

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

1923 • OUR 79TH YEAR OF MINISTRY • 2002

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

January 2002

www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

Volume 10 – Issue 1

Monthly Parish Newsletter
of Holy Trinity
Greek Orthodox Church
Pittsburgh, PA

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Just follow the Herald link!

Holy Theophany - January 6

Ἡ ΒΑΠΤΙΣΙΣ ΤῸ ΧΡΙΣΤῸ



In the Jordan when You were baptized, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest. For the voice of the Father bore witness to You, calling You His beloved Son; and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the truth of that word. O Christ our God, Who did appear and illumine the world, glory to You!

The Apolytikion of Theophany

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

Parish Newsletter of
Holy Trinity
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A Parish of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of
Pittsburgh and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese
of America under the Spiritual Jurisdiction of the
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

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The Cultural Side

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Publication Schedule

The Herald is published monthly.
The information deadline is the 15th of each
month. If you would like to assist with mailing
the Herald, please contact the church secretary
at 412-321-9282 to volunteer your help.

This issue of
the Herald
is sponsored by
Angela Morris
in memory of her
beloved husband,
**Michael F.
Morris**
May his memory
be eternal!

Father John's Message

The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea,
across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in
darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region
and shadow of death light has dawned.”

(From Matthew 4.15-16, quoting the Prophet Isaiah)

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Christ,

Greetings in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! As we prepare to celebrate His Holy Nativity and coming into the world in the flesh, as well as His Holy Baptism at Theophany in the River Jordan, it seems many people have a different sense of the celebration of the holidays this year, mainly as a result of our nation's tragic losses stemming from the September 11 terrorist attacks. Even though most of us did not lose any personal acquaintances in the tragedy with it being so far away, it has affected many people and has cast its shadow far and wide.

Yet that idea of a land with darkness somehow looming over it is precisely what the holy fathers had in mind when they assigned the above reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew as the reading for the Sunday after Theophany. It describes the final condition of God's people before the Incarnation. You see, although the darkness cast by the shadow of September 11 is broad, it is not unique in its ability to bring people into the realm which shakes their sense of hope. That was the condition of the Hebrews who, through generations of persecutions and wars, had been almost stripped of it. That condition is shattered through the divine action of God, who burst through the darkness of this world by taking on flesh and sanctifying it, then taking on death and conquering it. The holy fathers have provided us with an “after the feast” reminder through this reading. It reminds us today that long after we put the Christmas lights away, the light of hope and salvation the Lord has brought us in these feasts does not wane. It also gives us yet another reason why understanding the history and experience of God's people throughout history in the scriptures can help us in our lives today. God provided what they needed for salvation then; He will continue to provide it for us today.

In an effort to bring us further along that path of understanding what God has done, with whom and when and how it continues to affect our lives today, I will be offering an eight-week series of studies entitled, “A Panoramic View of Holy Scripture.” According to the author of the book of the same title, “The light that the pages of Holy Scripture sends forth is eternal and will illuminate ‘every man coming into the world’ (John 1.9). He who believes and studies scripture and lives according to its teachings lives in the light.” What better way to immerse ourselves in that light but to get to know it? Please place each Wednesday from January 9 through February 27 on your schedule for this important series.

As we approach the New Year, brothers and sisters, may we keep this in mind: Jesus is given many names in the Christmas readings. One must stand out this year—*Emmanuel*. As that holy name states, “God is with us.” No matter what the coming year brings, nothing can change that. It is up to us to discover the truth and the promise of that name and to make it central to all our hopes, desires, plans, resolutions and lives. It is experienced in our worship, our home, our work and wherever we choose to recognize it. This looks to be an exciting year for Holy Trinity Church. I, for one, am glad we will not face it alone ... for God is with us! Have a blessed Christmas and a healthy and joyous New Year!



News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

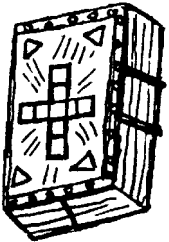
No Church School Class December 30

Attention, parents! There will be no Church School class on December 30 due to the holiday celebrations, so please plan on being in church *together as a family* for the entire service on those days. Instead of teaching your children to think of these times as “days off from church,” give your children the gift of faith and dedication by bringing them to Liturgy and helping them understand the importance of worship and prayer in the Orthodox life. It is one of the best gifts you can give your children at the holidays for a lifetime! Thanks!

Theophany Services & Water Blessing ... January 6

Since the Great Feast of Theophany falls on a Sunday this year, there will be no Church School class on January 6 in order to allow us to celebrate the Great Blessing of the Waters together as families. Father John will offer a message to the children just prior to the Blessing of the Waters instead of the usual spot after the Gospel reading. Parents, please be sure to have your children there on that day to receive the blessings of this Great Feast of the Lord.

New Adult Study Series on the Scriptures. Jan./Feb.



Ready to brush up on your knowledge of the Bible? Want to “get to know” the Bible but aren’t ready for a verse-by-verse analysis? Would you like to be able to see the beautiful forest of Holy Scripture without getting lost in the trees? If so, this course is for you!

Father John will be leading a new study series in January and February for adults entitled, “A Panoramic View of Holy Scripture.” The source material for the course will be two new publications by the respected Bishop Augoustinos Kantiotes of Florina, Greece. The goal is to take a friendly and plain-language view of the Bible to help us become more scripturally educated and illuminated. See the enclosed flyer for details.

