



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

Inside This Issue

- 2 Father John's Message
- 3 News & Events
- 5 Gheronda's Corner
- 6 The Cultural Side
Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά
- 8 Community Life Photo Journal
- 10 Our Worship - Part 4
- 12 Happy New Year??

Special Inserts

September Parish Calendar

2005 Walk for Missions

DON'T FORGET:
THE SPECIAL GENERAL
ASSEMBLY TO VOTE ON
THE PURCHASE OF THE
PROPOSED NEW CHURCH
PROPERTY WILL BE
HELD ON
SEPTEMBER 18
PLEASE BE THERE FOR
THIS IMPORTANT EVENT!

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

1923 · EIGHTY-TWO YEARS OF MINISTRY · 2005

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

September 2005

www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

Volume 13 – Issue 8

The Nativity of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary - September 8



Your Nativity, O Theotokos, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe; for from you has dawned the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, annulling the curse and bestowing the blessing, abolishing death and granting us life everlasting.

Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

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The Cultural Side

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Publication Schedule

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month. If you would like to assist with mailing
the Herald, please contact the church secretary
at 412-321-9282 to volunteer your help.

Sponsor an issue of
the Herald with your
personal greeting in this
space. See the form on
the bottom of page 11.

Remember a loved one,
congratulate a special
celebration.!



“Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.” And he who sat upon the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.”

The Book of Revelation 15.3-5

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Time for New Year resolutions! What do you mean, they are only for January 1? According to the explanation on the back page of this issue, the Orthodox Church celebrates the beginning of the Ecclesiastical New Year on September 1, so it's time for New Year resolutions, right?

Actually, as opposed to the prevailing secular practice of the January 1st personal New Year resolutions focused on ourself, the Church takes quite the opposite approach, as we turn to the Lord to consecrate the New Year for His glory. In the words of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios:

Our life within the Church, and specifically within the liturgical cycle of the year, is guided by the celebration and commemoration of what God has and will continue to do in our world and within our souls as He leads us toward our redemption. Thus, our participation in the services and ministry of the Church is very critical in a world that may seem chaotic. Through our worship and prayer God affirms that our lives and this world were not created in vain, but that all of His creation has a divine purpose. This purpose is to know and experience the love of God. This is not a love that results in chaos or disorder we may see around us.

Through our worship and prayer God affirms that our lives and this world were not created in vain, but that all of His creation has a divine purpose. This purpose is to know and experience the love of God.

It is a love that transforms lives that are lost, confused, and suffering. It is a love that renews our awareness of God's redemptive plan. It is a love that gives our lives meaning, direction, and purpose; for without the love of God, everything we do is done in vain.

There are many things happening in the life of Holy Trinity Church right now: the annual Greek Festival; the start of the Church School year; the many meetings and Special General Assembly concerning the proposed new church property. At the end of the day—and at the start of this ecclesiastical New Year—what matters is not what our own individual, personal wishes are, but that we continue forward to the glory of God as a worshiping community, the Body of Christ, one in the Spirit as He makes “all things new” as stated above.

May our All-merciful God grant us this truth and reality as we go forth into this New Year of His Grace. A “Blessed New Year” to all!

News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Church School Begins September 11

Advance registration for the 2005/2006 Church School was held in August. If you didn't sign your children up yet, don't worry: there's still room! Sign up at the Church School office if you missed registration.

Parents are reminded that classes start with the two-year-old Toddlers Class. **The first day of classes for Church School is Sunday, September 11 at 9:30 with Divine Liturgy and the children's sermon, followed by classes after Holy Communion.**

The Church School is also collecting its annual Parents and Volunteers Survey forms at registration time, and asking for each family to sign up to sponsor a Church School Snack during Coffee Hour. Please take the time to complete one of these forms and offer your stewardship of time and talents in helping the Church School ministry this year.

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Liturgies September

Please take note of the following upcoming liturgical dates. Unless otherwise indicated, Orthros starts at 8:30 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m..

Nativity of Theotokos Vespers & Liturgy Sep 7/8

These services will be held at the Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery in Saxonburg, PA.

