Often times, when we enter an Orthodox Church, our eyes are immediately taken to the iconography, especially if we haven't been to Church for quite some time. We see things, that we may not have noticed before, because we are viewing them from a different perspective. How many of us have noticed the Icons of the Saints that are depicted on top of columns in our Church, but never really seen them?

This past month, on December 11th, we celebrated the feast day of one of these saints, Daniel the Stylite. He was born in a little village near Samosata (which is located in modern day Turkey) during the 5th century. From the time of his youth, Daniel’s heart was always set on serving God. When he turned 12 years of age, he travelled to a local monastery to beseech the Abbot to allow him to join as a novice. While the Abbot was initially hesitant to permit him to join the brotherhood because of his young age – he soon overcame his reluctance because of Daniel’s earnest supplication and request. He could see, through God’s Grace, the true desire of Daniel’s heart. As a result of the young man's plea - Daniel was permitted to enter the monastery where he faithfully undertook the tasks and prayer rule assigned to him. After some time, and in the presence of his overjoyed parents, he was tonsured a monk.

One day, while traveling with the Abbot to a meeting of Archimandrites that was called by the Archbishop of Antioch, Daniel had the opportunity to visit the illustrious Saint Symeon the Sylite, whose unusual ascesis was the admiration of some but questionable to others. As they approached Saint Symeon they could feel God's presence in the person of the saint who was situated high on a column. They could also sense the weight of the battle that was being waged by this holy man through prayer and God’s Grace.

It is said that priest-monks who were traveling with Daniel recoiled in fear and that only Daniel found the courage to climb the ladder and receive a blessing from the Saint. “Take courage, Daniel, be strong and patient,” Saint Symeon said to him, “for you will have to bear many hardships for God. But I trust in the God whom I serve that He will strengthen and accompany you on your way.”
Sometime later the Abbot of the monastery died, and Daniel, who was then 37 years old, was appointed to succeed him. He continued to devote his life to God and prayer. When he was 57 years old he had a vision of Saint Symeon the Stylite standing before him at the top of a huge pillar of cloud; on either side of him were two men of shining appearance who, at the command of the Elder, fetched Daniel and brought him up to his side. Symeon gave him a fatherly embrace and disappeared into heaven, leaving his spiritual son on the pillar accompanied by the two angels. The vision was confirmed soon after by the arrival of the monk Sergius, one of the disciples of Saint Symeon the Stylite, bringing with him the leathern, hooded tunic of the Saint.

In the strength of this sign and informed in a dream that the time was at hand, Daniel left the monastery to follow the way of Saint Symeon and to climb a twelve-foot-high pillar which, through the care of some friends, had been made for him, just outside Constantinople in a lonely spot, indicated by the fluttering of a white dove sent by God. The owner of the land, an officer of the imperial household, annoyed at the trespass, wanted to drive Daniel off his property; but a sudden storm which destroyed his vines, together with the steadfastness of the Saint, worked such a change in him that he was inspired to have a new, higher pillar set up beside the first one for the heroic soldier of Christ. Sergius settled at the foot of this new pillar in order to attend to the direction of the ever-increasing number of disciples who were called to pray at the foot of the column.

A spectacle to men and to angels, Daniel never moved from there and lived only for heaven; in return God made the pillar a channel of His grace, which poured forth abundantly upon the faithful who travelled to receive the Saint’s blessing. The miracles, signs, healings, words of salvation and heavenly wisdom of the Stylite soon attracted crowds of visitors, including Empress Eudocia and the Emperor Leo, who would express his gratitude to the Saint by having the foundations laid for a third pillar.

It’s not easy to dedicate one’s life to prayer and fasting. We all are aware of how easily we become distracted in prayer. Yet Daniel remained resolute and strong. He remained steadfast in his supplication to God, undistracted by satan’s attempts to dissuade him.

Not long after Daniel had taken his station on the third column a violent storm arose and the pillar, which had not been well secured, rocked back and forth in the wind and driving rain.

The disciples of the Elder trembled for his life but he uttered not a word and persevered in prayer. The following year, his leathern tunic was torn off by the strong wind one winter’s night, and the snow congealed over his body as a thick layer of ice. It wasn’t until late in the next day that the wind abated and his disciples were able to set up a ladder and thaw him out with hot water. They were amazed to learn that, as he froze on the pillar, the Saint had been carried away in spirit to a place of refreshment where he conversed with Saint Symeon the Stylite. Following this incident, the pious Emperor insisted on a small shelter being put up above the pillar to protect Daniel from the worst of the weather. So greatly did the Emperor admire the holy Stylite’s way of life that he had a palace built nearby and brought all his royal guests and ambassadors out to visit the Saint.

In fact, the Saint’s pillar became one of the most venerated places of pilgrimage within reach of Constantinople, and people from all over the world made their way there. The Emperor prevailed with Daniel to allow a great hospice for the reception of these pilgrims to be built beside the church where the relics of Saint Symeon the Stylite had been brought from Antioch.

Like an earthly angel, with heart and eyes ever turned toward God, the holy man lived
a stranger to vainglory and pride. His countless miracles were for him the opportunity of advancing in humility; he did not attribute them to any virtue of his own, but he would send those who came to him to venerate the relics of Saint Symeon or to anoint themselves with the oil of the lamps which were burning near his tomb.

Daniel showed this same wonderful humility even in his death. When he fell sick, Emperor Anastasios had a beautiful tomb prepared for him; but then Daniel recovered, and made the Emperor promise to bury his body deep in the earth, below the relics of Saints Ananias, Azarias and Misaël (December 17). He stayed crouched on the pillar in prayer for thirty-three years. Upon his death on December 11, 493, at the age of 84, his body was buried as he had requested – so that the answered prayers of anyone venerating his grave would be attributable to the holy Martyrs.

It may be fair to ask what can we learn today, from the life of this Saint who separated himself from the world, living a life of prayer, while situated on top of a pillar? What example can he provide us now, over 1,500 years after his death?

The truth is that Saint Daniel the Stylite continues to rise before us as a beautiful example of prayer and perseverance.

Prescribed Covid-19 precautions have kept us, for the better part of nine months, separated and segregated from each other; in a state of isolation. Living in a reality that only bears a reflection of the life ‘we once knew.’ We have seen our actions curbed – even our access constrained – and have been besought at various moments with overwhelming feelings of unseen temptations such as anger, distress, panic, loneliness and jealousy.

If left unchecked these thoughts run the risk of overtaking us; distracting us from our journey towards salvation by focusing simply on ourselves.

