



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

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HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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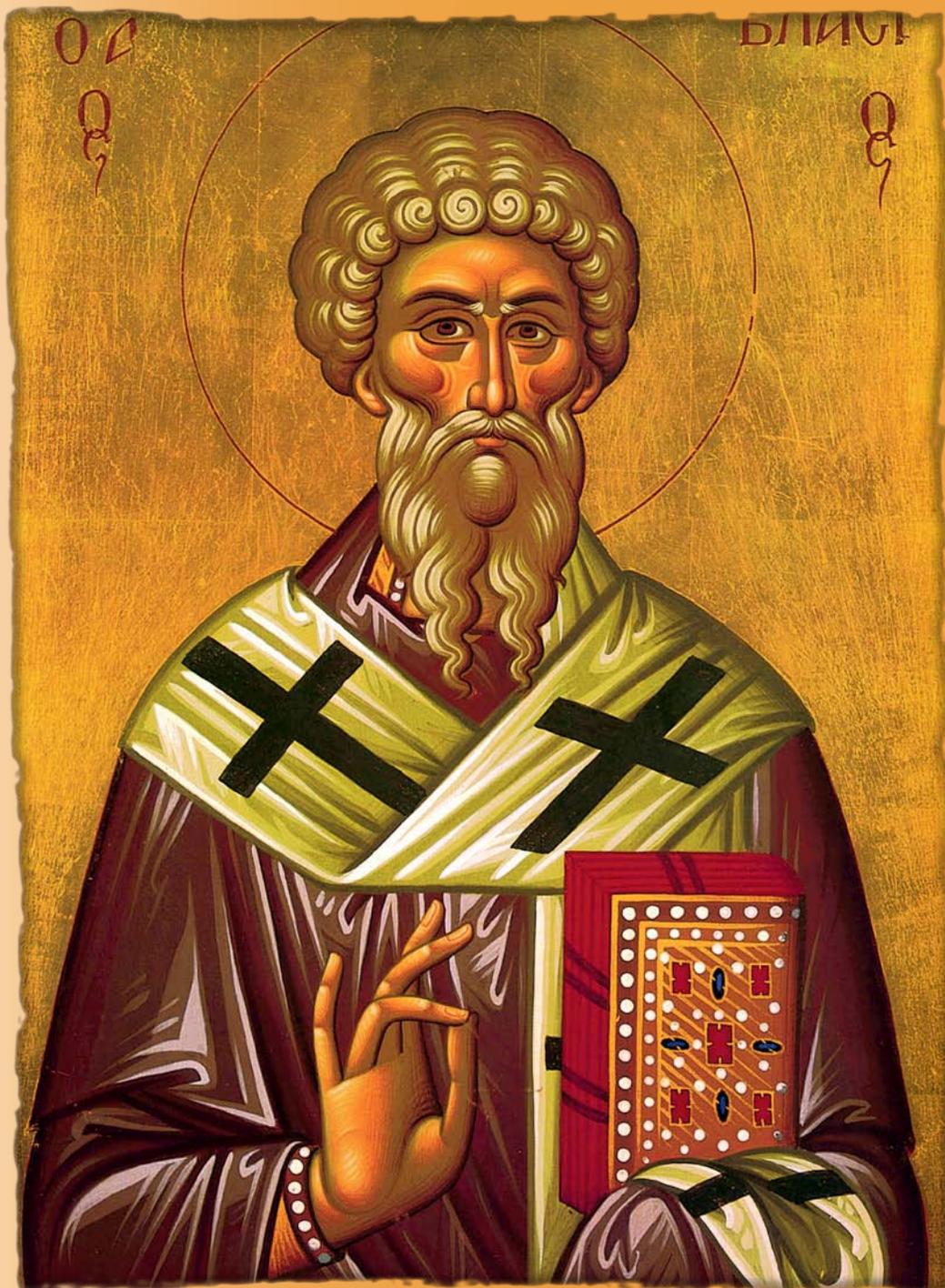
Also enclosed:

February Parish Calendar
Lenten Services Calendar/Flyer
Saturday of Souls Names Form
2010 Cemetery Rates

QUICK NEWS



During the recent Holy Trinity Basketball Tournament, GOYANs assembled relief kits to send to the victims of the Haiti earthquakes. Over 250 teens participated in the weekend event, which included all-day games on Saturday, a "Blacklight Dance" and more. For more photos, see the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 8-14.



Saint Vlasios the Hieromartyr of Sebaste · Feast Day: February 11

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

Chris T. Balouris, President

Anthony Loomis Alex Trivilas

Jason Farmakis Yvonne Balouris

George Danis George Dickos

Troy Geanopoulos Joanne Germanos

Louis Kort Andrew Athanasiou

Vasilios Scoumis Gerri Valliant

Ministries

Philoptochos..... Kay Balouris, Pres.

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

Choir..... John Nychis, Director

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

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

Cemetery..... Bill Fiedler, Chairman

Greek School.... Effie Kilantonis, Coordinator

Social Hall..... Laura Triantafillos, Coordinator

Bookstore..... Bill and Linda Areheart



“Above all hold unfailing your **love** for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins.

Practice **hospitality** ungrudgingly to one another.

As each has received a gift, employ it for **one another**, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”

1 Peter 4.8-10

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in our all-merciful and loving Lord! As I write this message, we are still taking down lights, moving back chairs and generally putting everything in order after having hosted over 400 teens and adults for last weekend’s GOYA Metropolis Basketball Tournament. There are also daily conversations, e-mails and phone calls about the event, and they all point in one direction: thank you for offering such gracious hospitality. And what does that mean? To some it means the food was delicious; to others it means the dance was “awesome!”; to still others it means the organization made things easy. Within the context, however, of who are what we are—members of the Body of Christ as His Holy Church—it means something infinitely greater. It means the commandment of God was fulfilled: “This is my commandment, that you love one another” (John 15.17). Thank you, my faithful brothers, sisters and spiritual children. In the words of the Gospel, “Well done, good and faithful servants!” (Matt. 25.21).

Coming out of that whirlwind of activity, it may surprise some of us to find this issue of *The Herald* packed with Lenten information. Indeed, with Pascha falling on one of its earliest possible dates, April 4, Lent starts February 15. Though it is possible to think of it as “going through the motions” once again, it is certainly not beneficial to do so. If we look ahead with dread toward the increased demands that Lent brings, will will carry it as a burden instead of receiving it as a blessing. How can we avoid this?