Koimissis Vespers & Liturgy..... Sept. 13/14

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

Feast Day of the Monastery Sept. 7 & 8

The Monastery of the Nativity of the Theotokos in Saxonburg, PA, will be celebrating its Feast Day on Wednesday, September 7 and Thursday, September 8. Great Vespers and a vigil will be held on Wednesday evening, September 7, and Divine Liturgy will be held the next day.



Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery

Holy Cross Vespers & Liturgy Sept. 13/14

Our sister parish of Holy Cross in Mount Lebanon invites us to attend their annual Feast Day Great Vespers on Tuesday, September 13 at 7:00 p.m., followed

by a lenten reception. Also, we will be joining them as a parish on the next day, Wednesday, September 14, for their Feast Day Liturgy of the Holy Cross. Orthros is at 9:00, followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00.

Special note: During the Feast Day Liturgy on September 14, the Ordination to the Priesthood of Deacon Nicholas Halkias will take place. Everyone is invited to join together in prayer for this special event.

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Baptism: Michael Haniotakis

The servants of God, Michael Haniotakis, was received into the Holy Orthodox Christian Faith through a Baptism on July 17, 2005. The Godparent was Stephen Haniotakis. Congratulations, and may God grant him many years!

Recent Deaths

The servant of God, William Romanis, fell asleep in the Lord on August 8, 2005. The Funeral was held at Holy Trinity Church on August 11, followed by interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery. The 40-day memorial is scheduled for September 11. May his memory be eternal!

Upcoming Memorials

September 4: Antonia Karas (6 months).

September 11: William Romanias (40 days).

September 18: Michael Sfanos (1 year).

Note About Scheduling Memorials

In order to have Memorial or Trisagion services listed in the *Herald* or the Sunday Bulletin, it is necessary to contact Father John well ahead of time. Because of the *Herald* publication schedule, advance notice of at least **8 weeks** may be needed for information to be listed there. Lists of names and years commemorated should be submitted in writing to help eliminate errors. Sunday Bulletin listings will include a notice on the week before and the week of the service if advance notice of at least **3 weeks** is provided. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Church School Staff Meetings September 15/22

The Holy Trinity Church School staff will hold meetings for the new year on September 15 & 22 at 7:00 p.m. the home of Church School Coordinator Stacy Dickos. The younger grades (up to Fourth) will meet on September 15 and the older grades (Fifth and above) on September 22. Please see Stacy for details.

News & Events

GOYA Officers for 2005/2006

Congratulations to the GOYA and their new officers for the 2005/2006 year: President – Victoria Kritiotis; Vice-President – Maria Valliant; Treasurer – Andrew Athanasiou; Corresponding Secretary – Michael Georges; Recording Secretary – Eleni Balouris; Activities Coordinator – Helena Erdeljac. Please support our young people in their faithful service of the church this year!

GOYA Kick-OffSeptember 17

The annual GOYA Kick-off will be held at the Kritiotis house at "Limni" (north, near Mercer, PA) on Saturday, September 17. The family event will include a barbecue, a meeting, fun and, of course, the annual football game! Information is being mailed directly to the GOYA families. Questions? Call Victoria Kritiotis at 412-766-5002.

REGIONAL NEWS

Walk For Missions 2004 October 9

The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh will once again sponsor its annual Walk for Missions on Sunday, October 9 at 2:00 p.m. (Registration at 1:00 p.m.) at the South Park Fair Grounds. Proceeds from the Walk will benefit the Orthodox Christian Missions Center (OCMC), which sends Orthodox Christian missionaries throughout the world: 35 long-term missionaries and over 800 short-term missionaries to 21 countries. OCMC also supports the ministries of indigenous (local) clergy in mission areas of over 12

countries, with over 240 clergy in areas such as Cameroon, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Tanzania. The registration and sponsor flyer is enclosed in this issue of *The Herald* and should be brought to the Walk. Please notify Holy Cross Church at 412-833-3355 if you plan to participate.

Spotlight on Music October 29

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh Ladies Philoptochos Society's "Spotlight on Music" is pleased to announce an evening of music and fun. All proceeds will benefit the Camp at Mount Tabor. Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 29, 2005, at the University of Pittsburgh's Bellefield Auditorium (across from St. Nicholas Cathedral in Oakland). All organizations are encouraged to attend. Join those groups that have already scheduled this event as autumn outing. Tax deductible tickets will be available through the Philoptochos at a donation of \$15 advanced purchase and \$20 at the door. Student tickets are \$10.

