



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

1923 · EIGHTY-THREE YEARS OF MINISTRY · 2006

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

December 2006

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

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He Who Is comes to be; the uncreated is created. The unconfined is confined.

He is the bridge between divinity and the grossness of the flesh.

He Who enriches becomes poor: He takes upon himself the poverty of my flesh so that I may receive the riches of His divinity.

He who is full is emptied: He is emptied of His own glory for a little while, that I may share in His fullness

He shares in my flesh in order that He may rescue the image and confer immortality on the flesh.

St. Gregory the Theologian
Oration 38
4th century



12th century Icon of the Nativity from the Palatine Chapel, Palermo, Italy

Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

Parish Newsletter of
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The Cultural Side

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Publication Schedule

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the Herald, please contact the church secretary
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The Herald

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“For us men and for our salvation came
down from heaven and was incarnate of
the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and
became man.”

The Nicene Creed

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Ever had anyone go out of their way to do some-
thing for you, even though they didn't have to? Maybe
they made a meal for you when you were sick, took time from a busy day to
talk of visit with you or wrote you a nice note. When those things happen,
it not only makes you feel good, it also lets you know in a very tangible
way that the person holds you in high regard, is willing to go out of their
way for you and is even willing to place your needs before their own. And
what makes it most special is that they did it because they wanted to, not
because they had to.

In all the sparkle and excitement of the secular Christmas season—and
even sometimes in the Christian observation, too—the thought is some-
times lost that the Logos, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Only-
Begotten Son of God did not come into the world because He had to, but
He did it for us out of His supreme love for us. According to Metropolitan
Hierotheos Vlahos, “The Logos of God did not need to become man for
His own sake; He became man solely for man alone. This shows God's
great love, in taking on human nature and uniting is with divine nature.”
(From the book, “On Entering the Orthodox Church”).

If, then, we feel compelled to express our thanks, write a note or even
do something in return when a fellow man or woman does something nice
and selfless for us in this life and in this world, how much more must we be
indebted, eternally thankful and motivated toward love by this saving act
of God?

Granted, the above example might not carry the weight it would have
in previous generations because the art of properly thanking others has
unfortunately been lost with the transformation of our society into a less
formal sense of social practice and obligation, but as faithful Christians we
simply cannot overlook this gift or take it for granted.

So as we approach the celebration of the Holy Nativity of our Lord,
instead of focusing so much on the gifts we will give others (which in their
best sense are acts of love reflecting Christ), perhaps we would better
spend on time thaking God through prayer, serving others, sharing the
Good News of His saving gift with those who need to hear it ... and most
of all, seeking news ways each day to respond to God with acts and expres-
sions which say, “Thank you” and “I love you!” Have a blessed
Christmas!

“Christ is born! Glorify Him!”



News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal December 16

The complete cast rehearsal for the Holy Trinity Church School Christmas Pageant will be held on Saturday morning, December 16. from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Please note: Grades 5 to 12 are asked to be present at 9:00 a.m. to rehearse speaking parts; Grades 4 and under are asked to be present at 10:00 for the complete rehearsal. All students and staff are requested to be present. "Bonus" attendance credit will be given for all students who participate in the rehearsal.

Grades 5 to 12.....9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
Grades 4 & under.....10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Church School Christmas Pageant December 17

The Holy Trinity Church School ministry will be offering its annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 17. All the students of the Church School will be involved in this event. On that day, 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 Dec. 24, 31

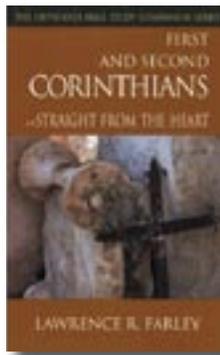
Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on December 24 and 31 due to the holiday celebrations, so please plan on being in church together as a family for the entire service on those days.

Food Drive Bags Due Dec. 10

The Church School food drive bags should be returned to the church by Sunday, December 10, so that the food can be delivered to the agency for distribution.

St. Lydia's Orthodox Women's Ministry Dec. 4

The St. Lydia Women's Study Ministry is for women to share in fellowship and to study 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 the home of Jan Petredis in Wexford. New participants are always welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable and the approach is casual, but the subjects are important for today's women and families. All Holy Trinity women are welcome and invited to bring a friend!



