



A PILGRIMAGE TO CONSTANTINOPLE, ROME

October 4 - 10, Fr. Teodor led a group of 30 parishioners from Saints Constantine and Helen and from the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Churches on a pilgrimage to the holy sites of Constantinople, the heart of Orthodoxy, and the ancient city of Rome.

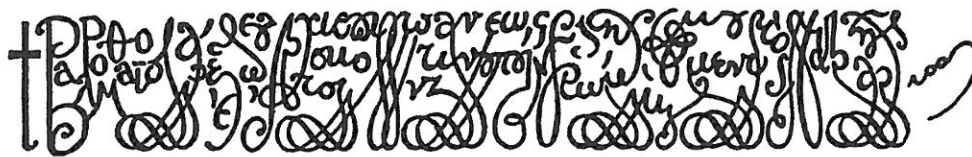
In Constantinople, our group visited the 17th century Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate; prayed at the St. George Cathedral and participated in a private audience with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, presented our Fr. Teodor with the ecclesiastical title of "PROTOPRESBYTER OF THE ECUMENICAL THRONE" – the highest distinction a priest can receive.

They also visited Agia Sophia, the Church of the Holy Wisdom, often called the eighth wonder of the ancient world. It is one of the world's greatest architectural and spiritual masterpieces and was the Cathedral of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople for more than one thousand years. During the Ottoman period, Agia Sophia was turned into a mosque. Today, we still see these conversions in the church. Presently, Agia Sophia is considered a museum.

Other stops included the Church of the Holy Savior of Chora, Baloukli Monastery and its Underground Shrine of Zoodochos Peghe, Topkapı Palace housing the relics of St. John the Baptist and Panagia Blacherna were the beautiful hymn, "Te Ypermacho" was chanted over 1,400 years ago and the Grand Bazaar. Finally, they took a private cruise and buggy ride to Halki and to the Theological school.

In the "Eternal City" of Rome, our group visited the Vatican, St Peter's Basilica, the Colosseum, St. John in Laternan Cathedral and the Holy Stairs, San Pietro in Chains, Santa Maria Maggiore and St. Paul outside the Walls, the Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain, Piazza di Spagna, Piazza Novova the Pantheon and Roman Forums and the Palentine. Fr. Teodor celebrated the Divine Liturgy in a Sunday service at St. Teodoro, the only Greek Orthodox Church in Rome. (More photos from the trip inside this issue of Visions.)





To the Reverend Fr. Teodor Petrutiu, Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Throne, pastor of Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Westland, Michigan, our beloved in the Lord: Grace be unto you and peace from God.

Having received your gracious offering of five thousand dollars during your recent pilgrimage to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, we hasten to wholeheartedly thank you and the members of your parish for this generous contribution to the Sacred Center of our Orthodox *genos*. Your offering demonstrates to us a deep dedication to the Mother Church of Constantinople, as well as the faith and commitment you have cultivated in your church community by your example.

In these days of financial uncertainty, where businesses, institutions and even churches are suffering the consequences of economic crisis, you have demonstrated visionary leadership, which brought about the transformation of your entire community to the point of being able to now offer a generous gift of love to the Church of Christ's poor. For this, we not only thank you, but we congratulate you and your entire parish for rising above the challenges and divisions.

As we stated during your visit, "the Phanar is the art of producing the best possible result under the worst circumstances." We repeat this because we can all participate when united, even in dire circumstances, in powerful transformation and change for the improvement of circumstances locally and globally. For, where there is faith even the size of a mustard seed, we are vouchsafed the assurance that every obstacle will be removed. As the scripture says, "what is impossible with men is possible with God."

Therefore, it is in this spirit of prayerful assurance that we encourage you, our beloved, to inspire and to continuously cultivate internal transformation, pursuing virtue and seeking the Kingdom of God. For, "the Kingdom of Heaven is within us." May you continue, dear Father, faithfully, prayerfully and humbly, serving this great Mystery, the Mystery of the Great Church of Christ, being always obedient and filially dedicated to your hierarch, His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit, as well as displaying the ethos and nobility of the Constantinopolitan tradition, having now become a co-Cyrene of the crucified yet glorious Mother Church.

