



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

JANUARY 2012

VOLUME 20 • ISSUE 1

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January Parish Calendar

**SPECIAL PHOTO
COVERAGE OF
HISTORIC
GROUNDBREAKING
INSIDE!**

QUICK NEWS



Holy Trinity GOYA officers present Metropolitan Savas and the Capital Campaign committee a \$3,000 check for the building fund at the Groundbreaking Service for the new church. Want to see more scenes from the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? Check out the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 8-19.



DECEMBER II, 2011

GROUNDBROKEN ON NEW HOLY TRINITY CHURCH!

His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh uses the golden shovel and breaks ground on the new Holy Trinity Church with Father John Touloumes looking on.

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, Economos

Church: 412-366-8700

Home: 412-831-3574

E-mail: fjt@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Production

Mary Portellos, Secretary/Office Administrator

E-mail: office@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Contributors

Michael Kritiotis Voula Hareras

Maria Kraniou Vickie Bellios

Rev. Fr. John Androutsopoulos

Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu

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About the Parish

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

495 Browns Lane

Pittsburgh, PA 15237-2515

Phone: 412-366-8700 • Fax: 412-366-8710

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

Jason Farmakis Yvonne Balouris

George Danis George Dickos

Troy Geanopoulos Joanne Germanos

Louis Kort Andrew Athanasiou

Vasilios Scoumis Gerri Valliant

Ministries

Philoptochos Kay Balouris, Pres.

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

ChoirJohn Nychis, Director

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

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

Cemetery.....Bill Fiedler, Chairman

Bookstore.....Bill and Linda Areheart



“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

(Matthew 9.37)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

December 8-11, 2011 will go down in the history books as amazing and transformative days in the life of Holy Trinity Church and the Metropolis of Pittsburgh. On December 8th, the Metropolis welcomed a new hierarch to the throne, a new shepherd into the flock and a new spiritual father into the Metropolis family with the enthronement of His Eminence Metropolitan Savas. This issue of *The Herald* contains lots of photos from that event, and the clergy and laity of Holy Trinity Church were there as an important part of those historic days.

Then, on December 11th, the divine calling and multi-generational aspirations of the entire Holy Trinity family were fulfilled through the Groundbreaking Service for the new Holy Trinity Church at the corner of Babcock Boulevard and Cumberland Road as His Eminence Metropolitan Savas blessed the waters, turned the first golden shovel of dirt and laid the first stone of the foundation. Many thanks to all those who worked so hard to make this day and this dream possible!

What does that all mean? It's time to get to work! No, not with hard hats and shovels. We'll leave that to the construction workers. There are a lot of other things we can do. In fact, there's one main job only we can do: tend to those little Yellow Crosses. What are they? They are the “Welcome” badges we offer to new visitors to Holy Trinity Church on Sunday mornings. You may have noticed: there are a lot of them lately. Since moving to our interim location, there is hardly a Sunday Liturgy that goes by without someone with a Yellow Cross showing up in Coffee Hour.



Where do they come from? How did they discover us? What are they hoping to find here? Do they have children? Would they like to get involved in the life of the community? These are all questions that must be asked ... by you! Yes, while the bulldozers, cranes and hammers are busy building our physical new church building, we are all on the construction crew of the Holy Trinity Church community. Please do not underestimate this. Each and every one of us has an important calling to fulfill in this task. His Eminence Metropolitan Savas is not just joining us, but leading us in that work. As quoted on page 9 from his Enthronement Address: “new opportunities lie ahead... new opportunities to encounter our neighbors, new opportunities to evangelize, new opportunities to draw the world into the Apostolic net of salvation...We have but to summon the courage in faith to go through that door.”

So keep an eye on that property as the dirt moves and the buildings rise. But be even more vigilant for those little Yellow Crosses. They are our calling, our work, our privilege and our joy. Happy New Year!

Paternaly yours in Christ,

Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:

**In Loving Memory of Father John Kostopolos
May His Memory Be Eternal!**

WORSHIP LIFE

Divine Liturgy 9:30 a.m.

With the move to the North Hills bringing us within closer proximity to most of our parishioners, Holy Trinity Church is now maintaining a permanent, year-round worship schedule of 8:30 a.m. Orthros and 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy. Remember, all **SUNDAY** services are held at the interim location on Browns Lane (HT). **WEEKDAY** services are held at the Saint George Chapel (SG), 8941 Ringesen Road, Allison Park. Please set your alarms to be there on time!

Fast-Free Celebration of the Nativity Dec. 25-Jan.4

In celebration of the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord, please note that the holy canons indicate that there is no fasting from December 25-January 4. This refers, of course, to the daily fasts of the church and does not eliminate the eucharistic fast (no food or drink from the time of waking up until Liturgy) for those receiving Holy Communion. Question? Please see Father John or Father Radu. Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Weekday Services January

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. and weekday services are held at the Saint George Chapel (SG), 8941 Ringesen Road, Allison Park.

Thu. Jan. 5, 6pm Forefeast of the Theophany of our Lord

This is the first of two Theophany Divine Liturgies and services of Great Blessings of the Waters. The evening Vesperal Liturgy will be followed by the Great Blessing of the Waters service. Please note that this is a **STRICT FAST** day in preparation for Theophany and those wishing to receive Holy Communion should refrain from eating from noon until Liturgy.

Fri. Jan. 6, 9am/10am The Theophany of our Lord

This is the main Orthros and Divine Liturgy of this great Feast. We will offer the Great Blessings of the Water at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

Sat. Jan. 7, 9am/10am. The Synaxis of St. John the Baptist

This feast of the "greatest of the prophets" and Forerunner of Christ is held on the day after Theophany.

