On January 1st, we celebrate the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great. Therein, we encounter a prayer by St. Basil which retells the whole story of our salvation, beginning with Adam and ending in Christ. As we embark on the new year, making new decisions, facing new challenges, and undertaking new efforts, I hope that this prayer can serve as a reminder of the bigger picture: the story of God’s love, and how it has worked through Christ to bring us to salvation. When you need strength or direction, read this prayer slowly and allow the words of St. Basil to draw eternity into your day.

When You created man and had fashioned him from the dust of the earth and had honored him as your own image, O God, You set him in the midst of a bountiful paradise, promising him life eternal and the enjoyment of everlasting good things by keeping your commandments. But when he disobeyed You, the true God Who had created him, and was led astray by the deceit of the serpent, he was made subject to death through his own transgressions. In your righteous judgment, O God, You exiled him from paradise into this world and returned him to the earth from which he had been taken. But You provided for him the salvation of rebirth which is in your Christ Himself. For You did not turn Yourself away forever from your creation whom You had made, O Good One, nor did You forget the work of your hands, but You visited him in different ways. Through the tender compassion of your mercy, You sent forth prophets. You performed great works by the Saints who in every generation were well-pleasing to You. You spoke to us through the mouths of your servants the Prophets who foretold to us the salvation which was to come. You gave us the Law to aid us. You appointed angels to guard us. And when the fullness of time had come, You spoke to us through your Son Himself, through whom You had created time. Being the Brightness of your Glory and the Stamp of your Person, and upholding all things by the power of his Word, your Son did not think of equality with You, Who alone are God and Father, as something to be grasped. And so, although He was God before time began, He appeared on earth and dwelt among us. He was incarnate of a holy virgin and emptied Himself, taking on the form of a servant and being conformed to the body of our lowliness so that He might conform us to the image of his glory. Since sin entered the world through a man and death through sin, so your Only-begotten Son, Who is in your bosom, our God and Father, was well-pleased to be born of a woman, the holy Birth-giver of God and ever-virgin Mary.

(continue on page 2)
ANNOUNCEMENTS

2019 FUNERALS

John Louis Perentesis + (September 29)
George D. Simos + (November 27)
Konstantinos Dakas + (December 16)
Tom George Melitsas + (December 17)

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL

2019 BAPTISMS

November 23 Presvia, daughter of Samuel & Andrea Schulte
Godparent is Olivia Siklich

November 24 Lukas, son of Thomas & Alici Bryson
Godparent is Steven Bryson

December 8 Magdalene, daughter of Trevor & Anita Bruckhorst
Godparent is Jim Axiotis

December 8 Alexandros, son of Trevor & Anita Bruckhorst
Godparent is Maria Axiotis

December 16 Aglaia, daughter of Alan & Jan Hukkala
Godparent is Margaret Stark

2019 WEDDINGS

November 30 Robert Koval & Stefanie Georges
Koumbara is Sophia Cordone

December 8 Trevor Brunckhorst & Anita Axiotis
Koumbaro is Christos Burdalas

PARISH COUNCIL

Opa Fest 2020
Planning has commenced for Opa Fest 2020! Please mark your calendars for June 19-21. Note the date change is moved up one weekend than previous years.

Office News
We are still in need of a maintenance man to replace Ty, our longtime handyman who has retired. The work is part time, 15 hours per week, for “light handyman” type of activity. Anyone interested in encouraged to contact our church office at 248-362-9575.

His Eminence is actively searching for a new priest for our community following Father Stratton’s retirement. All Sacraments plus Divine Liturgies will be covered by a clergyman from the Metropolis.

2020 Stewardship cards have been mailed, please make sure you submit them at your earliest convenience. There are additional cards in the Narthex next to the steward box. We appreciate your fellowship and continued support.

(PULPIT ARTICLE CONTINUED)

He was born under the Law, so that He might condemn sin in his own flesh, so that those who died in Adam might be made alive in Him, your Christ. He lived in this world and gave us commandments for salvation. He released us from the delusions of idolatry and brought us to the knowledge of You, true God and Father. He procured us for Himself as a chosen people, a royal priesthood and a holy nation. Having purified us with water, He sanctified us with the Holy Spirit. He gave Himself as a ransom to death by which we were held captive, having been sold into slavery by sin. He descended into the realm of death through the Cross, that He might fill all things with Himself. He loosed the sorrow of death and rose again from the dead on the third day, for it was not possible that the Author of Life should be conquered by corruption. In this way He made a way to the resurrection of the dead for all flesh. Thus, He became the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep, the first-born of the dead, that He might be first in all ways among all things. Ascending into heaven, He sat at the right hand of your Majesty on High, and He shall come again to reward each person according to his deeds.

