



# THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

FEBRUARY 2017

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HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA  
OUR VISION: "FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."

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## QUICK NEWS



GOYA players and fans cheer our girls during the recent Holy Trinity Basketball tournament. Want to see more photos of this event and others in the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? See the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 6-11 or visit our growing online photo gallery site at [photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org).

## SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON: FEBRUARY 12



**O** Father, foolishly I ran away from Your glory, and in sin, squandered the riches You gave me. Wherefore, I cry out to You with the voice of the Prodigal, "I have sinned before You Compassionate Father. Receive me in repentance and take me as one of Your hired servants."

**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

**Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church**

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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

#### 2017 Parish Council

Gerri Valliant, President

Dean A. Balouris Michael Passodelis

George Danis Joyce Athanasiou

George Dickos Stephen Stearns

Van Backeris Karen Georgiadis

Tom Germanos Alex Trilivas

Marios Kritiotis Jean Willow

#### Ministries

Please visit the Holy Trinity website at [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org) for descriptions and contact information on Holy Trinity Church's ministries, including spiritual life, education, youth, senior, family and cultural opportunities. There is something for everyone, so please get involved today!

"FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."



**L**ove giving hospitality, my child, for it opens the gates of Paradise. In this you also offer hospitality to angels. "Entertain strangers so that you won't be a stranger to God."

Elder Amphilochios Makris (20th c.)

My Beloved Spiritual Flock,

In his admonition to hospitality above, Elder Amphilochios of Patmos (1889-1970) builds on the gift of Christian hospitality described by Saint Paul in Hebrews 13.2: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." In a beautiful, gentle and spiritually rewarding way, he elevates it from a directive to a delight. When hospitality is offered in such a manner, it's hard to tell for whom the gates of Paradise are opened: the giver or the receiver.

I have had the blessing to be on the receiving end of such hospitality—the kind in which the giver delights in as much as the receiver—many times as a priest, but more often simply as a person. Whether it has been at a monastery (they are particularly good at this!), a church, a parishioner home, a friend's house or at a new place for the first time, there is a beautiful and affirming nature about it. Why? Well, the food might be great, but that's usually not the best part. The accommodations might be quite comfortable, but it's not about that either. In the end, it's about the relationship the encounter offers. And relationships in the Christian life are about love. And love for Christians springs from that most central model of all relationships: the Holy Trinity. We see this beautifully expressed in the icon known as the "Hospitality of Abraham," (from Genesis 18) also known as "The Holy Trinity." It is found centrally located above the solea in the front of our church and it is not just an icon but an identity and way of life here.

We recently had the blessing as a community to host the first Metropolis GOYA Basketball Tournament of the year. It is not the first such event we have hosted in our new home. Since 2013 we have opened our doors to the Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assembly, the IOCC Syria Relief Dinner, the FOCUS Benefit Banquet, the Greater Pittsburgh Sunday of Orthodoxy celebration, an Open House to introduce ourselves to our new neighbors and, of course, our "Taste of Greece" Festival (4 times!). And that's only to name a few. During and following these events, the most rewarding experience for me as a priest of this community is to see how much energy, joy and love emanate from the members and volunteers from this parish whose sacrifices of love make them possible and whose open arms of hospitality bless both the givers and the receivers. In other words, we do not just say our vision of life here is "Faith. Family. Community." Everything we do reflects it. And when visitors see and experience that, they receive not just from us, but from the Lord, Who is the source of light, life and love. As I said during the Sunday homily on the last day of the Festival last summer, hospitality is "baked in" to the life and experience of this community, and that indeed provides every opportunity to "entertain angels unawares."

Thank you to all our GOYAns, parents, supporters, volunteers, Parish Council and every member of this community whose expressions of love for Christ and all those who enter these doors make it all possible. May He continue to bless us with the ability, desire and privilege of reaching out with love to all who find their way here, and may He guide us to find our way to the many others who are out there waiting for us, or rather, waiting for someone to bring them the Good News that God's love is here for them...and so are we. And may the gates of Paradise be waiting for us all!

With pastoral love in Christ,

**Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:**

**Mary-Magdalene Welsh**

**"For the Health of the Athanasiou Family"**

**WORSHIP LIFE**

**Weekday Services . . . . . February**

Please take note of the following upcoming liturgical dates. Unless otherwise indicated, Orthros starts at 8:30 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m.. Guide to locations of services: "HT" = Holy Trinity Church, 985 Providence Boulevard, Pittsburgh; "SG" = Saint George Chapel, 8941 Ringeisen Road, Allison Park.

