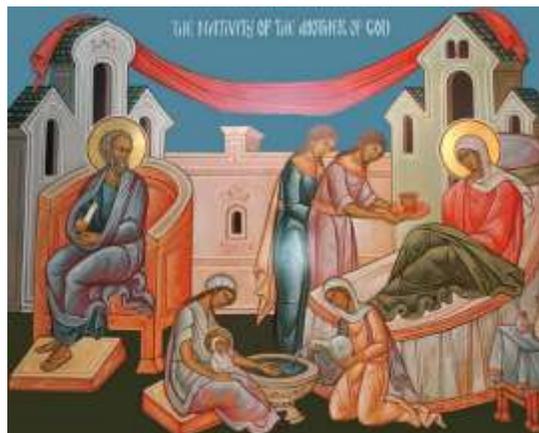


September 2019

My beloved, a huge “thank you” to our **Greekfest** committee and its chairman Costa Georgopoulos, our Parish Council members and president Costa Georgopoulos, our Ladies of Philoptochos and president Lucie Scouteris, our Youth Group and their leaders, our sponsors, advertisers, donors, volunteers and all of you, our parishioners, who came and supported our church and helped make Greekfest 2019 a great success!



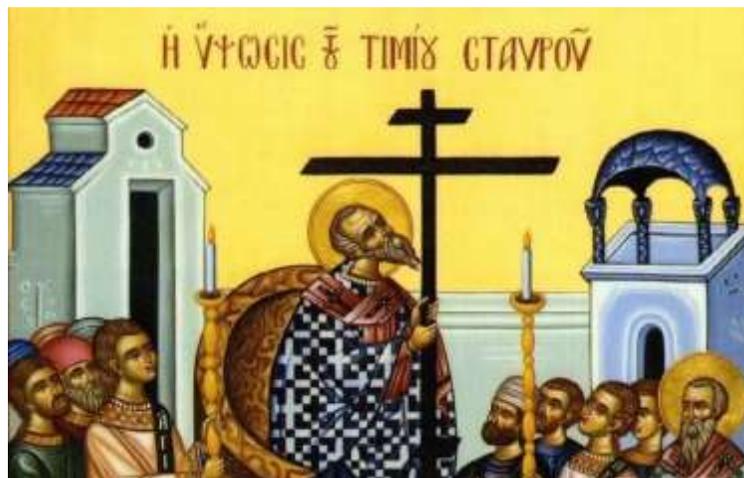
September is the beginning of the **New Ecclesiastical Year!** The last big feast of the old Ecclesiastical Year was the **Dormition and Assumption of the Virgin Mary** on August 15th. The first big feast of the new Ecclesiastical Year is the **Birth of the Virgin Mary** on September 8th. It is very appropriate to begin and end each year with the All-Holy Mother of God (Panagia Theotokos), the one who joined heaven and earth and the one who merged the created world with the uncreated divine nature. Her own miraculous birth from two aged and barren parents, Joachim and Anna, shows that the Creator of natural laws can override them as He pleases. This because He is the God who “**can raise up descendants of Abraham from stones**” (Matthew 3:9), the God who “**unfolds the heavens like a curtain**” and “**makes the mountains smoke at His touch**” (Psalm 103). With Panagia’s birth, we see the beginning of the secret Plan of our Salvation, a plan set forth as part of our Heavenly Father’s Divine Economy.



September is also the month of the **Holy Cross!** **September 14th**, the feast of the Holy Cross, is one of four strictest fasting days of the year, during which our body and soul kneels before the biggest symbol of our faith! It is through the Cross that Resurrection was made possible! It is “**through the Cross, salvation came to mankind**” (Galatians 5:11). It is often with a Cross that we must follow our Lord (Matthew 16:24).



Finally, September is the beginning of the **New School Year**. Our young ones cheerfully return to their classes, reminding us of our own school years. The youth is the future of our Church! It is up to us to teach them well, not only with our advice but predominantly by our example. Parents give the good example when they are leading the prayer at home, at the beginning and the end of each day and each meal. Parents raise good Christians when they are talking and reading to their children about the Lord. Parents teach children how to worship when they are cheerfully leading the way to church and its ministries on Sunday mornings. Parents cultivate virtues into children when they are showing love and kindness to all people and living creatures, and when they are keeping the environment clean by recycling at home. Our children are watching us and emulate our behavior. Spiritual parents and grandparents raise (in most cases) spiritual kids and grandkids. The proof is in the list of Saints of our Church – they all had virtuous parents and grandparents. Finally, there is one thing children have and grownups need to emulate: **a pure heart**. This is why our Lord invites us to become like children, because **“to the children belongs the Kingdom of Heaven”** (Matthew 19:14).



This year, the feast of the Holy Cross is on Saturday, **September 14th**. If your schedule permits, please honor this great feast of our Orthodox faith by participating to the Divine Liturgy and if your health permits, by fasting on that day. Blessed New Ecclesiastical and School Year!

With Love in Christ, Your Parish Priest,
Fr. Gregory