

ST. DEMETRIOS

Volume XXXVI, No 03

Saco, Maine

MARCH 2025

*On March 3 we will be “entering” Great Lent -
the most challenging & most wonderful time of the year.*

May our Lord’s unapproachable & uncreated Light, shine upon us!

O Lord and Master of my Life!

Take from me

**the spirit of sloth, despair,
lust of power and idle talk.**

Rather grant to me your servant

**the spirit of chastity, humility,
patience and love.**

Yes, Lord and King.

Grant me to see my own sins,

and not to condemn my brother.

For You are blessed unto the ages of ages.

Amen.

~ St. Ephraim the Syrian

May we all have a blessed struggle / Lent.

On Sunday February 23, we were finally able to have
our General Assembly and vote for
the 2025 Operating Budget & the Fire Suppression System.

THANK YOU to all of those who have attended.

About the Services

As of now, Father Basil is still not allowed to raise his right shoulder.

When he receives the OK from the orthopedic doctor, he will be able to serve Liturgies.

FESTIVAL ... FESTIVAL ... FESTIVAL ...
Friday, Saturday, Sunday, July 11, 12, 13th, 2025
Mark your calendars!!

The Festival is back, and planning, organizing and preparing... to get ready for our annual event!!

We will be sending monthly newsletter articles, and also updates and messages to keep everyone up to date.

Very important ...

We need everyone's help, cannot do this without everyone's help, see Stavros Nashi..... place your name on the Volunteer list. We need YOU!

We are going to continue our **SPONSORSHIP ADS**. If you recall, last year we announced each ad purchased by placing them on the hall wall for all to see.

We will have more info in the next newsletter. Stay Tuned!

PALM SUNDAY LUNCHEON

EAT IN or TO GO

Sunday, April 13th following the Divine Liturgy

Propane (& Electricity) Challenge

Baked Haddock Dinner \$25

Rice pilaf, Vegetables, Dessert

or

Pasta with Sauce \$15 (adults)

Children pasta lunch ... Eat free.

Please, make checks payable to:

St. Demetrios Church – GOYA.

**100% of the proceeds/donations
are used for our Heating/Cooling.**

We truly thank the Lacones for *Sponsoring the meal!!!*

St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church

“Triodion”

Sundays in Great Lent

Great Lent is the ultimate preparation for the *real event* of the Lord’s Entrance into Jerusalem, His betrayal, Death and Resurrection.

1. March 2: Forgiveness (Cheese-Fare) Sunday (Matt 6:14-21)

Forgiveness Vespers. We do the Service of FORGIVENESS @ the end of The Liturgy!

We cannot begin Great Lent without Forgiveness & Repentance.

This Sunday emphasizes forgiveness and how we must forgive others if God is to forgive us so we can break the chains of sinful tendency which we inherit from the Adam and Eve. This is the last day before.... the Lenten fast begins on the following morning: no meat, dairy or fish are to be eaten.

March 3: Clean Monday - Great Lent Begins

Great Lent begins with this day of “cleansing”. The ancient custom is to fast as strictly as Holy Week.

Both the services & readings are about the failures of Israel to remain faithful and how God consistently pursued His people to try to redirect them towards Heaven.

2. March 9: Sunday of Orthodoxy

This is the first Sunday in Lent. It is the day of the “Icon Procession” to celebrate the restoration of Icons after about 150 years of persecutions against those who had defended all Iconography! Imagine that! The Spiritual meaning is simple: If our Lord Jesus is real, if all the Righteous in the Scriptures are real, if all the Apostles and saints are real, then we can depict them & the events around them!

3. March 16: Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

St. Gregory lived in the 1,300s AD, it was he who re-affirmed the Christian teaching that the presence of God (grace) is *the (real) presence of God!* Does this sound silly? Sure does, but the strange belief had crept in that we are too sinful for God to come among us. As if Christ never took flesh and lived with us.

When we pray, worship, etc., we are with our Lord, we are not just sending “texts & emails”, we are speaking directly....

4. March 23: Sunday of The Cross

On the Third Sunday of Lent **the Cross** is placed before us in the center, adorned with flowers, for inspiration and encouragement. This is Mid Lent.

