Beloved Parishioners,

We have seen a lot of societal turmoil over the past months resulting from the death of George Floyd and the more recent death of Rayshard Brooks. These deaths and others before them have released an anger and perhaps even a rage that seems to have simmered below the surface for years. Many are seeing in these deaths a sign of latent racism in America, that America and Americans are still not color blind, that we suffer from Societal Racism.

I would hope that we not rush to judgment regarding the individual motives behind the deaths of these two black men. Our system of justice as a nation requires due process, and in the case of an accusation of murder, a trial by jury of your peers for the police officers who have now been so charged. But more importantly, our Church in its broad and vast history has ALWAYS counselled us not to judge others judging the interior unspoken intention of another person is exactly the kind of judgment of others that we are commanded NOT to do!

However, we must look square in the face at the continuing disturbance that is affecting our nation. Are we a racist nation? This is the question that this social unrest is asking us to examine in ourselves (even if we disapprove of the way that they are asking the question!). Some of you reading these words may offer a reflexive NO, WE ARE NOT RACIST, we are simply a society of law and order and there exists no institutional or systemic racism in our country. But we must acknowledge that that is not the experience of many minorities in this country.

The New York Times in an article entitled: How Much Racism Do You Face Every Day? (1/20/2020) interviewed 101 black teenagers and asked them simple questions regarding their experiences over a two-week period. While we cannot describe this poll as scientific, here are just two of the questions that they asked: How many times did you encounter people who did not expect you to do well, because of your race/ethnicity? How many times did you encounter people who were surprised that you, given your race or ethnic background, did something really well?

I lived for a summer in Kenya while I was in Seminary. It was one of many pivotal moments of my life that helped to define me as a person. What I learned during those three months showed me what racism looked like in reverse. What I mean to say is that I saw how people assumed things about me because of my skin color that had no basis in reality but were only based upon societal stereotypes.

Continue on page 7
**Parish Council**

**Presiding Priest Fr Paul Update**
Fr. Paul continues his pastoral leadership for our parish in a variety of ways and our Parish Council and community are grateful for all his efforts in these unprecedented times of Coronavirus and social distancing requirements. Examples include virtual meetings Fr. Paul has held with many of the various ministries within our parish, working to reschedule and advise of upcoming Sacraments such as baptisms and weddings, as well as officiating various Sacraments and Trisagion. The weekly Sunday live Internet broadcast of Divine Liturgy, along with sermons and remarks on those days, have been a wonderful beacon for all the Faithful.

**Full Time Return of Fr Michael**
With the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas, the Parish Council together with Fr. Paul are delighted to share the news that Fr. Michael is returning to full-time status as our assistant priest as of June 15. Fr. Michael has completed the first phase of his studies and initiated this request. Together Fr. Paul and Fr. Michael will be working together to support our large and wide-ranging parish.

**Office Changes**
McKenna, who has been serving as our office administrator since last fall is relocating to Florida. We have a new office administrator in place, Maggie. She has had time to transition to her new role prior to McKenna leaving. We appreciate your support and patience when contacting the office until Maggie is fully up to speed. Maggie, welcome to our community and we wish McKenna all the best in her new adventure.

**Catering Events Return**
Using the guidelines published by Oakland County and the State of Michigan, Ernie's Catering has resumed hosting events on site at our Event Center. Nearly all events which fell during the Stay at Home order by the State and needed to be postponed have now been rescheduled; only a handful were ultimately cancelled. Please continue to support our excellent catering team and contact Sam and Marlaina directly for any of your catering needs.

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**Hellenic Dance Festival**
Our community will be serving as host to this year’s Hellenic Dance Festival in mid October.

