



July-August 2023
Volume 31 | Issue 6

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PHOTO OF THE MONTH



The GOYA teens enjoyed a day of fun and rides at Cedar Point, followed by a monastery work pilgrimage. See photos of this and other parish events and celebrations on pages 12-16.

THE HOLY TRINITY

HERALD

Faith. Family. Community



The Dormition of the Theotokos Feast Day: August 15

In giving birth you retained your virginity, and in falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Theotokos. You were translated unto life, being the Mother of Life. And by your intercessions you deliver our souls from death.

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, PITTSBURGH, PA



Father John Touloumes
Proistamenos

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS ALL YEAR!

1923 · CENTENNIAL · 2023

OUR VISION

Faith. Family. Community.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is to proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ.

**This house was built by the Father;
this house was made firm by the Son;
this house was renewed by the Holy
Spirit, which illumines and supports, and
sanctifies our souls.**

Hymn from the Service of Consecration of a Church

My beloved Holy Trinity family,

It is hard to believe we are already halfway through the Centennial year of our community, celebrating 100 years of Holy Trinity Church. I offer my thanks to the Centennial Committee, Parish Council and especially all the ministries that have stepped forward to offer special Centennial events. Each one reminds us of how important it is to celebrate and give thanks for the many blessings our loving Lord has shown graciously showered upon this community and her people. The faithful of God never forget such things and know in their hearts that it is to God the glory for all things belongs.

Thinking back to the beginning of the year, it is also hard to remember (without looking at “before” pictures) that—except for the dome and altar area—we started the year with just white walls inside the entire church. We have already become so used to being surrounded by the “great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12.1) of saints in our new iconography that it seems it’s always been that way. And thanks to the generous and sacrificial love of our Holy Trinity family, over the summer there is more to come. In the next few months the new interior furnishings of the church will be arriving: a new Holy Altar table, iconostasis, chanters stands, Narthex icon stands, candle stands and new seating for the entire church and more. Like Dr. George Kordis and his team of iconographers who offered so many great talents with faith and love for this community, the Eleftheriadis family of woodworkers from Serres, Greece, have worked with us closely to ensure a beautiful offering that will put the finishing touches on Holy Trinity Church as a testimony and witness to the beauty of the timeless tradition of Orthodox Christianity.

Of course, all this will culminate with the centerpiece and highlight of the entire year—and for that matter the pinnacle of the entire 100 years of Holy Trinity Church: the Consecration on the first weekend of November. To help better understand the process and the meaning of the Consecration of a Church, please be sure to read the feature article, “Consecration 101”, on pages 7-11. And please mark off that Friday through Sunday to be present and participating fully, starting with the Friday Consecration Vespers and concluding with the Centennial Gala celebration. It will be a time to be remembered for all generations.

From the very first church services in 1923 through every service, celebration, ministry and activity in 100 years of community life, many have served and worked with love and faith, but it has been God Who has laid out the plans. What an honor it is to be His servants in fulfilling them!

Pastorally and paternally yours in the Lord,

JULY-AUGUST

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services - July-August

In addition to regular Sunday Orthros at 8:30am, and Divine Liturgy at 9:30am, the following weekday services will be offered this summer. Please see the online parish calendar at HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar for updates. (HT=Holy Trinity Church; SG=Saint George Chapel.)

- **Saturday, July 8, 8:30am Orthros/9:30am Liturgy - The Great Martyr Prokopios** (Services and annual summer benefit picnic to follow held at *Saint Anthony Church, 424 Miller Ave., Clairton, PA*)
- **Saturday, July 15, 9:00am - Prophet Elias** (Services held at the *Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery, 121 St. Elias Ln., Saxonburg, PA*)
- **Saturday, August 5, 6:00pm Great Vespers and Feast Day Vigil for the Transfiguration of the Lord** - (Services held at *Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Ellwood City*)
- **Paraclesis Services** during August (SG) - 6:30PM
 - Wednesday, August 2
 - Friday, August 4
 - Monday, August 7
 - Wednesday, August 9
 - Friday, August 11
- **Tuesday, August 15, 8:30a Orthros/9:30a Liturgy - Falling Asleep of the Theotokos** (SG)
- **Tuesday, August 29, 8:30a Orthros/9:30a Liturgy - Beheading of Saint John the Baptist** (SG)

Our Youth Need Blessings All Year...Summer Too!

There is an unfortunate notion in the minds of many parents and children that when Church School classes end in May, they are "on break" and will be absent entirely from church for the summer. This could not be farther from the truth of our life as Orthodox Christians. While classes provide an essential way for our children to learn about their faith, as Orthodox Christians we know that living our faith begins with worship - and that continues year-round. Yes, summer is a time many families are traveling and not able to attend services here, but when we are at home base, Divine Liturgy at your children's spiritual home should be part of the weekly family schedule. So parents, please make a family plan for the summer that includes worship, preparing for Holy Communion and helping your children learn that God loves them...year round!

2023 Summer Teaching Series July/August

Holy Trinity Church is once again offering its Summer Teaching Series of sermons, starting July 9 and concluding August 20. The theme for this eight-week

Sunday message series is "God is Wondrous in His Saints" (Psalm 68/67). The focus will be on the many kinds of saints found in the new iconography of Holy Trinity Church and their connection to and meaning in our lives.

Remember, when there are no Church School classes in the summer, the homily is offered at its proper place following the Gospel, so 9:30 is a great time to arrive! ☺

And pay close attention: there will be a 5-minute question and answer session at the end of each Liturgy, too!

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

Church School Registration & Family Sign-Ups

Following the summer break (note: as it says in the previous announcement, from classes only, not from worship!), Church School will resume the week after the Festival, on Sunday, September 10. That means it's time for Church School Staff, Parents and Students to look ahead to the 2023/2024 Church School year. Registration will be available following Divine Liturgy on Sundays, August 6, 13 & 20 in the Gallery during Hospitality Hour. It's really easy: parents of existing students simply need to update and sign the registration form, and there's a new student form for first-timers (must be 3 years old by Sep. 1, 2023). Each family is also asked to sign up to host one Church School Snack date. And all parents are asked to complete a Church School Volunteer Form to help with various activities and events throughout the year.

Holy Trinity Greek Dancers Summer Practices

Please plan on having your children attend as many of the dance troupe practice sessions as possible. As a reminder, the groups are HOPE (5 years old through 2nd grade), JOY (3rd through 6th grade) and GOYA (7th through 12th grade). All practices will be held at Holy Trinity Church. Please feel free to reach out with any questions to Eleni Dedousis (412-953-3699) or Victoria Andromalos-Dale (412-496-9128) or email greekdancers@HolyTrinityPgh.org.

- Sunday, July 2, Hospitality Hour: All groups
- Wednesday, July 5, 5:30pm: HOPE/JOY
- Wednesday, July 5, 6:00pm: GOYA
- Sunday July 9, Hospitality Hour: All groups
- Thursday July 13, 5:30pm: HOPE/JOY
- Thursday July 13, 6:00pm: GOYA
- Sunday July 16, Hospitality Hour: All groups
- Wednesday July 19, 5:30pm: HOPE/JOY
- Wednesday July 19, 6:00pm: GOYA
- Sunday July 23, Hospitality Hour: All groups

- Wednesday July 26, 5:30pm: HOPE/JOY
- Wednesday July 26, 6:00pm: GOYA
- Sunday July 30, Hospitality Hour: All groups

GOYA Coordinating Child Care, Pet Care, Lawn Care

Holy Trinity GOYA is offering a resource list of teens who are making themselves available to community members for help with child care, pet care and lawn care. Here's how it works: send an email to GOYA@HolyTrinityPgh.org with a description of what is needed. A list of GOYAns willing to offer that type of service will be provided. Arrangements will be made directly with the teens, and any compensation for the services will go directly to the teen offering it.

GOYA offering 2023 FOCUS Backpack Program

Holy Trinity GOYA is again working with FOCUS North America this summer to provide children in need with Back-to-School Backpacks, filled with necessary school supplies. We will be ordering 100 backpacks and have again chosen a close-to-home elementary school to work with: Manchester Academic Charter School, on the city's North Side (whose principal is our own Vas Scoumis). Here's how it works: Visit the Gallery after Liturgy on August 6 or 13 and pick up a backpack for \$10 (payment required at pickup). Use the provided list of needs to purchase school supplies to fill the bag. Then return the filled backpacks by Sunday, August 20. Thank you for being generous by participating in this worthy cause!

COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

Hospitality Hour "Open Table Sundays" July 2, 23

When there is no ministry or memorial hosting Hospitality hour following Sunday Divine Liturgy, we offer "Open Table Sundays," on which we ask parishioners to please bring something small to share on platter and place it on the table in the Gallery. Also, we are in need of folks to help set up clean up on those days. Let's all work together for this wonderful fellowship ministry! Questions? Contact Stacy Dickos at 412-298-9409 or email hospitality@holytrinitypgh.org.

Bereavement Support Ministry July 10

Join us for our July Holy Trinity Bereavement Support Ministry meeting. Our team provides spiritual care to our parishioners and their extended family & friends in times of grief and loss of a loved one. Meetings start at 6:30pm with fellowship and light refreshments. It doesn't matter whether your loss is recent or many years. This is a safe sharing environment and there is no cost for sessions & written materials. Questions? contact Amy Armanious at visitation@HolyTrinityPgh.org.

Philoptochos Centennial Ornaments on Sale Now

Holy Trinity Ladies Philoptochos is offering a special Centennial Ornament to celebrate 100 years of Holy Trinity Church. Order this beautiful limited-edition collectors item now at HolyTrinityPgh.org/centennial. Each ornament measures 2-½ inches, made of cast metal & comes in a storage box. Use it as a Christmas ornament or display it all year long! This will be a wonderful gift for the holidays, or to celebrate graduations, weddings, & new babies too. Get one for yourself, your child or grandchildren, Godchild, or your friends! Pre-order now to receive the discounted pricing of \$20.00 per ornament. All orders must be pre-paid and received by Sunday, October 1, 2023 to pick up the ornament before the holiday season. Shipping is not available. A limited number will be available on the pickup date at the regular rate of \$25.00 per ornament.



Holy Trinity's Taste of Greece..... Aug. 31-Sep. 3

Please mark Thu., August 31, through Sun., September 3 on your calendar for this summer's "Taste of Greece" Festival. Everyone, new members and old hands, young and young at heart, should pledge a donation of their time and talents so that we can continue to grow both the success of the festival and the fellowship with all our Holy Trinity church family members! Invite your friends! See you there!

Consecration Weekend: Reserve Now!..... Nov. 3-5

The Consecration Weekend flyer is located on page 17 of this issue. Please plan on dedicating that weekend to celebrating the once-in-a-lifetime historic Consecration and Centennial of our beloved Holy Trinity Church with your parish family. Tickets for the Consecration Luncheon and Centennial Gala are available, along with more information about commemorative items, on our website at HolyTrinityPgh.org/centennial.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3 Premiere Sep. 8

Celebrate the newest release of the "My Big Fat Greek Wedding" movie franchise in great Greek style with your Holy Trinity community! As another Holy Trinity Centennial offering, Philoptochos is presenting a special Greek Movie Night celebration starting with dinner at Holy Trinity Church and then the movie up the hill at the Cinemark Theater. Many may remember the great time we had back in 2016 with the release of MBFGW2, complete with Greek food, music and the parade to the theatre! Let's do it again! See the flyer on page 21 of this issue. Tickets must be purchased in advance and will be available at HolyTrinityPgh.org/events. Opa!

Solid Foundations

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." (St. Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, 3.10-11).

From civilization's earliest construction of buildings, foundations have made them possible. But the age of modern skyscrapers took the importance of foundations to new heights (pardon the pun!). Simply laying a slab of stones or cement was not enough. The height, weight and physical strain of tall buildings required newer, better foundations that would not be shaken even by the most severe challenges.

The world's tallest building is currently the Burj Khalifa. It is over a half-mile tall, with 164 floors. To keep this modern marvel standing strong, the architects and engineers set the building on a concrete slab that is 12 feet thick. It is tied into the bedrock below using 192 pylons, each of which is 5 feet in diameter. Needless to say, the tallest building in the world probably also has the strongest foundation known to man. At least one would think.

There I would like to draw your attention to another foundation, not supported by 192 pylons, but of 318. It predates the 2009 construction of the Burj Khalifa by 1,684 years. No, I'm not talking about some hidden archeological dig that has uncovered some amazing underground building unknown to man. I'm talking about the very Orthodox Christian Church you're sitting in today. And no, again, not the physical building of Holy Trinity Church on Providence Boulevard,



but the timeless Orthodox Christian Faith itself upon which the foundation of this church and every other Orthodox Christian Church is laid.

Today we celebrate the 318 Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council, convened by the Emperor Constantine in the year 318 A.D. in the city of Nicaea. Why does the conve-

ning of a large group of bishops in the early 4th century that matter to us today? Because everything we believe, teach and do as Orthodox Christians rests on the foundation of their sacred work.

And what was sum of that work? Here is a brief list of their contributions to the faith on which we stand:

- This council decreed that the Logos (the second person of the Holy Trinity), the Word and Son of God, is uncreated, ever-existing, and fully divine.
- It proclaimed that He is begotten—that is, “born” or generated—from the Father, and not made or created by Him.
- It affirmed that the Logos is of one essence (in Greek, *homoousios*) with the Father.
- It assured us that He is true God of true God, the Word of God by Whom all things were made (Jn 1.3; Heb 1.2).
- The Holy Fathers confirmed forever, never to be challenged or changed, that this uncreated, only-begotten, divine Son of God Who became man from the Virgin Mary is Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of the world.

These major achievements are announced in a document you all know by heart: we call it the Nicene Creed, so named because that was where the First Ecumenical Council met. The Council also dealt with some practical administrative issues, such as how and where the authority of bishops and jurisdictions work and how to receive people back into the faith who had fallen away.

Interestingly, this council also issued proclamations, known as canons, that directly affected us here at Holy Trinity Church today:

- Canon 20 prohibits kneeling during the entire season from Pascha to Pentecost and at every Sunday Divine Liturgy, since the Divine Liturgy is always resurrectional celebration in nature.
- Another canon settled the controversy about married clergy, and decreed that married men could be ordained as deacons, priests and (are you ready for this?) even bishops and continue in their

married life!

Administrative matters aside, the dogmatic proclamations of the First Ecumenical Council allow us to live undaunted by the ever-changing priorities and trends of the world. And they secure us from the fear of waking up one day and discovering that the eternal Church in which we live the life of salvation has been rocked by a modern wrecking crew that had blasted or dug out the foundations from underneath us.

As Metropolitan Hierotheos says, “The whole faith of our Church is found in [the] five central points of the Creed. They are most basic and necessary, because without this faith, our salvation is uncertain.” He goes on to boldly state, “If we do not believe in God in Trinity, if we do not believe that God took on human nature in order to save man, if we do not believe in the uniqueness of the Church and if we do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, we then shake the foundations of our entire faith.”

We live in ever-changing times. So much of what we have grown up with is being challenged, changed and even decried. On the one hand, some of this is good, well-grounded in science or resulting from a constantly-evolving social dialog. On the other hand, for us as Orthodox Christians, the foundations of the faith as proclaimed in the Creed are universal, eternal and unchanging. You have not and will not ever wake up and find your church debating the humanity, divinity, resurrection or eternity of our Savior Jesus Christ. Nor is any other point of the Creed re-opened to re-examine and re-evaluate by our enlightened 21st century mindset. You are standing on solid foundations. Sleep well tonight!

That does not mean, however, that your church is not sensitive to the

needs of life in the world today. That’s one reason I’ll encourage you to attend the last of our “Explore the Word” series this Wednesday evening, expertly taught by Father Radu. For the past few weeks, the class has been examining a document titled, “For The Life of The World: Toward a Social Ethos of the Orthodox Church,” which explores the positions and responses of the timeless Orthodox Christian Church in today’s world on issues such as health care, human rights, marriage, politics, poverty, violence, sexuality, slavery and war, just to name a few. You may ask how an unchanging Church can be relevant in such tumultuous and ambiguous times. The answer is that our belief in the eternal truths of our foundations gives us the solid ground on which to stand and discuss the very things that are washing out the beliefs and further dividing of other churches like amoeba.

Returning to our opening quote, Saint Paul as early as the first century realized that challenges were coming when he wrote, “No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.” Three hundred years later, realizing that the ark of salvation, the Holy Church, was awash in serious theological controversies, bravely accepted the call of that very Christ to lay the foundations that would never be shaken. I hope you will join me today in thanking God for them and for the assurance they give us every day we wake up as firm and sure believers in a tumultuous and unsure world: that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13.8) and that His Holy Church will be teaching that truth standing on its well-laid foundations forever. Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Amen.

Delivered May 28, 2023 ❖

CONSECRATION 101

Understanding the Sacred Tradition of Consecrating a Church

A primer for the faithful of Holy Trinity Community in preparation for the Consecration of Holy Trinity Church on November 3 & 4, 2023.

Photos taken from the Consecration of the Saint George Chapel - May 4, 2019



WHAT IS A CONSECRATION?

The Consecration is the service of sanctification and solemn dedication of a building for use as a church. It is a special service which “changes” an ordinary building into the House of God. Like the Baptism of a child or the ordination of a priest, this change takes place through the Grace of God and the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Consecration of a church is a complex service that is filled with profound symbolism and many biblical elements and references. The Consecration is different from and usually takes place awhile (sometimes years) after, the blessing of the ground and the church’s formal opening for worship (Thryanoixia). The Consecration service of Holy Trinity Church in Pittsburgh is scheduled for Saturday, November 4, 2023, to be celebrated by His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh. The liturgical schedule for the Consecration Services is as follows:

- **Friday, November 3**
7:00pm Consecration Vespers
- **Saturday, November 4**
8:00am - Orthros
9:00am - Consecration Liturgy and Procession with the Holy Relics
12:00pm - Celebration Luncheon

The information in this article will be helpful understanding the beauty, meaning and symbolism of every part of this sacred event.



As Isaiah says, islands will be dedicated to God, which are to be understood as the churches of the Gentiles, which have recently been established, and have their sturdy construction by God. Therefore let us also spiritually celebrate the festival of the present Consecration.

