



NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Rev. Father Nicholas Marcus, Proistamenos

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Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church

Fall 2025 General Assembly Agenda

1. Opening Prayer
2. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the Assembly
3. Spring 2025 General Assembly Meeting Notes
4. Presbyter's Report
5. President's Report
6. Ministry Reports – See written reports provided.
7. Financial Status: Finance Report, Fundraising, Stewardship, and Audit
8. Festival Recap
9. Clergy Laity
10. Safety
11. Estate Planning
12. Iconography
13. Parish Council Nominations and Election Committee
14. Motion to Close Meeting
15. Closing Prayer

Your presence and contributions are highly valued! We kindly request that you make every effort to attend and actively participate.



NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

39851 FIVE MILE ROAD PLYMOUTH, MICHIGAN 48170

REV. FATHER NICHOLAS MARCUS

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Clergy and Parish Council Attendees: Father Nicholas Marcus, Nancy Kurys, John Petrou, Dimitri Karatsinides, Voula Sonbay, Lynn Perakis, Tom James, Anne Randall, Jerry Takis, Georgia Theophelis, Christina Tzilos.

Absent: Marios Lambis

Stewards Present: 54

May 4, 2025, 12:27 pm

1) **Opening Prayer:** Fr. Nicholas Marcus

2) **General Assembly Elections:**

- a) Tom James nominates Angela Kheir as General Assembly Moderator. Anne Randall Seconds. All in Favor.
- b) Anne Randall nominates Nancy Kurys for Chairperson of Assembly, John Petrou for Vice-Chairperson, and Lynn Perakis for Secretary. Tom James Seconds. All in Favor.

3) **Kitchen Expansion,** John Petrou:

- a) John thanks the crew for putting everything together, but most of all, he thanks Theodora Bageris. He notes that she is a pillar of the church and has been here most of her life. John thanks Theodora for all she has done and for always being here for us. He expresses that we love her very much. John shares that we have made a plaque with her famous galaktoboureko recipe that will be displayed in our kitchen. He thanks her again for all she does for us.
- b) Theodora thanks everyone for their kindness. She has been at the church since day one, and Nativity is her second home. She expresses that we all enjoy Nativity, and we will continue to enjoy it.

4. **Maintenance,** Dimitri Karatsinides

- a) Planning to replace parking lot drains.

- b) Working to alleviate drainage issues at the ED Center. Pending bids for next steps.
- c) Planning to purchase another under-counter refrigerator for kitchen
- d) Working on drainage for the storage building to ensure integrity of the building
- e) New walk-in refrigerator units are almost finished. Will triple existing capacity. These walk-ins were donated by Poulos Family/Karl's Cabin.

4) Fall 2024 General Assembly Minutes:

- a) Correction noted in section 4b of Fall General Assembly Meeting Notes: James and Kathryn Klein and the Sophia Poulos family donated the beautiful new icon stands.
- b) A motion to accept the minutes was made, and it was seconded. All were in favor of accepting the meeting notes.

5) Presbyter's report:

- a) 2025 Baptisms: Five, and since the beginning of the ecclesiastical year (September 2024), seven.
- b) Weddings: Several planned, including three weddings in Greece for which Father is processing paperwork.
- c) 2025 Funerals: Four, and since the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, seven. There have been over 100 funerals since Father came to Nativity. The majority were stewards of this church (>90%). Although we have lost members, the stewardship report shows stable numbers. The Holy Spirit is active in the church.
- d) 2025 Chrismations: Five, and more coming. Other people finding the Orthodox faith, and we will see this more in Michigan. In the South, this is the norm. In fact, the Atlantic Diocese is the largest growing because of all the chrismations. In Grand Rapids proper, there are Antiochian, Romanian, Russian, and Greek Orthodox jurisdictions. And the parishes are mixed- Greeks, Russians, Romanians, Serbians. Father also notes that Nativity was 60% Greek oriented when he first came. In addition, parishioners love the Greek language because it is the language of the scripture.

