



# THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

MAY 2010

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HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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May Parish Calendar

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HOLY TRINITY SPRING

GREEK FESTIVAL

MAY 20-23

## QUICK NEWS



Dozens of excited children await the "Ready, Set, Go!" of the Agape Vespers Candy Hunt on the front lawn of the church. The teens participated instead in a Scavenger Hunt. For lots of photos of the activities and services during Lent and Holy Week 2010, see the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 8-11.



"Hospitality of Abraham" · Holy Trinity Icon · The Monastery of Saint Paul · Mount Athos

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](http://www.odpgh.org)) and Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America ([www.goarch.org](http://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



“My son, keep your father’s commandment, and forsake not your mother’s teaching. Bind them upon your heart always; tie them about your neck. When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you.”

Proverbs 6.20-22

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is risen! In the next four to six weeks, we will observe a two special events which are addressed within the guidance and wisdom of the quote above from the Book of Proverbs. We will be celebrating Mother’s Day on the second Sunday of May; we will also be honoring the fathers on Father’s Day, the third Sunday of June. Those celebrations should be not only stand-alone days when we do special things for our parents, but they should also cause us to reflect on the Bible’s guidance and call ourselves to account: do we truly honor (or, in the event of their already having passed into eternal life, did we truly honor) our fathers and mothers as the Lord commands, not just on those two days of the year, but throughout our lives and theirs?

The sisters of the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City provided some guidance for what this means a few years ago in their publication, “Transfigured Life.” They explain that to “honor our parents” means:

- To forgive them of their faults, sins and weaknesses—even as we hope that our own children will forgive us;
- To wish for them all good things necessary for their salvation.
- To pray for them and to have prayers said by the Church for them (whether in this life or in their memory).
- To speak no evil of them.
- To do good to them and help them as much as it is in our power.

Whether we have been blessed with a long and loving relationship with parents who have always been there for us or challenged by their weaknesses and ours into a more difficult expression of love, our challenge as children is the same: honor them as commanded by the Lord.

This year, as we approach these declared national holidays, please remember that they were proclaimed by God long before our society fixed them on these various days in May and June. “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you” (Exodus 20.12). They are, therefore, divinely-given opportunities to not only obey God, but to share back with Him through the persons of our parents (or through their memory) just how much we love Him and them!

Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!

Pastorally yours,

Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:

**In loving memory of Gus Hareras**  
**February 8, 1927 – May 25, 1983**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**Orthodox Studies Forum . . . . . May 5, 19**

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 on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at La Roche College, 900 Babcock Blvd., in the Palumbo Science Center, Room 102. The group is studying the topic, "The Jesus Prayer" using the classic book, "The Way of the Pilgrim." Everyone is invited.

**Saint Lydia Women's Study Fellowship . . . . . May 6, 27**

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. Meetings take place every other week on Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. at the Saint George Chapel, 8941 Ringeisen Road, located at Holy Trinity Cemetery. The gathering starts promptly at 10:00am with an hour of study and prayer, followed by a half-hour of women's fellowship. For further information, call Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925. May 27 will be the last meeting for this season. The group will resume in September.

**WORSHIP LIFE**

**9:30 Regular Divine Liturgy Hours . . . . . Now in Effect**

Don't forget, regular 9:30 Divine Liturgy hours resumed on April 1. Orthros is at 8:30 a.m. and Divine Liturgy starts at 9:30 a.m. for both Sunday and weekday services through October. Please set your clocks and your personal schedules to be there on time.



**Weekday Services . . . . . May**

Please take note of the following weekday Liturgies for the feast days in April. Unless otherwise indicated, Orthros is at 8:30 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30 at Holy Trinity.

**Wed. May 12, 6pm ... The Holy Ascension of the Lord**

*Note: This is a 6:00 pm Vesperal Liturgy!*

**Fri. May 21 ..... Ss. Constantine & Helen**

**Sat. May 22 ..... Pentecost weekend Saturday of Souls**

*Note: This service at Saint George Chapel. HT Cemetery*

**Mon. May 24 ..... Feast Day of the Holy Spirit**

*Note: This is the nameday feast of our parish.*

**Memorial Day Service for Veterans . . . . . May 31**

Please join together in front of the Holy Trinity Cemetery War Memorial at 9:30 am on Memorial Day (May 31) as we hold a special ceremony to honor those who have given their lives in defense of the United States, the Constitution and the cause of freedom they so cherished. Important note: this service is to commemorate veterans; it is not a general memorial service for all the departed — that will be held according to Orthodox tradition on the Pentecost weekend Saturday of Souls – May 22 this year – with a Divine Liturgy & Memorial at the Saint George Chapel at Holy Trinity Cemetery. May

their memories be eternal!

**Summer Attire Reminder**

Please remember that even during the summer months when many people like to keep things "casual," entering the Holy Church is still a sacred experience which our preparation and attire should reflect. Everyone should refrain from wearing shorts and t-shirts and women are asked, as usual, to wear dresses or skirts instead of pants. While we will not impress the Lord with clothing, we will honor Him with our modesty and piety. As the scriptures say, "Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, for evermore" (Psalm 93.5).

**FESTIVAL NEWS**

**Festival Dates . . . . . May 20-23, September 2-5**

Holy Trinity Church will hold a four-day "Spring Festival" this year from Thursday-Sunday, May 20-23. Remember, no matter how many days the festival lasts, it still takes a lot of work, so please be ready to offer your help. Also keep Thursday-Sunday, September 2-5, free to work at, eat at, bring your friends to and enjoy the Holy Trinity Greek Summer Festival. Thanks!

**FUNERALS**

**Frank Chapas**

The servant of God, Frank Chapas, fell asleep in the Lord on April 12, 2010. The Funeral service was held on April 16 at Holy Trinity Church. Interment followed at Holy Trinity Cemetery. May his memory be eternal!