Wed. Jan. 11, 6:00 pm Paraclesis to the Theotokos

This service of supplication to the Mother of God is held on the second Wednesday of each month.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

No Church School Class January 1

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on January 1 due to the holiday celebrations, so please join together as a family on that day.

Orthodox Studies Forum January 4 & 18

The Orthodox Studies Forum continues its season on Wed, Jan. 4 & 18, at 7:00pm, at Holy Trinity Church's interim location (495 Browns Lane). The study topic for this year is the book, "Living the Beatitudes" by Father Tom and Presvytera Kyriaki Fitzgerald. The book is available in our Three Hier-

archs bookstore during Coffee Hour and at the study. All are welcome. For information, see Father Radu or contact him at FrRadu@HolyTrinityPgh.org.

Saint Lydia Women's Study Jan. 12, 26

The St Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is now in its 12th year! If you have missed out on this wonderful time with fellow sisters in Christ sharing, learning and growing in faith, maybe this is the year you can join in! This group is open to women of ALL ages and ALL places in life! They do not know everything...they are learning, so please don't feel that you don't know enough to attend! This year they are studying a selection of the Epistles of the New Testament using a book entitled "Universal Truth: The Catholic Epistles of James, Peter, Jude, and John" (An Orthodox Bible Study Companion). Meetings are held every other Thursday beginning September 29 at St George Chapel, 8941 Ringesen Road, Allison Park. 9:30 - Coffee and Fellowship; 10:00 - 11:15 Study. For more information contact Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

HOPE/JOY January Event: Sleepover Jan. 20/21

Holy Trinity HOPE and JOY ministries will be hosting a sleepover for youth and their parents at Holy Trinity Church's interim location, 495 Browns Lane, overnight Friday January 20, 2012 through Saturday morning January 21, 2012 (start/end times TBD - will be announced). They will be spending the evening with a lot of fun activities including stump the priest, movies, snacks, scavenger hunt, giant twister and a few other surprises. Parents, please email Penny Tomalski at pennybt@roadrunner.com or call her at 724-813-5726 with any questions. RSVP's will be due in early January.

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

Vasilopita Celebration. January 8

The Philoptochos will sponsor the annual Vasilopita Celebration on Sunday, January 8, following Divine Liturgy. Representatives from all parish ministries are asked to be present. 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. Thank you for your participation!



COMMUNITY NEWS

Year-End Stewardship Notes

The Stewardship Committee and Parish Council thank all our Holy Trinity Stewards for their pledges and contributions this year and ask that everyone brings their offerings up to date for 2011. Please take note that all offerings you would like listed as received during the 2011 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 2011 pledge (to pay the balance) or the 2012 pledge (to pay ahead) and your pledge balance will be accurately calculated no matter when the offering is made. Year-end statements will be sent out at the end of January. Thanks! Also, the 2012 Holy Trinity Stewardship Pledge Cards have been distributed and all Holy Trinity Stewards should complete one immediately.

Parish Council Election Results/Installation January 8

Thank you to all those whose names were submitted for Parish Council elections this year. The results from the vote have placed the following members on the Council for the 2012-2013 term: Dean A. Balouris, George Dickos, Jason Farmakis, Louis Kort, Marios Kritioris and Alex Trilivas. Continuing on for the remainder of their term are: Chris T. Balouris, George Danis, Troy Geanopulos, Charles Petredis, Stephanie Sedor, Vasilios Scoumis and Gerri Valliant. Parish Council installation will be held on Sunday, January 8, followed by the election of officers. May God be our guide and strength in all things!



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. Please note that dates of your area and be available at that time. Rescheduling will only be done for cases of inclement weather.



FUNERALS

General Information

The following funerals have taken place in our community shortly before or since the move from the North Side. They have been held at various locations through the gracious hospitality and support of our local sister parishes and through the blessing of having the Saint George Chapel in our parish.

Important Note: During our new church construction period, the following options exist for various types of sacraments and services:

- **Funerals:** Most funerals can be accommodated at the Saint George Chapel at Holy Trinity Cemetery. Very large (over 100) attendance funerals must be held at either our interim location on Browns Lane or at a nearby Orthodox Church (St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral being the closest).

- **Baptisms and Weddings:** Small to medium baptisms and weddings may be held at the Saint George Chapel. Larger events must be held at either our interim facility on Browns Lane or, for a more traditional surrounding, at a nearby Orthodox parish, including Saint Nicholas, Holy Dormition in Oakmont, Holy Cross in Mount Lebanon and All Saints in Canonsburg.

Cornelia Sampson

The servant of God, Cornelia Sampson, fell asleep in the Lord on May 25. The Funeral service was held May 28 at St. George Chapel. May her memory be eternal!

Manuel Giakouminakis

The servant of God, Manuel Giakouminakis, fell asleep in the Lord on May 29. The Funeral service was held June 1 at St. George Chapel. May his memory be eternal!

Peter Phaturios

The servant of God, Peter Phaturios, fell asleep in the Lord on May 30. The Funeral service was held June 3 at St. George Chapel. May his memory be eternal!

Paul Zappas

The servant of God, Paul Zappas, fell asleep in the Lord on September 19. The Funeral service was held September 23 at St. George Chapel. May his memory be eternal!

Irene Kavalis

The servant of God, Irene Kavalis, fell asleep in the Lord on October 6. The Funeral service was held October 10 at St. George Chapel. May her memory be eternal!

Georgia Manesiotis

The servant of God, Georgia Manesiotis, fell asleep in the Lord on October 27. The Funeral service was held October 10 at St. George Chapel. May her memory be eternal!

Fotini Dedousis

The servant of God, Fotini Dedousis, fell asleep in the Lord on December 3. The Funeral service was held December 7 at St. George Chapel. May her memory be eternal!

