



SOLAR PANEL BLESSING



YOUTH UPDATE



NATIVITY SET UP

THE MESSENGER

DECEMBER ISSUE

SAINTS PETER & PAUL

p.1

A Message from Father Rick

Father Richard Demetrius Andrews

Greetings Brothers and Sisters:

We are well into the **Advent Fast** (Nov. 15 - Dec. 25) in preparation for the celebration of our Lord's Nativity. I encourage all of us to abstain from meat and dairy products (fish is allowed except on Wednesdays and Fridays and after December 12th). Along with fasting, moral self-examination, repentance and confession are essential components of the season. The Sacrament of Holy Confession is available by appointment by contacting me.

Nativity worship services are: Friday *December 22nd* Royal Hours 10:30am, preceded by Orthros 8:30am and Divine Liturgy 9:30am for *St Anastasia the Pharmakolytria*, whose relics are in our holy altar table. Saturday *Dec. 23rd* Great Vespers 5pm. Sunday *Dec. 24th* Orthros 8:15am and Divine Liturgy 9:30am for the *Eve/Forefeast* followed by the brief concert of carols by our

choir. Great Vespers Sunday evening 6pm. Monday *Dec. 25th* Orthros 8:15am/Liturgy 9:30am. Our offices will be closed on Dec. 25-26th.

In addition, we can preserve the spirit of the season through quiet contemplation. This is challenging with the holiday shopping season, holiday parties, and end of year deadlines. We should strive not to pre-celebrate Christmas. The Orthodox Church celebrates with the fast-free, joyful **Twelve (12) Days of Christmas** (December 25th to January 6th, for Theophany/Epiphany). We must be intentional about how and where we will spend our time and energy during Advent.

Advent is the time when many clergy make **visitations** to *elderly and homebound parishioners*. I have noticed that many of our elderly, for various reasons, have become disconnected from our parish. Thus, often I am not aware of their need for outreach and ministering of the Church. Thus, please let me know of any elderly and homebound members, or even

former members, so I can make sure they are being taken care of spiritually.

Parish Council elections will take place on December 3rd. The current slate of candidates are: *Vanessa Adinamis, Chris Atsavas, Christy Gouletas, Angie Katsamakias, Sophia Lehocky, George Karagiannis, Mary Ann Rasmussen, Tracy Ronstadt, George Seletos, Julie Stefanski, and Peter Triantafilou*. The top nine vote getters will fill the positions for the 2024-2025 term. The remaining two will serve the open positions for the 2023-2024 term. I would like to thank *Louis Apostol* and *Nick Mechales* for their service on the parish council. They have chosen not to run for re-election but we are very appreciative of their dedication, commitment and hard work on the parish council and in our community.

This past month of November I was blessed to attend the **Archdiocese Presbyters Retreat in Arizona** (30 - Nov. 2). Approximately 250 clergy from

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THE CONCEPTION BY ST. ANNA OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

According to the ancient tradition of the Church, since Saint Anna, the Ancestor of God, was barren, she and her husband Joachim remained without children until old age. Therefore, sorrowing over their childlessness, they besought God with a promise that, if He were to grant them the fruit of the womb, they would offer their offspring to Him as a gift. And God, hearkening to their supplication, informed them through an Angel concerning the birth of the Virgin. And thus, through God's promise, Anna conceived according to the laws of nature, and was deemed worthy to become the mother of the Mother of our Lord (see also Sept. 8).

CONTACTS

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**Rev. Dr. Fr. Richard Demetrius Andrews,
Protopresbyter,** frrick@ssppglenview.org

Rev. Dn. Theodore Saclarides, M.D.

Sunday & Weekly Services

Matins 8:15 am

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am

Church Office Hours:

Mon.-Thurs. 9:00am-5:00pm

Friday: 9:00am-3:00pm

Parish Administrator: Elea Bentley
parishadmin@ssppglenview.org

Administrative Assistant: Jolynn Ruggiero
office@ssppglenview.org

Youth Director: Steven Thell
youthdirector@ssppglenview.org

Communications Coordinator: Amanda Sideris
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Bookkeeper: Diane Bravos
diane@ssppglenview.org

2023 Parish Council:

President: Steve Koulogeorge

Vice President: Christy Gouletas

Secretary: Therese Speropoulos

Corresponding Secretary: Julie Stefanski

Treasurer: Nick Colis

Assistant Treasurer: George Seletos

Mary Alukos
Keith Anderson
Louie Apostol
Chris Atsaves
Sophia Lehocky
Tommy Mantice
Nickolas Mechales
Jim Santos

