SAYING THANKS THROUGH PRAYER

Saint Paul writes in his first letter to the Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

The idea of giving thanks is woven throughout the fabric of our Church. There are many moving accounts of God's people thanking Him in the Old Testament. Many times it involved building altars as an OUTWARD sign of their INWARD gratitude. Plenty of the Psalms are beautiful songs of thanksgiving to God. As noted in the Gospels, Christ Himself thanks His Heavenly Father. The essence of the Divine Liturgy each Sunday is the Eucharist. Communion is celebrated each Sunday we gather in the House of God. We petition, thank and praise our Lord through this common partaking of His Body and Blood.

Yet another way of expressing thanks is through prayer. Our prayers can be classified into 3 unique types: asking, thanking and praising. All 3 are necessary for a full relationship with God. The beginning of our Christian experience is the asking for God's forgiveness. When this is sincerely done, we are guaranteed His forgiveness. The natural response is to thank God for all that He has given us. Food, clothing, shelter, health and wealth are simply the beginning of what God has bestowed upon us. A growing relationship with our Lord Almighty eventually leads to praising Him for His goodness, truth and love.

As Christians, we use prayer to thank God for each blessing He has given us. Go forth and SHOW everyone what it means to be thankful.

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin . . . . . Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey . . . . . Litho in U.S.A.

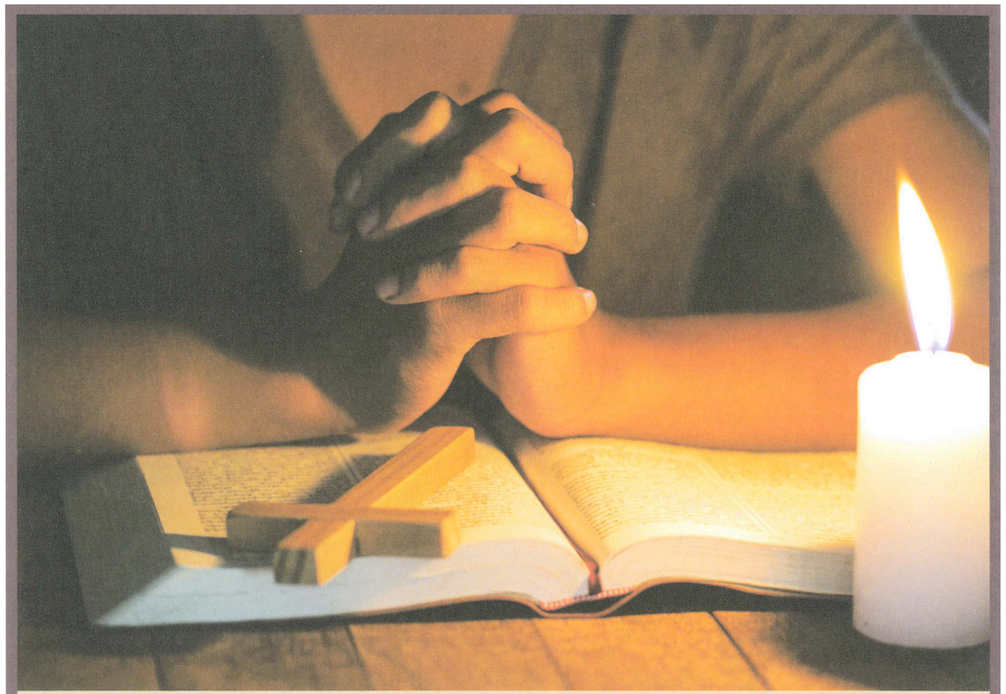
Metropolis of New Jersey

St. Sophia/SS. Faith, Hope & Agape
Greek Orthodox Church of Valley Forge
900 South Trooper Road
Jeffersonville, PA, 19403
Tel.: (610) 650-8960 • Fax: (610) 650-8961
www.saintsophiachurch.org email: office@saintsophiachurch.org

Sunday Worship: 8:45 am - Orthros: 10:00 am Divine Liturgy
Office Hours - 10 am to 4 pm

Rev. Economos Peter J. Thornberg, Proistamenos
frpeter@saintsophiachurch.org
Metropolis of New Jersey

St. Sophia/SS. Faith, Hope & Agape Greek Orthodox Church
February 26, 2023



PRAISE GOD

FOR THE GRACE
AND LOVE
HE HAS BESTOWED
UPON US.

