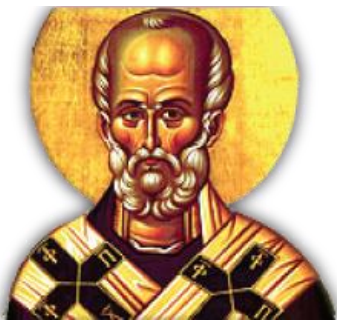


## NOVEMBER 19, 2017–Ninth Sunday of Luke

Obadiah the Prophet; Barlaam and Heliodoros the Martyrs of Caesarea;  
Anthimos, Thallaios, Christophoros and Evfimias the Martyrs



### WELCOME TO ST. NICHOLAS GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

VISIT [www.stnickspgh.org](http://www.stnickspgh.org) TODAY for news and updates about our parish!

CLERGY: Rev. Fr. Christopher Bender and Rev. Dn. Robert Lykos

Father's Cell & Email: 724-630-3483; [frchbender@verizon.net](mailto:frchbender@verizon.net)

PROTOPSALTIS: Dr. Nick Giannoukakis CHANTER & CHOIR DIRECTOR: Steve Andrews

ORGANIST: Igor Kraevsky ALTAR BOY CAPTAINS: Andreas Paljug & Jacob Kefalos

Questions about our Parish? Email Debbie Sandherr, Office Mgr. at [church@stnickspgh.org](mailto:church@stnickspgh.org)

**SERVICE SCHEDULE: Winter schedule (Current) Sept.-June, 8:30 a.m. Orthros & 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy;**  
summer schedule July & August 8 a.m. Orthros & 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy

**TO OUR VISITORS & GUESTS:** We welcome you to worship today, whether you are an Orthodox Christian or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are so pleased to have you with us! Although Holy Communion and other Sacraments are offered only to baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians in good standing with the church, all are invited to receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) from the priest at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. The Antidoron is not sacramental, but is reminiscent of the agape feast that followed worship in the ancient Christian Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church hall for fellowship and refreshments. **Please sign our visitor's book at the back of the church before you leave today, and leave an email address if you want to receive news & announcements from St. Nicholas.**

**Epistle: Ephesians 2: 14-22 (p. 104) Gospel: Luke: 12: 16-21 (p. 108) HYMNS: See pg. 2**

--**TODAY'S MEMORIAL SERVICE** is being chanted for the repose of the soul of the servant of God, **KATHERINE KEFALOS (40 days)**. May God grant her eternal rest and comfort to her family.

--**TODAY'S TRISAGION SERVICE** is being chanted for the repose of the soul of the servant of God, **GEORGE P. KRELIS (45 years)**. May God grant him eternal rest and comfort to his family.

-- **PLEASE JOIN US for coffee & fellowship after services, sponsored by the Kefalos family.**

**TODAY IS IOCC SUNDAY** as designated by the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops. Please see the letter on the last page of the bulletin that explains the day. A second tray will be passed in support of IOCC's ministries.

**ON NOVEMBER 26** there will be a Trisagion service for Peter O. Stamoolis (10 years);  
And for Renee Mitchell (25 years).

### **THIS WEEK AT ST. NICHOLAS:**

**Monday, November 20:** Parish Council Meeting, 7p.m.; GOYA Boys Basketball-**ALL Are Welcome**

**Tuesday, November 21:** **Entrance of the Theotokos, Orthros- 9 a.m., Divine Liturgy-10 a.m.**  
Open Gym/Young Adult Basketball, 8:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, November 22:** Adult Greek School: Beginners, 6:30 p.m., Advanced, 8 p.m.;  
GOYA Girls Basketball-**ALL Are Welcome**, 7 p.m.

**Thursday, November 23:** HAPPY THANKSGIVING, Office Closed

**Saturday, November 25:** **NO** Greek School today; **Cathedral Ball begins at 6 p.m.**

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## *Winter Wonderland at the 2017*

### *St. Nicholas Cathedral Ball*

*Featuring "Ta Filarakia"*

**Saturday, November 25th**

**6 p.m. Cocktail Hour \* 7 p.m. Dinner\* 9 p.m. Dance**

**Dinner and Dance \$60 - Children under Twelve \$15 - Dance after 9 p.m. \$25**

**Dinner Choices:** Filet Mignon Medallions ♦ Crab cakes ♦ Vegetable Stuffed Portobello Mushroom Cap

**R.S.V.P. by Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup>** (Tables of 8 or 10) To George Bellios at 412-897-5354 or [ggbellios@aol.com](mailto:ggbellios@aol.com)

