



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

1923 · EIGHTY YEARS OF MINISTRY · 2003

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

December 2003

www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

Volume 11 – Issue 12

Monthly Parish Newsletter
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Fr. John Touloumes, Ekonomos

Inside This Issue

- 2 Father John's Message
- 3 News & Events
- 5 "Mouse Tales:" The Saint
Spyridon Church School
Library Update
- 7 Parish Council Highlights
- 8 "Gheronda's Corner"
- 9 The Cultural Side
Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά
- 12 Preparing for Christ

Special Inserts

December Parish Calendar

Holy Trinity New Year's Eve
at PNC Park Flyer

THE HOLY NATIVITY IN THE FLESH OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST



This icon of the Holy Nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is a priceless treasure from the 11th century A.D. It is contained in an illuminated-script lectionary called "The Gospel of Nikephoros Phokas," which is housed in the treasury of the Monastery of the Great Lavra on Mount Athos in Greece. Although not as refined in style as more modern icons, it bears witness to the history of Orthodox Christian tradition, as it is the same in content and composition as icons still used over 1,000 years later. As in all iconography, it is intended to teach in color the holy mystery of the Gospel and bear witness its truth.

Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

Parish Newsletter of
Holy Trinity
Greek Orthodox Church
302 W. North Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15212
Phone 412-321-9282
Fax 412-321-7272

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

Editor

Father John Touloumes, Economos
Church: 412-321-9282
Home: 412-831-3574
E-mail: ijt@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Production

Josephine Stofko, Parish Secretary
Church: 412-321-9282
E-mail: office@HolyTrinityPgh.org

The Cultural Side

Michael Kritiotis Voula Hareras
Maria Kraniou Vickie Bellios

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
in memory of

Tim Brouker

by the Stepp, Kaloxylas,
Wagner and Regakis
families

May his memory
be eternal!



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

If the meaning and celebration of Christmas were up to "the world," things would probably be a lot different. Perhaps it would be moved to the summer to make travel more convenient. Maybe it would be always on Monday, like other national holidays, to facilitate longer vacations. Maybe the retailers would have it moved to an otherwise slow time of year to even out their cash flow.

Thank God these things have not come to pass ... yet. Absurd as they sound, it is important to realize how many ways the world tries to meddle with and seditiously transform this very foundational feast of our faith from an experience of salvation to a gala of worldly cares and even evil intent (for a blatant example, read about the new and profane Disney Santa movie).

The passage above is one of the many read at the Service of the Royal Hours on Christmas Eve morning, and it speaks to not only the prophecy of Samuel concerning the coming of the Messiah, but also to the endurance and eternal quality of God's truth. It is on the strong foundation of that truth that we must continue to stand firm, even as the forces of political correctness attempt to wash us away from it with a rip-tide of sophistry and godless philosophy.

Two hundred years ago, it would have been unthinkable for the Bible not to be taught in schools in America. One hundred years ago it would have been unimaginable that prayer would be removed from those same institutions. And fifty years ago who would have dreamed that Nativity scenes would be the battleground for religious freedom. Yet these things have all come to pass, and it is getting worse. Churches formerly seen as traditional are now sanctifying those who practice so-called alternative lifestyles as leaders and pioneers of a supposedly enlightened brand of Christianity. As this issue goes to press, the news has come of the activist Massachusetts Supreme Court's ruling that rocks the very foundation of our society by re-defining marriage to include what God has denounced as abhorrent (Romans 1.22-28).

In the long run, what can we do? Mother Raphaela offers some powerful advice on the back page of this issue. She reminds us that we will not renew ourselves but "putting Christ into Christmas," but by putting ourselves into Christ, Who is our light and our life. It is that renewal that will give us the strength to endure the delusions of the world around us. "For we share in Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end" (Hebrews 3.14). In Him alone is the love that will save us.

Have a blessed Christmas. Christ is born! Glorify Him!

"This is our God, and there shall be none other
accounted in comparison of Him.
He has found out all the way of knowledge,
and has given it to Jacob His servant,
and to Israel His beloved.

This is the book of the commandments of God,
and the law that endures forever:
all they that keep it shall come to life;
but such as leave it shall die."

(Baruch 3.35ff, from the Third Hour of the Nativity)



News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Church Christmas Pageant December 21

The Holy Trinity Church School ministry will be offering its annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 21. All the students of the Church School will be involved in this event. Preparations are being made by each teacher for the students in their class. In addition to their in-class preparations, please take note of these special practice times:

Sunday, Nov. 30, Dec. 7 & 145th-12th Grades

Practice following Divine Liturgy. Specific information will be provided by the teacher in each class.

