

SEPTEMBER 2016



Voice of St. George

**SAINT GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF THE DESERT**

74-109 LARREA ST., PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA



SAVE, O GOD, YOUR PEOPLE!

Franklin Graham, the son and successor of the Evangelist Billy Graham, has been traveling throughout America, calling people to pray for our country, especially now as we continue to hear political polemics regarding violence; the role of police; threats from ISIS, etc. Graham has been preaching: *"America is at a crossroads, and I believe we should take every opportunity to stand up for the things of God and His Word."*

The Orthodox Christian Church raises a prayer for God's people at various times throughout the year—and especially as we commemorate the **Exaltation of the Holy Cross of our Savior on September 14th**. *"Save, O God, Your people and bless Your inheritance..."* are the opening words to the hymn that is chanted in connection with this most Holy Day.

In essence, Graham is banking on the prospect that Americans are the "we" that should take the opportunity to stand up for the "things of God." Yet, perhaps what has put us at the "crossroads" in the first place is that "we" haven't necessarily been seeking the "things of God." To stand up for God's things necessitates that we define what those things are. Only then, if we are still willing to do so, we can "stand up" for the things of God.

The Holy Cross both defines and declares the "things" of God, as seen in the Person of the very One Who voluntarily put Himself upon the Cross for our salvation. As such, the Holy Cross speaks to us through the One Who went upon it, saying, *"Not as I will, but as You will."*

As in the Person of our Lord and Savior, surrendering to God's Will

yields salvation for self and others. The "things of God" center around "care for others," which requires a mentality far different from what is currently popular.

The "crossroads" at which we find ourselves calls us to summon our will in preference over our rights. As Christ willed to do the Father's Will at the time of His crucifixion, we, too are pressed to will to do our Father's Will if our prayer is: *"Save, O God, Your people."*

As much as I read the Bible, I find nothing in it that speaks to my rights. We hear the words of our Lord: *"Whosoever wills to follow Me, deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me."*

In his essay, "Counting the Cost," C.S. Lewis wrote: *"The terrible thing, the almost impossible thing, is to hand over your whole*

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self—all your wishes and precautions—to Christ. Christ says, ‘Give me All. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money... I want you!’

In other words, with God taking on human flesh, He claims us as His own—as His people. As a result, we can only thank God for the “right” to give of ourselves in doing God’s Will. Our gratitude is expressed by our *desire to take up our cross*—that is, *to accept our responsibilities* toward God and others. But, there is a great mystery here: discharging our responsibilities is not a matter of a reliance on our own powers. But, it is a matter of allowing God to be in charge.

This is *humility*. From this genuine humility many other virtues follow: *faith, prayer, charity, and respect for others*. I would like to think that these are the “things of God” that “we” all cherish, which can make us all great, and, by extension, make America great. Franklin’s call to prayer cannot remain simply a “rally cry.” We are called *to actually be people of God*. Clearly, this is the message of the Holy Cross.

Christian virtues do not come by magic. To acquire and preserve them requires that we “fight the good fight” against evil—against godless principalities and ideologies and against temptations. In Orthodox Christian hymnology the Holy Cross is called “the weapon of peace.”

As it is now, however, there seems to be little use made of this “weapon” as we pray, because there is little “fighting the good fight” against temptations and falsehood—for, temptations, rather than being fought, are disguised as excusable “psychological impulses,” due to “understandable” conditions. Also, falsehood is hardly debated anymore in a spirit of truth, due to a lack of discernment between entitlements and responsibilities; between God’s Will and our own.

Our free will allows us to take *responsibility* to live a life pleasing to God, as opposed to relying on our *rights* to have good things just happen to us. The Holy Cross is the sign of God’s love, inviting us to be co-workers in the Divine Will for human salvation.

+FR. THEODORE

PARISH PLANNING



Based upon the experiences of many who have both led and participated in developing a strategic plan, the following recommendations and insights are provided in order to help teams avoid potential planning pitfalls.

