



An Orthodox Christian Initiative

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The Holy Fire

The Holy Fire of Jerusalem is the light that miraculously ignites inside the Tomb of Jesus every year on Eastern Orthodox Holy Saturday. This miracle has been well documented for centuries. Well before services begin, the Tomb of Christ is first extinguished of every flame, and searched thoroughly by Jewish police for any possibility of something that would create fire, and is sealed and guarded before the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Jerusalem enters.

After having been searched as well, the Patriarch enters with unlit candles. He prays; the Holy Fire descends upon the Holy Sepulcher, and lights his candles, which he brings out of the Tomb of Christ and shares with the faithful assembled. This ceremony every Orthodox priest and his community re-create in parishes around the world during the Holy Saturday Service. (See <http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2017/04/15/the-miracle-of-holy-fire-2017-videos-jerusalem/> for more information.)

This year, for the first time in decades, the Holy Fire was brought to New York City by the Patriarch of Russia, who, every year, sends a private jet to Jerusalem to transport The Holy Fire to Russia. (On our Facebook page, ZOE for Life!, has posted a map showing the spread of the Holy Fire across the United States and Canada. The Holy Fire is available at ZOE House by appointment, 216-465-9030.

What a blessing for us here, in the United States, to share this sacred fire, bestowed upon us as an affirmation from God! It has been shared with different jurisdictions, across state lines, and even into other countries! What a miracle this Holy Fire is! How awe inspiring for each of us, to have this miracle from Heaven bless our homes! He has once again, miraculously, given us His uncreated light, that we may believe more confidently.

So many brothers and sisters in Christ, have driven countless miles to share this Holy Fire with all of us. It reminds us that the Lord promised us, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20. After all, the



Lord is not in the bricks and mortar of our churches; not in the beautiful iconography that surrounds us; not in the golden ornaments, or chiming bells. He is in us! You and I, dear reader. We carry Christ with us and in us wherever we go, just as the Apostles did; just as the disciples did. We are His church. Let us resolve here and now to share His love and tender care for all of His children wherever we go, just as we have shared the Holy Fire. Let us spread the wonder that our Jesus is with the world around us, so that they too know the grace of the Holy Trinity. What an amazing world this could be!

Wish List for ZOE House

- Financial donations in any amount (always our greatest need)
- Target, Walmart or Visa gift cards
- Diapers, Baby Wipes
- Baby Wash Cloths, Baby Towels
- Baby Shampoo, Baby Lotion
- New Infant Cars seats (asked for every day!)
- Pack and Plays
- Newborn Clothing, Blankets
- Strollers
- High Chairs
- Baby Swings

Thank you for your generosity!

Fish Feast Benefits ZOE for Life!

On March 25, 2016, on the Feast Day of the Annunciation, the Parish of St. Michael the Archangel Antiochian Orthodox Church in Cotuit, MA hosted fundraiser for ZOE for Life! On this day, fish was fried, and many enjoyed the delicious meal as well as the good fellowship the Feast provided. Even those who were unable to be there on the 25th, mailed in donations to help support the efforts to protect the lives

of little ones as yet unborn. Their goal was to raise \$1,000.00 - but thanks to the open hearts of so many, that goal was doubled! We gratefully thank every member of the Parish of St. Michael the Archangel Antiochian Orthodox Church in Cotuit, for their hard work to help us create ZOE Women's Center. Many lives will be changed, many souls will be saved, thanks to your generosity!



The Saint Anna Cafe

The Saint Anna Cafe was established in January of 2014. Mathushka Kerri Fox wanted girls, ages 6th grade and up to have a mission to call their own at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Randolph, NJ.

We started with one Nespresso maker and some pods and the Saint Anna Cafe was off to the races. A year later we had to add another machine. We make cappuccino and espresso. We also have different flavored syrups to add, and our coffee is served with a sugar stick in lovely white cappuccino cup.

The Cafe is open during our church coffee hour after Divine Liturgy. Two girls work on Sundays, September through June. Nine of us work on a rotating schedule. We each wear a pink apron and a name tag. We set up

the coffee station, take orders, deliver the cappuccino or espresso to the customers table, and clean up afterwards. Then we have to count the money and keep the books.

In January 2016 we took a vote on a non-profit we wanted to support, and unanimously voted to support ZOE House, a ministry of ZOE for Life!. Through the sales of the coffee, a bake sale and a Bottles for Babies coin drive, we were able to send ZOE House \$2200.00 this past Christmas. We hope to have two more Bottles for Babies drives before the end of this year, as well as one more bake sale. We have some new girls who will be joining Saint Anna Cafe, and we are saying 'good-bye' to two of our girls who have graduated and are heading off to college. We can't wait to see what the future holds for Saint Anna Cafe!

Greetings from ZOE for Life!

Livonia, Michigan

The Michigan Chapter of ZOE for Life! continues to provide material assistance to moms and their toddlers that we have been servicing since October of 2015. Additionally, we are working closely with *Little Tots and Moms*, a social services agency that is licensed under the Maternal Infant Health Program through the State of Michigan.

We work closely with ODO (Orthodox Detroit Outreach), heeding God's call to feed the hungry and clothe the poor.