This year's theme will continue the Bible Study of

Saint Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians. The study guide being used is a new publication, "First and Second Corinthians: Straight From the Heart." It approaches the study with an easy-to-understand method intended for all people. 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 for the year is available at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services. December

Please take note of the following weekday Liturgies for the feast days in the month of December. Please note that we are currently on the time schedule for "Winter Hours:" Orthros is at 9:00 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00.

- Tue. Dec. 5****St. Savas the Sanctified**
- Tue. Dec. 5***, 7pm **Vespers of St. Nicholas**
- Wed. Dec. 6*** **St. Nicholas the Wonderworker**
**All services for St. Nicholas held at St. Nicholas Cathedral*
- Wed. Dec. 6, 6:00 p.m.**..... **Paraclesis**
- Thu. Dec. 7**.....**St. Ambrose/Sr. Citizens Christmas Lunch**
- Mon. Dec. 11***, 7pm..... **Vespers of St. Spyridon**
- Tue. Dec. 12*** **St. Spyridon the Wonderworker**
**All services for St. Spyridon held at St. Spyridon in Monessen.*

Christmas/New Year Services December/January

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

- Fri. Dec. 22, 10 am**.....**Royal House of the Nativity**
This special service offers readings, prophecies and hymns which point to and interpret the Divine Incarnation.
- Sun. Dec. 24, 10am**.. **Liturgy of the Forefeast of the Nativity**
In addition to being a regular Sunday Liturgy, this is also the Liturgy of the Forefeast of the Nativity in preparation for the celebration of the Feast. There is no Church School on this day.
- Sun. Dec. 24, 7pm****Great Vespers of the Nativity**
This service "opens the liturgical day" and begins the celebration of the Nativity. This is the Great Vespers of the Feast (Not a Liturgy; no Holy Communion).
- Mon. 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!



News & Events

Mon. Jan. 1 **Orthros/Liturgy of St. Basil the Great**
Due to New Year's Day falling on a Monday, we will not be able to have the traditional New Year's Eve Vespers Liturgy. Please plan on attending Divine Liturgy on Sunday as the first act and family worship of 2007!

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Baptism: Elias Hadjipanayis

The servant of God, Elias Hadjipanayis, son of Costas and Lorraine Hadjipanayis, was received into the Holy Orthodox Christian Faith through the Holy Mystery of Baptism on November 18, 2006. The Godparent was Kimberly Pabian. Congratulations, and may God grant him many years!

YOUTH MINISTRY

GOYA Childrens' Book Drive **December**

The GOYA will be collecting new or "like new" children's books for distribution to needy children in the Pittsburgh area. Have some sitting around at home? Look for the deposit box in the Narthex or in the Coffee Hour.

GOYA Fireside Chat **December 10**

The annual GOYA Christmas Fireside Chat will be held at the home of Andrew and Maria on Sunday, Dec. 10.

GOYA Breakmaking **December 15**

All GOYAns are asked to participate in baking bread to fill their holiday orders on Friday, December 15 from from 4:00 to 10:00 pm.

GOYA Winter Fun Event **December 26**

The GOYA will be holding a sledding/ice skating party at North Park on December 26, followed by a fondue party at the Erdeljac house. Watch for details in the mail.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Special General Assembly **December 10**

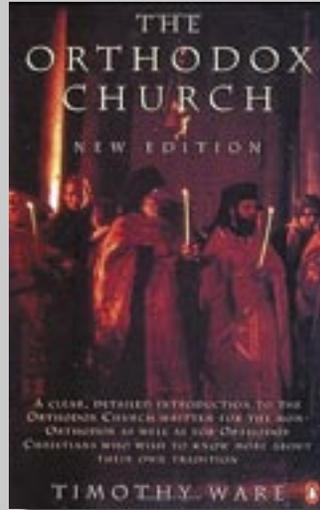
Please mark your calendar to attend the Special General Assembly on Sunday, December 10, following the Divine Liturgy. This is a special assembly called to vote on the proposal to acquire new property for a potential new home for Holy Trinity Church. Please see the special mailing sent the last week of November or visit the parish web site at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

New Year's Eve at Holy Trinity **Dec. 31**

Please make plans now to attend New Year's Eve at Holy Trinity Church. Dinner will begin at 7:30pm, followed by the Dance and New Year's celebration. See the enclosed flyer for details.

