Beloved Clergy and Faithful,

It’s been a long and cold winter for the faithful of the Metropolis of Detroit. This has been the third highest recorded snowfall in Detroit — and many other areas in the Metropolis have broken their local weather records.

Based on all the emergency weather news reports, the school closings, the airport shut downs, and the water main pipe breaks, it almost begs the question of us: What makes this ‘change’ in the weather so special? But every time these unusual weather patterns happen, we are forced to think about the reality of the society and cities we have created: Is there insulation? Do we have food for the blizzard? Do we have heat? Can we get to work, or school, or the doctor’s office?

Could it be that sometimes we are so used to the regular patterns of our lives that any change to the normal rhythm makes us take a second look?

Our Orthodox Church understands this reality of change. Our Church calendar has a regular rhythm — but just as we are getting comfortable, the Church liturgical cycle changes so that we can take a second look at what is happening in our spiritual lives.

Having entered the period of Triodion and now preparing for Great Lent, I invite us all to take a look at our hearts and souls. Are we on the journey to truly reflect the Image of our Creator? Are we endeavoring to fulfill our calling to be children of the Most High God? Have we emptied our selves of our human failings so that we can fill our hearts and souls with His presence and His love? May we all be blessed by the journey to Pascha.

With paternal prayers,

†NICHOLAS
Metropolitan of Detroit
Metropolitan’s Schedule

February

2  Parish Visitation
6  Funeral of Archon Tom Zaferes
9  Divine Liturgy
10—13  Leadership 100 Conference & Synaxis of Hierarchs
13  Iconography Visitation
22  1st Saturday of Souls Divine Liturgy
23  Parish Visitation
25—27  Metropolis Clergy Retreat

March

1  2nd Saturday of Souls Divine Liturgy
   Sacred Scenes Exhibit by iconographer Vlasis Tsotsonis
2  Forgiveness Sunday Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
   Ordination to Holy Diaconate of Alex Radulescu
3  Clean Monday Service & Koulouma Luncheon
5  Presanctified Liturgy
7  1st Salutations Service
8  3rd Saturday of Souls Divine Liturgy
9  Sunday of Orthodoxy Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
14  2nd Salutations Service
16  Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
17—19  Holy Eparchial Synod Meeting
21  3rd Salutations Service
23  Sunday of the Holy Cross Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
24  Annunciation of the Theotokos Great Vespers
25  Feast of the Annunciation Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
28  4th Salutations Service
30  Sunday of St. John Climacus Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

For calendar updates, please visit our website at: www.detroit.goarch.org/news/calendar

Metropolis Greek Schools

The Metropolis of Detroit has 25 parishes that offer Greek School classes for the youth as well as adult classes. The Greek School program has approximately 85 teachers and 700 students. The Metropolis Greek Schools are under the Greek Language and Cultural Committee – Chairperson Fr. Nicholas Kyritses. The Co-Chairpersons for the Greek Language program are Dr. Gus Demas, Dr. Kathryn Kittides and Mr. George Reganis.

The Archdiocese has offered a series of books, “Ta Ellinika Mou” from Greece and distributed to our schools. The books are offered at no cost to the Greek School students from “FAITH: An Endowment for Orthodoxy and Hellenism”.

Dr. Gus Demas and Dr. Kathryn Kittides have organized various teaching development seminars for our Greek School Teachers over the past ten years. The most recent seminar was offered on Saturday, September 21, 2013 titled “Modern Greek Education in the Digital Age – How to use Technology in the Greek Language Classroom” presented by Ioanna Tolios. The seminar was attended by 25 teachers held at the Macomb Community College Computer Lab in Clinton Township, MI.

Mr. George Reganis oversees the Ellinomatheia Exam Program. More details on this program in the next Shepard’s Staff issue.
Youth News
By Eva Kokinos—Konstantakos
Metropolis Youth Director

Destination: Salvation

In my travels throughout our Metropolis and Archdiocese, I’ve learned a few things about making my journeys smooth and efficient. Even though the route might seem pretty clear, I never know what I might encounter on my journey. In fact, my trips do not always end up as I anticipated.

Because of these unexpected issues that can happen, many of us make our best effort to be prepared. First, we always make sure to know exactly where we are headed! Even the most adventurous traveler will have some type of goal in mind for the end point of their travels. We arm ourselves with the best navigational tools we can find, such as GPS, maps, etc. We make sure we have supplies (emergency kit, jumper cables, snacks, etc.) in case we encounter unexpected hazards or delays. We might even choose to bring along a travel companion who knows the path to the destination or they simply offer us company and support on our journey.

We are quickly approaching Great Lent. For every Christian, this is our annual journey toward salvation. We should put more energy into planning our Christian journey than we would planning a road trip or our family vacations.

