

SparkLight

Enlightening Monthly Updates Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church July 2020

Illumination by the Spirit is the endless end of every virtue.
Saint Symeon the New Theologian

Odyssey Update

In a typical year the onset of warmer weather has us thinking about summer gatherings and vacations. In the Saint Barbara parish, the season characteristically brings with it many opportunities for fellowship and fun as we begin our preparations for the Odyssey Festival. 2020 however, has proven to be anything but a 'ordinary' year – as we are still dealing with the Coronavirus Pandemic and are only recently beginning Phase Two of the re-opening of our parish. Businesses throughout the State of Connecticut have also begun the slow re-opening process and are mandated to adhere to new strict guidelines that seek to keep the public safe in the midst of the health crisis. While we are slowly starting to see an easing of the 'stay-at-home' orders - we are still subject to abide by the new set of rules that seek to keep us healthy.

As you can imagine, the Church Office has received many inquires regarding the Odyssey Festival. Will we be allowed to hold the Festival? Will it be the same? What about the music? Odyssey dancers? Choir? Treasures n' Junque? Book and Icon Store? Jewelry? T-shirts? Marketplace? How do we...? All of these good questions and many more have been researched, addressed and debated by the

Odyssey Committee, Parish Council and local town health officials.

Let's answer the biggest question first: "Will we have a Greek Festival on Labor Day Weekend this year?" YES! We are still planning on holding a festival this year.

Now the important follow-up question: "Will this year's festival be the same Odyssey as in year's past? No, it won't. It will be very different indeed. There will be no outdoor seating or tents. No lamb-on-the-spit. No snack bar. No gourmet grill. No Treasures n' Junque. No Odyssey dancers. No church tours or choir presentations. No Book and Icon store. No jewelry, t-shirts or marketplace. State and local regulations will simply not allow us to gather in the same manner as we have in the past.

But as the saying goes: "Necessity is the mother of invention" so we adapt... we improvise... we overcome – and prepare to create a new experience.

In order to do this, we are planning to hold a 'drive-thru festival' – "Odyssey Express" on the Saturday & Sunday of Labor Day Weekend (September 5th & 6th).

It will feature a sampling of the wonderful Greek food that has been associated with the Saint Barbara Odyssey for nearly forty years! There will just be a few choices of meals – not the wide array of culinary treats – but they will be prepared with the same love, care and expertise as always.

We will need assistance and the help of those who are able to assist safely in the preparation of the food AND in the coordinating and staffing of the dinner set-up and drive-thru experience. There will be no gathering of people on the Church premises. All food is being prepared for take-out meals only, to be picked up by a drive-thru that will be set up at the Church parking lot.

We will continue the planning process and keep everyone informed.

Faithfully,

Father Peter

“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.” Romans 15.2

Υπό Πρεσβ. Ι. Ορφανάκου

«Εκαστος ημών τω πλησίω αρεσκέτω εις το αγαθόν προς οικοδομήν.» Ρωμ. 15. 2

Ο καθένας μας πρέπει να γίνεται αρεστός εις τόν πλησίον του, εις τρόπον ώστε να συντελεί εις το καλόν, εις αρετήν και εις οικοδομήν τού πλησίον.

Είναι αλήθεια ότι οι σχέσεις των ανθρώπων μέσα εις την κοινωνίαν δεν είναι πάντοτε οικοδομητικά. Οι περισσότεροι των ανθρώπων δεν είναι καθαρώς ειλικρινείς. Πολλά είναι τα κρούσματα της πονηρίας και της κακίας, ώστε κατήντησε σήμερα να φοβάται κανείς ακόμη και την σκιάν του. Γι' αυτό ο Απόστολος Παύλος γράφει εις την προς Ρωμαίους Επιστολή του, και συμβουλεύει ότι ο καθένας μας πρέπει να γίνεται αρεστός εις τον πλησίον του, εις τρόπον ώστε να συντελή εις το καλόν, εις την αρετήν και εις οικοδομήν τού πλησίον. Να γίνη ο καθένας μας παράγων ψυχικής οικοδομής, αφορμή παρηγορίας και δημιουργός οικογενειακής χαράς και ευτυχίας.