**Upcoming Events**
- Aug 22 - tentative "Community Paniyiri Day"
- Sept 27 - tentative "Bring a Friend to Church Sunday"
- Sept 13 - Parish Picnic / Back to Sunday School Day
- Oct 9 - Tentative Family Night
- Oct 16-18 - Hellenic Dance Festival
- Nov 8 or 15 - General Assembly
- Nov 22 - Feather Party/Catechism Bake Sale
- Dec 6 - Feast Day of St Nicholas Breakfast/

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**Announcements**

**Baptisms**

**March 28**
Paris James son of Nicholas and Katie Chaka Parks
Godparent: Anton De Avila

**May 30**
Evgenios George son of George and Melissa Kyriakopoulos
Godparents: Carol and Kalliope Gaggos

**May 30**
Vasilea Dennis daughter of Arthur and Maria Post
Godparent: Alisha Serras

*Congratulations to the newly illumined servants of God, to their families and Godparents!*

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**Funerals**

Fr. George Emanuel Hatz (+May 15)
Maria Gornas (+May 15)
Mary Anthy Angelos (+May 25)

*May their memory be eternal!*
An Excerpt from St. Gregory the Great’s Commentary on the Gospel of John:

At that time, Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and we will make him our dwelling place. He who does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you have heard is not of me, but of the Father who sent me.”

John 14.23-31

Measure, dear brothers, what a feast it is to lodge God in his heart! If a rich and powerful friend entered your house, you would clean it up in haste, so that nothing could strike the eyes of the friend who enters. So let he who prepares for God a dwelling in his soul, blot out the defilements of his evil deeds.

But see what the Truth declares: "We will come, and we will dwell in him." It happens that God comes into the hearts of some without dwelling there, when these people, touched by compunction, are visited by the thought of God, but forget in the time of temptation that they were first touched with compunction, and return to their ancient faults as if they had not wept. But whoever truly loves God and keeps his commandments, the Lord comes into his heart and dwells in it, for the love of God penetrates him so much that he does not depart from it in the time of temptation. He, therefore, really loves, who does not allow himself to be dominated by the delectation of sin to the point of consenting to it. In fact, the more we take pleasure in what is low, the further we get away from the love from above. Hence the rest of the text: "He who does not love me does not keep my words."

Go back to yourselves, dear brethren, and inquire whether you really love God; let no one, however, accept the answer of his soul if he cannot join the testimony of his works. To verify that one loves his Creator, it is his language, his thought and his life that must be questioned. The love of God is never idle. If it exists, it operates great things; but if one does not want to do anything, it is not love.

Selected by Fr. Michael Manos

Save the Dates

(all dates are subject to change)

Aug. 3-7 - Faith and Fun Week

Aug 22 - tentative "Community Paniyiri Day"

Sept.27 - tentative "Bring a Friend to Church Sunday"

Sept 13 - Parish Picnic / Back to Sunday School Day

Oct 9 - Tentative Family Night

Oct 16-18 - Hellenic Dance Festival (subject to change)

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Coming soon

St. Nicholas Young Adults

We are excited to announce that St. Nick's is beginning a Young Adult group (ages 18-25)! Our mission is to create a community focused on strengthening our faith and fellowship with each other, so as to better integrate our community into the life of the Church and become active members of the body of Christ. We plan on meeting at the end of June via Zoom to plan and organize our group, and we hope to meet in person sometime in July! If you have any questions, want to join, or have any suggestions, feel free to reach out to Fotini Michalakis (fotinim@umich.edu) and/or Nicole Souphis (souphilsn@msu.edu).
Covid-19 virus hit the state and the metro Detroit area hard. With schools closed children were going with very little in nutrition and no lunch let alone our frontline medical staff working extended hours. St. Nicholas Philoptochos and our caterer Ernie’s Mediterranean jumped into action.

St. Nicholas’ exclusive caterer Ernie’s Mediterranean prepared over 200 containers of food on behalf of St. Nicholas church to be delivered to Beaumont Hospital frontline medical staff. Thank you, Sam and staff, for your help during the Covid-19 virus.

PICTURED … LEFT TO RIGHT
CHEF JORGE YEPEZ, CHEF DAVID MASTEJ, GENERAL MANAGER JAY BRAUNER
OWNER SAMUEL BACKOS

St. Nicholas Philoptochos in conjunction with one of our charities, Focus Detroit have sponsored and prepared lunches every Saturday for families in Detroit. Every Saturday in the months of June and July have found members of the St. Nicholas family and the ladies and gentlemen of Philoptochos handing out 120 lunches each week at Greenfield Union Elementary-Middle school. We are blessed to have such wonderful and dedicated parishioners who step up when there is a need.