A reception will be held at St. Nicholas Cathedral following the concert. All groups - Philoptochos, GOYA, Senior Citizens, Choirs, JOY, YAL, Greek Schools and other regional and educational groups are invited to this historic event. Let us all come together to celebrate and to help our children and our Holy Orthodox Faith.



2005 Holy Trinity Stewards

Thank you to the following faithful stewards who have submitted their pledge cards for the 2005 pledge year since the last update. Please join them in their support for the ministries of Holy Trinity and submit your pledge card today! Remember, a current, signed pledge card is required each year as part of maintaining your membership in good standing at Holy Trinity Church.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Battaglia
Mr & Mrs Louis Cherpes
Miss Diana Fries
Dr & Mrs Peter Gagianas
Mr Troy Geanopoulos
Mrs Chrissie Georgiadis
Mrs. Angela Grieser
Dr & Mrs Brian Jewell
Presvytera Louella Kostopoulos
Mrs. Fanny Kostos
Mr & Mrs Steve Pefanis

Mrs. Sophia Regas
Mrs Anastasia Rigas
Mr & Mrs John Sampson
Christopher Sarandou
Mr. & Mrs. George Triantafillos
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Zagnacky
Mr George Zappas

TOTAL NUMBER OF PLEDGES..... 227
TOTAL DOLLARS PLEDGED....\$ 139,232.00
AVERAGE PLEDGE..... \$613

DON'T FORGET TO BUY HOLY TRINITY SCRIP CARDS EVERY WEEK! SEE THE SCRIP DESK AT COFFEE HOUR. USE THEM FOR ALL YOUR SHOPPING. IT'S LIKE MAKING A "FREE" DONATION EVERY WEEK!

Gheronda's Corner

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



Father John
Androutsopoulos

SEPTEMBER: NEW BEGINNINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR

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

September 1: The Indiction

September 1st marks the beginning of the "Indiction," or the "Ecclesiastical New Year."

Troparion Of The Indiction

"O You, Creator of the whole universe, Who did appoint times by Your own power, bless the crown of this year with Your goodness, O Lord. Preserve in safety Your kings and Your city, by the intercessions of the Theotokos, and save us."

Prayer for the Feast

"May the New Ecclesiastical Year be blessed from above and be fruitful in the vineyard of our Lord Jesus Christ for the glory of God, His Church, and the salvation of our souls."

September 8: The Nativity Of Our Most Holy Lady The Theotokos

On September 8, the Church celebrates the birth of the Theotokos from her mother, St. Anna.

Troparion Of The Feast Day

"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."

Prayer for the Feast

"Grant, O Lord, we supplicate You, to us Your servants, the gift of Your heavenly grace: that as in the child-birth of the Blessed Virgin our salvation began, so from the votive solemnity of her Nativity we may obtain peace with God and with ourselves."

September 14th: The Elevation Of The Life Giving Cross

Trisagion Hymn of the Feast

"Your Cross, our Master, we adore, and Your holy Resurrection do we glorify."

Exapostelarian Of The Feast Day

"The Cross is the preserver of all the universe. The Cross is the comeliness of the Church. The Cross is the might of kings. The Cross is the steadfastness of believers. The Cross is the glory of the angels and the sting of Satan."

(Reminder: The Feast Day of the elevation of the Holy Cross is a strict fast day equal to Holy and Great Friday.)

Stewardship Thoughts for the New Ecclesiastical Year

§ The Church was important enough to Jesus Christ that He was willing to give Himself for it. "Just how important is it to me?" is the question of the hour. Story: A man bragged that he had not been late for work in ten years, though he lived twenty miles from the job ... but he was late for church nearly every Sunday! Lesson: Where a man's heart is, there will his gifts be also.

§ If you are giving until it hurts, you are not giving properly. Keep on giving until it no longer hurts. Giving should be joyous. It never hurts the cheerful giver to give. God *so loved* the world that He gave. Few of us *so love*."

§ God made the sun, and it gives heat and light. He made the moon and stars and they give light. He sent His beloved Son and He gave His life. God made man and man must also give in order to live.