6) President's report, Nancy Kurys:

- a) Nancy thanks Father Nick for all he does; we are blessed. She thanks the Parish Council—they are amazing and have so much love. She thanks the Parish for attending

and staying for the General Assembly. Finally, she gives a big shout out to the “boys” who help at our church, led by Dimitri Karatsinides.

- b) Nancy notes that Father Nick has given his blessing. She has spoken with Louis Poulos and her father to bring catering back to the church and promote the social hall for rental. She will discuss this further with the Parish Council.
- c) Six Parish Council members will be up for reelection in the Fall: Nancy Kurys, Tom James, Marios Lambis, Anne Randall, Georgia Theophelis, Christina Tzilos. The Parish Council elections will be on December 7th. The Fall General Assembly will be on November 16th.
- d) Nativity Picnic for 50th Anniversary is planned for June 7th, at Maybury Park in Northville.
- e) Nancy notes that the Ministry Contact List was distributed, along with the PC liaison.
- f) Narthex: Thanks George Zervos for his involvement.
- g) Nancy gives recognition to the Parish Council for helping with everything, and to the Parish as well. She thanks everyone from the bottom of her heart. Tom James thanks Nancy Kurys for all she does as Parish Council President.
- h) Nancy thanks Dimitri and Yianni for the baptismal font. Now Billy doesn't have to carry hot water to the back of the church!

7) **Written Reports.** Please read the ministry updates.

8) **Financial Status,** John Floros:

- a) Documents distributed: 2024 Profit and Loss YTD Comparison, Profit and Loss YTD Comparison (Jan. – March 2025), Balance Sheet Comparison As of March 31, 2025, Offerings/Candles Chart.
- b) 2024 Cash offering as of April 2025: \$496,610, \$78,035 higher than in 2023 – largest yearly offering to-date!
- c) 2024 Fundraising: \$138,125 Net Income. \$26,820 lower than 2023; largely due to expenses.
- d) Cash balance: \$677,413.50, of which \$263,861.25 is in restricted accounts.
 - i) Endowment Fund: \$33,856.12
 - ii) General Fund: \$235,866.15
 - iii) Fundraiser Account: \$143,829.98

- iv) Restricted Account: \$263,861.25
 - e) Candles- upward trajectory since 2021.
 - f) John credits Voula for all her work on the books. Very thankful!
 - g) Archdiocese assessment submitted for 2026.
- 9) **2024 Stewardship Report**, Angela Kheir
- a) Stewards: 132 Families, Total Pledged: \$262,911. Total Paid: \$363,418.
 - i) 31 families made their pledge
 - ii) 62 families exceeded pledge amount
 - iii) 39 families under pledge (deficit of \$22,070)
 - b) Non-Stewards: 89 Families, \$51,250
 - c) 2024 Stewardship Total: \$414,668
- 10) **50th Anniversary of Nativity of the Virgin Mary**, Georgia Theophelis
- a) Georgia notes that we are so blessed to do the dinner dance and encourages everyone to attend November 1st at Laurel Manor. We have a nice venue, and excellent food.
 - b) Presvytera Liza and Georgia are heading the committee with Golfo Wernette in charge of the commemorative book. Georgia requests articles, pictures to be dropped in the bin at Nativity. This book will be “something else for our parish”. Parishioners can submit full pages of their family history at Nativity. We will also be putting out ads for the book.
 - c) Georgia encourages everyone to help; this is a big project and it is for every one of us.
 - d) Finally, Georgia thanks everyone for 50 years; it has been a pleasure to be here at Nativity.
- 11) **Iconography**, Anne Randall and John Petrou
- a) Anne Randall shares the committee’s excitement about moving forward with the iconography project. Since completing the Pantocrator, the committee has been actively exploring how to complete the remaining iconography.
 - b) Anne explains that while Maria Sigala—who completed the Pantocrator and other iconography at Nativity—does excellent work, her availability is limited for several years. The committee has also spoken to four other iconographers, with priority to ensure the iconography will be beautiful and cohesive to our church.