- **Wed. Feb. 1, 7:00pm:** Great Vespers of the Presentation of the Lord at the Presentation Church ("Ypapanti") in East Pittsburgh.
- **Thu. Feb. 2, 9:00am Orthros/10:00am Liturgy:** The Presentation of the Lord at the Presentation Church ("Ypapanti") in East Pittsburgh.
- **Sat. Feb. 18:** Saturday of the Souls and Memorial (SG)

**Wednesday Evening Worship . . . . . February 1, 8, 15, 22**

Of course, don't forget the mid-week worship opportunity every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Church as part of the Faith and Family Weekdays ministry. Services vary each week.

**LENTEN SERVICES & INFORMATION**

**Saturdays of Souls . . . . . February 18, March 4**

Preceding the start of Lent and during the first week of Lent, the Church offers the "Saturdays of the Souls" to commemorate those who have fallen sleep in the Lord. Services are held at the Saint George Chapel located at Holy Trinity Cemetery. Orthros is at 8:30am followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30am and the Memorial Service. They will be offered on February 18 and March 4 this year. See the enclosed flyer to submit names for commemoration and be sure to attend and commemorate your departed loved ones.

**Lenten and Holy Week Schedules of Services**

This issue of The Herald contains a complete schedule of services for Lent. A Holy Week schedule will be included in the March issue. Please post them in a conspicuous place in your home. Make a family plan and circle the services you are able to attend and place them on your schedule and on your phone's calendar! 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!

**Sunday of Orthodoxy Service . . . . . March 5**

The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh is hosting its annual Sunday of Orthodoxy Service and Celebration on Sunday, March 5, at 4:30pm at All Saints Church in Canonsburg. Bishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, Western Eparchy, will be the speaker.

**GOYA Lenten Soup Sales . . . . . February 26-April 2**

The GOYA is once again offering its very popular Lenten soup and sauces 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 Sales table in Gallery during Coffee Hour each week! Thank you for supporting our youth as you strive to maintain and grow your spiritual discipline of fasting during Lent!

**Lenten Coffee Hour Reminder . . . . . Through Pascha**

Please keep in mind that starting February 27 and throughout Lent our Coffee Hours following the Divine Liturgy observe 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.

**Upcoming Lenten Dates . . . . . Feb-April**

Wondering about Lenten and Paschal dates? Here's a helpful guide to some of the important events coming up. Mark them on your calendar!

- Meatfare Sunday (Last day of eating meat) .. Feb. 19**
- Cheesefare Sunday (Last day of eating dairy) Feb. 26**
- Pure Monday (Lent begins) ..... Feb. 27**
- Sunday of Orthodoxy ..... Mar. 5**
- Godparent Sunday/Lenten Luncheon..... Mar. 19**
- Saturday of Lazarus/Palm Cross/Candle prep .... Apr. 8**
- Palm Sunday ..... Apr. 9**
- Holy Week ..... Apr. 9-15**
- Holy Friday (schedule off work & school) ..... Apr. 14**
- The Great and Holy Pascha ..... Apr. 16**

**FAITH AND FAMILY WEEKDAYS**

**Wednesdays: "Journey to Fullness" . . . . . Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22**

The "Journey to Fullness" is a video teaching series by Father Barnabas Powell for everyone who wants to learn more about the "fullness of the faith" found in Orthodox Christianity. It features a 20-minute video presentation followed by a 40 minute facilitated discussion. It's a great way to deepen your understanding of the faith whether you are a lifetime Orthodox Christian, new to the faith or an inquirer.

**Orthodox Movie Night . . . . . Feb. 9**

This monthly offering of inspirational movies combines specially selected inspirational movies with snacks and good company in the Fireside Room. Free to all, it's a relaxing and uplifting alternative to the "same old stuff" on cable TV. The February selection is "Fireproof," a challenging, inspiring and motivating look at the struggles and victories of marriage that will be a blessing to all married couples, regardless of how long they've been together. It's a great Valentine event!

**"Prayer and Panera" St. Nikodemos Fellowship. . . Feb. 16**

The Saint Nikodemos Men's Fellowship meets on the Third Thursday of each month for morning prayers and Christian

**For the latest updates and schedule of parish events, visit [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar)**

fellowship (with coffee and bagels, too!). The group meets at Holy Trinity Church promptly at 7:00 a.m. for a 15-20 minute morning prayer and scripture, then move up the hill to Panera for 30-45 minutes of coffee and breakfast and conversation on living as a Christian man in today's world. Questions? Email at SaintNikodemos@HolyTrinityPgh.org. Change up your morning routine - and change things for the better!

**"Hearts of Faith" St. Lydia Women's Fellowship...Feb. 28**

The Saint Lydia Women's Fellowship returns with a monthly morning session of conversation with God and each other. The group meets at church at 9:00 a.m. for a 30 minute morning prayer, then gathers in the Fireside Room for an hour of sharing and discussion about the matters a woman's heart.

**VISITATION MINISTRY**

**Visitation Ministry Meeting and Luncheon .....Feb. 19**

The Visitation Ministry Team is looking to expand their ministry outreach in the New Year of 2017. We will have our annual meeting and luncheon on Sunday, Feb 19 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Conference Rooms A and B. This ministry of compassion is an important part of our parish life. Some of our team activities include: prayer, baking cookies, creating and delivering small gifts to the homebound, mailing cards to those who need an encouraging word, home and hospital visitation, regular phone calls to those who live alone, offering support to those who are grieving loss, and much more. If you would like to know more about our Visitation Ministry, then please attend this annual meeting and luncheon. All are welcome! We love to see new faces become a part of this ministry. Feel free contact Amy Armanious 412.628.0973 or email visitation@HolyTrinityPgh.org

**YOUTH MINISTRIES**

**GOYA Basketball Practice ..... February 13**

GOYA will hold basketball practice Monday, February 13 from 6:00-8:00pm at Hosack Elementary School.

**GOYA Basketball Tournaments .....February**

Our GOYA teens will travel to Steubenville, Ohio, from February 3-5 and to Canton, Ohio, from February 17-19. May God grant them good skills and safe travels!

**HOPE and JOY Skating Evening..... February 24**

The HOPE and JOY ministries will go to FunSlides on Friday, Feb. 24, for indoor skating, a meal, and a discussion with Fr. Radu. Watch for details via email. Not on the list? Send your information to Chrysoula Balouris at chrysoulab@gmail.com.

**GOYA Hosting Pre-Lenten Breakfast ..... February 26**

Our GOYA teens will be hosting a Pre-Lenten Breakfast on Cheesefare Sunday, February 26, following Liturgy. Thank you for supporting our teen ministry by attending!

**BeeTreat for Teens and Parents..... February 25**

Holy Trinity Church will be hosting a creative new youth ministry event, a "BeeTreat" on Saturday, February 25, from 9:30am-5:00pm. This free event is offered by a travelling Archdiocesan ministry team including Steve Christoforou and Christian Gonzalez. It is based on the popular "Be The Bee" video program produced by the Y<sup>2</sup>AM team (Youth and Young Adult Ministries).

**What is a "BeeTreat?"**

BeeTreats are a ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and they all about unifying our efforts in Youth and Young Adult Ministry and bringing together as many people as possible for an exciting and Christ-centered experience. Their aim is to reorient each heart, home, parish, and city towards Christ, to help people #BeTheBee and #LiveOrthodoxy every moment of every day.

**Who Can and Should Attend?**

**ALL TEENS, THEIR PARENTS AND YOUTH MINISTRY WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS!** BeeTreats are free! The BeeTreat Team has specific programs and workshops for youth (6th-12th grade), young adults, youth workers, parents, and anybody else who might be interested in learning more about youth ministry and what it means to "Be the Bee". There is a special track for adults, parents and youth ministry workers. Y<sup>2</sup>AM is a ministry of the whole Church and for the whole Church.

**Where Can I Find More Info on "Be The Bee?"**

Check out the great series of videos at BeTheBee.goarch.org. There are over 100 great informative, entertaining and inspiring videos, plus other great info.

**How Can I Register?**

Simply visit the online registration form and register for free at: [bethebee.goarch.org/retreats](http://bethebee.goarch.org/retreats).

The IOCC Pittsburgh Committee, St. Nicholas Philoptochos,  
and the Antiochian Orthodox community invite you to a

**Syrian Relief Dinner & Prayer Service**

Sunday April 2, 2017 | Service 4:00 • Lenten Dinner 5:00

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral

419 South Dithridge St. • Pittsburgh (Oakland) 15213

Register online at [ioccc.org/pittsburgh](http://ioccc.org/pittsburgh)

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

**JANUARY 2017 – "THE VOICE OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH"**



**Father John Androutsopoulos**

**PRE-LENT:  
A TIME FOR SPIRITUAL RENEWAL  
The Sundays of Preparation**

Before Great Lent begins this year – on Monday, Feb. 27th -- our Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church tries to prepare us for this time of spiritual renewal. For four Sundays prior to the Great Fast, we are prepared for this great spiritual experience. The Church,

through the Gospel lessons, guides us along the path of repentance.

**The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee: Feb. 5**

What is the Triodion? A sacred book of the Church used for pre-lent and the Great Lent. The first Sunday of the Triodion is the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee, and from this parable, we learn the power of humble prayer and humility. The Gospel Reading is Luke 18:10-14.

*Beloved, 56 years ago on the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, I preached my first sermon as a Deacon at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, St. Louis, Missouri.*

**The Sunday of the Prodigal Son: Feb. 12**

The second Sunday of Triodion offers us the parable of the Prodigal Son, perhaps better titled the "Parable of the Loving Father." It is a picture of repentance (the younger son) of love, of forgiveness and of envy (the elder son). From this parable we learn that for the repentant soul, spiritual joy is never too late to be found; the Church always welcomes those who sincerely repent of their evil ways and seek to walk the path of righteousness again. The Gospel Reading is Luke 15:11-32.

**Meatfare Sunday: Feb. 19**

The lesson from the third Sunday of the Triodion, Meat Fare Sunday, is the Last Judgment. It reminds us of the terrible day of the Last Judgment when all who have lived from the beginning of man will face the righteous King and Judge. We are also reminded of our need to perform acts of virtue, to be compassionate, merciful and charitable. The Gospel Reading is Matthew 21:31-46.

**Cheesefare Sunday: Feb. 26**

On the fourth Sunday of the Triodion, Cheesefare Sunday and the last Sunday before the Great Lent, the theme is the lost Paradise and ways to regain it: to forgive, to observe the laws of fasting humbly and to "lay up treasures in heaven and not on earth. The Gospel Reading is Matthew 6:14-21.

**A Call For Renewal**

This Pre-Lenten period of four Sundays is a time of invitation to each of us. The Church calls each of us to make good use of the coming time for spiritual renewal. The Church offers us these Gospel lessons as examples of God's great mercy. The Church encourages us to be repentant and implores us to obey God's Commandments if we desire to be reconciled with Him.

Let us accept humbly the invitation that the Church extends to us. Let us deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him, as He commanded us to do – thus we will receive from Him the Divine Grace which He has in store for those who are faithful to Him and His Holy Church.



**How Can We Prepare Ourselves?**

1. **SET A GOAL**  
First of all, set a goal for yourself – a spiritual goal. Then through daily prayer, fasting, repentance, confession, Holy Communion and continuing thoughtfulness, strive to reach this goal.
2. **ATTEND SERVICES**  
What else can we do during this period of preparation? To reach your spiritual goal, resolve to participate in the services of the Church. The Divine Liturgy on the Lord's Day is a solemn obligation.
3. **PRAY**  
Pray and meditate daily. Prayer and meditation are food for the soul. Read the Holy Scriptures and think about what you have read. Also, read other spiritual books. You will find inspiration and spiritual uplifting in reading religious books.
4. **GIVE**  
Give of yourself and of your material resources. How can you give of yourself? Visit the sick, the aged and the lonely. Volunteer to undertake Church projects; with God's help, they are easy and rewarding.
5. **RESOLVE**  
Resolve to raise your contributions, your Sunday offering to the Church. Give up a pleasure or an entertainment so that you can do this. Every Orthodox Christian is called upon to prepare himself for the Great Lent, which this year begins on Monday, February 27th.

*With His Love and Blessings  
during this Holy Season,  
Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos  
Protopresbyter and Internal Missionary*

# HOLY TRINITY GOYA







# HOLY TRINITY PITTSBURGH

# HOLY TRINITY GOYA



# Community Life Photo Journal | Vasilopita 2016

**January 8, 2017:** Holy Trinity Philoptochos sponsored its annual Vasilopita celebration for the Feast of Saint Basil. After the prayer, 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, New York, a Philoptochos-supported ministry that serves children in need.



Movie Night Ministry

St. Nikodemos Men's Ministry

Capital Campaign Committee

Longest Member Present



Acolyte Ministry

Parish Council

"Faith and Family Wednesdays"

Holy Trinity Choir

Visitation Ministry



Church School Ministry

HOPE

Cemetery Committee

Technology Committee

Seniors Ministry



Philoptochos

Online Video Ministry

GOYA Teen Ministry

Stewardship Ministry



St. Spyridon Library

Greek Festival Committee

Missionaries

Chanters

Three Hierarchs Bookstore



Summer Camp Ministry

Hospitality Ministry

Longest Married Couples Present

Newest Member Present

JOY Ministry

## A TIME TO CONNECT THROUGH LENTEN WORSHIP

PLAN TO CONNECT DURING LENT THIS YEAR - CHECK  ALL THE SERVICES YOU AND YOUR FAMILY PLAN TO ATTEND!

### Forgiveness Vespers

**Description:** The first service of Lent, it combines a Solemn Vespers of Lent with a special "Forgiveness Service" at the end.

**When & Where Offered:** 6:30 p.m. on the first evening of Lent (February 26 this year) at St. George Chapel.

**Special Features:** Kneeling in repentance during the changing of the colors from the bright gold and white of the Resurrection to the solemn purple of Lent, listening to the deeply moving hymn preparing us for both Lent and for our final encounter with the Lord,



**Why You Should Attend:** To start out the spiritual journey of Lent on the right foot. Attending this service marks a clear start of Lent both in our soul and on our schedule.

**I/My family will be there:**  Feb. 26

### Great Compline

**Description:** Used only during Lent, this larger version of the Compline or "After Dinner" service contains many special penitential prayers and hymns.

**When & Where Offered:** 6:30 p.m. on the Monday evenings of Lent at St. George Chapel.

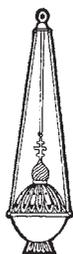
**Special Features:** The chanting of the beautiful Lenten hymn, "Lord of the Powers, be with us, for in times of distress, we have no other help but You, Lord of the Powers, have mercy on us!"

**Why You Should Attend:** At Holy Trinity Church, all those who attend are able to participate in the many readings of this service if they desire. This is a great way to start each week as we re-enter the depths of Lent following Sunday's bright celebration.

**I/My family will be there:**  Feb. 27,  Mar. 6,  Mar. 13,  Mar. 20,  Mar. 27,  Apr. 3

### Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

**Description:** Every Sunday or feast day Divine Liturgy is resurrectional and celebratory in nature, and early on the Church came to regard this character as "out of harmony" with the solemn and penitential character of Lent. So rather than exclude any form of Liturgy during the weekdays of Lent and deny the faithful the ability to receive Holy Communion—the "food of immortality,"—the Quinisext Council in the seventh century A.D. approved the use of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts as a way of offering the Holy Gifts between Sundays during Lent. The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is an evening service which comprises the solemn Lenten Vespers with the distribution



of Holy Communion at the end. There is no consecration of the Holy Gifts during the service. Holy Communion is offered from the reserve gifts consecrated on the previous Sunday at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

**When & Where Offered:** 6:30 p.m. on the Wednesdays of Lent (except March 8 this year) at Holy Trinity Church. Now part of the weekly "Faith and Family Wednesdays."

**Special Features:** The Entrance with the *consecrated* Holy Gifts, which is accompanied by a special hymns used only during this service: "Now the Powers of Heaven minister invisibly with us. For, behold, the King of Glory enters. Behold, the mystical sacrifice, fully accomplished, is ushered in."

**Why You Should Attend:** Provides a mid-week spiritual guidepost which encourages us to prepare both spiritually and physically for Holy Communion, thus deepening our awareness of Lent and strengthening us in our struggles.

**I/My family will be there:**

Mar. 1,  Mar. 15,  Mar. 22,  Mar. 29,  Apr. 5

### Salutations to the Theotokos/Akathist

**Description:** The Akathist Hymn is a beautiful treasure of theological poetry set to music in honor of the Most Holy Theotokos. Its main hymn, "O Champion General" ("*Ti Ipermacho*") commemorates the rescue of the Byzantine imperial city of Constantinople from attack, which the faithful attributed to the intercessions of the Mother of God. The service is offered in two forms. The first four Fridays each contain only one segment of the larger poem and are called "Salutations," from the greeting of the Archangel Gabriel to the Theotokos. The "Akathist Hymn" refers to the entire service with all the stanzas and is offered on the fifth Friday of Lent.



**When & Where Offered:** 6:30 p.m. on the first five Fridays of Lent (except Mar. 24 this year) at St. George Chapel.

**Special Features:** The poetic proclamations of respect and love offered by the priest on behalf of the faithful as he stands in front of the icon of the Theotokos at the front of the church. They are an exclusive feature of this service.

**Why You Should Attend:** With these services, there is a sense of "being there" when that first proclamation was made by the angel as the hymn says: "An angel, and the chief among them, was sent from heaven to cry to the Theotokos, 'Rejoice!'" It is not just the Church honoring her Most Holy Mother: it is me honoring her, too.

**I/My family will be there:**

Mar. 3,  Mar. 10,  Mar. 17,  Mar. 31

☑ WORSHIP ☑ LEARN ☑ GROW ☑ PRAY ☑ SERVE

# FAITH AND Family WEEKDAYS

AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

“Every day in the temple and at home they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.” (Acts 5:42)

## NEW FORMAT! NEW SCHEDULE!

Three years ago, Holy Trinity Church introduced an innovative series of educational programs under the title of “Faith and Family Wednesdays.” Since then, dozens of presentations, hands-on-learning sessions and worship services provided a way for Christians to grow and progress in the knowledge and understanding of their faith. In active pursuit of growing ministries that are relevant and accessible to our faithful parishioners, this ministry is now re-launched using your feedback as “Faith and Family **WEEKDAYS!**” Check it out!

### “FAITH AND FAMILY **WEEKDAYS**” MINISTRIES GUIDE: SPRING 2017

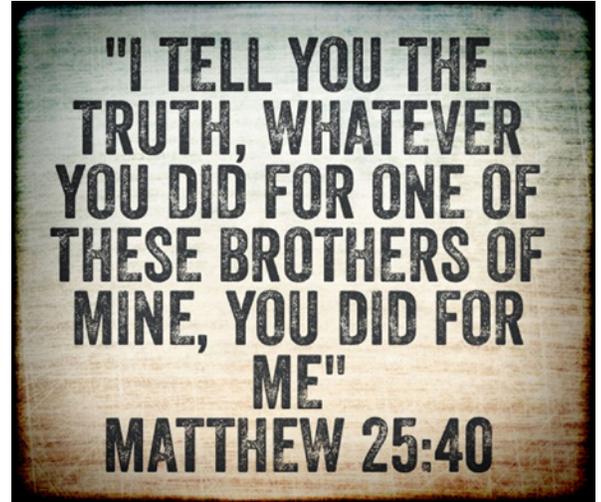
DAYS	MINISTRY	SCHEDULE	ABOUT
DAILY	“Prayer Partners” Prayer Support Ministry	Every Day: In your personal prayers	EVERYONE can participate in this vital ministry EVERY DAY. On the first Sunday of January, April, July and October, blank prayer cards will be distributed. Write your first name. They will then be randomly distributed at the end of the service. Each person will commit to praying for the person they receive <u>daily</u> during that quarter. Pray and be prayed for!
TUESDAYS 9:00am	“Hearts of Faith” Women’s Ministry	4th Tuesday Sep.-May Jan. 24, Feb. 28, Mar. 28, Apr. 25, May 23	The Saint Lydia Women’s Fellowship returns with a monthly morning session of conversation with God and each other. The group meets at church at 9:00 a.m. for a 30 minute morning prayer, then gathers in the Fireside Room for an hour of sharing and discussion about the matters of a woman’s heart.
TUESDAYS 7:00pm	“Journey of Marriage” Marriage Prep Ministry	2nd Tuesday Oct.-June Jan. 10, Feb. 21*, Mar. 14, May 9, Jun. 13 (*=3rd Tues)	Marriage preparation for couples using the excellent and interactive “Journey of Marriage” materials developed by Dr. Philip Mamalakis and Fr. Charles Johannides. From “Hello!” to honeymoon, this series educates and equips couples for fruitful Orthodox Christian marriage. It’s lots of fun, too!
WEDNESDAYS 6:30pm	“Journey to Fullness” Faith Growth Ministry	Wednesdays: 2 series of sessions, 8 weeks each Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25. Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22	Father Barnabas Powell has released an excellent new video series for everyone who wants to learn more about the “fullness of the faith” found in Orthodox Christianity. Fr. Barnabas’ style is sincere, straight-forward and he is not afraid to raise and speak to the tough questions. At the end of each segment there is a brief question and answer review which delves deeper into issues raised in the talk.
THURSDAYS 7:00am	“Prayer and Panera” Men’s Ministry	3rd Thursday Sep.-June Jan. 19, Feb. 16, Mar. 16, May 18, Jun. 15	The Saint Nikodemos Men’s Fellowship hosts this morning session of prayers and Christian fellowship (with coffee and bagels, too!). The group meets at church promptly at 7:00 a.m. for a 15-20 minute morning prayer and scripture, then moves up the hill to Panera for 30-45 minutes of coffee, breakfast and Christian men’s conversation.
THURSDAYS 7:00pm	“Orthodox Movie Night” Entertainment/Fellowship	2nd Thursday Oct.-June Jan. 12, Feb. 9, Mar. 9, Apr. 6, May 11, Jun. 8	A monthly offering of inspirational movies with snacks and good company in the Fireside Room. Free to all, it’s a relaxing and uplifting alternative to the “same old stuff” on cable TV. Why sit around alone and watch that when you can enjoy a night of Holy Trinity fellowship and entertainment?

