



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

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

November 2004

www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

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

Inside This Issue

- 2 Father John's Message
- 3 News & Events
- 5 "Gheronda's Corner"
- 6 "Mouse Tales" St. Spyridon
Children's Library Update
- 7 The Cultural Side
Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά
- 8 Stewardship Sunday
- 9 On the Holy Angels
- 12 A Challenge to Apostleship
for Orthodoxy in America

Special Inserts

November Parish Calendar
2005 Christmas Card Form
Christmas Poinsettias Form
Philoptochos Christmas Bake Sale
New Year's Eve Flyer

The Holy Archangels - Feast Day: November 8



FALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY INFORMATION ENCLOSED

November 21 General Assembly Agenda / Parish Council Elections Form

Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

Parish Newsletter of
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The Cultural Side

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Publication Schedule

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The Herald
is sponsored
in loving memory
of
Jimmy Regakis
by his mother, Olga
May his memory
be eternal!



“REJOICE ALWAYS,
PRAY CONSTANTLY,
IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS”
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This three-line, three-verse quote from St. Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians came to mind for this message through one of the earliest songs I remember learning it at Summer Camp over twenty years ago. It was refreshing not only because of the simplicity and clarity of its call, but because it took me back to days which seemed—at least in retrospect—to make it easier to look joyfully and thankfully at life and the world. Then again, who in life cannot look back to a time which was simpler, less troublesome and seemingly easier? Perhaps life wasn't really easier then, in the “old days,” but time has eased our fears and God has revealed His plans, assuring us that even when we weren't sure, He was and always will be with us.

So, in preparing for Thanksgiving this year, if Saint Paul's advice still holds, if we are still to rejoice, pray and give thanks, even in the midst of this uncertain and sometimes troubled world, what should we be joyful, prayerful and thankful about? I have compiled this brief list for our community. Certainly you can add more.

- We are thankful first and foremost for the life-giving sacrifice of our Savior Jesus Christ on the Cross which rescued us from sin and death and gave us life.
- We are thankful for the generations of apostles, hierarchs, martyrs, confessors, men, women and believers who have preserved and taught that Good News so we may still find salvation in it today.
- We are thankful for the great inheritance built by the early immigrants and the founders of our churches in this country who worked, sacrificed and laid the foundations of Orthodoxy in America for themselves and for us.
- We are thankful that we can pray, go to Church, receive the Holy Mysteries and share our faith without fear of persecution, torture or death, and we pray for those Christians throughout the world who live with those dangers daily.
- We are thankful that, even in times when terrorists seek to attack and destroy this country, there have been and still are great leaders and brave souls who have fought and died to preserve this, the longest-lasting constitutional government in the history of the world, and its message of liberty, peace and freedom.
- We are thankful that, even though our political system is highly charged and contentious, while revolutions and upheavals take place throughout the world, the only force needed in America for her citizens to make changes in government is the pressure it takes to pull the lever on a voting machine.
- We are thankful that, as stewards of God's blessings, we have not only enough food, clothing and resources to provide for our own needs, but to reach out a hand of help and love to those in need both here and throughout the world.
- We are thankful that while some denominations in this country are closing parishes and losing members, we are a thriving and growing community with a great future, a holy mission and an energetic flock which is ready for the task.

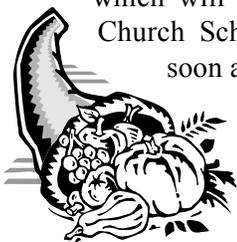
This Thanksgiving, add your own. No matter what our situation, our struggles, our pains or our sorrows, God is with us, blessing us and giving us much for which we can be truly thankful.

News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Church School Food Drive November

In keeping with the command of the Lord to help the poor and needy, our Church School students will be collecting food for a local food pantry and homeless shelter during the month of November. Look for the bags, which will be provided to the children during Church School class and start filling them as soon as possible. The food will be given to a local shelter which serves people of this area with a proven financial need. Thank you for your generosity and for helping your children understand the importance of meeting this challenge and call.



St. Lydia's Orthodox Women's Fellowship . . . Nov. 18

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 the home of Jan Petredis in Wexford. New participants are always welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable and the approach is casual, but the subjects are important for today's women and families.



This year's theme is "Growing in Christ," and is based on the book of the same name by Mother Raphaela, an Abbess of an American monastery. The topic for the November 18 meeting is, "The Knowledge of the Glory of God."