Invoking upon you and your entire parish the grace and endless mercy of God, we remain with much love and honor.

At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the twenty-second of October, 2015

Your fervent supplicant before God,

✠ BARTHOLOMEW

Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome
and Ecumenical Patriarch

A Message from Father Teodor



"You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier." 2 Timothy 2:3-4

Next week in the US is Veteran's Day. We want to honor and esteem all veterans, no matter which branch of the military they served under. In doing so, I would like to make this parallel: what is required in order to become a soldier is also required from a veteran of the cross of Christ, a true Christian.

First of all, one must serve voluntarily. United States no longer forces men and women to serve in the military service of their country. They are asked to volunteer to serve. God also does not force anyone to serve in the service of His Kingdom, but He does plead with us to volunteer and come to salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord in the Church.

Second, you must have complete faith. When you serve the American flag, you must have faith in the American government that it will supply your every need while serving. When you serve the Christian Cross, you must also have faith in The One who has called you into His service that He will supply your every need.

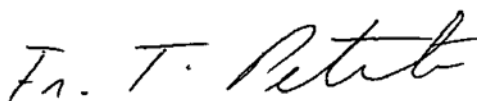
Thirdly, you have to have complete commitment. When you serve the flag, you are expected to be completely committed to your country and to allow nothing to prevent you from performing your duties and serving faithfully. When you serve the cross, you are also expected to be completely committed to Christ and His Kingdom. You are expected to serve Him faithfully, not allowing anything to keep you from doing His will.

Lastly, you are required to display complete obedience. When you serve the flag, you are required to follow orders and are expected to be obedient to the letter. When you serve the cross, Christ expects and requires no less.

To be volunteers, to have faith, to have commitment and to have obedience, is what is required from soldiers in the military and from Christian soldiers serving our Lord Jesus Christ in the Church.

May the Lord, as we celebrate Veteran's Day and remember all those who served their country, help us remember their qualities and become all true Spiritual Veterans in the service of our Lord.

A Blessed Veteran's day to all!



Fr. Teodor Petrutiu

AXIOS! HONORS AND RECOGNITION

Fr. Teodor Petrutiu - Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Throne

Last month on the trip to the Patriarchate in Constantinople, His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, presented Fr. Teodor with the ecclesiastical title of "PROTOPRESBYTER OF THE ECUMENICAL THRONE" – the highest distinction a priest can receive. His All Holiness spoke of Fr. Teodor's *"wisdom, hope and endurance – all aiming to bring positive transformation"* and said *"Today we would like to acknowledge, celebrate and congratulate you for the sacrifices and efforts you exerted in order to successfully revitalize and restore the parish of St. Constantine and Helen... May He who has glorified you this day by His Church, glorify you in the age to come. May you continue to worthily and nobly 'take up your cross and follow Him'."*

When they returned home, our entire parish family was able to share the pride when Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit visited our Sts. Constantine and Helen to formally recognize Fr. Teodor with his new title. AXIOS!



Gus Stavropoulos, Joan Keker Honored by Archbishop Demetrios

Sts. Constantine and Helen parishioners, Gus Stavropoulos and Joan Keker were honored at the Metropolis of Detroit Clergy-Laity & Philoptochos Conference by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit for their years of hard work and dedication to the church.

Although many are familiar with the years of dedicated service Gus Stavropoulos has given to St. Cons as a member of our Parish Council, and as a leader of many events and campaigns; he is also very active in the Greek Orthodox Church of America, on both a local and national level. He has held a series of positions within the lay leadership of the church, including the Archdiocesan Council, Leadership 100, and a member in the Metropolis of Detroit council.

Over the years Joan Keker has held many positions at the Sts. Constantine and Helen Church, serving lengthy terms as Director of our Sunday School and Educational Programs, as Philoptochos President, and as a member of our Parish Council. A former "Woman of the Year" at St. Cons, Joan has been in charge of "The Hellenic Cuisine" cookbook production and sales for over 25 years.

Congratulations to Gus and Joan!