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

**Cemetery Clean-Up Volunteer Project. . . . . May 8**

From our Cemetery Chairman: "May 8th we will hold the annual Cemetery Clean-up/Spruce-up Day from 9:00am to 3:00pm. I will be ordering trees, bushes and shrubs from Best Feeds for landscaping around the Chapel as well as buying some annuals to plant. Topsoil will be ordered and available to all parishioners to use of their family plots. Bring your own flowers for your family graves (try to get deer resistant flowers if possible) and remember no trees and perennial bushes are permitted around family graves. Come early or late and leave when you have to. Any help will be appreciated. Food and beverages will be provided as well. Bring gloves, rakes, shovels and wheelbarrows.

**Church School Last Class/Graduation Date . . . . . May 16**

Attention Church School Staff, Parents and Students: Please note that the both the last day of classes for this semester and Church School Graduation will be held on Sunday, May 16. All students are asked to attend.

**Summer Camp Dates . . . . . June 20-26/July 11-17**

Please note the designated Holy Trinity weeks for our Metropolis Summer Camp dates in 2010: JOY is Week 1 (June 20-26) and GOYA is Week 4 (July 11-17). Information will be forthcoming and available online.

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



Father John Androutsopoulos

### WHAT YOUTH CAN OFFER CHRIST

*The Psalmist wrote: "You are my hope, O Lord: You are my trust from my youth."  
Psalm 71: 5*

Dear Faithful Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Christ,

Parents should have their teenage children read the following article:

### Heroic Youth in Scripture

Many persons of whom we read in Holy Scripture were young when they accomplished their heroic deeds. Joseph was young in years when he met and withstood terrible temptations. Jesus Himself flatly refused to accept the devil's temptations. He remained ever obedient to His Father's will and purpose for His life.

The Bible has many incidents of young people who helped to change their world by moral bravery. St. Stephen who was the first Christian martyr submitted to stoning rather than deny his Lord.

### Young Leaders Still Needed!

We need such courageous leaders today! It is no easier to be God's servants now in this troubled world, but He does not call persons who can follow only easy paths. He will use all the courage and fortitude young persons may possess. He needs young heroes for His work today!

Youth is the morning of life, a joyful time, a time of decision in many directions. It is a time when some decide to follow the teachings of Christ. For others, it is a time when this decision is postponed.

### The Time to Act is Now

There are those who say that Christ's teachings are not practical. They assume it will be better to postpone a deci-

sion to follow Him as Lord until they are old, or after they have established themselves in a business or profession. The wiser ones commit themselves to Christ and His Holy Church early in life, and they do not regret it.

### Jesus Calling Youth to Action

In the days of Jesus ministry on earth, boys and girls, young men and women loved to hear Him teach. Surely the lad with the five loaves and two fishes was not far back in the crowd; he must have been at the very front, and so heard the conversation about food being needed for the multitude.

He no doubt responded to the words of the Master in the way Christ loves to have young persons respond – by willingly giving what he had. (From The Miracle of Feeding the Five Thousand Matthew 14: 13-21; Mark 6: 30-44; Luke 9: 10-17; John 6: 1-13)

### The Best Example

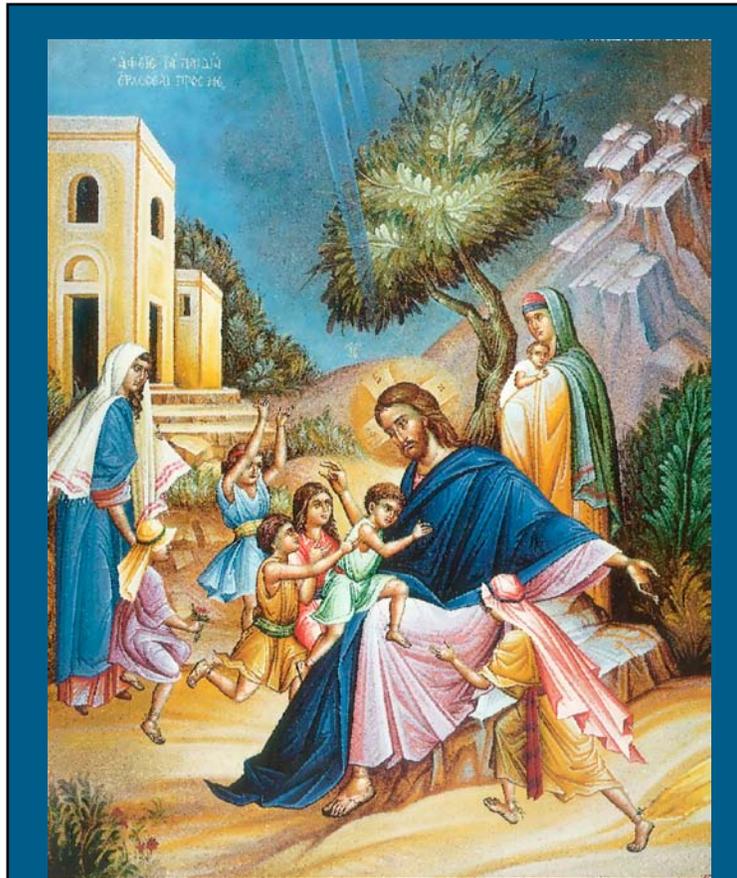
Youth can offer the most refreshing help Christ can have in reaching others. When youth sincerely witnesses for Christ, fellow youth are inspired by their radiance and by the good news they bear. The best way youth can witness for Christ is to show a good example. St. Paul wrote to young Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim 4: 12) By setting a Christian example, youth may influence not only others, but the whole world.

When Jesus was upon earth, He not only preached the Gospel, He lived in such a way as to be a perfect example to other. His deeds

led others to commit themselves to Him.

*With the love of the Risen Lord,,*

*Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos, Protopresbyter*



**O** God, from my youth You have taught me, and I still proclaim Your wondrous deeds.

Psalm 71:17

Hello, my precious children!

Christ is risen! Before I get to this month's chatting, I want to offer a BIG hug (see it over there on the right?) to all the mommy's and yiayia's for Mother's Day. We all love you so..o..o much! Thanks for all you do for us, your precious children!

Easter was really early this year, and that mean's Pentecost is early, too. It takes place 50 days after Easter, since Pentecost actually means "50th" in Greek. Pentecost, all my precious children know, is the very special day in the life of the Church when the Holy Spirit came down and blessed the Apostles in an amazing way which gave them the gifts they needed to preach the Good News of Jesus, His Resurrection and His Holy Church throughout the world.

So, keeping that in mind, I thought this would be a good time to share some stories from an animated series in my library called, "The Fruits of the Holy Spirit." In the episode, "Lost in the Woods," we learn about the gift of faith and how it teaches us that our Heavenly Father will indeed do what He has promised to do.

When Stevie loses his way in the forest, he realizes important it is to do what the conductor has told him by using a special little song. I, Spero, would like to share that song with you, since it helps Stevie overcome his fears in the dark woods.

David was a little boy, Goliath looked so big  
That the warrior giant thought he won the fight against the scrawny boy.  
But God is so much bigger than the earth, sea & sky.  
David knew that him and God would surely win the fight.  
He put his faith in God and won the fight!  
Daniel in the lion's den knew he was there for lunch!  
The hungry lion could finish him in one great munchy bite.  
But Daniel trusted in God to make the lions nice and tame,  
So Daniel lifted up his voice in prayer and praised God's name, putting his faith in God.  
Sarah had put her trust in God that she would have a son.  
The others laughed and said it was impossible for she was ninety-one!  
But that is what the Lord would do, she had the baby before she was ninety-two!

Stevie thinks, "I want my faith to be as strong as those in my song." Through his example, you will also learn that we need to trust God every step along the way. That kind of faith is a promise and it is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Remember, my little ones, faith is trust in our Heavenly Father, even when we do not understand everything about how it works!

Love in Christ,  
Spero



A regular report on the Stewardship ministry of Holy Trinity Church, which provides every member a vital opportunity to become involved in supporting the life and ministries of the Church through their God-given time, talents and treasures.



**James Statheas**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

To lead us to the glorious celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our Church during Great Lent takes the opportunity through Holy Scripture to address many questions concerning our Christian life and our participation in HIS church. On Holy Thursday one of the Gospel readings deals with the Anointing For Burial of our Lord. In Matthew Chapter 26, Verses 6-13, the Evangelist describes the scene where "A woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when his disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor." This passage in Matthew addresses the issue of giving alms to the poor versus giving to the church. In the Orthodox Study Bible our spiritual fathers address this question as follows:

"Should we give to charity or to the Church (stewardship or building fund)? What specifically is to be done with our personal funds and the Church's money is not resolved here; but Christ establishes that a believer's gift of his very best to honor and glorify the Person of Christ is just as worthy as giving to the poor. The material richness of the Orthodox worship--the gold censers, elaborate vestments, grand iconostasis--is our equivalent of anointing Christ with very fragrant oil." (Orthodox Study Bible, 1993 Commentary on Gospel of Matthew, Page 71).

The dilemma of giving alms to the poor versus giving to the Church really isn't an either/or question. The response from our parishioners submitted on their stewardship pledge cards prove the point. In addition to their "treasures" pledge, on the talents and treasures segment of the pledge card the most common ministries chosen next to offering to help during our festivals is volunteering in Holy Trinity's Outreach to the Poor Ministry and the Philoptochos Ladies Society.

Thank you to all who have submitted their pledge cards to date and if you have not done so at this time, please take a moment to do as such. You may mail your card in to the office or drop it off at the Pangari before church services.

With the 2010 Stewardship theme being "Come and See", we look forward to seeing you in church this Sunday.

Jim Statheas  
2010 Stewardship Chairperson

## 2010 HOLY TRINITY STEWARDS

Thank you to the following Holy Trinity Stewards who submitted their cards since the last publication. Still not on the list? Why not send yours today!

- Ms. Marjorie Andromalos
- Mr. Anthony C. Balouris
- Dr. & Mrs. Christ A. Balouris
- Mr. George N. Beckas
- Rev. Fr. Radu & Pres. Loredana Bordeianu
- Mr. & Mrs. Louis Cherpes
- Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Countouris
- Mrs. Carol Fiffas
- Mr. & Mrs. Brian Fitzpatrick
- Dr. & Mrs. Peter Gagianas
- Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Georgiallis
- Mr. & Mrs. Carlo Iasella
- Mr. & Mrs. Homer Johnson
- Mr. & Mrs. James Kolovos
- Mrs. Penelope Komninos
- Mr. Louis J. Kort
- Dr. & Mrs. Dimitris Kraniou
- Mr. & Mrs. Louis T. Loomis
- Mr. & Mrs. Charles Petredis
- Mrs. Georgia Touloumes

## 2009/2010 STEWARDSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

<b>2009 Offerings Received from Stewards Submitting Pledge Card</b>	<b>\$163,070 (229 pledges)</b>
<b>2009 Offerings Received from Donors Without Pledge Card</b>	<b>\$35,204 (38 donors)</b>
<b>2009 Total Stewardship Income</b>	<b>\$198,274 (267 donors)</b>
<b>2009 Average Stewardship Pledge</b>	<b>\$680</b>
<b>2010 Offerings Received from Stewards Submitting Pledge Card</b>	<b>\$51,624 (170 donors)</b>
<b>2010 Offerings Received from Donors Without Pledge Card</b>	<b>\$16,953 (46 donors)</b>
<b>2010 Total Stewardship Income</b>	<b>\$68,577 (194 donors)</b>
<b>2010 Average Stewardship Pledge</b>	<b>\$753</b>
<b>2010 Stewardship Pledges Total</b>	<b>\$127,963 (152 pledges)</b>



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](http://www.philoptochos.org) or contact a local member.

## Philoptochos Report: May 2010

### CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN! CHRISTOS ANESTI! ALITHOS ANESTI!

"April showers bring May flowers," and May brings many events such as these from Philoptochos:

#### May Luncheon

All the ladies of the community are invited. It will be held after church on May 2, 2010 after church. All the Ladies of the community are invited. The fee is \$15.00. It is an opportunity for everyone to come and have a good time and enjoy each others company. We know many ladies to see but never have the opportunity to sit and talk with them. Please come. We are looking forward to seeing you.

#### Mothers Day Tea

Please enjoy a cup of tea with the tea bag we have sent you in the mail. Think of our mothers and everything that they have done in the past. We are asking for a donation in their memory. This is the last fund raiser until the Turkey Fund-raiser in November. The money we collect will help us make our donations to the charities we support and to help the poor in our community from now until then. Please be generous. Thank you.

#### Spring Festival

May 20, 2010 through May 23, 2010 is the Holy Trinity Spring Greek Festival. Please spread the word to your friends and neighbors. We need many parishioners to work, so please volunteer in any way you can. If you cannot work, please donate and come to eat. The food is delicious!

#### Memorial Day

Memorial Day is celebrated on May 31, 2010. Please remember all who have gave their lives for freedom. Remember freedom is not free. May their memories be eternal.

#### Books – Books – Books

Just a reminder that we are still collecting new and slightly used books. We have extended our collection date to June 16. Please bring any books you have to the Community Center.

#### "Undie Sunday"

In the past we have asked for donations for undies for young people. Many children who are sent to homes or foster homes arrive with one pair of undies and some without socks. This year our goal is to help as many children have more than one pair of undies and socks. A box will be in the Narthex of the Church starting June 6, 2010 until the end of August. Any size socks and undies will be appreciated. Thank you and God bless you!

Respectfully submitted,  
Esther Ladakos  
Secretary

*You're invited to attend the Annual  
Holy Trinity Ladies Tea  
to benefit Philoptochos Charities*



*Sunday, May 2, 2010  
From 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

*Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
302 West North Avenue  
Pittsburgh, Pa*

*Donation: \$15 per person  
Paid Reservations Required by April 25, 2010  
Reserved Seating for parties of 8 or more*

*Please make checks payable to:  
Holy Trinity Philoptochos*

*Send to:  
Holy Trinity Philoptochos  
302 West North Avenue  
Pittsburgh, Pa 15212*

*Contact Joanne Germanos with questions  
412-252-3996*

*Make sure to wear your favorite Hat*

Community Life Photo Journal | Lenten and Holy Week Readers

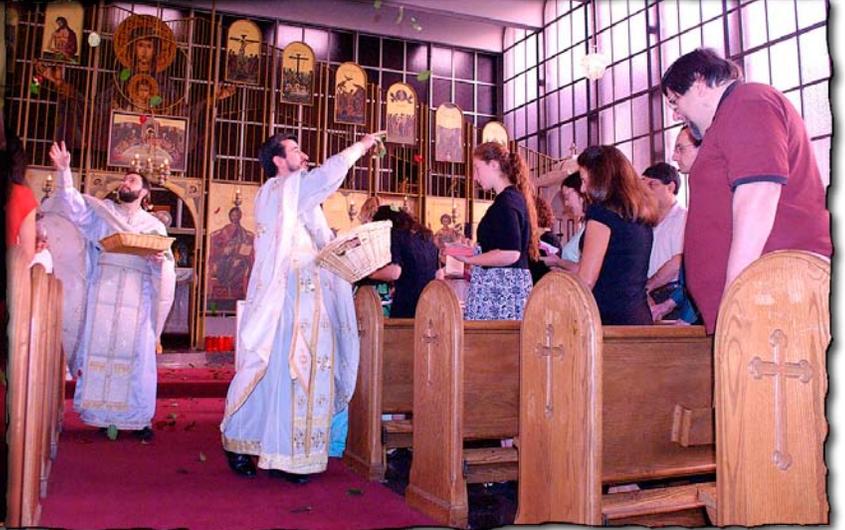




## Holy Friday/Epitaphion

On Holy Friday evening, the annual procession around the outside of the church took place, with candle-bearing faithful chanting solemn hymns along with the choir and chanters.





## Holy Saturday

From the anticipation of the early morning proclamation, "Arise, O God," and sprinkling of leaves to the all-day wait for the candle-lit "Anastasi," Holy Saturday was marked as always with great anticipation for the hymn of victory: "Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling upon death!" The liturgical celebration was followed by the annual Anastasi meal.



## Agape Vespers

Celebrating the annual tradition of proclaiming the universal message of the Resurrection of Christ in many languages at the Agape Vespers, Holy Trinity was blessed this year by parishioners offering the following Gospel readings, in addition to the usual New Testament Greek and English offered by Father John and Father Radu:



French...

Italian...

German...

Spanish...

Latin...

& Romanian!



Children of all ages enjoyed the annual Pascha Candy hunt and teen Scavenger hunt following the Agape Vespers, including a number of sets of twins, pictured with Fr. John below!



Tributes to Mother's Day: An original composition and an excerpt from the Greek Language Periodical, "Pros Tin Nikin"



Voula Hareras

## ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΠΟΛΛΑ ΜΑΝΟΥΛΕΣ

**Ε**πέρασε και η Μεγάλη Έβδομάδα και ζήσαμε όλοι μας τις κατανυχτικές θείες ακολουθίες, μαζί με τον Χριστό μας περάσαμε με πόνο τὰ πάθη του. Και μετά νοιώσαμε τὴν μεγάλη χαρά τῆς Ἀναστάσεως, [τὴν ἑορτὴ τῶν ἑορτῶν]. Ὅλες οἱ Ἁγίες ἡμέρες τῆς μεγάλης ἑβδομάδος εἶναι γεμάτες Θεικό μεγαλείο, πλούσιες σὲ νόημα καὶ διδαχή.

Θά σταθώ όμως στὴν Μεγάλη Πέμπτη στὴν Σταύρωση τοῦ Κυρίου μας, καὶ θά μοιραστῶ μαζί σας μερικές σκέψεις πού μου ἦρθαν στό μυαλό, ἀπὸ τῆς τελευταίες στιγμές τοῦ Χριστοῦ μας, πού ὑπόφερε τὸν φριχτό σταυρικό του θάνατο ὡς ἄνθρωπος, γιὰ νὰ μὰς γλυτώσει ἀπὸ τὶς ἁμαρτίες μας, καὶ μετὰ τὴν Θεική του Ἀνάσταση νὰ μὰς ἀνοίξει τὴν πόρτα τοῦ Παραδείσου, γιὰ τὴν αἰώνια ζωὴ κοντὰ του.

Ναὶ ἦρθε στὴν Γῆ ὡς ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἐζήσε τὴν σύντομη Ζωὴ του ἐντελῶς ἀνθρώπινα. Ὡς Θεός όμως πού ἦταν μὰς Δίδαξε, ὅλες του οἱ ὁμιλίες, οἱ Παραβολές, τὰ παραδείγματα, τὰ Θαύματα, καὶ γενικά ὅτι ἔκαμε μόνον πνεῦμα Θεοῦ θά μπορούσε νὰ τὰ κάνει.

Καὶ ὅταν πραγματικά, μελετήσεις καὶ ἐφαρμοῖσεις αὐτὰ τὰ διδάγματα, γίνεσαι ἄλος ἄνθρωπος γιὰτὶ ζῆς πλέον μετὰ τὸν Θεό. Τὴν Μεγάλη Πέμπτη λοιπὸν λίγο πρὶν παραδῶση τὸ Πνεῦμα του, μὰς ἀφησε ἄλλη μιά σπουδαιότατη διδαχή.

Κάτω ἀπὸ τὸν Σταυρό ἦταν ἡ Θεοτόκος Μητέρα του, καὶ ὑπόφερε καὶ αὐτὴ βλέποντας τὸ ἀγαπημένο της παιδί σ' αὐτὸ τὸ μαρτύριο. Καὶ πιο πέρα ἦταν ὁ ἀγαπημένος καὶ ἐκλεκτός του μαθητὴς Ἰωάννης, καὶ τοῦ λέγει νὰ πάρει τὴν Μάνα του, καὶ νὰ τὴν ἔχει σὰν δική του καὶ νὰ τὴν προστατεύσει, τὸ ἴδιο εἶπε καὶ στὴν Θεοτόκο Μάνα του,- ὅτι αὐτὸς θά εἶναι ὁ υἱός σου- ἔτσι ἀπλά.

Τότε σκέφθηκα ὅτι ὁ Χριστὸς μας δὲν ἔκαμε αὐτὴν τὴν κίνηση γιὰ τὴν Παναγία μας, διότι δὲν νομίζω ἡ Παναγία μας νὰ ἠθέλε κάποιον νὰ τὴν προσέχει, ὁ γυός της ἦταν Θεός, καὶ σὲ τρεῖς ἡμέρες θά ἀναστηθῆ, καὶ ὅπως παρουσιάσθηκε στοὺς Μαθητὰς του, ἀσφαλῶς θά παρουσιαζόταν καὶ στὴν Μάνα του, ἀλά ἂς υποθέσουμε ὅτι κάποια ἀνάγκη τῆς παρουσιαζόταν μετὰ ἓνα νεῦμα τοῦ Κυρίου μας στρατιὰ ἀγγέλων θά ἔτρεχαν πρὸς βοήθειά της.

Ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ Σωτῆρας μας ἀφησε αὐτὸ σὰν διαθήκη γιὰ μὰς, ἠθέλε νὰ μὰς διδάξει, ὅτι πρέπει νὰ προσέχουμε τοὺς γονεῖς μας, καὶ νὰ δίνουμε τὴν πρέπουσα προσοχή σ' αὐτοὺς ὅταν βρίσκονται σὲ δύσκολες στιγμές ὅταν γεράσουν καὶ δὲν μποροῦν νὰτὰ καταφέρουν μόνοι τους.

Ἡ Μάνα μας ἀπὸ μωρὰ μὰς κρατᾶ στὴν εὐλογημένη της ἀγκαλιά, μὰς προστατεύει, ξενυχτᾶ, χτυποκαρδίζει, γιὰ μὰς συνέχεια σὲ ὅλη της τὴν ζωὴ, καὶ ὅταν πλέον εἴμαστε τακτοποιημένοι, δὲν σταματᾶ νὰ προσεύχεται γιὰ μὰς, καὶ νὰ μὰς δίνει ἀδιάκοπα τὴν εὐχή της.

Δὲν ζητᾶ ἀπὸ μὰς τίποτε σπουδαίο, μόνον λίγο σεβασμὸ καὶ λίγη ἀγάπη, γιὰ νὰ εἶναι ἥρεμα τὰ λίγα ἀκόμα χρόνια πού

θὰ ζήσει. Νὰ διαθέτουμε λίγη ὥρα νὰ τὴν δοῦμε, καὶ νὰ ἔχει τὴν εὐλογία νὰ βλέπει καὶ νὰ καμαρώνει τὰ ἐγγονάκια της.

Εὐλογημένοι ὅσοι ἀκολουθοῦν αὐτὸ πού προσπάθησε ὁ Χριστὸς μας νὰ μὰς διδάξει λίγο πρὶν παραδῶση τὸ Πνεῦμα. Ἀλά ἡ Μάνα δὲν ἀγανακτᾶ καὶ μετὰ τοὺς ἀδιάφορους, ἡ καρδιά της ματώνη πού δὲν τοὺς βλέπει ὁμως προσεύχεται μερόνυχτα καὶ γι' αὐτοὺς γιὰτὶ εἶναι Μάνα.

Αὐτὲς τὶς σκέψεις ἔκανα, καὶ τώρα πού ἔχουμε αὐτὸν τὸν μήνα τὴν ἑορτὴ τῆς Μάνας εἶπα νὰ τῆς μοιραστῶ μαζί σας. Εὐχομαι νὰ εἰσθε ἀπὸ τοὺς εὐλογημένους..

ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΠΟΛΛΑ ΜΑΝΟΥΛΕΣ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου..

Βούλα Χαρερά

## Ἡ ΜΑΝΑ

Οἱ τσέτες, οἱ τσέτες. Οὐρλιαχτὸ τρόμου ἀπ' ἄκρη σ' ἄκρη στὴν Τσατάλτσα.

Οἱ τσέτες, βγάτε στό βουνό, Χριστιανή. Χαλασμός στὴ μικρὴ κωμόπολη τῆς ἐπαρχίας Ἀμισοῦ στὸν Πόντο.

Δὲν ἦταν ἡ πρώτη φορά πού οἱ φανατισμένοι ἔθνικιστὲς τοῦ Τοπάλ Ὁσμάν ἐμπαιναν στὴν Τσατάλτσα. Ὁρκισμένοι ἐχθροὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τοῦ Πόντου ἐπεφταν σὰ δαιμονισμένο λεφουσί στὰ γυναικόπαιδα. Ἐσφαζαν, ἀτίμωσαν, βασάνιζαν, ἀρπαζαν κι ἔκαιγαν στό περασμάτους. Καὶ ὅσο ἐβλεπαν τὸ αἶμα τὸ Χριστιανικὸ νὰ τρέχει, τόσο σκύλιαζαν κι' ἀναβε μέσα τους ἀγρία ἢ λαχτᾶρα γιὰ πιὸ φρικιαστικά βασανιστήρια πού ἀνθρώπου νους ἀδυνατεῖ νὰ συλλάβει.

Τούτη τὴν φορά όμως, πού οἱ τσέτες φάνηκαν ἀπὸ μακριὰ μέσα στὸν κάμπο, ἡ ἐπιδρομὴ ἐδειχνε νάβῃ ἢ τελειωτική. Μέσα σὲ ἀλόγων κOURνιαχτὸ, μετὰ ξέφρενος καλπασμούς καὶ βάρβαρες κραυγὲς ἀνέβαιναν πρὸς τὸ χωριὸ οἱ τσέτες.

Οἱ τσέτες, στό βουνό γρήγορα στό βουνό. Ἀνταριασμένοι τρέχανε οἱ χριστιανοὶ πρὸς τὸ ὕψωμα τοῦ Ἀη Γιώργη, πού θά τοὺς ἐβγαζε στὴ δασωμένη μεριά τοῦ βουνοῦ.

Ἀλαφιασμένη ὄρμησε στὴν αὐλὴ της καὶ ἡ Ἀνατολή. Τρελλὴ ἀπὸ ἀγωνία ἀναζήτησε μετὰ τὴν ματιὰ της τὸ ὀχτάχρονο βλαστᾶρι τῆς τὸν Ἡρακλὴ της, πού εἶχε βγεῖ ἀπὸ ὥρα γιὰ παιγνίδι. Τὸ ἀνθρώπινο ποτάμι πού ἔτρεχε, τὴν παρέσυρε, ἀθέλητα ἔτρεχε καὶ αὐτὴ.

Ἡρακλὴ, Ἡρακλὴ μου, ἐμπήξε φωνὴ ἀπελπισίας ἢ νέα γυναῖκα. Μὰ τὰ λόγια της χάνονταν μέσα στὰ οὐρλιαχτὰ τοῦ κόσμου.

Πού εἶναι τὸ παιδί μου Παναγία μου,...Ἡρακλήηη, ἡ καρδιά της νόμισε θά σπάσει...

Φτάσαν στὸν Ἀη Γιώργη. Πίσω στὸν κάμπο οἱ τσέτες πλησίαζαν. Κατακαμένη Πατρίδα, ριμαγμένο κορμί τοῦ πόντου,... Σταυροκοπήθηκαν οἱ χωριανοὶ κι' ἄρχισαν πάλι τὸ τρελλὸ τρέξιμο.

- Τρέχα Ἀνατολή, τί κοιτᾶς? Πάει πιά ἡ Τσατάλτσα.

- Μὰ πιά τίποτε δὲν ἀκούει, κανέναν δὲν βλέπει, τὸ βλέμμα της ἀγρίεψε.. Τῆς φάνηκε γιὰ μιά στιγμὴ πὼς εἶδε τὸ βλαστᾶρι της στὰ χέρια τους, πὼς νὰ τὸ χτυποῦν καὶ τὸ δένουν στὰ καπούλια τῶν ἀλόγων τους.. Τῆς φάνηκε πὼς ἀκουσε τὸν Ἡρακλὴ της νὰ φωνάζει [ΜΑΝΑ, Μάνα σώσεμε..] τῆς φάνηκε πὼς...

τ- Παραλογίζεται, ἀλαλιασμένη παίρνει πάλι τὸν κατήφορο οὐρλιάζοντας. Ἡρακλήηη Ἡρακλήηη.. Τὴν βλέπουν

An original poem on the theme of "Knocking on God's Door" and our need to repent in order to share in the Resurrection.



Vickie Bellios

Χτυπω την πορτα του Θεου  
Και εκεινος δεν ανοιγη.  
Γιατι λειει ειμ'αμαρτολος  
Και δεν εχω ειρηνη.

Ειρηνη μεσα στην καρδια  
Που ολοι μας ζηταμε  
Μα πουθενα δεν βρισκουμε  
Οσο κι'αν πεθημαμε.

Ανησηχοι και αμαρτολοι  
Εις την ζωην ετουτη  
Το μονο που σκεπτομαστε  
Ειναι μονο τα πλουτη

Παληανθρωποι γινηκαμε  
Ολοι χωρις αισθηματα  
Και ονειρευομαστε συχνα  
Ζωη γεματη χρηματα.

Τα χρηματα ειναι καλα  
Ποτε ομως δεν βοηθουν  
Εκει που οι αδολες ψυχες  
Ζητουν αυτες να οδηγηθουν.

Μπροστα στα χρηματα πολλοι  
Χανουν και την ζωη τους

Στην αμαρτια βυθυζοντε  
Μολυνουν την ψυχη τους.

