

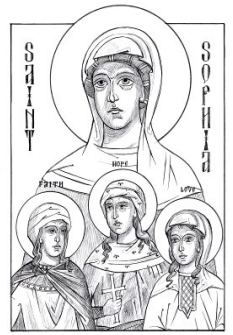


NEPSIS

Spiritual watchfulness and alertness. "Watch, therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming" (Matthew 24:42)

Saint Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church
325 Waring Road
Syracuse, New York 13224

Phone (315) 446-5222
Fax (315) 251-1654



New Priest for St. Sophia's

May 2026

Last fall, the chancellor of the Metropolis of Detroit told me that he had someone who would want to come to Syracuse and take over St. Sophia's so that I could retire. I did not ask for specifics - I've found in my years of priesthood that sometimes it's best to enjoy not knowing things.

But on the day after Pascha - because he had promised to tell me who was coming here "after Pascha" - he called to tell me that Fr. Niko Tzetzis would become the new pastor at St. Sophia's. I was happy to hear this, for a couple of reasons.

First, I had worked with Fr. Niko and found him to be intelligent and creative. Some years ago, Fr. Niko (then just "Niko") was working at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Rochester. I called him about something to do with camp, but in the course of our conversation I could tell that Annunciation was not a good fit for him. I wanted to help in some way, so I told him that he no longer worked at that church, but that he would start immediately at St. Sophia's. He did. What a joyful time that was! He helped our youth program extensively, preached several great sermons, was invaluable at camp, and helped me immensely with some internet/computer problems I was having. Eventually he had to go on to bigger and better things, but St. Sophia's definitely benefited from his time here.

Secondly, I have loved every minute of my time at this parish, but as you know, I'm not on the inside circle of the Archdiocese or the Metropolis. Fr. Niko is. He will have great ideas of his own, but he will also hear ideas that I simply do not have the connections to hear. Collaboration is a big and powerful tool for priests: he has that tool, and our parish will enjoy advantages from it.

I pray for a long and successful pastorate for our incoming proistamenos, Fr. Niko Tzetzis. Great things lie ahead for St. Sophia's!

Your affectionate servant,

Fr. David

2026 Parish Council

Peter Manolakos
President

Thomas Anthis Jr.
Vice President

Robert Allen
Secretary

Michael Copanas
Treasurer

Joy Weatherup-Anthis

Dimitrios Giaprakis

Eleni Kosmas, MD

Martha Lemondes

George Nardone

Marianna Politis-Tacea

Christopher Shiomos,
OD

Honorary
Board Member

James Sakezles

**VISIT THE
PARISH
WEBSITE**

stsophias.org





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Χριστός ἀνέστη . Christ is Risen. We have just celebrated Pascha, the most joyful day of the Ecclesiastical calendar. Pascha is the promise of the incarnation and Christ's passion. On Pascha we "come to the light" of the resurrection. which opens the door to salvation.

St Athanasius wrote "God became man so that man might become god." Well that line certainly turned some heads and much has been written about it. Obviously Athanasius was not saying that we can aspire to become God Himself. At Matthew 5:48 the evangelist is translated as saying "Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect (telios)" The Greek word telios is more literally translated as "complete."

Matthew 5:48 comes at the end of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus tells us to love our neighbor and our enemies. He tells us who is blessed. He tells us what to do, what to become. I read these words and I think, well, that is a very, very, very high bar. Certainly too high for me. What can I do?

I can pray to the Holy Spirit to come and dwell in me so that I might have a chance to succeed. I must recognize that my will won't get me over the bar. But I must aspire to be the person God wants me to be. I must pay attention to the Sermon on the Mount and make a sincere effort to embrace the words of the Lord. I must try to be "complete". Easy to say, not so easy to do.

I think about my aspirations. They are very human, very worldly, very self-centered. I aspire to be what I want myself to be, to have, to do. And while I am conscious of my failing, my lack of "zeal for the Lord", I always come back to Pascha. I ask the crucified God to take pity on me, to forgive my transgressions, to help me to reset my aspirations so that I can be the person He wants me to be. I know that even the Saints need the Holy Spirit to get over the bar. It's just the case that most of us need a bigger boost than the Saints. Pascha, glorious Pascha opens the door to that boost, opens the door to God's mercy and grace, Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

As everyone now knows, Father David is soon to retire from his role as Protopresbyter of Saint Sophia's. Our new priest, Father Niko Tzetzis is well known to most of us. Father Niko grew up in Syracuse, left 20 years ago, and comes back to us as a respected and experienced priest. He, Presvytera Ivey and their two young children will be living in the parish house where he spent a lot of time in his youth. I am grateful to Metropolitan Nicholas, who ignored the long tradition of not assigning priests to parishes where they grew up, and is sending Father Nikko to minister to us. On behalf of the Parish Council and the parishioners of St Sophia's, I welcome Father Niko and his family to his once again home in Syracuse and St Sophia's.

