

THE HOLY TRINITY

HERALD

Faith. Family. Community

November 2021
Volume 29 | Issue 7

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PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Holy Trinity teens volunteered to serve as luncheon wait staff when Holy Trinity Church hosted 300 Young Adults during the 2021 Pittsburgh YAL Conference, October 8-10.



Nativity of the Theotokos - Feast Day November 21
Icon from the Annunciation of the Theotokos Monastery, Ormylia, Greece

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, PITTSBURGH, PA



Father John Touloumes
Proistamenos

We praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You, Lord our God.

Hymn at the Consecration of
the Holy Gifts in the Divine Liturgy

My beloved Holy Trinity family,

In his famous proclamation of the national holiday of Thanksgiving in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln—a believing and religious leader—wrote the following:

"I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens."

One of the many notable points about this address is that he issued it in the middle the American Civil war, which started in 1860 and ended in 1865. Thanksgiving in the middle of turmoil, revolt, hatred and violence? There is indeed a lesson for us today and truly at any time: we do not need to wait and must not wait until "everything is ok" in our eyes to offer thanks to Almighty God for blessings seen and unseen, whether or not we recognize them. That God blesses us at all times is not in doubt. Whether we are aware of that assurance in the midst of hearts troubled by events of the world around or minds confused and polluted by so many ungodly things is where the real problem lies.

And here is a greater challenge: when the pain and struggles hit close to home, is giving thanks still part of the process, or do we simply dwell on the loss and allowed ourselves to be fooled by the evil one into thinking that God has abandoned us? In his book, "When God Is not There," Metropolitan Nikolaos of Mesogaia empathizes with us in those times, but connects the thinking with thanks: "Am I not your child? Aren't you the God of love? What is the relationship between Your love and my trial? How can my ordeal draw me close to You? How can Your kindness be compatible with the inexplicable logic of pain, sorrow and the risk that I may lose my faith?" He goes on to say that many times we feel there are no answers to those questions, but he reminds us, "Certainly, pain and injustice cannot abolish God's love. God exists. He is love and life; perfect love and the fullness of life. And the greatest miracle of His existence is that He co-exists with pain, injustice and death." Indeed, through it all, "God is with us."

From last Thanksgiving to this year, many of us and those around us have suffered the death of loved ones, loss of jobs, health challenges, the pandemic and more. But God has been with us through all of it and continues to share the gift of eternal life, where "there is no pain, sorrow or suffering."

Brothers and sisters, it is indeed a God-inspired tradition that we take the time as a country each year to honor a day of Thanksgiving, but we as Christians are called by Saint Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5.18 to do it continually: "In all things give thanks." May your eyes and your heart always be blessed with the revelation of God's many blessings around you. Happy Thanksgiving!

With paternal love in Christ,

OUR VISION
Faith. Family. Community.

OUR MISSION:
The mission of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is to proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ.

NOVEMBER

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services - November

In addition to regular Sunday Orthros at 8:30am, and Divine Liturgy at 9:30am, the following weekday services will be offered this month. Please see the online parish calendar at HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar for updates. (Location code: HT=Holy Trinity Church; SG=Saint George Chapel.)

- **Mon. Nov. 1**, 8:30am Orthros/Liturgy - Saints Cosmas and Damian the Holy Unmercenaries (SG)
- **Mon. Nov. 8**, 8:30am Orthros/Liturgy - The Holy Archangels (SG)
- **Tue. Nov. 9**, 8:30am Orthros/Liturgy - St. Nektarios the Wonderworker (SG)
- **Tue. Nov. 16**, 8:30am Orthros/Liturgy - St. Matthew the Evangelist (SG)
- **Wed. Nov. 24**, 6:30PM **EVENING** Orthros/Liturgy - St. Katherine the Great Martyr & Thanksgiving (SG)
- **Tue. Nov. 30**, 8:30am Orthros/Liturgy - St. Andrew the First-Called Apostle (SG)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Church School Reminder: Bring Your Children!

With God's blessing and praying for His divine protection on all our students, staff and families, Holy Trinity Church School is continuing classes in-person for the 2021-2022 year. **Remember: "Church School" starts with "Church!"**

All families are asked to attend Divine Liturgy each Sunday, starting at 9:30. The Youth Sermon, a special feature of our Sunday Liturgy at Holy Trinity Church, is offered following the Gospel, so be sure to arrive on time for a message created for the students. Thank you, parents!

"Church School vs. Holy Trinity Community" Fall Food Drive: Through November 28

During the month of November, Holy Trinity Church School is once again holding its Fall Food Drive...but this year there is a special twist: it's Church School vs the Community! All month there will be two food collection bins in the Gallery during Coffee Hour: one for Church School collections and the other for the rest of the community. You do not need to have children in Church School to participate. At the end the winner will be announced, and a special award given, but the real winners will be those in need who will receive food supplies as we approach the winter months. Items will be donated to the Orthodox Christian ministry at the Neighborhood Resilience Project in the Hill District, which Holy Trinity has been supporting actively since its founding as FOCUS

Pittsburgh many years ago. See the list of requested food items at the church office window and thanks for taking the challenge! Remember, in Proverbs 22.9 it says, "The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor." May all be blessed in this effort!

