DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT

SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

THE REVEREND STEVEN P. ZORZOS, D. MIN., PROTOPRESBYTER & PRESIDING PRIEST
THE REVEREND GREGORY GATANAS, M. DIV., PRESBYTER & ASSISTANT PRIEST

CHRIST, THE HOLY WISDOM OF GOD

September 1, 2026

Dear Sunday School Families,

Happy Ecclesiastical New Year! We hope your summer was restful, and we're excited to welcome our students back for another year of growing in faith, community, and the love of Christ.

Sunday School begins on September 13th
We start Sunday School on September 13th with an annual Open House. Students will participate in classroom activities and parents are welcome to visit and meet our teachers while enjoying light refreshments (optional, but we'd love to see you!).

A Special Farewell to Father Steve
September 13th will also be Father Steve's last day as Saint Sophia's proistamenos (presiding priest) as he begins his well-earned retirement. We're asking all students to make a card thanking Father Steve for his 42 years of love and dedication to our Sunday School program. Bring a card from home or make one in class that day - supplies will be provided. Children will hold up their cards during the Children's Sermon, and we'll present them all to Father Steve at the reception following church.

Welcoming Father Augustine
We're delighted to welcome Father Augustine as our new presiding priest and look forward to introducing him to our students. With our assistant priest, Father Gregory, we It's shaping up to be an exciting year: our teachers are reviewing the brand-new Archdiocese Sunday School curriculum, and we're planning activities that bring our faith to life! Thank you also to everyone who completed our end-of-year Sunday School survey - we're incorporating your feedback across the year. More details on the schedule and activities to come!.

Thank you for sharing your children with us and as they grow in their knowledge of Christ and their growth as Orthodox Christians.

Grades and Teachers

Pre-K / Kindergarten:	Amerisa Kyriazis & Phillarica Neal
1st / 2nd Grade:	Angelic Papacalos
3rd / 4th Grade:	Kelly Tanzi
5th / 6th Grade:	Helen Palatianos & Claire Brainard
7th / 8th Grade:	Joanna Thomas & Marie Thomas
9th - 12th Grade:	Amanda Lockhart, Elizabeth Charles & Edward Villanueva

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Sunday School Registration

To register your child, please click on the link below. Sunday School is free for all Saint Sophia Stewards in good standing. Not a steward? Please contact the church office to enroll:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdqC7vAwHRnr9S2Vsdl_7ML8qabffz5m1Ekfct_1nzz1ifs5Q/viewform

Sunday School Location and Times:

All Sunday School classes are held on the **second floor of the Frosene Center**, connected to Saint Sophia. You can access the classrooms via the Frosene Center elevators or by walking through Father John Hall and the atrium—classrooms are down the hall on the left.

Arrival:

Please bring your children to church and have them sit with the Sunday School teachers in the **reserved pews on the left side** of the nave. The **Divine Liturgy begins at 10:00 AM**—we ask families to **arrive by 10:30 AM**.

Class Time:

Sunday School begins **immediately after communion**. Teachers will walk the children from the pews to their classrooms. Drop-off is also available—please ensure your child is registered and we have your contact information.

Dismissal:

Classes end at **12:00 PM**.

- **6th grade and younger**: Parents must pick up children directly from their classrooms after liturgy.
- **7th grade and up**: Students will be dismissed at noon and may join their families at **coffee hour in Father John Hall**.

Talks with Our Clergy:

We are honored to have a series of three different sessions where our clergy share wonderful, age-appropriate lessons with our Sunday School students.

Teen Talk: 7th - 12th grade
Faith Time: 3rd - 6th grade
Face Time: Pre-K - 2nd grade

Holy Communion:

Per Father Steve, "make an effort to limit food immediately before communion or if your child needs food but feed them but keep the meal light (skip the bacon, eat the toast)." Also, we know that children burn calories quickly so every classroom will have snacks in the classroom for all to enjoy after communion.

Special Programs:

Acolyte Altar Boy Program: Our 9th grade boys (ages 13 and 14) depart from the traditional Sunday school curriculum to partake of our Acolytes (Altar boy) program. Through active participation in the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and holidays, the program instructs the boys on the meaning of the Divine Liturgy, other services, and the fundamental sacraments of the church. To participate, please contact sexton Victor Berio (victor@saintsophiadc.com)

Myrrh Bearers: Our 3rd grade girls (ages 9 - 10) are invited to serve as Myrrh bearers (Myrofores) during the Good Friday service of Holy Week. The girls' participation serves as a living reminder of the women who followed and served Christ, and who were the first to witness and announce His Resurrection. To participate, please contact Kelly Tanzi (kellytanzi@msn.com).

Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival: The Cathedral's teenagers (7th – 12th grade) are invited to participate in the annual Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival. The Saint Sophia team will compete against Sunday School students from across the Archdiocese during three rounds of competition at the district, regional and national levels. To participate, please contact Amanda Lockhart (amanda.k.lockhart@gmail.com).

Nursery Room: Parents of younger children (ages 3 and under) are welcome to take a break in the Nursery Room which is shared with the GOYA room at the entry of the Frosene Center on the 2nd floor.

Again, we are thrilled to welcome you all back to Sunday School on September 13th and know we will have a wonderful year to come.

Yours in Christ,

Amanda Lockhart, Sunday School Director

Kelly Tanzi, Sunday School Curriculum Specialist

Fr. Steven P. Zorzos, Presiding Priest

Fr. Gregory Gatanas, Assistant Priest