



Monthly Parish Newsletter
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Fr. John Touloumes, Economist

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THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

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Mission: To proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ

December 2005

www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

Volume 13 – Issue 11

*Christ is Born!
Glorify Him!*



The Virgin on this day, brings forth the One Who is above all things;
and the earth a cave provides for Him Who is beyond man's touch.
Angels, along with shepherds now give their glory; Magi follow a star as they
journey; when for our sakes is born a young child, the pre-eternal God.

(Kontakion of the Nativity)

Icon: The Nativity of Christ from the Palatine Chapel of the Norman Palace, Sicily, 12th cent.

Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

Parish Newsletter of
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The Cultural Side

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by
Angela Morris
May his memory be
eternal!



Why? “When the madness of idolatry and irreligion filled the world and the knowledge of God was hidden, who part was it to teach the world about the Father? ... It was the Word of God, Who sees all that is in man and moves all things in creation... Desiring to do good to men, as Man He comes, taking to Himself a body like the rest; and through His actions done in that body, as it were on their own level, He teaches those who would not learn by other

means to know Himself, the Word of God, and through Him the Father.”

St. Athanasius, “On the Incarnation”

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Newborn Christ,

One of the most fascinating (and sometimes challenging) aspects of dealing with young children is their level of curiosity. As they expand the horizons of their growing world and form ideas about how things work, they eventually get to the inevitable stage of the continuous “Why?”

According to one psychologist, when young people are in that stage, they don't express themselves the way adults do, and their limited vocabulary is used differently than ours. “After conversing with thousands of children,” says this doctor, “I've decided that what they really mean [when they ask “Why?”] is ‘That's interesting to me. Let's talk about it together. Tell me more, please?’”

Just as child can never truly grasp the depths of the explanation for the question, “Why is the sky blue?”, we as children of God can never truly comprehend the unfathomable mystery of the Creator of the universe incarnate, born of a woman and lying in a stable. But just as the curious child who honed that curiosity into a life's work and maybe was instrumental in putting man into space or find the cure for a devastating disease cannot do so without a constant focus on that curiosity, so we cannot expect to somehow stumble upon the riches of the kingdom of God without Him Who is the “Holy Wisdom,” the Incarnate Son of God.

So in this season when we may look out at the world around us and what it has done to this holy time of year and ask, “Why attack the placing of Nativity scenes and Christmas trees? or “Why make this such a gaudy and commercial event?” or “Why do so many people and (un)civil organizations have so much hatred for Christ and Christians?”, perhaps we are better off simply gazing into the icon of the Nativity or a Manger scene and ponder a different kind of “Why?” The one that will bring us into the revelation of God's love is not from criticizing how others receive Christ but how He receives us: “Why, despite my attachment to worldly things?”; “Why, even though I do not love others as you have asked me?”; “Why, in spite of my thanklessness and carelessness?” From the depths of those “Why?” questions God will speak. Look. Listen.

At the end of it all, He has already answered. In the words of St. Athanasius, “He, the Mighty One, the Creator of all, Himself prepared this body in the Virgin as a temple for Himself, and took it for His very own, as the instrument through which He was known and in which He dwelt...This He did out of sheer love for us, so that in His death all might die, and the law of death thereby He abolished.”

Brothers and sisters, Christ—Who loves us—is born! Glorify Him!

News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal December 17

The complete cast rehearsal for the Holy Trinity Church School Christmas Pageant will be held on Saturday morning, December 17, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Please note: Grades 5 to 12 are asked to be present at 9:00 a.m. to rehearse speaking parts; Grades 4 and under are asked to be present at 10:00 for the complete rehearsal. All students and staff are requested to be present. "Bonus" attendance credit will be given for all students who participate in the rehearsal.

Grades 5 to 12.....9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Grades 4 & under.....10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Church School Christmas Pageant December 18

The Holy Trinity Church School ministry will be offering its annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 18. All the students of the Church School will be involved in this event. On that day, following Holy Communion, all Church School students and staff will depart for their classes and final preparations for the pageant. All our parishioners are asked to stay for the pageant and coffee hour in the social hall

No Church School Class Dec. 25, Jan. 1

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on December 25 and January 1 due to the holiday celebrations, so please plan on being in church together as a family for the entire service on those days.

St. Lydia's Orthodox Women's Fellowship . Dec. 1, 15

The St. Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is a ministry for women to share in fellowship and to study scripture, the Orthodox Faith and family life in today's world. The meetings take place every other week on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. at the home of Jan Petredis in Wexford. New participants are always welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable and the approach is casual, but the subjects are important for today's women and families.

This year's theme is a Bible Study of Saint Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians. The study guide being used is a new publication, "First and Second Corinthians: Straight From the Heart." It approaches the study with an easy-to-understand method intended for all people. For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925.



YOUTH MINISTRY

GOYA Events.....December

Thu. Dec. 1, 6:30 pm: Basketball practice

Thu. Dec. 8, 6:30 pm: Basketball practice

Sun. Dec. 11: Christmas Fireside Chat

Thu. Dec. 15, 6:30 pm: Basketball practice

Fri. Dec. 16, 4:00-9:00 pm: GOYA Baking

For information contact Presvytera Becky (412-831-3574) or GOYA President Victoria Kritiotis (412-766-5001).

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services.....December

Please take note of the following weekday Liturgies for the feast days in the month of November. Orthros is at 9:00 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00.

