

THE FORERUNNER

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THE FIRST SERMON OF CHRIST

Any classical public speaking training would tell the aspirant lecturer to always start with a little warm up for the audience, in order to get them engaged, then introduce the topic, present the topic and then a short recap at the end. It is all about building up to your main subject. This is pretty much what I'm doing now.

There is an old story with a priest in a convent that loved to preach. He always used well thought out phrases, nice metaphors, parables, comparisons, his subjects were always good, but he would tend to take a little more time than others. The abbess was a little upset about that because this would cut out the time dedicated to the various obediences in the monastery. So she decided she would go and complain to the bishop. As a consequence the priest was called at the chancery and the bishop asked him if possible to stay to the essence and cut the embellishments so the sisters could have more time to work. So next Sunday the Father, a little ticked off about the discussion with the bishop starts his sermon as usual: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Beloved sisters, repent or go to hell! Amin!" and he got back into the altar.

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COUNCIL CAPSULE

I would like to take this opportunity as we enter the New Year to express our gratitude to Fr. Vasile for his guidance, and to wish all of you a very Happy, Healthy New Year. It's hard to imagine that just a year ago the contract to begin construction on the church was signed. There is no denying that our new church is beautiful and once again I would like to thank and congratulate all those who participated in the Capital Campaign and ultimately, the Dedications Program, for their generosity and faith that brought us here. The dreams of many have culminated in a church we all need to be proud of. Even though the Capital Campaign Program has ended, I encourage those who have made commitments and not yet completed them, to do so at their earliest convenience. Also, now is the time to think about submitting your stewardship commitment for 2013. Our parish will become more than we ever imagined, not maintaining ministries, but growing ministries which will be made possible with your support.

(Continued on page 2)

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *The first Sermon of Christ*
- *The life of St. Ignatius of Antioch*
- *Stewardship program for 2013 is ongoing! Join today!*
- *Chosen and Appointed by God to Go and Bear Fruit*
- *Music Ministry Page*
- *Church Events*

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COUNCIL'S CAPSULE



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Elections for the Parish Council were held on December 9th and I'm very pleased to congratulate the following parishioners on their appointments. Harry Karegeannes, Michael Eftimie, Hope File, Tim Cline and Jeremy Ellis. Once the Metropolis has ratified the elections, the council will convene after the Oath of Office to elect officers for the 2013 term.

This year, we will be celebrating our Parish Name Day with a dinner to be held the evening of January 6th. His Eminence will be celebrating Vespers with us at St. John's at 5:00pm after which we will be hosting dinner. Details are being finalized and will be sent out to everyone via email.

In closing, December 31st is the end of my third term as Parish Council President. I would like to first thank the

Councils that I have had the privilege to serve with during my terms and second to thank Fr. Vasile and the Parish for their support, time and dedication to St. John the Baptist Church. Thank you and God bless.

Barbara Vittas

Parish Council President

ELECTIONS FOR
THE PARISH
COUNCIL WERE
HELD ON
DECEMBER

ST. IGNATIUS THE GOD BEARER OF ANTIOCH

By St. Nikolai Velimirovich

This holy man is called "the God-bearer" because he constantly bore the name of the Living God in his heart and on his lips. According to tradition, he was thus named because he was held in the arms of God Incarnate, Jesus Christ. On a day when the Lord was teaching His disciples humility, He took a child and placed him among them, saying: *"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven"* (Matthew 18:4). This child was Ignatius.

Later, Ignatius was a disciple of St. John the Theologian, together with Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. As Bishop of Antioch, Ignatius governed the Church of God as a good shepherd and was the first to introduce antiphonal chanting in the Church, in which two choirs alternate the chanting.

This manner of chanting was revealed to St. Ignatius by the angels in heaven.

When Emperor Trajan was passing through Antioch on his way to do battle with the Persians, he heard of Ignatius, summoned him and counseled him to offer sacrifice to the idols. If Ignatius would do so, Trajan would bestow upon him the rank of senator. As the counsels and threats of the emperor were in vain, St. Ignatius was shackled in irons and sent to Rome in the company of ten merciless soldiers, to be thrown to the wild beasts.

