



# THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

JANUARY 2014      VOLUME 22 • ISSUE 1

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Father John's Message
- 3 News & Events
- 5 Gheronda's Corner
- 7 The Cultural Side  
Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά
- 8-9 New Starting January 8:  
**"Faith and Family  
Wednesdays"**
- 10-11 Community Life  
Photo Journal
- 12 Nativity Flower Donors
- 13 House Blessing Schedule
- 14 Ask the Elders
- 16 House Blessing Request  
Form

### - INSERTS -

- January Parish Calendar
- HT Basketball Tournament  
Volunter and Donations Form
- "A Sampling of Holy Trinity" flyer
- "Essence of Joy" Concert flyer

## QUICK NEWS



Holy Trinity GOYAns took to the snowy field for the annual GOYA Thanksgiving Turkey Bowl football game. Want to see more photos of the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? See the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 10-11 or visit our **new** online photo gallery site at [photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org).

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA



## ORTHODOXY 365: THE YEAR IN SAINTS AND FEASTS

An icon that gathers together hundreds of major saints and feasts celebrated throughout the year on the Orthodox Christian liturgical calendar. Although this one is of Russian origin, this style of icon is also popular in the Greek tradition as well. It is offered here as a faith overview of the year of saints to come and an invocation of their prayers. Can you find your saint?

# 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](mailto:fjt@HolyTrinityPgh.org)

### Production

Mary Portellos, Secretary/Office Administrator  
E-mail: [office@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:office@HolyTrinityPgh.org)

### Contributors

Voula Hareras	Vickie Bellios
Rev. Fr. John Androustopoulos	
Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu	

### Photographers

Mary-Magdalene Welsh	Theanne Gagianas
Peter Gagianas	

### Copyright Notice

This newsletter contains copyrighted material of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church and third party copyright owners, including, without limitation, text, photos, and graphics, and the contents of the newsletter are protected under the United States and international copyright laws. You may not copy, modify, publish, transmit, display, participate in the transfer or sale, creation of derivative works, or in any way exploit, any of the content, in whole or in part. No copying, redistribution, retransmission, publication or commercial exploitation of any material in this newsletter is permitted without the express written permission of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church and any applicable third party copyright owner.

## About the Parish

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
985 Providence Boulevard  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Phone: 412-366-8700 • Fax: 412-366-8710  
Web site: [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org)  
Email: [office@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:office@HolyTrinityPgh.org)

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

### 2013 Parish Council

George Dickos, President	Marios Kritiotis
Dean A. Balouris	Charles Petredis
George Danis	Joyce Athanasiou
Andrew Janis	Stephanie Sedor
Jason Farmakis	Alex Trilivas
Louis Kort	Gerri Valliant
Leo Loomis	

### Ministries

Please visit the Holy Trinity website at [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://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!



**L**ead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Colossians 1.15

Dear Faithful Servants of Christ,

For the past few years, we have been living in anticipation and waiting. Along the way we have observed a lot of "lasts" and "firsts" as we have been led by the Spirit of God along our journey

of faith as a community. You may remember the first service on the new church property with His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos; the last Divine Liturgy at 302 West North Avenue; the first day of construction after the Groundbreaking service with His Eminence Metropolitan Savas; and, the culmination of it all, of course, the Thyranoxia ("Opening of the Doors") and the first Orthros, Divine Liturgy, Saturday of the Souls Memorials and Pentecost Feast Day in the new church.

After all that waiting and moving from one step to the next, one might sit and ask, "What now?" Sometimes after great life events as these, there is a sense of denouement or loss of purpose that leaves one somewhat empty. I will compare it to something many of our children and young adults have experienced after returning from the summer camp ministry: "post-camp let-down." That time at camp is so exciting and engaging that young people who have been there for a week or counselors who have been there over a month have a sense of missing the great adventure, the wonderful brothers and sisters who walked it with them and the life of immersion in faith as they walked with God along the way. It only lasts a while, and it can go two ways: if it is allowed to take emotional root it can be quite destructive because they think it's all over, but if it is allowed to take spiritual root it is quite powerful because they know a new part of their life in Christ is just beginning.

So what is next for us at Holy Trinity Church? If we are to live up to the calling as the witnesses for Christ He has called us to be, what's next is set forth in Saint Paul's quote above: "a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." It is understanding that the building is not the end of our work, but the beginning of our new calling, which we can only receive and live when we live lives that bear those marks: worthiness, fruitfulness, goodness, productivity and growth in the Lord.

It is impossible for us not to do so if we are to continue to faithfully be the Body of Christ, Who said, "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a bushel, but on a stand, that those who enter may see the light" (Luke 11.33). Imagine if we hung a sign on that beautiful, shining new dome that said, "Our work here is done." "Impossible!", says the Lord. Instead, the banner on the lawn reads, "Come and see!" (John 1.46), as an invitation to all. And they keep coming and coming. What a joy to behold that our newest challenge is not growing but being faithful stewards of that growth so that all who enter here inspired by the external beauty may find an even greater witness inside.

An important part of sharing, bearing witness to and teaching the Faith is knowing it in the first place, so Saint Paul calls us to be always "increasing in the knowledge of God." Here at Holy Trinity Church we are embarking on an exciting new opportunity to do so with our "Faith and Family Wednesdays." I join our Spiritual Life Ministry, Parish Council and Council of Ministries in inviting you to participate every Wednesday, starting January 8th. See pages 8-9 of this issue for more information and a listing of the offerings and schedule. There will be something for everyone, and we will be ready to respond to the needs of the community and adapt as we go along. This is our own unique design based on models successfully used for years in some other Orthodox parishes, and we look forward to your participation and feedback.

May the Lord of mercy bless you, your family and the entire Holy Trinity community with a blessed New Year!

In Christ,

## WORSHIP LIFE

### **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!

### **New Year's Eve Liturgy/Celebration ..... December 31**

Want to start the New Year out "on the right foot?" Well, point that foot toward Holy Trinity Church and start your evening with the first Divine Liturgy of the New Year by celebrating the Feast of Saint Basil with Vesperral Liturgy at 6:00 p.m., followed by an exciting New Year's Eve Celebration featuring the live Greek band "The Levendes" from Detroit starting at 7:30. Be sure to prepare as usual for an evening Liturgy, with no food or drink following your noon meal, and of course the appropriate prayers of preparation for Holy Communion. There is no better way to sanctify yourself, your family and the entire New Year. "Kali Hronia!" Happy New Year to all!



