

THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO
40TH ANNUAL
Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical and Fine Arts Festival



Evanthia Fotopoulos, 1st Place, Iconography - Senior Division
St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Schererville, Indiana

Bright Saturday, May 11, 2024

Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church
Westchester, Illinois
Host Parish



**40TH ANNUAL
GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO
ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ORATORICAL AND FINE ARTS FESTIVAL**

HOSTED BY
HOLY APOSTLES GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
WESTCHESTER, ILLINOIS

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Furla

**HIS EMINENCE
METROPOLITAN NATHANAEL OF CHICAGO**



**2024 Metropolis of Chicago
St. John Chrysostom Oratorical and Fine Arts Festival**

Beloved Friends and Faithful of the Holy Metropolis of Chicago,

Χριστὸς Ανέστη! - Christ is Risen!

On behalf of Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church, we welcome you to the 2024 St. John Chrysostom Oratorical and Fine Arts Festival. We are honored to host this treasured event and thank you for traveling to Westchester to witness all of the talents our Lord has bestowed on our youth across our Metropolis. We offer our heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of the participants, as well as their families. May the Holy Spirit enlighten and guide you as you continue to grow in your Orthodox faith.

The Apostle Paul tells us that there are many members that make up the Body of Christ, each member being unique and offering his or her service to the Church. We commend all of today's participants for taking the time during Great Lent to reflect on their faith and then use their God-given abilities to express their faith and love for Christ and His Church through their voice, writings, and art. We pray that through the intercessions of St. John Chrysostom our participants will be blessed with an ongoing desire to grow in their Orthodox faith and through their example, teach and share it with those around them.

We express our appreciation and gratitude to His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael for allowing us to host this extraordinary event. Also, much thanks to Fr. Luke Melackrinos for continuing to champion the Oratorical Festival in our Metropolis. To the judges, parents, all of our volunteers, the Holy Apostles Philoptochos, and the Metropolis Oratorical Festival Committee members, we collectively thank you for your dedication and time, as a program of this magnitude would not be possible without your efforts. Holy Apostles also extends a very special thank you to Audrey Polite and Andrea Tsakopoulos for their tireless efforts, organized nature, and truly enthusiastic approach to putting this Metropolis-wide event together. Finally, our gratitude to our Parish Committee led by Toni Milak and Alex Magdalinos for their efforts in making this day successful. What a joy it has been collaborating with you all!

With love in our Risen Lord,

+ Fr. George Dokos *+ Fr. Nicholas*

Fr. George Dokos

Fr. Nicholas Georgiou



Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church A Brief History

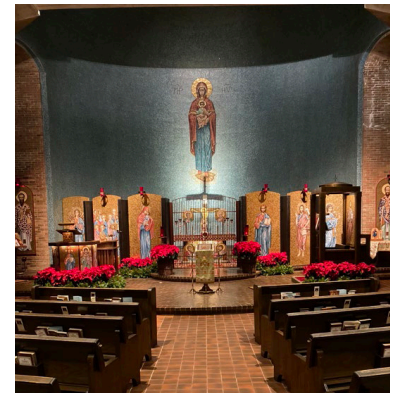
Construction on the Holy Apostles building began on June 6, 1964, and the first Divine Liturgy in the completed building was celebrated on Sunday, June 27, 1965. One distinguishing feature of Holy Apostles is the beautiful and colorful mosaic iconography that complements and contrasts the dark brick and rich wood of the church's interior. Also of architectural note is the intent of the interior to evoke a sense of the ancient catacombs in which Christians used to gather and worship.



On July 12, 1959, fifty families came together to celebrate the Divine Liturgy in the George F. Nixon Elementary School's gymnasium in Westchester, Illinois. They were led by a young priest who had just returned to Chicago from his first assignment in Pittsfield, Massachusetts—Father Bill Chiganos of blessed memory. These men, women, and children stood together as one body of Christ, believing in their vision to establish a Greek Orthodox parish that could serve the Western suburbs' spiritual needs. They grew to over 280 families, who in 1961 came together and raised enough funds to purchase the five acres of land that Holy Apostles now stands upon.

On June 1, 1975, Archbishop Iakovos of blessed memory consecrated Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church in a service filled with God's grace, mystery, and beauty. Today's parish has over 700 stewards who offer their time, talents, and treasures to the Lord.