- Establish “Why” - the Rationale for Change: Ensure that the rationale for change is established early, is clear and compelling, and explains why you are commencing with the development of a plan at this time.
 - Eliminate “Fluff”: Make sure your mission, vision and values are directional and important and are not viewed as ambiguous.
 - Realize That It Will Take Six to 18 months: This is typically the amount of time it will take to fully complete your plan; sometimes it will take longer, but rarely shorter than this.
 - Appreciate That Semantics Do Vary: Terminologies in the planning process vary widely from parish-to-parish. Some parishes use “strategic goals” with “supportive objectives”; others reverse that order; still others don’t use “goals” at all and prefer to use “action items.” Still others like to use “priorities.” For the sake of continuity, our Metropolis of San Francisco planning committee uses these key terms: *Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Value Statements, Strategic Objectives, Goals and Actions*.
 - Communicate Frequently: Build communication plans and approaches in order to keep all internal stakeholders (church staff and parishioners) and external audiences (Metropolis, outside organizations, etc.) informed as to the status and content of the plan. Rule of thumb: Plan on sharing and repeating a key fact a minimum of three times to ensure understanding and recall.
 - Seek Consensus: Expand participation during the design process and reach a common agreement amongst parishioners during the decision and approval processes. By having “many
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PARISH PLANNING, continued

hands” involved in the project the likelihood of support increases greatly.

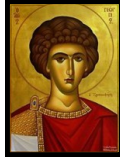
□ **Narrow the Focus:** The nature of the planning process means teams will look at many aspects of parish life. Produce a plan that is easy to understand, is not overwhelming in its scope and limits itself to no more than 10 strategic objectives.

□ **Recognize the Fluidity of Plans:** Once the initial plan is created, conditions will shift, people will change and priorities will be modified, which means the plan will need regular review and modification over given time periods.

— *Metropolis of San Francisco Strategic Planning: A Guide for Our Parishes*

MESSAGE FROM THE PARISH PRESIDENT

Recently, many stewards at our church were asked to complete a questionnaire which was designed to measure eight areas that characterize all church parishes. The strength of these characteristics define the “health” of our church. The healthier we are, the greater the chance of growth. This questionnaire was championed and distributed by **Rhonda Latkovic** and **Anna Prineas**. Thank you to both Rhonda and Anna, as well as all of those who took the time to provide thoughtful and honest responses.



Results showed half of these quality characteristics falling within the average range; that is, showing as healthy and developed at levels consistent with that of most churches. These areas were:

Gift-based ministry – It is believed that the church leadership helps its members identify their gifts and integrates them into matching ministries.

Passionate spirituality – A spiritual intimacy is evident and leads to a strong conviction that God will act in powerful ways to help and guide us.

Inspiring worship service – We see our liturgy as an inspiring experience for all who attend, appreciating the awesomeness of

God’s presence.

Need-oriented evangelism – Our church cultivates relationships with “pre” Christian people so they can become fully devoted followers of our Lord and build authentic relationships within the church.

Of course, that leaves four other quality characteristics that were reported to be areas of weakness; presenting for us a challenge to improve. The first of these involves a less than Empowering Leadership. The ideal of our church leaders having an intimate relationship with God, which results in a Christ-like character and clear sense of calling is reportedly lacking, at least to the degree that allows us to be fully empowered as a parish.

The next area of deficit, **Effective Structures**, refers to our church groups all working together to fulfill their intended purpose. We have many groups that have as goals different aspects of the Orthodox life, from serving the less fortunate to maintaining a spiritually and financially sound parish. Such groups may need to be better defined, better communicate their actions and better meet their objectives.

Growing churches have developed a system of small groups where individual Christians can find intimate community, practical help and intensive spiritual interaction. Such **Holistic Small Groups** endeavor to sustain the growth of the church by leading outreach efforts and meeting each person’s individual needs. These groups, per the questionnaire results, are lacking in their numbers and/or in their effectiveness.

Finally, at the heart of a healthy growing church is unfeigned, practical love. As Jesus said, people will know that we are His disciples by our love. Whereas I see such love demonstrated regularly in our community, there is also bickering, disagreement and unrest which interferes with our “love quotient,” as reported by you.