Saint Daniel rises in front of us as an example for us to change our perspective. His presence on the pillar reminds us that we are called to look beyond ourselves heavenward towards God. Through prayerful supplication and perseverance God will grant us, through His Grace, a new invigorated attitude and open our eyes to the many blessings which He continues to grant us. Let us use this opportunity to refocus our resolve on God. As we enter 2021 let us set firmly on a course of action that leads us closer to Heaven. Let our lives be changed – not just by the glimmer of the availability of a number of vaccines – but by the true Light of Christ, which enlightens our path and calls us all to salvation and into God’s Loving Arms.

In this Light – we see things clearer. We recognize God’s Love and Grace in all things. We find strength and endurance even in the midst of turmoil and the courage to persevere even when we feel weakened.

In the Apolytikion of Saint Daniel the Stylite we chant the following words:

“You became a pillar of patience, O devout one, emulating the forefathers, Job in his sufferings and Joseph in his temptations, and the manner of the bodiless, though you were still in body. O devout father Daniel, intercede with Christ God, to save our souls.”

As we begin this new year may God continue to grant us the opportunity to express our gratitude to our Lord for the many blessings He continues to bestow on us.

May we emulate the resolve of the Prophet Job, the steadfastness of the noble Joseph, the attentiveness of angels and the fortitude of Saint Daniel the Sylite and find strength through endurance.

Faithfully,

Father Peter
Many celebrate the feast days and know their designations, but the cause for which they were established they know not. Thus concerning this, that the present feast is called Theophany -- everyone knows; but what this is -- Theophany, and whether it be one thing or another, they know not.

...It is necessary to say that there is not one Theophany, but two: the one actual, which already has occurred, and the second in the future, which will happen with glory at the end of the world. About this one and about the other you will hear today from Saint Paul, who in conversing with Titus, speaks thus about the present: “The grace of God has revealed itself, having saved all mankind, decreeing, that we reject iniquity and worldly desires, and dwell in the present age in prudence and in righteousness and piety” -- and about the future: “awaiting the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:11-13). And a prophet speaks in this way about this latter: “the sun shall turn to darkness, and the moon to blood at first, then shall come the great and illuminating Day of the Lord” (Joel 3:4).

Why is not the day, on which the Lord was born, considered Theophany -- but rather this day on
which He was baptized? This present day it is, on which He was baptized, and sanctified the nature of water. Because on this day all, having obtained the waters, do carry it home and keep it all year, since today the waters are sanctified; and an obvious phenomenon occurs: these waters in their essence do not spoil with the passage of time, but obtained today, for one whole year and often for two or three years, they remain unharmed and fresh, and afterwards for a long time do not stop being water, just as that obtained from the fountains.

Why then is this day called Theophany? Because Christ made Himself known to all -- not then when He was born -- but then when He was baptized. Until this time He was not known to the people. And (to show that) the people did not know Him… John the Baptist says: “but there stands One among you whom you do not know.” (John.1:26). And is it surprising that others did not know Him, when even the Baptist did not know Him until that day? “I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit” (John 1:33). Thus from this it is evident, that -- there are two Theophanies, and why Christ comes at baptism and on whichever baptism He comes, about this it is necessary to say: it is therefore necessary to know both the one and equally the other. And first it is necessary to speak your love about the latter, so that we might learn about the former.

There was a Jewish baptism, which cleansed from bodily impurities, but not to remove sins. Thus, whoever committed adultery, or decided on thievery, or who did some other kind of misdeed, it did not free him from guilt. But whoever touched the bones of the dead, whoever tasted food forbidden by the law, whoever consorted with lepers -- that one washed, and until evening was impure, and then cleansed. “Let one wash his body in pure water” -- it says in the Scriptures, -- “and he will be unclean until evening, and then he will be clean” (Leviticus 15:5, 22:4). This was not truly of sins or impurities, but since the Jews lacked perfection, then God, accomplishing it by means of this greater piety, prepared them by their beginnings for a precise observance of important things. Thus, Jewish cleansings did not free from sins, but only from bodily impurities. Not so with ours: it is far more sublime, and it manifests a great grace, whereby it sets free from sin, it cleanses the spirit and bestows the gifts of the Spirit.

And the baptism of John was far more sublime than the Jewish, but less so than ours: it was like a bridge between both baptisms, leading across itself from the first to the last. Wherefore John did not give guidance for observance of bodily purifications, but together with them he exhorted and advised to be converted from vice to good deeds and to trust in the hope of salvation and the accomplishing of good deeds, rather than in different washings and purifications by water. John did not say: wash your clothes, wash your body, and you will be pure, but what? – “bear fruits worthy of repentance” (Matthew 3:8).

Since it was more than of the Jews, but less than ours: the baptism of John did not impart the Holy Spirit and it did not grant forgiveness by grace: it gave the commandment to repent, but it was powerless to absolve sins. Wherefore John did also say: “I baptize you with water… He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matthew 3:11). Obviously, John did not baptize with the Spirit. But what does this mean: “with the Holy Spirit and with fire?” Call to mind that day, on which for the Apostles “there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them” (Acts 2:3).

And that the baptism of John did not impart the Spirit and remission of sins is evident from the following – Saint Paul found certain disciples, and said to them: “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said, “No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They said, “Into John’s baptism.” And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance,” – repentance, but not remission of sins; for whom did he baptize? Having proclaimed to the people, that they should believe
in the One coming after him, namely, Christ Jesus. “Having heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus: and Paul laying his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them” (Acts 19:1-6). Do you see, how incomplete the baptism of John was? If the one was not incomplete, then why would Paul have baptized them again, and placed his hands on them; having performed also the second, he showed the superiority of the apostolic Baptism and that the baptism of John was far less than his. Thus, from this we recognize the difference of the baptisms.

Now it is necessary to say, for whom was Christ baptized and by which baptism? Neither the former the Jewish, nor the last -- ours. From where does He need remission of sins? How is this possible for Him, Who has not any sins? “Of sin,” -- it says in the Scriptures, -- “worked He not, nor was there deceit found in His mouth” (1 Peter 2:22); and further, “who of you convicts Me of Sin?” (John 8:46). And His flesh was privy to the Holy Spirit; how might this be possible, when it in the beginning was fashioned by the Holy Spirit? And so, if His flesh was privy to the Holy Spirit, and He was not subject to sins, then for whom was He baptized?

But first of all it is necessary for us to recognize, by which baptism He was baptized, and then it will be clear for us. By which baptism indeed was He baptized? -- Not the Jewish, nor ours, nor John’s.