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 is also located on our web site, www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship . . . Nov. 9, 23

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 12:00 noon to 1:00 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. This year will also feature a complete series of guest facilitators, with seven area

clergy on a rotating schedule. The November topics and facilitators are:

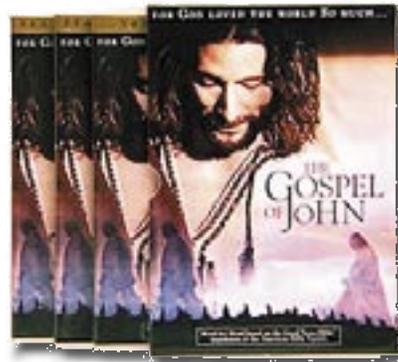
Nov. 9: "God and Money" (Fr. John Touloumes)

Nov. 23: "Living a Life of Thanksgiving" (Fr. Michael Kallaur)

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.

New Adult Bible Study: Gospel of John . . . Nov. 2, 16

This season, Holy Trinity Church is offering an exciting new adult education opportunity: a Bible study for adults. This new educational offering is **open to all**, both "beginners" in Scripture study as well as those who are well-read. It will be based on an excellent new DVD production of "The Gospel of John" and will go through the entire book in segments, watching the selected section on DVD, then discussing it together. Please refer to the brochure for directions and information.



The remaining fall meeting dates are the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month: November 2 & 16 and December 7 & 21 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the home of Cliff and Sondra Brubaker, 123 Foxwood Dr., Wexford. (724-940-3445). More information and directions can be found in the 2004/2005 Religious Education Ministries brochure or on our web site, www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

YOUTH MINISTRY

GOYA Basketball Practices Fall/Winter

The GOYA is now holding basketball practices in preparation for the 2005 Metropolis tournament season. The teams meet at 6:30 p.m. at Oliver High School on Brighton Road.



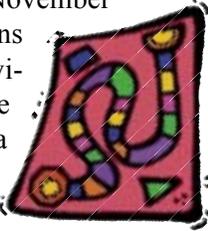
GOYA Fellowship Night November 17

The GOYA will hold its November fellowship night for at the home of Andrew Athanasiou on Wednesday, November 17 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. These casual meetings provide and opportunity for discussion, time with friends, questions for Fr. John and other GOYA matters as needed. For information, contact Andrew Athanasiou at 412-322-6002.

News & Events

JOY Kickoff/Game Night.....Nov. 12

The JOY ministry (8-12 year-olds) will hold a Fall Kick-off and Game Night on Friday, November 12 at 6:30 p.m. in the social hall. Plans will be made for this year's JOY activities, so parents are asked to be there with ideas and a willingness to lend a hand or host an activities. Children should bring their favorite games to share with others and be ready for fun! Please call Arnette Georges at 412-364-5589 to offer to bring a snack or dessert for the night.



LITURGICAL LIFE

Weekday Services.....November

Please take note of the following weekday Liturgies for the feast days in the month of November. Orthros is at 9:00 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00.

- Ss. Cosmas & Damian..... Mon. Nov. 1**
- The Holy Archangels..... Mon. Nov. 8**
- St. Nektarios the Wonderworker Tue. Nov. 9**
- St. Katherine the Great Martyr Wed. Nov. 24**
(Note: Nov. 24 is a 7:00 p.m. Vespers Liturgy)
- St. Andrew the Apostle Wed. Nov. 30**

BAPTISMS

Battaglia

The servant of God, Adrianna Marguerite Battaglia, daughter of Michael and Anne-Marie Battaglia, was received into the Orthodox Christian Faith through the Holy Mystery of Baptism on Oct. 23, 2004. Her sponsor was George Andrews. May God grant her many years!

FUNERALS & MEMORIALS

Upcoming Memorials

Memorial or Trisagion services have been scheduled for the following souls during the coming weeks:

- October 31:** John Regas (2 yrs.); GAPA Members.
- November 7:** Philoptochos Members
- November 21:** George Georgiadis (1 yr.)
- November 28:** Dina Contis (1 yr.)
- December 5:** Marie Kourakos (1 yr.)

PARISH NEWS

Fall Community Homeless Outreach.....Nov. 20

Holy Trinity Church has been blessed once again with the opportunity to host the "Feed the Homeless"

Outreach event. You may remember that in March of 2003, our parish—which so often asks for the support of the community around us for the Festival, Wednesday Lunch, etc.—accepted the invitation of the Greater Pittsburgh Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood and opened our doors to the poor and needy the Lord commands us to serve in His name for a sit-down hot lunch.