Ignatius rejoiced in suffering for his Lord, only praying to God that the wild beasts would become the tomb for his body and that no one would prevent him from this death. After a long and difficult journey from Asia through Thrace, Macedonia

and Epirus, Ignatius arrived in Rome, where he was thrown to the lions in the circus. The lions tore him to pieces and devoured him, leaving only several of the larger bones and his heart. This glorious lover of the Lord Christ suffered in the year 106 in Rome at the time of the Christ-hating Emperor Trajan. Ignatius has appeared many times from the other world and worked miracles, even to this day helping all who call upon him for help.

A Reflection From His Life

The holy martyrs, seized with the love of Christ, were like unquenchable flames. This love eased their sufferings and made their deaths sweet. St. Chrysostom says of St. Ignatius: *"He put off his body with as much ease as one takes off his clothes."*

(Continued on page 3)



THE FIRST SERMON OF CHRIST (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1)

We might consider this example a little excessive at a first glance, but, at the end of the day, the priest from our story exposed the essential idea that we have a choice in this life and our choice determines our life. Bad choices won't take you anywhere good - the essence.

Christ as well did not always conformed to the niceties of oratory; on the contrary, His first recorded words to the people gathered around Him were very blunt: *"Repent for the kingdom of heavens is at hand!"* (Mathew 4:17). No warm-up, no fancy introductions just the essence of the matter. John said actually the same thing (Matthew 3:2) to the people gathered to be

baptized by him in the Jordan. No frills, just what they needed to know.

Repentance nowadays is a very misunderstood word. It has a negative connotation and people think that is something left to do only for hardened criminals with a heavy conscience. But the original meaning of the word in Greek "*metanoia*" refers to a change of mind. Is the mind we achieve after we have done something wrong and we suffered the consequences. Repentance is something that we have to do if we want to avoid the same mistake. Someone said that you can only make a mistake once because starting with the second time is a choice. Repentance is another choice: to do better next time.

Our relationship to sin unfold in a similar fashion: you sin once, you see the bad fruits, you should stop doing it. For example: you stole something, you got caught (eventually everyone gets caught) you should stop doing it. Simple, you should learn from your mistakes and set your life on another course. Don't delay it. If not, you will become a slave of sin and you can't blame your problems on anyone but yourself.

Our society is in deep need of repentance because it keeps repeating the same mistakes again and again, not learning from them. The result? Everything is getting worse, the economy, the education, the

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ST. IGNATIUS THE GOD BEARER OF ANTIOCH

(Continued from page 2)

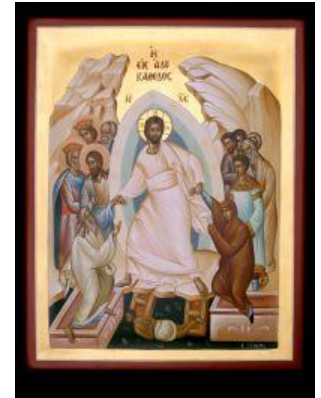
Traveling to Rome to his death, Ignatius feared only one thing: that Christians would somehow prevent his martyrdom for Christ, by their prayers to God or in some outward manner. Therefore he continually implored them, in writing and in speech, not to do this. "Forgive me," he said. "I know what is for my benefit. I but begin to be a disciple of Christ when I desire nothing, either visible or invisible, save to attain Christ. May every diabolical torture come upon me: fire, crucifixion, wild

beasts, the sword, tearing asunder, the crushing of my bones, and the dismemberment of my whole body - only that I may receive Jesus Christ. It is better for me to die for Christ than to reign to the ends of the earth.... My love is nailed to the Cross, and there is no fire of love in me for any earthly thing."

When he was brought to the circus, he turned to the people with these words: "Citizens of Rome, know that I am not being punished for any crime, neither have I been condemned to death for any transgression, but rather for the sake of my God, by

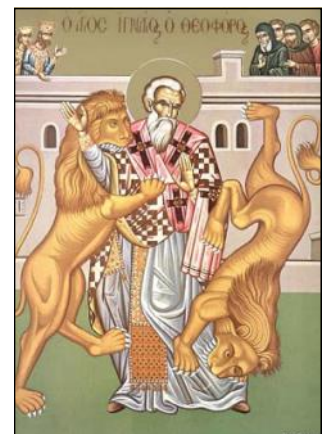
Whose love I am overcome and Whom I insatiably desire. I am His wheat, and the teeth of the wild beasts will grind me to be His pure bread."