For whom, since you from your own aspect of baptism does perceive, that He was baptized not by reason of sin and not having need of the gift of the Spirit; therefore, as we have demonstrated, this baptism was alien to the one and to the other. Hence it is evident, that He came to Jordan not for the forgiveness of sins and not for receiving the gifts of the Spirit.

But so that some from those present then should not think, that He came for repentance like others, listen to how John precluded this. What he said to the others was: “Bear ye fruits worthy of repentance;” but listen what he said to Him: “I need to be baptized of You, and do You come to me?” (Matthew 3:8, 14). With these words he demonstrated that Christ came to him not through that need with which people came, and that He was so far from the need to be baptized for this reason -- so much more sublime and perfectly purer than Baptism itself.

For whom was He baptized, if this was not done for repentance, nor for the remission of sins, nor for receiving the gifts of the Spirit? Through the other two reasons, of which the one the disciple speaks, and about the other He Himself spoke to John. Which reason of this baptism did John declare? Namely, that Christ should become known to the people, as Paul also mentions: “John therefore baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.” (Acts 19:4); this was the consequence of the baptism. If John had gone to the home of each and, standing at the door, had spoken out for Christ and said: “He is the Son of God,” such a testimony would have been suspicious, and this deed would have been extremely perplexing. So too, if he in advocating Christ had gone into the synagogues and witnessed to Him, this testimony of his might be suspiciously fabricated. But when all the people thronged out from all the cities to Jordan and remained on the banks of the river, and when He Himself came to be baptized and received the testimony of the Father by a voice from above and by the coming-upon of the Spirit in the form of a dove, then the
testimony of John about Him was made beyond all questioning. And since he said: “and I knew Him not” (John 1:31), his testimony is trustworthy.

They were kindred after the flesh between themselves “wherefore Elizabeth, thy kinswoman, has also conceived a son” -- said the Angel to Mary about the mother of John (Luke 1: 36); if however the mothers were relatives, then obviously so also were the children. Thus, since they were kinsmen -- in order that it should not seem that John would testify concerning Christ because of kinship, the grace of the Spirit organized it such, that John spent all his early years in the wilderness, so that it should not seem that John had declared his testimony out of friendship or some similar reason. But John, as he was instructed of God, thus also announced about Him, wherein also he did say: “and I knew Him not.” From where did you find out? “He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit” (John 1:32-33). Do you see, that the Holy Spirit did not descend as in a first time then coming down upon Him, but in order to point out that preached by His inspiration -- as though by a finger, it pointed Him out to all. For this reason, He came to baptism.

And there is a second reason, about which He Himself spoke -- what exactly is it? When John said: “I have need to be baptized of You, and do You come to me?” -- He answered thus: “Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness” (Matthew 3:14-15). Do you see the meekness of the servant? Do you see the humility of the Master? What does He mean: “to fulfill all righteousness?” By righteousness is meant the fulfillment of all the commandments, as is said: “both were righteous, walking faultlessly in the commandments of the Lord” (Luke 1:6). Since fulfilling this righteousness was necessary for all people -- but no one of them kept it or fulfilled it -- Christ came then and fulfilled this righteousness.

And what righteousness is there, someone will say, in being baptized? Obedience for a prophet was righteous. As Christ was circumcised, offered sacrifice, kept the sabbath and observed the Jewish feasts, so also He added this remaining thing, that He was obedient to having been baptized by a prophet. It was the will of God then, that all should be baptized -- about which John says: “He having sent me to baptize with water” (John 1:33); so also Christ: “the publicans and the people do justify God, having been baptized with the baptism of John; the pharisees and the lawyers reject the counsel of God concerning themselves, not having been baptized by him” (Luke 7:29-30). Thus, if obedience to God constitutes righteousness, and God sent John to baptize the nation, then Christ has also fulfilled this along with all the other commandments.

Consider, that the commandments of the law is the main point of the two denarii: this debt, which our race has needed to pay; but we did not pay it, and we, falling under such an accusation, are embraced by death. Christ came, and finding us afflicted by it, He paid the debt, fulfilled the necessary and seized from it those, who were not able to pay. Wherefore He does not say: “it is necessary for us to do this or that,” but rather “to fulfill every righteousness.” “It is for Me, being the Master, says He, proper to make payment for the needy.” Such was the reason for His baptism, wherefore they should see, that He had fulfilled all the law, both this reason and also that, about which was spoken of before.

Wherefore also the Spirit did descend as a dove: because where there is reconciliation with God, there also is the dove. So also, in the ark of Noah the dove did bring the branch of olive, a sign of God’s love of mankind and of the cessation of the flood. And now in the form of a dove, and not in a body, this particularly deserves to be noted -- the Spirit descended, announcing the universal mercy of God and showing with it, that the spiritual man needs to be gentle, simple and innocent, as Christ also says: “Unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3). But that ark, after the cessation of the flood, remained upon the earth; this ark, after the cessation of wrath, is taken to heaven, and now this Immaculate and Imperishable Body is situated at the right hand of the Father....
"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

2 Timothy 4:7

«Τὸν ἁγώνα τὸν καλὸν ἡγώνισμαι, τὸν δρόμον τετέλεκα, τὴν πίστιν τετήρηκα»

β’ Τιμ. 4:7

Τον καλὸν αγώνα διά το Ευαγγέλιον του Χριστού ἐχω αγωνισθεὶ μας λέγει σήμερα ο Απόστολος Παύλος.

Τον Απόστολο Παύλο εκάλεσε ο Θεός εἰς ἕνα πολύπλευρον αγώνα. Τον εκάλεσε πρῶτον να γίνη ἀγιός. Να ομοιάσῃ προς τον Αρχηγόν Του. Καὶ κατόπιν να οδηγήσῃ καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους εἰς τὸ φῶς του Χριστού, διὰ να γίνουν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἄγιοι.

Η κλήσις αυτὴ εἶναι θεία, εἶναι τιμητικὴ καὶ ουράνιος αποστολή. Εἰς αὐτὴν τὴν αποστολὴν ἔλαβαν μέρος ὅλοι οἱ ἄγιοι της Εκκλησίας μας, οἱ μάρτυρες, οἱ πατέρες, οἱ υπόσκες, οἱ σπουδαίοι, οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ τόσοι ἄλλοι θριαμβεύσαται της πίστεως μας.

Ἡ ἱδιὰ κλήσις ὡς ἐπεκύρωσεν από τὸν Κύριο καὶ πρὸς ὅλους τοὺς χριστιανοὺς κἀκεῖστος, γιὰ νὰ λάβουν μέρος εἰς τὸν αγώνα αὐτὸν τῆς αρετῆς καὶ αγίατης, καὶ νὰ γίνου τὸ ἄλας τῆς γῆς καὶ τὸ φῶς του κόσμου. Αὐτὴ εἶναι η μόνη πρόσκλησις, η ὧν γίνεται χωρὶς τὴν παραμικρὰν εξαίρεσιν. Καλοῦνται ὅλοι χωρὶς ουδὲνος εξαίρουμενον.

