



A GOOD WORD—Λόγον Αγαθόν

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

VOLUME 4 NO. 1 (ISSUE 31) — JANUARY 2021



LONGING FOR CHRIST AND FOR ONE ANOTHER

ARCHPASTORAL MESSAGE FOR CHRISTMAS 2020

It seems appropriate that, maybe more than ever before, we are longing for celebrations – Christmas and New Year’s among them. We are longing for the feast as we know it (or have romanticized it in our minds) and not the version that we seem to have received in 2020. We are longing for family and friends, coworkers and customers, safety and health and goodness.

The world was longing for its Savior, suffering under the consequences of humanity’s sin, when the Lord chose to become human. His response to our longing was to enter the world, taking on our nature, loving us intimately, suffering for us, and liberating us. For He, too, longs for us - to throw off the shackles of our corruption and slavery to sin, and to find the promised life with Him in eternity.

At Christmas we celebrated the initiation of the plan to fulfill our longing with His presence, His grace, and His transformative love. While following His Nativity there were still years of difficulty, work, and suffering, it was all bearable because of the ultimate purpose - our Salvation, which was assured by His Incarnation. His acts of self-sacrificial love gave true satisfaction to our longing and showed us a path beyond the suffering of this life to the place for which we truly yearned.

We are called, in imitation, to see the longing in our fellow human beings - longing for joy in place of fear or sorrow or distress, longing for love in place of indifference or hatred - and to meet that longing with His love and our faith. While the days of difficulty are not over, and we still have a period of physical separation and work and sacrifice ahead, we must take the strongest lesson of the pandemic - that we desperately long for Christ and for one another - and find a way to meet that longing with His compassionate grace. Like He did, we must show mercy, reach out, excel in charity, and put others before ourselves. And when we’re met with their fear, distress, sorrow, or anger, to respond with the love that is longed for at the deepest level - a love that counts not the wrongs, but sees the inherent dignity in each person. The dignity that Christ came to redeem and restore through His Nativity. Christ is Born!



SUPPORT HIS EMINENCE AND THE METROPOLIS MINISTRIES

It costs approximately \$1,000 per day to operate our Metropolis—including Metropolitan Savas’s pastoral visitations, preparations for Summer Camp and GOYA retreats, our vital registry (tracking marriages, baptisms, chrismations, and deaths), and more. Please consider sponsoring a day in the life of the Metropolis. To contribute, visit <https://pittsburgh.goarch.org/support>

SERVING THE LEAST AMONG US

The Gospel commands us to "...feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick and visit the imprisoned..." (Matt. 25:35-36). Below is a sample of the Outreach work done in the parishes of our Metropolis (*to account for all such good works would require far more space than is available here*):

St. John the Divine, Wheeling, WV – Its "Open Door" food-kitchen remains a staple in the Centre-Wheeling neighborhood where visitors receive a hot meal, drink, and dessert and a two to three day supply of groceries

Holy Cross, Pittsburgh PA – The parish's Agape Fund recently donated \$50,000 to the "Neighborhood Resilience Project" (NRP) in the "Hill District" to help furnish the free clinic being constructed at its new headquarters

Kimissis Tis Theotokou, Alliquipa, PA – The parish held its 4th annual Thanksgiving food drive to provide turkeys and complete dinner boxes filled with non-parishable goods to 250 families (or more than 760+ individuals).

St. Demetrios, Rocky River, OH - During Christmas time, the JOY group is collecting infant and toddler winter outerwear for the free store at Zoe House in Parma, Ohio. Zoe of Life! serves women in crisis pregnancies and mothers in need.

St. Paul, North Royalton, OH – Organized by the stewardship committee, the parish prepared, packaged and delivered 150 meals to St. Herman's House (FOCUS Cleveland), which feeds the homeless daily.

St. Demetrios, Warren, OH – The parish has ongoing outreach to the needy and addicted with ministries that include providing monthly food cards for impoverished families, access to clothing – especially winter coats – as well as prayer, drug rehab referrals and job possibilities.

Ypapanti, East Pittsburgh, PA - During the Nativity Fast the church collects toys and clothing for children aged 2-21 for local charity "Beverly's Birthdays." The parish also does an Angel Tree to collect Christmas gifts for the kids that live on Electric Ave

Annunciation, Akron, OH - Timely and compelling medical information about COVID-19 was shared by Holy Unmercenaries Medical Society (HUMS) – which includes experts in infectious disease. They presented necessary information, vaccine news, and actionable steps.

St. Nicholas, Bethlehem, PA - The #FeastDayRundown is the work of the parish GOYAns. They research a saint or feast and with Fr. Alexey and parishioner help, create one-minute video about the day. See them all at www.instagram.org/feastdayrundown

Transfiguration Mission, Lititz, PA – The parish supports the residents of the Gatehouse Recovery for Men with stockings and gift bags (with cards for Christmas) containing personal care items and snacks. These remind the men they are seen and cared about.

St. Haralambos, Canton, OH – The parish offers relief to individuals and families for food, utility bills, medical bills and rent through organizations like the Salvation Army Food Bank, Stark County Hunger Task Force and the Canton Community Christmas Giving Tree Project. *GOYAns pictured below.*



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232 - <http://pittsburgh.goarch.org> - info@pittsburgh.goarch.org
412-621-5529 (Main) - 412-465-0460 (Camp) - 412-621-8543 (Youth) - 412-621-1522 (Fax)

His Eminence Metropolitan SAVAS of Pittsburgh, Presiding Hierarch

Fr. George Callos, Chancellor

Rhea Ballas, Youth & Young Adult Ministries Director

Stacey Stathulis, Stewardship Ministries Coordinator

ADn. Ryan Gzikowski, Asst. to Metropolitan & Registrar

Marina Papafil, Camp Ministries Coordinator

Maria Stamoolis, Director of Greek Education and Culture