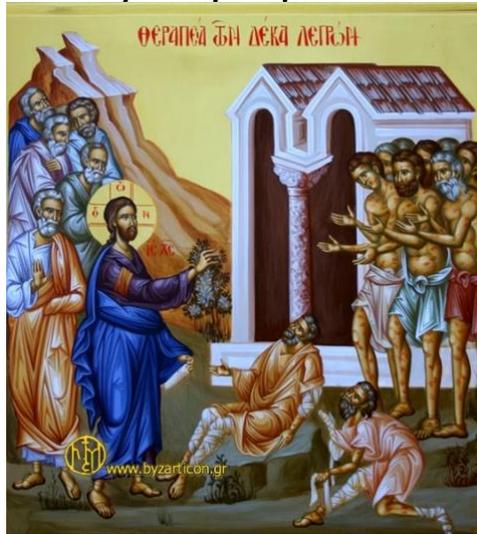




**Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church**  
 8306 NC HWY 751,  
 Durham NC 27713 919-484-1600  
 fatherstavroforos2012@gmail.com,  
 www.stbarbarachurchnc.org  
**News & Announcements**  
 January 15, 2017

*12th Sunday of Luke*  
*Κυριακή 12η Λουκα*



Paul of Thebes ☩  
 John the Hut-Dweller ☩  
 Pansophios the Martyr of Alexandria

**NEWCOMERS AND VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME !**  
 Sunday Worship Schedule: Matins 9:00 am & Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

*To Our Visitors and Guests*

*We welcome you to worship with us today, whether you are an Orthodox Christian or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion and other Sacraments are offered only to baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians in good standing with the Church, all are invited to receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) from the priest at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. The Antidoron is not a sacrament, but it is reminiscent of the agape feast that followed worship in the ancient Christian Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning please join us in the Church hall for fellowship and refreshments. Please complete a Visitor's Card before you leave today and drop it in the offering tray, or give it to one of the parishioners after the service, or mail it to the church Office.*

**Today's Readings:**

**St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:4-11**



BRETHREN, when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away; anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its

creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all.

### **Πρὸς Κολοσσαεῖς 3:4-11**

Ἀδελφοί, ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς φανερωθῆ, ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν, τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ. Νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνείαν, ἀκαθαρσίαν, πάθος, ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, καὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, ἣτις ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρεία, δι' ἧς ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας· Ἐν οἷς καὶ ὑμεῖς περιεπατήσατέ ποτε, ὅτε ἐζήτε ἐν αὐτοῖς. Νυνὶ δὲ ἀπόθεσθε καὶ ὑμεῖς τὰ πάντα, ὀργὴν, θυμὸν, κακίαν, βλασφημίαν, αἰσχρολογίαν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν· μὴ ψεύδεσθε εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἀπεκδυσάμενοι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον σὺν ταῖς πράξεσιν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον, τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν· ὅπου οὐκ ἔστι Ἕλληνας καὶ Ἰουδαῖος, περιτομὴ καὶ ἀκροβυστία, βάρβαρος, Σκύθης, δοῦλος, ἐλεύθερος· ἀλλὰ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἐν παῶσιν Χριστός.

### **The Gospel according to Luke 17:12-19**



At that time, as Jesus entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." When He saw them He said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus's feet, giving Him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then said Jesus: "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And He said to him: "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

