



WHAT'S HAPPENING at St. George...



“Love always understands the need to make sacrifices. Whatever is done under coercion always causes the soul to react with rejection. Love attracts the grace of God. When grace comes, then the gifts of the Holy Spirit come. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-sufferance, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control. (Gal. 5:22-23) These are the things which a healthy soul in Christ should have.”



Elder Porphyrios (+ 1991), On the Church

A look at what is upcoming at St. George!

Stewardship Ministry

If you have not yet offered your Stewardship for 2019, we humbly ask that you complete the Stewardship Pledge Form and offer it to God as your commitment for the year.

Please pray and ask God to guide your heart as you make your pledge for the upcoming year. Your offerings make possible the work of the Church and pay for our operational costs and ministries. We need everyone's help, from locals to snowbirds to make St. George thrive.

In the end, stewardship is the ultimate act of giving. Time, talent and treasure are how we as Orthodox Christians give thanks for the limitless gifts we receive.

[Stewardship commitment forms](#) are now available and can be returned to the office. We also have new ways in which you can give, to make giving easy throughout the year!

Philoptochos News

Join our Philoptochos for the Agape Lunch on Sunday, February 17th following services.

Please also submit your dues for 2019. Dues are \$30.



Save the Date! His Grace Bishop Sevastianos of Zela to visit Feb 24th

Join us for lunch following services on Sunday, February 24, 2019 in honor of His Grace Bishop Sevastianos of Zela.

Bishop Sevastianos, has been actively involved in the Administration of the Church in general, and in particular in our Holy Archdiocese, serving as a Council member on the Metropolis and Archdiocesan levels; in the Administration Committee of the Archdiocesan Council where he assisted in developing resources for the training of Parish Councils and in the Legal Committee of the Archdiocese. He has served as President of the Clergy Syndesmos of the Metropolis of Atlanta for several years and the Archdiocesan Presbyters Council. His Grace is currently serving as the Chief Secretary of the Holy Eparchial Synod.

Festival

Thank you to our festival chairpersons, sponsors, and all our volunteers for your support in making our Greek festival a success!



2019 Oratorical Festival

Save the Date! Our parish level festival will be held March 3, 2019. Topics for the upcoming year are already released along with other preparation materials and further information! We are here to assist our youth once again this year in this endeavor, simply ask! [Email us](#) with subject line 'Oratorical' and we will be glad to meet to help and provide resources! Link to resources now on our [website](#)!

45-year Anniversary Album

St. George is searching for a chairperson(s) and committee members for our 45-year anniversary album this year. If you can volunteer your time, please [email](#) or speak with Eleni Demirtzoglou.

Every Saturday, Great Vespers at 7pm
Every Sunday, Matins at 8:30am Followed by the Divine Liturgy at ~9:30am

Sun, Feb 17	Following Services	Philoptochos Agape Lunch
Mon, Feb 18	7pm	Great Vespers St. Philothei of Athens
Tues, Feb 19	8:15am	Matins & Divine Liturgy of St. Philothei
Sun, Feb 24	8:30am	Matins & Divine Liturgy; His Grace Bishop Sevastianos of Zela Visit and Lunch
Sun, Mar 3	Following Services	St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival



Ladies Philoptochos Society of St. George
Invites You to Attend the

Annual Agape Luncheon

Sunday, February 17, 2019
Immediately After Church Service

Adults: \$20.00 Students (13-18): \$10.00

Children 12 and under: Free

*Proceeds will go to help Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital
Foundation and local Homeless Shelters*