Gheronda Aimilianos of Simonopetra Monastery on Mount Athos has written a wonderful and uplifting guide with hints on spiritual growth, and I have excerpted parts of it for this month and next in the “Ask the Elders” column. Orthodoxy is indeed so rich in resources that it sometimes becomes confusing and overwhelming to know where to begin. A great place is that vast collection of “spiritual books” as he calls them. They include the writings of the Fathers and Mothers of the Church, the lives of the saints and, of course, the Holy Scriptures. I will add to those the many new publications that have become available in recent years. Father Radu and I will be using some of them for our Lenten lessons, so perhaps that is the best place to start. Others are available in our Three Hierarchs Bookstore. Another source is our on-line bookstore at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/store. Click on “Books” from the left menu and go to “Spirituality” for a large selection of inspiring materials.

Whether it is some better reading materials to guide us in our spiritual journey, more attention to fasting and its benefits, better attendance at the holy services, great effort at setting aside time for prayer and confession, taking time to help others in need or—hopefully—a healthy combination of them all, God and His Holy Church are offering you all you need. Immerse yourself. In the end, they are not there to “add” to our life, but to help us realize on a daily basis what Jesus told Martha (Luke 10:41): “One thing is needed.” Not sure what it is? “Come and see!”

Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:

**Happy Birthday to my beloved son, +Jimmie Regakis
I Love You! From your mother, Olga**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Church School Lenten Activities February, March

As always, our Church School ministry will be active during the upcoming Lenten season. Don't miss these opportunities:

- The Sunday of Orthodoxy Procession with icons on February 21. Remember to bring your icon to Liturgy!
- The readings for the Presanctified Liturgies on the Wednesdays of Lent (followed by covered dish dinners). Children, please sign up during Church School to read at the services; Parents, join them at the service and please bring food so everyone can enjoy the fellowship after.
- The opening readings for the Services of Salutations on Fridays during Lent for any children who arrive before the service and wish to offer.
- The annual Mission Box in support of Orthodox missions .
- And, of course, attendance at Lenten services and special Church School Lenten lessons.

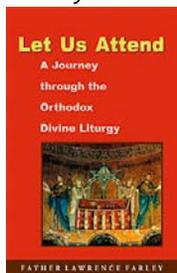
Parents: please encourage your children to participate in these important faith and learning experiences. Thank you!

Orthodox Studies Forum Mondays During Lent

Now in its fourth 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. The group meets usually meetings on the first and third Wednesday of each month at La Roche College, but during Lent this year the group will hold a special half-hour study series on Monday evenings following the 6:00 pm Great Compline service at the Saint George Chapel, 8931 Ringeisen Road, located at Holy Trinity Cemetery. The topic will be "The Jesus Prayer" using the classic book, "The Way of the Pilgrim." Everyone is invited. The study will go from 7:00-7:30.

Saint Lydia Women's Study Fellowship Feb. 11, 25

Now in its 11th year, 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. This year's topic is The Divine Liturgy. The meetings take place every other week on Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. This year there is a new location: the Saint George Chapel, 8931 Ringeisen Road, located at Holy Trinity Cemetery.



New participants are always welcome: married, single, wives, mothers, working or retired, everyone is welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable, the approach is casual and discussion-oriented, The gathering starts promptly at 10:00am with an hour of study and prayer, followed by a half-hour of women's fellowship. 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 or visit www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/stlydia.

St. Nikodemos Men's Fellowship. . . Tuesdays During Lent

The St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship is an Ortho-

dox men's fellowship, study and discussion group. It will hold a special Lenten Study Series on the Tuesdays of Lent 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 special series is "How to Live a Holy Life" by Metropolitan Gregory of St. Petersburg. For info, call Gus Georgiadis at 412-880-4999. The dates for the series are: Feb. 16 & 23, Mar. 2, 9, 16 & 23.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

GOYA Monthly Meeting & Fellowship Feb. 14 & 28

The GOYA will hold its monthly meeting on Sun., Feb. 14 following Liturgy. Also, its monthly GOYA Fellowship will be held Feb. 28, at 6:30 p.m. The location is to be announced.

HOPE and JOY February

The HOPE and JOY ministries will have hold a snowtubing outing during the month of February. More information will be posted in the bulletin soon.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Holy Trinity Hosting Lunch for Homeless/Needy . . Feb. 27

Holy Trinity Church has been the host church of the semiannual lunch for the area's homeless and needy since its inception in 2003. The Holy Trinity Outreach Ministry is making plans to once again host this event. The date is February 27, 2010. This will be the first time our church is sponsoring this event on our own, so any and all assistance in the form of volunteers, food, supplies or monetary donations will be gratefully accepted. This time, we are once again trying to expand our outreach by also distributing socks to the guests we will be hosting that day. During this time of the Great Lent, we ask you to please be a part of this philanthropic outreach event and help by bringing packages of athletic or similar type socks to the church—or to the event. Please see Mike or Julie Kritiotis (412-766-5001) or Vas Scoumis (412-996-6505) for more details.

LENTEN INFORMATION

Saturday of Souls Services February 13, 20

All Saturdays of the Souls services are held at the Saint George Chapel at Holy Trinity Cemetery, 8941 Ringeisen Rd., McCandless Township. The services will be offered this year on February 13 and 20. The Memorial Service is held at the end of the Liturgy. Please use the memorial names list enclosed in this issue of *The Herald* to list your Orthodox loved ones who have fallen asleep in the Lord; and even better, be there yourself to experience the beauty and the meaning of the Saturday of Souls in the place where they have been laid to pious rest. Please also consider preparing and bringing "kollyva" (memorial wheat) for use during the service as well.

Lenten Soup & Sauces Sales Weekly During Lent

The GOYA will resume its very popular Lenten soup and

saucers sales during the Sundays of Lent. Among the many good reasons to buy some to take home are that they are strict Lenten recipes, they provide fund-raising support for our GOYA ministry ... plus they taste great and they are good for you! Please visit the Lenten Soup and Sauces table in Coffee Hour each week! Thank you for supporting our youth as you strive to maintain your spiritual discipline!

Lenten Schedule of Services

This issue of The Herald contains a complete schedule of service for Lent. Please post it in a conspicuous place in your home. Circle the services you are able to attend and place them on your schedule. Talk about them and make plans with your family. As the hymn from the Book of Psalms tells us during the Great Compline service, "God is with us." Lent provides us a special time to be with Him. See you there!