Πόσα δράματα και πόσες αυτοκτονίες θα είχαν

αποφευχθή, αν οι χριστιανοί είχαν ως αρχήν τους αυτήν την υπόδειξιν του Αποστόλου Παύλου. Δεν θα περίμεναν να έλθη εις τα πόδια τους ο πονεμένος. Θα τον αναζητούσαν αυτοί, θα τον εστήριζαν και θα του επρόσφεραν βοήθεια, και αν η ψυχή του ήτο άρρωστη κα σκλαβωμένη τι θα μπορούσε να του προσφέρη ένας λόγος Θεού, μία αδελφική υπόδειξις, μία εκδήλωσις πραγματικού ενδυαφέροντος, και μια πράξις θυσίας και αγάπης. Θα αποφεύγετο το συνηθισμένο εκείνο παράπονο πολλών, ότι δεν ευρέθηκεν ούτε ένας άνθρωπος στο δρόμο μου, να μου πη δυό λέξεις και να με συμβουλευψη στοργικά και αλλάξη την πορεία της ζωής μου.

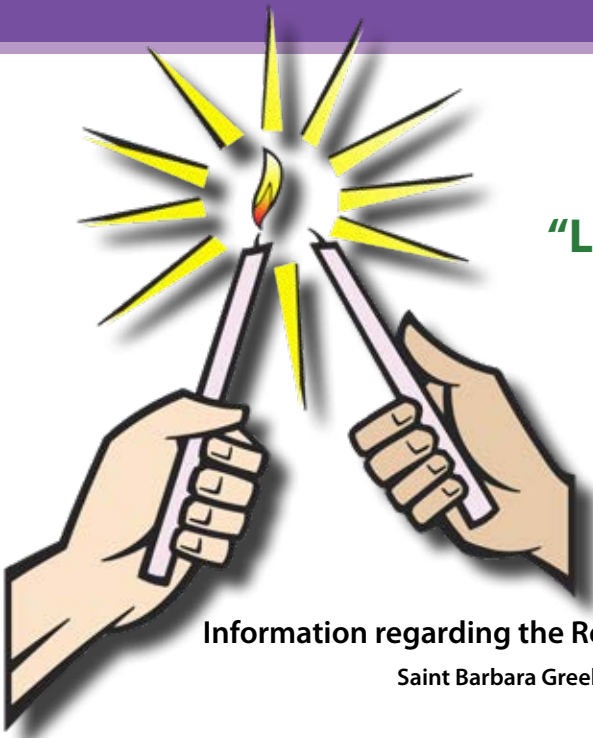
Αδελφοί μου, τίποτε εις την ζωήν δεν γίνεται χωρίς κόπον και θυσίαν. Ολα είναι κερδισμένα με πολύ αίμα, μας διδάσκει ο Σταυρός του Χριστού.

Λέγεται, ότι σε κάποιο μέρος υπάρχει μια κοιλάδα εις την οποίαν υπάρχουν πολλά τριαντάφυλλα. Την εποχή τής συγκομιδής είναι τόσο δυνατή η ευωδία, ώστε και για λίγα λεπτά αν κανείς μείνη σ' αυτήν, οπυδήποτε και αν πάη κατόπιν στο διάστημα της ημέρας, η ευωδία πού θα σκορπίζη γύρω του θα μαρτυρή, ότι πέρασε από την κοιλάδα αυτήν των ρόδων.

Αδελφοί μου, και εμείς σαν χριστιανοί πού είμεθα, θα πρέπει όσοι μας πλησιάζουν, και έρχονται κοντά μας, να οικοδομούνται, να ωφελούνται, και να γίνωνται καλύτεροι. Η ψυχή μας, τα λόγια μας, η στάσις μας, οι ενέργειες μας, όλα θα πρέπει να αφήνουν επάνω τους μια ευωδία πνευματική, πού να μην χάνετε ποτέ.