Our parish builds upon its founding principles and supports a predominantly English-speaking Christ-centered community with Orthodox values. We deeply cherish religious education, service through our many ministries, love of brothers and sisters in Christ, and active participation in the liturgical and sacramental life.





2023 HONOREES

SPEECH

Junior Division

1st Maria Malamis	Ascension of Our Lord	Lincolnshire, IL
2nd Lydia Houck	St. Mary's	Minneapolis, MN
3rd Evan Skoulikaris	St. John the Baptist	Des Plaines, IL

Senior Division

1st Leo Petropoulos	St. Sophia	Elgin, IL
2nd Jacob Cash Baffes	SS. Constantine & Helen	Palos Hills, IL
3rd Emily Hattling	St. George	St. Paul, MN

ESSAYS

Junior Division

1st Alexis Petros	Ascension of Our Lord	Lincolnshire, IL
2nd Nicholas Frangopoulos	Annunciation	Milwaukee, WI
3rd Peter Fotos	Holy Cross	Justice, IL

Senior Division

1st Ana Arzoumanidis	SS. Peter & Paul	Glenview, IL
2nd Vasiliki Koutsis	St. Nicholas	Oak Lawn, IL
3rd Billy Panos	Assumption	Chicago, IL

POETRY

Junior Division

1st Dina Anteliz	Ascension of Our Lord	Lincolnshire, IL
2nd Epaminontas Stamus	St. Spyridon	Palos Heights, IL
3rd Ioanna Gerick	St. John the Baptist	Des Plaines, IL

Senior Division

1st Nicholas Karadimas	St. John the Baptist	Des Plaines, IL
2nd Nikolas Milak	Holy Apostles	Westchester, IL
3rd Victoria Holcomb	St. Demetrios	Chicago, IL



2023 HONOREES

ICONOGRAPHY

Junior Division

1st Thanasi Maglaras
2nd Anastasia Rihani
3rd Alexander Mastorakos

Ascension of Our Lord
St. John the Baptist
Holy Cross

Lincolnshire, IL
Des Plaines, IL
Justice, IL

Senior Division

1st Evanthia Fotopoulos
2nd Kalina Zheleva
3rd Athena Litsogiannis

St. George
St. Nicholas
Holy Cross

Schererville, IN
St. Louis, MO
Justice, IL

VOCAL SOLO

Junior Division

1st Amy Amnen Asfaw
2nd Lia Weening

St. Nicholas
Assumption

St. Louis, MO
Homer Glen, IL

Senior Division

1st Tara Mastorakos
2nd Marina Matson

Holy Cross
Kimissis Tis Theotokou

Justice, IL
Racine, WI

VOCAL CHANT

Junior Division

1st Maria Malamis
2nd Vasileios Yannoulis

Ascension of Our Lord
St. John the Baptist

Lincolnshire, IL
Des Plaines, IL

Senior Division

1st Vasilios Malamis
2nd Panayiotis Malamis
3rd Georgios Vasilakis

St. Demetrios
Holy Trinity
St. Sophia

Elmhurst, IL
Chicago, IL
Elgin, IL



2024 PARTICIPANTS SENIOR DIVISION

SPEECH

Ana Arzoumanidis	SS. Peter & Paul	Glenview, IL
Constantina Castillo	St. George	Chicago, IL
Taylor Cooper	St. Athanasios	Aurora, IL
Gabriella Earth	SS. Constantine & Helen	Merrillville, IN
Eleftherios Halikias	St. Spyridon	Palos Heights, IL
Gianni Kutrumanes	St. Nectarios	Palatine, IL
Sophia Paraschou	St. George	St. Paul, MN
Leo Petropoulos	St. Sophia	Elgin, IL
Elena Stavros	Holy Cross	Justice, IL
John Tsagalis	SS. Constantine & Helen	Wauwatosa, WI
Filia Tzortzis	St. Demetrios	Chicago, IL
Caroline Vranas	St. Nicholas	Oak Lawn, IL
Stamatina Yannoulis	St. John the Baptist	Des Plaines, IL
Chris Zouras	Ascension of Our Lord	Lincolnshire, IL

ESSAY

Alek Eidsvold	St. George	St. Paul, MN
Nicholas Frangopoulos	Annunciation	Milwaukee, WI
Demetri Kouriabalis	St. Demetrios	Chicago, IL
Michael Lambrou	St. Anthansios	Aurora, IL
George Mastorakos	Holy Cross	Justice, IL
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Stefanie Milak	Holy Apostles	Westchester, IL
Christos Natsis	St. John the Baptist	Des Plaines, IL
Yanni Sarolas	St. George	Chicago, IL