In Orthros/ Matins we hear, "Behold! Through the Cross joy has come into all the world." The Cross is the sign of victory and life. It is the Way of the Resurrection. For this reason we sing on this Sunday: "Before Your Cross we bow down and worship, O Master, and Your Holy Resurrection we glorify."

If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, carry his cross & come follow Me. (Mt 16:24)

5. March 30: Sunday of St. John of the Ladder

St John is the author of *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* and was the abbot of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai.

He outlines the steps in the Spiritual Warfare, the struggle from being "self-centered" to "God-centered". From "looking down" to "looking up", from the "fogginess of the passions which push us to sin against God & neighbor", to "clarity of the Light to help us understand and become merciful". This is the Spiritual Warfare that we see all around us.

Fasting Notes:

Cheesefare Week: Feb 23 – March 2, we partake of dairy, fish, etc. everyday.

Cheesefare (Forgiveness) Sunday - March 2, LAST day of dairy....

Clean Monday – March 3, **Lent** begins.... NO meats, dairy, fish, olive oil & wine (on weekdays).

On weekends we partake of olive oil (oo) & wine.

The Annunciation – March 25, we have olive oil (oo), wine & fish.

SATURDAY OF SOULS, HOLY WEEK, NAMES LISTING.

When offering a list of names for Fr. Basil to read, please do the following: List the **first name larger**, then all **subsequent names somewhat smaller**, and **print the names** in capital letters. This will help a lot. Thank you.

The ANNUNCIATION (MARCH 25th)

Fr. Cleopa (Romania) encouraged everyone, layman and monastic, to love the Theotokos and turn to her at all times. He also counseled everyone to be humble.... Often when speaking about her, tears of love would flow from the beloved elder's eyes. At one gathering of faithful and monastics, he gave the following address:

"God has bestowed His great mercy and compassion on the most holy ever Virgin Mary through the many gifts that she possesses. Out of all these gifts, which do you suppose is the reason for the great glory and spiritual honor that is accorded to her? Which do you think is the greatest of the gifts of the Theotokos? Is it her *virginity*, or *wisdom*, or *sanctity*, or *understanding*, or another of the many and innumerable gifts that she possesses?

"Yes my brothers! Truly God has adorned the most holy Virgin Mary with all these spiritual gifts. But *the great gift that has accorded her such glory and ineffable honor is her **gift of humility***. Without this virtue, all her other virtues would have been useless.

"Humility is the basis for the glory and honor of the most holy Virgin Mary above all the other gifts that she possesses. It was due to her humility, according to the witness of the Holy Spirit, that the Lord looked upon *the humble state of his servant* and lifted her to the heights of glory and honor so that she is glorified in heaven by all the heavenly hosts and blessed by all the generations of earth.

"Humility is the virtue that has led to the exaltation and glory of all the saints of God. It was humility that exalted Abraham and made him the friend of God and the father of many nations, for he considered himself to be nothing but dirt and ashes. Humility raised Joseph to occupy such an exalted position in the land of Egypt.

"Humility showed that David lived according to the heart of God since he considered himself to be a *worm and not man (Ps 22:6)*. Humility radiated from the prophet Daniel, the three youths, the great prophet Isaiah, and above all, the holy Baptist John who felt that he was not worthy to undo the latch of Christ's sandals; because of this humility, he was deemed worthy to be the witness of the revelation of the Holy Trinity at the Jordan and was called by Christ Himself the *greatest of those born of woman (Lk 7:28)*.

"If these great saints of God showed such exceptional humility, then who can delve into the depth of the humility that rested in the heart of the most holy Theotokos? When she heard and understood from the Archangel Gabriel that she was to conceive of the Holy Spirit and give birth to the Son of God, she did not exalt herself in her heart; instead, with complete humility she considered herself to be a simple servant, saying, *Behold the servant of the Lord. Be it unto me according to Thy word (Lk1:38)*. **This is the ANNUNCIATION!**

This answer of hers was the exact fulfillment of the words of Scripture, *he who humbles himself will be exalted (Lk 14:11)*.