February 26, 2023
Forgiveness Sunday
Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza
The Holy Great Martyr Photine, the Samaritan Women
Holy Martyr Theocletus

ENTRANCE HYMNS

Resurrectional Apolytikion – To Fedhron Tis Anastaseos ("The Joyful News of Your Resurrection")

The joyful news of your resurrection was proclaimed by the angel to the women disciples. Having thrown off the curse that fell on Adam, they ran elatedly to tell the apostles: Death has been vanquished; Christ our God is risen from the dead, blessing all the world with his great mercy.

Apolytikion of St. Sophia/Ss. Faith, Hope & Agape

Greek

Ος ελαία κατά καρπος ανεβλάστησας, έν ταίς ανλαίς του Κυρίου, Σοφία μάρτυς σεμνή, καί προσήγαγες Χριστώ καρπόν η δύτατον, τούς τής νηδύος σου βλαστούς, δί α γώνων εύαγων, Αγάπην τε καί `Ελπίδα σύν τη θεόφρονι Πίστει, μεθων δυσώπει υπέρ πάντων ήμων.

English Phonetics for Greek

Os elea kata karpos anevlastisas, en tes avles tu Kyriou Sofia martys semni, ke prosigages Christo karpon idytaton, tus tis nidyos su vlastus, di' agonon evagon, Agapin te ke Elpida, syn ti theofroni Pisti; meth' on dysopi yper pandon imon.

English

As an olive tree laden with fruit you sprouted forth, in the courtyards of the Lord, Sophia martyr dignified, and you brought to Christ a fruit most sweet, Namely your womb's own sprouts, brought up by instructive deeds: your daughters Love and Hope, along with God-minded Faith; together intercede with God for us all.

Seasonal Kontakion – Tis sofias odhighe ("O Guide to Wisdom")

O guide to wisdom, provider of prudence, disciplinarian of fools, and defender of the poor, fortify and discipline my heart, O Master; You, give me a word, O Word of the Father. For behold, I will not hinder my lips from crying to You: O merciful Lord, have mercy on me who have fallen.

Saturday of the Souls Σαββατω Των Ψυχων

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Project Mexico

Imagine if you didn't have a home, or home was a makeshift shelter constructed from discarded pallets, tin, cardboard, or tarps. Unfortunately, this is the reality for countless families around the world – including families in Mexico.

By God's grace, volunteers with Project Mexico have been making a difference. Since 1988, Project Mexico has been building safe, secure, and weather-tight homes for some of the most impoverished families in Northern Mexico. Every home is constructed over the course of four days and built entirely with volunteer labor.

Our parish has once again committed to fielding a group of volunteers to help Project Mexico build a house between June 30th and July 6th, and we need your help. So far, 7 people have answered the call. If you would like to learn more, please email John Pogas, the group leader, at johnpogas@gmail.com or call him at 215-896-1963. We will also have an information table set up in the hall during coffee hour.

EPISTLE READING

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Make your vows to the Lord our God and perform them.
Verse: God is known in Judah; his name is great in Israel.

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

Ἀνάγνωσις ἐπιστολῆς

Πρὸς Ρωμαίους 13:11-14, 14:1-4 **τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα**

Εὔξασθε καὶ ἀπόδοτε Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν.
Στίχ. Γνωστὸς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ὁ Θεός, ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ μέγα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

Ἀδελφοί, νῦν ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἡ σωτηρία ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν. Ἡ νὺξ προέκοψεν, ἡ δὲ ἡμέρα ἤγγικεν· ἀποθώμεθα οὖν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σκότους, καί ἐνδυσώμεθα τὰ ὅπλα τοῦ φωτός. Ὡς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ, εὐσχημόνως περιπατήσωμεν, μὴ κώμοις καὶ μέθαις, μὴ κοίταις καὶ ἀσελγείαις, μὴ ἔριδι καὶ ζήλῳ. Ἀλλ' ἐνδύσασθε τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, καὶ τῆς σαρκὸς πρόνοιαν μὴ ποιεῖσθε, εἰς ἐπιθυμίας. Τὸν δὲ ἀσθενοῦντα τῇ πίστει προσλαμβάνεσθε, μὴ εἰς διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν. Ὃς μὲν πιστεύει φαγεῖν πάντα, ὁ δὲ ἀσθενῶν λάχανα ἐσθίει. Ὁ ἐσθίων τὸν μὴ ἐσθίοντα μὴ ἐξουθενείτω, καὶ ὁ μὴ ἐσθίων τὸν ἐσθίοντα μὴ κρινέτω· ὁ θεὸς γὰρ αὐτὸν προσελάβετο. Σὺ τίς εἶ ὁ κρίνων ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην; Τῷ ἰδίῳ κυρίῳ στήκει ἢ πίπτει. Σταθήσεται δέ· δυνατὸς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς στῆσαι αὐτόν.