Lenten Coffee Hour Reminder Feb. 21 - Mar. 28

Please keep in mind that during the Lenten season our Coffee Hours following the Divine Liturgy will be observing the Orthodox Lenten fasting schedule. Anyone sponsoring a memorial coffee hour or providing Church School snacks is asked to take care that non-meat and non-dairy items are provided. The Philoptochos and the Church School can provide a list of suggestions for good alternatives. Thank you for helping our community grow in this proper and helpful Orthodox spiritual practice and discipline.

Lenten Fasting and Confession

In addition to the special services being held, please remember that the main focus of Lent is a personal one, with increased attention to our spiritual life through prayer, fasting and Holy Confession. Since spiritual discipline is also required, the Holy Canons of the Church prescribe the guidelines for the Great Lenten Fast, beginning this year on Pure Monday, Feb. 15. Orthodox Christians are called to refrain from eating meat (including red meat, poultry, etc.), dairy (milk, eggs, cheese), fish and other animal products through Pascha. We are also to abstain from wine and olive oil during weekdays (Monday through Friday). Shellfish, vegetables, pastas and the like are permitted at all times. If you have any questions—especially if you are new to fasting or have special health conditions—please see the Fasting Guidelines on page 10 or speak with Fr. John about specific questions. Please also see Fr. John or Fr. Radu to set up a time for Holy Confession during the Lenten season. *Kali Metanoia!* (May your repentance be good!)



Upcoming Lenten Dates. February-April

Wondering about Lenten and Paschal dates? Here's a helpful guide to some of the important events coming up:

- Pure Monday (Lent begins) Feb. 15**
- Sunday of Orthodoxy Feb. 21**
- Godparent Sunday Mar. 7**
- Palm Sunday Mar. 28**
- Holy Friday (schedule off work & school) Apr. 2**
- Pascha Apr. 4**

FUNERALS & MEMORIALS

Nicholas

The servant of God, Anna Nicholas, fell asleep in the Lord on December 19, 2009 in Scottsdale, Arizona. The Funeral was held on December 28 at Saint George Chapel, followed by Interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery may her memory be eternal!

Manning

The servant of God, Kelly Manning, fell asleep in the Lord on December 26, 2009. The Funeral was held on December 31 at Saint George Chapel, followed by Interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery may her memory be eternal!

Clayton

The servant of God, Betty Clayton, fell asleep in the Lord on January 18, 2010. The Funeral was held on January 22 at Holy Trinity Church, followed by Interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery may her memory be eternal! A 40day memorial service will be held on February 21.

Triantafillou

The servant of God, Maria Triantafillou, fell asleep in the Lord on January 19, 2010. The Funeral was held on January 22 at Saint George Chapel, followed by Interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery may her memory be eternal! A 40day memorial service will be held on February 28.

Mihalopoulos

The servant of God, Nicholas Mihalopoulos, fell asleep in the Lord on January 24, 2010. The Funeral was held on January 28 at Holy Trinity Church, followed by Interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery may his memory be eternal! A 40day memorial service will be held on February 28.

Upcoming Memorials

Feb. 21: Betty Clayton; Feb. 28: Maria Triantafillou, Nicholas Mihalopoulos; March 14: Antonia (Vlahakis) Karras.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The Holy Trinity Capital Campaign fundraising efforts continue to EXCEED all expectations! Despite these uncertain economic times, the faithful stewards of Holy Trinity met 100% of their commitment in 2009.

Over \$550,000 was collected from committed stewards. When combined with other fundraising efforts, including our extra festival and social events, we were able to raise over \$660,000 in fiscal year 2009!

These are exciting times at Holy Trinity Church. The Capital Campaign Committee is hard at work analyzing our budget as well as our future cash projections. Stay tuned for some exciting information in the coming months. If you are not one of the committed stewards, please consider adding your name and financial commitment to this project. For those of you who have already signed your card, THANK YOU!



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



Father John Androutsopoulos

"Do good, be rich in good works, be generous and willing to share." (1 Tim. 6:18)

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

St. Paul offers a variety of practical advice to Timothy and the church he is responsible for in the chapter 6 of his letter. But much of his advice touches on the Christian's attitude toward wealth and his use of it. A Christian should be content to have the necessities of life. It is dangerous to want to become wealthy: "The love of money is the root of all evils" (verse 10).

St. Paul does not, however, teach that money itself is evil, or that Christians cannot be rich. Verses 17 to 19 are addressed to wealthy Christians, instructing them in the right use of their wealth. Yes, wealth has its dangers, but the wealth of this world also offers a way to lay up eternal wealth, if it is used properly and generously.

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It Says "Do Good, Be Rich In Good Works."

Question: Which Works Are Good?

Those works are good, which are done according to God's will. We perform good works, if we, with good intention, do those things which please God, and abstain from those displeasing Him.

So, which are the principal good works?

1) Prayer, by which we keep in communion with God. 2) Fasting and self-denial, by which we restrain ourselves -from sin and evil inclinations. 3) Alms-giving, by which are understood all works of mercy, which we do to our neighbor as an outcome and proof of our dutiful love for him.

How many kinds of works of mercy are there?

Two: Spiritual and Corporeal.

Which are called spiritual works of mercy?

Those that are done for the good of the soul of our neighbor; namely: 1) To correct sinners; 2) to counsel the doubtful; 3) to instruct the ignorant; 4) to comfort the afflicted; 5) to forgive offences; 6) to bear wrongs patiently; 7) to pray for the living and the dead.

Which are called corporeal works of mercy?

Those that are done for the temporal welfare of our fellow-men. They are: 1) To feed the hungry; 2) to give drink

to the thirsty; 3) to clothe the naked; 4) to harbor pilgrims or strangers; 5) to visit the prisoners; 6) to visit the sick; 7) to bury the dead.

Are all works that are good in themselves acceptable to God?

No; only those are acceptable to God and will be rewarded by Him, which are done in the state of grace and a good intention; that is, in order to please God, or because it is His Holy Will.

Can anyone be saved without good works?

No: God rewards everyone according to his works. It is not enough for a Christian to abstain from evil in order to be saved; he is also obliged to perform good works. "...faith without works is dead." (James 2:20)

"Be generous and willing to share." (1 Timothy 6:18) Beloved, our religion—that is Christianity—is a religion of caring and sharing with others.

