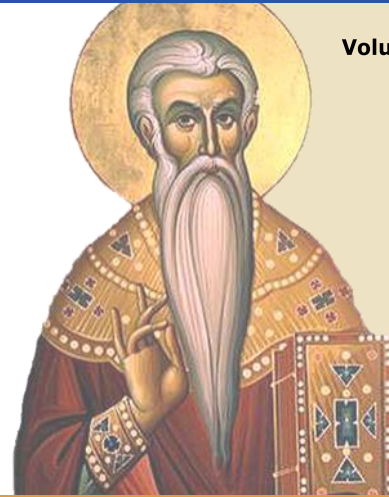


# *in* Touch

Volume 31, Issue 8  
August 2023



The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

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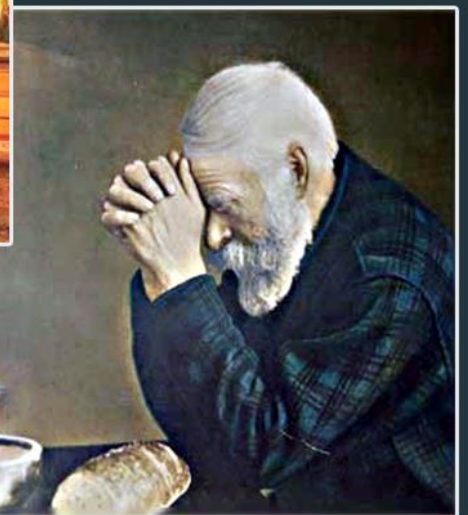
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## Rediscovering Prayer



## in the Orthodox Church

Lord, You know that men are flesh and blood; forgive them their sins and pour out Your blessing on all. — St. Haralambos

# Office of Supplication to the Theotokos (Paraklesis)

Celebrated three times each week (check the Community Calendar for details) during the first two weeks of August, the Office of Supplication is the Orthodox Church's response to our need for special prayers for any number of situations: health, depression, anxiety, and other spiritual and physical needs. Known in Greek as the *Paraklesis*, various hymn-writers in the Orthodox Church have also composed the *Paraklesis* or Office of Supplication for our Lord Jesus Christ, and for several saints.

Celebrated in honor of the Theotokos during the first half of August, during the fasting period in anticipation of the feastday of her Dormition (blessed repose) on Aug. 15, it is our way of acknowledging the Blessed Virgin Mary as our primary intercessor to God, the one who hears our needs, and prays on our behalf.

The nine odes of the Office of Supplication, each containing four stanzas, are a series of beautiful poetry and inspirational prayer. The English translation maintains the same poetic meter as the original Greek, so the melodies are unchanged and easily learned.

As an example, the First Stanza of Ode 1, begins, "By hosts of temptation sorely oppressed, in you I seek refuge in my eagerness to be saved. O Virgin and mother of the

Word, from trouble and danger deliver me." The hymns bring to mind our own weaknesses – physical and spiritual – and also entreat the Blessed Virgin Mary's help and prayers.

The Fourth Stanza continues, "Afflicted in body and in my soul, count me as deserving of divine love and of your care. You alone as birth-giver of God, in your goodness gave birth to the source of good."

Coming together and praying the Office of Supplication was never meant to replace private prayer, but rather to help strengthen it. They are two very different expressions and experiences of prayer; one not better than the other, but both complementing each other in helping to strengthen our spiritual relationship with God.

All parishioners are encouraged to celebrate and pray these services together, which are held in the evening, afternoon and morning (please see the Community Calendar for details). Service books will be available in the Narthex. To include the names of family or friends in the prayer list, simply print the names on a slip of paper and place it on the memorial table on the solea before the beginning of the service.

## August Holy Days

In anticipation of the beginning of the Church year on the first of September, there are two major feast-days celebrated during the month of August. These are the Transfiguration of Christ on Aug. 6, and the Dormition of the Theotokos celebrated on Aug. 15.

The Transfiguration of Christ is recounted in the gospel of St. Matthew, chapter 17, while the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos is not found in the New Testament but in another early writing of the Church known as the Proto-

Evangelion of Saint James, which describes more of the life of the Mother of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

In preparation of these two feastdays, we begin a two-week fasting period from the first of this month, finishing on Aug. 14. Divine liturgies will be celebrated on the morning of both feastdays, and all are invited to the service of Great Vespers celebrated at the Assumption Church in Scottsdale at 5:30 pm Tuesday evening, Aug. 14.

## Front Entry Portico Project

### Help Us Reach Our Goal!

The parish council will soon be deciding on which proposal will be awarded the contract to build the Front Entry Portico. This beautiful addition to our building is quickly moving from "dream" stage to becoming a reality!

