



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

APRIL 2013

VOLUME 21 • ISSUE 4

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APRIL 21 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**NEW CHURCH
OPENS IN
TWO MONTHS!**

QUICK NEWS



Stonework is completed on the fireplace in the "Fireside Room" at the new Holy Trinity Church. Want to see more scenes from the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? See the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 8-10 or visit our online photos and videos at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

"No longer does the fiery sword guard the gates of Eden, for the wood of the Cross suddenly assaulted it. The sting of death and the wrangling of Hades were nailed to it; but You, O Savior, appeared, calling to those in Hades: 'Enter again into Paradise!'" (St. Romanos, 6th c.)



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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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

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Charles Petredis

Andrew Janis

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Stephanie Sedor

Louis Kort

Alex Trivilas

Leo Loomis

Gerri Valliant

Ministries

Please visit the Holy Trinity website at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org for descriptions and contact information on Holy Trinity Church's ministries, including educations, youth, senior, family and cultural opportunities. There is something for everyone, so please get involved today!



These words become like a mirror to the person singing them, so that he might perceive himself and the emotions of his soul...Each psalm is both spoken and composed by the same Spirit, so that in these same words...the stirring of our souls might be grasped, and all of them be said as concerning us, and the same issue from us as our own souls.

From the "Epistle to Markellinos"
St. Athanasios the Great (4th c.)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Christ,

Have you ever listened to a song or watched a favorite movie and found yourself reciting along with the singer or character with so much familiarity that you feel you are part of the character and the words are yours as well? When that happens, we cease to become mere audience and move into the realm of vicarious participation: it becomes as if we ourselves are on the stage or in the scene. In television, movies and music, a delivery so effective that it actually brings the hearers to that level of active would be awarded and lauded for its engaging and raptured performance.

According to one of the earliest fathers of the Church, Saint Athanasios (4th century), that experience is not new, nor is it accidental. In fact, when speaking of the hymnology and scripture, Saint Athanasios states that when properly experienced, the hymns and readings of the services of the Church are not mere recitations of someone else's words and life, but spoken as if they were ours, so that "all of them be said as concerning us, and the same issue from us as our own souls."

How is this possible? Can a person stand in a worship service in the 21st century and speak the words of a hymnographer from the 4th century with anything other than a sense of performance 17 centuries removed? According to Saint Athanasios, it is possible through none other than the Holy Spirit, "so that in these same words, the stirring of our souls might be grasped." One need only look to one famous prayer of the Church to understand this: the Morning Prayer of Saint Philaret of Moscow. After imploring God for help in all things, the prayer confesses that we cannot even pray without the inspiration and power of the Holy Spirit, so it concludes, "Teach me to pray. Pray Yourself within me. Amen."

It is possible, then, for the prayers and hymns of the Church to become "ours" because it is the same Holy Spirit Who inspired and empowered the original authors Who empowers and inspires us. In other words, they did not "invent" them, and we are not "repeating" them, but we, as children of the one God Who calls us all to repentance, are "sharing" in that same spirit of faith and repentance through the Holy Spirit, who prays within us!

This is why, for example, during our offerings of the Great Compline services at the Saint George Chapel on Mondays during Lent, all those attending are given an opportunity to share in the readings. It is why our children so powerfully connect through the Holy Spirit on Wednesday evenings during the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts. And it is why the mouths and hearts of the faithful cannot be stilled as they join in the joyful Salutations to the Theotokos on the Fridays of Lent.

This year, my beloved spiritual children, allow that gift to grow within you. It is from God Himself, and it is for you. This is one of the beautiful joys of our Orthodox Christian worship services: we do not invent or entertain, but rather we enter into the mysterious encounter of grace.

I look forward deeply to sharing in that grace with you during the remainder of Lent and leading up to Holy Week. Kalo Pascha!

Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:

**Sponsored in memory of Steve Karavolos (+ 1999)
by his wife and family. May his memory be eternal!**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Church School Lenten Activities April/May

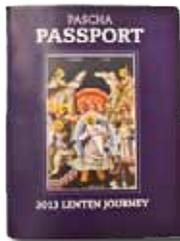
As always, our Church School ministry will be active during Lent and Holy Week. Don't miss these opportunities:

- 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 their talents.
- 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!

Pascha Passports Throughout Lent & Holy Week

New this year: Pascha Passports! Our Church School ministry has an exciting new learning and motivational tool this year to help our children record their journey through Lent and Holy Week. The Passports are designed to help children enjoy your journey and discover new things along the way. In addition to services, there are "special destinations" on the way to Pascha, and families should help their children visit as many destinations as possible. Each time a child visits a new location, the Pascha Passport gets stamped. Questions? Ask your child's Church School teacher or see Presvytera Eileen Sedor or Karen Georgiadis.



Saturday of Lazarus Palm Crosses/Candles April 27

Calling all Holy Trinity Church School students and staff: Your help is needed to prepare some important items for our Holy Week services! Please have your Pascha Passports ready for the Saturday of Lazarus, April 27, for Divine Liturgy followed by the making of the many Palm Crosses needed for Palm Sunday. Younger students will also have the very important task of preparing the cupped candles for Holy Friday and Holy Saturday evenings. Divine Liturgy is at 9:30 a.m. followed by a Lenten breakfast and the project. Parents, please be sure to attend with your children and family.

Saint Lydia Women's Study April 25

The St. Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is now in its 13th year! This year the women are studying selections of spiritual guidance topics from Elder Paisios of Mount Athos (+1994), one of the most read and beloved elders of the contemporary Orthodox world. All women of any age are welcome. 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. Due to the Monastery Pilgrimage, there will be only one meeting this month on April 25.

LENTEN AND PASCHAL INFORMATION

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 May 4

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.

Women's Lenten Retreat April 8/9

Holy Trinity Church is offering an overnight Women's Lenten Retreat on Monday, April 8-Tuesday, April 9, at the Holy Protection of the Theotokos Monastery in White Haven, PA. The event is being coordinated by the St. Lydia Women's Fellowship Ministry and is open to all women. Contact Stacy Dickos (412-367-0925) for information or reservations.