Hymn from the Service of Consecration of an Orthodox Church

THE CONSECRATION VESPERS

On the evening before the Consecration, the new Holy Altar Table is cleared. Everything is removed, including the covering, so that it stands bare and ready to be washed and anointed during the upcoming services. The hierarchy enters the Church, carrying the relics of three Holy Martyrs sent from the Archdiocese in a special ecclesiastical box called a "Reliquary." The Reliquary is placed on a Paten, which is the gold diskos or round stemmed plate that holds the bread for Holy Communion, and it is placed on the Holy Altar Table, where it remains overnight, accompanied by a Vigil Light. His Eminence then presides over the celebration of a special service of the Preparation of the Relics, which includes hymns honoring the memory of the Holy Martyrs. This is followed by the Great Vespers Service. (Note: The identity of the saints whose relics will be placed in the Holy Altar are not known until they are specially delivered to the Church just prior to the Consecration.)

THE CONSECRATION SERVICE

The following morning parishioners gather early in the Church for the celebration of the Orthros, the Consecration Service and the Divine Liturgy. The hierarchy enters the Church and proceeds to the Holy Sanctuary, where the Vigil Light awaits on the Holy Altar table, lit in front of the relics of Holy Martyrs.

At the conclusion of the Orthros, the Divine Liturgy begins and continues as usual until the exclamation, "For You, our God, are holy, and to You we offer up glory." In a regular Divine Liturgy, this would be followed by the "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal" hymn. Instead, special prayers for the Consecration are inserted. The first prayer, in honor of the Holy Martyrs, prays the following:



O Lord our God, You are faithful in Your words and You never lie in Your promises; You granted Your holy Martyrs to fight the good fight and to finish the course of godliness and to keep the faith of the true confession. All-holy Lord, be entreated by their prayers and grant us, Your unworthy servants, to have a part and inheritance with them, that being imitators of them, we too may obtain the good things that await them. By the mercy and love for mankind of Your only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

The hierarchy censes the relics and then raises the Holy Paten containing them up to begin the procession. The procession is led by the acolytes, followed by the choirs, the clergy, the hierarchy carrying the Holy Relics, and finally all the faithful, leaving the Church empty. As the procession leaves the Church, the choirs sing hymns honoring the Holy Martyrs:

Hear us, you martyred Saints, who have fought the good fight and have

gained crowns. Entreat the Lord to shed His tender mercy on our souls.

Glory to You, O Christ our God, Your Apostles' proudest boast. The treasure of Your Martyrs' joy, who to all proclaimed the Trinity one in essence.

These hymns are two of the three hymns also chanted at weddings and ordinations. Following those hymns, others are offered that are only ever used for Consecrations:

Be consecrated, be consecrated, O new Jerusalem, for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. This house was built by the Father; this house was made firm by the Son; this house was renewed by the Holy Spirit, which illumines and supports, and sanctifies our souls.

In the Old Testament, when the Temple was consecrated, Solomon offered sacrifices of irrational animals and whole-burnt offerings, O Lord. Since You, O Savior, were well pleased that the types should cease and the truth be known, now the whole world offers bloodless



PLACING AND SEALING THE HOLY RELICS

sacrifices to Your glory; for as the Lord of all, by Your Holy Spirit You sanctify everything.

Consecration is an old honored custom, and a good one. And it is also proper to honor new churches through consecration. As Isaiah says, islands will be dedicated to God, which are to be understood as the churches of the Gentiles, which have recently been established, and have their sturdy construction by God. Therefore let us also spiritually celebrate the festival of the present Consecration.

HIGHLIGHTS

The many actions that take place during the Consecration Service are not only beautifully symbolic, but deeply theological, historic and meaningful. Here are some of the highlights.

1. The Three Processions around the Church Building.

Those in attendance process with the hierarchy and the Holy Relics around the church three times. By circling the Church three times, we circumscribe a border around the building, and

declare that this Church is set apart for God. This tradition is as ancient as Joshua's Battle of Jericho. God promised the city of Jericho to His people, though at the time it was occupied by other people. The chief captain of the host of the Lord, a great angel, took back this territory, consecrating it to our Lord. During the Consecration Service the faithful process as Joshua and his people did, circling the walls of the Church and declaring the land for God.

When the first procession reaches the front of the Church, the hierarchy places the Holy Relics on a table, which has been previously placed there, and the first readings from the Bible follow. After the readings, the hierarchy picks up the Holy Paten and the second procession around the Church takes place with hymns being chanted. After the second and third processions, additional readings are offered.

2. The Entrance into the Church

Following the third procession around the Church, the hierarchy, raising his hierarchical staff, knocks on the closed front doors of the Church,

calling out in a loud voice: "Lift up your gates you rulers; and be lifted up you eternal gates, and the King of glory will enter." From inside the Church and behind the closed doors a voice answers, "Who is this king of glory?" The hierarchy replies, "The Lord mighty and powerful, the Lord powerful in war." And again, he repeats, "Lift up your gates you rulers; and be lifted up you eternal gates, and the King of glory will enter." Again, the voice asks, "Who is this king of glory?" and the hierarchy answers, "The Lord mighty and powerful, the Lord powerful in war." This exchange is repeated a third time in dramatic fashion.