Appetizers, Salad, Pastitsio with Vegetable, Galaktoboureko

Your Funeral

By Fr. John Bakas

What will your funeral be like? What will be said of you? Will it be a happy time? More than that, what will be the scene as you stand before God? We write our own script for our funeral by the way we live! Imagine with me that you are sitting here at church, but this time you are not gathered for the Divine Liturgy. This time you are gathered for a funeral. Do you see it? Can you picture what it looks like? You sit looking on and taking everything in. Perhaps you see crying, grieving, maybe some shedding of tears, maybe even some laughing at the makaria as people share memories of the deceased. You know many of the people gathered together in memory of this person, so you make your way in and find a place to sit. The pews are packed full of people. Finally, people slowly take their seats and the funeral begins. You look and then realize something very strange and very staggering, the funeral is for you. What would the scene be like at your own funeral? Would there be family grieving? Would there be positive memories shared? Keep on imagining the scene. The priest conducting the funeral begins his eulogy after the service and tries the very best he can to paint a message of hope and a positive message about your life. He tells some stories of your life, he shares some memories, and then speaks of your spiritual condition. He quotes the passage in the Scriptures where it says, "it is appointed for a man once to die and then to face the judgment." He points out the Biblical truth that as you died your spirit separated from your body and your faith now came to light. All the doubts that you had, all the questions, all that you lived for, nothing else mattered. You sit there wondering why he wasn't saying more good about you. You think back to other funerals you attended and the same priest went on and on about how so and so was a faithful church member, how they were servants, how they were people of character and integrity, and then you realize that maybe there was not that much to say. You want to stand up and shout, "I wasn't that bad of a person!" "I came to church!" However, the message continues and finally draws to an end. A time was even given in the hall for eulogies and a few friends and family got up and reminisced a little about your life and events you shared with them. They spoke of your great personality and how fun you were to be around. You noticed that the things people were saying about you were meant to be complimentary, but now after life was over they didn't matter all that much. People spoke of how hard of a worker you were, of the talents that you had, of the Las Vegas gambling outings, golf, partying, your love of ouzo, and that you danced a mean hasapiko but you noticed not one comment about your faith, not one comment about your spiritual life was mentioned. All your life you strove so hard to impress people, all your life you thought you wanted people to just like you. So you would do anything to make a friend, and make friends you did. You thought it was vitally important to be good at everything. You wanted people to remember your dedication to work. You never thought that life would come to an end so quickly. You thought you would have had time later for other things, but the chance never came. At that time your mind is flooded with all sorts of thoughts, all sorts of regrets. You realize all that what you worked so hard for did not matter now. You realize you spent far too much time on things that didn't matter and far too little time on the things that did really matter. You lamented the times you were too busy at work to see your children grow up. You lamented the times you were too busy just to spend time with your spouse. You lamented the times you were so wrapped up in your recreation that you neglected the church by taking your kids to baseball and soccer practice on Sunday mornings. You wish you would have served more, loved more, studied scripture more, paid more attention, and you wish you had given more. Now there was nothing you could do about it. Now all that was gone and quickly you learn as you watch your own funeral what was most important. You learn quickly that if you could have written the script for your own funeral it would have been much different. You did write the script of your own funeral, you wrote it by the life you lived, but you do not like the commentary and wish you could change some things. As the funeral winds down, a last prayer is said and the pall bearers go and carry your casket out of the building. The hearse drives to the graveyard and all the time you feel that you are watching from outside all of it. They bring your casket down, a Trisagion is chanted, memory eternal Amen. Then they begin to lower your casket into the ground and cover it up. For you that is a very sobering scene, because that solidifies that the truth that your life is done and that there was no coming back to correct mistakes. You see an immense light different from any light you have seen before. You see a great white throne with someone sitting on the throne. You stand there and you feel totally inadequate, you feel dirty, immoral, for the first time in your life you feel like you are an awful person. You feel alone, and you begin to tremble, your voice begins to quiver. You have this anxiety and fear that words cannot explain because you know the one you look at holds your eternal destiny in His hands and that your judgment was about to be final. You realize all that you lived for, all that you were striving for was now totally irrelevant, all that mattered now was what this One sitting upon the throne would say to you about your eternal destiny. You realize that you spent far too much time on things that didn't matter and far too little time on things that did matter. You know who the one you are standing before is. It is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, but you don't know him, because you never made time to speak to Him. You never made time to learn of Him. You had planned on it some- day. You thought you had more time. You thought you would get around to it as you grew older, but the time never came. So you stand before His throne speechless. There at that judgment seat you see your life relived. You see things from a different perspective this time. You see the times you hurt people. You see all the wrongs you committed. You see of the times you neglected to do what you should have done. You begin to weep uncontrollably because there more than ever you realize you were not as good of a person as you thought you were. The answer was because you lost your love for the Lord. You were carried away by the world. You recall times with friends when they were mocking God and you joined in with them rather than speaking up because you were afraid. You all times when people needed help and you turned your back on them. You recall times when you could have invited people to come and attend church but you didn't think it really mattered. The place you found yourself was nothing like you had pictured. You thought many times about life after death, but this was much different than you had been taught or thought. You never expected to be so afraid and feel so helpless. The whole time you stand there your mind is filled with, "I wish I would haves" and "I wish I had not's." Then you have nothing more to say and you know what is coming next. You hear the words you dreaded the whole time, "depart from me you evildoer, I never knew you." Now, look up, and open your eyes. You realize all that was not real. Have you ever had a bad dream that seemed so real, and then you wake up and are so thankful it was not a reality; perhaps that is how you feel right now. The reality is that one day those images may come true. How do you want to be remembered? I'd go with faithful over faithless. I'd go with generous over stingy. I'd go with compassion over apathy. I'd go with diligent over lazy. I'd go with Christ-like over worldly. I'd go with sincere over hypocritical. Has your faith sunk in to your heart to the point where it makes a difference in how you live your life? Or, are you just going through the religious motions that you think you are supposed to go through? As you live your life are you prepared to meet the Lord? The reality is, we will all stand before Him some day. What will we say?

Fr. John S. Bakas is dean of St. Sophia Cathedral in Los Angeles and adjunct professor of Orthodox Theology at the Loyola Marymount University School of Theology.