Now, returning to that blessing for the fourth time, on Saturday, November 20, the Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood will again sponsor a sit-down lunch for the homeless here at Holy Trinity Social Hall from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. This philanthropic outreach will be sponsored by various Orthodox parishes in the area, who will bring food and provide volunteers to set up, clean up and serve. In addition to offering the use of our hall, it is important that the Holy Trinity community steps forward to serve. If you would like to help by cooking, serving or donating, please contact Julie or Mike Kritiotis at 412-766-5001. During the Christmas fast when we are called to prayer, fasting and almsgiving, this is truly a wonderful way to fulfill the commandment of Jesus Christ: "As you did it to these, the least of my brethren, you did it to Me" (Mt. 25.40). Thank you for your generosity.

New Year's Eve 2004

The Social Committee is pleased to announce that, after a number of successful special events over the past few years, New Year's Eve is coming home to Holy Trinity Church this year for a family-priced community style event. The theme for the event is "Welcome Home, New Year's Eve: The Tradition Returns!" The event will run from 8:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. and the schedule will be as follows:



- 8:00 p.m. Vespers Liturgy
- 9:00 p.m. New Year's Eve event begins
- 9:30 p.m. Dancing & Live Entertainment by The Greek Company Orchestra
- Midnight Noisemakers, Hats, Champagne Toast and Traditional Greek Vasilopita
- 12:15 a.m. Buffet breakfast by Stratigos Caterers

Information can be found in the flyer in this issue of *The Herald*, and more information is forthcoming. Can't wait until then? Questions? Call Kathy Balouris at 412-635-0482.

Gheronda's Corner

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



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

"Sadness and Gladness" (John 16:16-22)

At that time, Jesus said to His disciples: 'In a little while you will not see me any more; and then a little while later you will see me.' Some of His disciples said to the others: 'What does this mean? He tells us, in a little while you will not see me, and then a little while later you will see me; and He also says, it is because I am going to the Father.

What does this a little while mean?' they asked. 'We do not know what He is talking about. Jesus knew that they wanted to ask Him, so He said to them: 'I said, in a little while you will not see me, and then a little while later you will see me. Is this what you are asking about among yourselves? I tell you the truth: you will cry and weep, but the world will be glad; you will be sad, but your sadness will turn into gladness. When a woman is about to give birth to a child she is sad, because her hour of suffering has come; but when the child is born she forgets her suffering, because she is happy that a baby has been born into the world. That is the way it is with you: now you are sad, but I will see you again, and your hearts will be filled with gladness, the kind of gladness that no one can take away from you.'"

What is meant by Christ's words, "A little while and you shall not see me, and again a little while and you shall see me?"

- 1) The suffering, the crucifixion and the resurrection of Christ.
- 2) The suffering of the apostles after the Ascension of Christ.

What is a good Christian's greatest consolation in affliction?

The thought that all suffering in this world is but momentary and transient, and that by patient suffering we gain eternal joy. "And this small and temporary trouble we suffer will bring us a tremendous and eternal glory, much greater than the trouble." (2 Corinthians 4:17).

Why did Christ foretell to His disciples their future sufferings and joys?

- 1) In order that these sufferings, being foreseen, might not be so heavy for them to bear.
- 2) In order that their faith might be strengthened by remembering that Christ had foretold their sufferings.
- 3) In order that they might know that their sufferings were small in comparison to the endless joy following them.

St. John Chrysostom says: "If you were chosen king on condition that you remain one night in a low, foul-smelling

stable, before entering your palace and taking possession of the government: would this cause you to be downcast and despondent? Would you not rather make little of it on account of your hope of being king? Why, then, should we not be willing to pass a little time in sorrow and suffering in this vale of tears, when we have the sure hope of soon being possessors of the Kingdom of Heaven?"

Consolation in Affliction

"You shall lament and weep" (John 16:20).

It is a great and dangerous mistake to fancy that true happiness consists in the vain glories, perishable riches, and sensual delights of this world, since Jesus Christ has taught the very opposite to be true. He called the poor and those that suffer in meekness and patience blessed, but the rich who live in luxury and ease He calls most miserable, because in the life to come they would weep and gnash their teeth.

It is well to bear in mind this article of faith, that by sorrow we must enter the kingdom of heaven, was not written for some only, but for all. St. John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles, even Christ Himself had to enter into the kingdom of heaven by suffering. The most noble thought that consoles a Christian in suffering is this, that in order to share Christ's glory in heaven, we are deemed worthy to share His sufferings in some manner here on earth. Christ consoles those suffering in patience with the assured hope of salvation.

The Feasts of November

Beloved brothers and sisters: During the month of November our Holy Orthodox Church celebrates many great feast days. On November 8 we wish "Happy Name Day" to those who have the name Michael or Gabriel. To those who have the name Catherine, November 25 is their nameday; and to those who have the name Andrew, it is November 30.

The Fast of the Nativity: November 15-December 24

On Monday, November 15th, the Nativity Fast begins. "Advent" is a Latin word which means "the coming." Here it is used to signify the visible coming of the Son of God into the world. Advent is a time of spiritual preparation a time of getting ready for Christmas, the great and Holy Feast of the Nativity of our Savior Jesus Christ. We can be ready to meet our Savior through prayer, fasting, Through the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion, by attending Church Services during the Advent.

Thursday, November 25: Thanksgiving Day

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Let us not forget to thank the heavenly Father for His blessings. We are deeply in debt to Him. Always be thankful. Make every day a Thanksgiving Day.

*Have a Blessed Thanksgiving Day!
With His love,
Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos*

Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update

Hello, my Precious Children!



Happy, Happy Thanksgiving to all of my precious little ones! Yes, it is I, Spero, here to chat to you about the spirit of giving thanks. When think about being thankful, often think about being thankful for things that we receive. We should also take time to give thanks for the person that gave those things us. Well, when we think about our blessings, we know for sure that every good thing comes from Our Heavenly Father, so we have Him to thank for all of them.

One way to thank Him is to say a prayer. Yiayia says, "Prayer is a good habit and that praying is a great way to show that we are thankful." Another way to thank Him is to be more like God in our everyday ways and to treat each other as He would like. So, before you speak or do anything, think and thank God for everyday and every person in it.

My little ones, we have a new DVD from the Veggie Tale series called "Sumo of the Opera." In this DVD you will learn—along with Larry the Cucumber—a lesson in perseverance. To everyone's surprise, he turns pro wrestler as "The Italian Scallion." And as if he isn't silly enough as a cucumber in wrestling gear, his inability to take anything serious makes it all the more fun! Larry is a joking pro-wrestler who never manages to finish what he starts. But when he steps into the ring with "Apollo Gourd," will Larry, the "Quit 'n' Run Cuke," risk getting sliced and diced to finish what he has started? Larry stops and thinks that sometimes there is a good reason to quit, but he remembers that Our Heavenly Father asks each of us to do many things that are hard. They are things that make us a much better person. God loves us when we finish what we start, so do not stop, just keep on persevering and this will make you feel good about yourself when you finish. If it is what God wants you to do, you will always come out a winner. Yiayia says, "Hebrews 10:36 teaches us we need to persevere so that when we have done the will of Our Heavenly Father, we will receive what He has promised". Yiayia also says, "He wants us to keep on going even when it is very hard. We must always to try and do what God wants us to do, for He cares about us and promises that when we finish running the good race, He has a special reward for each of us. Remember, God made each of us special and loves us very, very much."

We also have a new book for the library, called, "Just Like Mama," by Beverly Lewis. This is a story that takes place in the Pennsylvania Dutch country of Lancaster County, where a girl named Susie Mae boosts that everyone says that she looks just like her mama. However, her brother Thomas, makes her so..o..o..o angry when he says, "Well you may look like mama, but I doubt that you can keep up with her all day." Susie Mae wants nothing more than to be just like her own loving mama. So one day she sets out to prove to her brother, Thomas, and herself that she is ready to do exactly that, from taking on the morning milking to egg-gathering and berry-picking, she tackles all of Mama's daily chores with gently amusing and genuine touching results. That evening, she watches her patient and kind Mama read the word of God from the Bible and she learns how important it is to be more like the Lord Jesus.

In Christ, Love Spero

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

The following article is a Greek-language commemoration and reflection on this Greek national holiday provided by one of our Cultural Side contributors, Voula Hareras.



Voula Hareras

Αυτον τον Οκτωβριο αναπολουμε και τιμουμε τον Μακεδονικο Αγωνα και τους ηρωες του, εκατο χρονια μετα τον θανατο του Παυλου Μελα, που εγινε αφορμη να αφυπνισθη το Πανελληνιο και να αναλαβει τις ευθυνες του για το μεγα εθνικο θεμα.