GOSPEL READING
The Gospel According to Matthew 6:14-21

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

ΕΥΑΓΓΈΛΙΟΝ
Ἐκ τοῦ Κατὰ Ματθαῖον 6:14-21 **Εὐαγγελίου τὸ Ἀνάγνωσμα**

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος· Ἐὰν γὰρ ἀφῆτε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, ἀφήσει καὶ ὑμῖν ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος· ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἀφῆτε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, οὐδὲ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἀφήσει τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν. Ὅταν δὲ νηστεύητε, μὴ γίνεσθε ὥσπερ οἱ ὑποκριταὶ σκυθρωποί· ἀφανίζουσι γὰρ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ὅπως φανῶσι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις νηστεύοντες· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν. σὺ δὲ νηστεύων ἄλειψαί σου τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ τὸ πρόσωπόν σου νίψαι,ὅπως μὴ φανῇς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις νηστεύων, ἀλλὰ τῷ πατρί σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ, καὶ ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ ἀποδώσει σοι ἐν τῷ φανερῷ. Μὴ θησαυρίζετε ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅπου σὴς καὶ βρῶσις ἀφανίζει, καὶ ὅπου κλέπται διορύσσουσι καὶ κλέπτουσι· θησαυρίζετε δὲ ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐν οὐρανῷ, ὅπου οὔτε σὴς οὔτε βρῶσις ἀφανίζει, καὶ ὅπου κλέπται οὐ διορύσσουσιν οὐδὲ κλέπτουσιν· ὅπου γάρ ἐστιν ὁ θησαυρὸς ὑμῶν, ἐκεῖ ἔσται καὶ ἡ καρδία ὑμῶν.

February Poor Box Donations
Thank you for considering a gift!

Please consider supporting the philanthropic outreach of our Church through the Philoptochos Poor Box located in the Pangari. Each month 100% of the donations are designated for a local charity.

Donations made to the Philoptochos Poor Box for February benefit Liberty Ministries, which assists offenders and ex-offenders in the community by providing hygiene kits and other care packages, offering assistance such as residential program and sending children of those in program to summer camp and more. You can read more about them at https://www.libertyministries.us/.

On Sunday of Orthodoxy – 3/5/23 – Philoptochos and GOYA will work collaboratively to assemble “Lydia Bags”, named for Lydia, a woman of faith, industry, and hospitality, who we read about in Acts 16:13-15. These bags are intended for those incarcerated in local correctional institutions. Your donation will fund will provide the items included in each care package.

Please consider donating to this worthwhile charity at:
http://www.saintsophiachurch.org/poorboxdonations.html or submit a check payable to St. Sophia Philoptochos and indicate Poor Box on the memo line. God bless you!

Communion Prayers

I believe and confess, Lord, that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, Who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. I also believe that this is truly Your pure Body and that this is truly Your precious Blood. Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, in word and deed, in knowledge or in ignorance. And make me worthy, without condemnation, to partake of Your pure Mysteries for the remission of sins and for eternal life. Amen.

Behold, I approach for Divine Communion. O Maker, burn me not as I partake, For You are fire consuming the unworthy. But cleanse me from every stain.

O Son of God, receive me today as a partaker of Your mystical supper. For I will not speak of the mystery to Your enemies, nor will I give You a kiss, as did Judas. But like the thief, I confess to You: Remember me, Lord, in Your Kingdom.

Tremble, O man, as you behold the divine Blood. It is a burning coal that sears the unworthy. The Body of God both deifies and nourishes me: It deifies the Spirit and wondrously nourishes the mind.

You have smitten me with yearning, O Christ, and by Your divine eros You have changed me. But burn up with spiritual fire my sins, and grant me to be filled with delight in You, so that, leaping for joy, I may magnify, O Good One, Your two comings.

How shall I, who am unworthy, enter into the splendor of Your saints? If I should dare to enter into the bridal chamber, my vesture will condemn me, since it is not a wedding garment; and being bound up, I shall be cast out by the angels. Cleanse, O Lord, the filth of my soul, and save me, as You are the one Who loves mankind. In Your love, Lord, cleanse my soul, and save me.

Master Who loves mankind, Lord Jesus Christ, my God, let not these Holy Gifts be to my judgment because I am unworthy, but rather for the purification and sanctification of both soul and body and the pledge of the life and Kingdom to come. It is good for me to cleave unto God and to place in Him the hope of my salvation.

O Son of God, receive me today as a partaker of Your mystical supper. For I will not speak of the mystery to Your enemies, nor will I give You a kiss, as did Judas. But like the thief, I confess to You: Remember me, Lord, in Your Kingdom.