Announcing a New Learning Series at Holy Trinity Church:

THE ORTHODOX STUDIES FORUM



Now Underway! Try It!

About the Book

This book is probably the best introduction to the Orthodox Church, written in an accessible, though rigorous style. It deals with the history, Liturgy, and teaching of the Orthodox Church. It brings an ecumenical perspective in the sense that it compares the teachings and history of the Orthodox Church with those of other Christian Churches. It

also presents our Tradition in a language that you could use when discussing your faith with people who are not Orthodox.

About the Author

Kallistos Ware is one of—if not the—most important living Orthodox theologians. He wrote his dissertation on the Orthodox Church while still a young Protestant student, later developing a fascination with the history, teaching, and Liturgy of our Church. He eventually became Orthodox and was made the bishop of Diokleia, changing his name to Kallistos. He is also a retired professor from Oxford University in Great Britain, whom Pittsburgh will be honored to host in March 2007.

About the Teacher/Facilitator

Father Radu Bordeianu is a full-time professor at Duquesne University with a Doctoral degree from Marquette University and is the Assistant Priest at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church. He has served and taught at several parishes in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

About the Study Series

The Orthodox Studies Forum is designed for adults who are interested in learning more about the Orthodox Christian Faith. It is for both those who have been Orthodox all their lives and want to learn more as well as those seeking to embrace Orthodoxy or grow further in their faith. The group meets on the **first and third Wednesday** of each month from **7:00-8:30 p.m. from November through May** at LaRoche College, 9000 Babcock Blvd., Pittsburgh (next to UPMC Passavant Hospital). The room is in the A.J. Palumbo Science Center, Room SC105.

Gheronda's Corner

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



Father John Androutsopoulos

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

Christ is born
Glorify Him.
Christ has come from the
heavens,
receive Him.
Christ is on earth,
elevate Him.
Sing unto the Lord, all the

earth; and ye nations, praise Him with joy;
For He has been glorified.

Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room

"There was no room for them in the inn"! (Luke 2:7)

Many hearts like an old house have become cluttered with worldly things. There is no room for the good and lovely. Like the inn in Bethlehem, there is no room for Christ the Savior. During the Christmas season, our hearts seem more easily touched and filled with goodwill towards others. But in the rush of preparing for Christmas, are we making room for the Christ of Bethlehem? Or are we so preoccupied by worldly cares that we are shutting Christ out? Let us rid our hearts of the trivial, so that there will be room for the Christ child. He will make our lives fresh and joyful.

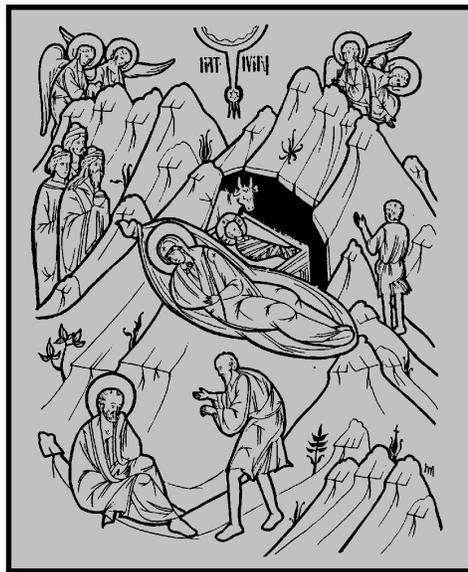
Early in the fall we may visit stores and see festive Christmas decorations. The sight is a delight to our eyes. Everywhere attractive gifts are on display and salespeople are serving the many shoppers who throng around the counter. An air of expectancy hangs over everything. We are waiting for what? We are preparing for whom? We think of the numerous gifts to be wrapped, the greeting cards to be written, and the many tasks to be done before Christmas.

But there is one thing more important than all these. Will we be ready to receive the greatest gift of all on Christmas morning the Christ Child? Are our hearts being made ready that the King of all the world might

find us fit for His abode in us. How empty our lives, will be this Christmas, if Jesus should pass us by because we are not prepared to receive Him. There is no preparation so important as that which makes us ready to meet Christ on the day of His Nativity.

Beloved, we should keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, who said, "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." Acts 20:35

The message of Christmas is "THINK OF OTHERS." Generally, at no other time during the year we are so generous towards others as during the Christmas season. Jesus gave all to us. How much of ourselves are we giving to others?



Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ, The first step in receiving Christ into our lives this Christmas is to set aside SELF, together with all other selfishness it harbors. Only then can there be room in our hearts for receiving the true Lord of life. Let Christ our Lord enter our lives anew and dwell at the very center of our being so that our lives may declare HIS GLORY.

From The Great Vespers Of The Nativity:

"What shall we render Thee, O Christ, for Thou did appear on earth as a man for our sake? Verily, every individual of the creatures Thou did create shall offer Thee Thanksgiving. The angles

shall render Thee praise; the heavens, the star; the Magi, gifts; the shepherds, wonder; the earth, the cave; the wilderness, the manger; and we, men, a Virgin Mother. Wherefore, O God before the ages, have mercy upon us."

Christ Is Born!

May the new born Christ Child bestow His Blessings and love upon each and every member of our family here at Holy Trinity.

May the new year be filled with health and happiness and spiritual joy for all.

Glorify Him!

With His Love

Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά



Voula Hareras

Άγαπητοί Μου

Απασχοληθήτε για λίγο να ξεφυλλίσεις, και να μελετήσεις, τής παραδόσεις και τὰ έθιμα πού σου άφησαν κληρονομιά οί παλαιοί μετανάστες προγονοί σου, και τότε με έκπληξι θά βρεθής αντίκρου μέ ένα κομμάτι γυμνό, τής

ψυχής σου.

Έπειτα μελετώντας προσεκτικά και με σεβασμό αυτά, και φθάνοντας ως τής ρίζες τους, θά δής καινούργιους όριζοντες πού άνοιγοντε μπροστά σου, της εύεργεσίες πού μπορείς να προσφέρεις και τόν ψυχικό πλούτο πού θά άποκομίσεις.

Η κληρονομιά για τήν όποια μιλάω, είναι οί κοινότητες, και οί συλλόγοι μας, είναι ένα μονοπάτι άνοιχτο, πού μέ κόπους και θυσίες τό άνοιξαν, γιατί δέν είχαν τά μέσα πού σέ βοήθησαν, αυτοί οί ΑΜΟΡΦΩΤΙ να άποκτήσης έσύ.

Δέν είχαν τήν δύναμι να άνοιξουν φαρδειά λεωφόρο, άφησαν όμως τό μονοπάτι άνοιχτό να τό πάρης έσύ, και πισοστρατεύοντας να βρής τής ρίζες σου. Έκεί πού ξεκινάει ή βάση της ράτσας σου, τής φυλής σου, κάτι πού είναι πιό πλατύ άπο τήν σημερινή σου οικογένεια, και έντελώς άσχετο άπό τήν μεγάλη κοινωνία πού ζής, και πού πρέπει να σέβεσε, εκεί είναι μιá μικρή ξεχωριστή ψυχική κοινωνία που θά φυλάξης σαν ιερό κειμήλιο, γιατί σου τό άφησε κληρονομιά ό φτωχός σέ χρήματα, μετανάστης γονείς σου, αλά πλούσιος σέ ψυχικά και ήθικά αισθήματα.

Πάρε παράδειγμα τήν έργασία πού άφησε ή Μάνα σου, ή ή γιαγιά σου, προσπάθησε όσο μπορούσε να κρατήση όλα τά έθιμα τής φυλής μας, να διατηρήση άμάλευτα άπό τήν ξενικήν επίδραση και άγνά να τά άφήση πίσω της δουλεύοντας γι'αυτό πλάϊ πλάϊ μέ τόν άνδρα της.

Οί Γυναίκες αυτές, φύλαξαν πιστότερα τήν παράδοση γιατί αυτός είναι και ό ρόλος της γυναίκας αυτή πάντα πιό θρησκευτική, και μέ πιό έσωτερικότητα μπορή να κάμη τής παροδόσεις να φαίνοντε ώραιες και να μπορούν να στέκοντε όλες σωστά και σοβαρά, και περήφανα να στολίζουν τήν κοινωνία της ξένης χώρας που της δέχτηκε, της φιλοξένησε, και πολλές φορές της θαυμάζη και της

άντιγράφη, γιατί είναι γεμάτες Οίκογένεια, Θρησκεία, Αλληλοβοή Θεια, Αγάπη.