### **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.. Guide to locations of services: "HT"=Holy Trinity Church, 985 Providence Boulevard, Pittsburgh; "SG"=Saint George Chapel, 8941 Ringesen Road, Allison Park.

#### **Sun., Jan. 5: The Forefeast of Theophany**

This is the first of two Theophany Divine Liturgies and services of Great Blessings of the Waters. The Liturgy will be followed by the Great Blessing of the Waters service. Please note that this is a fasting day in preparation for Theophany. (HT)

#### **Mon., Jan. 6: The Holy 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. (HT)

#### **Tue. Jan. 7: 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. (SG)

#### **Fri. Jan. 17: Saint Anthony the Great**

The feast of Saint Anthony will be celebrated at the Saint Anthony parish in Clairton. Watch the bulletin for details.

#### **Thu. Jan. 30: The Three Hierarchs**

Divine Liturgy for the feast of the Three Hierarchs, St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian and St. John Chrysostom, will be held at the Saint George Chapel.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### **No Church School Class ..... Dec. 29**

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on December 29, so please join together to worship as a family.

### **Great Blessing of the Waters ..... January 5**

For our first year in our new facility, one of the two Great Blessing of the Waters service for Theophany falls on a Sunday. To give the entire parish family an opportunity to participate and receive that blessing, all our Church School students and staff will remain in the church at following Holy Communion for the water blessing service. Following that service, the Church School will proceed to their classes, and one of our priests will go around to each class and bless the classrooms and the students and staff. This is a wonderful way to the children to not only receive the blessing for their class but to offer their class to the Lord as well. Parents, please be sure to have your children there on January 5!

### **Saint Lydia Women's Study Ministry ... January 9, 23, 29**

Attention women of all ages: you are invited to participate in the exciting 15th year of Holy Trinity Church's St Lydia Women's Study. This ministry is dedicated to the concerns and spiritual needs of women and begins with your choice of fellowship with others or quiet prayer time in the Church at 9:30am. The study portion takes place from 10:00-11:15am. NEW THIS YEAR: Since we have our wonderful new facility, the group gathers in the warmth and comfort of the Fireside room. This year's study topic is "Women of Faith," and will look at many inspiring examples of women in the life of the Church and the Bible through scripture readings, stories of saints, spiritual writings and hymns, all with an eye toward applying their examples in our own lives. Please come and bring a friend, sister, koumbara, etc! The topics for January are "St. Melanie: Philanthropy" (Jan. 9) and "St. Juliana: Tears" (Jan. 23).

The remaining schedule of meetings for Winter/Spring 2014 is: January 9 & 23, February 6 & 20, March 6 & 20, April 3 and May 15. Also, on January 29 and April 30 there will special "Faith and Family Wednesdays" evening sessions to give those who can't attend during the day an opportunity. For more information contact Stacy Dickos 412-298-9409 or saintlydia@HolyTrinityPgh.org or find the schedule at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/saintlydia.

## YOUTH MINISTRIES

### **GOYA Meeting ..... January 12**

The GOYA teen ministry will hold a meeting following Church School on Sunday, January 12. Teens, please be present to plan for a busy winter and spring!

### **GOYA Basketball Practices ..... January 6, 14, 28**

Ready for GOYA basketball tournament season? Not without practices! All our teens are asked to attend practices on the following nights at these locations:

Monday, January 6, 6:30-8:30pm - Peebles Elementary

Tuesday, January 14, 6:30-8:30pm - Hosack Elementary

## News & Events

Tuesday, January 28, 6:30-8:30pm - Hosack Elementary Questions? Please contact Presvytera Becky at GOYA@HolyTrinityPgh.org or 412-874-5195.

### GOYA Metropolis Basketball Tournaments .....January

In addition to hosting our own tournament this year (see below), our teens will be participating in two tournaments: January 17-19 and January 31-February 2. GOYAns: please confirm your attendance dates immediately with your coaches so our teams can plan their participation. Thanks!

### HOPE and JOY Ministries Sleepover .....January 24

The HOPE and JOY ministries will host a sleepover at Holy Trinity Church on Friday January 24. For more information contact Jeanne Torlidias Willow at 412-369-8464 or jeanнеторлидас@verizon.net or Lori Thomas at 412-931-3707 or llthomas4@comcast.net and watch the HOPE and JOY email.

### Volunteers Needed for HT Basketball Tourney ..Feb 14-16

Holy Trinity GOYA is putting out a call for all who are interested to help with the Metropolis GOYA Basketball Tournament being hosted at Holy Trinity Church on the weekend of February 14-16, 2014. Special areas of need are: hospitality greeters and guides, gymnasium supervisors, concession stand personnel, cooks for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday meals being served at the Church, and general setup and cleanup for the beginning and end of the event. Donations are also needed to help extend our Holy Trinity hospitality to our hundreds of visitors.

Although this is a GOYA event, basketball tournaments at Holy Trinity have always been a community project, and our teens will be depending on our help, since they are wrapped up in the games during the weekend.

Please use the form included in this issue of the *Herald* or contact Presvytera Becky (GOYA@HolyTrinityPgh.org or 412-874-5195) or Steve Hodge (tournament@HolyTrinityPgh.org) to volunteer or donate.

## PHILOPTOCHOS MINISTRY NEWS

### Vasilopita Celebration.....January 26

The Philoptochos will sponsor the annual Vasilopita Celebration on Sunday, January 26, following Divine Liturgy (normally held in early January but rescheduled for later than usual due to the feast of Theophany and other conflicts). 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!

### Seniors Fellowship Ministry Tamburitzans Trip ....Feb. 16

The Senior Fellowship Group has reserved a limited number of seats for a Tamburitzans performance scheduled to take place at 2:00 pm on Sunday, February 16, 2014, at the Cumberland Woods Village Legacy Theatre, less than 5 minutes from church. This show is certain to sell out quickly, so get your reservations in ASAP. With our group discount, tickets are only \$20.30 each (normally \$34.00 at the door).

Prepayment is required to secure your reservation. Please see Tina Fiedler during Coffee Hour or give her a call at 412-364-1545. America's longest-running multicultural song and dance company, the Duquesne University Tamburitzans is a unique ensemble of talented young folk artists dedicated to the performance and preservation of the music, songs, and dances of Eastern Europe and neighboring folk cultures.

## COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

### Parish Council Election Results/Installation .....Dec. 29

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 2014-2015 term: Dean A. Balouris, George Dickos, Jason Farmakis, Louis Kort, Marios Kritiotis and Alex Trilivas. Continuing on for the remainder of their term are: Joyce Athanasiou, George Danis, Andrew Janis, Leo Loomis, Charles Petredis, Stephanie Sedor, and Gerri Valliant. Parish Council installation will be held on Sunday, December 29, followed by the election of officers. May God be their guide and strength in all things, and may they all have our support at all times!

### "Faith and Family Wednesdays" Begin! .....January 8

It's here! Starting January 8, Holy Trinity ministries are offering great new way to learn, grow, worship and participate in the life of the Church on a regular, weekly basis. Each Wednesday will feature a worship service followed by a series of learning and growing opportunities for adults and children of all interests and ages. The evening will go from 6:30 to 8:30pm. For growth in faith learning, there is a Bible Study, the Orthodox Book Club and Orthodoxy 101 for inquirers or anyone interested in the basics of the Faith. There will also be Orthodox Life Lessons in Byzantine chanting classes, liturgical cooking workshops, wellness sessions, Greek language classes, Greek dance practice, youth activities for GOYA, JOY and HOPE and other special offerings on a periodic basis. More information can be found on pages 8 and 9 of this issue of the *Herald*, so starting January 8, save Wednesdays evenings for Holy Trinity!

### 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. Never has your house blessed before? This is a great year to start! 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.

### New Year Holiday Office Schedule .....January 1

The offices of the Archdiocese, Metropolis and Holy Trinity Church will be closed on Wednesday, January 1, in observation of the New Year holiday.

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



**Father John  
Androutsopoulos**

## JANUARY 2014 – “THE VOICE OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH”

### “A NEW DIRECTION FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR”

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Rejoice in the Lord always!

#### A New Direction

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8a).

Beloved, let us redirect the ambitions and strivings of your life! That is the constant appeal of James to the early Christians. He has severe words for Christians who

would try to serve two masters. “God and Money”, Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13.

But James never forgets the hope of the Gospel, with its power to heal our divided selves and set us in new directions. His final words to us are promises not denunciations. Despite our mistakes and our sins of the past, we are called to draw near to God and assured he will draw near to us. The Christian life is a life of constant renewal. It means daily repentance – seeing how we have lost the way in human situations and turning ourselves around.

In the turning, God is at hand. He gives us the strength to change. This is a message for young people, and for persons past 30, even those who have reached old age – whatever that is. The central message of Christianity is that through the gift of God’s grace in Christ, we are reconciled to God, to ourselves, and to God’s creatures around us.

#### A Happy New Year

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13, 14).

God is the giver of many wonderful new things. We come to Him by faith in Christ and He gives us spiritual regeneration. Then He gives us a new nature, a new heart, a new life, a new hope, and a new task.

Now to you and me, God is giving a New Year. This means a new start for some of us. We have not done so well in the old year – we have not lived for God as we should. Now we have a chance to make a new start. This means a new hope for some. We have dreamed that certain things would happen in the old year, but these dreams have not come true, so we will hold onto the hope that they will come true during

this new year. This means new obligations for some. Maybe it means a new job, maybe it means new family responsibilities, maybe it means a new position to maintain. You are resolving to carry these responsibilities more successfully in the coming year. Maybe it means a new life to live. Well, it is time for all of us to turn over a new leaf and to write a new story on a clean page. God help us to write well.

#### A Prayer for the Old Year

“Our Father Who art in Heaven, we have closed the books on the old year with mingled regrets and joys. We have known victories and defeats, joys and sorrows, blessing and helpful experiences. We are thankful, Father, for them all. We earnestly pray that, as we step over the threshold into a brand new year, we shall live closer to Thee and to one another. May we profit by the experiences of yesterday, buoyed up by new faith, hope, and love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. In His name we invoke Thy sweetest benedictions of grace and peace. Amen.”



In our text, we see Paul looking two ways. He looked backward and thought of all that he had suffered for Christ and all that he had accomplished for Christ. Then he said, “I am going to turn my back upon all of that, for there is something more important ahead.” Then looking forward he said, “I am going to rededicate my life to Christ and redouble my efforts for Him. I am pressing toward the maker for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” In like manner, it behooves us to look back over the past for a time – we are to turn all of that over to God and leave it with Him. Then we are to look toward the New Year, resolving in our hearts that with God’s help we will make it a better year for Him. We wish each other a Happy New Year, but we must do more than that. We must Repent, Resolve and Remember.

#### We Are To Repent And Confess Our Sins In The Sacrament Of Holy Confession In Our Church

Repentance has first brought man into good standing with God and that position can never be changed. He has become a child of God and that relationship will continue forever. However, his enjoyment of that position can be altered. He can sin and lose sweet fellowship with the Lord. So we see that a Christian sins in some manner every day – in deed,

word or thought. He needs to come to God in penitence and ask for His forgiveness in the Sacrament of Holy Confession. We should never go to sleep at night until we have looked up to God, confessed our sin, and gotten everything right with Him. And surely we ought not to go in the New Year until we have repented of all the wrongs that we have done in the old year.

There are sins to be repented. Ah, we remember them! We remember when we stepped aside and did the things which were wrong in God's sight and since we are Christians, we have not been happy about it. If we are real Christians and if we sin, we are not going to have an easy conscience. We are not going to say, "Oh, that wasn't anything." We are going to be miserable until things are right between us and our Lord. If we can go on sinning day after day and year after year and feel no pang of conscience about it, it just means that we have never known Jesus as our Saviour or God as our Heavenly Father.

Think of Simon Peter – he was Jesus' right-hand-man and nearest and dearest to him. But when the testing time came, when Jesus was in trouble, Peter wondered away. He slipped into the courtyard and warmed himself by the enemy's fire. He stood shoulder to shoulder with those who were crying out for the blood of Christ. Someone asked him if he knew Jesus. Three times he lied and said that he never knew Him. His last denial was accompanied by an oath. Do you think Peter was happy? No, he went out and leaned against the wall and wept bitterly. There was no peace in his heart until he came back to Jesus, sobbing out the words, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." So if you have any sins standing between you and God today, pull them out of your heart, hold them up to the light, forsake them and cast them away asking God to forgive and forget. And He will do just that. He has so promised and He always keeps His promise. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). There is neglect to be repented. We may not have indulged in open sin, but we have neglected our Christian duties.

Beloved, remember for the New Year we are to resolve to be a better person, a better Christian and to remember what Jesus did for us. What has He done? He knew that we had sinned and that the wrath of God would fall upon us. So He went to the cross and took our place and died in our stead.



## A Prayer for Repentance

O Lord our God, good and merciful, I acknowledge all of my sins which I have committed every day of my life, in thought, word and deed; in body and soul alike. I am heartily sorry that I have ever offended Thee, and I sincerely repent; with tears I humbly pray Thee, O Lord: of Thy mercy forgive me all my past transgressions and absolve me from them. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy Grace, to amend my way of life and to sin no more; that I may walk in the way of the righteous and offer praise and glory to the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

## A Prayer for the New Year

Dear Father, as we begin a New Year, we pray that all bitterness and wrath and malice and anger and evil speaking shall be put away from among us, and that we shall be kind to one another. Help us, Father, to be faithful to Thee. In the name of Thy Son Jesus. Amen.

## Happy New Year!

A Happy Nameday to all of those who celebrate their namedays in the month of January! May We all have a blessed, healthy and happy New Year.

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

---

## Editor's Note:

Having received the blessing of our beloved "Gheronda," Father John, for all those who celebrate their namedays in January, I will take a moment of editor's privilege and, on behalf of the entire Holy Trinity community, offer our return prayers and blessings for him as well, for he, too, celebrates his own nameday on January 7th, the Feast of the Synaxis of Saint John the Baptist, Prophet and Forerunner. As Father John has often told me, when he was ordained by the respected Archbishop Iakovos of blessed memory, His Eminence exhorted him to always preach with the zeal and fervor of his patron saint. Now, even after many years of active parish ministry, Father John continues to heed those words and bring us his inspiring messages of faithfulness to Christ, His Holy Church and the Holy Scriptures. Thank you, Father John, and may God grant you many more years ... and many more articles!

*With deepest respect and love, Father John Touloumes*

A Greek language composition titled "A Mother Writes" adapted from the Greek periodical, "Pros Tin Nikin."

## MIA MHTERA GRAFEI



Voula Hareras

Παιδί μου,

Υπάρχει μιά κρυφή νεανική άρετή. Μ' αύτό θέλω νά πώ ότι, ένώ φαίνεται ότι είναι φυσικό νά μήν τήν έχουν οι νέοι, άλλα οι μεγάλοι πού έχουν άντιμετωπίσει πολλά καί άντιξοα στή ζωή, γιά νά τήν κατορθώσει κανείς πρέπει νά διαθέτει νεανική δύναμη.

Ισως δέν μπορείς νά ύποπτευθείς ότι πρόκεται γιά τήν άρετή τής ύπομονής. Υπομονή σημαίνει νά έχεις - καλύτερα νά βρίσκεις - τό θάρρος καί νά έχεις τήν τόλμη νά άντιμετωπίζεις τήν δυσκολία πού συναντάς στά καθημερινά άλλα καί στά μεγάλα θέματα τής ζωής, όχι μέ τό νά άντεπιτίθεσαι όργισμένος, ούτε μέ τό νά παραδίδεσαι φροβισμένος, άλλα μέ μιά σοφή στάση άναμονής, πού θά σου δίδει τό χρόνο καί τή δυνατότητα νά δείς καθαρά τί είναι αύτό πού έχεις μπροστά σου καί μέ ψυχραιμία καί άξιοπρέπια καί έξυπνάδα νά τό άντιμετωπίσεις θετικά.

Η ύπομονή έπειτα σου δίδει τή δύναμη νά νικάς τά έμποδια χωρίς νά κατατρίβεσαι μάυτά, χωρίς νά άγανακτείς, χωρίς νά μοχθείς όπωσδήποτε νά τά έξαφανίσεις. Σκέψου άθλητικά. Φαντάσου ότι μετέχεις σέ ιππικούς άγωνες μέ έμποδια. Τό άλογό σου τρέχοντας συναντά τό πρώτο έμποδιο καί πασχίζει μέ τήν όρμη καί τή δύναμη του νά τό έξαφανίσεις άπό τό μέσο τού δρόμου του. Είναι αύτό τό πιό άποτελεσματικό. Αν άσχοληθεί μέ αύτό χάνει καί χρόνο καί δυνάμεις καί ή νίκη όλο καί άπομακρύνεται, γιατί αύτή τρέχει μέ φτερά. Άλλα είναι γνωστό πώς τό γυμνασμένο άλογο βάζει τά δυνατά του, ψηλώνει τά πόδια του καί τίς δυνάμεις του κι άφνει τό ένα έμποδιο πίσω άπ' τ' άλλο καί τρέχει άκαθεκτο πρός τό τέρμα.

Παιδί μου, στό δρόμο σου καθημερινά κι έσύ συναντάς κάποια έμποδια. Μιά δυσκολία έδαφους, άς πούμε - ένας πειρασμός ψυχής, μιά άποτυχία, κάποια άδικία, μιά έλλειψη κατανοήσεως έκει πού δέν τό περιμένεις, ή κακία τού κόσμου, μιά άρρωστια, ένα οικογενειακό πρόβλημα, σου άφαιρούν κάποτε τήν αίσιοδοξία καί σου δημιουργούν άναστολές γιά νά συνεχίσεις ν' άγωνίζεσαι.

Τότε είναι ή ώρα τής δυναμικής άρετής τής ύπομονής, πού

Θά σου δώσει τή δύναμη νά δημιουργήσεις ό, τί ώραίο καί μεγάλο. Τό είπε ώραία καί ό ποιητής -

«Χέρια τής θέλησης νικόν τά δυνατά κι ένάντια,  
κι ω χέρια τής ύπομονής, πού τρίβετε διαμάντια!»

Γ. Δροσίνης

Ναί, γιατί ή ύπομονή χαρίζει στόν άνθρωπο μιά άλισίδα άρετών όπως ψυχική άντοχή, έπιμονή γιά τήν πραγματοποίηση τού σκοπού, συνεργατικότητα, έσωτερική έλευθερία. Ενώ φαίνεται πώς βάζει τόν έαυτό του κάτω άπό τά γεγονότα, δηλαδή τά δέχεται έτοιμος νά τά άντιμετωπίσει, ή κάτω άπό τούς άνθρωπους, πού δέν τούς άπορρίπτει άλλα τούς φέρεται ψύχραιμα καί μεγαλόψυχα, δέν αίσθάνεται καθόλου νικημένος.

Ένα αίσθημα πνευματικής άνωτερότητας πλημμυρίζει τήν καρδιά του, πού δέν μπορεί νά τό δοκιμάσει όποιος, χάνοντας τήν ύπομονή του, γίνεται άντιμαχος τού άλλου, πού τού άνταποδίδει τά ίσα χωρίς ποτέ έστι νά άναδεικνύεται καί νικητής.

Είδα μικρά παιδιά, πού αντιμετώπιζαν γλυκά τά νεύρα τών μεγάλων. Κι είδα μεγάλους νά τούς μαλακώνουν τήν καραδιά αυτά τά παιδιά. Εχω άκούσει γιά τήν ύπομονητική έργασία παιδιών πού δέν είχαν τίς δυνατότητες νά σπουδάσουν κάτι σπουδαίο, γιατί δέν είχαν τά μέσα. Κάποτε καί γιατί δέν φαίνονταν νά έχουν τίς άπαιτουμενες διανοητικές δυνάμεις. Κι όμως αυτά τά παιδιά μέ τήν ύπομονή τους κέρδισαν ό, τι δέν έφτασαν άλλα παιδιά, πού είχαν ίδεώδεις συνθήκες. Θαύμασα καί τούς άθλητάς τών παραολυμπιακών άγώνων. Αύτα τά θαυμάσια παιδιά τής ύπομονής!

Τήν ύπομονή τή ζήτησε άπό μάς ό Κύριος Ιησούς Χριστός, όταν έλεγε - «έν τή ύπομονή ύμών κτήσασθαι τάς ψυχάς ύμών.» (Λουκ. κα'19)

Μέ τήν ύπομονή μας, πού πηγάζει άπό τή νύκη τής άνθρωπινης άδυναμίας κι άνυπομονησίας, πού ζητά τά πάντα εύκολα καί άμεσως, θά κερδίσουμε τίς ψυχές μας, θά άγγιξουμε τόν ούρανό μέ τά αιώνια βραβεία. Οί άγιοι τής Εκκλησίας μας, έζησαν αύτή τήν ήρωική πραγματικότητα ό καθένας στήν προσωπική του ίστορία καί φώτισαν καί εύεργέτησαν τόν κόσμο.

Ο δρόμος τής ύπομονής τους είναι καί γιά μάς άνοιχτός.

Η μητέρα σου

Πρός τήν Νικην

## HOPE and JOY Christmas Caroling | Community Life Photo Journal



December 13, 2013: The HOPE and JOY ministries offered their annual tradition of Christmas carols for seniors at Cumberland Manor and the Vincentian Home. Father Radu led the group of youngsters and parents in bringing the joy and love of Christ to everyone there.

WORSHIP — BYZANTINE MUSIC — GREEK LANGUAGE CLASS — LITURGICAL COOKIES

**ABOUT THIS MINISTRY**

How often have you heard or felt expressions like these?

“I don’t know enough about my faith.”

“I would like to understand the Bible better.”

“I wish I knew how to chant/make prosforo/kollyva?”

“I would like to learn to speak conversational Greek?”

As the Ethiopian said to the Apostle Philip in Acts 8.31,  
“How can I, unless someone guides me?”

The Faith and Family Wednesdays ministry offers guides, teachers and practical experience in all these areas and more. The list below is just the start as it is inaugurated.

It also provides the “something for everyone” opportunity to spend time around your Holy Trinity family and enjoy worship, fellowship, growth and sometimes just fun! It’s a great way to live and learn your faith between Sundays!

We are blessed with talented community members, volunteers, clergy and visiting teachers and experts who will be leading our new weekly ministry.

**Father John Touloumes** - Protopresbyter and Proistamenos of Holy Trinity Church. **Father Radu Bordeianu** - Associate Priest.

**Loredana Bordeianu** - Theology major with professional training in Conservation and Restoration of Icons on Wood.

**Peter Papadakos** - Byzantine Chant Instructor and Protopsalti of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh. **Guy and Stephanie** - Holy Trinity Greek Festival and Spiritual Life Ministry Chairperson. **Anita Sinicrope Maier** - Psychotherapist specializing in

**ABOUT THE FAITH****COMPLETE GUIDE TO JANUARY 2014 “FAITH”**

DATE	TRACK	WORSHIP 6:30-7:00	STUDIES 7:15-8:30	GROWTH 7:15-8:30
<b>JANUARY 8</b> Second Wednesday of the month		Vespers Service	Bible Study Father John	Orthodox “Learning the Faith” Father Dimitri
<b>JANUARY 15</b> Third Wednesday of the month		Service of the 9th Hour and Confessions	Orthodox Book Club Father Radu	Journey to Marriage Couples Pre-Marriage Seminar Father John
<b>JANUARY 22</b> Fourth Wednesday of the month		Paraclesis Service to the Theotokos	Bible Study Father John	Orthodox “Learning the Faith” Father Dimitri
<b>JANUARY 29</b> Fifth Wednesday of the month		Holy Unction	“God’s House/Our Responsibility” Group Service Project	Saint Lydia Vassilieff Ministry Father John

BIBLE STUDY — WELLNESS SEMINARS — ORTHODOX BOOK CLUB — JOURNEY TO MARRIAGE



## E PEOPLE

will be offering lessons in all the tracks listed below. Here is an intro to just some of those already scheduled:

Assistant Priest of Holy Trinity Church and Associate Professor of Theology at Duquesne University. **Presvytera Wood.** **Father Dimitri Callozo** - Proistamenos of the Nativity of the Theotokos Orthodox Church in Youngstown. **Guy and Stephanie Guimond** - Certified Paramedics and CPR instructors. **Joyce Athanasiou** - Longtime Pastry Chairperson of the Specializing in Eating Disorders. **Joanne Germanos** - Registered Nurse. **Jessica Thomas** - Pitt Nutrition Major.

## ABOUT THE SCHEDULE

The most important thing about the schedule is simple: be there at 6:30 and there will be both a blessing and an opportunity for you. And bring the entire family, because there is something for them, too!

The worship service will go from 6:30-7:00pm. After a brief fellowship break, there will be a series of simultaneous learning, growth and activity sessions from 7:15-8:30pm. All sessions will take place in the various facilities of Holy Trinity Center.

There are five tracks each week: Studies, Growth, Youth, Greek Culture and Orthodox Life. Topics and specific activities will vary from month to month, and information will be published in the Herald, the Bulletin on the email list and on the website.