Mon. Dec. 5.....St. Savas the Sanctified

Mon. Dec. 5*, 7pm..... Vespers of St. Nicholas

Tue. Dec. 6*..... St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

**All services for St. Nicholas held at St. Nicholas Cathedral*

Wed. Dec. 7, 6:00 p.m..... Paraclesis

Thu. Dec. 8..... Forefeast of the Conception

of the Theotokos/Sr. Citizens Christmas Lunch

Sun. Dec. 11*, 7pm..... Vespers of St. Spyridon

Mon. Dec. 12*..... St. Spyridon the Wonderworker

**All services for St. Spyridon held at St. Spyridon in Monessen.*

Christmas/New Year Services December/January

Please keep in mind the following festal celebrations during December and January. Unless otherwise noted, each listing indicates Orthros at 9:00 am, followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am.

Fri. Dec. 23, 10 am..... Royal House of the Nativity

This special service offers readings, prophecies and hymns which point to and interpret the Divine Incarnation.

Sat. Dec. 24, 7pm..... Vespertal Liturgy of the Nativity

This service "opens the liturgical day" and begins the celebration of the Nativity. This is a combination of Great Vespers and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil. Those wishing to receive Holy Communion should prepare by abstaining from food and drink from noon until the service.

Sun. Dec. 25..... Divine Liturgy of the Nativity of Christ

9:00am Orthros/10:00 am Liturgy. This is the main service of the Birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Open the best gift first by attending Liturgy with your family and receiving the Holy Mysteries together! Make it a family tradition to keep the most important thing about Christmas the most important thing in your home!

Sun. Jan. 1..... Orthros/Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Due to New Year's Day falling on a Sunday, we will not be able to

News & Events

have the traditional New Year's Eve Vespers Liturgy. Please plan on attending Divine Liturgy on Sunday as the first act and family worship of 2006!

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Baptism: Alexandra Brennan

The servant of God, Alexandra Brennan, daughter of Billy and Holly Brennan, was received into the Holy Orthodox Christian Faith through Baptism on November 6, 2005. The Godparent was Stavroula Pantelakis. Congratulations, and may God grant her many years!

COMMUNITY LIFE

Philoptochos "Undy Sunday" December 18

Holy Trinity Philoptochos is organizing a new event to help the local needy: "Undy Sunday." All parishioners are asked to bring a new pack of men's, women's or children's socks or underwear (no need to giftwrap) on Sunday, Dec. 18, to be collected and distributed to the poor and needy of the local area. Thanks for your help!

Holy Trinity Winter "Bundle Up" Drive ... Dec./Jan.

The Holy Trinity GOYA is coordinating a "Winter Bundle Up" winter outerwear drive for clean and "like-new" coats, hats, scarves, gloves. Please bring them during the month of December and January and deposit them in the marked containers during Coffee Hour. Received a new coat for Christmas? What about the old one? If it is in good condition, remember the Lord's advice in Luke 3: "And the multitudes asked him, 'What then shall we do?' And He answered them, 'He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.'" Thank you for giving heed to that call through your donations.

New Year's Eve

Please note: Holy Trinity Church will not be hosting a New Year's Eve event this year. Please enjoy the holiday safely with your loved ones and plan on attending Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 1, New Year's Day, to start the year off on the "right foot." A Happy and Blessed New Year to all!

COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS



2005
DECEMBER 27-31
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



Under the jurisdiction of the SCOBA Campus Commission, these National Conferences of Orthodox Christian Fellowship are open to college students, high school graduates and college-age young adults. Both conferences will include a variety of enlightening workshops, daily services and many different social events. They aim to promote unity among Orthodox young people and to renew them in their journeys toward salvation. Check out the details for each coast below!

EAST COAST CONFERENCE

Antiochian Village: Bolivar, PA

Keynote Speaker:
Fr. Thomas Hopko
Dean Emeritus, St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary

Workshop speakers will include:
Fr. Luke Veronis
Mother Magdalena
Mr. Daniel Abraham & more

Events
• Snow-tubing
• Pre-New Year's Eve Dance

Questions?
Veronica Stavila (east_cc@ocf.net)

WEST COAST CONFERENCE

St. Nicholas Ranch: Dunlap, CA

Keynote Speaker:
Rev. Hieromonk Jonah Paffhausen
Abbot, Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco

Workshop speakers will include:
Fr. Chris Salamy
Mr. Michael Kallas
Katrina Bitar & more

Events
• Dancing
• Trip to Sequoia National Forest

Questions?
Gina Johnstone (west_cc@ocf.net)

Cost: All-inclusive \$200 registration fee. (Scholarships are available.)

REGISTER TODAY!

To register or for more information, please go to **www.ocf.net**

Special thanks to The Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch and to our anonymous generous donor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, proud sponsors of our College Conference!

Our Faith is our strength.

It gets stronger as we pass it on.

Each generation to the next: one teaches another, another learns from the other.

This is the great strength of our common Orthodox Faith.

And today, at Hellenic College and Holy Cross, a generation of dedicated young men and women is preparing to become the clergy and lay leaders of tomorrow.

Take your place in the long line of those who have joined to assure the future of our Faith. Become a member of the League of Faithful Orthodox Stewards—LOFOS.

Your contribution will help to strengthen our Faith.

To make your gift, call 617-850-1317.

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Looking for information on Orthodoxy?
Check out the award-winning site of the
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese:

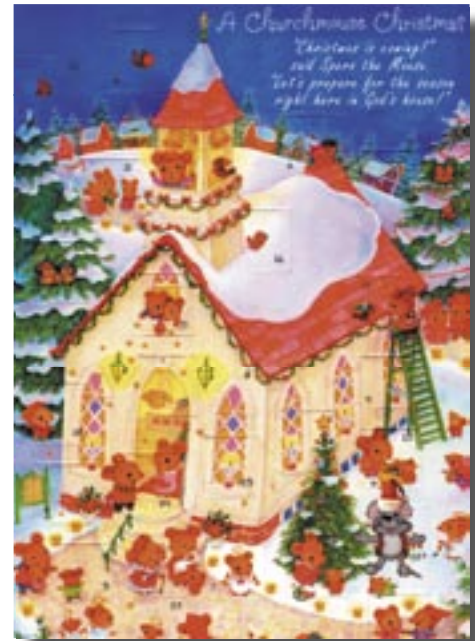
www.goarch.org

Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update

Hi! It is me, Spero!

