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Christ is Born, Glorify Him!

The Nativity of Jesus Christ

If we truly understand the message of Christmas, which teaches us to love and serve the poor, let us first of all turn to Christ.

Theophany

The baptism of Jesus is not only His epiphany or manifestation to the world as Christ. It also manifests Him as the Son of God.
Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church

Reverend Presbyter Anthony Evangelatos

George Stavropoulos, Chanter — Heidi Mason, Choir Director — Ona Calogrias, Organist

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Father Anthony.............................. priest@annunciationbrookton.org
office@annunciationbrookton.org
Reflections on the Nativity of Christ

Taken from: The Living God, Vol. 1; St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1989

If we truly understand the message of Christmas, which teaches us to love and serve the poor, let us first of all turn to Christ. Only He can teach us how to really love the poor, not for our own glory – not even for a social ideal – but for the love of man as He Himself has loved us. Jesus Christ is the first among the poor; no one has so totally impoverished himself as He did. And, moreover, He did so voluntarily. For let us never forget that He is the second Person of the Trinity, the Son of God, and that He has lowered Himself to the point of becoming a defenseless child, lying in straw at the feet of animals...

Christmas is also a message of peace. Even for those who have forgotten Christ, or have never known Him, Christmas is a symbol of peace on earth and love among men, if only for twenty-four hours or for a single night (as in, for example, truces during wars, cease-fires, or messages of peace from all the governments of the world). This is appropriate, for Christ is the God of Mercy, the Prince of Peace, “and of his peace there will be no end” (Is 9:6).

The peace of this world is often only a period of calm between two wars. Jesus is the Prince of Peace, a peace without end. His Kingdom will not fall like all other kingdoms, reigns, governments, and dictatorships. The peace of Jesus Christ allows us to participate now in His Kingdom which is to come. Let us learn how to carry this peace of Christ within us from this moment on. Let us, like the shepherds, hear the exclamation of the angels during Christmas night: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men” (Lk 2:14). Let us be witnesses of this marvelous reconciliation between heaven and earth, between God and man!

We shall never exhaust the Nativity message, its beauty and its mystery. We have spoken of peace and poverty. It is through Jesus that we can understand these two aspects: He is peace, and He is the poorest among the poor...

When Adam was created, he was formed out of the earth; today the second Adam, Christ, recreates man in His person. The Son of God at the mouth of the cave has taken our human condition upon Himself; He is born of the earth and will return to the earth at the time of His burial. “The first man was from earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven... Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven” (1 Cor 15:47,49)...
prayers of the baptismal rite, which demonstrate the awesomeness of the holy mystery taking place before us. During the prayers of exorcism we hear the following: The Lord rebukes you O Devil, for He came into the world and dwelt among men in order to shatter your tyranny and free mankind; hanging on the Cross, He triumphed over all the hostile powers...He destroyed death by death, and conquered you O Devil, who had the power of death...Have fear, come out and depart from this human being, and never return nor hide in him, neither meet nor act upon him, not by night or by day, not at dawn or at noontime, but depart to your own darkness until the appointed great day of judgment.

From another prayer we hear, Therefore I adjure you, most wicked, impure, abominable, loathsome and alien spirit; come out of the man and never again enter into him. Depart; admit the vanity of your power which could not even control the swine. We see with both these prayers that the Church takes Satan head on prior to baptizing one of God’s children. The priest prays to God to drive all the disgusting demons out of His holy temple. The priest and godparent(s) breathes and spits upon Satan and his demons out of disgust, and they then turn their back on them in order to face and acknowledge Jesus Christ as the living God.

Upon blessing the baptismal waters the priest says, Manifest Yourself O Lord, in this water, and grant that he who is baptized in it may be transformed so as to put away the old nature that is corrupted by deceitful desires, and to put on the new nature that is renewed in the image of God the Creator; so that united with You in the likeness of Your nature that is renewed in the image of God the Creator, granting to him the remission of all his sins both voluntary and involuntary. We see here that we are not only re-born in Christ through baptism, but also cleansed of all sin. Furthermore, we are sanctified and regenerated through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is not truly complete without Holy Chrismation.

