



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

OCTOBER 2009

VOLUME 17 • ISSUE 9

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Also enclosed:
October Parish Calendar

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

**NOVEMBER 1, 2009
FALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NOTICE, AGENDA &
PC NOMINATIONS FORM!**

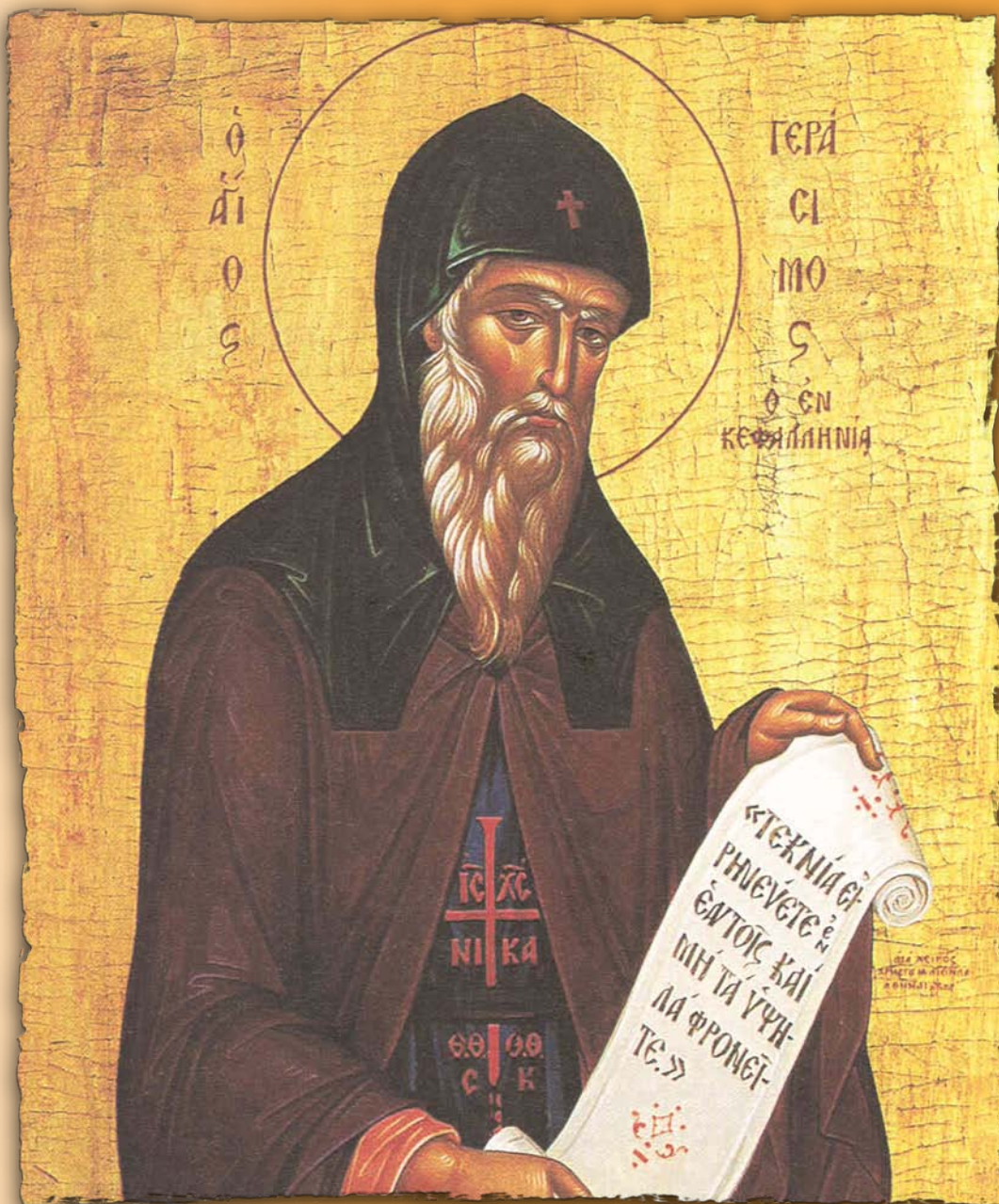
QUICK NEWS



Two enthusiastic volunteers staff the gyro preparation area under the outdoor tent during the tremendously successful 2009 Holy Trinity Summer Greek Festival. For photos of this event, as well as images from the 2009 Holy Trinity Combined Youth Ministries Kick-Off, see the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 8-11.

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

O believers, let us praise the protector of the Orthodox, the God-bearing miracle-worker lately appearing to us, the incarnate angel, the divine Gerasimos, for he has rightly received from God the ever-flowing grace of performing healing. He strengthens those with diseases and he heals those with demons, and therefore he pours out healings to those who honor him.



Saint Gerasimos of Cephalonia · Feast Day: October 20

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

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

About the Herald

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

Editor

Father John Touloumes, Ekonomos

Church: 412-321-9282

Home: 412-831-3574

E-mail: fjt@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Production

Josephine Stoffko, Administrative Asst.

E-mail: office@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Contributors

Michael Kritiotis

Voula Hareras

Maria Kraniou

Vickie Bellios

Rev. Fr. John Androustopoulos

Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu

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About the Parish

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

302 West North Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15212-4626

Phone: 412-321-9282 • Fax: 412-321-7272

Web site: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

Email: office@HolyTrinityPgh.org

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

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Parish Administration

Clergy

Rev. Fr. John Touloumes, Proistamenos

Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Assistant Priest

Parish Council

Chris T. Balouris, President

Anthony Loomis Alex Trivilas

Sondra A. Balouris Yvonne Balouris

George Danis George Dickos

Troy Geanopoulos Joanne Germanos

Robert Marsh Nicholas Sarandou

Vasilios Scoumis Gerri Valliant

Ministries

Philoptochos..... Kay Balouris, Pres.

