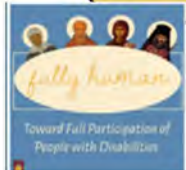
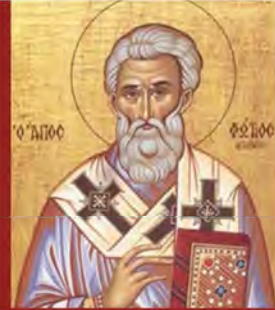




# A Good Word - Λόγον Αγαθόν

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH



**CENTER FOR FAMILY CARE SEEKS 12 PILOT PARISHES**  
On Behalf of All: Toward an Accessible Divine Liturgy for Children with Disabilities

The campaign has begun to choose 12 Orthodox Christian communities as Pilot Parishes which will create or enhance accessible worship ministry efforts for children with disabilities through the Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer Grant Initiative On Behalf of All: Toward an Accessible Divine Liturgy for Children with Disabilities, awarded by Lilly Endowment Inc.



### CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF SAINT SAVAS THE SANCTIFIED

His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh cordially invites you to the Celebration of the Feast of Saint Savas the Sanctified on **Thursday December 5th** at the **Metropolis of Pittsburgh**.

9:00 - 11:30 am Orthros & Divine Liturgy followed by a reception to 2:00 pm

**RSVP by Dec 1st**

lhenry@pittsburgh.goarch.org / 412 621 5529 x10

## ON BEHALF OF ALL

Apply to be a Pilot Parish now!  
<https://tinyurl.com/FHOBOA>

### OVERVIEW

The *On Behalf of All* project seeks to nurture the worship and prayer of young children ages 0 - 12 years with disabilities.

12 parishes across the nation will be supported to become models in accessible worship.

In turn, each of these parishes will then adopt and model their efforts and outcomes for a local, sister Orthodox parish by the end of the 5-year grant period.

### FACTS

An estimated 20% of children in the U.S. have a disability.

If 2 of every 10 young people in Sunday Liturgy do not look like they have a disability, they may have invisible disabilities; additionally, there are likely seen and/or unseen barriers that are keeping families with special needs away.

### ACCESSIBILITY

An accessible parish begins with the awareness and attitude of its leadership. Priests and parish leaders must be supportive of taking measures to make worship fully accessible for children and their families who have unique needs.

### A SPECIAL CALL

A pilot parish liaison will be called upon as a dedicated, volunteer ministry leader who can advocate on behalf of families with disabilities to priests and parish councils.

Liaisons will commit to 2-4 hours of monthly training/collaboration and 2 multi-day training workshops (travel and expenses covered by the grant).

Assessment tools, training, parish-wide retreats, ongoing coaching, problem-solving, and resource creation will be provided by the *On Behalf of All* grant.

Families will be interviewed by an independent consultant to help identify needs and follow the progression of accessibility in their communities over the 5-year grant period.

Nine of the twelve parishes will be chosen from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (one per Metropolis), and the remaining three spots will be open to parishes among other Orthodox Jurisdictions.

The On Behalf of All grant resources will provide educational parish-wide training/coaching, assessment tools, research, and resource development for initiating and optimizing accessible worship for children with disabilities ages birth to 12 years and their families. See the infographic for a summary of the commitment of applying Pilot Parishes.

As the Lord chose His original 12, may He likewise help us select 12 ready and willing communities! To fill out an application, use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/FHOBOA>

## NEW METROPOLIS CENTER UPDATE

The weather this fall has been kind to us and thus we have made significant progress with construction. The interior stairs have been installed, walls are up, windows are in, the veranda is now walkable and the concrete for the altar has now been poured.

If you would like to learn more about the New Metropolis Center project, or would like to make a pledge/donation please visit:

<https://www.pittsburgh.goarch.org/pledge> As always, we thank you for your support!



## 20 Athletic 25 Seminars



For Advisors, Clergy, Coaches, and GOYA Officers!