Sundays of Preparation

Before Great Lent (Fast) begins, our Church prescribes for the faithful a period of preparation. **The Great Fast begins this year on Monday February 15.**

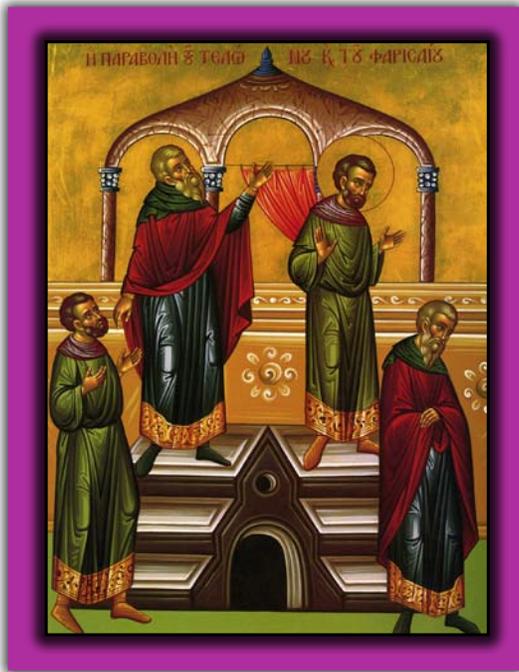
The first Sunday of the Triodion and preparation this year is January 24th, the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee. From this parable we learn the power of humble prayer, *humility*. Read Luke 18:10-14.

The second Sunday of preparation (January 31st), is called the Sunday of the Prodigal Son or the *Loving Father*. This parable is a picture of repentance (the younger son) of forgiveness, of envy (the older brother), and of God's love. Read Luke 15:11-32.

The third preparatory Sunday February 7th, is Meat Fare Sunday. The Gospel lesson for this Sunday is Matt. 25:31-46, and it describes the Second Coming of the Lord and the Last Judgement.

The theme of Cheese Fare Sunday, also called the Sunday of Forgiveness, (February 14th), the last Sunday before Great Lent/Fast begins, is the expulsion from Paradise and ways to regain it: to forgive, to observe the laws of fasting humbly, to "Lay up treasures in heaven and not on earth. Read Matt. 6:14-21.

Every Orthodox Christian is called upon to prepare himself during this pre-lenten period of four Sundays for the GREAT FAST which this year begins on Monday, FEBRUARY 15th.



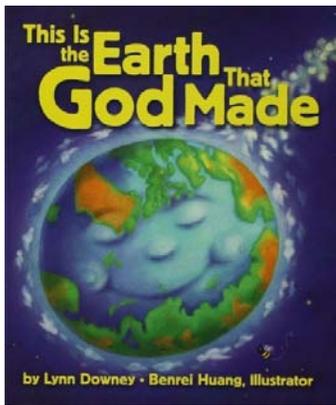
*Have a blessed Pre-Lenten Season!
Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos*

Hello, my precious children!

Can you believe it's Lent already? Yiayia says Lent has started so early because Pascha (Easter) is celebrated on April 4 this year, and since Lent always starts seven weeks before that, the first day of Lent is February 15. The Church calls that day "Pure Monday" because we try to use Lent to get our soul pure or clean through prayer, fasting, helping others and, most of all, by the forgiveness that our Heavenly Father offers through Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit.



You know, a lot of those Lenten lessons talk about Heaven, so I asked Yiayia, "Yiayia, how do we get to Heaven?" In her wonderful and wise way, she told me that there is only one way to get to Heaven: through Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us that only those who believe and trust in Him will go to Heaven. So we must really place our trust and our hope in Him. We should ask Him for forgiveness when we disobey Him. We should hold very strongly in our heart our faith that Jesus is the only-begotten Son of God Who came to Earth, became man, died on the Cross to cleanse us from our sin and rose from the dead so that we might also share in eternal life. We should always pray that the His Holy Spirit will guide us and bless us. We should know and read and love the Bible because it is God's word and it teaches us so much that we need to know. In fact, the Bible says that whoever becomes a child of our Heavenly Father will be with Him when we leave this life. Want to see where? Read the Gospel of St. John: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."



And speaking of coming to Earth, I have a great book in my library called "This is the Earth that God Made" by Lynn Downey. After reading the book, I found myself saying this delightful rhyme over and over: "This is the Earth that God made. This is the rolling, rocking sea that drinks from the fountains that flow from mountains that rise from the dirt that covers the Earth that God made!"

With this catchy little rhyme and the beautiful pictures, each page shows a new part of our Heavenly Father's wonderful and awesome creation. When you finish reading this book, you will be even more thankful for all the gifts, big or small, that He made and shares with us. Also, in the back of the book, you will discover ways you and your parents can learn more about nature.

I look forward to seeing all my precious children during Lent. There are so...o...o many ways for you to grow and learn. Remember to always be there on time for Divine Liturgy, because our Heavenly Father has invited us and is waiting for us. Give your Church School teachers your best attention, because they have a lot of fun and important things to teach you about our Church and our Faith. Remember to ask your parents about fasting, prayer and coming for some of those other special services during Lent.

And, of course, don't forget to stop by and visit me in the St. Spyridon Library. I love sharing it with you!

Love in Christ,
Spero

An update on the news and activities of our local Holy Trinity chapter of the Philoptochos Ladies Society, a national philanthropic ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. and the Parish Council." Want more information? Visit their web site at www.Philoptochos.org or contact a local member.

Philoptochos Report: February 2010

Books Drive

Our thanks to everyone who donated their new and slightly used books. The Family Literacy Center And All Of Us Care organizations were very appreciative. It is wonderful that we can help make a difference for young children and adults who are unable to read.

Vasilopita

The Vasilopeta Celebration was held on January 10, 2010. Each year we send St. Basil's Academy the money we collect from the collection tray and the coffee money. We collected \$188.00 but we sent \$500.00.

Remembrance: Kelly Manning – December 26, 2009

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of Kelly. She was a member of Holy Trinity all of her life. She was a member of the Philoptochos for over 50 years. She worked for Holy Trinity in any way she could. You could find her in the food line and at the coffee stand. It will not be the same without her. May her memory be eternal! A 40-day memorial will be held on Jan. 31, 2010. We ask that all the

Philoptochos members come to the front of the church.

General Membership Meeting

Our next General Membership Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 7. Your attendance is important. This is the perfect time to pay your Stewardship or to join. Being a member offers us the opportunity to make a difference for people in need. All of us can join the Philoptochos to help others! We are looking forward to seeing you.