PARISH EVENTS RAISE FUNDS TO SERVE THOSE IN NEED

Philoptochos fashion show benefits St. Nicholas National Shrine

On Saturday, September 12, 2015 our St. Helen Philoptochos sponsored a luncheon and fashion show at the Hellenic Cultural Center to benefit the new St. Nicholas National Shrine at the World Trade Center. The original Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church cast a reverent and faithful shadow on the World Trade Center. For many Greek immigrants, it was their first stop after seeing the Statue of Liberty and disembarking from Ellis Island. Generations of New Yorkers, Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike, would stop in to light a candle, say a prayer, or just sit quietly. Everything changed on 9/11. Saint Nicholas was completely destroyed in the collapse of World Trade Center Tower Two during the terrorist attacks, the only house of worship destroyed. Once rebuilt, Saint Nicholas, has the potential to inspire millions for generations to come.

The fashion show was presented by the Clothing Cove of Milford. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped with this event, including our beautiful parish models, Stella Boyer, Lexi Furkioti, Joy Kisabeth, onna Linaras, Helena Monolidis, Stephanie Ochadleus, Sophia Poulos, Jamie Rimpley, Corrin Stamatakos, and Alexandra Thrubis.

Men's Club Golf Outing Raises Funds for John Koinis FEED THE NEEDY program

On September 20, 2015 the St. Cons Men's Club hosted its 4th Annual Golf Outing which raised funds to support the "John Koinis Feed the Needy Program" that provides food for over 100 families during the Thanksgiving holiday. The event was held at the Fellows Creek Golf Club in Livonia. The weather was beautiful, and the golf was great fun for the "pros" and the beginners! After a day of golf, everyone came back home for a delicious dinner at the Hellenic Cultural Center.

Congratulations to everyone who worked so hard to make this event a huge success! The Feed the Needy program helps many needy families in our community and is the major annual charitable effort of our Men's Club.



FUN AND FELLOWSHIP!



GOYA Outing at Three Cedars Farm

On October 18, 2014 our new GOYA Executive Board members were sworn in at church. Congratulations to Joanna Colovas, President; Alexis Furkioti, Vice President; Steven Brylinski, Secretary; and Helenia Monolidis, Treasurer. Jean Chuey is the GOYA Advisor. Following the service was the first GOYA event of the year at Three Cedars Farm in Northville. Our GOYA members had a great time making their way through a corn maze, and taking a good old-

fashioned hay ride. GOYA is open to young people ages 14 – 18. Throughout the year, these teens participate in a variety of social and service activities with other youth from our church and Orthodox churches throughout Metropolitan Detroit.

TLC (Thursday Lunch Club) Celebrates OXI Day!

St. Cons has just started the Thursday Lunch Club! Once a month, we will be hosting lunch at the Hellenic Cultural Center, followed by plenty of good conversation. All ages are welcome to join. In October, our TLC lunch was a celebration of OXI Day, commemorating the anniversary when former military general and Prime Minister Ioannis Metaxas said, “No” to an ultimatum made by Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini to allow Italian forces to occupy strategic locations in Greece or otherwise face war back in 1940. The next TLC lunch will be an early Thanksgiving celebration, held on November 21, 2014. Lunch is free of charge, but reservations are required. Please call the church office to reserve your space, at 734.525.6789.



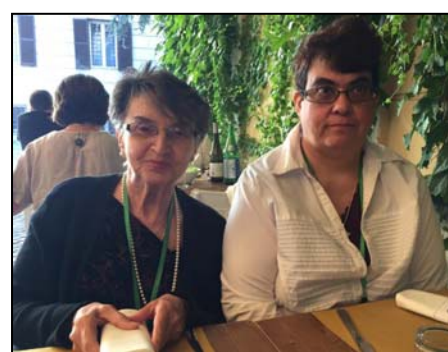
Moms' Group gets “crafty”

Our Moms' Group is well known for presenting some of our parish's signature family events, including the annual Name Day Dinner Dance and the Fall Festival. The Moms' Group is focused on presenting fun social activities and support for our parish moms and their families. Even at their meetings, they do something a little bit special! At their September meeting, each of the members had fun making a beautiful scarf (see photo, right.) This month, the Moms' Group held a lovely get-together dinner for moms only at the BRAVO Cucina restaurant.