Elder Cleopa, I Bălan, p 244-247

PASCHAL NEEDS 2025 - LENTEN & HOLY WEEK NEEDS

Flowers for Icon – Salutations	4 weeks @\$50/week
Flowers for Feast of Veneration of the Cross	\$150
Charcoal	\$55
Incense (one box)	\$70
Candles for Cross (six sets)	\$21 per set
12 Candles (12 Gospel Readings on Holy Thursday)	\$7 each
24 Candles for the Tomb-Kouvouklion on Holy Friday	\$7 each
3 XL Candles (for Services), need 15 sets	\$21/per set
Palms/Laurel	\$200
Pussy willows (obtained locally in fields) for Palm Sunday Slavic tradition	
Bridegroom Icon	\$75
Palm Sunday Icon	\$50
Wreaths	\$65 Taken
Holy Friday wreath (Kouvouklion)	\$55 Taken
Lavaron	\$75
Potted lilies (or items we can later plant outside)	\$30 each
Flowers for Kouvouklion/Epitaphion	\$1,500
Flowers (various needs for Holy Week and altar decor)	\$350
Resurrection Lambatha	\$375
Olive oil: <u>Please do not bring Capatriti oil. It does not burn well.</u>	
Communion wine: Donations only please. The Church will purchase wine.	

See Stephanie... please give your checks to Stephanie, in the office where a list will be kept. Make your check payable to St Demetrios, ear-marked: Donation, Holy Week.

Thank you for your support – Glory to God in and for all things!

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PAIDEIA OF MAINE FUNDRAISER DINNER DANCE April 26, 2025

It would give us great joy if you could join us at the ELKS club, Portland, Maine to enjoy great food and dance to the tunes of DJ Angelos Sotiropoulos.

Tickets are on sale now. Please reach out to board members Val Kapoathanasis and Agathi Haxhi in Portland, Irene Steltzer and Dimitra Voulgari in Saco, and John Rozos in Lewiston, to purchase your tickets.

You could reserve your own table with the purchase of 8-10 tickets.

Tickets for adults are \$50.00 each and for children/students are \$10.00 each.

This event is much anticipated. Please purchase your tickets soon before they run out.

The proceeds from this event support academic and Metropolis of Boston Summer camp scholarships.

March 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Great Lent begins Monday March 3. Sunday of Orthodoxy is March 9. <i>Please remember to bring an Icon - we will have a LIMITED Procession!</i> Holy Pascha is Sunday April 20.</p>		<p>BAKING DAYS: TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS @ 9:00AM</p>				<p>1 (fast only from meats) 8:30am Orthros only - Saturday of Souls - Ψυχασαββατον</p>
<p>2 Sun. of Forgiveness w/ Forgiveness Vespers <i>(Last day of Dairy)</i></p>	<p>3 (fast) Great Lent begins! 6:00pm Gt Compline w/ Canon of Repentance - prt a.</p>	<p>4 (fast) 6:00pm Gt Compline w/ Canon of Repentance - prt b.</p>	<p>5 (fast) 5:30pm Gt Compline w/ Canon of Repentance prt c. w/ pot luck supper</p>	<p>6 (fast) 6:00pm Gt Compline w/ Canon of Repentance prt d.</p>	<p>7 (fast) 6:00pm Salutations - Χαίρετισμοι α!</p>	<p>8 (fast) 8:30am Orthros only - Saturday of Souls - Ψυχασαββατον</p>
<p>9 Sun. of Orthodoxy w/ Icon Procession <i>Change your clock time!</i></p>	<p>10 (fast)</p>	<p>11 (fast)</p>	<p>12 (fast) 5:30pm Gt Compline w/ pot luck supper</p>	<p>13 (fast)</p>	<p>14 (fast) 6:00pm Salutations - Χαίρετισμοι β!</p>	<p>15 (fast) 9:30-11:30am Class/Discussion - The FAITH <i>(anyone interested in joining the Church please come)</i></p>
<p>16 Sun. of St. Gregory Palamas Confession after Liturgy</p>	<p>17 (fast)</p>	<p>18 (fast)</p>	<p>19 (fast) 5:30pm Presanctified Lit. or Compline w/ pot luck supper ??</p>	<p>20 (fast) 6:00pm Meeting for the 2025 Greek Fest</p>	<p>21 (fast) 6:00pm Salutations - Χαίρετισμοι γ!</p>	<p>22 (fast)</p>
<p>23 Sun. of The Holy Cross w/ Cross Procession</p>	<p>24 (fast)</p>	<p>25 (o oil/wine/fish) 8:30am LITURGY ?? The Annunciation Ευαγγελισμος</p>	<p>26 (oo/wine) 5:30pm Presanctified Lit. or Compline w/ pot luck supper ??</p>	<p>27 (fast)</p>	<p>28 (fast) 6:00pm Salutations - Χαίρετισμοι δ!</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>COMMUNITY RETREAT @ <i>Metrop. CAMP</i></p> </div>
<p>30 Sun. of St. John of the Ladder <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;"> <p>COMMUNITY RETREAT @ <i>Metrop. CAMP</i></p> </div></p>	<p>31 (fast)</p>					