Γι'αυτο ο Θεος δεν μας ακουει  
Την πορτα δεν ανοιγη  
Και οταν τον χρειαζομαστε  
Τα δυο αυτια Του κλεινη.

Βαρεθηκε ολες και ολους μας  
Παντα να συχωραι  
Και ευκαιρια απ'Αυτον  
Σε'μας δεν εχωραι.

Γι'αυτο και ολοι μας εμεις  
Πρεπει να μετανοιωσουμε  
Γωνατιστοι με κλαματα  
Υποσχεση να δωσουμε.

Υποσχεση εις τον Θεον  
Μεσα απ'την καρδια μας  
Κι'ετσι η πορτα θα ανοιχτη  
Δι'απλατα μπροστα μας.

Γιατι αν δεν μετανοιωσουμε  
Κι'αν δεν Τον δεχτουμε  
Ολοι οταν πεθανωμε  
Δεν θα αναστηθουμε.



(Continued from Page 13)

οί χωριανοί μά πού καιρός για χασομέρι. Οί τσέτες καίνε κιάλας τά πρώτα σπίτια..Κι' αυτή τρέχει πάνω τους.

- Σέ μιά στιγμη κουλουριασμένο σε ένα χάλασα δίπλα άντικρύζει τό παιδί της..Τά γαλανά ματάκια κατακόκκινα από τό κλάμα, τήν κοιτούν μέ άπόγνωση. Υαινα νά ταν, δέν θά χυμούσε έτσι. Τό σφιγγει στην άγκαλιά της..

- Πού είσουν Μανούλα μου...Ηρθαν οί τσέτες...Τρέχα ' Ηρακλή μου καί θά γλυτώσουμε..Θά μάς πιάσουν Μάνα,..Τό μικρό κορμάκι τραντάζεται από τό τρέμουλο...Οχι πουλί μου μόνο τρέχα, Χουφτώνει τό χέρι του παιδιού καί άνηφορίζει πρós τόν ' Αη Γιώργη. Πίσω τους τό χωριό καίγεται...

- Παναγία μου νά προλάβουμε, Πιό γρήγορα, Ηρακλή μου.. Τά όχτάχρονα ποδαράκια άδυνατούν νά φθάσουν τής Μάνας τό γρήγορο τρέξιμο. Η καρδούλα του πάει νά σπάσει, Λαχανιασμένος ιδρωμένος, ξεπνοος, από τό άγχομαχητό καί άγωνία σέρνεται κυριολεκτικά κρατημένος από τό χέρι τής Μάνας..Νά φτάνουν στον Αη Γιώργη.

- Σέ μιά στιγμη κοιτάζει πίσω..Προσπαθεί κάτι νά πεί μά ή φωνούλα του πνίγεται..Δείχνει μέ τό δάχτυλό του..Οί τσέτες τούς είδαν..

- Μάνα ψιθυρίζει μισολιπόθυμος..Μάνα χανόμαστε..  
- Παναγία μου, σώσε μας,Χανόμαστε..Ξυπίσω τους χυμούν δυό τσέτες σπιρουνιαζουν τά άλογά τους.

- Καί ή Μάνα 'Ανατολή κραυγή από τά σωθικά της βγάζει..  
- Τρέχα Παναγίτσα μου, Μάνα είσαι καί έσύ, Γλύτωσέ μας....Βλέπει μπροστά της σχισμή βράχου, Χώννει τό παιδί. Μπαίνει ή ίδια μπροστά καί τραβά ένα πουρναρόκλαδο βγιά

νά καλυφθεί. Σπρώχνει τό μικρό της πίσω...Μιά άπαίσια σκέψη τή διαπερνά καθώς αισθάνεται τό σώμα του γιου της βαρύ πάνω στην πλάτη της.

- Λές....Καλύτερα νεκρός ό Ηρακλής μου παρά στά χέρια τους.

- Τήν λούζει κρύος ιδρώτας..Ομως μένει στητή πιέζοντας τό παιδί πρós τά πίσω..άς περάσουν πάνω από τό κορμί της ζωντανό δέν θά τούς τό δώσει.

- Οί στιγμές περνούν βασανιστικά. Οί δυό τσέτες πού τούς καταδίωξαν, βρίσκονται μπροστά της, ή 'Ανατολή τούς κοιτά κατάματα, δέν δείχνουν όμως νά τήν βλέπουν. Γυρίζουν τό κεφάλι δεξιά άριστερά. Τήν ψάχνουν, παίζουν μαζύ της, όχι τήν κοιτούν αλλά δέν τήν βλέπουν, κρατά καί τήν αναπνοή της μπροστά από τό μυστήριο πού ζει.. Λίγα λεπτά άκομη καί τό θαύμα ολοκληρώνεται. Οί τσέτες βρίζοντας άπομακρύνονται. Τήν έχασαν..'Ανοιξε ή Γή καί τήν κατάπιαε...

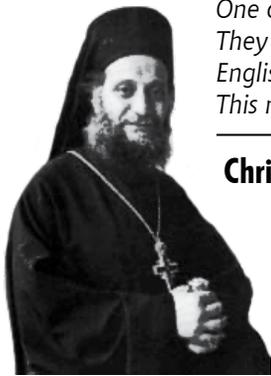
- Γύρω της αισθάνεται γαλήνη, κάνει μισό βήμα μπρός ξεσφιγγει τό παιδί..Βγαίνει σιγά σιγά από τό βράχο. Γυρίζει πίσω καί άκούει τόν 'Ηρακλή της..Μάνα τό στήθος μου πονά.. Τόν παίρνει στην άγκαλιά της καί τόν ξαπλώνει στο χώμα.

- Ησύχασε Πουλάκι μου, Μάνα πού είναι οί τσέτες....Τούς έδωξε ή Παναγία μας παιδί μου ..Τούς τύφλωσε καί τούς έδωξε..Ηταν έδώ ή Παναγία Μάνα...Ναί

- Ηρακλή μου ήταν έδώ τήν είδα...