The Moms' group welcomes new members! For information, contact Kali Michalopoulos at 734.331.9515 or kmich333@comcast.net.



A FEW MORE PHOTOS FROM CONSTANTINOPLE AND ROME



KIDS OF ALL AGES LOVE OUR FALL FESTIVAL!

If you weren't there, you missed all the fun! Our 18th Annual Fall Festival, held on October 23rd, and sponsored by our Mom's Group was a big hit!

There were all kinds of games and prizes, bingo, a bounce house inside the Hellenic Cultural Center, a hayride for those who wanted to go outside, and a visit from Pebbles the clown! Everybody ate well with hot dogs or a pizza slice, and tons of delicious desserts!

We are so grateful to all the fantastic volunteers, and to the people who donated food, goods or services to make this event such a great success. Thanks especially to Kali Michalopoulos and our Moms' Group for a great evening of fun!

We're already planning our costumes for next year! How about you?

All of the fantastic photo booth pics are available at the online photo gallery:
<https://qoo.gl/qbJwsR>



SERVING OUR COMMUNITY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Each year our church family comes together in the spirit of the joyous Christmas season and gives generously of their time and of their financial resources to help those in need and support our many Church ministries. Once again this year, we will be reaching out to all the members of our parish community for their support on many worthy efforts. Please help in whatever way you are able.

FEED THE NEEDY: Our Men's Club Feed the Needy event will be happening on Saturday, November 21st. Monetary donations, volunteers and drivers are needed to help with this important event, providing a delicious Thanksgiving supper to 100+ families in our community. Volunteers are needed to help pack and deliver food items the morning of Saturday, November 21st, starting at 7:30 am. If you can help, contact Danny Stergiadis, 734.624.1699.

CHRISTMAS MATCHING GIFTS PROGRAM: Each holiday season our parish sends out a special Christmas offering envelope. Once again this year we are pleased to announce that generous donors are offering up to \$20,000 in matching gift funds for all contributions that the Church receives through this Christmas Offering. Through the generosity of our parish community, in the past two years we have exceeded our Christmas giving goal.

TREE OF LIGHTS: The Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church is sponsoring its 21st Annual Christmas Tree of Lights project. The tree will be illuminated with lights in memory or in honor of people you love. Each name will be printed on a card and displayed on the tree. Minimum donation is \$10.00 per name. All proceeds will benefit our church. A special tree-lighting ceremony will be held on Sunday, December 20, 2015, immediately following the Divine liturgy. During the prayer service, each name on the tree will be read by Father Teodor. The tree will remain on the solea until after the New Year. For more information, contact Diane Drakos Plungis at 734.462.1179 or the church office.

STS. CONSTANTINE AND HELEN CHRISTMAS CARD: Reach out to our church members with the joy of the season! Each year, Christmas greetings are sent out to the entire parish, our community partners, and to parish priests within our Metropolis. You can save money on postage, and help to raise money for the important ministries of our church by adding your name to the card. Suggested minimum donation is \$20. For more information, or to be included on the holiday card, contact Melinda Lazarus at 734.422.3872 or the church office.

CHOIR POINSETTIA SALE/CHRISTMAS CAROLING: Our church Choir members will be selling beautiful poinsettia for use in your home, or to decorate the solea through the holiday season. Our Choir members will also spend an afternoon caroling at nursing homes and assisted living centers, bringing some holiday spirit to dear friends and family than cannot attend church services. For more information, contact Maritsa Kalasz at 734.522.9334

TOYS FOR TOTS/MITTEN TREE: Once again this year we are collecting new, unwrapped toys for the US Marine Corps "Toys for Tots" campaign. The collection box is in the multi-purpose area outside the church office. Deadline is December 14, 2015. For more information, contact Stephanie Skotanis or the church office. Our "Mitten Tree" will also be placed in the multi-purpose area, collecting scarves, hats, gloves, and of course, mittens! These donations are given to the Dorsey Center, serving needy families in Westland, for distribution at their annual Christmas party.