### **Κατὰ Λουκᾶν 17:12-19**

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, εἰσερχομένου αὐτοῦ εἰς τινα κώμην ἀπήντησαν αὐτῷ δέκα λεπτοὶ ἄνδρες, οἱ ἔσθησαν πόρρωθεν, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἦσαν φωνὴν λέγοντες· Ἰησοῦ ἐπιστάτα, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. καὶ ἰδὼν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· πορευθέντες ἐπιδείξατε ἑαυτοὺς τοῖς ἱερεῦσι. καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ὑπάγειν αὐτοὺς ἐκαθαρίσθησαν. εἷς δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἰδὼν ὅτι ἴαθη, ὑπέστρεψε μετὰ φωνῆς μεγάλης δοξάζων τὸν Θεόν, καὶ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον παρὰ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ εὐχαριστῶν αὐτῷ· καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν Σαμαρεῖτης. ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· οὐχὶ οἱ δέκα ἐκαθαρίσθησαν; οἱ δὲ ἑννέα ποῦ; οὐχὲν εὐρέθησαν ὑποστρέψαντες δοῦναι δόξαν τῷ Θεῷ εἰ μὴ ὁ ἀλλογενὴς οὗτος; καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἀναστὰς πορεύου· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε.

## ***Today's Events:***

### **Memorials:**

1 year - Aggi (Anagnostis) Capsalis

5 years - Edith Ero (Stavriani) Kouros

### **Philoptochos Vasilopita Auction**

will take place in the Parish Hall to benefit Saint Basil.

### **Philoptochos General Meeting**

after the Philoptochos Vasilopita Auction for Saint Basil's

## **Oath of office for the New Parish Council**

*"We do solemnly affirm*

*that we will uphold the dogma, the teaching, the traditions, the holy canons,  
and participate in the worship, and preserve the moral principles of the Greek Orthodox Church,  
as well as the Charter, and the Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
and that we will faithfully, and sincerely, fulfill the duties and obligations  
required of a member of the Parish Council.*

*So help us, God."*

## **Names of the Members that Will Make Up the New Parish Council:**

Susan Alexander

Alex Arapoglou

John Bush

Eleni Christakos

Costa Constantinou

Lou Constantinou

Len Goodwin

Johnny Mariakakis

Pete Marinos

Helen Paliouras

Theky Pappas

Daniel Przybl

John Varelas

Evelyn Zehia

## **COMMUNITY VASILOPITA TODAY IN CHURCH**

### **Vasilopita Prayers and Cutting Instructions for the home**

The ritual of the cutting of the Vasilopita with the family, begins with the head of the household. Making the sign of the cross, he begins by praying to



God that He come and bless the household, guests, and finally the food and drink that will be served.

The blessing of the Vasilopita usually begins with the Apolytikion of St Basil the Great, chanted in tone 1

*Thy sound hath gone forth into all the earth that received thy word.*

*Thereby thou hast divinely taught the Faith;*

*Thou hast made manifest the nature of things that be;*

*Thou hast adorned the ways of man.*

*O namesake of the royal priesthood,*

*our righteous Father Basil,*

*Intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.*

Then the following prayer may be said:

Let us pray unto the Lord. Lord, have mercy. O Creator of all things, Lord and King of the ages, plenteous in mercy and bountiful in goodness, who didst accept the Magi's gifts in Bethlehem, who art the Bread of life that came down from heaven, who by Thine authority didst establish the seasons and the years and dost hold our life in Thy hands. Hear us who pray to Thee on this holy day upon our entrance into the new year of Thy goodness and bless (+) this Vasilopita, which has been offered to Thy glory and in honour of our Father among the Saints Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia. Do Thou who art Benevolent, look down from Thy holy heaven and send down upon us, upon those who have offered these gifts and upon them that partake thereof, Thine heavenly gifts, for our hope is in Thee, the living God, unto the ages. Bless this parish (home, school, foundation, etc) and our entrances and exits; replenish our life with all good things and direct our footsteps that we may keep Thy divine commandments, for man shall not live by bread alone; Through the intercessions of Thy Most pure Mother, of our Father among the saints Basil the Great and of all Thy saints who from all ages have been well pleasing to Thee. Amen

The traditions way of Cutting the Vasilopita

Then the head of the household lifts the Vasilopita, kisses it, and makes the sign of the cross over it with his knife and proceeds to cut. The first piece traditionally is cut for Christ, teaching us that we offer to the Lord, the first fruits of His blessings upon us. The second piece is cut for the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, and the third for St. Basil, and the fourth for the poor and the needy..The next piece is cut for the entire household hosting the event, and then a separate piece is cut for each family member and guest going from the eldest to the youngest.