Effie Zuck

The servant of God, Effie Zuck, fell asleep in the Lord on December 5. The Funeral service was held December 10 at Holy Trinity Church in State College, PA. May her memory be eternal!

Sophia Regas

The servant of God, Sophia (Fakles) Regas, fell asleep in the Lord on December 6. The Funeral service was held December 10 at St. George Chapel. May her memory be eternal!

Funeral: Dickos

The servant of God, Betty Dickos, fell asleep in the Lord on December 16. The Funeral service was held December 20 at St. George Chapel. May her memory be eternal!

Baptisms and Weddings

Due to space constraints, the list of recent Baptisms and Weddings will be published in the next issue of *The Herald*.

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

January 2012 – The Voice of the Gospel



Father John Androutsopoulos

NEW YEAR'S DAY

My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ: Rejoice always!

On January 1st, our Holy Church celebrates the Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the memory of St. Basil the Great. Happy Nameday to

those who have the name Basilius, Basil or Bill.

Dedication: To Metropolitan Savas

On July 1, 1961, I was assigned as a parish priest of the Annunciation Church of New Kensington, PA, where I served for 35 years. Although I had numerous opportunities to transfer to larger parishes, I chose to stay at the Annunciation because that's where I felt I was needed the most. During those 35 years, I served under the pastorage of three auxiliary Bishops: Theodosios, the respected Bishop Gerasimos, Anthimos and the respected first Bishop of Pittsburgh—and later the first Metropolitan of Pittsburgh—Maximos. Now, with the beginning of the New Year, I am going to dedicate my 104th message in the Herald to our new Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh. It is a prayer for His Eminence and His Metropolis:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, graciously look down upon our Metropolitan and grant to Him the fullness of your Grace. Give Him wisdom and prudence that He may lead His flock to eternal life. Bless all spiritual officials of our Metropolis, strengthen and console them in their duties, grant obedience and true piety to all the faithful so that we may together attain eternal salvation. Amen.

Sevasmiotate: "Polla ta eti sas!" Welcome to Pittsburgh, the center of Orthodoxy, and the City of Champions! *"Panevlavos aspazometha tin dexian sas!"*

The New Year in God's Grace

Beloved, the first day of the New Year, we are to turn a new page in the book of our life. That page is clear. What are we going to write on that page? Are we going to write works of the light to please God or are we going to write works of the darkness to displease our Heavenly Father?

How to grow in grace in the New Year? The following are a few Biblical instructions to help us grow in God's grace:

What do we mean by "the Grace of God?" We believe that it means God's matchless, overpowering love and favor.

What is sin? Sin is "anomia". Whoever sins is guilty of breaking God's law, for sinning is breaking the law. (1 John 3:4). When the sinner repents and confesses his sins, he is spiritually regenerated (John 3:3-5). He starts a new life and

enjoys spiritual growth. If we are faithful followers of Christ, we need to repent in the beginning of the New Year.

What is repentance? A change of mind and a turn from sin to salvation, from darkness to light, and from hatred to love. The first sermon of St. John the Baptist was "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." If this sermon was good for St. John, it was good for Jesus Christ to begin His ministry with the same sermon.

God So Loved the World

It really did happen, you know. A baby was born in a stable, and shepherds came to worship Him, and wise men came bearing gifts. During the Christmas season, we should look back and realize anew what an earth-shaking event it really was.

God became man and came to earth and loved us and forgave us. Think about it. It really did happen!

Daily Prayer

The "Oxygen of the Soul." If we do not have it, we will "faint". Then Jesus told them this parable to teach them that they should always pray and never be discouraged. (Luke 18:1) See also (1 Thessalonians (5:17):

"Pray at all times." With repentance, prayer and fasting, we can grow in Grace. Concerning fasting, I have written to you many articles in *The Herald*.

Christian Work and Witness

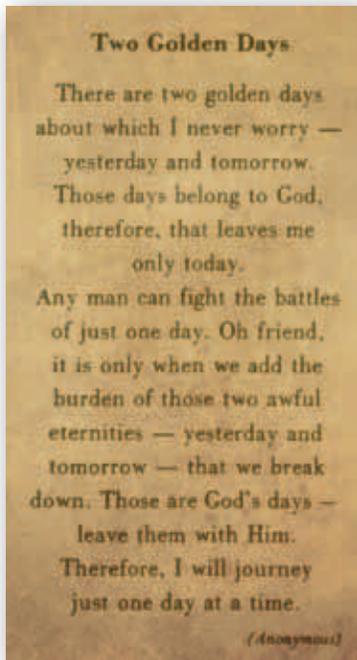
Get busy in christian work and bear witness to others in every way possible. "Whoever declares publicly that he belongs to me, I will do the same for him before my Father in heavens (Matthew 10:32).

Avoid evil company and any environment that tends to soil the soul. Do not be fooled. "Bad companions ruin good character." (1 Corinthians 15:33). Also, and so the Lord says, "you must leave them and separate yourselves from them. Have nothing to do with what is unclean, and I will accept you. (2 Corinthians 6:17).

We should regularly partake in Holy Communion and examine ourselves and confess our sins. In so doing, we will keep ourselves "in the love of God." "If we would examine ourselves first, we would not come under God's judgment." (1 Corinthians 11:31) As we give attention to these biblical instructions, we will grow "in Grace and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18)

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with all of us. Have a blessed, healthy and happy New Year!

