

HOLY TRINITY HERALD NEWSLETTER October 2025



V. Rev. Fr. Maximos Politis – Parish Priest
(347) 500-8176 FatherMaximUSA7@gmail.com

Mr. Thomas Lekas – Parish President (678) 993-3629

Parish Council

Priest-V. Rev. Father Maximos Politis

President - Thomas Lekas

Vice President - Zoe Kugeares

Recording Secretary - Carman Gaetanos

Treasurer - Kaliroi Parris

Stewardship Toula Zotos

Andrew Antonopoulos

Theo Bersu

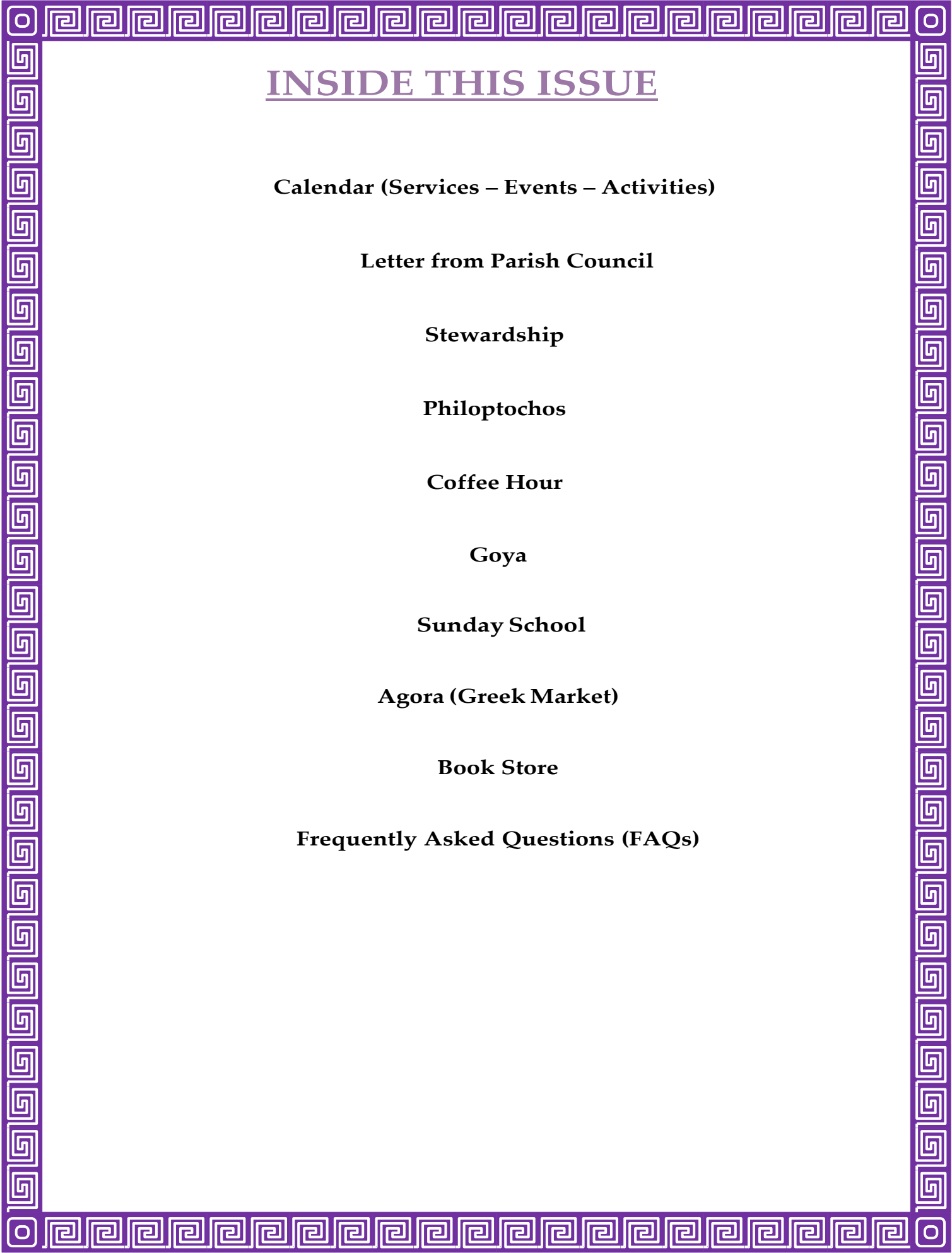
Nick Kelley

Maria Lagoutaris

Stacy Symeonides

OUR MISSION: Our parish is a living witness of Jesus Christ, serving the spiritual and physical needs of all people, through worship, outreach, and education.

OUR VISION: Fostering an Orthodox Christian environment that **encourages** parishioner engagement, increasing public awareness of our faith and of our parish as a spiritual home, and nurturing and growing our stewardship commitments.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Calendar (Services – Events – Activities)

Letter from Parish Council

Stewardship

Philoptochos

Coffee Hour

Goya

Sunday School

Agora (Greek Market)

Book Store

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

OCTOBER CALENDAR

1 TODAY < > October 2025 📅 (GMT-05:00) America/New_York 🏠						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 • Orthros at 9am, Divine Liturgy at 10 am	29	30	1	2	Office Closed on	4
5 • Orthros at 9am, Divine Liturgy at 10 am • Philoptochos Meeting (after Divine Liturgy)	6	7	8	9	Office Closed on	GREEK FESTIVAL 2025
12 GREEK FESTIVAL 2025 No Sunday School • Orthros at 9am, Divine Liturgy at 10 am	13	14	15	16	Office Closed on	18
19 Mortgage Reduction • Orthros at 9am, Divine Liturgy at 10 am	20	21 • Parish Council Meeting 6:30pm	22	23	Office Closed on	25
