

# YOUTH MINISTRIES DIRECTORY

## 2019 – 2020



### ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

REV. FR. SIMON THOMAS, *PARISH PRIEST*  
REV. FR. NICHOLAS VIERON, *PASTORAL EMERITUS*  
MR. WILLIAM A. KALLAS, *PASTORAL ASSISTANT*

# Children Are the Church!

*"Fathers and mothers: Go and lead your child by the hand into the church."*

-SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

We often hear the youth of a parish being described as "the future of the Church." We at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church believe that children *are* the Church. We love our youth and their presence reflects the life of the parish – from teenagers down to the smallest infant. As the old saying goes, "What is worse than a crying baby in church? No crying babies in church!"

It is for this reason that this Youth Ministries Directory has been created. Within this directory you will find all the ministries the Annunciation Church is able to offer to our youth throughout the 2019-2020 ecclesiastical year. A description of each ministry, along with how you and your family can participate will be included. It is our prayer that through these ministries, your family will grow closer to Christ and His Holy Church!

*"The primary lesson for life must be implanted in the soul from the earliest age. The primary lesson for children is to know the eternal God, the One Who gives everlasting life."*

-SAINT CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

## Archdiocesan Social Media Resources

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries has expanded into the social media sphere! Join the conversation!

**Facebook:** Y2AM.official

**Twitter:** @Y2AM\_Official

**Instagram:** @Y2AM\_Official

**YouTube:** Y2AM & Y2AM REAL Orthodoxy

Reflect with us by following us on our Blog: The Ladder

(<http://blogs.goarch.org/y2am/theladder>)

Discover with us by digging deeper into the Sunday Gospels on Poetry Genius:

<http://genius.com/albums/Y2am/Exegenius>

Stay technologically safe with us: Faith & Safety (<https://faithandsafety.org>)

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## PARISH PROGRAMS & EVENTS

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### Acolytes

This ministry is designed for young men between the ages of 6-18, who are called to assist the priest during the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and other divine services during major Feast days. It requires a great deal of dedication on behalf of both the young men, as well as from their parents who transport them to church. This is a most sacred ministry of the Orthodox Church.

Acolytes are asked to arrive properly dressed (i.e. a white or light-colored dress shirt, a tie, dress pants, and dress shoes) on time for the service. The Divine Liturgy begins at 10am, and all servants are asked to arrive at Church by 9:45am.

Acolytes should prepare themselves to receive Holy Communion as often as possible. As Christians we prepare by fasting on the appropriate days (i.e. Wednesdays and Fridays and/or throughout other festal periods) as well as limiting our thoughts, words, and actions to only those things that glorify God. We also fast completely on Sunday morning, not eating or drinking anything until we receive Holy Communion.

Serving in the Holy Sanctuary is a privilege. These young men have shown responsibility and dedication to the Lord and His Church. The Acolytes assist the priest under the supervision of Mr. Daniel Shipman.

### Athenian Dance Program

*"Let the children praise the Lord with dance!" -Psalm 149:3*

The Athenian Dance Troupe's mission is to provide dancers with artistic education and immersion in the rich tradition of Hellenic performing arts and dance. A key goal for The Athenian Dance Troupe is to instill in its dancers an enthusiasm for and desire to share the art of Hellenic dance within the Memphis community.

We accept dancers into the program starting in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. For older children and teenagers interested in joining, no prior dance experience is required. All are welcome! The Junior troupe comprises children in 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade and the Senior troupe includes children in 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

The current dance rehearsal schedule from September through May is available on the parish calendar. The Junior troupe rehearsals last approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Senior troupe rehearsals run for approximately two to three hours. Rehearsal attendance determines your child's performance opportunities.

The Athenian Dance Troupe regularly performs for the parish during national Greek celebrations such as *Oxi* Day and Greek Independence Day (March 25<sup>th</sup>). The troupes also perform for the Memphis community at the annual Greek Festival and when invited to cultural festivals, schools, and nursing homes.

The instructors for both dance troupes are Andrew & Leah Horvath. If you have any questions, would like more info, or would like to enroll your child(ren), please contact Father Simon at the Church Office, or the Horvaths.

