Voice: (585) 244.3377

January 2020

From the Desk of Rev. Fr. Angelo Maggos

Parish Registry, Progress Report Upcoming Church Services and Events Youth Ministry and Organizations News

From the Desk of Fr. Angelo

Many of us begin each New Year by making resolutions so in addition to offering this review of our achievements from the previous year, I would also like to share the opportunities and challenges that we will face in the coming year with the hope that you can become involved in shaping our church community for 2020.

Parish Overview

POSITIVE NOTES Now that we are regularly recording attendance each Sunday, we are getting a truer picture of the overall church attendance. A regular Sunday averages between 200-300 people. During the last 12 months, we performed fifteen (15) Forty-Day Blessings, 14 Baptisms, and 7 weddings, compared with 23 Baptisms and 6 Weddings in 2018. Unfortunately, 2019 was a difficult year with 24 funerals. Out of 875 potential families on our current mailing list, we stand at a bit over 400 members in good standing. For a definition of good standing see our website or the Good News.

Stewardship has shown a slight increase in concert with new and/or returning members as we have been reaching out to some of our parishioners to welcome them back.

CHALLENGES Stewardship continues to fund only one third (1/3) of our operating expenses so that fundraising continues to be a necessity. The Parish Council has over the last two (2) years initiated some revenue sources (discussed later) which will generate additional income.

This being said, I still strongly entreat all of us to not let up and continue this important work of reaching out to those members who don't attend regularly. Take them to lunch or dinner and talk with them to let them know what the latest happenings are and to discover what keeps them from becoming more involved in our church and community. I realize that not everyone will respond favorably but through personal experience I know that there are many who would respond to words of encouragement to reconnect with our wonderful community!

Religious Education (RE)

POSITIVE NOTES We were extremely fortunate to have the talents of Andreas Sava, a new parishioner, who moved here in 2018 from New Jersey. With his experience in Orthodox religious education from his previous parish, he aligned our existing RE program with the *Orthodox Christian Education Commission* (OCEC) which is the standard curriculum for all Orthodox churches in America. Unfortunately, a job transfer took Andreas away from us, but God always provides, and our dedicated teaching staff has been joined by SarahAnn Pantisides and Soultana Swain. They graciously accepted the position of co-directors of Youth Religious Education (Sunday School) together with Rhonda Stamatis who is serving in the new position of Teacher Recruitment and Teacher Mentorship. Please take a moment to look over the Religious Education organization chart and Job Descriptions for Sunday School positions on our website under the "Education" tab.

Also, if you are interested in teaching or participating in another way with our youth, PLEASE contact Rhonda or me to help get you involved.

The Religious Education Committee (REC) publishes the entire year's schedule of activities in August so parents can plan ahead for all education and activities. This schedule is included in the August issue of the Good News and is also under the "Education" tab on our website.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, the Religious Education staff and I are committed to professional development at least once per year for all our teachers to ensure that they are up to date with the latest developments in education and teaching methods and the latest Archdiocese Education curriculum and training resources. This will take the form of seminars, guest speakers, and workshops along with a 3-week Orthodox education primer to prepare new teachers. This is to ensure that each of our children receive a true, correct and unified understanding of our Orthodox faith.

While the number of children attending Sunday School is not what this parish experienced in the 1980's and 90's, we have seen good (not great) participation of children under 12 so that our average attendance is about 20-25 on a typical Sunday. And most important they are actively involved and have a strong desire to learn about our Orthodox Christian faith.

This lower number of children has forced us to combine some classes so that now we are operating Kindergarten and 1st grade, Pre-K and 3&4 grade, 2nd and 3rd grade, 4th and 5th grade, 6-8 grade and the teen class.

The staff and teachers of RE make sure that we have several youth activities throughout the year such as cookie baking for the police and fireman, prosphoro baking and the Lenten Passport program.

GOYA is a struggle as schoolwork and sports occupies much of our teen's lives but Teri Strembenis has kept that flame alive by scheduling quarterly events where our teens can get together such as Laser Tag, Kayaking, and the Breast Cancer Walk. We are hoping to organize a Spring trip to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Nashville TN (new home of Fr Michael Marcatoni) to visit his church and tour the full size replica of the Parthenon.