St. Lydia’s Women’s Fellowship January

The St. Lydia Women’s Study Fellowship is a ministry for women to share in fellowship and to study scripture, the Orthodox Faith and family life in today’s world. The meetings take place about twice a month on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m at a home in the North Hills. New participants are always welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable and the approach is casual, but the

subjects are important for today’s families. The main source material for studies this year is the book, “Diary of a Russian Priest,” which provides scriptural guidance, pastoral direction and spiritual insights into every day life.

Meetings are scheduled for January 17 and 31. For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Paula Valiant at 412-487-3977.

St. Nikodemos Men’s Fellowship January



The St. Nikodemos Men’s Study Fellowship meets on the second and fourth Thursday each month from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. at the office of TriadUSA, Suite 460, Two Gateway Center, downtown. The group features prayer, Bible study, topics of interest to Orthodox Christian men and how to live our Faith in the working world. It is open to all interested men and has been centrally located downtown to accommodate those who need to be at work early. For directions, call Gus Georgiadis at 412-880-4999.

The first meetings of 2002 are scheduled for January 10 and January 24.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

JOY Overnight Trip to Zoo. January 18

The JOY ministry will be taking an exciting overnight trip to the Pittsburgh Zoo on Friday, January 18th. The information will be sent directly to the homes of the JOY children. Please watch for details. Questions? Contact Karen Georgiadis at 724-625-8551.

GOYA Basketball Tournaments. January

Our GOYA will be participating in two Diocese Basketball Tournaments in January. The first is January 11-13 at St. Haralambos in Canton, OH. The second is January 25-27 at St. Nicholas in Pittsburgh. Please be sure to encourage our GOYA in their efforts by supporting the various fund-raisers which make these activities possible, including the Superbowl Hoagie sale (see below) and the Valentine’s Breakfast in February. Thank you!

GOYA Parent Meeting & Feed the Homeless Project

The GOYA will again reach out their halping hands to the local community by participating in the Feed the Homeless project of the Orthodox Clergy Brother-

News & Events

hood of Greater Pittsburgh. The GOYAn's will gather on Friday, January 4 at 6:00 pm in the Social Hall. A light dinner will be provided for GOYAn's and their families. Also, during this project, a Parents' Meeting will be held to make plans for the upcoming basketball tournaments and for our own Holy Trinity Basketball Tournament, which our GOYA will be hosting from March 1-3, 2002.

GOYA Hoagie Sale February 3

The GOYA will be pre-selling hoagies during January for Superbowl Sunday on February 3. Please support our teens in this effort, which helps raise funds for the various events of the GOYA, outreach projects, trips and the Diocese basketball tournaments. Thanks!

LITURGICAL LIFE

Paraclesis Service January 9



On the first Wednesday of each month, Holy Trinity Church offers a Paraclesis service to the Theotokos. Special prayers are also offered for peace in the world and protection of our people and our country during this time of turmoil. Please also bring a list of the names of people you would like prayed for during the service. (Note: The service is being moved to the second Wednesday in January due to a scheduling conflict.)

Weekday Liturgies January

Please keep in mind the following festal celebrations during the month of December. Unless otherwise noted, each listing indicates Orthros at 9:00 am, followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am.

Sat. Jan. 5 The Forefeast of Theophany

This is the first of two Liturgies and Great Blessings of the Water services of Theophany. It is also a strict fast day in preparation for the feast.

Mon. Jan. 7... St. John the Baptist & Forerunner

Thu. Jan. 17..... St. Anthony the Great

Note: Liturgy for St. Anthony will be held at St. Anthony Church in Clairton with His Eminence, Metropolitan Maximos.

Fri. Jan 25 St. Gregory the Theologian

Wed. Jan. 30 The Three Hierarchs

Note: Liturgy for the Three Hierarchs will be held at Holy Cross Church, home of the Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School, which celebrates its feast day on this day..

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.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Over 50 Meeting January 31

The Over 50 Club will hold its monthly meeting and lunch at the Holy Trinity Social Hall on Thursday, January 31 at 12:00 noon. For information, call Stella Athanasiou at 412-322-4080.

Year-End Donations Notice

Each year, questions arise concerning year-end donations, such as, "Can I pay ahead for next year's pledge?" or, "When is the last day I can get credit for a donation this year." Here are some answers:

Tax Year credit: In order for donations to be credited for the 2001 tax year, they must be received at the church by December 31 or postmarked by December 31, regardless of the pledge year to which they apply. This is an I.R.S. regulation. We can only provide proof of donation for the calendar in which the donation was made.

Pledge Year credit: You can at any time pay ahead for next year's pledge or behind for last year's, but please note whether year-end donations should be applied to your 2001 pledge or 2002 pledge.

2002 Pledge Cards Available

Stewardship Pledge Cards for the year 2002 will be distributed after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, December 23. Please pick up your envelope on that day to help save the church the expense of mailing it. Those cards not picked up will be mailed directly to the homes of the members the following week.

Please read the information sent with the card and give dedicated and sacrificial attention to completing and signing your card as soon as possible with an eye toward helping your church reach its Stewardship goal. You may bring or mail the card to the church, but the Stewardship Committee is requesting all cards be submitted by Sunday, January 13. Thank you, good and faithful stewards!

Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update



Happy New Years and Happy Birthday to my little sister Zoe! Yes today my sister is one years old, you see she was born January 1 last year. She is sooo cute and cuddly and I love her. Well, on to our reading for this month.

This reading is more for my older children but you younger ones may also learn from this reading. I want to talk about two volumes from Paul's letters by Anthony Coniaris.

Being the curios little mouse that I am I asked Papou, " Please tell me about Paul's tresaure's". Papou answered, " The word letter means epistle". Fourteen of the books in the New Testament are actually letters that Paul wrote to the early christian churches. The new christians had no books to guide them. So, Paul wrote about the real life problems they faced. He taught them how to live so their lives would show in Christ. The churches treasured these letters. The early christians saved them to read over and over again. Even today hundreds of years later Paul's words still speak to us during every Divine Liturgy to help guide us and to live our lives in a christian way.

My yaiyai recommended to all the younger children, ages 7-10, another reading called "The Turnabout Paul's Story", by Michael Williams. This story shows Chist's love is stronger than our sins. Saul, a persecutor of christians is proof! He did a complete 180 degree turnabout on the route to Damascus. Saul became Paul, Jesus saved him by converting him into one of the most devout believers ever. WOW! Paul must have been one of the greatest christians of the church! This book also includes stories about his childhood, conversion to christianity, friendships with other christians and escapes from shipwreck and prison. He had a very exciting life back then.

Love in Christ, Spero

The Feast of Theophany and the Blessing of Homes

"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. 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.

As the service concludes, please lead the priest throughout the house to sprinkle the holy water. 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.

2002 House Blessing Schedule

Date	Time	Area	Zip Codes
Mon. 1/7	3pm-6pm	Northside	15212
Tue. 1/8	2pm-6pm	Mt. Lebanon, Bethel, U. St. Clair, Greentree	15102, 15241, 15243, 1522X
Wed. 1/9	10am-5pm	North Hills/McKnight	15237
Thu. 1/10	1pm-4pm	North Hills/Wexford	15237, 15090
Thu. 1/10	3pm-7pm	Bellevue, Westview	15202, 15229
Fri. 1/11	9am-12pm	Dormont, Brookline	15216, 15226
Mon. 1/14	1pm-4pm	Northside/Perrysville	15212, 15214
Mon. 1/14	6pm-9pm	North Hills/McKnight	15237
Tue. 1/15	3pm-8pm	Wedford, Cranberry	15237, 160XX
Wed. 1/16	1pm-4pm	Other/Pittsburgh	Various
Thu. 1/17	5pm-8pm	Other/North Hills	Various

Special note: Please submit your form ASAP and please be available at the time scheduled for your area. Re-scheduling will only be done in cases of inclement weather, not on an individual basis. Thank you for helping make it possible to visit as many homes as possible by maintaining the schedule!

PLEASE RETURN THE FORM ON THE BACK PAGE BEFORE JANUARY 5 TO SCHEDULE YOUR HOME

Το Θάυμα των Χριστουγέννων

Ο Γεωργος αποτελειωσε βιαστικά ολλες τις παραγγελιες που ειχε στο μαγαζι που δουλεβε, αποχαιρετισε το αφεντικο του τον κυρ. Ανδρεα και του ευχηθηκε καλα Χριστουγεννα. Αυτος τον πληρωσε και το μεροκαματο, και του εδωσε και μερικα χρηματα, δωρο χριστουγεννιατικο, και ο μικρος εφυγε τρεχοντας.

Εξω ο καιρος ειχε χαλασει, εκανε κρυο τσουχτερο και νυφαδες χιονιου επεφταν συνεχεια. Ο Γεωργακης ομως δεν ενοιωθε κρυο, ηταν χαρουμενος γιατι σημερα θα πραγματοποιουσε το μεγαλο του ονειρο. Στο λεμο του κρεμοταν κατασαρκα ενα σακουλακι με χρηματα. Τα μαζεβε δεκαρα, δεκαρα ολον το χρονο, για να αγορασει μ'αυτα ενα ποδηλατο που το εβλεπε και το καμαρωνε καθε μερα στην βιτρινα του καταστηματος στην γωνια του δρομου.

Ω! ναι με ποση λαχταρα περιμενε τουτην την ωρα. Επιτελους τα καταφερε και ηταν εις θεση να το αγορασει.

Ο Γεωργακης ηταν περιπου δωδεκα χρονων ορφανος απο πατερα. Μερικα χρονια τωρα ζουσε με την μητερα του, που προσπαθουσε η δυστυχη να μεγαλωσει το παιδι βιοπαλευοντας.

Ομως η κακια τυχη χτυπησε ξανα την πορτα τους, εδω και δυο χρονια επαθε εγκεφαλικο και εμεινε παραλυτη, καθισμενη στην αναπηρικη καρεκλα. Έκανε οτι μπορούσε γυρο στο σπιτι. Ετσι ο μικρος απο δεκα χρονων βρεθηκε προστατης της μητερας του και επρεπε να βοηθησει να ζησουν.