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

GOYA Field Trip to Saxonburg Monastery.....Nov. 6

Our GOYA teens will be taking a field trip/pilgrimage to the Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery in Saxonburg on Saturday, November 6. Watch the GOYA email list for information.

GOYA MeetingNov. 14

GOYA will be holding its monthly meeting in the Conference Room on Sunday, November 14 following Divine Liturgy. All teens are asked to attend.

JOY Activity/Parents Meeting.....Nov. 14

The JOY ministry (8-12-year-olds) will be holding its first activity of the season in the Fireside Room following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, November 14. There will be fun activities, a pizza lunch and a greeting card outreach project. At the start of the event, parents of all 8-12-year-olds are asked to stay for a brief meeting to discuss and plan JOY events for the year. Questions? Contact Nicole Steiner at 412-352-0289.

Turkey BowlNov. 28

The GOYA will hold its annual Turkey Bowl Football Game on Thanksgiving Sunday, November 28, following Divine Liturgy. This is a fun and friendly GOYA tradition, and everyone is invited: players, non-players, cheerleaders, parents and fans! Players should bring a change of clothes and shoes for play. The flag football game will be followed by hot chocolate, meatless "walking tacos" and other goodies. Yum!

MINISTRIES NEWS

Bereavement Ministry Remembrance Night.... Dec. 6

Special Vespers Service offered by our Bereavement Support Ministry - Monday, Dec 6th at 6:30pm..Holidays may bring mixed feelings for those experiencing grief and loss of a loved one. Father John and our Bereavement Support Ministry Team have coordinated a special Vespers Service for those who have experienced recent loss or one that has been for many years. It will be a quiet, sacred time for worship, reflection, and prayer. We encourage each person to bring a framed photo of their loved one. We will display these photos on a table. Each person will be given

a special votive candle to be lit by each photo as a remembrance of the light and warmth that our loved ones have shared in our lives. Please join us for this special evening together as we prepare for the Nativity of our Lord and the Christmas holiday. If you want to learn more, contact Amy Armanious, Visitation Ministry Coordinator at visitation@holytrinitypgh.org.

Visitation Ministry Drivers Needed

The Holy Trinity Visitation Ministry Team is in need of drivers to help parishioners with medical appointments, shopping, local errands and pharmacy drive thru. If anyone can assist, please contact Amy Armanious at visitation@HolyTrinityPgh.org or see Amy in person. Any helping hands are appreciated. Thank you!

COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

Military Appreciation Day 2021Nov. 14

Sponsored by the Visitation Ministry Team - In observance of Veteran's Day, the Visitation Ministry Team requests your prayers and support once again to honor parishioners, family, and community members who have served and are still serving our country in the military. Our tribute on Sunday, November 14th will include a memorial service for all veterans and fallen heroes, and special recognition of living veterans and active military service members. We will proudly display our military honoree names on the monitors in the Grand Room and Gallery as an offering of love and gratitude for their service. May God bless all those who have served and continue to serve our country!"



Stewardship Update

Although we are three-quarters through the year, we are still seeking 2021 Stewardship pledge cards from all our parishioners...and...we are asking everyone to take the time to ensure that your contributions are up to date with your pledge. That means that at this point in the year, all stewards should have contributed around 3/4 of their annual giving for 2021. This is critical to maintaining our financial stability and sustaining the many ministries that serve the needs of this parish and the world around us. We are grateful for your commitment and we remind you, signing the pledge card is only the beginning: please keep up with your contributions as well. Giving opportunities exist in-person, by check, on-line or using the app.

Information can be found at holytrinitypgh.org/give-info. Questions? Contact Stewardship Co-chairmen Mike Kritiotis or Ted Stewart or email stewardship@HolyTrinityPgh.org.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Christmas Card FormsDue December 6

If you would like to include your name in this annual community tradition, please be sure to submit your form and donation to the Church Office by December 6. The card will be mailed with the Christmas/New Year bundle.

Holiday Poinsettias FormDue December 6

This issue of the Herald contains a form for the sponsoring of holiday poinsettias for use in the church during the Christmas and Theophany season. To donate one or more flowers in memory of a loved one or in honor of a special person or event, please complete the form and return it to the Church Office with your donation by December 6. ❖

By the Grace of God and through the apostolic tradition of the laying on of hands by

HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN
SAVAS
OF PITTSBURGH

the servant of God

DEMETRIOS CONSTANTINE

will be ordained to the Holy Diaconate on

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2021

ST. JOHN THE FORERUNNER
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

4955 Glenwood Ave
Boardman, OH 44512

**ORTHROS AND DIVINE LITURGY
8:30 AM**



Your presence and prayers are humbly requested.

Please RSVP for the reception by November 3rd
to demetrickonstantine@gmail.com

Faith & Family Weekdays

Something for Everyone!