Νεαρος αξιωματικος του ελληνικου στρατου, απο επιφανη οικογενεια, στοργικος συζυγος και πατερας δυο μικρων παιδιων ξεκινησε ενα πρωινο του Φλεβαρη του 1904, ενω η Ελλαδα, μετα τον ατυχη πολεμο του 1897, βρισκοταν σε μια κατασταση απραξιας και απογοητευσεως. Στην τουρκοκρατουμενη ελληνικη Μακεδονια οι γειτονες μας Βουλγαροι ειχαν επιδοθη σε μια συστηματικη εξοντωση του ελληνικου στοιχειου με ολους τους τροπους, παρα την μεγαλη προσπαθεια που ειχαν αναλαβει για την καταπαυση των σφαγων ελληνες εθελονται. Ξεχωριστος αναμεσα τους ο αγνος ηρωας και εθνομαρτυρας του Αγωνα Τελλος Αγρας. Οι Βουλγαροι τον κρεμασαν αργοτερα, ενω διαπραγματευονταν μαζι του.

Ο Παυλος Μελας δεν αντεξε στην προσκληση και την προκληση για μια ολοκληρωτικη θυσια. Οταν καλει η μυστικη φωνη του χρεους η απαντηση ειναι ενα - ναι - ει ενα - οχι. Ενδιμεση δεν υπαρχει. Κι αυτο ειναι το μεγαλειο του ανθρωπου, γιατι μονος απ ολα τα πλασματα αυτος, μπορει να θετει υψηλους σκοπους και μονος μπορει, οταν κρινει πως για να τους διασωσει χρειαζεται η θυσια της ιδιας της ζωης, να την προσφερει εκουσια και λυτρωτικα. Και οσο πιο πολλα θυσιαζει τοσο πιο αποτελεσματικη και αφυπνιστικη γινεται αυτη για τις συνειδησεις των αλλων, εκεινων που λενε οτι θα ηθελαν, αλλα δεν μπορουν!

Ο Παυλος Μελας τα προσφερε ολα: ονομα, θεση, πλουτο, οικογενειακη ευτυχια, ζωη, γιατι πιστευε στο Θεο, που ικανωνει τον ανθρωπο για αυτες τις θυσεις. Οταν ο ηρωας το δειλινο της 13ης Οκτωβριου του 1904 μαχομενος ηρωικα παρεδωκε το πνευμα στην μικρη Στατιστα της Δυτικης Μακεδονιας (σημερινο χωριο Μελας),

επηρε να γινεται πραγματικοτητα η προρρηση του Στεφανου Δραγουμη (πατερα της συζυγου του Ναταλιας): Ενος το αιμα εβρεξε τη μακεδονικη γη και εγεννησε θαυμα. Απ ακρου εις ακρον των απανταχου Ελληνων αι καρδιαι εδονηθησαν ως ενος ανθρωπου τα σπλαγχνα... Εφυτρωσαν επι της αιματοβρεκτου γης εκδικηται, αμυντορες, και αν ο Θεος θεληση, σωτηρες. Η δημοτικη μουσα εκλαψε και υμνησε με ιδιατερη ευαισθησια το θανατο του παληκαριου:

Σαν τετοια ωρα στο βουνο, ο Παυλος πληγωμενος μεσ στο νερο του αυλακιου ητανε ξαπλωμενος... Σταλαματια το αιμα μου για Σε, πατρις μου, δινω, για να χεις δοξα και τιμη, να λαμψεις σαν τον ηλιο.

Αλλα και η δοκιμη ποιηση προσφερε τα ανθη της, με κορυφαιο το γνωστο ελεγιο του Κωστη Παλαμα:

ΠΑΥΛΟΣ ΜΕΛΑΣ

Σε κλαιει λαος. Παντα χλωρο να σειεται το χορταρι στον τοπο που σε πλαγιασε το βολι, ω παλικαρι. Παναλαφρος ο υπνος σου, του Απριλη τα πουλια σαν του σπιτιου σου να τ ακους λογακια και φιλια, και να σου φτανουν του σκληρου χειμωνα οι καταρραχτες σαν τουφεκιου αστραποβροντα και σαν πολ-εμου κραχτες.

Πλατια του ονειρου μας η γη και απομακρη. Και γερνεις εκει και σβεις γοργα.

Ιερη στιγμη. Σαν πιο πλατια τη δειχνεις, και τη φερνεις σαν πιο κοντα!

(Πολιτεια και Μοναξια)

Θρηνος και αινος για τον τιμημενο ηρωα, που γινεται συμβολο και υψωνεται φωτεινο μετεωρο στον ουρανο του Εθνους. Το σκηνικο του επιταφιου του η πλαση. Θρηνηται και εγκωμιαστραι ενα απεραντο πληθος. Το βολι το φαρμακερο δεν ειναι οργανο θανατου. Γινεται χειρι στοργης που βαζει τον ηρωα να αναπαυτη απο τον ασιαστο εξωτερικο και εσωτερικο αγωνα. Γιατι ο Παυλος δεν αγαπουσε τον πολεμο. Δεν εκανε πολεμο για τον πολεμο. Αγωνα εκανε για να σταματησει η σφαγη. Για τουτο κι ο ποιητης βρισκει τις πιο τρυφερες λεξεις και εικονες για να δωσει τις επιταφιας ευχες στον νεαρο ηρωα πατερα. Ο θανατος γινεται υπνος, η υγρη γη γινεται κλιναρι, οπου οπως εκεινος αποκοιμουσε τα παιδακια του, τωρα αυτος σ εκεινη πλαγιαζει. Του Απριλη οι φτερωτοι συνοδοι, που θα ρθουν μετα τον χειμ-

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

ωνα, και θα τον συντροφεύουν στη μοναξιά του ταφού του, ν απηχουν στην ψυχη τρυφερες στιγμες σπιτικής στοργής, παιδικα λογακια και φιλια, που δεν σταθηκαν ικανα να αποτρεψουν το παληκαρι απο το πρωτο χρεος: του υπερασπιστου του πατριου εδαφους.

Τουτης της ιερης δηλαδη γης, που πανω της χτιζουμε τα σπιτια μας και χαλα-κενουμε δεσμους ακαταλυτους αγαπης. Οι καταρραχτες του αγριου χειμωνα ας μεταποιηθουν σε ντουφεκιου αστραποβροντα, γιατι ο αγωνας δεν εχει τελειωσει και το Παληκαρι δεν εχει χαθη!

Στους συμμετρικους στιχους, που ακολουθουν, προβαλλει η καρποφορια της θυσιας στο οραμα της πλατιας γης του εθνικου ονειρου, που ως τωρα

φανταζε απομακρη. Η ιερη στιγμή του θανατου κανει το θαυμα ορατο. Ανοιγει τα ματια, που ηταν σφαιλιστα. Η ονειρευμενη γη ερχεται πιο κοντα. Απο χωμα και φυτρα, που κοιμουνται στο βαθος του, φανταζει κοσμος ολακερος ολανθιστος, που ερχεται προς εμας και μας βεβαιωνει πως η θυσια ειναι σπορος ανωλεθρος και ζωοπαροχος. Σωζει τα ατομα και τα εθνη. Ετσι το ορισε ο Θεος.

(Συχνα η ψυχη του υπεφερε και χρειαζοταν να την στηριξει με αποτελεσματικο στηριγμα. Γραφει στη Ναταλια: Καπου-καπου ενα δακρυ... Κι επειτα μια μεγαλη ιδεα. Και στεγνωνει το δακρυ...)

Περιοδικο *H NIKHN*
Βουλα Χαρερα

Stewardship Sunday and Luncheon: November 14

Κυριακή 14 Νοεμβρίου – Δωρεάν Γεύμα προς τιμήν των 'Οικονόμων' της Αγίας Τριάδος

You Are Invited! Mark Your Calendars!

Hard as it may be to believe, we are approaching the end of yet another year!

As this is a season of reflection from the past and excitement toward the future, the Stewardship Committee has been busy considering the community's achievements of this past year and re-designing our system of giving to God through our beloved Holy Trinity Church for the coming year. We trust that you would like to hear and see for yourselves what we have been working on on your behalf.

We would be honored if all of our stewards – οι οικονόμοι της εκκλησίας μας - joined together on November 14, 2004 for Divine Liturgy, followed by a celebration of our Stewardship Commitment to the Holy Church of Christ.

It will feature a complimentary, delicious light lunch, a brief, informative presentation and the 2005 Holy Trinity Stewardship packets for our current and prospective stewards.

During this interesting program, we will provide you with a wrap-up of the 2004 Stewardship year. We gratefully acknowledge that, in 2004, we've continued to grow as a church and reached a new level of giving. We will also have the pleasure to introduce you to the newly re-designed 2005 Stewardship information, along with its goals, theme and ideas for opportunities we see in the new year.