POETRY

Eleni Baltsas	St. Spyridon	Palos Heights, IL
Shaun Canas	St. George	St. Paul, MN
Gabriella Earth	SS. Constantine & Helen	Merrillville, IN
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George Mastorakos	Holy Cross	Justice, IL
Athanasios Papaioannou	St. John the Baptist	Des Plaines, IL
Angelica Sozios	Assumption	Chicago, IL
Jane Tselepis	Holy Apostles	Westchester, IL
Constantine Zouras	Ascension of Our Lord	Lincolnshire, IL



2024 PARTICIPANTS SENIOR DIVISION

ICONOGRAPHY

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Evanthia Fotopoulos
Elena Gerick
Maria Grigorakos
Julia Kroll
Athena Litsogiannis
Thanasi Maglaras

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Holy Apostles
St. George
St. John the Baptist
SS. Constantine & Helen
St. Sophia
Holy Cross
Ascension of Our Lord

Hammond, IN
Westchester, IL
Schererville, IN
Des Plaines, IL
Wauwatosa, WI
Elgin, IL
Justice, IL
Lincolnshire, IL

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Holy Cross

Justice, IL

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Liliana Zarakas

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Ascension of Our Lord
St. Sophia
SS. Constantine & Helen

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Lincolnshire, IL
Elgin, IL
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Christos Deligiannis
Fotoula Earth
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George Lynch
Anthony Milak
Harry Muwanga
Parker Paraschou
Anastasia Rihani
Maria Zouras

Assumption
St. Demetrios
St. Spyridon
SS. Constantine & Helen
St. Nicholas
Holy Cross
St. Mary's
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Kimissis Tis Theotokou
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St. George
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Justice, IL
Minneapolis, MN
Palos Hills, IL
Racine, WI
Chicago, IL
Westchester, IL
Hammond, IN
St. Paul, MN
Des Plaines, IL
Lincolnshire, IL

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Susanna Brown
Evan Kantas
Athanasios Lambrou
Leonidas Mattingly
Nikoleta Papisimakis
Gabriel Prosiliakos
Efremia Siozios
Stefania Tillich
Anthony Tzortzis
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St. John the Baptist
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SS. Constantine & Helen
St. Demetrios
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Merrillville, IN
Chicago, IL
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Benjamin Mamalakis
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Christina Sourounis
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St. Nicholas
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St. John the Baptist
St. Nectarios
St. Spyridon
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Harry Skintges

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St. Mary's

St. George

St. Demetrios

Holy Apostles

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Kimissis Tis Theotokou

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St. John the Baptist

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Irini Polimus

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Merrillville, IN

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Maria Zouras

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Ascension of Our Lord

Des Plaines, IL

Palos Heights, IL

Lincolnshire, IL



2024 TOPICS

SENIOR DIVISION

TOPIC 1

Slandered without cause, convicted without a trial, exiled unjustly — this was the life endured by one of the greatest saints of our times — Saint Nektarios of Aegina. Forgiving others who hurt us that deeply and unjustly seems almost impossible. What can we learn from Saint Nektarios, whose life was about forgiving what some might call the impossible?

TOPIC 2

Apostle Paul refers to Adam as the first man, and Christ as the Second Adam. The Fathers of the Church, especially Saint Irenaeus of Lyon, refer to Christ and Panagia as the Second Adam and the Second Eve. Why is the Most Holy Theotokos called the “Second Eve”? And why is Christ called the “Second Adam?” How do Christ and Panagia fulfill and go beyond their prototypes?

TOPIC 3

Christ says, “This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:1). He also says, “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53). Explore the Orthodox teaching on the Eucharist by reading the prayers of the Divine Liturgy and the writings of one or more Church Fathers.

TOPIC 4

The number of natural disasters worldwide continues to increase, resulting in more communities destroyed and more lives lost. How would you respond to someone who questions why God allows natural disasters to happen when we know God can intervene at any moment? If God is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-loving, how can He allow evil things to happen?

TOPIC 5

During the Divine Liturgy, before the Consecration of the Holy Gifts, we hear the priest say the following: “Your own of Your own we offer to You, in all and for all.” What does this petition mean to you as an Orthodox Christian? Why is it important for us to focus on giving back out of the gifts we have been given by God?