JOM

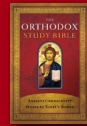
Journey of Marriage
1st Tuesday, 7:00pm



Marriage seminar aimed at preparing couples for their wedding. Based on the "Journey of Marriage" course by Dr. Philip Mamalakis. Conducted as group sessions with other couples to share and grow together. Nov. 2, Dec. 7, Jan. 4, Feb. 1, Mar. 1, Apr. 5, May 3.

ETW

Explore the Word
Alternate Wednesdays, 6:30pm



Father Radu continues his exploration of the Holy Bible, this time with a survey of the Old Testament. Learn about Genesis, Exodus, Job, the poetry of the Book of Psalms and the Prophecies of Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah. Bring your Bible and your questions!

PBC



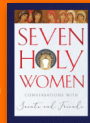
Parish Book Club
Alternate Wednesdays, 6:30pm



Men and women of all ages can learn more about Christian living in the midst of challenges with a discussion of the book, "Gratitude in Life's Trenches: How to Experience the Good Life Even When Everything's Going Wrong." Sounds like help everyone could use!

SLF

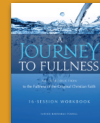
St. Lydia Women's Fellowship
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 7:00pm



Our longest-running study group, aimed at giving women the opportunity to share and grow together. This year based on the new book, "Seven Holy Women: Conversations with Saints and Friends." Nov 9 & 23; Dec. 14; Jan. 11 & 25, Feb. 8 & 22 & more.

JTF

Journey to Fullness
Mondays (7-week series), 7:00pm



An overview of the Orthodox Christian Faith for newcomers interested in joining or life-long members yearning to deepen their understanding. Format: Videos and Q&A/discussion. Nov. 8, 15, 22, 29, Dec. 6, 13 & 20. Repeats May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 & Jun. 6, 13.

P&P

Prayer & Panera
2nd & 4th Thursday, 7:00am



Prayer and Christian fellowship for men. Meets at church promptly at 7:00 a.m. for a 15-20 minute morning prayer and scripture, then moves up the hill to Panera for 45 minutes of coffee & conversation. Nov. 11, Dec. 9, 23, Jan. 13, 27, Feb. 10, 24, & more.

Faith and Family Weekdays is back, and there is something for everyone! Ready to learn more about the Bible, about your Faith, about navigating life's challenges as a Christian, a woman or a man? It's all there. New this season: the **Parish Book Club**, based on the Orthodox Christian book "Gratitude in Life's Trenches." Having been through the challenges of the past 18 months, we could all use a perspective that helps us find blessings and thanks even in the most challenging situations. Also new: **Family Game Night**. Enjoy games, fun and fellowship with other parish families of all ages! For adults and young people, too!

There are lots of other opportunities to learn about the Faith, the Bible, marriage and Christian living. Something for everyone! Watch the bulletin and check the online calendar at HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar for details and locations.

FGN



Family Game Night
First Friday, 7:00pm

Games, fun and fellowship for all ages! Board games, skill exercises and more. Bring your own favorites with you to share! Popcorn, snacks and drinks provided. It's for the entire family, so bring Papou & Yiayia, Mom & Dad, too! Nov. 5, Dec. 3, Jan. 7, Feb. 4.

Tithing: Where is God on My Giving List?

Ted Stewart, Stewardship Ministry

The last couple of years have been significantly challenging for churches everywhere, including ours. The list of needs continues to grow and as well all have witnessed, the resources to fulfill those needs have not kept pace, leaving many tough decisions for church leadership to make.

The bottom line as with anything we do is that we can't expect to see different results in a situation if we keep approaching it the same way we have in the past. Times are changing and we need to be flexible in our thinking which will hopefully allow us to operate differently.

In reference to whether you have made a pledge or are a tithing member of Holy Trinity we must first emphasize the need to be faithful to our commitment. There are many demands we all face every day, which requires our attention and commitment and our relationship with God and His church is no different. The question is where does God "rank" in the process? Is he first in line or have we placed Him last?

We all depend on Him to be there when we need Him, so the question remains, are we there when He needs us? Food for thought, so let us each examine our priorities on where we place God on our individual list.

So, with that being said let's get back to the question at hand, should I pledge or tithe? Well, one might ask what is the difference? A pledge is an estimate of giving that is a reflection of your faith and values. It is a com-

mitment to support the church or organization. This commitment can and does vary based on the circumstances an individual may face.

Tithing is more of discipline toward giving that a person incorporates into their life. In addition to being biblical (Genesis 28: 20-22, Malachi 3: 10-12, Hebrews 7: 1-2, etc.), it represents an extraordinary statement of faith.

This concept of tithing is not something new as it began in the early days of the church. Basically, the concept of tithing is something Orthodox Christians do not generally discuss. The terms, dues and pledges have been more commonly used, hence the need to provide to shift our thinking and start to re-educate ourselves on the concept of tithing. Yes, tithing generally centers our finances but it is more inclusive to address our time, talents and treasures. If someone doesn't have finances, then time and talents come more into play, but if we have the finances then we should include tithing in this area as well.