February 26, 2023
Forgiveness Sunday
Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza
The Holy Great Martyr Photine, the Samaritan Women
Holy Martyr Theocletus

St. Sophia/Ss Faith, Hope & Agape Vigil Candle: If you are interested in sponsoring a vigil candle, please see a Parish Council member at the Pangari – no advance signup necessary and several individuals or families can sponsor each week. The proceeds of these donations will go to our Mortgage Reduction Fund. Each vigil candle lasts one week; the asking donation is $10.

Chrismation: The daughter of Spiros and Alexandra Vlahopoulos, Nola, will receive the sacrament of chrismation this morning immediately preceding the Divine Liturgy. God bless Nola (whose chrismation name is Maria), her parents and her godmother, Eleftheria Leventis.

40-day baby blessing: Elias (Lou) & Lisa Giannoumis present their second child, a girl, for the traditional 40-day baby blessing. May God bless Alexandra, her brother Evan, and their parents!

St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival: The Parish Level of the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival will take place today immediately following the Divine Liturgy.

TODAY– Cheesefare Sunday Tiropites/Spanakopites: The Ladies' Philoptochos will be selling Tiropites and Spanakopites during coffee hour today. The proceeds of this sale will benefit one of the numerous charities of the Philoptochos.

Sunday of Orthodoxy: Next Sunday (March 5th) on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, we will have the Procession of the Icons at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. We ask that the children of the Parish (as well as any adults who so wish) bring in an icon of their own so that they may participate in the procession. This is such a tremendous way to teach our children the importance of icons in the Orthodox Christian Faith.

Readers for Salutations to the Theotokos: The first Salutations to the Theotokos are on Friday evening, March 3rd (that night they will begin early – at 5:30 pm). We are looking for readers for the English and Greek for that Friday and the following four Fridays. If you are interested in reading, please call the Parish office to put your name on the list. Also, if you wish to decorate the icon of the Panagia with flowers on one of the Fridays, please call the Parish office to let us know which Friday you are choosing.

Saturday of Souls: The third Saturday of Souls is Saturday, March 4th. Forms for the names of the departed are available at the Pangari (and attached). Please submit your names to the Parish office by March 3rd; however, please DO NOT text the names or submit them via Facebook. Please also remember your loved ones by not only submitting their names, but by attending the holy services to offer your own prayers for their eternal rest. Please PRINT CLEARLY, AND ONLY BAPTISMAL FIRST NAMES ARE NECESSARY.

Coffee Hour Sponsors Needed: Thank you to everyone who has sponsored coffee hour. We now need coffee hour sponsors for the next several weeks. If you are interested in hosting a coffee hour, please sign up on the Coffee Hour Sponsor Sheet on the door near the coffee/refreshments table. Keep in mind that we are in a fasting period; guidelines are posted on the information sheet on the door.

Mortgage Reduction: Are you one of those people who need the physical reminder of a coupon booklet to make a payment? If so, there are a limited amount of Mortgage Reduction packets (coupons & envelopes) available at the Pangari. Feel free to take one. Thank you for your support of this program!

Stewardship: Thank you to everyone who supported our 2022 Stewardship Program. 2023 Stewardship Commitment Forms are now available at the Pangari and on the table outside of the Parish office. When paying by check, it is imperative that you indicate "Stewardship 2023" on the memo line so that your account is properly credited. Also, if you make cash donations, please be sure to include your name either on the outside of the envelope or on a slip of paper attached to the cash. Should you have any questions, please call the Parish office or see Tom Cox, our stewardship chairperson.

Liturgical Services are streamed on Facebook each Sunday. Simply click on the link below.
You do NOT need a Facebook account to access the online services.
www.facebook.com/saintsophiachurch

PLEASE keep in mind that our fixed costs are still ever present.
We hope you can help us with an online donation. You can give by going to our website, www.saintsophiachurch.org and clicking on the "Donate" button.

Donate

You can also donate using Venmo! Just search in Venmo or click www.venmo.com/SaintSophiaChurch

NEW! We also accept Zelle as a form of payment! Through your bank's Zelle system, input treasurer@saintsophiachurch.org as a recipient and you'll be ready to donate to St. Sophia Church.

ST. SOPHIA PHILOPTOCHOS

Order by April 1

Pickup April 8

Tsoureki Sale

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Quantity: _____ @ $20 each = Total Paid: _____

Make checks payable to St. Sophia Philoptochos
or pay by Paypal ladies@saintsophiachurch.org

ST. SOPHIA PHILOPTOCHOS

CHEESEFARE SUNDAY

FEBRUARY 26, 2023

Freshly Baked Tiropites & Spanakopites Only $4.50 each

Frozen 6-packs - $25
With Cooking Instructions

LIMITED SUPPLIES - RESERVE TODAY

FOR ORDERS: Ann Z. 484-576-3281
ladies@saintsophiachurch.org

IGNITE THE FLAME!

