



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

NOVEMBER 2008

VOLUME 16 • ISSUE 9

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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IMPORTANT NOTICE:
NOVEMBER 9, 2008
FALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NOTICE, AGENDA &
PC NOMINATIONS FORM!

QUICK NEWS



His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos presided over the historic Ground Blessing and First Liturgy at the future location of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church on Sunday, October 19, 2008. Hundreds joined in the celebration, which included Orthros, Divine Liturgy, the Ground Blessing and Celebration Lunch. See pages 6-11.



SAINT KATHERINE THE GREAT MARTYR
FEAST DAY - NOVEMBER 25

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

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

About the Herald

The Herald is the Monthly Newsletter of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

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About the Parish

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Holy Trinity Church is a parish of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh (www.odpgh.org) and Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (www.goarch.org) under the Spiritual Jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Parish Administration

Clergy

Rev. Fr. John Touloumes, Proistamenos

Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Assistant Priest

Parish Council

Louis T. Loomis, President

Chris T. Balouris Dean J. Balouris

Sondra A. Balouris George Dickos

Anthony Loomis Robert Marsh

John Phillips Nicholas Sarandou

Vasilios Scoumis Alex Trilivas

Gerri Valliant Louis G. Zozos

Ministries

Philoptochos Esther Ladakos, Pres.

GOYA.....Pres. Becky Touloumes, Advisor

ChoirJohn Nychis, Director

Over 50 Club.....Stella Athanasiou, Pres.

St. Lydia Study.....Stacy Dickos, Coordinator

Cemetery..... Bill Fiedler, Chairman

Greek SchoolEffie Kilantonis, Coordinator

Social Hall.....Kathy Romanias, Coordinator

Bookstore Bill and Linda Areheart



I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who have pleasure in them. Full of honor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures for ever.

Psalm 111.1-3

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On October 3, 1789, George Washington proclaimed the first official Thanksgiving Day in the United States. Its was to be "a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God." On October 3, 1862, Abraham Lincoln officially established Thanksgiving Day as an annual holiday, and it has indeed been observed every year since then in November.

Though times may be economically uncertain and politically challenging, this annual call to give thanks brings us back as a nation to the very basic recognition that "the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed" (Washington's Proclamation) allows us the freedom to seek refuge and hope we find in God no matter how waves of temporal seas toss us.

This November in particular, we here at Holy Trinity Church also have a special opportunity to look back over the events of the past month and truly "give thanks to the Lord" with our whole hearts! During that time, with the strength, grace and blessings of God, we:

- Celebrated 85 years of ministry as a parish with an honoring of the founders and previous generations of Holy Trinity Church life.
- Blessed our new church property with its historic first Divine Liturgy and Ground Blessing Service with His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos presiding.
- Looked into the future via a beautifully produced Capital Campaign Newsletter and an inspiring video, both built around the theme of our Capital Campaign, "Raise Up the Foundations of Many Generations."

Sealing all those important events together was perhaps the most important item to be celebrated: the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4.3) that Saint Paul teaches us is necessary to maintain "one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4.4-6). This was blessedly evident in the tireless dedication, respectful cooperation and countless sacrifices that were made by the committee, volunteers, supporters and participants ... of both the current events as well as those of the cumulative 85 years which brought us here today! Many thanks to all!

Those blessings of unity, faith and vision—which have brought Holy Trinity Church where it is, by the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—are not to be taken for granted, nor are they there just for us, but for the generations still to be served, both in this community and in the world around us. Have a blessed Thanksgiving, surrounded by the sweet love of God!

Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:

**In Loving Memory of Jimmie Regakis from Mother, Olga
May His Memory Be Eternal!**

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Liturgies November

Please take note of the following upcoming liturgical dates. Also, please note that the time for services changes to "Winter Hours" in November. Orthros is at 9:00 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00, unless otherwise indicated.

Nov. 1: Ss. Cosmas and Damian the Wonderworkers

Nov. 7, 7:00 pm: Great Vespers of The Holy Archangels

Nov. 8, 9:00 am: Orthros & Liturgy of The Holy Archangels

Note: Vespers & Divine Liturgy to be held at the Archangel Michael Chapel at Angel's Acres in Canonsburg. This is a feast day celebration of the Canonsburg chapel.

