



THE HOLY TRINITY

# HERALD

*Faith. Family. Community*

April 2024  
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### PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Holy Trinity teens bring hundreds of Jared Boxes with toys and activities to be blessed before distributing them to hospitalized children of the area. See more photos on pages 10-11.



## Christ is Risen! Truly He Is Risen!

Icon of the Resurrection in the Dome of Holy Trinity Church | George Kordis, Iconographer

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



Father John Touloumes  
Proistamenos

## Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ, let us worship the holy Lord Jesus.

The Paschal Canon  
& The Divine Liturgy

My beloved Holy Trinity family,

It's just around the corner...that special celebration...the midnight service...the candlelit congregation...the triumphal hymns. Pascha! The Resurrection of Christ! Christ is Risen! And it's only once a year...or is it?

For those who have attended the Holy Saturday evening Paschal vigil, the quote above may sound familiar because we read it together as a congregation three times that night as we announce and confess that Jesus is risen from the tomb. It is indeed a powerful confession of faith in the Resurrection of Jesus and a proclamation of the promise that those who believe will share in it.

But for those who listen carefully during any Sunday Divine Liturgy, you can also hear the priest reciting that same proclamation as he goes around the Holy Altar table with the censer in preparation for the Great Entrance. And it lays the groundwork for the rest of the service, which culminates in the present reality of that very same Resurrection in our communing in the Sacred Body and Holy Blood of the Risen Savior. It is for me as a priest one of the deepest anchor points of the entire Liturgy.

So although we celebrate Pascha on the calendar as the greatest feast of the Church only once a year, every Sunday is also a continuing celebration of the Resurrection of Christ. Every Sunday is a type of Pascha. Every Sunday joins the eternal moment of Pascha in a way beyond time and human understanding.

To affirm that perspective, listen to the testimony of the priestly prayer at the consecration of the holy gifts during the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, used during the Sundays of Lent: "Do this in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this Bread and drink this Cup, you proclaim my death, and you confess my resurrection."

Does that make Pascha just a more grand celebration of a repeating event? By no means. It is the beginning, the fountainhead, the source of every other Resurrection celebration as they all dip into the same moment of eternity. So rather than allow our continual celebration of the truth of the Resurrection to diminish the uniqueness and special experience of Pascha, it should actually multiply it and extend it throughout the year. And that makes it all the more important to be part of the original proclamation and to "Come receive the light, from the never-setting light; and glorify Christ who has risen from the dead."

As we approach the sacred days of Holy Week, I pray you will find a way to dedicate that week to the Lord Who dedicated and sacrificed Himself for you. It will be another "first" at Holy Trinity Church, as it will be our first Pascha in our newly-completed and consecrated sacred temple. I look forward to sharing the joy of that sacred joy together with you and our entire Holy Trinity family.

With paternal love in Christ our Risen Lord,

Now in our 101st year!  
1923-2024

**OUR VISION**  
Faith. Family. Community.

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

BECOME WHAT YOU WERE MADE TO BE. THIS YEAR, EXPERIENCE

# LENT WITH INTENT

INTEND TO PRAY, FAST, GROW, SERVE, ATTEND.

*"What can I offer the Lord for all He has done for me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will keep my promises to the Lord in the presence of all His people." (Psalm 116.12-13)*

## WORSHIP LIFE

### Weekday Services - April

See the Lenten and Holy Week schedules of services.

## LENTEN NEWS & EVENTS

### 2024 Lenten Theme: "Lent With Intent"

Each year we offer a theme for Lent which builds on our Orthodox Christian tradition in a way that helps us grow and connect with Christ in today's world. This year the theme is "Lent With Intent," taken from Psalm 116.12-13: "What can I offer the Lord for all he has done for me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will keep my promises to the Lord in the presence of all his people." During the Lenten journey, you will hear lessons on the many opportunities the Church provides as we restore our relationship with God and His Holy Church, through which we find true peace in Him Who is our peace, Jesus Christ.

### Lenten and Holy Week Schedules of Services

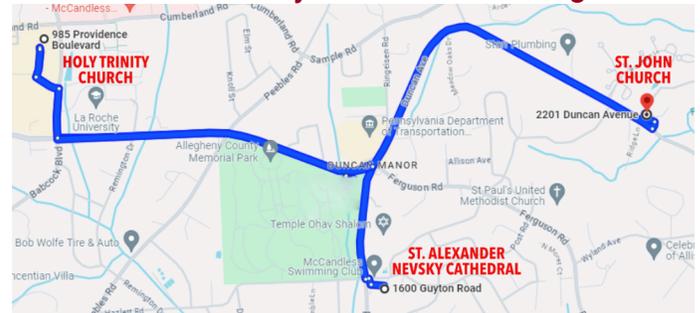
This issue of *The Herald* contains a complete schedule of services for Holy Week. A Lenten Services schedule was included in the March issue. Both are also available online at our website. Please post them in a conspicuous place in your home. Make a family plan and circle the services you are able to attend and place them on your schedule and on your phone and computer calendars! As the hymn from the Book of Psalms tells us during the Great Compline service, "God is with us." He has planted the desire for His peace in our hearts and souls. Let's let nothing keep us from it.

### Godparent/Godchild Sunday ..... April 7

Holy Trinity Church will celebrate its annual "Godparent/Godchild" Sunday as is our tradition on the Third Sunday of Lent. To make this a full spiritual family event, we are asking everyone to do invite their Godparents and Godchildren to join us. To assist with that, there are invitations with envelopes available in the Narthex and at

the church office window. Please take one, sign and address it and send it to the one who sponsored you for your Baptism or Chrismation and ask them to join you for this special celebration and for the Philoptochos Lenten Luncheon afterward. If they already entered the joy of eternal life, they will be with us spiritually and in memory, so celebrate for them here!

### "North Hills Orthodoxy" Presanctified Liturgies



There are now three Orthodox Christian parishes in our North Hills neighborhood, growing the presence of Orthodox Christianity together: Holy Trinity, (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese), St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (Orthodox Church of America) and St. John the Baptist (Carpatho-Russian Diocese). In the desire to provide a greater fellowship among our parishes and communities, we will be sharing in three Wednesday Presanctified Liturgies this Lent. The remaining two dates and locations are as follows:

- **Wed. April 3, 6:30pm** - Holy Trinity Church, 985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh
- **Wed. April 10, 6:00pm** - St. John the Baptist Church, 2201 Duncan Avenue Allison Park.

All our parishioners are invited to attend all the services. What a wonderful way to build Orthodox fellowship and a stronger connection among our North Hills sister parishes. Each service will be followed by a Lenten meal. (Note: the remainder of the Lenten Presanctified Liturgies will be held on Wednesday evenings as usual at Holy Trinity Church, followed by a Lenten meal and presentation.

### Lenten Soup Sales

Holy Trinity GOYA is once again offering its very popular Lenten soup 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!

### Lenten Hospitality Hours

Please keep in mind that throughout Lent our Hospitality Hours following the Divine Liturgy observe Orthodox Lenten fasting practices. Any families or ministries hosting a Memorial or Ministry Hospitality Hour and any families hosting providing the Church School snacks are asked to take care that non-meat and non-dairy items are provided. The Hospitality Hour and Church School ministries can provide suggestions if needed. Thank you for helping our community grow in this proper and helpful Orthodox spiritual practice and discipline.

### Lent: A Good Time for Holy Confession

In addition to the special services being held in this holy season, please remember that one of the main focuses of Lent is increased attention to our spiritual life through prayer, fasting and ... Holy Confession. Orthodox Christians should participate regularly in the gift of Holy Confession, and Lent provides a good reminder to do so. Through this Holy Mystery we receive the gift of God's divine forgiveness (John 20.23) as promised by the Lord. We also receive the opportunity to share our deepest concerns and receive counsel and encouragement toward spiritual growth. If you would like to receive this blessing during Lent—or any time—please speak with Fr. John or Fr. Radu to set up a time for Holy Confession. *Kali Metanoia!* (May your repentance be good!)

### Saturday of Lazarus Palm Crosses/Candles... Apr. 27

Calling all Holy Trinity Church School students and staff, their families, friends relatives, and everyone at Holy Trinity Church: Your help is needed to prepare some important items for our Holy Week services! Divine Liturgy is at 9:30 a.m. followed by a Lenten breakfast and the project. Plan to stay and help make the many Palm Crosses (note: everyone can help with this!) as the younger students prepare the cupped candles for Holy Friday and Holy Saturday evenings. The GOYA teens will be setting up for the Palm Sunday luncheon. This is a family event for all.

### GOYA Community Palm Sunday Luncheon.... April 28

The GOYA teen ministry will be hosting their very popular annual Community Palm Sunday Fish Luncheon again this

year in the Grand Room of Holy Trinity Center. Please make plans to attend with your family and be sure to buy your tickets in the Gallery after Liturgy or online at [HolyTrinityPgh.org/events](http://HolyTrinityPgh.org/events) by April 23, because advance purchase is required. Take out will be available, too!

### Help Decorate Kouvouklion on Holy Friday!..... May 3

As we prepare to celebrate Pascha, please consider taking the day off from school or work on Holy Friday. All ages are invited to come to the church and help with decorating the Kouvouklion (the Tomb of Christ) with flowers immediately following the 8:30am Service of the Royal Hours. Important note: this is a family opportunity, not a "drop-off" event. Young children must be accompanied and supervised by a parent or responsible adult.

### Upcoming Lenten Dates

- Godparent Sunday/Philoptochos Lenten Luncheon: Apr. 7
- Saturday of Lazarus/Palm Cross/Candle prep: Apr. 27
- Palm Sunday: Apr. 28
- Holy Week: Apr. 28-May 4
- Holy Friday (schedule off work & school): May 3
- The Great and Holy Pascha: May 5

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

### Readers for Presanctified Liturgies..... Wednesdays

All teen students Grades 5-12 are asked to sign up for readings for Presanctified Liturgies during the following Wednesdays of Lent: April 3, 10, 17 and 24. At least 8 readers are needed for each service. This is a great way for our young people to contribute to the services and the worship life of our church as active participants.

## YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

### GOYA Meeting ..... April 14

The GOYA teen ministry will be holding its monthly meeting on Sunday, April 14, in the Conference Room following Church School. All teens are invited to attend.

### GOYA Bag Lunch for the Needy..... April 20

Attention teens: GOYA will be sponsoring a bag lunch meal for the needy in April. Meals will be assembled on Friday, April 19, after school and distributed on Saturday, April 20. See the GOYA email list for more info.

### Summer Camp Registration Is Open!

The Metropolis of Pittsburgh has announced the dates for its 2024 Summer Camp season. They are as follows:

- Week 1 (Grades 2-4): June 16 - June 22
- Week 2 (Grades 5-7): June 23 - June 29
- Week 3 (Grades 7-9): June 30 - July 6
- Week 4 (Grades 10-12): July 7 - July 13

**IMPORTANT:** The standard fee for 2024 is \$675, but all active youth participants of Holy Trinity Church member families may register for camp using code **"SC24HTP"** to receive \$425 off the registration fee, reducing the fee to only \$250. The code **must** be used at the time of registration. Find information and to register for camp, visit [y2am.pittsburgh.goarch.org/summercamp](http://y2am.pittsburgh.goarch.org/summercamp).

## COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

### Help Clean-Up Holy Trinity Cemetery ..... April 20

Please join other Holy Trinity parishioners on Saturday, April 20 from 9:00am until 4:00pm for Community Clean-Up Day at Holy Trinity Cemetery (8941 Ringeisen Rd Allison Park, PA 15101). Volunteers are asked to help with the general Spring cleaning of the Cemetery grounds. Bring your lawn & garden tools and a pair of work gloves! Topsoil will be provided for those parishioners who would like to work on their family's individual graves. Snacks and drinks will be provided. Rain date if needed, will be Sunday, April 21. All help is greatly appreciated! Questions? Please call Bill Fiedler at 412-364-1545.

### Make Plans for the Anastasi Dinner ..... May 4

Don't forget to make plans to attend the Resurrection Orthros, Liturgy and Dinner on Holy Saturday evening/the early morning hours of Pascha. Following the Paschal Divine Liturgy, join your Holy Trinity family to celebrate the Feast of Feasts at the Holy Trinity family table! Reservations are not required, but there will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex during Holy Week to sign if you plan to attend so we can plan for food preparation.

### Agape Vespers & Paschal Candy Hunt ..... May 5

The Church School ministry is again sponsoring the annual Paschal Candy Hunt on the Main Lawn of the church (weather permitting) on Pascha following the Agape Vespers Service at 12:00 p.m. All the children are invited to come for this bright, beautiful service. It is a great way for those with children who are not able to attend the midnight service to share in a special celebration of Pascha.

### New "Active Older Adults" Ministry Events Update

Holy Trinity Church is pleased and thankful to offer a new ministry, "Holy Trinity Active Older Adults." This group is designed to engage the 60+ members of our community for fun and interesting activities such as get-togethers and day trips. Please note the following changes from last month's flyer:

- The "Paint Party" originally set for March 14 has been rescheduled for Thursday, May 23.
- The Erie bus trip to see the solar eclipse has been canceled.

- The Frick Pittsburgh Museum event originally set for May 8 will be rescheduled for June or later.
- The Flight 93 Memorial trip will be rescheduled for a later date.

For the **"Paint Party,"** come unleash your inner artist and enjoy a glass of wine and appetizers while socializing with your old and newly acquainted friends on Thursday, May 23 beginning at 1:00pm in the Gallery. Take home your masterpiece to display on your wall. The cost is \$36.00 per person. To reserve your spot, please email your reservation to [AOA@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:AOA@HolyTrinityPgh.org) or see or call Tasy at 724-612-9145.

### Hospitality Hour Hosts Needed

Thank you to everyone who has stepped up to host our reformatted "Hospitality Hour" following our Sunday Divine Liturgies. There are a number of available Sundays in the Spring. Remember a loved one. Celebrate a special event. Share your hospitality with the community. Contact Stacy Dickos at 412-298-9409 or email her at [hospitality@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:hospitality@HolyTrinityPgh.org) to reserve.

### 2024 Pilgrimage: "Greece By Faith" .... Sep. 23-Oct. 4

The Holy Trinity Pilgrimage Ministry is pleased to announce its 2024 Pilgrimage: "Greece By Faith." Explore Greece through its Orthodox Christian heritage as we visit famous sites such as Kefalonia (St. Gerasimos), Aegina (St. Nektarios), Meteora (monasteries), and of course we'll visit the Acropolis and many other cultural and historic sites. Whether it's your first trip or you go often, you haven't seen Greece like this before! For information, visit [HolyTrinityPgh.org/2024-greece](http://HolyTrinityPgh.org/2024-greece). **Important: There are still a few spots left and the trip is now open to others outside the Holy Trinity community. Deposits are being accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, so if you're interested, don't wait!**

### 2024 "Stewardship Independence" - Pledge Today!

Thanks to the dedication and offerings of so many faithful stewards, Holy Trinity Church 2023 was a record Stewardship year. However, the Stewardship ministry is raising awareness that even with that level of support, we still are not doing everything we can to keep our church opening and ministering without outside financing. As such, we invite all Holy Trinity Stewards to make a **2024 "Stewardship Independence Pledge"** this year. Many have. Will you? Consider adding your now-complete Capital Campaign annual giving to your Stewardship pledge, or increasing your 2023 pledge by 20%. To enter a pledge, visit [HolyTrinityPgh.org/pledge](http://HolyTrinityPgh.org/pledge). Or you may access your account by visiting [HolyTrinityPgh.org/realms](http://HolyTrinityPgh.org/realms) and click "Sign in". Never logged in? Just enter your email address and click "Forgot Password." Questions? Send a message to [realm@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:realm@HolyTrinityPgh.org). ❖

# Starting LENT With INTENT



**O**n August 7, 2004, runners carrying the flaming Olympic torch were the first ones to cross the brand new Rio-Antirrio bridge, a modern engineering marvel that connected the Western Peloponese with mainland Greece. It was a critical part of the Greek transportation infrastructure that made the 2004 Olympic games, spread over all of Greece, possible. The bridge was dreamed of for hundreds of years but presented many challenging obstacles, including deep water, insecure materials for foundations, seismic

activity, the probability of tsunamis, and the expansion of the Gulf of Corinth due to plate tectonics. How did they do it? Intent. They created the plan. They let nothing stop them. They were bent on intent.

On May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy laid down a daring challenge to a joint session of the United States Congress: "This nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth. Within that very decade, on July 20, 1969, American astronauts Neil Armstrong and "Buzz"

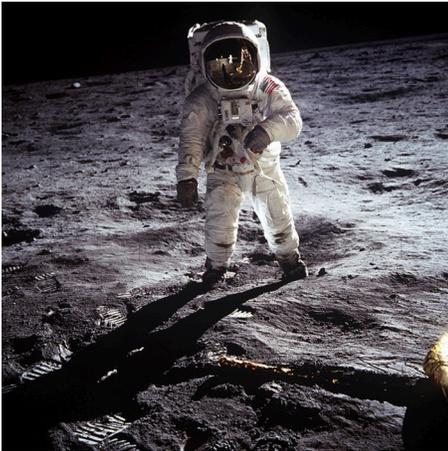
Aldrin became the first humans ever to land on the moon. How did we do it? Intent. We accepted the challenge, stuck to the plan and let nothing stop us. We did not relent on our intent.

Building the impossible bridge. Putting a man on the moon. Makes almost anything we think about doing seem a whole lot easier, doesn't it? But whether it's a large or small goal, it will never happen without that common factor: intent. Strong, persistent and undefeatable intent.

As we enter the holy season of Lent this year, our Lenten theme here at Holy Trinity Church embraces the weeks ahead with the same foundation: intent. The theme, "Lent With Intent" appears in your bulletin today and in the March Herald with its scriptural foundation from Psalm 116: "What can I offer the Lord for all He has done for me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will keep my promises to the Lord in the presence of all His people" (Psalm 116.12-13). "I will. I will." It's stated twice in answer to the question of just what should our response to the Lord be for all His blessings. Not "I might" or "Someday..." but "I will." Deliberate. Intent.

So here we are together today, standing at the doorstep of what many like to call, "The Lenten Journey." So my question for you today is, "What are your intentions?" I use the word intent, well, "intentionally," because it is a powerful word. It is more than just a thought, an idea or even a plan. It carries with it the expectation that something is going to happen and I have a lot to do with it happening. Indeed, you do.

This is not like the first day of a college course where the professor



hands out the syllabus and says (how many times have I heard this), "You will get out of this course what you put into it." That is by no means the message today, because our Lord is far more gracious and encouraging than that. Want to see? Jumping all the way ahead to the Paschal Homily of Saint John Chrysostom, delivered at the Resurrection Service of every Orthodox Church, he affirms that the Lord "accepts the deeds, and welcomes the intent, honors the acts and praises the offering." An ancient writer, Defensor Grammaticus, says likewise, "Our behavior is only acceptable to God if we have the strength of purpose to complete any work we have undertaken."

So it is a good day to ask, "What is my intent for Lent this year?" The easy answer at the surface is that I will pray, fast and give alms, which are generally seen as the three pillars of Lent. But intent starts deeper. It asks more than "what?" It asks "why?" Today's Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans (13:11-14; 14:1-4) looks ahead for the answer to the light of Pascha and calls us to "cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light."

Saint Paul knows our opportunity to do this is now. "Be very careful, then, how you live," he encourages us in Ephesians 5.15-16, "not as unwise but

as wise, making the most of every opportunity." And here is our opportunity. As one writer has said, "Spiritual growth requires an intentional effort. Spiritual stagnation and decline require no effort at all." (unknown)

Let's wrap up today with some encouragement from the hymns of the first week of Lent. What I love about them is they are not commandments, but encouragement. They meet us where we are and lift us up to where we can be...if we have the intent.

Regarding fasting, the Vespers of Pure Monday tomorrow says, "Let us cheerfully begin the season of Lent, and undergo the spiritual struggles. Let us purify and cleanse our souls and bodies. As we fast from foods, let us also abstain from giving in to any of the passions, and instead delight in the virtues of the Spirit."



Regarding giving, the Orthros of the first Tuesday of Lent states, "Let us offer our virtues to God as gifts, and set aside the works of darkness."

And regarding prayer, the Orthros of

the first day of Lent calls us, "Let us shine with the bright radiance of the holy commandments of Christ our God: with the brightness of love and the splendor of prayer."

Intent. It's a powerful word that can yield powerful results when we set out on anything armed with it. And lest we be defeated by setting ourselves up for the failure of pride by thinking it's about checking off a to-do list, remember, it's not about a check-list, it's a heart-check. We cannot earn paradise by our deeds; we can only prepare our heart to receive paradise as a gift from the One who opened it for us through His death and Resurrection.

Christ, the "author of our life," (Heb. 12.2) shapes our future, our reality and who we are made to be. Our intent to make His plan for us a reality is what He waits for in everyone's life. Lent is a great way to let Him know you are ready to try. You can do this. You're not being asked to build the impossible bridge or send a man to the moon. As the saying goes, "Intent makes things happen. Apathy wonders what happened." This Lent, let's start with intent and humbly give the grace of God room to work in our deeds and our heart.

Concluding with some final words from the beautiful hymns of the Church, "The time has come - the start of our spiritual contests, the victory over demons, the full armor of self-control, the angels' dignity, the confidence before God...let us set off on the journey to things above...to see the irresistible beauty of the Master. ... Lord...make us worthy to worship Your Passion and holy Resurrection" (Compilation of hymns). May the Lord bless us, strengthen us and lift us up all as we head into "Lent with intent." Amen.

Delivered March 17, 2024 ❖

The Archdiocese Stewardship theme for 2024 is “Well Done, Good and Faithful Stewards” from the Parable of the Talents. This ties in very well with our own goal this year of Stewardship Independence. We have asked the community to bestow more of the gifts they are blessed with back to God through this ministry. The response has been terrific so far. **We are on the right path to reach our financial goal of Stewardship Independence this year. We are not there yet, so we need those who have not pledged yet to complete a pledge card and those that have pledged, to fulfill their commitment in 2024.**

The Parable of the Talents tells us that we are all blessed with certain gifts. This parable stresses the importance of developing our gifts, multiplying them, and offering them back in service to God. In the Gospel of Matthew, we read the Parable of the Talents, in which a man leaving on a long journey called three of his servants and entrusted to each a certain sum of money measured in talents. To one he gave five, to another he gave two and to the third, he gave one talent. Upon his return, the man called his servants to give account for the money with which he had entrusted them. The first two, by wise use of the money had doubled the amount they had received. To these he praised with the words, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”

The third servant, who had received one talent, out of fear, had buried the talent in the ground. Upon the man’s return, this servant returned to him only the one talent. In anger, the man called him a “wicked and

# Our God-Given Gifts

## Using Them For Their True Purpose

lazy servant,” and taking away the one talent, he gave it to the servant who had ten.

Jesus gave us this parable for us to consider the gifts that God has given us. We all receive different gifts. **If you want to be a faithful servant, then take whatever you have and offer it faithfully to the Lord. It is not about how much ability you have, it is what you do with it.** The gifts we receive are to be multiplied. They are not to be buried in the ground. We were given our church, Holy Trinity, originally built by our ancestors, and re-imagined and rebuilt in our beautiful newly-consecrated facility. This has enabled us to grow and multiply it by adding to the number of faithful and growing her ministries. We can now take the next step in that journey.

**The result of Stewardship Independence will open up immense opportunities to serve our parishioners better, as well as our broader community through outreach, missions, and donations such as the one just made to North Hills Community Outreach this past month.** Those kinds of actions allow Holy Trinity Church to make a real difference in the lives of many people. To make the most of these kinds opportunities we are asking the ministries within Holy Trinity to identify needs in order to enable them to enhance the services we can offer. Financially, we will be better positioned to support the goals of these ministries as we reach Stewardship Independence. Additionally, one of the primary needs of many of the ministries within Holy Trinity is involvement and participation. We need the time and talents of more people in our community to better meet the goals of these ministries.

The Stewardship Ministry thanks the community for enabling Holy Trinity to get to the point where Stewardship Independence is a realistic goal. **With your continued support, we will meet that goal in 2024.** Let’s also make sure to invest and multiply our time and talents as told in the Gospel through service in our ministries. Then, when we reach our Stewardship goals we are also enriching the lives of the Holy Trinity community, the greater community that we live in and all those we serve in the love and name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

For those who have stepped up, “Well Done, Good and Faithful Stewards!” For everyone else, it time to step up, join in and be counted: please pledge today! Click the QR code above or visit [HolyTrinityPgh.org/stewardship](https://HolyTrinityPgh.org/stewardship). ❖



**PLEDGE NOW!**

**QUESTIONS? CONTACT US! WE'RE HERE TO HELP!**  
**Stewardship Questions:** [stewardship@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:stewardship@HolyTrinityPgh.org)  
**Realm Questions:** [realm@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:realm@HolyTrinityPgh.org)

# Living the Beatitudes

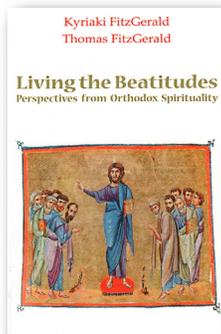
True fulfillment comes not from a set of rules or self-reliance, but from wholeheartedly embracing the teachings of Christ.



