Official Publication of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit



## The Shepherd's Staff

Issue 3 | Volume XII | Christmas 2020



# Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Nativity Icon in the Prothesis Holy Trinity - Toledo, Ohio

## Metropolitan's Message

Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Isaiah 60:1

Beloved faithful of the Metropolis of Detroit,

Along with year's end come our long winter nights. Early sunsets and late dawns—these can bring a sense of bleakness and gloom to the season. But there is something as well about dark winter skies that draws our eyes upward. Above our heads, of course, is a galaxy of glory and beauty at all times. But we see these wonders only in the hours of deepest darkness.

So it was many years ago for those Wise Men from the East. God spoke to them as they could best understand, in the language of the celestial bodies. But it was not by the light of the noonday sun that Good News came to the Magi. It was in the blackness of night that they witnessed the rising of a new star, the herald of a new King. They needed the dark to see the Light.

We are entering a season that many have predicted will be "a dark winter" for our world. They foresee illness, death, and economic hardship, bringing stress and distress throughout society. These woes will touch our own towns and cities, our neighborhoods and

parishes, and each one of our families. We will all be affected by the dark winter to come.

And yet this darkness also draws the eyes of our souls to the one true source of light and hope: our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ. He came into our world to heal and to save us. He taught us the power of selfless love. He gave us the medicine of immortality. He built His Church to be our comfort and haven. Even in these dark times of isolation and fear, we have the saints and angels as protectors and guides; we have one another as brothers and sisters.

In times of health and prosperity, we might not fully appreciate the blessings of our life in Christ. Like the Wise Men of old, we need the dark to see the Light. That Light is always, always there, if only we lift up our hearts and eyes to behold the glory of the Lord that has risen upon us.

Beloved in the Lord,

May the Light of Bethlehem shine in your hearts in the days ahead and in all your celebration of the Lord's holy birth. Merry Christmas to all and a Blessed New Year!

With Christmas blessings and thanks,

+METROPOLITAN NICHOLAS OF DETROIT



Metropolitan Nicholas at Vespers for the Feast of the St. Demetrios. Nativity of the Theotokos, Monday, September 8, 2020

### **Youth News**

#### BY EVA KONSTANTAKOS

#### SUPPORT YOUR SUMMER CAMPS: Camp Sunday – February 7, 2021

Our three exceptional Metropolis summer camps bring faith, joy, and friendship to campers, staff, and clergy from across the Metropolis. Most importantly, these vital programs offer all participants an opportunity to grow in Christ – individually and as a camp family! Therefore, it is essential that we raise awareness and support for these incredible ministries.

The Metropolis Youth Office has designated Sunday, February 7, 2021 as "Camp Sunday." On this specific Sunday, or any Sunday in February, parishes are asked to promote the respective camp of their area. More information will be sent to the parishes outlining the various ways they can support the Orthodox Christian summer camps of our Metropolis. Feel free to contact the Metropolis Youth Office (youth@detroit.goarch.org) with questions.

MDSC - www.gomdsc.org

ST. NICHOLAS SUMMER CAMP – <u>www.stnicholascamp.org</u> ST. TIMOTHY SUMMER CAMP – <u>www.sttimothycamp.org</u>



#### 2021 ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL FESTIVALS

The St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival is an incredible program of the Archdiocese and Metropolis that encourages teens to learn about and witness their faith through the art of public speaking. For the 2021 SJCOF season, the Metropolis Youth Office is working on guidelines for conducting virtual Oratorical Festivals. Parishes will receive easy-to-follow protocols for conducting virtual festivals and for submitting speaker presentations.

Should in-person festivals be permitted in the new year, please see the dates and locations for our District and Metropolis Festivals. All parishes should complete their parish festivals (whether virtual or in-person) by the end of March.

