



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

SEPTEMBER 2016 VOLUME 24 • ISSUE 7

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
OUR VISION: "FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."

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QUICK NEWS



Holy Trinity JOY campers, staff and Father John on the "Photo Deck" at Camp Nazareth. Want to see more photos of this event and others in the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? See the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 6-8 or visit our growing online photo gallery site at photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

THE HOLY PROPHET ZACHARIAH—SEPTEMBER 5

ICON FROM THE DOME OF THE SAINT GEORGE CHAPEL



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

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

About the Herald

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

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About the Parish

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

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Parish Administration

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2016 Parish Council

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George Danis Joyce Athanasiou

Andrew Janis Stephen Stearns

Van Backeris Stephanie Sedor

Tom Germanos Alex Trilivas

Marios Kritiotis Gerri Valliant

Ministries

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



As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."
(Matthew 4.18-19)

My Beloved Spiritual Children,

The numbers are not good.

All right, now that I have your attention, you are probably wondering, "What numbers? Stewardship? Festival? Attendance?" No, actually, though those may be of great importance and interest to the the life of every church community, they are all doing well here at Holy Trinity. In fact, in many ways, the continued sacrificial love, dedicated labors, faithful attendance, active participating, generous giving and just plain hard work of the members of the Holy Trinity family are heading in the right direction. That is one reason a good way to portray the life of this blessed community right now might be the proverbial "salmon swimming upstream." If you take a look at that photo, you will notice that it's not an easy path and success is not assured. In fact, it takes great energy and focus. And it is against tremendous forces pushing in the opposite direction. But it is victorious and forward progress, even with all our challenges of never-enough finances, participation, volunteering and more. And I give glory to God for every push, every stride and every burst of love and energy each of the members of this family offer to keep the inspiring life of this parish proclaiming our *"Faith. Family. Community."* vision and propelling our mission *"To proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ"* forward.



So what, then, are the numbers to which I am referring? Once again, a number of studies and statistics have been published that remind us of the serious downstream forces that contend against the mission of the Gospel throughout this country:

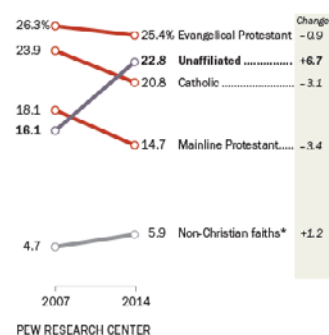
- The Pew Research Center study to the right indicates one strong area of religious growth in from 2007 to 2014 in America: the "Nones," or those who choose not to be affiliated with any faith. That number grew from 16.1% to 22.8%. Each of them—Greek or not—live in the field of unbelief the Lord has called us to harvest (Matthew 9.38).
- The most recent registry statistics of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese cite that from 1991-2015 the only area of growth has been funerals, from 4,090 to 4,324. Baptisms are down from 9,142 to 5,683 and Marriages from 5,711 to 2,336. Not good signs.

But remember that in the early 4th century, the heretical forces of Arianism (a false theology) outnumbered correct Christian faith. And until the victories at Midway and Stalingrad, the outcome of World War II was by no means assured. The numbers do not determine the outcome. The promise of Christ does.

So even if we are salmon "swimming upstream" while the world around us is being swept back down the river of doubt and darkness, it is our calling to continue the holy work of the Gospel. Had the Twelve Apostles focused on the numbers (them against the world), they might have never taken up the cause. But as Jesus empowered them, so He has also clothed us with "power from on high" (Luke 22.49). May it power us up the stream and help us call all to salvation!

Changing U.S. Religious Landscape

Between 2007 and 2014, the Christian share of the population fell from 76.4% to 70.6%, driven mainly by declines among mainline Protestants and Catholics. The unaffiliated experienced the most growth, and the share of Americans who belong to non-Christian faiths also increased.



WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services September

Please take note of the following weekday Liturgies and services this month. Unless otherwise indicated, Orthros is at 8:15 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30 at the St. George Chapel (SG).

Sept. 7, 6:00pm: Nativity of Theotokos Vespers & Vigil

Sept. 8, 9:00am: Nativity of Theotokos Divine Liturgy

The above two services will be held at the Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery in Saxonburg, PA,

Sept. 13, 5:00pm: Exaltation of the Holy Cross Vespers

Sept. 14, 8:30am: Holy Cross Orthros/10:00am Liturgy

The above services will be held at the Holy Cross Church in Mount Lebanon.