GOYA.....Pres. Becky Touloumes, Advisor

Choir.....John Nychis, Director

Over 50 Club.....Stella Athanasiou, Pres.

St. Lydia Study.....Stacy Dickos, Coordinator

Cemetery.....Bill Fiedler, Chairman

Greek School....Effie Kilantonis, Coordinator

Social Hall..... Laura Triantafillos, Coordinator

Bookstore..... Bill and Linda Areheart



Woe to me if I do not preach
the Gospel!
1 Corinthians 9:16

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I was blessed recently with a wonderful opportunity to participate in both continuing education as a pastor and fellowship and inspiration as a clergyman specifically related to the important task Saint Paul speaks of above: the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The first-of-its-kind event was sponsored by the Archdiocesan Presbyters Council and held on the campus of our seminary, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, on the outskirts of Boston. It was attended by Greek Orthodox clergy from throughout the country. Some of the participants were newly ordained. Some had been in active ministry for a number of years. Others, such as myself, brought 20 or more years of ordained ministry. All benefitted greatly, myself especially.

The "Art of Speaking Workshop" as it was titled, was an intense, three-day schedule of lectures, workshops, discussion groups and even the taping and evaluation of two sermons all the participants were instructed to prepare and deliver. Notable speakers presented both instructional and inspiration messages on preaching and the ministry of the priesthood, including emeritus professors of homiletics and liturgics, as well as a dynamic new seminarian who was received into the Faith after serving for many years as a Pentecostal minister.

I had an opportunity to share by my anticipation and reflections on the workshop on the week before and after the event with those in attendance at Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity Church. In both instances, this was born out of my personal desire to include the entire parish membership in the quest for more effective ministry in hopes that we will all take the calling more seriously to bring the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people.

In his talk, Father Alkiaviadis Calivas, one of my beloved beloved professors, shared this: the four essential, indispensable activities of the Church are these: 1) Worship; 2) Proclaiming the Word of God; 3) Teaching; 4) Works of love (Philanthropy). Please note most importantly: he said that are the works of the Church, not simply "activities" of the clergy. That means all of us are called to share the Gospel!

And so, I invite you to join me in a renewed dedication to bringing the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those around us. Yes, the clergy are specially trained and educated in the formalities of giving sermons, but none are as powerful as the personal, face-to-face, heart-to-heart message from believers to those in need: unbelievers, faithful people who are struggling or anyone else whose burdens can be lightened by He Who said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt. 11:30).

If Saint Paul was so compelled to share that Good News, both the ordained clergy and every layperson must be equally as moved. As it says in 1 Timothy: "Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord ... but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God Who saved us and called us with a holy calling."

Yours in Christ,

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services October

Please take note of the following upcoming liturgical dates. Unless otherwise indicated, Orthros starts at 8:30 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m. (through October).

Oct. 14: 6:00 pm - Paraclesis to the Theotokos

Oct. 26: St. Demetrios the Great Martyr

Oct. 28: The Holy Protection of the Theotokos/"OXI" Day

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Church School Is Underway Sundays

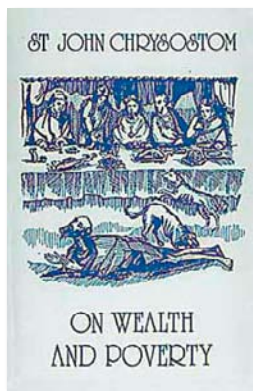
Church School for the 2009/2010 is underway! Missed registering your child(ren)? Don't worry! Simply accompany your child to class and see the teacher to sign up. And remember, signing up is just the start! Please give your child the best opportunity for learning the Faith in its fullness by starting with Divine Liturgy, because no matter how much we know about God in our head, it is in the holy worship services and sacraments of the Church that we come to know Him in our heart. Divine Liturgy starts at 9:30 through October (10:00 December through March) and the children's message is offered immediately following the Gospel, which is not too long into the service. And also this year there is a new home for our St. Spyridon Children's Lending Library so our students can enjoy beneficial and inspirational books, videos and DVDs! Thank you, parents, for your dedication and love for both your children and the Church

Orthodox Studies Forum Starting October 7

Now in its fourth year, the Orthodox Studies Forum is designed for adults who are interested in learning more about the Orthodox Christian Faith. It is led by Father Radu Bordeianu and is for both those who have been Orthodox all their lives and want to learn more as well as those seeking to embrace Orthodoxy from another background and grow further in their faith.

This year's forum will study the book, "On Wealth and Poverty" by St. John Chrysostom. This fourth century Father of the Church was one of the most prolific speakers and writers of the early Church and this well-translated series of messages is a contemporary and relevant to our life as Christians as it was when it was originally delivered.

The group meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at La Roche College, 900 Babcock Blvd., in the Palumbo Science Center, Room 106. (Note: This is the same building in which the group met last time. After Oct. 7, the group will be meeting in Room 102, another room in the same building.) For more information, visit www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/osf for details or contact Fr. Radu by email at FrRadu@HolyTrinityPgh.org.



Saint Lydia Women's Study Fellowship Starting Oct. 8

Now in its 11th year, 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. This year there will be a new location: the Saint George Chapel, 8931 Ringeisen Road, located at Holy Trinity Cemetery.

