



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

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THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

1923 · EIGHTY-ONE YEARS OF MINISTRY · 2004

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

January 2004

www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

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Saint Basil the Great - Feast Day: January 1



Raised by parents of unusual devotion, St. Basil and his five brothers and sisters became priests, monastics and bishops. All became saints of the Church in the fourth century. St. Basil distinguished himself as a hierarch, writer, theologian and administrator of the early Church, establishing written rules for monasticism as well as orphanages and hospitals.

Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

Parish Newsletter of
Holy Trinity
Greek Orthodox Church
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Pittsburgh, PA 15212
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The Cultural Side

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Publication Schedule

The Herald is published monthly.
The information deadline is the 15th of each
month. If you would like to assist with mailing
the Herald, please contact the church secretary
at 412-321-9282 to volunteer your help.

This issue of
The Herald
is sponsored
in memory of
Maria Elderkin
by
Father John, Presvytera
Becky and family
May her memory
be eternal!



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

DO any of the following exciting announcement from various walks of life sound familiar to you?

"Look, Mommy, I don't need training wheels any more! I can do it myself, watch! Can you ask Daddy to take mine off?"

"After years of intensive research, it gives me great pride as chairman of this pharmaceutical company to announce today a new life-saving treatment..."

In both cases, there are two important things for us to note: 1) Both the little boy and the big company have been working hard at a goal for a long time; 2) They have "arrived" and are very excited about it. What does that have to do with Holy Trinity Church? Everything. Read on.

We have just concluded our 80th year as a parish. I have concluded my 10th year here as the spiritual father for this flock of Christ. Together, we have been at work for a long time on many aspects of our very important mission: "To proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ." As our Vision Committee, Parish Council, General Assembly and many parishioners have noted, we are ready to make a serious step forward in fulfilling that mission by moving this community into the next phase of its life and to its next location. It is now time to fully commit to that, together, with one mind and one heart.

Perhaps some of us have been wondering when the things that need to happen to make that possible are going to start to happen. In answering that question, I turn to the letter enclosed with your 2004 Stewardship packet: "Looking ahead, we believe that 2004 should be the "breakthrough" year for Holy Trinity Church... Together, we are poised to move Holy Trinity Church, her ministries and her families into the next exciting phase in the evolution of our parish."

For each of us, just the thought of it should bring about both the excitement of the child who is ready to grow into his or her new world. But it should also inspire and enthuse us that we are, like the drug company cited above, ready to make a life-saving breakthrough: we are ready to become the light on the hill and the calling to salvation that God has prepared for those who love Him. There are people out there waiting to hear this life-saving news!

Yes, 2004 ~~can~~ *must* be the year! Take your Stewardship and other parish commitments seriously. Step up when you are asked ... *and you will be asked this year*. Get on board: it's going to be an exciting time!

May our Lord grant a blessed and peaceful New Year to all!

News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Church Christmas Pageant December 21

The Holy Trinity Church School ministry will be offering its annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 21. All the students of the Church School will be involved in this event. On that day, following Holy Communion, all Church School students and staff will depart for their classes and final preparations for the pageant. All our parishioners are asked to stay for the pageant and coffee hour in the social hall

No Church School Class December 28

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on December 28 due to the holiday celebrations, so please plan on being in church together as a family for the entire service on that day. Thank you!

St. Lydia's Women's Fellowship January 8, 22

The St. Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is a study of 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. 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 Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925. A complete schedule of dates and topics can be found on our web site at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org. For January, the topics are as follows:

January 8: Liturgy: Here and Beyond/The Liturgy & the Bible

January 22: A Consistent Life Ethic/The Manipulation of the Human Person

St. Nikodemos Men's Fellowship Jan. 13, 27

The St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship is an Orthodox men's fellowship, study and discussion group which meets **on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at from 12:15 to 12:50 p.m.** at the office of TriadUSA, Suite 460, Two Gateway Center, downtown. The group seeks to provide a regular meeting for working men to discuss issues of faith, work and family. It is open to all interested men and has been centrally located downtown to accommodate easy access for the lunchtime meetings. They are currently studying different issues of contemporary life and faith, as well as the Epistles of St. John. For directions, call Gus Georgiadis at 412-880-4999. A complete schedule of dates and topics can be found on our web site at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

YOUTH MINISTRY

GOYA Hoagie Sale February 1

The GOYA will be pre-selling hoagies during January for Superbowl Sunday on February 1. Please support our teens in this effort, which helps raise funds for the various events of the GOYA, outreach projects, trips and the Diocese basketball tournaments. Thanks!

COMMUNITY NEWS

Holy Trinity New Year's Eve at PNC Park . . . Dec. 31

Don't wait! Call today for your reservations for Holy Trinity's New Year's Eve at the Home Plate Club at PNC Park. Call Arnette Georges at 412-364-5589.

Year-End Stewardship Donations

The Parish Council thanks all our Holy Trinity Stewards for their pledges and contributions this year. Please take note that all offerings you would like listed as received during the 2003 tax year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31) for tax deduction purposes must be received at the church by Dec. 31. This is an IRS regulation. You may indicate the offerings to apply for either your 2003 pledge (to pay the balance) or the 2004 pledge (to pay ahead) and your pledge balance will be accurately calculated no matter when the offering is made, but if you desire a 2004 tax year receipt, the offering must be received by Dec. 31. Year-end statements will be sent out at the end of January. Thanks!