Holy Week Schedule of Services

This issue of The Herald contains a complete schedule of Holy Week services. Please post it in a conspicuous place in your home and plan on attending as often as possible with your family.

GOYA Community Palm Sunday Luncheon April 28

The GOYA teen ministry will be once again hosting their very popular annual Community Palm Sunday Fish Luncheon this year on April 28. It will once again be held community style in our interim Browns Lane location. Pre-sold reservations are being taken to make sure they have enough seating and food. Tickets will be on sale following Liturgy during Lent. In addition to being a wonderful community fellowship opportunity, this is one of the largest fund-raising events of the year for the GOYA to support their many activities, so thank you for your support and generosity.

Holy Friday Trisagion at the Epitaphion May 3

Each year we offer a Trisagion Service in front of the Epitaphion (the Tomb of Christ) prior to starting the Holy Friday evening service of the Praises (*Engomia*). It is an important way to honor and pray for all those who have fallen asleep in the Lord as part of the Holy Trinity community by offering their names before the Tomb of the Lord Whom they served and worshiped during their life here. Please be sure to



complete the Holy Friday names form enclosed in this issue of *The Herald* and submit it before the start of the service on Holy Friday. Thank you for remembering all our departed members.

Make Plans for the Anastasi Dinner May 5

Don't forget to make plans to attend the Resurrection Orthros, Liturgy and Dinner at Holy Trinity Church on Saturday evening, May 4/early morning Sunday, May 5. Following the Divine Liturgy of the Resurrection, join your family, friends and other members of Holy Trinity to break the fast and celebrate the feast. It will be held family-style, just like the Palm Sunday Luncheon the week before. We will be serving a traditional Greek Paschal meal of delicious Holy Trinity style lamb, rice, bread, cheese and olives. Free-will offerings will be accepted to help cover the costs of the meal. Bring family and friends for the greatest Feast in the Orthodox Christian Faith! The Resurrection Orthros starts at 11:00 p.m., but with a full house expected, doors will open at 10:00 p.m., so be sure to get there early to get a seat!

Agape Vespers & Paschal Candy Hunt..... May 5

The Church School ministry is again sponsoring the annual Paschal Candy Hunt on the lawn of the church at Browns Lane (weather permitting) on Pascha following the Agape Vespers Service at 1:00 p.m. All the children are invited to come for this beautiful and bright service. It is an especially good way for those with small children who are not able to attend the midnight service to share in a special celebration of Pascha.

Upcoming Lenten Dates.....April/May

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

- Saturday of Lazarus Palm/Candle Making.....Apr. 27**
- Palm Sunday & Community Fish LuncheonApr. 28**
- Holy Friday (schedule off work & school)..... May 3**
- Pascha May 5**
- Feast of St. George (Nameday of the Chapel).. May 6**

COMMUNITY NEWS

Philoptochos News

The Ladies Philoptochos Society has started collecting "Coupons for Troops" as an expression of thanks and support for the essential work our armed forces do in keeping us safe. They are asking all who are interested in donating clipped coupons to this worthwhile venture to watch for a collection box in the hall. This is a program which enhances the well-being of overseas and domestic military families by sending them food, non-food, baby food and pet food manufacturer coupons to make their hard-earned dollars go farther. Ready to help? Here are the guidelines. Coupons must be:

- 1. From manufacturers for individual products (example: soup, pasta or toothpaste).
- 2. General use, not just for individual stores (example Target, K-Mart and other individual store coupons cannot be used).
- 3. Clipped out individually (not by the sheet)
- 4. Packaged in sandwich or quart-size plastic bags.

5. Active (up to 3 months remaining) or recently expired no more than 60 days.

6. Actual printed coupons (no internet coupons, food stamps or vouchers).

7. From any source as long they are original manufacturers' coupons.

Thanks for helping Philoptochos help our troops!

GOYA Meeting April 14

The GOYA teen ministry will hold a meeting following Church School on April 14. All teens are asked to attend.

Council of Ministries First Meeting April 13

The "Council of Ministries" is a keystone part of Holy Trinity Church's parish growth and renewal project. It is comprised of the leadership of each ministry at Holy Trinity Church and will meet a number of times a year to coordinate ministry cooperation and development in the parish. The initial Organizational Meeting of this important group will take place on Saturday, April 13, 2013, from 10:00 a.m. to noon at our interim location on Browns Lane. Current ministries asked to attend are: Acolytes, Agape Fund, Capital Campaign, Choir, Church School, FOCUS Pittsburgh, GOYA, Greek Education, Greek Dancing, Greek Festival, HOPE, JOY, Notable Speakers Series, Orthodox Studies Forum, Outreach Ministries, Parish Council, Philoptochos, Seniors, Social, St Lydia Women's Study Fellowship, St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship, St. Spyridon Children's Library, Stewardship, Three Hierarchs Bookstore, Welcome & Hospitality, Young Adult Ministry. For more information, contact Charlie Petredis at 866-304-5919 or charles.petredis@wfadvisors.com.

Holy Trinity Choir Recruiting for Opening & Beyond

The Holy Trinity Choir is on an active recruiting campaign in preparation for the opening of the new Holy Trinity Church and for a worship life pleasing to God for years to come. Can you sing? It is a God-given gift that you have for a reason, and that reason might very well be to serve your Church! Who is the choir looking for? 1) People who would like to sing with the choir every Sunday; 2) People who would like to contribute their singing talents during the special services of Lent and Holy Week leading up to the opening; 3) **FORTY PEOPLE** who would like to have the special and historic honor of singing for the June 22 Grand Opening of the new Holy Trinity Church; 4) People who are willing to make the commitment to stay on beyond that as stewards of the music ministry of Holy Trinity Church.

To prepare properly for all those offerings, rehearsals are a must. Each Sunday, unless announced, members will meet in the choir room as follows: 1) New members should exit with current choir members enjoy some refreshments at coffee hour if desired; 2) Rehearsals will be no more than 60 minutes in length; 3) April rehearsals will prepare first for Holy Week and then for the opening of the new church. Questions? Please see Choir Director Harriet Valliant.

First Holy Trinity Festival at New Church! .. Aug.28-Sep. 1

Please mark August 28 through September 1 (Labor Day Weekend) on your calendar as the inaugural Greek Festival

at our new Church location. The Festival Committee is reaching out to everyone to join in helping at what will be an unprecedented and historic event at our new Church, and our Parish Council has challenged us with the goal of holding our parish's most successful festival ever! They are looking for parishioners to fulfill a variety of roles-there is something for everyone! To learn about how to help, please contact one of the following festival chair people: Harry Athanasiou: 412-292-4205, Leo Loomis: 412-563-2323, Stephanie Sedor: 412-780-6183, Penny Tomalski: 724-813-5726 and Gerri Valliant: 412-487-3977 More information regarding festival prep will be forthcoming. We look forward to welcoming and sharing our Holy Trinity hospitality with the North Hills in our new Church!

Festival Baklava Big Cooking Day April 20

The Pastry committee of our Greek Festival invites everyone to participate in the big Baklava Cooking day, Saturday, April 20 starting at 9:00 a.m. at the interim location. Please confirm to Joyce Athanasiou at jcbathanasiou@aim.com or 412-292-4206. Thank you!

Outreach Opportunities Available

A message from our Outreach Ministries coordinator, Mike Kritiotis: Thank you for the great response thus far for local outreach to our less fortunate neighbors, through the FOCUS Center's ministries, the Food Pantry and Pleasant Valley men's shelter. There are still many opportunities to make a difference:

1. If you would like to sign up to provide 120 bag-lunches to the homeless and needy through FOCUS Pittsburgh, there are several open Saturdays for the remainder of the year. We also have one remaining evening (Tuesday, October 15) to provide a hot dinner to 30 residents at Pleasant Valley shelter on the North Side. See Mike Kritiotis after church for details. FOCUS Pittsburgh hopes to significantly grow its services in 2013 and beyond, so we will be providing you with much more information in the coming weeks and months.

2. The St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry on the South Side is always looking for contributions and volunteers. Food distribution takes place every Thursday from 5:45pm-6:45pm. Donations can be made by calling 412-431-6428; or see Harry and Joyce Athanasiou.

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 or weather cancellations? Sign up at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

NEW CHURCH PROJECT NEWS

Keep Up With Construction Progress Online!

Want to keep up with the construction progress of the new Holy Trinity Church? Simply visit our website, www.HolyTrinityPgh.org, and click the Gallery link for lots of photos. There are also links to up-close walking tour videos with descriptions about construction progress and features of the new facilities. For direct access to the videos or to "Like" and post comments about them, visit [Facebook.com/holytrinitypgh](https://www.facebook.com/holytrinitypgh).

Iconography Team Meals Needed April 3-26

Our iconography team is working on the new church from April 3 through April 26 (and possibly also after Pascha). During that time they will be working approximately 12 hours a day, Monday through Saturday. They will break each day for their main meal around 1:30, according to the typical Greek schedule, which places that largest meal of the day in the middle. To help them complete their work without worrying about finding food and taking time for restaurants, we would like to provide them with both Holy Trinity hospitality and some great Lenten food (they are all Orthodox). If you are willing to "adopt a day" and provide a large Lenten meal for 7 people, please contact Jan Petredis at c.petredis@comcast.net or 724-935-0805. Meals should be in oven-ready pans for heating, and please contact Jan to assure a healthy variety of items to avoid all the same food. Thank you for providing the food sustenance for this group of talented artists as they provide us with a beautiful environment of spiritual sustenance for generations to come!

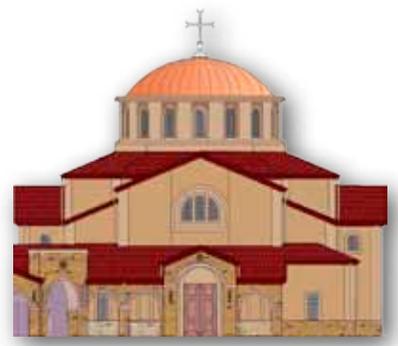
Iconography Lecture Series Mondays, April 8-May 13

Watch for forthcoming information on an exciting lecture series to be offered by our New Church iconographer, Dr. George Kordis. In addition to being a distinguished Byzantine iconographer with an international portfolio, Dr. Kordis is Assistant Professor in Iconography at the University of Athens and a visiting professor at Yale University as well as the author of many publications. Some of his major commissions include: Docheiariou Monastery (Mount Athos), St George Orthodox Cathedral, (Beirut, Lebanon), Faneromeni Church (Vouliagmeni, Greece) and Saint Sophia Church (Valley Forge, PA). Dr. Kordis has graciously offered to conduct lectures in iconography during his time here in April and May as he and his team complete our church project. Sessions will be on Monday evenings (except Holy Monday).



OPENING OF THE NEW CHURCH: JUNE 22, 2013!

It's now less than three months away, so, keep the weekend of June 22-24 clear for the "Thyranoixia" (Official Opening) of the new Holy Trinity Church! His Eminence Metropolitan Savas will preside over a weekend including the Opening of the Doors service and Liturgy on Saturday and at Pentecost Liturgy on Sunday. There will also be a Gala Fund-raising Dinner-Dance on Saturday evening, so keep your calendar clear and make it a Holy Trinity Weekend from start to finish! See the complete events schedule on the enclosed flyer and watch for the invitation and reservations information being mailed in early April. Make your plans now and get your reservations early!



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

APRIL 2013 – "THE VOICE OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH"



Father John Androutsopoulos

My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ: "Rejoice in the Lord always!"

Repentance In Our Hearts

"The Lord seethe not as man seethe; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7). (Greek translation: "kathara kardia" = clean heart)

Great Lent is a time of repentance. We look back over the months that have passed, and we are truly sorry for the lapses in our lives that have grieved the Holy Spirit.

But the Great Lent should not be a time of mere temporary regret at failing God. The whole year ought to be a daily walk with Christ. Paul urged Timothy, "Be prepared in season and out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2).

We think of the Savior's agony in the Garden. His sorrow at the apathy of the disciples, His grief at the treachery of Judas, His ordeal at the hands of the soldiers, and the barbarity of the crucifixion. The contemplation of these sufferings causes us to realize anew the "exceeding sinfulness of sin."

Lent is a time to search our hearts, to pray that the searchlight of the Spirit reveals to us even the faintest trace of evil in our inmost being. With repentance in our hearts, we should then pray for the permanent cleansing Christ promises.

"I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgave the iniquity of my heart." Septuagint Psalm 31:5 (King James 32:5).

This verse from the Psalms brings to mind the woman who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and wiped them with her hair. She gave a moving expression of sorrow for her sins and of her love and gratitude because Jesus forgave her.

When we look at sin as something which not only does harm to us and others but also makes our Savior sorrowful, then tears can be expression of true repentance, and we can receive the grace of God's forgiveness for our sins.

"He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

When we repent of our sins and at the same time put our faith in Christ, we have the feeling of guilt taken away, and a new life begins. It is of grave concern today that as Christians we too often hesitate to take our stand with Christ. It is easier

to substitute a set of ideals of our own rather than follow in the way He gives, but the Holy Spirit speaks to our hearts, and we are conscious of our guilt and unworthiness.

All of us as Christians need to have repentance in our hearts at all times. This becomes our constant reminder that we are unable to handle our problems of sins and guilt by ourselves. Repentance keeps the way open for the grace of our Lord to flow into our hearts and through us as His servants.

"Put off your old nature which beckons to your former manner of life...and put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:22,24).

The storms of our times have revealed weakness in our lives. Moral standards are swept away, and weak faith does not hold us steady. When the storms of temptations and trouble come, we are weakened by unconfessed sin. Some of us are swayed by pride and self-seeking. Through indifference some drift loose from God.



During this Great Lent, we have a time for self-examination, a time when we may come to a deeper understanding of the meaning and power of the Christian life. When we respond to God's love with self-denial and spiritual discipline, Christ strengthens us to stand firm in faith and to shine as lights for Him in this world.

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

These words of Holy Scripture come to mind in relation to what is required of anyone who would accept the Christian faith. They are the words of the Apostle Peter, who unremittingly devoted himself to Christ after the day of Pentecost.

The subject of the Gospel is the same now as it was then. The preaching of John the Baptist was "Repent", and it was the thought of Jesus Himself. Without repentance there is no remission of sins. Without it nobody can partake of the redeeming work of Christ. Repentance is the only ground in the heart of man in which it is possible to plant the glorious tree of salvation through Christ and grow in new life in Him. Repentance is necessary in order to enjoy the blessings of the work of Christ and accomplish our work for Him in spreading His Gospel. Repentance is the door we can open to find the riches of Christ's redemption.

May we all have a Blessed and Fruitful Great Lent with a clean heart.

*With His love,
Rev. Fr. John H. Androutsopoulos, Protosphyter*



Hello there, all my precious children! It is me, your favorite little church mouse, Spero. I am going to chat with you about my little munchkin sister, Zoe. She really comes up with some great ideas sometimes. I am really very proud of her but don't tell her because then she'll bug me all of the time.

One day, Zoe, very excitedly came running in to tell me something very important. She says, "Do you know that I have found a way to put Jesus and others first in my life? Do you want to know how Spero?"

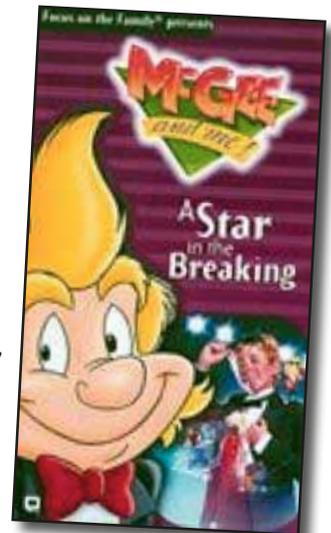
"Sure," I said (being the loving brother that I am!), "tell me Zoe."

So Zoe continued, "Well it's simple, just remember how to spell JOY. The first letter 'J' stands for 'Jesus'; the second letter, 'O', stands for 'others'; and the

third letter, 'Y', stands for 'yourself'. "So, Spero, when you put Jesus first, others second, and yourself last you will find only 'JOY!'"

You know, Zoe was right. Remember, JOY is the way you feel when you are very, very happy. And when we find JOY, it only gets bigger. Yiayia says that it is a lot like love: the more that you give the more that you will receive. So my little ones, I know that it is hard to do sometimes but try for the rewards will be great.

Now, on to this month's video review. In the "McGee and Me" video series, the second episode is, "The Star in the Breaking." This will teach my little ones about humility. In the first part of the video, Nicholas, whose cartoon character, McGee, shows that all of those who come to dinner will try to sit at the head of the table. He advises, as the Bible says, "if you are invited to a wedding feast do not always head for the best seat, because some one more respectful than you will show up". The host will bring him over to where you are sitting and say, "Let this man sit here." You then will be totally embarrassed and then have to take whatever seat is left at the foot of the table. Do this instead: start at the foot of the table and when the host sees you he will come and say, "friend we have a better place than this for you". Plus, you will be honored in front of all of the guests. Anyone who tries to honor himself will be humiliated and he who humbles himself shall be honored.



