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By [Natalie Ornell](#)

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September 05, 2014 7:22PM

## Food, food and more food at annual Braintree Greek festival

St. Catherine's Greek Orthodox Church in Braintree is holding its annual Greek Festival which began on Thursday, continued on Friday, and will be open all day Saturday and Sunday at 119 Common Street. The festival features Greek food, band performances, dance groups, a flea market and children's activities

BRAINTREE – St.Catherine Greek Orthodox Church is made up of parishioners who fought hard to achieve the American dream, first in Boston and later in the South Shore, said Father Philippe Mousis, presiding priest at the church.

Father Mousis was at the Braintree church on Friday as members of the congregation and many others celebrated during St. Catherine's four-day Greek Festival.

"This community has been around for 50 years," Father Mousis said. "When they came in the 1960s and '70s, it was during a difficult time (for) Greece."

He said some of the challenges Greeks faced during that era were similar to the problems people are facing today, including a lack of jobs and resources.

Arthur Pappas is chairman of this year's festival at St. Catherine. Pappas was 10 when his family immigrated from Sparta to Quincy in 1970. He now lives in Sharon and owns multiple gas stations on the South Shore.

His mother, Panagiota Pappas, 72, spent months preparing Greek desserts like koulourakia, loukamades, kourambiedes and tsoureki from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. with other women from a group at the church called the Philoptochos – a Greek word for philanthropy.

Arthur Pappas said he still visits Greece often. The best food at the festival, he said, is the stuffed tomatoes and peppers and added a plug for a Greek restaurant near his home, the Tasos Euro Cafe at Norwood Airport, which he said cooks better Greek food than many restaurants in Greece.

Evdokia Demopoulos, 76, from Dorchester, said the food at the festival was delicious but not the same caliber as her first-generation Greek parent's home cooking. She said she married an Italian and had gotten away from Greek cooking, so she was enjoying the festival Friday with Greek sausages and an Armenian-American friend.

Jim Greene of Braintree said he and his wife Kathi had come to the festival for the past few years. He had been in Greece in the mid-1960s, and said he had fond memories of the country and the food, which is always one of the highlights of the festival at the St. Catherine festival.

"It's fun to experiment with other people's food. Went to Piraeus and Crete in the U.S Navy. While we were anchored, people would come out with peanuts and grapes," he said. "It's really beautiful."

"I admire the upkeep on it," said his wife Kathi about the church.

Richard and Robin Pompeo from Braintree, formerly from Quincy said, "They used to have a Greek church on Beale Street. When they moved here we'd promise ourselves to keep going."

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PHOTO/ GARY HIGGINS/THE PATRIOT LEDGER

Marina Mousis holds freshly baked breads. The annual Greek Festival, held at St. Catherine Greek Orthodox Church in Braintree, featuring traditional foods, music, dance and crafts, runs through Sunday. Many enjoyed the festival Friday, September 5, 2014.