**OR the church office at 412-682-3866 or [church@stnickspgh.org](mailto:church@stnickspgh.org)**



## NOVEMBER 19, 2017–Ninth Sunday of Luke

Obadiah the Prophet; Barlaam and Heliodoros the Martrys of Caesarea;  
Anthimos, Thallalaïos, Christophoros and Evfimias the Martyrs

Tone 7

Orthros Gospel 2

### SPECIAL HYMNS OF THE DAY (SMALL ENTRANCE):

*First to be chanted as the priest exits the Altar at the Small Entrance is the Resurrection Apolytikion in Tone 7*  
(See p. 172 in the Divine Liturgy books.)

*Then, the usual Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) in Tone 2 is chanted:*

Δεῦτε προσκυνήσωμεν καὶ προσπέσωμεν Χριστῷ. Σῶσον ἡμᾶς Υἱὲ Θεοῦ,  
ὁ ἀναστὰς ἐκ νεκρῶν, ψάλλοντάς σοι Ἀλληλούϊα. "Come let us worship and fall down before Christ.  
Save us O Son of God, who arose from the dead. We sing to you, Alleluia."

*After this, the Resurrection Apolytikion is repeated, followed by that for the patron saint of our Church:*

Κανόνα πίστεως καὶ εἰκόνα πραότητος, ἐγκρατείας Διδάσκαλον, ἀνέδειξέ σε τῇ ποιμνῇ σου, ἢ τῶν πραγμάτων  
ἀλήθεια· διὰ τοῦτο ἐκτίσω τῇ ταπεινώσει τὰ ὑψηλά, τῇ πτωχείᾳ τὰ πλούσια, Πάτερ Ἱεράρχα Νικόλαε·  
πρέσβευε Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

The truth of things have revealed you to your flock as a rule of faith, an icon of meekness, and a teacher of  
temperance; for this cause you have achieved the heights by humility, riches by poverty. O Father and  
Hierarch Nicholas, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

*Finally, we hear the Kontakion in Tone 4 for the Entrance into the Temple of the Theotokos (Nov. 21):*

Ὁ καθαρῶτατος ναὸς τοῦ Σωτήρος, ἡ πολυτίμητος παστάς καὶ Παρθένος, τό ἱερόν θησαύρισμα τῆς δόξης  
τοῦ Θεοῦ, σήμερον εἰσάγεται, ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ Κυρίου, τὴν χάριν συνεισάγουσα, τὴν ἐν Πνεύματι θεῷ, ἢν  
ἀνυμνοῦσιν Ἄγγελοι Θεοῦ, Αὕτη ὑπάρχει σκηνὴ ἐπουράνιος.

Today is the prelude of God's pleasure and the proclamation of man's salvation. The Virgin is clearly made  
manifest in the temple of God and foretells Christ to all. Let us also cry out to her with mighty voice, "Hail,  
fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation."

**SCRIPTURE READINGS:** Epistle: Ephesians 2: 14-22 (p. 104); Gospel: Luke: 12: 16-21 (p. 108)

*After the Gospel reading please return to page 12 of the Divine Liturgy Book for the remainder of the Service.*

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**PLEASE NOTE:** Great Vespers for the Feast day of St. Andrew the Apostle (Patron Saint  
of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and of the Archons of the Ecumenical Throne) will be held  
this year at **HOLY TRINITY CHURCH** in the North Hills on **Wednesday, November 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**at 7 p.m.** A reception will follow, honoring our newest Archons,  
Harry Anathasiou and Peter Tsudis.

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**OTICE FOR ALL ORGANIZATIONS OF ST. NICHOLAS:** To organize and prioritize the  
daily needs of St. Nicholas Cathedral, our maintenance staff has adopted a task-list  
system, prepared with their input, which allots time for routine, seasonal and  
unexpected needs of our facilities. Employees are required to submit a check list of  
tasks accomplished daily to the Office Manager (OM) who, in turn, confirms the work  
has been completed. **Any additional task requested of the maintenance staff must**  
**be scheduled through the OM. EXAMPLES INCLUDE:** running errands, emptying  
deliveries, setting up tables and chairs, taking something to storage, etc. The OM is  
responsible for all scheduling of help, including extra personnel needed for church  
functions. We have established a proven labor pool that must be respected & used  
efficiently. **All organizations are asked to adhere to this policy.**



## 2017 Stewardship Pledge Cards are in the Narthex

*(Just ask a member of Parish Council)*

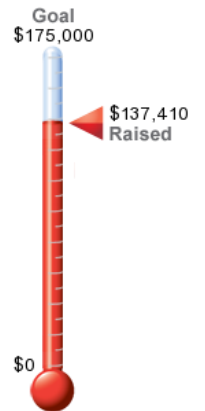
If you have already submitted your 2017 Stewardship Commitment, **THANK YOU!**  
If not, please take the time to make your financial Stewardship Commitment today and complete the talent portion of the card to enable **OUR** Community to grow and carry on the mission of our faith.