Andrew Horvath  
[andrewmarkhorvath@gmail.com](mailto:andrewmarkhorvath@gmail.com)

Leah Apalodimas Horvath  
[leahapalodimas@yahoo.com](mailto:leahapalodimas@yahoo.com)

## GOYA & JOY

*"Young people must be made to distinguish between helpful and injurious knowledge, keeping clearly in mind the Christian's purpose in life. So, like the athlete or the musician, they must bend every energy to one task, the winning of the heavenly crown."*

-SAINT BASIL THE GREAT

Youth ministry begins with the family in the home. It continues in the Church as we strive to provide for the spiritual needs of the children of our parish. The foundation of all youth ministry is the cultivation and education of our children, so that they may become active members of the Body of Christ.

This ministry incorporates the "Four Circles of Ministry" - *liturgia* (worship), *koinonia* (fellowship), *diakonia* (service), and *martyria* (witness). Our Youth Family Nights will take place approximately once every month. We will begin with a prayer service, followed by a meal, then an outing or social event.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Fr. Simon at the Church Office. The Senior GOYA (Grades 9-12) advisors are Andrew & Tina Douglas. The JOY advisors are Kellye Farris, Madeleine Donnelly, and Pannay Guigley.

## Choir

If your children love to sing, then the Choir is for them! The Annunciation Choir encourages children to chant hymns and become active participants during the Divine Liturgy and other church services. Through Choir, your child will develop his or her God-given talent and offer it back to the Lord.

The Annunciation Choir is a volunteer choir that is open to all children in our parish. Don't worry about whether your child has "a good voice"! All voices raised in song to the Lord are beautiful! Practices take place every other Thursday. Please consult the weekly bulletin or parish calendar for precise dates. Please contact Father Simon at the Church Office or our Choir Director, DoraThea Kastanas, if you would like more information.

## Greek School

Kyria Despina Karas has offered instruction in the Greek language and culture for many years. In you are interested in joining a class, please contact her or call the Church Office. There are also resources online for the Greek language. Here are a few resources that several of our families are using:

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- *Papaloizos Publications*: [www.greek123.com](http://www.greek123.com)
- *Time for Greek School* resource blog by Presvytera Georgia: [greeksschoolusa.com](http://greeksschoolusa.com)
- *I Learn Greek* resource page: [www.ilearngreeks.com](http://www.ilearngreeks.com)
- *The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Department of Greek Education* has a Kindergarten curriculum, along with several textbooks for higher levels:
- <http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/greekeducation/>
- *Learn Greek Online* is a course provided by *Kypros.Net* in collaboration with the *Cyprus Radio Foundation* to teach the modern Greek language online:
- [www.Kypros.org/LearnGreek/](http://www.Kypros.org/LearnGreek/)

# Sunday School

*“With us everything should be secondary compared to our concern with children, and their upbringing in the instruction and teaching of the Lord.”*

-SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

The philosophy of our Sunday School Program is based on a Christ-centered approach, which enriches our students with principles of the Orthodox Faith, providing well rounded and theologically based lessons on the Bible, Liturgical Worship, Prayer Life, Sacramental Life, and Mission Awareness. Our program builds a solid foundation for the children of our community through exemplary lessons in the teaching and worship practices of the Orthodox Christian Faith.

Sunday School children are encouraged to attend the Divine Liturgy with their families beginning at 10:00am. Immediately following Holy Communion, children proceed directly to the classroom so lessons may begin. Classes end at 12pm. Registration begins on August 4<sup>th</sup>, with classes beginning on August 11<sup>th</sup>. It is never too late to join!

Please bring your child(ren) to Sunday School every week. The curriculum builds on concepts learned from week to week and regular attendance will help your child more fully understand the teachings of our Orthodox Christian Faith.

Perfect Attendance (zero unexcused absences) and Excellent Attendance (three or fewer unexcused absences) will be acknowledged on Graduation Sunday. Excused absences include: 1) attending another parish (with bulletin); 2) attending a camp with a religious service included.

