COLLECTION TITLE (NHM37)	The George J. Meletsis Family Archives of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
COLLECTION IDENTIFIER	87564
EXTENT	5 linear feet
CREATOR	St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church (Des Plaines, Ill.)
RELATED COLLECTIONS	The George J. Meletsis Family Archives of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church (NHM37)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The 1954 to discuss building a Greek Orthodox church and starting a Sunday school in the Des Plaines area. The initial group was called The Hellenic North-West Suburban Women's Club. The Sunday School opened in 1957, initially held in the Lions Memorial Field House in Mt. Prospect, Il. Initial church services began at the St. John Episcopalian Church in Mt. Prospect with Reverend Tsouris. In 1959, after years of fundraising, 35 families came together to purchase the former Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and named their new church St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church. That same year, Reverend Philip J. Pekras was hired as their first pastor.

The congregation quickly outgrew its initial space and purchased a plot of land in 1962 to build an Education and Cultural building which opened in 1965. With continued growth, the church completed several construction projects to expand in the 1970s.