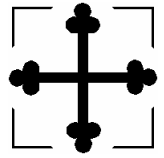




# Agape



## ST. GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH JAN 2017

Beloved in the Lord,

*Happy New Year! For my message this month I would like to share with you Archbishop Demetrios's Encyclical for the New Year and the Feast of St Basil.*

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we welcome the New Year on the Feast of Saint Basil, we are strengthened and inspired by the mighty acts of God in 2016. One of our tremendous blessings was the gathering in Nashville for the 43rd Biennial Clergy Laity Congress of our Holy Archdiocese. Our theme for the Congress was "You are the Voice of Christ in a Changing World," and we continue our focus on this theme as we plan our ministry and service in the year to come.

The commemoration of Saint Basil the Great on this day provides us with an example of holiness, leadership, and service that embodies this theme. From his prayerful manner of life and his deep faith and spiritual insight, we see a man who knew Christ and lived in His presence. Through his sermons, theological treatises, and pastoral diakonia he was the voice of Christ. He lived during a time marked by theological controversies and transitions related to Christianity and the Church. Many people had significant physical and spiritual needs. In this very challenging and changing period, Saint Basil offered wisdom, comfort, and guidance by the grace of God.

In following the witness of Saint Basil and many other Fathers of the Church who have been the voice of Christ, we are sent by our Lord into the world and into this new year to share the Gospel of faith and love, to bring comfort and healing with God's grace, and to help others know Christ and His blessings of peace and life.

He sends us as His voice into a world that continues to change. At the beginning of each calendar year we are reminded of this rapid change as we survey the events of the last twelve months. We are called as Orthodox Christians to meet this change with grace and truth. We do this as we commit to the timeless mission of the people of God to live and proclaim the Gospel. We also do this as seen in the breadth and substance of our ministries and through expanding and adapting our work to meet contemporary needs. We are sent by Christ with a message of hope and life and with the wisdom to navigate a changing and challenging world while sharing His grace in effective ways.

May we also affirm our commitment to be the voice of Christ in all that we do. Certainly, we will be His voice through the witness of our worship; but let us also be His voice through the growth and quality of our ministry to families, children, youth, and senior adults. Let us be His voice through the quality of our educational work and resources. Let us be His voice in our outreach to the unchurched. Let us be His voice in our homes, schools, and workplaces. Let us be His voice in traditional, unique, and inspiring ways so that others will find life and peace in Him.

With paternal love in Christ, †DEMETRIOS, Archbishop of America

***Building a Stronger Orthodox Christian Community by: Spiritually growing together; Sharing the Orthodox Faith through fellowship, outreach, and philanthropy; Worshiping in a traditional Byzantine church; Supported through Stewardship***

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Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As 2016 comes to a close, we reflect on a busy and prosperous year. Having re-sided and painted the exterior of the church this year. Seeing increased involvement from parishioners, and growth of our parish; along side the work towards restarting youth ministries and developing our young adult ministries. Our efforts to work towards the long term goals of our parish are only obtainable with the efforts of all our stewards and the efforts of our youth all together. So far there has been great involvement and we as the Parish Council continue to ask for your help in supporting these efforts of the parish. Continue to be "all-in" and continue to find ways to become involved, better serving our community. I also wish to thank those who ran for 2017 Parish Council.

In Christ,  
Gregory Sebastian  
Parish Council President

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With new and restock items being ordered for the bookstore, please check if there is anything that meets yours or the needs of those you know. As well as informing Brett or myself of items you would like to see the bookstore carry. We are working to add additional suppliers in efforts to offer additional items and be able to reduce costs on others.

Gregory Sebastian  
Bookstore Manager

## STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Thank you for your response to our request to get your cards in and for helping us meet our pledge goal for 2017! Your faithful offering of time, talent and treasure are amazing!

With love in the Lord,  
Your Stewardship Committee

## Fundraising Committee

Our Annual Bake Sale & Craft Fair was a big success!

We had more visitors than last year and even sold out of food in our kafenion after the first day!

We all had a great time putting on the event. Thank you to all who supported it and to all of our volunteers.

Our next fundraiser is not until May, when we'll do two Greek Dinners.

If you'd like to join our committee, please come to our next meeting January 8, after church.

**Presv. Maria**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

As we enter the new year, the operations' account balance is over \$19,000. This not the largest carry-over we have ever had, but it is larger than we had anticipated when the parish assembly was held on December 18th. Thank you to everyone who has supported Saint George in 2016.