In the second part of the video, Nicholas learns that there was a time when the only thing that you would get when being an ace with ketchup, mustard bottles and cream pies was a trip to the principal's office and a two week detention. However, today, perfecting these skills can get you a visit to a T.V. show and a two week vacation at an amusement park! Unless, that is, your thirty minutes of game show fame goes to your head and you turn it into a prime time egotistical bully. Then the only thing that you win is the contempt of your friends and a lesson in humility. Yiayia says, "Our Heavenly Father strengthens those who are humble and flattens the hotshot"

Also, please do not forget to visit me in church during Lent. I would love to see those little feet under the chairs. But please, watch out when you kneel down to pray - I'm praying you won't kneel on me!

Love in Christ,
Spero



**AN INTERESTING COMPARISON:
FRONT DOORS "THEN AND NOW"**

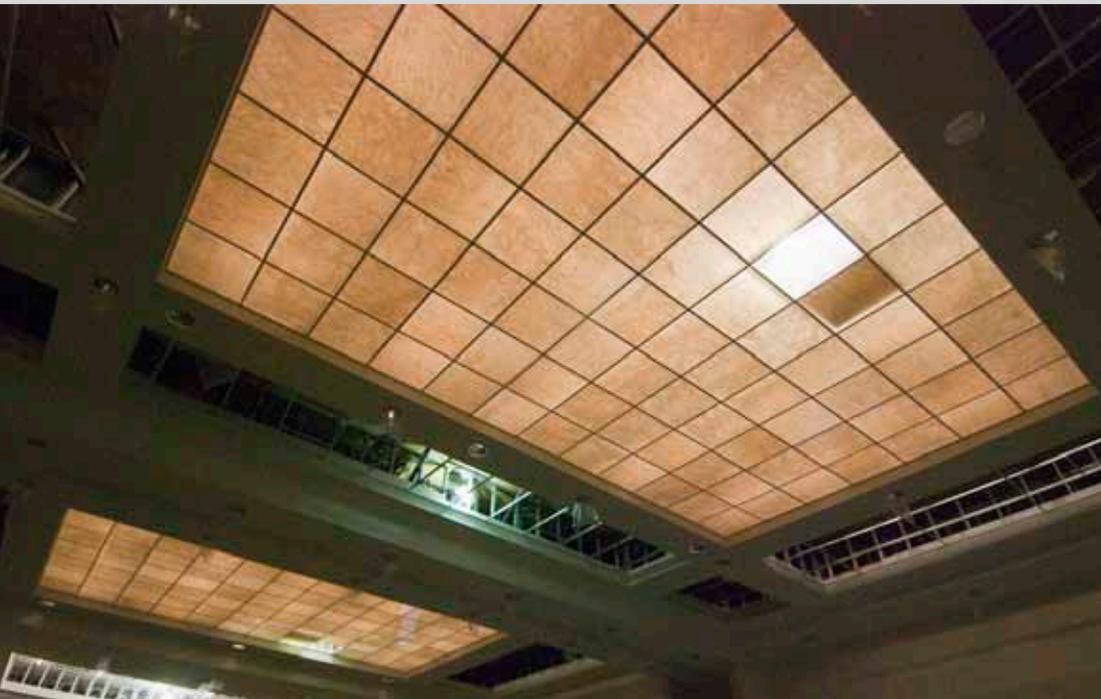


**HAGIA SOPHIA
CONSTANTINOPLE 537 AD**



**HOLY TRINITY
PITTSBURGH 2013 AD**





Progress continues! Top row (L-R): Custom-made fiberglass columns await installation. Workers pre-drill holes for the sound system brackets before carrying the columns to their mounting place and securing them. Far Left: Holy Trinity's new grand front doors resemble the 1,400+ year-old great iron doors of the Great Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Center column: Stonework nears completion at the front entrance and in the Fireside Room. Left: One of the Education Center classrooms receives a special treatment of "whiteboard paint," which renders an entire wall in the classroom as one giant whiteboard. Above: The beautiful alabaster ceiling in the Grand Room adds a warm glow. An installed column with the base and capital. Glory to God!

WATCH CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS ONLINE! PHOTOS AT www.HolyTrinityPgh.org. VIDEOS at [Facebook.com/holytrinitypgh](https://www.facebook.com/holytrinitypgh).



March 8-10: Holy Trinity GOYA took three teams and quite a few parents and family members to the last Metropolis Basketball Tournament of the year in Columbus, Ohio. The weekend was hosted by the Annunciation Cathedral in Columbus. Congratulations to all our players and thank you to the parents, coaches and community for all their support for our youth!

**HOLY TRINITY
PALM
SUNDAY
COMMUNITY
FISH LUNCHEON**

**A GREAT OLD HOLY TRINITY TRADITION
SERVED UP AT A GIANT FAMILY STYLE TABLE!**

**PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2013
FOLLOWING DIVINE LITURGY**

FAMILY STYLE BANQUET SEATING

ADULT "FISH PLAKI" MEALS: \$12

CHILD FISH STICKS MEALS: \$8

PROCEEDS BENEFIT TEEN MINISTRY

TICKETS WILL BE PRE-SOLD DURING LENT

SEE GOYA TABLE AT COFFEE HOUR

A Writing from the Journal, "Pros Tin Nikin" titled, "If Tears Spoke", and an original poem by Voula Hareras, "The Two Tears"



Voula Hareras

ΑΝ ΜΙΛΟΥΣΑΝ ΤΑ ΔΑΚΡΥΑ

Καί ποιός μάς είπε ότι τά δάκρυα δέν μιλούν. Μιλούν στην παγκόσμια γλώσσα της καρδιάς για να μπορούν να την διαβάζουν οι άνθρωποι όλης της γής και όποιος ηλικίας.

Αν επιχειρούσαμε να μεταφράσουμε την γλώσσα των δακρύων, θά έπλημμύριζαν την ζωή

μας όλα τά είδη των τραγουδιών, από τους άλαλαγμούς της χαράς μέχρι των θρήνων τους σπαραγμούς, από τους παιάνες των ένθουσιασμών μέχρι τό μοιρολοϊ του άνέκφραστου πόνου.

Θά ξεγλιστρούσαν αύθόρμητα οι ψιθυρισμοί από τίς μυστικές της καρδιάς μας συγκινήσεις, που κανείς δέν θέλομε να τίς ξέρη, τάχα ποιός μπορεί να έρμηνεύση έσωτερικά βιώματα που ούτε έμεις οι ίδιοι κάποτε δέν τολμούμε να άποκρυπτογραφήσωμε.

Αν όσα λένε τά δακρυσμένα μάτια μας έγράφοντο μέ γράμματα ή μέ νότες στό πεντάγραμμο, δέν θ'άντεχε ούτε ή ματιά, ούτε ή άκοή μας τους θρήνους, τά παράπονα, τά έρωτηματικά, τίς τύψεις, την ντροπή, για τά άνομολόγητα λάθη μας που ούτε μονάχοι μας κάποτε δέν θέλομε να παραδεχούμε.

Καί όμως! Ο, τι δέν λένε τά χείλη και δέν γράφει το χέρι, τό δημοσιοποιεί πολλές φορές των ματιών μας τό δάκρυ. Καί τό δάκρυ μιλάει είλικρινά, δέν γνωρίζει την γλώσσα της ύποκρισίας, της άδυναμίας, των ψεύτικων συναισθηματισμών. Ξαφνικά άναποδογυρίζει τό ποτήρι των διαλογισμών που μαζεύει στής ψυχής μας τά φυλλοκάρδια τά σύννεφα, που πυκνώνει μέσα μας κάθε είδους εύαισθησία, και άνεβάζει στά μάτια την βροχή των δακρύων. Αρκεί να διασχίση τόν ούρανόν της ψυχής μας ή άστραπή μιάς άλήθειας, ίκανής να την συγκινήση. Χαρά στόν άνθρωπο που έχει τότε την εύαισθησία να κλάψη.

Κλασσικό τό παράδειγμα μέσα στό Εύαγγέλιον.

Τό άμάρτημα σχεδόν μέ την ίδια βαρύτητα του Ιούδα και του κορυφαίου Αποστόλου Πέτρου, ό πρώτος Τόν έπρόδωσε, Τόν έπούλησεν, ό προδοτής! Ο άλλος Τόν άρνήθη, έβεβαίωνε πώς δέν Τόν ξέρει και μάλιστα 'μεθ'όρκου' στην πιο κρίσιμη ώρα της ζωής Του, όταν ό Κύριος, μόνος, έγκαταλελειμμένος, έξευτελισμένος, δαρμένος, έδικάζετο για να θανατωθή!

Ομως! Ομως ή άστραπή της αγάπης του Κυρίου έβγήκε γεμάτη στοργή και τρυφερότητα από την Θεϊκή ματιά Του... και έπερασε στην ματιά του Αποστόλου Του κι έφτασε στά βάθη της καρδιάς του, κι ό Μαθητής, ό γενναίος στην Πίστι και στην αύταπάρνησι, συγκλονίσθηκε 'και έξελθών έξω έκλαυσε πικρώς' (Μάρκ. κστ'75).

Στην κατάπικρη ώρα του πειρασμού ό Απόστολος Πέτρος δέν άρνήθηκε τόν καλόν έαυτόν του, θυμήθηκε κάτω από τό θεϊκό χάδι εκείνης της ματιάς του Διδασκάλου του, ό, τι του είχε πει πριν από λίγο, ότι πριν να λαλήση ό πετεινός, θά μέ άρνηθής τρεις φορές!... Καί καθώς τό λάλημα του κόκκορα

σάν ξερή σκουζιά έσκισε τό σκοτάδι της τραγικότερης νύχτας του κόσμου, ή βροχή των δακρύων του γενναίου Μαθητού έπότισε την ψυχή που άμάρτησε, και όχι μόνον την δική του, έπεσε μαλακή, ποτιστική, σωτήρια στό σκληρό χώμα της άμαρτίας της κάθε μιάς ανθρώπινης ψυχής, κι άφησε να άντηγή στους αιώνες τό τραγούδι της μετανοίας, λυτρωτικό, άναστάσιμο, χαροποϊό.

Τό μήνυμα διαχρονικό. Δέν ύπάρχει άμάρτημα, όσο βαρύ και άν είναι, που να μπορή να νικήση την αγάπη του Χριστού. Η ψυχή που άμάρτησε, έχει δρόμο να γυρίση στη συγγνώμη. Άρκεί να μη πνίξη μέσα της την εύαισθησία της άποδοχής του μηνύματος που της στέλνει ή Θεία στοργή. Τό ξέρω πώς άμάρτησα, λέει και κλαίει ό Απόστολος Πέτρος, αλλά ξαναγυρίζω συντριμμένος σε Σένα, τόν Υϊόν του Θεού και Σωτήρα μου. Καί περιμένω από Σένα την λύτρωσι.

Κάποτε Σού έδινα ύποσχέσεις, ότι ποτέ δέν θά Σε έγκαταλείψω, κι άς κάμουν ό, τι θέλουν οι άλλοι...γιατί έγώ είμαι σταθερός κι ήρωϊσμό που τόν απέδειξα...τόσες φορές... Τώρα ή άμαρτία μέ έκαμε κουρέλι, λυπήσου με...

Δέν φαίνεται πουθενά μέσα στην ιστορία των ανθρώπων να έκλαψεν άμαρτωλός για την πτώσι του και να μη συγχωρέθηκε από την εύσπλαχνία του Θεού.

Ο Ιούδας δέν έκλαψε συντριμμένος, διότι δέν μετενόησεν, άπλώς 'μετεμελήθη'. Καί τόν κατάπιεν ή άπόγνωσις, αυτοκτόνησε, και τόν έκέρδησεν ό άδης.

Δύρον Θεού ή γλώσσα των δακρύων, μάτια που τολμούν να βουρκώνουν έμπρός στό μήνυμα της αγάπης του Θεού, ποτίζουν την ψυχή τους μέ την βροχή της Θεϊας Χάριτος, και άνθίζει μέσα τους ή άνοιξις της άναστάσεως.

“ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΝΙΚΗΝ”

ΤΑ ΔΥΟ ΔΑΚΡΥΑ

Από τη γή δυο δάκρυα
θερμά μαργαριτάρια
άνέβηκαν και στάλαξαν
στού πλάστη τά ποδάρια.

Καί είπε τό πρώτο τρέμοντας
προστά στόν Θείο Θρόνο,
έμένα μ'έβγαλε ή καρδιά
για τόν δικό της πόνο.

Καί ό πλάστης άποκρίθηκε,
ούτε στημή μή χάνεις
σύρε να γίνης βάλσαμο
τόν πόνο της να γιάνεις.

Ηρθε και τ'άλο τρέμοντας
έμπρός στόν Θείο Θρόνο
έμενα μ'έβγαλε ή καρδιά
για καποιο ξένο πόνο.

Κί'ό πλάστης άμοκρίθηκε
εσύ μαζί μου μείνε
της ευσπλαχνιάς τά δάκρυα
δάκρυα δικά μου είναι.

Βούλα Χαερά

A fictional but moving story of the meeting of the Theotokos (the Mother of Jesus) and the mother of Judas who betrayed the Lord.



Vickie Bellios

Η ΗΜΕΡΑ ΣΥΧΩΡΗΣΗΣ

Με αργό βήμα η Παναγία
 με αμέτρητο τον πόνο
 τη νύχτα από τον Γολγοθά
 κατέβανε μόνη
 τον ιόν της βλέπει
 μες' στο σκοτάδι εκείνο
 οι πέτρες ανατρίχιασαν
 από τον μυστικόν της θρήνο
 όλα τριγύρω σιωπηλά
 βουβός είναι και ο δρόμος

Θαρρείς εξεπήδησε
 ένας μεγάλος πόνος
 και όσο βαδίζουν σαν σκιές
 στα άχαρα εκείνα μέρη
 και μοιρολόγια λέει η Παναγιά
 τα πιό όμορφα που ξέρει
 και κλαίνει τα όρη και οι πλαγιές
 κι όπου και αν διαβαίνει
 κάθε λουλούδι τρυφερό
 που βρίσκει το μαραίνει
 κλαίει η Παρθένος που έγινε
 σκοτάδι εκείνη την ημέρα
 είναι ο Χριστός Θεάνθρωπος
 μα και η Παναγία μητέρα
 μα ακούει πιό κάτω μιά φωνή
 που την ερημιά ταραίζει:
 «ω τι φωνή λυπητερή ποιά είναι,
 γιατί στενάζει;
 ποιά άλλη σαν και με πονεί
 και μοιρολόγια λέει;
 για του παιδιού της το χαμό
 και άλλη μάνα κλαίει»
 Ναι μιά μάνα κάθετα
 μονάχη της σε μια άκρη
 απαρηγόρητα θρηνρεί
 και χύνει μαύρο δάκρυ
 και εκείνη σαν την Παναγία
 το γιό της έχει χάσει
 μα δεν μπορεί η άμοιρη
 στιγμή να τον ξεχάσει
 η Παναγία τον Χριστό
 τον είδε σταυρομένο
 με εκείνη είδε το γιόκα της
 σε δένδρο κρεμασμένο
 κλαίει, με το κλάμα της
 δεν συγκινεί κανένα
 αισθάνεται όμως τον πόνο της
 η Παναγία Παρθένα
 και πάει να τη γνωρίσει
 λόγια αγάπης να της πεί
 να την παρηγορήσει
 «Μάνα,» της λέει, «είσαι δύσθχη
 και σέρνεσαι εδώ πέρα



δεν είσαι μόνη που έχασες
 το φως των οφθαλμών σου
 πες μου ποιός είναι ο γιός σου;»
 και η μάνα που είναι ένοχος
 τα μάτια χαμηλώνει
 και η ερώτηση αυτή
 στα σπλάχνα την πληγώνει
 σκύβει δειλά και απαλά της λέει
 «αδελφή μου,
 Ιούδας ονομάζεται
 το άμοιρο παιδί μου
 μόνο μιά μάνα, μόνο αυτή
 σ'όλο τον κόσμο ξέρει
 τι κοφτερό νιώθω βαδιά
 στα στήθια μου μαχαίρι
 στους πέντε δρόμους ρίχτηκα
 παιδί μου σαν ζητιάνα
 μακάρι να μην έσωνα, Θεέ μου,
 να γίνω μάνα»
 Μα η Παναγία κατάλαβε
 Το γιό της τον γνωρίζει
 μα η μάνα του Χριστού δεν δείχνει
 τον ιδικό της τον καημό
 ξεχνά την ώρα εκείνη
 και γιά τη μάνα του κακού
 τα δάκρυα της χύνει
 σκύβει και την ασπάζεται
 χαϊδεύει τα μαλλιά της
 και την κρατάει με στοργή
 σφιχτά στην αγκαλιά της
 της λέει λόγια τρυφερά
 και τη γλυκοημερώνει
 και δίνει θάρρος δύναμη
 και επάνω την σηκώνει
 «σήκω», της λέει,
 «άμοιρη πρέπει να ξαποστάσεις
 πάμε μαζί στο σπίτι μου
 τη νύχτα να περάσεις
 εκεί οι δύο τον πόνο μας
 τον μητρικό να πούμε
 να σμιζουμε τα δακρυά μας
 και να προσευχηθούμε»
 αυτά είπε η Δέσποινα
 στην δύσθχη μάνα
 τι εύσπλαχνη η Παναγιά
 και ξεκινάν αντάμα
 η μιά στις άλλης το πλευρό
 σκυφτές συλλογισμένες
 οι δύο μανούλες περπατούν
 αδελφό ακαλιασμένες
 ναι γιατί που σήμερα ο Κύριος
 στον Γολγοθά κρεμάται
 έδωσε τέτοια εντολή
 «Αλλήλους να Αγαπάτε»

Ανώνημος
 (Provided by Vickie Bellios)



Elder Aimilianos

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.