When he had been devoured by the wild beasts, by God's providence his heart remained among the bones. When the unbelievers cut open the saint's heart, they saw inside, inscribed in golden letters, the name "Jesus Christ".



The Resurrection

WHEN THE UNBELIEVERS CUT OPEN THE SAINT'S HEART, THEY SAW INSIDE, INSCRIBED IN GOLDEN LETTERS, THE NAME "JESUS CHRIST".



LET STEWARDSHIP BE A WAY OF LIFE



As the year begins we hope that you continue to pray about how you will dedicate your time, talent and treasure. Every year at this time people make New Year's Resolutions. Our hope is that you will pray and ask God to guide you in your resolutions for the coming year. God's will is always the way. Our New Year's Resolutions should focus first on serving God and giving gratitude and thanks for all that we enjoy everyday. **We are already half way to our \$265,000 goal.** To date we have 64

pledges in 2013 for a total of \$133,730. For those who have faithfully committed, our sincere thanks. If you have not completed your stewardship card please do so as soon as possible. We look forward to the coming year and all that it will bring toward our spiritual growth.

"Chosen and Appointed by God to Go and Bear Fruit."
John 15:1 - 8

Nina Sullivan and Hope File

**FOR 2013,
CREDIT CARD
GIVERS NEED TO
RENEW THEIR
CREDIT CARD
DRAW
SUBSCRIPTION BY
COMPLETING A
2013
COMMITMENT
CARD.**

UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Can we now build a definition for stewardship? How might we describe "stewardship in action?"

The following list is adapted from one prepared by Ron Nicola:

1. Stewardship is our active commitment to use all our time, talent and treasure for the benefit of humankind in grateful acknowledgment of Christ's redeeming love.
2. Stewardship is caring for the needs of others.
3. Stewardship is offering one's self to God as He offered Himself to us.
4. Stewardship is what a person does after saying "I Believe . . .", as proof of that belief.
5. Stewardship is learning how to be a responsible

and concerned caretaker of Christ's Church; it is learning how to enjoy Church life and be happy in Church work, for in Her dwells the fullness of the Spirit of God.

6. Stewardship is devotion and service to God and his Church as persons, as families, as metropolises, as national Churches, and as the Church universal. (Ron Nicola, "Stewardship - A Set of Basic Principles," The Word, November 1982,4.)

Perhaps we could summarize the points just mentioned this way: Christian stewardship is a life in service to God and His Church motivated by our thankfulness for His love to us . . . ".... in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died

for us." It is the wise and proper use of all the gifts God has entrusted to our care. (See Romans 5:8) What **then are the essential** elements of stewardship?

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

1. Acceptance of the belief that all life and life itself is a gift from God.
2. Freedom to choose not to sin and freedom from the constraints, pressures and temptations of the world that smother the expression of this belief.
3. Life in the Spirit which is characterized by behavior that uses and nurtures the time, talents, and treasure entrusted to us by God.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I become a member of the parish?

Membership in the Orthodox Church begins at Baptism (Chrismation for some) and continues throughout our life. We are united with Christ through the sacraments and through our faithful offering of our lives to Christ. We have to distinguish however between voting members and non-voting members. A voting member is over 18 years old and has turned in a signed stewardship commitment

card (for time, talent and treasure). The Archdiocese also requires the voting member to remain current through the year on their commitments. Overall true membership in the Body of Christ, involves living daily according to His word and within His Church.

Why must I commit to give a specific amount?

Knowing the amount of your monetary participation helps our parish plan the activities throughout the year. Your

monetary stewardship is kept in the strictest of confidence.

What if I cannot fulfill my stewardship commitment?

During the course of a year, people's circumstances change. Your stewardship is valued because it is made out of your love for God and His Church. Please do not be concerned if you are unable to meet your stewardship commitment – we are glad you are a part of this parish.