At the third answer the hierarchy once again lifts the Holy Relics from the table and makes the sign of the Cross with them three times before the closed doors. The doors are then opened and the hierarchy leads the clergy and faithful into the Church, while this special hymn is chanted:

You have made the earthly beauty of the holy tabernacle of Your glory to be like the majesty of the firmament on high, O Lord. Make it strong forever and ever, and accept our supplications that we unceasingly bring to You there, at the intercession of the Theotokos. For You are the life and resurrection of all.

3. The Placing and Sealing of the Holy Relics in the Holy Altar Table.

The hierarchy enters carrying the Holy Relics and proceeds to the Holy Altar Table. All the faithful follow. Uncovering the Paten, he places the Holy Relics in a small box. He then pours Holy Chrism over the Relics; this act symbolizes the union between our Lord, and His Martyrs. Having done this the hierarchy prays for the deceased founders of the Church.



WASHING THE HOLY ALTAR TABLE

In the early years of Christianity the Church was not allowed to exist; for many years the early Christians were persecuted and killed for their faith in Christ. In those days, the Christians met in underground burial places and celebrated the Eucharist on the graves of the martyred Saints. When the persecutions ended, and the Church was free to exist, the custom of celebrating the Eucharist over the graves of Martyrs continued by placing Holy Relics in the Altar at the time of the Consecration. In this manner, we are always reminded that the Church was built on the Blood of the Martyrs and their faith in the Lord.

Following these two prayers the hierarch places the box containing the Holy relics into a special cavity in the Holy Altar Table. In order to seal them permanently the hierarch pours wax/mastic over them. The wax/mastic contains many sweet smelling and fragrant spices, which were used by Joseph of Arimathea and Nikodemus to anoint the Body of Christ in preparation for his burial. The Holy Altar represents the Tomb in which our Lord's body was placed. All of this takes place during the chanting or

reading of Psalm 144 (145).

Together with the saints' Holy Relics, a scroll listing the names of all those who pledged in support of the building of the Church are sealed in the Holy Altar forever. The Consecration is the "Baptism" of a Church, and in it each of us reaffirms our own Baptism, our own dying and living with Christ. Therefore, on the day of Consecration, the Church "entombs" with our Lord, through the interment of the names, our loved ones, past and present, all of whom are alive together in Christ.

4. The Washing and Anointing of the Altar Table.

The hierarch's robes are then covered with a simple white linen tunic called the Savanon, which represents both a baptismal garment and the shroud in which our Lord was buried, as he prepared to clean the Altar Table. The Altar Table represents the Tomb of Christ and His body lies therein. The Altar must undergo its own "Baptism" (washing) and "Chrismation" (anointing). The hierarch is given three bars of soap and a basin of water, which he blessed to make it

Holy Water (much like the blessing of waters in Baptism). As he cleans, he chants from Psalm 50/51, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Fill me with joy and gladness; let the bones which You have broken rejoice." Later, this special white garment will be cut up into small pieces and offered to the faithful as a blessing from the service to take to their homes.

After the Altar Table is cleaned, he marked the sign of the Cross in water over it three times (as when a person is immersed into the water three times in Baptism). He then makes the sign of the Cross with Holy Chrism over the Altar three times, calling out each time, "Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!" (as when a person is Chrismated.) Psalm 132 (133) is then read, which reminds us that when Aaron was chosen by the Lord and anointed, the oil flowed over him and into his beard. The Holy Altar Table is then dried with special engraved cloths which will be used to make Holy Antiminsia, or sacred liturgical cloths to be distributed to other churches by the hierarch.



THE ANTEMINSIA CLOTHS



VESTING THE HOLY ALTAR TABLE

5. The Placing of the new Altar Coverings and other Holy Articles on the Holy Table.

On the four corners of the Holy Altar Table, icons of the four evangelists (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) are then placed and sealed with wax. The Altar Table is then covered with the "Katasarkion". This white linen cloth represents the Lord's burial shroud. The Katasarkion is tied with a cord which represents the cord with which our Lord's hands were tied as He stood before the High Priests. The Katasarkion will never be removed and will remain on the Altar for as long as the Church remains standing. As the Katasarkion is being placed on the Altar, Psalm 131 (132) is read. Having placed the Katasarkion over the Altar, the hierarch says: "Glory to You our God unto ages of ages." He washes his hands, and covers the Altar Table with a set of new, brighter and more elaborate Altar vestments, which symbolize the glory of God. While he covers the Altar Table, the reader reads Psalm 92 (93): "The Lord reigns; He clothed Himself with majesty; the Lord clothed and girded Himself with power; and He

established the world, which shall not be moved. Your throne is prepared from of old; You are from everlasting."