PARISH MINISTRIES

Agape Preschool: Julie Mantice, agape@ssppglenview.org

Acolytes: Steven Thell, acolytes@ssppglenview.org

Athletics: Chris Atsaves, athletics@ssppglenview.org

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Book & Icon Store: Tina O'Donnell, bookstore@ssppglenview.org

Building Maintenance: John Vranas, john@vranas.com

Care for Creation: Susanne Chakos, careforcreation@ssppglenview.org

Catechism: Fr. Richard Andrews, catechism@ssppglenview.org

Chanters: Chris Atsaves, chanters@ssppglenview.org

Choir Director: Therese Speropoulos
choir@ssppglenview.org

Church School: Nick and Kery Obradovich, Elaine Carrozza
churchschool@ssppglenview.org

Coffee Connection: Doreen DeSent,
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Coffee Fellowship: Carolyn Kolbaba,
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Divorce Rebuilders: Maria Boyle
divorcerebuilders@ssppglenview.org

Dynamis Group: Joanne Trahanas, dynamis@ssppglenview.org

Georgia Photopulos Cancer Support Group:
Bud Photopulos and Phyllis Perivolidis
cancersupport@ssppglenview.org

GOYAlumni: Marina Alexis, goyalumni@ssppglenview.org

Greek Dance: Anna Andrews, dance@ssppglenview.org

Greek School: Stella Theoharopoulos,
greeksschool@ssppglenview.org

Grief Support: Tracy Ronstadt, griefsupport@ssppglenview.org

Myrrhbearers: Anna Kallis, myrrhbearers@ssppglenview.org

Orthodox Couples Club: Trish and Marco Iannessa,
occ@ssppglenview.org

Philoptochos: Dena Pavlopoulos, philoptochos@ssppglenview.org

Prison Outreach: Brad DeSent
prisonoutreach@ssppglenview.org

Prophora: prosphora@ssppglenview.org

Readers: Sophia Lehocky, readers@ssppglenview.org

Saint Basil's Philanthropy: Christy Gouletas
philanthropy@ssppglenview.org

Saint Stephen Men's Group: Brad DeSent
mensgroup@ssppglenview.org

Stewardship: Julie Stefanski, stewardship@ssppglenview.org

Sunday Coffee Fellowship: office@ssppglenview.org

Ushers/Greeters: Bo LaMotte, ushers@ssppglenview.org

Welcome: Keith Anderson, Sylvia Creatura, welcome@ssppglenview.org

Young Adult League (YAL): Maria Mantice, Tommy Mantice
yal@ssppglenview.org

For Emergencies Only: Please call the main office number and access Fr. Rick's voicemail. Leave a message stating your emergency. If you do not receive a call back within 15 minutes, call again and leave a brief message.

PASTORAL MESSAGE

CONTINUED...

around the United States. Our keynote speaker was *Bishop Maxim* of the Serbian Diocese of the West and the topics were: “*From Omega to Alpha*” and “*Technology and Salvation*.” As president of the Chicago Clergy Syndesmos, I also serve on the Archdiocese Presbyters Council (APC) consisting of 19 clergy representing the nine (9) metropolises in the Archdiocese. Each of us has a role in planning and carrying out the retreat. I was in charge of the fitness sessions. We engaged professional trainers for one hour sessions on three different days. Thus, we try to re-energize the mind, heart, soul and body of the retreatants.

I also participated in the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) *Frontline chaplain training* in Atlanta (Nov.13-17). This was three full days of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) training for groups and individuals and was all expenses paid by a grant from the Red Cross to IOCC as part of the Hurricane Ian disaster. IOCC is small compared to some of the major disaster relief agencies in the US and the world. However, it has an excellent reputation for the work it does both at home and abroad.

Related to that is the *IOCC relief work in the Holy Land*. Please pray with us for peace in the Holy

Land. IOCC has reconfirmed that our staff in Gaza and Jerusalem remain safe. Safety protocols are always in place, and programs continue as security conditions allow. IOCC provided food and water, hygiene items, and mattresses for hundreds of displaced people in Gaza. As the situation continues to change, IOCC is monitoring developments and is in close communication with partners. Teams across the Middle East continue working with the US-based team to determine the most urgent needs and how we can best assist. A gift today to IOCC’s Middle East Relief Fund will allow IOCC to quickly and effectively get critical care to people in need. Visit www.iocc.org/holyland23 to give.