CHOSEN AND APPOINTED BY GOD TO GO AND BEAR FRUIT

Our theme for 2013 is **Chosen and Appointed by God to Go and Bear Fruit** from chapter 15 of the Gospel of John. At the Last Supper, as we read in Chapter 15 of the Gospel of John, Jesus instructed His disciples, "I Am the Vine; you are the branches."

He was telling us that the purpose of our abiding in Him is to bear fruit for God in the world. "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit..." Just as the vine bears fruit through its branches, so Jesus has chosen to work in the world through us.

We are the members of His Body. We are the branches through which the True Vine must bear fruit. We bear fruit when we serve and support God and His Church.

Stewardship

Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability,

reverence, and responsibility before God. A primary goal of Stewardship is to promote spiritual growth and strengthen faith.

Becoming a Steward begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. As Stewards, we affirm that every aspect of our lives comes as a gift from Him. Stewardship calls on the faithful to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which they have been blessed.

The Steward

An Orthodox Christian Steward is an active participant in the life of the Church. The Parish encourages all who accept the Orthodox Faith to become practicing Stewards.

Each year the Steward is expected to carefully review his or her personal circumstances and make a commitment of

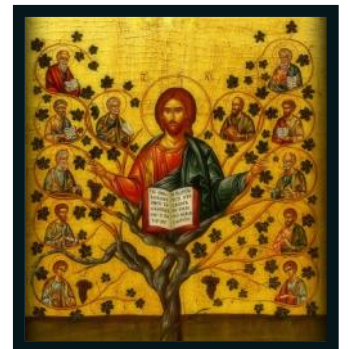
time, talent, and treasure to support the Parish and her Ministries, which in turn also support the National Ministries of our Archdiocese, Metropolises, and institutions.

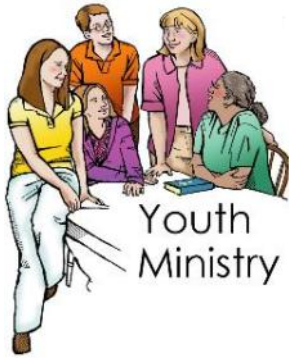
Stewardship is not about paying the bills.

The goal of stewardship is not to pay the bills of the church; the goal of stewardship is to fulfill the purpose of our lives by participating in and enabling the good works of the Church in our Community.

Stewardship is how we should live everyday of our lives, fully engaged and responsible about our life in Him. Stewardship is a practice that can re-shape our world and ourselves in such a way that we can experience God's grace, love and communion in the present. Stewardship is not about survival of the parish, is about personal and communitarian growth in Christ.

WE ARE ALREADY
HALF WAY TO
OUR \$265,000
GOAL.
IF YOU HAVE
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STEWARDSHIP
CARD PLEASE DO
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YOUTH MINISTRIES ON THE MOVE

As we reported at the November General Assembly, YM is very proud of our GOYA group. They did some major fundraising in 2012 to come from a deficit to now being in the black. They were able to afford most of the cost of the January GOYA basketball tournament and still leave some money in the bank. Bravo to all of you for all your hard work. And, thanks to the parish council for helping them out with the remaining

cost.

We hope that many from our parish will cheer the GOYAns on at the basketball tournament, Jan. 19-20. Saturday games will be played at Fieldhouse USA in Frisco; and if we make it to final rounds on Sunday, games will be played at St. Mark's School in Dallas (Hicks Gym).

YM is in the midst of encouraging our middle school and high school students to work

on their essays for the 2013 Oratorical Festival which will be hosted by St. George's in Albuquerque, April 12-14. Topics have been shared with the students but we will address them in more detail starting in the new year.

Καλή πρωτοχρονιά

Harriet Blake

YM coordinator

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

I'm sure you've enjoyed this year's Christmas musical program. Every child had an opportunity to shine. It was very nice to see our youths perform.

I send heartfelt thanks to our ChurchSchool teachers for their dedication to our children.

*Pre-K and Kindergarten:

Mrs. Maria Kerbow, Ms. Allison Medvic, Mrs. Tina Molhoek

*First and Second grades: Mrs. Theresa Alexander

*Third and Fourth grades: Mrs. Esther Petercsak

*Middle School: Mrs. Harriet Blake

*Teen-age: Mrs. Anca Mor-

covescu, Mrs. Hilary Walker, Mr. David Walker

Church school will resume on January 6th.