My precious little ones stop and think. If you could give your Heavenly Father a special gift, what would you give to him? Well, you're not alone in wondering what would be best. To help you out, we have a new DVD by Max Lucado called "Punchinello and the Most Marvelous Gift".

It is Maker Day in Wemmicksville and all of the small wooden people called Wemmicks are trying to make this a very, very special day for Eli. Each one of them has an idea for a special gift for their creator. Here are some of the special things they are planning: The baker is baking a seven-tier layer cake, the most delicious magnificent cake you would ever see. Violet, one of the Wemmicks is making the biggest, most beautiful flower wreath for the door. The mayor's wife, who has a voice like an angel, is practicing a solo. One of the Wem-



micks is making a one-piece machine that sounds like a whole orchestra. They are great gifts, but the gift become more important than the reason for giving them! Never the less, Punchinello thinks, "This year, I want to do something extra special for Eli." He is so excited that he runs and tells Eli, "Just wait until you see what I am going to do for you!" He doesn't realize that Eli, his creator, thinks that just being with Punchinello is enough for him. After a lot of thought and prayer, Punchinello sings this song, "I like you and love you, and I want all to see without Eli there would not be any me. I wish I had a simple gift but my simple gift is me". "Wow! That was the most marvelous song and gift," Eli exclaims. All the Wemmicks learn an important Christian lesson, that WHY you give is much more important than WHAT you give. Punchinello's special gift was from his heart. Remember our Heavenly Father loves us for just being ourselves.

Our Heavenly Father has given us many special gifts. But can you think of ONE that is the most special? Yes, He gave us His Son. He was born on Christmas Day, in a stable with meager surroundings. He was sent here as an example to teach us and groom us for the future. In addition, later in His short human life on earth, He was sacrificed for our sins not His. This was done in order to give us hope that there is life after death and to learn to forgive others as He has forgiven us.

So, my precious children, the special lesson you can learn from today's DVD is that living the way God wants us to is most important gift of all. Happy Birthday to Jesus and Merry Christmas to all!

In Christ

Love Spero

Gheronda's Corner

Part of a regular series of contributions by our resident "Gheronda" (respected elder clergy), Father John Androutsopoulos



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

THE SEASON OF HOPE

"Advent" (the fast of Christmas), which begins on November 15, is a time of preparation, a time of anticipation, a time of hope, a time for reflection.

Advent is the opening of the door that leads to the great Christmas event—the Savior's birth. It is the final period before the divine nature becomes human nature. It is the proclamation that the Messiah has come.

The story of Advent is the story of people waiting for deliverance. After the waiting period of thousands of years, we know that God sent the Savior and Deliverer, and He came as a Child!

"When the fulness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." (From the Christmas Day Epistle reading of St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians, 4:4-7).

Like the prodigal son, all peoples have wandered from God into a far country of sin. We are unable to redeem ourselves. In our need God sent to us a Redeemer, His beloved Son. Here is demonstrated the love of God. He did not abandon His people. In Christ's Advent we see an expression of the wisdom of God.

The glory of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, comes to the heart like a sunrise. What the sunrise does for a dark and sleeping world is a kind of symbol of what Christ's light does for the hearts of Christians. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them the light has shone."

How can we prepare for the coming of the Redeemer, the Incarnate Word, the Light of the World? In planning and preparing for Christ's Nativity, we shall miss the point of it all, if we do not seek the true meaning of Christ's coming. During this Advent we can open the Holy Scriptures. He meets us in the pages of the New Testament and gives us His message of salvation. We

can prepare ourselves spiritually by participating in the services of the Church.

If the Christ Child comes to us this Christmas, it means He must enter our lives, into our hearts. Are these hearts clean and ready to receive the Divine Christ, the Holy Guest, as our homes are to welcome human guests? Should we not be disturbed by some of the things we find in our lives, in our hearts—such things as hate, malice, envy, bitterness, doubt? To be rid of these and have them replaced with beautiful things like love, joy, peace, gratitude, selflessness—how we should long for the power of Christ to transform us and occupy His deserved place?

During this Holy Season of Lent before Nativity of the Christ Child, we must repent, confess our sins and receive Holy Communion. If we desire to be governed by the Spirit of Christ, we can say, "I am ready for Christmas. There is room in my life and in my heart for the Christ Child."

I'm Third

There is a story called "I'm Third" about a boy who is very popular among others his age. He is an excellent leader in his school group. One of his friends visits him and sees a homemade plaque in his room with the

words "I'm Third." When his friend asks him what it meant, the boy replied, "It is the motto I try to use in my life. It means 'God is first, others are second, and I'm third.'" St. Paul writing to the Corinthians said "... whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." The driving force in our lives should be trying to please God. Secondly, we should take into consideration the needs of others. With our own pleasures subordinated, we will truly be the humble servants of God. How about us? Who is first in our life? Are we going to please God this Christmas?

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM !

Χαρούμενα Χριστούγεννα! Merry Christmas!

May the love of the new-born Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ be born anew in our hearts this Christmas Day, and every day!

