font. It is placed in the Narthex to symbolize the entrance into the Church through baptism.

After preparing in the Narthex, the Nave is the next part of the Church. The Nave, which is the main worship area, represents the kingdom of God on Earth. This is where the faithful gather to participate in the Church service. The Nave typically consists of a seating area for the people, iconography, and the central dome. The central dome depicts the image of Christ as the center of activity. He is put there to represent the ruler of all. The shape of the dome is also important, because it represents the union of Heaven and Earth as one. This reinforces the idea that the Church is a place to be closer to God. In more traditional Orthodox churches, Byzantine churches for example, the layout of all the icons and architectural features such as pillars, point your eyes upward, symbolizing the ascension of our souls into Heaven. On the walls of the Nave, one can find a myriad of iconography. These icons depict Christ, the Theotokos, various Saints, and important biblical events. The icons are not decoration but serve as theological teachings and things to be venerated.

The last of the three parts of the Church is called the Sanctuary and is the location of the altar. The altar is where all the services take place, and Divine Liturgy is performed. The altar represents Heaven, where God's presence is strong, and sacrifices takes place. Outside of the altar, stands the Iconostasis. This is the wall of icons that separates the Nave from the Sanctuary. It serves as a representation of the separation between Heaven and Earth, and its icons are a window into Heaven. The royal doors in the center symbolize Christ as the mediator between God and man. Orthodox churches are always built to face East. Facing East symbolizes how Christ's second coming will be the rising sun of righteousness.

Orthodox church architecture is not merely functional but profoundly theological. Every aspect of its design from the dome to the Iconostasis, reinforces Orthodox beliefs about salvation, the Incarnation, and the Kingdom of God. Worship in an Orthodox church is meant to be a transformative experience, immersing the faithful in the reality of God's presence.

**Please consider donating to the Metropolis Scholarship Fund**



**PLEASE SUPPORT OUR METROPOLIS MINISTRIES!**

It costs approximately \$1,000 per day to operate our Metropolis - including Metropolitan Savas's Archpastoral visitations, preparations for summer camp and GOYA retreats, our vital registry, and more.

Please consider sponsoring a day in the life of the Metropolis.

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, 5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232

412-621-5529 (Main) 412-465-0460 (Camp) 412-621-8543 (Youth)

pittsburgh.goarch.org info@pittsburgh.goarch.org



# JANUARY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> <b>NEW YEAR'S DAY,</b> <b>CIRCUMCISION</b> <b>OF OUR LORD,</b> <b>FEAST</b> <b>OF</b> <b>BASIL THE GREAT</b> Orthros 9:00 a.m., Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10:00 a.m.  <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> <b>Sunday</b> <b>before</b> <b>Theophany</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.  <b>Cutting of Vasilopita</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Royal Hours</b> <b>of</b> <b>Theophany</b> 10:00 a.m.  <b>Vesperal</b> <b>Divine Liturgy</b> <b>of</b> <b>St. Basil the Great</b> <b>(followed by the</b> <b>Great Agiasmos)</b> 6:30 p.m.	<b>6</b> <b>THEOPHANY</b> <b>Festal Orthros</b> 8:30 a.m. <b>Divine Liturgy</b> 9:30 a.m. <b>(followed by the</b> <b>Great Agiasmos)</b>  <b>Adult Greek Classes</b> 6:30 p.m.	<b>7</b> <b>Synaxis</b> <b>of</b> <b>John</b> <b>the Holy Glorious</b> <b>Prophet, Baptist, &amp;</b> <b>Forerunner</b> Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.  <b>YAL Volleyball</b> 7:00 p.m.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <b>GOYA</b> <b>Holiday Party</b> at Boyce Park	<b>10</b> <b>Greek School</b> 10:00 a.m.
<b>11</b> <b>Sunday</b> <b>after</b> <b>Theophany</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.	<b>12</b> <b>Bible Study</b> 5:30 p.m.  <b>YAL Basketball</b> 7:00 p.m.	<b>13</b> <b>Adult Greek Classes</b> 6:30 p.m.	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> <b>Pitt/CMU OCF</b> 7:30 p.m.	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>Greek School</b> 10:00 a.m.
GOYA BBall Tourney in Columbus, OH						
<b>18</b> <b>12th Sunday</b> <b>of</b> <b>Luke</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.	<b>19</b> <b>Bible Study</b> 5:30 p.m.  <b>Parish Council</b> <b>Meeting</b> 6:30 p.m.  <b>YAL Basketball</b> 7:00 p.m.	<b>20</b> <b>Adult Greek Classes</b> 6:30 p.m.	<b>21</b> <b>St. Maximos</b> <b>the Confessor</b> Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.  <b>YAL Volleyball</b> 7:00 p.m.	<b>22</b> <b>Pitt/CMU OCF</b> 7:30 p.m.	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Greek School</b> 10:00 a.m.
<b>25</b> <b>15th Sunday</b> <b>of</b> <b>Luke</b> Orthros 8:15 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.  <b>Philoptochos</b> <b>Membership Drive</b>  <b>Oratorical Education</b> <b>Sunday</b>  <b>Happy 250 USA</b> <b>Celebration</b>	<b>26</b> <b>Bible Study</b> 5:30 p.m.  <b>YAL Basketball</b> 7:00 p.m.	<b>27</b> <b>Adult Greek Classes</b> 6:30 p.m.	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> <b>Pitt/CMU OCF</b> 7:30 p.m.	<b>30</b> <b>Synaxis</b> <b>of</b> <b>The</b> <b>Three Hierarchs</b> Orthros 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.	<b>31</b> <b>Greek School</b> 10:00 a.m.
GOYA BBall Tourney in Cleveland, OH						

St. Nicholas Greek  
Orthodox Cathedral  
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Pittsburgh, PA 15213

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