

# Holy Trinity - St. John the Theologian Greek Orthodox Church



## TRIODION BEGINS

*The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, which this year falls on February 9th, is the first Sunday of a three-week period prior to the commencement of Great Lent. It marks the beginning of a time of preparation for the spiritual journey of Lent, a time for Orthodox Christians to draw closer to God through worship, prayer, fasting, and acts of charity. It is also on this day that the Triodion is introduced, a liturgical book that contains the services from this Sunday, the tenth before Pascha (Easter), to Great and Holy Saturday.*

## IMPORTANT DATES

- February 2 - Philoptochos Meeting
- February 4 - 4:30 pm Women's Bible Study
- February 5 - 5:30 pm Paraklesis
- February 8 - 10 am Liturgy for Theodore the Commander followed by Orthodoxy 101
- February 9 - Parish Council Meeting & Souper Bowl Luncheon
- February 11 - 5:30 pm Men's Bible Study
- February 12 - 5:30 pm Paraklesis
- February 13 - 5:30 pm Choir Practice
- February 17 - 10 am Liturgy for St. Theodore of Tyre
- February 18 - 4:30 pm Women's Bible Study
- February 19 - 5:30 pm Paraklesis
- February 22 - 10 am Saturday of Souls & Gyro Drive Thru
- February 23 - Meatfare Luncheon
- February 24 - 10 am Liturgy for St. John the Baptist
- February 25 - 5:30 pm Men's Bible Study
- February 26 - 5:30 pm Paraklesis
- February 27 - 5:30 pm Choir Practice

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>26</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Men's Bible Study 5:30 p.m.	<b>29</b> 5:30 p.m. Paraklesis	<b>30</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy Three Hierarchs	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy <b>Philoptochos Meeting</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m.	<b>5</b> 5:30 p.m. Paraklesis	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy St. Theodore the Commander Orthodoxy 101
<b>9</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy <b>Parish Council Meeting</b> <b>Souper Bowl Luncheon</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Men's Bible Study 5:30 p.m.	<b>12</b> 5:30 p.m. Paraklesis	<b>13</b> 5:30 p.m. Choir Practice	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy	<b>17</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy St. Theodore of Tyre	<b>18</b> Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m.	<b>19</b> 5:30 p.m. Paraklesis	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy Saturday of Souls 11 - 2 Gyro Drive Thru
<b>23</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy <b>Meatfare Luncheon</b>	<b>24</b> 8:45 Orthros 10:00 Liturgy John the Baptist	<b>25</b> Men's Bible Study 5:30 p.m.	<b>26</b> 5:30 p.m. Paraklesis	<b>27</b> 5:30 p.m. Choir Practice	<b>28</b>	<b>1</b> <b>Stewpot</b>

<b>Strict Fast</b> 	<b>Fish Allowed</b> 	<b>Dairy Allowed</b> 	<b>Wine and Oil Allowed</b> 
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## **GREETINGS,**

**What a wonderful start to the year. A vasilopita bake-sale raising nearly \$1,000 for a great cause. Thank you to all who helped make the luncheon an exciting time and a great success.**

**In addition, we have had a large number of visitors recently and it has been wonderful to see. Each has been a joy to meet and interact with. Let us continue to make everyone feel welcome and part of our church family.**

**In regards to the parish council meeting, we met on January 12th with discussion mainly surrounding housekeeping items for the year such as accounting, banking, officer elections, etc. The agenda this year will focus on smaller projects such as the addition of a byzantine cross on the roof, minor landscaping, iconography, Sunday school room improvements, and freeing up additional space through the organization of storage. Growth will certainly be the priority focus.**

**We will continue to have bimonthly gyro drive-throughs with the first taking place on February 22nd. These are in addition to the Taste of the Mediterranean event taking place at Old Capital Inn on May 2nd. More information to come on that soon as the few remaining items get tied up.**

**Lastly, a major focus for the year will be on growing and gaining more involvement from the parish with the choir. It is a vital ministry to the church and one that we urge interested parties to seek involvement with. Please see Father's message concerning choir practice, an opportunity to learn about this ministry, and how you can become involved.**

**IN CHRIST,  
THE PARISH COUNCIL**



# **St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival**

The St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival is a nationwide ministry of the Department of Religious Education (DRE) of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The Oratorical Festival provides a platform and experience where Greek Orthodox youth from grades 7-12 present speeches discussing the Faith and the Church. Participants can explore and deepen their faith while honing their speech writing and public speaking skills.



This year, we will be hosting the district level competition for the Western Conference, which includes (in addition to our own parish) the churches of Baton Rouge, Biloxi, Ft. Walton Beach, Gulf Shores, Jackson, Mobile, Monroe, New Orleans, Panama City, and Pensacola.

The parish level festival will be held on April 12th, (Lazarus Saturday) after the pancake breakfast. The district level festival will be held two weeks later, on April the 26th.