Re-dedicate yourself to God by participating in the Divine Liturgy each Sunday and offer your TIME, Talent and treasure.

### **HELP US REACH/ EXCEED OUR GOAL!!**

*"As the Father Has Sent Me,  
So I Send You"* John 20:21

<u>2017</u>	<u>STEWARDSHIP</u>
Total Stewards	211 (GOAL 300)
Total Pledged	\$137,410.00 (GOAL \$175,000.00)
Avg. Pledge	\$651.23



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### **From the Church School Desk:**

***"You Are the Voice of Christ in a Changing World."***



#### **"What I did not learn in Sunday School" Adult Education Class!**

In October, Deacon Robert Lykos started special classes after the Divine Liturgy on various topics for the adults of our beloved parish. The next class will be **today** in the Conference Room.

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral Church School is preparing for their Holiday Outreach Projects. We are looking for hats, mittens, scarves, gloves, etc. for **FOCUS' Project Bundle-up**. Thanks in advance for your warm winter accessories and teaching the children the gift of giving.

The Church School children will present their **Christmas Pageant** under the direction of Jenny DeMatteo, Kelly Gary & Aimee Walker on Sunday, Dec. 17, 2017. Please refer to the enclosed practice schedule for further details.

Please volunteer **your** time, talent and treasure to help **our** children.

Yours in Christ, *Miss Michelle*

## **PHILOPTOCHOS UPDATES**

- ♦ **Spanakopita Rolls** – Orders are now available for pick up, and we will be selling spanakopita rolls after church on Sundays through the holiday season. They are \$9 each and make wonderful appetizers for your holiday parties!
- ♦ **Vasilopita New Year's Bread** – Volunteers are needed to help mix, roll, bake and wrap Vasilopita on **Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**. We will be working all day (from 5 a.m. into the evening) so please come any time you can. Order forms are also available in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please see Nikki Lykos or Alisa Mathews.
- ♦ **Directory Update** – Please return your directory update form as soon as possible to ensure your information is accurate in the new directory! Also, please consider sponsoring the directory or placing an ad to help offset the cost of printing. If you have any questions, please contact Nikki Lykos (412-897-8208) or Michelle Kotsagrellos (412-680-1416).
- ♦ **Food Bank** – The Food Bank supports several of our parishioners and continues to need your support! You can donate by making a check payable to the "St. Nicholas Philoptochos Food Bank" or through United Way by designating the St. Nicholas Food Bank (#3288) through your employers United Way contribution. Questions: contact Elaine Andrianos (412-731-4334) or Denise Daugherty (412-508-1326).





Philoptochos is collecting placement bags for children going to a foster care home. Bags can be dropped off in the plastic bin near the church office by **Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>** and will be donated to the Foster Love Project, which supports local kids in foster care. Please donate only complete bags!

Infant/Toddler Bags (ages 0-2)	Kids Bags	Teen Bags
<b>Required items:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diaper bag or large tote bag (must zipper)</li> <li>- Footed PJs</li> <li>- Pack of onesies</li> <li>- Small blanket</li> <li>- Small stuffed animal</li> <li>- Baby board book</li> <li>- Baby soap (in Ziploc)/washcloth</li> <li>- Socks</li> </ul> <b>Optional items:</b> pacifier, lotion, teether, wipes, diapers, bottle	<b>Required items:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large backpack or duffel bag</li> <li>- 2 pairs of PJs (1 winter, 1 summer)</li> <li>- Pack of socks</li> <li>- Small blanket</li> <li>- Stuffed animal</li> <li>- Book</li> <li>- Toothbrush/Toothpaste (fluoride free for under 5)</li> <li>- Bath pouf and body wash (in Ziploc)</li> </ul> <b>Optional items:</b> lotion, wide-toothed comb, pack of underwear, night light, coloring book, hat/mittens	<b>Required items:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Duffel bag or large zippered tote</li> <li>- PJs (shorts/t-shirts/sweatpants)</li> <li>- Pack of socks</li> <li>- Blanket</li> <li>- Small pillow</li> <li>- Book</li> <li>- Toothbrush/Toothpaste</li> <li>- Bath pouf and body wash (in Ziploc)</li> <li>- Deodorant</li> </ul> <b>Optional items:</b> wide-toothed comb, journal, feminine products (no razors please), lotion, hat/gloves