Nov. 21: The Entrance of the Theotokos

Nov. 25: Saint Katherine the Great Martyr

FUNERALS & MEMORIALS

Sophie "Marge" Parikakis

The servant of God, Sophie "Marge" Parikakis, fell asleep in the Lord on September 28, 2008. The Funeral was held on October 2 at Holy Trinity Church, followed by interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery. May her memory be eternal!

Stella Kourakos

The servant of God, Stella Kourakos, fell asleep in the Lord on October 3, 2008. The Funeral was held on October 11 at Holy Trinity Church, followed by interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery. May her memory be eternal!

Upcoming Memorials November

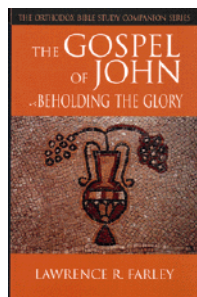
Nov. 2 - Sophie Parikakis (40 days), Stella Kourakos (40 days); Nov. 9 - Peter Zikos (2 yrs.), Arkadi Maleme Cretan Association of Pittsburgh Memorial.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St. Lydia's Orthodox Women's Fellowship Nov. 20

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 Stacy Dickos, 8130 Britany Place, Pittsburgh. New participants are always welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable, the approach is casual and discussion-oriented, and the subjects are important for today's women and families. All Holy Trinity women are welcome and invited to bring a friend! For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925.

This year's topic for study is the Gospel of St. John, using the Study Guide "The Gospel of John: Beholding the Glory" by Lawrence Farley. A complete schedule is available online at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

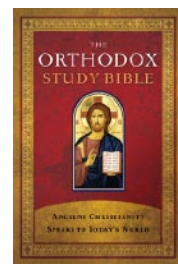


St. Nikodemos Men's Fellowship Nov. 6 (NOTE NEW MEETING SCHEDULE!)

The St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship is an Orthodox men's fellowship, study and discussion group which meets on the **FIRST AND THIRD THURSDAYS** of each month at from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. at the office of TriadUSA, Suite 1600, Three Gateway Center, downtown. The group seeks to provide a regular meeting for working men to discuss issues of faith, work and family. The topic for this year is "Practical Wisdom." It is open to all interested men and has been centrally located downtown to accommodate easy access for the lunchtime meetings. For directions, call Gus Georgiadis at 412-880-4999. The remaining dates for 2008/2009 are: Nov. 6, Dec. 18, Jan. 15, Feb. 5, Feb. 19, Mar. 5, Mar 19, Apr. 2, May 7 & May 21.

Orthodox Studies Forum November 5, 19

Now in its third year, the Orthodox Studies Forum is designed for adults who are interested in learning more about the Orthodox Christian Faith. It is led by Father Radu Bordeianu and is for both those who have been Orthodox all their lives and want to learn more as well as those seeking to embrace Orthodoxy from another background and grow further in their faith.



This year's forum will investigate one of the most important biblical themes: the People of God. Beginning with Old Testament, the participants will explore selected texts that reflect the story of creation, the fall into sin, the election of Israel, the different covenants that God has established with his people (especially the Decalogue), and the need for a new covenant as described by the prophets. The study of the New Testament will continue with the establishment of the new covenant in Jesus the Christ, as reflected in the Gospel according to Matthew (which will be read in its entirety), fragments from Luke, John, and Saint Paul's Epistles. It will conclude with the study the life of the early Church as reflected in the Acts of the Apostles and several Epistles.

The group meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the La Roche College WEST Campus, 9000 Babcock Blvd., Pittsburgh. The room is in Providence Hall at the top of Mary Way on the WEST Campus. Room 126. Parking is available behind the maintenance building. See the flyer at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org for details.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

GOYA Fellowship & Parent Meeting November 2

The GOYA will hold a brief monthly fellowship meeting following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, November 2. At that time, there will also be a GOYA parents meeting to plan for the fall and prepare for the basketball season. All parents are asked to attend. For more information, contact Presvytera Becky at 412-831-3574.