Χριστός ἀνέστη .

Yours in Christ,

Peter Manolakos

Parish Council President



April 2026
Sacramental Registry

Baptisms

Anthony (Joshua) Thompson
Luca (Anthony) Thompson
Carter (Paisios) Dunsmore
April 6

Theodore Martinko
April 18

Chrismation

Gabrielle Marie-Arcadi Lombardo
April 11

Funerals

Frederick L. Zimmerman III
d. April 15

May 2026
Memorials

May 3
None Scheduled
May 10

Trisagions
Michael Vasiliou (6 months)
Petros Vasiliou (33 years)
Roda Vasiliou (37 years)
Athanas Anastasiou (20 years)
Olga Anastasiou (8 years)

May 17
None Scheduled

May 24
Frederick L. Zimmerman III (40 Day Memorial)

May 31
None Scheduled

HOLY ASCENSION

Thursday – May 21, 2025

9:00 am Orthros

10:00 am Divine Liturgy



The Feast of the Ascension of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ is celebrated each year on the fortieth day after the Great and Holy Feast of Pascha (Easter). Since the date of Pascha changes each year, the date of the Feast of the Ascension changes. The Feast is always celebrated on a Thursday. The Feast itself commemorates when, on the fortieth day after His Resurrection, Jesus led His disciples to the Mount of Olives, and after blessing them and asking them to wait for the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit, He ascended into heaven.



2026 Festival Volunteer Online Sign-up

WE WANT YOU FOR GREEK



The 2026 St. Sophia's Greek Cultural Festival is coming — and we need YOU to help make it unforgettable! Our Festival thrives because of the amazing energy and talents of volunteers like you.

Whether you can give a few hours or a few days, your time makes a huge difference. We're looking for enthusiastic individuals to lend a hand in all areas. We encourage you to sign up for multiple shifts if you can!

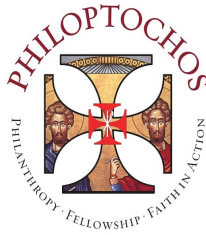
Join us in creating another year of cherished memories, vibrant community, and Greek hospitality at its finest. Thank you for being such an important part of our Festival's success!



To volunteer for positions, please go to our volunteer sign-up website at:

<https://signup.com/go/ZDnZhHK>

A big thank you to Martina Auer for her work recreating the Festival Website.
Please check it out at syracusegreekfest.com



May 2026 Coffee Hours

May 3, 2026
None Scheduled

May 10, 2026
*In Memory of
Michael, Petros, and Roda
Vasiliou, Athanas and Olga
Anastasiou
Given by Sofia Vasiliou and
Family*

May 17, 2026
Sponsored by AHEPA

May 24, 2026
*In Memory of Frederick L. Zimmerman III
Given by Dorothy Zimmerman
and Family*

May 31, 2026
None Scheduled

May 2026 Ladies Volunteering To Serve Coffee Hour



A special "Thank You"
to the following ladies of our
community who have volunteered to
donate their time to serve coffee:

May 3, 2026
Thalia Tonas
Sofia Vasiliou

May 10, 2026
Heppi Vastakis
Artemis Voudouris

May 17, 2026
Jeanette Vigliotti
Sophia Wales

May 24, 2026
Joy Papazides
Matina Sterio

May 31, 2026
Chrisoula Anastasiou
Helen Aravantinos

If you are not currently on our
list of volunteers for coffee hours,
a sign up sheet is in the gymnasium.
All are welcome.

PHILOTOCHOS **COFFEE HOUR SERVICE**



Philoptochos provides the coffee service during Coffee Hour on Sundays from September through May. During these months, please call the Church Office to schedule a sponsored coffee hour for a memorial.