Annual **Community**
Retreat

Fri, Sat & Sunday - *March 28, 29 & 30*

@ Metropolis of Boston Camp
(Contoocook, NH)

We will have two Presentations, *with our Speaker:*

Fr. Michael Palamara

The Spiritual Life,....

....especially during Lent & Holy Week.

There will be also a **youth/children's program.**
(Organized by the Camp Staff)

Cost: **Room & Board (Adults)** (*children are free*)

Fri-Sun: \$280 (per person)

Sat-Sun: \$160 (per person)

Everyone is welcome!

If you cannot attend overnight, please....

....join us for the day Presentations.

(free will offering)

Offered by **St. Demetrios – Saco.**

For information contact: **Lisa Tompkins** at 207-286-6526, or lisatompk@gmail.com

Project Mexico

from Tom Carr

Project Mexico is not only supporting **the building of a safe, secure and weather-tight home for some of the most impoverished families in Northern Mexico**, but is **also providing financial support** of St. Innocent Boys Orphanage and for practicing our Orthodox faith. The boys participate in sacraments, worship services, and expressing faith through prayer, hymns, and icons.

St. Innocent Orphanage officially opened its doors to its first boys by **private tutoring, an active program of athletics and extra-curricular activities**, and a lasting sense of family and belonging fostered by unconditional love and support from all of the staff and volunteers within our ministry.

The Home Building side of Project Mexico **provides homes** so that these families can build a brighter future for themselves and their children.

We have secured **the week of August 17th-23th** for our Home Building project.

St. Demetrios currently has **six members** registered to participate in the project:

- **Dimitra Voulgari**
- **Louis Cotsis**
- **Joshua Brewer**
- **Josiah Smalley**
- **Riley Saunders**
- **Tom Carr**

The cost per person is of \$500, and it includes flight, transportation, food & board, **and the actual building of the “one room house”**.

And we already have \$2,700 towards the \$9,000 needed.

This is a much needed, and worthwhile project, that can grow and perhaps even be extended to other areas.

We would like to offer this Philanthropic effort as representatives of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Saco, Maine.

Our community support for this philanthropic project would be greatly appreciated. Help us to help others.

Notes for March 2025

Saturday Mar 15: 9:30-11:30am Class/Discussion - The Faith (*anyone interested in joining the Church, please come...*)

.....

Sunday Mar 16: CONFESSIONS. Connect with Stephanie/office.

.....

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS: Following the Elections, a notice was sent to His Eminence offering the results and accepted the following council members, along with these words: "all the blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our Council includes Thomas Carr, John Caras, Mike Christakis, Pota Desjardins, Stavros Nashi, Adriana Popa, Christopher Fox Silva, Antonia Spirounias, Irene Steltzer, Caton Tompkins and Stephen Zafirson. On Sunday, February 23rd the *Affirmation of Office* was offered by Fr. Basil Arabatzis. Our officers are President Thomas Carr, Vice President Stavros Nashi, Treasurer Irene Steltzer, and Financial Secretary Adriana Popa. Congratulations everyone!

HELLENIC SOCIETY OF MAINE has events scheduled for MARCH.