Snow Line. 412-321-9282, Option "6"

Please keep in mind over the winter months that the Holy Trinity "Snow Line" is available to check for the cancellation of events in the case of snow or inclement weather. Call the church office after hours, then select option "6" to hear announcements of any cancellations.

LITURGICAL LIFE

Paraclesis Service. January 7

On the first Wednesday of each month, Holy Trinity Church offers a Paraclesis service to the Theotokos for the well-being of our community, her parishioners and others whose names are offered. This is a beautiful service and a wonderful way to offer spiritual support for your Church and your loved ones. Please also bring a list of the names of people you would like prayed for during the service. The service is at 6:00 p.m.

Vasilopita Celebration January 11

The Philoptochos will sponsor the annual Vasilopita

News & Events

Celebration on Sunday, January 11, following Divine Liturgy. In addition to commemorating the Feast of St. Basil, a collection will be taken to benefit St. Basil Academy, the young people's philanthropic institution run by the Archdiocese in Garrison, NY.

Weekday Liturgies January

Please keep in mind the following festal celebrations during the month of December. Unless otherwise noted, each listing indicates Orthros at 9:00 am, followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am.

Wed. Dec. 31 St. Basil the Great
This will be a Vespertal Liturgy for January 1, held the evening of the feast at 5:30 p.m., prior to the New Year's Eve celebration.

Mon. Jan. 5 Forefeast of the Theophany of our Lord
This is the first of two Divine Liturgies and services of Great Blessings of the Water service offered for Theophany.

Tue. Jan. 6 The Theophany of our Lord
This is the main Liturgy of this great Feast and offers the Great Blessings of the Water service.

Wed. Jan. 7 St. John the Baptist & Forerunner

Sat. Jan. 17 St. Anthony the Great
Note: Liturgy for St. Anthony will be held at St. Anthony Church in Clairton with His Eminence, Metropolitan Maximos.

Fri. Jan. 30 The Three Hierarchs
Note: Liturgy for the Three Hierarchs will be held at Holy Cross Church, home of the Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School, which celebrates its feast day on this day..

House Blessings January

Services for Holy Theophany and its surrounding feasts will be held as usual on January 5-7. An important part of that celebration is the Great Blessing of the Waters service. In order to bring the blessings of the feast and the Lord into our homes, Orthodox Christians traditionally invite the priest to bless their home with the Holy Water from the feast. Please see the enclosed information and schedule your visit by January 5. A House Blessing Request Form can be found on the back page of this issue.

Commitment Sunday Rescheduled January 18

Due to inclement weather on December 14, Holy Trinity's Commitment Sunday has been re-scheduled for January 18 following the Divine Liturgy. Please plan on being here for important information and to take your part in the active life and future of Holy Trinity Church. See the enclosed flyer.

SACRAMENTAL REGISTRY

Weddings

Kratsas: The servants of God, Jonathan Kratsas and Carol Ann Erwin, were crowned in the Holy Mystery of Marriage on November 30. The Koumbaros was Galen Kratsas. May God grant them many happy and blessed years!

Funerals: May Their Memory Be Eternal!

Langas: The servant of God, John Langas, fell asleep in the Lord on November 19. The Funeral was held at Holy Trinity Church on November 22, followed by interment at Allegheny Cemetery.

Georgiadis: The servant of God, George Georgiadis, fell asleep in the Lord on November 25. The Funeral was held at Holy Trinity Church on November 29, followed by interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery. A 40 day Memorial Service is scheduled for January 4.

Contis: The servant of God, Dena Contis, fell asleep in the Lord on November 26. The Funeral was held at Holy Trinity Church on December 1, followed by interment at Allegheny Cemetery.

Kourakos: The servant of God, Marie Kourakos, fell asleep in the Lord on December 11. The Funeral was held at Holy Trinity Church on December 15, followed by interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery. A 40 day Memorial Service is scheduled for January 18.

Upcoming Memorials

In addition to those mentioned above, there will be a 1-year Memorial Service for the servant of God, Clara Pappas, on January 18. May her memory be eternal!

REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

Regional IOCC Committee Forming

International Orthodox Christian Charities is forming a Metropolitan Pittsburgh Committee to assist with their ministries and awareness in this area. A letter is enclosed in this issue of *The Herald*. If you are able to assist in this important effort, please contact Nicholas Terezis at 740-282-5198.

THEOS Christmas Appeal

This issue of *The Herald* contains a Christmas appeal letter for our local Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School. If you are able to offer your support, it will enable this educational ministry to grow and continue to serve the Orthodox Christian families of the area. Thank you!

Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update

Hey! It's me Zoe, here to bring you the latest and greatest for the month of January!

This is my favorite month and do you know why??? Because it is my birthday! Yep, I am another year older ... and hopefully wiser! My mommy says that I am now old enough to go to the Big New Year's Ball at the end of this year. Boy I can't wait. Mommy says that I need to be really good and she will buy me a special dress. I asked her "How will we get there?" and she said, "Don't worry the Head Mouse Keeper will be taking us". I am so..o..o..o excited.



Well, my special gift from my brother, Spero, is that he is giving me his permission to chat with all the children in this month's Herald. I hope that I can do as well as him, so, here we go...!

My first selection for reading is about something from personal experience. I did something really well and told everyone about it, but then found out that my friends didn't like me any more. Spero says that is because I was bragging and boasting, and my big brother—who loves me so much—wants me to grow in my faith (he felt that I had to be told a good way to handle this!). He read a book to me called "Humble Bee-Licious"; by Matt Whitlock it is a story about PRIDE.