Procedure to Schedule a Memorial Sponsored Coffee Hour Service:

- 1. Call the church office 315-446-5222 and schedule the memorial and sponsored coffee hour with Nigel van der Woude (Parish Office Administrator).*
- 2. Choose one of the levels of Coffee Service below. Coffee Hour Service Fees to be paid ONLY by check made payable to Philoptochos (Memo line: include date of service & name of honored loved one.)*

Mail check to: Attn: Philoptochos 325 Waring Road – Syracuse, NY 13224

Sponsored Coffee Service Options

=>Basic Coffee Service - \$50 includes the following:

*Philoptochos provides and serves the coffee, milk, sugar, and juice.
Parishioner provides the pastries.*

=>Super Plus Coffee Service - \$150 includes the following:

Philoptochos provides and serves the Pastries, coffee, milk, sugar, and juice.

Reminder: Dates not available to sponsor Coffee Hour service include; Stewardship Sunday, Godparents Sunday, and Cheese Fare Sunday. Please refer to the Church calendar for these dates.

****Summary Months of June, July and August:***

To sponsor a coffee hour during these summer months only Basic Coffee Service (\$50) is available. Philoptochos provides coffee, cups, sweetener, creamer, stirrers and set up the serving table. Parishioner provides: Pastries, set up the serving station and tables, serve the coffee hour and clean up service immediately following coffee service. During these summer months, please call either Coffee Coordinators of Coffee Service - Vivian Alexander 315-673-2880 or 315-430-6162 or Maria Allis.

Philoptochos News - May 2026

Xristos Anesti St. Sophia's Community,

As we step into the beautiful month of May, we are reminded of the familiar phrase "April showers bring May flowers". After a month of rain and grey skies, things are finally starting to bloom. This serves as a nice reminder that the slower, messier seasons in life can lead to something good. Even when things feel a little heavy and uncertain, growth is still happening – sometimes in ways we don't see right away.

As May unfolds, take a moment to slow down and appreciate the small signs of growth around you – and within you. Whatever April brought, May offers a chance to reset, recharge, and move forward. May this season bring a sense of calm, renewal and quiet joy. Let this be a time to reconnect with your faith, church family, and yourself.

As we are in the season to prepare for festival I encourage all to come out and volunteer their time to help get the church ready in every way possible! Showing up and helping where you can in these upcoming weeks before festival is just as important as showing up and offering help during the festival. It is a time where we need the help of our church family and friends of every faith and culture to bring together our community to make for a Big Fat Greek Festival!

In Faith Always,

Jeanette Capousis Vigliotti



Grocery Bags for the Jamesville-Dewitt Ecumenical Food Pantry will be handed out on Sunday, May 3rd after the Divine Liturgy. Please return them the following Sunday, May 10th. We will be buying foods for a special summer distribution coming up. Lists of what is needed will be attached to the bags. Thank you for giving to those in need in our community.

2026 College Graduates

We thank God for our brilliant young adults raised at St. Sophia's who have gone on to success in higher education. Please include the information of a family member, godchild, or friend from St. Sophia's who is graduating in 2026 and we will honor them in the June edition of Nepsis.

<https://forms.gle/Y79cY5FgWwTTQpZk9>

Attention all bakers!

Pita making for the festival will take place on May 2 & May 9, 2026. This is a great opportunity for fellowship, learning, and contributing to our festival preparations.



2026 ST. TIMOTHY SUMMER CAMP



REGISTRATION IS OPEN!



sttimothycamp.org

THE DETAILS

When: August 9th - 15th, 2026

Where: Camp Oswegatchie - Croghan, NY

Who: 8 years old - High Schoolers

Scholarships Available

QUESTIONS?

youth@detroit.goarch.org



JULY 1-5 2026 • CLEVELAND, OH

Join hundreds of young adults for a weekend full of faith & fellowship!

Featuring:

- Engaging speakers - Interactive service project
- Themed evening events - Free time in Cleveland
- Hosted at the Cleveland Marriott Downtown @ Key Tower!



Socials & Registration



Donate
(Choose National YAL in dropdown)

Rise & Build:
Claim Your Calling!



SACRED IMAGE, SACRED MARRIAGE ~RETREAT~



Marriage Workshop Retreat with Presbytera Kerry and Fr. Harry Pappas

August 14-16, 2026

Notre Dame Retreat Center, Canandaigua, NY

The Metropolis of Detroit and the Department of Marriage and Family Ministry invites married couples to an enriching weekend retreat focused on growing a healthy and holy marriage. Using the icons of Christ the Bridegroom, Saints Joachim and Anna, and the Wedding at Cana as guides, the retreat will explore the three primary dimensions of marriage: the personal (the personhood of each spouse), the intimate relationship (spiritual, emotional, and physical), and the communal dimension (with family, church, and community). This three-day experience will feature teaching, workshops, liturgical services, and focused discussions—both large group, small group, and one-on-one between spouses—to help couples rekindle their connection and grow their relationship amid the demands of daily life.