## “FAITH AND FAMILY WEDNESDAYS” AT HOLY TRINITY

WEEKLY TOPIC	YOUTH 7:15-8:30	GREEK CULTURE 7:15-8:30	ORTHODOX LIFE 7:15-8:30
Orthodoxy 101 “Faith and Family” mitri	<b>HOPE &amp; JOY Ministry</b> <b>GOYA Teen Ministry</b>	<b>Adult Greek classes</b>	<b>Byzantine Chanting Class</b> Peter Papadakos
Marriage Marriage Prep John	<b>Youth Greek Dance Lessons</b>	<b>Adult Greek classes</b>	<b>The Orthodox Kitchen: Liturgical Cooking/Prosforo</b> Joyce Athanasiou
Orthodoxy 101 “Faith and Family” mitri	<b>Youth Movie &amp; Game Night</b>	<b>Adult Greek classes</b>	<b>Wellness Seminar: CPR/Choking/AED</b> Guy and Stephanie Guimond
Women’s Prayer John	<b>“God’s House/Our Responsibility” Group Service Project</b>	<b>Adult Greek classes</b>	<b>“God’s House/Our Responsibility” Group Service Project</b>

MARRIAGE — ORTHODOXY 101 — GREEK DANCE LESSONS — YOUTH MINISTRIES

## Community Life Photo Journal | Ministries Event / GOYA Turkey Bowl



**November 12, 2013:** Holy Trinity Church's "Council of Ministries" holds its first meeting in the new church facility. Pictured here are leaders of the many ministries of the parish, working to coordinate and grow the ministry offerings and to involve everyone in the life of the Church.



**November 17, 2013:** Holy Trinity Choir holds one of its many Christmas season rehearsals under the direction of its director, Harriet Valliant. They worked hard during the holiday season to prepare both liturgical offerings and a special program of Christmas hymns and carols.



**December 1, 2013:** A great old tradition in a great new home! The GOYA Thanksgiving Turkey Bowl was played for the first time on the lawn (well, on the snow on the lawn!) at the new Holy Trinity Church. Referees Jim Balouris and Bob Marsh kept things in good order on the field for the players. Meanwhile, things stayed warm and cozy inside with hot chocolate, snacks and a Christmas card-writing project to support our troops for the holidays.



# Philoptochos Seniors Christmas Lunch | Community Life Photo Journal

**December 5, 2013:** Holy Trinity Philoptochos graciously hosted its annual Christmas Luncheon for Seniors, held for the first time in the beautiful and sunny Gallery of the new Holy Trinity Church. The day featured great food from Arista Catering, gifts for each senior, Greek Christmas carols and even a visit from Santa Claus!



# Thank You | 2013 Nativity Flowers Donor List

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

## DONORS

Anonymous.....	For the health of my family (9 plants)
Victor and Patricia Amurgis & Family .....	In memory of our loving parents; William & Harriet Amurgis (3 plants)
Harry & Joyce Athanasiou.....	In memory of George Athanasiou.....
Harry & Joyce Athanasiou.....	In memory of George Bertos.....
Harry & Joyce 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.....
Reggie & Marianne Bonfield .....	In memory of Frank Chapas.....
Bill and Sophea Chapas & Family .....	In memory of John W. Chapas.....
Cynthia Morris Criss.....	In memory of Tom & Dora Morris (5 plants)
Shea Danis .....	In memory of Demetrios Danis (2 plants)
Helen DeMoss.....	In memory of John DeMoss and for the health of his family.....
Stacy and George Dickos .....	In memory of our fathers, Peter Gidas and Dinos Dickos.....
Mina and Jeff Durosko & Family.....	In memory of James & Elli Stephanou (2 plants)
Frank Katina, Helena & Mike Erdeljac.....	In memory of Mike & Theologia Alexiades.....
Christian, Becky, Jackson & Esme Farmakis.....	In memory of John Farmakis.....
Christian, Becky, Jackson & Esme Farmakis.....	For the health of Inez Jovenall.....
Bill and Tina Fiedler & Family .....	For the health of our family, friends and the Holy Trinity Community
Bill and Tina Fiedler & Family .....	In memory of our beloved mom Sophie, niece Danielle, grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles & cousins
Tessie Frankos .....	In Memory of James Frankos and daughter Demitria.....
Connie Fries .....	For the health of family & friends.....
George & Phyllis Geanopoulos .....	In memory of Harry & Helen Geanopoulos.....
George & Phyllis Geanopoulos .....	In memory of John and Erma Haas.....
Dr. & Mrs. Mark Georgiadis.....	For the health of our parents.....
Dr. & Mrs. Mark Georgiadis.....	In memory of Peter Georgiadis.....
Eugenia Graser .....	In memory of my parents and my husband.....
Sally Hionedes .....	In memory of Paul Hionedes.....
Sally Hionedes .....	In memory of Pete Ladakos.....
Sally Hionedes .....	In memory of Kay Hartig.....
Sally Hionedes .....	In memory of Jimmy Hartig.....
Athena & Steve Hodge .....	In memory of John & Elaine Rexine.....
Andrew and Sofia Janis & Family .....	In memory of Athanasia & Clifford Geanopoulos.....
Andrew and Sofia Janis & Family .....	In memory of my deceased grandparents, aunts and uncles.....
Brian & Debbie Jewell .....	In memory of Samuel Booras.....
Brian & Debbie Jewell .....	In memory of Marsha Booras.....
Brian & Debbie Jewell .....	In memory of Kathy Page.....
Brian & Debbie Jewell .....	In memory of Bill Meni.....
Brian & Debbie Jewell .....	For the health of Georgia Booras.....
Brian & Debbie Jewell .....	For the health of Jodi Meni.....
George & Scarlet Karpakis .....	For the health of family & friends (2 plants)
James & Bettina Kermes .....	For the health of family & friends.....
Vasiliki Kourouklis .....	In memory of Lucky Kourouklis.....
Vasiliki Kourouklis .....	In memory of Stavroula Repana.....
Mike & Julie Kritiotis .....	For the health of family & friends.....
Susan Manesiotsis .....	In memory of Louis & Nikki Manesiotsis.....
Susan Manesiotsis .....	In memory of Michael & Georgia Manesiotsis.....
Susan Manesiotsis .....	In memory of Victor & Audrey Mus.....
Susan Manesiotsis .....	In memory of Susan Will.....
James and Judith Mermigas & Family .....	In memory of Theodore Mermigas.....
Michael P. Panos .....	In memory of Constance and Patricia Tsalas.....
Peter & Mary Panos .....	In memory of George & Mary Panos (2 plants)
Orestes & Arlene Paras .....	In memory of John & Maria Paras and Michael & Diana Paras.....
Orestes & Arlene Paras .....	In memory of Albert & Rose Russell and Arthur Russell.....
Charlie and Jan Petredis & Family .....	With Thanks to God for our Blessings.....
Charlie and Jan Petredis & Family .....	In memory of Papou Bill Petredis (2 plants)
Dorothy Phaturos & Family .....	In memory of Peter Phaturos.....
Rania Pontikos .....	In memory of Pauline Pontikos (2 plants)
James, Mary and Alexander Portellos .....	In memory of Maria Portellos Elderkin.....
Evan & Teri Rigas .....	In memory of John & Theologia Rigas (2 plants)
Angie Roman .....	In memory of Gus Roman.....
Steve & Electra Roman .....	In memory of our parents.....
Dean Scoumis & Family .....	For the health of Constantine, Jessica, Kaeley, Theodore & Angeliki (4 plants)
James F. Sicalias .....	In memory of my mother Bessie Cocheres-Sicalias.....
Charles Siebott & Irene Karavolos .....	For the health of our family.....
James Steve Statheas .....	In memory of Steve & Demetra Statheas.....
Robert and Marianne Stearns & Stephen .....	In memory of Eric Michael Stearns.....
Katina Tanner .....	In memory of Nicholas Tanner.....
Harriet Valliant .....	In memory of Helen Valliant.....
Mary Magdalene Welsh .....	In memory of my beloved mother, Julia Welsh.....
Michael & Virginia Zagnacky .....	In memory of our beloved daughter Danielle, her Grandma Marge, Nouna Helen and Great-Grandparents
Anthony & Aspasia Zissis .....	In memory of our parents.....
Lou, Julie and Ale Zozos .....	In memory of Eileen Hoffmann – Julie's mom and Ale's grandmother.....

