



# THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

MARCH 2012

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HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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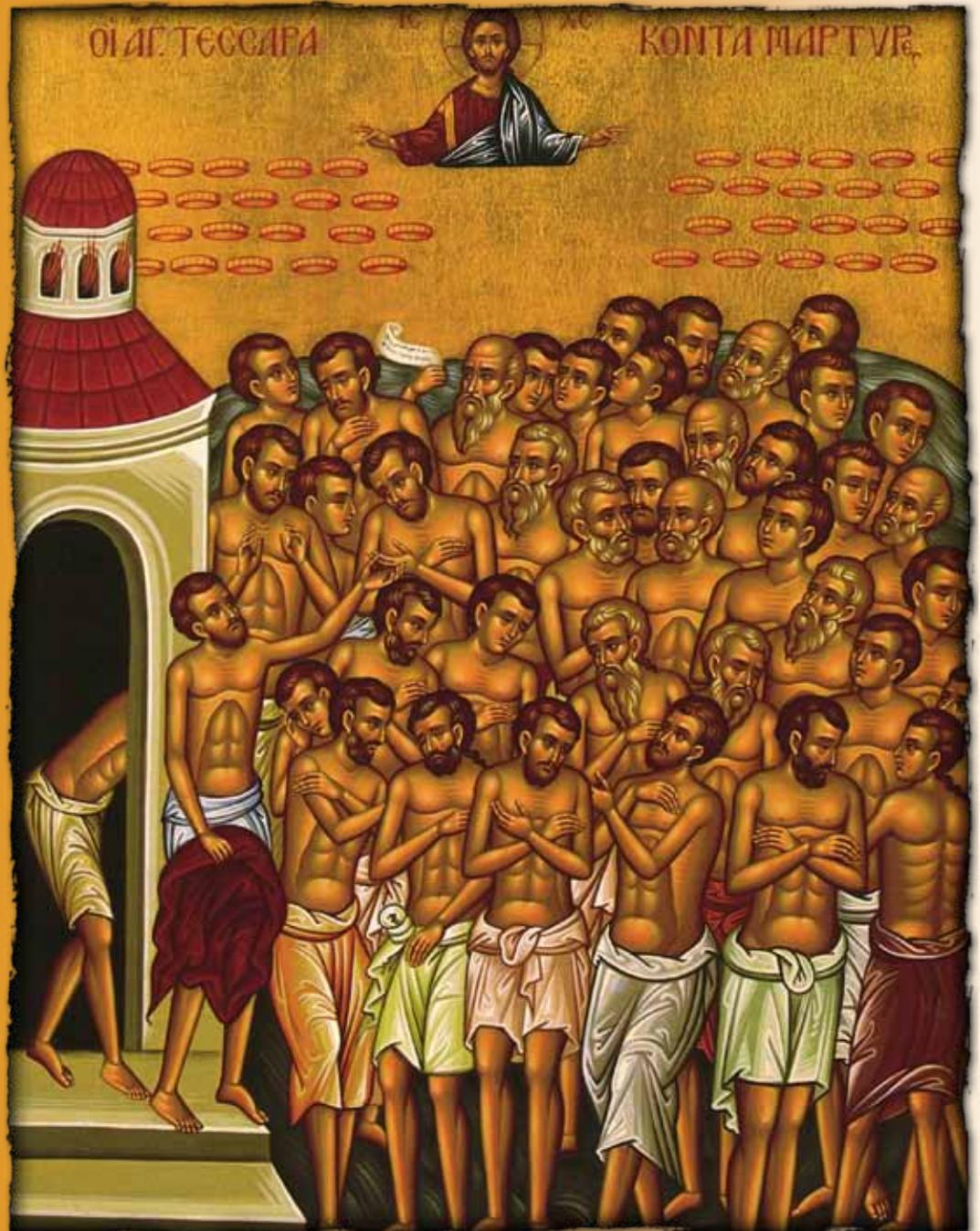
The 2012 Pittsburgh Summer  
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**MARCH 18TH**  
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## QUICK NEWS



Members of the GOYA Boys Senior Basketball team lift Coach George Georges in celebration of their third championship of the season and his last game as he retires after 17 years of coaching. Want to see more scenes from the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? Check out the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 8-11.



### The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste. Feast Day: March 9

“O Forty Champions of the Lord, you abandoned the armies of the world and attached yourselves to the Master in heaven. Having gone through fire and water, O blessed ones, you worthily won glory from heaven and a multitude of crowns.” (Kontakion of the Feast)

**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

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### About the Parish

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Holy Trinity Church is a parish of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh ([www.odpgh.org](http://www.odpgh.org)) and Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America ([www.goarch.org](http://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

Dean A. Balouris     Marios Kritiotis

George Danis         Charles Petredis

George Dickos        Vasilios Scoumis

Jason Farmakis        Stephanie Sedor

Troy Geanopulos      Alex Trivilas

Louis Kort             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

Bookstore ..... Bill and Linda Areheart



“Behold, this is the acceptable season; behold, this is the season of repentance. Let us put away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, so that we may navigate the immense ocean of Lent, and arrive at the third-day Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls.”