METROPOLIS
OF DETROIT

Register via QR Code

Questions?

nkokkales@detroit.goarch.org



St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church – May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Fr. David Out of Town	2 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
3 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC CHILDREN'S SERMON	4	5 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	6 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY MID-PENTECOST	7 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	8	9 10:00 AM—2:00 PM CAMP OPEN HOUSE 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
10 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN MOTHERS' DAY	11	12 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	13	14 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	15	16 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS 6:00 PM AHEPA FAMILY BANQUET
17 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN 11:30 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL GRADUATION	18	19 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	20	21 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY HOLY ASCENSION 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	22	23 10:00 AM ROMANIAN LITURGY 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
24 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY FATHERS OF 1ST COUNCIL	25 MEMORIAL DAY 8:30—9:15 AM WOODLAWN CEMETERY 10:00—11:00 AM OAKWOOD CEMETERY 12:00—1:00 PM ST. MARY'S CEMETERY	26 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	27	28 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	29	30 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SOUL SATURDAY 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
31 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY HOLY PENTECOST						

St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church — June 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	3	4 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	5	6 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
7 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS	8 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	9 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	10	11 <u>GREEK FESTIVAL</u> <u>5-9 PM</u>	12 <u>GREEK FESTIVAL</u> <u>5-10 PM</u>	13 <u>GREEK FESTIVAL</u> <u>NOON-10PM</u>
14 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY <u>GREEK FESTIVAL</u> <u>NOON-4PM</u>	15 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY 6:00 PM AHEPA	16 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	17	18 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	19	20 10:00 AM ROMANIAN LITURGY 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
21 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY	22 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	23 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY	24 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY NATIVITY OF ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER	25 6:00 PM CHOIR PRACTICE	26	27 5:00 PM GREAT VESPERS
28 8:45 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY	29 9:00 AM ORTHROS 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY HOLY APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL	30 10:00 AM BIBLE STUDY				



**JUNE
11-14**

53rd Annual

ST. SOPHIA'S GREEK FESTIVAL

THURS. JUNE 11th 5 PM to 9 PM

FRI. JUNE 12th 5 PM to 10 PM

SAT. JUNE 13th Noon to 10 PM

SUN. JUNE 14th Noon to 4 PM

FOUR DAYS OF FLAVOR, FUN, & GREEK CULTURE!

Live Music | Dance Performances | Authentic Greek Cuisine | Shopping | Church Tours

325 Waring Road, Syracuse, NY

FOR MORE INFO VISIT **SYRACUSEGREEKFEST.COM**

RAIN OR SHINE | FREE PARKING | FREE ADMISSION | FREE SHUTTLE

St. Sophia's Website & Mailing List

Visit the St. Sophia's website at www.stsophias.org. There is a wealth of information on the website with the most up to date calendar on services and events, color photographs from recent functions, electronic sacrament forms to easily fill out and submit, and an online chapel highlighting the days readings and hymns. Please subscribe to our mailing list to receive the latest information instantly. By subscribing to the mailing list you will be able to receive the electronic form of the Nepsis, the weekly bulletin, parish obituary announcements, and any other pertinent information. You may sign up by going to the website and clicking the tab titled "Subscribe to our Mailing List" or via this link: <https://www.stsophias.org/join-our-mail-list> It's that easy!

If you no longer require the paper copy of Nepsis through the mail, please notify Nigel in the office so that you may be removed from the mailing list.



Festival Setup Master Schedule

May		
2nd	Pitas crusts	9:00am - ?
9th	Pitas crusts	9:00am - ?
11th - 15th	Koulourakia, kourabides + finikia	9:00 - 4:00
18th	Village Set-up	5:00 PM
25th - 30th	Baklava	9:00 - 9:00
30th	OP&T Delivery	9:00 AM
June		
3rd	Finikia syrup	
4th	Cupping & Boxing	11:30 - 9:00
	Andy's delivery	
	Lyncourt Grocery Delivery	1:00 PM
5th	Cupping & Boxing	9:00- 9:00
6th	Tzatziki	9:00 AM
8th	Refer. Truck Delivery	
	Electrical set-up	
9th	Coke delivery/coolers	
	Pitas	9:00 - 3:00
	Rice Pudding	3:00 - 9:00
	Outside Tent Installation complete	4:00 PM
	Taylor Rental Delivery	4:00 PM
	Outside Tent set-up	5:00 PM
	Beer Trailer Delivery	
	4K trucking delivery	
10th	Pitas	9:00 - 3:00
	Rice Pudding	3:00 - 9:00
11th	Festival	5:00 - 9:00
12th	Festival	5:00 - 10:00
13th	Festival	12:00 - 10:00
14th	Festival	12:00 - 4:00
15th	Drain Fryer	
Pick up:	Soda, beer , tables, chairs, refer.	
	Donation of leftovers	
17th	Grease Barrel Pickup	
28th	Post festival meeting	After Church
Schedule Times & Dates		
	Pasta flora	
	Paximadia	
	Dept. head meetings	
	Village Teardown	
	Revised: 4/20/26	