Όταν ξεριζώσης τήν μητρική γλώσσα, τής παραδόσεις, τά έθιμά σου, τότε έχασες τήν ψυχή σου. Μονάχα κάτι κληρονομίες άσυνάρτητες θά άπομείνουν μέσα σου, πού θά ξεπροβάλουν άζαφνα για να δείχνουν στους ξένους πώς δέν είσαι όλότελα δικός τους. Και ένώ φαινομενικά έχεις δυό πατρίδες στ'άλήθεια είσαι χωρίς πατρίδα, και πολλές φορές άδειος και λυπημένος.

Πάρε λοιπόν τό μονοπάτι πού βρήκες, άντάμωσε παρέα τους άλλους της ράτσας σου, τούς όμοιους σου, και μέ χαρά προχωρήστε να βρήτε τους θυσαυρούς πού άφησαν, και εκεί θά ξαναβρής άτόφια και χαμογελαστή τήν Μάνα σου, τόν πατέρα σου, ή τούς προγόνους σου άν γεννήθηκες έδώ.

Και τά ίδανικά πού κρύβης μέσα σου άναφτερωμένα θά βρούν διέξοδο και θά πλάσης και σύ τότε ότι θέλης γιατί θά έχεις πλέον γερά θεμέλια.

Έχεις χρέος να τά μελετήσης όλα αυτά γιατί είναι δικά σου, και άρκετά τά έγκατελειψες σχεδόν μέχρι τώρα μέ τό να έχεις κοντέψη να πεισθής πώς αυτά δέν έχουν άξια, είναι κατώτερα και για πέταμα.

Μαθαίνοντας πούθε έρχεσαι, θά μάθης και τόν σωστό δρόμο πού πρέπει να πηγαινεις και όταν τά μάθης αυτά έγινες άνθρωπος αισθηματίας.

Γιά να σταθή και να διατηρηθή μιá κοινότητα ή ένας σύλλογος, δέν χρειάζεται ιδικό κλήμα, ή πατρίδα, χρειάζεται ή καλή διάθεση άνθρώπων συνδεδεμένων μέ τά ίδια ίδανικά, και μιá μικρή αφιέρωσι άπό τόν πολύτιμο χρόνο σας.

Χρέος έχετε να σεβασθήτε τήν μνήμη αυτών πού φύγαν και να εύχαριστήσετε αυτούς πού άπομείναν, και τό σπουδαιότερον θά ντύσης τό γυμνό κομμάτι τής ψυχής σου, και θά κρατήσης τήν σειρά.

Έπειτα άπό χρόνια τό ίδιο θά πράξουν τά παιδιά σου για σένα.

Έλπίζω και εύχομαι να διαβάσης μέ προσοχή τό κείμενο και να τό έξηγήσης και στα παιδιά σου πιστεψέ μέ θά ώφελιθούν.

Καλόν χειμώνα λοιπόν,

Βούλα Χαρερά

Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update

Hello My Precious Children!

I, Spero, asked my Papou: "How can we find out what is right and what is wrong?" Papou said that we can learn what is right and wrong by reading our Heavenly Father's words in the Bible. Our loving God has given us rules and guidelines on how to live so we know right from wrong. These answers are found in the Bible when we read verses such as 10 Commandments (Exodus 20.1-17) and the Beatitudes (Matt. 2.5-12). From these, we get a pretty good idea of how God wants us to live. In the Book of Deuteronomy (12.28), are also told to be careful to obey all God's commandments, then later St. Paul reminds us as Christians that we should do everything in a spirit of love (1 Corinthians 16.13-14). We must do what is right in God's eyes because this shows Him every day that we love Him and trust Him. We must love our Heavenly Father above all because He wants only the very best for us and because He loved us first!

Now, my little sister, Zoe, likes to play hide-and-seek. The other day, she asked if we can ever play hide-and-seek with God. I answered that since God is all-knowing and all-seeing, He really has the advantage in that game! Still, we do find some people in the Bible who do try to hide from God because they have not been obedient to Him. Take Jonah, for example. It's one of my favorite Bible stories. Jonah was a prophet, which means he was a messenger of God, because he spoke to the people about God's message to them. Now, the Lord asked Jonah to go to Ninevah and tell the people there to "shape up!" because they were acting in ways they were against God's teachings. But Jonah did not do what God asked. He told God, "No, I do not want to go to Ninevah. They are bad people!"