Saturday, Dec. 20 All students & staff

9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Full cast rehearsal for everyone. Extra attendance credit is offered for everyone who attends this rehearsal.

Sunday, Dec. 21 Christmas Pageant

Following Holy Communion, all Church School students and staff will depart for their classes and final preparations for the pageant. All our parishioners are asked to stay for the pageant and coffee hour in the social hall

No Church School Class December 28

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on December 28 due to the holiday celebrations, so please plan on being in church together as a family for the entire service on that day. Thank you!

St. Lydia's Women's Fellowship . . . December 4, 18

The St. Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is a study of scripture, the Orthodox Faith and family life in today's world. The meetings take place every other week on Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. at a home in the North Hills. The fellowship is enjoyable and the approach is casual, but the subjects are important for today's families. For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925. A complete schedule of dates and topics can be found on our web site at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org. For November the topics are as follows:

Dec. 4: Do icons really weep?/The Missing Ingredient/The Gift of Wonder

Dec. 18: Why the Incarnation?/The Nativity: A Sacrifice of Love

St. Nikodemos Men's Fellowship Dec. 9, 23

The St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship is an Orthodox men's fellowship, study and discussion

group which meets **on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at from 12:15 to 12:50 p.m.** at the office of TriadUSA, Suite 460, Two Gateway Center, downtown. The group seeks to provide a regular meeting for working men to discuss issues of faith, work and family. It is open to all interested men and has been centrally located downtown to accommodate easy access for the lunchtime meetings. They are currently studying different issues of contemporary life and faith, as well as the Epistles of St. John. For directions, call Gus Georgiadis at 412-880-4999. A complete schedule of dates and topics can be found on our web site at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

YOUTH MINISTRY

GOYA Fireside Chat December 7

The GOYA will hold its annual Fireside Chat on Sunday, December 7, from 4:00 to 7:30 pm at the home of Tom and Christina Zikos. All our GOYAnS are invited to attend and set aside some special time preparing for the Nativity of the Lord. In addition, there will be a "Questions and Answers with Father John" session. Details will be mailed to the GOYA homes. To confirm your attendance, please contact the Zikos family at 724-935-4083.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Christmas Card/Poinsettia Forms Due Dec. 6

Sponsor forms for both the Holy Trinity Community Christmas Card and the Christmas Poinsettias have been included in the current issue of *The Herald*. Please note that the deadline for submitting the forms, along with your donation, is December 6.

Holy Trinity New Year's Eve at PNC Park . . . Dec. 31

Tickets are now on sale for this year's exciting New Year's Eve at the Home Plate Club at PNC Park. Complete information can be found on the flyer enclosed in this issue of *The Herald*.

Year-End Stewardship Donations

The Parish Council thanks all our Holy Trinity Stewards for their pledges and contributions this year. Please take note that all offerings you would like listed as received during the 2003 tax year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31) for tax deduction purposes must be received at the church by Dec. 31. This is an IRS regulation. You may indicate the offerings to apply for either your 2003 pledge (to pay the balance) or the 2004 pledge (to pay ahead) and your pledge balance will be accurately



News & Events

calculated no matter when the offering is made, but if you desire a 2004 tax year receipt, the offering must be received by Dec. 31. Year-end statements will be sent out at the end of January. Thanks!

LITURGICAL LIFE

Weekday Services..... December

Orthros is at 9 am, followed by Divine Liturgy at 10.

Wed. Dec. 3, 6:00 p.m..... Paraclesis to the Theotokos

Fri. Dec. 5, 7pm*.....Great Vespers of St. Nicholas

Μεγ. Εσπερινός του Αγίου Νικολάου του Θαυματουργού

Sat. Dec. 6*..... St. Nicholas the Wonderworker

Του Αγίου Νικολάου του Θαυματουργού

* All services for St. Nicholas held at St. Nicholas Cathedral

Tues. Dec. 9..... Conception of the Theotokos

Thu. Dec. 11.....St. Daniel the Stylite

Followed by the Philoptochos Senior Citizens' Luncheon

Thu. Dec. 11, 7pm*..... Great Vespers of St. Spyridon

Μεγ. Εσπερινός του Αγίου Σπυριδωνος του Θαυματουργού

Fri. Dec. 12*..... St. Spyridon the Wonderworker

Του Αγίου Σπυριδωνος του Θαυματουργού

*All services for St. Spyridon at St. Spyridon Ch. in Monessen

Wed. Dec. 31, 5:30 pm.....Vespers of St. Basil

Vespers of St. Basil will be held at Holy Trinity Church, followed by the New Year's Eve event at the Home Plate Club at PNC Park (see enclosed flyer)

SERVICES OF THE HOLY NATIVITY OF CHRIST

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Wed. Dec. 24, 10 amRoyal House of the Nativity

This special service offers readings, prophecies and hymns which point to and interpret the Divine Incarnation.

Wed. Dec. 24, 7pm..... Vespers of the Nativity

This service "opens the liturgical day" and begins the celebration of the Nativity. This is a combination of Great Vespers and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil. Those wishing to receive Holy Communion should prepare by abstaining from food and drink from noon until the service.

Thu. Dec. 25 Divine Liturgy of the Nativity of Christ

9:00am Orthros/10:00 am Liturgy. This is the main service of the Birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Open the best gift first by attending Liturgy with your family and receiving the Holy Mysteries together! Make it a family tradition to keep the most important thing about Christmas the most important thing in your home!

Year-End Giving

Our stewardship commitment is not just a powerful way to contribute generously to the mission and philanthropy of Holy Trinity Church, but also a method to realize considerable tax advantages in doing so! The ability to deduct charitable contributions is one area the IRS has left untouched, realizing the importance of philanthropy in our society. As the end of the tax year approaches, here is a reminder on the three most common ways of giving and their advantages in simple terms:

A gift of cash

The simplest method of giving to Holy Trinity. Up to 50% of one's income can be deducted, for donors itemizing deductions on their tax returns. Any excess can be carried forward and deducted over the next five years. Tax savings through the deduction depend upon the donor's tax rate and other factors.

A gift of depreciated securities

A gift of securities that has decreased in value will be most advantageous to the donor if the security is sold, a loss is taken for tax purposes and the proceeds of the sale contributed to the church for another tax deduction. A five-year carry-over privilege also applies.

A gift of appreciated securities

Giving securities, such as stocks, that have risen in value since they were bought could have significant tax advantages for the donor. Examples:

- Elimination of long-term capital gains tax. For this exclusion to apply, the gift must be made before the security is sold by the donor.
- A tax deduction for the donor, equal the full market value of the stock
- Application of the 5-year carry-over privilege

Please note that appreciated securities must have been held for a minimum of 12 months to receive the full tax advantage.

There are many other ways of giving, each with its unique characteristics. If you have questions about your individual situation, please consult a professional. Any member of our Finance or Stewardship Committees will also be glad to assist you. Thank you for remembering Holy Trinity Church in your year-end giving plans. Please also remember that estate giving options are also available and can provide very attractive tax benefits.

Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update

Hi!

Happy December and Merry Christmas to all my precious children! Today I am going to share a part of my own personal mouse history with you, just as it was told to me by my yiayia. It is the story of my great, great...great papou. It is called "The Stable Mouse" and was actually printed in the Abbey Press. So you can say that my family was there when it all happened way, way back and because of this story that is how we became church mice.



One dark evening while my great, great...great papou was asleep he heard someone stirring and sprang to his feet. A couple was looking for a place to rest why they were there, he couldn't have guessed. But soon he noticed a bright star in the sky and a choir of angels singing high. That's when he saw as he peeked through a board that a child had been born—it was Christ the Lord! Shepherds came traveling far and long. Wise Men arrived with treasures so rare but the poor little mouse had no gift to share. Huddled and silent he began to cry and started to leave with big tears in his eyes. That's when an angel appeared by his side saying "Don't run away- there's no need to hide". The mouse turned and said "I have nothing to give, no treasures or songs, just the life that I live". The angel smiled "That is all you need live your life for the Lord both in thought and in deed. For the greatest gift we can give God above is a life filled with peace joy, faith, and love. My great, great...great papou understood from that moment on that his gift was worth more than treasures or song. So remember this year the best gift you can give is your love to the Lord and the life that you live.

That is why from time to time my family and I travel back to my family town to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem where we can relive the experiences of my great, great...great papou. We visit with relatives in the near by stables. It is great to smell the hay and nap in the lofts and romp through a stable. But then it is really good again to come home to my church and smell the incense of yiayia blessing the house, to taste yiayia's wonderful cooking and to find the warmth and comfort of my own room and bed. So remember that this is the best times of the year to cherish with family and friends and to make the most of what we have. Merry Christmas! Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Love in Christ
Spero (the Orthodox Christmas Mouse!)