2024 TOPICS

JUNIOR DIVISION

TOPIC 1

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has earned the title of the Green Patriarch, and was named one of Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World, for His teachings about humanity's spiritual responsibility for taking care of God's creation — planet earth. His All-Holiness stands on the shoulders of Saints, who taught that the world is a gift from God, and that taking care of His creation is a way to connect with God. Explore and discuss the teachings of His All-Holiness and the Saints on the creation of the world. What are some of our practical responsibilities as stewards of our planet, and how does that enrich our lives as Christians?

TOPIC 2

Many of us have heroes to whom we look up. It may be an older brother or sister, an athlete, or a musician. We have heroes in our religious life, as well as people who inspire us to practice our faith. They teach us, usually by example, how we ought to live as Orthodox Christians. Select a Saint or person who has been the most influential in your spiritual life. Describe the particular and practical ways that influence has taken place.

TOPIC 3

On the Day of Theophany (January 6), we chant, "All those who were baptized in Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Discuss the meaning of this hymn and the obligations it places upon us as Orthodox Christians.

TOPIC 4

When reading the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32), we learn about the various stages of repentance. What are they? How do they relate to the reversal of the son's journey away from the father? What does the father's reaction upon seeing his son teach us about our relationship to our Father in Heaven?

TOPIC 5

The Orthodox Church has a rich heritage of sacred hymns that "contribute radiant and poetic splendor to Orthodox worship," thus, opening the way to God. Select your favorite Church hymn and talk about how it strengthens your faith.



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His Grace Bishop Timothy of Hexamilion

DIRECTOR OF MINISTRIES AND PROGRAMS

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SPIRITUAL FATHER OF THE ORATORICAL MINISTRY

Fr. George Dokos, Proistamenos of Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church, Westchester, IL

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A special thank you to Holy Apostles Greek Orthodox Church Philoptochos Chapter

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Artemis Kamaris	St. Sophia	Elgin, IL
Maria Baltsas	St. Spyridon	Palos Heights IL



2024 CONTRIBUTORS

On behalf of His Eminence Metropolitan NATHANAEL of Chicago and the Metropolis of Chicago St. John Chrysostom Oratorical and Fine Arts Festival Committee,
thank you to all who have contributed their time, talents, and treasures to this ministry!

PLATINUM LEVEL (\$1000)

Ascension of Our Lord Greek Orthodox Church, Lincolnshire, IL
AHEPA Chapter 78, Merrillville, IN

GOLD LEVEL (\$500)

Holy Apostles Philoptochos, Westchester, IL
St. Demetrios Philoptochos, Hammond, IN

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Holy Trinity Philoptochos, Schiller Park, IL

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Donated by Dean, Joanne, Symeon, George, Lindsay, Dino and Ioanna Stavrakas
*"In Memory of our parents and grandparents
George D. Chronis and Sam & Helene Stavrakas"*