26 • Sunday Service - St. Demetrios Feast Day • Orthros at 9am, Divine Liturgy at 10 am	27	28	29	30	Office Closed on	1 • Losey-Danikas Baby Shower 12:00 P.M. to 3:00p.m.
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Click the link below to view the Calendar of Saints, Feasts and Readings
In the Orthodox Church.

www.goarch.org/chapel/calendar

Click the link below to view the Church Calendar

www.holytrinitystaugustine.org/events

If you have any updates to the calendar, please contact the Church Office
at Holy3goc@gmail.com or (904)829-0504

EVENTS

ANNUAL GREEK FESTIVAL

The annual **Greek Festival** returns to Holy Trinity Church on October 11 & 12, 2025 to celebrate the cultural presence of Greek influence in the nation's oldest city. The popular festival offers the Greek cultural experience of traditional food, music, folk dance and sharing it with our visitors.

We invite the entire community to Volunteer and join us on Saturday, October 11, 11 am-9 pm and on Sunday October 12, 12-4 pm. [Click here](#) to sign up and volunteer!

Additional help is needed leading up to the event:

Parking set-up - Wed Oct 1, 3pm (see Tom Lekas)

Sign distribution - Sun Oct 5

Tzatsiki prep/Hall set-up - Wed Oct 8, 2pm

Moussaka, pastitsio, dolmades, spanakopita, baklava are available for pre-order until October 3 and for pickup at the Festival. Check out the menu online www.staugustinegreekfestival.com.

Free parking will be available at Webster Elementary School (420 North Orange St, St. Augustine), and shuttle will be provided by Old Town Trolley. There will be limited premium parking at Holy Trinity Church for \$20. Volunteer parking is available 20 yards west of main church entrance (pass required).

Portion of this year's event proceeds will benefit St. Johns Ecumenical Food Pantry. This is a local outreach promoting awareness of hunger issues and offering emergency food assistance.