Other events in the month of **December** are the Philoptochos Holiday Fair (Dec.2), Stewardship Sunday, Parish Council elections & Metropolis Holiday Open House (Dec.3), St. Nicholas Oak Lawn parish feastday (Dec.6; no services at SSPP), Philoptochos Advent Luncheon (Dec.9), St. Spyridon Palos Heights parish feastday (Dec.11 Vespers; Dec.12 Orthros & Liturgy at SSPP), Hellenic Foundation Awards (at HF offices Dec.14), Sanctuary Cleaning (Dec.16, 2-5pm), Pan-Orthodox Nativity Concert (at Holy Nativity Romanian Dec.17),

The month of December is also our biggest for *stewardship* revenue. You should received a statement dated around Nov.30th that reflects your giving so far this year. For 2023, we still need to receive approximately \$300K by the end of the year to meet our stewardship goal. At this time, we ask three things: 1) if you made a stewardship pledge, be sure to fulfill it; 2) if you have not pledged, be sure to make a stewardship contribution; and 3) no matter if you pledged or did not, consider how God has blessed you and *give generously even beyond your planned stewardship contributions*.

Looking ahead to 2024, the Archdiocese theme is “*Well done good and faithful servant*” (Matthew 25:24). These are Jesus’ words told in the Parable of the Talents (Mt.25:14-30) to the two servants who multiplied the gifts given to them by their master. Jesus calls the third servant, who buried his one talent in the ground, “*wicked and lazy*” (v.26) and he represents those who use their gifts from God only for earthly things (St Gregory the Great).

God’s guidelines for giving is the tithe (10%). He gives us everything but only asks for ten percent in return. That’s a pretty good deal. With a total (operations & capital) annual parish budget of

PASTORAL MESSAGE

CONTINUED...

\$1.7M we encourage everyone to strive towards tithing (10%) but **suggest a minimum of four percent (4%) annual giving.**

Looking ahead to January –St. Basil Chicago parish feastday (Dec.31 Vespers; Liturgy at SSPP Jan.1), Theophany/Epiphany Feast (Jan.5-6), St John the Baptist Des Plaines parish feast day (Vespers Jan.6), Parish Vasilopita (Sun.Jan.7), Catechism classes begin (Jan.8, on Monday evenings), St Athanasios Aurora parish feast day (Vespers Jan.17; Liturgy at SSPP Jan.18), Ministry Council mtg (Jan.23); Sanctity of Life service at Holy Apostles Weschester (Jan.28).

An update on the *clergy leadership training* program: The first cohort including myself are finishing our first year in December. The format has changed for 2024, condensing to two years instead of four years, and three out of town trips, instead of four. The upcoming 2024 intensive topics are: *Focus on Your Strengths & High Leverage Parish Experience* (February), *Missions and Values & Positive Parish Culture* (June), and *Team Recruitment/Development & Subtract and Scale* (September). The Metropolis continues to provide 60% of funding, the parish 30% and the priest 10%. I thankful for the investment and support of

everyone. I pray it benefits all of our community!

Related to leadership is the beginning of a **Multi-source Feedback Process** for myself and our parish. This is commonly known as a 360-degree evaluation but adapted for the priest-parish context. Metropolitan Nathanael went through this last year and we would be the first priest-parish of the Metropolis to do this process. The Metropolis has offered to fund 50% of the cost and the other half will come from the *Fr. George Scoulas Memorial Endowment Fund*. The planning phase will begin very soon. Look for more information in the coming weeks. Blessed Advent and Nativity!

+Fr. Rick



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We welcome our new Members to Saints Peter and Paul *Jason and Vicki Vranas.*



Sister Vassa Talk on Oct 27th



HCHC Fundraiser with keynote speaker and Fox News Anchor Michael Emmanuel



Fr Rick with Pres. Jane at HCHC Fundraiser



Ruby Hubbard Baptism 11-19-23



Andrea Mourikes Baptism 10-28-23

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



Feed the Hungry 11-5-23



Creek Bed Remediation



40 Day Churching - Katherine Damisch & Baby Luke With Dad Kevin Pollack



Chris Atsaves Hellene of the Year



Konstandinos Nicolopoulos Baptism 11-18-23



YOUTH UPDATE

YOUTH UPDATE

A MESSAGE FROM STEVEN

This past month has been busy for youth ministry. On November 3rd-5th, The Goyans spent the weekend at the Saint Iakovos Retreat Center for our Fall Fanari. There were games, karaoke, and a whole lot of fun. At the end of the weekend, we declared a new winner for the Bozno Bowl. We had It was a great time, and we got to participate with Holy Apostles for a part of the weekend. It was a nice way to connect with fellow Orthodox Christians outside of our church.

