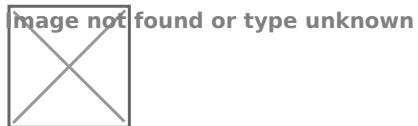


Ordination of Deacon Steven Sarigiannis at St. Barbara Church in Orange, CT



Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange, CT was filled to capacity to witness the Moving ordination of Steven Sarigiannis to the Diaconate by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America. Deacon Steven is a graduate of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology and is a life-long member of the parish, growing up in the community and serving in many ways. Praying along at the ordination were Deacon Steven's wife Diakonissa Theophania and their young daughter Despina-Agapi Florentia, the Deacon's parents and his grandfather, Fr. Steven (Stylianos) Sarigiannis, who has served the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America for more than 69 years.

Recognizing the fine examples and the deep heritage that has led Deacon Steven to this day, Archbishop Elpidophoros remarked, "On such a day as this, I want you to look around and consider your spiritual inheritance – the ministry, the sacrifice, the prayers, the service to others, and the grace of the Holy Spirit that has carried you to this moment. You are surrounded by a 'great cloud of witnesses,' as the Scripture states. Just look at the smiling faces of the clergy who have traveled to Saint Barbara today to join in this Liturgy of your Ordination to the Holy Diaconate. They have come to pray for, and to stand with you. They are standing with you to welcome you into the fellowship of the hoplites of the Lord, even as we chant on the Feast of the Holy Fathers:

ὝΩ θεία παρεμβολή, θεηγόροι ὄπλιται....

O Divine array, God-proclaiming hoplites.... ([full text here](#))

Responding to His Eminence, the newly ordained Deacon said, "I glorify God for my upbringing here at the St Barbara parish. This community, its families and its many ministries helped raise me, and cultivate me. This is a true church family. It was through the leadership, spiritual efforts, and liturgical grace of Fr. Peter Orfanakos in particular, that had an enduring effect on me. I loved to serve, and especially in the Holy Altar. I will recall one Sunday though, while kneeling for the consecration of the Gifts, I experienced a moment of Divine Grace. In this timeless moment, as a

boy, I knew that Jesus Christ was calling me to Him. A seed was planted in me for service in ordained ministry, although I didn't fully understand it at the time... Now, Your Eminence, so many years later, that seed within me has matured, and I stand before you, in the presence of my family, friends, and guides. I am humbled to return to the same church I grew up in, the very altar I first was called, in order to offer myself fully to our Lord Jesus Christ: in mind, in body, and in spirit. I stand before you ready, devoted, and eager to beginning my ministry, to fulfil that which I am called, and continue to be sent like the Apostles, as I am needed. I know I am unworthy of this Grace, yet I dare to stand before you praying that I will be made worthy of this blessing. (full text here)

Concelebrating with His Eminence were many priests including: Chancellor of the Archdiocesan District Fr. Elias Villis, Frs. Luke Veronis, Harry Pappas, Nikolaos Karloutsos, Nikolas Delaveris, Nicholas Lanzarakis, Constantine Koutroubas, Michael Palamara, Peter Orfanakos, Joshua Mosher (OCA), Archdeacon Dionysios Papiris and Deacon Ieromias.

The parish hosted a beautiful luncheon in Deacon Steven's honor. He looks with great anticipation to begin his ministry as Deacon for His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas of Detroit.

Photos: GOARCH/D. Panagos

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