Happy New Year!

Khanh Moutafis

CHURCH
SCHOOL WILL
RESUME ON
JANUARY 6TH.

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN HOW TO PRAY

*This is an excerpt from the blog
<http://orthodoxmom.com>*

In order for parents to give their children Christian training, they themselves must first of all be pious and God-fearing; they themselves must love to pray. If the mother does not have faith and piety, if she does not find-because she does not seek-joy and consolation in prayer, she will not succeed in teaching her children to be pious.

Bishop Irenaius-On the Upbringing

of Children

This is something I need to keep in mind at all times. It's so easy for me to forget how closely children observe their parents. If I expect them to treat all people and situations around them in a manner befitting an Orthodox Christian, than I first must do this.

In order for our children to become pious Orthodox Christians, it is our responsi-

bility to teach them to pray. Here are things that have been helping me with this task and I hope you'll be encouraged as well.

• **Be Consistent.** Create a schedule. This doesn't mean at 8:00 a.m. on the dot we need to wake them if they're still sleeping. It simply means that as soon as they awaken, change their clothes and wash up, we need to say our morning prayers and then sit down



PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

Thank you for the overwhelming response to the calls from Philoptochos these past two months. Because of YOU, we have supported the following events/projects:

****Godparents Sunday** - \$200 donated to Hurricane Sandy victims who are parishioners of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Staten Island, NY, and \$150 donated to our church benevolent fund.

****Poinsettia plants** adorning the narthex and church steps honoring loved ones and memorializing those who have gone before us.

****Christmas Bake Sale** supporting our general treasury.

****Mid-Cities Christmas Providers Program** (Adopt-a-Family) collected many gifts and so many gift cards. The Ageless Wonders alone collected almost \$300 in gift cards and donated them to these families.

****Outreach visits** to our home bound and confined members of the parish.

Coming up on January 13 we will have our annual Vasilopita auction celebrating the New Year and supporting those stu-

dents at St. Basil's Academy.

We rely on you to provide for all these needs and you have shown your generosity time and time again. To the Philoptochos members who use their talents and time to make these events and projects happen, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. And to those of you who share your treasure to complete the work, may Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ bless you three-fold.

Joanie Ruppel, President
St. Irene Philoptochos



TO THE
PHILOPTOCHOS
MEMBERS WHO
USE THEIR
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CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE REPORT (CONT.)

(Continued from page 6)

for breakfast. If possible, choose a time when the whole family can pray together.

• Lead by Example. Children do as they see, which means they need to see us praying. Not just reading the services but sincerely praying to God from our hearts. Let them see you giving thanks to God and praying for others. Let them see and hear you praying in times of fear or trouble. What a blessing it is to have our children turn to God first in the midst of trouble!

• Make them feel involved. During prayer times let them hold a candle or an icon. If they're old enough to cense the icons, let them. Ex-

plain to them at what point they should make the sign of the cross or a prostration; allow them to sing the alleluia's or Lord have mercy's. Another simple, yet powerful thing to do is teach them the Jesus Prayer; even the smallest of children can utter the sweet name of Jesus!

• Send them off with prayer. Before they leave for school or in the car if you drive them, say a prayer with them asking Christ, the Panagia, their Guardian Angel and/or patron saint to guide and protect them. Pray for their teacher and classmates. Give them the opportunity to pray for their activities of the day, any special tests or other concerns they may have. This will

make them comfortable and get them into the habit of including God in all aspects of their life as well as learning to pray, and ultimately love, all the people around them. Read the *Akathist to the Theotokos, Nurturer of Children*. This service takes 15 minutes and contains the most powerful prayers I have ever read for a mother and child.

Read the entire article [here](#)





St. Isaac the Syrian

MUSIC
MINISTRY,
CHOIR AND
CHANTERS
PAGE



St. Roman the Melodist

CHOIR NOTES — IT'S BEEN A GOOD YEAR !