Sept. 17: Saint Sophia and her Daughters (SG)

Liturgy for Saint Sophia will be held at the Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery at 7:30am as the opening blessing of the "Steps to Heaven Walk" event.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Church School Begins. September 11

The first day of classes for Church School is Sunday, September 11 at 9:30am with Divine Liturgy and the children's sermon, followed by classes after Holy Communion. Please be sure to register your child(ren) during Coffee Hour or—new this year—online at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/register.

Church School Parents and Staff Sign-Up September

All Church School families are asked to sign up for hosting one Church School snacks Sunday. Even if there are multiple children in a family, each family is asked to pick just one Sunday. A list is available in the Gallery following Divine Liturgy. Also, help is still needed in the area of assistant teachers and in special event coordination, such as the Christmast Pageant. Sign up in the Gallery after Liturgy. Thank you!

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

GOYA Kick-Off Sep. 10

Holy Trinity GOYA will hold its fall Kick-Off on Saturday, September 10 at 6:00pm the home of Jim and Yvonne Balouris. All the teens of this community are asked to attend and get involved. See the GOYA email list for details.

Summer Camp Photos Online

Lots of photos of the Metropolis Summer Camp Ministry are now available online, including many of our Holy Trinity campers and staff. Visit pittsburgh.goarch.org/summer-camp and click on the Summer Camp photos link.

SPIRITUAL LIFE MINISTRY

"Prayer and Panera" St. Nikodemos Fellowship. . . Sep. 15

The Saint Nikodemos Men's Fellowship meets on the Third

Thursday of each month for morning prayers and Christian fellowship. The group meets at Holy Trinity Church promptly at 7:00 a.m. for a 15-20 minute morning prayer and scripture, then move up the hill to Panera for 30-45 minutes of coffee and breakfast and conversation on living as a Christian man in today's world. Change up your morning! Experience the call of Psalm 143.8: "Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love." Give it a try! The next meeting is Thursday, September 15.

"Faith and Family" Ministry To Resume October

Holy Trinity Church's "Faith and Family" ministry will resume starting in October and continue through May. Building on the fruits of our last three years and taking into account the constructive feedback of the participants and session leaders, it is our hope that it will become an even more effective opportunity for growth in Christ for all. Have ideas to help make this valuable ministry even more fruitful? Want to learn about something new? See a great idea somewhere else you would like to try here? To submit ideas or feedback, please see Spiritual Life Ministry Chairperson Joyce Athanasiou (412-292-4205) or Father John.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

Philoptochos Meeting September 18

The Ladies Philoptochos will hold their first meeting of the fall on Sunday, September 18, following Divine Liturgy.

Reminder: How to Submit Herald and Bulletin Notices

Have announcements the Holy Trinity community needs to hear? Putting on a special event? Official ministries and parish events of Holy Trinity Church may send information to be placed in our parish communications by sending requests to the following addresses: For inclusion in the *Herald*, please send announcements via email to

herald@HolyTrinityPgh.org

by the **15th of the month** for the following month. For the Sunday Bulletin, please send info via email to

bulletin@HolyTrinityPgh.org

by the **Wednesday** for the following Sunday. Organizations and ministries are responsible for writing and submitting any news or information they would like included by those deadlines. Questions? Call the Church Office. Thank you!

REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

"Steps to Heaven" Monastery Walk September 17

The annual 10K/2 mile "Steps to Heaven" Walk-a-thon is being held on Saturday, September 17 to benefit the Monastery. The day starts with Divine Liturgy at 7:30am for the feast of Saint Sophia and her children, which also celebrates this year's theme, "Walk with the Children of God." Check-in is at 8:30 followed by the Walk at 9:30 and lunch afterwards. Please support our sisters in Christ and register to walk or to help with the event at StepsToHeavenWalk.org.

For the latest updates and schedule of parish events, visit www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar

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

SEPTEMBER 2016 – "THE VOICE OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH"



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

The "Holy Days" of September

Rejoice, beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. Rejoice in the Lord always!