1) Know where you are going: As a Christian, it is important to understand what we are trying to achieve. If we do not have a clear vision of our destination, it will be very easy to change paths or change focus. The goal of our Christian journey is to seek holiness and unite with our heavenly Father. So when planning your daily spiritual journey, make sure to always keep your compass pointed toward God.

2) Always have an “emergency” plan: You cannot always anticipate the spiritual “emergencies” you will encounter on your Christian journey. That is why it is important to make sure you have the necessary tools to deal with these issues. Make sure you have built a relationship with your priest/spiritual father. Develop and actively participate in your prayer life. Actively participate in the Holy Sacraments for spiritual nourishment. Own a Bible, actually reading and learning from the Scriptures. Don’t be one of those people who have a perfectly good “map” and never use it OR not know how to read it properly!

3) Pay attention to the road/Avoid distractions: It is easy to get caught up in different distractions along the road… gossip, materialism, jealousy, anger, etc. Through prayers, fasting, almsgiving and other spiritual disciplines, you can stay focused on the road and not get delayed by “hazards” or distracting messages. Don’t forget… If you get lost, you can always “turn around” through the Sacrament of Confession.

4) Make Sure to Bring “G.P.S.” on your journey: No, no… we aren’t talking about a global positioning system. Instead, we need to enlist the help of the saints and other Orthodox Christian role models as our “Guides on the Path to Salvation.” The Saints are “seasoned travelers” who have been down the same road toward salvation. Through their own lives, they can offer us guidance for our own journey. Orthodox Christian role models, like our priests, parents, grandparents, godparents, and youth workers, are our travel companions. They, too, are on the journey toward eternal life. So, they can keep us company when the road is lonely or overwhelming. They can also help us navigate back to Christ’s path when we get lost or confused.

Wishing you all good strength on your journey through Great Lent and beyond.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 14-16 Dayton GOYA Basketball Tournament
March 15 Upstate NY GOYA Lenten Retreat
March 22 Michigan Area GOYA Lenten Retreat
March 28-30 Fall Creek Falls GOYA Lenten Retreat
April 26 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival— Central District Finals
April 26 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival— Michigan District Finals
May 3 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival— Southern District Finals
May 4 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival— Upstate NY District Finals
May 16-17 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival— Metropolis Finals

2014 HC/HC CrossRoad Institute

Calling all high school juniors and seniors!! Applications are now being accepted for the 2014 CrossRoad season. CrossRoad is a ten-day academic summer institute that prepares high school juniors and seniors to make big life decisions and connect with the Orthodox Christian theological and spiritual tradition. Hosted on the scenic Hellenic College Holy Cross campus, overlooking the beautiful Boston skyline, participants experience daily worship, visit local parishes, tour Boston, and spend a day at the beach. Sessions for 2014 will be held on the following dates: June Session: June 21 – July 1, July Session: July 5 – July 15

Application Priority Deadline: March 1

Visit www.crossroadinstitute.org to apply or for more information!
Philoptochos News
By Margaret Yates—President

Just as we were recovering from all the Christmas activity, it was time to prepare for the various Vasilopita celebrations. This National commitment, with money going to St. Basil Academy, is the first activity of the New Year and celebrated by all chapters in the Metropolis. Trays were passed, lunches and Vasilopita auctions held, and breads were cut on the solea with different church organizations offering financial assistance to the Academy. Thank you to all who participated and made the events so special.

Although the Ecclesiastical year begins in September, our budget year begins in January with the passing of the budget. We hope that each chapter added the Friends of the Metropolis to their budgets as a line item. This year an added Metropolis commitment was established for the Partners in Philanthropy Fund which assists those in our Metropolis who need some financial assistance. Monies in this fund are used solely to help our brothers and sisters through difficult times. This money does NOT leave the Metropolis; the Emergency Fund is used to aid those affected by disaster throughout the country and the world.

The majority of our Philoptochos chapters are on track to be recognized at the Philoptochos conference in Philadelphia in July by having paid all National Commitments for 2012 and 2013. Congratulations! A handful of chapters have not been ratified by National and we are trying very hard to assist them in the process. Unless a chapter has been ratified, they will not be able to participate in the conference.

All Philoptochos chapters have been asked by the National Philoptochos Society to promote awareness of heart disease in women by designating February 9 as Go Red for Women Sunday. Members and non-members alike are asked to wear red on the 9th to bring attention to this disease.

We’ve been busy planning our biennial luncheon to be held in Toledo on April 26. Themed “A Celebration of Caring”, past Philoptochos Presidents will be recognized and honored for their many contributions to the mission of Philoptochos. We hope that all chapters in the Metropolis will support the luncheon, as it is the only fundraiser we have to support out philanthropy. Sponsor forms have been sent to chapter presidents and are available to their parishioners who wish to support this event. All donors will be recognized in our program.