What now? It is our turn, as a community, to
Continued on the next page – – – – >

MESSAGE FROM THE PARISH PRESIDENT, continued

look ourselves in the mirror and ask if we want to be better. We can ignore the questionnaire results and continue to operate as we are now. Whereas there is much to continue to embrace, by keeping the status quo, we will be missing an opportunity to grow as Christians. Growth does not mean that everything will be perfect, it means that we will better meet the challenges presented to us. We can still disagree with others, but let's do so with a goal to better our church, regardless if our position turns out to be accepted or not. We can still get upset, but let's decide whether our feelings are based in pride or true concern over another's misunderstanding of the Orthodox way. And, if it is the latter, let's set out to help them, not to condemn. Let us be thankful for the results of this questionnaire and begin to change. How? Through prayer, honesty, and love for one another. As our Lord said, "And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9).

— JIM CHRISTOPOULOS,
Parish Council President

SEPTEMBER COLORING BOOK SESSION

September is just around the corner and the children will be going back to school and we will be going back to COLORING!



Our next coloring session & luncheon will be held on Friday, September 16th. Start time will be 12:00 pm. The "Martha Stewart" inspired lunch will be served at noon and then coloring will start after lunch is complete.

Coloring pages and pencils will be supplied. A \$5 minimum donation is requested.

All donations will be given to the church. Through the generosity of the attendees we have raised \$265 dollars this year. Please RSVP your attendance to Rhonda Latkovic by September 11th.

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



We hope you had a great summer. Now that it's September, Philoptochos' activities begin. Our first Board Meeting will be on Monday, September 12 at 11:00 a.m. Our General Assembly Meeting will be on Monday, September 19 at 11:30 a.m.

In August, we made a donation to Coachella Valley Rescue Mission for their Book Bag Project. They provide book bags filled with school supplies for the children. We were able to donate more money than budgeted due to the generosity of one our parishioners.

We are starting The Knitting Project - Part 2. We need knitters and crocheters to make afghans and headbands for the children and adults at the City of Hope. Are you rusty in these sewing arts or haven't knitted or crocheted since childhood? Not to worry! We are going to have a workshop to brush up your skills. If you are interested in joining the team, contact **Rhonda Latkovic** or **Linda Kallis**.

Future Dates:

1. October Board Meeting, October 3 at 11:00 am.
 2. October General Assembly Meeting, October 10th at 11:30 am.
 3. Pet Blessing October 22 at 9:30 a.m.
- Bring your dog, cat or other pet. It's lots of fun!
— LINDA KALLIS,
Philoptochos President

HERITAGE CENTER
AT ST. NICHOLAS RANCH

The beautiful and newly constructed **Heritage Center** at the St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center in Dunlap, California will be officially opened on **Thursday, September 22, 2016** with a special ceremony (*thyranoixia*, in Greek) officiated by His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos at **11:30 a.m.** **Faye and Alex Spanos** and their family are the major benefactors. They have been long-time stewards of our Holy Orthodox Christian Church.

OUTREACH REPORT

Outreach will be presenting the following events for the rest of this year; First, **The Baby Bottle Drive** commencing for 2 consecutive weeks Sundays **October 2nd, and Oct. 9th**. We will be presenting Guest Speakers from **Birth Choice of the Desert** as our spectacular kick-off presenters for this event; **Barbara and John Jimenez** will share with us their experiences creating, and developing this worthy program to help teenager/others, in the prevention of abortions, further to advise us here at St. George Church as to how we can assist. Remember that it is our cheerful giving that helps the poor and needy, and those that are unable to take care of their daily needs. In 2015 our goal was to raise one thousand dollars for the Baby Bottle Drive and we actually over exceeded our goal by raising over 2K, now let us strive to exceed that amount, God willing we can do it!

The second event will be **Veteran's Day** on Sunday **November 6th**. We pray that all parishioners will support these events by attending, and sharing of your monetary gifts. Let us celebrate the United States of America by honoring our flag, ROTC, with music, and singing of military songs, moreover listening to a dynamic speaker that fought in three wars **LT/C Blaine Mack, USA retired Airman**. Together let's give God all the Honor, the Glory and the Praise for this wonderful Nation, that He will continue to protect us, and to save us! Bring your family and friends to these Gala occasions!