Can you help with a gift this month? Donations of any amount are greatly appreciated to help us build this wonderful addition to our building. Donate online at [www.stharalambos.org](http://www.stharalambos.org) or checks can be made payable to Saint Haralambos Church and sent to the church office.





## Prayer in the Orthodox Christian Tradition

As Holy Scripture records in the Sermon on the Mount, our Lord Jesus Christ instructed, *“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”* (Matt 6:6)

Jesus is offering clear guidance on how to pray, in addition to the benefits of prayer. Christians in all traditions and throughout all time, have taken these words to heart and have learned the spiritual benefits of prayer to God. As with all spiritual tools in the Christian tradition, it takes time and effort to develop, along with the awareness of pitfalls that should be avoided.

Jesus also the importance of the intent of our prayers. As we see, for example, in the parable of the Tax Collector and the Pharisee (Luke 18), some may twist prayer into something only to show others what good and holy people we are! The words of the prayer may be the same, but the evil intent has made it meaningless to God.

Was Jesus saying that all prayers should be said by ourselves in private? If we read a bit further and see the context in which He spoke, we learn that this is not the case, The New Testament also records several examples of Jesus praying out in the open, for the benefit of others to hear. Prior to raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11), and before His arrest (John 17), are two examples of Jesus praying aloud specifically for the benefit of those near Him. And, finally, His prayer, *“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,”* (Luke 23:24) was heard by all gathered by the cross at His crucifixion.

Jesus prayed alone and he prayed together with others. He taught us how to pray: from the heart, believing and trusting that God hears our prayers. And for those of us who sometimes do not know what words to use, He also gave us a beautiful example, the Lord’s Prayer, which is found in virtually every prayer service of the Orthodox

Church.

Christians of all traditions acknowledge the importance and the benefits of prayer. There are prayers unique to the Orthodox Church, to the Catholic Church, and to many other Christian traditions. We can offer prayers before meals, before meetings, before taking a trip and before beginning our day; we can also offer prayers after meals, after meetings, after taking a trip, and at the end of our day. The timing and content of prayers is not as important as our attitude toward prayer.

When we speak of prayer in the Orthodox Christian tradition, we refer to prayers originating from, and practiced in, the eastern Christian tradition: prayers written by Fathers of the Church such as St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, St. Ephraim the Syrian and St. John of Damascus among many others; prayers practiced privately and corporately; those that have been set at certain times throughout the day and those appropriate for any time of day or night; those that have been written down, as well as with those said from the heart, using our own words.

*The timing and content of prayers is not as important as our attitude toward prayer.*

The reason that prayer in the Orthodox tradition is so incredibly rich and inspirational is because it has never ceased to be a primary function of the Church and of individual Orthodox Christians seeking to increase their personal devotion and strengthen their relationship with Christ our Lord and Savior.

This month’s article on prayer is simply to reiterate the concept of prayer in our Orthodox Christian tradition. Next month will offer examples on the unique prayers found in our rich prayer tradition.



**St. Haralambos  
Greek Orthodox  
Church**

www.stharalambos.org

**Rev. Michael Pallad**

### Sunday Worship

Matins: 8:45 a.m.  
Divine Liturgy: 10 a.m.

[Services live online](#)

### Office

623-486-8665  
7950 W. Pinnacle Peak Rd., Peoria, AZ 85383  
Office@StHaralambosAZ.com  
FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com

### Hours

Monday - Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### Parish Council

Cynthia Bekiaris	Dan Teska
Deborah Chionchio	Vivian Teska
Virginia Dent	Mary Wysmierski
Hope Evangelinos	Ray Wysmierski
Anna Kinniburgh	Solomon Woldesilassie

## Parish Council News

By Ray Wysmierski, President

Your parish council met on Jul. 11, 2023 and tackled a lot of work. The maintenance is almost complete with the air-conditioning issues repaired, fire alarms, and door repairs. We are in the process of vetting contractors for the portico project.

The FEMA grant for security which includes the fence, cameras, and parking lot lighting, is picking up speed. Harry Bekharis is working on securing the appropriate contractors from a list provided by the state of Arizona. We are now looking at fencing the property the church sits on, lighting the east and west side parking areas. This along with security cameras to further protect our church.

The daycare has been approved for the extra space in the front half of the fellowship hall. This is the additional income we will realize. They are also making state mandated changes that will only improve our space without creating any inconveniences for us. Only improving the appearances of the spaces they occupy. So we can always use your time, talents and treasures. I also appreciate my fellow council members who share the same passion about our church. Please read the attached article I have included provided by the archdiocese.

Look for a special general assembly soon so we can review the final cost for the portico. And hopefully we can provide details of the security project, (fence, cameras, and lighting).

