

THE ORTHODOX OASIS

“WHAT GREATER

wonder

HAS CREATION SEEN?”

ASSUMPTION

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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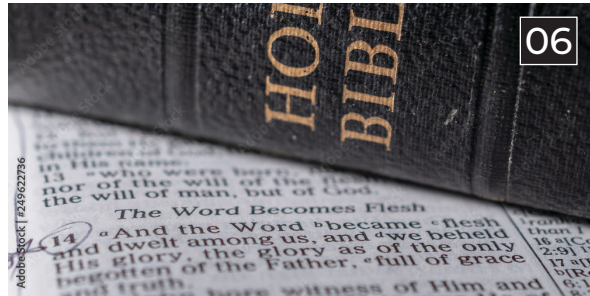
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ASSUMPTION

G R E E K O R T H O D O X C H U R C H

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NOTE: Oasis submission deadlines are the 10th of the month prior to publication

“AND I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD”

The life of a five year old is magical and full of wonder. We have such fond memories of watching our three boys when they were young enough to explore. One day in particular, they were set loose in a Sierra Nevada meadow. Everything fascinated them: the smells, the bugs, wild life. It was all a vast ocean of wonder that engulfed them as they scattered in three different directions. If St. Paul was watching that day, he may have said, “How beautiful it is for them to play and be transformed by wonder, it is the gateway to seeing His glory you know.” For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived by the things made, both *His eternal glory and divine nature...*(Rom. 1:20). What happens to us when we leave the **meadow of wonder** and, if it is the gateway to the knowledge of God, how can we enter it again?

**Seek and you shall find,
knock and it shall be opened.**

Some might say, “I’m content, I don’t feel anything lacking in my life and I am not interested in knocking at all.” The *opposite of freedom is imprisonment, a hardening of the heart*. It is possible to be living in



a *prison* unaware of the *walls* that exist. Our God is a God who looks upon everything He has created as a loving, compassionate, and long-suffering Father. God is quite aware of the prisons that harden hearts. The prophet Isaiah holds the heart of God within his heart. As a distressed Father, he expresses our Lord’s dismay over His children being led away from Him by embracing *idols*. “Hear, O heaven, and hearken, O earth: for the Lord has spoken, *saying*, I have born and reared up children, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel does not know me, and the people have not regarded me. Ah sinful nation, a people full of sins, an evil seed, lawless children: you have forsaken the Lord, and provoked the Holy One of Israel... (Isaiah 1:2-6) When ancient Israel made an *alliance* with a foreign power they adopted the idols or gods of that nation. Are we aware of the consequences of the alliances we have made?

What about our professions; how do we conduct our business? How often am I shopping? How much do I consume? What is my religiosity? What is entertainment for me? What about my home décor, and the neighborhood where I choose to live? And, how about my obsession with social media? We may possess everything and find we actually have nothing. Alliances may be unavoidable but

they are still choices that can produce an unhealthy attachment to possessions. When a possession becomes something we cannot live without, it has taken us captive. Detachment from things make attachment to our Lord possible. It is no wonder that many of the homeless know God; He is relied upon every day for survival...they have nothing else.

**The wonder of the Glory of God
in creation is a gift for everyone,
meant to lead us to the door of His Kingdom.**

The reason creation does not know its Creator is because of the many prisons we have fallen into that harden our hearts. Even the atheist astronomer and planetary scientist Carl Sagan proposed a “Cosmic Calendar” that makes, in my mind, an incredible witness about the Glory of God. According to his line of thinking, if the “Big Bang” happened (15 billion years ago) on January 1, then Christ was born on December 31 just under five seconds before midnight. God has made it clear that a human being is the crown of all His creation. The human person is a “universe” within a universe who alone has a reasoning soul and a body capable of worshiping and knowing God. The human being alone has become the Temple of the living God’s presence called to live eternally in His Kingdom. The human being alone is the highest manifestation of God’s image and likeness in all of creation. It is for us alone that God becomes incarnate as a human being in order to save us from a godless life of eternal darkness. God takes 15 billion years to create a planet suitable for His Creation to exist – that says a lot about the value of the human being.

As we enter into a season of preparing for the birth of Christ, the prophet Isaiah shows us the way that leads back to the wonder of God’s glory. “Wash yourselves, be clean; remove your iniquities from your souls before mine eyes; cease from your iniquities; learn to do well; diligently seek judgement, deliver him



that is suffering wrong, plead for the orphan, and obtain justice for the widow. And come, let us reason together, said the Lord: and though your sins be as purple, I will make them white as snow; and though they be as scarlet, I will make *them* white as wool (Isaiah 1:1-18).” Isaiah was a decent human being. He was a faithful worshiper of God but didn’t know what he was lacking. One day while in worship, God opens his eyes and allows him to experience a vision of the Kingdom of God (Isaiah 6). At that moment he realized he was unclean and the people around him were unclean because they did not yet really know God. He cries out to be cleansed and then a burning coal touches his lips. Only then could he hear the voice of God. His heart was softened through the revelation of God and he received his call to give his life to Him as a Prophet - “And I heard the voice of the Lord, whom do I send, and who would go for Us?” And I said, “Here am I! Send me (Isaiah 6:8).” Every Sunday we stand next to the Prophet Isaiah waiting to hear the voice of God in our lives. It is the greatest gift we can be given and all we have to do is free ourselves in order to receive it.

