



Issue: November 2022



## Metropolitan Ilia, of blessed memory

His Excellency Metropolitan Ilia Katre of Philomelion fell asleep in the Lord on Thursday, October 6, 2022. He was a beloved spiritual father, hierarch, and friend.



**Please join us in honoring the life of Metropolitan Ilia of Philomelion**

**Sunday, November 13, 2022  
At 10 A.M.**

**The 40<sup>th</sup> day memorial service in the church. Following liturgy, we will meet in the church hall to share stories and pictures.**

In the early 20th century at the border town of Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan, where the Saint Mary's River connects Lake Superior to the lower Great Lakes, a handful of Albanian immigrant workers found employment in the Northwestern Leather Tannery. It was to this place that 18-year-old Sotir Ilo Ketri (Sam Katre) came to work under the guidance of his uncle, Vangjel Cicani. In 1932, he returned to his native village of Sinica in the district of Devol, where he married Evgjenia, the daughter of Kosta and Lefteria Dimashi.

By 1936, the couple had made their home in Sault Ste. Marie and the next year became parents of twin boys, Ilia and Kosta, born on July 14, 1937. Two months later, 24 years old Evgjenia succumbed to insurmountable childbirth complications. Five years later, Sam was married to Greek-American born Panagiota (Lula) Demetropulos, and together they raised their sons to be God-fearing communicants of the Holy Orthodox Church.

Strong familial ties united the six Albanian families living in one residential neighborhood, where contact and communication in the Albanian language was a

daily occurrence. Spiritual life was centered at Saint George Greek Orthodox Church, which attracted faithful from a number of ethnic backgrounds. Instructed in the faith by the monastic priest, Father Eugene Lucas, both Ilia and Kosta read and discussed matters of Orthodox teachings and practice extensively throughout their youth.

During Holy Week in 1955, the brothers, now high school seniors, visited Saint Nicholas Church in Chicago, located on Rockwell Street, where they met Bishop Mark Lipa and Father John Chaplain. It was during this meeting that Bishop Mark arranged for Ilia to pursue theological studies at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School in Brookline, Massachusetts, in preparation for the priesthood.

While still in high school, he mastered both the Greek and Albanian languages and in time, chose to serve the Albanian Church. On the advice of his father, Ilia trained to serve both the Albanian and Greek Orthodox Churches.

On May 20, 1962, Ilia was married to Helen, the daughter of Dhimitrula and Nikolla Sotira of St. Louis, Missouri. He graduated from Hellenic College and Seminary at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School in Brookline, Massachusetts with a Bachelor of Theology degree; and on Pentecost Sunday, June 17, 1962, Deacon Ilia was ordained to the priesthood at Holy Trinity Albanian Orthodox Church in Boston, where he served as pastor until August 31, 1983.

During Father Katre's ministry at Holy Trinity Church, the membership was increased, a religious education program was implemented, and a plan for financial stability was adopted. At the same time, he served as secretary to Bishop Mark and to the Diocese. Father

Katre developed several other aspects of his priestly ministry, including being spiritual advisor to college and university students, working on Pan-Orthodox committees in the Boston area, and representing Bishop Mark and the Diocese at various inter-Orthodox and ecumenical activities. He held the post of Assistant Director of Holy Cross Orthodox Press, overseeing the operation of the bookstore and the sales of publications, and functioned as managing editor of The Greek Orthodox Theological Review.

He was treasurer of the Orthodox Theological Society of America, vice-president of the Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology and Religion, and treasurer of Holy Cross Alumni Association. He was a member of the Advisory Board of the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute of Berkeley, California. Furthermore, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1972 from Hellenic College and the following year received a Master of Divinity degree from Holy Cross School of Theology. September 1, 1983 he was assigned as Dean of Student Affairs at Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology, a position he held until November 30, 1988, during which time he also served as Vicar General for the Albanian Orthodox Church of America until May, 2002.

December 1, 1988, Father Katre was called to serve at Saint John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Las Vegas, Nevada, where the parish was the recipient of his strong leadership, paternal love and great wisdom. Under his leadership, a magnificent new Church was built, opening its doors on September 27, 1992 and Father Katre continued to oversee the development of the Community and Education Center until its opening on May, 10, 2003.