Ο λόγος του Θεοῦ μας βεβαιώνει, ότι εἰς τὴν θείαν αὐτὴν κλήσιν ἔχουν τὸ δικαίωμα, τὴν εὐκαιρία καὶ τὸ καθήκον ὅλοι ὁσὶ ἔχουν νὰ ανταποκριθοῦν.

Ο Ἀπόστολος Παύλος εξαίρετος που ηγαίνει. Η πίστις του ἦτο βεβαιὰ, ότι η πορεία του αὐτῆ καταλήγει εἰς τὸν οὐρανό. Οτι αναμένει τὸν στέφανον τῆς νίκης, καὶ εμπιστεύεται εἰς τὴν αγάπη καὶ υπόσχεται τοῦ Κυρίου.
Celebrating the Feast Day of Saint Barbara

There is a beautiful hymn chanted in the Paraklesis Service of Saint Barbara that states: “You are the Savior’s famous prizewinning Martyr and our helper in adverse circumstances… Barbara, we pray and entreat you to protect us from epidemics and from terrorist attacks, from disaster and catastrophe and urgent need.” This hymn is just one of many that reminds us how the Patron Saint of our Church strengthens us all in Christ.

On December 3rd and 4th we gathered to celebrate the vespers and feast day of our patron Saint. A number of parishioners were able to be present in the Church to welcome His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, who led us in the celebration of the Great Vespers Service, while even more participated online. It was the first time that the Archbishop was able to visit our community since our parish’s Centennial Jubilee. While less people were able to be physically present the celebration was festive as we lifted up hymns of praise in honor of our beloved Saint Barbara.
As we continue to navigate the continuing effects that Covid-19 has had on our extended family of humanity, we, as a community of faith, persevere in prayer to God, through the intercessions of our patron Saint, to bestow peace and healing to the world. While we continue to see the suffering brought about by this pandemic, we have also witnessed the fortitude of each of us, and the promise brought about through God’s Grace of at least two vaccines in addition to a number of effective therapeutic treatments.

I conclude with the words of the following Μεγαλυνάρια Hymn from the Paraklesis Service of
Saint Barbara the Great Martyr: “Everyone who comes to your church and prays receives grace and mercy and a quick answer to his prayer. Therefore we implore you, receive our supplications and grant us our petitions, Barbara our Patron Saint.”
His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America Homily at the Vespers of the Feast of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Tonight, we continue our journey to the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ through three very special days in the life of the Church, which begin with your Heavenly Patroness, Saint Barbara the Great Martyr. It is Barbara whom we honor with hymns and praises this evening, and who leads off these three days – December 4th, 5th, and 6th, that are a profound image of the life and experience of the Church.

We commence this evening – with a woman and a martyr. We often do not think of the leadership of women in the Church because of the all-male liturgical priesthood, but in fact, women were the first witnesses of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they announced it to the Disciples.1

Indeed, it was these same women, Disciples of the Lord, who had remained by the Cross of the Lord, and led in the burial customs after His saving death. In the Epistle of Saint Paul, we read of many women leaders and deaconesses, including Phoebe, Chloe, Junia and Priscilla.

But it is in the ranks of the Martyrs that women often surpass men in their devotion and faith unto death. And here we know that in the earliest days of the Church, Saint Barbara bore witness unto the shedding of her own blood, and received the crown of martyrdom.

For the blood of the martyrs watered the seed of Faith that was sown throughout the Roman Empire, and from which the harvest of the Church was achieved. Without the astounding and indeed miraculous testimony of the martyrs, the message of God’s love might not have been as believable for a doubting and indifferent world. That is why Saint Barbara and parishes such as this that carry her holy name are so important to the memory of not only the origins of the Church, but her future as well.

There have been martyrs in every era of the Church, but where there has been little persecution, it is the Saints represented by December Fifth's feast – that of Saint Savvas the Sanctified – who continue this witness to the truth. For that is what the monastic life is called to be, a witness to the radical love of God for every human being. In a monastery, you do not choose any one of your monastic family. They are simply there, like your family of blood relations. But unlike that personal family, you have no experience of the monastic family because you did not grow up with them. And yet, the monastic vocation is to love the brotherhood or sisterhood in Christ with the same sacrificial love of God that was witnessed upon Golgotha. This is a very real martyrdom of the ego and the self-centered existence that dominates so much of our world today.
You see how Barbara’s sacrificial testimony in her own blood, becomes transformed into Savvas’ testimony in his deeds. But there is one motivation behind them both, and that motivation is love. Barbara loves God so much that she gives up her life for Him. And Savvas loves God so much that he gives up his ego for Him. And they both lead to the next day, December 6th, when we celebrate the Wonderworker of Myra, Saint Nicholas.

As a Hierarch of the Church, I have a special love and appreciation for Saint Nicholas. For in his ministry, we see the arc of love – exemplified in martyrdom by Barbara, and in monasticism by Savvas – we see it come full circle. Saint Nicholas’ ministry was directed toward others and their needs – material, physical, spiritual. The love of God welled up in the Bishop of Myra’s heart and it overflowed in his diakonia to his people, who were and still are the children of God.

Thus, my beloved Christians, the blood that flowed in martyrdom from your Celestial Guardian, Saint Barbara, was transmuted into the interior martyrdom of Saint Savvas. And in Saint Nicholas, this same sacrificial love becomes the “precious myrrh” and “dew of Hermon” that nourishes the Church through the hierarchical ministry.  

Therefore, let us honor and praise the Holy Barbara, whose martyric love launches these days of holiness that ultimately lead to Incarnate Love Himself, born in a Cave and laid in a Manger for our salvation. Amen.

1 See the Apolytikion of the Plagial of the Second Tone and Matthew 28:1-10 as well as Luke 24:1-10.
2 Psalm 132 (LXX) – “μύρον ἐπὶ κεφαλῆς” and “δρόσος Ἀερμών”.
Building Resilient Communities
Tips & Tools

1. Have a plan in place – identify resources you, your family, and your community can bring to bear before crises. That way you are prepared to provide services and care in the wake of a disaster.

2. Create multiple avenues to allow all people to access assistance or service opportunities.

3. Focus on courage and hope in spite of fear. While it is okay to feel afraid, demonstrating courage inspires hope and engagement.