- c) Anne notes that iconographers are expensive, but the committee believes they have found a promising and reasonably priced option based in Chicago - Odiseas and Marianna of Iconography of Churches.
- d) Sample renderings were circulating in the meeting and Anne cautions that while some may have seen these preliminary renderings, these are only early concepts. The Parish will have the opportunity to review finalized designs, provide input, and see a breakdown of icon costs for those who wish to contribute.
- e) John adds that Odiseas, the iconographer under consideration, is based in Chicago and has previously worked with Father John at St. George Southgate. Diane Michalakakis has also conveyed a positive impression. The iconographer has visited Nativity to offer ideas.
- f) Father Nick notes he first met Odiseas at Clergy-Laity. Odiseas is also one of the approved iconographers in our Metropolis. He has completed work in Muskegon and at St. George Southgate. Odiseas is efficient, reasonably priced, and once work begins, progress will be visible week by week.
- g) Anne directs us to Odiseas' website, www.iconographyofchurches.com, to see his work.
- h) George Vlahakis asks how the iconographer will complete work so quickly and whether the work would be quality. Anne said icons will be hand painted and completed in the traditional and proper way.

12) **Campus Development Plan**, Tom James.

- a) Kitchen: Tom notes that although Yianni credited Theodora for her generous gift of money towards the church, Yianni also deserves credit as he was at the church every single day as the work was being done. Same with Dimitri Karatsinides who did the electrical. Tom also gives credit to Ted Kaplantzes. Finally, he credits Pete Tzilos for the entire design, including involvement in picking out material. We now have two more feet in the kitchen!
- b) Campus Development Plan: Tom notes that Pete Tzilos has initial drawings of the plan. The committee is comprised of Yianni, Pete, Dimitri, and Tom. Tom notes there is a lot to consider - ordinances, setback rules, etc. Tom welcomes the parish to review the plans in detail after the meeting, which includes everything we have spoken about in the past. Tom also notes we could do a phased approach of the campus expansion.

- i) George Vlahakis asks if we have a construction fund. Tom notes not yet but technically we could create a construction fund at any time.
- ii) Tom reminds us that \$200,000 was donated to work on the development of the plans. The balance of funds in the planning phase will shift to construction fund.
- c) Narthex: the design has been approved and the material chosen. George Zervos donating the labor. \$7K was approved but costs coming in closer to \$5K. The material is bronze color and although it is dark, it should be dark for coming into the nave. There are also future plans to carry the design to the sides of the church.
- d) George Vlahakis asks about the building next door. Tom notes it has been confirmed as a funeral home, no crematory.
- e) Anna Petrou asks about timing of campus expansion and the response is we can expand once church is consecrated. We cannot consecrate the church if we have debt.
 - i) Father notes that we do have Cardinal Icons, so technically we could move forward with consecration. Father would need to sit down with the Bishop. The Bishop would likely ask for the balance of the iconography and then consecration. Father also thinks that now that we are talking about iconography, it is best if we complete it before consecration. Father indicates we will also need to obtain relics, and he will look to do this when he is in Greece. The date of the consecration will also be determined based on the Archbishop's availability from New York. Father Nick notes that like St. Nick's Ann Arbor, we will put a big tent up and invite other churches.
 - ii) Ultimately, the campus expansion will take time. Georgia Theophelis encourages us to target next summer for consecration and volunteers to chair.

13) Other

- a) Live-Stream: Louis Poulos notes the feedback that it is difficult to hear. Father Nick explains that we need to move the sound system to the middle of church and attach dynamic microphones to pick up sounds. From there we would hook up the sound system into the computer. Stephan Milojevic is working on this.
- b) Father notes that the Mitsias family is helping in the donation of new robes. The Men's Club and the Choir are donating as well.

14) Angela Kheir motions to close the meeting; Nancy Kurys seconds. Meeting adjourned at 1:22pm.

15) Closing Prayer: Father Nicholas Marcus

Signatures

Priest, Fr. Nicholas Marcus

President, Nancy Kurys

Secretary, Lynn Perakis

ACOLYTES/ALTAR SERVERS
Submitted by Bill Smith, Pastoral Assistant

The Start of the Ecclesiastical New Year went off to a great start with the Altar Servers . We had a Orientation meeting on Sunday Sept 21st. We had a great turnout. We have new altar servers this year . The altar servers enjoy being up in the Holy Altar and being part of the Sacramental life of the church. It's a joy and blessing working with these kids. The kids love to learn and be team leaders. The altar boys love to continue to read the Epistle.