Fr. Andrew Stephen Damik of Ancient Faith Ministries is the Archpriest at St. Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church and he listed "**6 Reasons Why Tithing is Good for an Orthodox Parish.**" Here is a summation of those reasons:

1. Tithing enables us to become more like Christ, in that it demonstrates a powerful way that we give of ourselves, just as Christ gave everything of Himself to us.
2. Tithing shows that we are serious in our commitment. The tithe represents at a minimum 10% and

for some that is serious but for others it is not so they should do more. The goal is to get serious about our giving.

3. Tithing is absolutely Orthodox as is giving, asceticism, generosity, ministry and discipline.
4. Tithing becomes ministry. God takes what we give, blesses / sanctifies it and uses it in multiple areas of ministry.
5. Tithing ends money problems for the parish, once and for all. Many parishes, including ours, depend on other "outside sources" of revenue to fund the operation of the church. Those "external" funds should be used augment, not sustain, the ministries of the church.
6. Tithing changes a parish culture. This is not just from a financial perspective but rather changes occur universally because the focus shifts to how we begin to serve and minister to others in greater ways without the need to worry about how we need to keep the church afloat.

So now that we understand some of the benefits of tithing, the take away message is that the benefits of tithing enhance our relationship with God. God knows our individual circumstances and is not caught off guard when challenges arise in our life. These challenges should not deter us in our commitment. Tithing a tenth sets the standard and if we are not there yet, we need to strive for it.

For now, if you have made pledge at the beginning of this year and have found yourself behind in meeting your commitment, please let this be a reminder to catch up on those offerings. Your church is depending on each of us to do our part!

Faithfully yours,
The Holy Trinity Stewardship Ministry

New Orthodox Volunteer Corps Launches in Pittsburgh



On October 4, the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America voted overwhelmingly to create a new official agency of the Assembly, Orthodox Volunteer Corps (OVC). OVC addresses a critical need in American Orthodoxy - an immersive, year-round, life shaping ministry exclusively focused on young adults, 21-29 years old.

Youth and young adults are less connected to the Church than any other demographic. The twenties are a pivotal time of development, what researchers call emerging adulthood, during which long-lasting decisions are made about career, family, and faith. And there are relatively few formative opportunities that are specifically targeted at Orthodox young adults today.

At the same time, research shows that young adults are hungry to serve and live with purpose. The Church is the perfect home and vehicle for purposeful service.

OVC aims to inspire and equip young

adults for service to Church and world. OVC will do so first through a 10-month, full-time program rooted in four transformative encounters: service, formation, community, and Church. First, OVC will match each participant with an existing nonprofit for a 10-month placement, four days per week, providing hands-on service and unique professional experience. Second, OVC will provide a curriculum of leadership development and faith formation in Orthodoxy through a once-per-week, all-day, interactive, experiential seminar. Third, OVC will provide housing for participants to live together in community. Finally, OVC will facilitate close connection to local parishes, providing mentorship and grounding the program in the Church.

The program will begin in Pittsburgh and expand to other cities. OVC is currently recruiting for an inaugural cohort of full-time volunteers to begin in Fall 2022. OVC will host a virtual public launch on November 9, at 8pm ET. All are welcome. To register or for more info, visit orthodoxvolunteercorps.org.



Clinging TO JESUS CHRIST

Father John's Homily
October 14, 2021

A few years ago I decided to mulch the areas around our house. I slightly overestimated how much mulch I needed, and ended up with a half a truck of fragrant brown organic material dumped on the street in front of our house. Two days, many wheelbarrows and a lot of sore muscles later, the job was done and the place looked beautiful.

A few weeks later, I was surprised to see some little green sprouts with sharp little leaves popping up in the middle of the mulch – not everywhere, but just in one section. I plucked them, but they kept growing back. I looked them up on the web and discovered they were thistles. So I tried weed killers of every kind, but again they not only grew back but spread prolifically. And I kept picking and weeding and they kept growing. Here's what I discovered.

Thistles are a seed-producing machine. Each little plant can produce between 1,500 and 5,000 seeds that spread like wildfire. They land all over, germinate and then send out spreading roots, which can extend up to 20 feet away from the plant, and many feet deep. And trying to pluck them out only helps them spread more because their miniscule seeds get scattered in the process.