Visit the official St. Augustine Greek Fest website at www.staugustinegreekfestival.com/ or the Festival Facebook page: www.facebook.com/StAugustineGreekFestival. Please join us. **Opa!**

[Parishioner volunteer signup: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4AA8AE23A7FDCF8-58847031-staugustine#/>]

**** Last day** for Festival Pan Preorders is tomorrow, **October 3rd**. Reserve yours today!

<https://www.staugustinegreekfestival.com/>



Holy Trinity Scholarship Announcement

The Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in St. Augustine Florida is pleased to announce that we will be awarding scholarships to qualified high school graduating seniors starting with the current school year 2025-2026.

The recipients of these scholarships will have exhibited exemplary Christian values and enjoy a good standing in academic, civic, and cultural circles.

The scholarships, funded by private donations, will be presented at an annual event in May beginning in 2026.

Scholarship applications must be submitted in January of the award school year. The submission will be accompanied by the required documentation.

The review, evaluation and endorsement from the Holy Trinity Scholarship committee will be completed before the end of March.

The scholarship recipient selection will be finalized by mid-April, and the announcement will be made in mid-May at the Holy Trinity church of St. Augustine during church services.

Eligibility requirements and application will be available soon. For more details, please contact the church office Holy3GOC@gmail.com

Letter from Parish Council

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

October Herald Parish Update

As we step into October, we're excited to share an update on recent parish developments since our September parish council meeting. This month's Herald highlights our ongoing projects, community contributions, and spiritual growth. Together, we continue to build a vibrant and welcoming environment for all.

Mikae Gaetanos Field Project:

With the permission of the donors, we have used \$24,800 for environmental studies and to clean grade our utility access road to make it suitable for volunteer parking during our festivals. With the help of two volunteers, we measured and marked 45 parking spaces. We will also install lights to improve the safety of the parking area. During the festival next week, our volunteers should ride-share to minimize vehicles and park in the new lot. You will notice that our bank balances are shrinking as we use the money earmarked for this project.

Tree Clearing and Safety: Permits, Protection, and Buffer Zone

Although your parish council (PC) had approved selling our trees to a local logger, the county did not. The county environmentalist said they would approve clearing only the two acres adjacent to the church. I submitted new documentation and am waiting for their reply. We have already paid for the permit, so it makes sense to obtain it, even though we do not currently have funds to complete the work. This is beneficial for us in terms of the safety of our church buildings. Over the years, the forest has encroached on our building, and we are currently at risk from trees falling in storm conditions and from fire damage in the event of a wildfire. You may recall that there was a fire in the woods on either side of CR 214 just east of us. With this permit, we will begin to create a buffer around our building to protect them.

Stewardship, Improvements, and Volunteer Spirit:

Our Lord continues to bless our efforts to grow the church. Our stewardship is growing, and many of you are stepping up to help our church as needs arise. For example, parishioners have donated an ice machine and a pure water dispenser for our kitchen. Other parishioners have stepped forward to help us with plumbing issues and improving our Wi-Fi.

Serve-Safe Certification: Ensuring Kitchen Safety Together

As our kitchen continues to serve as a hub for parish gatherings and celebrations, we must maintain the highest standards of food safety. We still need someone to step up with a Serve-Safe Certification for our kitchen. This is a St. John's County requirement for commercial kitchens. If you have this certification or are interested in getting it for our church kitchen, we will pay for the class and the test!

Greek Festival Preparation: Leadership, Teamwork, and Volunteering

Preparations for our annual Greek Festival are in full swing, thanks to the dedicated leadership of our organizing committee and the tireless efforts of many parishioners. Their commitment ensures that this beloved tradition will once again bring joy to our community and guests. We invite everyone to participate – whether by volunteering, cooking, serving, decorating, or welcoming our visitors. Your help is essential for a successful festival! I am especially grateful for the leadership of Andy Lekos, Carman Gaetanos, and Theo Bersu in making sure they guide us to do all the smaller tasks that go into making the huge task of producing the Greek Festival. Axios!!