– LOUISE DOBBS BARRINGER,
Outreach Chairperson

Greeters Needed

If you are not working with any Auxillary of the church at this time, and are interested in something to do in God's house, "be a Greeter", what better group to be a part of than "welcoming and greeting" the people that enter into the temple for worship and praise to OUR GOD! Please See **Louise Dobbs Barringer**, Welcome Committee Coordinator for more information.

SAINT(S) OF THE MONTH STS. JOACHIM AND ANNA



St. Joachim was of the tribe of Judah, and a descendant of King David.

St. Anna was the daughter of Matthan of the tribe of Levi with Aaron, the High Priest. Sts. Joachim and Anna had been married for fifty years, and were barren. Yet, They lived devoutly, using only a third of their income for themselves and giving a third to the poor and a third to the Temple. God multiplied his flocks, so the couple was well provided for.

The two of them gave themselves to prayer that God would work in them the wonder that He had worked in Abraham and Sarah, and give them a child. St. Anna then conceived and gave birth to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This **Conception of the Most Holy Mother of God** is celebrated by the Church on **December 9** and the **Nativity of the Theotokos** is celebrated on **September 8**.

Sts. Joachim and Anna took Mary, at the age of three, to the temple, dedicating Her to the Lord. The Church commemorates the **Presentation of the Theotokos** on **November 21**.

– Taken from <https://Orthodoxwiki.org>

ST. GEORGE ANNUAL PET BLESSING EVENT

This year's pet blessing will be held on Saturday, October 22nd. The event will begin at 9:00 a.m., with the blessing service, lead by Father Ted, to start at 9:30 am. We will have swag bags for the first 30 pet attendees!



A raffle will be held with tickets on sale for \$1.00 each or 6/\$5.00. We are collecting raffle prizes now. If anyone would like to donate an item, it would be greatly appreciated.

We plan on selling tyropita, Greek salads, & kou-louria at the event also.

We are holding the event three weeks later than last year in the hopes the weather will not be as hot. If anyone would like to volunteer to assist with the event set-up or donate a raffle prize, please see **Rhonda Latkovic** or **Linda Kallis**.

2017 GREEK FESTIVAL



The **2017 St. George Greek Festival** will be held on Saturday and Sunday, **February 25-26, 2017**. **George Argyros** is the **2017 Festival Chairman**; Fr. Ted will help in a “co-chairmanship” capacity, and he is looking forward to working with everybody, both as pastor and as co-worker.

The first **Festival meeting** will be held on Monday, **September 12, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.** in our parish hall. It is a very important meeting since the following agenda items will be presented:

- Festival Service & Booth chairpersons
- Volunteer assignments
- Health Department requirements
- Publicity needs
- Parking (volunteers/vendors/valet)

We look forward to seeing everyone at this important **2017 Festival meeting**. The more volunteers that come forward to help in working the Festival, the greater will be the over-all success of the Festival.

ST. GEORGE FESTIVAL 2017 NEEDS LIST

The following are just some of the items needed for our **St. George Greek Festival 2017**, which will take place on **Friday, Saturday and Sunday, February 25-26, 2017**. If you are interested in donating the monies for part or all of any one of these items, please contact **Fr. Ted** at (760) 880-5869, or call (760) 568-9901 if interested in supporting our **2017 Festival** in this manner. Receipts and/or acknowledgement will be issued upon receipt of **any donated funds**. We are always most grateful for your support and generosity.

Description, Quantity and Value of Items Needed

Beer (Athenian).....	25 cases.....	\$750.00
Butter, Sweet (unsalted).....	600 lbs.	\$1,500.00
Chicken Base.....	20 lbs.....	\$75.00
Cheese, Cottage.....	125 lbs.....	\$385.00
Cheese, Parmesan.....	10 lbs.....	\$40.00
Cucumbers.....		\$100.00
Dinners Rolls.....	300 doz.....	\$350.00
Eggs.....	180 doz.	\$155.00
Feta Cheese (5 gal. bucket).....	40 buckets.....	\$615.00
Filo.....	800 lbs.....	\$2,035.00

Description, Quantity and Value of Items (Festival)