<u>Central District Festival</u> - Saturday, April 10, 2021: Annunciation Church – Dayton, OH <u>Michigan Area District Festival</u> - Saturday, April 10, 2021: Assumption Church – Grand Blanc, MI <u>Southern District Festival</u> - Saturday, April 10, 2021: Annunciation Church – Memphis, TN <u>Upstate NY District Festival</u> - Saturday, April 10, 2021: St. Nicholas Church – Jamestown, NY <u>METROPOLIS FINALS</u> – Saturday, May 15, 2021: Holy Trinity Cathedral – Carmel, IN

Please direct questions regarding the Oratorical Festival to <u>youth@detroit.goarch.org</u>. More information will also be available at the following links.

https://www.detroit.goarch.org/sjcofresources

https://www.detroit.goarch.org/metropolissicof.html

#### **2021 REGIONAL GOYA LENTEN RETREATS**

The Metropolis of Detroit annually sponsors regional GOYA Lenten Retreats, gathering youth during the important period of Great and Holy Lent to learn, worship, and grow closer to God. Due to the continuing limitations and concerns surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic, the ability to have in-person retreats remains uncertain. However, the Metropolis Youth Office is working on possible virtual alternatives in case in-person gatherings are not allowed by that time. Details will be sent to parishes via email regarding the respective retreats being offered in their area. Feel free to direct questions to youth@detroit.goarch.org.

#### SUPPORT ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP (OCF)

Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) is the official campus ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. This vital ministry of our Archdiocese and Metropolis provides meaningful and transformative ministry to young adults on college campuses across the United States. During these difficult times, OCF has been a leader in providing virtual ministry opportunities for college students. As we close out this year, consider making a gift to OCF to help them continue this integral ministry. No gift is too small and every gift is a blessing! Visit <a href="www.ocf.net">www.ocf.net</a> for more information.

We wish everyone a blessed Nativity and a happy, healthy New Year!

## **Philoptochos News**

#### BY THEONE DICKOS

#### **GOD IS WITH US**

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

It is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20:35



Greetings, and may the beauty of this joyous Season be with you always. Philoptochos ladies have received many blessings In their lives, but our biggest blessing is the ability to assist those who are less fortunate.

We thank God for all things that are good. Philoptochos ladies wanted to meet in person to enjoy the camaraderie and exchange ideas with our Philoptochos sisters at the 2020 National Philoptochos Convention in Cleveland, OH, but God had other plans for us. On August 21 and 22, over 600

delegates and observers participated in the first Virtual National Philoptochos Convention. All business was conducted with innovation technology and social distancing. **Our beloved Metropolitan Nicholas** participated in both days of the convention, and thanked the Philoptochos for their kindness that is extended to all especially to those who are in need.

One of the highlights of the Convention was the Agape Awards Presentation. Philoptochos has many dedicated women who have devoted decades in serving their church, the Philoptochos Society and the less fortunate. Congratulations to Margaret Manos who is the Agape Award winner from the Metropolis of Detroit. Margaret attends Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Buffalo, NY. Even at age 84, Margaret is a source of inspiration for all the chapter members with her tireless energy, outgoing personality and broad knowledge of all things Philoptochos. We recognize the seven other nominees from the Metropolis of Detroit who also serve as role models for all generations. They are as follows: Harriet Ellis, Annunciation, Dayton, OH, Theodora Bageris, Nativity of the Virgin Mary, Plymouth, MI, Christine Encelewski, Annunciation, Muskegon, MI, Catalina Gianakouros, Annunciation, Vestal, NY, Georgene Ochadleus, Saints Constantine and Helen, Westland, MI, Liberty Pasyanos, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Carmel, IN, Asimina Sideris, Holy Trinity St. Nicholas, Cincinnati, OH. We thank all these special ladies for their dedicated service.

In October of 2020 Archbishop Elpidophoros appointed the new Philoptochos Executive Board and National Board Members. Congratulations to our own Harriet Stoukas becoming Assistant Treasurer. Congratulations also go to the following ladies who were appointed to the National Board: Cindy Crosson, Theone Dickos, Andrea Feles-Katsimbaris, Debbie George, Katherine Kotsis, Maria Stavropoulos, Evanthia Valassisades, Margaret Yates, and honorary National Board Member Anne Feles.