§ A young pastor looked at the congregation while preaching on serving the poor and said. "Where are the poor?" Then he looked at the offering plates and said, "Where are the rich?"

§ A man told the pastor that the church seemed only to mean, "give, give, give!" The pastor said, "Thank you for that wonderfully true definition." Christian giving began when God gave His Son, and it never ends until we are gathered home.

§ Dear Parents: with your children, please read and memorize today the following verse from the Gospel of St. John (3:16): "For God loved the world *so much* that He gave His only-begotten Son, that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life."

With His love,

Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά



Voula Hareras

Άπο Το Ταξίδι Μου

Είχα χρόνια νά πάω στην πατρίδα Ελλάδα, γ αυτό ένιωσα μία μεγάλη συγκίνηση όταν τό άεροπλάνο προσγειώθηκε στο άεροδρόμιον, ή πρώτη εύχάριστη έντύπωσις ήταν ή καθαριότητα καί ή όμορφιά του νέου άεροδρομίου [Ελευθέριος Βενιζέλος]. Πράγματι μπορείς άνετα νά πείς ότι είναι τό καλύτερο των Βαλκανίων.

Γενικά έντυπωσιάστικα μέ τούς μεγάλους καινούργιους δρόμους, τά υπέροχα στάδια, καί όλα τά λοιπά έργα που έγιναν για τούς περισυνούς Όλυμπιακούς Αγώνες.

Περάσαμε τό Ρίο Αντίριο; την περίφημη καλωδιακή Γέφυρα, καί φθάσαμε στο Άγρίνιο, μιάν όμορφη πολιτεία, καθαρό άέρα, καί φιλόξενους κατοίκους. Πήγα στη έκκλησία του Αγίου Ίωάννου του Ρηγανά καί χάρηκα την υπέροχη άνδρική χορωδία, καί τής ωραιότατες οίκόνες.

Κατόπιν μέ ferry boat, πήγα Κεφαλλονιά, ένα ωραίο ξεκουραστικό ταξίδι, ήταν πεντακάθαρο, ή θάλασσα βαθειά γαλάζια, ούρανός καταγάλανος όλα φωτεινά καί χαρούμενα, τέλος φθάσαμε πήγα στο χωριό μου γεμάτη νοσταλγία, γύριζα γύρω στο πατρικό μου σπίτι, τό γεμάτο παιδικές άναμνήσεις μόνη για δυό μέρες τό χάρηκα.

Όταν ήρθαν τά παιδιά καί τά έγκόνια μου άρχισαν την περιήγησι του Νησιού, ή πρώτη μας επίσκεψη, προσκύνημα στην μονή του Αγίου Γερασίμου, γονατιστοί όλοι προσευχηθήκαμε νά δώση ειρήνη στον κόσμο, καί υγεία σε όλους.

Τά παιδιά έντυπωσιάστηκαν μέ τό Άγιο Λείψανο, καί κατόπιν μέ την μεγάλη υπέροχη εκκλησία, τό τέμπλο όλο σκαλιστό πεντελικό μάρμαρο [δωρεά του άποθανόντος έδώ στο Pittsburgh, Νίκου Καβαλιεράτου] τούς τεράστιους υπέροχους πολυελαίους, δωρεές των Κεφαλλονίτικων όργα'νώσεων Άμερικής.

Μά αυτό που σε καθυλώνη για ώρες είναι ή Άγιογραφίες του Ναού, ώρες ημορείς νά τής θαυμάζεις [άκόμα ζωγραφίζουν].

Χάρηκαν τά παιδιά την καταγάλανη θάλασσα καί τις ωραίες άμμουδιές έφυγαν ευχαριστημένα, αλά καί στην όμορφη Καλαμάτα ένθουσιάστικαν, γύρισαν τριγύρω άρκετούς άρχαιολογικούς χώρους,

έμαθαν πάρα πολλά για την άρχαία ιστορία, καί τό τελευταίο γύρω από την Άθήνα, Άκρόπολι, μουσεια καί βόλτες στην όμορφη Πλάκα, μέ λύπη φύγανε, άφου τούς ύποσχεδήκαμε νά ξανάρθουμε, γρήγορα πάλι.

Άλήθεια πώς μπορείς σε δυό σελίδες νά κλείσης μιá όλόκληρη Ελλάδα, την ιστορία χιλιάδων χρόνων, τό λαμπερό φώς του ήλιου καί τά χρώματα της.

Τελείωσαν όλα σε 3 έβδομάδες, μετά έπιστροφή καί πάλι στη άγαπημένη δεύτερη πατρίδα μας, την μεγάλη Άμερική, άς την εύλογή ό Θεός νά βρή τον τρόπο νά φέρει ειρήνη στον κόσμο. Άπό τό χέρι τής είναι, άκόμα είναι Παντοκράτιρα, άς τούς φωτίση τό Άγιον Πνεύμα νά βρουν την λύση.

Τό ποίημα τό έγραψα στο χωριό μου.

Βούλα Χαρερά

Το Πατρικό Μου Σπιτι

Τό πατρικό μου τό σπιτάκι στο χωριό
Έχει μπροστά του πικροδάφνες καί κρινάκια
Τό έχει άγκαλιάση μιá παλαιά κληματαριά
Κι έχει ο κήπος του λογείς; λογείς δενδράκια.

Έχει για σκέπη κεραμίδια φτωχικά
Και τά παράθυρα παλαιά και ξεβαμένα
Και τά παρτέρια πούνε γύρω στην αυλή
Έχουν λουλούδια πούνε όλα ξεραμένα

Στο κάτω μέρος μιá Γέρικη έλιά
Πού στέκει δίπλα στο ψηλό τό κυπαρίσσι
Κι άπεναντί τους ή μεγάλη άμυγδαλιά
Έπese, κι έκρυσpe στη ρίζα τής την βρύση

Έχει άράχνες ή μικρούλα άποθήκη
Και τής γιαγιάς ό άργαλειός μένει βουβός
Γκρεμίστηκε τό τζάκι στην γωνία
Κι έχει γεμίσει από μπάζα ό λινός

Έκύταζα μέ μάτια βουρκωμένα
Κι ένοστάλησα άμεσως τά παλιά
Πούνε οι γονείς μου, οι γιαγιάδες οι παπούδες
Ως καί τ άδέλφια μου χαθήκαν μακριά

Τότε έκάθησα στην άκρη στο μουράγιο
Και σαν νά νόμισα πως μουπε μιá φωνή
Μήν κλαίς καρδούλα μου, καθόλου μήν λυπάσαι
Ότι γεννιέται νά τό ξέρεις πώς δεν ζή.

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά



Maria Kraniou

be interesting.

A few months ago, while sitting in a doctor's office and browsing through a National Geographic magazine, I came across a fascinating section on ancient Greece. It contained information on Olympic history, archaeology, tourism, mythology, among other topics. I'd like to share some of the facts that I found to








Maria Kraniou

Olympic History

Some of last summer's Olympic events would be familiar to the athletes who originated the competitions around the 8th century B.C. Artwork on classical pottery shows well-muscled men racing, wrestling, throwing the discus, and more. But the clothing sported by today's competitors would probably puzzle those ancient Greeks, since the original Olympic athletes wore little more than the sheen of olive oil.

Below are some highlights of other similarities and differences from ancient times to today.

(to be continued next issue...)

Sport	How They Played It
Discus 	Modern discus throwers use much the same technique as ancient Greeks. What has changed over the centuries is the discus itself: The earliest surviving models, from the 6th century B.C. were stone. Later ones (3rd century A.D.) were iron or bronze.
Javelin 	The javelin throw probably originated as a display of hunting or battle skills. Throwers competed for distance – as today's athletes do. But ancient javelins were equipped with a leather strap that throwers hooked their fingers through to get more distance from their throw.
Running 	Footraces of varying distances were the first and, for many years beginning in 776 B.C., the only Olympic events. An embankment curved around the sides of a broad, flat running track and served as a spectator area for the crowds the races attracted.
Long Jump 	Today Olympic long jumpers leap unencumbered, but ancient athletes carried stone weights – or halteres – that they pumped vigorously up and down as they ran to increase their jump's momentum.
Wrestling 	Greek wrestlers didn't try to pin their opponents, as wrestlers do now. Instead, the object was to throw an opponent to the ground – three times to win. Matches weren't timed, and wrestlers weren't separated into weight divisions.
Equestrian 	Today's equestrian events emphasize style; the ancient Greeks' emphasized speed. Both horseback and chariot races were staged in open-air riding rings known as hippodromes. As is the case today, the Greeks awarded the winner's wreath to the owner of the horse.
Boxing 	Fighters wrapped straps of leather around their hands to protect themselves during bouts, but they kept their fingertips free. Fights had no time limits, and contestants were matched not by physical size but by the luck of the draw.