Dates To Keep In Mind

- Meeting – Feb 7
- Lenten Lunch – March 7 - This is the third Sunday of Lent and we celebrate The Sunday of the Holy Cross and Godparent/Godchild Sunday
- Easter Bake Sale – It's not too early to think about ordering pastry for Easter.
- Mother's Day Tea – Date to be announced

Respectfully submitted,
Esther Ladakos

Charities and Philanthropies Supported by Holy Trinity Philoptochos in 2009

National Philoptochos Charities & Programs

- ♥ Membership
- ♥ St. Photios National Shrine
- ♥ St. Basil Academy (Vasilopita)
- ♥ St. Basil Sisterhood
- ♥ Social Services
- ♥ Autism Fund
- ♥ Missions Programs
- ♥ Support a Mission Priest (OCMC)
- ♥ Hellenic College/Holy Cross
- ♥ HC/HC Scholarships
- ♥ International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)
- ♥ Retired Clergy Association (RCA)
- ♥ Cancer Fund
- ♥ Ecumenical Patriarchate & Soup Kitchen
- ♥ National Sisterhood of Presvyteras (NSP)
- ♥ UNICEF
- ♥ General Medical Fund
- ♥ Orthodox Campus Fellowship (OCF)
- ♥ HelleniCare
- ♥ 75th Anniversary Fund

Metropolis Of Pittsburgh

- ♥ Membership
- ♥ The Illuminator
- ♥ Emergency Fund
- ♥ Nativity of Theotokos Monastery
- ♥ Saint Gregory Palamas Monastery
- ♥ Holy Protection Monastery
- ♥ Saint Theodore the Studite Monastery
- ♥ Saint Mary of Egypt Monastery

- ♥ Special Care Fund
- ♥ Metropolis Home Fund
- ♥ The Camp at Mt. Tabor
- ♥ Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School (THEOS)
- ♥ Daffodil Luncheon
- ♥ Stewards of St. Photios

Our Own Local Charities

- ♥ Holy Trinity Capital Campaign
- ♥ Holy Trinity Cemetery Fund
- ♥ Holy Trinity Homeless Lunch Ministry
- ♥ Northside Ministries Fire Fund
- ♥ Fallen Heroes Fund
- ♥ The Caring Foundation
- ♥ Women's Shelter of Pittsburgh
- ♥ Leukemia/Lymphoma Fund
- ♥ Salvation Army Christmas Gifts
- ♥ Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh
- ♥ Children's Medical Fund
- ♥ Metropolis Summer Camp
- ♥ Holy Trinity Festival
- ♥ MEFGOX (Mid-East Choir Federation)
- ♥ Local Needy Families
- ♥ Allegheny Valley School
- ♥ Zoe for Life
- ♥ Christmas Gifts for Seniors & Shut-Ins
- ♥ 40-Day Blessing Books for Newborn Children
- ♥ Bread of Life Food Pantry
- ♥ Northside Common Ministries Food Pantry
- ♥ Senior Citizens Luncheons

Community Life Photo Journal | Holy Trinity Basketball Tournament

January 22-24, 2010: Holy Trinity GOYA hosted another Metropolis GOYA Basketball Tournament with enthusiasm and hospitality. The event involved 9 parishes, 29 teams, over 250 players and a full-house crowd on Sunday morning for Liturgy (see pages 10-11). Games were played at North Allegheny schools. Guests were housed at the Holiday Inn on McKnight Road. Friday evening featured an outreach presentation by the YES (Youth Equipped to Serve) Ministry. Saturday evening provided a "Blacklight Night" dance for the teens and a great buffet dinner. As always, the GOYA offers its sincere thanks to the entire community and everyone who volunteered for, donated to and supported the event!









December 20, 2009: The students and staff of the Holy Trinity Church School Ministry staged its annual Christmas Pageant, with this year's theme being "Merry Christmas Charlie Brown!" Classic characters from the famous comic strip provided the framework for this annual Holy Trinity adventure, involving all the students and staff of this vibrant ministry.

Holy Trinity
Church School Ministry
presents

Merry Christmas Charlie Brown!

A Joyous Celebration
of the Nativity of our Lord
and Savior Jesus Christ
...with a little help from
Charlie Brown and his Friends!



Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
December 20, 2009





January 10: Holy Trinity Philoptochos sponsored its annual Vasilopita celebration for the Feast of Saint Basil. After the blessing, representatives from each ministry of the parish were brought forward to receive a slice of the blessed bread. A collection was also taken that day in support of the Saint Basil Academy in Garrison, NY, a Philoptochos-supported ministry.



"Vasilios" Namedays



Longest Member Present



Ladies Philoptochos Society



"Protopsalti" & Chanters



2010 Parish Council



Adult Study Ministries



Church School Ministry



Holy Trinity Choir



St. Spyridon Library



Greek Education Program



HOPE and JOY Children's Ministries



GOYA Teen Ministry



Young Adult Ministry



Three Hierarchs Bookstore



Cemetery Committee



Over 50 Club



Weekly Lunch Volunteers



Vision Committee/Capital Campaign



Herald Mailing Volunteers



Missionaries



Holy Cross Seminarians



Longest Married Couple Present



Newest Members Present



Youngest Child Present

It is said that the best form of advertising is word-of-mouth, because we trust the people we know. Likewise, we also take matters of faith closer to heart when they come from people we know and trust. In this new series of articles from our Stewardship Committee, you will hear about the importance of supporting the Holy Church through Stewardship directly from friends and members of the Holy Trinity Church family. Please join them in your offerings of time, talents and treasures ... and don't forget to submit a card every year!



This month's featured Steward:
Our new Stewardship Chairman,
James S. Statheas.

How long have you been a member at Holy Trinity?

I have been a life long member of Holy Trinity being baptized at our previous location on Sandusky Street. Actually

my father Steve was part of the original group of Greek immigrants who literally passed the hat and helped to build Holy Trinity in the 1920's. I believe we, the current members of Holy Trinity, are forever indebted to our founding fathers and mothers for the sacrifices they made in establishing our church. Although most if not all had meager assets, they recognized the need to build a church, a spiritual home, a place to come together and practice the traditions of the Greek Orthodox faith which was a most important part of their lives. Their efforts truly defined and set a high standard of stewardship for the following generations to follow.

In which ministries, organizations and functions are you involved in and why?

My first act of service at Holy Trinity was as an acolyte. I still remember the privilege of serving as an acolyte for Archbishop Iakovos on his pastoral visit to our church. I have also served on Parish Council as secretary and treasurer and co-chaired two of our Greek Food Festivals. My involvement with the Parish Council was the result of Father John asking me if I would be interested in serving. As a member of Parish Council I gained an understanding of the hard work and resources that are necessary to maintain our church and the need of us all to participate to the utmost of our ability through the sharing of our time, our talents and our treasures. It was an honor and privilege to have served on Parish Council and I feel as a member of Holy Trinity I have a responsibility to help in any capacity when I am asked. Currently I am the new chairman of the Stewardship Committee (and I am looking forward to our Spring Greek Food Festival).