The Junior and Senior Goyans got to eat out at Iron Age-Korean Barbeque. It was an all-you-can-eat buffet where you cook the meat yourself on grills. It was a fun atmosphere to participate in, and our GOYAns had a delicious meal.

The faith Love Joy enjoyed two events this month at church. We learned about the nativity fast, why it is essential to our spirituality, and how we can participate. We also did a service project craft which we made pom poms for the upcoming 'Pick up your Cross' event that helps youth and adults with special needs.

Our College kids came home for Thanksgiving break. We had a Friendsgiving together and go

the chance to catch up with them. We had a great turnout.

We have started our Hope group (0-4-year-olds) this month. We enjoyed a nice meal, did an ornament craft they can put on their Christmas tree, and got to play some games in the gym.

Looking ahead to the month of December, we have our Gingerbread Christmas party with the Hope and Faith Love Joy groups on December 8th. The senior GOYAns will shop at Target and purchase and hand out gifts for underprivileged children. When they get back, they will spend the night at church. Please reach out to me with any questions you may have.



BOOKSTORE & MORE

BOOK STORE

UPCOMING

Your Book and Icon Store is the place to shop for all your Christmas gifts!! We honestly have beautiful books, icons, jewelry, and gifts for anyone and everyone on your Christmas list. Vasilopita coins just came in, and they are beautiful! We are open every Sunday immediately following the Divine Liturgy, and would love to see you stop in to shop. Anything we don't have, we can most likely order with a very quick turnaround. Hope to see you soon!

Any questions or requests can be sent to bookstore@ssppglenviv.org



COFFEE CONNECTION

UPCOMING

Please join us on Sunday, December 10h following Holy Communion in the Youth Room for Coffee Connection: An Educational Ministry Open to All Adults.

This Year's Theme is:

"The Orthodox Way and Other Faith Communities: Exploring The Truths Our Faith Holds, In Relation to Other Traditions"

We will be discussing:

The Virgin Mary Part 2 (Islam/Popular Culture)

- Why is Mary so popular?
- Islamic Devotion to Mary
- Cultural Perceptions of Mary



PRESIDENTS LETTER

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

CROSSOVER

They say that this time of year, from Thanksgiving through Christmas and right on up to New Years can be a stressful time for people; holidays, family gatherings, obligations and preparations.... It can certainly can make a person reflective about their life and those around them.

For me, this time of year brings up the memory of a time when I really had to look at who I was; the time I lost my Gold Cross. It was a gift that my Aunt had given me a long, long time ago. Growing up as a skinny Greek kid, I wasn't much for wearing anything around my neck. Especially one that is 14ct. Gold and screams "RELIGION" to the rest of the world. But over time, I got pretty used to it. My friends never made mention of it and I started to feel a certain comfort in having something that connected me to my Aunt, my siblings, my Parents and my Faith. During times of stress, I found myself absent-mindedly tapping the cross against my chest, gently with my two middle fingers, just to make sure that it was as there (tap, tap).

And time passed... I got a job, got married, had kids, got divorced and got remarried. My Aunt passed away, as did my Father and all of my other Aunts and Uncles. And in all those times, of uncertainty and sorrow, of achievements and of victories, I carried that Gold Cross around my neck (tap, tap). It was attached to me... a part of me. One time, while on a Consulting assignment at a hotel I was staying at, the cross's chain detached while I was

showering. I placed the Cross and chain on the counter and got ready for work. It wasn't until I got to work, when I happened to tap my chest, that I realized that my Cross was not there. I contacted the hotel and asked if the cleaning service had found my Cross.. I was told that they didn't run across anything like that. I came back to the hotel, which was a short drive from my assignment and checked the room myself. It had been cleaned up, but the Cross was no longer where I left it. Again, I checked with the front desk and again I was told that no one had found a Gold Cross. My first thought was that someone had pocketed the Cross.... someone probably figured that they could pick up some easy cash pawning or selling off that Cross. My second thought was when I turned my anger towards myself., how could I have been so careless to just walk out of a hotel room without making sure that I had everything with me... especially something that I carried around my neck for 30+ years.