4. Engage all year round! You don’t have to wait until a disaster strikes to get involved. Stay active through volunteering monthly, packing hygiene and cleanup kits, or making your own monthly IOCC Care Calls.

General Tips

Youth and Young Adults

Worship - prayer must be central in everything we do with our young people

Connect - allow quality time to be spent with their peers and work on ways to incorporate service into everything they do.

Engage youth in designing response ideas - people support what they create; kids are no different

Debrief - give youth the opportunity to break experiences down for themselves and talk about their experiences

Ensure that opportunities to serve or help are tangible

Parish Focused

Take an inventory of the talents and resources within your parish community. Identify potential leaders who can be tasked with developing the policy/procedure for response to needs from within the greater community. This gives a real sense and culture of shared ownership and room for healthy discussion of differences of approach before crisis happens. Signing up to become an IOCC Homefront parish can help a community prepare.

Develop a clear line item in the parish budget for response to greater community issues. This could be called a “Benevolence Fund” or “Crisis Response Fund.” Talk about this fund regularly, even in times of calm. Reinforce that this is a part of the culture of the parish.

Provide opportunities - (during COVID, even over ZOOM) for non-crisis, non-political engagement among parishioners (book study, young family groups, etc). Often personal interactions where one does not just have to focus on the problems can create and remind parishioners of the deeper faith and human bonds they have with one another. These bonds are especially important to keep intact during times of crisis and disaster.

Always have proper and robust debriefing sessions. Even if it is a non-crisis situation (a homeless family comes to the parish and the parish responds, an appeal is given to support a charity, etc), give room for honest debriefing about what was done well, what new challenges arose that were previously not revealed, etc.
Saint Barbara Young Adults, through the Telos Project, gathered via Zoom on December 20th for the next installment of “Rise and Shine with Faith - Christmas Edition.”

The lively discussion focused on the Nativity Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom that was featured in the December Issue of SparkLight. Many expressed how much they enjoyed the reading - which, because it was a sermon, had what they described as “an intimate feel.”

The group found Chrysostom’s comments around the incomprehensible nature of Christ’s birthday completely relatable and validating. Our Faith is what allows us to believe the unexplainable. As he said, “where God wills, the order of nature yields.” We may not be able to understand the way God works, but we believe because of our Faith. During a Christmas season that looks very different from others, we hold onto this Faith and understanding that greater things are ahead of us.

We look forward to our next Rise and Shine where we will continue to come together to explore our faith through readings of the Church with open, judgement-free conversation.

To participate in the next series of discussions or other Saint Barbara Young Adult initiatives please visit: @StBarbara_Yam on Instagram or Saint Barbara Young Adults on Facebook.

Eugenia Stavrianos

Eugenia grew up in Stamford, CT and moved to Stratford, CT with her family in 2006. She is new to the Saint Barbara parish, and is motivated to be a part of the parish because everyone is welcoming and it feels like one big family. Eugenia is motivated to be a part of YAM so that she can meet more young professionals like herself and get involved more within the parish.

Eugenia is a Registration Manager at Reed Exhibitions, an event and trade show organizer with events in 40 different countries. Her job involves a lot of travel, and she enjoys working in hospitality, seeing different parts of the country, and meeting people from around the world. Eugenia’s short term goals include building on her leadership skills, becoming more confident in her work, and working towards a promotion at work.

In her free time, Eugenia enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling, attending country music concerts, going to professional sporting events, cooking and baking. Eugenia’s favorite Greek food is moussaka, specifically her Mom’s moussaka!
Parish Council Elections

Congratulations to the following individuals for their election to the Parish Council – Cynthia Anasson, Emanuel Cosmas, Maria Diamantis, Vasilia Kaouris and Antonios Panagiotakis.

Many thanks and congratulations to the following outgoing Parish Council members, for their tireless dedication to our faith and the life of our parish: Melissa Papantones (who served in the office of Vice-President) and Mike Suffredini (who served in the office of Treasurer).

Without volunteers like you, the progression of our community would not have flourished as it has. We look forward to others being inspired by all who serve on the Parish Council, various committees and organizations of the Church.

Church Professionally Disinfected

The Church facilities were professionally disinfected on December 11th through a generous donation of time and talent by Saint Barbara parishioners David and Teressa Patrick who own Patrick Family Chem-Dry Company.

Their professionally trained technicians treated all the surfaces throughout the church using a disinfectant approved by the EPA for use against SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19. We thank them for their continued assistance and care.

New Fund Established

The members of the Saint Barbara Endowment Fund are pleased to announce the creation of the Ted Vartelas Community Outreach Fund: Established by his children Pamela Alessio, Robyn Reilly and Jonathan Vartelas in honor of their father’s legacy of compassion and generosity. Earnings from this fund are used for philanthropic causes at the discretion of the Parish Proistamenos.

In addition to the current 35 named scholarships, this fund is now the 10th special fund that has been established within the Endowment Fund for the support of cultural advancement, religious education, athletic ministries, landscaping, maintenance and general needs, and philanthropic purposes.

Parish Christmas Card

Our sincerest apologies to the following families whose names were mistakenly omitted from our Parish Christmas Card:

Terry & Paris Stamos Heath, III
Evelyn D. McGrath
Saint Barbara Parishioner Honored

Saint Barbara parishioner Chris Winkel was one of four UConn student-athletes awarded the National Strength and Conditioning Association’s (NSCA) 2020 All-American Athlete of the Year Award. Chris was recognized for his athletic accomplishments and dedication to strength and conditioning.

Before the 2020 spring season was cancelled, Chris, who serves as Captain of the Baseball Team, was hitting .348 with three doubles, one triple and five RBIs. During the Huskies’ five game winning streak to finish the year, the UConn centerfielder was 11-18 (.611) and recorded four multi-hit efforts including a pair of three-hit contests.

Coach Joel DeMarco states: “Chris is an exceptional athlete and leader for our baseball program. He has a tireless work ethic and a passion for improving his skills both on and off the field. Chris was in the top 10% of our testing protocol since his arrival on campus as a freshman but his consistent approach and hard work have kept him in the top echelon of our performance standards for four years. He exemplifies all of the personal attributes that we strive for in the strength and conditioning profession. He was named team captain as a junior and has set the standard very high for our baseball program.”

Chris (1B/CF) and his brother Pat (C) are members of the UConn Baseball Team.

CrossRoad is a ten-day academic summer institute that prepares high school juniors and seniors to make big life decisions and invites them to connect with the Orthodox Christian theological and spiritual tradition in a deep and meaningful way.

CrossRoad offers a space for young people to form authentic and lifelong friendships, ask hard questions, and explore their calling as an Orthodox Christian in the 21st century.