Please tell us why Holy Trinity is important to you.

My parents and Godparents taught me the meaning of our Greek Orthodox Faith and that faith is the most important part of my life and defines who I am as a person. I strongly believe that I have two homes, my personal physical home and my spiritual home, which to me is Holy Trinity Church. Our church is the location where we come together to celebrate our faith through participation of the beautiful liturgical services that are part of the Orthodox tradition. These services help us celebrate the

Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to his glorious resurrection on Easter Sunday to services commemorating our Blessed Mother, the Theotokos, and the Great Saints and Prophets of our faith. It is in our spiritual home where we celebrate our most joyous occasions, weddings, baptisms, and christenings. We also gather at our spiritual home to pay our last respects and honor the memories of our departed friends and loved ones. Our church is also a great source of fellowship from the basic coffee hour each Sunday to community dinners and dances and the great opportunity to invite our friends and neighbors to our Greek Food Festival. These are the reasons our ancestors build Holy Trinity and these are the reasons why we, the current members of Holy Trinity, must do all that we can to maintain and develop our community and we can do that through active participation in our stewardship program.

What comes to mind when you hear the words "Good and Faithful Steward"? Why should we all give to Holy Trinity Church?

To me the term steward and/or stewardship is synonymous with the term responsibility. As I indicated earlier I believe we have two homes, our physical home and our spiritual home, which is our church. As a homeowner I am responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the place I call home. In the same realm, I firmly believe that I have the same responsibility toward the maintenance of my spiritual home, my Holy Trinity Church.

Our Lord teaches us that to those that much is given much is expected., yet in comparison He asks very little of us, to provide a small portion of our blessings toward his church and to come together for a couple of hours each week in His midst during our liturgical services. By being "Good and Faithful Stewards" we are simply honoring our Lord's teachings and upholding the great responsibility He gave to all of us, to preserve and grow His Church as the vehicle to spread his Word. During the preparation of Holy Communion in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, the priest chants "We offer to you these gifts from your own gifts, in all and for all". This passage reminds me that I can never give anything to the Lord, I can only return part of the blessings he bestowed upon me. By being a "Good and Faithful Steward", I am presented with the opportunity to return a portion of those blessings.



HOW TO FAST DURING LENT AND HOLY WEEK

(Note: All the dates below refer to 2010 specifically. These change each year due to the varying date of Pascha, April 4 this year.)

Fast Free Pre-Lenten Week: (Jan. 25-31)

The week of the Publican and the Pharisee—which is the beginning of the Triodion Period—is a fast-free week, which means no fasting the entire week (even Wednesday and Friday of this week are fast-free).

Meatfare Week (Feb. 1-7)

Meat Fare Week is the week that follows the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. During this week, the normal Wednesday/Friday fast prevails on these two days. All other foods are permitted the other days of this week.

Cheesefare Week (Feb. 8-14)

Cheese Fare Week is the week that follows Meat Fare Sunday. During this week, there is abstinence of meat and meat byproducts the entire week, but dairy products (milk, eggs, cheese, etc.), fish, olive oil and wine are allowed the entire week (up until sundown of Cheesefare Sunday, March 9).

Great Lent and Holy Week (Feb. 15-Apr. 3)

Weekdays: During this time, the Holy Canons indicate abstinence of meat, meat byproducts, dairy products, fish, olive oil and wine. There are two exceptions to the above: Fish is allowed on March 25 and on Palm Sunday (March 28 this year) due to the celebratory nature of those great feasts.

Saturdays and Sundays: During Great Lent, olive oil and wine are permitted (Except on Holy Saturday - a strict fast is kept on this day.)

All Days: Shellfish (shrimp, crab, scallops, etc), fruits and vegetables, grains, etc., are permitted throughout this period on all days.

General Notes

As with all rules of fasting, which are designated by the Holy Canons of the Orthodox Church, you are instructed to seek counsel from your Spiritual Father/Parish Priest for your personal guidance on fasting.

Fasting is not effective or even spiritual if it is an empty physical exercise; it must be accompanied by prayer, almsgiving, reading of Holy Scripture and other related books and attendance at church services. We should strive to attend as many Lenten Services as possible.

It is also recommended that you participate in the Sacrament of Confession at the onset and/or during this period of Great and Holy Lent. Any questions should be directed to your Spiritual Father/Parish Priest.

Remember, true fasting is not meant to be a set of rules making for a dismal life; rather, it frees us from the slavery of sin since the fast from certain foods & their quantity harmonizes with spiritual fasting - a fasting from sin and passions. We should also remember that it is as important to fast with what comes out of our mouth as well as what goes into it. God does not need our fasting and we do not “earn” blessings or any other gift of God by fasting; rather, it expresses our desire for a more pure state of communion with Him.

From Hymns of the Church

“Let us begin the fast with joy. Let us give ourselves to spiritual efforts. Let us cleanse our souls. Let us cleanse our flesh. Let us fast from passions as we fast from foods, taking pleasure in the good works of the Spirit and accomplishing in them love .”

(Forgiveness Sunday Vespers)



TIPS ON MAINTAINING A HEALTHY LENTEN FAST

- 1) Reduce all “empty calorie” foods (i.e., cookies, cakes, candy, soda/pop, etc.) and replace them with nutrient-dense foods, such as whole grains, legumes [Legumes include: chickpeas, beans (black, red and navy), lentils, peanuts, peas, soy and bean sprouts], nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables.
- 2) Use a variety of fruits and vegetables in meals. Add a vitamin C source to each meal. Vitamin C is highest in fruits and fruit juices, but is also plentiful in red sweet peppers, kohlrabi, broccoli, pod peas, sweet potatoes, cauliflower and kale, just to name a few.
- 3) Provide vitamin D by daily exposure to the sun or by foods fortified with vitamin D (for example, certain breakfast cereals and milk alternatives).

Note: These are helpful tips, not medical advice! Please consult your doctor for special medical needs. There is also plenty of vegetarian/fasting info on the Internet.



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A selection of original works in Greek from two of our talented parishioners. First, a work of prose looking back over the events of 2009. Then two poems: personal reflections on "My Village" from Voula and Vickie's musings on the similarities of "Winter and Old Age."