Humble Bee made some "bee-licious" snacks that were so..o..o..o delicious that everyone loved them but his boasting and bragging created a real problem. You see, my little ones, sometimes we do not want to share the credit for the good things that we do, but we must humble ourselves before our Heavenly Father in confession. Then He will make everything right again. God gave us so much because He loves us.

Yiayia says if we want to learn about God's great love, we should read Luke 15, which has a bunch of good stories: The Lost Sheep, The Lost Coin and The Lost Son. Remember, God loves each of us equally because we are His children. We must not think that we are better or worse than anyone else (even though our pride tells us we are!). We must enjoy being what God made each of us to be; He has a special plan for each of us.

My second experience that I have to share with you is about behaving like "The Non-Praying Mantis", by Matt Whitlock. Have you asked Our Heavenly Father for something and did not get what you asked for? We all have times when we think that God is not listening to our prayers. This story is about Amanda, a praying mantis who wanted something but she did not care whether the thing she asked for was pleasing to Our Heavenly Father. But she did not get exactly what she was expecting. Amanda discovered the secret of getting prayers answered by seeking God and delighting in Him. He will give us the desires of our heart when they are according to His will. Yiayia says the Bible tells us of many prayers answered: Hannah prays words of praise to God when her prayer is answered for a child to be given to her (Samuel 2:10); David calls out to God for help. (Psalm 77); Daniel begs God for forgiveness (Daniel 9:19); and the Church prays to God for a miracle and God so answers by saving Peter from prison (Acts 12:5). So pray daily my little friends, God loves to hear us speak to Him. Today and every day pray as a family!

Happy, Happy New Year! Happy, Happy Name Day! And Happy, Happy Birthday to all! Wishing you health, love, and happiness for a blessed New Year!

With love in Christ, Zoe

The Feast of Theophany and the Blessing of Homes

"At Your Epiphany, the whole creation sang Your praises. For You, our God, have appeared on earth and dwelt among men. You have sanctified the streams of the Jordan, sending down from on high the most Holy Spirit."

From the Service of the Great Blessing of the Waters



"What is Theophany?"

Every year on January 6th, the Orthodox Church celebrates the Feast of Holy Theophany, which is the baptism of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church and is also known by the name, "Epiphany." The Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan at the hand of St. John the Baptist sets the example for our own baptism by water in the Holy Spirit.

"How do we celebrate Theophany?"

The main celebration is, of course, found in the Church with the holy services on January 5th (the Forefeast), January 6th (Theophany) and January 7th (Synaxis of St. John the Baptist). We also take the feast home with us by having our homes blessed with the Holy Water.

"What happens during a House Blessing?"

You will receive a call to confirm your appointment a day or two ahead. When the priest arrives, he will conduct a brief service either in your dining room or

at the place where your family usually offers its prayers. It is best to have the entire family present if possible, especially children. Please be sure to have an icon and a list of the first names of all the members of your household. If you have a home censer, you may prepare it also. A bowl of water is not necessary, as the priest will bring the holy water sprinkler from the church.

As the service concludes, please lead the priest throughout the house to sprinkle the holy water. When the service is over, please understand if your priest needs to keep the visit brief in order to cover all the homes scheduled on that day.

Should I have my house blessed every year?

Yes! In the Orthodox Christian tradition, homes should be blessed each year to bring the blessings of the Feast of Theophany into the home and to rededicate ourselves and our family to the Lord. It is an annual commitment, celebration, thanksgiving and family prayer.

2004 House Blessing Schedule

Date	Time	Area	Zip Codes
Wed. Jan. 7	3pm-6pm	Northside, Perrysville	15212, 15214
Mon. Jan. 12	4pm-8pm	South Hills (all areas)	15102, 15216, 1522X, 1524X
Wed. Jan. 14	4pm-8pm	Bellevue, Westview	15202
Fri. Jan. 16	5pm-9pm	Wexford (South)	15090, 15237
Sat. Jan. 17	1pm-6pm	Wexford (North), Cranberry, Mars, Gibsonia, Treesdale	1504X, 15237, 160XX
Mon. Jan. 19	4pm-9pm	North Hills (McKnight area), Allison Park	15101, 15237
Tue. Jan. 20	4pm-9pm	All other areas	Various

Important note: Please submit your form as soon as possible and please be available at the time scheduled for your area. Re-scheduling will only be done in cases of inclement weather. Thank you for your help!

PLEASE RETURN THE FORM ON THE BACK OF THE PAGE BEFORE JANUARY 5 TO SCHEDULE YOUR HOME. YOU WILL RECEIVE A CALL TO CONFIRM YOUR TIME.

Holy Trinity Receives Thank You for Winter Outreach

GREATER PITTSBURGH
community
food bank



Member of America's Second Harvest

November 22, 2003

Greek Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood
C/o Father John Touloumes
302 W. North Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

Dear Friends,

Thank you for inviting Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank to benefit from your luncheon food drive again. You collected **820 pounds** of food and grocery items that will help local children, people with disabilities, senior citizens on fixed incomes, single moms and people who have lost their jobs.

I really enjoyed coming down and being a part of your luncheon. Your group did a spectacular job with the lunch, it was a pleasure to help. Thank you for continuing to support Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, and all the people we serve.

I look forward to working with you again. Have a wonderful holiday season!