“The Orthodox Bookshelf” is a *Holy Trinity Herald* column by Rick Paese focusing on books of Orthodox Christian interest for everyone. Many of the books highlighted will be available for purchase at the Three Hierarchs Bookstore in the Gallery.

We live in a time where self help books are becoming increasingly ubiquitous. With book titles like “7 Habits of Highly Effective People” and “12 Rules for Life,” people are clearly hungry for a simple and short set of tenets to live by to improve their lives and give them meaning. But we know that rules and habits alone cannot give us what we crave. Thankfully, the Orthodox faith offers a timeless set of principles that go beyond mere rules and habits. One such concise list of principles come directly from Jesus’ mouth. These are the Beatitudes taught at the start of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-10). In a few biblical passages, the Beatitudes give the key to a truly fulfilling and blessed life.

The Beatitudes have long been used as a means to teach the Christian faith. In this spirit, “Living the Beatitudes” by Thomas and Kyrriaki FitzGerald concisely explains the meaning of each of the eight Beatitudes and how



to apply them in our lives. Each chapter has a short excerpt from a church father and a prayer related to the given Beatitude. The following gives a few key points for each Beatitude.

## 1: Blessed are the poor in spirit...

To be poor in spirit is to recognize our complete dependence on God. He is the center of our existence. Recognizing our “poverty in spirit” before God is the necessary precondition for spiritual growth.

## 2: Blessed are those who mourn...

We are to mourn over our sins. “Blessed Mourning” is a healthy attitude of the heart when we acknowledge our sin, turn toward God, repent, and commit to avoiding the sin in the future.

## 3: Blessed are the meek...

We are to be gentle and compassionate, just as Jesus showed us during His time on earth. This is not a commandment to be weak or frail.

## 4: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness...

Jesus’s disciples are those who seek after God, the God who first seeks us. When we long and seek after inappropriate attachments, we try to fulfill our longing for God with poor substitutes. This causes us to miss out on the true satisfaction that comes from a union with God.

## 5: Blessed are the merciful...

Mercy is a gift of compassionate love freely offered to another person in imitation of the way God treats us and Jesus illustrated while on earth. None of us are without sin, yet God is still

rich in mercy. We must do the same to others despite their shortcomings.

## 6: Blessed are the pure in heart...

Like the tax collector, we are to approach God with innocence and honesty. We need to truly examine ourselves, including our faults. St. Gregory of Nyssa said, “Our greatest protection is self-knowledge, and the avoidance of the delusion that we are seeing ourselves when we are really looking at something else.”

## 7: Blessed are the peacemakers...

Christians are to share their peace with those around them. However, we need to first seek peace for ourselves, because we cannot give something we do not have ourselves. The word “peace” used in Scripture goes beyond a mere lack of hostility. It is a rich and powerful word which signifies completeness and well being.

## 8: Blessed are those who are persecuted...

When Christ experienced persecution He responded with love, mercy, and forgiveness. We should do the same. When we respond to evil with good we break the power of evil.

As we reflect on the Beatitudes, we are reminded that true fulfillment comes not from a set of rules or self-reliance, but from wholeheartedly embracing the teachings of Christ. “Living the Beatitudes” serves as a reminder that our ultimate source of blessing lies in surrendering to the wisdom and grace found in God’s eternal truths. ❖

Rick Paese

## Jared Box Project Donates Gift Boxes to 250 Children at Local Hospitals!

The Holy Trinity Ladies Philoptochos would like to thank the Metropolis of Pittsburgh GOYAn for assisting in the Jared Box project during the Holy Trinity Basketball Tournament. The boxes were filled as part of the Tournament Friday night service project and were blessed with prayers for the health of the children receiving them in church on Sunday, February 25th. Thank you to all those who donated items for, helped pack or deliver the 250 Jared Boxes for children in local hospitals! With your generous donations and support, we exceeded our initial goal of 200 boxes and were able to help many more children in the Pittsburgh region!



The Holy Trinity GOYA & Philoptochos will be filling boxes for

# The Jared Box Project

to help lift the spirits of children in the hospital

Jared Boxes are plastic shoeboxes filled with small gifts, games, books & other fun activities that are given to children in the hospital to provide a fun diversion.

The boxes will be assembled as a service project during the Holy Trinity hosted GOYA basketball tournament February 16-18, 2024.

We are collecting items for tween & teen boys & girls (8 years old and up): Crayons, markers, colored pencils, pens, coloring books, word searches, doodle pads, writing journals, Silly Putty, stuffed animals, card games, LEGO kits, puzzles, brain games, books, magazines, lip balm, lotion, fun socks, colorful pillowcases, jewelry making kits, craft kits, paint sets, reusable water bottles. Other items that are labeled as suggested for teens. Items don't need to be expensive. The dollar store has lots of great options!