-St. Basil the Great
December was a busy month and we could not have accomplished everything without you! Thank you to everyone who supported Philoptochos through donating their time, creativity, monetary donations, and love. Here is a recap of what we accomplished:

- Father Stratton’s retirement – it is bittersweet for our community to send Father Stratton off into retirement. Father Stratton and Pr. Denise received Shinola watches as a reminder that Detroit is home and that time is precious. We are grateful for the 18 years that we shared and look forward to seeing them over the years to come.
- Celebrated the feast day of St. Nicholas with a bake sale. We raised approximately $1,500 and the money will go towards our philanthropic obligations.
- Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams – a group gathered on Wednesday, December 18 to shine our lights to the children at Royal Oak Beaumont. It was such a magical experience.
- Sunshine Committee – Raised approximately $2,000 thanks to your generosity. The funds will be used for our Forget me Not baskets (Christmas and Easter), to help our Parish members and support our local community through Troy People Concerned.
- School Supplies – the remaining school supplies have been delivered to Linden Charter Academy. Thank you to everyone who donated. The teachers and students are very appreciative.
- Giving trees – FOCUS Detroit and Judson Center benefited from your generosity. We delivered the hygiene kits to a school in Detroit and the children put on a beautiful Christmas program to show their gratitude.
- Forget me Not baskets – We assembled and delivered approximately 40 Christmas bags filled with cookies, chocolates, a cross and love.

Upcoming events:

- Vasilopita Luncheon – Sunday, January 12. Please join us in celebrating the New Year! You can reserve your seat at the Church office with Cindy Crosson.
- January meeting – Wednesday, January 8 at 7:00 in the Church hall. We will be planning our 2020 activities and lining up guest speakers. We would love to hear what is important to you!

If you would like to get involved, please join us at our January meeting and share your ideas. You can also stay connected by following our Facebook page (Philoptochos St. Nicholas Troy) or submitting your email address to Philoptochos@StNicholasTroy.org to receive the monthly newsletter.

THANK YOU again to everyone! Many hands make for light work and we could not do it without you!

GOYA

This month GOYA hosted their annual Christmas party on December 13th at the George’s house. We had a great time together with food, games, and movies. On the 18th, GOYA attended Beaumont’s Moon Beams in Royal Oak. Thank you to everyone who came out to shine their lights and wish the patients a happy holiday!

Next month the GOYA Grand Rapids Olympics is planned. The GOYA officers will be meeting to plan out the GOYA calendar for the rest of the 2020 Sunday School year. We are looking forward to more trips and volunteer activities to come.

We hope everyone is having a blessed holiday season and a great start to the new year!
CATECHISM

As the Christmas holiday fast approached, the children of the Catechism in the spirit of philanthropy participated in their Community Service Projects (CSP) of the year. Our theme for the CSP will be “Children Reaching Out...” The first project is in conjunction with our Philoptochos with "Giving Tree- hats, gloves, mittens & scarves" for Focus Detroit. “The Giving Tree” second project, again with Philoptochos, is to provide personal hygiene products to families of Focus Detroit. And thirdly, “Moonbeams for Sweet Dreams” at Royal Oak Beaumont on Wednesday, December 18. This wonderful family activity was a great opportunity for our Catechism students along with GOYA and the various groups in the Church to come together and spread some love to the children in Beaumont Hospital during the Christmas season. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the children and families that participated in all the projects. The catechism office was overwhelmed with the outpour of gifts for the families. Our “St, Nicholas Sacks” were filled to the brim. The Mitten and Scarf tree was filled to the top with your gifts. We are blessed to have such wonderful families to help provide these families with a Merry Christmas. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Our annual Christmas program was held on December 22 with the children presenting “A Wonderful Baby’s Birth” with a breakfast brunch. Yes, there was a Santa Clause and he paid St. Nicholas a visit on December 22 after our Christmas program. Yup, you heard correct, Santa was here again. We would like to thank Mr. Nick Kaltsounis and his crew for providing the breakfast and to the parents and directors for letting us present this wonderful program and finally, to Santa, thank you for coming to town to visit the children of St. Nicholas.

As the new year approaches the Catechism classes will participate in the traditional cutting of the Vasilopita in their classrooms. We will let you know the lucky recipients of the hidden coin in the February Echo issue.