The Coin

Each person feels special and appreciated, having individually been remembered, receiving a portion of the blessed bread. Finally, a piece is always cut for the poor, reminding us to always keep a portion of our blessings for those who are in need. Hidden within one of the pieces of the Vasilopita is a coin or a small piece of jewelry. The person who receives the piece with the coin receives a special blessing. There is a strong connection between the piece of Vasilopita which is cut for St. Basil and the one that is cut for the poor. It is believed that the person who finds the coin in his piece of Vasilopita will not only come into God's good fortune for that year, but that he will also be in a position to care for the poor, widows, and orphans.

This connection is found in the teachings of the saint. "He who works ought not to work to serve his own needs but to fulfill the Lord's commandment, which says, 'I was hungry and you gave me to eat.'" (Mt. 25, 35) As we are fed by the salvific love of our Savior this blessed season, may our new year be blessed with every good gift from above, especially the gift of giving.

***THE ACADEMY OF SAINT BASIL***



In March 1944, Archbishop Athenagoras recommended that the Philoptochos Society purchase the 250 acre Rupert Estate in Garrison, New York, located on the shores of the Hudson River, directly across from the United States Military Academy at West Point. With that purchase, Philoptochos undertook the daunting task of completely renovating the property. Today, Philoptochos remains a major financial supporter of the Academy through two ministry commitments:

**Vasilopita:** Held in January by every chapter in the United States, this event provides a major source of funding for the Academy's operating expenses.

**Sisterhood:** The Sisterhood fund provides for the physical needs of the children, including clothing, furnishings, equipment and other essentials for the dormitories and kitchens; graduation celebrations, and awards and gifts. Additionally, the Fund facilitates the mission of Saint Basil Academy which is "to shelter, protect, love and educate the youth so that they grow up to be healthy, wholesome, well-rounded Orthodox Christians, as well as productive members of society with vision and hope."

In 2014, the National Philoptochos contributed \$371,950 to the Academy of Saint Basil for both the Vasilopita and Sisterhood Funds. Over the past 10 years, National Philoptochos has contributed approximately \$4 million to the Academy.

**Our Saint Barbara Philoptochos is conducting its annual Vasilopita Auction today with all proceeds being donated to Basil's Academy in Garrison NY**

## Vasilopita Recipients for 2017

1. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
2. Virgin Mary the Theotokos Mother of God
3. St. Basil for Saint Basil Academy and its Residents
4. For the Poor and the Needy
5. St. Barbara Church

### Liturgy and Worship

6. Chanters - Pete Marinos
7. Assistant Chanters - Tony Thompson, Panagiotis Mavroidis
8. Altar Boys - William Mariakakis
9. Choir Directors - Donna Trohanis, Eleni Christakos, Catherine Mariakakis, Costa Constantinou
10. Organists - Bessie Chronaki, Costa Constantinou

### Administrative

11. Parish Council -President - Pete Marinos
12. Philoptochos President Catherine Mariakakis
13. Office Manager - Helen Koutouzakis
14. Sunday School - Michelle Claypoole
15. Hope/Joy - , Summer Kinard
16. Greek Dance Troupe -Keith and Alexia Rheinhardt
17. Greek School Administrators - Helen Paliouras & Evdokia 'Evvy' Glekas
18. AHEPA President Representative - Lazarus Odzak
19. UNC Orthodox Christian Fellowship -Cassie Daphne Snow
20. DUKE Orthodox Christian Fellowship - Steven Katsohirakis
21. Dina Paliouras - **the Provider** of the Community Vasilopita for the Church Service