Voula Hareras

Λοιπόν έφυγε και τό 2009 πού μέ τόση έλπίδα και προσμονή καρτερούσαμε για μία καλύτερη χρονιά.

Όμως πόσο μεγάλη απογοήτευσι μάς κέρασε. Δυστυχώς κανένα άπολύτως πρόβλημα από τά τεράστια πού μαστίζουν την άνθρωπότητα δέν έλυσε, αλλά αντιθέτως πρόσθεσε πολύ μεγαλήτερα.

Όυτε μία στιγμή δέν σταμάτησε ό Πόλεμος, οί τρομοκράτες συνεχίζουν τό έργο τους σέ γή και στόν άέρα κάνοντας τόν κοσμάκη νά ζή στην άγωνία.

Όυτε μιά άχτίδα φωτός στην οικονομική κρίση, πού μέ κομμένη άναπνοή, ό κόσμος παντού πού θά καταλήξει αυτή ή άβυσσος και άν θά τά καταφέρουν οί μεγάλοι τής γής νά βρούν μιά άκρη.

Μέσα σ'αυτά όλα έχουμε και τά φυσικά φαινόμενα σχεδόν όλόκληρο τό 2009. Πυρκαγιές, Σεισμούς, Πλημμύρες, Καταστροφές, όλη ή γή ήταν έρμαιο τών στοιχείων τής φύσεως, μέ πολλά θύματα από την κακοκαιρία.

Και για συμπλήρωμα ήρθε και ή νέα γρίπη, νά κάμη και αυτή τό θαύμα της. Μάλιστα άγαπητοί μου, έσπασα τό κεφάλι μου νά βρώ κάτι καλό νά γράψω για τό 2009 δυστυχώς δέν βρήκα.

Τό μόνο συμπέρασμα πού έβγαλα είναι ότι ό Σατανάς χορεύει, και αυτό γιατί έχουμε φύγη όλοι, Αρχηγοί κρατών και άπλοι, από τόν δρόμο τού Θεού, άντί νά ύψωνουμε τά μάτια μας ψηλά, μήπως μέ την προσευχή, μας λυπηθή ό Θεός, αντιθέτως αδιάζουν οί εκκλησιές από τούς πιστούς. Λυπηρόν.

Καλοί μου φίλοι παροτρύνεται τά παιδιά σας νά ακολουθούν τόν εύλογημένο δρόμο πού μάς δίδαξε ό Χριστός μας.. Τήν άγάπη, τήν συνγνώμη, τήν έλεημοσύνη, τήν προσευχή.

Ετσι θά νοιώθουν χαρά και άνακούφιση έχοντας τόν Χριστό στην καρδιά τους, τόν χρειάζονται πάρα πολύ τώρα σέ αυτόν τόν ταραγμένο κόσμο.

Σάς εύχομαι από την καρδιά μου νά έχετε όλοι σας ειρηνικό χαρούμενο και γεμάτο υγεία τό 2010, και τού χρόνου νά γράψουμε μόνον χαρούμενα πράγματα.

Βουλα Χαρερά

ΤΟ ΧΩΡΙΟ ΜΟΥ

Τά βράδυα στό χωριό μου ποτέ δέν έχει σκοτάδι
Γιατί μου φέγγουν τ'άστέρια
Στό χωριό μου ποτέ δέν νοιώθω φόβο
Γιατί μέ γιγαντώνουν τά βουνά του

Δέν έχω ποτέ μοναξιά στό χωριό μου
Γιατί μέ στροφεύουν τά πουλιά, και ή πολύχρωμες
πεταλούδες
Όταν έχω πόνο τό λέω στό γιασεμί και στην γαζία
Κι' αυτά άρωματίζουν τόν άέρα για χάρη μου

Στό χωριό μου ή πηγή ποτέ δέν σταματά νά τρέχει γαργαρό νερό

και τό μοιράζει σέ όλους τό ίδιο.

Η έκκλησίτσα τού χωριού μου είναι μικρή και καθαρή
τήν άγαπώ πολύ, γιατί ποτέ δέν έχει κλειστή τήν πόρτα της.

Δέν θυμώνουν τ'άστέρια στό χωριό μου
όταν τά κρύβουν τά σύννεφα ξέρουν ότι
ό καθαρός άέρας θά τά διώξει.

Γενικά στό χωριό μου μέ γεμίζει ζωντάνια ή αύγούλα
Και μέ ήρεμή τό δειλινό, γιατί όλα είναι φυσικά
όπως τά έπλασε ό Θεός.

Ω ναι λατρεύω τό χωριό μου, γιατί όταν πηγαίνω
[Μέ τά μάτια τής ψυχής μου βέβαια], σέ κάθε βήμα μου
΄ξαναζώ τά ξέγνοιαστα παιδικά μου χρόνια, και μέ τήν
φαντασία μου

Βλέπω τούς γονείς μου, τούς παπούδες μου τίς γιαγιάδες μου
και όλους τούς παιδικούς μου φίλους, πού οί περισσότεροι
δέν υπάρχουν πια...

Βούλα Χαρερά



Vickie Bellios

Χειμώνας είναι γηρατειά και
γηρατειά χειμώνας
Γ'αυτό σε όλους φαίνεται πως είναι
ένας αιώνας.

Χειμώνιασε και χιονισε μας τύληξαν
τα κρύα
Και οι δουλιές σταμάτησαν, κλείσαν
τα σχολεία.

Εις την αρχή μας γέλασε ήρθε
καλοκαιρία

Σε όλους μας καλάρωσε αυτή ιστορία.

Αλλ' ο χειμώνας έρχεται, αν και τον περιμένωμε
Και εις το σπίτι πιό ζεστά ντυνώμαστε και μένωμε.

Είναι όπως τα γηρατειά που δεν τα θε' κανείς μας
Αλλα μας επισκέπτονται χωρίς την θελησή μας.

Ποιός θα μπορέση από μας τα γηρατειά να κάψη;
Και η νειότη νάνε αιώνια χωρίς να την πειράξη.

Ο χρόνος όπως το είπαν όλοι ο Πανδαμάτωρ
Αλλάζει αυτός τον άνθρωπο και γίνεται αυτοκράτωρ.

Αλλάζει τ'ωραίο σώμα μας γεμίζομε ρυτίδες
Κι' αντί για τα πηρούνια μας τρώμε μ'οδοντογλυφίδες

Και έτσι καταλάβατε καλύτερα απο 'μένα,
Χειμώνας, κρύα, γηρατειά είναι πολύ δεμένα.