Today, my dear spiritual family, we heard the Gospel of the Parable of the

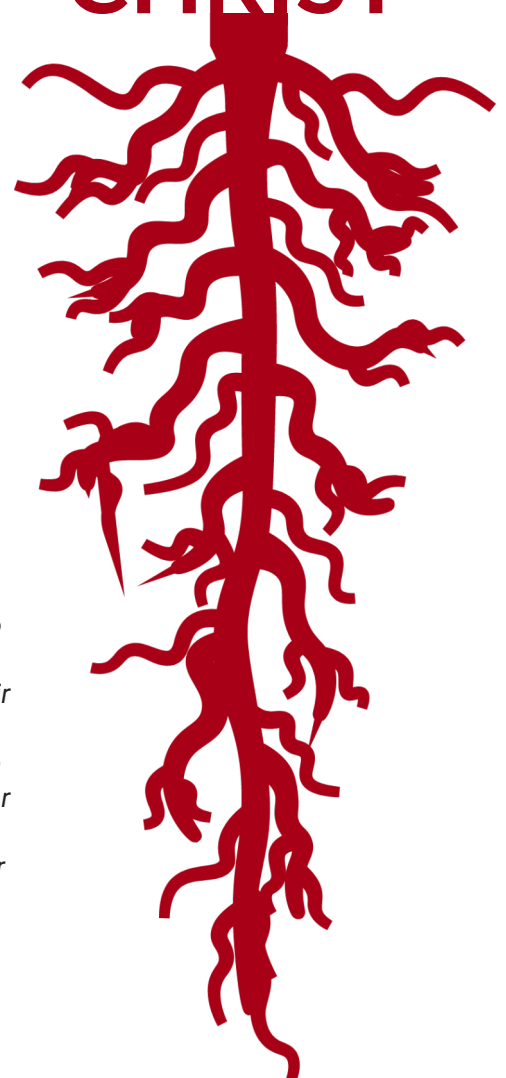
Sower. In it, we hear about a sower whose seeds land in various places: on a footpath, on rocks, among thorns and among the good soil. In explaining the parable, here is what Jesus said it meant:

"The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8.11-15).

In most sermons about this parable, the classic lesson to leave with is to plant ourselves in good soil, which is often interpreted to be the Church, a believing family or a community of

faith, since that good soil will provide a place for us to grow and thrive spiritually. And that is a valuable lesson in many ways.

Today, however, I would like this parable to take on a different meaning by looking to the "bad guy" in the story as our inspiration: the thorny plants. Having struggled with those thorny, stubborn thistles for so long, I thought to myself, "If bad



plants, like bad choices, can be so hard to get rid of, what can we learn from them?"

Christian author Henri Nouwen answered the question for me and provided the inspiration for this message in a brief passage titled, "Deeply Rooted in God." In it, he speaks about the need for Christians to be deeply rooted, not shallow. As I read it, the thistles came to mind, but instead of being angry at them for ruining our beautiful landscaping, I began to admire them for their tenacity and their ability to withstand any attack. Key to my new admiration were three things: their deep, deep roots, their connectedness to each other and their ability to continue spreading even under threat of death.

Here is what Nouwen says: "Without deep roots we easily let others determine who we are. But as we cling to our popularity, we may lose our true sense of self. Our clinging to the opinions of others reveals how superficial we are. We have little to stand on. We have to be kept alive by adulation and praise" (Bread for the Journey, April 5). The cure: stay deeply rooted in God, clinging to Jesus Christ with all our might.

There has been perhaps no better time in the history of the world for us to understand this challenge due to the influence of social media. In previous generations, this was an affliction of public figures like politicians and actors, because most of the rest were anonymous to the public. But with the advent of social media, anyone can publicly become our fan by praising us, our critic by attacking us or our cancel agent by ignoring us ... and we often respond as if it really matters. "Just be like everyone else—or at least like we say everyone else should be—and you'll be safe from attack," they say. Go along to get along. And soon that

external influence has us changing our clothes, our choices, our actions, our friends and even our beliefs and our lives. In Nouwen's words, we have "let others determine who we are." Indeed, a sad and shallow existence.

Now, let's learn a lesson from the thorny thistles. What if, instead, we grew deep roots, way deeper than anyone could reach? What if every time we were cut down, we doubled down? And what if instead of allowing ourselves to be separated



from everyone else attached to our root system, we held tight and made it impossible to separate us?

That, my dear Christian family, is the life of someone who deeply clings to Jesus Christ. That is the story of so many Christians over the centuries who have understood that our refusal

to allow anyone to separate us from the love and life of God is key to staying planted in the faith through all challenges and temptations so that we may live forever with God. It is the story of the defenders of the faith, such as the Holy Father of the Seventh Ecumenical Council we celebrate today, who stubbornly defended the attacks against the holy icons. It is the story of the martyrs, such as Saint Andrew the Monk Martyr of Krisis, whose defense of the holy icons ended up with him being tortured and dragged through the streets, martyred for his faith instead of trading it for public praise.

So today we can hear the Gospel, remember those saints and ask ourselves, ***"Who determines who I am, what I believe and where I am willing to take a stand?"*** Am I so shallow that I will give up what really matters for what is popular or trendy so I can be accepted by others until the trend changes, or will I stand firm in my faith so I can be accepted by God for all eternity in His Kingdom?"

Sadly, in today's post-Christian America, you are the thorny weed of faith that many forces are trying to uproot and throw away so there is little standing in the way of redefining life and truth itself.

Don't give up. Others may think you can just be quickly plucked and discarded, but imagine those 20-foot roots of yours deeply connected to your fellow believers and your Church. Every time you are attacked, continue to spread seeds of faith. Do not surrender, "that you may be, as Saint Paul says in Philippians 2.15-16, "blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life," clinging to Jesus Christ...no matter what. Amen. ❖



METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH HOSTS FIRST YAL CONFERENCE IN 32 YEARS!

The Metropolis of Pittsburgh hosted its first Young Adult League Conference since 1989 from October 8-10, with 300 in attendance. Geared toward Orthodox Christians between the ages of 18-35, the weekend brought young adults from across the country together as one Body in Christ. Addressing the struggles of 2020, the theme was "CONQUER: The Struggle is Real." It worked to empower young adults to overcome the difficulties of this world through the love and power of Jesus Christ. Orthodox author and therapist Dr. Albert Rossi was the main speaker. Events throughout the weekend included a welcome reception at PNC Park, workshop sessions, outreach projects, a Glendi Dinner Dance and Divine Liturgy and brunch at Holy Trinity Church with our Holy Trinity GOYAns serving our guests as wait staff. Congratulations, Pittsburgh YAL! Well done







Holy Trinity Church offered its first-ever “Blessing of the Animals Service” on Saturday, October 2, 2021. Pets of all kinds were invited to the event. The prayer service, in honor of Saint Mamas and Saint Modestos, patron saints of animals, prayed: “bless now our pets which we are well-pleased to receive as our companions upon the earth. Grant that each pet here may be treasured with care so that we may love and honor all your marvelous works.” May God indeed bless them all!



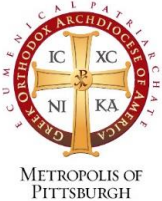
Note from Father John: Our sweet little 15-year-old, Rex (above), passed away 7 days after this service. 😞

Blessing of the Animals Service



Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
985 Providence Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15237





"FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

Reverend Father John Touloumes, *Proistamenos*
Reverend Father Radu Bordeianu, *Assistant Priest*



GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOTICE AND AGENDA – NOVEMBER 7, 2021

October 22, 2021

Dear Parishioners,

Our regular Fall General Assembly will be held IN-PERSON in the Grand Room on Sunday, November 7, 2021, following the Divine Liturgy. The agenda for the meeting will be as follows:

1. Invocation Father John
2. Election of Chairman of the Assembly
3. Approval of Minutes.....George Dickos
4. Priest's Report..... Father John
5. Parish Council President's Report George Danis
6. Selection of the Auditing Committee for 2022
7. Selection of the Parish Council Election Committee for 2022
8. Nomination of Candidates for Parish Council for 2022/2023
9. Reports
 - A. Year-to-Date Financial ReportMichael Passodelis
 - B. Stewardship Committee Report Mike Kritiotis
 - C. Cemetery Committee ReportBill Fiedler
 - D. Festival Committee ReportFestival Chairpersons
 - E. Consecration Project Progress Report Jim Balouris
10. Old Business
11. New Business
12. Adjournment and closing prayer Father John

Please be present and participate as part of fulfilling your membership at Holy Trinity Church. Also, please keep in mind that you must be a 2021 Stewardship member in good standing with a signed pledge card to vote.

Sincerely,

+Father John Touloumes
Protopresbyter

George Danis
Parish Council President

IMPORTANT NOTE: A Parish Council nomination form is enclosed in this mailing. Please note that all members nominated (or interested in being nominated) for Parish Council elections must attend the Holy Trinity Parish Council Candidate Seminar to be conducted on Tuesday, November 30, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Church.



Metropolitan Germanos of Ileia blesses students in this fire-affected community who received school-supply vouchers and school kits.



HOPE AFTER GREECE'S FIRES

Families, Small Businesses Receive Aid for Recovering, Rebuilding

Since 2012, IOCC has worked with Apostoli, the humanitarian arm of the Archdiocese of Athens, on the Give for Greece program to provide business and livelihoods support, reliable food access for families in need, medical supplies, and education programs for Greeks and refugees.

In addition, IOCC has also offered relief following emergencies. This summer, wildfires raged across Evia, Attica, and the Peloponnese, destroying homes, businesses, and livelihoods as about 300,000 acres burned. Evia, Greece's second-largest island, was especially hard hit, with one-third of its forests burned, including valuable pine trees—the basis of traditional beekeeping, honey, and resin-collecting industries.

In response to the latest fires, IOCC began with an on-the-ground needs assessment, which the team is using to custom design response in affected

areas. Programming began in the municipality of Ileia, in the western Peloponnese, an area that also saw widespread fires in 2007. IOCC collaborated with local Church authorities, the Primary School Teachers Association of Pyrgos-Ancient Olympia Municipalities, and partner Apostoli to distribute school-supply vouchers and school kits to full-time local residents affected by this year's disaster. The items ensured that families in some of the hardest hit areas could buy what their children needed to start the school year.