Holy Trinity Philoptochos: Philanthropy in Action

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 Metropolis 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. 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.

In addition to their previous work, the Philoptochos has just added three exciting and long-needed new ministries: the Circle of Angels (Visitations to hospitals and shut-ins), the Holy Myrrhbearers (Grieving support and after-funeral care) and the Saints Joachim and Anna Outreach for Seniors (Supporting the elderly with calls, visits and other forms of help). To get involved with any area of the Philoptochos ministries, contact Holy Trinity Philoptochos President Tina Fiedler at 412-364-5589 or write her at: 302 West North Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15212.

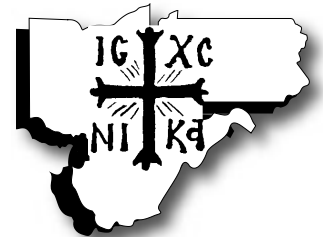
Local Holy Trinity Outreach



- Holy Trinity Church General Fund
- Holy Trinity Cemetery Fund
- Summer Camp for Children from-Holy Trinity Church
- Holy Trinity Festival
- Local philanthropy for the needy
- Holy Trinity Senior Citizens
- Children's Hospital Free Care Fund
- New ministries!
 - Circle of Angels Visitation Ministry
 - Holy Myrrhbearers Grieving Support
 - Ss. Joachim & Anna Seniors Outreach

Metropolis of Pittsburgh Outreach

- Patriarch Bartholomew Metropolis Home
- Metropolis Special Care Fund
- Metropolis Philoptochos Emergency Fund
- Holy Nativity Monastery
- St. Gregory Palamas Monastery
- Holy Protection Monastery
- St. Mary of Egypt Mission
- Metropolis of Pittsburgh St. Photios Program
- The Caring Foundation (Health care for Western PA needy)
- The Illuminator



National Philoptochos Outreach



- Ecumenical Patriarchate
- Ecumenical Patriarchate Soup Kitchen
- Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology
- Saint Basil Academy (Vasilopita)
- St. Photios National Shrine
- Social Services
- The Cancer Fund
- Unicef
- Orthodox Christian Mission Center
- "Support a Mission Priest"
- Int'l Orthodox Christian Charities
- National Children's Medical Fund
- Mideast Federation of Greek Orthodox Musicians
- National Orthodox Christian Fellowship (College Ministry)
- SBA Graduation



Parish Council Update - October 2003

This abbreviated review of the Parish Council minutes is provided as a way of keeping our Holy Trinity parishioners informed of the active work of the Parish Council. Want to get involved? Contact any Parish Council member. Thank you to our Parish Council secretary, Maria Kranjou, for provided these condensed minutes for the Herald.

Call to Order

The regular monthly meeting of the Parish Council of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church was held on Tuesday, October 14, 2003, at the Church Library, pursuant to notice duly given to all members. A quorum being present, the meeting was opened with a prayer by Father John Touloumes.

President's Welcome and Correspondence

A formal reply was sent to the Archdiocese requesting that the amount we had paid be considered our stewardship commitment paid in full

Approval of September 2003 Minutes

Paul Balouris motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Leo Loomis. Unanimously approved.

Father John's Report

Parents will trade places with their children next Sunday for church school. A visitation committee has been set up. P.C. members should RSVP to Father if they plan to attend the Clergy-Laity banquet on October 30. An Agape Fund meeting took place to set up the Agape Fund guidelines. The committee will meet twice a year. Father John proposed a guideline change and an addition on the issue of reimbursements. Motion was made by George Georges to approve the changes, seconded by Leo. Unanimously approved.

Financial Update

The Diocesan Stewardship Committee sent a letter dated stating our parish's Archdiocesan Total Commitment assessment for the 2004 calendar year.

Committee Reports:

Social Committee: Two venues that are being considered for NYE are the Home Plate Club at PNC Park and the William Penn Hotel.

Maintenance Committee: The walk-in cooler is freezing – the repair man is coming tomorrow. The top left oven broke down. More chair covers have been ordered.

Vision Committee: Discussion of two properties located on Reis Run Rd. Kamages is in Reading, PA, so he will be asked to come to Pittsburgh and visit these properties.

Festival Committee: The gross from the festival is approximately \$118,000, and the profit is in the mid \$50,000. A statement will be prepared for the General Assembly.

Review of By-Laws

The Council continue its on-going process of review the draft copy of the parish's By-Laws. Article 9 was reviewed and approved with changes.

Old Business / New Business

General Assembly: The agenda will focus on "Building for the Future" and recruiting people for various committees (Vision, Festival, Stewardship, etc.).

New Divine Liturgy Books: The process of acquiring new Divine Liturgy books is now being coordinated with the process the choir is now undertaking of selecting new music. Father John indicated the importance of having the translations match and will work with the choir on this issue.

Adjournment

The next meeting date was set for Tuesday, November 11, 2003 at 7:00 at the Church Library. No further matters appearing, the meeting adjourned with a prayer at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Kranjou, Secretary



Gheronda's Corner

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



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

Our Christmas Gift to Jesus

CHRIST IS BORN...
...GLORIFY HIM!

"It is, more blessed to give
than to receive." (Acts 20:
35)

How blessed the wise
men were in being able to
bring gifts to the Holy Babe and to adore Him as they
knelt before Him! Their hearts were filled with joy as
they left that place.

Everyone who loves Jesus with all his heart wants
to give Him love, coming out of a heart full of grati-
tude. We want to bring Him our best gift - the one He
desires most. So we surrender our lives to Him that He
may reign over us.

Jesus our Lord and Savior never refuses a gift
given with a loving heart. When we open our hearts to
Jesus, He enters and fills us with an immense and over-
flowing joy. His gifts are much bigger than ours. He
gives in abundance. How wonderful to be His faithful
servants!

"A contrite and humble heart God will not
despise." At Christmas time our best gift to Jesus
is an open and responsive heart. This culminates in
faith which believes that Jesus is the One Whom the
Scriptures say He is: the Son of God, the Savior of the
world, the Bread of life, the Good Shepherd, the Living
Water, the Prince of Peace, Emmanuel - God with Us.

Accordingly, we commit ourselves to His trans-
forming power. As surely as Jesus is the Son of God
given for our redemption, it follows that when we
receive Him we shall henceforth follow Him devoutly
and love Him with all our hearts.

For all the gifts which we have received so abun-
dantly from the Father, especially for the Gift of His
Beloved Son, we thank our Heavenly Father. We, too,
offer ourselves as a gift to Him.

Beloved, we know that many unbelieving mer-
chants take advantage of the spirit of the Holy Season
for purely commercial purposes. But in spite of all that
may be wrong, there is something wonderful about a
season when we celebrate the birth of the Son of God.
Let us rejoice and be happy together!

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

Did you ever try to define the little adverb "so" in
John 3:16?

How about this: "For God loved the world SO
MUCH that He gave His only-begotten Son that who-
ever believes in Him should not perish, but have ever-
lasting life (John 3.16).

The Wise Men did not exchange gifts. They made
the long journey to present their gifts to Christ. The
Wise Men were wise because they did the wise thing.
Wise people still bring their gifts to Jesus. Exchanging
gifts is not giving.

THOUGHTS ABOUT ADVENT

The Fast of Christmas (Advent) which means "The
Coming" of the Great and Holy Feast of the Nativity of
Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

ADVENT teaches us to do some spiritual shopping
for Christmas.

ADVENT should be a season of spiritual awak-
ing for the soul. Fasting, Prayer, and the Sacraments of
repentance, confession: and Holy Communion make
the soul alive and exceedingly happy.

OUR SPECIAL GREETINGS

On Christmas Day when we celebrate the glorious
Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, let us thank Christ
that His coming means the dawning of the day of peace
and good will among all persons.

May our Heavenly Father help us to remember
that Jesus did not remain the little babe of the manger,
but grew into manhood, and proved by His wonder-
ful works that He was the Son of God. May we never
forget that He loved us and gave Himself for us. May
we give ourselves wholly to Him.

With heartfelt gratitude and love, my family
and I extend our special greetings to Rev. Fr. John
Touloumes and his family and all the members of Holy
Trinity Church have a Blessed Christmas Season.

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

*With His love and blessings,
Rev. Fr. John R. Androutsopoulos*

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά

A Greek language offering in honor of the holiday of Thanksgiving



Voula Hareras

Ημερα Των Ευχαριστιων

Την τελευταία
Πεμπτη του
Νοεμβριου ολοκληρη η
Αμερικη εορταζει με
πιστη και κατανυξι την
ημερα των Ευχαριστιων [Thanksgiving].