(From the Aposticha of Vespers on Pure Monday)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the “old days” of travel, agents used to handle things for us. It was simple: I make a call, let the agent know where you wanted to go and when, and he or she would book the plane, train or boat, the hotel, reservations at restaurants, secure guides and all the other items needed for a complete and enjoyable journey. No so any more. Today we have become used to doing it all ourselves: book tickets on-line, look up reviews of accommodations and dining spots, rent cars and so on. If you’ve ever booked a large trip these days, you may find yourself asking, “Isn’t there someone who can guide me through this process and just let me know what the best options are for a great trip?” Actually, that’s why agents are still in business for those who don’t want to chance it on their own are still looking for experienced, full-service professionals.

Well, over and over the hymns and writings of the Church refer to Lent as a “journey.” If that is the case, we might say that we have options for planning and navigating that trip, too. According to the way most travel is planned today, it would seem reasonable to think we are pretty much on our own. We can pick and choose, ask around, see what’s convenient and “affordable” (that is, not requiring too much of us). But there is a danger in that approach: it’s selectivity may end up having us fail to choose precisely the sites our soul needs to see and the adventures our spiritual life needs to take so that we may successfully and beneficially traverse “the immense ocean of Lent.”

That’s where I thank God constantly as an Orthodox Christian and a priest that we have the best “travel agent” ever to prepare us for and take us through this journey: the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church. It is truly complete with everything we need. Thank God for the beautiful services, the inspiring hymns, the privilege of receiving the tools of spiritual and physical cleansing through fasting and confession. Thank God for the constant reminders to serve others through service and almsgiving so we do not consume ourselves on our own desires. Thank God for the truly insightful teachings of the holy men and women of the Church who are willing to shower us with the fruits of their labors through writings such as those of Elder Paisios (see page 14 for a wonderful set of questions and answers on repentance).

It might be liberating or somehow a proclamation of our modern individuality to say, “I’d rather do it on my own,” but if you are truly interested in discovering the person God made you to be in His image and likeness, taking this journey guided by the time-tested Holy Tradition of the Church will get you there safer and guarantee a more rewarding journey. Most of all, remember that Lent itself is not the destination; it is a well-trodden path to help us “arrive at the third-day Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls. This year, leave it to the “experts” and allow your journey to be fully blessed! I look forward to travelling with you. In Christ,

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**Church School Lenten Activities ..... March**

As always, our Church School ministry will be active during Lent. Don't miss these opportunities:

- The Sunday of Orthodox Procession with icons on March 4. Remember to bring your icon to Liturgy!
- The readings for the Pre-sanctified Liturgies on the Wednesdays of Lent (followed by covered dish dinners). Children, please sign up during Church School to read at the services; Parents, join them at the service, too! Also, everyone is asked to please sign up to bring food so everyone can enjoy the fellowship after (not just parents - anyone can sign up!).
- The opening readings for the Services of Salutations on Fridays during Lent for any children who arrive before the service and wish to offer.
- The annual Mission Box in support of Orthodox missions .
- And, of course, attendance at Lenten services and special Church School Lenten lessons.

Parents: please encourage your children to participate in these important faith and learning experiences. Thank you!

**Orthodox Studies Forum ..... Break During Lent**

The Orthodox Studies Forum will be taking a break during Lent to offer its participants an opportunity to participate fully in the Lenten services on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays

**Saint Lydia Women's Study ..... March 1, 22**

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 at St. George Chapel, 8941 Ringeisen Road, Allison Park. 9:30 - Coffee and Fellowship; 10:00 - 11:15 Study. For more information contact Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925.

**LENTEN INFORMATION**

**Lenten and Holy Week Schedule of Services**

The last issue of The Herald contained a complete schedule of service for Lent. This month's issue features a Holy Week schedule. Please post them in a conspicuous place in your home. Circle the services you are able to attend and place them on your schedule. Talk about them and make plans with your family. As the hymn from the Book of Psalms tells us during the Great Compline service, "God is with us." Lent provides us a special time to be with Him. See you there!

**Lenten Soup & Sauces Sales ..... Weekly During Lent**

The GOYA is once again offerings its very popular Lenten soup and sauces sales during the Sundays of Lent. Among the

many good reasons to buy some to take home are that they are strict Lenten recipes, they provide fund-raising support for our GOYA ministry ... plus they taste great and they are good for you! Please visit the Lenten Soup and Sauces table in Coffee Hour each week! Thank you for supporting our youth as you strive to maintain your spiritual discipline!

**Lenten Coffee Hour Reminder ..... Through April 15**

Please keep in mind that during Lent our Coffee Hours following the Divine Liturgy observe the Orthodox Lenten fasting schedule. Anyone sponsoring a memorial coffee hour or providing Church School snacks is asked to take care that non-meat and non-dairy items are provided. The Philoptochos and the Church School can provide a list of suggestions for good alternatives. Thank you for helping our community grow in this proper and helpful Orthodox spiritual practice and discipline.