From the staff of St. Nicholas Catechism, we hope you had a Blessed and Merry Christmas and we wish you all a Healthy and Prosperous New Year.
Vasilopita Luncheon
hosted by the St. Nicholas Ladies Philoptochos Society

Sunday, January 12, 2020
Join us immediately following the Divine Liturgy in our Event Center

Festivities include the
cutting and distribution of the Vasilopita
at which time donations will be collected to benefit

St. Basil Academy

Buffet Luncheon
$15 in advance
($18 at the door)
Salad, Greek Stye Roast Chicken
Rice Pilaf, Vegetable, Vasilopita
Dessert, Beverage

Children (6-12 yrs, 5 & under - Free)
$6 in advance
($8 at the door)
Salad, Chicken, Macaroni & Cheese
Vegetable, Vasilopita
Dessert, Beverage

Reservations are preferred*
Limited tickets will be sold at the door
Seating Limited to the first 300 people

Name: ___________________________ Phone: ___________________________

Tickets: Adults: __________ Children: __________ Under 5: __________

Total amount enclosed: ___________________________

email address: ___________________________

*Reserved seats for tables of 8 or 10 must be accompanied with names and full payment for the table

For reservations please contact:
Cindy Crosson at euterpe_cdc@yahoo.com or 248.471.4375
Vasiliki Michalakis at vmichalakis@gmail.com or 248.842.4194
Vasilopita

Order Vasilopita for home
Pre-orders only with payment
NO sales will be available at the luncheon

Complete this form and submit with payment to
St. Nicholas Philoptocho
All bread will be available for pick-up on January 12 at the Luncheon

Please print clearly

Name: ____________________________________________

Phone: __________________________________________

Please order ______ Vasilopita(s) at $10 per loaf

Amount enclosed: _________ Check # _________ Cash _________

No orders taken after January 6, 2020

Make checks payable to St. Nicholas Philoptocho
in the memo line, please indicate St. Basil Academy

Return this form to the
Vasilopita Box in the Administrative Foyer
UPCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

January 1
OFFICE CLOSED

January 5
Blessing of the Waters 11:00am

January 6
Blessing of the Waters 11:00am
Great Vespers @ St John

January 9
Argonauts Luncheon 12:00pm

January 12
Vasilopita Luncheon 11:30am

January 20
NO GREEK SCHOOL
To our St. Nicholas Family:
The expressions of love, blessings, kind words of thanks, and your most generous and thoughtful gifts have overwhelmed us both.

God has truly blessed us with the honor of serving you.
Merry Christmas to all. May God bless our St. Nicholas church and to all those who call St. Nicholas home, a healthy, happy and joyous 2020.

May the blessings of our Incarnate Lord and Savior be with you always!

We love you,

Father Stratton & Denise
### January 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUNDAY SCHOOL HOSTING JANUARY COFFEE HOUR</strong></td>
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| 5 Sunday before Theophany | 6 Holy Theophany | 7 Synaxis of John the Baptist | 1 St Basil the Great Circumcision of Christ  
9:00am Orthros  
10:00am Divine Liturgy  
11:00am Blessing of the Waters  
12:00pm Choir Practice | | | |
| 9:00am Orthros  
10:00am Divine Liturgy  
10:30am Catechism  
11:00am Blessing of the Waters  
12:00pm Choir Practice | 9:00am Orthros  
10:00am Divine Liturgy  
11:00am Blessing of the Waters  
4:30pm Greek School  
7:00pm Adult Greek School  
Great Vespers @ St John | 9:00am Orthros @ St John  
10:00am Divine Liturgy @ St John | | | |
| 8 | 4:30pm Greek School  
6:00pm AHEPA Meeting  
7:00pm Adult Greek School  
7:00pm Philoptochos Meeting | 12pm Argonauts Luncheon  
7:00pm Choir Practice | | |
| 12 Sunday after Theophany | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 St Anthony The Great | 18 St Athanasios  
9:00am Orthros  
10:00am Divine Liturgy | |
| 9:00am Orthros  
10:00am Divine Liturgy  
10:30am Catechism  
11:30am Varlos Luncheon  
12:00pm Choir Practice | 4:30pm Greek School  
7:00pm Adult Greek School | 4:30pm Greek School  
7:00pm Adult Greek School  
7:00pm Parish Council Meeting | 11:00am Argonauts Board Meeting  
6:30pm Men’s Group Meeting  
7:00pm Choir Practice | | |
| 19 12th Sunday of Luke | 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
No Greek School | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 9:00am Orthros  
10:00am Divine Liturgy  
10:30am Catechism  
12:00pm Choir Practice | 7:00pm AHEPA Meeting  
7:00pm DOP Meeting | 4:30pm Greek School  
7:00pm Adult Greek School | 7:00pm Choir Practice | | |
| 26 15th Sunday of Luke | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |
| 9:00am Orthros  
10:00am Divine Liturgy  
10:30am Catechism  
12:00pm Choir Practice | 4:30pm Greek School  
7:00pm Adult Greek School | 4:30pm Greek School  
7:00pm Adult Greek School | 7:00pm Choir Practice | | |
Father Stratton & Presbytera Denise:
From the bottom of our hearts, your St. Nicholas family thanks you, and may God grant you continued health, happiness and strength. You have touched our lives in so many ways. Continue to keep in touch with all of us, as this is not a goodbye, but rather God Bless You as you embark on your next chapter. We love you both!