Πραγματι ειναι μια ξεχωριστη ημερα
αφου ανηκει αποκλειστικα στο Θεο
και ευχαριστουμε για ολα τα καλα που
πλουσιοπαρουχα μας δινει.

Στα πενήντα σχεδον χρονια που βρισκομαι
στην Αμερικη αυτη η εορτη ερχεται πρωτη
στην καρδια μου. Τα πρωτα μας χρονια
μαζευομαστε με την οικογενεια του ανδρος
μου τους Γονεις του και τον αδελφο του
οικογενειακως.

Μα με το περασμα των χρονων αλλαξε
και αυτο οι γονεις πεθαναν τα παιδια μας
μεγαλωσαν μερικα παντρευτηκαν και αλλεξε
η συνθεση της οικογενειας. Ο Κουνιαδος μου
με τα παιδια του και Συμπεθερια εκαναν
μαζυ την γιορτη οπως επισης και η δικη μου
οικογενεια με τα δικα μου Συμπεθερια.

Μετα απο μερικα χρονια αλλεξε και πιο
πολυ το δικο μου τραπεζι ο Γαμπρος μου
καθηγητης στο Point Park College συνιθιζε
καθε χρονο να φερνει και καποιον φοιτητη
του απο ξενη πατριδα να μην ειναι μονος

του αυτην την ημερα καποτε ειχαμε και απο
δυο.

Αυτο το Thanksgiving ομος που θα μου
μεινη αξεχαστο ειναι οταν τελευταια με
ρωτησε αν μπορούν να ρθουν 4 φοιτητες απο
ξενα κρατη αμεσως με χαρα ειπα ΝΑΙ! ΝΑΙ!
Πραγματι ηρθαν τεσσερα λεβεντοπαιδα με
λουλουδια και γλυκα τα καυμενα.

Ενας απο Τουρκια ο δευτερος απο
Παλαιστινη ο τριτος Ιαπωνεζος και ο
τεταρτος Ρωσος. Οταν καθησαμε στο τραπεζι
και ηταν η ωρα να πουμε προσευχη τους ειπα
να πιασουμε τα χερια μας στο τραπεζι και
για ενα λεπτο να προσευχηθουμε νοερα καθε
ενας στον Θεο του. Δεν θα ξεχασω το θερμο
σφιξιμο του χεριου μου απο τον Τουρκο και
τον Ιαπωνα που ηταν διπλα μου.

Κατοπιν αφου ευλογησα το φαγητο
φαγαμε με χαρα και κουβεντα και τι δεν
ειπαν αυτα τα παιδια ολα λατρευαν την
Αρχαia Ελλαδα και δεν σταματαγαν να μιλουν
για τους φιλοσοφους τον πολιτισμω για τους
Ολυμπιακους αγωνες και αλα μιλησαν για
την δικη τους πατριδα τα ηθη και εθιμα τους
τα εγγονια μου ακουγαν και κρεμοντουσαν
απο τα χειλη τους και τοτε τα ματια μου
βουρκωσαν και ειπα:

Γιατι Θεε μου δεν δινεις φωτιση και στους
μεγαλους της γης να καθησουν ετσι σ ενα
τραπεζι να δωσουν και αυτη τα χερια και να
γινη ειρηνη στον κοσμο σου.

Γιατι?

Βουλα Χαρερα

Πρωινή Προσευχή Για Παιδιά

Με την γλυκιά αυγούλα
χαρούμενο ξηινό
Και στέλνω προσευχούλα
Θερμή στον ουρανό.

Αξιώσέ με Θεέ μου
Νά με καλό παιδί
Και πάντα χαριζέ μου
Χαρά και προκοπή.

Θεέ μου σαν τα πουλάκια
Χαρούμενο να ζώ
Και τα άλλα τα παιδάκια
Πολύ να τ' αγαπώ.

Και στέλνε μου από πάνω
Την χάρη σου κ' ευχή
Να σ' έχω όπου θάμε
Προστάτη και σπεπή.

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά



Michael Kritiotis

"The Flies and the Demons"

When the pot is on the fire and boiling, the flies don't dare come near. But when it's taken away from the fire, the flies even fall in it! The same happens with our souls – while they are kept close to the Church and the holy sacraments, evil can only look from afar; but when they begin to move away..."