**Happy 2017!**

**Vasilopita Sunday Rescheduled for January 15- Philoptochos will sponsor Annual Vasopita Sunday. Whole vasilopitas will be available for bidding, as well as individual slices offered for a suggested minimum \$2 donation. All proceeds benefit St. Basil's Academy in Garrison NY.**

**Our first General Membership Meeting will be held immediately following the Auction.**

**Upcoming Events: Membership Tea Saturday February 11. This year there will be an Outreach Activity. As part of Fill the Bag Initiative we will be assembling bags for the homeless. Bags will contain water, wipes, tissues, socks and a non perishable food item. Beginning Sunday February 12, bags will be available for members of our parish to have on hand in their cars to distribute to homeless. All ladies are invited to attend the Tea and become members of Philoptochos.**

**Sunday February 12 there will be a tray passed for Social Services as well.**

**Yours in Christ**

**Catherine Mariakakis- Chapter President**

**PROJECTS TO DATE:**

**2016**



January 16	Evening of Music
January 30	Spaghetti Event
February 20	Gyro Event
June 4-5	Greek Festival
July 23	Gyro Event
September 24	Evening of Jazz
October 1	Greek Style Chicken Dinner & Pastry
November 18-19	Athenian Grill and Pastry
December 2	Christmas Concert
December 10	Holiday Greek Pastries

**2017**

May 6-7	Greek Festival
April 22	Easter Concert

---

*The Community of Saint Barbara Durham, NC*

*has dedicated*

*January 22nd @ January 29th, 2017*



*As*

*Diakonia Center Panagia Chapel Sundays*

# The Blessing of Homes

The custom of blessing homes during the Epiphany season is of special beauty and significance. It is not simply a sentimental tradition without meaning, nor is it a custom whose meaning we have forgotten, like an old friend whose face we remember, but whose impact on our life has been forgotten.

When an Orthodox Christian believer moves into a new home, he dedicates his new home as the abode of a follower of Christ. He asks that God, the source of all goodness and the Giver of every perfect gift, to bless his house and all that is within it; he recalls that Jesus Christ, His Son, came to bring Salvation to all, even as He brought Salvation to the house of Zacchaeus; he prays that the Holy Spirit may abide in it, guiding those who dwell in it in the Paths of righteousness.

During the Season of Epiphany we rededicate our home for its original purpose, just as we must periodically rededicate our life to Christ. We do it especially on this Feast because this is the day on which we remember in the Church Year the coming of Christ who began His Ministry when He descended into Jordan to be Baptized by St. John the Forerunner and Baptist. He enters again into our lives reminding us that we must "repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand."

An Orthodox Christian must dedicate not only himself and his house to the Lord, but his daily work and all his efforts as well. All things are to be done to the glory of God. That is why in the Orthodox Church, not only religious objects, such as icons, crosses, churches and vestments, are blessed, but also homes, fields, animals and all objects which are used in our daily life for the good of man. In this the Church expresses its faith that the Holy Spirit's sanctifying action extends over the whole Creation.

When the priest comes to bless the family and its house, the following rules should be observed:

1. A lighted candle, an icon, and a wide bowl for Holy Water should be placed on the table.
2. All radios, televisions, etc. should be turned off.
3. All present in the house should come together and stand at the table.
4. Those who are able should join in the singing.
5. The first names of those for whom special prayers are to be offered, including all the members of the family and especially those living in the house, should be clearly printed on a sheet of paper.
6. *Get your visitation forms from the narthex by asking one of the parish council members that are on duty.*
7. *The Last days for House blessings will be January 28, 2017.*



## Ahepa News

### 1. DISTRICT GOVERNOR'S VISIT:

On Sunday February 5<sup>th</sup>, our District Governor brother Bill Bond and his wife will visit us in Durham and attend Liturgy at St. Barbara's – after Liturgy we will host the coffee hour and enjoy a light lunch with our guests. If at all possible, please come to Church, participate in the reception, and bring some food [salty or sweet] for this occasion.