September 1: The Indiction

September 1st marks the beginning of the Indiction or the Ecclesiastical New Year. We pray that during this New Year of our Church, with the Blessings of our Heavenly Father, we will all be spiritually

regenerated and become faithful and fruitful servants and good stewards in the vineyard of our Lord Jesus Christ!

September 8: The Nativity of the Theotokos

On Thursday, September 8, our Church honors the birth of the Theotokos, the Virgin Mary. This is one of the 12 Major Feasts of the Church. The Theotokos was the chosen vessel of God. She was destined to bear the Savior of the World. There are many beautiful hymns written to honor the Theotokos. At every Church service there is a hymn to honor her.

The Troparion of the Feast

Your Nativity, O Theotokos, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe; For from you did shine forth the Sun of justice, Christ our God, Annulling the curse, and bestowing the blessing, abolishing death and granting us life everlasting.

September 14: The Elevation of the Holy Cross

On Wednesday, September 14, our Church celebrates the Feast of the Elevation of the Precious Cross of the Lord. This is also one of the 12 major feasts of the Church. This feast day is equal to the Holy and Great Friday and is also a strict fast day.

To the Christian, the Cross is a sacred symbol of his faith in Jesus Christ. We Orthodox Christians honor the Cross of Christ during the Great Feast of the Elevation of the Cross. It is through the Cross of Christ – the formerly hated and ignominious instrument of a cruel death – that we are saved. He who was slain on the Cross for our iniquities brought to life us who are not worthy. He has made us worthy of God's great mercy for He is good and compassionate. We on the Feast Day of the Elevation of the Cross rejoice and exalt His Holy Name. Our Church emphasizes the greatness of the Cross with these words: "The Cross is the guardian of the Universe; the Cross is the "beauty of the Church; the Cross is the might of kings; the Cross is the affirmation of the faithful; the Cross is the glory of angels and a plague to demons." Another hymn from the Feast: "Thy Cross, our Master, we adore, and thy Holy Resurrection do we glorify."

The Cross Of Christ

"As for me, however, I will boast only of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; for by means of his cross the world is dead to me, and I am dead to the world." Galatians 6:14

The apostle Paul did not say that he gloried in the virgin birth of Christ, although he, of course, believed in that. He did not glory in the miracles of Christ, although he knew about them. He did say, "I boast only in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ!"

Now why should we glory in the cross today? Why should we preach the cross? Why should we make so much of the cross? It was certainly not a glorious object when Christ died upon it. Death upon the cross meant the most shameful death that a man could die. It meant the greatest humiliation that could be imposed upon a human being. Yet when Jesus died upon that cross, He made it forever glorious. The day He

was crucified has become the greatest day in the history of the world. That cross has become the highest symbol that men ever looked upon. The influence of that cross has become the mightiest power in all the world. The little light which was kindled that day upon Calvary has indeed become the Light of the world. So today in deepest humility, let us kneel at the foot of the cross and find its meaning for our hearts.

But my beloved, we know nothing of the awful depth of human sin until you go to the cross. We look upon the One who is dying there and we say, "Who is this that is dying, and why does He die?" And the answer comes back from heaven, "This is My only begotten Son, dying not for His own sin, but for the sins of others." And when you and I come to realize that our sin plucked God's Son out of the Father's

bosom and brought Him down to this world to die upon a cruel Roman cross, we come to realize something of the awful depth of our sin.

As we come to the cross, we realize not only the depth of human sin, but the height of divine love. We realize not only how deep a man can go into sin, but how high God can go in His love. "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life." John 3: 16

My beloved, the way of the Cross is the only way that men can be saved. We are not saved by our good works; we are not saved by our generous gifts. We are saved by the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ on the cross, through OUR REPENTANCE FOR SIN AND OUR FAITH IN THE SAVIOUR.

*With His love,
Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos
Protopresbyter and Internal Missionary*



Stewardship: Living Out the Resurrection All Year

You've probably heard the phrase, it's not a sprint it's a marathon? We all know that life is normally a marathon but it may contain some "sprinting periods" to meet the demands that are prevalent in our race. Ecclesiastes 9:11 states "the race is not given to the swift or the strong but those who endure until the end." At Holy Trinity we have been blessed to have a "dual component" to our Stewardship race that consists of a sprinting period and a marathon period. The good news is that God has given us the tools, motivation and ability to run this race collectively. Every person who is here at this Church has a part to play and we are counting on each other to fulfill what God has given you to do.