Ηταν μικρος για να τον παρουν σε καλη δουλεια, κι' ετσι εγινε θεληματαρης στο καταστημα τροφιμων τρεις δρομους πιο κατω απο το σπιτι του. Φωναζαν οι πελατες απο τα γυρω διαμερισματα, και αυτος κουβαλουσε τα ψωνια, επερνε ενα μικρο μεροκαματο απο τον κυρ Ανδρεα, ομως και με τα φιλοδωρηματα που του εδιναν εβγαζε καλο μεροκαματο.

Ηταν κουραστικη δουλεια σηκωνε βαρος δυσαναλογο για την ηλικια του και πολες φορες η αποσταση απο το μαγαζι ηταν μεγαλη, ομως δεν

παραπονιοταν ηταν ενα πολυ καλο αγορι, και η χαρα του ηταν μεγαλη που βοηθουσε την μητερα του που τοσο αγαπουσε.

Ενα χρονο περιπου ειχε δη στην βιτρινα το ποδηλατο, και μπηκε στην καρδια του. Αχ ας μπορούσε να το παρει, ποσο ποιο ξεκουραστα θα εκανε την δουλεια του. Θα εβαζε στο καλαθι πισω τα ψωνια θα κρεμαγε και δυο σακουλες μπροστα, και γρηγορα-γρηγορα θα τελειωνε και θα εβγαζε πιο πολλα χρηματα.

Ετσι αρχισε να βαζει στην ακρη καθε μερα ενα μικρο ποσο και τωρα ειχε μαζεψει οσα χριαζοταν. Και με το χριστουγεννιατικο δωρο θα ψωνιζε και για το σπιτι οτι χριαζοταν, αυτα σκεφτοταν και ετρεχε χαμογελοντας.

Περνοντας εξω απο ενα κτιριο στη γωνια του δρομου, στο κουφωμα της πορτας ειδε μια γυναικα καθισμενη, κατι κραταγε στην αγκαλια της και διπλα της ηταν ενας μικρος μπογος.

Ο Γεωργακης θα περνούσε χωρις να δωσει μεγαλη προσοχη, τον παραξενεψε ομως που η γυναικα οταν ειδε που πλisiaζε προσπαθησε να κρυφτει πιο βαθεια και οπως προσπερασε ακουσε πνιχτο κλαμα μωρου.

Προχωρησε μερικα βηματα αλλα κατι ανωτερο απο περιεργια τον εκαμε να ξαναγυρισει για να δει τι γινεται. Η γυναικα τρομαγμενη που τον ειδε να πλησιαζει προσπαθησε να σηκωθεί να φυγει μα δεν το καταφερε ευκολα.

Ο Γεωργακης την πλησιασε και την ρωτησε τι της συμβαινει και αν μπορεί να την εξυπηρετησει. Αυτη δεν απαντησε αμεσως αλλα οταν σηκωσε τα ματια της και ειδε οτι ηταν ενα μικρο παιδι ησυχασε καπως, εσφυξε στην αγκαλια της, το τυλιγμενο με μια κουβερτουλα μωρο και στην επιμονη ερωτηση του Γεωργακη, εαν θελει να την βοηθησει να παει στο σπιτι της με μια ξενη προφορα του ειπε οτι δεν εχει που να παει.

Ο Γεωργακης την προσεξε τωρα καλυτερα και ειδε οτι ηταν ενα νεαρο κοριτσι οχι μεγαλυτερο των εικοσι χρονων, φοβισμενη και σχεδον παγωμενη, αυτη και το μωρο απο τον

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παγωμενο αερα Χωρις δισταγμο της ειπε να τον ακολουθησει και της πηρε και το μπογαλακι στα χερια του.

Το κοριτσι στην αρχη ηταν δισταχτικο οταν ομως ο Γεωργακης της ειπε οτι θα πανε σπιτι του αφεθηκε στην τυχη της, πραγματι σε λιγο εφθασαν σπιτι, ο Γεωργακης εξηγησε στην μητερα του, που τον κοιταζε εκπληκτη, τι σηνεβει και την παρακαλεσε να φιλοξενησουν το κοριτσι μεχρι να δουν τι θα γινει.

Η μητερα του ουτε στιγμη δεν σκεφτηκε να αρνηθη, ειπε στο κοριτσι να βαλει μερικα ξυλα στην σομπα και να τακτοποιησει το μωρο που εκλεγε ανησυχο, και ηταν μελανιασμενο απο το κρυο. Ο Γεωργακης αφησε τις δυο γυναικες να τακτοποιηθουν και ετρεξε να προλαβει τα μαγαζια ανοιχτα.

Αγορασε οτι χρειαζοτα για ενα καλο χριστουγεννιατικο τραπεζι. Μπηκε στο ζαχαροπλαστικο πηρε ενα χριστοψωμο και μερικα γλυκα. Μετα πηγε σε αλλο καταστημα, πηρε για την μητερα του μια ωραια μαλλινη ζακετα, ζεστες μαλλινες παντουφλες για το κοριτσι και παλτουδακι, σκουφακι και καλτσες για το μωρο.

Εφτιαξε ομορφα πακετα, και φορτομενος με τα πακετα αλλα ξαλαφρωμενος απο τα χρηματα στο σακουλακι, γυρισε σπιτι, περνοντας απο το ποδηλατο το αποχαιρετισε μένα χαμογελο.

Στο διαστημα αυτο η μητερα του ειπε στο κοριτσι να παρει την σκαφη που ζυμωνε ψωμι. Όταν ηταν καλα, εβαλλαν κουβερτουλες σεντονι και εφτιζαν μια προχειρη κουνια για το μωρο, το κοριτσι το επλυνε το ταισε και τωρα ζεστο και χορτατο.