It didn't take long, however, that I realized my anger and my frustration were misguided. When you count your blessings; your health, your children and Grandchildren.. your Family and friends... the people that love you, care for you and stand by you, you realize that you are part of something that is so much bigger than you are.

And you realize that if that Cross was lost and gone forever, perhaps it is God's will, or fate that it be so. And if the Cross was stolen, perhaps that person needed that Cross more than I did. I even hoped and prayed that perhaps that Cross could even give some person the faith that they didn't know that they had inside themselves. A couple of months ago, I found an old Cross of mine that I wore in High School. It's not made of Gold... it's some type of metal, possibly silver.

It's tarnished from my high school years on the swim team. It's old and beaten and worn down, but it suits me fine. And I'm going to wear it until my days are no more. Because it is my Faith, it is my choice and it is a part of me that extends well beyond who I am.... (Tap, Tap)

A BIG THANKS

...to all who participated in the 2023 Foster Children Christmas Gift Drive, sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Clergy Association (OCCA). The wish-lists that each of you filled in (bought) for a deserving child, helped to bring Christmas to a child in need.

In Christ,
Steve J. Koulogeorge
Parish Council President

PRESIDENTS LETTER

A BIG THANKS

Congratulations to those individuals running for the Saints Peter and Paul Parish Council:

Vanessa Adinamis
Sophia Lehocky
George Seletos
Angie Katsamakakis

Chris Atsavvas
Nicholas Mechaless
Julie Stefanski
Mary Ann Rasmussen

Christy Gouletas
Tracy Ronstadt
Peter Triantafilou
George Karagiannis

Parish Council Elections will be held on Sunday, December 3rd, from 11:00am – 1:00pm.

WHAT'S GOING DOWN? WHAT'S COMING UP?

- YAL Men's Youth Basketball games in December - Sunday 12/3 and Saturday 12/16. For further information, please contact Chris Atsavvas at chris.atsavvas@gmail.com
- The Annual Philoptochos Holiday Fair – Saturday December 2nd, 8:00am – 5:00pm.
- Parish Council Elections – Sunday, December 3rd, 11:00am-1:00pm Fellowship Hall.
- Metropolis Christmas Open House – Sunday, December 3rd 4:00pm-8:00pm. Carlisle Banquets 435 Butterfield Rd, Lombard, IL 60148.
- SSPP Blood Drive – Tuesday, December
- Men's Group Fellowship – Thursday, Dec. 7th, 7:00pm – 9:00pm. North Branch, 4520 W Lake Ave, Glenview, IL 60025.
- Church School Christmas Pageant -
- Greek Dance Group (Elementary school aged children only) on Sundays (12/3, 12/10, 12/19) from 12:15pm-1:15pm.
- The Parish Council Meeting for December will be held on Tuesday. 12/12 starting at 7:00pm.

PHILOPTOCHOS

HO HO HO! HOLIDAY FAIRE

We have made a lot of changes to this year's format. While we are still featuring our fantastic home baked pastries, lunch in Fellowship Hall will offer more of a food court experience where you can choose from pastichio, spanakopita, gyros, and Greek chicken. Other new additions include: an after-hours dinner drive-thru, live entertainment, gingerbread house decorating and a pop-up shop featuring hostess gifts that were made by our own Philoptochos members, and our Curated Collection of vintage home decorative items! Of course, Santa will also be stopping in! We hope you will, too.

Remember to get your raffle tickets - even if you can't be there to take part in the fun. There are a lot of wonderful prizes including a Weekend Getaway to Abbey Lake, 4 Front Row Center tickets to Disney on Ice, and 4 amazing seats for the Olivia Rodrigo Concert. Tickets are \$10 each or 3 for \$25. For more information on the raffle, contact *Debbie Kunkel* at debbieck8@att.net.

And a big thank you to all our generous raffle donors and sponsors who are really helping us to make an incredible difference for this year's event beneficiaries, Misericordia Home - Chicago, who offers a continuum of care and support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and Camp One Step, who provides respite care for children battling cancer.

HOLIDAY CHEER CONT.