In Christ’s Love,

✠Fr. Andrew



And the Word became flesh!...O, boundless compassion of God! O, inexpressible wisdom of God! O, great wonder, astounding not only the human mind, but the angelic [mind] as well! - From the Nativity Sermon of St. John of Kronstadt

It's the Holiday Season. I can't even write that without hearing Christmas music in my head.

And now, at the beginning of November, we're headed into a remarkably busy season full of a lot of things.

A lot of planning. A lot of prepping. A lot of partying.

I don't want to dismiss the goodness of all this celebration. A good Thanksgiving meal and Christmas cocktail parties deserve their rightful place in the midst of the next couple months.

But as our calendars fill up with awesome and wonderful events, it's important that we (that I!) keep track of that which is truly awesome and wonderful – **that the Word became flesh.**

While the holiday season is full of times and opportunities for celebrating, the Church actually sees it as a time for **fasting**, with the Nativity Fast beginning on November 15. For forty days, the Church invites us to go hungry, to empty our stomachs so that we might make room in our hearts to receive the **wonder of wonders:** the newborn King Jesus.

We are invited to wonder at and wait for the arrival of the incarnate Son of God.

But wonder is something that is a bit lost on us these days. Waiting is actually even harder.

In our technological age, everything is accelerated. If we have a question, we no longer have to wait with uncertainty; instead, we can merely Google it (remember when "google" wasn't also a verb?).

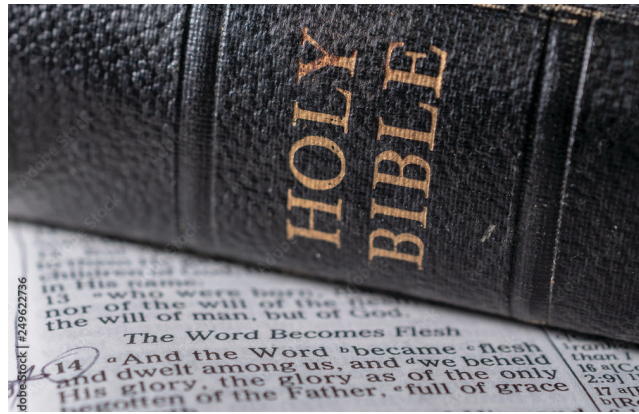
Questions are no longer mysteries to be

pondered; they are merely problems to be solved.

And so, with access to all kinds of information, we struggle to sit and *wonder*. We struggle to allow awe to hit us in the chest, and instead, we simply seek knowledge to fill the head.

But the Church invites us here to something else.

To wait. To wonder.



The Church, in her wisdom, gives us forty days to contemplate the awesome mystery of the incarnation of Christ, that the eternal God who has no beginning would choose to have a beginning in the womb of a virgin.

WHOA.

That the uncreated God would willingly choose to share our created nature is a reality that should stop us dead in our tracks and leave us with only one response:

WHOA.

How easy it is to slip into questions of HOW or WHY! How tempting to Google "How did Christ become man" or "Why did Christ become man"... but perhaps the most fitting response for us in the season of the Nativity Fast is simply, **"WHOA."**

Consider this: the God of all took on the very same

humanity that we all share. Our God who is above all creation so desired to be in close proximity to us that He decided to become one of us.

He had the same hands.

He had the same feet.

He had the same eyes.

I've had the joy of watching my children be born, and I will never forget the first time I took each of them in arms and looked at them. I had never seen something more beautiful, more amazing, **more wonderful.**

WHOA.

As I held my daughters, the significance of Christmas finally took root in my heart.

Because of the Incarnation, simply being human is a cause for awe and wonder.

Like the Psalmist, the incarnation of our Lord should lead us to reflect profoundly on words we may have grown deaf to:

We are fearfully and wonderfully made.

WHOA.

We realize this when we hold a newborn baby, but somewhere along the way we lose sight of this.

We become busy. We become distracted. We become numb to the causes for awe and wonder that exists before us when we encounter another person.

This is even more the case when we encounter other humans at the bottom of the social ladder - the poor, the destitute, the marginalized, the forgotten.

We forget that simply being human is a cause for awe and wonder.

And so the Nativity Fast comes before us, reminding us that our awesome and wonderful humanity is one that knows *hunger*.

And in this way, the Nativity Fast is an opportunity for us to stand in solidarity with the poor, those whose humanity deeply knows hunger while being simultaneously overlooked and yet a cause for awe and wonder.

So the Church offers us an invitation to contemplate the Incarnation on multiple levels.

It is an invitation for us to empty our own stomachs in anticipation of the coming King. It is an invitation for us to ponder that the King has shared *our own* humanity. And it is an invitation to recognize that the King is always coming to us in the person of our needy neighbor.

It is to recognize that the one Christ is present in all human beings, regardless of their social status.

The humanity of every person is uniquely beautiful, uniquely awesome, uniquely wonderful.

Yes, the Word became flesh 2000 years ago, but the Word is also continually *becoming flesh* in the eyes of those on the street.