Flour, bread (25 lbs/bag).....	50 bags.....	\$250.00
Flour, regular (25 lbs/ bag).....	50 bags.....	\$250.00
Grape leaves (16 oz jar).....	8 cases.....	\$300.00
Cavenders Greek Seasoning.....	1 case.....	\$80.00
Ground Beef.....	800 lbs.....	\$785.00
Gyro.....	1,500 lbs.....	\$3,775.00
Honey.....	150 lbs.....	\$1,145.00
Lamb Chops.....	600 lbs.....	\$3,800.00
Loukaniko.....	500 lbs....	\$1,895.00
Metaxa (1.5 liter).....	12 bottles.....	\$150.00
Milk.....		\$40.00
Nuts, Almonds.....	125 lbs.....	\$200.00
Nuts, Walnuts.....	125 lbs.....	\$425.00
Oil, Canola.....	10 gal.....	\$140.00
Oil, Mazola.....	10 gal.....	\$175.00
Oil, Olive.....	12 gal.....	\$350.00
Olives, Kalamata.....	12 kegs.....	\$1,395.00
Onions, Green.....		\$100.00
Onions, Yellow.....	14 sacks.....	\$130.00
Ouzo.....	12 bottles.....	\$1,200.00
Pita.....	80 cases.....	\$1,440.00
Retsina.....	5 cases.....	\$230.00
Rice, Uncle Ben's (25 lbs/bag).....	15-25 lbs.bags..	\$215.00
Salad Mix.....	800 lbs.....	\$600.00
Shortening, Vegetables.....	40 gal.....	\$175.00
Sowlaki, Chicken.....	2,000 pieces....	\$1,500.00
Sowlaki, Pork.....	1,000 pieces....	\$1,000.00
Spinach, Fresh.....	60 lbs.....	\$300.00
Sugar, Granulated (25 lbs / bag).....	50-25 lbs bags....	\$515.00
Sugar, Powdered.....	3 cases.....	\$55.00
Tomatoes.....	30 cases.....	\$450.00
Tzaziki (5 gal/ bucket).....	14 bags.....	\$450.00
Wine, Red.....		\$545.00
Wine, White.....	15 cases.....	\$430.00
Ziti, Pastitsio.....	160 lbs.....	\$375.00

Please note that some prices and quantities are subject to change over time.

Donations are also welcome for underwriting the costs of non-food materials. Please contact **George Argyros** for information regarding donations towards the costs of tents, chairs, etc.

Everyone is asked not to purchase anything for the Church or the Festival without permission to do so. **Any purchases in excess of \$250 without prior written authorization from the Parish Council and/or the Festival Chairman will not be reimbursed and will be considered to be a donation.**

AHEPA NEWS



As we leave the summer behind us, we concluded a great year with AHEPA.

Wynn Storton finished his 2 year term as District 20 Governor at the Supreme Convention in Las Vegas, and received **National District Governor of the Year for the second year in a row.**

Fr. Ted's cousin, George Booras, was elected to Regional Supreme Governor.

The first meeting for this season is scheduled for **second Wednesday of September (Sept. 14th) at 6:30 pm.**, to set the calendar for AHEPA 528 and activities to help the Church, community and scholarships.

Please plan on being in attendance for this productive meeting. If you would like to join or just see what AHEPA is about, please call or email me.

AHEPA Chapter 528 will be working with Saint George church with Veterans day in November and moving forward enthusiastically with membership growth and activities to promote the values of AHEPA and the Orthodox Church.

We are looking forward to celebrating brother **Tom Evans 100th birthday this November.**

Have a blessed and safe summer.

—WYNN STORTON,
AHEPA 528 President



Wynn Storton was presented the AHEPA National Governor of the Year Award for the 2nd year in a row at the National AHEPA Conference in Las Vegas this summer.