New participants are always welcome: married, single, wives, mothers, working or retired, everyone is welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable, the approach is casual and discussion-oriented. The gathering starts with a half-hour of women's fellowship followed by an hour of study and prayer. All Holy Trinity women are welcome and invited to bring a friend! For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925.

This year's topic for study is the Divine Liturgy, the central worship offering of our Church. A complete schedule is available online at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/stlydia.

FUNERALS & MEMORIALS

Nikki Manesiotis

The servant of God, Nikki Manesiotis, fell asleep in the Lord on September 20, 2009. The Funeral was held at the Saint George Chapel on September 23, followed by interment at the Holy Trinity Cemetery. May her memory be eternal! A 40-day Memorial is scheduled for October 25.

Upcoming Memorials

October 11: Stella Kourakos, Elpida Kraniou; October 18: Patrick Nagle; October 25: Nikki Manesiotis; November 15: Betty Beckas.

SACRAMENTAL REGISTRY

Baptism: Gracik

The servant of God, Audrey Gracik, daughter of Jeremy And Alexandra Gracik, was received into the Holy Orthodox Christian Faith through the Holy Mystery of Baptism on September 20, 2009. The Sponsor was Stellanie Coleman. May God grant her many years!

YOUTH MINISTRIES

GOYA Fellowship October 25

Holy Trinity GOYA will hold its monthly teen fellowship on Sunday, October 25 at 6:30 pm. Please watch the GOYA e-mail list for information on the location. Have a teen that wants to get involved? Send a note to "GOYA@HolyTrinityPgh.org" to receive information.

GREEK SCHOOL NEWS

Children's and Adult Greek Classes. 2009-2010

Holy Trinity Greek School is operating both adult and children's classes this year, including the additions of new

teachers. Holy Trinity has a wealth of materials from pre-school through senior high, including new curriculum now available through the Archdiocese, underwritten by the Faith Endowment. Also, the Greek school is pleased to announce the return of one of their veteran teachers, Magdalini Evangelopoulou Paleos. All that is needed are your children, from ages 4 through 18, to benefit from this program. For more information, call Effie Kilantonis at 412-831-3291.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Fall General Assembly.....November 1

Please plan on staying after Divine Liturgy on Sunday, November 1, to attend the Regular Fall General Assembly. This is the Regular Fall Assembly to review parish life, nominate candidates for the Parish Council and hear reports on important parish matters. It is important that all members attend, as these meetings are quite important in the day-to-day life of the parish. Please remember, to vote at an assembly, nominate or be a candidate for Parish Council or to vote in elections, you must be a member in good standing as defined in the Uniform Parish Regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, having a signed 2009 Holy Trinity Stewardship Pledge card submitted. An agenda is enclosed.

Sign Up For the Holy Trinity Email!

Want to receive the Sunday Bulletin directly via email? Want to keep up to date with the latest Holy Trinity news, including changes of events, changes due to weather, etc.? Go to www.HolyTrinityPgh.org and sign up today!

Follow Holy Trinity Church on Twitter!

For the fastest notices and latest Holy Trinity Church event reminders, follow us on Twitter! It's easy:

- 1) Go to www.twitter.com and create an account.
- 2) Click on "Find People" and enter "holytrinitypgh".
- 3) Click on the "Follow" icon next to "Holy Trinity Church". You'll now receive all Holy Trinity "tweets" instantly.



That's all you need to do, but there are two other helpful hints to protect your privacy:

- 4) If you do not want anyone to be able to "follow" you (that is, you're just using Twitter to get news from Holy Trinity or other people you follow), go to "Settings" and check the "Protect my tweets" box to keep anyone from following you.
- 5) Unless you have your messages sent somewhere, you will have to logon to Twitter to get the news. Better idea: have all "tweets" sent to your email account or mobile phone. Go to "Settings" and click on "Devices" and choose where you want your updates sent.

What will Holy Trinity Church be "tweeting" about? Reminders for upcoming events and services; last-minute changes due to weather; urgent announcements and other important information.

REGIONAL NEWS

Walk For Missions 2009October 11

The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh will once again sponsor its annual Walk for Missions on Sunday, October 11 at 2:00 p.m. (Registration at 1:00 p.m.) at the South Park Children's Playground. Proceeds from the Walk will benefit the Orthodox Christian Missions Center (OCMC), which sends missionaries throughout the world. This year the focus will be on Spanish translations of Orthodox catechetical materials for use in Latin America. The Orthodox Christian Mission Center receives many such requests from individual inquirers and independent church groups for instruction into the Orthodox Christian Faith. The registration and sponsor flyer is enclosed in this issue of *The Herald* and should be brought to the Walk. Please notify Holy Cross Church at 412-833-3355 if you plan to participate.

IOCC Wine Tasting Benefit Event.....October 15

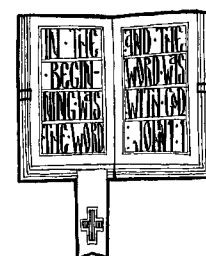
The Pittsburgh chapter of International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) will host a Wine Tasting and Dinner to benefit its philanthropic and humanitarian work on Thursday, October 16, 2008 at Little Athens Restaurant, 518 Locust Place in Sewickley (412-741-1230). Appetizers will start at 6 p.m., followed by dinner. Tickets are \$60.00 per person. Due to limited seating tickets must be purchased in advance. To purchase tickets go to www.iocc.org/pittsburgh or contact Sophie Farah at 412-341-6869 by Sunday, October 11. Enjoy an evening of fellowship, food and fine wine! See the enclosed flyer for more information.



Presentations on the BeatitudesOctober 17

The Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School is pleased to present a new event: "The Life-Giving Beatitudes of Christ", a series of talks with Fr. Demetrios Carellas, Chaplain of the Nativity of the Theotokos Greek Orthodox Monastery. The first event will take place Saturday, October 17, 2009, 3:00 pm, at the T.H.E.O.S. School, 1819 Ellsworth Avenue, Heidelberg, PA. The phone number of the school is 412-278-3333.

The topic for the first talk is: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens." Q & A will follow. Light refreshments will be served. Donations gratefully accepted to benefit T.H.E.O.S.



METROPOLIS & ARCHDIOCESE NEWS

Upcoming Events

Please note the following upcoming Metropolis events. Information and registration can be found at the Metropolis web site: pittsburgh.goarch.org.

November 13-15: GOYA Fall Retreat
January 15-17: Young Adult Retreat

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



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

The Destination of a Christian

The ultimate aim and destination of the Christian is to approach the perfect—that is, God—and to achieve the salvation of his soul.

In other words, each faithful Christian desires to end this earthly life with the hope and assurance that he or she will inherit eternal life. To inherit the

future life, the faithful Orthodox Christian will look to the Church where there is at the disposal of the faithful three means:

1. The Orthodox Catholic Faith
2. The Grace of God
3. The good deeds of the faithful

The faithful Christian must believe in the Holy Trinity; in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; also in the life to come, and in the Church of Christ upon earth.

The Grace of God can be received through the Holy Sacraments and special Services, which the Church, through her Priests, offers for the sanctification of the Faithful.

Faith and Works

Faith and the Grace of the Holy Spirit are absolutely necessary for our salvation, but they alone are not sufficient. It is not enough to believe in God and be worthy of His grace to be saved, but we must also do His will. Those worthy of receiving God's grace are the ones who do not oppose God but are prepared to receive Him. As Orthodox Christians, there are certain duties we must perform while we are on earth:

1. The first and most important way for a Christian to approach God and to be compared to our Lord Jesus Christ as Man (the human nature of Christ) is prayer, which is the most important privilege God gave to man, so that His creature (man) to communicate with His Maker. The Holy Fathers say that prayer is the lifting up the mind and heart to God. Every Orthodox Christian must pray.

2. Aside from prayer, of great importance is also Fasting—the abstinence of certain foods and worldly pleasures. Fasting helps our soul and our prayers. Fasting is the mother of good health.

3. To be saved, an Orthodox Christian must heed the word of God. God has revealed in many ways His will, beginning with the prophets, and right up to Jesus Christ, of all His

revelations. The most important laws which guide us are the Ten Commandments, for Jesus said, "Whoever accepts my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves me. My Father will love whoever loves me; I too will love him and reveal myself to him." (John 14:21)

4. Besides the Commandments of God, a good Christian must also abide by the laws laid down by the Church, to guide the life of its members on earth.

5. A good Christian must persist in doing good if he hopes to achieve salvation. This persistence in living up to the teachings of good willingly and doing deeds, is known as virtue. The most important virtues are the nine by which we achieve happiness and which were given to us by Jesus Christ Himself, during His "Sermon on the Mount." (Please read Matthew 5:1-12.)

6. A Christian must avoid sin. The persistence to do the Will of God and live a Christian life is known as virtue, but the disobedience of the Law of God is known as sin. A Christian must fight sin. If because of temptation or weakness, a person sins, then he or she must repent. The Christian must be contrite and confess the sins so that he or she may be absolved and forgiven. The Orthodox Christian must receive Holy Communion for the remission of sins.

7. An Orthodox Christian has received his life with its soul and body as a gift from God. As a gift, the person must take care of the soul and body. These obligations are known as duties to one's self.

8. Even if a Christian fulfills all the duties to God and to himself or herself, that Christian still cannot obtain salvation if he or she is negligent towards their neighbor. The first and greatest of our duties towards our neighbors is to love that person. Our Lord places only the love of God above the love of neighbor.

If an Orthodox Christian desires to attain a good life here on earth, and if the person wishes to achieve eternal salvation, that Christian will do the Will of God and prepare to receive Him.

PRAYER



FASTING



OBEDIENCE



MORALITY



GOOD WORKS



PURITY



SELF-CONTROL



COMPASSION

Thought For This Month:

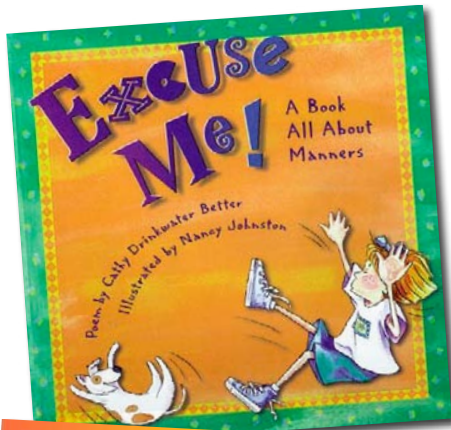
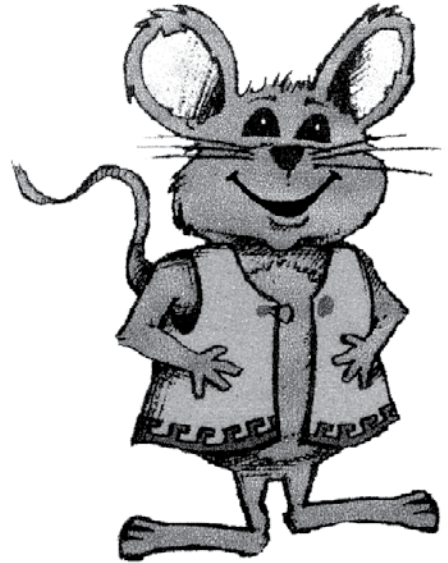
Beloved as Orthodox Christians do we know our destination? Do we know where we come from and where are we going? We come from non-existence to life and through death we are going to the immortality of the soul.

With His love,

Rev. Fr. John R. Androutsopoulos

Hello, my precious children!

Today I have a few books out of my awesome Children's Lending Library to share with you, and they are all about one of your parents' favorite subjects: manners! These are mostly for my little ones under 8, but even the big kids can get them and read them to their younger brothers and sisters!



The first one, "Excuse Me!" by Cathy Drinkwater Better, is a really good one to read these days. Schools and lots of other places are trying to teach us to be careful about sneezing in public so we don't spread or catch germs like the flu. I even heard the Governor on the radio the other day asking us to be careful when we sneeze! This book will teach you all about good manners that are easy to use. It makes us lots safer and more polite to each other, and that makes every day more fun as we share the love of our Heavenly Father with those around us!



The second one is from Veggie Tales, and it's called "Peas and Thank You," by Mike Newrock. In it, our fun little friends from Veggie Tales head out to collect sunflower seeds. On the way, they teach us that everyone wins when we are polite and take turns. We also learn the importance of good manners. Yiayia says the Bible tells us in 1 Peter 2:17 to show proper respect to everyone: "Respect everyone and show special love for God's people."



And finally, another great book from Veggie Tales called, "Junior and Laura Share the Year Together," by Lisa Vischer and Murry Murray. In this colorful adventure, we will learn the fun of sharing (that's right, I said the FUN of sharing!) as we go through every day of the year with our Veggie pals, Junior and Laura. We learn how to share something new together every month of the year. We also discover how our Heavenly Father really wants us to share our things and how much He pleases Him when we do!

So, don't forget to come visit me in my new location inside the Church Office. There is a schedule posted on the lower level for which classes will visit on which days.

Love in Christ,
Spero

In previous issues, the Herald has reported on the plight of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the constant oppression and persecution it has experienced at the hands of both governmental authorities and anti-Christian forces. This article is especially relevant because I visited this historic cemetery at the Monastery of "Zoodochos Peghe" during our pilgrimage in 2007. Among other notable graves there is that of Patriarch Athenagoras, former Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. Please continue to pray for our Patriarch and his faithful that they may be protected by God in their continual mission to keep the light of Christ alive there. +FJT

Ninety Tombs Desecrated In Historical Orthodox Christian Cemetery

Istanbul, Turkey
9/17/2009

Ninety tombs were desecrated by vandals in the beginning of September, at Baloukli cemetery, bringing to mind the tragic pogrom of the Greek community in September 1955. The vandalism was ascertained in the morning of September 2nd by the guards of the nearby historical Monastery of the Life-giving Spring of Baloukli. The unknown individuals, who committed the sacrilege act, entered by the stone fence of the cemetery that faces the road.

After viewing the destroyed tombstones, the Board of Trustees of Baloukli Hospital, began construction of a higher fence so that access to the cemetery may be prevented. In most of the graves, are buried ethnic Greeks who lived the last years of their lives in the Nursing Home of Baloukli.

The vandals broke in pieces the tombstones that were bearing the cross, the names and dates of birth and death of those who died. The authorities are looking into the case. This incident, which has not yet been widely known, has created great concern among the Greek minority in Istanbul. It should be noted that on many other occasions in the past, the government has tracked down desecrations of smaller scale but this is the first time that so many burial plots have been vandalized. The destroyed tombstones will be restored when the work for building the outside fence is completed so that a new "invasion" of vandals will be prevented.

Report by N. Manginas for the Order of Saint Andrew. The Order of St. Andrew's fundamental goal and mission is to promote the religious freedom, wellbeing and advancement of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which is headquartered in Istanbul, Turkey. For more information, visit www.archons.org.



Top photos: Damage done to the Baloukli Cemetery; A personal inspection by His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew. Bottom photos: The tomb of Patriarch Athenagoras; tombs of the hierarchs; the actual "Zoodochos Peghe" Life-Giving Spring located inside the monastery.









Sept. 13, 2009: Holy Trinity HOPE, JOY, GOYA and YAM gathered at Treesdale for their annual Combined Youth Ministries Kick-off. They enjoyed food, games and planning for the new year.



An update on the news and activities of our local Holy Trinity chapter of the Philoptochos Ladies Society, a national philanthropic ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. and the Parish Council." Want more information? Visit their web site at www.Philoptochos.org or contact a local member.

Philoptochos Report: October 2009

By the time you read this newsletter summer will be officially over. School will have started and all the activities that we are involved in will begin.

Membership

Ladies of Holy Trinity if you are not a member of Philoptochos, we welcome you to join. The Philoptochos is the only 100% philanthropic organization. Our goal is to help our church, the poor, the homeless and the handicapped. Please join because you want to be involved in making a difference.

Bake Sale

The Philoptochos is selling 9x13 pans of Spanokopita for \$25.00 each and 9x13 pans of Baklava for \$30.00 each. Each of us has family and friends who would be interested in purchasing one or more items. Please help the Philoptochos sell these items. For more information please see Joyce Cournouris or Kay Balouris.