Community Life Photo Journal

From July 21-24, the Holy Trinity GOYA embarked on a pilgrimage to Chicago. Highlights of the trip included a visit to the Saint John Chrysostom Greek Orthodox Monastery in Kenosha, Wisconsin, tours of the Field Museum, Navy Pier and Sears Tower and Divine Liturgy at the Assumption of the Theotokos Church in Chicago. For a bit of added Greek flavor, the group also managed visits to the Greek Islands Restaurant in Greek Town and the Saints Peter and Paul Church's Greek Festival in Glenview. All in all, it was quite a varied and blessed trip, enjoyed by all! These two pages offer a glimpse into some of the memorable moments and experiences.



(Counter-clockwise from top left) Top left: Yes, that's 4:56 AM, about the same time the group woke up on their first morning to attend the early morning service at the monastery chapel! Right: GOYAnS enjoying breakfast in the visitor's refectory at the monastery; The entire group in front of the main church of the monastery; The new monastery complex. The entire project (church, chapels, visitors' center, monastic quarters, etc.) was recently completed at a total cost of \$8.6 million; The interior of the main church, featuring an iconostasion, main chandelier, marble floor and other furnishings made by traditional artisans in Greece; Gherontissa Melanie presenting a selection of the sacred relics housed in the monastery chapel, among which were Saint George the Great Martyr; the monastery bookstore, located in the visitor's center. Our group stayed in the former monastic quarters, which have now been converted for guest use, since the nuns now reside in the newly constructed monastic residences inside the new monastery complex.



Community Life Photo Journal



Left: "The Andrews" (Athanasious and Georgiadis) blow out the candles of their shared birthday cake; Right: A "sweet" visit to the Jelly Belly factory, close to the monastery. (Note the Greek menu!) Counter-clockwise: The entire group at the Field Museum, with Sue, the worlds largest complete T-Rex; Dancing at the Ss. Peter & Paul Church Festival; three "little Yiayias" at the Greek Islands Restaurant; parents enjoy a Greek dinner, too!; GOYA at the White Sox game.



Left: Members of the Koimissis GOYA and their preist, Father Athanasios, present a commemorative gift to our GOYA officers on Sunday morning.



Our Worship - Part 4

Part of a special series of educational features designed to provide "continuing education" to our parishioners. Taken from the publication, "Our Worship," which examines and explains the main elements of worship in the Orthodox Christian Church.

ARE WE "WORTHY" TO RECEIVE THE EUCHARIST?

One sometimes hears that the Eucharist should be received only rarely, even only once a year, because we are "unworthy" to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. This belief is contrary to the spirit of the Divine Liturgy and, in fact, to the teaching of Christ Himself.

- First of all we acknowledge that nothing we do can make us truly worthy to receive Christ in the Eucharist. We are sinners, allowed to receive Christ's Body and Blood "for the forgiveness of sins" and "unto life everlasting." The Eucharist is not a reward.
- While we must prepare to receive the Eucharist, we should not assume that our preparation, not even Confession, "makes" us worthy.
- During the Cherubic Hymn, the priest prays, "No one who is bound by the desires and pleasures of this life is worthy to approach You..." The Liturgy points out that God, through His love and endless mercy, makes us worthy to approach Him. The Eucharist is God's freely-given Gift to us; we must, however, accept it in all humility and faith, and with a repentant spirit.
- The priest gives us Holy Communion using our baptismal name, "The servant of God, N. receives..." a reminder that it is by virtue of our Baptism, not our personal "goodness," that we share in the Eucharist.
- Receiving the Eucharist only once each year was set as a minimum, not a norm. This concept finds its origin in that period of Church history when few received Holy Communion. As a minimum, an annual reception of the Eucharist was decreed, but this was never intended to be the norm. The Liturgy is, in essence, a meal; in day-to-day terms, no one prepares a meal for people who have no intention of partaking of it.

