



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

FATHER JOHN RALLIS
PROTOPRESBYTER

FATHER DIMITRI TOBIAS
ECONOMOS

November 23, 2025

+ AMPHILOCHIOS, BISHOP OF ICONIUM

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers... and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need, so continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart...and the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”
(Acts 2:42-47)

Dear and beloved Steward (or future Steward) of St. John the Baptist,

A challenge before each of us for the Year of the Lord 2026 is to become a **new creation** in Christ!



How are we to do so?

A profound first step is for each of us to make a prayerful assessment of all the gifts that God has given to us.

In this season of giving thanks and preparing for the great Gift of the Birth of Christ, it is a natural thing to do.

The next important step is to make a commitment of some part of those gifts back to God through giving to your parish. You have likely heard in the past that since ancient times, giving a “tithe” or 10% of one’s income to the Church is a good goal... not an end in itself, but a step on the way to giving all of ourselves to Christ as He gave Himself completely for us.

In that spirit, we ask you to consider the information on the enclosed Commitment Card and to challenge yourself to commit to increasing your giving, as you are able.

Please mail or bring your completed Stewardship Commitment Card to St. John the Baptist at the address below.

Or communicate your pledge via this QR code:



And give online (one-time or monthly) here:



How are we to live as a new creation in Christ? We can gain insight from the few sentences above from the Acts of the Apostles as to how the earliest Christians did so. Central elements contributing to the increased number of Christians in the early Church were *sacrificial giving, worship, education, fellowship* and *outreach*.

The same elements are essential for the Church to thrive today, and each is tied to our personal spiritual growth, strengthening the body of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. St. Paul in his letters to the Churches, asks Christ’s followers to become a new creation. Per St. Paul, a new creation is not the circumcised or uncircumcised, the politically conservative or liberal, the rich or poor, the educated or illiterate, but the one *“by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world”* (Galatians 6:14).

The thief on the right of the Crucified Lord crucified his past, repented, was forgiven and became the first citizen of paradise because he chose to become a new creation in Christ through repentance. Meanwhile, the thief on the left was unable to crucify his worldly past and was eternally condemned.

The future health and growth of our parish and our universal Church depend on each of us becoming a new creation in Christ – Christians in essence, not only by name. We have as examples thousands of saints who travelled this path through the centuries. From the first Holy Martyrs Stephen and Thekla to the venerable Saint Demetrios Gagastathis, recently recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, each gives us a distinct example of how to live as a new creation in Christ.

We wish you a blessed and spiritually fruitful Nativity Fast. May our stewardship of His gracious gifts be pleasing to God.

In Christ’s abiding Love,


Father John Rallis
Protopresbyter


Father Dimitri Tobias
Economos


Peter Stamatis
President, Parish Council


Katherine Stamatis
Chair, Stewardship Committee