**IMPORTANT:** All items must be new. No food items. No tiny items due to choking hazards. No snow globes or glass items that can break. No pencil sharpeners. No bubbles. No holiday items. Keep in mind, toys need to fit into a plastic shoe box

**YOU CAN HELP!**

- ✓ Learn more at: <https://thejaredbox.org>
- ✓ Purchase dollar store items & drop off in the Gallery between Jan 7 - Feb 11, 2024, or
- ✓ Purchase items from our Amazon Gift Registry "Holy Trinity Pittsburgh GOYA" or by using the QR code

Contact Nicole Steiner, 412-352-0289 for more info



Row 1 (Feb. 25): Holy Trinity Philoptochos members joined other ladies from the Metropolis and the Chancellor, Father George Callos, for a Metropolis Philoptochos Retreat. Row 2 (Mar. 3): Holy Trinity Philoptochos hosted a hugely successful membership luncheon with many in attendance. The ladies enjoyed a wonderful lunch and learned about the many philanthropic activities of this important ministry. Row 2 and 3 (March 12): Enthusiastic volunteers gathered once again to begin prepping food for the annual Holy Trinity "Taste of Greece" Festival, to be held Aug. 29-Sep. 1, 2024. Check the Festival Cooking schedule for upcoming dates.





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Reverend Father John Touloumes, *Proistamenos*  
Reverend Father Radu Bordeianu, *Assistant Priest*

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## GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOTICE AND AGENDA SUNDAY, APRIL 21, FOLLOWING DIVINE LITURGY

March 26, 2024

Dear Parishioners,

Our regular Spring General Assembly will be held on Sunday, April 21, 2024, following the Divine Liturgy. The agenda for the meeting will be as follows:

1. Invocation..... Father John
2. Election of Chairman of the Assembly
3. Reading of Minutes from previous General Assembly ..... Andrew Fournaridis, Secretary
4. Priest's Report..... Father John
5. Parish Council President's Report..... Anthony Balouris
6. Committee Reports
  - a. Financial Committee
  - b. Stewardship
  - c. Church Consecration and Completion Project
  - d. Festival Committee
  - e. Agape Fund
  - f. Cemetery/Chapel Committee
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Adjournment and closing prayer..... Father John

Please be present to participate as part of fulfilling your membership at Holy Trinity Church. Also keep in mind that a completed, signed 2024 Stewardship Pledge Card is required to vote. The Uniform Parish Regulations of the Archdiocese require that new members must be enrolled for at least 90 days before being able to vote.

Sincerely in Christ,

  
+Father John Touloumes  
Protopresbyter

  
Anthony Balouris  
Parish Council President

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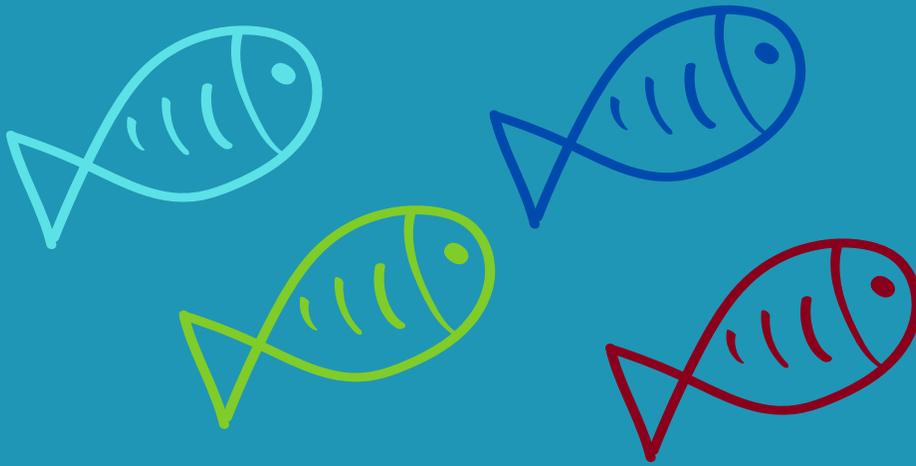
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**SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2024**  
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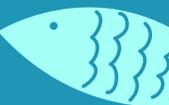
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**CELEBRATE THE  
VICTORY OF  
CHRIST!**



# **THE HOLY TRINITY ANNUAL ANASTASI DINNER**

**Saturday Evening  
May 4, 2024**

**Following the 11:00pm  
Resurrection Divine Liturgy**

**Hosted by the Holy  
Trinity Parish Council**

**Come and celebrate the  
glorious and life-bestowing  
Resurrection with your Holy  
Trinity family! Greek-style  
Roast lamb and more.**

**Free-will offerings accepted**

**CHRIST IS RISEN!  
CHRISTOS ANESTI!**



# Walking Through Holy Week

**Gheronda, there is so much meaning, beauty and richness in the Orthodox experience of Holy Week. Can you walk us through the meaning of each day?**

## Saturday of Lazarus

Jesus, when he had learned that Lazarus was sick, said: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby" (John 11:4). This is how Jesus confronted the issue and it is the way every Christian must confront every piece of information that he gets, every incident that takes place in his life. So let us have trust in the providence of God. That is how Christians must live.

## Palm Sunday

Today we celebrate the great event of the entry of the Lord into the Holy City of Jerusalem. On the one hand, the Lord is the King of Israel; on the other, He is the humble and meek One who enters the Holy City riding upon the colt of a donkey. The humility of the Lord! When man humbles himself, when he is shattered, this is the moment that he is a true man, and he shines with light. We will benefit greatly if our [own] arrogance and egotism are demolished.