Elder Paisios (of Mt. Athos)

(The original, in Greek, was shared in a previous issue)

November 17, 1973

Most of us associate "November 17" with the terrorist organization which targets westerners and Greek politicians in Greece in a reign of terror that started in 1975. Only recently, in fact, did the authorities finally arrest the masterminds and hit-men of that organization, who are now standing trial.

The origin of that memorable date, however, goes back to 1973, when, from the afternoon of November 14 to 3:00 a.m. on November 17, university students barricaded themselves inside Athens Polytechnic University, demanding a democratic government. It was the boldest revolt against the military dictatorship that was ruling Greece at the time. The uprising was crushed with tanks and violence that killed 20 students, but it sparked the fire of democracy in the hearts of the people, revealed the barbarism of the dictators and marked the beginning of the end of their rule.

Unfortunately, the group that was originally formed to retaliate against the ruling junta, deteriorated into a guerilla organization that espoused communism and expanded its targets to include foreign diplomats and even ordinary citizens and property. With the Athens Summer Olympics approaching, they became a concern to authorities, who finally got a break in summer 2002 when they captured a key member. Since then, most if not all, of the group's members have been arrested.

Μικρά, Διάφορα κι Αναφορικά

Έχει μαζευτή αρκετό υλικό στ' αρχεία μας, κι είναι καιρός να το μοιραστούμε με τους αναγνώστες! Ορίστε λοιπόν, ορισμένα:

Επίκαιρο Ιστορικό

Το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο βρίσκεται φυσικά στην Κωνσταντινούπολη. (Πριν πάρει τ' όνομά της από τον Κωνσταντίνο τον Μέγα το 325 μ. Χ., όταν έγιναν τα επίσημα εγκαίνια της ιδρύσεως της, στο σημείο εκείνο ήταν η μικρή πόλη Βυζάντιο. Είχε ιδρυθεί από τον Μεγαρέα Βύζαντα το 658 π.Χ., γι' αυτό και πήρε το όνομά του.)

Το τιμητικό προβάδισμα, τα πρεσβεία όπως λέγεται

στην εκκλησιαστική γλώσσα, δόθηκε στον Αρχιεπίσκοπο Κων/πόλεως ήδη από το 381 κατά την Β' Οικουμενική Σύνοδο. Κατά τη διάρκεια της Οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας, το Οικ. Πατριαρχείο απέκτησε ακόμα μεγαλύτερη δύναμη και ακτινοβολία. Και αυτό, γιατί ο πρώτος Σουλτάνος, ο Μωάμεθ ο Β' ο κατακτητής, για λόγους πολιτικής σκοπιμότητας (άραγε δεν είθελε αυτός, το Πατριαρχείο νά βάζει 'ιδέες' στα μυαλά του λαού;), παραχώρησε μεγάλα προνόμια στον Οικουμενικό Πατριάρχη και στο Πατριαρχείο Κων/πόλεως. Έτσι ο Οικ. Πατριάρχης αναλάμβανε ταυτόχρονα και σαν Εθνάρχης του υπόδουλου Γένους, μπορούσε όμως να ασκεί και ουσιαστική επιρροή πάνω στις άλλες αδελφές Εκκλησίες και Πατριαρχεία εντός του Οθωμανικού Κράτους.

Η Ελεημοσύνη

«Φίλε, είναι μεγάλη υπόθεση η ελεημοσύνη, η οποία πρέπει να πηγάζει από την αγάπη προς τον Χριστό, και να επεκτείνεται και σε όλους τους ανθρώπους. Οι κοινωνικές αδικίες, η εκμετάλλευση, η απερισκεψία, η απληστία, οι ασθένειες, ακόμη και η τύχη - δεν ξέρουμε τι κρύβει η πρόνοια του Θεού - οδηγούν τους ανθρώπους σε εξαθλίωση. Οι υπόλοιποι άνθρωποι, όπως επιτάσσει και η συνείδηση, θα πρέπει να προσφέρουν για τη στήριξη των συνανθρώπων τους.»

Π. Καπάρης

Είναι Θεός

Είναι Θεός -

Αυτός σκορπίζει τον ήλιο και τη γη θερμαίνει
Κι αγαπά και προστατεύει όλη την οικουμένη.

Είναι Θεός -

Καθε πρωί μας δίνει μια καινούργια μέρα
Μας δίνει τη ζωή, μας δίνει τη μητέρα.

Είναι Θεός -

Αυτός μας οδηγεί
και μας διδάσκει αυτά που πρέπει
και ρίχνει μιά ματιά στη γη
και όλων μας τις πράξεις μας τις βλέπει.
Είναι Θεός!