### Birthdays



- Andreas Karabetsos (3)
- Joseph Berte (4)
- Irene Nathanson (4)
- Olga Fredericksen (6)
- Victoria Georgen (15)
- Alexis Tremoulis (17)
- Thalia Christian (18)
- Father Michael Pallad (18)
- Angela Covault (27)
- Val Danos (27)
- Zewdi Asfaha (31)

If you don't see your name, or those of family members, and would like to be included on the monthly birthday listing, please send the information to the church office.

## Thank You

A sincere thank you to our St. Haralambos church family for the reception celebrating our retirement.

It has been an honor and a privilege to have served our church and the many friends we have made during that time.

With much gratitude and love,  
Frosene and Stella

## Memory Eternal

May God grant eternal rest to the soul of his servant, Peter Michas, who fell asleep in the Lord on Thursday July 27, 2023. May his memory be eternal.

## 2023 Stewardship Families

Abbitt, Dimetra  
Asfaha, Moges  
Berhe, Almaz  
Bekiaris, Harry & Cynthia  
Bravos, Frosene  
Bryson, Tom & Joan  
Carlson, Olga  
Chionchio, Debbie  
Cholas, Angie  
Christian, Thalia  
Conklin, Maria  
Contes, Jamie  
Covault, Lloyd & Angela  
Danielek, Michael and  
Chrissy  
Davis, Mary  
Deming, Janet

Dent, Virginia  
Dodd, Voula  
Evangelinos, Parry & Hope  
Farr, Paula  
Farr, Kevin  
Farr, Jeff & Judy  
Finch, Dennis & Marina  
Gardener, Semos  
Giannias, Elaine  
Gryparis, Demetri and  
Magda  
Hartsel, Barbara  
Javaras, Harry  
Jolly, Judith  
Kapetenakis, Voule and  
Cathy  
Kinniburgh, Bob & Anna

Lafayette, Henry & Maria  
Lazzelle, Estelle  
Levendi, Mary  
Loukas, Christos & Peggy  
Magnani, Sharon  
Mavridis, Christos  
Michas, Peter  
Milonas, Nick & Jane  
Munteanu, Mirela  
Nathanson, Irene  
Nicely, Edna  
Pagos, Stella  
Pallad, Fr. Michael & Pres.  
Kristin  
Pappas, Irene  
Servetas, Charlotte  
Singleton, Melanie

Stratos, George & Irene  
Surman, Dina  
Tally, Katherine  
Tesfay, Ocbai & Genet  
Teska, Dan & Vivian  
Tsioutsopoulos, Demetre & Holly  
Vardalos, Peter & Lindsay  
Vasquez, Argyro  
Woldesilassie, Solomon & Lydia  
Wysmierski, Ray & Mary  
George & Helen  
Yannakopoulos  
Zakas, Speros & Linda

Love and stewardship are inseparable when we consider God's blessings in our life. We use God's blessings with love and compassion for others and to honor, worship and give thanks to him.

Our parishes can be transformed, becoming beacons of Christian love as we care for one another, face challenges together, and serve our neighbors. We would be known as Christians by the love and compassion we embody as a parish family.

We are called to be compassionate stewards, placing the needs of others before our own. Scripture is filled with passages of God's call for us to be generous, loving, compassionate givers. Saint Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians tells us of God's call for us to "excel in the grace of giving." We are "hard-wired" to live as members of the Body of Christ and serve our larger community with compassion and love.

The priority of compassionate stewardship is not to pay the bills. It is about how we, as a community, can do God's work with love and compassion. It is less about the parish's need to receive, and more about our need to give. It is our generosity with the gifts and blessings God has entrusted to us. Compassionate stewardship is an attitude and a way of life.



### EVERY PORTION MATTERS

Once upon a time, a festival was to be held in a certain village. To ensure there would be enough wine for the celebration, each member of the village agreed to pour one bottle of his best wine into a large cask. "If I fill my bottle with water," reasoned one villager, "the dilution will be so slight, who will notice?" But when the feast and time for merrymaking commenced, and the cask was tapped, nothing but water poured forth. Every member in the village had reasoned alike: "My portion will not be missed!"



## STEWARDSHIP MINISTRIES

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA  
DEPARTMENT OF STEWARDSHIP,  
OUTREACH & EVANGELISM

[www.stewardship.goarch.org](http://www.stewardship.goarch.org) | [stewardship@goarch.org](mailto:stewardship@goarch.org)

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Christina Meares

*For additional copies of this brochure and additional resources for Stewardship, Outreach & Evangelism, please visit [orthodoxmarketplace.com](http://orthodoxmarketplace.com)*

...the greatest of  
these is love

# ...the greatest of these is love

Jesus spoke of love and showed compassion. He taught us by his example to love one another and to be compassionate toward those in need. In the Gospels, we read of the compassion of Jesus:

*When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick (Matthew 14:14).*

*Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him (Matthew 20:34).*

*...he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd (Mark 6:34).*

Compassion can often mean kindness and sympathy. In these verses, it means something deeper and much more powerful. “And he had compassion” is translated from the Greek ἐπιλαλησίου (epilalēsio) and comes from the root word in Greek for “guts.” In other words, it is compassion and concern that are felt in one’s guts — a compassion that is felt in a deeply physical way. Compassion felt in this way compels us to respond with love and deep concern.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus says “But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him...” (Luke 10:33).