Before we talk about each period we would like to thank each and everyone who has contributed thus far. As stated in an earlier bulletin, Stewardship pledges are up and individual stewards are increasing the level of contribution. Current giving covers approximately 65% of the church's operating costs. Please continue the great work since the race is still on and we need 35% more to cover 100% of the operating costs. Every amount helps so we are asking everyone to contribute.

"The marathon period" is defined as our continued commitment to contribute our time, talents and treasures to the work of Holy Trinity ministries at each and every opportunity. The "regular and faithful" members who currently fulfill many of these duties (Festival, Coffee Hour Set-Up, Cemetery Committee, Sunday School, Visitation, Focus, etc.,) are reaching their limits and are in need of your assistance. Your time and talents are needed at this time, to keep the life of Holy Trinity Church growing and vibrant.

Now here is an element of our "sprint period" that is pressing and requires our immediate attention. Again we are asking

for everyone's participation so much to the effect that we will be unable to make our mortgage payments after December 2016 if we don't get additional contributors to make a pledge and donate now. We need your Capital Campaign pledge commitment from now through the year 2020. Remember, the main reason we want to pay off our mortgage early is so that we don't have to pay the bank the huge amount of interest and we can use these funds to grow the ministries of Holy Trinity Church as God

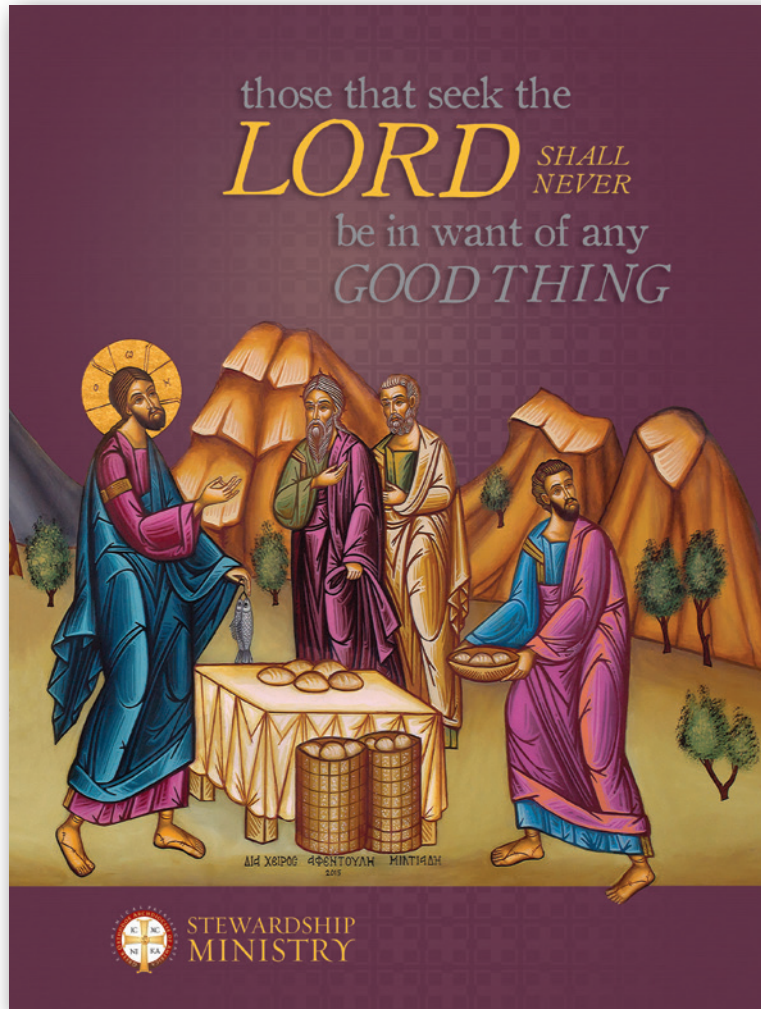
intended. If you find yourself thinking "this isn't for me", or "this isn't a good time for me", please reconsider. This is THE time for all of us, small and big, rich and poor. When our mother needs our help, we help her, to the best of our abilities. This is our Mother asking.