With the love of the Newborn Savior,,

Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos



The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά



Voula Hareras

ΔΥΟ ΜΩΡΑ ΣΕ ΜΙΑ ΦΑΤΝΗ

Μιά μικρή αληθινή ιστορία

Το 1994 δύο άμερικανοί άνταποκρίθηκαν σε μία πρόσκληση που τους έκανε το τμήμα εκπαίδευσης της Ρωσίας, για να διδάξουν ήθικη στις δημόσιες σχολές, στηριζόμενοι

στις Βιβλικές αρχές. Είχαν διδάξει σε φυλακές, σε επιχειρήσεις, στο τμήμα πυροσβεστών, στην αστυνομία και σε ένα μεγάλο όρφανοτροφείο. Στο όρφανοτροφείο αυτό υπήρχαν 100 παιδιά περίπου (αγόρια και κορίτσια) που ήταν εγκατελειμμένα από τους γονείς τους. Από κει προέκυψε αυτή η ιστορία που την διηγήθηκε κάποιος από τους επισκέπτες...

Πλησίαζαν οι γιορτές του 1994. Τα παιδιά του όρφανοτροφείου άκουσαν για πρώτη φορά την ιστορία της Γέννησης του Χριστού. Τους διηγηθήκαμε την άφιξη της Παρθένου Μαρίας και του Ίωσήφ στη Βηθλεέμ, οι οποίοι αφού δεν βρήκαν τόπο στα πανδοχεία, έπρεπε να πάνε σ' ένα στάβλο. Εκεί γεννήθηκε ο μικρός Ίησους και τοποθετήθηκε σε μία φάτνη.

Κατά τη διάρκεια της ιστορίας, πρόσεξα ότι τα παιδιά αλλά και οι υπάλληλοι του όρφανοτροφείου δεν μπορούσαν να συγκρατήσουν την κατάπληξή τους. Και κάθονταν στην άκρη της πολυθρόνας προσπαθώντας να μην χάσουν ούτε μία λέξη από την αφήγηση. Όταν τελείωσε η ιστορία, δώσαμε στα παιδιά, τρία μικρά κομμάτια χαρτόνι για να κάνουν μία φάτνη. Σε κάθε παιδί δόθηκε ένα τετραγωνάκι χαρτιού κομμένο από κάποιες κίτρινες πετσέτες φαγητού που είχα φέρει μαζί μου. Αυτό έγινε γιατί στην πόλη δεν μπορούσα να βρώ ένα μεγάλο κομμάτι χρωματιστό χαρτί.

Σύμφωνα με τις οδηγίες που τους έδωσα, τα παιδιά έκοψαν και δίπλωσαν το χαρτί προσεκτικά βάζοντας χρωματιστές λουρίδες για άχυρο. Μερικά μικρά τετραγωνάκια φανελένια, κομμένα από ένα παλιό νυχτικό που μία άμερικανίδα κυρία ξέχασε αναχωρώντας από τη Ρωσία, χρησίμευσαν για να γίνει η κουβέρτα του μωρού. Από μία τσόχα χρώματος καφέ έφτιαξαν τη φιγούρα του μωρού.

Ενώ τα όρφανά βιαστικά στόλιζαν τις φάτνες τους, εγώ περπατούσα ανάμεσά τους για να δώ αν χρειάζονταν κάποια βοήθεια. Όλα πήγαιναν καλά μέχρι που έφτασα εκεί όπου καθόταν ο μικρός Μίσα. Φαινόταν ίσαμε έξι χρονών και είχε τελειώσει τη δουλειά του.

Όταν είδα τη φάτνη έμεινα έκπληκτος γιατί αντί να δώ ένα μόνο παιδί μέσα σ' αυτήν, είδα δύο. Φώναξα γρήγορα το διερμηνέα για να τόν ρωτήσω γιατί είχε δύο μωρά στη φάτνη. Ο Μίσα σταύρωσε τα χέρια του και, παρατηρώντας τη σκηνή της φάτνης, άρχισε να

επαναλαμβάνει την ιστορία της Γέννησης. Η αφήγηση ενός παιδιού που άκουσε την ιστορία αυτή μία μόνο φορά ήταν πολύ καλή, μέχρι που έφτασε στο σημείο που η Μαρία έβαλε το μωρό στη φάτνη. Εκεί ο Μίσα άρχισε να έπινει το δικό του τέλος για την ιστορία, λέγοντας...

Και όταν η Παρθένη Μαρία άφησε το μωρό στη φάτνη, ο Ίησους με κοίταξε και με ρώτησε εάν είχα ένα μέρος να μείνω. Εγώ του είπα ότι δεν είχα γονείς και γι' αυτό δεν είχα μέρος να μείνω. Τότε ο Ίησους μου είπε ότι μπορούσα να μείνω εκεί μαζί Του. Τού απάντησα ότι δεν μπορούσα, διότι δεν είχα κάποιο δώρο να του προσφέρω. Αλλά επειδή ήθελα να μείνω με τόν Ίησού, σκέφθηκα τι θα μπορούσα να Τού προσφέρω ως δώρο, τη ζεστασιά.

Γι' αυτό Τόν ρώτησα... Εάν σου προσέφερα ζεστασιά, αυτό θα ήταν ένα καλό δώρο για Σένα, Και ο Ίησους μου είπε... Εάν Μου προσέφερες ζεστασιά, αυτό θα ήταν το καλύτερο δώρο που θα είχα δεχθεί ποτέ. Γι' αυτό μπήκα μέσα στη φάτνη και ο Ίησους με κοίταξε και μου είπε ότι θα μπορούσα να μείνω εκεί για πάντα.

Όταν ο μικρός Μίσα τελείωσε την ιστορία του, τα ματάκια του έλαμπαν γεμάτα από δάκρυα τα οποία μούσκευαν τα μάγουλά του, σκέπασε το πρόσωπό του, έσκυψε το κεφάλι πάνω από το τραπέζι και οι ώμοι του άρχισαν να σείονται από ένα βαθύ κλάμα. Το μικρό όρφανό συνάντησε Κάποιον ο Οποίος ποτέ δεν θα το εγκατέλειπε ούτε θα το έκμεταλλευόταν. Κάποιον που θα ήταν μαζί του για πάντα...!