In 1992, Father Katre was sent twice on missions to Albania by His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to help rebuild the Albanian Orthodox



Church following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. On October 19, 2001, Father Katre suffered the loss of his beloved Presvytera Helen. He had contemplated retiring from the priesthood with the intention of sharing his time between his children and grandchildren in Reno, Nevada, and Massachusetts. However, in 2002, Father Ilia accompanied Metropolitan Anthony of San Francisco to the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the service of Sanctification of the Holy Chrism.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew proposed that the widowed Father Katre be ordained bishop for the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He was unanimously elected titular Bishop of Philomelion by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on May 7, 2002 and was consecrated a bishop of the Ecumenical Patriarchate on May 12, 2002 by Metropolitans Anthony of San Francisco, Melition of Philadelphia, and Demetrios of Sebasteia. June 5,

2005, His Grace, together with Metropolitan Gerasimos and Father John Hondros concelebrated the Consecration of Saint John the Baptist in Las Vegas, Nevada.

At the request of Archbishop Anastasios, the Primate and Head of the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania, and with the permission of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Bishop Ilia ministered in the Church of Albania. Frequently he visited the Theological Academy, the Resurrection of Christ at the Holy Monastery of Saint Vlash, Durres, to lecture and to consult on administrative matters. He represented the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania on two official international theological dialogues: one with the Roman Catholic Church and the other with the worldwide Anglican Communion. As a member of the delegation representing the Church of Albania, he participated in the Inter-Orthodox Conference in June 2009, at Chambesy, Switzerland, which approved the final document on the Orthodox diaspora.

In March 2008, he accepted the invitation of Bishop Nikon of the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church in America, and the two hierarchs concelebrated the hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Saint George Cathedral, Boston; commemorating the 100th anniversary of the first Divine Liturgy in the Albanian language in the United States by the then-priest Theofan Noli. Present was Archbishop Anastasios, who blessed the throngs of faithful.

By appointment from Patriarch Bartholomew and the Holy Synod, Bishop Ilia served as Acting Abbot of the Patriarchal and Stavropegial Monastery of Saint Irene Chrysovalantou in Astoria, New York, from December 2010 to May 2012.



In 2019 in recognition of his exceptional contributions to Orthodox theological formation, praxis, and ecumenical dialogue, the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople elevated him to titular Metropolitan of Philomelion. Metropolitan Ilija was a member of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States, where he served as Chairman of the Theological Education Committee. He also sat on the Canadian Conference of Orthodox Bishops.



Boston Area Tenure:

- Dean of Student Affairs at Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology
- Spiritual Advisor to the student body at Northeastern University
- Assistant Director of the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Press
- Host of Albanian speaking radio program
- Contributor to the Drite E. Vertet Albanian language newspaper

Other Affiliations:

- Interfaith Council of the National Council for Community and Justice

- Clark County Ministerial Association
- Board of Trustees, Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute, Berkeley
- Holy Cross Alumni Association
- Orthodox Theological Society in America
- Orthodox Christian Association in Medicine, Psychology and Religion
- Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas



### †Message From the Parish Council

#### †SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, **November 20, 2022**  
Annual General Assembly

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*Te diele me 20 Nentor 2022-  
Mbledhja e Asamblese se  
Pergjithshme*



#### †2022 Memberships

Please send in or drop off your dues for 2022 and 2021 if you still have not done it; \$150 per individual over 21 years or old, \$250 for family membership covering both husband and wife plus children under 21 yrs of age. Please note "2022 dues" on your check.

If you are not yet a member but would like to join our parish, please speak to a member of the Parish Council for information. There is no initiation membership fee anymore. **Member directory**-If you need to update or correct your address or phone

number for the next membership directory, please contact our church at **773-889-4282** or [stnicholaschurch2701@gmail.com](mailto:stnicholaschurch2701@gmail.com). You can also contact Maria Barbachi if you want to give us your e-mail address to receive communication from our church. Also, if you are moving, please inform the church in regards to the forwarding address for future church communication.