WHOA.

The Nativity of our Lord shows us that the way God loves things is by becoming them.

WHOA.

So let's take this opportunity to lean into our own humanity, to recognize that hunger is itself a way to bodily become aware of our shared nature.

Let us show the love of God for the hungry by becoming hungry ourselves, and instead of merely feasting all through the holiday season, let us stand in solidarity with the poor by feeding them from our own tables, just as Jesus feeds us from His own table every Divine Liturgy.

Let us allow the Word of God to become Incarnate not just on December 25 every year, but by allowing Him to be incarnate *in us* as we lean fully into all that it is to be human and give our own lives away generously for the life of the world around us.

WHOA.

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

The Parish Council is excited about the many things unfolding at Assumption through the Ministries of our Church. Transparency and communication are important. We always encourage and welcome your feedback and questions. Please contact the Parish Council President, Takis Makridis at pccpresident@assumptionaz.org.

FINANCIAL REPORT
Nine months ended September 30, 2023

Revenues	\$724,615
Expenses*	\$798,015
Net Loss	\$ 73,400

**The YTD loss resulted from significantly lower than budget stewardship revenues.*

Stewardship

Thank you to the 296 families who have registered as stewards this year! We have received \$619,905 in commitments for the year and have collected \$463,871 through the end of August. Our 2023 budget is \$793,272, so the last four months are going to be extremely important in ending the year on-budget.

25% of our 2023 annual budget is dedicated to outreach and charity supporting 29 Assumption ministries, national & metropolis ministries, as well as outreach and philanthropy like the Good Samaritan Fund, Agape Fund, Project Mexico, various mission churches, St. Paisius Monastery, and youth scholarships.

40% of our annual budget provides ministry staffing to preach the Gospel, perform all sacraments, visit the sick and

lonely, teach the children, and build a vibrant chanting program (with in-house lessons) to experience Byzantine chanting.

35% of the budget finances church operations such as the bookkeeper, office administrator, maintenance, landscaping, utilities, and repairs. With our growth, maintaining administrative discipline is particularly important, and we have filled new staff positions that allow us to serve the community.

Not a Steward of Assumption? Please prayerfully consider becoming a Steward by submitting a commitment online at www.assumptionaz.org/stewardship, completing a paper-based form in the Narthex, or mailing your commitment form to the Church Office.

We encourage everyone who has not yet filled out a form to do so, as it helps us to make investment and planning decisions. Plus, being

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE GRID AS of October 16, 2023

Pledges	Families	Totals	Avg Pledge
\$1-999	143	\$ 57,881	\$ 405
\$1,000-1,999	80	\$ 97,464	\$ 1,218
\$2,000-2,999	33	\$ 72,760	\$ 2,205
\$3,000-3,999	18	\$ 57,564	\$ 3,198
\$4,000-4,999	12	\$ 50,485	\$ 4,207
\$5,000-5,999	15	\$ 75,600	\$ 5,040
\$6,000-6,999	4	\$ 24,372	\$ 6,093
\$7,000-7,999	1	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
\$8,000-9,999	3	\$ 24,000	\$ 8,000
\$10,000-10,999	6	\$ 60,000	\$ 10,000
\$11,000-19,999	3	\$ 39,000	\$ 13,000
\$20,000-29,999	1	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
\$30,000-40,000	1	\$ 38,000	\$ 38,000
\$50,000+	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Totals	321	\$ 674,126	\$ 2,100

2023 Stewardship Budget \$ 793,272

a steward is required to serve as a godparent for a sacrament, join a leadership team at Assumption, and participate in voting at Parish Council elections or a General Assembly. In the content below, we highlight some simple ways of giving.

Assumption Brokerage Account

We are pleased to provide multiple options for contributing to Assumption. One often-forgotten approach is to donate stock (or other securities) so that the capital gain is not taxed but goes to benefit the church. For example, suppose you bought \$1,000 worth of stock and today it is worth \$5,000: if you sold the stock, the gain of \$4,000 would be taxable, but if the stock were donated, there would be no tax liability. If there are stocks, bonds, or other securities you wish to contribute, contact our liaison, Dimitri Spanos, at Oppenheimer at (480) 596-1328.

Company Matching Donations

Many employers maintain philanthropic programs in which they match donations made by their employees. Some companies agree to make matching donations to churches. Explore with your employer whether they maintain such a matching program and whether churches are eligible. Assumption Greek Orthodox Church is a 501(c)(3) corporation and our federal tax-exempt ID is 36-4585276.

Donations from IRA or Retirement Accounts

The Internal Revenue Service reminds IRA owners age 70½ or over of their option to transfer up to \$100,000 to charity tax-free each year. These transfers, known as QCDs, offer eligible older Americans a great way to easily give to charity before the end of the year. For other retirement accounts owners subject to Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs), one needs to transfer the money directly from the retirement or IRA account to the charity for it to count as the tax-

free transfer. Any financial advisor can guide you on how to do this tax-efficient form of giving.

Old Community Center

Over the last few months, we have begun to update and refresh the old community center. This is part of a process to make the space available not only for our youth and young adult ministries, but also other ministries that wish to meet in a more intimate environment. Some of the major updates to the house have been the painting of the main room, remodeling of both bathrooms, and general clean-up to the different rooms. This will be a work in progress.