- **Thursday, March 6**, at 7:00pm, **Film discussion of** *While You Live, Shine* by Paul Duane (2018)
- **Saturday, March 15**, at 1:00pm, **LIVE!—"Greek Myths of the Night Sky.** Planetarium, Science Bldg, USM Portland. Adults: \$8, Children under 12 and Seniors, \$7.50.
- **Wednesday, March 26**, at 5:00pm, "*Greek Trivia Happy Hour*" via ZOOM.

PLEASE: If your children go to camp, REGISTER MARCH 11TH.

METROPOLIS OF BOSTON: MBC SUMMER CAMP '25

REGISTRATION OPENS March 11th, 2025, at 8:00pm. SPACE IS LIMITED. MARK YOUR CALENDAR.

Dates are as follows: Session 1: June 23-29; Session 2: June 30-July 6; Session 3: July 7-13;
Session 4: July 14-20; Session 5: July 21-27

THANKS FROM THE OCMC. We offer the SAMP program every January. They send Missionaries to indigenous areas; the Missionaries live on meager funds. Our response to this program, is exactly what we send to the OCMC... 100% of your donation!

Last year, every month was filled and we were able to send \$600 (12 months @ \$50). The OCMC sent a thank you note that ended with the Apostle Paul's message: *How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!* (Romans 10:15) Thanks to all who supported the OCMC SAMP!

FROM ST. FOTINI, THANK YOU to our community.

We are delighted to share that in January, St. Fotini collected \$856 from our generous congregation for the benefit of St. Basil Academy. Thank you all for your heartfelt contributions and continued support. This amount is in addition to the \$1,000 St. Fotini donated earlier in January.

Your kindness helps further the mission of St. Basil Academy and makes a tangible difference in the lives of those they serve.

Very nice THANK YOU from the St. Methodios Faith and Heritage Center, Home of the Metropolis of Boston Camp.

"Thank you very much for your generous donation of paper towels, toilet paper, sheets and many other items in 2024 to our Metropolis of Boston camp. Our mission is to spread our faith to our young people and visitors alike.

Our programs include winter, summer and fall camps to keep in touch with our youth. Our Retreat House serves many religious and non-profit groups. The Center has truly become a light to all who come here.

We are truly grateful for your contribution to this... our Greek Orthodox center of love and faith... which for over three decades, has touched the lives of so many of our faithful."

From Mike Sintros, St. Methodios Camp

Monthly Financial Report. 02/20/2025
(Operating Budget **2025**)

Mortgage Balance: \$96,035

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCIAL UPDATE as of January 31, 2025

Total Stewards: 94

Total Stewardship Received: \$21,934

<u>Month</u>	<u>Income (\$)</u>	<u>Expenses (\$)</u>	<u>Operating account (\$)</u>
January	\$26,719	\$21,797	\$4,923

We ended January in the **Black \$4,923!** {Compare to 2024: \$1,221}.

Our Income is up by \$4,000 (compared to *LAST YEAR*).

Our Expenses are about the same (compared to *LAST YEAR*).

Compare: Year to date:

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Total Income:	\$22,632	\$26,719
Total Expenses:	\$21,411	\$21,797

Thank You!!

***KEEP
THE
FAITH!***

Let our giving reflect our faith!

**** ** * ** ***

The holy Church teaches us that every Christian receives from God at his baptism a holy guardian angel, who, invisibly guarding the Christian, inspires him with every kind of good deed during his life, and reminds him of God's commandments. The prince of darkness, who desires to draw the entire human race into destruction allotted to himself, also appoints one of the wicked spirits to attend man, and this spirit follows his man everywhere and tries to draw him into every kind of sin.

*St. Ignatius (Brianchaninov), Bishop of the Caucasus and the Black Sea
Eternal Mysteries Beyond the Grave p.39*

Thank you Sponsors for making our St. Demetrios Newsletter possible!



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Saint Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston

Sunday Services:

9:00 AM Orthros

Divine Liturgy by 10:00 AM

Winter hours start September 29.

Fr. Basil Arabatzis, Presbyter

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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Church: (207) 284-5651

FAX: (207) 283-4641

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¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

² And be not conformed to this world: but be transfigured by the renewing of your nous-mind (the eye of your soul).

Rom 12:1-2

Saint Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Church

186 Bradley Street

Saco, ME 04072

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED