



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

1923 · OUR 79TH YEAR OF MINISTRY · 2002

Our Mission: To proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ

September 2002

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Monthly Parish Newsletter
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Fr. John Touloumes, Ekonomos

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**DON'T FORGET:
CHURCH
SCHOOL
STARTS
SEPT. 8th!**



Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

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Holy Trinity
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The Cultural Side

Michael Kritiotis Voula Hareras
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Publication Schedule

The Herald is published monthly.
The information deadline is the 15th of each
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the Herald, please contact the church secretary
at 412-321-9282 to volunteer your help.

Sponsor an issue
of the Herald in
memory of a loved
one or in honor of
a special event. See
the inside back page
for an individual
sponsor form.



Dear Brothers and Sisters and Christ,

The month of September always seems to provide an opportunity to look forward and look back. For many people, it is a chance to reminisce over summer vacations, visits with family, lighter days and breezy nights. For children and parents, it is a time to look ahead to sports, school, activities and crazy schedules.

For the Church, it is a time to look ahead into the new ecclesiastical year, because from the beginnings of the church calendar in the early centuries, Orthodoxy has counted the beginning of the new year according to the ancient Jewish tradition, which is the beginning of September.

For America, there is a new reason to look both ahead and behind this year. With the observance of one year since the dreadful and horrible terrorist attacks on America of September 11, 2001, this generation of Americans is now grappling with how to commemorate, memorialize or honor the memory of the many innocent victims and their life of American freedom without glorifying the awful intentions and deeds of the perpetrators. This is evident in issues ranging from the reconstruction at "Ground Zero" in New York to the issue of whether or not to make September 11 some sort of official national observance.

But this is not a strange historical experience for Orthodoxy. because unjustified attacks and the martyrdom of innocents are familiar experiences for us. You see, long before the peace and liberty of America was threatened by those with evil intentions, the Greek people of Greece, Asia Minor and Cyprus learned what it meant to have their culture, their faith and their very lives threatened on a daily basis during hundreds of years of religious and political oppression. We are here as a people today thanks to their resolve to stand against such forces with determination and faith.

Those experiences are especially important remembrances to us all as we approach September 11 for the first time since last year. So, as faithful Orthodox Christians, we both set the example and also join all Americans during these days by offering prayers for those martyred and ask, using a phrase from our Memorial Service, "May their memory be eternal!" We also stand by every citizen of this blessed nation with courageous resolve to never allow fear, terror and evil steal from us the God-given blessings of life in this land.

As part of that freedom, we are most thankful to the Lord for this parish and her people, who have used those God-given talents to glorify Him so well. We should all look forward to an exciting Church School year with both veteran and new staff and a new Church School Coordinator; we should all be thankful for all the hard work and love which has brought about what looks to be a record-breaking Festival (this is being written on the first day, which shattered all previous records!); and we should look forward with enthusiasm and great anticipation for news from the Vision Committee on the new property search and the Cemetery Chapel project.

Good things are coming! May the Lord bless us all with the vision to see them and the wisdom to recognize them!

News & Events

YOUTH MINISTRIES

GOYA Kick-Off September 7

The annual GOYA Kick-off will be held at the Kritiotis house at "Limni" on September 7. The family event will include a barbeque, a meeting, fun and, of course, a football game! Information has been mailed directly to the GOYA families. Questions? Call Marios Kritiotis at 412-766-5002.

JOY Kick-Off September

The JOY will be mailing information directly to the homes of the 8-12 year-olds regarding a kick-off event in September. Call JOY Coordinator Penny Georgiadis at 724-935-2383 for more information.

Youth Family Hayride October 12

The youth of our parish and their families are once again invited to participate in the annual Youth Family Hayride at Reilly's Summer Seat Farm. It will be held on Saturday, October 12 starting at 6:15 p.m. All the JOY children, GOYAns and their families are invited to participate. The cost is only \$4.50 (adults and kids over 12) or \$3.50 (children ages 3-12). Children under 2 are free. The group will ride the haywagon first, then gather at the bonfire to roast marshmallows, 'smores and have snacks. Dress warmly and don't forget to bring your roasting sticks!



EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Church School Starts September 8

The first day of classes for the 2002/2003 Church School year will be Sunday, September 8 (the week after the Festival). Please don't forget to bring the children on time at 10:00 a.m. for the service, since the children's sermon—which follows the Gospel reading—will resume on that day. Thank you, parents and staff! May God grant us an illuminated year!

Greek School Underway September 9

Holy Trinity Greek School will resume its program this year starting on Monday, September 9. Classes for children and adults will take place each Monday from 5:30-7:30 p.m. The objectives of the program include:

- Acquiring a comprehension of spoken, written and visual presentations of Greek media.

- Developing a proficient use of the written and spoken Modern Greek language.
- Learning about the Greek Orthodox Faith and traditions, especially as related to the Greek culture.
- Acquiring a well-rounded knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the cultural, historical and artistic developments of the Greek people.

If you have not already signed up, take advantage of this wonderful opportunity now! Help your children develop and grow in their knowledge and appreciation of their Hellenic language and traditions ... and maybe even take advantage of it yourself (adult classes are being offered, too!) Call Effie Kilantonis at 412-821-3291 or sign up at Coffee Hour after Liturgy.

St. Lydia's Women's Fellowship September 12

The St. Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is a ministry for women to share in fellowship and to study scripture, the Orthodox Faith and family life in today's world. The meetings take place every other week on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. at a home in the North Hills. New participants are always welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable and the approach is casual, but the subjects are important for today's families. For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Paula Valliant at 412-487-3977.

St. Nikodemos Men's Fellowship September 12

The St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship meets on the second and fourth Thursday each month from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. at the office of TriadUSA, Suite 460, Two Gateway Center, downtown. The group features prayer, Bible study, topics of interest to Orthodox Christian men and how to live our Faith in the working world. It is open to all interested men and has been centrally located downtown to accommodate those who need to be at work early. For directions, call Gus Georgiadis at 412-880-4999.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Over 50 Club Trip to Lancaster Sept. 30

The Over 50 Club will be travelling to the Jersey Shore and Lancaster County, PA, from September 30 to October 5. Bus transportation and meals are included in the \$335 package. Destinations include Wildwood, NJ, and the Sight & Sound Theatre in Stroudsburg, PA, where the group will attend a musical performance of the Bible story of "Daniel."

News & Events

Additional Stewardship Pledges Received

In addition to the names published in the last issue of *The Herald*, pledges from the following Holy Trinity Stewards have been received to date to help bring us to a **total pledge level of over \$100,000 for the first time in the history of our parish!**

Mr. & Mrs. Gus Passadis

Mr. & Mrs. Alex Trilivas

Thank you, all our good and faithful Stewards! If you have not yet submitted your card, please do so today!

LITURGICAL LIFE

10:00 Divine Liturgy Resumes September 8

On Sunday, September 8, the week following the Festival, Holy Trinity Church will return to its 10:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy schedule. Please don't forget that the children's homily is delivered following the Gospel reading, which takes place early in the service, so be sure to have yourselves and especially your children there on time!

Special 9/11 Commemorations..... Sept. 8, 11

Holy Trinity will offer a series of services com-

memorating those whose lives were lost in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. A special flyer is enclosed. A memorial will be held on Sunday, September 8, following the Divine Liturgy. Services will also be held on September 11 at 10:29 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Holy Cross Vespers & Liturgy Sept. 13, 14

Our sister parish of Holy Cross Church in Mount Lebanon invites us to join them for their feast day Great Vespers on Friday, September 13 at 7:00 p.m., followed by a lenten reception.

We will also join them at Holy Cross Church for Orthros and Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Holy Cross on Saturday, September 14 at 9:00 a.m. (*Note: services for this feast will not be held at Holy Trinity*)

Weekday Liturgies September

In addition to the regular Sunday services and the September 11 services, please make note of the following weekday services in honor of these Feast Days in September. Orthros starts at 9:00 a.m., followed by the Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

Tue. Sept. 17: St. Sophia and her daughters

Mon. Sept. 23: Conception of the Forerunner



By the Grace of God
and

Through the Apostolic Tradition of the Laying on of Hands

His Eminence MAXIMOS

Metropolitan of Ainou, Bishop of Pittsburgh

will ordain

The Servant of God

Ryan Gzikowski

to the Holy Diaconate

Saturday, October 12, 2002

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, 123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA

9:00 a.m. Orthros Service, followed by Hierarchical Divine Liturgy & Ordination

Luncheon Immediately following at Holy Cross Community Center

Everyone Welcome

Contact Kristina Anetakis Gzikowski 412-429-6264



Community Life Photo Journal

An on-going photo journal of scenes from the active parish life of Holy Trinity Church.



HOLY TRINITY ACOLYTES TRAIN & VISIT CARNEGIE SPORTSWORKS

In July, Holy Trinity held a training meeting for its bumper crop of Acolytes. The boys about what it means to serve in the Holy Sanctuary as an assistant to the priest, as well as how to do entrances and other practical matters. Prior to their Acolyte training, they were treated to an afternoon at the



nearby Carnegie SportsWorks, a hands-on interactive sports museum, said to be the largest in the world.

HOLY TRINITY CHILDREN AND ADULTS PARTICIPATE IN VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL



In July, adults and children from Holy Trinity Church participated in the annual Pittsburgh area Orthodox Christian Vacation Church



School, held at Holy Cross Church. Pictured here from L-R are: Fr. John and the Holy Trinity VCS Staff members; George

Touloumes as an old man in one of the morning skits; the entire VCS crew; Eleni Valliant assisting one of the younger students.

AUGUST 15: FEAST OF THE DORMITION OF THE THEOTOKOS

One of the most beloved feasts of the church year is the Holy Dormition of the Theotokos, celebrated August 15. Pictured here are just a few of those gathered to celebrate the feast and their name day. L-R: Maria Georgiadis, Maria Touloumes; Marie (Marika) Backeris; Maria Tzanakos and Peter (Panayiotis) Dickos. May God grant them many years!



If you have photos of events in the life of the parish, please submit them to the Church Office. Please be sure to submit a description of the subject and the date of the photo. All submissions become property of Holy Trinity Church and will not be returned. Inclusion is subject to editorial discretion. Digital photos (from either digital cameras or scanned images) are encouraged and may be sent to herald@HolyTrinityPgh.org. Please use a high resolution setting (150+ d.p.i.) for best printing results.

Know Your Faith: Facing Up to “Mary”

Part of a series of valuable articles intended to help us become familiar with some of the basis teachings of the Orthodox Christian Faith which are often challenged by non-Orthodox friends or others. We owe it to ourselves and the Holy Fathers and Martyrs who fought for and defended the Faith to know the truth of her teachings and be able to share it with others.

This topic is taken from a publication written some years ago by Peter Gilquist prior to his conversion to Orthodoxy and his ordination to the Orthodox Priesthood. He writes from the perspective of an “Evangelical Christian” in hopes of helping the Orthodox better understand the resistance non-Orthodox Christians have to the veneration of the Mother of God.

The Virgin Mary: A Misunderstood Woman

Is it safe to say that no woman in history is more misunderstood by modern Christendom than the Virgin Mary? If I have heard him say it once, I have heard Billy Graham say it at least a half dozen times over the years: ...Evangelical Christians do not give Mary her proper due.

There is no doubt in my mind that he is correct. But his statement raises a crucial question about Mary. What is her “proper due?” Before we look to the Scriptures for some answers, let us acknowledge right up front a problem which makes our task much more difficult than it should be.

The highly-charged emotional atmosphere which surrounds this subject serves to blunt our objectivity in facing up to Mary. Therefore, those ... who were brought up to question or reject honor paid to Mary in Christian worship or art often have our minds made up in advance. That is why we have allowed our preconceptions to color our understanding even of the Scriptural passages concerning her. We have not let the facts speak for themselves.

How to Examine the Issue

As we attempt to face up to Mary honestly and openly, let us turn first to the Bible, the source-book of all true Christian doctrine. We will consider what the New Testament teaches about her, and then we will turn to the Old Testament.

To understand how the biblical record has been applied through the years by Christians, we will look specifically at Church history to understand both how she has been properly honored, and how excessive beliefs concerning her have crept into the picture.

Lastly, we will look at how we must face up to her in light of the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Virgin Mary in the New Testament

What is it, then, that the New Testament clearly teaches concerning the Virgin Mary? The Gospel of Saint Luke, the book of the beloved physician, gives us at least four crucial answers.

1. Mary is the greatest woman who ever lived

Whereas our Lord Jesus Christ tells us there is no greater man to walk the earth than John the Baptist, both the Archangel Gabriel and the saintly Elizabeth confess to Mary, “Blessed are you among women” (Luke 1:28 and 42).

She is the most blessed of women for several reasons, the greatest of which is that she conceived, carried, gave birth to, and nurtured the very Savior of our souls. The One Who today occupies the heavenly throne of David, seated regally at the right hand of God the Father, entered the human race and became our Savior through her womb. She was sovereignly chosen by the Father to bear His only begotten Son.

In that role, Mary is the first person in all history to receive and accept Christ as her Savior. You and I are called to enthrone the Lord in our hearts and lives--to follow her example in doing so. Early in Christian history she is called “the first of the redeemed.”

I remember entering a Church some years ago and seeing a painting or icon of Mary with open arms front and center on the wall (the apse) just behind the altar.

My first impulse was to wonder why Christ alone was not featured at that particular place in the Church, though He was shown in a large circle that was superimposed over her heart. When I asked why she was so prominently featured, the Christian scholar with me explained, “This is one of the greatest evangelistic icons in the entire Church. What you see is Christ living as Lord in Mary’s life, and her outstretched arms are an invitation to you and me to let Him live in our lives as He has in hers.” The power of that icon stays in my mind to this day. For she has set the pace for all of us to personally give our lives over fully to Jesus Christ.

Mary is also blessed because she found favor in the sight of God. Gabriel’s words of encouragement to her were, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you” (Luke 1:28). Then he comforted her by saying, “Do not be afraid, Mary, *for you have found favor with God*” (Luke 1:30, italics mine). What does



Know Your Faith: Facing Up to “Mary”

one do to become one of God’s favorites, to be favored by Him? Remember Cornelius in Acts 10? He was the first Gentile to convert to Christ, “a devout man and one who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always” (Acts 10:2). Two verses later he is told in a vision, “Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.” The Lord took notice of his deeds of devotion and brought him salvation. In a similar way, Mary’s purity found favor with God, and she was chosen to bear His Son.

You say, “Wait a minute! Are you suggesting human merit earns salvation?” Not at all! As commendable as it is for us to live in purity, a devout life never merits salvation, or why would Mary be called first of the redeemed, and why would Cornelius be baptized into Christ by Saint Peter? Prayer and devotion, however, do gain God’s attention. When we seek Him with all our hearts, we do find Him! Do you want to be favored of God? Then give Him everything you have, give Him your very life. This is precisely what Mary did, and why she is to be considered the greatest woman who ever lived.

2. Mary is our model for Christian service

While God certainly knew Mary desired to please Him, He did not take her servitude for granted. The angel explained how she would bear Christ. “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest [God the Father] will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One Who is to be born will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

Now Mary had a decision to make. Was she willing? Hear her answer, for it is the doorway to the life of spiritual service for all of us. “Behold the maid-servant of the Lord!” she said. “Let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). Even if we are totally sincere about wanting to follow God, He will never conscript us apart from our consent! This is why He is called “the God of all grace” (1 Peter 5: 10). We are to choose freely to obey Him and do His will.

Some thirty years later, by the way, Mary again had opportunity to exalt her Lord. She was with Jesus at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. The servants who were in charge of the celebration discovered they were out of wine. Mary had no doubt as to who could solve their problem. Referring to her Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, she told them, “Whatever He says to you, do it” (John 2:5).



3. Mary is the Mother of God

Now things get a bit more touchy for some of us. Here is one of those emotional trouble spots I mentioned earlier. Whether we like to face it or not, the Bible teaches Mary is the mother of God. First let’s look at the text, then we will discuss why this title is so important to our lives as Christians in the Church.

After Christ had been conceived in her womb, Mary paid a visit to the home of relatives Zacharias and Elizabeth, soon to be parents of John the Baptist. When Mary greeted her cousin, Elizabeth called her blessed and said, “Why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Luke 1:43). Elizabeth knew that her Lord, the Messiah of Israel, was in the womb of Mary.

This tide took on great importance in the fourth century, when a heretic named Nestorius—a man who held high office in the Church—claimed that the one in Mary’s womb was certainly man, but that He was not God. Orthodox Christians, with one accord, said, “Wrong!” To see Jesus Christ as something less than God in the flesh is sub-Christian. For unless the one in Mary’s womb was and is God, we are dead in our sins. To safeguard the full deity of Christ, the Church has always insisted that Mary be rightly called—as Elizabeth called her—the Mother of God. This title, of course, does not mean mother of the Holy Trinity, for the Holy Trinity has no mother. Neither does it mean she originated the Person Who is God the Son. It refers instead to Mary being the Mother of the Son of God, Who assumed full humanity in her womb.

Just as we insist on the Virgin birth of Christ, we also insist that for the nine months she carried Him in His humanity He was at every moment fully God as well. Thus we say boldly and with great insistence that Mary is the Mother of God, Theotokos, God-bearer. To say anything less is to side with those who deny His deity.

When a man buys a large plot of land and turns cattle out to graze on it, he fences in his acreage. He does so to protect his cattle, to keep them from wandering off, and to discourage rustlers. Similarly, the Church sets doctrinal fences around its foundational truths. And nothing is more basic and important to us than the deity of Christ. Because Christ is God, we set a firm and non-negotiable fence around His divinity by our unmoveable confession that Mary is Mother of God.

(Continued next issue)

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά



Michael Kritiotis

A Trip to the Holy Monastery of the Panayia of Kykkos in Cyprus

During our recent trip to Cyprus, we were fortunate to visit and spend the night at Kykkos, the largest and most famous monastery on the island. I thought its stories, traditions and pictures were worth sharing.

History of the Monastery

The Holy Monastery of the Panayia of Kykkos was founded around the end of the 11th century by the Byzantine emperor Alexios Komnenos (1081 - 1118).

According to tradition, a virtuous hermit, called Isaiah, was living in a cave on the mountain of Kykkos. One day, the Byzantine governor of the island Manuel Voutoumites went into the forest to hunt. Having lost his way in the forest, he met monk Isaiah and ordered him to show him the way. When the hermit would not answer his questions, Voutoumites got angry with the monk's indifference, called him names and treated him badly. Not long after, though, when the governor fell ill with a mysterious illness, he remembered how inhumanly he had treated the hermit Isaiah and asked God to cure him so that he might go to ask the hermit personally for forgiveness. His illness was then cured.

But God had appeared in front of the hermit and revealed to him that what had happened had been planned by the divine will and advised him to ask Voutoumites to bring the icon of the Virgin that had been painted by the Apostle Luke, to Cyprus. The icon was kept in the imperial palace at Constantinople. When Voutoumites heard the hermit's wish he was taken aback because he considered such a thing impossible. Then Isaiah explained to him that it was a matter of divine wish and they agreed to travel together to Constantinople.

Time was passing and Voutoumites could not find the right opportunity to present himself in front of the emperor and ask for the icon. Then, by divine dispensation, the daughter of the emperor fell ill with the same illness that had struck Voutoumites. The latter grasped the opportu-

nity and went to see the emperor Alexios. He recounted to him his personal experience with the monk Isaiah and assured him that his daughter would be cured if he sent to Cyprus the holy icon of the Virgin. In his desperation, the emperor agreed. His daughter became well instantly. The emperor, however, not wanting to be parted from the original icon, called a first-class painter and ordered him to paint an exact copy of the icon with the aim of sending this one to Cyprus.