In the parable of the Prodigal Son Jesus says, “But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.” (Luke 15:20).

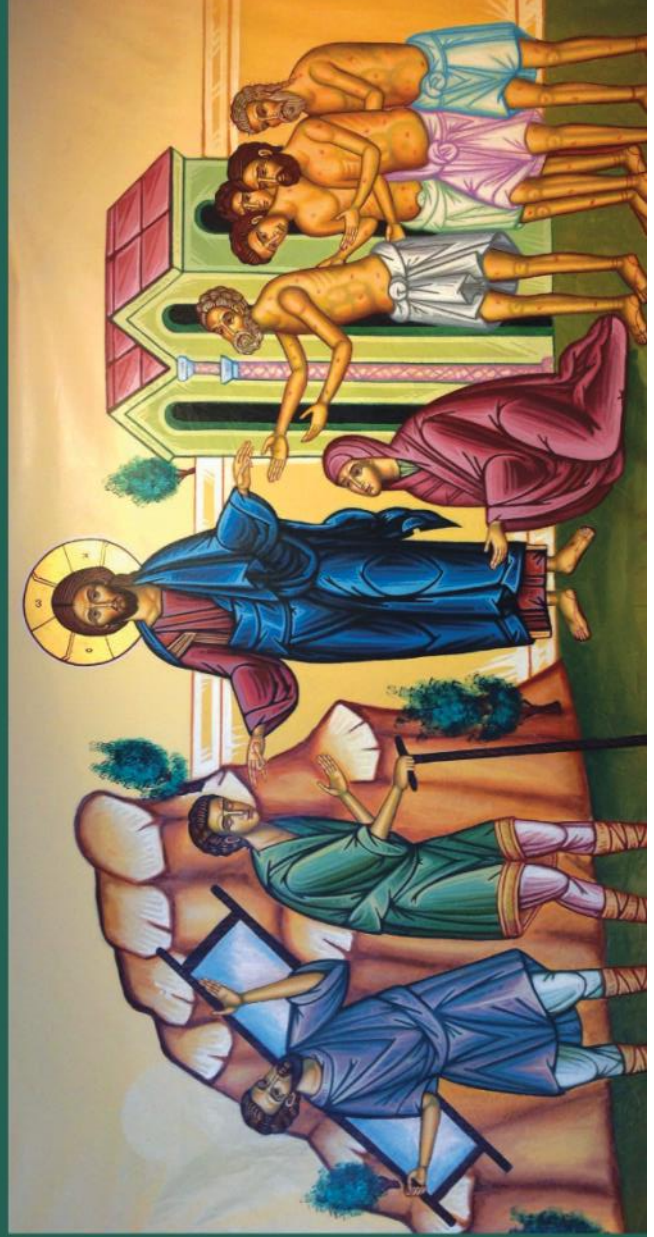
These stories reflect the love and compassion that Jesus has for his people. His compassion inspires and challenges each one of us to live compassionately.

This understanding of the full meaning of compassion in the New Testament means that another person’s suffering becomes our own suffering. Compassion in this sense can change the way we live and care for others and for our community. When we feel this physical type of compassion, we are fully and physically engaged. We serve others and care for our community with love.

To love in the way Saint Paul writes to the Christians at Corinth, when he says, “...the greatest of these is love,” means we can’t live without compassion for others. Love and compassion are not expressed only in our offerings of money and other support. Love and compassion are not something we give in order to receive something in return. Pride has no place in acts of love and compassion.

The love that Saint Paul describes in his letter to the Christians at Corinth is an expression of stewardship. Stewardship is everything we do after we say “I believe.” Stewardship is about how we live our lives and make our choices. Stewardship is about love and love is about stewardship.

**Stewardship is everything we do after we say “I believe.” Stewardship is about how we live our lives and make our choices.**



# AUGUST 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b>  7:00pm Office of Supplication to the Theotokos	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  4:00pm Office of Supplication to the Theotokos	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>  10:00am Office of Supplication to the Theotokos
<b>6</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Transfiguration of Christ</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>  7:00pm Office of Supplication to the	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>  4:00pm Office of Supplication to the Theotokos 6:00pm Parish Council	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>  10:00am Office of Supplication to the Theotokos
<b>13</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy <b>Dormition of the Theotokos</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>		