Church Connections: Father Maximos at Monastic Priests Meeting

This month, Father Maximos attended a monastic priests meeting in Texas, deepening our parish's ties to the broader ecclesiastical community. His participation reflects our church's connection to wider Orthodox traditions and leadership, enriching our local ministry with insights from across the world.

Bible Study Group: Growing in Faith

Our bible study group continues to meet on most Tuesday evenings at 6:00 PM. We always begin with a prayer for our church and another prayer for our study at 6:15. Since we began this ministry, we have studied the book of Daniel, Prayer, Repentance, Redemption, Forgiveness, and seven powerful women of the bible whose courage and faith shaped the Christian church. We have three more powerful women of the bible to go in this lesson!

Conclusion: General Assembly Preparations and A Call to Serve

We are deeply grateful to every member of our parish family, the volunteers, donors, leaders, and all who contribute to our mission. As we move forward into the fall, we, your PC, begin working on our General Assembly meeting. This meeting is important to all of us as we present our 2026 budget, updates on all our ministries, and most importantly, get your feedback and ideas for how to better serve the church. The date is set for November 9, 2025. We need three adult stewards of our church who have at least one year of tenure in our community and are interested in joining the PC. This is a ministry, a service to our Lord, and to every parishioner. Will you answer the call?

Operating account balance as of 9/30/2025	\$23,889.00
Reserves account balance as of 9/30/2025	\$66,442.62
Mortgage loan balance as of 9/30/2025	\$762,927.78

STEWARDSHIP



Stewardship - Faith in Action

Stewardship transforms a parish from a place people "attend" into a faith-filled community that people "belong to". If you are a steward of our parish, you are part of something sacred and vital, sustaining the life of our parish and helping the Church continue her holy mission to proclaim salvation in Christ in the world.

To those who have made stewardship contributions this year, Thank You! If you have not done so, anyone can become a steward at any time! We ask that everyone prayerfully consider their stewardship contributions to date and help our spiritual home meet its operating expenses in 2025.

You can fulfill your 2025 stewardship online at www.holytrinitystaugustine.org/stewardship, or use this QR code.



If you prefer to give by check, please note "Stewardship" on the memo line.

When we offer from what God has given us, we are united more deeply -- to the Church, to each other, and to Christ. May God bless you and your family abundantly, and may our parish continue to grow in faith, love, and unity.

Commitments to Date (as of September 30, 2025):

Stewards – 91

Commitments - \$171,904

Collected - \$106,842

Outstanding - \$65,063

Jan-Sept 2025 YTD Expenses vs Stwd & Other Income	
Expenses	\$241,057
Stwd Income	\$106,842
Other Income	\$104,587
All Income	\$211,429

Mortgage Reduction Campaign - One Step at a Time!

Just as our founders built this church for us, we need to focus on the future of those who will come after by reducing our mortgage principal -- one step at a time.

Every month, Holy Trinity meets its mortgage obligations by paying the required principal and interest. Additional payments toward the principal will ultimately reduce interest amounts in the future.

The 2025 budget includes a goal of \$5224 toward mortgage principal reduction. To date, we have collected \$4223. We are not limited by our budget goal, and can deposit any amount we raise toward the mortgage principle.

Options for giving toward this goal include the following:

- * Choose "Donate" on the church website. (holytrinitystaugustine.org)
- * Use custom QR code (below)
- * Deposit a check in the "Mortgage Reduction" box in the church narthex.
- * Transfer stock options. (contact office)
- * Include a gift as part of your estate planning.

Gifts designated for the mortgage reduction fund will be applied to the mortgage principal only.

Thank you for taking an active role in the future financial health of our parish! Step by step, our goals will be met!