As we reflect upon our own baptism, we should be awestruck to know that we have been set aside from the world and delivered from the power of the Devil; that we have been born anew by sharing in Christ’s death and resurrection through the baptismal waters; and that we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit, thus fully belonging to God as a creature who has been virtually re-created. From that point on, it is up to us to strive to live this way, so that our baptism does not become meaningless and trivialized.

May God bless all of you as we celebrate together Holy Theophany, when we all will pray for spiritual renewal through this holy feast of light—the transforming light of God that shines through all darkness and evil.

In Christ’s love for a blessed Nativity and Theophany,

+Fr. Anthony
FROM FATHER ANTHONY

Nativity Fast Continues

The Orthodox Church’s preparation for the Nativity of Christ is very different from other Christian traditions, and totally opposite of the worldly, secular observance during the weeks prior to the Nativity. Ours is a quiet, spiritual preparation through a 40-day fast. We remind all our brethren of this very ancient fast period of the Church, in order that we spiritually prepare for the Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh. Let us all strive as best as possible, to follow the fast as prescribed by our Holy Church. Following are the general guidelines traditionally accepted.

- From 11/15 – 12/12: Fasting from all meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products. Fish, wine and olive oil may be consumed every day except for Wednesdays and Fridays, with some exceptions. Shellfish may be consumed daily.
- From 12/13 – 12/24: Strict fasting (as in Great Lent) from all animal products, including fish, and from wine and olive oil. On Saturdays and Sundays, wine and olive oil may be consumed. Again, shellfish may be consumed daily.

Also, keep in mind that fasting is always relaxed for the infirm, growing children, expectant and nursing mothers, etc.

Please remember that the Church always presents the ideal method of fasting for our spiritual benefit, as a starting point. Each Orthodox Christian should prayerfully approach the subject of fasting, and seek the guidance of his/her spiritual father. Let us try not to ignore the fast completely, but instead, seek to incorporate as much of it as possible into our lives – especially the final period starting on 12/13.

Confession Schedule

The Holy Fathers of the Church have always instructed the faithful to participate in the sacrament of Holy Confession during all the major fast seasons of the year, and needless to say, on an as needed basis.

During the Nativity Fast, I am available to hear confessions per the usual schedule: Saturdays after Great Vespers, and during office hours by appointment.

Beloved in Christ, I realize that I’ve shared a lot of information in this article. I hope that it has helped to clarify some of the issues that many of us have found perplexing over the years. The main point that we should all take away from this article, is that canonical Orthodoxy continues to be the undivided Body of Christ. No matter whether we are ethnically Orthodox from one of the major jurisdictions, or converts to the Orthodox faith, we are all Eastern Orthodox Christians – brothers and sisters in Christ, united by the Holy Body and Blood of our Lord that we partake of in the Holy Eucharist.

Due to technical printing problems, the final sentences of Fr. Anthony’s message were missing from the printed versions of the November 2014 bulletin. The final paragraph is provided here, below. Father’s message in its entirety can be viewed online in the November 2014 bulletin.
## DECEMBER 2014

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**JANUARY 2015**

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<td><strong>Sun. Before Theophany</strong></td>
<td>Great Hours of Theophany 10 am</td>
<td>Holy Theophany Great Blessing of Water Orthros 8:45 am Div. Lit. 10:00 am Τα Άγια Θεοφάνεια Μεγάς Άγιαςμος (strict fast)</td>
<td>Synaxis of St. John the Forerunner Orthros &amp; Lit.</td>
<td>Circumcision of Our Lord &amp; Feast of St. Basil the Great Orthros &amp; Lit. Περίτομη του Κοριτσίου και Μήμη του Αγ. Βασίλειου</td>
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<td>Small Vespers 7 pm followed by Adult Rel. Ed.</td>
<td>St. Anthony the Great Orthros &amp; Lit.</td>
<td>Vespchal Lit. of Theophany Eve 5 pm Πρώτος Άγιαςμος</td>
<td>Parish Council 6 p.m.</td>
<td>St. Anthony the Great Orthros &amp; Lit. Του Αγ. Αντωνίου Great Vespers 6 pm</td>
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<td><strong>Gr. Vespers of St. Gregory the Theologian at Mansfield-6pm</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The Three Great Hierarchs Orthros &amp; Lit. Των Τριών Ιεραρχών</strong></td>
<td>Great Vespers 6 pm</td>
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GREEK MESSAGE