Sincerely,


Maureen Joyce
Food Resource Coordinator

1 North Linden Street • Duquesne, PA 15110 • (412) 460-3663 • Fax: (412) 460-0418
Reach us on the Internet at www.pittsburghfoodbank.org

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0899. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Parish Council Update - November 2003

This abbreviated review of the Parish Council minutes is provided as a way of keeping our Holy Trinity parishioners informed of the active work of the Parish Council. Want to get involved? Contact any Parish Council member. Thank you to our Parish Council secretary, Maria Kraniou, for provided these condensed minutes for the Herald.

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Parish Council of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church was held on Tuesday, November 11, 2003, in the Church Library. The meeting was opened with a prayer at 7:30 p.m.

President's Welcome and Correspondence

A date will be set in December for the General Assembly to meet and discuss three items: Festival, Stewardship, and Vision. More discussion will follow towards the end of the meeting.

Approval of October 2003 Minutes

Bill Fiedler moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by George Dickos. Unanimously approved.

Father John's Report

Family Christian Stores has offered our parish an incentive program which gives us a 5% credit of all purchases made by Holy Trinity members using their card. Information will be forthcoming. The Metropolis Regional Parish Council Seminar will take place on Wednesday, November 19, from 7 to 9 p.m. at All Saints Church in Canonsburg. Father distributed updated Agape Fund Guidelines. The second Homeless Feeding Program at Holy Trinity will take place this Saturday, November 15. Also, twenty-seven teens from our church will attend the GOYA Retreat, one of the largest representations of any parish in the Metropolis.

Financial Update

Mike reviewed the Statement of Operations (including a prior year comparison) from Jan. to Oct. 2003.

Committee Reports:

Social Committee: New Year's Eve will be held at the Home Plate Club at PNC Park. More details to follow.

Maintenance Committee: New seat covers for chairs in the social hall have been ordered.

Stewardship Committee: The average pledge is \$440, up about \$30 on average from last year. However, we have about 30 less pledges from last year. The Stewardship Pledges Received Report for 2003 was given.

Cemetery Committee: Bill Fiedler reviewed the amounts received for the Cemetery Chapel and in memory donations. The front fence/stone wall will be redone. It may cost \$4,000 to \$5,000 to rebuild that.

Vision Committee: Our architect, Christ Kamages, was in town recently and looked at the two Reis Run properties. He disqualified the lower property because of the general layout and access. The upper property is offering 8 acres, but we are requesting 16 acres. They have not given us a price yet. The property adjacent to this consists of 13 acres and belongs to a doctor. The committee is considering entering in discussions with the doctor also.

Old Business / New Business

Commitment Sunday will be on December 14. Letters will be mailed to homes and will go out in *the Herald*. It will also be announced in the Sunday Bulletin and at the Pangari.

Parish Council Elections: Due to absences at the recent General Assembly, we are in a situation in which we now have only 5 members on the audit committee 3 members on the elections committee. It was agreed that no action will be taken on this at the current time.

The amount the Parish Council can spend without requiring General Assembly approval was raised to \$10,000 at the last General Assembly meeting.

The next meeting date was set for Tuesday, December 9, 2003 at 7:00 at the Church Boardroom.

No further business appearing, the meeting adjourned with a prayer at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Kraniou, Secretary

(Thank you to Maria Kraniou for doing such a good job preparing these meeting summaries over the past two years. She is completing her term as secretary and Parish Council member this month. - Editor)

Gheronda's Corner

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



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

A Message for the New Year

*"The one thing I do, however,
is to forget what is behind me
and do my best to reach what
is ahead."*

(Philippians 3:13)

Beloved brothers and sisters
in Christ,

The old year is behind us; a new year is before us. Some of us will have to cross the Jordan before the year is ended. The promised land awaits God's children. God is the giver of many wonderful new things. Now, to you and me, God is giving a New Year. We wish each other a Happy New Year, but we must do more than that.

The best admonition for all of us is *to repent of our sins, to resolve to be better persons* and more faithful Orthodox Christians and to *remember that we never can repay Christ* for all that He has done for us. What has He done? He went to the Cross, took our place and died in our stead.

The following reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew will help is to become faithful Orthodox Christians:

At that time: Jesus said to His disciples: "Watch out for false prophets; they come to you looking like sheep on the outside, but they are really like wild wolves on the inside. You will know them by the way they act. Thorn bushes do not bear grapes, and briars do not bear figs. A healthy tree bears good fruit, while a poor tree bears bad fruit..A healthy tree cannot bear bear fruit, and a poor tree cannot bear good fruit. Any tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire. So, then, you will know the false prophets by the way they act, Not every person who calls me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants them to do." (Matthew 7: 15-21)

Who Are The False Prophets?

Jesus warned us against false prophets (wild wolves). St. Paul also warned that "grievous wolves would enter in, not sparing the flock." How can we be

sure about their teachings?

1) We are to measure them by the two sources of our Faith: the Holy Scripture and Sacred Tradition of our Church. If their teachings do not measure up to the truths of the Bible and Tradition in every respect, we are to reject these teachers and their doctrines.

2) We are to watch out for hypocrites, who show great candor on the exterior, but whose hearts are full of deceit.

3) We should beware of heretics, who surround their false teachings with the delusive appearance of truth.

4) We must avoid those writers who, under cover of attractive and pleasing language, hide the poison of falsehood and immorality.

5) Finally, among the false prophets are: the flesh, the world and the devil.

Why Does Christ Compare Man to Trees?