Stewardship is an integral aspect in the life of a Christian. As part of the Sunday School curriculum, we seek to develop in our children a sense of stewardship and belonging. Please encourage your child(ren) to participate in the stewardship program through the Sunday School. Please contact the Sunday School Director, Anna Paris, for additional information.

Our Sunday School Program is for children in Preschool (age 4) through High School. We have five classes with a curriculum that rotates each year:

**Pre-K & Kindergarten**

Teachers – Anna Paris & Naji Nassif

Curriculum – “God Loves Us, What We Do and See in Church”

**1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

Teachers – Kristine Wagner, Christina George, & Magda Sinis

Curriculum – “Me and My World”

**3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Teachers – Stephanie Johnson & Susan Meng

Curriculum – “Growing with God”

**5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Teachers – Renee Graves & Pannay Guigley

Curriculum – “Divine Liturgy for Children”

**7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Teachers – Ken Hoover & Gabriella Stroplos

Curriculum – “Orthodoxy: Catholicism without the Additions, Protestantism without the Substractions”

**High School Grades**

Teachers – Chris Apalodimas, Bryan Berretta, Elizabeth Hawkins, & Ted Poplos

Curriculum – Old Testament (Exodus) & Applying our Faith

## *Christmas Program*

Every year, the youth of our Parish present a Christmas Program on one of the Sundays in December to share the Nativity account - the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. The Program, entitled "The Living Icon," includes scripture readings, hymns, music, and the Nativity story presented by more than 30 children.

The day's activities begin with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, followed by the Christmas Program. Included with the program are carols sung by the Adult Choir, Youth Choir, and Greek School. Following the dismissal, fellowship continues with a festive Lenten meal. During the meal, Santa Claus arrives and gives gifts to the children.

The Christmas Program this year will be on December 22, 2019. To participate in this annual program, contact our Christmas Program Director, Ken Hoover at [ken\\_hoover@comcast.net](mailto:ken_hoover@comcast.net).

## *Scout Sunday*

March 29th is Scout Sunday at the Annunciation, and we honor our Scouts in the Parish. In 1960, the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas [SCOBA] endorsed Scouting as viable part of their youth ministry and created the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting [EOCS]. This is presently an agency under The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas. The Scout Law says that a "Scout is Reverent" and the Scouts of all ages promise to do their "Duty to God". These values strengthen youth character in their family, community and faith.

On Scout Sunday, scouts assist with Sunday worship by ushering, serving as Acolytes, and reading the Epistle. Please let us know if your child is in the scouting program.

## *Lenten Youth Retreat & Saturday of Lazarus*

The Lenten Youth Retreat will begin on Friday, April 10, 2020. This retreat is a lock-in sponsored by the GOYA. The retreat begins with a fellowship activity, which is followed by a Lenten dinner. After dinner, Father Simon spends time speaking with the youth. When it is time for bed, boys and girls retire to separate rooms with chaperones. The morning begins with the Divine Liturgy on the Saturday of Lazarus, and the day's activities.

On the Saturday of Lazarus, April 11, 2020, our parish will celebrate a family day with special activities for everyone. Following the Divine Liturgy and a Lenten pancake breakfast, we engage in several activities: folding palms, cleaning and decorating the church with palms, and ensuring that the church grounds are ready for Holy Week and Pascha.

### Youth Sunday

Youth Sunday will be scheduled in the May 19, 2020. On this Sunday, we will showcase the youth of our parish, as they will have an opportunity to: prepare the *prophoro* for the Liturgy, be ushers, read the Epistles, present their St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival speeches/essays/poems, host coffee fellowship, along with other surprises. This is a wonderful opportunity to show that our youth are an integral part of our parish.

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## METROPOLIS PROGRAMS & EVENTS

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### Saint Nicholas Summer Camp

Every summer, hundreds of children and teenagers from throughout the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit gather for our summer camp program. Their Orthodox Christian Faith comes alive for young people as they develop lifelong friendships and memories that will last forever. Summer camp activities include: arts and crafts, swimming, canoeing, campfires, nature hikes, Olympics, skit nights, daily worship services, and Orthodox life discussions.