Leveraging its experience of both

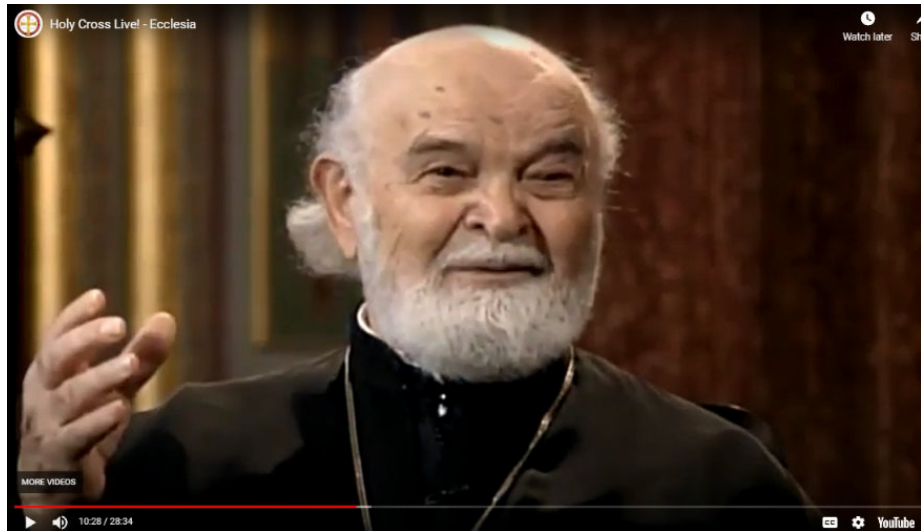
emergency response and long-term development aid in Greece, especially helping small-holder farmers and microbusinesses, IOCC is committed to long-term assistance for survivors of this summer's fires.

Editor's note of thanks to Holy Trinity Church: Each year our Taste of Greece Festival places collection jars at the checkout locations to allow people to donate to a cause. This year was the Greek Fires Relief. Over \$2,000 was collected, and with additional Agape Fund resources added, a total of \$3,000 was sent to IOCC to assist in this effort. God bless you! ❖

Elder of America

BISHOP GERASIMOS

Conference hosted by Hellenic College Holy Cross honors the holy life and spiritual legacy of a blessed elder and beloved former Bishop of Pittsburgh



This past June 12, 2020 – in the midst of the corona virus pandemic – marked the 25th anniversary from the blessed falling asleep in the Lord of our beloved and saintly Bishop Gerasimos Papadopoulos, former Bishop of Pittsburgh.

To mark this important date in the history of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology and in the life of our Church in America, a Memorial Conference to mark this 25th anniversary from his death, as well as the 110th anniversary from his birth was scheduled in 2020, but due to the pandemic was rescheduled for October 19-20, 2021.

The speakers and the program of this Conference were invited to reach out in particular to the new generations of students and clergy and younger lay people of our Church in America, who did not have the opportunity to know Bishop Gerasimos personally. By presenting the spiritual legacy of

this man of God, the Conference provided important information about his life and work, and thereby enhanced the developing consciousness of the people of the Church here in America that Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos is indeed among the righteous and saintly men of God. As the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in America is approaching her own centennial celebration in 2022, it has been proposed that, God willing, Bishop Gerasimos Papadopoulos, the blessed Elder of America, be presented to the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to be officially canonized.

Presentations during the two-day conference included His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, formerly of America, in Session 1, “The Elder as Bishop in America.” Session 2 featured Father Philotheos Papadopoulos, Priest-Monk at Docheiariou Monastery on Mt. Athos, speaking on “The Elder as a Youth and the Early Years as a Mo-

nastic.” Session 3 offered the premier viewing of the documentary: “Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos, Spiritual Elder of America,” produced by Nicholas Furris.

His Grace was laid to rest behind the Chapel of his beloved Hellenic College Holy Cross in Brookline (pictured below) on June 15, 1995.

All presentations and additional materials are available on the new website, bishopgerasimos.org. “Bishop Gerasimos, intercede for us!” ❖





ANNUAL SENIOR CITIZENS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

The time has come to gather together again and celebrate the holidays.
We are happy to announce the return of the Senior Citizens Luncheon!

Date: Thursday, December 2, 2021

8:30 am Orthros/ 9:30 am Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity Church

Feast Day of St. Porphyrios of Kavsoakalyvia

Time: 11:00 am Luncheon

Place: Holy Trinity Center Grand Room

RSVP: Yvonne Balouris 724-934-4850 or ybalouris@zoominternet.net

Please respond by November 25, 2021.

Dinner with Wine Pairings

Net proceeds to benefit
IOCC's relief efforts in Beirut

Sunday, November 14

5:30 ~ 7:30 pm

HOSTED BY

Khalil's Restaurant

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Middle Eastern feast with four wine pairings.*

Tickets: \$75 per person

Seating is limited

RSVP by Nov. 6 to reserve your space!

*Khalil's Restaurant requires proof of vaccination for
dining. Please bring proof of vaccination card or submit
ahead of time to zkhalil@live.com or fax to 740-282-5307.*

Tickets & Sponsorships at:

iocc.org/pittsburgh

Questions? Contact Zelfa at zkhalil@live.com or 412.417.4706

*The fair-market value (FMV) for each ticket is \$35. Only the portion of the
payment that exceeds the FMV is deductible as a charitable contribution.*



International Orthodox Christian Charities

Simpler is Better

How the era of endless conveniences has brought us so much discomfort

Geronda, How has modern technology changed our lives?