**Upcoming Lenten Dates. .... March-April**

Wondering about Lenten and Paschal dates? Here's a helpful guide to some of the important events coming up:

- Sunday of Orthodoxy ..... Mar. 4**
- Godparent Sunday ..... Mar. 18**
- Palm Sunday & Community Fish Luncheon ..... Apr. 8**
- Holy Friday (schedule off work & school) ..... Apr. 13**
- Pascha ..... Apr. 15**
- Feast of St. George (Nameday of Chapel) ..... Apr. 23**

**YOUTH MINISTRIES**

**GOYA Fellowship ..... March 11**

The GOYA teen ministry will hold its monthly fellowship gathering on Sunday, March 11 at 6:00pm. GOYAns, please watch the GOYA Facebook page for the location and details.

**HOPE/JOY Sleepover ..... March 23/24**

The January HOPE and JOY sleepover that was cancelled due to poor weather has been rescheduled for overnight March 23rd. Watch for details or contact Chrissyoula Balouris at 724-933-5205.

**PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS**

**Philoptochos Fellowship Ideas**

The Philoptochos is looking for ways to take advantage of our new location in the North Hills and provide opportunities for our seniors. Here are two thoughts. Maybe you have others. Please provide feedback to Joyce Countouris at 412-366-1498 and watch for news for them to get started soon.

Pot Luck Luncheons: Retired and looking for something to do? Tired of TV and the same old routines? How about coming to a "pot luck" luncheon? Whatever you bring is shared with everyone else, and others do the same. Get off the sofa and come to do something different! The cost is nothing more than your time and your casserole, salad or whatever you bring. It is sure to be a change of pace and might actually be a lot of fun! What would you like to do for the first get-together? How often would you like to meet? Do you want to share music and stories or have educational discussions?

**Exercise Program:** Our interim facility has long, open hallways, so why go to the mall to walk when we can do it together at our own place? Would you be interested in a regular day or days when we get together for an indoor walking program? How about a fitness program with some mild stretching and health-building moves? There are professionals who are willing to guide us.

### COMMUNITY NEWS

#### Christmas Card Omissions

The following names were inadvertently omitted from the Holy Trinity Community Christmas Card. We apologize and ask that you note their support and holiday wishes:

- James and Bettina Kermes
- Penelope, Nicholas and Yianni Komninos
- Despina Manias

#### Construction Reminder: Site Safety Guidelines

Construction is underway on the new church site, so our new property is now an active construction work site. The building committee, therefore, sends this message to us all:

**Construction is underway at full speed on our new Church campus, and visible changes are happening weekly. We must, however, ask all parishioners to follow a few simple requests. Please do not enter onto the construction site at any period of the day or week and please do not stop along Cumberland and Babcock to observe the site. There are safety and liability issues that our contractor, Bridges & Company, has been asked to enforce. In the near future we will publish scheduled dates were supervised site visitation will be conducted for the entire Holy Trinity community. Look for these future dates, but until then, if you have any questions, please talk to Bill Fiedler or Jason Farmakis. Thank you for your understanding.**

### WEDDINGS

Congratulations to the following couples who have been joined through the Holy Mystery of Betrothal and Crowning since our move from the North Side. Please note: while we are waiting to move into our new church, 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. Thus, each of the Holy Trinity weddings below has been held at other parishes in the area. We are grateful as a community for the hospitality our sister parishes have extended to us!

#### Kritiotis/Fodor

The servants of God, Marios Kritiotis and Julia Fodor, were crowned in marriage on July 30, 2011, at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Oakland. The Koumbaro was Nicholas Balouris. May God grant them many years!

#### Bloxsom/Triantafillos

The servants of God, Herbert Bloxsom, Jr., and Despina Triantafillos, were crowned in marriage on August 28, 2011, at Holy Cross Church in Mt. Lebanon. The Koumbaro was Fratzis Toppos. May God grant them many years!

#### Sideris/Makarsky

The servants of God, Jason Sideris and Nicole Makarsky, were crowned in marriage on September 4, 2011, at St. Michael Church in Greensburg. The Koumbaro was Stephen Sideris. May God grant them many years!

#### Bonfield/Jacesko

The servants of God, Christopher Bonfield and Stefany Jacesko, were crowned in marriage on September 17, 2011, at Holy Cross Church in Mt. Lebanon. The Koumbaro was Charles F. Chapas. May God grant them many years!

#### Loomis/Cook

The servants of God, Anthony Loomis and Amy Cook, were crowned in marriage on November 19, 2011, at Holy Cross Church in Mt. Lebanon. The Koumbaro was Christopher Loomis. May God grant them many years!

### FESTIVAL NEWS

#### Spring Festival Dates..... May 24-27

Holy Trinity's Spring Greek Festival will be held at our interim location on Browns Lane from Thursday, May 24 through Sunday, May 27, 2012. Please mark your calendars and plan on volunteering, eating, spreading the word and bringing your friends!

#### Festival Ad Book

This issue of *The Herald* contains a Festival Ad Book form. The Ad Book is an important part of the financial success of the Festival, so please consider placing an ad or taking the form to businesses and individuals you know are willing to support this event. Thank you!

#### Festival Cooking Dates

Please take note of the following remaining dates for Festival food preparation:

##### March 6 - 10:00am: Pastry Preparation

Contact Joyce Athanasiou (412-292-4206)

##### March 8, 15 & 22 - 9:00am: Spanakopita

Contact Kay Balouris (412-766-1263)

##### March 10, 9:00am: Souvlakia Prep

Contact Jim Balouris (724-316-2846)

Thank you for your offerings of time and labor to help!

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

### March 2012 – Between the First Day of Lent And Easter



**Father John  
Androutsopoulos**

**M**y beloved brothers and sisters in Christ: Rejoice always! On Monday, February 27th, the Great Lent (or *Nistia* in Greek) began.

#### What Happens During Lent?

What happens between the first day of Lent and Easter? It is a proper question, for Lent, the time between, comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *Lencten*, which means "spring." "The season suggests the

coming of more light over the world and the rebirth of nature. It commemorates our Lord's 40 days of fasting and temptations in the wilderness. Beloved, during Lent, we are asked to abstain and fast. To abstain means not to eat certain foods such as meat, dairy, fish and their products. To fast also means to cut down on the amount of food eaten, and then to give the money saved to the poor.

So, we rightly observe Lent in self-discipline, repentance, prayer and by studying the Holy Scriptures. We also observe Lent through proper Church attendance and not by arriving late for Holy Communion! Above all, we must partake in the sacrament of Holy Confession, which has been called our second Baptism. We must observe all of these preparations to receive Holy Communion properly at the Resurrection Liturgy.

Paul insists we will be crucified with Christ. Beloved, if Christ lives in us, he frees us from self-concern, and grants us a new identity, a new mind and new obligations. Therefore, we are identified with people and causes that Christ himself identifies with and calls, "the least of these" (Matthew 25:40)—the hungry, the homeless, the sick, the oppressed, the out-cast, the imprisoned. It is not possible to be Christian unless we care about the ones He came to redeem.

#### The Veneration of the Holy Cross

"We bow down before Thy Cross, O Lord, and we glorify Thy Holy Resurrection." The third Sunday of Great Lent (March 18 this year) is the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross. The Cross of Christ stands at the very heart of all our beliefs. As man He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is "Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:8-11.

Christ's Cross is called "life giving," the door of paradise and "the confirmation of believers." It is the sign of victory, and our salvation. So, the third Sunday of the Great Lent, at the proper time, we, with piety, will venerate the Holy Cross that we may be strengthened and encouraged to fulfill the disciplines with which the Great Lent rejuvenates us.

During the remainder of this Great Lent, if we get near enough to our Lord and Savior, we will hear Him asking us

to take up a Cross. In the Gospel lesson for the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross, our Lord admonishes us, "Who-soever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." To "take up" our cross means to suffer persecutions and even death for His sake.

The first step on the road to Christian life is self-denial. No one can take up a cross until he has laid down some things, such as evil inclinations and sinful desires. As we continue our Lenten journey, let us humble ourselves even as Jesus humbled Himself. "A humble and contrite heart, God will not despise."

#### The Feast of the Annunciation

This Holy Feast Day which the Church celebrates on March 25th commemorates the moment when the Angel Gabriel was sent from God to the Virgin Mary and announced to her that she had found grace with God. She was blessed and would be the Mother of Jesus. An account of the Annunciation is given by the Evangelist St. Luke (1:27-35).

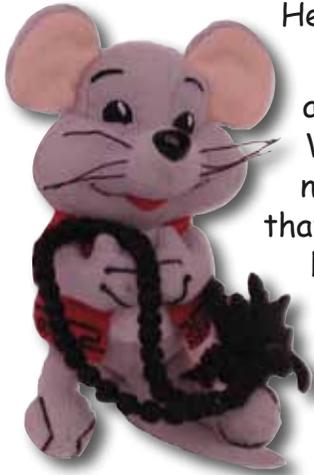
There is a dogmatic difference between the Western Church of Rome and the Eastern Church of Constantinople concerning the person of the Holy Theotokos Virgin Mary. Up until 1854, the two Churches did not differ with regards to the person, St. Mary. To both Churches, Mary was known as the Theotokos, the ever Virgin Mary. In 1854, however, at a Council of the Vatican, the Western Church proclaimed that the Virgin Mary was born without the original sin. This means that she was free from the sin of Adam and Eve. This doctrine was named the "Immaculate Conception." The Orthodox Church, instead, continues maintains the same historic teaching as before 1854, that the Virgin Mary was born with the original sin, but on the day of the Annunciation, she was cleansed by the Holy Spirit.

The Orthodox Church has always regarded the Annunciation as a most important event in the story of our salvation. The Annunciation is an announcement of glad tidings for this was the first time that the glad tidings of the coming of the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, were proclaimed to the world. The Feast was introduced in the early days of Christianity. It was officially introduced at the time of the Council of Ephesus, 431 A.D.