On Stewardship Sunday, I was discussing with another parishioner how it felt to be a member of the choir. This person shared with me how much he enjoys fully immersing himself in the liturgy, reading the verbal prayers, as well as the prayers said silently by the priest. He also sings the hymns and petitions. I understand his love of the deep meaning of the liturgy and it got me to thinking about how we all approach the liturgy in different, yet reverent, ways.

From the time we converted to Orthodoxy, some 25+ years ago, to now, I have participated in different ways. Before we had children, I was able to devote myself completely to learning

about the faith and the Liturgy. When the children were young, I devoted my worship to teaching my children how to “be” in church and how to participate in the liturgy. When my boys were old enough to serve, I helped with the Sunday school. I had always had an interest in the choir but, had felt intimidated at how professional they sounded and didn’t feel that my voice was good enough.

When we were blessed to find a home at St. John’s, it was like a new chapter. The choir sounded so beautiful and I felt myself being drawn to giving it a try. I still feel like a “deer in the headlights”, as one member so lov-

ingly remarked last week J, because I don’t read music and have no experience with music at all. I simply love to sing! And they let me sing! I love how the music emphasizes different notes in one word and how the meaning is so beautifully conveyed when we are all singing, as one voice. I never really looked at it that way before.

I don’t hear every prayer that is being said and I occasionally can get distracted but, I definitely FEEL the prayers and the Holy Spirit working, flowing, through the priest, altar boys, chanters, choir members, and parishioners. I am so thankful that I found my home in the choir.

FAMOUS PROTOPSALTI—THRASYVOULOS STANITSAS

Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas was born at Hypsomatheia of Constantinople in 1910 (or according to others, in 1907). He received his first music education from his uncle Demetrios Therapeianos. Afterwards, he was educated by Michael Chatziathanasiou, Demetrios Voutsinas, Giaggo Vasiliades, and John Palases.

He chanted in various churches of the City. In 1939, when the Lambadarios Constantine Priggos succeeded the retired Protopsaltes Iakovos Nafpliotis, Stanitsas was called from outside as the most suitable for the post of the Lambadarios of the Great Church of Christ. It must be noted that Thrasyvoulos Stanitsas, as he confessed it himself, initially found it difficult and put a lot of effort into chanting, until he learned the lessons that are chanted according to tradition in the Patriarchal Church, being invited from the outside. It is said that the ever-memorable Anastasios Michalides, also known as «sompatzis»

due to his profession, who was First Domestikos under Nafliotes, trained him every week on the lessons that he was about to chant.

This seems to be the way things happened when previously cantors had been hired «from outside» to the Patriarchal Church. A. Vou-doures (First Domestikos of the Patriarchal Church) in an article in 1937 in Orthodoxy mentions the following: «The people summoned from outside to the positions of the Protopsaltes (and the Lambadarios) of the Patriarchal Temple found great difficulty to the patriarchal psalmody, a difficulty, which they overtook with great effort, being required during their time as Protopsaltai to be directed and dragged along into chanting by the Lambadarioi and the Domestikoi of the Church, as this happened with S. Gregoriades (1866) and G. Violakes (1876) who immediately became Protopsaltai».

But, Stanitsas managed very

quickly to become a worthy successor of the position of his predecessors. With his patience, his unique talent and ability, his fame was spread to the whole City, especially with his successes to the «Σὲ ὑμνοῦμεν» (We praise you...), the Communion hymns and foremostly the «Troparion of Kassianes», which after chanting it at the Patriarchate he was called to chant it and at other Churches of the City «at the modest patriarchal command». Stanitsas was Lambadarios for 20 years opposite Constantine Priggos, and thus sucked in all his art and mastery. After a lengthy illness of his predecessor C. Priggos, in 1960, Stanitsas was promoted by the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I into Archon Protopsaltes of the Great Church of Christ. The ceremony took place on the third Sunday of the Lent of 1961. Unfortunately, he was not allowed to stay for a

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THE FIRST SERMON OF CHRIST (CONT.)

(Continued from page 3)

family and so on and so on... We seem to never learn.