SO. CALIFORNIA GREEK FESTIVALS

Dates/

<u>Times</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Telephone No.</u>
Sept. 3-5.....	Assumption	
12-10pm.....	Long Beach.....	(562)494-8929
Sept. 10-11.....	Sts. Const./Helen	
10-10pm	Cardiff-by-Sea.....	(760)942-0920
Sept. 23-25.....	St. Anthony	
12-10pm.	Pasadena.....	(626)449-6945
Sept. 23-25.....	St. Basil	
11am-11pm	San Juan Capstno....	(949)542-3445
Sept.30-Oct.2..	St. Nectarios	
12-10pm	Covina.....	(626)967-5524
Oct. 7-9.....	St.Sophia	
12-11pm	Los Angeles.....	(323)737-2424

SEPTEMBER 1: THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH'S YEAR

Our modern Western Calendar starts the year on January 1. Yet other calendars and civilizations have different calendars that start on other dates. The Roman Calendar, until Julius Caesar, had other start dates. The Jewish Calendar is more in line with September 1. Why is this? Early Christians believed that creation started on September 1 and this was called the "indictio" (in Latin) - the start of everything.

This seems a bit perplexing to most of us. Yet, a fact from the agricultural world helps to explain this. In addition, a look at the ministry and life of the Lord also helps us. In the basic facts of life, the cycle of fruits and farming make September important. This is the beginning of the farmer's year, since grains are collected and put away. In a real way, the work of the Church is like agriculture. Seeds are sown, grain is reaped. September is the key time for this. So, why should it also not be the time of sowing and reaping the harvest of the Word of God?

One other small point should be made about calendars. This issue is not the same question as the matter of the Julian versus the Gregorian Calendars. This is the issue that is connected with the

Continued on the next page - - - ->

SEPTEMBER 1: THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH'S YEAR, continued

date of Easter and other Easter-based feasts, since four or more independent Orthodox Churches use the Julian Calendar, and thus the date of Easter can vary, like this year. All Orthodox Churches use the Julian Calendar for establishing the date for Easter.

September, then, is the time in the Lord's life when His work in the world begins. The Church's Calendar of readings makes this very clear to us. In the Gospel of Luke (4:16-30), September 1 is the beginning of Christ's ministry on earth. Christ opened the Book of Isaiah: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor...to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."* When Christ read this passage, He told the people present: *"Today this Scripture is fulfilled..."*

The seeding and reaping of God's work begins. Christ's public ministry also begins. The Church's year and ministry begins, as well. By making the harvest the start of the Church year, we follow the example of Moses who ordained the Feast of Trumpets, when a holy assembly was called and the people would "bring a whole burned offering to the Lord."

—MATTHEW DAVIS

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES—Our Sunday school staff met at the end of August to plan out the new year.

We will be starting classes on the **18th of September**. If you want to volunteer to help with Sunday school or have some good ideas to share, please contact anyone affiliated with the Sunday school, such as myself, **Deacon Euthym and Krisann, Mariya Dunkel and Melissa Hawkins.**

—JIM CHRISTOPOULOS

P.S.: As always, it is truly a blessing to have the spiritual and emotional support from parents who bring their children to Sunday School faithfully and who serve to supplement Sunday School lessons on a daily basis.

+FR. THEODORE

Altar Flowers

Thank you all for your sincere participation during the past 3 years, we pray that you will continue to support this wonderful program for the adornment of our altar, and to all that gave special gifts above and beyond your personal contributions, may God bless you! To all that signed up for Altar Flowers for the month of October please submit your check now, making sure that you enter in the Memo Column the date/month year of your request. The reason is that some parishioners pre-pay for their orders, and the **Altar Flower Account** needs to be properly credited for your contributions. Please see **Louise Dobbs Barringer**, Altar Flower Coordinator, if you have further questions. Again, thank you!

ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT

The St. George of the Desert Greek Orthodox Church Endowment Fund realized a modest gain of 2.58% YTD, 1.46% for 1 year and 7.32% since inception. This brings its total balance to **\$280,246.52**. There were total donations of \$50.00 for the 2nd Quarter.

Our current Asset Allocation follows the Fund's By-Laws as shown below:

A. Domestic Equities.....	\$131,623.63....	48%
B. Domestic Fixed Income....	\$124,383.17...	43%
C. Int'national Equities.....	\$ 19,299.50....	7%
D. Cash & Equivalents.....	\$ 4,940.22....	2%

Domestic Equities rose 1.09% for the quarter vs. a 2.84% Benchmark because of broader diversity investments in our fund. The International Fund lost -1.41% for the year vs. -1.46% against the Benchmark due to European Union and Chinese slower growth. Fixed Income grew 2.34% vs. a 1.61% Benchmark.