## St. George Care Ministry-Coming in April 2017 -

The newest ministry at St. George is the Care Ministry. The purpose of this ministry is to meet the needs of our parishioners and their families. The scope of the Care Ministry will include Home visits, Hospital/Convalescent, Assisted Living & Long-term Care Facility Visits, and Holiday & Birthday Recognition. In addition, this ministry will provide assistance with Crisis Intervention, Health Care Resources, and coordinate education on Health Care Topics. The Care Ministry also will serve as a liaison between out-of-town Orthodox Parishioners and their home parishes. Within this framework, the Care Ministry will arrange for Meals & Transportation, help with Child Care, and provide other practical assistance as needed. In the case of Death, the Care Ministry will assist families with Mercy Meals, Funeral Receptions, and other arrangements according to the wishes of the family and as requested by the Priest. You have an opportunity to participate in this Ministry. Volunteer Forms will be made available in mid January 2017. Care Ministry volunteers may choose from a number of tasks in which they are interested. No experience is necessary. Volunteer training will be held in March 2017. Please contact, Gloria Zezeas-Timmons or Fr. Jerry with questions you may have.

### Care Notes

The beauty of simple kindness touches and changes us all. We give gifts on holidays, birthdays, and special occasions as acts of unconditional love and kindness. These are important events & milestones, but what do we do to spread kindness and compassion on the other days of the year? As Orthodox Christians, we are called to lives of caring and compassion. Resolve to be an ambassador of kindness by practicing "Random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty" every day to our families, friends, and strangers we meet on the streets as well.

Gloria Zezeas-Timmons, Care Ministry Coordinator

### The Cutting of the Vasilopita

The tradition of baking and cutting a special "pita" (which can mean a loaf of bread, a cake, or even a pie) each year on January 1st is observed of our holy father Basil the Great, archbishop of Caesarea in Cappodocia-- hence its name

"Vasilopita" meaning "St. Basil's Bread." This tradition is observed in both parish churches and in the homes of the faithful. What is the meaning of this tradition and how did it begin?

For centuries upon centuries, parents, grandparents and godparents have related the following to Orthodox children about St. Basil and the Vasilopita. One year, during a time of terrible famine, the emperor levied a sinfully excessive tax upon the people of Caesarea. The tax was such a heavy burden upon the already impoverished people that to avoid debtors' prison each family had to relinquish its few remaining coins and pieces of jewelry, including precious family heirlooms. Learning of this injustice upon his flock, St. Basil the Great, the archbishop of Caesarea, took up his bishop's staff and the book of the holy Gospels and came to his people's defense by fearlessly calling the emperor to repentance. By God's grace, the emperor did repent! He canceled the tax and instructed his tax collectors to turn over to St. Basil all of the chests containing the coins and jewelry which had been paid as taxes by the people of Caesarea. But now St. Basil was faced with the daunting and impossible task of returning these thousands of coins and pieces of jewelry to their rightful owners. After praying for a long time before the icons of our Master Christ and His All-Holy Mother, St. Basil had all the treasures baked into one huge pita. He then called all the townspeople to prayer at the cathedral, and, after Divine Liturgy, he blessed and cut the pita, giving a piece to each person. Miraculously, each owner received in his piece of Vasilopita his own valuables. They all joyfully returned home, giving thanks to God who had delivered them from abject poverty and to their good and holy bishop St. Basil the Great! In remembrance of that miracle wrought by God as a result of St. Basil's love and defense of his people, Orthodox Christians have observed the tradition of the Vasilopita each year on January 1st-- the date on which St. Basil reposed in the Lord in the year 379.

**PHILIA**

The Pastry and Gift Fair was festive and enjoyed by parishioners and visitors alike. Thank you to all who worked hard to turn this into such a successful event.

We had fun at Philia's White Elephant Christmas Party. Gifts were exchanged, some silly, some nice, we laughed a lot, had snacks and wine and sang our own version of the 12 Days of Christmas. It was good to just relax and enjoy the camaraderie and the happy atmosphere.

Plans for the future: January 15 – Vasilopita Charitable Luncheon sponsored by Philia

- December 10 and 11 – Pastry and Gift Fair
- December 18 – White Elephant Party

For info on wedding or baptismal items contact Gloria at 541-424-0575 or via email at zeazeastimons@gmail.com. And see Melita if interested in Rada products.