ΙΕΡΕΣ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΕΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ ΓΕΝΝΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΕΙΩΝ

Τετάρτη, 24/12:
- Αι Μεγαλαι Ωραι Χριστουγεννων, 10:00 πμ
- Μεγας Εσπερινος Χριστουγεννων με Θεια Λειτουργια, 5:00 μμ (Θεια Κοινωνια)

Πεμπτη, 25/12:
- Η Κατα Σαρκα Γεννήσις του Κυριου Ημων Ησου Χριστου
  Όρθρος, 8:45 πμ, Θεια Λειτουργια, 10:00 πμ
  (ανευ νηστεια μεχρι της 4/1 – καταλυσις εις παντα καθημερινως)

Πεμπτη, 1/1:
- Περιτομη του Κυριου και Μνημη του Αγιου Βασιλειου
  Όρθρος, 9:00 πμ, Θεια Λειτουργια, 10:00 πμ

Δευτερα, 5/1:
- Αι Μεγαλαι Ωραι Θεοφανειων, 10:00 πμ
- Εσπερινος και Θεια Λειτουργια Παραμονης Θεοφανειων, 5:00 μμ (πρωτος αγιασμος)

Τριτη, 6/1:
- Τα Αγια Θεοφανεια του Κυριου Ημων Ησου Χριστου
  Όρθρος 8:45 πμ, Θεια Λειτουργια & Μεγας Αγιασμος 10:00 πμ

Τεταρτη, 7/1:
- Η Συναξις του Τιμου Προδρομου και Βαπτιστου Ιωαννου
  Όρθρος 9:00 πμ, Θεια Λειτουργια 10:00 πμ

ΙΕΡΑ ΕΞΟΜΟΛΟΓΗΣΗΣ

• Καθε Σαββατο μετα απο τον Εσπερινο
• Ωρες γραφειου με ραντεβου

ΚΑΛΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΛΗ ΧΡΟΝΙΑ
Άρχισε την επίσημη επίσκεψη-προσκύνημα στην Κύπρο ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής Δημήτριος

21 Οκτωβρίου 2014

ΔΕΥΚΩΣΙΑ – Άφιξη σήμερα, Τρίτη 21 Οκτωβρίου 2014 στην Κύπρο ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αμερικής Δημήτριος πραγματοποιώντας επίσημη επίσκεψη στη Μεγαλόνησο, κατόπιν προσκλήσεως του Προέδρου της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας Νίκου Αναστασιάδη και με την σύμφωνη γνώμη της Ιεράς Συνόδου της Εκκλησίας της Κύπρου.

Κατά την άφιξή του στο Αεροδρόμιο της Λάρνακας τον Αρχιεπίσκοπο Δημήτριο υποδέχθηκαν ο Υπουργός Γεωργίας, Φυσικών Πόρων και Περιβάλλοντος κ. Νίκος Κουφιάλης και ο Πανιερώτατος Μητροπολίτης Κιτίου κ. Χρυσόστομος. Λίγο μετά την άφιξη, ο κ. Κουφιάλης είπε ότι αποτελεί «τιμή και χαρά να τον φιλοξενούμε στην Κύπρο για να τον φιλοξενούμε στην Αμερική τόσο για τα εθνικά μας θέματα αλλά και για τα άλλα θέματα που απασχολούν τον Ελληνισμό».

Ο Πανιερώτατος Μητροπολίτης Κιτίου κ. Χρυσόστομος εκπροσωπώντας την Ιερά Συνόδου και τον Μακαριώτατο Αρχιεπίσκοπο Κύπρου κ. Χρυσοστόμο καλωσόρισε τον Αρχιεπίσκοπο Αμερικής ως άγγελον ειρήνης και επιστήθιο φίλο της Κύπρου και πρόσθεσε: «Εναποθέτουμε στα πόδια του την αγάπη και την ευγνωμοσύνη μας για όσα προσφέρει για τον Κυπριακό λαό και για ολόκληρο τον Ελληνισμό στην Αμερική».