*With His Love and Blessings,
Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos
Protopresbyter*



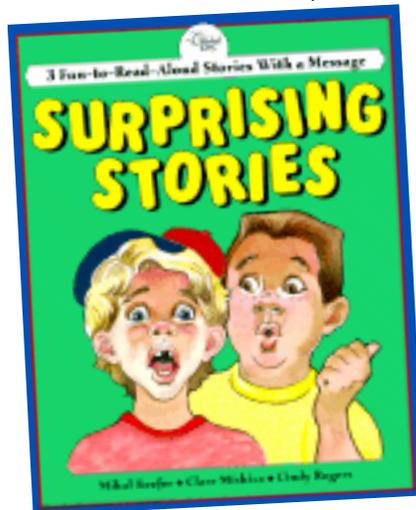
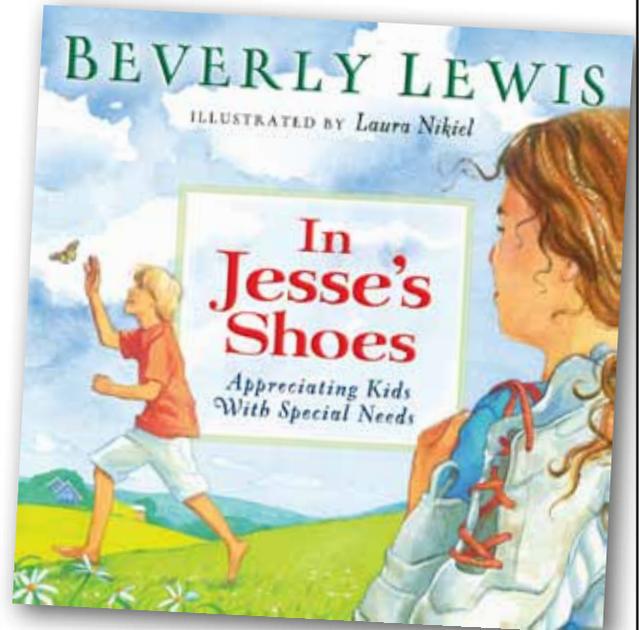
Hello My Precious Children!



I was so..o..o excited to be at the Groundbreaking for the new church. Not only was it a great big day for Holy Trinity Church, it was held in a FIELD! And you know what lives in fields, don't you? That's right: mice! So while all our people members will be busy soon bringing in new people, Zoe and I will be tilling the field for new members, too!

Well, I have a few books I would like to tell you about today. The first is "In Jesse's Shoes" by Beverly Lewis. After reading this story, I, Spero, appreciate children with special needs much more. It is a realistic story about a boy with special needs. And now

Jesse's "sisser", as he calls her, struggles to understand her brother. How she wishes Mom and Dad would just send him away to boarding school. She thinks that would solve the problem, so he wouldn't have to deal with the children who make fun and tease him every day. Seeing that makes her sad and upset for her brother. When she complains to her Dad about this, he tells her that answer might seem to work for her, but it wouldn't for Jesse, because,



"You have not had to walk in Jesse's shoes." She figures out that her Dad meant that she needed to better understand what it means to be Jesse. While trying, she also finds out that God knew what He was doing when He picked her to be Jesse's sister. Check out this great book to find out how she solves the problem of other children picking on her brother. And remember, our Heavenly Father made each one of us special, because we are all His children!

Another awesome book in my library is "Surprising Stories." I would tell you about them, but ... it a surprise! (Just kidding!) These three read-aloud stories with a message include: "Dear Christ, Dear Sam," about accepting differences; "Max's Answer," about trusting God; and "A Family for Casey," about how God answers prayer. Let me tell you about the second one. "Max's Answer." More than anything else in the world, Max wants a dog. But he can't have one because his little brother is allergic to them. Dogs make him sneeze. He was always disappointed about this until one day he heard the Bible verse, "Ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you" from Matthew 7. So he prays and prays to God about his problem. The surprise answer is much better than he could have imagined. Check out the book to find out what it is.

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope to see you often in my temporary new library...and I can't wait to move into my new library in that awesome new church!

In Christ,
Love, Spero



Voula Hareras

*Reflections in modern Greek
on the New Year from the periodical,
"Pros Tin Nikin"*

ΕΝΑΓΩΝΙΟΙ

Νέο έτος! Για τούς νέους, βέβαια, όλα είναι νέα καθημερινά. Καί τρέχουν νά γνωρίσουν καί νά δοκιμάσουν τίς πρωτόφαντες γί αυτούς έμπειρίες, τά νέα τής ζωής.

Νέο έτος! Για τούς νέους, βέβαια, όλα είναι νέα καθημερινά. Καί τρέχουν νά γνωρίσουν καί νά δοκιμάσουν τίς πρωτόφαντες γί αυτούς έμπειρίες, τά νέα τής ζωής.

Ομως συχνά σ'αυτή τήν όρμη τους βρίσκουν έμπόδια, κάποιοι πού δέν τούς κατανοούν, κάποιες άπογοητεύσεις, άποτυχίες, προβλήματα υγείας, οίκογενειακά, ό κόσμος πού δέν είναι όπως τόν θέλουν. Πολλά άπαγορευτικά, λίγοι δρόμοι έλεύθεροι καί μάλιστα οίπιο έπικίνδυνοι, άνεξέλεγκτη διασκέδαση, ναρκωτικά, ξέφρενες διαπροσωπικές σχέσεις.

Νέο έτος, φίλοι μου! Ομως δέν φαίνεται νά άνατέλλει διαφορετικό άπό τά άλλα. Αλλά οί νέοι, όσοι σκέπτονται δημιουργικά, τό θέλουν διαφορετικό. Κι αυτό πρέπει νά τό άπαιτήσουν άπό τούς άλλους, ίσως κι άπ, αυτούς. Αέναντι τών νέων όλοι έχουν χρέος. Ομως πρέπει νά τό άπαιτήσουν κυρίως άπό τόν έαυτό τους. Γιατί μπορούν. Οί νέοι τής Πατρίδας μας τό έχουν άποδείξει διαχρονικά. Οί δυνατότερες σελίδες τής Ιστορίας μας είναι γραμμένες άπ'αυτούς.