Πρός Την Νίκηη

*Εύχομαι σε όλους καλά Χριστούγεννα και γαλήνη στην
Βούλα Χαρερά*

Τι φώς και χρώμα κι όμορφιά, να σκόρπιζε τ' άγερ
όπου στην κούνια του Χριστού τους μάγους έχει φέρει!

Ποιός Άγγελος τόν διάλεξε για τέτοιο ταχυδρόμο!
Τ' άλλα τ' άστέρια θάβλεπαν το φωτεινό του δρόμο
κι' από τη ζήλεια θάτρεμαν, Άστέρι, σε ποιά χώρα
του απέραντου σου τ' ουρανού να λαμπυρίζεις τώρα
'Η παντοδύναμη φθορά μήν έσβυσε το φώς σου
'Η μήπως είς 'άθανατο κι' εσύ σάν το Χριστό σου
Δέν κατεβαίν η λάμψη σου κι' έδω στά Χωματά μας
Πά όλα τ' άστρα άλλοιμονο δέν είναι η ματιά μας
Και μόνον όταν τά λαμπρά Χριστούγεννά μας θάμπουν
Θαρρώ πώς οι άκτίνες σου μέσ την ψυχή θά λάμπουν

Τι φώς και χρώμα κι όμορφιά να σκόρπιζε τ' άστέρι
Όπου στην κούνια του Θεού τους μάγους έχει φέρει

Νάμουν του σταύλου ένα άχυρο ένα φτωχό κομμάτι
Τήν ώρα π' άνοιξε ο Χριστός στού ήλιου του τó μάτι
Νά δώ την πρώτη του ματιά και τó χαμόγελό του
Τό στέμμα τών άχτίτων του γύρω στο μετωπό του

Νά λάμψω απ' την λάμψη του κι' εγώ σάν διαμαντάκι
Κι' από την Θεία του πνοή να γίνω λουλουδάκι
Νά μωσχοβοληθώ κι' εγώ από την εύωδία



Community Life Photo Journal

Philoptochos "Ladies Fun Night Out" November 22

"The Ladies Philoptochos Society enjoyed the second annual 'Ladies Fun Night Out' event on Thursday, November 10th. Many thanks are due to the members of Philotochos for their generous contribution of a wide variety of delicious foods and attendance with friends. Also kudos to the vendors who shared our evening by displaying and selling their wares. A special thanks to Bill Fiedler who 'manned the kitchen' for the ladies and to the committee and friends who pitched in to help." (Note from Holy Trinity Philoptochos)





Community Life Photo Journal

GOYA Movie Night - November 5 & Monthly Fellowship - November 13

The GOYA enjoyed a casual "Movie Night" with a showing of the newly-released "Star Wars Episode III" DVD on November 5 at the home of Mark and Karen Georgiadis. There were lots of good snacks, including cappuccino and hot chocolate from the "barista," Dr. Mark. Later that month, the teens gathered for their monthly fellowship at the home of Steve and Athena Hodge. The topic was the worship life of the Orthodox Church, including a fun quiz and a discussion about "My Most Memorable Worship Experience" in the Church.



Missions: Proclaiming the Gospel Everywhere

This illuminating message from a missionary priest with many years of real field experience was recently published in the OCMC magazine (www.ocmc.org). It wonderfully integrates all mission work - local and foreign - into the same divine calling.

THE CROSS-CULTURAL TASK OF MISSIONS

Fr. Edward Rommen

For the longest time, people involved in proclaiming the Gospel have made a sharp distinction between what they called home missions and foreign missions. As they see it, home missions involves the evangelism and service done using one's own language within the context of one's own culture. In order to do this work, you do not have to travel far, or learn another language, or even get used to another culture. Foreign missions is, on the other hand, a somewhat more difficult and costly task, since it involves taking the Gospel across cultural boundaries. In order to do this work you would, in all likelihood, have to travel to another country, learn another language, adopt the ways of another culture and, because of the investment required, spend a lifetime doing it. Seen in this way, whenever the Church is successfully planted in a particular place it assumes a twofold task: to evangelize the people who inhabit its own area and to take the Gospel to the unevangelized peoples outside that region.

This double responsibility is rooted in the words spoken by our Lord to His disciples at the Ascension (Acts 1:8). Christ told them that after they received the enabling power of the Holy Spirit they would be His witnesses in "Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The basic idea seems to have been that the Gospel was to be preached in their own region (Jerusalem) and then gradually taken out into the surrounding areas (countries like Samaria) and from there on to all other nations, i.e., to the very ends of the earth. In other words, the Christian message was to be taken to places of ever increasing geographic and, more importantly, cultural distance. Surely, this is what Christ had in mind when He commanded His disciples to take the Gospel to all nations (Mt 28:18-20).

Judging by the history provided in the book of Acts, this gradual expansion is exactly the pattern the early Church fol-

lowed. The story of the Christian mission begins with evangelism in Jerusalem (Acts 2-7). It is then carried to Samaria by St. Phillip (Acts 8:4-25). St. Peter continues by taking the Gospel to the Gentiles of Lydda, Joppa and Caesarea (Acts 9 & 10). Still others succeed in planting a Church in Antioch (Acts 12). And it is from there that St. Paul takes the message (Acts 13) from one regional center to the next, leaving the newly planted Churches to reach out into their

own areas. In this manner the early Church spread through the whole Mediterranean region. What is important to note is that, even while the Churches at Jerusalem, Samaria and Antioch were sending missionaries to foreign parts they continued to evangelize their own areas and continued to grow. There is no indication, for example, that the Church at Antioch suffered any loss as a result of having sent out Barnabas and Paul. Quite to the contrary they seem to have been blessed in their own local ministries (Acts 14:26-28).