CHALLENGES

- 1. The size of our parish severely impacts my ability to have personal contact time with our kids during Sunday School, however, I am committed to the short-term solution of visiting each of the classrooms a minimum of twice per month. As a long term solution, the Parish Council and I have been discussing a return to the position of assistant priest, however we are pursing this carefully with the requirement that a concise description of duties be developed and that while this person does not need to be clergy, he or she must be young enough to relate well with our youth, especially our teens.
- 2. Adult RE continues to be a challenge as we discontinued the Tuesday evening Religious Education Adult Orthodox Education to investigate how to retool. Most of you recall that several months ago we sent out a poll through Facebook and our website offering three avenues for adult education; *Traditional Bible Study, Monthly Book Club and Theology on Tap.* While Theology on Tap was by far the most popular there was interest in the other two...so...starting in January 2020 we will be offering the following:
 - a) Bicentennial Bible Challenge. In conjunction with our neighbor Asbury First United Methodist, we will be conducting a weekly reading schedule along with a study guide to help shepherd us together through the entire Bible in one year. (see their program at www.asburyfirst.org/bible-200). These resources will be available for you to use on your own, as well as with small groups

for weekly discussion and conversation. I am very excited to be embarking on this journey together with our neighbor <u>so please let us know that you are interested in participating and we</u> will make sure that you are kept up to date as the resources become available.

- b) Orthodox Book Club. Once per month we will pick a book with a religious or social theme to read and then get together to discuss. I know that there are plenty of topics that you all are interested in. Our first book will be one which was given to the clergy of the Detroit Metropolis by His Eminence Bishop Nicholas entitled Simple Christianity. So as with the Bible Challenge, please let us know that you are interested in participating and we will keep you up to date on when our first meeting will be to discuss this book.
- c) Theology on Tap. I discovered this while at the seminary in Boston. This is a program of the Catholic Archdiocese to invite anyone, parishioner and non-parishioner, to ask those questions they always wanted to ask about Christianity. This project was very successful in engaging those who are not necessarily comfortable asking (sometimes controversial) questions in a formal setting. Again, as with the Bible Challenge please let us know that you are interested in participating and I will announce our first pub of choice.

Youth Worker Policy

Since September, our parish has been working hard to bring our parish into compliance with the newly implemented Archdiocese wide Youth Protection Program. Helen Eisenberg, due to her long experience in Sunday School was appointed as the Youth Worker Registrar to enroll our youth workers in the program, maintain the register of our youth workers and serve as the parish liaison to the Metropolis of Detroit and the Archdiocese.

This program requires registering ALL persons who work with our youth or have contact with our youth in connection with any event sponsored or operated by our parish. This program has been in place for all our Orthodox Youth Camps across the Archdiocese for many years and is now become mandatory at the parish level.

Also of note is that in the light of recent violent activities directed against churches in this country I initiated a two-fold campaign. The first act was together with Lamont Thomas, I asked the Rochester Police Department to conduct a security assessment of our entire facility here. They completed this in November, 2018. With these observations and recommendations, I then asked Peter Gines to investigate what policies are in place at local churches and synagogues and to put together a draft Security Response Plan for our church. He submitted to me a draft policy this past November and is under review by our Parish Council. Our plan is to put this into action by February, 2020. Upon completion this policy will be posted to our website.

Servers, Acolytes, Choir and Chanters

While youth Altar Servers is a struggle, I am appreciative of their help whenever they come to assist me. Our dedicated Acolytes, Juan Linares and Ronald Wiegand, *regularly* serve the church not only during Sunday Liturgy, but also for many of the other Feast Day services throughout the year. Their dedication is especially helpful to me during the Pre-Sanctified liturgies, the Akathist services and the entire Holy Week. Many thanks to them for helping to guide our younger servers and also many thanks to the several college students who always come to assist when they are home on break.

Our choir stands at 15 members under the continued direction of our Choir Directors, Julie Everliegh and Zoi Varahidis. We have added several new voices this year and our choir adds beauty to the Divine Liturgy. Many thanks to the directors and our choir members for their dedication and service. Please consider add-

ing your voice to our choir and let Julie, Zoi or me get you started on revealing your inner choir.