NATIVITY BOOKSTORE
Submitted by Mary Takis

NATIVITY BOOKSTORE opened in March 2016 thanks to Fr. Nick, Jerry and Michael. It serves many Christians from this Detroit Metropolis. There are many icons, books, gifts, cards and religious supplies for purchase.

In addition to the improved look in the store, we will have new icons and gifts for Baptisms, Chrismations, Weddings, Moms, Dads, and Grads.

Store hours are limited to Tuesdays(12pm-2pm), Fridays (11am-2pm), Saturdays (11am-2pm), and Sundays after Liturgy (12-1pm) or by appointment. For inquires you may leave a message at (734)420-0131 ext.4

We invite you all to Come And See !!!

SALES OF NATIVITY BOOKSTORE ANNUAL COMPARISON							
YEAR/ MONTH	2025 Sales	2024 Sales	2023 Sales	2022 Sales	2021 Sales	2020 Sales	2019 Sales
JAN	\$ 182.50	\$ 347.10	\$548.20	\$248.98	\$341.58	\$169.35	\$81.00
FEB	\$ 400.50	\$ 438.75	\$579.50	\$567.50	\$588.00	\$218.94	\$261.00
MARCH	\$1345.25	\$ 167.50	\$1214.20	\$750.80	\$288.95	\$448.00	\$621.10
APRIL	\$1082.50	\$1220.95	\$1469.33	\$980.25	\$1015.14	\$229.00	\$1391.59
MAY	\$ 214.50	\$ 176.25	\$657.60	\$867.50	\$693.50	\$ 78.00	\$625.30
JUNE	\$1256.47	\$1087.11	\$1315.58	\$1073.38	\$1097.79	\$276.75	\$828.25
JULY	\$ 217.00	\$ 484.00	\$577.50	\$452.80	\$608.50	\$450.45	\$763.00
AUG	\$ 544.00	\$ 361.74	\$901.00	\$598.00	\$932.25	\$590.80	\$272.00
SEPT	\$ 332.00	\$136.00	\$343.00	\$272.00	\$599.00	\$507.50	\$319.00
OCT	\$ 556.25	\$371.00	\$483.50	\$477.50	\$459.50	\$714.50	\$763.00
NOV		\$557.25	\$265.00	\$852.00	\$792.45	\$753.35	\$718.70
DEC		\$896.00	\$1356.26	\$1121.36	\$543.00	\$958.30	\$1685.95
TOTAL	*\$6135.97	\$6243.65	\$9710.67	\$8262.07	\$7959.66	\$5394.94	\$8329.89

*not final sales total



NATIVITY CHURCH BASKETBALL PROGRAM

Submitted by Lynn Perakis

Mission Statement: To foster fun and fellowship and enrich the lives of Orthodox youth through basketball.

Participation

Season has kicked off, with registrations rolling in for all 7 teams:

Biddy C (Ages 6-8)	Junior Girls (13-18)
Biddy B (Ages 9-10)	Junior Boys (13-15)
Biddy A (Ages 11-12)	Intermediate Boys (13-18)
	Senior Men (19+)

Nativity registered 3 teams for St. John GOYA Holiday Hoops Tournament, Nov. 7-9, 2025

- ♦ Nativity had 28 Players participate, with 25 teams overall in the tournament.
- ♦ Nativity Girls Team: 2nd Place!
- ♦ Junior Boys Team: 3rd Place!
- ♦ Intermediate Boys Team: 2nd Place!