GOYA Metropolis Fall Retreat November 14-16

The Metropolis of Pittsburgh will hold its annual GOYA Fall Retreat on November 14-16 at Camp Nazareth in

Mercer, PA. The guest speaker will be Father Luke Veronis on the topic, "Finding the Call of God in Your Life." Applications are available at the Metropolis web site: pittsburgh.goarch.org. As always, Holy Trinity GOYA covers half the cost of registration for all active GOYA participants. Please see Father John, Presvtera Becky or GOYA President Maria Georgiadis.

REGIONAL NEWS

"A Taste of the Burgh" Benefit Event. November 6

The Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School (THEOS) is hosting a relaxing and casual night out at Primanti Brothers in the heart of Pittsburgh's famous Strip District located at 46 18th street. The organizers note: It's a great deal for a great meal! Enjoy an endless supply of food, fun and complimentary spirits! Thursday, November 6th from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The donation is \$50 per person. Reservations must be made by calling 412-278-3333. Checks can be mailed to Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School, 1819 Ellsworth Avenue, Heidelberg, PA 15106. Reservations by credit card can be accepted by phone in advance only.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

85th/50th Anniversary Celebration Week Thank You

The chairpersons for the recent Ground Blessing Liturgy & Luncheon and the Holy Trinity 85th Anniversary Dinner Dance extend their deepest thanks to all the committee members, volunteers, donors, supporters and participants in those historic events. As they expressed, the anniversary provided an opportunity to reflect back over the past, the Ground Blessing gave us a look toward the future, and there is much more to come! They ask us to keep our eyes open more information and upcoming events in the Capital Campaign Newsletter.



Notable Speakers Series: Dr. Maria Khoury Nov. 9

The Holy Trinity Notable Speakers Series is pleased to announce its 2008 event: a presentation entitled "Christians in the Holy Land" by Dr. Maria Khoury. Dr. Khoury (Kouremenou) is an accomplished author who has written several books for children and adults alike that explore the life of Christians living in the Holy Lands. She has published articles in numerous newspapers and magazines around the world and has made presentations throughout the United States on her first-hand experience of the plight of Christians in that region. She is a graduate of Hellenic College (1982), Harvard University (1985) and Boston University (1992) with a doctor of education degree. Born in Tripoli, Greece, she was raised in Denver, Colorado and currently resides in the Holy Lands.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Khoury will be speaking in Pittsburgh for the first time here at the Holy Trinity Church Community Center on Sunday, November 9 from 7:00

to 9:00 p.m. This event is free and open to all. We would be delighted for you to attend, and please feel free to extend this invitation to everyone else who you think might be interested in this presentation. This presentation will speak of the plight of many Christians, so please consider bringing others, including non-Orthodox Christians, who would be interested. A flyer is enclosed in this issue of *The Herald*.

HOPE/JOY Outreach Project. November 16

The HOPE and JOY ministries will be holding their monthly gathering on Sunday, November 16, following the Divine Liturgy. The children will be doing an outreach project.

Fall Community Homeless Outreach November 22

Holy Trinity Church has been blessed once again with the opportunity to host the "Feed the Homeless" Outreach event. You may remember that in March of 2003, our parish—which so often asks for the support of the community around us for the Festival, Weekly Lunch, etc.—accepted the invitation of the Greater Pittsburgh Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood and opened our doors to the poor and needy the Lord commands us to serve in His name for a sit-down hot lunch.

Now, returning to that blessing for the eleventh time, on Saturday, November 22, the Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood will again sponsor a sit-down lunch for the homeless here at Holy Trinity Social Hall from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. This philanthropic outreach, coordinated by Holy Trinity Church, will also be supported by various Orthodox parishes in the area, who will bring food and provide volunteers to set up, clean up and serve. In addition to offering the use of our hall, it is important that the Holy Trinity community steps forward to serve. If you can help by cooking, serving or donating, please contact Julie or Mike Kritiotis at 412-766-5001. During the Christmas fast, this is truly a wonderful way to fulfill the commandment of Jesus Christ: "As you did it to these, the least of my brethren, you did it to Me" (Mt. 25:40). Thank you for your generosity.

GOYA Turkey Bowl at New Property! November 30

The GOYA will hold its Annual GOYA Turkey Bowl with an exciting new twist this year: it will be held at the new church property at the corner of Babcock Blvd. & Cumberland Rd. The event will be held at 1:00 p.m., weather permitting.