Already in 2023, we have used the new space with our youth and young adults for various needs. It has been a great space and has helped create a fruitful environment for ministry and connection.

Heavenly Coffee House (HCH)

The Coffee House is self-financing under the supervision and support of the Parish Council. Our mission is for HCH to serve as a friendly place for fellowship for our parishioners and evangelism within the surrounding community. HCH is open daily 7:00 am to 2:00 pm except for Saturdays. Drop in with a friend and don't forget to buy HCH gift cards to give out to your friends or neighbors for... just because.

SAVE THE DATE – Newcomers Dinner

Thanks to God's providence and the support of our parishioners, we have witnessed many new people joining our church. On Sunday, November 12 at 4:00 pm, the Parish Council will host a complimentary Newcomer Dinner in our Community Center for new Assumption members and their families. Individual invitations will be sent but if we have forgotten anyone, please come and RSVP on line office@assumption.org.

Nick & Katerina Adamopoulos
 Demitri & Carolyn Adames
 Christ & Christine Agnos
 Catherine Agra
 Aaron & Rebekka Amacher
 Laz Amanatidis & Popy Skagos-
 Amanatidis
 Dimitri Anagnostopoulos
 Nick & Athena Anastos
 Maria Apostolatos & Artin Knadjian
 Peter & Carol Aravosis
 Ann Argyropoulos
 Apostolos Argyros
 John Ashby
 Josef & Stella Athanas
 George & Vasso Athanasopoulos
 Sarante "Sandy" & Julie Athenson
 Athanasios Augoustatos
 Evan & Jewelie Bachanos
 Jo Ann Baldwin
 James Bancroft
 George & Kristine Banis
 Rev. Fr. Andrew & Pres. Andrea Barakos
 Shawn & Michelle Barker
 Lee & Ann Bartol
 Jerome & McCall Bauersfeld
 Daniel & Eriana Baum
 Garrett Beldt
 Tammy Belt
 Karen E. Bennion
 Lou & Judie Beratis
 John & Elaine Bergquist
 Ronald & Maria Betzig
 Daniel & Melisa Bill
 Peter & Gina Bills and Conflitti
 George & Mary Ann Bissias
 Georgia Botsios
 Clent & Soula Boudreaux
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 Rodney Enghash
 Nick & Angie Eliades
 George Elias
 Christo & Sandra Eliopoulos
 Chris & Sophie Evangelides
 Christopher & Elizabeth Exline
 Ryan Field
 Timothy & Karla Floor
 Theodore & Evangeline Fotias
 Charles Gadinis
 Angela Gallios
 Frantzeska Gallo
 David & Marta Gambaccini
 Thomas & Tanya Garrison
 Chris & Anne Cavras
 Nicholas & Judith George
 Jordan & Christyann Geotas
 Tassos & Katina Gianakakos
 Gina Giannis
 Christian A & Michaela C Gonzalez
 James & Popi Govas
 Suzanne Cuyan & Joey Cyganek
 Abby Hakim
 Billy Halax
 Amelia Hellwig
 Mary Hiras
 Michael Hiras & Sophia Fountis
 Alvin & Jeannette Hollander
 Peter & Mary Houlis
 Maria Houpis
 Diane Hubbard
 John & Coralio Ioannou
 Connie Issichopoulos
 Joseph Jalaf
 Scott Janetsky
 Nick & Courtney Joannides
 Daniel & Nicole Johnson
 Kevin & Tina Jones
 Jeanine Kaileh
 James & Linda Kalivas
 Laurie Kalivas & Robert Gibney
 Marika Kallonas
 George Kalomas
 James & Aphrodite Kandilas
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 Diane Kappa
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 James & Irene Mourikes
 Elias & Lama Mousa
 Christina Musallam
 Evie Musallam
 Susie Nakhla
 Marc & Terah Nassos
 Tom & Loretta Nations
 Bettie Neckopoulos
 Donald & Lorraine Nemer
 William & Sonia New
 Christopher Nicholson
 Chris & Lee Nicolopoulos
 Svilen Nikolov & Heather Wagner
 Monika Nikov
 Svetoslav Nikov
 Helen Noplos
 Mark Nowak & Mariana Toscas-Nowak
 Thomas & Beverly Orr
 Paul J & Erin Panagos
 Alex & Toni Pandi
 Anthony & Sandra Papadopoulos
 Bill & Soula Papadopoulos
 Chrysoula Papadopoulos
 Harrison & Christin Pappas
 George & Dorothy Parides
 Nicholas Paris
 Ted & Fotini Pasisis
 Angelo & Joyce Pateras
 Isaiah & Francesca Pavlatos
 Emily Pefanis
 Peter & Penny Pefanis
 Elenitsa Pena
 Rocco & Harriet Perna
 Ken & Penelope Plache
 Aquila & Anastasia Placker
 Gus & Anna Plagianis
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 Christina Pullos
 Elizabeth Riethmann
 Demetra Rishwain
 Mike & Antonia Ristagno
 Andrew Rores & Samira Fatehyar
 Star Rothenbacher

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 Perianthros & Evanthia Sarmothrakis
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 Hanadi Shraiki
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BUY TICKETS NOW



ALL SAINTS CAMP CELEBRATION BANQUET

SATURDAY | NOVEMBER 11, 2023

ASSUMPTION COMMUNITY CENTER

\$50 ADULTS | \$30 COLLEGE STUDENTS

\$20 KIDS 6-12 | KIDS UNDER 6 EAT FREE



The event will replace this year's ASC Golf Invitational to raise funds to benefit the All Saints Camp Ministry and is being hosted by Camp staff! Everyone is invited (bring the whole family) to enjoy a small taste of the camp experience while learning about how it helps our children and young adults that participate each summer.