For information about the Foster Love Project, visit [www.fosterloveproject.org](http://www.fosterloveproject.org)

Any questions? Contact Nikki Lykos (412-897-8208 or [nvlykos@gmail.com](mailto:nvlykos@gmail.com))

## St. Nicholas Annual Bazaar Sunday December 10, 2017



We are excited once again for the Annual St. Nicholas Day Bazaar. Please join the fun on **Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup>** following Divine Liturgy.

There will be lots of food, drinks & games for the kids! We will also have items to be purchased which make great holiday gifts.

**Hope to see you there!!**

**Bazaar set up will begin after Noon on Sat., December 9<sup>th</sup>.**

*(Please do not come before noon as there is an event and they will be using the hallways.)*

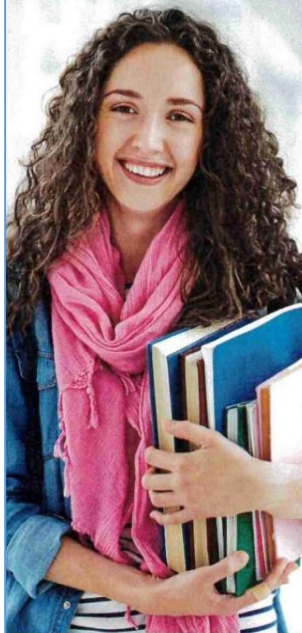
# \$250,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS

## 20 Awards of \$10,000 each

based on academic merit and financial need—two of which are allocated to **Music and Arts Majors**

## 20 Awards of \$2,500 each

based solely on academic achievement



### The 2017/2018 scholarship application is available and can be completed online!

Applications from eligible college students accepted through **January 31, 2018**.

The application and qualification criteria, requirements, and guidelines are available at [www.panhellenicsf.org](http://www.panhellenicsf.org).

If you are an undergraduate of Hellenic descent, we encourage you to apply for the scholarship awards!

**For any questions or inquiries:**  
Please email

[pkorbakes@panhellenicsf.org](mailto:pkorbakes@panhellenicsf.org)  
or call our office at (312) 357-6432



PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation  
17 North Wabash Avenue • Suite 600  
Chicago • Illinois 60602 USA

312.357.6432  
312.357.0527  
[panhellenicsf.org](http://panhellenicsf.org)  
[info@panhellenicsf.org](mailto:info@panhellenicsf.org)

## SIXTY CLUB NEWS



**TO OUR FRIENDS OF ALL AGES:**

THANK YOU to those who stopped by our display and picked up a flier. Now, remember to watch our Sunday announcements to see what may interest you... Thank you, also, to Alice Flocos who designed the poster display.

**IMPORTANT "SLIDER LUNCH" on January 14** after Liturgy in the small hall. This will be a business meeting to decide on the topic discussed at the end of the October 1 meeting and a tentative schedule for the year. Please let Virginia know if you will attend.

Reservations taken now for **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM** at the O' Reilly on **Sat., February 17 at 2 p.m.** The cost is **\$33 due January 28**. Please contact Virginia Fekaris (412-687-4804) or Alice Flocos (412-731-4282). We have 15 tickets in the first eight rows---please make reservations now in case we need more!

# **ECCLESIASTICAL MUSIC MINISTRY AT THE CATHEDRAL**

***You are cordially invited!***

*Come and learn Byzantine chant from a world-class instructor, or join our choir and learn to sing the unique and beautiful arrangements composed by our founding choir director!*



***Our Cathedral is graced by two music ministries grounded in tradition that we hope you will consider participating in:***

The first is rooted at the Analogion (the Chanter Bookstand). Our Analogion Ministry, blessed by the volunteer service of Dr. Nick Giannoukakis, invites and welcomes anyone with some musical ability, especially the younger generation, to join and learn the beautiful and 1200 year-old tradition of Byzantine hymnology and chant. Those who faithfully adhere to the ministry will not only have an opportunity to grow musically, but more importantly, will solidify their understanding of Greek, gain an appreciation for the structure of the services, and a better insight into our Orthodox faith and its theology through a comprehension of the hymns. With the exception of the summer months (June-August), the Ministry will focus on the Sunday Orthros and the occasional Vespers, in addition to the evening services of Lent and Holy Week. Between June and early September, the Ministry will also focus on the Holy and Divine Liturgy.