December 7 at 10 AM

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/Dec7Athletic>

December 8 at 5 PM

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/Dec8Athletic>



# 2024 Metropolis of Pittsburgh St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

## Senior Division Essay

The number of natural disasters worldwide continues to increase, resulting in more communities destroyed and more lives lost. How would you respond to someone who questions why God allows natural disasters to happen when we know God can intervene at any moment? If God is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-loving, how can He allow evil things to happen?

### Senior Division Essay Winner:

#### **“Understanding Natural Disasters in the Context of God’s Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Love” by Emanuela Santiago, St. John the Forerunner Greek Orthodox Church, Youngstown**

Natural disasters are undeniably devastating events that cause immense suffering and loss around the world. In the face of such tragedies, many people grapple with profound questions about the nature of God and His relationship to the world. Specifically, the inquiry arises as to why a benevolent and omnipotent deity would permit such calamities to occur when it is within His power to prevent them. In attempting to address this theological conundrum, it is essential to examine the complexities of divine attributes, human free will, and the nature of evil

Firstly, it is imperative to acknowledge the omnipotence of God – His unlimited power to influence and control the course of events. From this perspective, one might expect that a deity possessing such absolute power would intervene to prevent natural disasters and mitigate their destructive consequences. However, this simplistic understanding overlooks the intricate dynamics of divine sovereignty and human agency. While God indeed possesses the ability to intervene in the natural order, He also respects the natural laws and processes that govern the universe. Natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and tsunamis, are often the result of these natural processes operating according to physical laws.

Moreover, the concept of divine omniscience – God’s infinite knowledge encompassing past, present, and future – adds another layer of complexity to the question of why natural disasters occur. It is tempting to assume that if God is all-knowing, He must foresee and prevent all suffering. However, this perspective fails to account for the profound mystery of human freedom. God, in His wisdom, has granted humanity the capacity to make choices, both good and evil, and to shape the course of history. Natural disasters, while devoid of human agency, are often intertwined with human actions, such as environmental degradation or urban development in disaster-prone areas. In allowing natural disasters to occur, God respects the consequences of human choices and provides opportunities for redemption and renewal in their aftermath.

Furthermore, the attribute of divine love offers a lens through which to interpret the presence of suffering and evil in the world. God’s love is not merely sentimental affection but a profound and sacrificial commitment to the well-being of creation. While it may seem paradoxical that a loving God permits suffering, it is precisely because of His love that He allows for the possibility of genuine freedom and moral responsibility. In the face of natural disasters, God’s love is manifested through acts of compassion, solidarity, and resilience displayed by individuals and communities in their response to adversity.

In conclusion, the question of why God allows natural disasters to occur despite His omnipotence, omniscience, and love is a deeply complex theological issue that defies easy answers. By recognizing the interplay of divine attributes, human agency, and the mystery of suffering, we can begin to approach this question with humility and reverence. While we may never fully comprehend the ways of God, we can find solace in the assurance that His presence and love are steadfast amid the storms of life. Ultimately, it is through faith, compassion, and solidarity that we can confront the challenges posed by natural disasters and strive to build a more resilient and compassionate world.



Please consider donating to the Metropolis Scholarship Fund so that we may continue to offer scholarships to our talented youth. Visit <https://onrealm.org/GreekOrthodoxMe/give/oratorical>. Donations can also be mailed directly to the Metropolis to the attention of Alyssa Kyritsis. Please write “Oratorical Scholarship” in the memo line of your check.

### PLEASE SUPPORT OUR METROPOLIS MINISTRIES!

It costs approximately \$1,000 per day to operate our Metropolis - including Metropolitan Savas’s Archpastoral visitations, preparations for summer camp and GOYA retreats, our vital registry, and more.

Please consider sponsoring a day in the life of the Metropolis:

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, 5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232  
412-621-5529 (Main) 412-465-0460 (Camp) 412-621-8543 (Youth)  
pittsburgh.goarch.org info@pittsburgh.goarch.org