Community Christmas Card Form Due Dec. 6

The current issue of the *Herald* contains a form for the Holy Trinity Community Christmas Card. If you would like to include your name in this annual community tradition, please be sure to submit your form and donation to the Church Office by December 6. Thank you!

Holiday Poinsettias Form Due Dec. 6

The current issue of the *Herald* contains a form for the sponsoring of holiday poinsettias for use in the church during the Christmas and Theophany season. If you would like to donate one or more flowers in memory of a loved one or in honor of a special person or event, please complete the form and return it to the Church Office with your donation by December 6. Thank you!

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



Father John Androutsopoulos

"In Reverence, Giving Thanks"

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High"

(Psalm 92:1 - KJV)

The reverence inspired by thanksgiving is good. In a world of material power it is easy for us to stand amazed at that power and lose our reverence for God. Our prayers should always include thanksgiving. It is the acknowledgement that we are dependent on God. Even for the simplest things there is no possibility of our being on our own.

God is the Giver of All Gifts

The living God gives us richly all things to enjoy. All that makes life possible and good is a gift. It is not a gift that can be appreciated, much less properly experienced, if we fail to recognize God as the Giver. God gives Himself in His gifts.

The grace of God is supremely manifested in the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Our thanksgiving will be complete only if from our hearts we thank God above all for His love, given us in Jesus.

We have good reasons to rejoice and give thanks always, for God has bestowed upon each of us bounteous blessings. We live in a wonder world of rich natural blessings, which we are prone to take for granted. Only when one or another of these blessings is withdrawn for a time do we realize its richness.

As wonderful as His material and natural blessings are, God's spiritual blessings, with the plan of eternal salvation, are infinitely more wonderful.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord and be grateful for things of a divine origin, mindful of God, their Giver. A grateful person is not one who is zealous in giving thanks but once a year. He has at all times a grateful heart and offers thanks to God daily.

Thanksgiving: A Way of Life, Not a Day in Life

Thanksgiving is a condition of one's life rather than merely a tradition to be observed. Sincere gratitude has a way of revealing itself in our daily lives. By giving thanks we express the gratitude we have and feel for God's blessings. ✚

"Don't You Ever Say Thank You?"

"I sent him a gift, and he never acknowledged it!"

"I visited her when she was sick, and she hasn't phoned me in weeks!"

"When he was financial problems I loaned him some money. He hasn't mentioned paying it back!"

When a person fails to show gratitude it hurts. We can't understand how they can accept our gifts and our love and

never say thank you.

But what about us? God has given us the greatest gift there is - salvation through His Son - and are we truly grateful? We nod our heads and say of course we're grateful, but how are we showing it?

Do we get from Him, and not give in His name? Do we receive much from Him and not share what we have with others? Do we enjoy the security of His great love for us, and not love? There are so many ways in which we fail to show our gratitude to Him.

"Holidays" or "Holy Days"?

Beloved, as the two HOLY DAYS are approaching, THANKSGIVING and CHRISTMAS, this is a good time to think about all that we have and where we got it. Let us not forget the fact that everything we have comes from God - a gift, and so, naturally, we fail to thank Him?

We forget so often that all we own comes from God. We take health and love and even life for granted. Lord, forgive us and help us remember to thank you for everything. Amen. ✚

"My Church"

It is composed of people like me.
We make it what it is.

It will be friendly—if I am;

Its pews will be filled—if I help fill them;

It will do great work—if I work;

It will make generous gifts to many causes—
if I am generous;

It will bring other people into its worship and
fellowship—if I bring them;

It will be a church of loyalty and love,
of fearlessness and faith, and a church with a
noble spirit—if I, who make it what it is,
am filled with these.

Therefore, with the help of God, I shall
dedicate myself to the task of being all the
things I want my church to be.

BE A FAITHFUL ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN. GOD BLESS YOU!

*With His love and blessings,
Rev. Fr. John R. Androutsopoulos*



October 19, 2008: A major milestone in Holy Trinity's future, His Eminence Metropolitan Anthony presided over the Ground Blessing and Divine Liturgy at the new property in North Hills. Over 275 faithful participated in the services and luncheon and everyone who planned and supported this event. Watch for more news in the next Capital Campaign newsletter.





