



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

APRIL 2018

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QUICK NEWS



It's Festival cooking season, and these good stewards are ready to help and having fun! Join them! 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 7-11 or visit our online photo gallery site at photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

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



To the disbelieving Disciple You showed the marks on Your body. "Come and touch my hands and my feet, and my uncorrupt side." And he believed and cried to You, "My Lord and my God, glory to You." (Doxastikon of Orthros, Sunday of St. Thomas)

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

Editor

Father John Touloumes, Protopresbyter
Church: 412-366-8700
Home: 412-831-3574
E-mail: fjt@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Production

Mary Portellos, Office Administrator
E-mail: office@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Contributors

Rev. Fr. John Androutsopoulos
Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu

Photographers

Mary-Magdalene Welsh
Peter Gagianas Theanne Gagianas

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About the Parish

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
985 Providence Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Phone: 412-366-8700 • Fax: 412-366-8710
Web site: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org
Email: office@HolyTrinityPgh.org

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

2018 Parish Council

Gerri Valliant, President

Dean A. Balouris	Michael Passodelis
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George Dickos	Stephen Stearns
Alvin Backeris	Karen Georgiadis
Tom Germanos	Alex Trilivas
Ted Stewart	Jean Willow

Ministries

Please visit the Holy Trinity website at 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."



Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

1 Cor. 5.7-8

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!

Remember just a few weeks ago when that proclamation seemed so far away? And yet, here it is - by our temporal measure of time it has finally arrived, but in God's eternal time, it has been waiting for us all along. At Saint Paul says above, it's time to celebrate!

What a joy it is, after having traversed the course of the Great Fast, to be able to gather under the victory banner of Christ and proclaim the feast! It's part of the whole life of an Orthodox Christian: times of fasting and times of feasting. But we do not fast/feast for its own sake. Each time we are called to do so, we are also called to be changed.

The famed philosopher Heraclitus (5th c. BC) noted that "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man." Likewise, each time we step into the river of fasting/feasting, we are called to fast anew and feast anew - rededicated in our faith, cleansed, enlightened and transformed by whatever the Lord has planted in our heart. It should never be just "another trip around the block."

As a witness to that, Saint Paul calls to mind the practice of the leaven of the Jews. The festival he refers to above is the Jewish Passover, a commemoration of God's people being freed and delivered from slavery after marking their doorposts with the blood of a lamb so that the angel of death would "pass over" their homes. The tradition is that after this miracle, they needed to flee from Egypt so quickly that they didn't have time to allow their bread to rise, so to this day Jews eat unleavened bread during their observance of Passover in remembrance God delivering them from bondage.

Saint Paul's message to the early Christians of Corinth is that we have been delivered from the bondage of death by the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, shed on the Cross for us so that He might transform us and restore us to true life and freedom by the power of His Resurrection. This is why, in the same Epistle, the Apostle also says, "we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another" (3.18). So he transforms the very practice of removing leaven from the home and says it is more important to remove those things which enslave us, like malice and evil. Each of us has hopefully focused in prayer during the season of fasting this year that the Lord may reveal in our hearts the "leaven" we must leave behind and come to the feast empty of it and ready to be filled with the joy and love of Christ.

May your celebration of the Feast of Feasts be filled with His joy and the new life to which God has called you. As Saint John Chrysostom says in his famous Paschal Homily, "enter you all into the joy of your Lord; and receive your reward... the table is fully laden; let us feast sumptuously."

With pastoral and paternal love in the Risen Christ,

Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:

**Mary Magdalene Welsh
In Memory of Stella Athanasiou**

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services April

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.