## Philoptochos News (continued)

#### BY THEONE DICKOS

The Detroit Metropolis Philoptochos Chapters continue to find ways to extend a helping hand during this most unusual time. The chapters continue to embrace the National Philoptochos Operation Classroom Initiative. Ann Arbor, MI, Dayton, OH, Fort Wayne, IN, Muskegon, MI, and Vestal, NY chapters just to mention a few have provided school supplies, coats, toiletries, and shoes to impoverished students. The chapters also continuously support the Feeding the Hungry Initiative providing assistance and help at Soup Kitchens. Meals are packaged for the safety of the patrons.



The Metropolis of Detroit is honored and excited to be the Host Metropolis for the 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial National Philoptochos Children's Medical Fund Luncheon on November 6, 2021 in the city of Indianapolis. His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros will be in attendance, so be sure to keep this day open on your calendars. The Children's Medical Fund Luncheon was established in 1989, and has impacted the lives of children throughout the United States and throughout the world by donating 4.2 million to medical programs and facilities that offer care, treatment, innovative research and cures.

Wishing you a blessed holiday season.

#### METROPOLIS CONTRIBUTIONS

Benevolence through Partners in Philanthropy - \$1,853
Food Gift cards from National Philoptochos - \$2,000
Detroit Rescue Mission - \$1,000

Friends of the Metropolis - \$2,000

## BLESSINGS OF THE NATIVITY SEASON FROM THE CHURCH MUSICIANS OF OUR METROPOLIS



As we as Orthodox faithful move closer to the beautiful feast of the Holy Nativity this month, the church musicians of the Metropolis of Detroit, choir members and chanters alike, extend heartfelt good wishes to Metropolitan Nicholas, our Reverend Fathers, and to all the members of our parishes.

During this joyful season, you will hear the chanting of the beautiful prayers which make up the special hymns of the Nativity Feast – join us as we praise the birth of our Lord!

#### The Festal Antiphon:

Your birth, O Christ our God,
dawned the light of knowledge upon the earth.
For by Your birth those who adored stars, were taught by a star,
to worship You, the Sun of Justice and to know You, Orient from on High. (Ἡ Γέννησή Σου)

#### The Festal Kontakion:

Today, the Virgin bears Him who is transcendent, and the earth presents the cave to Him who is beyond reach.

Angels, along with shepherds, glorify Him.

The Magi make their way to Him by a star.

For a new child has been born for us, the God before all ages. (Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον)

#### The Festal Communion Hymn:

The Lord has sent Redemption to His people. Alleluia! (Λύτρωσιν)

#### Katavasia from Orthros:

Christ is born, Glorify Him! (Χριστός Υεννάται)

From all of us to all of you, we wish you a Merry Christmas – *Καλά Χριστούγεννα* – and a Happy New Year!

## **Christmas List**

BY FATHER MICHAEL MARCANTONI

In every culture solemn occasions are observed in connection with music specifically befitting the occasion. This is true both for civic observances, for instance the patriotic songs surrounding national days of independence, as well as religious ones. In our society it can be said that even non-church going individuals are still familiar with the words and themes connected with Christmas carols and indeed even many atheistic households mark the season in some way.

One of the most well known of these carols tells children that Santa Claus/Saint Nicholas makes a list of naughty and nice children and checks it diligently to ascertain how a given child will be rewarded or penalized based on their behavior. One element of the Christmas season that has rightly



been scrutinized both within and outside the bounds of the Church is the very commercial nature that has developed around the priorities connected with the Christmas season.

The sort of carrot and stick approach that is implied in a naughty or nice list, rests, in this case, on the reward of gifts for attendant "good behavior" being the ultimate focus. While this may have begun in a well-intentioned spirit, it has so morphed the Christmas season into such a large scale commercial event that it can and is often viewed entirely divorced from its spiritual implications by many.

The giving of gifts at Christmas takes its starting point in the gifts brought to the infant Christ Child by the Magi of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. We are told nothing about the quantity of these items and suppose that it was at least in such a quantity to fulfill the items' prophetic function of announcing the Christ as true Priest, Prophet and King.