Since our visitors may arrive the previous day - Saturday Feb. 4 - we were thinking of taking them for supper, about 6:00PM, to the BLEU OLIVE bistro - our brothers' Sam and Kleanthis Papanikas place. Let us know if you and your wife might wish to join us, so we can make adequate reservations.

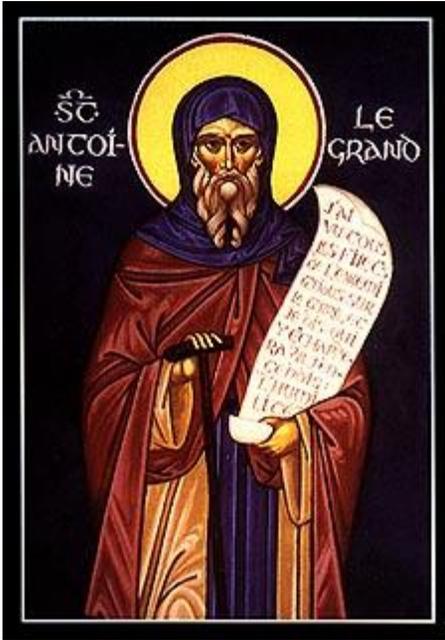
### 2. SCHOLARSHIPS:

The time to apply for AHEPA SCHOLARSHIPS has arrived – on the AHEPA table at St. Barbara's you will find DISTRICT 3 SCHOLASHIP applications, available to undergraduate students, who are accepted into the first to fourth year of a US college or university. Submission deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

Also AHEPA NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP applications are available to undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate students. The submission deadline for these is March 31, 2017. Please note that for both District and National scholarships, the student needs to be sponsored by a parent who is an AHEPA member in good standing [whose 2017 dues are paid], or the applicant must be an AHEPA member in good standing.

In addition, a local AHEPA SCHOLARSHIP is available to a qualified high school graduate who is an active member of our St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church parish. The applications for this scholarship will also be at the AHEPA table and the submission deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup> 2017.

# Venerable and God-bearing Father Anthony the Great



Commemorated This Tuesday on [January 17](#)  
Matins and Divine Liturgy starting at 9:00 am

*Του Οσίου και Θεοφορου Πατρος ημων*

*Αντωνιου το Μεγαλου*

*Τριτη, 17 Ιανουαριου*

*Ορθρος και Θεια Λειτουργια αρχιζοντας στις 9 πμ*

Saint Anthony the Great is known as the Father of monasticism, and the long ascetical sermon in *The Life of Saint Anthony* by Saint Athanasius (Sections 16-34), could be called the first monastic Rule.

He was born in Egypt in the village of Coma, near the desert of the Thebaid, in the year 251. His parents were pious Christians of illustrious lineage. Anthony

was a serious child and was respectful and obedient to his parents. He loved to attend church services, and he listened to the Holy Scripture so attentively, that he remembered what he heard all his life.

When Saint Anthony was about twenty years old, he lost his parents, but he was responsible for the care of his younger sister. Going to church about six months later, the youth reflected on how the faithful, in the Acts of the Apostles (4:35), sold their possessions and gave the proceeds to the Apostles for the needy.

Then he entered the church and heard the Gospel passage where Christ speaks to the rich young man: “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come follow Me” (Mt.19:21). Anthony felt that these words applied to him. Therefore, he sold the property that he received after the death of his parents, then distributed the money to the poor, and left his sister in the care of pious virgins in a convent.

Leaving his parental home, Saint Anthony began his ascetical life in a hut not far from his village. By working with his hands, he was able to earn his livelihood and also alms for the poor. Sometimes, the holy youth also visited other ascetics living in the area, and from each he sought direction and benefit. He turned to one particular ascetic for guidance in the spiritual life.