- **Fri. Apr. 13:** The Theotokos the Life-Giving Fountain (Zoodochos Peghe) (SG)
- **Sun. Apr. 22, 6:30pm:** Great Vespers of Saint George the Great Martyr - Feast Day Vespers of our Saint George Chapel (SG)
- **Mon. Apr. 23:** Saint George the Great Martyr - Feast Day Liturgy of our Saint George Chapel (SG)

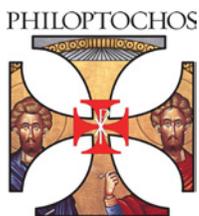
YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

Ten Minutes of HOPE and JOY Apr. 22, 29

Ten Minutes of HOPE and JOY: Our children in HOPE (grades K-2) and JOY (grades 3-6) will continue to meet with Father Radu once a month for ten minutes after their Church School lesson. To have more personal interaction and a meaningful dialogue, please help your children formulate questions about our faith, and we will address those topics during our "Ten Minutes of HOPE" on Apr. 22 and "Ten Minutes of JOY" on Apr. 29.

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

Philoptochos Meeting April 15



Attention Philoptochos current and new members: please join us for our monthly Philoptochos meeting. There are many new things going on. Please come be a part of a wonderful ministry having fun and working with your fellow parishioners to help those in need! We will be meeting in the Fireside Room after Divine Liturgy.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

Orthodox Movie Night Apr. 12

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 April selection is Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ." This film focuses on the last twelve hours in the life of Jesus Christ, from his betrayal at the hands of Judas Iscariot to His crucifixion, and, ultimately, His resurrection.

Bible Study Resumes April 18

Father Radu will be resuming his excellent study of Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans each Wednesday starting April

18 through May 30. Come for worship in the Church at 6:30 and then meet at 7:00 the Conference Room for the study. Learn the Scriptures. Deepen your faith.

Spring "Journey to Fullness" Series. Apr. 23-June 11

This informative Fr. Barnabas Powell video teaching series is for everyone who wants to learn more about the "fullness of the faith" found in Orthodox Christianity, whether as inquirers, catechumens or life-long members. There are two segments per session, along with an interactive question and answer period. Mondays 7:00-8:30 in the Conference Room.

"Hearts of Faith" St. Lydia Women's Fellowship. . . Apr. 24

The Saint Lydia Women's Fellowship meets for 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. We are studying the book, "Living the Beatitudes."

"Prayer and Panera" St. Nikodemos Fellowship. . . Apr. 26

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

Holy Trinity Golf Classic. June 25

Mark your calendar for the annual Holy Trinity Golf Classic, Monday, June 25. at Diamond Run Country Club. Registration and lunch begins at 10:30am, with a shotgun start at 12:15pm. The day will end with a delicious dinner and auction. Entry is \$200 per golfer, \$185 for early bird payments by May 1. Tee Sponsorships (which will include a foursome) are available from \$1,250. There will also be a Million Dollar shoot out, putting contest, and skills prizes. For information contact Gus Geordiadis at gus_geordiadis@ajg.com.

REGIONAL EVENTS

NHCO's Neighborhood Block Party April 26

North Hills Community Outreach's Neighborhood Block Party is being held from 5:30 to 8:30 pm on Thursday, April 26 at The Chadwick in Wexford. The whole family is welcome at this all-ages event, which includes multiple food stations, live music by members of Under the Covers and Juniper Six, princess and superhero visits, games, kids' activities, a silent auction and a cash bar provided by The Chadwick. Tickets are all-inclusive. Tickets are available through April 21 and are \$30 for adults, \$13 for children ages 3-10. Proceeds support NHCO's 20+ programs that help local families in need. Purchase tickets online at nhco.org/2018-neighborhood-block-party/ or by calling Cheryl at 412-487-6316 opt 1. Holy Trinity Church supports NHCO as part of its local outreach.

For the latest updates and schedule of parish events, visit www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar

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



Father John Androutsopoulos

**The Solemn Festival:
Pascha/Easter**

**CHRIST IS RISEN!
TRULY HE IS RISEN!**

**What is the Festival of Pascha/
Easter?**

It is the celebration of the day on which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ rose from the dead. "Jesus, having risen from the grave, as He

foretold, has given to us Eternal Life and the Great Mercy" (from the Orthros of the Resurrection).