He does this in order to make known the good and the bad Christians by their good or bad works. Just as a bad tree brings forth bad fruit, so does a bad man bring forth the bad fruits of wrath, envy, hate, lust, etc.; but as a good tree brings forth good fruit, so does a good man yield the good and sweet fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control (Galatians 5:22). A bad tree—in this case a bad Christian—is cut down and cast into everlasting fire. We should not take our Christianity for granted.

Stewardship Thought

It is well to remember, as we begin a new year, that *we cannot get something for nothing*. Gambling is getting nothing for something. Also, New Year's resolutions are good, if they are backed up with earnest prayer for help in keeping them.

A salesman tried to sell a farmer a book on how to be a better farmer. The farmer said that he did not want the book, for he already knew how to be a better one than he was. Most of us know how to be much better Christians than we are.

Prayer: "Our Heavenly Father, as we begin a new year, we pray that all bitterness, wrath, malice, anger and evil speaking shall be put away from among us, and that we shall be kind one to another. Help us, Father, to be faithful to You. Amen."

Have a Blessed, Healthy and Happy New Year

Have a Blessed and Happy New Year!
Rev. Fr. John R. Androutsopoulos

Community Life Photo Journal: GOYA Fall Events

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

GOYA Fall Retreat - November 14-16



Holy Trinity GOYAns gather with Father John during his visit to the Fall Metropolis GOYA Retreat at Camp Nazareth in Mercer, PA. Holy Trinity was one of the best-represented parishes participating, with 27 teens attending the two retreats.

GOYA Fireside Chat - December 7



See these photos and more in full-color at our website: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org!

GOYA Turkey Bowl - November 23



Above: GOYAns participate in the annual GOYA Turkey Bowl flag football game on Thanksgiving weekend in the park across from the Church.

Left: Holy Trinity GOYA held its annual "Christmas Fireside Chat" on December 7 at the home of Dr. & Mrs. Tony and Susan Zikos in Wexford. It offered teens an opportunity to focus on preparing to celebrate Christmas as Orthodox Christians. As a part

of the activities for the evening, the outreach project had the GOYAns compose and e-mail letters of thanks and encouragement to our troops in Iraq. Over 30 GOYAns were in attendance, including teens from the sister communities of All Saints (Canonsburg) and Holy Cross (Pittsburgh).

Community Life Photo Journal: 2003 Philanthropy

A year-end photo review of scenes from the active parish life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church during 2003

Walk for Leukemia - October 1



Members of Holy Trinity Church and other area parishes participated in the October 1 "Light the Night" Walk for Leukemia research. Members of "Jimmy's Team" raised money and walked in memory of Jimmy Hartig, who recently fell asleep in the Lord after battling the disease.

Backpacks for IOCC - October 1



The JOY ministry children extended a hand of love and care to needy children in the Republic of Georgia by purchasing and preparing school kits for them. This drive, coordinated by International Orthodox Christian Charities, provided basic learning materials such as pencils,

paper, crayons and other items, all packed in backpacks. So far, this national effort has collected over 15,000 backpacks for the IOCC education program. It is just one way the Orthodox humanitarian agency helps needy people of all races, colors and creeds throughout the world.

Holy Trinity Church Feeds the Homeless - March 29, Sept. 12, Nov. 15



It has been a banner year for Holy Trinity's participation in feeding the homeless. In coordination with the Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh, the JOY ministry prepared bag lunches for distribution at the local shelter on September 12. Various ministries at Holy Trinity Church have participated in this effort over the past 10 years.

New this year was the first-ever sit-down lunch for the homeless of the area, in which our community opened its doors to provide a warm, sit-down meal for "those of the least of our brethren." Food was provided by our own parishioners as well as Orthodox churches from around the region. Donations of canned and boxed food were also collected for the Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. After a resounding and enthusiastic success on March 29, the event was repeated on November 15 and will be offered twice each year from now on. Glory to God!



See these photos and more in full-color at our website: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org!

Community Life Photo Journal: A Look Back at 2003

A year-end photo review of scenes from the active parish life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church during 2003



Members of the 2003 Parish Council being installed on December 29, 2002.



Members of Holy Trinity Church and other area parishes ringing in the New Year at Heinz Field.



A "behind the scenes" look at the Holy Altar at Holy Trinity: Acolytes wait to have their robes blessed before Divine Liturgy.



The new Parish Council gets down to work at their first meeting in the Church Library on January 14.



Frank and Anne Chapas receive a special blessing at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on January 12, for the celebration of their 60th Wedding Anniversary.



JOY children gather for a fun photo in a giant mouth during their overnight trip to the Carnegie Science Center on the North Shore on February 7. During the evening the children played with interactive exhibits and attended an OmniMax movie.

See these photos and more in full-color at our website: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org!

Community Life Photo Journal: A Look Back at 2003

A year-end photo review of scenes from the active parish life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church during 2003



Coaches and players from our three Holy Trinity GOYA basketball teams pause during the first Diocese Basketball Tournament of the year on January 18. Above is the Boys' B Team, with Coach George Georges. Top right is the Boys' A Team with Coach Leo Loomis. Right is the Girls' Team with Coaches Presvytera Becky Touloumes and Paul Balouris.



Renowned Byzantine architect Christ Kamages listens to program input from Philoptochos President Tina Fiedler during a working session on February 15. Leaders from all areas of parish life were asked to provide information on the activities and needs of their groups. The result of this process was the beginning of the "kit of parts" that will be used to design a new church for Holy Trinity.