This same basic pattern has been maintained by Christians right down to the 20th century. Any number of examples can be given. Consider, for example the 9th century work done by Ss. Cyril and Methodios. They took the Gospel across cultural and linguistic borders to the Khazars and

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Illustration courtesy Canoness Theroy

then to the Slavs. In doing so they learned other languages, even invented a new alphabet (Cyrillic), thereby providing an ongoing basis for regional evangelism. In the 10th century, St. Vladimir brought the Church across geographic and cultural boundaries and, in the centuries that followed, the Russian Church "converted to Christianity all the Eastern Slavs and an overwhelming majority of the Arctic, Volga and Ural Finns. Many Karelians and Estonians were baptized—also several Turkish, Tungus and Mongolian tribes, as Yaktuts, Buryats, Kasan Tartars, Orochons, Altai folk Golds, Kamchadals¹." Even while they evangelized their homelands, "Russian missionaries founded flourishing Churches in

Missions: Spreading the Faith Near and Far

Japan and in Alaska and sizeable missions in Corea [sic.] and Iran, also in China and Manchuria". St. Herman and those who worked with him, translated the Gospel, the service books and the music of the Church in order to plant it in the cultures of Alaska. Those Churches then matured and continued to reach out into their own regions. Each of these examples carefully followed the pattern modeled by the early church in Acts and, by taking this two-fold evangelistic task seriously, the Churches in question continued to grow.

As important and valid as this pattern is, however, two recent developments have made it somewhat difficult to maintain the sharp distinction between home missions and foreign missions. First, because of the faithfulness of Christian missionaries, the Church has been planted extensively throughout the world. That means that, if we go today to another linguistic or cultural area, we are most likely going to find Christians already there. They will be worshipping in their own church buildings, teaching in their own schools, singing their own music and doing all of this in their own language. This does not mean, of course, that those regions have been completely evangelized—that the task has been accomplished. But it does mean that, if we were to leave our own homes in order to work there, we will probably be participating in their home missions work. In other words, foreign missions for one person may well be home missions for another in the contemporary moment.

The other development that makes it hard to maintain a clear distinction between home missions and foreign missions is what has been called multiculturalism. Basically, this refers to the mixing of populations such that cultural and linguistic groupings are no longer limited to particular geographic areas. There are, for example, a significant number of Spanish-speaking Cubans in the Miami area. They have been so successful at maintaining their own language, their music, their food, their dress and their culture that they retain their Cuban identity even while physically separated from their homeland. The same thing can be said for any number of other ethnic and cultural groups who today live within self-contained cultural enclaves in almost every part of the world. For all intents and purposes, multiculturalism has brought the peoples of the world to our own doorsteps. Today it is possible to hear any number of languages spoken and experience any number of cultural contexts right here within the borders of our own country and in our cities. That being the case, it is no longer necessary to go to another country to engage other languages and cultures. The world has come to us.

These developments raise the important question as to whether the ancient distinction between home and foreign missions is still valid or useful. Perhaps we can get at the heart of the issue by asking if all of this means that we have now completed the foreign missions part of our task? Do we still need to send missionaries to other parts of the world, or should we concentrate all of our resources in our own geographic areas?

We are, as I see it, not finished with the foreign missions portion of our task. I say this for two reasons. First of all, there are no areas of the world that have been absolutely and completely evangelized. In other words, there are always

individuals and groups of people that still need to hear the Gospel. There is still a lot of work to be done. I should also point out that there are many parts of the world that need to be re-evangelized, places where the once-strong witness of the Church has fallen silent. If that is true, the Churches of those areas may well need help from Christians in other parts of the world. This is not, then, the time to stop supporting foreign missions.

Second, although the presence of the world within our own borders creates a new challenge for mission, this certainly does not relieve us of the responsibility to be witnesses to those with whom we share the same language and culture. Home missions is an ongoing project. However, the multicultural makeup of our populations does add another dimension to what home missions means. A careful reading of Acts 1:8 indicates that the ever-increasing "distance" faced

SIMILARLY, WE DO NOT, IN THE CONTEMPORARY MOMENT, NECESSARILY HAVE TO TRAVEL GREAT DISTANCES IN ORDER TO ENCOUNTER PEOPLE OF COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CULTURES WHO HAVE NOT YET HEARD OF CHRIST.

by early Christian missionaries was a cultural distance, not a geopolitical one. This is evident in the case of the Samaritans, who lived in close proximity to Jerusalem, but were of a different culture. Similarly, we do not, in the contemporary moment, necessarily have to travel great distances in order to encounter people of completely different cultures who have not yet heard of Christ. Yet, we are still responsible for bringing them the Good News of the Gospel. So, our task is far from being finished at "home."

It seems, then, that the whole array of missionary tasks implied in the home missions/foreign missions distinction still apply, even though the world has changed significantly. The challenge today, however, is to avoid artificially separating those tasks and to ensure that one is not neglected in favor of the other. In order to do that, it might be helpful for us to think of our missionary responsibility as encompassing an entire spectrum of cultural distance—a spectrum ranging from the familiar context of our own home cultures to the unfamiliar contexts of peoples and languages we do not know. That way we would constantly be reminded that we are to proclaim to the Gospel to all nations, all peoples, all languages, all cultures, no matter where in the world they—or we—might be.

Fr. Edward Rommen is the priest at Holy Transfiguration Church in Raleigh, NC. He holds a M.Div. and a D.Miss. from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, as well as a Dr. Theol. from the University of Munich. After 15 years of church planting and teaching in Europe he returned to the United States to teach missions and theology. In 2000 he returned to active pastoral ministry and is also teaching adjunct at the Divinity School of Duke University.