Ο Αρχιεπίσκοπος Δημήτριος στη δήλωσή του κατά την υποδοχή είπε μεταξύ άλλων: «Αυτή δεν είναι επίσκεψη για μας είναι προσκύνημα. Προσκύνημα σε ένα χώρο ιερό στον οποίο επί άιώνες έχουμε συνεχή προσφορά πολιτισμού και ειρήνης και ο οποίος έχει υποφέρει τελείως αδίκως. Έναντι της προσφοράς του έχει δεχθεί τα εντελώς αντίθετα και εξακολουθεί να υφίσταται αυτές τις δυσκολίες, τις πίεσεις και την κατοχή ενός σημαντικού μέρους της Κύπρου η οποία εξακολουθεί.»
Baptism
11/16 – Ioannis (Jackson), son of George and Alyssa Lazarakis; sponsor, John Mourgis

Wedding
11/15 – Derek Mak and Olga Smiliotopoulos; sponsor, Tim and Elaine Follo
11/23 – Christo Dosis and Amanda Nepini; sponsor Elizabeth Tsianakas

Donations
Decoration of Icon of the Nativity of Christ – George and Toula Petropoulos
Decoration of Icon of Theophany – The Tsianakas family
Holy Water Bottles and Spring Water for Theophany, Buterbaugh Family, IMO John Nasios

Roof Donations
Mr. & Mrs. Christos Tsianakis & Family IMO of Aristidis and Efthalia Mylonas, $250
Masonic Lodge of Brockton, $200.

Food Festival Donations
Credit card machines at no charge - Paul Dorsey
60 cases Poland Springs Water - George & Jean Alexis and Ted & Helen Ntakoulas
100 Pounds of Butter - Perry & Ethel Savas IMO of Charles Savas
5 Cases Loucanico - Demakes Enterprises
Chicken Stock - Sarantos & Anna Manos
160 Dozen Eggs - James Sarantopoulos & Family
10 cases Heineken, 5 cases Amstel Light - Manny Castro, Horizon Beverage
10 cases Coors Light - Weisman Tavarez, Colonial Beverage
13 Budweiser 30 packs, 3 cases Corona, 3 cases Samuel Adams - Kevin Smith, L. Knife & Sons
7 Bud Light 30-Packs, 3 cases Corona, 2 cases Mike’s Hard Lemonade, 2 Miller Light 30-Packs - Giannaros Liquors
Children’s Corner Expenses - Stella Coutoumbas
Children’s Corner Expenses - Lori Stasiewski
Tomato and Avgolemono Sauces - Artvanitidis-West Side Foods
$200 - Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Bulgaris

Thank you so much for your generosity
**2014 Calendar of Events**

Parish Council Elections—Sun, Dec. 7  
Parish Council Meeting—Tues, Dec. 9  
Parish Council Oath of Office & Election of Officers—Sun, Dec. 21

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**Parishioners Can Make Donations Using Our Website**

Our Online Bill Pay option works like this:

- Go to our church website at [http://www.annunciationbrockton.org](http://www.annunciationbrockton.org)
- Scroll down the home page.
- Select (left click) one of the 4 Bill Pay options listed and follow links for more information and options.

You can fulfill your Stewardship or make other payments by credit card, including Roof Donations.

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**Service Cancellations**

For those of you who are not on the church’s listserv to receive automatic e-mail announcements, please remember that you can check for service cancellations using the church’s voicemail system.

*If you call outside of office hours, please listen to the menu and select #5 for the listing of church services for the current week. This message will always be updated regarding cancellations.*

Please note that a decision may not be made until late afternoon for an evening service, or early morning for a morning service, so please double-check before preparing to leave for church.

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**Lost and Found**

Many items have been left behind in our buildings during the past year. If you are missing something and think it may have been misplaced at our church, please call the church office at 508-559-0910. All unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of January.