Κοιμοταν στην κουνιτσα διπλα στην σομπα. Κατοπιν αφου πλυθηκε και φορεσε καθαρα ρουχα, που της ειπε η κυρια Αρετη να παρει απο την τουλαπα της, καθησε διπλα της και με συντομια της ειπε την ιστορια της.

Κυρια Αρετη, με λενε Νατασα. Γεννηθηκα στην Αλβανια, περασα ασχημα παιδικα χρονια φτωχια μεγαλη. Στα δεκαεενεα μου χρονια γνωρισα ενα πολυ καλο παιδι, αγαπηθηκαμε και παντρεφτικαμε, φτωχικα χρονια μα η αγαπη μας μεγαλη.

Τελικα, μια μερα παρεα μένα πρωτο μου

εξαδελφο και την γυναικα του αποφασισαμε να φυγουμε κρυφα, να περασουμε τα συνορα για να βρουμε μια καλυτερη τυχη στην Ελλαδα.

Με πολλους κινδινους τα καταφεραμε να περασουμε τα συνορα, κρυφα κρυφα προχωρουσαμε χαρουμενοι. Ο ανδρας μου προχωρουσε εμπρος εμεις ακολουθουσαμε απο αποσταση, ημουν και εγκυος και προσεχα, σε καποια στιγμη ακουσαμε ενα τρομαχτικο κροτο, ο δυστυχος ο ανδρας μου πατησε μια ναρκη και τον εκαμε κομματια.

Τι θελεις να σου πω κυρα Αρετη, νομισα πως θα πεθαινα και εγω μαζυ του, ομως φυγαμε γρηγορα, κρυφτηκαμε καπου και επειτα απο χιλια βασανα φθασαμε σε καποιο χωριο οπου περασαμε την νυκτα.

Την αλλη μερα φυγαμε και ηλθαμε στην μεγαλη τουτη πολειτια που ειναι πιο ευκολο να κρυβεσαι, νοικιασαμε ενα δωματιο στο υπογειο μιας πολυκατοικιας και ψαχναμε για δουλεια καθαριζαμε σπιτια. Ο εξαδελφος μου εκανε και τον κηπουρο, ετσι μαζυ με κατι χρηματα που φεραμε μαζυ μας τα περνουσαμε καπως καλα.

Σε λιγο διστημα με την βοηθεια της εξαδελφης μου γεννησα το μωρο. Εγω δεν μπορουσα να παω σε νοσοκομειο πρωτον γιατι θα μου ζητουσαν χαρτια, μα και γιατι δεν ειχα χρηματα, υπεφερα τρομερα. Ομως με την δικη τους βοηθεια το περασα κι'αυτο.

Αυτοι δουλευαν ολη την ημερα και παντα με φοβο μην τους πιασουν.

Μια μερα περιμενα μα δεν φανηκαν πουθενα μεχρι πολυ αργα, ηλθε ενας γνωστος μας αλβανος και μου εδωσε ενα σημειωμα του εξαδελφου μου, που ελεγε οτι τους επιασαν μαζυ με αλλους και τους εστειλαν στην Αλβανια. Μου ελεγε να μεταχειριστω τα χρηματα που φυλαγαν και να δουμε τι θα γινει.

Εκλαψα και τα χασα, τι θα γινω τωρα μένα μωρο. Πληρωσα το νοικι και προσπαθουσα να βρω δουλεια μα ηταν δυσκολο που θα αφινα το μωρο. Ηλθε και ο αλλος μηνας πληρωσα με τα τελευταια μου χρηματα το νοικι. Τωρα ηταν τα δυσκολα τι να κανω, να ζητιανεψω ντρεπομουν, φοβομου δε, μην με πιασουν και με στειλουν πισω στην πατριδα μου, γιατι τωρα που ειχα και το παιδι μου ηθελα να ζηση ελευθερο.

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

Τελειωσε και αυτος ο μηνας και δεν ειχα να πληρωσω το νοικι, μου ειπαν να φυγω αλοιως θα φωναζαν την αστυνομια.

Φοβηθηκα, πηρα αυτα τα ρουχαλακια και εφυγα. Ειναι μερικες μερες τωρα που κοιμομαστε στο σταθμο του τραινου κλεφτα, μας κυνηγουσαν πεινουςα.

Γαλα δεν ειχα αρκετο για να χορτασει το μωρο. Έβλεπα πως δεν θα ηταν ευκολο να το κρατησω και σημερα ειχα παρει την αποφαση να το δωσω.

Σκεφτηκα να το αφησω εξω απο την πολυκατοικια, να κτυπησω το κουδουνι, και να κρυφτω πιο περα να δω να το παρουν. Αρκετη ωρα στεκομουν και δεν αποφασιζα να το αφισω, το εσφιγγα με βουβο κλαμα.

Μεχρι που περασε ο Γεωργακης και με εφερε στο ευλογημενο σπιτι σας.

Η κυρια Αρετη ακουσε με συγκινηση την Νατασα και της λεει, Υπαρχει Θεος, παιδι μου, που φροντιζει για ολους μας. Δεν αφινει κανεναν απροστατευτο.