After the vesting of the Holy Altar Table, the hierarch censes the Holy Altar and the Church. He then Chrismates the icons and the building; carrying a reed to the tip of which has been bound a small sponge dipped in Holy Chrism. He draws the monogram of Christ in the apse of the Sanctuary, on the four columns and on the lintel of the door



ANOINTING THE HOLY ICONS

of the Church on the inside.

6. The Lighting of the Vigil Light.

Finally, at the conclusion of the Consecration service, the hierarch places the Vigil Light on the Holy Altar. This light reminds us of the unfailing light of our Transfigured Christ in His Holy Resurrection (and of the candle that a newly Baptized & Chrismated person carries). Earlier in the service everyone in the congregation has had an opportunity to offer a drop of oil to the holy vigil lamp, making it an offering of thanks and prayerful vigilance of all the people of God.

7. The first Divine Liturgy in the newly consecrated Church.

The celebration of the first Divine Liturgy in the newly-consecrated Church continues with great joy as the people of the Church offer their thanks to God and offer themselves to His service. The Consecration of a Church is not an end; like a Baptism is the start of a new life in Christ for the entire community. To God be the glory! Amen. ❖

Text resources for this article drawn from St. Barbara Church (Orange, CT) and Father Seraphim Dedes.

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX



100TH ANNIVERSARY PENTECOST



CHURCH - SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2023

FAITH · FAMILY · COMMUNITY

10

1923 · CENTENNIAL · 2023

POST FEAST DAY DIVINE LITURGY



THE HOLY TRINITY C





GOLF CLASSIC - JUNE 5, 2023



Our Holy Trinity GOYAns have had a fun and active month! May 30 (below): The graduating seniors were honored at a GOYA Senior Recognition Dinner and Family Cookout. June 7 (right): The teens enjoyed a day on the rides at Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio. June 8 (below): After that, they traveled to the Saint Gregory Palamas Monastery in Perrysville, Ohio, for a day of work, prayer and spiritual growth. They assisted the monks in clearing a forest area and maintaining the grounds of the monastery. They also had time to dialog with the Elder of the monastery, Father Joseph. It was a great two days!!



100 YEARS



Holy Trinity Consecration Weekend

Consecration Vespers: Friday, Nov. 3rd

7PM - Consecration Vespers and Placing of the Holy Relics on the Altar

Consecration Liturgy & Luncheon: Sat. Nov. 4th

8AM - Orthros

9AM - Consecration Divine Liturgy and Procession with the Holy Relics
His Eminence Metropolitan Savas presiding

12PM - Celebration Luncheon in the Holy Trinity Grand Room

Adults: \$25

Children under 12: \$15

The Holy Trinity Centennial Gala at the Omni William Penn Hotel Sunday, November 5th, 5pm

Adults: \$150

Teens (12 to 18): \$100

Seniors: \$100

Children under 12: \$50

Ticket prices include: appetizers, dinner, dancing, and the famous Pittsburgh Cookie Table. Please contact Joyce Athanasiou to donate to the Cookie Table

Entertainment by the **George Karas Band** featuring Toronto based clarinetist **Peter Bexis** and the **Holy Trinity Jazz Band**.

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TO GOD BE THE GLORY! ❖

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**OUR GOAL IS TO GET AT LEAST 30 PEOPLE EACH DAY SO THAT WE MAY FINISH ON TIME.
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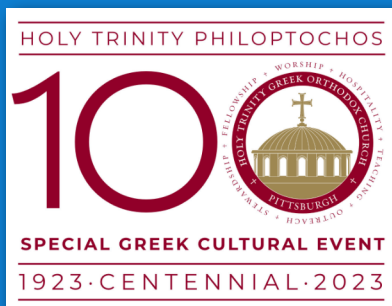
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WELCOME BACK FROM THE STAR

Nia Vardalos wrote via Instagram in Feb. 2023, confirming Rita Wilson and Tom Hanks’ return as producers. “The original cast is back, with some surprise guests too. I am thrilled to get the opportunity to write this third installment of our franchise and to direct it as well. See you at the movies! “



HOLY TRINITY’S GREEK NIGHT PACKAGE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2023

6:00PM Greek dinner at Holy Trinity Church

7:15PM “Greek Flag Parade” up to the theater for the movie

9:30PM Return to the Church for dessert & music

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HONORING THE THEOTOKOS

If we truly believe that which is written in Holy Scripture, we must honor and respect the Mother of the Lord.

Geronda, why do Orthodox Christians honor her so much and venerate her?

We honor the All-holy Virgin Mary and Birthgiver of God ("Theotokos") more than the other holy saints and angels, yet, nevertheless, we do *not* ascribe to her the same veneration as we do to God. The veneration that we render unto her is one of honor and reverence, as she is the Mother of the Lord, having not only a spiritual relationship with Him, as happens with other saints, but also a physical union with Him.