PHILOPTOCHOS



□ **Next Meeting: Sunday October 5, 2025** □ **12:15** □ **Conference Room**

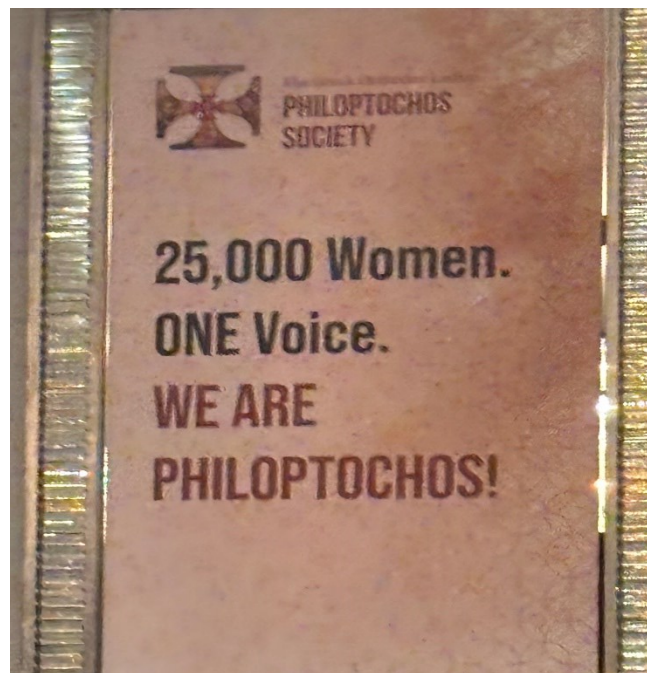
“but whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.”

1John 3:17-18.

The dedication, love, and tireless efforts of the Philoptochos Sisterhood continue to work in harmony to carry forward our Lord’s sacred mission. Thank you to all of you who support this charitable arm of our church.

***October brings our time to collect food for our local pantry shelters.... You will see the bins in the hall for your donations.

God bless and thank you.



➤ **Save the date**, we need your help on December 6th for our Craft and Vendor Fair. The committee is busy at work getting the details together and you will hear more about it. If you know anyone who would like to be one of our vendors, please contact our chairman Connie Espinosa at connie.I.espinosa@gmail.com See Information flyer below:



- Be on the lookout for the Christmas angel tree starting in November! Like last year, we will be working with St Photios Shrine and Saint Demetrios Philoptochos for the Christmas gift donations to our beloved veterans who reside in Clyde E Lassen Nursing Home.

Looking Forward to having the most wonderful Greek Festival and seeing all our amazing volunteers and Church family. OPA!!!

SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR



Each Sunday's social hour is chaired by Philoptochos.

A volunteer coordinates a given week's plan. That means that regardless of experience, anyone can volunteer to provide a snack and be a host. This is not limited to Philoptochos members or even just to women!

You can scan the QR below code to sign up:

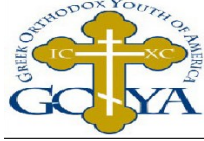


Sign up is also available on our website, under the Calendar tab.

If you need further assistance, please contact Kaliroi Parris at roi.parris@gmail.com You can also speak to her after church, and she can sign you up. Thank you!

We invite all Orthodox Christian women to attend any of our monthly Meetings and learn more about how we work together to make a difference!

GOYA YOUTH MINISTRY



HTGOC GOYA is for youth in sixth through twelfth grades. The GOYA ministry integrates worship (liturgia), fellowship (koinonia), service (diakonia), and witness (martyria).



Contact Connie (773/517-6352) connie.I.espinosa@gmail.com
Or Andy (904/392-1084) ajlekos@att.net for additional information.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Families,

What an incredible first month it has been! We are filled with gratitude and joy as we reflect on a wonderful start to our Sunday school year. It's been such a blessing to see so many new faces joining our community — welcome to all the new families!

From Sunday sermons, crafts, and prayer time, your children have brought so much energy and excitement every Sunday. Watching them learn, grow in faith, and build new friendships has been a true joy for all of us.