The fact that John's and Christ's calls are one and the same has a special significance that further exposes the work of salvation in our lives. John's first call to repentance is a call to meet Christ, to go out, find and embrace Christ in our lives, to let Him be born in our hearts so we can grow in Him and Him in us

Christ's call to repentance is an invitation to aspire at the next level, to change our secular way into His ways, to learn from the emptiness of a life without Him in order to fill it with His presence. It is a call to leave sin out of our lives and embrace virtue, to learn from our mistakes so our future would be brighter.

By future I do not mean a mere 80 or even a few extra years, if we are blessed. By future I mean an eternity in the Kingdom of Heavens. This is the future we are growing by planting the mustard seed of faith in our lives. Its fruits we'll taste eternally. I'll say that again, *eternally!* This promise is the great fulfillment of our creation, is God's authentic will for mankind: to be with Him

forever in a transfigured world as partakers in the love of the perfect Trinity.

We don't know exactly *what* the Kingdom will be like, we know it will be a new heaven and a new earth but what does this mean? Jesus only spoke about it in parables comparing it to 10 virgins, a vineyard, a treasure hidden in the field and so on. We also don't know *where* the Kingdom is. Some imagine it as a distant place, unreachable, elusive; others even deny its existence. We are also oblivious of *when* the Kingdom will actually come: today, tomorrow, next week, in a thousand years? Many tried to guess it but failed; even the all wise Mayans. It is a great mystery that won't be solved until it will actually happen. But we hear from Christ's very mouth that it is at hand, it is reachable and this is all that matters. When, where, how, is not that critical to know. What is important is to qualify as a citizen. God will reveal the rest when the time will be ripe.

So for us the Kingdom becomes a choice. Like choosing to be among the 5 wise, or choosing to do the will of the Father is a choice, or choosing to be a fertile ground for the Word of God is a choice, or

choosing to uncover the hidden treasure of the Gospel. All this are choices that make us draw near the promised entrance.

The martyrs have understood this and affirmed the Kingdom even with the price of their lives and thus receiving crowns of glory from Christ's very hands. As their faith grew stronger so the Kingdom of God drew closer. The fact is that the Kingdom was right in their hearts. St Ignatius the God Bearer of Antioch said to his executioner that he had Christ in his heart. So to mock him even after they killed him, they cut out his heart and cut into pieces. What they found however to their surprise was the letters ICXC NIKA, Jesus Christ conquers, on each and every piece. Christ had His mark in St Ignatius' heart.

This kingdom is what we should seek first; everything else is nice but not absolutely necessary. *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well* (Matthew 6:33). This is our primary concern, to make it in the kingdom, the rest is trivia. Repentance is the only way to get there by answering the call of Christ and following in His footsteps with boldness all the way to the end.



Archangel Gabriel

By Photios Kontoglou

*BUT SEEK FIRST
HIS KINGDOM
AND HIS
RIGHTEOUSNESS,
AND ALL THESE
THINGS WILL BE
GIVEN TO YOU
AS WELL
(MATTHEW
6:33).*



Thrasylvoulos Stanitsas

FAMOUS PROTOPSALTI—THRASYVOULOS STANITSAS

(Continued from page 8)

long time in the Patriarchal Temple as Protopsaltes, as he was expelled in 1964 due to the known Turkish government policy on the Cypriot issue, when it

expelled 30.000 Greek natives living in Constantinople. Thereafter, Stanitsas came to Greece, and stayed for a year in Chios where he chanted all around the island. Then he goes for two months in Beirut, and from 1966 until his

retirement in 1981 he chants in St Demetrios Acharnae, Athens, and leaves back a tradition, while in the meanwhile, in 1967, he goes for 3 1/2 months to America. But generally, at periods, he chanted all around Greece.



SACRAMENTS IN THE PAST MONTH

Baptism: Jeremy Forcum

CATECHISM CLASS

A new Catechism class for seekers in the Orthodox faith will start again this year. First class will be on February 10. If you are interested please contact Fr. Vasile Tudora so we can add you to the e-mail list and get you started!

GLADSOME LIGHT DIALOGUES

After a long break due mostly to the construction of the New Building the Gladsome Light Dialogues, our adult faith weekly interactions will be back in 2013!!

Stay tuned for more information. In the meantime please visit us for the latest articles on the web at [Gladsome Light Dialogues Blog](#)

AGELESS WONDERS

Happy New Year to all Ageless Wonders and to all our Parish!