We all have a race to run in this life, both individually and collectively, so let us run with endurance, finish the race and give God the praise for all He has done in helping us set the pace and be with us, each and every step of the way until we cross the finish line. . Remember if we don't get participation from EVERYONE to give of his or her time, talents and treasures then WE are placing the future of Holy Trinity in jeopardy.

In closing, December is rapidly approaching and we need everyone to "sprint" by making that Capital Campaign pledge through 2020 if you haven't done so already. When we stand before God let us hear Him say "Well

done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. (St. Matthew 25:21). See you at the finish line!!

Your servants in Christ,
The Holy Trinity Stewardship Ministry Committee



2016 Stewardship Roster Update

Thank you to the following faithful stewards who have submitted their pledge cards for the 2016 pledge year since the last Herald. Please join them in their support for the ministries of Holy Trinity and complete your 2016 pledge commitment today! Remember, a signed pledge card is required as part of maintaining your membership in good standing at Holy Trinity Church each year.

Ms. Constance Bistolas-Walters
Ms. Pamela M. Bolkovac
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Geanopoulos

Mr. & Mrs. John Anthony Hastings
Mr. George Manolagas
Mr. & Mrs. Charles William Petredis

Mr. Christopher Sarandou
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sarandou
Mr & Mrs Robert Weaver







June/July 2016: Holy Trinity Church's youth participated in the Metropolis of Pittsburgh Summer Camp ministry in record numbers in 2016, with 31 campers. In addition, numerous young adults served as camp staff, our two clergy were part of the pastoral support team and one of our parishioners, Ted Cherpas, served as Camp Ministries Coordinator. All in all, a great Holy Trinity summer!



July 4-7, 2016: During the 43rd Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress in Nashville, TN, our own Father John was re-elected President of the Archdiocesan Presbyters Council, the official organization representing and serving all the clergy of the Archdiocese. Pictured above left are the 2016-2018 officers with His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, and above right Father John offers the Grand Banquet invocation.



August 8, 2016: Hundreds of laypeople and clergy joined in worship at the Divine Liturgy for the annual feast day celebration at the Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Monastery in Ellwood City, PA. The service was presided over by His Eminence Archbishop Mark of Philadelphia (OCA) and His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek of Pittsburgh (OCA), with over 18 clergy participating.

Original Greek language composition by Voula Hareras: Never Forget Our History



Voula Hareras

ΓΙΑ ΝΑ ΜΗΝ ΞΕΧΝΑΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ ΜΑΣ

Τό 1821 όλοι άνεξερέτως οί Ελληνες μέ άγώνες καί μεγάλες θυσίες μέχρι θανάτου πλήρωσαν μέ τό αίμα τους, γιά νά έλευθερώσουν τήν άγαπημένη τους Πατρίδα πού στέναζε κάτω από τήν άπάνθρωπη σκλαβιά 400 χρόνων.

Όλοι τους είναι άθάνατοι ήρωες καί δέν πρέπει νά τό ξεχνάμε καί νά περνούν σχεδόν άπαρατήρητα τέτοια ιστορικά γεγονότα.

Θά πρέπει μέ κάθε θυσία νά μάθουν τά παιδιά καί τά έγγόνια μας τήν ένδοξη ιστορία μας καί νά είναι περήφανα.

Σήμερα θά αναφέρω δυό ήρωικά νησιά πού πολέμησαν καί αυτά παλληκαρίσια καί έχυσαν μέχρι σταγόνα τό αίμα τους γιά τήν Ελευθερία τής Πατρίδας των. Καί μέ αύτήν τήν θυσίαν τους κατάφεραν νά συγκινήσουν όλα τά Κράτη καί νά προσφέρουν καί αυτά τήν βοήθεια καί τήν συμπαράστασί τους στον ένδοξο Ελληνικό Λαό. ΑΥΤΑ ΕΙΝΑΙ Η ΧΙΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΑ ΨΑΡΑ.