Από τίς παλαιότερες καί τά άρχαιοελληνικά στάδια θεοσεβείς καί φιλότιμοι όρμησαν στά στάδια τής φιλοπατρίας καί τής τιμής. Περσομάχοι (παίδες Ελλήνων), Μεγαλέξανδροι, Μάρτυρες καί Νεομάρτυρες, Κλεφτόπουλα, Μακεδονομάχοι, Έλευθερωτές τού '12 καί τού '13, νεαροί μαχητές τού '40, Εθνομάρτυρες τής Κύπρου, νέοι έθελοντές τού καλού καί τού σήμερα, πού όμορφαίνουν τόν κοινωνικό στίβο μέ τά νιάτα τους, πού κοπιάζουν γιά τή σπουδή, γιά τό τίμιο έπάγγελμα καί προσφέρονται γιά δημιουργικά έργα καί πράξεις χριστιανικής αγάπης καί άλληλεγγύης καί έξω άπό τή χώρα μας, νέοι, νέοι...Καί μεγάλοι, βέβαια, πού όμως δείχτηκαν ό, τί ήταν νέοι.

Νέο έτος, φίλοι μου! Καλόδεχτο καί (εύτυχές) τό 2012 μ.Χ.

Καί νά σάς βρεί δυνατούς, μέ όνειρα γιά τό αύριο τού Θεού γιά σάς, καί (έναγώνιους), δηλαδή στό δρόμο τής πατροπαράδοτης αγωνιστικότητας τής φυλής μας γιά ό, τι ώραίο, μεγάλο καί εύγενικό. Γιά τή διπλή σωτηρία τού άνθρώπου στόν πυρπολημένο άπό τήν άπληστία καί τά πάθη πλανήτη μας.

Καλή χρονιά! Πάνοπλοι στήν ψυχή, μέ τό χαμόγελο τής νιότης σας στά χείλη, δώστε τήν καρδιά σας στόν ώραίο άγώνα.

Ο Θεός μαζί σας!

Προς Την Νικην



Vickie Bellios

*An original Greek
composition by
Vickie Bellios titled,
"Joy to Him."*

*It describes the character
and disposition of a
person whose life is filled
with joy: smiling, loving,
friendly and faithful.
Good goals for the
New Year!*

Χαρά σ' αυτόν

Χαρά σ' αυτόν που μπόρεσε
ποτέ να μην χολιάσει
και της ψυχής την ομορφιά
ποτέ να μην σκιάσει.

Χαρά σε εκείνη την καρδιά
που δεν κρατά κακία
ακόμα και στους άνομους
που ζουν στην αδικία.

Χαρά στον που εγέμισε
μ' αγάπη την καρδιά του
κι αισθάνεται χαρούμενος
κοντά στη φαμελιά του.

πάντα με το χαμόγελο
με αρετές μεγάλες
και που ξαπλώνει ήσυχα
στον ύπνου τις αγκάλες.

Μίσος δεν ξέρει τι θα πει
στο στόμα στάζει μέλι
και όλοι πολύ τον αγαπούν
σαν το καλό κοπέλι.

Έτσι ο Θεός μας έπλασε
μα κάπου το ξεχνούμε
και χρειαζόμαστε βουλές
για να το θυμηθούμε.

Ευχόμαστε Θεούλη μας
να μην μας τιμωρήσεις
και την αγάπη απ' τη καρδιά
ποτέ να μη στερήσεις.



December 8, 2011: Hundreds of faithful from around Pittsburgh, the Metropolis and the country gathered in joyful and prayerful celebration for the Enthronement and first Divine Liturgy in Pittsburgh of His Eminence Metropolitan Savas. Pictured here are scenes including Holy Trinity clergy and community members who participated and attended. AXIOS, Your Eminence! Welcome to Pittsburgh May God grant you MANY YEARS!



For more photos and information about His Eminence Metropolitan Savas and the Enthronement, visit the websites of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh (pittsburgh.goarch.org) or the Archdiocese (www.goarch.org).



I stand before you this day as one who receives a gift, a gift that truly is “good and perfect,” a gift from the Father of lights, a gift that is itself a kind of light — this Holy and God-Saved Metropolis of Pittsburgh. “You are all sons and daughters of the light and sons and daughters of the day” (1 Thess. 5:5). In you I see the light of Christ shining. The unwaning light of Orthodox Christianity has been shining forth throughout this Sacred Metropolis from the day of its inception, in the service and synergy of the holy hierarchs, the reverend clergy, and the pious faithful laboring together for the glory of our Triune God. In you has been at work that divine grace, “which ever heals what is weak and completes that which is lacking” — the divine grace which transforms us “from glory to glory . . . by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 3:18); the divine grace that adorns you as the holy, “radiant bride of Christ, without spot or wrinkle or any other blemish” (Eph. 5:27). This is the gift — the gift of you, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh.

By the grace of God, new opportunities lie ahead for the Metropolis of Pittsburgh and for our Church in America — new opportunities to encounter our neighbors, new opportunities to evangelize, new opportunities to draw the world into the Apostolic net of salvation. May God grant us the same ambition that burned within Saint Paul, to preach the Gospel where Christ was not previously known (Romans 15:20). In geographical terms, this is not possible for many. But in technological terms, there is a wide open door (cf. 1 Cor. 16:9) for all of us to bring the love of Christ in new ways to new places and new people. We have but to summon the courage in faith to go through that door.

A challenge lies ahead — the challenge of encounter. In an era of economic hardship, political gridlock, societal polarization, encounter becomes difficult. Like the Great Wall of China, the “us versus them” mentality pervades modern culture. Who is better equipped by God to overcome these divisions than the Church that brings together old and new, East and West, rich and poor, saint and sinner? Dialogue — thoughtful, sensitive, heartfelt, open-minded dialogue — is the great need of our time. Can the Orthodox Church keep silent and sit passively and still remain who She truly is?

Let it begin, therefore, among us ourselves first of all, as the family of faith of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh. With God’s blessing of strength and health, I look forward to a long and fruitful relationship with the clergy and the faithful of this ancient and historic Metropolis. Technology is a marvel, but in this first phase of my arch-pastoral ministry, there can be no substitute for the personal encounter. I want to meet as many of you as possible, and as fast as possible. It is my intention to visit every parish of the Metropolis within my first year, and to meet all the members of your communities in your spiritual homes. For in meeting together, I with you and you with me, we may both begin to understand the mind of the Spirit who dwells in us and who is doing for us a new thing that now springs forth for us to perceive.

To that end, I yearn for your prayers, that I may “be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (Eph. 6:10), and in peace and health “that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you,” (Romans 15:32), so that in better knowing you all I may faithfully “guard the good deposit that was entrusted” to me (cf. 2 Timothy 1:14), “with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us” and who makes all things new. Glory, thanksgiving, and honor to the One never ceases to grant us every good and perfect gift from above, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen!

Excerpts from the Enthronement Address of His Eminence Metropolitan Savas
Saint Nicholas Cathedral, Pittsburgh PA — December 11, 2011

Community Life Photo Journal | First Pastoral Visit of Metropolitan Savas

December 11, 2011: His Eminence Metropolitan Savas made the first official pastoral visit of his new ministry in Pittsburgh to Holy Trinity Church at our interim facility, the former Northway Elementary School. In a magnificent day that culminated with the Groundbreaking for the new Holy Trinity Church, His Eminence presided over Orthros and Divine Liturgy, received a new member into the Orthodox Church by Christmation, tonsured 23 Acolytes, and offered memorial prayers for the newly-departed mother of Father George Daskalakis. Quite a start at HT!







RAISE UP THE FOUNDATIONS
OF MANY GENERATIONS





Community Life Photo Journal | Holy Trinity New Church Groundbreaking

December 11, 2011: Weeks after final approval, months after the sale of the previous church, years after the purchase of the new property and nearly a century after the founding of the community, ground was finally broken on the new Holy Trinity Church. Attendees bussed from the interim facility to the new property, where His Eminence Metropolitan Savas blessed the project and turned the first shovel.





METROPOLITAN AND ATTENDING CLERGY



PARISH COUNCIL



VISION COMMITTEE



HOLY TRINITY PARISH COUNCIL PAST-PRESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE



It was a day for the future! It was a day for the entire North and for the entire North. It was a day for seniors and those new arrived to the area that started with the A Eucharist, presided over by the Bishop, and a day that was a ship meal of thanksgiving for mercy and loving-kindness that bears His Most Holy Trinity! Glory to God

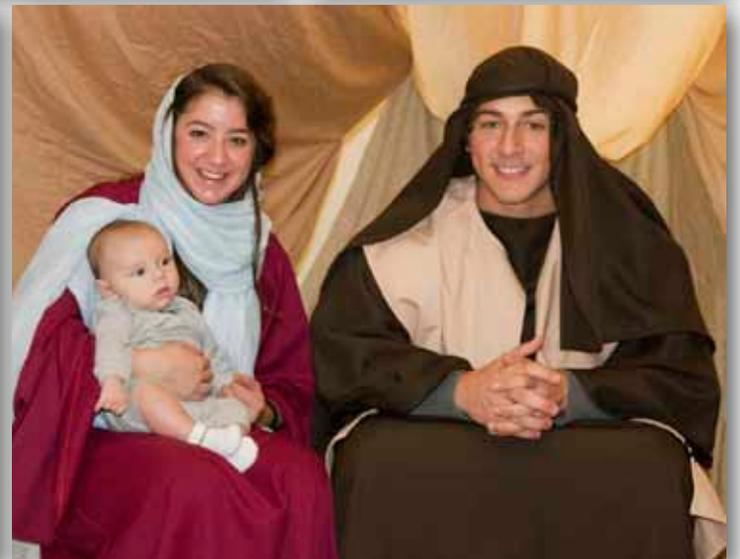


history books and for
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and a day for children.
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Agape Meal of the Holy
ver by our new Metro-
ended with the fellow-
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ness to a humble parish
oly and Exalted Name:
od for all things!





December 17/18, 2011: While rehearsing for the next day's Christmas Pageant, the students of Holy Trinity Church School received a snowy, jolly treat when the Ross Township Fire Department showed up with a surprise visitor in red tossing candy in the streets! When then finally got back to rehearsal, the dedicated students and staff put together one of the most exciting, energetic and entertaining Church School Christmas Pageants ever. Below are scenes from this year's "Journey to Bethlehem," a travelling production in which the scenes and actors stayed in one place and the audience moved from scene-to-scene, following the Wise Men to Christ.





Thank You | 2011 Nativity Flowers Donor List

Many thanks to the following parishioners and friends for sponsoring the beautiful poinsettias for the decoration of the church and chapel during the Christmas holidays. May the Lord remember them and those whom they have honored!