Rather than focusing on the issue of gifts, the Gospel Narrative focuses on the coming of Christ fulfilling the Prophecy that "Those who sat in Darkness saw a Great Light." In this vein it bears mentioning that the Christmas season is very often a time of great darkness for many. According to the Mayo Clinic website seasonal depression and isolation increases around the holidays for a variety of factors. The Holiday Season is also the time where long standing family divisions and feuds can be in starker relief, many people turn to substances to cope (especially alcohol) and these yearly trends are currently compounded by the additional isolation of COVID quarantines and restrictions.

Rather than a list of hot seasonal gifts and their recipients we should prioritize a list of the isolated and depressed. Our list this year should be those isolated, rejected and neglected within our own circles who sit in great darkness and who at this time need most of all the great dawning light of the Orthodox Gospel. It need not be expensive, it need not be lengthy, but prioritize the list of those sitting in darkness, isolation and loneliness. Your gift or perhaps the briefest of phone calls can in fact be the difference between life and death and the Light of Christ to those sitting in great darkness.

Merry Christmas, Kala Xristougenna,

# Friends of the Metropolis

pray





## Friends of the Metropolis 2020

List of Donors January 1 - November 30

#### +His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas

#### Ann Arbor, MI - St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas Parish St. Nicholas Philoptochos Kotsis, Fr. Nicolaos and Presbytera Sandra Baldwin, James and Suzanne Daniels, Tony and Clevie Mikhail, Eva Yates, Margaret

#### Binghamton, NY - Holy Trinity

Bahlatzis, Fr. Michael and Presbytera Kimberly

#### Bloomfield Hills, MI - St. George

Lionas, James and Helene Lionas, Nicholas and Amanda Savas, Zachary and Susan Sisson, Rocky and Constance

#### **Buffalo, NY - Annunciation**

**Annunciation Parish Annunciation Philoptochos** Christakis, Fr. Christos and Presbytera Lisa Rossiter, Deacon Benjamin and Diakonissa Emily Anas, Alex and Tina Colaizzo Blakeslee, Ronald and Maria Cervi, Brian and Lea Danakas, George Hiczewski, Peter and Michele

#### Carmel, IN - Holy Trinity Cathedral

Pappas, Victoria

**Holy Trinity Parish** Holy Trinity Philoptochos Holy Trinity GOYA Hohnholt, Fr. Gregory Buffenbarger, Deacon Bryce and Diakonissa Elyse Andros, Cheryl Chekouras, R.H. and Peggy

Dallas, Christopher and Teresa Dickos, Dennis Dickos, Theone Dunbar, Pete and Lea Eleftheri, Anthony and Jill Gibson, Karen Hostetler, Duane and Eleny Johnson, Ronald and Sunday Kostyn, Catherine Lisch, Mike and Jean Malandrakis, Michael and Helen Oberlies, Toulas Pappas, Leon and Andrea Pappas, Nick and Tracy

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Pavia, Joseph

Payne, Martha

Chattanooga, TN - Annunciation **Annunciation Parish** Ballas, Fr. Stavros and Presbytera Thea Bougdanos, Maria Campa, Pedro Corum, John and Betsy Dimopoulos, Dennis and Barbara Etherton, Wayne and Yolanda Fotiadis, Nicky Gaitanoglou, John and Jane Kouris, George Mousourakis, John and Donna Pagnani, Anthony and Irene Simpson, Joseph and Jillian Tolbert, John and Janice Tutor, Ryan and Christina

#### Cincinnati, OH - Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas

Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Parish Assaley, Lewis and Patricia Brown, William Perdikakis, Gus and JoAnn Raptis, James and Maria

#### **Dayton, OH - Annunciation**

**Annunciation Parish Annunciation Philoptochos** Gingrich, Fr. Joseph Abboud, Fayez and Maria Anton, Ted and Helen Bouris, Harry and Linda Burns, Annika Castleman, Maria P. Clarke, Steven and Constance Couchot, Larry E. and Christine S. Davell, Constantine and Phyllis Fote, Alex and Photini Hodson, Thomas Inempolidis, Demetrios and Dena Liapis, Gus H. Keilholz, Mark and Cynthia McClish, Jonathan Nicholas, Joanne Renee Panson, George and Sherry Powers, Michael and Maria Retzios, Thomas and Angela Shamma, H. Nicholas and Nadine Stamas, Elizabeth Stamas, Nick and Emily Urse, John and Deborah Valassiades, John and Evanthia Zavakos, James and Ruthann Zalants, Anthony and Irene