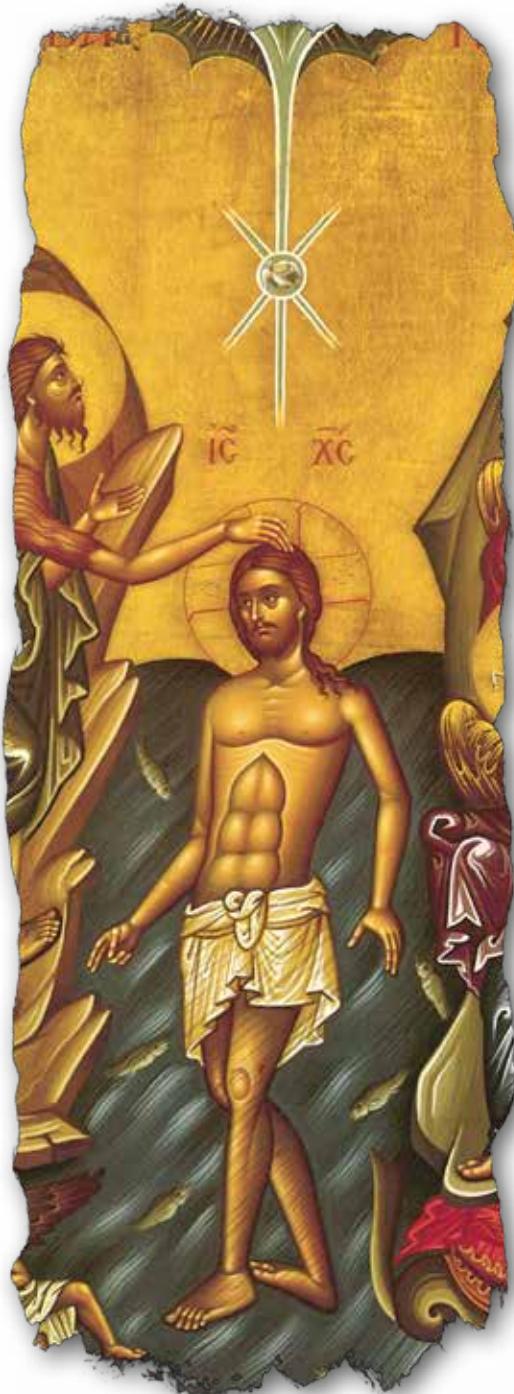
## COMMEMORATIONS



# The Feast of Theophany and the Blessing of Homes and Businesses

*"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.

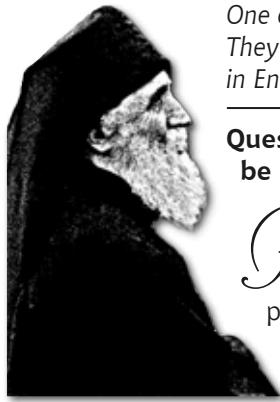
## **2014 House Blessing Schedule**

Date	Time	Area	Zip Codes
Thu. Jan. 9	3pm-6pm	Northside, Perrysville, Bellevue, Westview	15212, 15214, 15202
Thu. Jan. 9	5pm-8pm	South Hills (all areas)	15102, 15216, 1522X, 1524X
Mon. Jan. 13	3pm-8pm	Allison Park, McKnight, Ross, McCandless	15101, 15237
Tue. Jan. 14	3pm-8pm	Gibsonia, Treedsdale	15044
Thu. Jan. 16	3pm-8pm	Cranberry, Mars & North	16046, 16066
Mon. Jan. 20	3pm-8pm	Wexford	15090
Thu. Jan. 23	3pm-8pm	Wexford	15090
Fri. Jan. 24	3pm-8pm	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: Geronda, when can a person be considered to be fair?

**A**ccording to the world, a fair person is one who judges on the basis of human justice. But perfection means being fair not on the basis of human justice, but on the basis of divine justice; for this is when God will bless him. When I

do not insert my ego and self-interest into my actions, then, in a sense, I force God to grant me His divine Grace. All human justice, even the most perfect, always contains human elements. And as long as human justice exists in the spiritual man, the Holy Spirit attempts to remove it as a foreign body, while the man struggles with ups and downs that tire him spiritually. When he acquires divine righteousness, then comes the glow of purity and divine enlightenment.

### Question: Then when someone says that he has been wronged and treated unjustly, would it be helpful if I remind him that there is also divine justice?