DONORS

COMMEMORATIONS

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Victor Amurgis & Family	In memory of our parents, William & Harriet Amurgis
Victor Amurgis & Family	In memory of our parents, William & Harriet Amurgis
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Joyce & Harry Athanasiou.....	In memory of George Bertos
Joyce & Harry Athanasiou.....	In memory of George Athanasiou
Joyce & Harry Athanasiou.....	For the health of our family
Anthony & Helen Balouris	For the health of family & friends
Anthony & Helen Balouris	In memory of our family, past community members & friends
Anne Chapas.....	In memory of Frank Chapas
Jim & Bobbie Chapas.....	In memory of John W. Chapas
Johanna Cocheres.....	In memory of all beloved deceased members of the Cocheres & Capetan Families
Cynthia Morris Criss & Sandra Morris Schall.....	In memory of Tom & Dora Morris
Cynthia Morris Criss & Sandra Morris Schall.....	In memory of Tom & Dora Morris
Cynthia Morris Criss & Sandra Morris Schall.....	In memory of Tom & Dora Morris
Cynthia Morris Criss & Sandra Morris Schall.....	In memory of Tom & Dora Morris
Cynthia Morris Criss & Sandra Morris Schall.....	In memory of Tom & Dora Morris
Shea Danis	In memory of Demetrios Danis
Helen P. DeMoss.....	In memory of John DeMoss & the health of his family
Mina Durosko.....	In memory of my parents, James (Demetrios) & Elli Stephanou
Frank & Katina Erdeljac.....	In memory of Mike & Theologia Alexiades
Frank & Katina Erdeljac.....	In memory of Mike & Theologia Alexiades
Bill & Tina Fiedler and Family	In memory of our mom, Sophie Parikakis, grandparents, aunts, uncles & cousins
Connie Fries	For the health of family & friends
George & Phyllis Geanopulos	In memory of Harry & Helen Geanopulos
George & Phyllis Geanopulos	In memory of John & Erma Haas
Dr. & Mrs. Mark Georgiadis.....	For the health of our parents
Dr. & Mrs. Mark Georgiadis.....	For the health of our parents
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Brian & Debbie Jewell	In memory of Samuel Booras
Brian & Debbie Jewell	In memory of Phyllis Maggos
Brian & Debbie Jewell	For the health of Kathy Page
Brian & Debbie Jewell	For the health of Jodi Meni
Brian & Debbie Jewell	For the health of Cynthia Poulos
Gus & Stella Kalaris.....	In memory of Gus & Panagiota Bistolas
Gus & Stella Kalaris.....	In memory of George & Pauline Kalaris
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Irene Karavolos & Fanny Kostos.....	For the health of our family
Esther Ladakos	For the health of Paul & Sally Hionedes
George & Canella Lalikos	In memory of our beloved parents
Harriet Navarro	In memory of The Karras Family
Peter & Mary Panos.....	In memory of The Panos & Peters Families
Marian Pantelas.....	In memory of my husband George
Orestes & Arlene Paras.....	In memory of John & Maria Paras, Albert, Rose & Arthur Russell
Dorothy Phaturios & Family	In loving memory of Peter Phaturios
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The Pontikos Family	In memory of Konstantina Tsaktanis
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The Pontikos Family	In memory of Marianthi Papoutsis
The Pontikos Family	In memory of Nicholas Papoutsis
The Pontikos Family	In memory of Evridiki Stanitsa
Angie Roman	In memory of Gus Roman
Archie & Mary Selevos.....	For the health of the Archie & Mary Selevos Family and Vellis Family
James Sicalias.....	In memory of my mother Bessie Cocheres-Sicalias
James Steve Statheas	In memory of Steve & Demetra Statheas
Fran Stephen	In memory of Peter Podimatis
Fran Stephen	In memory of Mario Sokolec – Happy Birthday in Heaven
Katina Tanner	In memory of Nick Tanner
Eric & Penny Tomalski.....	In memory of Leon Tomalski & Themistocles Balouris
Joanne Ladakos Watson & Family.....	In memory of Peter Ladakos
Joanne Ladakos Watson & Family.....	In memory of James Hartig
Joanne Ladakos Watson & Family.....	In memory of Anthony & Stella Paterakis
Joanne Ladakos Watson & Family.....	In memory of Walter & Catherine Hartig
Joanne Ladakos Watson & Family.....	For the health of Bob & Joanne (Ladakos) Watson
Joanne Ladakos Watson & Family.....	For the health of Despina (Esther) Ladakos
Mary Magdalene Welsh.....	In memory of my beloved mother Julia Welsh
George Zappas	In memory of William Zappas
George Zappas	In memory of Paul Zappas
Anthony & Aspasia Zissis.....	In memory of our parents
Louis, Julie & Alexandria Zozos	In memory of Eileen Hoffmann – mother & grandmother of Julie & Ale Zozos

"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.

The priest will offer the blessing service and offer the names of the people present and those contained on the family names list in prayer. As the service concludes, please lead the priest throughout the house to sprinkle the holy water while chanting the hymn of Theophany. He will bring a copy of the service so you can follow along and chant the hymn. 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 Our House and Business 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. It is also a pious way of asking God's blessings on our business and livelihood as good stewards of all His gifts.