Some say she should not be given special honor because Jesus said "whosoever shall do the will of My Father who is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

There exists above all another relationship with Christ much higher and more important—the spiritual relationship—which consists in doing the will of God. This kind of relation, however, does not abolish and does not discard the natural one. Accordingly, it was a word of exhortation and encouragement that was directed to the others and not a word of dishonor toward His Mother. As long as our Savior Jesus Christ was with His Mother on the earth He always listened to her and loved her and He didn't exhibit disobedience toward her in all that she asked of Him.

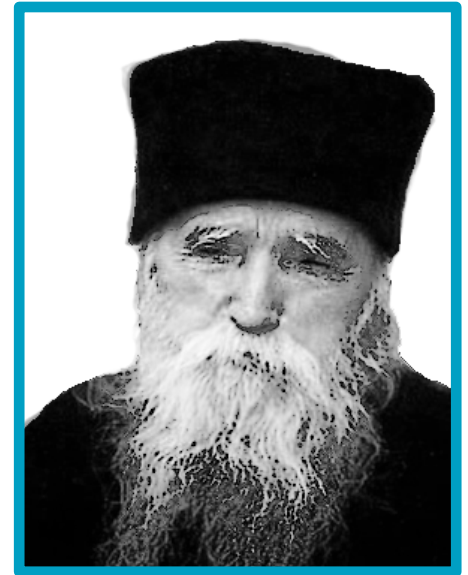
When Jesus addresses her as "woman" at the wedding of Cana and from the Cross, it seems to be disrespectful. Please explain.

At the wedding in Cana of Galilee at the request of His Mother He performed His first miracle, changing water into wine. He took great care of His Mother, such that even while He hung crucified on the Cross He entrusted her to the care of the most beloved of His disciples, the Evangelist John. In no case is a disdainful word spoken.

In no way did He mean disrespect, but only in the sense of gender. For that is exactly how the two angels spoke to Mary Magdalene at the tomb: "Woman, why do you weep?" And the two men who appeared at the Ascension of the Lord into heaven said to the apostles: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven?" Neither the angels nor the two men said the words "woman" and "men" with scornfulness but rather, on the contrary, in a kind manner.

Where is it said in Holy Scripture that Mary, the Mother of the Lord Jesus, conceived Him without a man?

The archangel venerated the Virgin Mary calling her "full of grace" and "blessed among women," that she



Elder Cleopas of Romania

had great grace from God, had never known a man, was overshadowed by the power of the Most High, and that she conceived and gave birth to the Son of God by the Holy Spirit.

We have only one Savior, Jesus Christ, but we chant and pray "Most Holy Theotokos, save us." Is this not a contradiction?

As for the expression of prayer that is addressed to her, it means: "Entreat your Son to save us," or "Redeem us." In the Greek language, the word "save" means to redeem from evil, temptations, distress and necessity. Therefore, by "save us" we don't mean "forgive us our sins," but "entreat your Son for our salvation."

It is impossible for the veneration of the Mother of the Lord to exceed the reverence shown to her Son. On the contrary, all veneration shown to the Mother of God is a constituent part of the veneration shown her Son, Who chose her and blessed her to be His Mother. ❖

Excerpted from
*The Truth of Our Faith
on Christian Living* ❖

THE HOLY TRINITY

HERALD*Faith. Family. Community***About the Herald**

The Herald is the Monthly Newsmagazine of
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Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Assistant Priest

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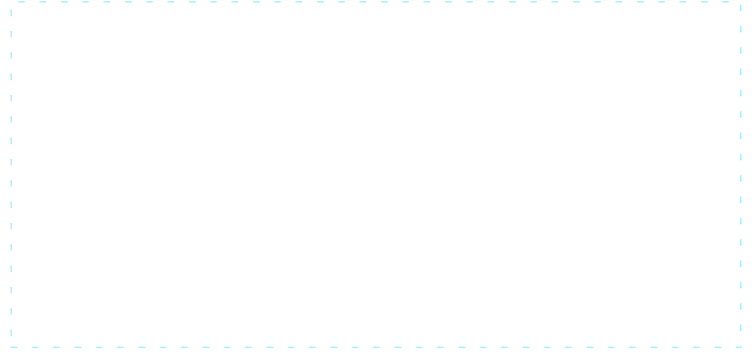
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HE WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU, TOO!

Consider the lilies
of the field, how
they grow; they
neither toil nor
spin; yet I tell you,
even Solomon in all
his glory was not
arrayed like one of
these. But if God so
clothes the grass of
the field, which
today is alive
and tomorrow is
thrown into the
oven, will he not
much more
clothe you?

Matthew 6.28-30



*A wild flower growing in
the fields of Mount Athos.
Photo 2007 Peter Gagianas*