



HOLY CROSS - ST. NEKTARIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH (BARRIE)

ΙΕΡΟΣ ΝΑΟΣ ΤΙΜΙΟΥ ΣΤΑΥΡΟΥ - ΑΓΙΟΥ ΝΕΚΤΑΡΙΟΥ

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WHAT IS A MEMBER OF THE PARISH?

Beloved in Christ,

Many ask us “We would like to become Members of this Parish. What do we have to do?” This is such a wonderful and noble act on all Orthodox Christians. Traditionally, a membership entailed paying a yearly due to the Church which entitled the person to vote and run for a position on the Parish Council or Philoptochos. However, this is not what we are supposed to do. To be a “member” of a Church, one must not only be an Orthodox Christian, but must also be a **Member in Good Standing with the Church**. Regardless of their heritage, they have been Baptized and/or Chrismated into the Holy Orthodox Church, but also continue to live and practice the Orthodox faith by *participating in the life of the Church*. This means, aside from regular attendance on Sundays (which is a minimum), the individual has no canonical impediments prohibiting them from receiving Holy Communion, confess regularly (at least twice a year), and regularly tithe and are committed stewards to the Parish.

Tithing (as per the Old Testament) refers to regularly (e.g. monthly or weekly) donating a set amount of one’s income to the Church. In the New Testament, 10% tithing is considered to be the minimum.

Stewardship, on the other hand, refers to what the Bible teaches. Each of us are to be servants (i.e. stewards, δούλοι). *A servant of Christ knows who is the King. A servant of Christ is one who has voluntarily set aside his or her personal rights in order to love, serve, and obey the will of God in Christ Jesus. Servants of Christ die daily to sin and fleshly desires, allowing Christ’s life to flow through them (Galatians 2:20).*

We are all expected to help our Church in whatever way we can (e.g. helping with AGAPE Meals, cleaning upstairs or the basement after Church, manning the candles, bathrooms, etc...). This is our Christian duty. Christ himself says: *whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. (Matthew 20:26-28).*

Individuals on limited incomes (e.g elderly or other reasons) can still help the Church! Speak directly with the Parish Council who will advise you what can be done. Remember, the Church is a family. As a family we work together. **Nobody is excluded** because of financial constraints. To every obstacle, with prayer, a solution will be found!

Paid memberships, as we’ve been announcing since January 2020, will be phased out as of December 2022. To become a Member of the Church, one must tithe regularly and be a steward. THIS will be your membership!

If you have any questions or you need help, please do not hesitate to speak with us.

In Christ’s love,

The Parish Council