We often get requests from Little Tots and Moms to provide baby clothing, diapers, wipes and layette items to the clients that they serve. ZOE for Life! is so blessed and happy to share whatever we can with our partner organizations. Most recently, we were contacted to provide clothing and diapers to a mom who had three young toddlers. Her house suffered smoke damage from a fire and she lost furniture as well as clothing for her children. Thankfully none of her children were injured in the fire.

Additionally, we work closely with ODO (Orthodox Detroit Outreach), heeding God's call to feed the hungry and clothe the poor. To be sure, it is difficult to

break the cycle of poverty facing the moms we minister to. And perhaps the odds are against these mothers to rise up into a more stable socio-economic position. But they chose life for their children and we feel strongly that we must do whatever we can to make their lives and that of their innocent children a little easier, without judgment.

It can be a bittersweet ministry at times...when you see women continue to bear children outside of marriage, or become addicted to opioids and alcohol. Poverty is such a debilitating condition but no child should go hungry or without proper clothing. It is in these areas that ZOE for Life! and ODO can provide much needed assistance and requires so little on our part other than compassion for those less fortunate than ourselves.

We appreciate your continued prayers and spiritual support. Any monetary donations you are able to provide will be accepted with great joy! Checks can be made payable to *ZOE for Life!-Livonia, MI* and mailed to P.O. Box 258, Farmington, MI 48332.

With love in Christ,
ZOE for Life! – Livonia, Michigan
855-ZOE-LIFE (855-963-5433)
www.zoehousemi.org
Email: info@zoehousemi.org

ZOE Women's Center News

God is demonstrating Himself to His faithful! Thanks to His Grace, ZOE Women's Center is becoming a reality! Much has been happening since we last wrote to you. A Steering Committee has been formed that meets monthly, which currently includes some ZOE for Life! Board Members, nurses, a hospital administrator, and an Orthodox priest. Key members who are soon to be joining us include a physician and a registered sonographer.

As you may already be aware, we have been praying to open a facility that would offer limited obstetrical

ultrasounds to enable us to confirm the viability of pregnancy for our clients who are abortion minded or abortion vulnerable. Having a Medical Director and a Sonographer were essential to this goal. We are praising God that He has answered these prayers!

We still have a lot of work to do, many prayers to offer, and money to be raised. But God is faithful, and we are ever grateful for your help! So we will continue to "press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Thank you for all you are doing to make the ZOE Women's Center a reality.


You shop. Amazon gives.

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to ZOE for Life! whenever you shop on AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile is

the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
Go to <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1881888> to find out how you can help.



3352 Mayfield Road
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Friend us on Facebook

April 2, 2017

Saint Basil Greek Orthodox Church
909 River Street, Troy, NY 12180

Dear Zoe for Life,

Every Sunday our elementary Sunday school class children put a donation in a special box. The funds are collected so that our classroom of Orthodox Christians could help various orthodox charities such as IOCC, Orthodox Mission Priests, Orthodox Camps and ZOE for Life, and in a few months - St. Andrew's Orthodox Camp near Syracuse, NY. The Sunday school students are donating to ZOE for Life to help mothers and babies stay well! We collected \$10 to help someone and we put it into a Target gift card.

God Bless,

Dorothy, Mary, Athena, Christopher, Emily Nico, Steve, Stephen, Joshua, Sophia, Kalliopi, Isaia, Michael, Peter, Bianca, Thomas, Sophie and Lisa McCarthy (teacher)

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The primary goal of ZOE for Life! is to preserve the life of the unborn child. We recognize that every soul consecrated by God is a gift to be cherished. ZOE for Life! helps pregnant women in distress who need confidential emotional and spiritual support to encourage them to choose life for their unborn child; assists Orthodox Christians seeking to adopt; and provides life-affirming resources and an Orthodox Christian education program for Pure Living/Abstinence.

Join Our Bottles for Babies Campaign

We want to send you a baby bottle, and ask you to fill it with loose change. What could be simpler? Simply empty your change into the bottle every day. When it is full, take it to the bank and send the cash to ZOE. Reuse and repeat! Contact Despina at despina@nmavrakisfamily.com.



Rhonda's Story

We recently had a very pregnant, new client come to ZOE House named Rhonda. She came in very timidly and we could tell she was troubled. After sitting down to talk with her, we realized she was very frightened, especially of delivery. Furthering our conversation, we found out that her baby was conceived non consensually and she had a very limited support system.

We offered her encouragement, support, and prayer. When we told her that we would pray for her, we could see the relief in her face and her demeanor change. We could see the love of God through her response.

After her visit, we continued to nurture our relationship with her, reaching out with a phone call. We wanted her

to know that we were genuinely concerned for her and she could rely on ZOE House for help.

After delivery, she called us in need of Pack and Play and through the grace of God (and many tiny miracles) another volunteer went the extra mile to deliver it to her in the hospital.

We continue to pray for her and we hope she continues to reach out to ZOE House not only for physical goods, but for spiritual and personal guidance.

*Karen Contoveros and Dawn Koukios,
ZOE House Volunteers*