Marking a historic
Church's history and
Metropolis Maximos
and Blessing and First
ish's future site in the
faithful attended the
afterwards. Many thanks
ed, worked for and sup-
n for more information
aign Newsletter!





Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Historic Ground Blessing Service & First Divine Liturgy at New Property Babcock Boulevard & Cumberland October 19, 2008



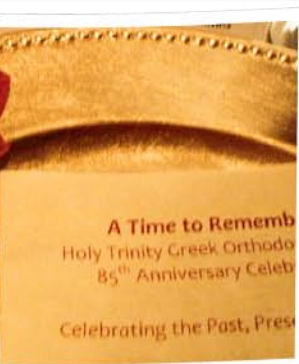
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October 25, 2008: Holy Trinity celebrated her 85th Anniversary with a dinner/dance in the community center. The evening featured a moving performance of the Holy Trinity choir, the premiere of an inspiring video and great live music of various Holy Trinity-blessed musicians.





Holy Trinity Church
85th Anniversary in grand style
The elegantly appointed
evening featured a
"You Raise Me Up" by
Holy Trinity young women,
Spring Capital Campaign
Greek music from members
of the Greek bands.





Voula Hareras

Μια Μητέρα Γραφει

Παιδί μου,

Στήν εποχή μας, χάρη στην τεχνική πρόοδο, και εξ αίτιας όχι μόνον αυτής, σκεπτόμαστε μέ εικόνες, επικοινωνούμε όχι τόσο πρόσωπο μέ πρόσωπο, αλλά μέ φωνή και μέ φωνές από τά τελειότατα τηλεπικοινωνιακά και όπτικοακουστικά μέσα πού διαθέτει ό καθένας έχουν επίσης

διευκολυνθεί στό έπακρον οί έπιλογές μας χάρη κυρίως στην έπιστήμη πιά τής διαφημίσεως. Ή τηλεόραση, οί μικρο και μεγαλοαφίσσες μας ύποβάλουν συνέχεια και συναισθηματικά γιά προτιμήσεις, γιά παράδειγμα, [έλάτε στή δική μας γιορτή] προκαλεί ένα κυρίαρχο άναψυκτικό, χορηγός τών όλυμπιακών αγώνων.

Έτσι και οί μεγάλοι και οί Νέοι αγοράζουν. Αραγε αυτό πού θέλουν; Τά καταστήματα πάσης φύσεως πουλούν. Τί τάχα τό λένε [ότι πουλάει] ότι δηλαδή έχει κατανάλωση, και τί έχει κατανάλωση, ότι είναι τής μόδας, και τήν μόδα ποιός τήν ύποβάλλει; Μά είναι άπλό. [όποιος διαλέγει πρίν από μάς γιά μάς].

Άρα κάποιοι μάς επιβάλλονται μέ τά δικά τους κριτήρια και τά δικά τους γούστα, όποτε τό γνωστό σλόγκαν άποκαλύπτει χωρίς νά τό θέλει τήν κρυμμένη του αλήθεια και δέν ύποκρίνεται διά τήν έξυπνηρέτησή μας.

Κι' άν τό φαινόμενο περιοριζόταν μόνο στά είδη τής καθυμερινής ανάγκης ή τής πολυτελείας—όσο κι' άν κι εδώ κινδυνεύει κανείς νά γίνει έτεροκαθοριζόμενος—ή δέσμευση τού αγοραστού θά λέγαμε ότι δέν είναι τόσο άποφασιστική γιά τήν έλευθερία τής προσωπικότητός του.

Όταν όμως πρόκειται γιά τό ήθος και τίς ιδέες, εκεί ότι άγαράζουμε, ότι άποδεχόμαστε δηλαδή ως σωστό, έχει άντίκτυπο στην πνευματική ύπόσταση τού καθενός μας, στό βαθύτερο είναι μας, αυτό μάς καθορίζει.

Ή έπιβολή όμως μέ αυτόν τόν τρόπο, τρόπου σκέψεως και συμπεριφοράς, πού άζποβλέπει στό ύλικό κέρδος εκείνων πού τά διαφημίζουν και τά διαθέτουν γιά άγορά, [έμπόριο ναρκωτικών, ποτών, νυκτερινών κέντρων, πολλών άχρηστων προγραμμάτων] τηλεόρασης και πολλά άλλα, δέν στέκει νά περνά άπαρατήρητο από τόν Νέο άνθρωπο, σέ μιά ήλικία δηλαδή πού δημιουργεί ό καθένας τό προσωπικό του ύφος, τό δικό του ήθος, πού θά τόν συνοδεύσει σ'όλη του τήν ζωή και γιά πάντα.