The Philoptochos National Board will hold their next meeting the end of February in New York. On Saturday, March 1, the Philoptochos Center of Philanthropy will open its doors with a Thyranixia service. The Tree of Giving will be on display, each leaf designating a Philoptochos chapter who participated in the project. We are proud of the fact that 100% of the active chapters in our Metropolis will have a leaf on the tree. Thank you to all for making the dream of having our own home a reality.

Philoptochos Donations
• TOLEDO - $1345
• ANN ARBOR - $1630

MEFGOX News
By Theodore Niforos—President

BLESSED AND HAPPY NEW YEAR to all.

The MEFGOX elected officers have been busy creating a new edition of the Greek and English Second Liturgies of one of our Archdiocese’s most accomplished and prestigious musicians, Presvytera Anna Gallos. This music will be used for the Sunday Liturgies at our next two annual conventions, with the first at Annunciation Cathedral in Columbus, Ohio, July 24-27, 2014. For our

MEFGOX and other Church Musicians, ordering information will be on our web site, MEFGOX.com, by early February.

Although it is somewhat early in the year, it is time for our Greek Orthodox student Church Musicians from parishes in good standing as stewards of MEFGOX to start thinking of scholarships. This is particularly true for our high school seniors and college students. MEFGOX offers Memorial Scholarships to music students and has granted many over the years. As I advised in last fall’s Shepherd’s Staff, at our most recent convention, we

(Continued on page 5)
When I was in elementary school, I fell down during recess and cut my chin. I had to go to the ER for stitches. There was a band-aid on my chin keeping the wound closed. When I saw the doctor, he explained that he was going to have to take off the bandage and scrub out the wound before he could stitch it up. Considering the inevitable pain and reopening of the wound, I wasn’t too thrilled about this. I remember begging the doctor to just stitch my chin without cleaning it. The doctor looked me in the eyes, smiled and said, “Don’t be afraid, pal, I know exactly what I’m doing. It’s going to hurt a little, but it’s for your own good.” He proceeded to take off the band-aid and scrub the dirt out of the wound as I cringed in pain. At the time, I didn’t understand the seriousness that an infection could cause if the wound weren’t cleaned properly.

I don’t tell this story to gross anyone out, but rather to make an analogy to certain times when God allows pain and suffering in our lives. Sometimes the Lord has to scrub away iniquity from our lives. Although bearing the burdens we each have may seem difficult or even painful, we cannot despair, for God always has our salvation in mind. This is affirmed in the Gospel of John 3:17 which states, “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world might be saved through Him.”

Saint Ambrose once said, “Christ alone takes away the sins of the people, provided they do not refuse to submit to healing.” In other words, sometimes the cure we need might be difficult to endure or may not make sense to us. Sometimes things may seem to only be getting worse before they get better. The fact is that God desires that all people be fully healed and saved. Weeks after this episode, my body was healthy and free of infection. Things could have been much worse if it weren’t for the thorough, albeit painful, cleaning that I received. With this in mind, let us trust in Christ and His plan for us. Even though sometimes it might hurt a bit, He knows exactly what He is doing.

(Continued from page 4)

gave out five scholarships. Information and an application can be found on our web site, above, under the Forms and Files tab.

On the subject of our young musicians, and for their families reading the Shepherd’s Staff, we urge them to consider seriously joining their church choirs, to ask their priests or chanters about learning to chant, or otherwise assisting in their respective parish music programs. As with all of our Holy Church endeavors, we need our young people to train them and prepare them to sustain our church in the future. For us at MEFGOX, we focus on musical aspects of our worship, but all efforts on behalf of our faith are important.
Friends of the Metropolis 2013

Donors list

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St. Nicholas Parish
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Annunciation Philoptochos
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Holy Trinity Parish
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Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas GOYA
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Pangalos, Despo
Pantos, Theodore and Nana
Petroeulas, George and Jan
Phillips, Peter and Toula
Samaras, Robert and Marietta
Stoukas, Harriet
Thomas, Tom J. and Lynn
Vlahantones, Louis
Voudoukis, Ignatios
Zoto, Mary

Sterling Heights, MI - St. John
St. John Parish
St. John Philoptochos
St. John Choir
St. John GOYA
Kyritses, Fr. Nicholas
Collins, George and Vasiliki
George, Bessie
Karamanos, Peter and Mary
Kotsis, Andrew and Irene
Kotsis, Harry and Katherine
Kotsonis, Steve and Angela
Lionas, James and Helene
Patouhas, Spyros and Katina
Raphis, E. Mike and Betty
Salonikas, Georgios and Nicoleta
Sours, Bernice
Tangalo, John and Mary
Tangalo, Philip and Alexandra
Tangalo, Theodore and Mary
Tavoularis, Leonidas
Vekos, Gloria
Zotos, George