Because modern conveniences have exceeded all bounds, they have become inconveniences. Machines have multiplied and so have distractions; man has been turned into a machine. All kinds of machines and inventions now rule over man.

Modern devices are endless. They run faster than the mind of man, because the devil has a part in it too. In the old days, when we did not have telephones, faxes, and all kinds of gadgets, we lived tranquil and simple lives.

All of these modern comforts make the cultivation of conscience in people difficult. In the old days, people used to work with animals and were more compassionate. If you overloaded an animal and the poor thing kneeled down from the weight, you felt bad for it. If it was hungry and looked at you snivelling, it broke your heart. I remember, when a cow of ours fell ill, we suffered with it, because we considered it a member of the family. Today people own lots of devices made of steel, but, unfortunately, even their own hearts have turned into steel.

What do all these modern conveniences do to our relationships?

Today, we have so little consideration

for our fellow human beings. In the old days, if there was any leftover food, people would find someone that needed it and would give it away before it spoiled. A spiritually advanced person would even say, "Let the poor person eat first and I will eat later." Nowadays, people put the food in the refrigerator and don't even think of those in need. I remember, whenever we had a good yield of vegetables or fruit, we would always share it with our neighbours. What could we do with all that produce? It would spoil anyway. Now that we have refrigerators people think to themselves, "Why, share it with others? We'll put it in the fridge and keep it for ourselves." And I will not even mention the tons of produce we throw away or bury in landfills, while millions of people in other parts of the world are starving to death.

How have all these devices changed even Christians' values and our priorities?

All these gadgets are driving them crazy! All these conveniences make people suffer and suffocate with anxiety. At least in the old days, things were well-built and lasted a long time. Now you pay all this money to buy something and pretty soon it breaks down. So the factories keep making new things and taking people's money. People are working so hard trying to make ends meet.



Saint Paisios of Athos

Geronda, what should we tell mothers who are trying to find way to keep their children from being addicted to technology?

They must help them understand that television [*Editor's note: the saint's advice may be expanded to include cell phones, computers and other newer technology*] dulls their children's minds. They lose the ability to think on their own, to think critically — not to mention the damage it causes to their eyesight. And we are talking about man-made television.

But there is another kind, a spiritual television. When people uproot their old self and the eyes of the soul are cleansed, they can see into the future without the aid of any machines. Have they told their children about this other kind of television? If they won't, these boxes will make our children dumb.

Adam and Eve had the gift of foresight. But they lost it when they fell from Grace. If the Grace of the Holy Baptism is preserved, children will get with it spiritual foresight. But this requires watchfulness, vigilance and spiritual work. ❖

Excerpted from
The Spiritual Counsels, Vol. I

THE HOLY TRINITY

HERALD

*Faith. Family. Community***About the Herald**

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

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**About the Parish**

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

**Parish Administration
Clergy**

Rev. Fr. John Touloumes, Proistamenos
Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Assistant Priest

2021 Parish Council

George Danis, President (pcpresident@holytrinitypgh.org)
Alvin Backeris Anthony Balouris Ashley Bournias
George Dickos Tom Germanos Karen Georgiadis
George Mellis Richard Paese Michael Passodelis
Dean Passodelis Gerri Valliant Jeanne Willow

Ministries

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

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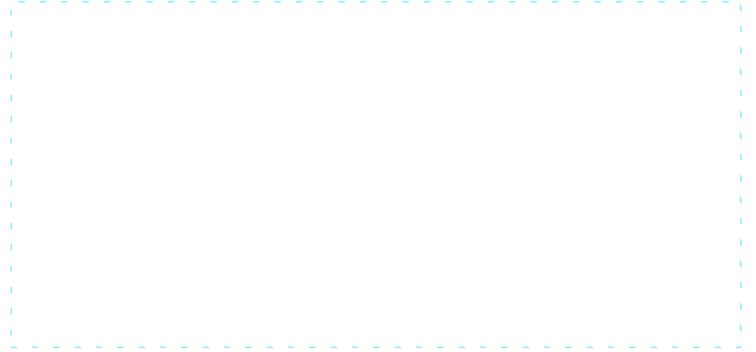
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OUR JOURNEY TO CHRIST

Only communion with Christ and constant participation in his work provides for us the knowledge of God and the desirable life. But we do not come to know Christ instantly at some point, and then he becomes ours. Christ is life, and we must constantly struggle to have him and to keep him within us. We get to know him and to have him as long as we struggle to follow him, to imitate him in our life. In all of our life, we must try to be conformed to Christ. Our life needs to be a journey to Christ, and being in Christ and through Christ, we go to the Father. The more we travel on the way of Christ with faith, the more we have Christ, the more we see in Christ the Father and are in the house of the Father with Christ.

Bishop Gerasimos Papadopoulos
The Gospel of John: A Commentary