NEW
CATECHISM
CLASS
STARTING
FEBRUARY 10!!

USHER SCHEDULE

- 1st Sunday: Barbara Vittas, Bob Steffaro
- 2nd Sunday: Hope File, Michael Eftimie
- 3rd Sunday: Larry Leeders, Karen Kinman
- 4th Sunday: Nina Sullivan, Raj Shah
- 5th Sunday: Chris Geil, Nancy Medvic
- Fill-in: Harry Karegeannes

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

- 1st Sunday: Bennett Kerbow, Jackson Wright, Alex Genovezos, Caleb Ellis, Luca Tudora
- 2nd Sunday: Michael Beebe, John Molhoek, Alex Shah, Chris Eftimie, Joseph Berca
- 3rd Sunday: James Seals, Alex Genovezos, Caleb Ellis, Luca Tudora, Matei Tudora
- 4th Sunday: Michael Beebe, John Molhoek, Alex Shah, Chris Eftimie
- 5th Sunday: Michael Beebe, James Seals, Alex Genovezos, Alex Shah, Luca Tudora

COFFEE HOUR HOST

- 1st Sun.: (Jan. 6 - Holy Theophany)
- 2nd Sun: Parish Council
- 3rd Sun: GOYA
- 4th Sun: Philoptochos
- 5th Sun: Parish Council (if applicable)

COFFEE HOUR DUTIES

SETUP

Arrange pastries/food in a desirable manner on the appropriate tables in the parish hall.

You are responsible for making the coffee. Make two pots: one regular, one decaf. Plug in be-



fore going into church. The instructions are in the kitchen.

Prepare a tray with sugar, creamer, sugar substitute, mixing straws, a few spoons. Set with trash bucket.

Put donation basket out with appropriate sign.

CLEAN UP

Wash all dishes soiled, including coffee pots.


















Return sugar tray to kitchen and replenish it.

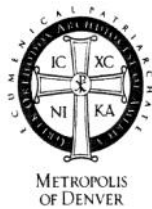
Wash off hall tables and kitchen counters.

Thank-You

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

JANUARY 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
		 <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM			 <i>Royal Hours</i> 6:00 PM	 <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM <i>Great Vespers & Lity</i> 5:00 PM
<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>
 HOLY THEOPHANY <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM <i>Great Blessing of Waters</i> <i>Vespers</i> 5:00 PM Church Nameday Dinner 6:00 PM	<i>Synaxis of St. John the Baptist. Church Feast Day</i> <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Hierarchical Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM				 <i>Vespers</i> 6:00 PM	Holy Martyr Tatiana <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM Vasilopita Baking 9:00 AM <i>Great Vespers</i> 5:00 PM
<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>
Sunday after Theophany <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM Bill Wright Memorial Vasilopita Auction <i>Vespers</i> 6:00 PM	Holy Fathers Slain at Mt. Sinai and Raithu <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 6:00 AM		 <i>Paraklesis</i> 6:00 PM		 Basketball Tournament (Dallas)	Basketball Tournament <i>Great Vespers</i> 5:00 PM
<i>20</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>
12th Sunday of Luke (10 Lepers) <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM Basketball Tournament	Basketball Tournament		 <i>Paraklesis</i> 6:00 PM			<i>Great Vespers</i> 5:00 PM
<i>27</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>31</i>		
15th Sunday of Luke (Zacchaeus) <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM		<i>Vigil</i> 6:00 PM	 The Holy Three Hierarchs <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 6:00 AM		Fasting Symbols: <i>Fast Free</i>  <i>Fish allowed</i> 	<i>Wine/oil allowed</i>  <i>Strict Fast</i> 



**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

303 Cullum Dr.
Euless, TX 76040
Tel 817 283-2291

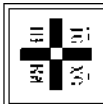
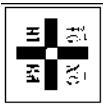
Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT

Sponsorship for This Month's Forerunner



**WE'RE ON THE WEB AT
[HTTP://STJOHNDFW.INFO](http://stjohndfw.info)**



The Holy Theophany
January 6

Vol. XXIX No. 1 JANUARY 2013

THE FORERUNNER