Gheronda, I am often envious of the worldly success of other people.

Sometimes we are dazzled by worldly people, but we forget that all their marvelous palaces are built on sand, and that, one day, they will watch them collapse into a heap of dust (cf. Mt 7.26-27). If we need to approach them, let it be during their moments of honesty,

when they can open their hearts to us. Then we will see that their eyes are filled with tears, and filled with the things of the world; we will see their hearts plunged into despair and choking on their empty satiety. It is then that you will hear what their tired lips are whispering: “Tell me, where can I find oblivion in this heartless world?” They are dead souls, even if they are still alive. Souls without ideals, without any striving for a higher spiritual life—that’s the only way they can be described: dead souls.

What should a Christian do instead of pursue the world?

For those of us, on the other hand, who want to be living hearts, on fire with higher ideals, what are the principles that should govern our spiritual life? First and foremost, for us to be spiritual people, for our lives to be true, we must live a sacramental and mystical way of life. What does a sacramental and mystical way of life mean? Was any of us born of his own accord? No. All of us received the gift of life from our father and our mother. In the same way, no one acquires the gift of the spiritual life by his own efforts, try though he may. No matter how much I stretch myself, I’m not going to get any taller, however much I struggle. In the same way, I’m not going to create a spiritual life for myself. Even if I exhaust myself trying, if I toil, and weep, or undertake long fasts, the spiritual life is a gift granted to me by the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 2.8-10).

So I cannot attain a spiritual life by simply doing spiritual things?

A basic condition for the spiritual life is that we should understand that, on our own, we can do absolutely nothing. No matter how hard we try, the spiritual life is something that someone else gives to us. And this “someone else” is the Spirit of God, the Comforter, the “Treasury of good things and the Giver of life,” the treasury from which all the riches of spirituality come forth, the source from which the spiritual life emerges and overflows. Of course, sometimes we get confused, and think that to be spiritual means to be a “good person”: not to steal, not to kill, not to go to bad places or with bad friends, to go to church on Sunday, to be there for the Doxology, or at least in time to hear “Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” to read spiritual books, and so on.

But no, this is not the spiritual life. A spiritual person, a true

Christian, is someone whose entire life is sworn to God. Initially, by means of his baptism, and later, in his heart, such a person swears an oath to God, to live for God, and to remain with God forever’. A spiritual person is an athlete who has burst into life, who stands out from the crowds of human beings, and runs with all the speed of his soul to heaven. A spiritual person is one who, with shining eyes and chest thrust forward, has set his course and races to heaven. He is not a “good man.” A spiritual person knows that, in order to succeed, he needs strong wings: the wings of the Holy Spirit.

So how, then, do I find this spiritual life?

A spiritual person must therefore do everything possible to attract, to win over, the Spirit of God, because only the Holy Spirit, God himself, has the gifts of the spiritual life. According to St. Gregory of Nyssa... the “distribution of the royal gifts” of the Holy Spirit takes place in the Church through the sacraments.

The first sacrament is Baptism, followed by Chrismation. After this, there is Confession, a sacrament which cleanses our hearts from sins and places us before someone who guides us to heaven: without him we can do nothing. After this is Holy Communion. Just as when the Holy Spirit overshadowed the All-Holy Virgin (cf. Lk. 1.35), and the Word of God descended and was made flesh in her womb, so too does the Spirit come into our soul - so that Christ might be born within us, so that we may become personally acquainted with, and make the Holy Spirit our own; so that the life of Christ can become our life. And this is precisely what happens in the sacraments, beginning with Baptism and Chrismation. Without these, there is no Christian life. Whatever you do, even if you give your entire life to the poor, you are not going to be saved without Baptism and Chrismation.

As we receive Christ in Baptism and Chrismation, so too in Holy Communion. That tiny morsel you receive, which you put into your mouth and barely feel, is the whole Christ, the whole Trinity, together with the Church of Christ, and all the saints. This is Holy Communion. You have a bowl full of flour, you add a little yeast to it, and all the flour is leavened (cf. Gal 5.9). You receive a little morsel of Holy Communion, and you are immediately leavened; although you are a human being, you become what the Holy Communion is: God! And this is why the early Christians partook of it every day (cf. Acts 2.46). And we receive Communion every fifteen or twenty days and then think that we’ve done our duty, that we’re fine, indeed, that we’ve gone above and beyond our duty! But they received Communion every day, because they knew what it was.

We can say, then, that a sacramental way of life means sacramental union with Christ, participation in the life of the Church by means of the mysteries. Listen to me. Try it and you’ll see how easy it is to be united with Christ every day, every hour, and every moment: you and Christ.

Excerpted from “The Church at Prayer”

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WHY JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS

Jesus does not offer just a little of Himself (labor, teaching), or something foreign to Himself ("the blood of bulls and goats", Hebrews 10.4); but rather, His whole self. He undergoes voluntary death.

He did not come down from the Cross alive, as the Jews besought Him to, so that the people standing right there would see and believe. He did not come in order to work miracles of that sort, or to impress us with supernatural events and phenomena. He came down from the Cross dead. And He conquered death through death. That is where the unique greatness of His grace and His power is to be found. He is not sacrificed in a temple, but outside any building or temple, on a high scaffold—the Cross—in order to sanctify the air and the entire creation. Every place has become an altar of sacrifice.

He is not sacrificed in one city for one nation. Instead, He suffered outside the walls, outside the city, in order to show the catholicity of the sacrifice for the entire world, the whole of humanity.

This is the consolation for man. The "one thing new under the sun." When He rises, He raises the world with Himself. And the whole creation, including mankind, rejoices. We do not have victors and vanquished; we have only victors. We have nothing but light, nothing but joy. "All things are filled with light." "Death has been put to death!"

Archimandrite Vasileios of Iveron, Mount Athos