Financials

- ♦ 11th Annual Dennis Ford Golf Outing on September 28, 2025, raised a recording breaking \$8,720.56 to support offsetting 50% of the costs associated with the program.
- ♦ Costs of the program includes gym rental, tournament fees, registration fees, uniforms, equipment, end of year banquet, etc.
- ♦ Balance of funds through player registration (\$125/player) – slight reduction

2025 - 2026 Plans

- ♦ Games begin on Sundays in December for the Junior Girls, Junior Boys, Intermediate Boys, and Senior Men
- ♦ Games begin on Saturdays in January for Biddy C, Biddy B, and Biddy A Teams
- ♦ March 13 - 15, 2026: OYAA Tournament
- ♦ TBD: End of Year Basketball Banquet

GOYA MINISTRY REPORT

Submitted by Bill Smith, Pastoral Assistant and Denise Stein, GOYA Advisor

September 2025

Sunday September 7 - Meeting and election of officers

Sunday, September 21 - installation of GOYA Board

October 2025

Sunday, October 5 - GOYA Night with God at the home of Fr Nick and Presvytera's home

Saturday, October 18 - Dodgeball Tournament at Assumption Church

November 2025

Sunday, November 2 - meeting

November 7-9 - Holiday Hoops

Saturday, November 15 - Trip to Holy Trinity Monastery

Upcoming Events

December 7 - GOYA meeting

December 19 & 20 Annual GOYA Caroling

Upcoming Service Projects

Toiletry collection for Focus Detroit

GOYA Meets the 1st Sunday of the month following church school.



"The Three Hierarchs" Greek school
Ελληνικό σχολείο "Οι Τρεις Ιεράρχες"
Submitted by Anna Liakou-Hentnik, nativity_greek_school@yahoo.com

Joint ministry (Nativity of VM, SS Const.& Helen)

Program overview:

Director: Anna Liakou-Hentnik

Teachers: Anna Liakou-Hentnik, Evangelos Skoures, Roberta Manushi, Christina Tzilos

Assistant: Theodora Grias

Students: **63** (40 kids and 23 adults)

Levels offered in 2025-26:

All classes are ONCE a week.

In person: Kindergarten, Beginning levels 1a, 1b/2a, 3a, 3b/4a

Online: Adults Classes 101, 104, 202

Curriculum:

Kindergarten students learn the basics: the alphabet, 6 words for each letter, numbers 1-20, colors, greetings, age-appropriate activities, games, songs

Beginning levels 1, 2, 3, 4: This is the fifth year that we are using the **Papaloizos "Γεια χαρά!"** series (endorsed by GOARCH) that comes with a **full online platform** that the students can utilize at home for additional fun practice; most importantly they can review their weekly lesson, even if they don't have a Greek speaking family member available to help them. The series also has interactive white board features that teachers use in class to enhance their lessons.

Adults 101: The students in 101 use the NEW **Papaloizos** series **"Let's Talk!"**.

Adults 104, 202: The students use the series **Greek for you A1 & A2 by NEOHEL** that abides with European standards for the foreign language instruction; we have been using this curriculum for many years and can attest to its high quality.

Events/programs planned:

9/30: The Blessing took place by Fr. Nick and Fr. Teodor at the NEC.

10/7: Classes started in person and online.

11/4: The **OXI Day** program will take place at the Hellenic Cultural Center at 6:00 pm in honor of our ancestors who displayed great courage on "October 28th, 1940" defending our motherland from the fascist regimes of Hitler and Mussolini.

3/25: The **Greek Independence Day program** ("March 25th, 1821") in honor of the Greek Revolution of 1821 will take place at the Hellenic Cultural Center at 6:00 pm.

5/21: The **Graduation program** will take place at the Hellenic Cultural Center at 6:00 pm.

FATHER GEORGE VAPORIS LIBRARY
Fall Assembly 2025
Submitted by Mary Takis

The Library has over 1,500 books, videos, DVDs and CDs

Currently 13 items are checked out:

<u>From 2022</u>	<u>From 2023</u>	<u>From 2024</u>	<u>From 2025</u>
2	5	3	3

The secured bookshelves are currently filled and we cannot take any more donations. An inventory of the book collection by titles and subject categories is still in progress. We would like to reduce the video tapes. Any duplicate donated books or videos will be available for anyone free of charge.