All information about the Oratorical Festival, including topics for the two age groups, can be found at:

<https://atlmeteropolis.org/st-john-chrysostom-oratorical-festival>

All parents are asked to encourage participation from students as we return to participating in this annual ministry of our Church. This is a great opportunity for students to grow in their understanding of the faith, improve public speaking skills, and represent our parish.

Parish Family,

We are excited to announce more details regarding our upcoming event, Taste of the Mediterranean, which will be held at the Old Capital Inn on May 2, 2025! This year promises to be an unforgettable evening celebrating Greek cuisine, culture, and community.

The event will feature the following:

- Wine Tasting: 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM
- Dinner Event: 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

We are thrilled to have Pete Efstratiou, the owner of Filo's Mediterranean, preparing the delicious Greek-inspired dishes. In addition, the event will also feature a selection of mezzas and pastries crafted by the wonderful ladies of Philoptochos.

Adding to the vibrant atmosphere, we are excited to welcome Chris Sarris from Birmingham as our DJ for the evening, setting the perfect mood for dining and dancing.

Ticket Information:

- Dinner Only: \$75 per person
- Dinner + Wine Tasting: \$125 per person

We are aiming to sell 300 tickets for this incredible event and they can be purchased on the website: [www.greekjacksonms.org](http://www.greekjacksonms.org). A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the local charity We Will Go, which continues to make a meaningful impact in our community.

**Sponsorship Opportunities:** We are working hard to secure sponsorships from local businesses and encourage parish members to help by reaching out to businesses within your networks. If you have personal connections or are interested in sponsoring the event, please consider contributing. Sponsorships can easily be purchased on the website. However, we have attached a sponsorship packet to assist in obtaining sponsorships if needed. Completed forms can be emailed to the contact information on the packet or picked up by a committee member in person.

Let's come together to make this event a success and build something we can grow and look forward to each year!

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to seeing you on May 2nd!

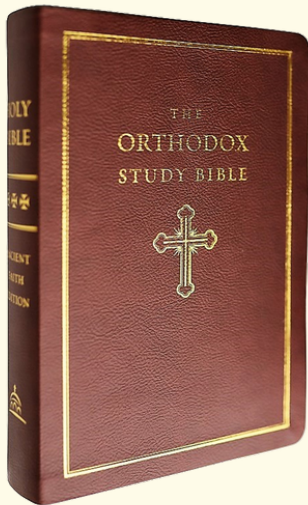
In Christ,

TOM Committee

# Choir Practice

On Thursday, February 13th and 27th, at 5:30 p.m. we will begin having choir practice every other week.

We are striving to grow our choir and gain participation from additional members of our community, so anyone interested is encouraged to attend. We will look forward to seeing you there.



## Men and Women's Bible Study

Our Men and Women's Bible Studies have been well attended and consistent since we started back up, with the two groups alternating Tuesday evenings.

This has been a great opportunity for learning and fellowship for anyone in the community. Those interested in the Women's Bible Study should contact Kari East to be added to the GroupMe, and those interested in joining the men's group should contact Fr. Mike.

# Gyro Drive Thru

On Saturday, February 22nd at 11:00 a.m. we will have our next Gyro Drive Thru following the liturgy for Saturday of Souls. We hope that everyone will join us as we not only remember those who have passed away, but also work to support the ongoing life of the church today.



Inviting All Those **Young at Heart** (age 55 and up)

## Seminar on Retirement Readiness

**Date:** Tuesday, February 25, 2025 11:00 am - 1:00 pm (Program starts at 11:00 am with Lunch to follow at 12:00 pm)

**Location:** Home2Suites by Hilton, 1930 Lewis Turner Boulevard, Fort Walton Beach, Florida 32547; 850-315-0017

**Cost:** There is no charge for the lunch or to attend the presentation thanks to a generous donor. Freewill donations will be gladly accepted, however, to cover those expenses beyond the donor's gift.

**Program:** Please join us for an informative discussion of some of the issues and concerns faced by those approaching retirement. We are honored to have the following representatives offer the benefit of their experience and advice:

The Northwest Florida Agency Area on Aging, Inc. – David Alexander will discuss the type of requests he receives on their hotline.

Council on Aging of West Florida – Emily Echevarria will overview existing programs and discuss how to start the process for subsidized services. Programs include: in-home care, Meals on Wheels, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer opportunities, and Foster Grandparent and Senior Companions.

**Reservations:** Sts. Markella & Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church Office; 850-244-0822; email [office@stmarkella.org](mailto:office@stmarkella.org)

**Reservation Deadline:** Tuesday, February 18, 2025. (We need reservations so we know how many meals to prepare.)

**Hotel Event Special Room Rate:** Please visit [www.hilton.com](http://www.hilton.com) to book a reservation and use Group Code CHT90E (zero, not the letter). You should see more rates for \$110 and a 1 king bed studio suite beside a button for Orthodox Seniors Retreat.