[Τσέτες Τούρκοι άντάρτες]

Ιστορία άληθινή από τό περιοδικό Πρós τήν Νίκη



**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 we start a new series based on the question, "Have We Received the Holy Spirit?"

### **Christ is Risen!**

**H**oly Week, the celebration of which we have just completed, is surely the most beautiful time in the entire ecclesiastical year. Who could deny the splendor and magnificence of our feasts? They are God's own feasts, and make our hearts rejoice in Jesus Christ. Although Holy Week

has now come and gone, the hymns of the Passion continue to resound within our ears, mingling with the cries of our heart, which we offer up to the Risen Lord.

### **Have I Received the Holy Spirit?**

**E**ach of us, to a greater or lesser extent, celebrated those feasts and took something from them. What did we take? To this question, each of us will have a different answer, because even though the Church is a unity, it is a unity of distinct personalities. It is an assembly of persons, each one of them whole and complete, standing before God, and not an anonymous, undifferentiated mass. Thus it is entirely possible for all of us to be gathered together in church, to be standing next to each other and chanting in unison, but for each of us to get something different out of the experience. And what each of us receives is known only to that person, only to the spirit of the man, which is in him, as well as to God the Spirit, Who searches the depths of our own spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 2.10-11).

### **I Received What I Prepared For**

**W**hat, then, did we receive? In the first place, we received what we prepared ourselves to receive. Whatever food you've prepared, that's what you'll eat. Whatever bed you've made, that's the one you're going to lie on. Whatever you've sown in your field, that's what you'll reap. Throughout the liturgical year, then, we receive what we have prepared ourselves to receive. God will not bring something to fruition that we have not had a hand in cultivating; and what we cultivate, that which we expect to bear fruit, grows directly from the seeds we've sown within ourselves. Consequently, we'll get whatever it is our heart has prepared for itself. One person will get God; another will be moved by the chanting; another will gain a few insights; someone else the kingdom of heaven. Each will receive whatever it is he desired. In each instance, the preparation of the heart is fundamental. One person cultivates the wind, and reaps nothing. Another prepares to receive the Holy Spirit. It all depends.

### **I Received What I Am Capable Of Containing**

**W**e also receive, not simply what we've prepared ourselves to receive, but what we're capable of receiving: what we're able to contain within ourselves. He who receives is the one who is able to contain what he receives within himself (Mt 19.12). We receive, then, whatever we're capable of understanding; in proportion to the idea of God that we have.

For example, I receive Holy Communion, and so do you, and so does somebody else. But each of us perceives the sacred gifts differently; each of us has a greater or lesser understanding of them, and thus we receive them in a manner that is distinctive to each. Our understanding of something is part of the way we experience it, and cannot be separated from it, so much so that the experience of God and His kingdom is a form of understanding, for it is the experience of true knowledge (cf. Jn. 8.32; Lk. 1.77; 1 Cor. 1.5). the more you learn to cultivate within yourself the knowledge of God, the more you can receive Him in the fullness of His truth and perfection. As we said, each of us receives Him according to the capacities of our heart, mind, and will. We are all drawing from the same well, but we drink different water, depending on our thirst. Our capacity for God depends very much on the simplicity of our hearts, on the purity of our nights, on our spiritual reading and meditation, and on the degree to which we empty ourselves. It depends on our self-emptying; a kenosis of our substance and being (cf. Phil. 2.7). And this is the great mystery of human freedom, which God never violates. We are filled to the degree that we are empty, to the degree that we voluntarily make room within ourselves for God. This is why we say: "You receive as much as you can contain."

### **I Receive According To The Measure I Have Loved**

**W**e also receive according to the measure that we have loved. Such love is closely linked to the depths of our being, to our experience of pain and suffering, which reveal the depths of our love. If we are unwilling to suffer, we will not be able to love. Such love is also linked to the flight of the soul, to the distance it keeps from the world, which is also a kind of suffering, because it wants to ascend to God, since it has no peace apart from God's love, by which it is crowned and united to God. It follows, then, that the closer you are to God, the more you love Him. Our love for God is union with God, because it results from a certain kind of knowledge. And knowledge of God is acquired by participation in God, by making our existence an eating and drinking of God, an active communion in His life. The more our existence has been leavened by God, the more we love Him. And the more we love Him, the more we receive from Him.

### **God is Everything**

**S**o, the more we've prepared, the more room we've made, the more we've suffered, the more we've loved, the more we've cried aloud - wept and lamented without restraint - the more we'll have received God Himself. Needless to say, all of this remains hidden behind a cheerful countenance, beneath a smile, beneath the depths of true joy, beneath an entire life that witnesses to God by its tranquility, love, and truth, because we know that, no matter what happens, God for us is everything.

*Excerpted from "The Way of the Spirit"  
(to be continued next issue...)*

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## God is With Us

*The past few months have seen the world once again inundated with floods, earthquakes and tragedies of staggering proportions. Unbelievers sometimes use these earthly phenomena to question how a God who loves us could “allow these things to happen.” This brief excerpt from Fr. John Breck offers another view.*

If there is any sense to be made of these tragedies from our poor, myopic perspective, it is one provided simply and eloquently by the Church’s liturgical worship. From Nativity, through Theophany, and on to Holy Pascha, the common theme that we celebrate and proclaim to each other and to the world is summed up in the name given to Jesus at His birth, the name Emmanuel, “God is with us.” This means not only that God accompanies us, remains present with us, and provides hope and consolation in our times of grief and loss. It means above all that God shares our suffering. He takes part in our pain and anguish, fully and to the bitter end.

This is the distinguishing mark of Christianity. It is the truth that God’s love for His people—for us—is such that He humbles and sacrifices Himself on our behalf. God suffers and dies, so that we might live in Him. In the midst of a critically unstable, and at times violently chaotic world, we can hold fast to the one truth, the one reality that matters: God is with us.



“Longing for God”  
John Breck, SVS Press

Scripture of the Month: “I am with you always, to the close of the age.” (Matthew 28.20)