Beloved, March 25th is a religious holy day. But, it is also a Greek holiday, for on March 25th, 1821, the Greek revolution for freedom from the Turks began. That day, Bishop Germanos raised the flag of the revolution at the monastery of Agia Lavra, near Kalavrita, with the password "Freedom or Death!" The struggle began to free Greece, which was under Turkish control since 1453. The Greek people were slaves for 368 years. After struggling for seven years, Greece was free.

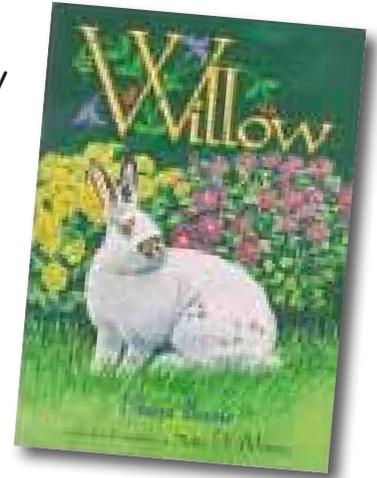
May we all have a fruitful, Great Lent in the vineyard of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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



Hello, my Precious Children!

It is I, Spero. I am here to tell you a story about a little creature like myself. Her name is Willow, and she is found in a book of the same name by Norm Bomer. Willow is a little bunny that wasn't very happy. She simply felt sorry for herself. She wanted more than anything to be free; you see she was in a hutch. Sure she had plenty of food, a safe hutch, play time in the yard, and a very loving family. But Willow still wanted to be free, just like other wild bunnies. She wanted to be free to stay out all night if she wanted, free to go where she wanted and



free to eat the berries and nibble the grass when she wanted. Willow is a lot like us, isn't she?. Sometimes, we get tired of the rules at home, forgetting that they are for our own protection. We want the same freedoms as Willow, to go where we want, when we want. Well, when Willow's hutch is left open one night, she gets her chance to escape ... freedom at last! Willow learns that wishes sometimes come true in unexpected ways. In this story about the true meaning of freedom, Willow quickly learns a very valuable lesson that she won't soon forget. It is a lesson for all children to learn. Despite the rules, there is freedom at home. Freedom tied with the strings of love!

I also have a teaching for today and it is about losing someone that you are close to or someone you really love. It is about God's promise, "I will give you life forever". Have you ever had a Papou or Yiayia that has died? Or perhaps a young friend? It makes you feel very, very sad. Do you know that everyone feels sad and may even cry when someone that they are close to has died? The Bible tells us that even Jesus cried when his good friend Lazarus died. Think about how Jesus' friends—the disciples—felt when he was crucified. They were very, very sad. The disciples were also very scared after Jesus died. But we cannot blame them for feeling afraid. They knew that those that hate Jesus might arrest and kill them too. So they hid behind locked doors.

Stop and think! Do you think any of the disciples expected Jesus to come alive in three days? NO! They did not even expect him to rise from the dead. They knew He was crucified and died on the cross, that His body had been buried in the tomb and a huge stone had been placed in front of it to seal it. We must all remember Jesus wants to live with you in your heart. He wants you to live with Him in heaven. He died and came alive so that we could live with Him forever. Our Heavenly Father is the giver and creator of all life. So think about the new life that He has waiting for us in heaven. Just as He raised His Son from the dead, He will also raise to a new life all those that put their trust in Jesus. So, my little ones, when someone you love dies, Jesus says "I am the resurrection and the life and he who believes in Me lives, even though he dies" (John 11:25).

Have wonderful, happy and Blessed Pascha!

Love in Christ, Spero

Reflections in modern Greek on the March 25th holiday: the Feast of the Annunciation and Greek Independence Day



Voula Hareras

## 25 ΜΑΡΤΙΟΥ 1821

**Ν**ά μία ήμερομηνία πού θά πρέπει νά μένει άθάνατη στις ψυχές των Έλλήνων όλων των γενεών.

Καί νά μήν ξεχνάμε ούτε για μία στιγμή τις θυσίες των ήρωικών προγόνων μας, πού έπειτα από 400 χρόνια σκλαβιάς και τρομαχτικής βίας κατάφεραν όχι μόνον νά διατηρήσουν μέ κίνδυνο της ζωής τους

γλώσσα και θρησκεία αλλά και μέσα στην καρδιά τους νά καιεί ή φλόγα της έλευθερίας για την αγαπημένη τους Πατρίδα.

Γιαυτό σάν ήρθε ή εύλογημένη ώρα του λυτρωμού όλου σάν μία ψυχή πολέμισαν γεναία άψηφόντας τον θάνατο γιατί είχαν πλέον χωνέψη βαθιά τό “καλητερα μιάς ώρας έλεύθερης ζωής παρά σαράντα χρόνια σκλαβιάς και φυλακής” και μέ την βοήθεια της Παναγίας μας κατάφεραν αυτό πού άλλοι λαοί τό θεωρούσαν άκατόρθωτο δηλαδή νά κερδίσουν την έλευθερία τους.

Ναί τετρακόσια όλόκληρα χρόνια ή Έλλάδα μας είχε σβυστή από τον χάρτη ούτε μία στιγμή όμως δέν είχε σβυστή από την καρδιά των ήρωικών προγόνων μας και ζούσαν μόνο μέ αυτό τό όνειρο της έλευθερίας της, την όποιαν μέ θυσίες και



άίμα την ξαναποκτήσαμε, βεβαιότατα και είναι βγαλμένη από τον Έλλήνων τά κόκκαλα τά ιερά, όπως πολύ σωστά τό λέει και ό έθνικός μας ύμνος.

Γιαυτό λοιπόν ή 25 Μαρτίου 1821 είναι άναμφισβίτητα ή λαμπρότερη σελίδα της ιστορίας μας, άς μήν τό ξεχνάμε ποτέ αυτό.

Γιά νά ολοκληρώσω αυτά τά λίγα λόγια θά ήθελα νά μοιραστώ μαζί σας ένα ποίημα του Εθνικού μας ποιητού:

**Α**νοιξες είναι λυώσανε εις τά βουνά τά χιόνια  
Και λυώσανε τά σκοτεινά τά τετρακόσα χρόνια  
Τού ούρανού τά ρόδινα χαμογελούνε χείλη  
Και ρίχνει τά διαμάντια του στό πράσινο τριφύλλι  
Στού Μάρτη ψάλλουν τό φιλί όλόχαρα τ'αίδόνια  
Και ποτε κείνα τραγουδούν και ποτε τά μιλιόνια  
Εχουνε σχόλη ή Παναγιά και ή Έλλάς μεγάλη  
Η μία τό κρίνο δέχεται δάφνης κλωνάρι ή άλη  
Χαίρε Μαρία από δώ άκούς χαριτωμένη  
Και καλώς ήρθες από κεί θεά ξενητεμένη  
Όμως καμπάνα δέν άκούς καμιά σ'αύτην την ώρα  
Τό καργιοφύλι τούς πιστούς ξυπνά και φέρνη τώρα  
Και μέσα στά μεσάνυχτα πού όλα είναι μαύρα  
Μπουλούκια άνηφορίζουνε προς την Άγία Λαύρα  
Ποιός είναι κείνος ό παπάς πού μέ όψη άναμένη  
Κρατώντας τό άγιο λάβαρο στό ιερό προβαίνει  
Και λέει μέ δυνατή φωνή πού τον άέρα σχίζει  
Ποιός θέλει την σημαία μου, ποιό χέρι την άξίζει  
Τό χέρι άπλώνει ό Μωριάς ή Ρούμελη την πιάνη  
Υδρα Σπέτσες και Ψαρά έπάνω της ξαπλώνουν  
Τό Σούλι την άναζητά τηνε ζηλεύει ή Μάνη  
Σπαθιά μιλιόνια μονομιάς και ράσα την κυκλώνουν  
Και νά βροντά ή θάλασσα και ή στεριά σαλεύει  
Και ή σημαία στά φτερά της νίκης ταξιδεύει  
Στήνετε έδώ στήνετε εκεί σέ τοίχοι άνεβαίνει  
Σέ θάλασσες δροσίζεται σέ χώρες μέσα μπαίνει  
Την νίκη έχει συντροφιά πετούνε πλάι πλάι  
Κι' όλα τά κάνει γαλανά στον δρόμο πού περνάι  
Ταξίδευε ταξίδευε Έλληνοπούλα πάλι  
Ολος ό κόσμος νά είδει τά γαλανά σου κάλη  
Λαγκάδια πέρνα και βουνά μέ τον Καραϊσκάκη  
Κυμμάτιζε κυμμάτιζε του ούρανού πανάκι  
Στην βάρκα του Κανάρισου όπου τό κύμμα άνάβη  
Και του Μιαούλη φτέρωνε τό όλόμαυρο καράβι.





# Community Life Photo Journal | "A Sampling of Holy Trinity"

**February 25, 2012:** Holy Trinity Church hosted its first-ever "Sampling of Holy Trinity" as a way of introducing the community to new members and bringing the entire community up-to-date on parish ministries, the exciting progress of our New Church project and the Capital Campaign. The event was well-attended, informative and deliciously catered by Mediterraneo Rustic Mediterranean Cuisine!





**Above:** The young children of the HOPE and JOY ministries and their families enjoy an afternoon of snow tubing at Wildwood Highlands.

**Below:** Teens of the GOYA ministry get together at our interim location to prepare hoagies for their Valentine's sale.



## Parish Council Update

*This abbreviated review of the Parish Council minutes is provided to keep our Holy Trinity parishioners informed of the active work of the Council. Thank you to our Parish Council secretary, Stephanie Sedor, for providing these condensed minutes. Stay informed! Get involved!*

### Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Parish Council of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church was held on Tuesday, January 17, 2012. The meeting was opened with a prayer at 7:10 pm by Fr. John.