**Syracuse, NY – St. Sophia**
St. Sophia Parish
St. Sophia Philoptochos
St. Sophia GOYA
Smith, Fr. David and
Presbytera Donna
Boucounis Andrew
Ganotis, John
Kantor, Walter and Dorothy
Kazakis, Elaine
Nicholas, Mary T.
Theodore, Dorothea
Theodore, Eleanor
Trovato, Diana

**Toledo, OH – Holy Trinity Cathedral**
Holy Trinity Parish
Holy Trinity Philoptochos
Damaskos, Fr. Aristotle and
Holy Trinity Philoptochos
Presbytera Donna
Ganotis, John
Kantor, Walter and Dorothy
Kazakis, Elaine
Nicholas, Mary T.
Theodore, Dorothea
Theodore, Eleanor
Trovato, Diana

**Traverse City, MI – Archangel Gabriel**
Archangel Gabriel Parish
Archangel Gabriel Philoptochos
Strezza, Fr. Ciprian and
Presbytera Sinziana
Adams, Damon
Bemis, Steven
Ealy, Ray and Martha
Foster, Andrew
Long, Stephanie
Majoros, Theme and Barbara
Pomolje, Johnnie and Nicola
Psaros, John and Donna
Sobkowski, Nikki
Stamos-Underwood, Theresa
Underwood, Robert
Weston, Judith

**Troy, MI - St. Nicholas**
St. Nicholas Parish
Dorozenski, Fr. Stratton and
Presbytera Denise
Dalamangas, Fr. Chris and
Presbytera Niki
Arman, Steve and Anita
Asher, Michael
Athans, Aristeia
Becharas, Stefanos and Irene
Bollas, Jobel
Bournias, James and
Evangeline
Chalkier, Jess and Patricia
Chucales, George T.
Crosson, Patrick and Cynthia
Demery, Beck
Feles, Andrea
Feles, Gust and Anne
Feles, Nicholas and Melanie
Feles, Paul
Finazzo, Catherine
George, Christian
George, John and Marlo
George, Jordan
Gottes, Soteria
Gryparis, Stratis and Emrione
Karmanos, Peter and Danielle
Karniots, Stephen
Kiousis, Olga
Korstanje, Ingmar and Marlo
Lafter, Mary
Liakonis, Chris and Labrini
Malis, Alexis
Martin, Albert and Helen
Morris, Georgia
Morits, George and Hionia
Papathanasopoulos, D.
Patches, John and Angeliki
Perivolarakis, Calliope
Pshias, George and Bess
Strumbos, Peter W.
Ydias, Spiros and Alyssa
Yanke, Timothy
Yanoulaki, Peter
Zampetis, T K Family
Foundation
Zotos, Gregory

**Vestal, NY – Annunciation**
Annunciation Parish
Bahlatzis, Fr. Michael and
Presbytera Kimberly
Michalopoulos,
Presbytera Magdalena
Abdo, Moufid and Anita
Gianakourous, Harry and
Katerina
Ivan, Lynda

**Watertown, NY – St. Vasilios**
St. Vasilios Parish

**Westland, MI – Sts. Constantine and Helen**
Sts. Constantine and Helen
Parish
Sts. Constantine and Helen
Philoptochos

**Sts. Constantine and Helen**
Choir
Petritiui, Fr. Teodor and
Presbytera Roxana
Alexander, Alex and Kathy
Angelopoulos, Ioannis and
Aspasia
Avdoulos, John and Yiota
Bozadzis, Carol
Calagias, Efstratos
Charalambopoulos, D. Elaine
Darin, Matthew and Zoe
Dougekos, P. Becky
Frango, Louis and Family
Kasotakis, Paul and Nanette
Katsarelas, Sophie
Livanos, Demetrios and Connie
Ochadleus, William and
Georgene
Simakas, Pete
Skotanis, Bill
Themelis, John and Donna
Tolios, Costas and Ioanna

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Craprotta
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In Memory of Presbytera Angela
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Dear Friends of the Metropolis:

God has called us to do mighty deeds for the glory of His name and for the love of His people.

You are called upon to join in this reality of “faith working through love” as we continue to manifest the love of God for His Church and His people.

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 and help 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.

If you have not yet become part of the Metropolis-wide effort, I would like to invite you to join forces with the faithful throughout our Metropolis 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 blessing and prayers,

+NICHALES
Metropolitan of Detroit

I am pleased to support the work of Metropolitan Nicholas and the Metropolis through the Annual Metropolis Stewardship “Friends” Program

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