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**STEWARDSHIP**

The bricks of our Church support the building. We, as members of this parish, are the “building blocks” that support our many ministries and church events.

Stewardship aids in the development and maintenance of our church and more specifically, it supports a life in Christ!

As 2014 draws to a close we kindly ask that you complete your 2014 pledges, if not already fulfilled.

As we look forward to 2015 we ask you, our families, and individuals, to continue to pledge a portion of your financial treasure to our church and its ministries.

*Best Wishes for the Nativity Season,*  
The Stewardship Committee
Housewarming Baskets for Our Homeless Veterans

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston is undertaking a mission to assist homeless veterans who transition to independent living in coordination with the Department of Veteran’s Affairs, New England Healthcare System.

Items listed below represent the homeless veteran’s needs as identified by the veterans, to establish their home in the community. Please provide any of the listed items, all new items. Monetary contributions or gift cards in lieu of the listed items are also welcome. Please make checks payable to Metropolis Philoptochoi of Boston.

High priority items needed to complete one housewarming basket:

- Broom, dustpan
- Bucket
- Shower curtain
- Dishpan
- Dish cloth/towel
- Flashlight/batteries
- Dish soap
- Bar soap, pkg of 4
- Toilet paper, pkg of 4
- Bath towel, washcloths (2)
- Small bathroom trash bins
- Mop
- Toilet brush & holder
- Shower rings
- Dish rack/tray
- Cleaning sponge
- All purpose cleaner
- Toothpaste
- Liquid hand soap
- Paper towels, pkg of 4
- Trash container bags
- Laundry detergent

Inflatable twin bed w/ air pump
Twin bed pillow
Twin sheet set
2 twin bed blankets
Set of bath towels
1 twin bed cover
1 cloth outside shower mat
1 set of silverware for 4

Set of cooking utensils
Coffeemaker
Set of twin bed sheets
Set of full bed sheets
2 sets of plastic dishware & cups
Set of silverware for 4
Laundry detergent
Paper towels

Electric fan
1 non-slip inside shower mat
1 set pots and pans
Manual can opener
All purpose cleaners, sponges
Cooking utensils container
PHILOPTOCHOS

Interested in becoming a member of the Annunciation Ladies Philoptochos?
We’d love to have you! Please come to an event or meeting and join us! All ladies are welcome.
For more information, contact the Church Office.

Existing members, please remember to send your Philoptochos membership $25, annually.

Thank you!

Koliva
If you are planning a memorial service and would like to order koliva, please call the Church office at 508-559-0910 at least one week in advance of the memorial service. The cost is $85 and checks should be made payable to the Ladies Philoptochos Society.

Coffee Hour
If you are interested in sponsoring a coffee hour, please contact Tina Boutas at 508-588-8891 or call the Church office at 508-559-0910.

Shut-In Visitations
Anyone who would like a visit from the Ladies Philoptochos, please contact the Church office at 508-559-0910.

OTHER CHARITY

Volunteers Needed for Local Charity
10 volunteers are needed to wrap holiday gifts 6 to 8 p.m. December 15
My Brother’s Keeper in Easton

For more information, contact Paula Odierno at pckodierno@gmail.com or call the Church Office

My Brother’s Keeper is a Christian ministry that picks up donations of used furniture in good condition, including couches, kitchen tables, chairs and dressers. Items are delivered free to families in need. We are collecting at our church on a regular basis items such as baby diapers, baby wipes, linens (sheets), towels and canned goods. You can also schedule a pickup from your home by calling My Brother’s Keeper at 508-238-7512.
BHS Holiday Concert
Wednesday, December 17, 2014 @ 7pm

A South Shore seasonal favorite, the Brockton High School Holiday Concert is one of the hottest tickets in town. A bevy of bands and choruses will take the stage to provide concertgoers with a wide selection of holiday favorites, and a peek at some of the newest in festive fare.

Join us at The Chateau Restaurant (Nocera’s) @ 5 pm for a Pre-Concert dinner.

