



*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](http://WWW.HOLYAPOSTLESINDY.ORG)

[INFO@HOLYAPOSTLESINDY.ORG](mailto:INFO@HOLYAPOSTLESINDY.ORG)

Fr. John Koen Tel: 317-908-8511

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Here's hoping and praying that you all had a wonderful and blessed Christmas and New Year's Day. We move into a new year with lots of possibilities and also lots of unknowns. Much prayer is needed for our country after a very contentious and divisive election process. Like the new president and government or not, it is our duty as Orthodox Christians to pray for our President, our civil authorities and our armed forces. Let us do so. It will be very much needed.

Also, we ALL need to seriously pray for our Holy Apostles parish to grow, IF that is indeed what we want. I say it that way because we ALL have to want this, and it is everyone's obligation to so pray. It is NOT my job alone, if I didn't have to work full time, and could devote full time and energy to the parish, it would still NOT be just my job alone to grow the parish. You all have to seriously and sincerely want and desire this. Otherwise, it's not likely to happen. Everyone needs to realize, if they haven't already, that it is impossible to go back to the past, for things to somehow magically be as they were before the events that led to the formation of Holy Apostles. The Greeks that are not committed to either Holy Apostles or Holy Trinity are essentially, by now, a lost cause, so to speak, I and others have repeatedly reached out to them (the same at Holy Trinity), and they repeatedly do not show up, for whatever reasons or excuses they come up with. We will always be Holy Apostles GREEK Orthodox Church, but that does NOT mean that it's just for Greeks. That is a failed model and expectation, not only here, but across the entire Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. We will certainly always be open to Greeks who wish to either return or first appear, but you all need to face the fact that the future is in converts.

Your people came from Greece to be, whether they realized it or not, missionaries. To, sooner or later, bear witness to the One, True, Holy and Apostolic Faith, so that Americans could be able to return to that Original Church. A vast majority of Americans have ancestors who were, once upon a time, Orthodox. They need to return to the Faith of their Fathers and Mothers. More and more want so to do. But how is this to be if no one seeks them out and welcomes them?! It's past time to stop blaming anyone in our parish for either driving or keeping anyone away. That is basically nonsense, and a very tired and lame excuse.

If you do not wish to grow and expand, then at least be honest and say so. If you only want a Greek social club (under the pretense of church), then be honest and say so. But I do not and will not support that, as I told you when I first started to pastor for and with you, several years ago. Please do not be under any delusions that having a Greek priest would somehow fix everything; like it or not, our future, as Orthodox Christians of ALL jurisdictions, lies with seeking out and opening up to converts. In so doing, you will NOT lose your Greek Orthodoxy, because Orthodoxy does not exist in a cultural vacuum. It never has and it never will. The Greek "flavor" and traditions ARE important, but only secondarily. Jesus Christ did not come just for the Greeks, or Russians, or Bulgarians, or Serbs or Romanians, etc., but for ALL humankind. If you don't share your Faith, then who will?!

You've all been through a lot in life, including in your Church life, both individually and collectively. But that does NOT mean that your work is finished, any more than mine is. So, it's your choice; do you really, truly desire to heal, grow, transform and go forward? Or do you just want to ride this out until it fizzles? Stop blaming other people. Stop making excuses. Let us come together and PRAY to see and enact the right way forward. I cannot and will not do this all by myself. I desperately need your full, conscious, heart-felt support, engagement and prayers. Thank you. God bless!

Your Brother in Christ,  
Fr. John

**NOTED DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR:**

**January 1:** Feast of St. Basil

**January 6:** Holy Theophany

**January 8:** Sunday of Theophany, Cutting of Vasilopita, Installation of Parish Council, Pitch In

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:**

Sunday school will begin after Father John's sermon and will end in time to bring the children in for communion.

**CHAPEL:**

Please dress a warmer than normal since Northwood is working on getting new heating for the church.

**HOUSE BLESSINGS-ΑΓΙΑΣΜΟΣ:** Father John will be conducting House Blessings in early January. This is an ancient custom where the priest blesses people's homes, schools and businesses. You will need to call Father to make an appointment to visit your home or business. (To reach Father John via phone @317-908-8511, or via email: [FrJohnKoen@hotmail.com](mailto:FrJohnKoen@hotmail.com)).

Ο Πατερ Ιωαννης θα κανη αγιασμο στα σπιτια αρχας Ιανουαριου. Αν θελετε να επισκε- φθη το σπιτι σας, επικοινωνησατε μαζυ του στο τηλεφωνο 317/908-8511.

**VASILOPITA PITCH IN:**

On Sunday, **January 8<sup>th</sup>**, we will be having a pitch in of appetizers and desserts to be held in the coffee hour room. We felt this would be better than going to a restaurant since we never know what the weather might be. Remember this event is to help St. Basil's Academy, as well as enjoy each others company.

**LOOKING FOR CHAIRMEN:**

The Parish Council is asking for your help in chairing one of the following 2017 events:

**Palm Sunday Luncheon, OPA House, Irvington Fall Festival, Christmas card, & Vasilopita Luncheon**

We cannot have these events if people do not step up to chairing them, and the same people who have chaired them for numerous years need a break.

**2017 STEWARDSHIP FORM:**

Please fill out the enclosed stewardship form and either send to the church, or give it to a Parish Council member. This form helps plan for the upcoming year. The sooner you do it, the less chance you having of forgetting.

**HOLY WATER:**

We will let you know when it will be available.

**ABOUT OUR STEWARDS:**

Again we want to thank Mary Kostarides for her continuously providing the Prosfhora for church.

**ST. PHANOURIOS TREE:**

In case you were unable to see our tree this year. We had to adjust this year due to the heating situation. For those of you who purchased an ornament, you will be able to pick them up on January 8.