Coffee Hour

Won't you consider sponsoring a coffee hour? It would be wonderful to honor someone on his or her birthday, name day, or anniversary. You may sponsor the coffee hour alone or with family and friends. Please contact Kay Balouris (412-766-1263) to make arrangements.



Cookbooks

The holidays are coming and many of us will be looking for that special gift to give to a friend or acquaintance. Our cookbook is the perfect gift and only \$15.00. They will be on sale every Sunday during the coffee hour.

Get Well Cards

The Philoptochos cannot send Get Well or Thinking of You cards to those who are ill or hospitalized unless we are informed. Please contact the church office and provide Josie with a friend or loved one's information. Thank you.



Spotlight On Music

Holy Trinity Philoptochos once again offered its support to the "Spotlight on Music," a great afternoon of outstanding musical talent and art work to benefit the Metropolis Camp at Mount Tabor. Thank you to those who attended.

A Little Bit Of Wisdom...Hugging

Many people believe that hugging is therapeutic. They have been hugging for many years. It makes them feel good. Maybe they were on to something that has now been raised to the status of a treatment for depression. In fact, books have been written on the subject. Remember a hug a day will keep the "Head Doctor" away.

So try it, you will like it!

Philoptochos Coming Events (Dates TBA)

Philoptochos Name Day Sunday
Thanksgiving Fund Raiser
Angel Tree - Gifts for Needy Children
Seniors Christmas Party

*Respectfully submitted,
Esther Ladakos, Secretary*

Philoptochos and Social Services: Faith Meets Works!

The mission of the Social Services Department of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc. (National Philoptochos) is to improve the quality of life of those in need, in a way that maintains the dignity, self-determination and independence of the client.

Since the 1950's, upon recommendation of Archbishop Iakovos, Philoptochos placed an increased emphasis on the implementation of important programs to benefit the Greek Orthodox Community, including, but not limited to institutions of the Church, the philanthropies of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and assistance to Greek and Greek Orthodox families. Involvement in social and moral issues encouraged the establishment of several committees to address topics such as child abuse prevention, domestic violence, homelessness, pornography, drug and alcohol abuse and aging. Since 1987, the National Philoptochos Office has employed professional Social Worker(s), engaged in assisting the Greek Orthodox Community in the United States as well as Greek and Cypriot Nationals. The Social Workers are bilingual (Greek/English) graduates of accredited Master's programs in Social Work and licensed in the State of New York. Assistance to individuals and families is provided through outreach, education and information, referrals to local and broader resources, advocacy, supportive counseling, short-term intervention, resource development and financial assistance as needed and approved according to the guidelines of the Department. (Find out more at www.philoptochos.org/socialservices/mission)

Modern Greece's contribution to the defense of freedom against the Axis Powers of World War II was heroic, remarkable and—after much sacrifice—successful. In the words of Ioannis Metaxas: "Greece is not fighting for victory. She is fighting for glory, and for honor. She has a debt for herself to remain worthy of her history." This article encourages us all to "Never Forget Our History."



Voula Hareras

Για Νά Μήν Ξεχνάμε Τήν Ίστορία Μας

Δέν θά πρέπει ποτέ νά ξεχνάμε τής Νίκης τού Στρατού μας στό 'Αλβανικό μέτωπο τής 28ης 'Οκτωβρίου 1940.

Μία ακόμα χρυσή σελίδα στο γεμάτο ήρωισμούς βιβλίο τής ένδοξης Ίστορίας μας.

΄Αν καί μικρό κορίτσι τότε, ακόμα θυμάμε σάν νάταν χθές αυτό τό ξέφρενο πρωινό τής 28ης

'Οκτωβρίου 1940 ήταν κάτι πού δέν περιγράφεται μέ λόγια.

Οί Έλληνες άνέκαθεν πήγαιναν στόν πόλεμο σάν σέ πανηγύρι. Η Έλληνική ψυχή έχει μέσα της έναν άέρα διαφορετικό. Τίποτε δέν μπορεί νά τήν φοβίσει νά τήν ρίξει χάμω νά τήν χαλάσει.

Καί τήν αύγή τής 28ης 'Οκτωβρίου 1940 άρχιζε ένα γλέντι, ένα ξεφάντωμα, πού όμοιό του είχε χρόνια νά τό ζήσει ή Πατρίδα. Αύτοί οί στρατιώτες, οί χυμένοι μέσα στους δρόμους, οί πιασμένοι μέσα μέσα κι έξω από τά τράμ, οί άνεβασμένοι πάνω στά τρένα μόνο στόν πόλεμο δέν έλεγες ότι πηγαίνουν. Μέ τά χέρια σηκωμένα ψηλά, τά δίκονα νά άνεμίζουν καθώς χαιρετούσαν, τά πρόσωπα φωτισμένα από τά χαμόγελα πού σκορπίζαν, μέ τά μαντολίνα στόν ώμο [ω ναί καλά διαβάσατε, τά μαντολίνα στόν ώμο] λές πήγαιναν σέ ξεφάντωμα, σέ γλέντι, σέ πανηγύρι.