**BEGINS WITH CAMP VESPERS AT 6:00 PM
FOLLOWED BY THE BANQUET AT 6:30 PM**

SNAPSHOTS *of life at Assumption*

GOYA EVENT



COMMUNITY OUTREACH DAY



FIRST FRIDAYS



CATECHISM



PHILOTOCHOS MIX & MNGLE



FIRST FRIDAYS



SEP-OCT 2023

IF YOU HAVE PHOTOS YOU WOULD LIKE CONSIDERED FOR THE NEXT ISSUE, EMAIL TO OFFICE@ASSUMPTIONAZ.ORG

FIRST FRIDAYS



MINISTRY EXPO



HEAVENLY COFFEE HOUSE

FIRST FRIDAYS



COMMUNITY OUTREACH DAY



PHILOTOCHOS MIX & MINGLE

REGISTER TODAY!

ANNUAL YOUTH

WINTER

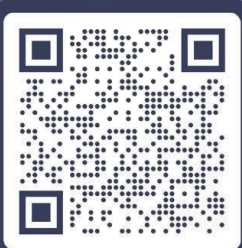
Retreat

January 12 - 14, 2024

Emmanuel Pines Camp, Prescott, AZ

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Questions? Niko Paris:
youth@assumptionaz.org

AY&YA
ASSUMPTION YOUTH YOUNG ADULTS

WONDER IN THE HYMNS OF THE NATIVITY

BY ANASTÁZIUS KAEJATÍDARJÁN

When asked to talk about this, the first thing that went through my head was the following heirmos. It would be sung during Orthros on the 25th of December, as part of the Canon of the feast, and it's one of a handful of hymns that actually uses the word "wonder."

Once, the Master who works wonders saved a people, dividing watery waves of sea, leaving dry land; and now he is born of his own will from a maid, giving us our path, and so we give him glory equal with the Father in essence and with man.

Rather than simply meaning the sense of awe, here "wonder" is used rather differently: a term for the object of our wonder. Buried in this usage is the recognition that God is the worker of unfathomable wonders. His wonders *rightly warrant* a response from us, and this is where our own sense of wonder or awe comes in. The hymn mentions the parting of the waters, which is a reference to Moses and the Red Sea, but also to the creation of the world itself, as the Spirit hovers over the face of the waters, pulling dry land out from them. Next, it says God is born of his own will from a virgin, and in so doing, provides for us the path to salvation, just like of old when he prepared the way for Israel to cross the sea. The former is a great marvel, and the latter is even more so—Who is ever born of their own will? Who has the authority and power to command their own birth for the restoration of humanity? As Christians, it is our goal to respond appropriately to the wonders wrought by the Lord; and what is the appropriate response? To be fully attentive to the profundity, to be transformed, to have our hearts rightly set in order revolving around the great wonder. But for our response to be true and genuine, it can't remain a mere feeling: it must expand into our actions. Thus, the hymn says, "*...and so we give him glory...*," in order to teach us, not only that true awe inspires us to glorify God, but that the only appropriate response to a great wonder *is another great wonder.*

*What great wonder could we give in return? How? We can live doxological lives glorifying God in all things, becoming citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, Children of God by adoption, and thus active participants in God's creative acts, even our own creation. The word, "kingdom," along with other words that end in -dom, has a surprising etymological connection to the word, "doom," which in turn has a deeper and older meaning: *destiny, judgement, a house that has been set in order.* To be part of the Kingdom of Heaven means to be rightly oriented, with our attention fixed on the King of Heaven. Here is another hymn that illuminates for us the meaning of wonder. Belonging to the prayers of the Ninth Hour, it would be sung as a part of the service of the Royal Hours of the Nativity. It is long, but it includes the following instruction.*

...Henceforth, cast aside all fear and understand this strange wonder; for in my womb God now descends upon the earth because of his mercy, and he has taken flesh...

To properly behold the wonder is to "cast aside all fear," because the works of the Lord are borne of mercy and love. Without this mercy and without this love, the appropriate response to the acts of God might be something like fear, as it is frightful for the sea to split, and even more frightful, for divinity to become visibly manifest on earth. Such things disrupt our sense of security; they upend the predictable course of our lives, thrusting us into a condition altogether strange and unpredictable. For Christians, however, fear is supplanted by wonder, because God is acting in love towards us, to heal and deify us, and we can trust him. Boldly, we may cast aside any sensual security in order to enter instead into a relationship of trust. Love is the heart of the matter; there is no wonder without the profound desire for unity with *the beloved.* The Lord has this kind of love towards us. The purpose of our wonder is to kindle this profound desire also within ourselves

MEET...JONAH & ELIJAH ROGNSTAD

“...Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.” - Mark 10:14-15

This new feature in the Oasis is designed to help you get to know the stories of fellow parishioners as we seek to embody Christ’s Church.