Κ' έτσι ας προσπαθήσωμε τους δύο αυτούς εχθρούς
Να καταπολεμήσωμε.

Ας ζήσωμε ειρηνικά τα τελευταία χρόνια με υπομονή
και φρόνηση / Στου γηρατός τ'αλλόνια.

Ας ευχηθούμε στο Θεό όλους να μας φωτίση
Τα τελευταία χρόνια μας ήρεμα να τα σβύση.

Και έτσι όλοι να ησυχάσωμε μες στην ζεστή αγκαλιά Του
Και να μας κρίνει σύμφωνα κάτω απ' την ευνοιά Του.



Elder Aimilianos

One of the great blessings of Orthodoxy is the presence, prayers and inspired words of the Holy Elders of the Faith. They have been referred to as “precious vessels of the Holy Spirit.” In recent years, many books have been published in English with their writings and talks. This column provides an opportunity for each of us to be blessed by their words. This month’s topic, “Spiritual Study,” was chosen to give us all some motivation to increase our efforts during Lent!

Question: Geronda, how does “spiritual study” differ from other kinds of reading?

Beginning from childhood, most people spend a lot of time reading. And today, in the age of science, literature, and progress, you have to read a lot. If you don’t, it’s like being blind. You read and you urge your child to read, so he won’t be a failure in life. Everybody reads in accordance with his training and specialization, or depending on his education, capabilities, and his social position—some less, some more. All this is useful. But it isn’t enough.

There are those which we call, in a word, spiritual books, which we must necessarily read, because we need them on our journey to heaven. When you read these books, you sense at once that God is speaking to you. They are tools for the spiritual life.

Question: What are these books, which are so central to the Christian life?

They exist in great numbers. It isn’t possible for me to deal with them all, but only those which the Church has singled out—based on her history, her life, and her blood—and given us for our daily pleasure and delight. God speaks in these books. Who wrote these books? The authors were divinely inspired instruments who became the servants of the Holy Spirit. You open them up, and right away you realize that God is talking to you. You feel at once the beating of the Spirit’s wings. You feel God answering your questions. You see him dispersing your darkness, clearing away old obstacles, opening up new pathways. Then, filled with joy, you cry out: “Behold, I have begun to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes” (Gen 18.27). I have begun to converse with God, with my Christ. And who am I to speak with God? I am ashes, I am clay. But God does me this favor.

It is through these books that he shows you where to go. God calls you. He says to you: “Come, my child, ascend to the heights.” You feel this. You feel it like the holy man who would excuse himself from company by saying: “Someone is waiting for me in my room”. They didn’t know who it was. They thought it was a person, but he went to his books, where God was waiting for him’.

Question: What kind of writings do these books contain?

First and foremost are those which are called patristic books, that is, the writings of the Fathers of the Church, those men, who we said, were the instruments of the Holy Spirit, and who were like fire when they spoke and lightning when they wrote. Thanks to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have left us their immortal masterpieces. Truly, what would the world be like without the Holy Fathers?

They lived by prayer, in vigils, and in fasting. They loved God with all their soul, and God loved them unreservedly, deeming them worthy to leave us their immortal writings, more precious than all the gold in the world (cf. Ps 18.11; 118.72).

All the Fathers of the Church lived more or less the same way of life. If we take a look at one of them, St. Basil the Great, it will be as if we had before us a gathering of all the holy Fathers. St. Basil attended the greatest schools of his day, where he studied philosophy, rhetoric, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. He became an orator. The future seemed to smile on him, and his life was one success after another. But what happened then? This beautiful soul, this shining mind, this sensitive and God-enamored heart, was incapable of being enslaved to an earthly career. Thus he left his family and friends and went to live in the deserts of Pontus. In his small hut, St. Basil was visited by God. Divine lightning flashed forth, the darkness became like day, and Basil himself became like the sun. Just as Christ entered the upper room, although the doors and windows were shut, so too did he enter into the room of St. Basil the Great. On the basis of this divine illumination, he wrote the masterpieces which he left behind to illuminate us.

This is more or less how all the Fathers of the Church wrote their books, through which they take us by the hand, and lead us from one summit to another, from one peak to another, passing beyond the stars, to the throne of God, and to the friends of God, the saints. This is how St. John Chrysostom wrote, and this is how that eagle of the Spirit, St. Gregory the Theologian, wrote as well.

Question: All this is wonderful, Gheronda, but where can I find such writings?

Don’t worry. If you haven’t already looked for them, you’ll see how easy it is to find them, and read them. Today there are so many editions and translations of these books, that all of the Church Fathers are readily accessible.

There are dozens of books containing the sermons of St. John Chrysostom, and dozens more with the writings of Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, St. Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain, and so many other Fathers of the Church. And their message is simple.

In reading them, your eyes will be opened (cf. Ps 18.9). Imagine sitting in the dark, and suddenly I come near you, and I shine a light in your face, and your eyes open wide and are dazzled by the light—that’s exactly what will happen when you read the writings of the Fathers of the Church. One could also say that their writings are like lenses which enable us to gaze steadily on the sun, on Christ himself.

(More next issue: The Lives of the Saints and the Bible.)

Excerpted from “The Church at Prayer: The Mystical Liturgy of the Heart”

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The Ripple Effect of True Christian Living

If we are honest with ourselves, part of the reason why many people remain unchurched is that they have looked us over and do not especially like what they see. Some of us talk the faith but do not live it. Others do not even talk it very well.

Maybe we have never thought of ourselves as hypocrites, but how many of us would pass this test: How many people can you name who have re-examined their lives because there was something in your life that they saw and craved but did not possess? That something is more than just having said a prayer to determine salvation. It is a continual awareness of, and response to, the presence of God—a spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical transformation that is accomplished by giving the Holy Spirit free rein and that results in an entirely new way of being God's Church on Earth.

The results of years of research is clear on this point: Many people name Jesus as their savior, but relatively few have lives that consistently demonstrate He is truly the Lord of their hearts, minds and souls. Perhaps before we invite other people to take part in the things of God, we should commit ourselves to experience fully all that is available to us through Jesus. When that happens, we will not have to worry too much about attracting and assimilating others into the Church. When God becomes the true priority in our lives, and when we imitate the heart of Christ and live in the power of the indwelling Spirit, what we represent will be irresistible.

Graphic © Tyler Boyes - Fotolia.com

Grow Your Church from the Outside, George Barna, 2002

Scripture of the Month: "Let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete." (James 1.4)