The Resource Group, who manages the fund, assesses a 1% Advisory Fee which amounted to \$700.61 or .25% of the current balance which is the rate charged to charities serviced by the group vs. their standard 2% fee. All funds continued on the next page ----->

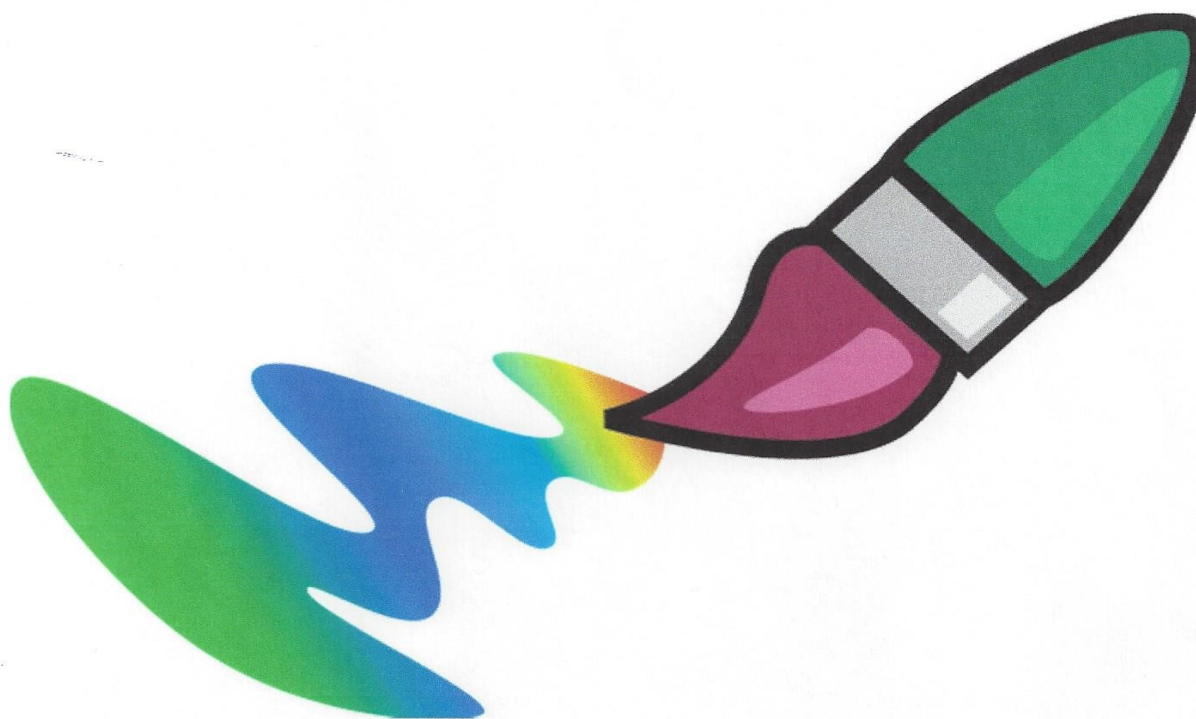
ENDOWMENT FUND REPORT, continued

are “No Load,” meaning the funds do not charge an administrative fee. I believe they are serving our needs.

The bottom line – the Resource Group still believes that global economic growth will slowly and deliberately grow, led by advanced and commodity-consuming emerging economies. They still like U.S. risk assets, because the fundamentals are better than other countries. Based on the current economic forecasts from the FED, diversification continues to be a better strategy than tightly focused positions.

The focus of the committee will continue on estate planning and planned giving to grow the fund.

– NICK M. LATKOVIC,
Endowment Fund Committee Chairperson



ADULT COLORING SESSION & LUNCHEON

When: Friday, Sept. 16th @ noon-2pm

Where: St. George church hall

RSVP: By Sept. 10th to Rhonda Latkovic

Lunch will be served at noon with coloring to follow. A \$5.00 minimum donation is requested. Lunch is a Martha Stewart inspired menu. There will also be raffle. Coloring supplies provided. Please join us!