In this period of his life Saint Anthony endured terrible temptations from the devil. The Enemy of the race of man troubled the young ascetic with thoughts of his former life, doubts about his chosen path, concern for his sister, and he tempted Anthony with lewd thoughts and carnal feelings. But the saint extinguished that fire by meditating on Christ and by thinking of eternal punishment, thereby overcoming the devil.

Realizing that the devil would undoubtedly attack him in another manner, Saint Anthony prayed and intensified his efforts. Anthony prayed that the Lord would show him the path of salvation. And he was granted a vision. The ascetic beheld a man, who by turns alternately finished a prayer, and then began to work. This was an angel, which the Lord had sent to instruct His chosen one.

Saint Anthony tried to accustom himself to a stricter way of life. He partook of food only after sunset, he spent all night praying until dawn. Soon he slept only every third day. But the devil would not cease his tricks, and trying to scare the monk, he appeared under the guise of monstrous phantoms. The saint however protected himself with the Life-Creating Cross. Finally the Enemy appeared to him in the guise of a frightful looking black child, and hypocritically declaring himself beaten, he thought he could tempt the saint into vanity and pride. The saint, however, vanquished the Enemy with prayer.

For even greater solitude, Saint Anthony moved farther away from the village, into a graveyard. He asked a friend to bring him a little bread on designated days, then shut himself in a tomb. Then the devils pounced upon the saint intending to kill him, and inflicted terrible wounds upon him. By the providence of the Lord, Anthony's friend arrived the next day to bring him his food. Seeing him lying on the ground as if dead, he took him back to the village. They thought the saint was dead and prepared for his burial. At midnight, Saint Anthony regained consciousness and told his friend to carry him back to the tombs.

Saint Anthony's staunchness was greater than the wiles of the Enemy. Taking the form of ferocious beasts, the devils tried to force the saint to leave that place, but he defeated them by trusting in the Lord. Looking up, the saint saw the roof opening, as it were, and a ray of light coming down toward him. The demons disappeared and he cried out, "Where have You been, O Merciful Jesus? Why didn't You appear from the very beginning to end my pain?"

The Lord replied, "I was here, Anthony, but wanted to see your struggle. Now, since you have not yielded, I shall always help you and make your name known throughout all the world." After this vision Saint Anthony was healed of his wounds and felt stronger than before. He was then thirty-five years of age.

Having gained spiritual experience in his struggle with the devil, Saint Anthony considered going into the Thebaid desert to serve the Lord. He asked the Elder (to whom he had turned for guidance at the beginning of his monastic journey) to go into the desert with him. The Elder, while blessing him in the then as yet unheard of exploit of being a hermit, decided not to accompany him because of his age.

Saint Anthony went into the desert alone. The devil tried to hinder him, by placing a large silver disc in his path, then gold, but the saint ignored it and passed by. He found an abandoned fort on the other side of the river and settled there, barricading the entrance with stones. His faithful friend brought him bread twice a year, and there was water inside the fort.

Saint Anthony spent twenty years in complete isolation and constant struggle with the demons, and he finally achieved perfect calm. The saint's friends removed the stones from the entrance, and they went to Saint Anthony and besought him to take them under his guidance. Soon Saint Anthony's cell was surrounded by several monasteries, and the saint acted as a father and guide to their inhabitants, giving spiritual instruction to all who came into the desert seeking salvation. He increased the zeal of those who were already monks, and inspired others with a love for the ascetical life. He told them to strive to please the Lord, and not to become faint-hearted in their labors. He also urged them not to fear demonic assaults, but to repel the Enemy by the power of the Life-Creating Cross of the Lord.

In the year 311 there was a fierce persecution against Christians, in the reign of the emperor Maximian. Wishing to suffer with the holy martyrs, Saint Anthony left the desert and went to Alexandria. He openly ministered to those in prison, he was present at the trial and interrogations of the confessors, and accompanying the martyrs to the place of execution. It pleased the Lord to preserve him, however, for the benefit of Christians.