Εκεινη τη στιγμη μπηκε ο Γεωργακης. Η Νατασα τον βοηθησε με τα ψωνια, μετα αυτος τους εδωσε τα δωρα τους, η χαρα τους μεγαλη και τα φορεσαν αμεσως. Η Νατασα μετα βαλθηκε να φτιαξει κατι για φαγητο, και η κυρια Αρετη ειπε στο Γεωργακη την ιστορια της Νατασας και συμπληρωσε, ο Θεος παιδι μου εστειλλε το κοριτσι, και εγω το χρειαζομαι και αυτη. Χρειαζεται οικογενεια, θα φροντισουμε για ολα. Μεγαλη η Χαρη του Θεου!

Η Νατασα πλησιασε και της ειπε, Κυρια Αρετη, συνεχεια λετε για τον Θεο. Θελω και εγω να μαθω τι ειναι αυτο που λες. Θα ειναι κατι πολυ σπουδαιο η θρησκια, γιατι βλεπω σε σενα μια γαληνη, μια καλωσυνη. Με βοηθησες με την καρδια σου. Εγω δεν εχω θρησκεια. Σε παρακαλω μαθαιμε να βρω και εγω το Θεο.

Νατασα παιδι μου εχεις το Θεο μεσα σου. Μονο θα πρεπει να μαθεις να προσευχεσαι για να τον δοξολογεις.

Θα πω του παπα μας να σε βαφτισουμε για να μπης για καλα στην θρησκεια και μετα θα

βαφτισουμε και το μωρο. Ετσι ο Γεωργακης θα γινotan ο νουνος.

Η μητερα του πηρε μια εικονα του Χριστου και εδειξε στην Νατασα πως να κανει το σταυρο της και να προσκηνισει.

Την ιδια ωρα χτυπουσε η καμπανα της εκκλησιας που καλουσε τους Χριστιανους για την Λειτουργια.

Τοτε εγινε το θαυμα,τους αξιωσε ο Θεος να ακουσουν και οι τρεις μια ουρανια μελωδια, που υμνουσε την Γεννηση του Σωτηρος, και ειδαν αγγελο να κατεβαινει και να στεκεται διπλα στην κουνια του μωρου που χαμωγελουσε στον υπνο του.

Η Νατασα επεσε στα γονατα και με δακρυα στα ματια εκανε συνεχεια το σταυρο της οπως την εμαθαν. Την στιγμη αυτη καποιος χτυπησε την πορτα συνηλθαν, και ο Γεωργοακης πηγε να ανοιξει.

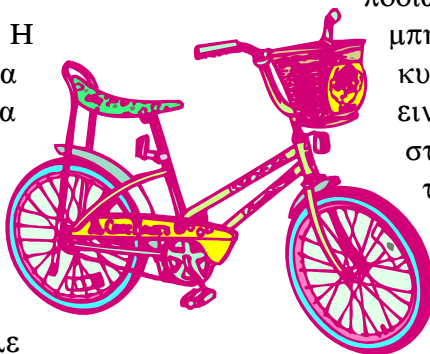
Στο σκαλοπατι βρισκοταν το αφεντικο του. Τι εγινε βρε παιδι μου, φτερα εβαλες στα ποδια σου; Δυο λεπτα μολις εφυγες μπηκε η κυρια Ξυλια. Ξαιρεις η κυρια απεναντι απο το μαγαζι, ειναι προεδρος της φιλοποτοχου στην εκκλησιας μας. Καθε χρονο τα Χριστουγεννα, κανουν ενα καλο δωρο σε οποιον νομιζουν οτι το αξιζει. Φετος διαλεξαν εσενα. Ελα λοιπον, να παρεις το δωρο σου απο το φορτυγακι μου. Της ειπα οτι θα σου το φερω πριν παω στην εκκλησια.

Ο Γεωργακης τον ακολουθησε και τοτε εμεινε αφωνος, μεσα στο φορτυγακι ηταν ενα πανεμορφο ποδηλατο πολυ καλυτερο απο αυτο που ειχε ονειρευτει, με μεγαλη καλαθα που αστραυτε μεσα στην νυχτο.

Το αφεντικο του δεν χορταινε να βλεπει την εκκληξη του Γεωργακι.

Αντε παιδι μου καλοριζικο και καλα Χριστουγεννα, συνεχιζε στην ζωη σου να εισαι τιμιος και καλος και ο Θεος θα ειναι παντοτε μαζυ σου.

Βουλα Χαρερα
Δεκεμβρι 2001



Ξεχνάμε

Ξεχνάμε πως, Χρηστούλη μας, γεννήθηκες απλά για να μας δείξης απο που έρχεται η χαρά.

Ξεχνάμε πως μας δείδαξες μόνο ταπεινότητα, που μοναχά εκεί κοντά βρίσκομε την γαλήνη.

Γαλήνη που πασχίζομε κοντά σ' αυτή να ζούμε αλλά ξεχνάμε δυστυχώς που πρέπει να την βρούμε.

Ξεχνάμε πως γεννήθηκες σε μία μικρούλα φάτνη που, αν ήθελες, θα διάλεγες το ποιό χρυσό παλάτι.

Ξεχνάμε που edιάλεξες δύο απλούς ανθρώπους και τους ονόμασες γωνείς στους άγιους εκείνους τόπους.