Συνδρομή Σοφίας Γ.

Αγάπη

Γιά την αγάπη όσα κι αν δίνεις είναι λίγα
Και να το ξέρεις πως δεν έχει ανταμοιβή,
Δώστα και φύγε και μην χάνεις ευκαιρία
Στο περιθώριο μη βάζεις την ψυχή.

Λαϊκό

- Ο Θεός, όπως αγαπά εσένα, έτσι αγαπά και τους εχθρούς σου!

- Για να γίνει το Θαύμα, αρκεί ν' αγαπάμε. Ούτε η προσευχή, ούτε το κομποσχοίνι δεν έχουν τέτοια δύναμη

Γερόντισσα Γαβριηλία

Community Banking
at its best.

NorthSide Bank

Main Office Allegheny Professional Building
100 Federal Street 490 East North Avenue
231-6900 231-3500

Thank You

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



61 ARCH STREET, SUITE 102
CARNEGIE, PA 15106



Merrill Lynch

Samuel William Spanos
CFP, CFM
First Vice President
Resident Manager
Wealth Management Advisor

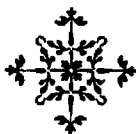
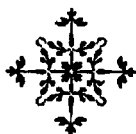
Private Client Group
446 Third Street
Beaver, Pennsylvania 15009
724 773 8701
800 813 5191
FAX 724 775 7050
sspanos@pclient.ml.com

STEPHEN M. BRADY FUNERAL HOME

412-321-0495

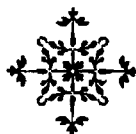
920 Cedar Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA
Expert **Pre-Need** Planning & Funding

In memory
of their
beloved
ones

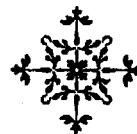


The Vlahakis Family

In loving memory
of my brother,



Michael



Louis Manesiotis
and family

EYE PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS, LTD.

Christ A. Balouris, M.D.

Comprehensive Ophthalmology

Downtown Center City Tower 412-281-5876
N. Hills Pgh. Office and Research Park 412-364-5282
Fox Chapel St. Margaret Medical Arts Bldg. 412-784-9060
Shadyside Aiken Professional Building 412-621-9060

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cemetery

McCandless Township, North Hills

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

Contact Cemetery Chairman Bill Fiedler
412-364-1545

HERALD PERSONAL SPONSOR FORM

Please enclose a donation of at least \$20.00

NAME:

PHONE:

ADDRESS:

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

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

(list names or further information here):



NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 1463
PITTSBURGH, PA

PREPARING FOR CHRIST

Mother Raphaela, Abbess of the Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery in Otego, New York, has some words of wisdom for Orthodox Christians as we prepare to celebrate the Nativity of Christ. She offers to us an alternative to the commercialized and secular approach so prevalent in the world ... an even points out that our own apparently faithful approach sometimes misses the mark!

Rather than thinking in terms of putting Christ into our Christmas, may we rather think in terms of putting ourselves, including our Christmas, into Christ. Jesus Christ is at the center of the universe, and we need to find ourselves in our relation to Him, not the other way around.

We need to learn to pray. We need to develop a relationship with God. We need to begin even when we don't really know how. To keep ourselves honest, we can say, "God, if there is a God, reveal Yourself to me," or, "God, I want to love You," or, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief." We need to struggle with not getting the kind of answers we may expect from God, He always responds to our prayer, but being the best of parents, He doesn't always say yes. And sometimes His silence is very loud because He is telling us that we need to grow up and figure out or do something on our own.

If we begin to do this, to put ourselves into Christ, Christmas, along with very many other things, will cease to be a problem. We will want to use every way we can think of to celebrate the greatness of the coming of our God and Savior. We have so many ways to choose from, and they are all literally God-given. We have the beauty and solemn joy of church services; the sharing of life in eucharistic communion as well as at our family tables, all heightened by the preceding days of fasting. We can decorate our surroundings; prepare beautiful things; pay more attention to giving and receiving love, including giving presents if they are important to us and to those we love; sing our hearts out; discover the neighbors who have less than we do and share some of our bounty with them.

So rejoice in the Lord. Look for the joy of a child's wonder. Celebrate the feast. And let this Christmas be the beginning of a whole re-orientation of our life around the center of reality: God has made us and redeemed us, and in preparing for the Christ child in the manger, we prepare to welcome all the Life and Love in the universe.