Η ΚΑΤΑΣΤΡΟΦΗ ΤΗΣ ΧΙΟΥ

ΚΑΝΑΡΗΣ'...Ταυτόχρονα μέ τήν άλλη Ελλάδα Επαναστάτησαν καί τά Νησιά,πρώτο δέ μεταξύ των Νησιών ή Χιος. Μάλιστα οί Ελληνες κατώρθωσαν νά έλευθερώσουν τήν Χίο,καί νά

Αναγκάσουν τούς Τούρκους νά κλειστούν σ'ένα φρούριο.

Ο Σουλτάνος θύμωσε μέ τά γεγονότα αυτά καί διάταξε τόν στόλο του νά πλεύση στην Χίο μέ 7000 στρατό,ό μικρός Ελληνικός στρατός δέν μπόρεσε νά αποκρούση τόν στρατό τού Σουλτάνου. Τότε όλο τό νησί παραδόθηκε στην καταστροφή ή πόλις της Χίου καί 40 χωριά κάηκαν,άπό τίς 100 χιλιάδες πληθυσμό 23 χιλιάδες έσφάγησαν καί 48 χιλιάδες πουλήθηκαν σάν δούλοι. Οί άλλοι κάτοικοι πού άπόμειναν σκορπίστηκαν στά βουνά καί στής σπηλιές τού Νησιού.

Ετσι τό μυροβόλο Νησί ή ώραία Χίος έρημώθηκε.

Αλλά τό κακούργημα τής Χίου δέν έμεινε άτιμώρητο. Ο Ελληνικός στόλος μέ Αρχηγό τόν Κανάρη,πού ήταν άπό τά ψαρά έφθασε στην Χίο, ό Κανάρης μέ τόν Πιπίνο άλλο Ναυαρχο άπό τήν Υδρα άποφάσισαν νά κάψουν τόν Τούρκικο Στόλο μέ πυρπολικά Κάθε ένας διάλεξε 20 συντρόφους, ύστερα μπήκαν μέσα σέ δυό βάρκες καί έδεσαν σέ κάθε μία ένα πυρπολικό.

Τά πυρπολικά ήταν μικρές βάρκες γεμάτες εύφλεκτες ουσίες, όπως θειάφι,πίσσα καί λοιπά,τά κολουσαν στά πλευρά των μεγάλων Καραβιών καί τά άναβαν. Επαιρναν άμέσως φωτιά καί μετέδιδαν τήν φωτιά στά Καράβια τά όποία καμωμένα άπό ξύλα άναβαν άμέσως καί γίνοντας παρανάλωμα πυρός. Στό λιμάνι τής Χίου ήταν

άγκυροβολημένος ό Τούρκικος Στόλος, μέ δυό μεγάλα πλοία,τήν Ναυαρχίδα καί τήν ύπονναρχίδα. Οί Τούρκοι γιόρταζαν τότε τό Ραμαζάνι. Νήστευαν όλη μέρα, τό βράδυτό είχαν ρίξει στό φαγοπότι καί τήν διασκέδασι. Οί περισσότεροι είχαν μαζευτή στά μεγάλα πλοία. Ο Κανάρης κι' ό Πιπίνος έπλησίασαν μέ τά πυρπολικά των τά πλοία, πρώτος ό Πιπίνος άναψε τό δικό του καί τό προσκόλησε στην Ναυαρχίδα, σέ λίγα λεπτά οί φλόγες έζωσαν τήν Ναυαρχίδα,ή φωτιά μετεδόθηκε καί σέ πλοίο πού ήταν εκεί κοντά άγκυροβολημένο, ύστερα σέ άλλα πλοία, οί Τούρκοι δέν ήξεραν τί συμβαίνει. Επεφταν στην θάλασσα καί προσπαθούσαν νά φύγουν άπό τά πλοία πού δέν είχαν πιά φωτιά.

Σέ λίγο ή φωτιά έφθασε στην πυριτιδαποθήκη. Η Ναυαρχίδα σάν πυροτέχνημα άνατινάχτηκε στό άγέρα μέ ένα τρομαχτικό κρότο. Ο Κανάρης άπό μακριά άκουσε τόν κρότο καί είδε τίς φλόγες καί είπε [Ω τί ώραία φωτοχυσία] έτσι ό Κανάρης έκδικήθηκε τήν καταστροφή τής Χίου. Οί Τούρκοι έχασαν 2000 Ναύτες καί πολλά πλοία, τά ύπόλοιπα έφυγαν γιά τόν Ελλήσποντο, καί γιά πολύν καιρό δέν τολμούσαν νά βγούν στό Αίγαιο, φοβόντουσαν τά πυρπολικά...