**The Holy Gospel of The Divine Service of The
Resurrection is According To Mark, Chapter 16:1-8:**

THE GOSPEL: "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, that they might go and anoint Him. And very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb, when the sun had just risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll the stone back from the entrance of the tomb for us?" And looking up they saw that the stone had been rolled back, for it was very large. But on entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting at the right side, clothed in a white robe and they were amazed. He said to them, "Do not be terrified. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified? He has risen, He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him, as He told you." And they departed and fled from the tomb, for trembling and fear had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The Explanation Of The Gospel

The crucifixion was past, the Sabbath had drawn to a close. This Holy Gospel shows us the devotion of the three holy women, whose love for Jesus did not end with His death, as they sought to honor Him after death by offering the spices for His anointment.

We also can anoint Christ by assisting those in spiritual or temporal need. How acceptable the devotion of the three women was to God, was shown by the fact of an angel being

sent to comfort them.

The angel said, "He has risen!" (Mark 16:6b)

Our Church proclaims these words today because they gather up in three words all that God has said to us in the Old Covenant and the New.

The meaning of life is disclosed in these words . They call us away from all cringing before evil and death. Christ's victory has overcome the power of evil and death. Eternal life becomes a present reality, not a vague, future hope.

We celebrate the Resurrection because Christ has revealed God's power and His love, power and love which are triumphant over death. We celebrate the Resurrection because we are new creatures in Christ who believe passionately in the future life. We look forward in hope.

The angel expressly commanded the women to go and tell His disciples and Peter of the resurrection of Christ. This should be a cause of great consolation for penitent sinners, because it proves that God does not despise a humble and contrite heart.

St. Augustine remarks: "The day of Christ's resurrection caused life for the dead, pardon for sinners, joy for the heavens."

Forgive To Obtain Forgiveness

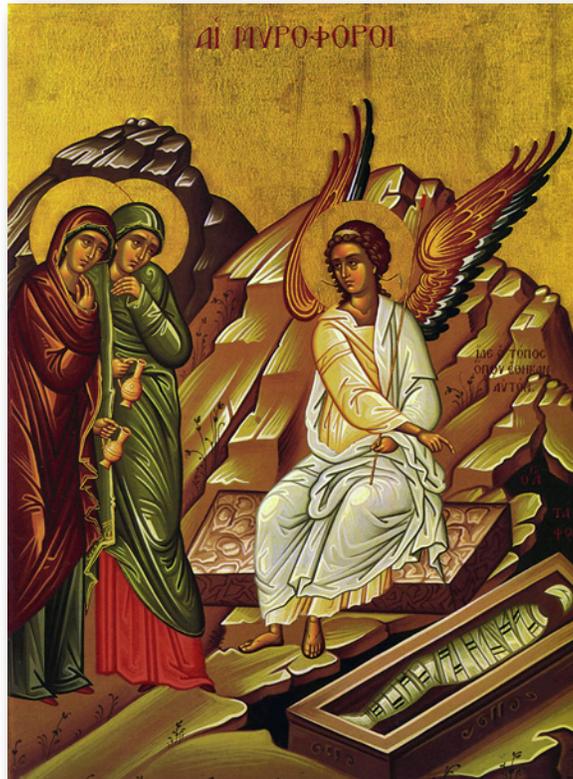
Jesus said, "But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." He also said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." It is clear that forgiveness and mercy from God depend on our own willingness to extend mercy and forgiveness to our fellowman. If we withhold mercy and forgiveness, then God withholds it from us. Jesus told Simon Peter to forgive 490 times (70x7), if someone came asking forgiveness. Forgiveness is important in our approach to God as repentance. Love must precede true forgiveness. It is easy to forgive those we love.

Beloved, let us remember Christ's prayer from the Cross for His crucifiers: "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." He prays for all of His enemies!

May the Risen Lord on this most radiant Feast of Pascha fill our hearts with joy and grant each and everyone in our family at Holy Trinity good health and many, many years! Kalo Pascha—Happy Easter!

Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!

*With the love of the Risen Lord,,
Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos
Protosyner and Internal Missionary*



Giving Back to God

When Bill tells his friends outside of the Church what he does for the Church Cemetery they think he is out of his mind. They say...“wait, you go out and “probe” for graves that are underground? In the winter, and in the rain?” Yep, he does. Why?

In Bill’s professional life he has been trained as an Architect/Engineer. He looked upon the confusing Cemetery record keeping as a challenge. A challenge that could be resolved. Like many, he provides financial stewardship every week, but his work at the Cemetery is his way of giving to the Church through time and talents. The financial impact on a small Cemetery such as ours would be too great for a paid caretaker. So, we have always relied on volunteers like Stephen Stearns and Bill.

Steve said that throughout his journey as an Orthodox Christian, he has always looked for new ways to be involved in the life of the Church. Growing up, he believes God blessed him with a unique ability to connect and comfort people in various situations. He thinks this could be a useful resource in assisting the Cemetery ministry. In the short time that he’s been on the committee, he has found great fulfillment in helping the people that we talk engage. Steve truly believes it is up to us to use our time and talents to offer a different kind of stewardship that often goes overlooked.

Responsibilities for us include selling graves, laying out graves, resolving conflicts (yes, we’ve had a few), recording payments, coordinating funerals and arranging for services from grass cutting to tree removal.

We grow up and live in a society where material advancement and personal pleasure seem to be the number one goal. The purpose of life, our culture tells us, is personal satisfaction. We see just the opposite with disappointment from failing to achieve these goals.

Stewardship does not just mean being hit up for an annual pledge to the Church. It is not being enlisted in a financial

goal for a capital campaign. Rather, it is a well-rounded view of life and a view based on theology and ecclesiology—the giving of treasure, time and talent.

The canonical standards from our Holy and Sacred Church, has established norms for the life of every Orthodox Christian. Such standards are not intended as limits upon our freedom, but should rather be understood as constituting the very basis for a communal life within the Church. We all share in the benefits from this communal experience called... Stewardship.

We embrace this Stewardship concept as an important part of our Orthodox faith and as part of a total commitment to Christ. It is a loving way to give back to God for thanks of what He has given us in life. Good stewardship is an inclusive way of life. This includes the satisfaction, loving treatment, and care of others from assisting them choose their own final resting place, to burying their loved ones. Having friends and family buried at the Cemetery provides us an emotional tie as well as a self-imposed responsibility to provide them the care and surroundings that they deserve.

If on the Day of Judgment, you are asked how you stewarded the God-given resources put in your charge, how will you answer? Will you just say, “But Lord, come on, nobody ever told me they were resources! No one asked me to step up and help. How was I to know I

was supposed to be a steward of them?”

It’s our time to step up and provide your treasure, time and talents, if not as part of our Cemetery Committee, then make it part of the many other wonderful Church Ministries. If we all do a little, it will not be left for just a few to do a lot.



*Respectfully
The Holy Trinity Cemetery Committee
William J. Fiedler Jr., Chairman
Stephen Stearns, Assistant Chairman*

"I Believe and Confess" - A Bible Study of a Prayer of Preparation for Holy Communion

An opportunity to examine the scriptural sources and meaning of the first prayer of preparation for Holy Communion used during the Divine Liturgy. Offered by Father John as the homily on Godparent-Godchild Sunday 2018 at Holy Trinity Church, Pittsburgh, PA

"I believe and confess, Lord"

Scripture: If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10.10)

Commentary: Our active commitment of faith is grounded our belief in and confession of Jesus Christ as Lord.

"that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God,"

Scripture: "He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'" (Matthew 16.15-16)

Commentary: The Apostle Peter sets the model of our open proclamation of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and our Savior.

"who came into the world"

Scripture: "Pilate said to him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice.'" (John 18.37)

Commentary: Jesus, Who is the Truth, reveals to Pontius Pilate His mission of the revelation of God's truth to the world.

to save sinners, of whom I am the first.

Scripture: "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners." (1 Timothy 1.15)

Commentary: St. Paul demonstrates that we need to be concerned with our own sins and repent of them daily.

I also believe that this is truly Your pure Body and that this is truly Your precious Blood.

Scripture: "Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'" (Matthew 26.26-28)

Commentary: Jesus proclaims at the Mystical Supper that the Eucharist is truly His Body and His Blood, not mere symbols.

Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me,

Scripture: "He had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2.17)

Commentary: Jesus is a merciful High Priest Who became one of us and Whose sacrifice on the Cross restores us to God.

and forgive my transgressions,

Scripture: "He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Colossians 1.13)

Commentary: God the Father sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our forgiveness and to open our way back to His Kingdom.

voluntary and involuntary, in word and deed, known and unknown.

Scripture: "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins' -- he said to the paralytic—"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home.'" (Mark 2.9-11)

Commentary: Jesus heals through true restoration: not just physically, but more importantly spiritually through forgiveness.

And make me worthy without condemnation to partake of Your pure Mysteries

Scripture: "Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself." (1 Corinthians 11.28-29)

Commentary: Self-examination (confession) guards against judgement. Worthiness comes through being cleansed by God.

for the forgiveness of sins

Scripture: "I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for His sake." (1 John 2.12)

Commentary: Our sins are real and we find forgiveness for them in Jesus Christ by confessing and calling on His Holy Name.

and for life eternal. Amen.

Scripture: "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal." (John 6.27)

Commentary: Our goal is not the perishable food of this life, but the food of eternal life—the Body and Blood of Christ.

Lent 2018: Top: Father Radu offers a beginning of Lent message on Pure Monday during the first Great Compline service of the season at the Saint George Chapel. In the lower left of the photo are students from the Duquesne University OCF who joined us for the service and a Lenten dinner afterwards. Middle Left: Mother Christophora of the Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Monastery in Ellwood City offers one of our Faith and Family Weekdays Lenten Speakers Series presentations on February 28. Middle Right: Ted Cherpas makes a presentation on Holy Week in the Holy City on March 28. Bottom: A view from the front of the Altar on Sunday morning, March 4.





March 4, 2018: Holy Trinity Church members were out in full force for the annual International Orthodox Christian Charities Syrian Relief Dinner held at St. Nicholas Cathedral. The evening began with Vespers with hierarchs from three jurisdictions, followed by a dinner attended by hundreds. Holy Trinity parishioners were there as attendees and volunteers, including over a dozen GOYA teens who helped serve and clean up, and adults who assisted in supervising the servers and cooking in the kitchen. Thank you to all for your support!





March 9, 2018: The HOPE and JOY ministries held an overnight event at Holy Trinity Church as their Lenten activity. Father Radu led the young people in worship to start the night. They then convened in the kitchen for an instructional session on making prosphoro, the holy offering bread used during the Divine Liturgy. Presvytera Evangelia Daskalakis instructed the children how to offer the prayers for making prosphoro, then allowed them to assist in kneading the dough and placing the seal. That very bread was used two days later during the Sunday morning Divine Liturgy. The group also watched the movie, "Wonder." Lots of fun and faith for all who came!



Community Life Photo Gallery | Community Events

Lent 2018: The GOYA teens had an active Lenten season, starting with preparing and selling delicious homemade Lenten soups to our Holy Trinity parishioners. Then, they attended the Metropolis GOYA Retreat at Camp Nazareth on the weekend of March 16-18. They also continued their regular meetings, planning for the Palm Sunday luncheon and other spring and summer activities.



March 23, 2018: The Pittsburgh Orthodox Young Adult ministry (POYA) gathered from around the city for the Service of the Akathist Hymn at our Saint George Chapel, and then enjoyed a Lenten dinner and good fellowship at the Red Orchid Thai restaurant nearby.



March 25, 2018: The Visitation Ministry volunteers prepared beautiful floral arrangements for distribution to the home-bound, shut-ins and others on their Pascha visitation list. Thank you to all who helped prepare and will deliver these symbols of love to those we serve!

March 11, 2018: Holy Trinity Philoptochos hosted its annual Lenten Luncheon on the Third Sunday of Lent, also celebrating God-parent-Godchild Sunday. Proceeds from the lunch benefitted our college and seminary, Hellenic College Holy Cross in Brookline, MA



March 25, 2018: The Visitation Ministry prepared their annual Pascha greeting cards to be delivered along with the beautiful flower arrangements (see left). There were 27 large cards, arrayed in the Gallery for signing by all the Holy Trinity parishioners. This is a wonderful way to let those in need or in ill health that they are not alone or forgotten. Thank you!



**CELEBRATE THE RESURRECTION!
PASCHA
LITURGY &
ANASTASI
DINNER!**

**CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!
BREAK THE FAST! REJOICE IN THE FEAST!**

CELEBRATE TOGETHER WITH YOUR HOLY TRINITY FAMILY!

**SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 7
11:00PM RESURRECTION SERVICE**



**DINNER IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE DIVINE LITURGY
FREE-WILL OFFERING. HOSTED BY HOLY TRINITY PARISH COUNCIL.**

☑ WORSHIP ☑ LEARN ☑ GROW ☑ PRAY ☑ SERVE

FAITH AND Family WEEKDAYS

AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

**NEW FORMAT!
NEW SCHEDULE!**

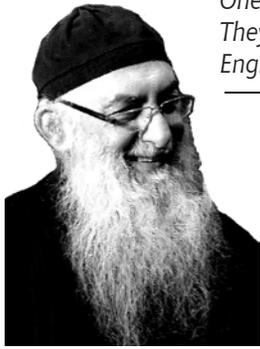
“Every day in the temple and at home they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.” (Acts 5.42)

Four 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 has now adapted and grown into “Faith and Family WEEKDAYS!” Check it out!

“FAITH AND FAMILY WEEKDAYS” MINISTRIES UPDATE: SPRING 2018

DAYS	MINISTRY	SCHEDULE	ABOUT
DAILY	“Prayer Partners” Prayer Support Ministry	Every Day: In your personal prayers	EVERYONE can participate in this vital ministry. On the first Sunday of Jan., Apr., July and Oct., prayer cards are distributed after Liturgy to ask parishioners to exchange names and become Prayer Partners. Pray and be prayed for daily!
MONDAYS 7:00pm	“Journey to Fullness” Faith Growth Ministry	Mondays: Spring Series Apr 23, 30; May 7, 14, 21; Jun 4, 11	This excellent video teaching series is for everyone who wants to learn more about the “fullness of the faith” found in Orthodox Christianity, whether as inquirers, catechumens or life-long members. Each segment offers an interactive question and answer period. Same series repeated in fall and spring.
TUESDAYS 9:00am	“Hearts of Faith” Women’s Ministry	4th Tuesday Oct.-May Oct. 24, Nov. 28, Dec. 19, Jan. 23, Feb. 27, Mar. 27, Apr. 24, May 22	The Saint Lydia Women’s Fellowship meets for a monthly women’s morning session of conversation with God and each other. The group meets at church at 9:00 am 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 Sep.-June Sep. 12, Oct. 19 (*3rd Thu.), Nov. 14, Dec. 12, Jan. 9, Feb. 13, Mar. 13, May 10	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 Worship 7:00pm Study	“Explore the Word” Wednesday Worship & Bible Study Ministry	Wednesdays Oct.-May Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25; Nov. 8, 15; Dec. 6, 13, 20, Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31; Apr. 18, 25; May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Prayerfully read the Bible! In Deut. 11, it says, “Lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.” Each Wednesday, come and fill your heart with worship at 6:30 and then meet at 7:00 the Conference Room for the study of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans led by Father Radu Bordeianu.
THURSDAYS 7:00am	“Prayer and Panera” Men’s Ministry	3rd Thursday Sep.-June Sep. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Dec. 21, Jan. 18, Feb. 15, Mar. 15, Apr. 26, May 17, Jun. 21	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 Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr. 12, May 10, Jun. 14	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



Archimandrite Zacharias of Essex

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 inspired by their wisdom.

Gheronda, what is the Jesus Prayer?

The Jesus Prayer is a short invocation, consisting of a brief phrase, which can be repeated constantly by the faithful in the name of the Lord Jesus. Most commonly, it takes this form: ‘Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner.’ It is an excellent ascetic practice, a means of sanctification for those living

a monastic life, and indeed, for all faithful Christians.