Ή ψυχή τού νέου είναι γνωστό ότι δέν άναζητά τό ότι δήποτε αλλά τό ύψηλότερο, τό άνώτερο, τό εύγενέστερο, δέν συμβιβάζεται μέ τήν εύκολη νίκη μέ κάθε είδους ντοπάρισμα. Στόχο του έχει και θά πρέπει νά έχει τό τίμιο στεφάνι, μακάρι κι άς ματώσουν οί

παλάμες από τό σκοινί τού ίστιοπλόου, πού έπιμένει νά κυβερνά τήν ίστιοσανίδα του κόντρα στόν άνεμο μέ άθόλωτο μάτι.

Ύπάρχουν και σήμερα πολλοί Νέοι πού θέλουν και άγωνίζονται νά μένουν κύριοι τού έαυτού τους, πιστοί σέ ότι άγνό και ώραίο έχει βάλει μέσα στόν άνθρωπο Ήθεός Δημιουργός του και σέ ότι Εκείνος όρίζει.

Αυτοί είναι οί πραγματικοί—ήρωες—πού δέν λυγίζουν στά άντίξοα, πού δέν παραδίδονται στόν πειρασμό νά πιούν από τά θολά νερά, γιάτί συμμερίζονται τήν διαπίστωση του Ποιητή, [Τό καλό τόσο πολύ τό τίμηση ό Πλάστης πού τό αγοράζει ή Άρετή μέ τό αίμα τής καρδιάς της]. Αυτοί έχουν πάντα καθαρό τό πρόσωπο, λαμπερό τό μάτι, χαρούμενη τήν καρδιά και μιά ψυχή δυνατή, πού βάζει όλο και πιό ψηλότερα τόν

Πήχυ τών άλμάτων της.

Σού εύχομαι παιδί μου νά άνήκεις σ'αυτούς,

Η Μητέρα σου

Πρός τήν Νίκη

Ήμέρα Τών Εύχαριστιών (Thanksgiving)

Ή τελευταία Πέμπτη τού Νοεμβρίου έχει καθιερωθή ως ή ήμέρα τών εύχαριστιών.

Πράγματι στην άνύσυχη και άστατη ζωή πού περνάμε καιρός νά σηκώσουμε τά μάτια μας ψηλά και νά εύχαριστήσουμε τόν Θεό γιά όλα τά καλά πού πλουσιοπάροχα μας προσφέρει. Αυτός διμιούργησε έναν επίγειο Παράδεισο, και μοίρασε τά άγαθά του σέ όλους άνεξερέτως τό ίδιο, και άν άκολουθούσαμε τόν δρόμο πού μας δίδαξε ό Χριστός, νά ζούμε. Δηλαδή όλοι οί Λαοί άγαπημένοι και άδελφωμένοι, και νά βοηθά ό ένας τόν άλλον, άνεξαρτήτος χρώματος και φυλής. Θά ήταν ή ζωή μας ένα αδιάκοπο χαμόγελο.

Και όμως δέν είναι έτσι δυστυχώς. Γιάτί αυτοί πού διευθύνουν τήν τύχη τού κόσμου είναι άχόρταγοι άρπαγες, τρελοί. Τούς κυριεύει ή άπληστία και τό έγκλημα, και σέρνουν

Αθώους συνανθρώπους τους στην καταστροφή, μέ άδικους πολέμους σκοτώνοντας τά παληκάρια μας, και τό δύστυχο Λαό τής άλλης πλευράς. Τούς παρασύρη ό Σατανάς πού γελά μέ τά χάλια μας.

Όμως άγαπητοί μου, ύπάρχει Θεός άς μήν άπελπιζόμαστε. Μόνον ψάξτε βαθειά στην καρδιά σας, και θά τόν βρήτε, και τότε δώστε του μιά θερμή προσευχή και μέ δάκρυα στά μάτια παρακαλέστε τον νά λυπηθή όλον τόν κόσμο, και νά δώση μιά λύση γιά όλα τά τεράστια προβλήματα πού ταρακουνούν τήν ανθρωπότητα.