As we learned from St. Paul (the "Apostle to the Greeks") in his letter to the Corinthians, "Every Sunday let each of you put aside your offering for the work of the Lord." (Cor. 16:2), we hope that on that Sunday, November 14, you will also put aside a small portion of your time for this important event! We promise it will be worth your while.

Thank you,

The Holy Trinity Stewardship Committee:

Chris A. Balouris – 2004 Chairperson
Harry Athanasiou
George Dickos

Mike Kritiotis – 2005 Chairperson
Cliff Brubaker
Fr. John Touloumes

On the Holy Angels

On November 8, the Orthodox Church celebrates the Feast of the Synaxis (Gathering) of the Holy Archangels. This is the name-day of those blessed with the names Gabriel, Michael, Raphael and Angeliki, just to name a few. It is also a day we all can offer thanks to God for the important role the angels have in the life of all His servants. This article explains—in a bit more detail than usual—the understanding of the nature and the role of the Holy Angels according to the Church and the Holy Fathers.



In our day, one rarely speaks about the angels. We speak about matter and about spirit—and some speak sometimes about the wicked spirits—but they almost never mention the immaterial creations, the clearly spiritual beings, the good spirits, the angels.

At most, with some condescension—or as if we were speaking of mermaids or ghosts—we refer to the angels when talking with very young children, merely to adorn our narration and satisfy somewhat the fantasy of the little children. However, we almost never consider their existence seriously and diligently. We are completely indifferent about whether they exist or not.

On the contrary, our Church remembers and honors the holy angels. During the celebration of their memory, the Feast of the Holy Bodiless Angels (November 8), we are given the opportunity to go over what the good spirits are, what their work is and what we owe to them.

What Are Angels?

What these mysterious beings are in their deeper essence, beloved readers, only God knows:

“We do not know with precision the essence of angels. Even if we philosophized about a myriad of things, we would not be able to find out.”
(Cyril of Jerusalem)

Only a portion of the truth has been revealed to us, and it refers more to their work. Thus we believe that angels were created by God the Father, the Maker of “Heaven and earth, and of all things, both visible and invisible,” as we confess in the Symbol of Faith. In this creation (of the world, angels and people), God the Father is the main Protagonist, but the Son also participates, since “by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible” (Col. 1:16). The Holy Spirit also participates in His way, which gives life to all creatures.

This refers to a creation that took place before the stars and the universe were made, in a way unknown to us, “outside of time” (St. Basil the Great) and “silently” (St. Isaac the Syrian). “When the stars were made, all

My angels praised with a loud voice” (Job 38:7). They are personal beings, despite the fact that they are not humans.

Do Angels Have Bodies?

In comparison to us, they are bodiless. In comparison to God, “the only truly immaterial and bodiless One,” they have spiritual, thin and ethereal “bodies.” The angel is called “bodiless as compared to us.”

Compared to God, the only incomparable One, everything is found to be thick and material, for truly the only immaterial and bodiless One is the divine” (St. John of Damascus, *Precise Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*).

But whether they have such “bodies,” they remain truly immaterial. From this viewpoint they are lacking before man, because they don’t have an organic relationship with material creation and cannot connect the material created world with the uncreated God.

In other words, whereas man was created “a little lower than the angels” (Heb. 2:7), he nevertheless has within his person the material and the spiritual world. Angels can’t do something like this, despite the fact that they are not cut off from or unrelated to the rest of creation.

For this reason also, Christ did not come into the world as the Angel of God, but as a God Man, combining, in His person, the Godhead and humanity. After the divine Incarnation, human nature obtained a unique glory and honor, incomparably greater than that of the angels.

Are Angels Mortal or Immortal Beings?

The angels exist as created beings, since they once had a beginning. This means that they are not by nature immortal, because only God is “naturally” immortal.

“Only God exists forever, even beyond forever.”
(St. John of Damascus)

The angels become immortal “not by nature, but by grace” (Basil the Great). In other words, they obtain their personal immortality through their relationship with God the Father, a relationship that is realized for them through the Son. Thus they can “see” God’s face



On the Holy Angels

as much as possible, and hymn and glorify the divine majesty. “The angels see ... as much as they can contain” (St. John Chrysostom).

What Do Angels Do?