We want to extend a heartfelt **thank you** to all our parents and families for your support. Your continued support, presence, and prayers help make Sunday school a place where children feel loved, inspired, and connected to their faith. This ministry would not be the same without your involvement and prayers.

If you have any questions, feedback, or would like to volunteer, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're always here to support you and your family.

With gratitude and joy,

Kaliroi Parris

Sunday School Coordinator

Holy3SundaySchool@gmail.com



AGORA (Greek Market)

Taste the Flavors of Greece & Support a Good Cause!



The Agora Team is looking for volunteers to keep the Agora going.

Your time commitment is minimal, but the returns to the church are huge. Once a month for an hour after liturgy, you will cover the Agora to make sales to parishioners. If you are a regular customer, consider working at the store. Training will be available.

Without your help, this ministry cannot continue to be successful!

To sign up, please visit:

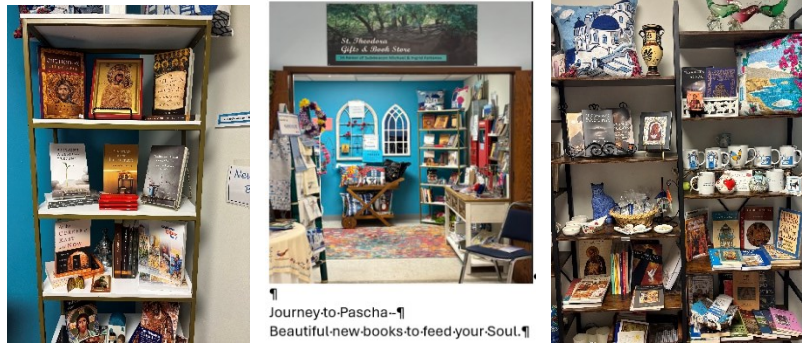
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0948ADA92DA4FDC34-55817756-agora/98603915#/>

Thank you once again for your unwavering support kai eis anoteria (to even greater success)!

The Agora Team

holytrinityagora@gmail.com

BOOKSTORE



St. Theodora Bookstore & Gift Shop

Where faith meets fabulous gift ideas (and the occasional Russian stacking doll).

Yes, we know—it's only October. But blink twice and you'll be untangling Christmas lights and wondering where you hid the nativity set last year. So why not get a head start? We've got **brand new pillows from Greece** (perfect for post-feast naps) and **Russian stacking dolls** that are both beautiful *and* mildly addictive.

Our little bookstore and gift shop have become a favorite stop for visitors to our church, and we totally get why—who doesn't love a shop filled with **Orthodox books, unique gifts from Greece**, and the faint scent of incense?

As a ministry of the church, everything we do supports the community—and your shopping habits helps more than you know.

Here's a taste of what you'll find:

Prayer Ropes (great for your spiritual discipline... or your cat's new toy—no judgment)
Orthodox Bibles (yes, the good kind!)
Inspirational Books for the Whole Family (and yes, even that one relative)
Home Décor (because your walls deserve a blessing too)
Jewelry (crosses, icons, and sparkle—hallelujah!)
And much more

Open Sundays (come by after Liturgy) and **by appointment during the week**
– because we're flexible like that.

So come shop, laugh, pray, and support the church—all in one go.

St. Theodora Bookstore & Gift Shop: *holier than Amazon, and way more charming.*

HOLY COMMUNION



Holy Communion is offered only to Orthodox Christians who are in good canonical standing with the church and who have prepared through prayer and fasting.

Order for Holy Communion will be as follows:

- Newly illumined – recently baptized and babies.
- Sunday school teachers and students (who will line up in the middle aisle before Communion)-all visiting children are invited to join us!
- The remaining congregation as directed by the usher.