Below: Couples take part in the annual St. Lydia/St. Nikodemos Couples Night, which is held each year around Valentine's Day. The evening includes faith-building discussions concerning marriage and family life as Orthodox Christians. St. Lydia is the women's fellowship which meets bi-weekly at homes in Wexford; St. Nikodemos is the men's fellowship which meets in downtown Pittsburgh twice a month on Tuesdays.



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Community Life Photo Journal: A Look Back at 2003

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Members of the Festas family pose for a professional portrait during the April 1 photo session in preparation for the Holy Trinity Photo Directory.



A double blessing: Members of the Germanos family celebrate an unique event when two members of the family are received into the Orthodox Church - little Despina is baptized and her mother, Joanne, is chrismated, both on March 23.



Vasilios Sanios demonstrates the art of Byzantine Palm Cross weaving on the Saturday of Lazarus. Many children of the parish also participated in preparing Palm Crosses for distribution to the faith and candles for the Holy Week services.



GOYAns from Holy Trinity gather with Father John and counselor Mary-Magdalene Welsh during the April 12 Diocese Spring Retreat at Camp Nazareth.



Above: Philoptochos ladies and mothers gather in front of the beautifully decorated kouvouklion on Holy Friday. Right: Fr. John Androutsopoulos, our resident "Gheronda," lifts the Epitaphion icon during the Holy Friday evening service. The beautiful new embroidered and painted icon was donated by the Pontikos family.



Parishioner Connie Fries receives a flower and Mother's Day blessings from His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos during a pastoral visit on May 19.



GOYA graduates Jonathan Bonfield, Maria Pantelakis, Michael Andromalos-Dale and Christopher Sarandou celebrate.

Below: Members of Holy Trinity Choir pose for their Choir Convention album photo with Director John Nychis on June 25 following Divine Liturgy.



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Community Life Photo Journal: A Look Back at 2003

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Above: Parishioners of every age take to the court during the Holy Trinity 80th Anniversary Weekend. A special basketball tournament fielded five teams in a round-robin event.



Right: Members of the very active Over 50 Club enjoy one of their various outings, this time on a dolphin-watching excursion during a trip in September to Wildwood, New Jersey.

Left: Students of the Greek School prepare their March 25 poems along with their teacher, Effie Kilantonis.



Left: Church School students in the 5th/6th Grade class display their icons for the Sunday of Orthodoxy.

Below: GOYAns gather in September for their annual Kick-Off at "Limni."



Left: After months of preparation and a long week of hard work, Holy Trinity Festival workers and dancers gather to celebrate. In the top photo, long-time dance instructor Stella Athanasiou thanks the children for their participation in the Greek Dance program for the festival. Below, chairpeople of the various festival committees, relieved after a long five days, receive special thank you's for their efforts. In addition, Father John is presented with a beautiful icon of the Holy Trinity in honor of his 10th anniversary of ministry at Holy Trinity Church.



See these photos and more in full-color at our website: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org!

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

A Greek language offering for Christmas and the New Year



Voula Hareras

ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ ΔΙΧΩΣ ΤΕΛΟΣ

Ο μεγάλος, δυνατός και δίκαιος Βασιλιάς, Βασιλεύε στην πανεμορφή χώρα, την πιο πλούσια και πιο όμορφη. Εκεί τα λουλουδια ήταν πάντα ανθισμένα και τα δέντρα γεμάτα καρπούς. Κυβερνούσε τα πάντα η σοφία του και τ'αγκαλιάζε η στοργή του. Μα το πιο θαυμαστό σε αυτόν το Βασίλεια ήταν πως δεν είχε υπηκόους.

Παιδιά μου θα εισθε, τους είχε πει, κι εγώ θα είμαι Πατέρας σας. Και πραγματι, όλοι τον ενιωθαν και τον φώναζαν Πατέρα. Κοντά του δεν τους ελείπε τίποτα. Χορταίναν αγάπη, ειρήνη κι ευτυχία. Κι ο πιο φτωχός και ταπεινός κι ασημαντός ενιωθε σαν χαιδεμένο του μοναχοπαιδί. Η καλοσύνη του έφτασε ως τα περάτα της γης, γι αυτό πολύ τον ζηλευαν οι εχθροί του και μελετούσαν πως να καταστρέψουν το βασίλειό του. Δεν αργήσαν να ετοιμασουν εναντίον του εκστρατεία. Οι εχθροί νικήθηκαν κι εφυγαν ντροπιασμένοι. Στη μάχη πάνω όμως έπιασαν αιχμαλωτό ένα μικρό παιδί του βασιλιά. Πληγώθηκε βαθύτατα η πατρική καρδιά, γιατί όλους τους είχε παιδιά του αγαπημένα.

Ολοκληρω το βασίλειο τίποτα δεν ήταν μπροστά στον καθένα χωριστά. Κι όσο οι μέρες περνούσαν, όλο και πιο βαθιά πονούσε ο Βασιλιάς.

Αντίθετα, αυτή του η λυπή ειρεφε τους εχθρούς. Το ζωντανό τους λαφύρο τους έδινε ζωή. Τον ερίζαν σε μια υγρή και σκοτεινή φυλακή. Έδεσαν τα τρυφερά του χέρια με βαριές αλυσίδες κι έβαλαν διπλή, τριπλή φρουρά να τον φυλάει.