In the evening the Mother of God herself appears in a dream of the emperor's and tells him that her wish is for her icon to be sent to Cyprus and for the copy to be kept by the emperor. On the following day the royal boat with the icon of the Panayia departed for Cyprus. During the

A view of the Monastery from above



The amazing "Kneeling Pine Tree"

their trunks and branches (we were led onto a path where, to this day, a large "kneeling pine tree" still exists – see photo). With patronage provided by the emperor, a church and monastery were built at Kykkos, where the icon was deposited.

A catastrophic fire broke out in 1365. The main church burned down together with many documents and relics. Fires of similar dimensions took place in 1541, 1751 and 1813. Each time, interior decorations and the library were destroyed. That's why only little written evidence of the early history has been preserved.

procession of the icon from the coast to the mountains, according to legend, the trees, participating in the welcoming ceremonies, were piously bending

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The Main Church ("Basilica") of the Monastery

The Monastery Buildings

The main church is a basilica (photo of the inside of the church, above). The iconostasis may be dated to the 18th century. Some of the icons in the iconostasis come from the 17th century. The frescoes in the main part of the restored church were painted recently by the well-known Cypriot painter. The frescoes in the other buildings in the monastery (photo below) were done a decade ago by Greek, Romanian, Serbian, Bulgarian and Cypriot painters. Impressive are the mosaics on the walls, a recent work by a Cypriot artist.

To safeguard the treasures from future natural disasters and to share them with the public, a large, modern museum was recently completed on the premises. Despite the many times fires claimed ecclesiastical artifacts over the centuries, we were astonished at the collections kept there. One can view icons from the 11th century on, crosses, relics, vestments, golden shrines and other objects of historical value. In addition, there are numerous old books. The finest among them are the printed Russian gospels decorated with precious stones which were presented to Kykkos in the 18th and 19th centuries by various dignitaries.

Under Turkish rule, it was prohibited to call the faithful to divine service with bells. Only at the end of the 19th century was it permitted to build a bell tower in which five bells hang. The heaviest one weighs 1280 kilograms, according to an inscrip-

tion underneath the edge of the bells it was a gift of the Russian Tsar Peter the Great and his wife Catherine. Today, a multiple bell tower looms on the mountainside over the monastery, its majestic bells echoing through the valleys for miles.

A charred arm hangs in front of the holy icon. The elder in the church quietly told the story of an arrogant man who many years ago, entered the church with an unlit cigarette in his mouth. When he was asked to put it away, he instead took a candle in front of the icon and lit his cigarette. His hand and arm instantly burned to the elbow!

Two "ksenones", or guest buildings were recently renovated and expanded, where faithful travelers can stay overnight at no cost. While there, we traveled a short distance to the top of the mountain overlooking the monastery. There, is what they call the "Throni Tis Panayias" (Panayia's Throne), a small chapel, appropriately named, with commanding views of all the mountain ranges around it. A path from there leads to the tomb of the Archbishop and first president of Cyprus, Makarios. Still guarded by two ceremonious soldiers, the spot was hand-picked by Makarios while he frequently came to pray in the serenity of the Throni and when he realized that he could also see his ancestral village from there.

A pilgrimage to Kykkos is a must if you visit Cyprus. Much information is now on the Internet as well.

Interesting Fact: This year, during the feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos, 30,000 pilgrims visited the monastery of the Panayia on the island of Tinos. The line to venerate the holy icon stretches to the entrance of the harbour. The faithful leave \$300,000 in donations, much of which is used to help charities.



Additional monastery buildings at Kykkos

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά



Vicky Bellios

Αφιερωμένο Σ'Αυτούς Που Χαθήκαν Στις 11 Σεπτεμβρίου 2001

A Greek-language poem dedicated to those who lost their lives in the attacks of one year ago on September 11th.

Τι ημέρα, Θεέ μου,
θληβερή 11 Σεπτεμβρίου;
Ημέρα μαύρη,
άχαρη θανάτου μακαβρίου.

Μακάβριο το θέαμα
χιλιάδες οι ψυχούλες
Που έσβησαν και εχάθηκαν
σαν του χιονίου νυφούλες.

Πατέρες έχασαν παιδιά,
Μητέρες τα δικά τους,
Παιδάκια την μανούλα τους,
Και άλλα τον μπαμπά τους.

Πως, Θεέ μου, είναι δυνατόν
να ζη τόση κακία
και οι άνθρωποι να φέροντε
σαν άγρια θηρία.

Άνθρωποι που δεν γνώρισαν
το τι θα πη αγάπη
και έσπειραν τον θάνατο
με πείσμα και ινάτι.

Τα δύο ωραία κτήρια
που στολίζαν την πόλη
δέχτηκαν την καταστροφή
απ' του εχθρού το βόλι.

Με τα αεροπλάνα μας
κλθαν να μας χτυπήσουν
και τ'ομορφα τα δίδημα
να κατακρημνήσουν

Μα ο Θεός ο δίκαιος
που δεν ξεχνά κανένα,
θα μεριμνήση να δοθή
δίκη εις το καθένα

Και αυτοί που θησιάστηκαν
για όλους συνανθρώπους
θα τους δεχθή εκεί ψηλά
στους άγιους το τόπους.

Τιμή αξίζει εις αυτούς
που έδωσαν τη ζωή τους
και έσωσαν τη Πατρίδα τους
με τη στερνή πνοή τους.

Διαλύθηκαν όλοι τους
και σβύσαν σαν κεράκια
μα βρίσκονται εκεί ψηλά
με τα αγγελουδάκια.

Η χώρα αυτή δεν χάνεται, όσο και να υποφέρει
Γιατί ο Θεός την ευλογή, και τήνε προστατεύει.

Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update

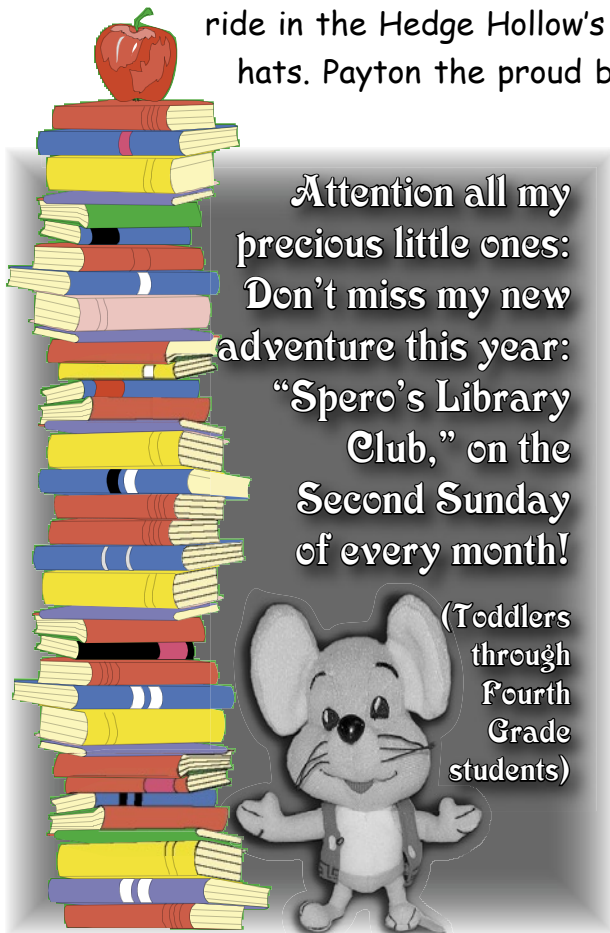
Welcome back to Church School, all of my precious children! How I missed you while I was on my exciting mission trip to Tanzania this summer! Even though I know that you attended church all summer while I was gone, I wish that we had been together to play and read! In fact, my sister, Zoe, missed my stories so much, she is driving me craaazzy! You can see us on my first day back, reading a story to her, of course! She really had fun with you this summer on her Summer Bible Tour with Yiayia. Thanks for being with her!



Well, here is our reading for the month of September. My little ones, have you ever bragged by saying, "Look at all I can do"? Or, "Look at how important I am". Our reading is from the book "Mookie and the Too Proud Peacock", by Kari Smalley-Gibson. The message from this book is that Our Heavenly Father has given each one of us special skills, talents, and gifts even though sometimes we do not know what they are and cannot see them. These gifts are not ours. They belong to God. He provides us with the gifts that He chose specially for us. In this story, Mookie, the beaver, and his forest friends are very excited because they get to ride in the Hedge Hollow's Summer Parade and wear their specially made hats. Payton the proud beautiful peacock boastfully brags that his hat

will be the best, and only he will get to ride at the top of the float. He finds out the hard way that no one likes this kind of an attitude of being a braggart. Payton hurt others and doesn't care. But then something disastrous happens. He develops a serious disease which is called bragging disease. He learns the importance of helping the forest animals grow their special talents instead of worrying about his own.

The greatest gifts that you have to give are loving and serving others. So the next time that you start to brag, remember what the Bible says, "Do not do anything only to get ahead. Do not do it because you are proud". (Philippians). Don't forget ... always be HUMBLE! Love In Christ, Spero



Attention all my precious little ones:
Don't miss my new adventure this year:
"Spero's Library Club," on the Second Sunday of every month!

(Toddlers through Fourth Grade students)

Gheronda's Corner: "The Measure of God's Love for Us"

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



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

**Sunday Before The
Exaltation Of The Precious
And Life-giving Cross**

The Nativity Of Theotokos

Gospel: John 3,13-17

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God

sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." (John 3: 16,17)

The Son of God was sent into the world not to condemn it but to bring it to salvation. The Son of God came to seek out those who were lost, to heal those who were sick, to change the lives of sinners, to bring eternal life.

The promises of the old covenant (agreement) were chiefly concerned with life on the earth. For example the promised land was God's blessing on His people, but a blessing of limited duration. The promises of the new covenant (agreement) brought by Jesus Christ far surpass the promises of the old covenant. Jesus promises eternal life. What Jesus came to bring us, not even death can take away.

Jesus is the measure of God's love for us. God loved the world so much that despite its sin He sent His own Son into the world to give eternal life to those who would accept His Son. God saw the world's desperate need for His love, and loved it without reserve. The creator stooped to walk among His creatures. The creator of the universe took on Himself the sins of His creatures by becoming one of them.

This is the measure of God's love for us, that He came in person to offer us eternal life. The gift He would give us goes far beyond anything we can imagine or dare to ask for. And He came in person to deliver it to us. He came in person to bring us to eternal life.

"I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Matthew 9:13)

What did Jesus do when He lived among us? He went about giving sight to the blind, full health to the paralyzed, life back to the dead. He cast out demons and taught those who were hungry for God's word. He sought out those that no one else cared for.

Jesus revealed God's love in all that He did. When He saw the state that people were in He was far from indifferent to their suffering. He cared that they were dejected; He felt genuine sorrow for them.

Jesus showed a special love for those who were otherwise unloved. He did not hesitate to make friends with tax collectors and people whom everyone recognized as sinners- those who were rejected by society. Jesus extended His love to them because they needed it the most. He took the first step of reconciliation with sinners precisely because they were sinners and needed reconciliation. He never told them that it was perfectly all right for them to keep on sinning (just as a doctor would never advise a patient to continue being sick). Rather He provided them a way out of their sins; He invited them to a new life in Him.

God's love for us has been revealed in Jesus Christ. He cares about us. He is concerned for us. He extends forgiveness and healing to us because He knows we need it. He seeks us out, no matter who we are or what we think of ourselves.

*"Let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy."*

**Our Father, Who art in heaven,
thank You for sending Your
Son into the world. Thank
You for calling us to everlasting
life in Your presence. We
embrace Your Son as our Lord
and Savior. Lord Jesus Christ,
thank You for coming among**

**us to reveal God's love. Thank You for loving us
with an unlimited love. Thank You for loving us and
wanting us to have abundant life. Amen.**



Diocese of Pittsburgh Youth Ministries 2002-2003 Calendar

For Additional Information on the Youth and Young Adult Programs on this calendar contact:

Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh – Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Vasie-Leigh Chames, Youth and Young Adult Ministries Coordinator

5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232 • 412-621-8543

E-mail: youth@odpgh.org or check the Diocese Website for calendar updates at www.odpgh.org/youth

SEP

Sunday, September Beginning of the Ecclesiastical New Year
Saturday September 28 Basketball Seminar – St. Paul, North Royalton, OH

OCT

Sunday, October 6 Basketball Seminar – St. Nicholas, Pittsburgh, PA
Thursday, October 3 Youth Commission Meeting – Diocese Headquarters, Pittsburgh, PA
Thursday, October 17 Fall OCF Dinner – Duranti's Restaurant, Pittsburgh, PA (Oakland)
Wednesday October 23-25 Diocese Clergy-Laity – Holy Cross, Pittsburgh, PA
Friday October 25-27 Diocese Young Adult Leadership Retreat – Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA

NOV

Friday, November 8-10 Diocese Folk Dance Festival, Holy Trinity Cathedral, Camp Hill, PA
Friday, November 22-24 GOYA Fall Retreat – Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA

DEC

Sunday, December 1 Basketball Signature Forms Due
Thursday, December 26-30 Pan-Orthodox College Conference – Antiochian Village

JAN

Friday, January 17-19 Diocese Basketball Tournament – Annunciation Akron, OH
Thursday, January 23 Youth Commission Meeting – Diocese Headquarters, Pittsburgh, PA

FEB

Thursday, February 20 .. Orthodox Campus Fellowship Speaker/Dinner – Duranti's Restaurant, Pittsburgh (Oakland)
Friday, February 21-23 Basketball Tournament – Locations TBA

MAR

Friday, March 7-9 Basketball Tournament – Locations TBA
Monday, March 10 **Pure Monday – Great Lent Begins**
Saturday March 29 Diocese Volleyball Tournament – St. Nicholas, Pittsburgh, PA

APR

Friday, April 4-6 GOYA Spring Retreat #1 – Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA
Friday April 11-13 GOYA Spring Retreat #2 – Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA
Dates TBA April Regional Oratorical Festivals (Call the Diocese to confirm the date in your region)
Sunday, April 20-April 26 **HOLY WEEK**
Sunday, April 27 **HOLY PASCHA**

MAY

Saturday, May 10 Diocese Oratorical Festival – Diocese Headquarters
Friday, May 18 “Back to our Orthodox Roots” Retreat – St. Nicholas Cathedral, Pittsburgh, PA
Thursday, May 22 Youth Commission Meeting – Diocese Headquarters, Pittsburgh, PA
Saturday, May 31 Counselor Orientations – Pittsburgh & Lancaster, PA

JUN

Tuesday, June 17 GOYA Day at Cedar Point, OH
Sunday June 15-21 JOY Summer Camp, Session 1 – Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA
Sunday, June 22-28 JOY Summer Camp, Session 2 – Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA
Sunday, June 29-July 5 GOYA Summer Camp, Session 3 – Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA

JUL

Sunday, July 6-12 GOYA Summer Camp, Session 4 – Camp Nazareth, Mercer, PA
Thursday, July 3-July 7 National Young Adult Conference – Baltimore, MD
Tuesday, July 22 Greek Day At Kennywood – Pittsburgh, PA

AUG

August (Dates TBA) Project Mexico – Tijuana, Mexico
Friday, August 15 Young Adult Summer Social – Pittsburgh, PA
Saturday, August 16 Counselor Reunion – Angel's Acres, Canonsburg, PA

Building An Architecture of True Orthodox Vision

Tenth in a series of educational articles by respected Byzantine architect Christ J. Kamages. Reprinted from "The Christian Activist" magazine to raise an awareness of the history, tradition and thought behind traditional architecture in the Greek Orthodox Church as our community looks toward making informed and educated decisions in the building projects which lie ahead.

