



## PARISH COUNCIL QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

April thru June, 2024

ST. RAPHAEL NICHOLAS & IRENE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH



*We have had a very successful 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter during 2024. At our recent general assembly held on June 2<sup>nd</sup> we informed our faithful of our current financial status, and our many ministry accomplishments. Keeping up with growth, kindly read the message to our Sts. RNI family, written by Sy Nease, our Stewardship Ministry Leader.*

Dear Sts. RNI Family,

Watermelon, peaches, ripe tomatoes: these are some of my favorite summer fruits! As we enter into the fruitful abundance of the summer months, I want to update you on our current stewardship. For those of you who support the ministry of Saints Raphael, Nicholas, and Irene through regular tithe and stewardship, thank you so much. Your financial support is significant, bearing much fruit.

So far this year, we are in a situation not uncommon to many parishes: we are just getting by. Stewardship is up (Glory to God!), but so are expenses (even with a spending freeze). But while stewardship may be up, it is not where it should be. For example, of our current \$150,000 received this year, over a third of that comes from only 5 stewards (one family has already generously fulfilled their substantial tithe for the year). Eleven stewards constitute 47% of total stewardship received so far this year. This means that (less than) 10% of our total stewards are supporting almost 50% of our overall stewardship. Glory to God that we have such generous individuals who are able and willing to give of what God has given to them!

Thankfully we have a few young adults who are stewards. They may not have much, but they are supporting their parish. We also have a number of retired individuals and couples who generously support the parish with the limited resources they have. And so many of our elder members support the parish with their time and presence, blessing all of us with their many years of wisdom and their experience of God's mercy in their lives. Again, glory to God!

My sincere plea and encouragement are to those who are able to give but currently do not. We have a number of stewards who give a very small amount but could very likely give more. As you are aware, this parish continues to grow and will require more and more of all of us. Some will directly benefit more than others, but if we are truly the body of Christ, every part of the body is blessed when any part of the body is blessed. As we minister to our youth and young adults, the entire body is blessed. As we add staff (a second Priest!) to help Father Barnabas, the entire body is blessed. As we add more teaching opportunities and service opportunities, the entire body is blessed.

So, to those who can give more, please consider increasing your stewardship. If every steward gave at least \$60/week or \$3000/year, we would be able to fully support every ministry of Sts. RNI as well as a Priest's assistant or 2<sup>nd</sup> Priest to help Father Barnabas; not to mention securing relics and taking care of our building and property. St. Paul rejoiced over the Philippians' willingness to support his ministry, saying, "Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account." As we begin to enjoy the fruits of summer, know that when you support the ministry of your parish, you are bearing fruit that abounds to your account!

In His Service,  
Sy Nease, Stewardship Ministry Leader