I am extremely grateful to our chanters, Presvytera Teri Maggos, Christine Kerxhalli Wiegand, Laurie Soures Wooters, for keeping up the Orthodox tradition of Byzantine chant. As with our Acolytes, they regularly serve the church not only during Sunday Liturgy, but also for many of the other Feast Day services throughout the year. For those of you that are interested in chant, please join us as the days of the prim donna chanters has long since faded and all three of our chanters are welcoming to those wishing to learn.

Outreach

While outreach to the community, both our church community and Rochester, has always been present at this parish we have undertaken steps to coordinate the efforts of each of the philanthropic organizations at this church through the formation of an Outreach Ministry. The organizational and communication skills and experience combined with a desire for this ministry resulted in my election of Mrs. Aliki Schimopoulou to serve as the chairperson of this ministry.

Several months ago, Aliki called for the leadership of each of the parish ministries, Philoptochos, St. Paraskevi, Seniors, GOYA, Religious Education, Greek School, and Parish Council, along with interested parishioners, to meet and discuss how best to organize our efforts. Two significant outcomes resulted:

- a) Identify quarterly outreach objectives and to begin immediately by having each ministry choose a particular cause. This would continue on an ongoing basis throughout the year with each ministry coordinating their projects to the Outreach Committee to ensure that their efforts are being communicated to the entire parish.
- b) Develop a long range strategy focused on discovering how our church can be linked in to ongoing charitable and humanitarian efforts in the Rochester Community and beyond.

With respect to item a), the Team began right away with some initiatives which were identified in the Sunday Bulletins and continued through the end of the year:

- Golisano Toy Drive sponsored by Religious Education and Greek School. The box for toys is downstairs outside of the Sunday School office of which we collected 32 individual toys.
- Winter Coat Drive of new or gently used winter coats, hats, and gloves for Rochester Children in need sponsored by the church. The collection box was located in the church Narthex and we collected 45 coats in addition to other winter items.
- CP Rochester sponsored by Philoptochos and St. Paraskevi Society.

With respect to item b) key members of our newly formed Outreach Team met with the Outreach Minister at Asbury First Methodist, Rev. Jaqueline Nelson, to assist us in building an Outreach strategy. Asbury was selected since they are our closest neighbor and have a vast amount of experience in many different types of outreach programs. This led to the following objectives for the Outreach Team:

- Development of a unified strategy to identify new opportunities and gaps within the local Rochester community.
- Establish and coordinate communication to the parish of all outreach efforts through website, newsletter, emails, Facebook, and Sunday Bulletins.

As the Outreach Team moves forward with developing the overall strategy, the plan is to continue to identify quarterly outreach opportunities giving everyone the chance to participate either by donating or becoming involved in some "hands-on" activities. Stay tuned to our website for more details.

Facility Maintenance and Capital Programs

There is just no way that you could have been to our church in the past year and not seen all the investments we have made here at East Ave. The following are some of the highlights.

The new parking lot was much more than just new pavement as it included installation of underground gas, electrical and water supply lines for our Greek Festival which dramatically reduced setup times and eliminates the trip hazards and safety issues caused by these exposed lines. Also, we installed underground tent stakes which eliminated the need to drive long steel stakes into our parking lot each year as well as being another dangerous hazard. This effort also includes widening the front circle to two full lanes, with sidewalk and marble curbing. Many thanks to all involved in this massive project and especially to Jim Stathopoulos and Tasso Kolokouris for their efforts in coordinating the details of this effort.

Hall Renovation As per the vote at the Fall and Spring General Assemblies, the Hall is being transformed into an elegant banquet hall that will stand in harmony with our beautiful church. The expected completion date is mid January and will feature vaulted wood beam ceiling, much improved lighting, chandeliers, new lightweight tables and cocktail tables, new counter top, full electrical in the serving area, screen for presentations and movies, sound system and new hi-impact wood-style flooring and central heat and air-conditioning. See the latest photo of the Hall progress on the next page. The plan moving forward is that the Hall will not only be a beautiful event space for community events throughout the year but also serve as a revenue source from both parishioners and non-parishioners. Many thanks to two young men of our parish who led this effort; Andrew Bouquin and Van Yannas. Their extensive construction backgrounds and have been indispensable for this project.

New Pangari Extension Through a generous donation by two of our parishioners, we have added an extension to the existing marble pangari stand (where we purchase candles). This was specially designed to match the color, marble and detailing of the existing pangari stand and to offer important storage space to those working there.