## Holy Monday

On Great Monday, the Church instituted the commemoration of Blessed Joseph the All-Righteous. As we know, his siblings wanted to kill him, but in the end they sold him as a slave. As his siblings feared that he might repay them their malicious injustice, Joseph told them: "Don't be afraid. I am a man of God." When

someone is a man of God, He is like God. And God doesn't hate anyone, neither does He envy or take revenge. He is God of love, of mercy and philanthropy.

## Holy Tuesday

[A hymn of the day says], "Strip from me the disfigurement of sin through participation in Your sufferings; clothe me in the glorious robe of Your beauty." If we offer and trust ourselves to God, He will make us as beautiful as He is and will clothe us in the glorious robe of His beauty and grace.

## Holy Wednesday

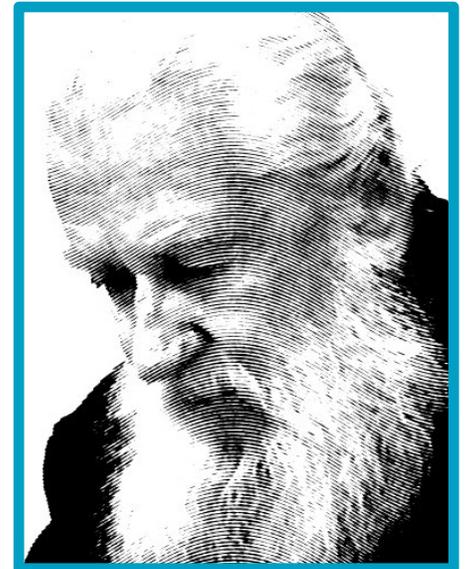
The whole service tonight refers to the sinful woman who nonetheless gained Christ's love and received remission of sins because she repented. In repentance is where the meeting of the Lord with man takes place. God becomes man and saves the sinful person when the person takes an attitude such as is expressed in the following prayer: "I as a man have sinned, but do You as God grant me forgiveness."

## Holy Thursday

Everything that the Lord did for our salvation starts from this day. The Church is Christ's body, because She celebrates the mystery of the Holy Eucharist in which we have the honor to receive the Body and Blood of the crucified Christ. That we receive the Body and the Blood of Christ means that we truly want to be crucified and resurrected with Him.

## Holy Friday

The most crucial time, at the darkest



Elder Symeon Kragiopoulos

moment, when there is no one around Christ, the thief on the cross, being in pain, is enlightened and realizes that Christ is the Son of God. That is why he turns to Christ and says these remarkable words: "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom" (Luke 23:42). [We also] should repeat, with a fresh attitude and with a new state in [our] soul, the words: "Lord, remember me..." And that is when God responds.

## Holy and Great Pascha

For us Orthodox Christians, the fact of the Resurrection of the Lord is a reality in the Church, in worship, and we can live it experientially. Christ is risen! And we live this fact as Christ reveals it to us. We say in the Church's prayer: "We have seen the Resurrection of Christ." We do not say: "We wait for the Resurrection of Christ," nor that we just "believe," but "We have seen!" However, one approaches the Resurrection of Christ with faith, and then—O wonder!—he sees it not with his logic, nor just with his external eyes, but with the eyes of his heart. ❖

Excerpted from  
*Timeless Truths*

**THE HOLY TRINITY**  
**HERALD**  
*Faith. Family. Community*

**About the Herald**

The Herald is the Monthly Newsmagazine of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

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Web site: HolyTrinityPgh.org | Email: office@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Holy Trinity Church is a parish of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh (pittsburgh.goarch.org) and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (goarch.org) under the Spiritual Jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

**Parish Administration  
 Clergy**

Rev. Fr. John Touloumes, Proistamenos  
 Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Assistant Priest  
 Deacon Matthew Palamara, Deacon

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**Ministries**

Please visit the Holy Trinity website at 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! Everyone is welcome!

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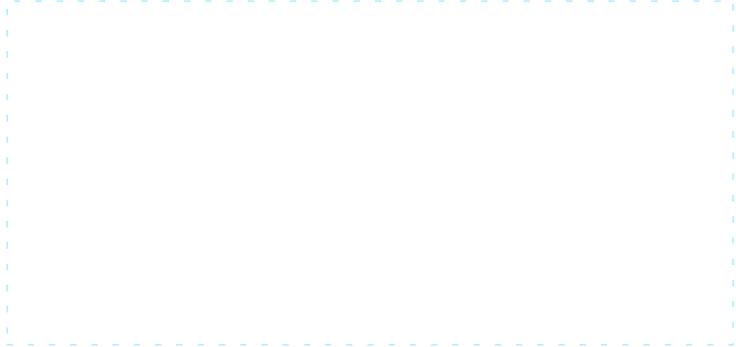
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## JESUS IS HERE



In the life of every disciple of Jesus, there come times when the Master seems to withdraw Himself and to remain absent—as if in some way He is buried. The Galilean women show us what our attitude should be at such moments. They have observed the grave; they know where Jesus is. And we, too, must not doubt that Jesus is there, even if He does not seem to answer, even if He has become invisible: we must keep our eyes fixed, if not on Him, at least in His direction.

From "The Year of Grace of the Lord"  
by a Monk of the Eastern Church