Q How long have you been at Assumption? What brought you here? We have been attending Assumption for the last seven years. We were both too young to remember exactly why we chose Assumption, but we were following our family’s decision to find a better church to be a part of.

Q In what ways are you and your family involved at Assumption? Our family is involved in many ways. Our parents both teach the 3rd/4th grade Sunday school class, and our dad used to be on the parish council. He is now in charge of the church-wide small groups. We both do First Fridays, attend Sunday school, go to Vacation Church School, and we serve in the altar during liturgy on Sundays.

Q Do you have a favorite memory from your time in the Assumption community?
Jonah: That’s a really hard question, so I will have to give you a couple. One of my favorite memories is from All Saints Camp. We were playing Tug of war during the “ASC Games” and when both teams began to pull on the rope, the rope broke. It was really funny! Another favorite memory from Assumption is being

able to watch my God-siblings be baptized into the Church. **Elijah:** My favorite memories also include watching our God-siblings be baptized. Other favorite memories I have are the “ASC Games” at All Saints Camp when we painted our shirts different colors and competed against other teams, First Fridays, and going to Vacation Church School.



Jonah and Elijah at camp

Q What does the word Wonder mean to you?
Jonah: Wonder means to be curious about something. It means that whatever it is, you want to know more about it. **Elijah:** Wonder means something you don’t know. It’s something you must take time thinking about to understand or something you will need to ask questions about.

Q What do you wonder about when thinking about the faith? **Jonah:** I think it's crazy that God is always there. He has no end or beginning, He just is. Also, what's amazing is how Jesus never sinned during his whole life. I also wonder about the Trinity, how are they all together? How did the Holy Spirit get created? All of these things about God will keep us wondering about Him forever. **Elijah:** I really wonder about the fact God has no beginning or end, it's crazy to think about. Would it be boring to be alone for so long? Or how the Trinity is three persons in one, how does that even work?



Jonah

Q What things at Assumption have helped teach you about the faith? And who has helped you learn? Both of us have learned a lot about the faith and the bible from Sunday school. Fr. Jacob has taught us many things during the Children's sermons on Sundays and at All Saints Camp. Fr. Tim, Fr. Andrew, and Fr. Alex have given us many lessons about our faith that we still remember.



Elijah

Q What kind of things are you involved in outside of church? **Jonah:** Outside of church I like to play baseball. I play a few different positions including 2nd base, center field and pitcher. On top of baseball, I like to play chess and read. **Elijah:** Besides school, I played golf last year. I like playing video games, reading and when it gets hot out, swimming. I also really love Legos. I once built a Lego motorcycle that was over 3,000 pieces in total.



Jonah and Elijah with siblings Micah and Penelope

MOMS & TOTS - THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

BY RAHAL TUOTI

The Mission of Our Moms and Tots Group Establishing Community for Our Youth

In the heart of our community, there exists a haven for mothers and their little ones, a place where faith, friendship, and familial bonds intertwine seamlessly. Our Moms and Tots Group is more than just a gathering; it's a time for mothers to share experiences, get a breather, and watch as their little ones begin forming lifelong bonds with the other children of our parish. At the core of our Moms and Tots Group lies a shared dedication to nurturing faith within our families, while staying engaged and connected with other moms rooted in the same place of life. We believe that instilling a strong foundation of spiritual values from a young age is paramount. By simply bringing the children together for authentic play, sweet interaction, and gentle introduction to our faith, mothers are supported in their steadfast mission to raise their little ones in a nurturing, spiritually enriching environment.



camaraderie that allows our Orthodox faith to flourish.

Our tots, too, find solace during these gatherings. We provide toys, crafts, and snacks to encourage interactive play in a nurturing environment for the littlest members of our community to grow, learn, and make new friends. In the arms of this loving community, children thrive both socially and emotionally.

The Moms and Tots Group stands as a beacon for moms to find peace and unity with others who share the similar experiences raising children. Above all, it is a testament to the power of community, and the common interest of raising our children together in the Orthodox faith.



Embracing Moms and Nurturing Play

Motherhood is a journey filled with joys, triumphs, and its fair share of challenges. Our group serves as an opportunity for mothers and little ones to stay connected and build a community of

Connect

We meet **every first and third Wednesday** of the month at 9:30 am. If you have any questions, please contact Talia Curtis at: taliakcurtis@gmail.com.

ANNUAL PHILOPTOCHOS CHARITY BENEFIT

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ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH COMMUNITY CENTER

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THE DATE!**

More details coming soon!



KIDS PAGE

BRING THIS COMPLETED PAGE TO FIRST FRIDAYS FOR A TREAT!