Δακρύα πικρά έχυνε στη φυλακή. Αποζητούσε του ήλιου το φως, την ελεύθερη ζωή, το παλάτι του Πατέρα, μα μέρα—νυχτά αγγίζει το θάνατο. Διπλά πονούσε ο Πατέρας. Δεν ησυχάζε. Ετοιμάζε την απελευθέρωση κι εψάχνε την καταλληλή στιγμή. Κι όταν με τη σοφία του είδε πως έφτασε η ώρα, έστειλε τον Ένα και Μοναδικό κι Αγαπητό Γιο, να τελειώσει αυτό το έργο.

Έφτασε η ώρα να απελευθερώσεις το παιδί μας, είπε ο Πατέρας. Παιδί του το είχε κε Εκείνος, αφού με το Βασίλεια Πατέρα του ήταν ένα, κι όλα όσα είχε, ήταν και δικά του, και τα δικά του ήταν του Πατέρα.

Προθυμά υπακούσε ο Γιος στο θέλημα του Πατέρα, γιατί ήταν και θέλημα δικό του. Εβγάλε τη βασιλική πορφύρα κι αλλέξε μορφή, να μην τον προδώσει η καταγωγή του. Ντυθήκε ρακή κι έτσι, όπως τον είδαν φτωχό και ταπεινό, τον πέρασαν νια ασημαντό οι εχθροί του. Γι αυτό όταν πλησίασε στη φυλακή, κανείς δεν ενοχλήθηκε ιδιαίτερα. Κάποιοι τον περιεπαίζαν, άλλοι τον εφτύσαν και τον κοροΐδευαν πολλοί.

Μία ο Γιος του Βασιλιά καθόλου δε λογαριάζε όλα τούτα. Ο νους του ήταν στο παιδί του, πως να εκπληρώσει το θέλημα του Πατέρα και να τελειώσει το έργο.

Οι εχθροί ήταν κοντοφθαλμοί πολύ. Δεν μπορούσαν να δουν τι μυστήριο κρυβόταν πίσω απ τα ρακή. Περιμέναν να ρθεί ο μεγάλος Βασιλιάς μ όλη του τη μεγαλοπρέπεια κι εξουσία.

Έτσι λαθρά ο μεταμορφωμένος Βασιλιάς πέρασε την πυλή και μπήκε στην αυλή. Κρυφθήκε σ ένα σταβλό, που βρήκε εκεί, και τα μεσανυχτά, όταν όλοι κοιμούνταν, έσπασε αθόρυβα τα σίδερα της φυλακής

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και μπηκε. Βρηκε το παιδι αλυσοδομενο σ' αθλια χαλια να κοιμαται. Εκλαψε πικρα. Αληθεια, ποσο τον αγαπουσε! Τον αγκαλιασε, τον φιλησε, τον ονομασε αδελφο.

Ξυπνα, του ειπε. Ειμαι ο Γιος του Βασιλια. Ηρθα για σενα. Μη φοβασαι. Μ εστειλε ο Πατερας να σ ελεθερωσω. Δε σου ταιριαζει να σαι δουλός ουτε αιχμαλτός. Παιδι, συγκληρονομο σ εκανε ο Πατερας. Σηκω να φυγουμε. Δος μου το χερι σου. Στηριξου πανω μου κι εγω θα σε γλυτωσω απ ολα σου τα βασανα.

Μα εκεινος ηταν δυσπιστος. Δεν εβλεπε μεσα στη νυχτα, ουτε μπορουσε να τον αναγνωρισει.

Ελα, παιδι μου. Εγω ειμαι. Μη σε πλανευει η μορφη μου κι η στολη μου.

Και του θυμισε το παλατι του Πατερα, του αποκαλυψε σημαδια της βασιλικης καταγωγης του.

Ελα, δος μου το χερι σου. Δεν εχουμε καιρο. Και κοιτα να πατας οπου παταω. Ακριβως στα δικα μου χναρια. Η παραμικρη αστοχη κινηση δα σε προδωσει. Ο τοπος ειναι σκοτεινος και ναρκοθετημενος. Οπου παταω εγω εχει φως. Ελα, δος μου το χερι σου και προσοχη πολλη. Πατα ακριβως στα χναρια τα δικα μου...

Η ιστορια αυτη δεν εχει τελος. Το τελος το γραφει μονος του ο καθενας αναλογα με την επιλογη του.

Θ αναγνωρισει τον Υιο και Λογο του Θεου, που ερχεται με αλλη μορφη, φτωχος και ταπεινος μεσα στη νυχτα;

Θα μπει στην περιπετεια της αποδρασης μαζι Του η θα νιωσει βολεμενος με λιγο φαι, λιγο ψωμι και την ψευτοζωη του;

Θα τον ακολουθησει για να βγει στο φως και την ελευθερια η θα σαπισει μεσ στη φυλακη κλεισμενος, πετωντας την τιμη που του εκανε ο Πατερας να ναι παιδι

Του στην αιωνια βασιλεια;

Καλα Χριστουγεννα και ο Νεος Χρονος να φερει ειρηνη στον κοσμο!

Βουλα Χαρερα

ΕΛΑ ΝΑ ΚΑΤΟΙΚΗΣΕΙΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΚΑΡΔΙΑ ΜΟΥ

Ελα να κατοικησεις στην καρδια μου, ολο το χρονο την ετοιμαζα για σενα. Εδιωχνα πικρες, μιση, βασιλια μου, και καρτερουσα ναρθεις νυχτα-μερα. Ποσο πολυ κουραστηκα, το ξερεις... Ηθελα οταν ερθεις, να τη βρεις λουσμενη στα λουλουδια κι ο θρονος Σου στα βαθη μου στημενος να ναι στολισμενος με ασπρα γιασεμια. Ηθελα οταν ερθεις, ν ακουστουν τα «ωσαννα» απο τ αγγελουδια και στη δικη μου την καρδια. Ηθελα οταν ερθεις, να βρεις πλουσια ζεστασια κι αντι απο των ζων την ανασα να θερμανθεις απ της μετανοιας μου τα δακρυα τα καυτα.