Watch for weekly updates, special events, guest speakers and youth activities in the Bulletin. Find more info at [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/ffw](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/ffw)

*Our Holy Trinity Philoptochos Ladies Society is a chapter of the national philanthropic ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Philoptochos is: "to aid the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widow, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of the impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts; to promote the charitable, benevolent and philanthropic purposes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through instructional programs, presentations, lectures, seminars and other educational resources; to preserve and perpetuate Orthodox Christian concepts and the Orthodox Christian Family, and through them, to promote the Greek Orthodox Faith and traditions, in accordance with its doctrines, canons, discipline, divine worship, usages and customs; and to promote the participation in the activities of the Greek Orthodox community, with the cooperation of the Parish Priest and the Parish Council." Want more information? Visit their web site at [www.Philoptochos.org](http://www.Philoptochos.org) or simply attend a meeting!*

**Philanthropy Offered by Holy Trinity Philoptochos in 2016**

Holy Trinity Philoptochos offers its sincere thanks to the parishioners and friends of Holy Trinity Church whose constant and generous support makes these donations possible. The "National Ministries" are a collection of priorities and agencies supported by the National Philoptochos. In addition to the more than \$23,700 in donations listed below, the Holy Trinity Philoptochos supported 20+ families in need at both Pascha and Christmas with donations of Giant Eagle & Walmart gift cards. The ladies also sponsor the annual Senior Citizen Christmas Party, which is free to the attendees. We also provide gifts for shut-ins that are delivered by Father John and the Visitation Ministry during the holidays. The weekly Sunday Coffee Hour is also organized & sponsored by the ladies. Ladies, not a member? Join today!



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- Women's Center & Shelter of Pittsburgh
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**Saint Paisios**

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.

**Gheronda, what does it mean to surrender oneself to God?**

When you allow your soul to cry, when you reject everything that cuts off the flow of your tears, then you’ll have a feeling of much greater intimacy with God. You’ll understand that now someone else governs your life. You’ll sense that now someone

else has grasped the tiller, someone else has taken hold of the wheel (indeed of your own hands) and is now directly guiding you Himself. You become someone guided by the grace of God.

We are guided by God’s grace, to which you can surrender yourself in all confidence. Indeed, it is impossible for you to do the slightest thing without it. Consider the glory of the stars, the magnificence of the heavens, and the wonders of the earth: none of these can give you anything at all. The only thing that can fashion a new heart within you (Ezek 11.19), rendering the old one utterly useless, is the power of God’s grace.

**What happens to us in that state of surrender to God?**

When you surrender yourself to God, moreover, your soul will experience three things: contemplation, prayer, and theology.