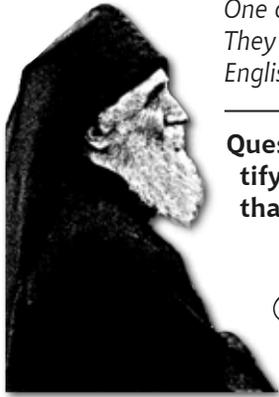
2012 House Blessing Schedule

Date	Time	Area	Zip Codes
Tue. Jan. 10	3pm-5pm	Northside, Perrysville, Bellevue, Westview	15212, 15214, 15202
Tue. Jan. 10	6pm-8pm	South Hills (all areas)	15102, 15216, 1522X, 1524X
Wed. Jan. 11	3pm-5:30pm 7:30pm-9pm	Allison Park, McKnight area	15101, 15237
Thu. Jan. 12	4pm-9pm	Gibsonia, Treesdale	15044
Mon. Jan. 16	4pm-9pm	Cranberry, Mars & North	16046, 16066
Thu. Jan. 19	4pm-9pm	Wexford	15090
Mon. Jan. 23	4pm-9pm	All other areas not listed/Make-up date/Snow date	Various

Important note: 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 PAGE OR EMAIL FATHER JOHN BEFORE JAN. 5 TO SCHEDULE YOUR HOME. YOU WILL RECEIVE A CALL TO CONFIRM YOUR TIME.

Reminder: Please schedule your House/Office Blessing by January 5th! See back page.



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 to 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, when I try to justify myself with excuses, I realize later that this does not befit a Christian.

The moment a person justifies the unjustifiable, he is separated from God. A form of insulation intervenes between man and God. Can an electric current pass through insulation? No. Isolation. Isolation from God and man. There is no stronger barrier to the Grace of God than excuses! It is like building a wall and separating yourself from God; by making excuses, you cut off all ties with Him.

Question: Geronda, when I don't excuse others for some action of their, does this mean I am hard-hearted?

You don't excuse others, but you excuse yourself? Next time Christ Himself will not excuse you. It is quite possible in a moment for man's heart to become hard as a rock, when he acts out of malevolence. He who does his spiritual work correctly finds excuses for everyone else in order to justify their shortcomings, but he never justifies himself, even when he is in the right. For if one looks carefully and honestly, one can readily find many things wrong with oneself, in which case one can easily justify the other. How many things have we all regrettably done!

Question: Gheronda, why do we resort to excuses?

Because of egoism. Excusing is a fall; it drives God's grace away. It is justification that exiled us from Paradise. Is this not what happened to Adam? God asked him, "Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" He [Adam] did not answer, "Yes, Lord, I disobeyed Your commandment and sinned; forgive me." Rather, he tried to justify his disobedience: "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." If Adam had said, "O my God, I have sinned; forgive me," and if Eve had said, "I have sinned, Lord," everything would have been made right. Instead, they resorted to excuses.

Question: If someone draws a wrong conclusion about me from something I did, is it necessary to explain my action?

If you have spiritual strength—that is, humility—accept that you were at fault, and do not speak. Let God justify you. If you do not speak, God will speak. You see, when Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, he did not say, "I am their brother; I am not a slave; my father loved me more than all my brothers." He did not speak, and later God made him king. What do you think? Does God not inform when needed? And if God indicates the truth for your benefit, all is fine and well.

Question: Gheronda, is it good to ask for an explanation

after a misunderstanding?

Has your mind been disturbed by it? Have bad thoughts risen in your mind? If not, it is not necessary for others to give you an explanation. But if your thoughts have been disturbed, it is good to be given an explanation, so that it does not turn to further evil.

Question: What if you don't explain yourself in order to justify yourself, but simply say how you confronted a situation, how you chose to act, and so on?

It is better to simply say, "Forgive me," with no explanation. Unless an explanation is asked of you and then, of course, you should humbly say how it happened.

Question: In other words, Gheronda, when should one give explanations?

When there is a misunderstanding that involves other persons, then it is imperative to provide some explanation in order to help in that situation.

Question: Sometimes, Gheronda, we cannot distinguish between self-justification and an explanation.

Self-justification does not bring peace and serenity to the soul, while an explanation brings rest and peace. Whoever justifies himself finds no peace, no consolation.

Question: Why is it so hard to find peace when we make excuses?

Whoever makes excuses finds no peace. Does his self justify him? The self, his conscience, does not justify him and therefore he finds no rest. This shows that he is at fault. How God has arranged such matters! He has granted man the gift of conscience, an awesome gift!

Question: Gheronda, when someone has done something wrong and makes excuses, and you point that out to him, but he continues to argue that it is not an excuse, is it possible for him to be corrected?

How can he be corrected? He understands that he is at fault, because he is tormented by it, but out of egotism, he does not want to admit it. It is a terrible thing! Much care is needed when you try to help someone who is used to making excuses for himself, because sometimes this is what happens. Since he is making up excuses for himself, it means he is very egotistical. So when you point out his faults, he will only tell more lies and make more excuses, in order to prove one thing or another, so that we won't be offended. Thus, when you show him what he is doing, even though you want to help him, you cause him to be an even greater liar. The moment you notice that he is going on with his excuses, you should stop trying to prove anything else to him. Just pray that God may enlighten him or her,

Excerpted from "Elder Paisios of Mount Athos, The Spiritual Counsels, Volume III: Spiritual Struggle"

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**Please note new contact information for
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Fax: 412-366-8710
Internet: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

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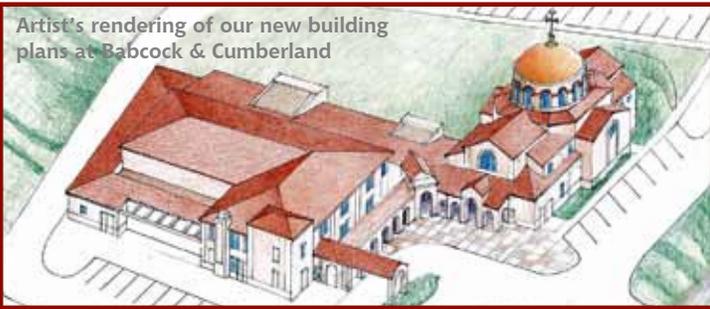
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plans at Babcock & Cumberland



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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!

Scripture of the Month: "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink." (John 7.37)