Thank you to all who've donated materials in the past. The Library is open Tuesdays thru Fridays 10am to 2pm; and Saturdays and Sundays 12pm to 2pm. Bill Smith has graciously volunteered to also help run the Library during the weekdays. By appointment please call 734 420 0131

NATIVITY SCOUTS
Fall Assembly 2025
Submitted by Mary Takis

The Scouts of Nativity (Boys and Girls Scouts whose families are members at Nativity Church) are always willing to lend a hand and serve our parish in some way.

This year thus far, Sunday of Orthodoxy (March 9th) was relabeled as Youth Sunday to include all Sunday School students to help in the service, icon procession, and pass baskets to raise money for FOCUS Detroit afterwards. Youth Sunday will continue again in 2026 (March 1, 2026). Also many children who were 8 years and older helped with games in the Kids Corner tent during the 20th Taste of Greece Festival back in August. Hope to see more helpers during the Holidays and Liturgical Year. Currently, there are Scouts working on the St George award metals. Hope to award in June 2026.

For more info on Religious Scouting Awards please contact Mary Takis, or praypub.org.

**Philoptochos Report
Fall Assembly 2025
Submitted by Kathryn Kline**

September

- Taste of Greece Sponsorship - \$500
- Hosted Vesper Service Dinner

October

- Hosted Hot Diggity Dog Fundraiser for Breast Cancer - Raised \$1,200 for the Pink Fund

November

- Passed tray for Sts. Cosmos and Damian - Collected and sent \$510
- Hosted Soup Sunday Fundraiser - Raised \$741
- Held a Turkey Raffle - Raised \$315

SUNDAY CHURCH/CATECHISM SCHOOL

Submitted by Jerry Takis

ENROLLMENT & ATTENDANCE

- Sunday Church School (SCS) enrollment is showing another mini-boom in the PK-K grades which is encouraging as Nativity has seen many High School graduates over the last four years. Currently, we have an estimated 53 students who may be active with 28 who are paid (or exempt). Last year, we had 51 possible participating students with 28 registered, so they are slightly down this year from last. We are holding steady, but we are also getting younger!! There is a demographic shift from upper grades to PK-4.
- Our theme for this school year is "Have joy in the Lord." We wish to reinforce the joyful feast days to keep this treasured tradition alive with our children!

TEACHING STAFF

- This year, we Nondo is coming back to teach 5-6 grades. If anyone is interested in helping us teach a class, please let Jerry or Father Nick know. We do have need for a couple of more teachers who will attend consistently, have a charisma with the students, and be willing to teach Orthodoxy true to the faith.

CALENDAR AND ACTIVITIES

- Our Nativity Christmas Pageant will be on Sunday, December 21, Christmas Eve after the morning Divine Liturgy. Make sure you bring students every week so we can practice!
- The Annunciation Program will be planned for the Sunday closest to March 25th.
- This year's Good Friday Retreat is being planned as "Walk with Me" where we will follow Jesus and experience with him, His Passion of Holy Week. The retreat is open to all, our sister parishes in the Detroit Metropolis, and other jurisdictions.
- Graduation is planned for June 7th so anyone planning anything this time of year, please keep it in mind.

UPDATES AND NEEDS FOR THE EDUCATION CENTER

- Huge thank you to the Parish for updates to the NEC basement to prevent flooding. So far, so good!
- If anyone does roof gutters, we need repairs and possibly some replacements to the roof gutters.
- New (or used) cement steps are needed at the front door of the NEC.
- The NEC also needs a 3-way switch replaced, so anyone with electrical experience to volunteer to do a small job would be greatly appreciated! The switch is already on hand.

ASSESSMENT

- The director's assessment of the SCS at Nativity for 2025-2026 year is
- Our SCS is on the upswing and we recommend to reach out to all parents and invite new families to build up our SCS program – especially for the middle grades.
- If you know anyone who hasn't attended and might be willing to come to or return to Nativity, please let Jerry or Father Nick know so we can warmly invite them to come.
- Finally we always THANK YOU, PARISH AND PARENTS, FOR YOUR HELP! Let us be festive, joyful and enthusiastic with the treasure we have been given, children and feast days!