FIND THE HIDDEN WORDS IN THE WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

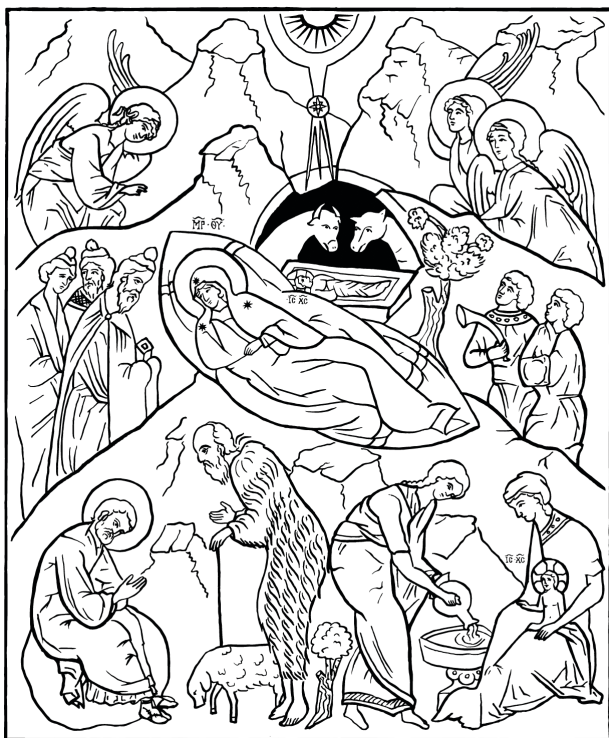
- | | |
|-------|-----------|
| AWE | GRATITUDE |
| CHILD | NATIVITY |
| COINS | NICHOLAS |
| FAITH | THANKS |
| FAST | THEOTOKOS |
| FEAST | WINTER |
| GIFT | WONDER |

LEARN A NEW WORD

wonder | *noun*: A feeling of surprise mingled with admiration, caused by something beautiful, unexpected, unfamiliar, or inexplicable; **verb**: be curious to know something.

Can you think of some examples of times when you have felt a sense of wonder at church or when you think about your faith?

COLORING FUN



WORD SEARCH

Y	T	L	C	O	I	N	S	S	J	K	Q
X	S	N	I	C	H	O	L	A	S	E	N
D	A	R	C	S	K	N	A	H	T	S	W
L	E	M	M	Q	E	J	F	N	N	O	I
I	F	D	Y	W	L	W	A	N	N	K	T
H	M	Y	U	O	P	W	A	D	G	O	S
C	M	M	O	T	I	T	E	I	S	T	A
O	G	O	H	N	I	R	F	H	S	O	F
Q	F	B	T	V	Y	T	S	X	O	E	C
O	V	E	I	B	C	Z	A	O	B	H	Y
Y	R	T	N	U	O	P	Y	R	C	T	U
O	Y	G	H	T	I	A	F	J	G	P	O

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

I WONDER why...

CRAFT IDEA

MAKE YOUR OWN MOBILE OF THE NATIVITY SCENE USING THESE [FREE PRINTABLES AND INSTRUCTIONS](#) FROM ORTHODOX PEBBLES



NOV-DEC

SPECIAL SERVICES

sundays...

8:00 am Matins
 9:30 am Liturgy
 10:45 am Sunday School
 11:45 am Greek Dance Practice
 12:00 pm Chant Class

mondays...

7:00 pm Orthodox Christian Fellowship at ASU

tuesdays...

5:00 pm Children's Greek School
 6:30 pm Catechism & Theology Class

wednesdays...

9:30 am Moms & Tots (1st & 3rd Wednesday each month)
 10:00 am & 6:30 pm Bible Study - Isaiah
 6:00 pm Sr GOYA Events (Nov 1, Nov 15 and Dec 13)
 6:30 pm Young Adult Ministry (Nov 8 and Dec 20)

thursdays...

5:30 pm Adult Greek School
 6:30 pm Chant Class
 6:30 pm Young Adult Ministry (Nov 30)
 7:00 pm Women's Book Club (Nov 16 and Dec 7)

fridays...

6:00 pm First Fridays (Nov 3 and Dec 8)

saturdays...

9:00 am Mom's Pantry (Nov 18 and Dec 16)
 5:00 pm Great Vespers (Most Saturdays)

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS

NOV 1 @ 6:00 pm | Sr. GOYA Pizza Party/Outdoor Games
NOV 3 @ 6:00 pm | First Fridays
NOV 9 @ 7:00 pm | Ministry Leaders Meeting
NOV 10 | Office Closed
NOV 10 @ 11:00 am | Veteran's Day Luncheon
NOV 11 @ 7:30 pm | Annual ASC Banquet
NOV 14 @ 8:00 pm | Loving Life +50 Hike
NOV 15 | Nativity Fast Begins
NOV 16 @ 7:00 pm | Women's Book Club Meeting
NOV 18 @ 9:00 am | Mom's Pantry
NOV 19 | General Assembly Meeting after Liturgy
NOV 23-24 | Office & Coffee House Closed (Thanksgiving)
DEC 7 @ 7:00 pm | Book Club Christmas Dinner
DEC 8 @ 6:00 pm | First Fridays
DEC 8 @ 8:30 pm | Sr. GOYA Christmas After-Party
DEC 9 | Loving Life +50 Social Event
DEC 10 @ 12:30 pm | Philoptochos Christmas Party
DEC 16 @ 9:00 am | Mom's Pantry
DEC 17 | Philoptochos Christmas Bake-Sale after Liturgy
DEC 17 | Sunday School Christmas Pageant after Liturgy
DEC 25-26 | Office & Coffee House Closed (Christmas)