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 2023 -- 11AM – 4PM
LUNCH WILL BE SERVED

MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND!

USE THE SIGNUPGENIUS LINK BELOW TO REGISTER
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F054CACAF2CA3F58-ignite

WHY ARE WE HERE?
WHY IS OUR CHURCH HERE?

The very inspirational IGNITE THE FLAME program provides an interacive and practical approach to live a better life and inspire the most effective Parish and Ministries.

Bill Marianes has inspired thousands of people in over 500 Orthodox parishes to discover and live their calling. He has also completed church strategic plans that cover over 26% of Orthodox Christians to help create the most healthy and effective parishes.

What would you do if you weren't afraid?

How can you discover and LIVE what God has called you to do?

How can we create a more dynamic, engaged, and loving church community?

Use SIGNUPGENIUS link above to register

SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
900 S. Trooper Road
Jeffersonville, PA 19403

For more info call or email
610-650-8960
office@saintsophiachurch.org

Interfaith Blood Drive

to address the nation-wide blood shortage

Joint effort of congregations from:
Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Wednesday, March 22, 2023
3 pm – 8 pm

2530 Stinson Lane
(Up the block from St. Sophia)
Norristown, PA 19403

For an appointment, please visit www.redcrossblood.org
Search using code: PAinterfaith
Or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING SERVICES AND EVENTS

Sat. Feb. 25th	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – 2nd Saturday of Souls**
Sun. Feb. 26th	**10:00 am – Forgiveness (Cheesefare) Sunday**; Parish Oratorical Festival
	Philoptochos Tiropites/Spanakopites Sale
	12:00 pm – Adult Greek School
Mon. Feb. 27th	**Clean Monday – Great Lent Begins**
	6:30 pm – Great Compline
Wed. Mar. 1st	5:00 pm – Greek School & Little Angels
	6:30 pm – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Fri. Mar. 3rd	**5:30 pm –Stanza I of the Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos (earlier time)**
Sat. Mar. 4th	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – 3rd Saturday of Souls**
	11:00 am – Ignite the Flame Retreat (registration required)
Sun. Mar. 5th	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – Sunday of Orthodoxy**
	Procession with icons at conclusion of Liturgy
	12:00 pm – Adult Greek School
Mon. Mar. 6th	**6:30 pm – Great Compline**
Wed. Mar. 8th	5:00 pm – Greek School & Little Angels
	6:30 pm – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Fri. Mar. 10th	**7:00 pm –Stanza II of the Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos**
Sun. Mar. 12th	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas**
	Daylight Saving Time begins
	12:00 pm – Adult Greek School
Mon. Mar. 13th	**6:30 pm – Great Compline**
Wed. Mar. 15th	5:00 pm – Greek School & Little Angels
	6:30 pm – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Fri. Mar. 17th	**7:00 pm –Stanza III of the Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos**
Sat. Mar. 18th	Sights & Sounds – St. Thomas, Cherry Hill
Sun. Mar. 19th	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – Sunday of the Holy Cross**
	12:00 pm – Adult Greek School
Mon. Mar. 20th	**6:30 pm – Great Compline**
Wed. Mar. 22nd	**10:00 am – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**
	3:00 pm – 8:00 pm – Interfaith Blood Drive at Mormon Church
	5:00 pm – Greek School & Little Angels
Fri. Mar. 24th	**6:00 pm – Great Vespers & Stanza IV of the Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos**
Sat. Mar. 25th	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – Feast of the Annunciation (Location to be announced)**
Sun. Mar. 26th	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – Sunday of St. John Climacus**
	Greek School Program for March 25th following Liturgy
	12:00 pm – Adult Greek School
Mon. Mar. 27th	**6:30 pm – Great Compline**
Wed. Mar. 29th	5:00 pm – Greek School & Little Angels
	6:30 pm – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Fri. Mar. 31st	**7:00 pm – The Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos**
Sun. Apr. 2nd	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt**
	Greek Independence Day Parade in Philadelphia TODAY!
	The bus departs from St. Sophia at 12:00 Noon ***SHARP!***
Wed. Apr. 5th	**6:30 pm – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**
Sat. Apr. 8th	**10:00 am – Divine Liturgy – Saturday of Lazarus**
	Pancake Breakfast; Palm Cross Folding; Tsoureki Pickup