Camp is typically scheduled for the month of July. If your family would like to participate, please contact Father Simon in the Church Office. There is a bus that is typically scheduled to accommodate transportation to the camp. More information can be found at: <http://www.stnicholascamp.org/>

### Youth Olympics

Young people from all over the Metropolis of Detroit join together in order to get better acquainted, have fun, and learn about their faith. Information may be found on the Metropolis of Detroit website: [detroit.goarch.org](http://detroit.goarch.org)

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# ARCHDIOCESAN PROGRAMS & EVENTS

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## *CrossRoads Program*

CrossRoads is a ten-day academic summer institute that prepares high school juniors and seniors to make big life decisions and connect with the Orthodox Christian theological and spiritual tradition. Hosted on the scenic Hellenic College/Holy Cross campus, overlooking the beautiful Boston skyline, participants experience daily worship, visit local parishes, tour Boston, and spend a day at the beach.

The CrossRoads Program at Hellenic College/Holy Cross is an engaging 10-day program for Orthodox Christian high school juniors and seniors of all jurisdictions, that takes place every summer on the campus of Hellenic College/Holy Cross in Brookline, Massachusetts. For ten days participants experience a full liturgical life, praying together at Orthros at the school's chapel and at Vespers at different Orthodox churches in the Boston area.

The students study their faith in an Orthodox academic setting as two seminary professors offer five days of mini-courses on various subjects. They participate in service projects at different outreach ministries in the Boston area, hang out together as a group and have fun and fellowship time with other Orthodox Christians teenagers from around the United States, forging friendships that will last a lifetime!

In all of this the CrossRoads program hopes to help its participants discern their life callings, matching their personal gifts with the needs of the world. The staff of CrossRoads believes that whatever direction you choose for your life, it can be of service to God and to your neighbor, which is Christ's call to us all.

### **Eligibility:**

CrossRoads has been designed to best meet the needs of Orthodox teens in their junior or senior year of high school who desire to deepen their faith in an Orthodox setting. For this reason, applicants must be between the ages of 16 and 18 years old and should not have graduated high school prior to April of the year they apply.

**Applications:**

For more information and to fill out an application to participate in the CrossRoads Program please go to: <http://www.crossroadinstitute.org/>

**Applications for Summer 2020 will open at the end of October 2019!**

**Summer 2020 Sessions**

**First Session:** Mid-June (Boston)

**Second Session:** Early July (Boston)

**Third Session:** Late July (Chicago)

**Tuition:**

For summer 2020 there is a tuition charge for the CrossRoad Summer Institute of \$850 for the ten-day session. Travel arrangements to and from Hellenic College in Brookline are also the responsibility of the student. Participant accommodations, meals, and activities related to CrossRoad are covered by the scholarship and partial tuition charge, although we recommend that students bring some spending cash for our outings into Boston. Students will be able to apply for financial aid only after they have been accepted to the program. Accepted applicants will receive scholarship information with their acceptance letter.

## **St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival**

The 2020 parish St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival will be held in the Annunciation Education Center on February 29, 2020. We are planning to make this year's festival the biggest and best one yet! The District Oratorical Festival will take place in April 2020, and the Metropolis Oratorical Festival will be in May 2020. The 37<sup>th</sup> National Oratorical Festival location has not been determined, and will take place in June, 2020. The Annunciation Parish Festival Chairman is Kathy Zambelis with the assistance of Paul Vieron.

**As in the past, we will have three divisions of speeches:**

**Elementary Division (parish level)** - This division is non-competitive (i.e. no judging) and open to all Annunciation Sunday School students. All participants will receive a certificate. Students may choose any topic of faith (Jesus, Prayer, Icons, etc.) and speak for 60-90 seconds. Be creative!

**Junior Division** - Open to Grade 7-9 students of the Annunciation Sunday school. Students will write and deliver a three to four minute speech on one of the Junior Division topics. Gift cards will be offered for the top three speeches. Division finalists will advance to the District Festival.

**Senior Division** - Open to Grade 10-12 students of the Annunciation Sunday school. Students will write and deliver a four to five minute speech on one of the Senior Division topics. Gift cards will be offered for the top three speeches. Division finalists will advance to the District Festival.

