



The Voice of Holy Apostles
Greek Orthodox Church of Indianapolis
Αγιοι Αποστολοι Ελληνορθοδοξη Εκκλησια Ινδιαναπολεως
+Metropolis of Detroit

4550 North Central Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46205

WWW.HOLYAPOSTLESINDY.ORG

INFO@HOLYAPOSTLESINDY.ORG

Fr. John Koen Tel: 317-908-8511

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the Lord! I hope and pray that this finds everyone well, and that your Thanksgiving celebrations were Thanks-filled, as well as warm and enriching.

As we are now in the preparatory season leading up to Nativity (aka Christmas), I offer a few thoughts to do with this time. You all know our Paschal greeting ("Christ is Risen! In Truth He is Risen!"). Do you also know our Nativity/Christmas greeting? It is: "Christ is Born! Glorify Him!" Everything spiritually important is summarized in those five words. It's kind of the Orthodox equivalent of the famous Protestant slogan: "Jesus is the Reason for the Season!" The most important thing we can do is realize that Christ is Born. And that we should, in all things, at all times, in all places, seek to Glorify Him. Everything else pales in comparison. All the shopping, decorations, gifts, food, parties, etc. are nothing if He is not at the center of our lives and in all that we do. How empty and meaningless is everything without Him! One of the saddest things I've ever heard people say concerning Christmas is: "It's all for the kids" or..."We're just doing it for the kids." The wonder, innocence and joy of children especially at high holy times of the year are truly overwhelmingly beautiful, and deeply moving.

Where is all the joy and wonder, etc. in so many adults? Where has it all gone? If it has diminished or disappeared it will come back, and grow, as we focus on central inner and higher spiritual first principles. It requires yearning, focus, reaching and giving. It takes effort, but the rewards are tremendous. I've been too many places, seen too many people focusing on all the wrong things, and then they wonder at the emptiness, bitterness, weariness, anger, disappointment, disillusionment, etc., that they feel. To grow in Light and Joy and Hope, we have to focus on what gives life and nourishment to such positive values and experiences. Ultimately, we have to face the things in ourselves, our own mistakes, failures, bad choices, lack of forgiveness, hardness of heart, etc. that stand in the way of a deeper, higher, lighter, better, more enriching and fulfilling life, in and with God, in, with and through Jesus Christ. Our involvement, regularly and faithfully, in the Life, Activities and Sacraments of the Church play a large role in this, if done in the right ways and for the right reasons.

What about the times when we're not in Church? Are we striving to still be in and with Christ, to apply what the Church gives to us and teaches us? This attitude and practice is also extremely important. So, let us this year strive faithfully to more fully, deeply and consciously realize and embody our Nativity/Christmas Greeting: "Christ Is Born! Glorify Him!" Abundant Light, Life and Love to one and all!

Your Brother in Christ,
Fr. John

NOTED DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR:

December 24: Regular Divine Liturgy at 10:30 AM

December 25: Holy Nativity (9:30 Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity)

December 31: Sunday before Theophany, New Year's Eve Divine Liturgy at 10:30 AM

January 01: New Year's Day

January 07: Vasilopita Luncheon

IRVINGTON FALL FESTIVAL:

We were pleased with selling out early at the festival, and next year we will be planning on having more available with some variations. It was nice to hear that people remembered us being there last year which is helping to market us. Thanks to the following who weathered the extreme cold while manning our booth:



Xanthippi and Nearhos Darzentas
Evelyn Karozos
Helen Kostarides
Deborah O'Reilley
Yianni Petsalis

2018 PARISH COUNCIL:

At the November 12th General Assembly only six members were elected, and there is an open seat that will be filled by the newly elected Parish Council. The six members are Xanthippi and Nearhos Darzentas, Angelus Kocoshis, Dr. Thomas Kocoshis, Elijah McKnight, and Deborah O'Reilley.

STEWARDSHIP:

The year is drawing to a close and we want to make sure you remember to complete your 2017 pledge in December so that your statement is complete for tax purposes. You will also see the enclosed 2018 Stewardship form. Please feel them out as soon as possible so you don't forget. You can mail or bring them to church. Your help in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

PARISH NEWS:

Angelo Zarvas had a slight setback following his surgery last month, but he is home now and on the road to recovery. Continue to keep Angelo in your prayers.

We want to give our condolences to Helen Zarvas on the passing of her brother Joe Alexander, and to Angelo Zarvas on the passing of his uncle. May his memory be eternal.

Best wishes to our dear chanter Elia Pepps on her upcoming December 29th wedding to Kyle Reif.

Many thanks go out to Alexandra and Thomas Kocoshis for donating a badly needed new coffee pot and drip catcher for coffee hour.

SAVE THE DATE: JANUARY 7, 2018

Following the Divine Liturgy and the cutting of our church's Vasilopita, we will be having our Vasilopita luncheon at the Greek Islands. Those attending will be ordering off the menu and an anonymous donor will be covering the bill. With this in-kind donation, there is a hope that all will be generous in their donation to St. Basil's Academy when the basket is passed. Feel free to write the check to Holy Apostles with a memo of St. Basil's. The reason for this is so that your donation will be added to your year-end statement from the church. Envelopes will be available for cash donations as well.

This will be a great time to gather as a parish and have time to share about our holiday and plans for the New Year.

Please contact Dr. Tom Kocoshis at 765-286-7242 or email Kocoshis@gmail.com so that he can have a head count to give the restaurant.