Ναί, μια ευωδία όπως τα τριαντάφυλλα!





“Let us not give up assembling together..”

Hebrews 10:25

PHASE TWO

Information regarding the Re-opening of the Saint Barbara Parish - Effective June 22, 2020

Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church - 480 Racebrook Road - Orange, Connecticut

WHAT TO EXPECT

How your church experience will be temporarily modified in this phase:

1

GREATER ATTENDANCE LEVEL

State and local regulations have expanded and now allow up to 25% of the occupancy rate (including the priest) to be present. As such **we are able to invite up to 96 people** to join us in person for the celebration the Divine Liturgy.

2

ADVANCE REQUESTS ARE STILL REQUIRED TO ATTEND

We will continue the established procedures of Phase One to ensure all parishioners have opportunities to attend services if they wish. Parishioners will need to make advance reservations before attending any services in the church.

Please call the Church Office at 203-795-1347 (Monday - Friday) to make your reservation. Reservations will not be taken via e-mail or text. Reservations must be made by Friday 5:00 p.m. for the Church service taking place on the upcoming Sunday.

3

WHO IS NOT RECOMMENDED TO ATTEND

Those with any signs or symptoms of any acute illness (whether it is COVID or not) **MUST** stay home, as should those who have come into contact with COVID-positive persons within the last 2 weeks.

In accordance with State Guidelines, those who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (65 years or older, live in a long-term care facility, underlying medical conditions such as asthma, heart conditions, immunocompromised, diabetes, obesity, kidney disease, or liver disease) should not enter the church building at this time and should continue to participate in services online. Questions should be directed to your healthcare provider.

PHASE TWO

4

ARRIVAL TIME

Because your parish council will need to provide for your arrival and guide you to a seating area, it will be **most helpful and appreciated for you to arrive between 8:25 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.**

We will have the front doors to the Church open. We ask that only one family unit at a time enter the Narthex – and that all others patiently wait outside (maintaining social distance) until they are able to enter the Church. Consider leaving personal belongings safely locked in your automobile. The parish council will monitor the front door area until all attendees are inside. After 10:20 a.m. the doors will be shut.

5

PLEASE DO NOT JUST 'SHOW UP'

The reason that we are taking reservations is to assure that we stay within the legally allotted number of attendees. By 'just showing up' you place undue stress on our parish council who may be placed in the uncomfortable position of having to deny entrance to a fellow parishioner. No one wants to have to do that.

6

MASKS REQUIRED

All attendees over the age of 5 are required to wear protective face masks.

7

FOLLOW THE SIGNS

Please follow posted entry points, aisles and designated seating areas. These have been prepared in advance to provide safe social distancing and need to be respected for everyone's well-being.

8

YOUR SEATING AREA

Designated seating areas will provide for spacing between individuals and family sections. Members of the same household may be seated in the same section without social distance between them.

9

NO ALTAR BOYS OR CHOIR

There will continue to be no altar boys or choir at this time. All altar boys and choir members are asked to please sit with their families in the pews. Our choir director, Stacey Grimaldi, will continue to lead us in the chanting of the hymns from the psalterion (chanter stand), and Presbyteria Vangie will continue to serve as our reader. We ask that no one else approach the chanter stand or enter the altar area, so that proper social distancing can continue to be maintained.

10

WORSHIP ADJUSTMENTS

Your experience during services will continue to feel different than before the start of the pandemic. You are asked to reverence sacred objects, and/or greet one another by bowing instead of kissing. These temporary measures help ensure the safety and comfort of all.

11

HOLY COMMUNION

Our Orthodox Christian faith and worship remain unchanged at their core. However, with pastoral sensitivity toward all parishioners during this unique time, you will receive specific instructions from Fr. Peter and the Parish Council members in attendance, regarding Holy Communion.

12

PREPARE FOR OFFERINGS IN ADVANCE

To minimize the handling and exchanging of currency in the church, please consider either making your offerings to the church through electronic giving or by preparing your offering in an envelope to be brought to the church and deposited in the Narthex. Trays will not be passed during the service.