Η ΚΑΤΑΣΤΡΟΦΗ ΤΩΝ ΨΑΡΩΝ

Υστερα άπό τήν Χίο οί Τούρκοι ήθελαν νά τιμωρήσουν τά ψαρά διότι οί ψαριανοί μέ τά πλοία τους έδιναν πολύτιμες ύπηρεσίες στον άγώνα, τοτε 30,000 στρατός καί πολλά πλοία έξεκίνησαν έναντίον των Ψαρών. Οί Ψαριανοί ένοιωθαν τόν κύνδυνο μά ήταν άποφασισμένοι νά πολεμήσουν γιά τήν Πατρίδα των.

Ο Τούρκικος στόλος έφθασε στό λιμάνι καί άρχισε τόν κανονιοβολισμό, τέλος όμως άρχισαν νά ύπερισχύουν κατώρθωσαν νά φθάσουν στην πόλη καί ύστερα άπό φονική μάχη νά πάρουν τά ψαρά.

Οί γυναίκες μέ τά παιδιά τους στην άγκαλιά έπεφταν στην θάλασσα γιά νά σωθούν άπό τούς Τούρκους καί πνίγονταν.φωτιά καί σίδερα παντού.

Από τους Ψαριανούς μαχητές μόνον λίγοι άπομείνανε καί κλείστηκαν σέ ένα φρούριο.

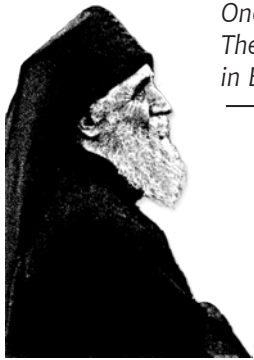
Όταν οί Τούρκοι μπήκαν μέσα οί Ελληνες έβαλαν φωτιά στην πυριτιδαποθήκη καί τό φρούριο άνατινάχτηκε στον άέρα μέ όλους τούς Ελληνες καί Τούρκους μέσα. Οί Τούρκοι έκάψαν όλο τό Νησί, ψυχή δέν έμεινε ζωντανή.

Πολύ παραστατικά ό Εθνικός μας ποιητής Διονύσιος Σολωμός περιγράφει τήν καταστροφή των Ψαρών...

Στων Ψαρών τήν όλόμαυρη ράχη
Περπατώντας ή δόξα μονάχη
Μελετά τά λαμπρά παλληκάρια
Καί στην κόμη στεφάνη φορεί
Καμωμένο άπό λίγα χορτάρια
Πούχαν μείνη στην έρημη Γή...

Βούλα Χαρερά





Saint 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.

Gheronda, does worrying about too many things take us away from God?

Look, let me try to explain. When a little child is playing and is all absorbed with his toys, he is not aware that his father may be next to him caressing him. If he interrupts his play a bit, then he will become aware of his father's caresses. Similarly, when we are preoccupied with too many activities and are anxiously concerned about them, when we worry too much about worldly matters, we cannot become aware of God's love. God gives but we do not sense it. Be careful not to waste your precious energy on redundant worries and vanities, which will turn to dust one day. When you do this, you not only tire your body, but you also scatter your mind aimlessly, offering God only your fatigue and yawns at the time of prayer—much like the sacrifice offered by Cain. It follows that your inner state will be like that of Cain's, you will be full of anxiety and sighs provoked by the devil standing by your side.

We must not waste aimlessly the fruit, the inner core of our power and then leave the shells for God. The many cares of life sap the marrow of our heart and leave nothing for Christ. If you notice that your mind constantly wanders off to various chores that you have to do, you must realize that you are not doing well spiritually, and this should alarm you because you have distanced yourself from God. You must realize that you are closer to material things than you are to God, closer to creation than to the Creator.

Those who work too hard and are full of worries forget God. Father Tychon used to say, “The Pharaoh gave the Israelites too much work and just enough food to forget God.” In our days, the devil has made people lose themselves in matter and all kinds of distractions; they work too much and they eat too much. This way they come to forget God,’ and they lose the ability or rather the will, to make good use of the freedom given to them, and sanctify their soul. Fortunately, however, and against the devil's desires, there is a good side to this; people are so busy that they don't have enough time to sin as much they would have liked to.