Return of the Palikari

(Note: This article was originally written by J Kelly Telonis for the December 2023 Nepsis. At her request we are printing it again to honor Stavros Tamoutselis of Blessed Memory after his repose on April 25, 2026)

Every year on March 25th Greeks celebrate Independence Day. It was on this day in 1821 at the monastery of Agia Lavra that the Greek warriors took the oath of “Freedom or Death” from Paleon Patron Germanos. Following 400 years of slavery under the notorious Ottoman Empire and several failed attempts at revolution it was time for these brave men to put their lives on the line in order to attain freedom. The fighters dressed in their fustanellas (symbolizing bravery and heroism) with swords in hand and horses nearby set off to achieve their goal.

In March of each year here in Syracuse we gather outside City Hall to celebrate Greek Independence Day. Adults and children gather to proudly display both Greek and American flags. The anthems of both our homeland and adopted homeland are sung. The mayor joins in by proclaiming the day as Greek Independence Day in Syracuse! The Greek flag is raised with its colors bathed in light throughout the night.



For many years there has been a proud *palikari* dressed in the uniform of revolutionary heroes “the fustanella”... his name is Stavros Tamoutselis. Standing straight and proud, he was much younger when he began this tradition. As the years have passed he stoops a bit, suffers from an ever present tremor, yet remains standing proud. Following the death of his beloved wife Polixeni, it takes him longer to dress in his “uniform”. Even with this difficulty he is among the first to arrive at City Hall. He shakes and struggles with his balance as he assists the mayor pulling on the rope that raises the blue and white flag towards the top of the poll where it will proudly wave for the next 24 hours. The Greek flag is known as the “blue and white”. According to tradition the nine stripes represent the nine syllables of the phrase “Freedom or Death” (E-lef-the-ri-a i Tha-na-tos in Greek), the motto of the Greek Revolution. The flag was officially adopted at the First National Assembly of Epidauros on January 13, 1882. Each year following the flag raising Stavros celebrates by having his picture taken with the current mayor.

Stavros understands how important it is to celebrate freedom after so many centuries of oppression under Ottoman rule. His faith is very important to Stavros and when his wife was alive he celebrated his Feast Day on September 14th each year by welcoming anyone who

(Continued...)



(Continued...)

wished to come to his house for food, sweets, music, singing and lively conversation. It was standing room only with many well wishers stopping by to wish him a Happy Name Day!

The elevation of the Holy Cross for which he was named was so important to him that while visiting his beloved village of Drosopigi in the year 2005 on the eve of the great holiday September 13th he invited the entire village to the local taverna "Poulia B" to celebrate his Feast Day with him. Stavros didn't walk or take a car to the venue but instead dressed in his *Tsolia* uniform (fustanella) and on a horse borrowed from his brother proudly rode toward the taverna. Seeing him arrive in such a manner he was welcomed by all with tears in their eyes and was greeted with hugs and kisses. The village had welcomed back one its many sons who had left seeking a better life in America and who now returned having never lost his love for his country of birth. Stavros, overwhelmed with happiness and with his beloved Polixeni by his side entered the venue with tears streaming down his face welcoming everyone to join them in conversations about old times, music, dancing and plenty of food!



The whole village as well as surrounding villages heard of this great celebration and local newspapers published the story of Stavros' "memorable and unrepeatable" celebration. The papers printed pictures of him on his horse surrounded by welcoming villagers and with his friends in the taverna. Stavros still has the article and photos framed and hanging on the walls of his humble abode. He is a simple man full of humility and burdened with physical incapacities but the love he has for his birth country, his adopted country and especially his faith in God keep him strong and act as a great example of how we should live our lives with such appreciation, passion and love.

May his Memory Be Eternal
 Αιώνια αὐτοῦ ἡ μνήμη