### President's Welcome and Correspondence

A warm welcome was offered to Dean A. Balouris and Marios Kritiotis for giving their time as the newest Council members. Thank you to Gerri Valliant for offering to help open the church each Sunday. This is a key year for revitalizing the church's ministries, we need to provide new opportunities of substance for the new members of Holy Trinity Church.

### Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Jason Farmakis to approve the December, 2011, minutes. Seconded by Lou Kort. Approved unanimously.

### Father John's Report

There have been many new house blessings this year. There will be a Parish Leadership Synaxis again this year to bring together the leadership of all the ministries of the church. We are hoping to have the new website up sometime in February. In addition to many new features, there are thousands of pictures of events from the past 10 years to be posted in a community photo gallery. We are also hoping to do a printed and online secure community directory with family pictures. Our parish email distribution list is growing, and we will also splitting it into two lists into a 'Holy Trinity News and Updates' list for parishioners and internal use and a and 'Holy Trinity Festival' list for festival and external news distribution.

### Financial Update

Our budget for 2012 is conservative and in line with 2011. We are hoping that expenses will decrease as we are at the Northway location this entire year. Our bookkeeper, Melanie, talked with Paychex and asked for reduced payroll processing fees, it was noted that Melanie is invaluable as an accountant for us. All those submitting official parish charges or invoices for festival or other church expenses are asked to make sure you turn in your receipts weekly to help her record them correctly.

### Committee Reports

**Construction:** Trailers are set up, waiting on power. Jason Farmakis will be on site every Thursday.

**Vision Committee:** February 25th "Sampling of Holy Trinity" event will be to update the community on the building project and invigorate the capital campaign. We need to have some follow up meetings to encourage new pledges and pledge extensions. Right now looking at mortgage payments of about \$225,000 per year, which is extremely high. We are waiting on the developer of McCandless Crossing to move the access road so that electrical service can be installed. The Vision Committee is continuing to think about the future in the new facility, including community center usage and different business models for managing it.

**Outreach:** How can we re-energize outreach ministries? We are doing outreach with Pleasant Valley Emergency Shelter, there are opportunities during the year to offer meals. Also looking for more opportunities through FOCUS Pittsburgh ..

**Stewardship:** In 2010, we collected \$224,096, and in 2011 we collected 200,451. In 2010, we had 209 pledges, for an average amount of \$687 per pledge. In 2011, we had 236 pledges for an average amount of \$779 per pledge. We're hoping this year is even better, as we add new members to the parish and continue serving the community.

**Festival:** Our plan is for the Festival to take place Memorial Day weekend, Thursday through Sunday, May 24-27. We are officially adding pastitsio and spanakopita to the menu, with all other items remaining the same. We would like to start using the "Aglaia Festival Systems" computer-based register system to replace our old registers. This will allow us to accept credit cards and donations, make transaction times faster, offer receipts, and give us daily, even hourly, sales reports. This year to advertise, we will be placing a large banner over McKnight Road near Mad Mex and the Northway turnaround. We will be using the Christ Church parking lot once again: thank you to their community for being wonderful neighbors! Pastry making/cooking will begin on Tuesdays and souvlakia preparation will be in March.

### Old Business/New Business

We are still waiting for iconography at the chapel to be finished, and for the chandelier to be hung. Fr. John will be traveling to Istanbul with Metropolitan Savas for 10 days in May. We need to figure out how to get an AED machine on the property and have people trained to use it.

### Next Meeting

The next meeting date was set for February 21st at 7:00 p.m. in church meeting room. No further business appearing, the meeting adjourned with a prayer at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephanie Sedor, Secretary

# HOLY TRINITY PALM SUNDAY COMMUNITY FISH LUNCHEON

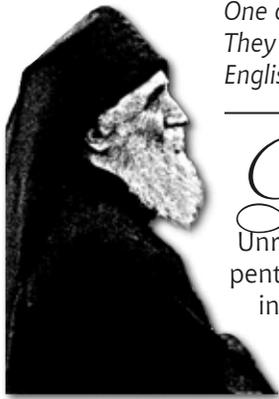
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Elder Paisios

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.

God gave man a mind so that he can become aware of his fault, repent and ask for forgiveness. Unrepentance is a cruel thing. The unrepentant person is very foolish in not wanting to repent and thus be spared from the small hell he is now living in, and which will lead him to eternal hell. He is also deprived of earthly blessings—which continue in Paradise,

near God—together with the greater, eternal joys.

As long as a person is far from God, he is beside himself. Notice what the Gospel tells us about the prodigal son: “When he came to himself he said, ... I will arise and go to my father...” Only when he came to his senses, when he repented, did he say, “I will return to my father.” As long as he continued to live in sin, he was beside himself; he was not in his right mind, because sin is outside the bounds of reason.