**Next meetings: January 8 and February 12.**

**Reminder:** Philia is a philanthropic organization open to ALL women in the parish, Come and join us! We could always use helping hands and helpful minds.

Julie Lenkoff, Philia Coordinator

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**COFFEE CHAT :**

Thank you to all who had signed up to host a lunch during our fellowship hour. The schedule has been finished and you all should have it in your emails. I will soon be posting a hardcopy on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall as well. Please remember to jot both the dates you signed up for as well as the potlucks, which will only happen if everyone participates.

Julie Lenkoff, Fellowship Coordinator

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**CLEANUP CORNER:**

Thank you to those who signed up to keep our church neat and tidy in 2017. The calendar has been emailed to you all and a hardcopy will be posted on the bulletin board once the happy snow-people are removed. Please contact Neal at nealzoumboukos@msn.com if you need to have the door opened.

Julie Lenkoff, Cleanup Coordinator (email: julielenkoff@comcast.net)

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ ~**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ ~ Christ is Born! We are looking forward to this New Year with great expectations. The Strategic Planning team is hard at work, and our strategy is to tighten our focus so that we can feel some real traction towards our goals of Spiritual and Physical growth. We are very thankful to be able to share this work with our sister Churches of Salem and Eugene. We would love to have you visit us this year; see our website schedule or contact me (Lisa Buck) for service times and directions. You are also welcome to join our mailing list to receive updated info: sign up easily through our Facebook Page, or contact me. Thank you for your prayers for Holy Cross!

In Christ ~ Lisa Buck, Holy Cross Roseburg

**Greetings from the Salem Mission,**

Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

The Salem Mission is grateful to God for all of the little changes we've been blessed with over the past year. We're making headway on the beginnings of Strategic Planning with some committees to spread out responsibilities and achieve smaller goals as we seek to be a spiritual home and hospital to all who are seeking the fullness of Truth in our Lord Jesus Christ.

At his last visit, Fr. Theodore Dorrance made a comment that there are more things we could do to make our borrowed space feel more Orthodox. Since that time, we've been discussing and making changes toward that end. Our most recent addition in creating a more Orthodox atmosphere is a large Panagia Platytera icon, which is hung directly behind the altar table. By containing the Creator in her womb, Mary our Panagia ("All Holy" indicating her closeness to God because of her obedience) is in this icon depicted as "more spacious than the heavens." It is amazing how a person feels as this icon warmly welcomes each one into the Nave, drawing us to worship our Lord.

Happy 12 Days of Christmas, New Year, and a blessed Theophany,  
Maria Hauser for the Salem Mission

## January Celebrations

### Birthdays

January 4th-Nikolas Jon Pos  
January 9th-Jack Buck  
January 10th-Dimitri Kokkino  
January 18th-Lenny Buck  
January 22nd-Lisa Buck  
January 25th-David Shafer

### Feast Days

January 1st-St Basil the Great  
Bill Lilles  
January 7th-St John the Baptist  
Joan Rundt, John Lallas, John Timmons, Jack Buck  
January 18th-St Athanasios the Great  
Art Mehas  
January 19th-St Mark of Ephesus  
Mark Hauser  
January 22nd-St Timothy of the 70  
Timothy Kaelin  
January 25th-St Gregory the Theologian  
Greg Sebastian

### Wedding Anniversaries

January 3rd  
Charlie & Stephanie Carroll

### Baptized in Christ/Chrismated

January 9th-The Buck Family

### Reposed in the Lord

January 27th-Angel Stephenson

Many Years! Chronia Polla!