Νά είστε βέβαιοι ότι ό Μεγαλοδύναμος Θεός θά σάς άκούση. Εύχαριστία λοιπόν και θερμή προσευχή.

Εύχομαι νά περάσετε καλά μέ τήν οίκογένειά σας, και τού χρόνου.

Βούλα Χαρερά

With all the exciting events of the past few weeks (Ground Blessing and First Liturgy on the new church property, 85th Anniversary of the parish), this is an opportune moment for a bit of reflection on what a "parish" is all about. An active, healthy and Christ-centered parish is able to add many opportunities to the life of its parishioners through ministries and programs; even as we look forward to those expanded possibilities, however, this article reminds us that the heart of it all beats with the faith of the saints and works as the hands of God.

The purpose of the Orthodox Church is the perfecting of the saints, the work of ministry, the building up of the Body of Christ—a triple task of the whole Church and, consequently, the task also of every parish.

The Perfecting of the Saints

The first point, the perfecting of the saints, is the moral perfecting of the members of the Church. The salvation of souls in Christ is first and foremost; it must not be relegated to second place.

Salvation in Christ is attained through prayer, through Divine services, the regulations of the Church, deeds of love and beneficence, spiritual struggle. A pastor's main concern is the salvation of those souls entrusted to him. It is likewise the personal concern of each member of the Church. It is accomplished within the common body of the Church—not in isolation, not individually, but by way of mutual spiritual support, and thereby overcomes the self-loving thought for one's self alone. A personal, worthy life in Christ is the responsibility of each member before the Church as a whole.

The Work of the Ministry

The second task is the work of ministry—to God and to men. It opens up before each member of the Church and of the parish a broad held of church social activity.

Ministry to God includes participation in the services—in church reading and singing, in constructing churches, in caring for the beauty and cleanliness of the church. These are just some examples of works, as they say, "for God."

Ministry to men includes all manner of charitable activity for the needy, help for the sick, altruistic efforts on behalf of others (as have been expressed in the sending of spiritual books, food, clothing and medicines to mission projects). In some parishes, this duty of ministering to one's neighbor has brought to life auxiliary parish organizations.

A special and very important task is the religious upbringing of children and youth. This cannot be underestimated, for we are in danger of seeing the younger generations fall away from the Church. ... The responsibility of the parish leadership on the one hand is to influence families in this regard, that they not neglect their duty towards their children, and, on the other hand, to form youth groups, catechetical schools, children's choirs, and to undertake other measures for keep-

ing the younger generation attached to the Church and to ensure that they remain under her influence.

The Building Up of the Body of Christ

The third task, the "building up the body of Christ," (Eph. 4.12) is ministry for the Church as a whole, a task that expresses to the greatest extent the unity of the part with the whole, of the parish with the Church. In our church consciousness, we should never lose sight of the image of the whole Orthodox Church; we must love her, be zealous for her. And so, in fulfilling this third task, we are hardly equal to it.

In practical terms, ministry to the Church as a whole means caring for church centers. It requires, first of all, an awareness of the many ways we at the local level are indebted to these church centers. The Church administration makes sure that the

services are conducted properly; it oversees the printing of service books and takes care that these are supplied to parishes; it safeguards the succession of episcopal and priestly ordination; it looks after the training and preparation of clergy, and provides pastors for church communities. It guards the Church against arbitrariness and against those people who introduce scandal into the Church. It safeguards the external dignity of Orthodoxy as well. It cuts off overt moral temptations, wards off attacks on the faith and the Church, wherever they may come from. It is responsible

for both the ideological defense of the Church and for her juridical defense, when this is called for.

The fullness of church life and the many-sided, productive activity of ecclesial, episcopal centers is direct evidence of the well-being of life within the numerous individual Orthodox parishes. Conversely, an episcopal center laboring under difficulties and having a limited range of activity invariably speaks of difficulties occurring on the parish level.

A Many-Sided Task

The task of building up the body of Christ's Church is great and many-sided. On the parish level it means that the parish community not shut itself up in its own narrow sphere, but that it be a beneficial and necessary, conscious part of the whole church body.