THE HOLY & GREAT COUNCIL OF THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH: THE IMPORTANCE OF FASTING

As a spiritual endeavor, the true fast is inseparable from unceasing prayer and genuine repentance. Repentance without fasting is fruitless (Basil the Great, *On Fasting* 1, 3. PG 31, 168A), as fasting without merciful deeds is dead, especially nowadays when the unequal and unjust distribution of goods deprives entire nations of their daily bread. *“While fasting physically, brethren, let us also fast spiritually. Let us loose every knot of iniquity; let us tear up every unrighteous bond; let us distribute bread to the hungry, and welcome into our homes those who have no roof over their heads...”* (Sticheron at Vespers on Wednesday of the First Week of Lent; cf. Is 58:6-7).

Fasting cannot be reduced to simple and formal abstinence from certain foods. *“So let us not be selfish as we begin the abstinence from foods that is the noble fast. Let us fast in an acceptable manner, one that is pleasing to God. A true fast is one that is set against evil, it is self-control of the tongue. It is the checking of anger, separation from things like lusts, evil-speaking, lies, and false oaths. Self-denial from these things is a true fast, so fasting from these negative things is good”* (Basil the Great, *On Fasting*, 2, 7. PG 31, 196D). Abstinence from certain foods during the fast and temperance, not only with regard to what to eat but also how much to eat, constitutes a visible aspect of this spiritual endeavor. *“In the literal sense, fasting is abstinence from food, but food makes us neither more nor less righteous. However, in the spiritual sense, it is clear that, as life comes from food for each of us and the lack of food is a symbol of death, so it is necessary that we fast from worldly things, in order that we might die to the world and after this, having partaken of the divine nourishment, live in God”* (Clement of Alexandria, *From the Prophetic Eclogae*. PG 9, 704D-705A). Therefore, the true fast affects the entire life in Christ of the faithful and is crowned by their participation in divine worship, particularly in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

The Church, however, has also established, with pastoral discernment, boundaries of philanthropic dispensation (*oikonomia*) concerning the rules of fasting. In this regard, the Church has considered

physical infirmity, extreme necessity, and difficult times where she has ordained the application of the principle of ecclesiastical *oikonomia*, through the responsible discernment and pastoral care of the body of bishops in the local Churches.

It is a fact that many faithful today do not observe all the prescriptions of fasting, whether due to faint-heartedness or their living conditions, whatever these may be. However, all these instances where the sacred prescriptions of fasting are loosened, either in general or in particular instances, should be treated by the Church with pastoral care, *“for God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live”* (Ezek 33:11), without, however, ignoring the value of the fast.

Therefore, with regard to those who find it difficult to observe the prevailing guidelines for fasting, whether for personal reasons (illness, military service, conditions of work, etc.) or general reasons (particular existing conditions in certain regions with regard to climate, as well as socioeconomic circumstances, i.e., inability to find lenten foods), it is left to the discretion of the local Orthodox Churches to determine how to exercise philanthropic *oikonomia* and empathy, relieving in these special cases the “burden” of the holy fast. All this should take place within the aforementioned context and with the objective of not diminishing the importance of the sacred institution of fasting. The Church should extend her philanthropic dispensation with prudence, undoubtedly to a greater extent when it comes to those fasts, on which the ecclesiastical tradition and practice have not always been uniform. *“It is good to fast, but may the one who fasts not blame the one who does not fast. In such matters you must neither legislate, nor use force, nor compel the flock entrusted to you; instead, you must use persuasion, gentleness and a word seasoned with salt”* (John of Damascus, *On the Holy Fasts*, Homily 3, PG 95, 68 B).

— Taken from the Official Document Regarding Fasting, Issued for the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, paragraphs 3, 7, 8.

St. George Greek Orthodox Church

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Sunday School Registration Form: 2016-2017



Child's Name	Birth Date	Grade	Name Day/Saint	Check Areas for Your Child to Participate	
				Epistle	Tray

Home Address	Home Phone

Parents' Names	E-Mail Address	Cell Phone Number

For High School Children (optional)

Name	E-Mail Address

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." – **Matthew 19:14**