Attention High School Juniors & Seniors

Are you an Orthodox Christian high school junior or senior interested in exploring your faith? Seeking to make authentic Orthodox friendships? Yearning to wrestle with tough questions about meaning, purpose, and life? If so, apply to CrossRoad!

Session One:
June 12-June 22
Boston

Session Two:
June 29-July 9
Boston

Session Three
July 19-29
Chicago

Priority Deadline: January 4, 2021

For more information and to apply visit: www.crossroadinstitute.org
$250,000 in Scholarships

Each year the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation awards $250,000 in Scholarships. The awards are offered at two levels: twenty (20) Awards of $10,000 based on academic achievement and financial need; and twenty (20) Awards of $2,500 based solely on academic achievement.

The PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois promotes education by providing scholarships and programs to Greek American students who, guided by the values of their Hellenic upbringing, have the potential to become life-long significant achievers and contribute meaningfully to society.

Scholarship awards are offered annually to recognize and reward students who have demonstrated exceptional academic performance, and to provide meaningful support to those with great financial need.

By recognizing the achievements of outstanding students, the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation encourages the very best of our young Hellenes to continue their scholarly pursuit and strive to accomplish their highest goals.

Undergraduate students of Hellenic descent who are enrolled in an accredited university in any of the 50 United States are eligible to apply.

Application from eligible students are accepted through January 31, 2021. The application and qualification criteria, requirements and guidelines are available at: www.panhellenicsf.org

An estimated 6.8 million Americans donate blood each year

Only about 3% of age eligible people
Less than 38% of the population is eligible
to give blood or platelets.

Source: American Red Cross

Saint Barbara Philoptochos Sponsored Red Cross Blood Drive

Every day blood donors help patients of all ages. The American Red Cross reports that every two seconds someone in the United States needs a blood transfusion. It is essential for surgeries, cancer treatment, treatment of chronic illnesses and traumatic injuries. Whether a patient receives whole blood, red cells, platelets or plasma this lifesaving care starts with one person making a generous donation. One donation of blood can potentially save up to three lives as blood and platelets cannot be manufactured and can only come from volunteer donors.

The Saint Barbara Philoptochos Society held a Red Cross blood drive on December 10th, which marked the fourth blood drive they hosted in 2020. We had 79 donors and were able to collect 66 pints of blood. In total we have been able to collect 187 pints of blood during the four drives in 2020.

Many thanks to Penny Palavra and Stacy Herbert who chaired the drives and to all who assisted the Red Cross as well as all those who came forward and gave of themselves to help others.
La Archidiócesis Griega de América convoco recientemente una conferencia acerca de enseñanza religiosa en español. Se llevo a cabo los días 13 y 14 de diciembre 2020 el tema fue: “Ya no hay judío ni griego; ni esclavo ni libre; ni hombre ni mujer, ya que todos vosotros sois uno en Cristo Jesús” Gálatas 3:28.

Su Eminencia el Arzobispo Elpidophoro convocó la conferencia bajo la dirección del Obispo Demetrios de Moskissos, quién es el Jerárquico Proistamenos en el Santuario Nacional de San Photios en San Augustine, Florida, y director de la Enseñanza en español iniciado por la Archidiócesis. La conferencia se llevo a cabo los días 13 y 14 de diciembre de 2020.

Father Peter me hizo el honor de pedirme que yo representara a nuestra comunidad en la conferencia que tuvo lugar por vía zoom. Como punto de referencia yo nací y crecí en Montevideo-Uruguay, país localizado en el sureste de América del Sur, el
many years and have learned much about our faith over the years through our parish’s various ministries.

While there were many materials regarding the faith available in English it was difficult for me to be able to understand many of the traditions of our Church as English was my second language. I was so excited to hear, throughout this Conference, many of the resources that were being prepared by several clergy in our Archdiocese for Spanish speaking faithful.

I am so impressed. Religion plays such an important role in the lives of people from Central and South America. The Church, much like in Greece (and here at the Saint Barbara parish) plays an integral part in their daily lives. For me, this involvement continued when I moved to Connecticut and joined the Saint Barbara Community. When I first arrived – I was one of the first parishioners whose maiden tongue was Spanish – yet I was received with much love and welcome arms. Since then, I have had the honor to serve in the PTO, Philoptochos and Parish Council.

In the 40 years since I arrived here, our parish has had the wonderful opportunity to welcome a growing number of parishioners whose maiden language is Spanish. Many of them coming into the Church through the Sacrament of Chrismation, after marriage.

Those interested may view some of the videos available in Spanish and find more information online via Facebook at “Ortodoxia en Español”

I look forward to continuing to report on this growing ministry of the Church and to make Spanish speaking parishioners aware of the resources that are being produced to assist us on our journey towards salvation.

Mary Constantinidi
The Need For Scenes Of The Saint’s Life Cycle

By Bishop Joachim of Amissos

In general, the iconographic program of a Byzantine/Orthodox church includes various types of images and cycles, arranged in a hierarchical order: Christ in the dome; the Theotokos in the conch of the apse; the Christological cycle (consisting of various scenes from the life of Christ or the Virgin), located in the vaults or upper levels of the walls; and the sanctoral cycle (the depictions of figures of saints), below, closer to the faithful worshippers. Numerous churches, however, include a cycle of images (a Life cycle, Vita cycle, or hagiographic cycle) depicting scenes from the life of the saint to whom the church is dedicated.

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros has recognized the significance for such a cycle to be included in the Saint Nicholas Shrine at Ground Zero, and has blessed the inclusion in the iconographic program of the Shrine of Saint Nicholas scenes from the pictorial Life cycle of this most beloved and venerated Saint within Orthodoxy.

Scholars have pointed out that visual Life cycles of saints provide a different means of interacting with a holy figure than with the frontal, portrait-panel icon intended for personal prayer and contemplation. A Vita cycle depicted on the walls of a church has a more public aspect, and this is especially important for the Shrine which will see countless visitors. Such cycles not only honor a saint from the distant past, but they instruct the beholder and reveal various aspects of the saint who has dedicated his/her entire life to Christ. The faithful participate in the saint’s deeds through beholding them in the icon, and have an emotional response to them. And as Saint Basil the Great wrote, employing the metaphor of art itself, the lives of the saints are examples to be emulated:

“…just as artists, when they are using models, strive by looking at the original to transfer its distinctive features to their own canvas, so he who is striving to reach perfection in all the virtues in turn, by looking steadfastly at the lives of the saints, as if at living models, must endeavor to make their good qualities his own through imitation.” (Letter 2, Saint Basil: Letters, vol. I, trans. A.-C. Way, The Fathers of the Church [New York, 1951], 8-9).