2024 HONOREES

SPEECH

Junior Division

1st Maria Zouras
2nd Anastasia Rihani
3rd Lydia Houck

Ascension of Our Lord
St. John the Baptist
St. Mary's

Lincolnshire, IL
Des Plaines, IL
Minneapolis, MN

Senior Division

1st Leo Petropoulos
2nd Anna Arzoumanidis
3rd John Tsagalis

St. Sophia
SS. Peter & Paul
SS. Constantine & Helen

Elgin, IL
Glenview, IL
Wauwatosa, WI

ESSAYS

Junior Division

1st Athanasios Lambrou
2nd Nikoleta Papisimakis
3rd Stefania Tillich

St. Athanasios
SS. Peter & Paul
SS. Constantine & Helen

Aurora, IL
Glenview, IL
Merrillville, IN

Senior Division

1st George Mastorakos
2nd Stefanie Milak
3rd Alek Eidsvold

Holy Cross
Holy Apostles
St. George

Justice, IL
Westchester, IL
St. Paul, MN

POETRY

Junior Division

1st Christina Sourounis
2nd Epaminontas Stamus
3rd Gabrielle Tsagaris

St. Nectarios
St. Spyridon
Holy Apostles

Palatine, IL
Palos Heights, IL
Westchester, IL

Senior Division

1st George Mastorakos
2nd Gabriella Earth
3rd Shaun Canas

Holy Cross
SS. Constantine & Helen
St. George

Justice, IL
Merrillville, IN
St. Paul, MN



2024 HONOREES

ICONOGRAPHY

Junior Division

1st Diamanto Mesiacos
2nd Melani Luhm
3rd Anastasia Rihani

St. Athanasios
Kimissis Tis Theotokou
St. John the Baptist

Aurora, IL
Racine, WI
Des Plaines, IL

Senior Division

1st Evanthia Fotopoulos
2nd Thanasi Maglaras
3rd Joanna Clohessy

St. George
Ascension of Our Lord
Holy Apostles

Schererville, IN
Lincolnshire, IL
Westchester, IL

VOCAL SOLO

Junior Division

1st Anna Pitsavas-Wakely
2nd Irini Polimus
3rd Molly Ellis

St. George
SS. Constantine & Helen
St. Nicholas

St. Paul, MN
Merrillville, IN
Oak Lawn, IL

Senior Division

1st Tara Mastorakas

Holy Cross

Justice, IL

VOCAL CHANT

Junior Division

1st Hara Klimediotis
2nd Maria Zouras
3rd Vasili Vythoulkas

St. John the Baptist
Ascension of Our Lord
St. Spyridon

Des Plaines, IL
Lincolnshire, IL
Palos Heights, IL

Senior Division

1st Maria Malamis
2nd Georgios Vasilakis
3rd Maria Grigorakos

Ascension of Our Lord
St. Sophia
SS. Constantine & Helen

Lincolnshire, IL
Elgin, IL
Wauwatosa, WI

ESSAY
FIRST PLACE • SENIOR DIVISION
GEORGE MASTORAKOS

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS: LESSONS FROM SAINT NEKTARIOS OF AEGINA

Saint Nektarios of Aegina, one of the most respected saints of our times, lived a life that was a testament to the power of forgiveness. Despite being defamed without cause, convicted without trial, and unjustly exiled, he chose the path of forgiveness, which demonstrates a remarkable strength of character.

Saint Nektarios was a beacon of resilience and faith. His life was marked by trials and suffering, yet he remained committed in his devotion to God. He was falsely accused of immoral conduct, leading to his removal from his position as the Metropolitan of Pentapolis. Despite the serious injustice, he did not hold a grudge to those who wronged him, instead he chose to forgive and move forward.

The life of Saint Nektarios teaches us that forgiveness is not a sign of weakness, but a manifestation of strength. It requires immense courage to forgive those who have hurt us deeply and unjustly. Yet, Saint Nektarios showed us that it is possible. He did not allow the bitterness of his past to destroy his future. Instead he used his experiences as stepping stones to spiritual growth, transforming his trials into opportunities for enlightenment.

Forgiving the “impossible” is a daunting task. It is natural to retain resentment and anger towards those who have wronged us. However, holding onto these negative emotions only serves to imprison us in our past. Saint Nektarios showed us that forgiveness is the key to breaking free from this prison. By forgiving his accusers, he was able to move forward and continue his spiritual journey, unburdened by the weight of past injustices.

In addition, Saint Nektarios’ life underscores the transformative power of forgiveness. Despite his unjust exile, he went on to establish a monastery in Aegina and wrote numerous theological works. His teachings continue to inspire millions around the world. This would not have been possible had he allowed resentment to consume him. His forgiveness allowed him to channel his energy into positive endeavors, contributing significantly to the spiritual community.

Indeed, Saint Nektarios’ life is not just a story of forgiveness, but also a lesson in humility and love. Despite the hardships he faced, he never lost sight of his purpose, to serve God and humanity. He treated everyone with kindness and respect, regardless of how they treated him. His life was a living testament to the words of Christ: “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you” (Luke 6:27-28). His unwavering faith and unconditional love for all are a source of inspiration for us all. As we strive to navigate our own trials and tribulations, let us remember the lessons from Saint Nektarios’ life and strive to embody his spirit of forgiveness, humility, and love.

In conclusion, the life of Saint Nektarios of Aegina offers valuable lessons on forgiveness. His ability to forgive the “impossible” serves as a reminder of the strength fundamental to forgiveness, humility, and love. His life teaches us that we, too, can overcome our past and build a future filled with peace and spiritual growth. As we navigate the challenges of life, let us remember Saint Nektarios and strive to emulate his extraordinary example of forgiveness, humility, and love. His life serves as a sign of hope, reminding us that even in the face of serious injustice, forgiveness is possible and transformative.