Everyone is invited to receive the Antidoron (Blessed Bread) at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

WEBSITE- www.holytrinitystaugustine.org

*You can always use the **LIGHT A CANDLE** option on our website to light a candle and to send a prayer request for your loved ones.*

LIGHT A CANDLE

- The Photos page is under Our Parish tab. It has tons of pictures (i.e. Sunday School & GOYA activities, Philoptochos, church painting and repairs, etc.). We always welcome your feedback and suggestions on how to improve our website.



Our Parish

Faith and Worship

Cultural Heritage

Photos

Commemorative Walkway

Agora - Greek Market

St. Theodora Bookstore

Sponsors and Benefactors

- The Calendar is updated with the latest information as soon as it becomes available. Also, this is where you can sign up to host coffee hours.

HALL RENTAL



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
2940 County Road 214, St. Augustine, FL 32084

Hall Rental Are you in search of the perfect venue to elevate your next gathering? Look no further than the **Michael C. Carlos Fellowship Hall at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church** in the charming city of St. Augustine, now available for your special occasion!

Spanning

2,500 sq. ft. with seating for up to 200 guests, this versatile space is perfect for any celebration be it a joyous birthday, cherished family reunion, festive holiday gathering, delightful baby shower, elegant wedding reception, or an insightful meeting and lecture.

The hall features kitchen facilities, allowing you to tailor the culinary experience to your desires.

For inquiries regarding pricing and reservations, please reach out on (904) 829-0504

or contact us via our website at www.holytrinitystaugustine.org



We eagerly await the opportunity to assist you in crafting an unforgettable event!

WAYS OF GIVING

On-Line: Click “Donate Now” on our Church’s webpage: www.holytrinitystaugustine.org to make a gift. Give via credit card, PayPal, or set up recurrent giving through your bank. Please be sure a specific notation (ex: stewardship) is included for each transaction.

PAGE

QR Code: Scan the QR code with your phone



Our “**Light a Candle & Say a Prayer**” ministry lets you light a candle during divine services. Your request will be forwarded to a Council member in the Narthex to light your candle. If you wish to provide names of loved ones to be prayed for, those will be provided to Fr. Maximos.



Giving by Check or Cash: Please be sure to include a notation on the memo line on checks to allow us to identify your intentions (i.e. stewardship, candles, trays, memorials, etc.). Please use a donation envelope available at the welcome desk and the Narthex and fill out the information requested.

Weekly Offering: The Lord's Day is to be the time for a weekly offering for the support of His cause. Make your offering today...check or cash and enable our Church to continue to enhance the spiritual growth of the Orthodox Christians entrusted to our care. Your offer can be made at the collection basket as you exit the service or mailed to HTGOC using the **donation envelopes are available at the welcome desk and in the Narthex.**

Celebrations: Are you celebrating a special day? Birthday, Anniversary, Seasonal House Cleaning? Whatever the event, please consider celebrating it with others and making it a fundraiser for our church. People have raised \$6 billion USD on Facebook and Instagram for causes they care about. Create a fundraiser and Facebook will take care of the donation processing with no fees. You can also place the PayPal giving link for the church in your on-line message for donations to be made directly to our account. This can be a fun way to share your happy day with your friends and community and an effective fundraiser for our church. Please reach out to Fr. Maximos or Nick Lekas for details.'

PLANNED GIVING

We wish to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to our parishioners who have inquired regarding bequests and gifts to the church. We strongly suggest that you discuss your wishes with your estate Planner and financial advisor. Your bequests and gifts to the church will help our parish meet its Financial obligations as well as the philanthropic and educational needs in our community.

Our parishioners have requested information about two specific situations:

Qualified Charitable Distributions

A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) gift is an easy way to reduce your tax bill and your RMD (required minimum distribution) from your IRA or pretax 401K accounts for any person 70 ½ or older. This can be handled directly from your Financial institution through your financial advisor.

(Click the links below to read more about these programs.)