**Question: Geronda, Abba Alonios writes, “If only a man desired it for a single day from morning till night, he would be able to come to the measure of God.” What does he mean?**

The spiritual life does not require years. Within a second, one can find himself gone from hell into Paradise, if he repents. Man is changeable. He can become an angel and he can become a devil. What amazing power there is in repentance! It draws down divine Grace. A man can be saved if he brings one single humble thought to mind! But if he brings to mind a single proud thought and does not repent, and death overtakes him in this state, then he’s lost. The humble thought, of course, must be accompanied by an inner sigh, inner contrition. A thought is a thought, but there is also the heart. The hymnist reminds us, “With the whole soul and reason and heart.”

But I believe that the Abba here is referring to a more permanent state, and time is needed to attain to such a good state. For now, I make a mistake, I repent, I am forgiven at that moment; if I have a fighting spirit, I can gradually turn this temporary good state into a more permanent one, but until then I vacillate.

**Question: Geronda, can an elderly person help himself spiritually?**

Yes. In fact, when one grows old, he is given the opportunity to repent more readily because the illusions are gone. While he still had his physical strength and his youth, he wasn’t aware of his weaknesses, and imagined himself to be in a good spiritual state. But now that he has difficulties and is complaining, it helps him realize that he is not all right, that he is weak; and this helps him repent. If he makes good use of the few years he has ahead and uses his past years’ experience well, Christ will not abandon him; He will be merciful.

**Question: Geronda, what is “joyful grief,” or “joy-creating sorrow?”**

It is the joy that comes from sorrow over a mistake we have made. Joyful grief contains both joy and pain and this is why it is called joyful grief. Man is saddened out of *philotimo* at having grieved the Lord, but he is also joyful because he feels divine consolation. The sinner, when he repents sincerely, is forgiven by God; he feels divine consolation and may even attain fervent spiritual joy, spiritual exultation.

**Geronda, can a man who struggles spiritually repent throughout his life?**

Yes. If he struggles appropriately, doesn’t notice his progress but only his mistakes, and lives in a constant state of repentance. He doesn’t know that at first he was struggling with one demon, and later he was struggling with a whole regiment. You see, the more effort one applies to uprooting a passion and acquiring a virtue, the more enemies gather to tug at the roots from below. That’s why, even though he may not see any progress, he nonetheless advances in a positive way. And it is possible to live in this state until the time of death, not seeing any progress and imagining that there is no advancement, seeing only that he continues to make mistakes; but in reality, there is indeed progress, because the struggle is constantly intensified, and one struggles with an ever-increasing number of demons.

Repentance for one who is struggling is a never-ending handicraft. We mourn for the dead, we bury them and often forget them...but we will mourn over our sins constantly, until we die; and this, of course, is done with discernment and with hope in Christ, Who was crucified to resurrect us spiritually.

In order for man to stop committing a particular sin, he must try to avoid the cause which leads to that sin. For example, a drunkard, if he is to help himself break the bad habit, should not even walk past a tavern. It takes a small amount of effort and a ready heart and will, and the Benevolent God will help us overcome our difficulties. Let’s say, for example, someone has a particular passion. He acknowledges the fact, he struggles to cast it off, he repents, and he becomes humble. His inner disposition and struggle to break the bad habit are known to God, Who provides assistance.

On the other hand, how can God give His Grace to one who doesn’t make any effort to change but instead continues to sin? God’s Grace does not come to someone who is in a false spiritual state, because this would not be helpful to that person... It is the person who does not remain stagnant in his fall, in his sinful thoughts and actions, but instead recovers, repents of his sins and struggles not to sin any more, who receives God’s Grace and is helped. *(Continued next issue...)*

*Excerpted from “Elder Paisios of Mount Athos, The Spiritual Counsels, Volume III: Spiritual Struggle”*

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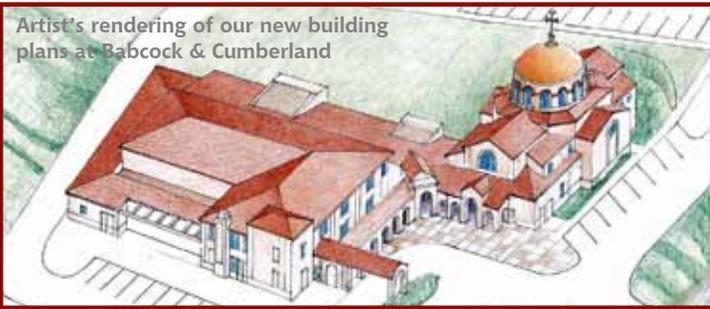
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## The Lenten Prayer of Saint Ephraim



Icon of Jesus Christ from the museum of  
Simonopetra Monastery, Mount Athos, Greece

O Lord and Master of my life,  
do not give me the spirit of laziness,  
idle curiosity, love of power and vain talk.

But grant me, Your servant,  
the spirit of moderation,  
humility, patience, and love.

Yes, Lord and King,  
grant me to see my own faults  
and not to judge my brothers and sisters.

**For You are blessed forever. Amen.**

Scripture of the Month: "Create a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me." (Psalm 50/51:10)