Technology Updates As beautiful as our facility is, it is vital that we have the technology to match our growing needs. The entire facility is now internet (wireless) capable. At the request of our teachers who want to use on-line teaching resources, we equipped four of the Sunday School classrooms with 32" smart TVs to allow teachers in both Religious Ed and Greek School to use on-line educational training plans, courses and educational videos. As was mentioned previously, the Hall will have a projector for presentations or movies and the sound system will be wireless as well as the hall lighting.

Through a generous grant from the estate of one of our recently departed parishioners, we have contracted to have a landscaping plan developed for the church property. This will be done in 3 phases (which will be posted on our website) with the first phase to be the front area of the church with a scheduled start of Spring of 2020. A bit of bad news, however, is that the large Beech tree in the front of the church has been declared diseased. We had 5 independent tree experts render their diagnosis and they all were in agreement that the tree cannot be saved and is a potential fall hazard. We are currently getting bids for the full removal of the tree and expect to have that complete by the end of first quarter of 2020. My thanks to Alan Makovsky for his hard work with the quoting process for landscaping and for his thorough investigation of the condition and options for the Beech tree.





Church Events:

- 1 January, Wednesday, Office closed
- 5 January, Sunday, RE class- Epiphany Liturgy & Blessing of the waters, 5:30 PM
- 5 January, Sunday, Philoptochos General mtg Discuss Vasilopita, 11:30 AM
- 6 January, Monday, Theophany Holy Epiphany Liturgy 10:00 am
- 6 January, Monday, PC Meeting 7:00 PM
- 12 January, Sunday, RE class Presentation of Oratorical Topics
- 19 January, Sunday, RE class
- 19 January, Sunday, RE PTA meeting
- 26 January, Sunday, RE class First review of Oratorical topics

Events:

- 4 January, Saturday, Greek School No class
- 11 January, Saturday, Panhellenic Vasilopita Picnic, Cobbs Hill Tay House, 2:00 PM
- 12 January, Sunday, Vasilopita Sunday. Proceeds to St. Basil's Academy
- 15 January, Wednesday, Good News submission deadline. Submit articles to goodnews@agocroc.org
- 19 January, Sunday, Aghia Paraskevi Society Mtg, 4:00 PM
- 21 January, Tuesday, Greek Festival Meeting, 6:00 PM
- 23 January, Thursday, Seniors Meeting, 11:00 AM



Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini Parish

Worship Sites: Annunciation Church, Our Lady of the Americas Church, and Saint Michael Church



November 26, 2019

Father Angelo Maggos Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation 962 East Avenue Rochester, New York 14607

Dear Father Maggos & Annunciation Community,

The staff, parishioners and community members of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Parish would like to thank you for your generous donation. Your turkey donation allowed us to fully serve 86 families. These families were able to receive not only a turkey but also non-perishable items to complement their Thanksgiving meal. We are humbled by your generosity and your service to our Rochester community.

"Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely, who conduct their affairs with justice." (Psalm 112:5) We are confident that your community will prosper because of your selfless acts. We will keep your community in our prayers. May God bless all of you!

Sincerely,

Priscila DeJesüs Pastoral Minister

Father Robert Werth Parochial Vicar

Tather Robert Worth

CHURCH HALL REMODELING UPDATE AS OF 12/31/2019



HALL RENOVATION CHALLENGE PLDEGE

Hall Donor Pledges are continuing, and we are very appreciative of everyone's support for this project.

Our long-time parishioners and supporters of this community, Nick and Katherine Sfikas, have already graciously donated \$150,000 towards the Hall Renovation Project. As with all of you, they have been keeping up with our progress and have seen that the Hall Pledge Donations to date have not yet reached the goal established at the last General Assembly.

With this in mind, Nick and Katherine Sfikas, have offered a matching pledge program of up to an additional \$50,000 to help us achieve our goal. We are, therefore, encouraging everyone to take up this challenge in whatever way they can. So as to not let this carry on for too long, we have set the deadline for collecting these funds to the end of March, 2020.

Be assured that as we move forward, we will be providing updates on our progress, through our website, the Good News and church announcements.

We are confident that we can meet this challenge that Nick and Katherine have presented to us, so let's get it done!