To begin with, you will contemplate all things in the church spiritually—and you will even be able to do so with your physical eyes, although that kind of seeing is acquired only after many struggles. In the meantime, you contemplate things spiritually. Your eyes have adjusted. The darkness dissipates and the shadows disappear. You contemplate the One Who Is (Ex 3.14) coming towards you. You contemplate the depths of your soul being kneaded by grace, like dough being kneaded into bread. Your soul is now a malleable lump kneaded by the hands of God. You see your soul being worked on, passing through His fingers, and you’re happy, so happy, at being in His hands, and watching them at work. Do you see His face? Not yet. His back parts? (Ex 33.23) No, for that would require the power and holiness of Moses. All you see is His hand, as we see it in certain icons, emerging from a cloud in order to bless the saint standing below it. And now you are standing next to God, watching His hand as it kneads your soul.

Not only do you contemplate, but you also begin to pray. Whatever you’ve done up until now, whatever you’ve said, even if you were praying, was nothing more than childish prattle, the nursery songs and infantile outbursts of your soul (1 Cor 13.11). They were expressions of your ego, and as such did not enable you to ascend to God. But now you are praying, and this prayer is given to you, placed within your heart, by the Holy Spirit, Who intercedes with sighs too deep for words (Rom 8.26). Now grace itself, God Himself, places prayer within your soul, in the mouth of your soul. Now you are praying.

Now we truly pray, because previously we had truly con-

templated: our spiritual vision was true. Now we can pray because contemplation unites us with everything. For example, now I see you, and thus I can embrace you. So too do we see the hand of God and take hold of it, so too do we lay hold of His grace. Now we’re able to pray to Him, because we know Him. Can you speak to an unknown God? What will you say to Him? But now that you see Him kneading your soul in His hands, you can say: “Dear God, relax Your grip a little,” or “Dear God, pummel me, because my heart is still like a stone,” or “Stop a bit, Lord, I’m tired,” and again, “Take me up, Lord, I can stand it: this is what I want, what I desire.” There is so much that you can say, and your words are a prayer, and your prayer becomes theology.

Also, you theologize. What does that mean? You begin to think about God, so that, within yourself, you begin to speak about Him. You begin to understand God based on real, experiential knowledge of Him. You become a person who knows God. You theologize. And that means that your words, tempered by knowledge, begin to express the truth of your experience. When I see you, and recognize you, I say: “Ah, it’s you!” That’s how it is. Previously your soul was trying to say something, but you couldn’t understand what it was. But now it cries out: Abba, Father! (Rom 8.15; Gal 4.6), and with those words you become a theologian: you discover that your mind is in God, that your word is God. You’ve captured God in the most delicate fibers of your heart and spirit.

**Gheronda, where does this all lead?**

Now you can understand and come to know God. And you can talk to Him. What more could you possibly desire? Now you understand that to know God means to taste God. The knowledge of God is my nourishment. I have eaten God. This is why, when the Holy Scriptures and the Church Fathers talk about the word of God, they say: “Eat and drink it” (Mt 4.4; Lk 4.4).

This, then, is the table that God has spread for us in the open air. How will we be able to feed so many thousands of people? His Apostles asked Him (Mt 15.35; Mk 8.4). How? From what source? And the answer was: Thousands of people ate, and were satisfied (Mt 15.37-38; Mk 8.8-9). And it is not just those who happen to be here today, but there are hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands, who are fed by God in this wilderness, on this patch of green grass, in this open air, in the heaven which is the Church.

Our food, then, is the knowledge of God. And when this food is ingested and assimilated by us, it is transformed and brings about something new: our rebirth and regeneration. The first birth was death, for sin gives birth to death (Rom 5.12). But God brings about a new, different kind of death, namely, the death and resurrection of baptism. That is what is happening here: death is brought to birth, by which I mean the birth of the death of sin.

*Excerpted from Elder Aimilianos of Simonopetra, “The Way of the Spirit”*



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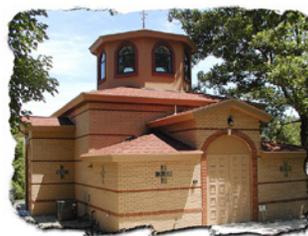
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### To Live in Christ



**W**hat is holy and beautiful and what gladdens the heart and frees the soul from every evil is the effort to unite yourself to Christ, to love Christ, to crave for Christ and to live in Christ. This should be your aim. Let this be in your head, your thought, your imagination, your heart and your will.

Excerpted from "Wounded by Love"  
by Saint Porphyrios

Scripture of the Month: "Christ is all, and in all." (Col. 3.11)