So Jonah tried to run away and hide from God by getting on a boat. But the moment he did, a big storm came up and rocked the boat. Everyone on board prayed for God to stop the storm, but not Jonah; he knew that God was angry at him because He was running away. So they threw Jonah overboard and at that moment the storm stopped! Jonah cried out to God, "Since you know where I am, you can help me, God!" So the Lord sent a big, fat whale to swallow him. Jonah remained in the belly of the sea beast for three days, praying. He finally gave up and told God, "OK, Lord, whatever you want me to do, I will do!" Jonah finally learned what obedience to God is all about. He was now ready to change the lives of thousands of people. Jonah's smart idea was telling God that he was sorry for running away.

After that, I went on to tell Zoe about the very first people who disobeyed God in the Bible, Adam and Eve. God had made the world, then made Adam and Eve, and He gave them everything they needed. One of Adam's first jobs was to name all the creatures that God had created. The Lord also gave them all the food they needed, but told them not to eat from the tree of knowledge, for if they did they would die. Then, one day, Eve was walking by the tree and a crafty snake tempted her by telling her that nothing bad would happen if she ate from the tree, but that she would become smart like God. Eve fell for the lie and took from the tree, then shared it with Adam. They had greatly sinned, not by wanting to be wise, but by disobeying God's command. They also tried to hide from God, but it didn't work for them, either! When the Lord found them hiding in the garden, He asked them why they were hiding and they were ashamed. So they were cast out of the garden of delight. God cursed the snake by making him crawl on his belly for ever. But He didn't give up on His best creation, mankind. He had a plan to let us back into His beautiful garden of Paradise, but it took a long time and we still didn't listen. That's when God sent His only-begotten Son into the world to save us. And because Jesus came, died for our sins and conquered death, He broke down the doors which kept us out of Paradise and let us back in through His Resurrection.

"Oh, Spero," said Zoe, "I just can't wait until Christmas to tell Jesus how much I love Him!"

You too, my precious children, can tell Him too, all together on Christmas morning at the special Christmas morning Divine Liturgy. I'll be there. Hope you will, too! Remember, Jesus loves you very, very much!!!



In Christ,
Love, Spero

Philoptochos News

An update on the news and activities of our local Holy Trinity chapter of the Philoptochos Ladies Society, a national philanthropic ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Philoptochos is: "to aid the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widow, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of the impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts; to promote the charitable, benevolent and philanthropic purposes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through instructional programs, presentations, lectures, seminars and other educational resources; to preserve and perpetuate Orthodox Christian concepts and the Orthodox Christian Family, and through them, to promote the Greek Orthodox Faith and traditions, in accordance with its doctrines, canons, discipline, divine worship, usages and customs; and to promote the participation in the activities of the Greek Orthodox community, with the cooperation of the Parish Priest and the Parish Council." Want more information? Visit their web site at www.Philoptochos.org or contact a local member.

Wine Tasting

On November 11, 2006 Philoptochos and the Parish Council co-Sponsored an evening of Wine Tasting. Those that attended had a great time. This was an interesting evening, because many had never been to a Wine Tasting before this evening. The wines and the Hors d'oeuvres were wonderful. My sincere thanks to Mrs. Joyce Countouris, Mrs. Nikki Marsh, and Mr. James Balouris for chairing this beautiful event. Also thanks to the committee who worked so hard on getting the very generous prizes and decorating the hall so lovely. Thank you, *Ke tou Hronou*.

Senior Citizens Christmas Party

You are cordially invited to attend the annual Christmas Party on Thursday, December 7, 2006, There will be a liturgy at 10:00am followed by a luncheon in the hall at 12:00pm. Please attend this is a very lovely affair. It gives you an opportunity to socialize and not be in a hurry to get home after church. If you know someone that needs a ride, please offer to bring them. Don't forget December 7. See you there.

Knitters And Crocheters Wanted

Do you knit or crochet? Our new project is to make 7x9 knitted or crocheted squares of yarn. We plan on joining them after Christmas to make lap blankets for the patients in nursing homes. No yarn, see Esther Ladakos

Prayers

Please pray for our loved ones. Prayer is a powerful medium. It can perform miracles. Please include the following in your evening prayers:

John, Peter, Louis, Betty, Dena, Marie, John, Tula, Helen, Sophia, Olga, Georgia

If you know someone who is ill, please contact Esther Ladakos at 412-761-3977. FIRST NAMES ONLY.