But I am not a monk and there are so many things to take care of living life in the world! How can I find peace in the middle of it all?

Where distractions and worries are removed, inner peace and spiritual success will follow. Too many worries will distance people from God. Distractions go hand in hand with spiritual parasites and the static can get so bad that spiritual wireless radios will not give a clear signal. A monk who does not lead a spiritual life has no excuse. Look at the poor people who live in the world and still try to lead spiritual lives. The monk has none of their worries; neither rent, nor debts nor keeping a job is on his mind. And he has his Spiritual

Father close by, ready and available; the Church is right in the Monastery. Prayer Services, Holy Unction, Supplication Services, and Divine Liturgies—it's all there for him. A monk enjoys a carefree life and his only concern is how to live an angelic life; he has no other goal. By contrast, a layperson has so much to care about! He must nurture and raise his children and, at the same time, he has to struggle for the salvation of his soul. Elder Tryfon used to say, “Does the monk want to attend a vigil? He can do it. Does he want to fast? He can do it. He has no wife and children. The layman, however, cannot. He has children ... one is asking for a pair of shoes, the other needs new clothes, the other needs something else...”

If we seek above all the Kingdom of Heaven and that's all we care for, the rest will be given to us.' If we become forgetful, then not only do we waste our time but we waste our very own self. When we remain mindful and prepare for the next life, then this life too will become meaningful. When we start thinking of the next life, nothing is the same anymore. But if all we think about is how to make this a comfortable life, then not only are we miserable, but we end up weary and condemned.

Do not be overwhelmed with anxiety and be possessed by the thought that, “Now we must do this, next we must do that and so on,” because this way Armageddon' will come, and you will still be hard at work. Even doing things with anxiety is demonic. Tune in to Christ! Otherwise, you will appear to be living near Him but inside you will still carry the mindset of this world, and, you might end up, I am afraid, like the foolish virgins.

The wise virgins did not only have kindness, they also had the right kind of mindfulness; unlike the foolish virgins that were careless, they were on guard and vigilant. This is why the Lord gave them the solemn warning, Be awake and watchful. They were virgins but foolish. If someone is born a fool, it is a blessing from God. She enters directly into the next life without having to pass any examinations. But if she is gifted with an intelligent mind and yet lives a foolish life, she will have no excuse on the Day of Judgment.

Can you see in the case of Martha and Mary, mentioned in the Gospel, how mindless care for things caused Martha to behave somewhat impudently? It seems that in the beginning Mary was actually helping her, but when she realized that Martha was nowhere near completing her preparations, she left her and went to listen to Jesus. She thought to herself, “Am I to lose time with my Christ for the sake of Martha's salads and sweets?” As if Christ had come to their home to taste Martha's salads and foods! It was then that Martha became annoyed and said, Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Let us be careful, then, not to behave like Martha. Let us pray that we will become good “Marys.”

Excerpted from “Elder Paisios of Mount Athos, The Spiritual Counsels, Volume I: With Pain and Love for Contemporary Man”



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The Liturgy: A Festival of Faith



The Liturgy in all of its expressions is a festival of faith, a celebration of the gift of knowledge of the Holy Trinity, and a reaffirmation of the new life that comes from the triune God. Hence we can say with Father Alexander Schmemmann that the Liturgy constitutes, shapes, defines, and expresses the Church and her members. The Liturgy is, without exaggeration, the face and the voice of the Church, the very expression of her inner self, her essence and conscience, the manifestation of her being the mystical body of Christ. Through the Liturgy, the Church expresses her self-identity, preserves her traditions, and manifests the mystery of the unity in diversity of her members. Hence, we can say that the Church is primarily a worshipping community. Father Georges Florovsky affirms this truth: "Worship is the norm of Christian existence ... The Church herself is ultimately 'real' precisely as a worshipping community."

(Excerpted from GOTR 49:3-4 "The Liturgy: The Church's Faith in Motion" by Rev. Fr. Alkiviadis Calivas)

Scripture of the Month: "O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!" (Psalm 95.6)