Annunciation Parish Council and Fr Angelo

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City/State/Zip:	
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Jeanette and Michael Lazary Aleksandra Velo

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Ana Dobrot

Vera Bellows

Vicky Stathe-Smith – In memory of her parents, Van

and Anastasia Stathe

Vasila Augustinos

Zoe Stamatis

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Helen Eisenberg

Nick Grigoriou Family in memory of John & Irene

John & Elaine Vangellow In memory of Jennie Mick-

Gregoriou

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Dear Families

We hope everyone had a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year with their families and we are looking forward to the upcoming year in Religious Education. First of all we would like to thank all the teachers, parents and students for their help and hard work with the Christmas Pageant. We couldn't have done it without everyone's dedication and involvement! Also thank you to everyone who donated to our toy drive and coat drive this holiday season. With the help of Greek School and our fellow parishioners we were able to donate 32 toys to Golisano Children's Hospital and 45 coats to children in need. A special thank you to Aliki Schimopoulou for all of her help with the outreach initiatives. We will continue with our charitable work throughout the year so stay tuned for more information in the coming months.

We will continue to focus on specific topics each month in religious education. January's topics will be: Sacraments and Church Holidays. Our students will learn more about different church Feast days which continues this topic that was initiated in December. Sacraments such as Baptism, Communion, Confession and Marriage to name a few will be discussed in Sunday School this month. Be sure to ask your child about what he or she did in Sunday School each week to continue the discussion from the classroom.

We thank everyone for their continued support and we look forward to another great year in Religious Education.

SarahAnn Panitsidis and Soultana Swain Religious Education Administrators

I would also like to extend a personal thanks to SarahAnn, Soultana, and Rhonda as they transition into these new roles that have been created for Religious Education. Their dedication to the Reprogram and their support of our dedicated teachers demonstrates the next generation of leadership in our church. If you are interested in teaching or assisting our teachers or staff please contact Rhonda Stamatis who is responsible for recruitment and mentoring of new teachers...so no worries that you have to go it alone.

Fr Angelo

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 2019



Annunciation Policies

MEMORIAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTION POLICY

All monies received during a funeral or memorial service that are made out to the church, that is, checks marked with "Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church" or cash with the envelope marked with "Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church" will be used for purposes in support of church operation.

These could include support of recognized church ministries, sacramental articles purchased for the church proper or for ongoing campaigns such as Hall Renovation or other capita improvements.

If it is desired that these monies are to be used for other wishes that the family may have the family must ensure that they announce that theses checks or cash be designated as such.

All monies received for funerals are tracked, and family members will receive a listing of those who donated and a total amount of the donation, typically within 40-60 days following the date of the funeral. In addition, for all monies received designated "Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church," donors will receive a letter thanking them for their donation to the church in memory of the deceased.

POLICY FOR DOCUMENT PREPARATION:

There is a required processing charge of \$40 per document. This charge covers research, preparation and routing of documents such as Certificate of Residency, Certificate of Freedom to Marry, Reissued Marriage Certificate, Reissued Baptism Certificate and Certificate of Death. Additional documents are \$20.00 per document.

ADDITIONAL:

We have wedding candles in the office for purchase which is required at the time of the ceremony. The donation for them are \$30.00.

We also have baptismal candles, \$30 for the large candles and \$7 each for the two (2) smaller candles which are also required at the time of the baptism.

MEMORIALS:

Coffee Hour scheduling for family memorials is the responsibility of the Philoptochos unless other arrangements have been made by the family sponsoring the Memorial. The family which is sponsoring the Memorial is asked to:

- 1. Contact the Parish Secretary to arrange scheduling for Coffee Hour that day. The Secretary will contact the Philoptochos President.
- 2. Arrange for or pay for Coffee Hour food items that are in excess of the standard menu (coffee, drinks, and simple snacks).
- 3. Coordinate the preparation and delivery of Koliva (if used). The Philoptochos or Church office can provide information on persons who can prepare Koliva. The standard rate for the preparation of koliva is \$150.