NOV 8 | Synaxis of the Archangel Michael

7:15 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

NOV 11

6:30 pm Great Vespers

NOV 13 | John Chrysostom

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

NOV 18

5:00 pm Great Vespers

NOV 20 | Forefeast Presentation of the Theotokos

6:00 pm Great Vespers

NOV 21 | Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

7:30 am Matins and 8:45 am Liturgy

NOV 25 | Catherine the Great Martyr of Alexandria

8:30 am Matins and 9:30 am Liturgy (at St. Katherine's)

NOV 30 | Andrew the First- Called Apostle

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

DEC 1 | Nahum the Prophet

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

DEC 6 | Nicholas the Wonderworker

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

DEC 9 | Conception by St. Anna of Holy Theotokos

8:00 am Matins and 9:00 am Liturgy

5:00 pm Great Vespers

DEC 12 | Spyridon the Wonderworker of Trymithous

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

DEC 15 | Eleutherios the Hieromartyr

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

DEC 16

5:00 pm Great Vespers

DEC 20 | Ignatius the God-Bearer, Bishop of Antioch

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

DEC 22 | Forefeast of the Nativity of Jesus Christ

7:30 am Royal Hours

DEC 23

5:00 pm Great Vespers

DEC 24 | Sunday Before Nativity

8:00 am Nativity Matins and 9:30 pm Liturgy

3:00 pm Nativity Great Vespers and 4:00 pm Matins

DEC 25 | Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

10:00 am Nativity Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

DEC 26 | Synaxis of the Holy Theotokos

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy

DEC 27 | Stephen, Archdeacon & First Martyr

7:30 am Matins and 8:30 am Liturgy



* FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE MOST ACCURATE INFORMATION USE THE QR CODE TO LINK TO THE ASSUMPTION CALENDAR ONLINE.

BOOK SPOTLIGHT

Wonder As The Beginning of Faith

by Bishop Maxim Vasiljević

In the forward by Christos Yannaras, he shares, “The author of this book, Maxim Vasiljevic, the most beloved bishop of Los Angeles, manages in this book a special (dare I say ecclesial) type of writing: He does not write to teach or to make known opinions, views, acquired information, or wise conclusions from the study of wise texts bequeathed to us by the Fathers of the Church. In short, he does not write to incite or facilitate the understanding of ecclesial truth or teaching. He is not interested in informing the reader. The aim and purpose of the writing here is to build a relationship of communion with the reader, to invite him to touch the empirical truth of the Church and to make him a participant in these empirical touches.

I would dare to say the “logic” of this book is to transmit experience and not just understanding-- that is, to work with the dynamics of poetry, not with the logic of the presentation of ideas. For example, the poet Odysseas Elytis writes: “What I know not glows within me. And yet it glows.” I would say that this phrase is the clearest possible formulation of empirical and not just intellectual knowledge.

This book of Bishop Maxim ravishes and captivates, not because it “informs” us about

the genesis of the ecclesial faith, but because it “leads us by the hand” to this faith, in the way that the language of art transmits the immediacy of experience.”

Walking in Wonder Nurturing Christian Virtues in Your Children

by Elizabeth White

Walking in Wonder blends patristic Orthodox teaching with practical suggestions for parents, resulting in a book that is not only inspirational but full of common sense. Elizabeth White draws from her extensive experience as an educator, parent, and faithful Orthodox Christian to outline not only what the virtues are, but how their development can be encouraged in the lives of children. Each chapter ends with a list of practical ideas any parent might try to help cultivate character qualities such as attentiveness and

silence. This small jewel could very well be called “the Holy Fathers applied to parenting.” This workbook will help parents, teachers, and all caregivers provide an environment that helps develop Orthodox attitudes toward self, others, the world, and Christ. *Written with children under the age of eight in mind.*

Books spotlighted here, as well as a wide range of other meaningful works to strengthen your spiritual journey, are available for purchase in the Assumption Bookstore. For further information contact: bookstore@assumptionaz.org.



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Pres. Andrea Barakos | bookclub@assumptionaz.org

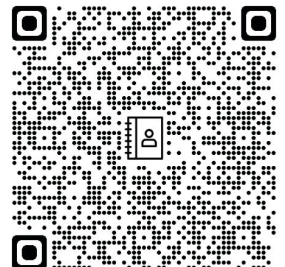
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YOUTH (K-12) - FIRST FRIDAYS, GOYA, ETC.

Niko Paris | youth@assumptionaz.org

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ST. BARBARA'S PHILOPTOCHOS HOLIDAY GIVING & REMEMBRANCE

Please look for information to purchase gift cards for our annual Turkey Drive that supports Vista Del Camino. You may make a donation online through a link that is on the weekly bulletins or after church on the Sundays in November.

Please extend your prayers and thoughts for loved ones with donations for the Christmas Poinsettias that will be placed on the steps in front of our altar. Tables with forms acknowledging your loved one will be available after church in December and online.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL SUZANNE GUYAN AT 206-612-6838**



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