1 Sergei Belikov, *The Foreign Missions of the Russian Orthodox Church* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1943), 111.
2 Ibid.

Income and Expense Report: 2004

Holy Trinity Church Income and Expense January through December 2004

Ordinary Income/Expense		Expense	
Income		A. Payroll Exp. & Fees	115,199.52
A. Stewardship/General	140,762.06	B. Payroll Benefits	28,010.43
B. Stewardship/Christmas	3,320.00	C. Archdiocese	24,800.04
C. Stewardship/Easter	4,031.50	C. Diocese-Dues	1,200.00
D. Candles	21,209.68	Christmas Card Exp	287.50
E. Trays	7,307.45	Clergy/Laity, Retreats & Travel	2,307.05
F. Other Contributions	8,051.50	D. Church Expenses	7,527.30
G. Hall Rental	26,125.23	E. Office	12,075.35
H. Wednesday Lunch Income	17,412.12	Facilities	39,307.29
Herald Income/Donations	135.00	Flowers Expense	2,585.47
I. Greek School Income	1,316.18	Greek Books	236.81
Other Income	36.40	Greek School	1,084.60
Rebate	30.00	Guest Speakers	1,088.70
Socials Income	6,525.00	Hall Expenses	5,135.76
Transfer from Festival Acct	67,504.02	Insurance	7,568.25
Transfer from Morgan Stanley	25,000.00	Other Income Interest Income	0.00
Transfer from Restricted Acct.	6,294.00	Other Income Interest Income	-1.42
Youth Income	1,080.00	Postage	1,897.05
Total Income	336,140.14	Real Estate Tax	1,085.52
		Socials	4,608.29
		Stewardship Exp	2,502.74
		Sunday School Exp.	1,029.44
		Telephone	3,750.38
		Utilities	42,297.71
		Vision Expenses	6,348.68
		Wednesday Lunch	8,142.35
		Youth Expense	4,100.00
		Z. Other Expenses	371.50
		Total Expense	324,546.31
		Net Ordinary Income	11,593.83

NOTES TO FINANCIAL REPORTS - PAGES 12 & 13

General statement: These two financial reports are provided in this issue of the Herald. The information contained herein is for the intended informational use of parishioners of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church only. Holy Trinity reports on a cash basis.

Income and Expense (January-December 2004). Note: This is an audited Income and Expense Statement.

Other Income-Transfers: This income reflects a partial use of net Festival proceeds and Investment savings for normal operational expenditures. Transfers from restricted account are pursuant to wishes of restricted funds' donor(s).

General Fund Summary for Year To Date. Note: This is an unaudited report.

Revenue: The 2005 revenue was at a running rate of 2.3 % below the 2004 level as of September 30, 2005.

Maintenance Expenses: Stated expenses in both 2004 and 2005 exceed that of 2003 due to timing of reporting as well as the decision to physically upgrade and address necessary facility related issues as follows:

- *Payroll. A skilled maintenance employee who could do more than janitorial work, such as painting of the bathrooms, reparations to pews and other items in the facility, was hired at market level.*
- *Utilities. A continual increase, although some expense reductions were incorporated.*
- *Maintenance and Facility. 2004 through present reflects the incorporation of the special building renovation program into maintenance, including updating of the hall; a donated new kitchen floor; as well as roof, freezer, and related facility repairs and improvements. (Note: The total funds donated in the Special Building Renovation Program from mid-2004 through the November 10, 2005 General Assembly totaled \$12,525, which is in addition to the \$2,032 raised in contributions into the second tray at the end of each of those months. Total spent during that time period for such renovations/improvements was \$29,775.)*

Other Expenses:

- *Youth Expenses. 2005 included GOYA Chicago pilgrimage.*
- *Archdiocese. The 2004 assessment of \$24,800 was paid after September 30, 2004, where the 2005 and 2003 assessments were paid prior to the respective September 30 date.*

Nine Month Financial Report: January-September 2005

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
General Fund Summary for Year To Date September 2005 and 2004 w/ 2003 Reference Base

DRAFT - UNAUDITED

2005 vs 2004

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>Base Ref 2003</u>	<u>Change</u> <u>Fav(Unf)</u>
<u>REVENUES - GENERAL FUND</u>				
Pledge-based Stewardship	\$ 105,980	\$ 106,810	\$ 84,881	\$ (830)
Other Stewardship and Contributions	12,881	10,259	12,929	2,622
Candles and Trays	20,357	21,712	20,077	(1,355)
Hall Rental	12,988	17,956	9,720	(4,968)
Wednesday Lunch	14,255	13,087	18,349	1,168
Other	7,013	7,657	18,317	(644)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 173,474	\$ 177,480	\$ 164,273	\$ (4,006)
<u>EXPENSES - GENERAL FUND</u>				
Payroll & Other Labor Fees	104,416	87,056	79,663	(17,360)
Payroll Benefits/FICA	19,083	21,018	20,166	1,935
Total Utilities	37,256	33,677	29,282	(3,579)
Maintenance and Facility Services	13,029	31,033	14,068	18,004
Hall Expenses	3,100	4,422	1,056	1,322
Office and Printing	9,077	10,205	10,014	1,128
Wednesday Lunch	8,691	5,953	8,152	(2,738)
Insurance and Taxes	6,832	5,591	5,858	(1,241)
Clergy/Laity, Retreats & Travel	2,417	1,861	894	(556)
Youth Expense	8,816	4,100	1,764	(4,716)
Archdiocese/Diocese	26,044	900	23,080	(25,144)
Stewardship Exp	1,230	1,376	1,353	146
Education Expenses	2,547	1,969	810	(578)
Church Expenses	5,082	6,049	7,435	967
Other Expenses	6,719	4,651	5,956	(2,068)
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$254,339	\$219,861	\$209,551	(34,478)
OPERATING FUND DEFICIT	\$ (80,865)	\$ (42,381)	\$ (45,278)	\$ (38,484)