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/qualified-charitable-distributions-allow-eligible-ira-owners-up-to-100000-in-tax-free-gifts-to-charity>
<https://www.fidelitycharitable.org/guidance/philanthropy/qualified-charitable-distribution.html>

Donating Stocks to Holy Trinity

Those choosing to donate stocks to Holy Trinity can do so. The church has a Fidelity brokerage account specifically for this purpose.

Thank you for your continued support of Holy Trinity Church!

COMMEMORATIVE WALKWAY

The commemorative walkway (aka Brick Campaign) began as a parish fundraising program for Holy Trinity at the time of the Opening of the Doors in 2008.

It has become a vehicle to honor individuals who have impacted our parish, while it continues to provide a wonderful opportunity for people to create a lasting memory for a myriad of reasons.

Show your support to Holy Trinity by purchasing a 4" x 8" paver with 3 lines for \$100, or an 8" x 8" paver with 6 lines for \$250.00, The net profit supports the parish operations.

Brochures are available on the card rack in the Church Hall or alternatively, please contact Connie Espinosa connie.l.espinosa@gmail.com to assist in this parish ministry.

Information and order forms are also available on our website under the 'Our Parish' tab or click the link below:

<http://www.holytrinitystaugustine.org/commemorative-walkway>



We're happy to share that nearly all the fabulous commemorative tiles are now in place! Huge shoutout to our awesome parishioners who rolled up their sleeves and made it happen!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

KOLIVA FOR MEMORIAL SERVICES:

Koliva is used for commemorations of the departed (40th day after death, 3rd, 6th, 9th month, annually) and Saturdays of the Souls. Contact Faye Peterson, pete9839@comcast.net or Angela Lekos, angelmou1@att.net if you need Koliva prepared. There is a fee of \$100 for materials, supplies and labor.

ARTOKLASIA:

Blessing of the Five Loaves is a service of thanksgiving through which we express our gratitude for all the blessings of life. The Blessing is offered on a feast day or special occasion. If you need Artoklasia prepared, contact Angela Lekos, angelmou1@att.net.

HOUSE BLESSINGS:

To arrange for a "house blessing" please contact the priest to make an appointment.

MEMORIAL:

To request a gravesite memorial, please contact the priest.

SPECIAL SERVICE: If you have a request for a special memorial service (traditionally a volunteered donation is given to the priest), please contact the church office in advance of the requested date with details.

To offer Holy Communion to someone in need at a hospital, nursing home, in hospice care or at home, please contact the priest.

******The deadline for the weekly Church bulletin e-mail articles is before noon on Wednesday.
The deadline for the monthly Newsletter articles is the 25th of the month.

SPONSORS

We are profoundly grateful to all the parishioners who have generously donated towards our major projects, including stucco, painting, roof renovations and landscaping. Your contributions have been instrumental in maintaining the beauty and integrity of our beloved parish.

We thank those who answered the call with donations to the matching funds for the multi-use “Mikae Gaetanos Field” fund, We raised more than \$3,000.00. We have established a talented professional committee to make the project a reality.

We also would like to give a big shout out to our generous sponsors for Greek Festival 2025: *Craig Funeral Home, Smiles by Dr. Craig, South State Bank, St. Johns Funeral Home and, Fr. Marius Buzatelu.* We couldn’t do without your support.

As we look ahead to 2025, we humbly request your continued support. While we have several upcoming projects that require funding, our most urgent need is for each of us to increase our stewardship giving to support our monthly expenses.

Thank you once again for your unwavering generosity and commitment to our parish community.

May God bless you abundantly.

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

Sponsors and Benefactors

Athenian Owl Greek Restaurant

Craig Funeral Home

Julie's Jewelry & Appraisals

Smiles by Doctor Craig

South State Bank

St. Johns Family Funeral Home

Mrs. Vasso Poulos

We want to THANK our sponsors and benefactors for their support, especially those who wish to remain anonymous.

We encourage you to show your appreciation to the sponsors listed here by patronizing their business.

May God bless you for your kindness and generosity!