διαμάντια και μπριλάντια και απλά ντυνούσανε με λιγοστά βαλάντια.

Στο τέλος εθυσίασες και την αγνή ζωή σου για μας που σ' ξεχάσαμε ως την στερνή θανή σου.

Μα ας σκεφθούμε λογικά όταν χτυπάει η καμπάνα πως εγγενήθης για μας απο μία άγια Μάνα.

Ας προσπαθήσωμε λοιπόν ποτέ να μη ξεχνούμε και σενανε Χρηστούλη μας να σε δοξολογούμε.

Συχώρεσε μας όλους μας που όλα τα ξεχνούμε και δεν θυμώμαστε ποτέ σε σενα τι χρωστούμε.

Ας κλίνωμε τα γόνατα για να προσευχηθούμε και σε το Μέγα Βασιλιά πάντα να ευγομονούμε.

**Vickie Bellios
Christmas
2001**



Gheronda's Corner

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

"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).

My Beloved brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Our Heavenly Father, is the giver of many wonderful new things. We come to Him by faith in Christ and He gives us the New Birth. "Behold, I make all things new."

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 on to 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. It is time for all of us to turn over a new page and to write a new story on a clean page.

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 re-dedicate my life to Christ and redouble my efforts for Him. 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, His Church and ourselves.

We wish each other a Happy New Year, but we must do more than that. Let me give you a recipe for a Happy New Year. This recipe consists of three "R"s: REPENT, RESOLVE and REMEMBER.

1) WE ARE TO REPENT: Now we know that repentance is the first step to God. We will never be saved until first of all we have repented of our sins.

2) WE ARE TO RESOLVE: Our resolution for the

New Year "I want to be a better person. I will try to be a better Christian."

3) WE ARE TO REMEMBER: We must remember that we never can repay Christ for all that HE has done 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. REMEMBER and SAY "In this New Year I will do my best for Christ."

In Luke 4:16, we are told that regular attendance at public worship was a part of our Lord's weekly activity. Orthodox Christians are admonished to walk even as He walked, and to form similar good habits of meeting together with other believers. If we neglect to worship God on the Lord's Day, we grieve Him and injure our own soul.

Some years ago a news reporter invited people to send in their response to the statement, "Why I Don't Go To Church." After he had received a number of replies, he decided to show the weakness of their alibis by inserting the word "movies" wherever "church" appeared in their letters. Here is a sampling of his column: One said, "I am out of the habit of going to the movies, that's why I no longer attend." Another wrote, "I know a man who has gone to the movies for years, and he is no better than I am." Still another remarked, "There are as many good people outside the movies as inside." Some commented, "I stay away from the movies because I went when I was a child." A number of other excuses were given which proved equally absurd when "movies" was substituted for the word "church". The reasons given were not valid. They were attempts to conceal a declining interest in their spiritual life, a refusal to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, or a lack of love for God's people. Let us follow the footsteps of Jesus' custom of attending Church services regularly.

Thought for the New Year: "Attending Church services does not depend on how far you live your church, but how close you live to God!"

My family and I wish to Fr. John and his family and all the members of the Holy Trinity Church, a Healthy, Happy And Blessed New Year.

With His Love

Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos

Spring & Summer Opportunities for College Students!

One of the most active and important ministries of Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of the Ladies Philoptochos Society. Through world-wide, national and local ministries, the Philoptochos reaches out to the needy, provides for the poor and hungry, visits and cares for the sick and much more. This work is done by the National Philoptochos, the Diocese Philoptochos and, here at home, our local Philoptochos chapter.

During the course of any given year, parishioners at Holy Trinity Church are asked to support the various fund-raising projects sponsored by the Philoptochos. Unless otherwise designated for a specific cause, most of these projects advertise that they support "the philanthropic work of the Philoptochos Society." The list below provides a more detailed idea of just what that philanthropic work is and whom it supports. During the course of the year 2001, your donations and the hard work of these ladies have provided over \$11,000.00 in charitable contributions. The recipient organizations are listed here in order to bring about an awareness of the important work of this outreach ministry, encourage the ladies and future members on to even greater things and to continue to engender the support of the entire community for these efforts

God bless you, ladies of the Philoptochos, and thank you for help do the work of love of Jesus Christ!

Local Holy Trinity Outreach



- Holy Trinity Feast Day
- Holy Trinity Cemetery Fund
- Summer Camp for Holy Trinity children
- Holy Trinity Festival
- Local philanthropy for the needy
- Senior Citizens

Diocese of Pittsburgh Outreach

- Special Care Fund
- The Caring Foundation
- Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh
- Diocese of Pittsburgh Summer Camp
- Children's Hospital
- St. Nicholas Church Fund (New York, September 11)
- The Illuminator



National Philoptochos Outreach



- Ecumenical Patriarchate
- Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology
- Saint Basil Academy (Vasilopita)
- St. Photios National Shrine
- Orthodox Christian Mission Center (Bishop Jeronymos)
- Social Services
 - Cardiac Fund
- Unicef
 - Cathedral Soup Kitchen
- Cancer Fund

Spring & Summer Opportunities for College Students!

A great way for Orthodox Christian college students to spend Spring Break!



REAL BREAK 2002

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This year *Real Break* is planning the following trips:

Project Mexico, Hogar Rafael Ayau in Guatemala, Raphael House in San Francisco, and St. Basil Academy in New York.