## News and Events

**What's New!**

- **First Saturday Breakfast:** The dates of the First Saturday Breakfast in January were: food prep on Friday, December 30st and the breakfast on Saturday, December 31st. The normal dates would have meant that the breakfast would have fallen on Old Calendar Christmas ( January 7th).
- **2017 Parish Council:** We congratulate Cassandra Batterson, Arin Carmack and Gloria Zeazeas Timmons on their election to the 2017 Parish Council. They join Greg Sebastian, Art Mehas, Neal Zoumboukos and Larisa Lilles, to comprise the full council. The 2017 Parish Council will take the Oath of Office on Sunday, January 1st. We pray that God blesses them and their work for the parish.
- **Holy Theophany Services:** Services for Holy Theophany are as follows. We will celebrate the Royal Hours of Theophany on Thursday, January 5th at 9:30 am. On Friday, January 6th, Pre-Communion Prayers will begin at 9:40 am, followed by the Divine Liturgy at 10 am. Following the liturgy we will celebrate a Great Blessing of the Waters. Please join us for these beautiful and divine services.
- **Baptized in Christ:** Please join us on Saturday, January 7th, at 2 pm, as Janelle Williamson, Johanna Williamson, and Alauna Perry are received in to the Church through Holy Baptism. Janelle will be given the name Mary and her sponsor is Pres. Maria. Johanna will take the name Demetra and her sponsor is Ann Marie Kaelin. Alauna will take the name Julianna and her sponsor is Joan Runday. May they live for us!
- **Vasilopita Luncheon & Auction:** Our annual Vasilopita Luncheon & Auction will take place after the divine services on Sunday, January 15th. You are invited to prepare Vasilopita for auction and help Philia host the event. Proceeds of this event support the work of St Basil Academy, a home for children.
- **Offering Box:** As a reminder, we voted at the last Parish Assembly to do away with the passing of trays and instead we decided that we would place an "Offering Box" in the church for you to deposit your offerings. You may deposit your offering in this box whether it be stewardship, loose offerings, or a donation. The box will be placed in the church by Sunday, January 8th.
- **House Blessings:** January is typically the month when we call for the priest to come and bless our homes, work places, cars, etc. Please contact Father Jerry if you would like to have a house blessing.
- **"Pray for one another that you might be healed" (James 5:16):** The Prayer Circle at St George meets every Thursday at 11 am in the Conference Room. Everyone is invited!

Philia members celebrating Christmas with their annual White Elephant luncheon!



# KOINONIA

	1/1	1/8	1/15	1/22	1/29
<b>FELLOWSHIP</b>	Creech	Creech	Vasilopita Luncheon	Green	Larisa L. Adrienne B.
<b>GREETER</b>	Ann L	Larisa L	John & Gloria	Jerry R	Melita G.
<b>PROSFORON</b>	Hauser	Lilles	Creech	Freezer	Freezer
<b>FLOWERS</b>	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
<b>READERS</b>	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas	Brad Thomas
<b>CLEANING CREW</b>	12/31	1/7 Bonnie S	1/14 Markopoulos	1/21 Creech	1/28 Creech

## GET INVOLVED!!!

Look through this list of organizations, programs, and ministries at our parish, then call the contact person and get involved!!!

<b>PARISH COUNCIL</b>	Greg Sebastian 541-220-9560
<b>ACOLYTES</b>	Bob Graham 541-937-2670
<b>BOOKSTORE</b>	Greg Sebastian 541-220-9560
<b>PHILIA WOMEN'S GROUP</b>	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
<b>CHURCH SCHOOL</b>	Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-9256
<b>CHANTER/CHANT GROUP</b>	Brad Thomas 541-689-9690, Ann Marie Kaelin 541-335-9256
<b>FRIENDS OF ST. JOHN</b>	Art Mehas 541-485-8671
<b>FELLOWSHIP</b>	Julie Lenkoff 541-345-2107
<b>STEWARDSHIP</b>	Neal Zoumboukos 541-344-4485
<b>GREETERS</b>	Melita Green 541-543-8792
<b>1ST SAT. BREAKFAST</b>	Volunteer needed
<b>FLOWERS</b>	Diane Monger 541-530-3210
<b>MISSIONS &amp; EVANGELISM</b>	Melita Green 541-543-8792
<b>FUNDRAISERS</b>	Presbytera Maria 971-678-5112

**Saint George Greek Orthodox Church**  
**202 Hillview 1**  
**Eugene, OR 97408-5018**

### **A good word from the Fathers...**

We can all be good if, with all our hearts, we unite ourselves with the Source of life, God. He will give us strength to love both ourselves and our neighbor. Without God it is not possible to love oneself, even. Many people become depressed and hopeless and attempt to take their own lives, for without God we cannot even love ourselves, let alone our friends, family, and neighbors--or our enemies for that matter. All is possible with God, for He is our strength and our life. We must give our heart to someone, and if we give it to any person on this planet, this person can harm us. We all seek boundless and unchangeable love and infinite peace, but who can give it to us? Not even our parents, our brothers, or our sisters. Every one of them can abandon, despise, or harm us. Why? Because we are all limited by time and space and we all battle against the unclean powers, which are constantly defiling our thoughts.

From "Our Thoughts Determine our Lives: the Life and Teachings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica"

(Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2009)

(from page 120)