Thank you to all !!!
CATECHISM
You Did it!!
You passed all the tests, and read all the books. As you were to graduate the world changed and put a stop to your plans. As we start to exit the Covid-19 lockdown it did not happen in time for our Graduates to celebrate as they thought they would. Their 2020 graduation will be one for the books.

St. Nicholas parish did not want to have these hard-working students move on to their next step without recognizing them for their work and dedication.

We Congratulate all our St. Nicholas family Graduates. May our Merciful Lord continue to guide these students throughout their lives as they grow in their Faith and begin the next stage of their lives!

High School Graduated:

Daphne Agapiou
Daphne graduated from Rochester High School. She will be attending University of Michigan.

Michael K. Bisbikis
Michael graduated from Lamphere High School. He will be attending Michigan State University.

Nicholas Boules
Nicholas graduated from Northville High School. He will be attending the University of Michigan.

Eve Bournias
Eve graduated from University Liggett School. She is attending Wellesley College and studying economics. She will be playing softball for the school.

Robert Charles Gurzick III
Robert graduated from Rochester Adams High School. He will be attending Michigan State University -College of Business.

Christopher William Ley
Christopher graduated from Cranbrook Kingswood. Chris will be attending University of Michigan -Ann Arbor. Majoring in Literature, Science and the Arts.

Elena Palazzolo
Elena graduated Henry Ford II High School. She plans on attending Grand Valley State University pursuing a career in Special Education.
Athena Samson
Eve graduated from Troy High School. She will attend Albion College, Majoring in Biology/Psychology.

Vasilios Alexander Tsaprailis
Vasilios graduated from Bloomfield Hills High School. He will be attending Oakland University.

Nicholas Zesses
Nicholas graduated from Troy High School. He will attend Michigan State University - Broad College of Business.

College/University Graduates:

Adonis Ioannis Agapiou
Adonis graduated Oakland University - Bachelor of Science in Engineering - Mechanical Engineering.

Fotini Michalakis
Fotini graduated from the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor with a BS double major in Neuroscience and History and a minor in Modern Greek.

Sofia Palazzolo
Sophia graduated from Grand Valley State University’s Seidman College of Business, where she earned her BBA in Finance. She is now working as a Financial Advisor in the Development Program at Merrill Lynch.

John Robertson
John graduated from Michigan State University, Lyman Briggs College-BS in physiology. He will be attending University of Michigan Dental School.

Harilaos Vouharas
Harilaos graduated from Oakland University with a BS in Business Administration major in Finance.

Graduate/Master Program:

Brienne Peers
Brienne graduated from Michigan State University with a Master’s in Teaching and Curriculum.

Artemis Vouharas
Artemis graduated from Oakland University with a Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

St. Nicholas Scholarship
Congratulations to the following recipients of the St. Nicholas Scholarship:

Christopher Ley
Sofia Papp
Elena Palazzolo
Nicholas Zesses
I was considered more intelligent because I was white (I was put in charge of the infirmary and tasked with distributing medication having had NO MEDICAL TRAINING). I was considered the arbiter in difficult discussions. (I found this one especially odd as I was only 23 or 24 years old! Thank God I was able to reject that role!). I was considered a better driver! Well, the list could go on.

My point is that we may indeed have some societal racism because such racism is based on certain cultural assumptions that people often, make whether based on their own experience or based on hearsay. When such prejudicial judgments effect our actions and decisions, even unconsciously, then we must acknowledge a certain type of racism even if it is unaccompanied by animus.