I See a Variety of Expressions of Iconscreens. What is the Tradition of—and Appropriate Approach to—the Iconscreen (continued from last issue)

Most churches still had the typical Byzantine chancel barrier at the beginning of the fifteenth century. But it was in process of being transformed into what is now regarded as the typical Orthodox iconostasis.

The icons of Christ and the Mother of God had only a short distance to move in order to occupy their now traditional places in the screen, to south and north respectively, of the holy doors. The Annunciation, often to be found in the spandrels of the arch above the chancel barrier, came down to occupy the upper panels, or the whole, of the doors themselves.

The "Deesis" (an icon of Christ, flanked the Theotokos and St. John the Baptist, both in a prayerful stance, pictured below) remained above the architrave, and so did the great feasts, expanded to form a complete series and placed above the Deesis, to which further saints were added, all turned towards the central figure of Christ in supplication. As the iconostasis, or templon as it was often called, grew, another rows of prophets and patriarchs were placed above the festal icons.



"Although mosaics are an expression of Byzantine culture, one must consider carefully the appropriateness of this form for the Iconscreen."

(Pictured here: portions of the 17th century icon screen from the Monastery of Simonpetra, Mt. Athos)



The Problem of the Later Development of High, Multi-Level Iconscreens

At its highest point of development the iconostasis completely filled the nave [from floor to ceiling]. It is generally held that this form was developed in Russia and spread thence to Mount Athos, and on to the Greek and other Slavic churches.

The [problematic] effect of this development was to complete the process by which the people were cut off both from hearing the central prayers and seeing the central actions of the Liturgy. These became the exclusive preserve of the clergy, who, alone by virtue of their ordination, could hear, see and touch the mysteries which were too holy for the laity to approach, and

which they only rarely received in Holy Communion. Popular eucharistic devotion was focused on the icons which they could venerate and before which they could pray, and on those parts of the service which they could contemplate the saving life and work of Christ.

Since there is a clear attitude pattern distinguished at the fourteenth century on separation in a physical, permanent sense, I would venture to add that there is room in our current discussion of the nature of the Iconscreen to revisit the issue of the degree and [problematic nature of this separation.]

The Iconscreen has a rich historical genealogy, and the form of its manifestation needs to be evaluated in the context of the historical perspective and a prayerful, systematic discussion of what is the nature of "separatism" and its implications.

Should Mosaic Icons Be Used for Iconscreens?

Although mosaics are an expression of Byzantine culture, one must consider carefully the appropriateness of this form for the Iconscreen. Iconography

occurs through a prescribed prayerful process, which is based upon holy traditions and the faithful execution by an Orthodox iconographer. To my knowledge, mosaics have developed historically as a decorative art and were developed to be viewed from a reasonable distance based upon the size and scale of the mosaic tiles. Furthermore, I know of no theological process or tradition tied to the beautiful craft of

mosaic decoration. Therefore, mosaic icons should not be used for veneration, and if there are Iconscreens with existing mosaic images, I would suggest a hand-painted icon be installed of the corresponding image (if not already provided), so that veneration would be consistent with the teaching of the Church.

(Continued next issue...)

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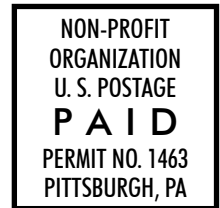
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The Spiritual Role of the Family

If we are responsible for developing the character of our children so that they mature into godly people, we must start young, taking every opportunity available to shape their minds and hearts. The best way to do this is through the deliberate, systematic teaching of Christian values.

This is not the job of the Sunday school teacher; the teacher's task is to reinforce what we should have already communicated at home. Instilling appropriate values in our children is one of the best investments we can possibly make since those values influence the ways in which we see and respond to the world.



Perhaps the most powerful teaching "tool" at our disposal is our own example. Our family members learn best by observing what we do. This is one of the reasons why it is so critical that we embrace a biblical world view; as our minds and hearts are influenced by God's principles, our behavior will be affected. That behavior then influences the thinking and actions of those who watch what we do.

We can also convey values through a direct course of education. Working with our family we may engage in activities that we have intentionally selected as a means to teach appropriate values (for example, abandoning the TV set for a few hours to work together at a soup kitchen, or taking time for family devotions). We may jointly analyze value-laden experiences, such as talking about the assumptions and values built into a movie or TV show, or reflecting on how someone has treated us and how we may properly respond.



From "The Second Coming of the Church" by George Barna