For the Shrine of Saint Nicholas at Ground Zero, the hagiographical cycle of Saint Nicholas has a particular, site-specific resonance:
1. a Greek Orthodox church dedicated to Saint Nicholas has been in the location since 1916;
2. the tragic events of 9/11 with the destruction of the church and the horrendous loss of life on that day;
3. Saint Nicholas, as a powerful intercessor, has been shown to be especially venerated as an intercessor for the dead on the Day of Judgment;
4. various sacred depictions from Saint Nicholas’ Life were painted as coherent cycles in numerous historic churches across the Byzantine/Orthodox commonwealth, often in spaces where intercessory prayers for the dead were conducted;
5. scholars have also noted that the largest number of surviving Vita cycles of Saint Nicholas are not found in manuscripts or on panel icons, but rather on church walls-relating to the more public, funerary role in commemorating the departed;
6. there was also a chapel dedicated to Saint Nicholas attached the exterior east wall of Constantinople’s Hagia Sophia—a chapel known to have existed since the eleventh century—and was designated especially for refuge and legal asylum - a most clear recognition of the Saint’s intercessory character (especially significant because the inspiration for the design of the Shrine is Hagia Sophia itself!)

The visual role of the iconographic program reinforces the Orthodox Church’s teaching of Christ’s victory over death, proclaimed by His Resurrection and in the life of His Saints, a victory also promised to faithful believers. The very name of our beloved Holy Hierarch, Saint Nicholas himself, declares this triumph: Nicholas- Νικόλαος-νίκη-λαός-the people’s victory.

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AHEPA Chapter 98
2nd ANNUAL ESSAY COMPETITION 2021

ELIGIBILITY: College Students and High School Juniors & Seniors from the Saint Barbara Parish

ESSAY TOPICS: College: Optimal National Leadership in a Democratic Society to Counter a National Crisis like the Current Pandemic.

High School: Your Experiences with On-Line Learning; the Good, the Bad, and the Indifferent; Give Examples

AWARDS: 1st place: $500 • 2nd place: $250 in each category

CRITERIA: (a) Length of Essay between 500 and 750 words (1 to 1.5 Page)
(b) To the extent possible, connect Essay ideas to the AHEPA personal and social values (faith, reason, excellence, truth, joy of life, free mind, individual freedom, philanthropy).

DUE DATE: February 15, 2021

Mail Essay to: Ahepa Chapter 98, 480 Racebrook Road, Orange, CT 06477, accompanied by a separate page to include personal information: Name, Age and Year in High School or College, postal and e-mail address, and Name of School in 2020-2021. On the back of the envelope write “Ahepa Essay Competition”.

For further information and to declare your entry in the competition (required) contact:
E. Hadjimichael at ehadjimichael@fairfield.edu  Tony Delos at stonacium@aol.com or Elias Lolis at elias.lolis@yale.edu
Covenant Care Community Christmas Tree

On Wednesday, December 16th the Saint Barbara Community gathered together for the annual Covenant Care Community Christmas Tree prayer service in our Church. Father Peter led the parish in the service highlighting prayer of remembrance for any loved ones who have fallen asleep. As a community we offered a fortitude of prayers beseeching God for spiritual strength and comfort.

This year's service was held on the same evening as the first significant snowstorm in our area. That, coupled with Covid-19 precautions, led to many of our parishioners hoping to join us in prayer online, even though a small numbered were able to be present in person.

Unfortunately, a number of technical glitches prohibited the service from being properly broadcast. While the live stream seemed to be working prior to the beginning of the service – as the service was set to begin there was trouble with the internet connection and the live stream failed. In addition, the software that we use internally to ‘send out’ the broadcast began to experience ‘trouble.’ We tried to solve the issue by rebooting the computer and the router several times but to no avail. We were hoping that we would be able to record the service on the computer and then post it afterwards on our YouTube channel – but unfortunately, the program continued to malfunction and did not record.

Father Peter and Presbytera Vangie prayerfully prayed and read aloud each of the names that were submitted as the 667 individual Leaves of Remembrance were lovingly and graciously placed on the Covenant Community Christmas Tree by Saint Barbara parishioners: Marcy, Jim and Patrick Winkel.

All those beautiful souls, whose names you submitted, were prayed for, and their heavenly prayers lifted us up as well, like a huge continual hug. It was so very powerful and peaceful and we hope the feeling continues through ongoing prayers.

Thank you for your understanding, prayers and participation. May our Lord continue to guide and protect us all.
“Car Caravan of Love” Demonstrated by Saint Barbara Choir

There is so much love still permeating from the incredible, caring, and dare I say ‘daring’ Choir Car Caravan Parade of goodwill, that headed out to Evelyn’s McGrath’s house on December 6, 2020, to wish her a blessed 99th Birthday. The enthusiasm in preparation of the event was spilling over in the parking lot that day as we all prepared to head off to Sunset Drive en route to a true celebration of life!

What a great way that each of the choir members, and other people present, put into action the words echoed by Fr. Peter in his sermon that morning as we celebrated the Feast day of Saint Nicholas. The miracle working Saint was with us, seeing Evelyn that day with her excitement and her joy at the front door. We went to give a gift, but we received much more.

Fr. Peter spoke of how we each are permitted to do acts of kindness and goodwill as an extension of God’s Grace gifted to us. He spoke about how our actions, by the grace of God, with Christian Agape, are answered prayers for others.

Every person who planned to go to Evelyn’s house that day to greet her, certainly did this out of loving kindness, out of being part of a group of messengers that sing hymns continually.

Although the Pandemic circumstances keep the Choir members from seeing one another weekly in person (at in-person Choir practice or in Church on Sundays or special service Feast days) it does not keep each one of us from the ongoing connection through the praise that lives in each of our hearts.

From Fr. Peter and my perspective that day, looking across the yard, we saw Choir members leap out of their cars with joy, with enthusiasm - through the risk assessment of the Pandemic - and deciding to take a stand for celebration, at a safe-distance, with safety precaution of masks, and with trust in the Lord to greet our dear friend and co-worker in Christ, the ever-incredible Evelyn McGrath.

The Choir really looked exactly like earth angels that day - gently showering the area with ‘trimmings of rainbows’ as they excitedly tossed glimmerings of hope in the air, in the form of hand-torn biodegradable colored tissue paper which looked like a rainbow of color streaming across the lawn in front of Evelyn and her daughter, who were standing at the front door of the house.

May that wonder of the day, the prayers that accompanied that journey from Saint Barbara Church to her home, continue to inspire us all.