#### **Detroit, MI - Annunciation Cathedral**

Bennert, Constance Lianos, William and Kim Politis, Dean L. Tavoularis, Leonidas Tapazoglou, Nicolaos and Christine

#### Farmington Hills - Holy Cross

**Holy Cross Philoptochos** Radulescu, Fr. Alex and Presbytera Silvana Artemas, Fr. John Casoglos, Thomas and Mary George, John and Debbie Liadis, John G.

#### Fort Wayne, IN - Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity Philoptochos Sicoe, Fr. Cosmin and Presbytera Mihaela Walsh, Fr. Andrew and Presbytera Sophia Baker, John and Konstantina Doublas, Gregory and Athena Maggos, Eleftherios and Paraskevi Ryman, Benjamin and Kelly

#### Grand Blanc, MI - Assumption

**Assumption Parish** Russell, Fr. Jarrod Chinonis, Dennis and Debra Chinonis, Linda Kalatzis, Athena Kaloydis, John and Karen Mersinas, George and Laura Stamatis, Thomas G. and Sandra L. Yeotis, Catherine Yeotis, Thomas and Magdalene

#### Grand Rapids, MI - Holy Trinity

**Holy Trinity Parish** Georgeson, Menas and Frosene Sinas, Thomas and Michelle

#### Indianapolis, IN - Holy Apostles

O'Reilley, Steven and Deborah

#### Ithaca, NY - St. Catherine

Bantuvanis, Ann Bezirganian, John Manos, Bill and Paulette

#### Jamestown, NY - St. Nicholas

Cheronis, James and Christine

#### Lansing, MI - Holy Trinity

**Holy Trinity Parish** Holy Trinity Philoptochos Sietsema, Fr. Mark and Presbytera Kathy Karagoulis, Michael and Lynne Munk, Jerry and Janice

#### Lexington, KY - Panagia Pantovasilissa

Panagia Pantovasilissa Parish Karounos, Dennis and Chrisi Minor, Thomas and Delores Sawaya, Peter and Kalliopi

#### Little Rock, AR - Annunciation

Vratsinas, Gus M.

#### Louisville, KY – Assumption

Wingenbach, Fr. Gregory Blackford, Charles and Patricia

#### Memphis, TN - Annunciation

**Annunciation Philoptochos** Thomas, Fr. Simon and Presbytera Stephanie In Honor of Fr. Nicholas Vieron Kay, John and Nancy McKee, James

Poplos, Theodore and Stephanie Semos, Vasili and Luane

#### Muskegon, MI - Annunciation

Sakellariou, Fr. John and Presbytera Pavlina Ladas, Paul and Patricia Micheil, Richard and Teresa

#### Nashville, TN - Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity Philoptochos Davis, Mark and Stephanie Gaddis, Jim and Tasoula Gore, James and Stacy Harman, Todd and Dawn Vaughn, James and Debby

#### Nashville, TN - St. John Chrysostom

Pittman, Michael Turner, Nicholai Waggoner, Michael and Kari

#### New Buffalo, MI - Annunciation - St. Paraskevi

Christensen, Fr. Lucas and Presbytera Stacey

#### Plymouth, MI - Nativity of the Virgin Mary

Nativity of the Virgin Mary Parish Nativity of the Virgin Mary Parish Council Marcus, Fr. Nicholas and Presbytera Liza Petrou, John and Anna Smith, Christopher J. Stassinos, Lambros and Helen Takis, Jerry and Mary Vardouniotis, John and Catherine Zervos, George and Lisa