2020 ADVERTISING/SPONSORSHIP COMMITMENT FORM

In order to help defray costs of printing and mailing and to increase awareness among our community of the broad range of experience and services available from our parishioners, we are inviting both parishioners and any vendors to our church to consider advertising in our monthly newsletter. Just complete the form below and mail, email or drop off to the church office. For email use office@agocroc.org

Name	Phone			
Address	City Zip			
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ADVERTISING OPTIONS:	NOTES:			
□ Full Page\$500/yr	Newsletter is printed 11 months per year as June/July is a combined newsletter			
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□ Business Card\$150/yr	Emailed ads must be 600 dpi or greater PDF			
	Please include or email artwork			



When you support the Friends of the Metropolis campaign, you are part of a greater outreach that proclaims with one universal voice that God is truly our hope and our rock of salvation. Because of your devotion to the Friends program, ministries and programs are implemented on a Metropolis-wide basis which strengthen and enhance our faith and our joint ministry of service. I would like to invite you to join forces with the faithful throughout the Metropolis of Detroit in support of the ministries which are part of the Office of the Metropolitan.

Thanking you for your kind and generous response, I remain, with paternal blessings and prayers,

+NICHOLAS Metropolitan of Detroit

MORE INFO AT: WWW.DETROIT.GOARCH.ORG/FRIENDS

GENERAL SUPPORT

Fully fund the general expenses of the Metropolis office, including programs and travels.

OUTREACH/MISSIONS

Create opportunities to introduce our faith to society. Participate in inter-Christian and interfaith activities. Provide quick responses to national and international disasters.

EDUCATION

Enhance various scholarship opportunities, adult education programs, and support Metropolis students at Hellenic College/Holy Cross.

HELLENISM

Develop programs for Hellenic Cultural Outreach, including language, history, and arts.

CLERGY/PARISH SUPPORT

Develop and provide instructional seminars and services for clergy and parishes.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Support the youth & young adult ministries, including our summer camps, as well as the activities of a full-time Metropolis Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.

LEADERSHIP

Organize Clergy-Laity Conferences, Oratorical Festivals, Youth Worker and Religious Education Training, and Adult Education Seminars.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Continued website development, hospitality to visiting dignitaries, charity and philanthropy.

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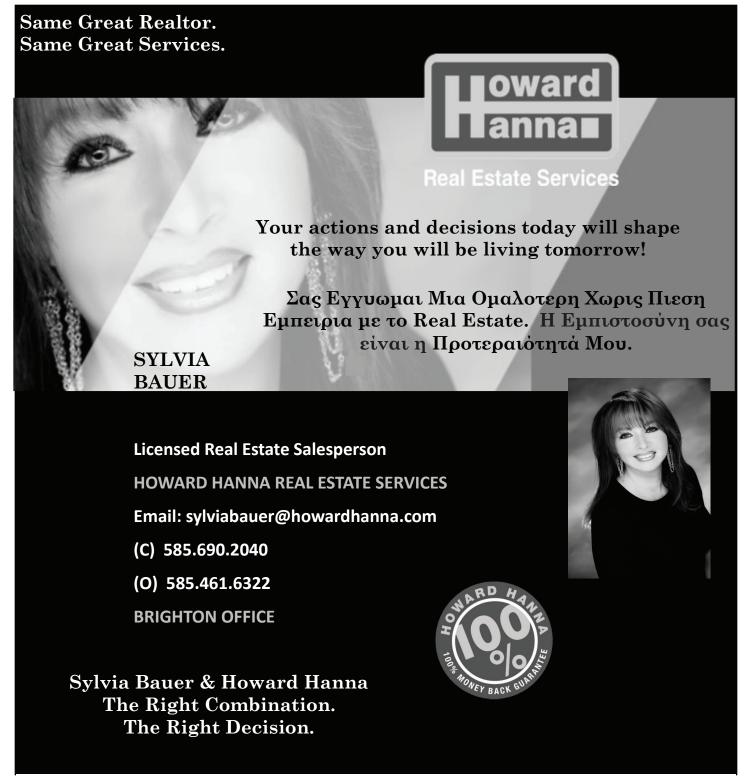


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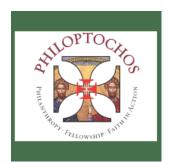


































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PARISH INFORMATION

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Stewardship and finance related questions: finance@agocroc.org

CLERGY:

Rev. Fr. Angelo Maggos, Presiding Priest

Email: frangelo@agocroc.org

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday through Friday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Secretary: Lena L. Livecchi **Email:** Office@agocroc.org

Submit Good News Articles to: goodnews@agocroc.org

2020 PARISH COUNCIL

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