POETRY
FIRST PLACE • SENIOR DIVISION
GEORGE MASTORAKOS

A CYCLE OF DIVINE GRACE

In the sacred silence of the Divine Liturgy,
Before the Consecration, a voice rings true,
“Your own of Your own we offer to You,
In all and for all,” a prayer anew.

As an Orthodox Christian, I ponder this phrase,
A petition profound, a spiritual maze,
It speaks of a cycle, a divine exchange,
Of God’s gifts to us, and our offerings in range.

“Your own of Your own,” echoes in the air,
A reminder that all we have is His to share,
The love, the joy, the daily bread,
Are but fragments of His bounty widespread.

We offer back, from His gifts so grand,
Not out of obligation, but a love so unplanned,
For every gift, both big and small,
Is a piece of His grace, a divine protocol.

“In all and for all,” the mantra concludes,
A call to serve, a purpose includes,
To give, to love, to share freely,
For in giving, we find God, quite really.

Why focus on giving back, one might ask,
In the light of His love, we find our task,
For in giving, we acknowledge His divine role,
And find our purpose, our spiritual goal.

ICONOGRAPHY
FIRST PLACE • SENIOR DIVISION
EVANTHIA FOTOPOULOS



SPEECH
FIRST PLACE • SENIOR DIVISION
LEO PETROPOULOS



VOCAL CHANT
FIRST PLACE • SENIOR DIVISION
MARIA MALAMIS



VOCAL SOLO
FIRST PLACE • SENIOR DIVISION
TARA MASTORAKOS



ESSAY
FIRST PLACE • JUNIOR DIVISION
ATHANASIOS LAMBROU

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD

If someone won the lottery today, how would they use it? A recent study from the National Endowment for Financial Education shows an approximate 70% of people who win the lottery carelessly spend it on themselves and eventually go bankrupt. The teachings of the church tell us to use our money towards helping the needy. In Saint Nectarios's life, demonstrated in the short story, Holy Hierarch Nectarios of Aegina, *The Wonderworker* by Catalin Grigore, Nectarios donates his money and supports his prayers through good deeds. Our Holy Fathers within the faith and the Bible teach us that faith must always be accompanied by good works.

In Grigore's book, Nectarios supports his faith through donating his money towards the reconstruction of the Greek Cathedral and cleaning a whole school. Towards the middle of the book, Nectarios finishes his studies, becomes ordained into the priesthood, and is sent to serve the Greeks in Egypt. Nectarios is said to have, "paid for part of the work with his own money" however, "the funds were not sufficient to fully restore the cathedral" (Grigore 11). The author creates the vision that Hierarch Nectarios had gone to "work" but in reality, his prayers led him to use his "funds" and help those Greeks that needed a shoulder on which to rely on. Moving throughout Nectarios' life, the school janitor of the seminary falls ill. For the three days he missed, Nectarios got up hours before school started and "cleaned the entire school, even the bathroom, all by himself" (Grigore 17). Nectarios strived to put himself in the position of taking a humiliating job of "cleaning" the whole school by "himself" to be humbled and isolated so he could be drawn closer to God.

All in all, the way Saint Nectarios of Aegina has impacted my life is the way he approaches situations. From elevating his faith through an ill janitor, or largely contributing to the reconstruction of the Greek Cathedral, Nectarios has made me realize that one cannot only pray and expect everything to magically happen. You must support prayer through good deeds, and work towards one's driven goal. To conclude, the works of Hierarch Nectarios teach that faith must always be accompanied by good works.

POETRY
FIRST PLACE • JUNIOR DIVISION
CHRISTINA SOUROUNIS

OUR HOME

As Orthodox Christians
We are called To be stewards Of God's creation
The fruits of our planet are meant to be cherished And treated
with grace
Taken care of,
In the honor of God and his people
The earth
God's gift to Us, One of many
The one we mistreat
We exploit
For temporary gain
With no sign of stopping
The perils are more than any
But,
We can change
Demand better
Do better
We are called To be stewards Of God's creation
As Orthodox Christians

ICONOGRAPHY
FIRST PLACE • JUNIOR DIVISION
DIAMANTO MESIACOS



SPEECH
FIRST PLACE • JUNIOR DIVISION
MARIA ZOURAS



VOCAL CHANT
FIRST PLACE • JUNIOR DIVISION
HARA KLIMEDIOTIS



VOCAL SOLO
FIRST PLACE • JUNIOR DIVISION
ANNA PITSAVAS-WAKELY



WHO IS SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM?