*Ju lutemi sillni ose dergoni pagesen e anetaresise se Kishes per vitin 2022 dhe 2021 ne rast se nuk e keni bere akoma. Ajo eshte \$150 per personat mbi 21 vjet dhe \$250 per familjet qe mbulon burrin, gruan si dhe femijet e tyre ne moshen nen 21 vjet.*

*Ju lutem shenoni "2022 dues" ne cekun tuaj. Ne rast se ju nuk jeni anetar i kishes dhe deshironi te beheni, kontaktoni zyren e kishes apo nje nga anetaret e Keshillit te Kishes per informacionin e duhur. Ju lutem njoftoni Kishen ne rast se keni ndryshuar adresen e banimit apo numrin e telefonit per te bere korrigjimet e duhura ne listat e Kishes. 773-889-4282 or [stnicholaschurch2701@gmail.com](mailto:stnicholaschurch2701@gmail.com).*



### † Ladies Auxiliaries News†



Ladies, join us the first Sunday of the Month for our meetings following Liturgy in the church hall. The dues are \$10.00 for the entire year.

*Bejuni anetare e Ladies Auxiliaries dhe ju ftojme te vini ne mbledhjet tona te dielen e pare te cdo muaji ne hollin e kishes, pas Liturgjise Hyjnore. Anetaresia koston \$10.00 ne vit.*



**A Message from Reverend Archimandrite Philip Koufos**

The Very Reverend Archimandrite Philip Koufos sends his deepest sympathies to our parish and his condolences to the family of Metropolitan Ilia on his passing. May his memory be eternal.



**† Prayer list / Lista e lutjes**



Please remember these people in your prayers:  
*Ju lutemi mos harroni të perfshini edhe këta njerëz në lutjet tuaja:*  
 Metropolitan Ilia,  
 Fr. Philip, Gregory,  
 Lillian, Richard, Perry,

Olga, Eva, Kay, Annie, Debra, Helen, John, Tina, Linda, Will, Peter, Mary, Rick, Sam, Nick, Cathy, Anastasia, Kathy, Vincenzina, Niki, Vasiliki, Dita, Cindy, Loren, Vasilika, Kostandin, Anesti, Peter, the men and women serving in the military, and those who have no one to pray for them. If you need to request a prayer for yourself or your beloved ones, please contact please contact our church at **773-889-4282** or [stnicholaschurch2701@gmail.com](mailto:stnicholaschurch2701@gmail.com).

Please pray along with Father from your homes. Pray for everybody's well-being in these challenging times, and don't forget to pray for the hospital workers, National Guard, cashiers and stockers, police, first responders, etc. – all the people working in the front lines that are fighting to keep us healthy and safe.



**St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church**



**Schedule of Services  
 Programi i Sherbesave  
 November / Nentor 2022**

**In-Person and Live  
 Streamed Services  
 (LS Denotes Service Live  
 Streamed on Facebook)**

06	Sun.	<b>7th Sunday of Luke</b> <i>7 Llukait</i>	Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
13	Sun.	<b>8th Sunday of Luke / St. John Chrysostom</b> <i>8 Llukait / Shen Joan Gojartii</i>	Divine Liturgy 10:00 am <i>Liturgjia Hyjnore</i>
20	Sun.	<b>9th Sunday of Luke</b> <i>9 Llukait</i>	Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
21	Mon. <b>LS</b>	<b>Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple</b> <i>Hyrja e Hyjlindëses Mari në Tempull</i>	Divine Liturgy 10:00 am <i>Liturgjia Hyjnore</i>
27	Sun.	<b>13th Sunday of Luke</b> <i>13 Llukait</i>	Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
30	Wed. <b>LS</b>	<b>Andrew the First-Called Apostle</b> <i>Ap. Andrea, I Parethirruri</i>	Divine Liturgy 10:00 am <i>Liturgjia Hyjnore</i>



**St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church - Chicago, IL**

5.0 ★★★★★ (10) Eastern Orthodox Church  
 9.5 miles · 2701 N Narragansett Ave, Chicago · Opens at 9:00 AM