**N**o, it's better to tell him to examine things in a spiritual manner according to the Gospel. For if you tell him, "There is divine justice," he will believe that he has been indeed treated unjustly, whereas he may have treated others unjustly himself. It's true, a heart can be so pained... I met someone who attended Church regularly, who fasted and so forth, and had the impression that he lived a spiritual life. In the meantime, although he owned five apartments, received two salaries, and had no children, he wouldn't give even a drachma to a poor man. So I told him, "You have so many poor relatives, why don't you give them something? What will you do with your wealth? Give some of it to the widows and orphans." And do you know what he said to me? "You mean I shouldn't collect rent from my widowed sister?" When I heard that, the blood rushed to my head. There, that's worldly justice for you! "Since the children who are going hungry are not mine, I'm not responsible for them. I'm not unjust. God forbid that I should be unjust to anyone!" That's what they say to comfort their thoughts, their conscience, but they don't have true peace and comfort.

With human reasoning and a worldly sense of justice, they remain indifferent to another human being's plight. How can they then experience anything spiritual? There are people who may give away an entire house as a blessing but will take someone else to court for a mere month's unpaid rent. How do you explain that?

### Question: Geronda, is it human justice?

**G**t's not even human justice. It has only a tiny bit of human justice. Someone will give away one hundred thousand to one person, and then turn around and drive a hard bargain with the taxi driver, threatening to report

him to the tourist police over a mere one thousand drachmas.

### Question: Geronda, could their big gifts be out of pride to satisfy their own ego?

**G**hat's it. They give the large sums with pride; they do it for their own glory, not for the glory of God. They may even give everything away, but they don't feel love. Today there is a false spirit. Even spiritual people seek legal justice and still claim to believe and trust in God! "My just claim, your just claim..." This is the "gospel" of reason, that strange reason, which I wish didn't exist! They say, "I don't want anyone to take me for a fool." Even Christians will file a lawsuit against someone else. Even when they are in the right, they should not go to the courts; how much even more so when they are not in the right.

This is the reason why some people become unbelievers. They see that one—who doesn't go to Church or attend vigils—will not take someone to court, while another—who does go to Church and attends vigils—will take some poor fellow to court for a small amount of money, just so that he can have what is rightfully his. I spoke to someone who wanted to take another person to court, and asked him, "Are you in need? Do you have more children? Are you being forced by your wife?" "No, I am doing it for the sake of justice," he replied. What can you say?

What is worst of all in such cases is that such people are not even troubled by their conscience, since they say, "Such things are not for us. We are here for spiritual things." They may even have the thought, "That person may find comfort in sacrificing himself, but I find comfort in having my peace and quiet..." and may even criticize the other person for not being spiritual. But the truth is that Christ is comforted where there is spiritual nobility, the spirit of sacrifice that does not proclaim itself.

### Question: When we see another person going through difficulty, shouldn't we help him any way we can?

**G**of course! But I have observed a certain worldly spirit that has crept into many spiritual people. They have set up their own worldly "gospel", a "gospel" made to their measure, and they tell you, "A Christian must preserve his dignity; he must not appear to be a fool." In other words, they deal with everything using a worldly rationality and sense of justice. They insist on getting what's owed them. "I'm entitled to it," they say, "I didn't harm him, and I don't want him to wrong or harm me!"

And in the meantime, they have their conscience clear, assuming that they are in the right. And one can see in such a person all the worldly rights. He has no *philotimo*, he has no sacrifice, he has nothing; he has set up his own "gospel" but has no relationship with God. How then can such a person be overshadowed by the Grace of God?

*Excerpted from Elder Paisios of Mount Athos,  
"Spiritual Counsels, Vol. III: Spiritual Struggle"*

*This space available  
for your business or  
annual commemora-  
tive listing. Contact the  
Church Office for  
information.*

**Thank You**  
to these patrons and  
businesses for sponsoring this  
issue of the *Herald*. If you would  
like information on becoming a  
*Herald* patron, please contact  
the church office. To become a  
Personal Sponsor on special  
occasions, see the form below.

*This space available  
for your business or  
annual commemora-  
tive listing. Contact the  
Church Office for  
information.*

**H & A HEATING  
AND AIR CONDITIONING, INC.**  
**412-366-2990**

Sales, Service & Maintenance  
Harry G. Athanasiou, President

**STEPHEN M. BRADY  
FUNERAL HOME**  
**412-321-0495**

**920 Cedar Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA**  
**Expert Pre-Need Planning & Funding**

**Salonika Imports**  
Food Importer and Distributor  
**Chris T. Balouris**  
**3509 Smallman St, Pittsburgh, PA 15201**  
**Phone: 412.682.2700 www.salonika.net**  
**new retail store hours:**  
**Mon-Tue 8am-5:30pm | Wed-Fri 8am-4pm | Sat 9am-2pm**

*Be one of the first to use the new*  
**Holy Trinity Center**  
*for your banquet, wedding reception,  
baptismal reception or other  
social event!*

*Contact Arista Catering & Event Planning*  
*sales@arista-events.com | 412-716-2835*

**Please note new contact information for**  
**Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church**  
**Address: 985 Providence Boulevard**  
**Pittsburgh, PA 15237**  
**GPS: Opposite 9000 Babcock Boulevard**  
**or at corner of Cumberland & Babcock**  
**Phone: 412-366-8700**  
**Fax: 412-366-8710**  
**Internet: www.HolyTrinityPgh.org**

**Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox**  
**Cemetery**  
**McCandless Township, North Hills**

Serving the needs of our community since 1945. Please, consider Holy Trinity Cemetery in your estate planning., Many lots are available at the very reasonable price of \$500 each.

Contact Cemetery Chairman Bill Fiedler  
412-364-1545

**HERALD PERSONAL SPONSOR FORM**

**Please enclose a donation of at least \$20.00**

NAME:

PHONE:

ADDRESS:

I/we wish to sponsor a *Herald*. Please include the following message:

In memory of...  For the health of...  In thanksgiving for...  In honor of...  To the Glory of God...  
 other: ( )

(list names or further information here):

**NOW IN OUR NEW HOME!**



**"FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."**

**Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church**

**985 Providence Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15237**

**TIME SENSITIVE INFORMATION: PLEASE EXPEDITE DELIVERY!**

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**P A I D**  
PERMIT NO. 1463  
PITTSBURGH, PA

## **2014 Holy Trinity House/Business Blessing Request Form**



Name
------

Address
---------

City, State, Zip
------------------

Daytime phone:	Evening phone:
----------------	----------------

Notes, directions or special information
------------------------------------------

**(NOTE: You may also EMAIL this information to: [fjt@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:fjt@HolyTrinityPgh.org))**

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 by 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)**