Adapted by the Editor from an article by Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky in *Pravoslavnyaya Rus*, No. 11



Hello, my precious children!

It's here! That's right: November, the month of Thanksgiving! I can't wait! Yiayia has been talking about all the good food she'll be cooking, and Zoe and I are so..o..o excited to get together with all our family, including our cousins. It's also a great time to give thanks for the many, many gifts we have received from our Heavenly Father.

Speaking of gifts, there is another great DVD in the library about using our gifts. It's called, "Lord of the Beans," and yes, it's from our friends at Veggie Tales! It's about the journey of a Flobbit named Toto Baggypants, who is a character in a play written by Junior Asparagus.

Toto inherits a most unusual and powerful bean. This bean has the power to give you anything, but Toto was told to use it wisely. Imagine - anything! What an amazing gift ... so he thinks! Remember, every gift is given for a reason. We can't choose which ones we want; we can only choose what we do with the one we have.

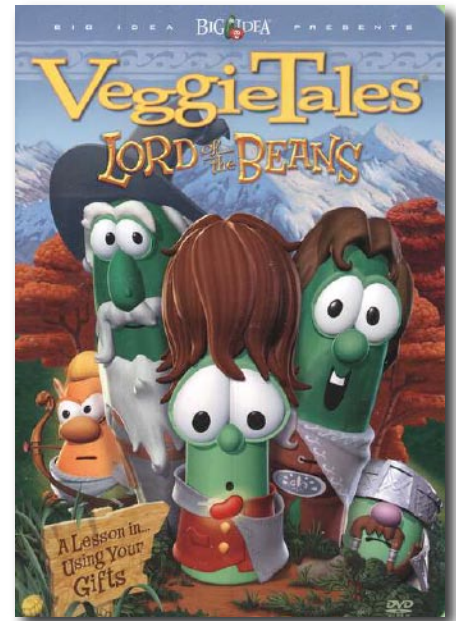
Toto realizes this and starts to worry that he will do something wrong with this powerful bean and really mess things up. With the help of his mentor, Randalf, and a group of friends, they go on a journey to find out how he should use his special gift. But the journey is not easy. He encounters many challenges, like going across the Mountains of Much Snowia, to the Elders of the Razzberry Forest, through the Blue Gate and into the desolate Land of Woe, all in search of an answer. Worst of all, they have to face the evil lord Scaryman, who would give anything to own the bean for his own selfish reasons.

On the way, Toto starts to realize what a wonderful thing it is to have a gift, and that the only way to really use it well is to find out what the will of God is for it. Should I use the gift to help people? But how? If it's just for what they want—more clothes, toys and fame—they will all feel good for a minute, but that kind of happiness will pass in a flash. He wonders how to make it last?

Finally, in the Land of Woe, he learns this song: "To have a gift is a wonderful thing; your spirits will lift and your heart will sing; though some might use it to live like a king; when you see all the good around and the help it can bring, and joy will bloom like the flowers in spring; then you finally know what it is for, yes, that is what it is there for. So let's say a prayer for the wonderful blessing in store for you when you know what it's for!"

Qwerty says, "We are God's workmanship, created in Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2.10). Yiayia says that our Heavenly Father made us and gave us each special gifts and talents so we can do good things for others. Lots of people just use their gifts for themselves; that makes us feel good for a while, but it doesn't last. Happiness that lasts is called "joy," and it comes from using our gifts the way God intended them. Happy Thanksgiving!

Love in Christ, Spero



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What Priests Do



On November 13, the Orthodox Church celebrates the memory of Saint John Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople, a prolific fourth century preacher and a patron saint and role model of priesthood. In honor of his feast, the passage below offers an insightful portrait of the essence of the priest as a pastor and shepherd: bringing souls to God.

The scope of our art is to provide the soul with wings; to rescue it from the world, and give it to God; to watch over that which is in His image; if it abides, to take it by the hand, if it is in danger; to restore it, if it is ruined; to make Christ dwell in the heart by the Spirit; and, in short, to deify and bestow heavenly bliss upon one who belongs to the heavenly host.

Saint Gregory the Theologian, "The Flight to Pontus" (4th c.)

Scripture of the Month: "I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel." (1 Corinthians 4.15)