13

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE ON EXITING

Please follow the directions provided by the priest and the guidance of any ushers regarding exiting with social distance.

14

PLEASE DEPART IMMEDIATELY

Much as this goes against our common practice following services, please do not congregate in the Narthex or other areas of the church building. All attendees are asked to directly depart following the service.

15

COFFEE HOURS—NOT YET!

Coffee hours will not be held during this phase. Please understand they will return as soon as possible when restrictions are loosened.

16

REMEMBER

Your positive support of the outlined measures are meant to help us all be uplifted as we continue in prayer, hope, and strength in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

17

PRAY WITH US ONLINE

We thank all who have participated online throughout our internet broadcasts. We will continue to broadcast Live Internet Services every Sunday via our parish website: www.saintbarbara.org Please continue to pray with us online on those days when you are not able to be present in person. No weekday services will be attended in-person at this time until further notice.

18

CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE - CONTINUE TO PRAY!

Please do your best to keep your stewardship contributions current and up to date as best as possible considering the current circumstances. Donations can be made online on our parish's website or by mail to the Church Office.

19

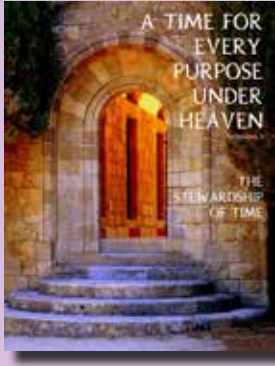
THANK YOU!

Fr. Peter, the Saint Barbara staff, and parish council members thank you for your understanding, support and cooperation during these temporary measures. We will continue to do our best to keep you informed as things move forward.

“Let us not give up assembling together...” Hebrews 10:25

Assembling: The assembly in the Old Testament (Hebrew: *koheleth*) is translated *ekklesia* in Greek, which we translate as “church.” God instructs the faithful not to forsake *assembling* as the church. Corporate worship on a daily basis, such as morning prayers or Matins, increases our expectation of **the Day**, the coming of the Kingdom.

Orthodox Study Bible, p. 1666.



STEWARDSHIP 2020

We are thankful to the following individuals who have pledged \$264,400 towards our 2020 stewardship goal of \$390,000.

If you have not yet made your stewardship pledge, we ask that you please call the Church Office or simply send in your Stewardship donation. Remember to give dedicated and sacrificial attention to your Stewardship donation, keeping an eye toward helping your church reach its Stewardship goal. As always, we are grateful for your love and support of our parish. Thank you for your continued support.

Mr. John Agapiou
 Mrs. Bessie Agapiou
 Mr. Anthony Alessio
 Mrs. Pamela Alessio
 Mr. Alexander Alexiades
 Miss Alexandra Alexiades
 Mr. Elias Alexiades
 Mr. Nicholas Amoratis & Stacey Cascone
 Mrs. Cynthia Anasson
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 Mr. Charles Waskiewicz
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 Mrs. Maryann Angelopoulos
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 Mr. Thomas Bruno, II & Mrs. Maria Zervos
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 Mrs. Avenya Buzelle
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 Mrs. Jane Hadjimichael
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 Miss Thespina Hadjimichael
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 Mr. & Mrs. Peter C. Proestakes
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 Mrs. Mary Reed
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 Mr. James Sarigianis
 Mrs. Florence Sarigianis
 Rev. Steven Sarigianis

Presvytera Electra Sarigianis
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Mrs. Theodora Sarris
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Mrs. Elizabeth Sava
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OCMC Interviews:
Steven and Theophani Sarigianis

Saint Barbara parishioners Steven and Theophani Sarigianis are interviewed by Staff members of the Orthodox Christian Missions Center regarding their call to missinary work as they prepare to serve the Church in Albania.

Pray along with them and enjoy hearing their story as they prepare to serve God and His Church.

Watch the entire interview at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBMX2ex1qIA&feature=youtu.be>



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