Dates for Real Break 2002

[spots available]

March 2-9	Project Mexico [15], Guatemala [15]
March 9-16	Project Mexico [15], Guatemala [15], St. Basil Academy [15]
March 16-25	Project Mexico [15], St. Basil Academy [15], Raphael House [15]
March 23-30	Project Mexico [15]

REGISTRATION STARTS NOVEMBER 12TH

Real Break provides alternatives to the "traditional" spring break which many times can be nothing but foggy memories and empty experiences. Over the past 10 years over 100 Orthodox students from all over North America have participate in *Real Break*.

For more information regarding *Real Break* or to start an OCF at your school contact:

National OCF Office

2311 Hearst Avenue • Berkeley, CA 94709

Tel.: (510) 704-8981 • E-mail: info@ocf.net

Website: www.ocf.net



IONIAN VILLAGE 2002

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For the summer of 2002, Ionian Village is looking for staff applicants in the following areas:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infirmary (RN or MD required) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orthodox Life |

Applicants must be Orthodox Christians, 21 years of age or older by June 24, 2002 and available to work from June 24 to August 13, 2002.

For more information, please contact the Ionian Village Office at (212) 570-3534 or by e-mail at ionianvillage@goarch.org. Visit our web-site at www.ionianvillage.org.

A great way to spend the summer, serve the Church, help young people and see Greece, too!

Building An Architecture of True Orthodox Vision

Second in a series of educational articles by respected Byzantine architect Christ J. Kamages. Reprinted from "The Christian Activist" magazine to raise an awareness of the history, tradition and thought behind traditional church architecture in the Greek Orthodox Church as our community looks toward the future and the major building projects ahead.

Successful results, in my opinion, are greatly enhanced when the activities of product and process are intertwined in the search for the most responsive and appropriate solution to meet the needs of the church. Product without process is akin to receiving Holy Communion without Proper preparation or without participation in the Divine Liturgy. Today, too many parishes approach planning, design, and building facilities without proper preparation, without the work of the people guided by the Holy Spirit in developing the specific vision for their community.

A Treasure Chest of Sacred Richness

My deep concern is that the Orthodox Church is the true Church, which, indeed, maintains the Apostolic continuity and tradition and represents a very special treasure chest of sacred richness. However, in recent years, the architectural results, together with their limited process, have produced hit or miss results in the New World, at best.

The "seat of the pants" or "I know it all" approaches for planning and design are not appropriate or effective, and their products bear regrettable legacies for the generations to come, not to mention the memorialization of visual and functional monstrosities on our landscapes. For many, many years these legacies will remain to provide witness to the Holy Orthodox Church that "a doctor can bury his patients but an architect cannot."

It is imperative that clergy, laity, and, yes, even architects face up to their responsibility to the heritage of the past to our people of today and for the generations to come so that our facilities can fulfill the promise and potential of the Holy Orthodox traditions and legacy.

Building on a Solid Foundation

Beyond the product/process issue, it is amazing that, over time an incremental, permissive, and passive attitude has allowed a number of issues to be considered that, I believe, erode the full richness of our liturgical practices. These issues need to be carefully reviewed, evaluated, and, if warranted, appropriate action taken. I feel it is important to carefully create a baseline that defines a desired level of performance or attributes required at a basic level, as well as desirable and optional expectations for architectural and environmental elements supporting our Orthodox ecclesiastical activities.

In contrast to the tradition of our Orthodox faith,

the very nature of Protestantism (the multitude of variations on a theme) and the search and groping of post-Vatican II Catholics constitute examples of unconstrained change without a frame of reference and without a solid (true) foundation and structure resulting in the creation of Meeting Houses or Public Auditoria of serendipitous quality and presence.

My grandfather often told me as a child, "Christos, if you tell the truth you never have to remember what you've said." I loved my grandfather because of his wisdom, compassion, and "street smarts", but more importantly, because of his strength and dedication to his true faith and principles. My grandfather's admonition bears strong meaning in these matters, because we must understand the truth or core meaning in any matter ... even the architecture and environment of the true faith.

A Heavenly Environment

In contrast to much of the American religious scene, our Orthodox Church is not void in its traditions and practices. Certainly, even with the recognition that we are an "apophatic Church" in that we know what we do not know and allow a context for the holy mysteries, our Church has numerous rich traditions and purposes that are definable and that are key in defining that special place, presence, and Heaven on earth. The power of the influence and example of Hagia Sophia, constructed under Justinian in 536, has been immense in not only converting Russia to the Orthodox faith under Vladimir but in creating an inspiration for Christian and Islamic architecture to come, 500 to 1,000 years after its completion. This manifestation is extremely powerful and created the first major proclamation of an architectural form responding to liturgical needs of the true faith. It broke the mold for Christianity, which was using the borrowed form of the secular Roman Basilicas. Oftentimes in our practice, I hear people proclaim that "I really want to build this church for God," and then I politely respond, "My friend, God does not need this church; we are those in need." The nature of our Orthodox ecclesiastical and iconographic traditions was developed by the Fathers to transform our earthly presence to that "heavenly environment," in the spirit of "linkage" and "connection," on a timeless continuum.

(Continued next month)

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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 even business, please mail or deliver this form to the church office by January 5. Your date and time will be confirmed a day or two before your visit.