Born in the ancient city of Antioch in 347 A.D. to a noble and pious family, Saint John Chrysostom was an exceptional student. He studied to be a lawyer but was led to a religious life where he devoted himself to spiritual growth. As a priest, Saint John had a rare quality of winning the hearts of his audience, even though many times he chastised them. He loved his people and would hold nothing back to reprove them into upright living.

A tremendous advocate of social justice, he loudly proclaimed the equality of all people before God and constantly spoke of the great distance between rich and poor, laying the blame on wealthy tyrants and extortionists. He did not remain silent to camouflage injustice. At the age of forty-nine, he became Patriarch of Constantinople and from the pulpit became an outspoken critic of the imperial court, frequently denouncing the Empress Eudokia. After a series of exiles and returns, Saint John was banished from Constantinople in 403 and died two years later, while still in exile.

He earned the title, Chrysostomos, “golden mouth,” because of his dynamic preaching. The Divine Liturgy celebrated in our Churches most Sundays of the year bears his name. The feast of Saint John Chrysostom is celebrated on November 13th. We also honor him on January 30th, the Feast of the Three Hierarchs, together with Saint Basil the Great and Saint Gregory the Theologian.

The purpose of the Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical and Fine Arts Festival is to give young people an opportunity to learn about and express their beliefs, their Church, and their heritage which strengthens their understanding and appreciation of their identity as Greek Orthodox Christians. As a Church Father, and because of his bold eloquence, it is fitting and appropriate that the Oratorical Festival is named after the most celebrated preacher in the history of the Christian Church.

The Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical and Fine Arts Festival is a program of the Department of Religious Education, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, 50 Goddard Avenue, Brookline, MA, 02445. <http://www.religioused.goarch.org/>



PASCHA CELEBRATED BY SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

“Whosoever is a devout lover of God let him enjoy this beautiful, bright Festival. And whosoever is a grateful servant, let him rejoice and enter into the joy of his Lord. And if any are weary with fasting, let him now receive his penny. If any have toiled from the first hour, let him receive his due reward. If any have come after the third hour, let him join in the Feast with gratitude. And he that arrived after the sixth hour, let him not doubt; for he too shall sustain no loss. And if any have delayed to the ninth hour, let him not hesitate, but let him come too. And he that has arrived only at the eleventh hour, let him not be afraid for reason of his delay; for the Lord...gives rest to him that comes at the eleventh hour as well as to him that toiled from the first...

“O Hades, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are annihilated. Christ is risen, and the evil ones are cast down. Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen, and life is liberated. Christ is risen, and the tomb is emptied of the dead; for Christ, having risen from the dead, has become the first fruits of those that have fallen asleep. To Him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.”

*Excerpt taken from the Paschal Sermon of St. John Chrysostom
Archbishop of Constantinople*



SHIRLEY (SEVASTI) KONTOS 1949-1991

Born and educated in Chicago, Shirley showed great artistic promise from a very early age. Upon completing her education with a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the School of the Art Institute and the University of Chicago in 1972 and a Masters of Fine Arts Degree from Northwestern University in 1974, Ms. Kontos embarked upon a journey which ultimately brought her recognition in the field of Baroque/Rococo painting.

At a turning point in her life, she recognized the Archangel Michael as her personal guardian angel and turned to the art of Byzantine Iconography with a fervor that she had not felt in her own endeavors.

She struggled to learn and to grow in a male-dominated field and, with every commission, grew stronger and more confident in her abilities. She traveled to Greece where she studied under Evangelos Sorogos. She studied the icons of several Churches in Greece, as well as the various schools of Byzantine iconography, being careful not to overlook a single detail.

Her first full church commission was Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Justice, IL. She went on to paint several other Churches while continuing to paint portable icons. Her works are displayed from coast to coast and as far north as Alaska.

Her crowning achievement was the iconostasion which was used when Patriarch Demetrios, Ecumenical Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at Grant Park.

The Lord called her home on February 2, 1991, but her accomplishments will live forever in His Name. Shirley's icons are presented each year to the Junior and Senior Division winners of Iconography.

May Her Memory Be Eternal.

“There is no other virtue that He mentioned except the performance of works of charity, for charity comes from love, and love is the goal and meaning of Christianity.”



*Icon of the Virgin Mary and Child,
written by Shirley Kontos,
can be found at the community of
SS. Constantine & Helen, Swansea, IL*

-St. John Chrysostom