Σου ειχα υποσχεθει απο περσυ να σου χαρισω μια καρδια γεματη απο λουλουδια, γιασεμια και ζεστασια, και τωρα πουρθες τιποτε απ ολα αυτα δεν βρηκες.

Ομως αγεπημενο Θειο Βρεφος, τολμα η αδεια μου καρδια και παλι ταπεινα σε προσκαλει. Γιατι, τι κι αν απο λουλουδια εχει μεινει ορφανη; Ο Θρονος Σου στα βαθη της στημενος Σενα και μονο καρτερει.

Ας ειναι αστολιστος Ελα, Θειο Παιδι, να βασιλεψεις. Και τοτε...χιλοι κρινανθοι θα ξεφυτρωσουν. Στη στιγμη, ζωη θα παρουν τα μαραμενα γιασεμια.

Ελα, Θειο Παιδι, να βασιλεψεις στη φτωχικη μου την καρδια!...

Ζωη και Μνημες

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Vickie Bellios

ΓΙΑΤΙ ΑΝΑΒΟΥΜΕ ΤΟ ΚΑΝΤΗΛΙ

Πρώτον — Γιατί η πίστη μας είναι ΦΩΣ. Ο Χριστός είπε, «Εγώ ειμί το φως του κόσμου». Το φως

της κανδήλας μας

θυμίζει το ΦΩΣ, με το οποίο ο Χριστός καταυγάζει τις ψυχές μας.

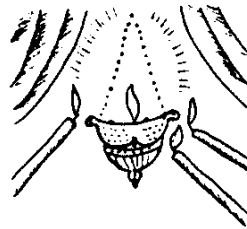
Δεύτερον — Για να μας θυμίζει, ότι και η ζωή μας πρέπει να είναι φωτεινή σαω των αγίων, δηλαδή των ανθρώπων, που ο απόστολος Παύλος τούς ονομάζει τέκνα φωτός.

Τρίτον — Για να είναι έλεγχος στα σκοτεινά μας έργα και στις κακές ενθυμήσεις μας και επιθυμίες. Και έτσι να τα επαναφέρει όλα στον δρόμο του φωτός του αγίου Ευαγγελίου. Για να λάμψει «το φως ημών έμπροσθεν των ανθρώπων, όπως ιδωσιν ημών τα καλά έργα και δοξάσωσι τον Πατέρα ημών τον εν τοις ουρανοίς».

Τέταρτον — Είναι μιά μικρή δική μας θυσία, σημείο και δείγμα της ευγγνωμοσύνης και αγάπης, που οφειλούμε στο Θεό για τη μεγάλη θυσία που έκαμε για μας. Με αυτήν, και με την προσευχή μας, Τον ευχαριστούμε για την ζωή, για την υγεία, για την σωτηρία, και για όλα όσα μας χαρίζει η θεϊκή και άπειρη αγάπη Του.

Πέμπτον — Για να είναι φοβητό στις δυνάμεις του σκότους, που μας επιτίθενται με ιδιαίτερη πονηρία πριν και κατά την ώρα της προσευχής, και θέλουν να απομακρύνουν την σκέψη μας από τον Θεό. Οι δαίμονες αγαπούν το σκοτάδι και τρέμουν το φως. Και του Χριστού, και εκείνων που αγαπούν τον Χριστό.

Εκτον — Για να μας παρακινεί σε αυτοθυσία. Όπως δηλαδή με



το λάδι καίγεται στο καντήλι το φθίλι, έτσι και το δικό μας θέλημα να καίγεται με την φλόγα της αγάπης για τον Χριστό, και να

υποτάσσεται πάντοτε στο θέλημα του Θεού.

Εβδομον — Για να μάθωμε ότι: Όπως δεν ανάβει το καντήλι χωρίς τα δικά μας χέρια, έτσι και το εσωτερικό καντήλι της καρδιάς μας δεν ανάβει χωρίς τα χέρια του Θεού. Οι κοποί των αρετών μας είναι η καύσιμη ύλη (το φυτίλι και λάδι), που γιά να ανάψουν και να φωτίσουν χρειάζονται το «πυρ» του Αγίου Πνεύματος.

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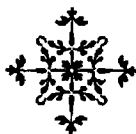
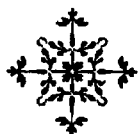
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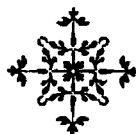
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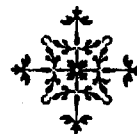


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of my brother,



Michael



Louis Manesiotis
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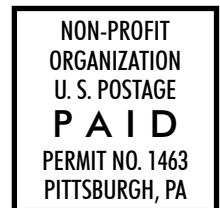
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A schedule and description of the House Blessing tradition can be found inside this issue of The Herald. If you would like this special blessing for your family, home or business, please mail or deliver this form to the church office by January 5. Your date and time will be confirmed the day before your visit. Note: Please be available at the time indicated on the schedule. Re-scheduling will only be done in cases of inclement weather. Thanks!