Join us for fun and fellowship at our Advent Brunch on Saturday, December 9, 11am – 2pm at Sunset Ridge Country Club. You won't want to miss this annual tradition! This year's food and monetary donations will go towards our Project Hope Ministry. Tickets are \$60 in advance. For more information, to purchase your tickets, or to donate to Project Hope, please visit the upcoming events page at www.sppglenview.org. If you need more information, contact event chair Julie Anastos at julieanastos@mac.com

PROJECT HOPE

Project Hope is the metropolis-wide philanthropy ministry that helps the less fortunate in the Chicago Metro area. Since its inception just three years ago, it has already organized, distributed, and delivered more than one million meals to people in need. We are happy to be part of this effort, and just recently, on November 3, we filled 150 bags with groceries. That's 11,880 meals! THANK YOU to our 30 parishioners who were there to make this happen. The groceries were distributed at the West Garfield Park Thanksgiving Food Drive at Pilgrimage Church.

Our work is not done, though. This is an ongoing project, and we hope to collect enough food every month to fill 50 bags. Please help us in this goal by bringing non-perishable food items to church with you. In addition to collecting

MORE ON PROJECT HOPE

at our Advent Brunch on December 9, there will be collection boxes in the entry of the Atrium throughout the year.



Volunteers from November 3rd Project Hope Food Drive Bagging Events

PHILOPTOCHOS

DECOR DIVINE DELIGHTS

Our first general meeting of the year was held on November 2 and featured a presentation by Crate and Barrel Interior Designer *Jill Ouellette* who shared tips on how to bring the warmth of the holiday season into our homes. Watch for an announcement of our next general meeting that will take place in March!



Event Chair Annette Vranas and Featured Presenter Jill Ouellette take a moment to pose before the guests arrive.



New Philoptochos Members Terri Jurichko and Natalia Kunzer were among the 40 women enjoying the evening.

KEEPING THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

A huge thank you to one of our Philoptochos members who prepared Greek Thanksgiving dinners for twelve of our homebound parishioners. The delicious home-cooked meals consisted of pastichio, a salad, roll, and karithopita and were delivered before Thanksgiving. They were enjoyed by all who received them!

In addition, our Philoptochos Christmas elves *Carrie Colis, Maria Costas, Vicky Limperis, Olga Panagakis, and Stephanie Vlahakis* have been busy preparing Christmas “goodie” bags for 55 Homebound/Seniors. The bags will be delivered the week of December 3-10 and are certain to bring Christmas cheer to all.



PHILOPTOCHOS



Saturday, December 2 - Holiday Faire

10am - 4pm, Atrium and Fellowship Hall
Lunch served 11:30 - 2:30; Drive-thru
dinner available 5pm - 7pm

Saturday, December 9 - Advent Brunch,

Sunset Ridge Country Club 11am - 2pm

Instagram

Follow us on Instagram:
@SSPeterandPaulPhiloptochos

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

STEWARDSHIP YEAR-END GIFTING

As we get to the end of any year, taxes (and how to lower them) creep into many people's minds. We also begin to get increased solicitations and reminders from charitable institutions about making gifts before the year-end. We thought it might be helpful to outline a couple of the most common and easy-to-implement alternative gifting strategies for your consideration.

Cash, checks, and credit card payments represent nearly all of SS Peter and Paul's receipts. Here are some ways to get a bit more creative that might benefit you, your tax situation, and the church simultaneously.

Donors can often save on taxes by directly donating appreciated non-cash gifts like **stocks, land and other assets**. For example, if the donor sells a stock to raise cash for a gift, they might have to pay a capital gains tax on the appreciated value, which could take a significant bite out of the total proceeds. The amount of the tax will depend on the time period held and the amount of the gain. However, if the stock is donated directly to the church, the donation avoids the capital gains tax. More importantly, the entire fair market value of the stock can be taken as a charitable deduction on Schedule A of the income tax return. While the entire market value is realized by the church, the donor saves the income tax that would have been paid on the gain. We have an existing investment account set up to receive stock donations.

If you can take advantage of this, please contact **Diane Bravos** in the office to get the instructions needed to make such a transfer.

An interesting twist on this strategy is to establish a **Donor Advised Fund (DAF)**. As markets reach new highs, donors are increasingly contributing appreciated assets to their donor-advised funds. This is how it works. Instead of donating directly to the church, transfer appreciated stock into a DAF account. You realize the tax deduction immediately for the fair value of the stock, but you can stretch-out the timing of your donations over many years. Ideally, you fund it with appreciated securities to save on the capital gains tax that would be due if sold, but cash can be contributed as well. You receive a charitable donation deduction in the year of the transfer, but there is no requirement that all the proceeds are distributed in the same tax year. For taxpayers that use the standard deduction because their total Schedule A deductions are below this threshold, the deduction for charitable contributions is lost. The donor advised fund allows for "lumping" several years of charitable contributions into one tax year and possibly taking advantage of the available tax deduction through itemization. Most investment firms offer this service for clients. You should check with your broker or financial advisor.