Dr. Giannoukakis, who was distinguished and tonsured as Protosaltis by Metropolitan Maximos in 1998, and noted to be among the "who is who" of Byzantine Chanters in a historical compendium published in Greece in 1994, is also the only chanter in our Metropolis to hold a certificate and diploma in Byzantine Music from a Greek Music Conservatory. Dr. Giannoukakis, personally-trained by renowned and respected Greek chanters (Constantin Lagouros, Georgios Syrkas, Emmanuel Hatzimarkos), offers music to the highest possible standards of the Great Church of Christ (the Ecumenical Patriarchate) and has successfully trained young and old individuals for more than 25 years. To learn more, and to consider participating, contact Dr. Giannoukakis at [ngn1@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:ngn1@andrew.cmu.edu) or at [ngianni@pitt.edu](mailto:ngianni@pitt.edu). All educational materials are complimentary.

The second is rooted in the rich polyphonic innovations of the late Rudolph Agraphiotis who in the early 1900s, first composed the lyrical Liturgy conducted in our church to this day. Some of the choir members are among those who came together to constitute the first choir directed by Mr. Agraphiotis. Today, the choir is in the very capable hands of Mr. Steve Andrews who directs it as another of our Cathedral's volunteers. The choir can be heard during the Divine Liturgy for most of the year's Sunday services as well as at the services for Holy Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

The Choir invites and welcomes anyone with some musical ability, especially the younger generation, to join. To learn more, and to consider participating, contact Mr. Steve Andrews at [beyondfromwithin@comcast.net](mailto:beyondfromwithin@comcast.net). Why not join both ministries? As it is written: "He who delights in the Lord, and walks in the Light will not stumble" (From the Doxastikon of the Orthros of the 5th Sunday of Lent).

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## **St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal Schedule**

**Sunday, November 19, 2017**

During Church School for Nursery-6<sup>th</sup> Graders

**Sunday, December 3, 2017**

For 1 hour immediately following the  
Divine Liturgy for all children

**Saturday, December 16, 2017**

12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Final Rehearsal for all children

**Sunday, December 17, 2017**

Christmas Pageant in Church  
Questions? Contact Directors

Kelly Gary at 412-741-8567

Or Aimee Walker at 412-398-6094



## **PROJECT BUNDLE UP**



**WE ARE LOOKING FOR HATS, MITTENS,  
SCARVES & GLOVES FOR FOCUS'  
PROJECT BUNDLE UP!**

## **PASTITSIO SALE**

GOYA has made and are selling Pastitsio  
pans frozen and ready to cook,  
9 X12 pans of Greek deliciousness!

To place an order, contact Alea Melacrinou  
either after church or email at  
[goya.pastichiosale@gmail.com](mailto:goya.pastichiosale@gmail.com)

***Thank you for supporting our fundraiser!***





# COUNTDOWN TO *Zero!*

A campaign to burn our mortgage  
by April 15, 2019

**Show your support by donating  
and *TOGETHER*  
we can reach our goal!**

*St. Nicholas Cathedral thanks you for your support.*

## **NEW YEARS EVE CELEBRATION**

**DECEMBER 31, 2017**

*Join us to celebrate  
the New Year!*

\$45 per person

\$15 for children (under 12)

\$25 Dance only

### **INCLUDES:**

- Buffet Dinner
- Champagne Toast at Midnight
- Full, cash bar
- Continental Breakfast
- Entertainment by PANIGIRI

Cocktails at 8 p.m.

Buffet dinner at 9 p.m.

Dance only at 10:30 p.m.

R.S.V.P. to Joanne Melacrinis at  
412-563-4609 or 412-400-4607  
NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 22

ST. NICHOLAS  
GREEK  
ORTHODOX  
CATHEDRAL  
419 S. Dithridge St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213



# Happy New Year!

**WHO:** CHURCH SCHOOL STUDENTS

**WHAT:** CHURCH SCHOOL BAKE SALE

**WHEN:** SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2017

**WHERE:** ST. NICHOLAS BAZAAR

**WHY:** CHURCH SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

**HOW:** BRING 2 DOZEN BAKED GOODS

**QUESTIONS:** CONTACT ANNA KUKUNAS 412-967-9154



## **GOYA NEWS**

### **Christmas Chocolate Sale**

Orders are being taken through Sunday, December 3rd for delivery on Sunday, December 17.  
Please contact a GOYA representative to place your order.