At the close of the persecution, the saint returned to the desert and continued his exploits. The Lord granted the saint the gift of wonderworking, casting out demons and healing the sick by the power of his prayer. The great crowds of people coming to him disrupted his solitude, and he went off still farther, into the inner desert where he settled atop a high elevation. But the brethren of the monasteries sought him out and asked him to visit their communities.

Another time Saint Anthony left the desert and arrived in Alexandria to defend the Orthodox Faith against the Manichaean and Arian heresies. Knowing that the name of Saint Anthony was venerated by all the Church, the Arians said that he adhered to their heretical teaching. But Saint Anthony publicly denounced Arianism in front of everyone and in the presence of the bishop. During his brief stay at Alexandria, he converted a great multitude of pagans to Christ.

People from all walks of life loved the saint and sought his advice. Pagan philosophers once came to Abba Anthony intending to mock him for his lack of education, but by his words he reduced them to silence. Emperor Constantine the Great (May 21) and his sons wrote to Saint Anthony and asked him for a reply. He praised the emperor for his belief in Christ, and advised him to remember the future judgment, and to know that Christ is the true King.

Saint Anthony spent eighty-five years in the solitary desert. Shortly before his death, he told the brethren that soon he would be taken from them. He instructed them to preserve the Orthodox Faith in its purity, to avoid any association with heretics, and not to be negligent in their monastic struggles. “Strive to be united first with the Lord, and then with the saints, so that after death they may receive you as familiar friends into the everlasting dwellings.”

The saint instructed two of his disciples, who had attended him in the final fifteen years of his life, to bury him in the desert and not in Alexandria. He left one of his monastic mantles to Saint Athanasius of Alexandria (January 18), and the other to Saint Serapion of Thmuis (March 21). Saint Anthony died peacefully in the year 356, at age 105, and he was buried in the desert by his disciples.

The Life of the famed ascetic Saint Anthony the Great was written by Saint Athanasius of Alexandria. This is the first biography of a saint who was not a martyr, and is considered to be one of the finest of Saint Athanasius’ writings. Saint John Chrysostom recommends that this Life be read by every Christian.

“These things are insignificant compared with Anthony’s virtues,” writes Saint Athanasius, “but judge from them what the man of God Anthony was like. From his youth until his old age, he kept his zeal for asceticism, he did not give in to the desire for costly foods because of his age, nor did he alter his clothing because of the infirmity of his body. He did not even wash his feet with water. He remained very healthy, and he could see well because his eyes were sound and undimmed. Not one of his teeth fell out, but near the gums they had become worn due to his advanced age. He remained strong in his hands and feet.... He was spoken of everywhere, and was admired by everyone, and was sought even by those who had not seen him, which is evidence of his virtue and of a soul dear to God.”

The following works of Saint Anthony have come down to us:

Twenty Sermons on the virtues, primarily monastic (probably spurious).

Seven Letters to various Egyptian monasteries concerning moral perfection, and the monastic life as a spiritual struggle.

A Rule for monastics (not regarded as an authentic work of Saint Anthony).

In the year 544 the relics of Saint Anthony the Great were transferred to Alexandria, and after the conquest of Egypt by the Saracens in the seventh century, they were transferred to Constantinople. The holy relics were transferred from Constantinople in the tenth-eleventh centuries to a diocese outside Vienna. In the fifteenth century they were brought to Arles (in France), to the church of Saint Julian.

## **THANK YOU TO ALL OUR STEWARD FAMILIES!**

**Our goal for the year 2016 was to increase the number of our active Steward families to 150! We are pleased to report that this ambitious effort has been practically achieved by noting that as of December 31, 2016, we had 145 Steward families contributing generously their time, talents and treasure to assist their church community of St. Barbara in meeting its mission. A big Thank You to ALL for your commitment to total STEWARDSHIP!**