Now the good spirits, the angels, according to the definition of Holy Scripture, are “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation” (Heb. 1:14). They serve the mystery of people’s salvation. Such a ministry is found throughout the history of divine Economy. Thus with their bright presence, which comprises indirect “theophanies” (revelations of God), they impart to the world God’s messages, they protect the righteous, they rejoice when sinners repent they serve Jesus in His work, and they will play their role on the Day of Judgment.

The holy angels have taken a particularly active part in the work of our salvation, which the Incarnation of the Lord secured for us. Even before His Birth, the angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah, to announce to him that he, an old man, and his wife, who was well advanced in years, in a miraculous way would obtain a son, who would become “great in the sight of the Lord” and would prepare the people to receive the Deliverer (Luke 1:5-25).

At the Birth in the flesh of the Savior, an angel of the Lord appeared to the good shepherds of Bethlehem, to evangelize to them that “great joy which will be to all people” (Luke 2: 10), and a divine melody of the angels to God was heard: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men” (Luke 2:14).

Later, when the Lord retired to the desert for 40 days “to be tempted by the devil” (Matt. 4: 1), “the angels ministered to Him” (Mark 1: 13). After this, at the end of the Lord’s earthly activity, when the agony of His passion had begun, in those dreadful hours of abandonment by everyone, “an angel appeared to Him from Heaven, strengthening Him” (Luke 22:43).

Finally, the angels again first gave the good news of joy during that fragrant morning of the Resurrection. First, “an angel of the Lord ... rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb” (Matt. 28:2), “for it was exceedingly large” (Mark 16:4). An angel of the Lord also first announced to the Myrrh bearing women the [news], “He is risen!” (Mark 16:6) and gave the signal to spread the news of the great miracle to the Disciples of the Lord (Matt. 28:7) and through them “to all creation” (Mark



16:15). Furthermore, the Myrrh bearing women saw two angels “in shining garments” (Luke 24:4) in the tomb, “one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain” (John 20:12). The two angels repeated to the Myrrh bearing women that they should not “seek the living among the dead” because “He is risen,” (Luke 24:6) and He will wait for everyone in Galilee (Mark 16:7).



How Do We Honor the Angels?

In the life of the Church—especially now—the angels and people coexist in a strange unity that surpasses every distinction of earthly and heavenly. “You Who beyond understanding united the heavenly with the earthly, O Christ, and made one Church, of angels and people, You do we ceaselessly magnify” (a hymn from the feast of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel). In every Eucharistic gathering, a mystical concelebration takes place. According to the Cherubic Hymn, every Christian community “depicts” mystically the Cherubim and receives the King of all, “invisibly escorted by angelic ranks.” When the Church chants the Thrice Holy Hymn, she is living on earth that which is going on in heaven also. She is also foretasting that which will happen at the end times, because then also the angels will not cease worshipping God, saying, “Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 7:12).

Are Angels Worshiped?

These points about the nature of the angels and their participation in the work of our salvation are presented with great brevity. They are nevertheless enough to show how little attention we give to the angels and their work. *All these things, of course, don’t justify any religion or worship of angels.* On the contrary, every honor given to them “goes” to the Lord Jesus, at Whose name “every knee should bow, of those in Heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth” (Phil. 2: 10). Every reference, however, to their work helps those who believe in the Lord to become, like the angels, “ministering and eucharistic persons” to live as “incarnate angels” of Christ’s presence in the world. Let us show our trust and our gratitude toward them, especially toward our “guardian” angels.

[Translated by Fr. Nicholas Palis from *Peiraike Ecclesia Magazine*, Nov., 2003, #143.

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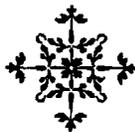
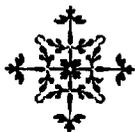
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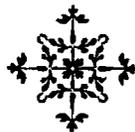
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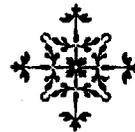


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Christ commanded His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations! When saying His disciples, it is not meant only the people who knew Him. Are we not Christ's disciples also, much like them more than 2000 years ago? This command, then, isn't just for them, but for all of us, Orthodox Christians, especially in America for we are faced with the same important task. Christ is alive in us, for we are still walking with Christ this very day. His command is clear, it is not subject for interpretation: "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20).'" Then where is the Orthodox voice in America: are we still just a voice crying out in the wilderness or a disciple-maker of all nations?

*From "Where is the Orthodox Voice in America?" by Paul Fuller,
President of the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at the University of Kentucky*