Fr Sophrony [1896-1993, founder of the Monastery of Saint John in Essex, England] observes that prayer through the name of Jesus was already known to the apostles from the days of the Lord’s presence on earth.’ It has its dogmatic foundation in the Lord’s words, pronounced a short time before He went up to Golgotha: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it to you. Hitherto, you have asked nothing in my name: ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full’ (John 16: 23-24).

What are the benefits of using the Jesus Prayer?

He who calls on the name of Jesus Christ is fulfilling a commandment, and he who invokes this name without ceasing places himself on the path of the commandments, the way of the Lord, which leads to sanctification and union with God. By His crucifixion and His resurrection, Christ fulfilled the great command that He received ‘from His Father’ (cf. John 10:18), and won for the faithful ‘grace for grace’ (John 1:16). He who calls upon the name of Jesus is initiated into the mystery of Christ’s cross and resurrection, and becomes a temple of the Godhead.

Prayer using the divine names is based on God’s revelation to man, not on the speculations of his natural intellect. The various names were made known to the prophets after superhuman spiritual battles, when their spirit was totally turned towards the personal God of Israel. Each name contained a twofold energy: the sensation of the living God, and knowledge of Him.’ However, the prophets’ prayer, whose goal was complete and true knowledge of God, was tirelessly directed towards God in expectation of a fuller revelation (Deut. 18:15; Ps. 79/80:1-3).

Christ brought to the world the fullness of divine knowledge. Consequently, the new name which becomes a guide for the transmission to this world of the perfect light of knowledge of God, ‘in whom there is no darkness’ (1 John 1:5), is the name of the Lord Jesus. The name Jesus was given by archangelic revelation at the Annunciation, and it means Saviour, or God-the-Saviour. It demonstrates the aim and meaning of the divine incarnation, but also the potential for deification that we possess as reason-endowed creatures.

Before Christ, knowledge of the Godhead was given to man through divine names which mainly revealed the attributes and characteristics of God. When, however, the Word of the Father took flesh, union between God and man was accomplished

in such fullness that our knowledge of God needed no further completion, but only a life-long struggle to assimilate it.’

How can a word such as a name carry such power?

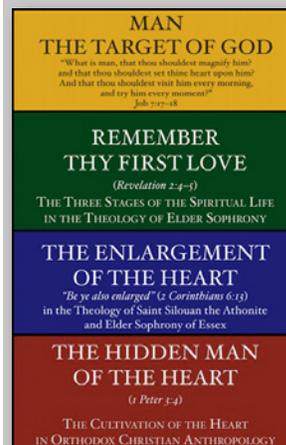
Calling upon this name in God-befitting manner makes vivid the presence of the eternal Lord, and He permeates the entire being of man, transmitting His own unique Energy and inaugurating new life. Praying in the name of Jesus then becomes a practice which, though still fearsome, is also filled with jubilation. Fr Sophrony says that after the coming of Christ, the invocation of the divine names, joined with a correct confession of faith and a state of fear of God, of reverence and love, brings about the spiritual regeneration of the faithful and their sanctification.’

When a man bears the name of the Lord, he carries within him God Himself, in the form of His Energies, and the Lord’s name becomes the linking principle between God and the rest of creation.’ In the divine names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the bread and wine are offered at the Divine Liturgy and are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. So too, by the invocation of the name Jesus Christ (the principal name of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity) the great and most significant miracle of human existence is accomplished: the union of the created with the untreated and eternal God.

Awareness of the ontological connection between the name and the Person of the Lord Jesus is a necessary element as His name is being invoked. The Jesus Prayer will lead the one who prays to an increased fullness of love and a deepening knowledge of God the Saviour—all the more so if the prayer becomes unceasing. Then the repetition of the Name not only ceases to be burdensome; it becomes the source of divine consolation and delight. By means of this name, man’s spiritual eyes are opened, so that he continually understands new mysteries of the ways of God, and is enriched by the experience of eternity.’

Excerpted from “Christ, Our Way and Our Life” Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, Essex, 2012

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Saint John of Damascus, Canon of the Resurrection

Scripture of the Month: “We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again.” (Rom. 6.9)