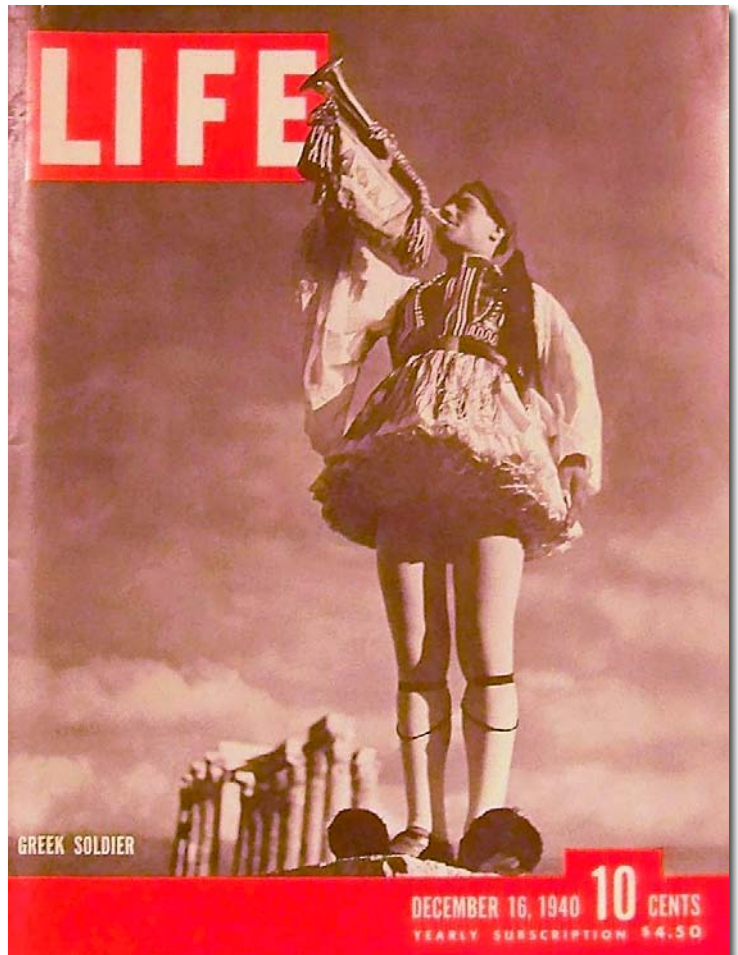
Ίαχές, τραγούδια, ζητωκραυγές, χειροκροτήματα, άλαλαγμός από τά πλήθη, καθώς τούς χαιρετούσαν για τό Μέτωπο. Έτσι άρχιζε ό πόλεμος έναντίον τών Ίταλών τό 1940...

Κι έτσι βαστούσε επί 216 ήμέρες. Άλλιώς δέν θά βγαίναμε καν για πόλεμο έναντία στόν άξονα, όπως καί τόσες άλλες εύρωπαϊκές χώρες πριν από μάς. Γιατί άν τό πάρεις μέ τή λογική, πώς ήταν δυνατόν νά έλπίζουμε σέ νίκη μέ στρατό 140,000 άνδρών έναντι 560,000 Ίταλών μέ ύπεροχή έκατονταπλάσια σέ μηχανικά μέσα.

Ηταν όμως αυτός ό ένθουσιασμός ή αίσιοδοξία, ή πίστη στή βοήθεια τού Θεού καί στόν δίκαιο άγώνα, πού μεταδίδονταν από τόν έναν στόν άλλο καί έμοιαζε μέ κύμα πού κατάκλυζε ψυχές καί φρόνημα, άπλωνόταν παντού καί φούντωνε μέ τό τραγούδι μέ τό άνέκδοτο τή σάτιρα καί τή γελοιογραφία.. Αύτός ό άέρας φούσκωνε γι' ακόμα μιá φορά τά στήθη τών Έλλήνων. Αύτός ό άέρας ήχούσε στίς βουνοκορφές τό προίμιο τής νίκης.

Όταν τά άναρίθμητα στίφη τών Περσών έβαλαν βουλή νά περάσουν από τά στενά τών Θερμοπυλών πού τά φύλαγαν λίγες έκατοντάδες Έλληνες μέ τόν Λεωνίδα, παρατήρησαν – γράφει ό 'Ηρόδοτος – ότι οί Έλληνες στρατιώτες έπιδίδοντο σέ άθλητικούς άγώνες, ένν άλλοι από αυτούς έφτιαχναν τά μαλλιά τους... Άπόρησαν οί έχθροί. Καί τότε ό Δημάρατος έσπευσε νά τούς έξηγήσει.. Είναι συνήθεια τών Έλλήνων

Είπε. Όταν πρόκειται νά άγωνιστούν μέχρι θανάτου, τότε στολίζονται καί καλοχτενίζονται. [Έπεαν μέλλωσι

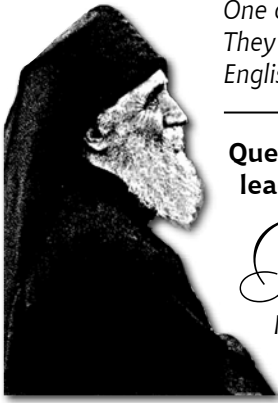


κινδυνεύειν τή ψυχή, τότε τάς κεφαλάς κοσμεύονται. Γιατί ό Έλληνας όταν πρόκειται για τήν Πατρίδα ξέρει νά γλεντά ακόμα καί τόν Πόλεμο Καί τόν Θάνατο ακόμα...]

Η άξέχαστη τραγουδίστρια τής Νίκης Σοφία Βέμπο στήν πρώτη γραμμή τού Μετώπου έμψύχωνε τά ήρωικά παληκάρια μέ τά άθάνατα τραγούδια της, άς θυμηθούμε ένα..