It is, then, God who makes us worthy to approach the Eucharistic meal "in faith and love."

THE PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

The Anaphora is followed by a litany and three prayers — one of them being the Lord's Prayer — in which we ask God to make us worthy to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Following these prayers, the priest calls us to ready ourselves to share in this Mystery: "Holy Things to the holy!" We respond by singing, "One is holy, one is Lord: Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen."

Several actions now take place before we receive the Eucharist:

- **THE FRACTION AND MINGLING** — The consecrated Lamb is divided in parts and placed in the chalice to which hot water is added. The union of the life-giving Body and the warmed precious Blood reminds us that we receive the living, resurrected Christ when we partake of the Eucharist.
- **THE PRAYER BEFORE COMMUNION** — Both clergy and laity recite this prayer: "I believe, O Lord, and I confess that You are the Christ the Son of the living God, who came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the first ..." In this prayer we acknowledge that we are in need of the healing power which the Eucharist brings to our lives. We seek God's forgiveness and ask him to make us worthy of His heavenly kingdom.
- **THE COMMUNION OF THE CLERGY** — The priest, deacon and other clergy approach the Holy Gifts, saying "Behold, I approach my immortal King and my God." Then they partake of the Eucharist.

HOW TO PREPARE TO RECEIVE THE EUCHARIST

The tradition of the Church warns that we should prepare ourselves before receiving the Eucharist by:

- **Acknowledging our sinfulness** and sincerely desiring God's forgiveness
- **Seeking His guidance** in changing our lives; and
- Offering fervent prayer while **fasting for a period of time** before the Liturgy.

In addition, we should be reconciled with God and others through the **Mystery of Repentance** on a regular basis — as often as recommended by our Father Confessor — and participate in the other services which prepare us for the celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy.

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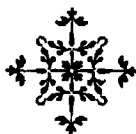
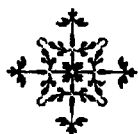
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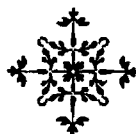
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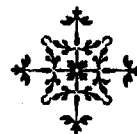


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HAPPY NEW YEAR??

Q: What do you mean, “Happy New Year” in September? Why is the first day of the new “Ecclesiastical Year” celebrated on September 1 instead of January 1 like the rest of the world?

A: For the maintenance of their armed forces, the Roman emperors decreed that their subjects in every district should be taxed every year. This same decree was reissued every fifteen years, since the Roman soldiers were obliged to serve for fifteen years. At the end of each fifteen-year period, an assessment was made of what economic changes had taken place, and a new tax was decreed, which was to be paid over the span of the fifteen years.

This imperial decree, which was issued before the season of winter, was named Indictio, that is, Definiton, or Order. This name was adopted by the emperors in Constantinople also. It is commonly held that Saint Constantine the Great introduced the Indiction decrees in A.D. 312, after he beheld the sign of the Cross in heaven and vanquished Maxentius and was proclaimed Emperor in the West.

There are three types of Indictions: 1) That which was introduced in the West, and which is called Imperial, or Caesarean, or Constantinian, and which begins on the 24th of September; 2) The so-called Papal Indiction, which begins on the 1st of January; and 3) The Constantinopolitan, which was adopted by the Patriarchs of that city after the fall of the Eastern Empire in 1453. This Indiction is indicated in their own hand on the decrees they issue (without the numeration of the fifteen years).

This Indiction begins on the 1st of September and is observed with special ceremony in the Church. Since the completion of each year takes place, as it were, with the harvest and gathering of the crops into storehouses, and we begin anew from henceforth the sowing of seed in the earth for the production of future crops, September is considered the beginning of the New Year. The Church also keeps festival this day, beseeching God for fair weather, seasonable rains, and an abundance of the fruits of the earth. The Holy Scriptures (Lev. 23:24-5 and Num. 29:1-2) also testify that the people of Israel celebrated the fest of the Blowing of the Trumpets on this day, offering hymns of thanksgiving.

It should be noted that to the present day, the Church has always celebrated the beginning of the New Year on September 1. This was the custom in Constantinople until its fall in 1453 and in Russia until the reign of Peter I. September 1 is still festively celebrated as the New Year at the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

From the “Online Chapel” of the Archdiocese Web Site: www.goarch.org