FOCUS Motor City COATS FOR KIDS: Our St. Helen Philoptochos will be working with FOCUS Motor City, part of a national movement of Orthodox Christians, united in faith and joined by a desire to provide action-oriented and sustainable solutions to poverty in communities across America. They will be collecting and purchasing new coats and boots for elementary school children in the Detroit Public Schools. For more information, contact Georgene Ochadleus at 248.685.8375.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

- 11/8/15—REVERSE RAFFLE
- 11/21/15 - MEN'S CLUB FEED THE NEEDY
- 12/20/15 – CHRISTMAS PAGEANT, CHRISTMAS TREE OF LIGHTS CEREMONY, PHILOPTOCHOS BAKE SALE
- 12/24/15, 12/15/15 – CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS SERVICES
- 1/19/16 – ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE

ORTHODOX YOUTH ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (OYAA) BASKETBALL SIGN UP

The 2015-6 basketball season starts in Dec/Jan. and runs through early March. We are trying to form teams from St. Cons for both boys and girls in the 7/8, 9/10, 11/12, and 13-15 age groups. The games will be played on Saturday mornings/afternoons except the 13-15 group which plays on Sunday afternoons. We will be playing against other Orthodox churches in the Detroit area. If your children are interested in playing, or you are interested in volunteering to coach or work with the teams, please stop by the hall after church during coffee hour for more information or call Pete Souchok on 734 558-7843.

SPANAKOPITA ORDERS FOR THANKSGIVING, CHRISTMAS

Get ready for the holidays! The Philoptochos will be selling frozen ½ sheets (approx. 12 large pieces) of spanakopita for the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. You can save time and still serve up a delicious, freshly baked pita! The cost is \$22, and can be purchased by advance orders only. Order forms will be available after church on Sundays in November and December, and in the church office during the week.

NATIONAL CHURCH MUSIC MINISTRY SUNDAY

Recently, our church community observed National Church Music Ministry Sunday. It comes each year in the month of October, close to the feast day of Saint Romanos, the Melodist (October 1). Our Choir members and Chanters were recognized and honored for their service to our parish.



PHILOPTOCHOS SUNDAY

On November 1, our St. Helen Philoptochos was honored with an artoclasia and memorial service. The Philoptochos ("friend of the poor") Society supports many community philanthropic efforts and the ministries of our church through fundraising events.



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***"Where there is no vision,
the people perish"***
Proverbs 29:18

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Stella Boyer, 734-981-2446

G.O.Y.A.

Jean Chuey, 248-596-9572

MEN'S GROUP

Antonios Stergiadis, 734-624-1699

MOMS GROUP

Kali Michalopoulos, 734-331-9515

PARISH COUNCIL

John Avdoulos, 248-568-4945

PHILOPTOCHOS

Georgene Ochadleus,
248-685-8375

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Andrea Uhlian, 313-720-9465

OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

Weddings:

8/22/15

FRANK DUQUET to VICKIE REDINGTON

9/4/15

GEORGE SMYRNIS to SOPHIA LIVANOS

10/17/15

TOM and SHANNON (WILLIAMS) GOSTIAS

40-Day Blessing:

10/4/15

ANDREW PETER LEFERE

Parents Ryan and Evagelia Lefere

Baptisms:

9/27/15

AGGELINA NEJLA MULLEN

Parents Jessica Bigas and Robert Mullen, Godparent: Emily Bigas

10/18/15

GEORGE MEIDANIS

Parents: Harry and Rachelle Meidanis, Godparent: Costas Meidanis

11/7/15

JACKSON ALEXANDER ROMEJ

Parents: Gregory Romej and Michelle Anderson,

Godparent: Sandy Mutafis

Congratulations!

Funerals:

8/28/15

CHRIST NICHOLAS

8/31/15

THEODORE MONOLIDIS

10/20/15

CHRIS MAKAS

10/20/15

CHRISTINE CARSON

May their memory be eternal!