CASH AND INVESTMENTS

	<u>Oct-05</u>	<u>Sep-04</u>	<u>Dec-03</u>	<u>Change</u>
<u>A. UNRESTRICTED:</u>				
<u>Checking:</u>				
General Fund	\$ 9,555	\$ 5,491	\$ 14,683	\$ 4,064
Festival Fund	31,802	60,060	14,002	(28,258)
Total Checking	41,357	65,551	28,685	(24,194)
<u>Savings:</u>				
Community Fund	1,248,093	944,398	904,245	303695
Endowment Donations (Germanos)	24,380	23,142	22,861	1,238
Total Savings	1,272,473	967,540	927,106	304,933
Total Unrestricted Funds	1,313,830	1,033,091	955,791	280,739
<u>B. RESTRICTED (Market Value):</u>				
Cemetery Fund	17,944	44,132	35,783	(26,188)
Endowment Fund	643,949	582,362	561,866	61,587
Chapel Fund - Mutual Fund/CD	94,372	161,022	159,691	(66,650)
<u>Agape Fund</u>				
- Endowment	135,458	136,040	136,729	(582)
- Checking	4,287	2,218	1,300	2,069
Them Balouris Fund	4,165	4,200	4,920	(35)
Money Market Restricted Acct	36,038	38,280	34,520	(2,242)
Total Restricted Funds	936,213	968,254	934,809	(32,041)
TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS	\$ 2,250,043	\$ 2,001,345	\$ 1,890,600	\$ 248,698

(Please see explanatory notes on the bottom of the previous page)

Our Worship - Part 6

Part of a special series of educational features designed to provide "continuing education" to our parishioners. Taken from the publication, "Our Worship," which examines and explains the main elements of worship in the Orthodox Christian Church.

We recall God's Old Covenant with His People ...

The priest offers the evening incense, recalling the worship of the Old Testament temple in Jerusalem. While he incenses the church we sing several psalms beginning with Psalm 140:

*"Lord, I call upon You; hear me! Hear me, O Lord!
Lord, I call upon You; hear me!
Receive the voice of my prayer when I call upon You: Hear me, O Lord!
Let my prayer rise as incense before You,
And let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord!"*

God alone is our only hope in the midst of a fallen creation; hence, we stand before Him in prayer, hoping that our supplications will rise as pure-burning incense.

... and proclaim His New Covenant in Jesus Christ

The theme of our chants moves to the New Covenant as we sing several stichera (verses) on the subject of the day's feast. On Saturday evening, these verses glorify Christ's victorious resurrection - the singular event which restores our relationship to God - while urging us to accept the Savior, Jesus Christ, as the One who comes to reunite creation with its Creator. Here is but one of the many hymns which are chanted at this time:

*"All has been enlightened by Your resurrection, O Lord.
Paradise has been opened again.
All creation, praising You, always offers You a song."*

Thus far at Great Vespers we

- glorify God for His loving and mighty act of creation
- reflect upon our sinfulness in turning away from God and living apart from Him as the Source of Life; and
- proclaim our desire for salvation through the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who comes to reconcile creation with its Creator.



Jesus Christ, the Light of the world!

Vespers celebrates the coming of Jesus Christ, the Savior. He is the One who enters our world as a Light to all, pointing out the path of salvation.

The priest processes out of the holy place with the censer. Standing before the royal doors of the iconostasis, he proclaims, "Wisdom! Let us attend!" We are invited to turn from our sinfulness, commit ourselves to God, and cling to Christ as the fulfillment of our prayers and longings by singing the ancient hymn, *O Gladsome Light*.

*"O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father,
Heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ!
Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the
light of evening:
We praise God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
For meet it is at all times to worship You with voices of praise.
O Son of God and Giver of Life.
Therefore all the world glorifies You!"*

Jesus Christ, the Gladsome Light of the Father, reunites us to life with and in the Trinity.

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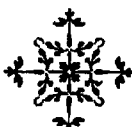
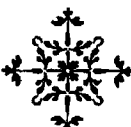
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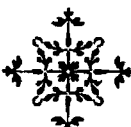
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WHY THE LOGOS CAME AS THE INCARNATE SON OF GOD

You must understand why it is that the Logos of the Father, so great and high, has been made manifest in bodily form. He has not assumed a body as proper to His own nature; far from it, for as the Logos He is without body. He has been manifested in a human body for this reason only: out of the love and goodness of His Father, so the salvation of us men.

It was our sorry case that caused the Logos to come down, our transgression that called out His love for us, so that He made haste to help us and to appear among us. It is we who were the cause of His taking human form, and for our salvation that in His great love He was both born and manifested in a human body.

For God had made man ... and had willed that he should remain in incorruption. But men, having turned away from the contemplation of God to evil of their own devising, had come inevitably under the law of death. Instead of remaining in the state in which God had created them, they were in process of becoming corrupted entirely, and death had them completely under its dominion. This, then, was the plight of men. God had not only made them out of nothing, He had also graciously bestowed on them His own life by the Grace of the Logos. Then, turning from eternal things to things corruptible, by the counsel of the devil, they had become the cause of their own corruption in death.

What, then, was God to do? What else could He possibly do, being God, but renew His Image in mankind, so that through it men might once more come to know Him? And how could this be done except by the coming of the very Image Himself, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

From "On the Incarnation" by Saint Athanasius