For taxpayers over the age of 70 ½, charitable contributions can be made directly from **IRA accounts up to \$100,000**, thus avoiding the taxation on the distribution. This

people who are in their RMD (required minimum distribution) phase and don't particularly need the money for living expenses. This is very easy to put in place with a simple form from your IRA custodian.

For more longer-term planning, you can also consider naming SS Peter & Paul in your **will or trust**. This can be a specific dollar amount or a percentage of the trust assets or estate. We have received many of such legacy gifts over the years which have helped fund capital projects, ministries, special projects, and operations.

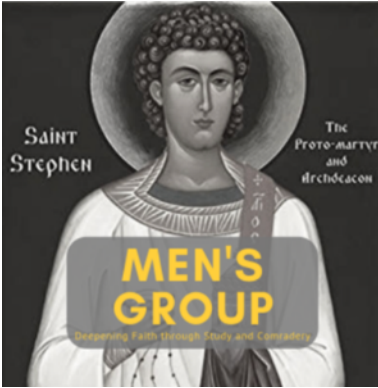
Another way to make a legacy gift is through **life insurance**. As people get into their retirement years, life insurance to protect dependents may no longer be needed. You may have a permanent life insurance policy (usually whole life insurance) that is no longer serving its initial purpose. A simple change of beneficiary to SS Peter and & Paul will direct the proceeds to the church upon your passing. If desired, you can also direct this gift to a project or ministry of your choosing.

The stewardship committee and parish council would like to thank you for your ongoing support of our church community. We hope you found this information useful and can work some of it into your planning.

May God's blessings continue to be with you and your loved ones and best wishes for a happy and holy Christmas.

The Stewardship Committee

SAINT STEPHEN MEN'S GROUP



THURSDAY EVENING 12/7

Thursday Evening Fellowship at North Branch on Thursday December 7th from 7:00pm - 9:00pm at North Branch.

These fellowship events are meant to give us a chance to informally get together and make new connections. Please sign up at: sign-up: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfQvhByqHOSaUcn0BoPNsGMgRMqWWHZvrvwi9zPFbZ955jfiQ/viewform?pli=1>

Additional details will be emailed to you.



SOLAR INSTALLATION BLESSING OCTOBER 2023

The Solar Panel project was completed in the summer of 2023. The project includes 283 Solar panels installed on the Community Center and Gym. The project came to fruition with the help of many people at Saints Peter and Paul. Fr Rick conducted a blessing of the installation in October. The Men's Group hosted Coffee Hour to commemorate the completion and Blessing of the project on October 30th. Any questions George Nassos will be happy give you more details.



MERRY CHRISTMAS 2023

The Saint Stephen Men's Group set up the newly refurbished Nativity Set on November 25th. This tradition has been practiced for over 20 years and marks the beginning of on the Holiday season. We wish everyone one a Blessed Holiday Season. Remember to take time to enjoy your family.

CLOSING

Please join our email list to keep up to date with activities. We welcome all adult men from Saints Peter and Paul, Orthodox and Non-Orthodox, and their friends who are interested in participating.

Please join the email list at:
<https://ssppglenview.org/st-stephens-mens-group/>



DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
COMING IN JANUARY						
1 ST BASIL THE GREAT 5 EVE OF THEOPHANY 6 THEOPHANY/EPIPHANY 7 Vasilopita Celebration 8 Catechism Classes begin	16 BLESSED CHAINS OF ST PETER 18 ST ATHANASIOS FEAST DAY 22 ST TIMOTHY FEAST DAY 28 Sanctity of Life Service 30 THREE HIERARCHS FEAST DAY	5 +ST SAVVAS THE SANCTIFIED 1pm-7pm Blood Drive 6:30pm Philoptochos Board Meeting 6:30pm Basketball Practice 7pm Catechism Class 8pm Bball Men's YAL (pickup)	6 +ST NICHOLAS 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Basketball Practice 7pm Senior GOYA Youth Mtg 7pm Philoptochos Sip and Stretch 8:30pm Bball Men's over 40 (pickup)	7+ST AMBROSE OF MILAN 7am Men's Study Group 6:30pm Basketball Practice 7pm Men's Fellowship at North Branch	1 +PROPHET NAHUM AGAPE NO SCHOOL 6pm Bball Coaches/Parents Mtg 6:30pm Jr. GOYA Youth Meeting	2 +PROPHET HABBAKUK 8am - 5pm Holiday Faire 5pm VESPERS
3 +14TH SUNDAY OF LUKE +PROPHET ZEPHANIAH 8:15am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY 10:50am Church School St. Nicholas Project 11am PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 12:15pm Greek Dance Practice 1-6pm Basketball Games at SSPP	4 +SS BARBARA & JOHN DAMASCUS 6:30pm Basketball Practice 6:45pm Greek Dance Practice	5 +ST SAVVAS THE SANCTIFIED 1pm-7pm Blood Drive 6:30pm Philoptochos Board Meeting 6:30pm Basketball Practice 7pm Catechism Class 8pm Bball Men's YAL (pickup)	6 +ST NICHOLAS 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Basketball Practice 7pm Senior GOYA Youth Mtg 7pm Philoptochos Sip and Stretch 8:30pm Bball Men's over 40 (pickup)	7+ST AMBROSE OF MILAN 7am Men's Study Group 6:30pm Basketball Practice 7pm Men's Fellowship at North Branch	8 6pm Faith, Love and Joy Youth Meeting	9 +CONCEPTION OF ST ANNA 11am-2pm YAL Christkindlemarket 11am-1pm Philoptochos Advent Brunch 5pm VESPERS
10 +10TH SUNDAY OF LUKE 8:15am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY 11am Coffee Connection 10:50am Church School Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 12:15pm Greek Dance Practice	11 6:30pm Bball Practice 6:45 Greek Dance Practice	12 +ST SPYRIDON 8:30am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY 9:30am AGAPE LITURGY 6pm Pick Up Your Cross Xmas Party @ The Concorde 6:15pm YAL Board Mtg 6:30pm Basketball Practice 7pm Cancer Support Mtg 7pm Parish Council Meeting	13 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Basketball Practice 6:30pm YAL Paraklesis & Talk 6:30pm PARAKLESIS SERVICE 8:30pm Bball Men's over 40 (pickup)	14 7am Men's Study Group 6pm Hellenic Foundations Awards 6:30pm Basketball Practice	15 +ST ELEFTHERIOS 6:30pm Senior GOYA Overnighiter	16 9am AHEPA Doughnut's with Santa 10am Senior GOYA Overnighiter End 5pm VESPERS 1-7pm Basketball Games at SSPP
17 +11TH SUNDAY OF LUKE + PROPHET DANIEL & 3 HOLY CHILDREN 8:15am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY 11:15am Christmas Pageant 12:15pm Greek Dance Practice 6:30pm Men's Basketball Games	18 6:30pm Bball Practice 6:45 Greek Dance Practice	19 6:30pm Basketball Practice 6:30pm Jr. GOYA Youth Meeting 8pm Bball Men's YAL (pickup)	20 +ST IGNATIUS GODBEARER 10:30am Bible Study 6:30pm Basketball Practice 7pm Choir Rehearsal 8:30pm Bball Men's over 40 (pickup)	21 +ST JULIANA NO Mens Study Group 10:30AM AGAPE Christmas Program 6:30pm Basketball Practice	22 +ST ANASTASIA PHARMOKALYTRIA 8:30am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY 10:30am ROYAL HOURS	23 5pm VESPERS +EVE/FORE- FEAST OF NATIVITY +SUN B4 NATIVITY
24 +EVE/FOREFEAST OF NATIVITY +SUN B4 NATIVITY 8:15am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY NO CHURCH SCHOOL 11am Choir Christmas Program 6pm VESPERS OF NATIVITY	25 +NATIVITY OF LORD 8:30am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY 6:30pm Bball Practice	26 6:30pm Basketball Practice 8pm Bball Men's YAL (pickup)	27 +ST STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR 8:30am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY NO BIBLE STUDY 6pm Faith, Love & Joy Youth Mtg 6:30pm Basketball Practice 8:30pm Bball Men's over 40 (pickup)	28 7am NO Mens Study Group 6:30pm Basketball Practice	29 +HOLY INNOCENTS CHILDREN 10am Sack Lunch	30 5pm VESPERS
+APODISIS OF NATIVITY 31 +SUN B4 THEOPHANY 8:15am ORTHROS-MATINS 9:30am DIVINE LITURGY NO CHURCH SCHOOL 7pm GREAT VESPERS @ St. Basil Chicago						

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