#### Rochester, NY - Annunciation

Gines, Maria

#### Rochester, NY - Holy Spirit

Stechschulte, Mark

#### Saginaw, MI - St. Demetrios

St. Demetrios Parish Cook, Fr. Timothy and Presbytera Catherine Bistolarides, Fr. Peter and Presbytera Peggy Ahejew, Petro and Sandra Economou, Athanasia Houpis, Evan and Candace Nichols, David Rouman, George and Frances

Stamas, Jim and Marsha Ulmer, George and Virginia Zubulake, George

#### Sault Ste. Marie, MI - St. George

St. George Parish

#### Southgate, MI - St. George

St. George Parish St. George Philoptochos Cook, Fr. Anthony and Presbytera Elizabeth Constantakis, Clarence and Lillian Danckaert, Seraphim and Anne Dionyssopoulos, Stavros and Eleni In Memory of Spyridon and Vasiliki Nanos Kircos, Lazaros and Paula Kontos, John and Marika Minton, Barbara Minton, Nicholas

Vougiouklakis, Peter and Christina

#### Springfield, OH - Assumption

**Assumption Parish** Lagos, James and Nike

#### St. Clair Shores, MI - Assumption

**Assumption Philoptochos** Varlamos, Fr. Michael and Presbytera Tina Abell, Fr. Christopher and Presbytera Alice Niforos, Theodore and Anna Stoukas, Harriet

#### Sterling Heights, MI - St. John

Kotsis, Andrew and Irene Kotsis, Damian and Anastasia Kotsis. Katherine Raphtis, E. Mike and Betty Tangalos, John and Mary Vekos, Gloria

#### Syracuse, NY - St. Sophia

Ganotis, John Kane, Maria

#### Toledo, OH - Holy Trinity Cathedral

Anagnos, Joyce Ioannidis, Deborah Photos, Thomas

#### Traverse City, MI - Archangel Gabriel

**Archangel Gabriel Philoptochos Anonymous Donor** Underwood, Robert and Theresa Stamos

#### Troy, MI - St. Nicholas

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#### Vestal, NY - Annunciation

**Annunciation Philoptochos** Bahlatzis, Fr. Michael and Presbytera Kimberly Yacalis, Deacon Vasili and Diakonissa Pamela Gianakouros, Harry and Katie Ivan, James and Lynda

#### Westland, MI - Sts. Constantine and Helen

Sts. Constantine and Helen Philoptochos Petrutiu, Fr. Teodor and Presbytera Roxana Chuey, Mark and Jean Lembesis, Dino and Kristine Stavropoulos, Peter and Marie

#### Other Friends

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## The Shepherd's Staff















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## Dear Friends of the Metropolis,

You made a tremendous impact in our Metropolis of Detroit for the year 2019. Because of your love and support for the Friends of the Metropolis program, we have been able to fully fund the continued operation and ministries of our Metropolis. Please know that the Metropolis of Detroit has always had an open financial accounting of our income and expenses.

Every gift to our Metropolis has been spent in accordance with the needs, work, and ministry of our Office for the benefit of our Parishes, our Clergy, our Faithful, and all of our individual ministries

If you are getting ready to give a donation for the 2020 Friends of the Metropolis program, please remember how your donations are used:

- ❖ YOU have helped us to pay all the normative operational expenses of the Metropolis Office including: building maintenance and repair; heat; lights; postage; technology; and supplies;
- YOU have made it possible to cover the travel expenses incurred during our pastoral visitations to the Metropolis parishes;
- \* YOU helped make certain that we are able to contribute to student loan payments for our

clergy and church workers who graduated from the Hellenic College/Holy Cross and serve in our Metropolis parishes;

- ❖ YOU have assured that there is support for creating virtual summer youth opportunities to all of our young people;
- ❖ YOU helped support monthly continuing education webinars for clergy, Sunday School Teachers, and Parish Youth Workers.
- \* YOU have been the helping hands who gave through our office to those in need of shelter, clothing, food, and medical supplies;
- ❖ YOU helped Metropolitan Nicholas assist people in emergency situations in need of financial support;
- ❖ YOU have allowed the Metropolis to help people and parishes that are most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for your great stewardship!

God be praised!

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