*Last year the festival was expanded, adding essays and poetry to the public speaking competition.*

**Two divisions of essay:**

**Junior Division** - Open to Grade 7-9 students of the Annunciation Sunday school. Students will write and submit a 300-400 word essay on one of the Junior Division topics. Prizes will be offered for the top three essays. The top finalist will advance to the Metropolis Festival.

**Senior Division** - Open to Grade 10-12 students of the Annunciation Sunday school. Students will write and submit a 500-600 word essay on one of the Senior Division topics. Prizes will be offered for the top three essays. The top finalist will advance to the Metropolis Festival.

**Two divisions of poetry:**

**Junior Division** - Open to Grade 7-9 students of the Annunciation Sunday school. Students will write and submit a poem in any form (sonnet, open verse, etc.) of between eight and thirty lines on one of the Junior Division topics. Prizes will be offered for the top three poems. The top finalist will advance to the Metropolis Festival.

**Senior Division** - Open to Grade 10-12 students of the Annunciation Sunday school. Students will write and submit a poem in any form (sonnet, open verse, etc.) of between eight and thirty lines on one of the Senior Division topics. Prizes will be offered for the top three poems. The top finalist will advance to the Metropolis Festival.

*A student may only participate in one category of the Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival: Speech, Essay or Poetry. All participants in the Annunciation Saint John Chrysostom 2020 Oratorical Festival must register not later than February 15, 2020.*

## *Ionian Village*

Teens and young adults that participate in Ionian Village travel across Greece, venerate the relics of saints, walk in the footsteps of the Apostles, and visit significant sites of Greek history and culture. Ionian Village is a unique summer camping program located in Greece and operated by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Ionian Village offers its participants a unique experience that is unavailable elsewhere. At the end of the program, staff and campers return to their homes with strengthened faith and with a greater appreciation for the Church and for Greek culture and heritage.

Teens and young adults have the time of their lives while at Ionian Village. Staff and campers from across the United States form bonds and friendships at Ionian Village that last a lifetime. Since 1970, almost 16,000 teens and young adults have experienced a 40+ year old tradition committed to building, "Faith and friendships that last a lifetime."

Ionian Village operates from a beautiful seafront campsite on western Peloponnesus in Greece on the coast of the Ionian Sea. The camp facility accommodates nearly 200 campers and 50 Staff Members in white-washed cabins and bungalows. The campground was developed and built with the intention of fostering an Orthodox Christian community and providing a Greek village experience. The facilities are centered around a traditional white-washed Chapel and include a private beach, an oversized swimming pool, shady pine forests, an amphitheater, a large hall for gatherings and activities, an open-air cafeteria, a soccer field, two volleyball courts, two tennis courts, and a basketball court.

### **Ionian Village Summer 2020 Camp Programs**

Both sessions are open to campers who are currently 9th grade through those who will complete the 12th grade in the spring of 2020.

<b>Session One:</b>	<b>Session Two:</b>
Late June – Early July	Late July – Early August

Full Non-Refundable Registration including round trip airfare from New York to Athens: \$6,000.00

\*We require a non-refundable \$500 deposit in order to register for camp.

**Please note:** All international travel must be booked with our agents. Most campers will travel to Greece on the start date of the program and will return to America on the last day of the program. There is also an option for campers to extend their ticket longer than the 20 days of the program, either before or after. This **MUST** be done with the official travel agency of Ionian Village, ProTravel. Campers traveling on the start and end date of the program will travel as a group with chaperones from Ionian Village. Campers are not allowed to book their international travel on their own.

For those who wish to receive a flight exemption, the parent/guardian of the participant(s) must contact the Office of Ionian Village to apply for a travel exemption **before** April 1. All decisions for flight exemptions are at the discretion of the Camp Director. To be considered, the participant(s) must be in Europe **before and** after the session dates. If approval is received, the participant(s) independent travel information for arrival and departure from the session become part of their file and must be supplied to the Office of Ionian Village. More information can be found at <https://www.ionianvillage.org/summer-camp>