Our Church guides us even here: It shows us through its panoply of saints, saints of every color, race, nation and history, that every person, irrespective of his or her race, is called by God into communion with him. Each person is precious in the sight of God and, we can add, of infinite worth! Christ values the unique soul of a human person “as more valuable than the entire world when he asks What does it profit a man to gain the entire world and to lose his soul”

It occurs to me that while we ourselves may not hold any personal animus or hatred towards any specific person of another race, culture, language or nation, it is perhaps true that we unconsciously treat such persons differently than we would someone who we identify as being “one of us.” This is a type of racism that we too can repent of. It will not hurt us to acknowledge this type of prejudice but really it will only BLESS US as it sets us free to love and to know MANY MORE PEOPLE than we would have been blessed to know otherwise.

Such a posture of fighting our own natural instinct to prejudge a person based on some learned stereotype will communicate almost immediately to the other an atmosphere of respect and freedom in their relationship to us. While it may not heal every ill, it may help to heal many ills.

With respect and love,
Fr. Paul Pattitsas

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**Grant Application Process Is Now Open**

The St. Nicholas Endowment Fund Grant Application Process has started for the Fiscal Year 2020 season. Endowment Grants are available to all ministries of our St. Nicholas Church. Because of COVID-19, Grant Application Forms are available via the church website at [http://www.stnicholastroy.org/ministries_and_organizations/st_endowment_fund/index.php](http://www.stnicholastroy.org/ministries_and_organizations/st_endowment_fund/index.php) or via email by contacting Stephen Karniotis at [GreekSnoopy@Comcast.net](mailto:GreekSnoopy@Comcast.net). Applications must be submitted and received no later than October 31st.

**Donating for the long-term of our St. Nicholas Church**

Are you interested in donating to the long-term stability of our St. Nicholas parish? Are you looking for an investment vehicle to leave money towards, knowing that it will be cared for and managed properly? Our St. Nicholas Endowment Fund may be the option you are looking for.

Established in 2006, the Saint Nicholas Endowment Fund is designed to give parishioners an investment vehicle to donate toward the long-term support of our parish. The Endowment Fund is a managed investment, with a Board of Trustees overseeing the portfolio as well as a professional investment manager to manage investment decisions for the Trustees. The Endowment Fund operates on a November 1st thru October 31st Fiscal Year.

All the contributions are pooled together into the Endowment Fund. At the end of the year, the fund is evaluated for profitability. If profitable, only 50% of the profit is used for the organizations, ministries, programs, or as designated by donors to the Endowment Fund. The remaining 50% of growth is retained in the fund for continued investment and growth.

Since its inception, the St. Nicholas Endowment Fund has contributed over $540,000 towards the ministries and programs in our St. Nicholas Church. As of May, the Endowment Fund has an estimated value over $2.2 million.

**St. Nicholas Endowment Fund & COVID-19**

Because COVID-19 impacted many of the grants awarded in November 2019 to ministries of our St. Nicholas Church, the Board of Trustees voted to extend the deadline for using granted funds from October of 2020 to October of 2021. This will give the organizations awarded grants sufficient time to use the funds awarded via the Grant Program.
Following the directives of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the State of Michigan in response to COVID-19 (coronavirus), the Saint Nicholas complex is closed to both parishioners and visitors. ALL Divine Services will be broadcast and can be viewed online at www.stnicholastroy.org.

Everyone is adjusting to these challenging circumstances and are seeking ways to maintain some normalcy. With this understanding and intent, the Parish Council can accommodate the requests of people who want to light a vigil candle or candles at Saint Nicholas Church.

Please visit the Parish website, www.stnicholastroy.org, and click on “Candles Online” to make the request and complete your donation of $5 (USD five dollars) per candle. OR, a donation check can also be mailed, writing vigil candle on memo line, again for $5 (USD five dollars) per candle.

A Parish Council member will light the vigil candle at the next Divine Liturgy, after the request is received.

Again, let us all continue to offer our prayers for those who are sick, for those medical personnel, for our government leaders, and for the health and salvation of people throughout the world.

I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12
June 2020

ALL DIVINE SERVICES WILL BE STREAMED ONLINE.

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<td>30 Holy Apostles Orthros/Divine Liturgy 8:30am/ 9:30am</td>
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Father Paul blessed our St. Nicholas Golf League on the first tee at Sylvan Glen.

Hit them straight and long!!!