Join us
Tuesday 2-4pm
January 20, 2015
PARADOSI DANCERS

We continue to welcome new dancers to the group, and we invite families who are interested to stop by a practice anytime and check us out!

As always there is no fee for instruction – we ask only for a one-time donation per dancer of $65 to assist in our purchase and maintenance of costumes and accessories, and for each family to commit to assist with food preparation for the group once or twice per year.

**Upcoming Practices for all Levels:**

- Sundays following Divine Liturgy
  - Sun, December 7
  - Sun, December 14

**Spiritual Wisdom: From the Hymnography of the Nativity**

The following is a sample of some of the beautiful and poignant hymns heard during the various services celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May they be of inspiration to all as we prepare for His glorious birth!

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**Before Thy birth, O Lord, the angelic hosts looked with trembling on this mystery and were struck with wonder. For Thou who hast adorned the vault of heaven with stars has been well pleased to be born as a babe; and Thou who holdest all the ends of the earth in the hollow of Thy hand are laid in a manger of dumb beasts. For by such a dispensation has Thy compassion been made known, O Christ, and Thy great mercy; glory of Thee.**

*(The Royal Hours)*

**What shall we offer Thee, O Christ, who for our sakes hast appeared one earth as man? Every creature made by Thee offers Thee thanks. The angels offer Thee a hymn; the heavens a star; the Magi, gifts; the shepherds, their wonder; the earth, its cave; the wilderness, the manger; and we offer Thee a Virgin Mother. O pre-eternal God, have mercy upon us.**

*(Great Vespers)*
We have lovely gifts for Christmas

Glory to God In the Highest
Christmas cards

Inside greeting, “And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

Pack of 15, 5” x 7” Single cards available
shop.ancientfaith.com

A 2015 calendar featuring the icons of the Virgin Mary from a variety of American iconographers...11” x 12” full color with large calendar boxes to record notes.

Lydia’s life has turned upside down. Her family has converted to Orthodox Christianity without her, she is about to leave home for college and one of her friends is going to have a baby. Lydia needs help, and she finds it in an icon of St. Lydia—so she pours her heart out in letters to St. Lydia who answers (!), guiding her through her troubles with love and compassion. Paperback and ebook.
shop.ancientfaith.com

This is your Bookstore.
Please visit our collection on Sundays after Church, to borrow or purchase.

If we are not present, don’t hesitate to email us at
annunciation.bookstore@gmail.com
Or call the office at 508-559-0910
SUNDAY SCHOOL

Registration for new students or changes for current students can be made by contacting Dina Coon at 781-871-5343 or by email: coon005@aol.com

Don’t Forget our Toy Drive!

Our Sunday School children are collecting toys for all ages of needy children in the Brockton area.

Toys should be new and not gift wrapped. The receptacle for the toys will be in the Sunday School hallway, across from the Kindergarten Room.

Last collection day is Dec. 7, which gives us plenty of time to sort and prepare the toys.

Merry Christmas!

NEW BASKETBALL SEASON

Metropolis Basketball 2014-2015

Together with St. Catherine’s, the Annunciation Church wants to again have successful teams!

If you are interested in playing or need more information please email passias@comcast.net. I will email the times to all who respond, and you may check the Metropolis website as well, www.boston.goarch.org
GOYA

For Christmas, the GOYA will be making food baskets to donate to Catholic Charities for families in need.

Get Your Skates...

In December, the GOYA plans to go ice skating at Patriots Place, followed by browsing the stores and hot chocolate from Dunkin Donuts. Anybody interested can email Jon with questions.

Next scheduled GOYA meeting will be Sun, December 7.

GOYA Scholarship applications are now being accepted. They must be received by January 31, 2015.
For details, contact the Church office.

JOY-HOPE

Our monthly meetings are open to anyone in the church ages 12 and under. We hope to see a strong showing of our church’s youngest members at this year’s events.

We ask that you please RSVP if you plan to attend an event to ensure we have enough supplies and attendees. We are also looking to add an advisor or two to help plan and organize events. If you are interested in becoming an advisor, or to RSVP to an upcoming event please email:

Irena at irena.mroz@verizon.net or Paula at paulatsitsop@comcast.net