Μές τούς δρόμους τριγυρνάνε οί μανούλες καί
κοιτανε' νά άντικρύσουνε
Τά παιδιά πού όρμιστήκαν, στόν σταθμό σά
χωριστήκαν νά νικήσουνε
Μά για κείνους πούχουν φύγει, καί ή δόξα τούς
τυλίγει, προσευχόμαστε
Καί ποτέ καμιά άς μήν κλάψη, κάθε πόνο της άς
θάψη κι' άς εύχόμαστε
Παιδιά τής Έλλάδος παιδιά, πού σκληρά
πολεμάτε, πάνω στά βουνά
Παιδιά, στήν γλυκειά Παναγία προσευχόμαστε
όλλες νάρθετε ξανά
Μέ τής δάφνης τά κλαδιά σάς προσμένουμε
παιδιά...

Πηγή Από Νίκη
Βούλα Χαρερά



Elder Paisios

One of the great blessings of Orthodoxy is the presence, prayers and inspired words of the Holy Elders of the Faith. They have been referred as "precious vessels of the Holy Spirit." In recent years, many books have been published in English with their writings and talks. This column provides an opportunity for each of us to be blessed by their words.

Question: Gheronda, how can comforts lead to discomfort?

Because modern conveniences have exceeded all bounds, they have become inconveniences. Machines have multiplied and so have distractions; man has been turned into a machine. All kinds of machines and inventions now rule over man. This is why human hearts too are turning into steel. All of these modern comforts make the cultivation of conscience in people difficult. In the old days, people used to work with animals and were more compassionate. If you overloaded an animal and the poor thing kneeled down from the weight, you felt bad for it. If it was hungry and looked at you snivelling, it broke your heart. I remember, when a cow of ours fell ill, we suffered with it, because we considered it a member of the family. Today people own lots of devices made of steel, but, unfortunately, even their own heart have turned into steel.

Is the equipment broken? It is welded together. Is the car not running? It is taken to the repair shop. If it cannot, be fixed, they throw it away; they have no feelings for it. After all, it's just a piece of iron. The heart does not take part in these decisions, and this is how selfishness and pride find fertile ground and take root.

Question: Geronda, why are there so many people suffering today?

It's simple: they refuse to strain themselves. There is too much convenience and it's making people sick and miserable. Modern comforts have stupefied people and the sloth we see in so many today has brought on many diseases.

In the past, it would take so much work to just thresh the wheat! The labor was hard but then the bread was so sweet! You never saw people throw bread away. If you found a small piece of bread somewhere, you picked it up and kissed it. Even today, those who lived through the German occupation will see a piece of bread and put it aside, while most people will throw it in the garbage as worthless. They don't appreciate its value. How often do you hear "Praise be to God" for all the blessings we receive from Him? You see, everything today is done the comfortable way.

Question: But what good does depriving ourselves of these comforts do?

Deprivation helps a lot. When people are deprived of something, they come to appreciate it more. When we deprive ourselves voluntarily, with discernment and humility for Christ's love, we feel spiritual joy. If, for example, someone says, "I will not drink water today because so and so is sick and my God, I cannot do anything more than that,"

and actually does it, God will refresh him not with water but with spiritual lemonade, with divine comfort! The worn out person feels great gratitude for even the smallest help. But take a rich, spoiled child; he does not feel any joy even when his parents satisfy his tantrums. He may have everything and still feel like his life is horrible; so he breaks and destroys whatever he finds, whereas some poor child will feel great gratitude for even a tiny bit of help.

Question: Why do worldly riches not satisfy us?

If a friend pays for their transportation to the Holy Mountain, they are very grateful to him and to God. You hear rich children gripe because they have everything they want instead of thanking God and helping some poor person. There is no greater ingratitude than this. They feel a void inside, because they have everything. They blame their parents, because they give them everything, and then they leave home and go hiking around with a backpack. And the parents give them money to call home so that they will not worry, but these young people don't even care. Eventually, the parents end up looking for them.

A young man from a good family who had everything, but did not find fulfillment and joy in anything, left home secretly and slept in trains so that he could experience hardship. But if he had a job and lived with his sweat and toil, his life would have meaning, he would have peace and would praise God all the time.

Question: What are the dangers of having life handed to us?

Today most people are not deprived of anything and for this reason they do not have *philotimo* (courtesy for others). If one has not worked hard, he cannot appreciate the hard work of others. What is the point of choosing a comfortable profession in order to make money, and then start looking for hardship? [People from a certain socialist country], who receive state allowances for almost everything and do not need to work for it, end up roaming the streets. They get tired doing nothing and feel stressed because they are spiritually derailed like a wheel which leaves its axle and then rolls aimlessly and falls over the cliff.

When conveniences become excessive, man is rendered useless and lazy. Even though we can turn something by hand, we think to ourselves, "No, I'll just press a button and it will turn by itself." When someone gets used to doing things the easy way, he wants to have it easy all the time. Today people want to work a little and get paid a lot. If they could get away without working at all, even better! The same spirit has entered spiritual life. We want to become saints without laboring for it.

Excerpted from "Elder Paisios of Mount Athos, The Spiritual Counsels, Volume I: With Pain and Love for Contemporary Man"

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No matter how many waves rise up in your soul, always flee to Christ. The Savior will come to help and will calm the waves. Believe that the Lord has providentially arranged your life for your healing; do not reject it and do not seek bodily rest and imagined peace. It is necessary rather to be shaken and endure much. If you will have a revelation, it will greatly ease your battle and you will have more peace than just by yourself.

Saint Leo

Do not be greatly disturbed by the arrangements of your fate. Have only the unwavering desire for salvation and, standing before God, await His help until the time come.

Saint Ambrose

Living Without Hypocrisy: The Spiritual Elders of Optina, Jordanville, NY

Scripture of the Month: "My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." (Psalm 121.2)