**FOCUS Angels** are! Please support GOYA to help make a FOCUS child's Christmas brighter.  
Please plan on bringing your wrapped gift to church by **December 3rd.**

***Thank you for supporting our fundraising efforts!!***



***SEND YOUR CHRISTMAS GREETINGS***  
WITH THE 2017 ST. NICHOLAS CHRISTMAS CARD

*You can save money on your Christmas cards  
AND help our beloved Cathedral at the same time!*

Name & Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your list of names to read (*please print*): \_\_\_\_\_

**Suggested donation:** \$20 OR MORE, payable to S.N.G.O.C. (memo: Christmas card) and include form.  
Place in the Sunday offering tray or mail to: St. Nicholas Cathedral, 419 S. Dithridge St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213

**-All names need to be submitted NO LATER than November 26, 2017-**

**Christ is born! Glorify Him!**

PLEASE HELP US decorate OUR BELOVED CATHEDRAL  
with beautiful poinsettias for the Nativity Season.

If you wish, please list the names of your loved ones to be remembered in  
the Proskomidi (*Preparation of the Gifts*) at every Divine Liturgy through Christmas.



For the Health of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory Of: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Suggested donation:** \$20 OR MORE, payable to S.N.G.O.C. (memo: Poinsettias) and include form.

**-All names need to be submitted NO LATER than December 15, 2017-**

Place in the Sunday offering tray or mail to: 419 S. Dithridge St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213



ASSEMBLY OF CANONICAL  
ORTHODOX BISHOPS  
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
-----Office of the Secretariat-----

*"Let each of you look out not only for his own interests,  
but also for the interests of others." Philippians 2:4*

To the Most Reverend Clergy, Venerable Monastics,  
and Devout Faithful of the Holy Orthodox Churches in the Americas:

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Each year on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, the Orthodox faithful in the United States come together to give thanks to God for all his blessings, and for the privilege of serving the least of our brethren. The Assembly of Bishops has called this Sunday A Day of Sharing, for the message IOCC brings is one of sharing God's good gifts to us, reiterating Christ's call to serve Him by loving and serving one another.

As the official humanitarian agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, International Orthodox Christian Charities, or IOCC, is our vehicle to extend to others the great mercy that Christ has shown us. Since its creation in 1992, IOCC has served people around the world struggling in the face of war, famine, natural disaster, and economic hardship so that they may have the means to live with dignity, respect, aid hope.

In 2017, IOCC's 25th anniversary year, IOCC has extended that hope to many around the world. IOCC has helped Syrian refugees throughout Greece, Jordan, Lebanon, Romania and Serbia, as well as those Syrians displaced in their own country, by providing food, water, shelter, and medicine. IOCC has offered economic opportunity to farmers in northern Greece grappling with the ongoing financial crisis, and trained healthcare workers in Ethiopia so that they can customize wheelchairs for people with disabilities. IOCC has helped to reconstruct storm-damaged schools in Haiti; rebuilt homes destroyed by natural disasters here in the United States; and offered emotional and spiritual care after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. With assistance offered in the spirit of Christ's love, farmers in Kosovo have increased their harvests, entrepreneurs in Bosnia-Herzegovina have grown their businesses, and flood survivors in Serbia have started anew.

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them" (1 Cor. 12:4-6). Each one of us brings unique gifts to our service of Christ; so too the ministry of IOCC is varied in its manifestations yet unified in purpose. That unity characterizes our ability as one Church to serve those in need, near and far, reaching around the world in Christ's love. As we thank God for His goodness to us, let us not forget His children near and far facing difficulty, and let us recommit to serving those in need, to being Christ's hands on Earth.

During this blessed holiday season, may the LORD shine His mercy upon you & your family, bring peace into your homes & your hearts.

With paternal blessing and love in Christ,  
+Metropolitan NICOLAE of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolis of the Americas

Liaison for IOCC from the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America  
1559 NORTH WOODLAWN STREET WICHITA, KANSAS 67208-2429  
PHONE: 316.687.3169 • FAX: 316.636.5628 • EMAIL: [SECRETARIAT@ASSEMBLYOFBISHOPS.ORG](mailto:SECRETARIAT@ASSEMBLYOFBISHOPS.ORG)