May God continue to bless each and every one of us. For those who were unable to make it out there that day, we hope this note invites you into the activity of the heart that took place. We all are called to do what we can, when we can, to impart no judgement, but to be supportive and to continue in hope as we all prepare for the day that we gather again, as a large strong Church Community in Christ, with and for the Glory of God in all things.

Thank you all of being an instrument of God’s Peace that day. With prayers for all to stay strong.

In Christ,

Presbytera Vangie
STEWARDSHIP 2020

We are thankful to the following 730 individuals who have pledged $416,825 towards our 2020 stewardship goal of $390,000. To date 396,108 has been received towards those pledges. If you have not yet fulfilled your stewardship pledge for 2020, we ask that you please call the Church Office or simply send in your Stewardship Donation. We are so grateful for your love and support of our parish. If you are 18 years or older - please consider becoming a steward. Thank you!

Mr. John Agapiou  Mr. & Mrs. George Arnaoutis  Mrs. Petrina Canevari  Mr. Fotios Diamantes
Mrs. Bessie Agapiou  Mr. & Mrs. John Atherson  Mr. George Carafides  Mrs. Antigoni Diamantes
Mr. Michael Albanis  Mr. Steven Baklas  Mrs. Alexis Carafides  Mrs. Ilia Diamantis
Mrs. Anna Albanis  Mrs. Debbie Baklas  Mr. & Mrs. Dan Carbine  Mrs. Maria Diamantis
Mr. Anthony Alessio  Mr. Dennis Bakousis  Mrs. Renee Cascio  Mrs. Vasilios Diamantis
Mrs. Pamela Alessio  Mrs. Despoina Bakousis  Mr. Constantine Chagares  Mrs. Keira Diamantis
Mr. Alexander Alexiades  Mr. James Ballas  Mrs. Helen Chagares  Mr. & Mrs. Marc DiCicco
Miss Alexandra Alexiades  Mrs. Demetra Ballas  Mr. Basil Chalts  Mr. & Mrs. Al DiGrazia
Mr. Elias Alexiades  Mrs. Lisa Ballas  Ms. Eccelia Chalts  Mrs. Melissa Dinar
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Mr. Antonios Amoratis  Mrs. Mary Ballas  Mr. James Chow  Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Dolan
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Mr. Iakovos Amoratis  Dr. & Mrs. Gregory Baron  Miss Claudia Basel  Mrs. Barbara Downey
Mr. Nicholas Amoratis & Stacey Cascone  Miss Melissa Basel  Mr. Edward Basel  Mr. Dan Drago
Mrs. Cynthia Anasson  Mr. Lillian Basel  Mrs. William Anderson  Mrs. Monica Drago
Miss Nina Waskiewicz  Mrs. Penelope Basel  Mrs. Lillian Basile  Dr. Andreas Drakonakis
Miss Eleni Waskiewicz  Miss Babette Basil  Dr. Helen Bass  Mrs. Jane Drakonakis
Mr. Charles Waskiewicz  Dr. Mary Bass  Mrs. Mary Bass  Mr. & Mrs. Peter Drougas
Mrs. Maria Anastasion  Mr. Theodore Belales  Mrs. Angela Belales  Dr. Haralambos Efthymiou
Mr. Theona Anastasion  Mrs. Angela Belales  Mr. James Benas  Mrs. Ariel Efthymiou
Mr. Gregory Anastasiou  Mrs. Marina Benas  Mr. Christopher Benas  Mrs. Pantelis Efthymiou
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Mr. Anastasios Anastopoulos  Miss Svetlana Benas  Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Crane  Mrs. Paul Efthymiou
Mr. Peter Anderson  Mrs. Martha Benas  Mrs. Sharon Cox  Mrs. Rachel Efthymiou
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Ms. Sophia Antirodias-Pampoukidis  Mrs. & Mrs. Joseph Angeletti  Mrs. Peggy Elefteriades  Mrs. Maria Elefteriades
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Angeletti  Mrs. Nicole Bikakis  Mrs. Paris Elioopoulos  Mrs. Virginia Eleioopoulos
Mr. Athanasios Angelopoulos  Mrs. Mary Bitzakis  Mrs. Mary Dakis  Mrs. Kostas Elioopoulos
Mrs. Maryann Angelopoulos  Mr. James Bitzoni  Ms. Nicki Dakis  Mrs. James Elioopoulos
Miss Irene Antar  Mrs. Kirsten Bitzoni  Mr. A. Paul Dalkas  Mr. Stylianos Emmanouil
Mr. Nick Anthis  Mr. & Mrs. Stamatios Biznis  Dr. Estell Pappas  Mrs. Kalohe Emmanouil
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Mrs. Vasiliki (Valerie) Anton  Mrs. Zoe Biznis  Ms. Eudoxia Daoutis  Kristin Esares and Daniel Dwyer
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Antonakis  Mrs. & Mrs. Christea Daoutis  Mr. George Daoutis  Mr. Stephen Esares
Mr. & Mrs. John Antonakis  Mrs. Anastasia Bolovinos  Mrs. Pinelopi Daoutis  Mr. & Mrs. Charles Esposito
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Mrs. Margaret Bratsenis  Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Borelli  Mr. Elias Dakalakas  Mr. Paul Faracas
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Mr. Esther Cambrass  Mr. & Mrs. William Cambrass  Mr. Vasilis Diakogeorgiou  Mrs. Antonio Armetta
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Arabolos  Mr. Daniel Canevari  Mrs. Elieni Diakogeorgiou  Mr. Owen Gavagan
Greening the Orthodox Parish
A four part webinar series to equip Orthodox Christians to be stewards of Creation

January 7, 2021
6 pm
Orthodox Initiatives
What is happening in parishes, what is possible and effective

Frederick W. Krueger
Dr. George P. Nassos
Hieromonk Michael
Franchesca Duval

January 8, 2021
6 pm
Ecumenical Practices
Insight into best practices in ecumenical partner churches.

Shantha Ready Alonso
Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas
Rev. Dr. Jim Antal
Rev. Dr. Leah D. Schade

January 14, 2021
6 pm
Communities at Work
Ways and practices to put creation care into action in our communities.

Karenna Gore
Rev. Fletcher Harper
Patrick Carolan
Martin Palmer

January 15, 2021
6 pm
Hopeful Aspirations
Young adult hopes for now and the future to protect God’s Creation.

Message from Dr. Jane Goodall
Ephemia Nicolakis
Nike Pappas
John and Alexios Touloupis
Steven Christoforou

Questions?
ecumenical@goarch.org

To Register Visit:
www.goarch.org