Membership And Stewardship

Every month I have asked if you are a member of

the Philoptochos. Once again, ARE YOU?? If not, why not?? We need every lady in the community to be a member of the Philoptochos if we are to survive. The work this small group does is amazing. Just imagine what a large group could do. Our chapter gives to National, the Metropolis, many local charities, and to those in need. This is why we keep asking you to join.

It is a very charitable organization!

Angel Tree

There are many names on the Angel Tree. Won't you please be generous and take one or two. You will help make a young man's Holiday a joy. The young men have been tortured, abused, have come from a drug family. It is no wonder they are troubled children. Please remember the gifts must be returned by Sunday, Dec. 14, 2006

Prepaid Bake Sale

Don't forget to order your goodies for the Holidays. Order forms are available in the hall on Sundays.

Metropolis Meeting

On November 1st and 2nd, I attended the Philoptochos meeting at Station Square with other Philoptochos Presidents and members from the Metropolis. It was an interesting meeting. Every chapter has its problems but many are able to overcome because they have many members. There were speakers who showed films or slides on various projects. Discussions were held on each project and before the meeting was adjourned. The Metropolis Philoptochos voted to donate the following:

Hellenicare.....	\$1,000.00
Women's Shelter of Pittsburgh.....	250.00
Ronald McDonald House.....	500.00
Navajo Mission Outreach	\$5,000.00
Children's Home.....	\$1,000.00
St. Mary of Egypt Monastery.....	\$1,000.00
St. Basil's Academy.....	\$3,000.00
Kidney Transplant Family	\$1,000.00





Philoptochos News (continued)

This was possible through the donations of all the chapters. As you can see, Philoptochos is always there!

Commitments and Charitable Donations

To date in 2006, our local chapter has made the following donations and offered support to the following:

NATIONAL MINISTRIES

Social Services	\$100.00
Vasilopeta	500.00
Cardiac Fund	50.00
St. Photios-St. Augustine.....	25.00
Missions	50.00
Hellenic College/Holy Cross.....	300.00
St. Basil's Sisterhood	10.00
IOCC	50.00
St. Basil's Graduation.....	10.00
Support Mission Priest	10.00
HC/HC Scholarship.....	10.00
Retired Clergy	50.00
Cancer Fund	100.00
Ecumenical Patriarchate	500.00
Ecumenical Soup Kitchen	100.00
General Medical Fund.....	10.00
Sisterhood of Presbyteres	25.00
UNICEF	50.00
Per Capita.....	<u>580.00</u>
TOTAL NATIONAL DONATIONS	\$2,530.00

METROPOLIS MINISTRIES

Metropolis Name Day	\$100.00
Illuminator (extra)	200.00
Daffodil Luncheon	100.00
Illuminator.....	100.00
Emergency Fund.....	100.00
Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery	100.00

St. Gregory Palamas	100.00
Holy Protection Convent	10.00
St. Theodore Monastery	10.00
Special Care Fund	100.00
Metropolis Home.....	100.00
Mt. Tabor.....	250.00
Summer Camp Underwriting.....	1,300.00
Father Katras Fund.....	1,000.00
St. Photios Metropolis	25.00
Per Capita.....	<u>406.00</u>
TOTAL METROPOLIS DONATIONS.....	\$4,001.00

LOCAL DONATIONS

HT Basketball Tournament.....	\$200.00
Three Hierarch School.....	75.00
Hurricane Katrina "Adopt a Family"	2,000.00
Festival Ad Book.....	250.00
Mixer for Holy Trinity Kitchen	1,000.00
Needy Individuals	1,000.00
Leukemia/Lymphoma.....	100.00
Altar Robes Cleaned.....	210.80
HT Christmas Card.....	15.00
HT Cemetery in Memory	300.00
Salvation Army.....	100.00
Children's Hospital.....	50.00
Caring Foundation.....	300.00
Cleaning Church Windows.....	1,300.00
Pittsburgh Turkey Fund	<u>50.00</u>
TOTAL LOCAL DONATIONS	\$7,150.80
TOTAL DONATIONS 2006 TO-DATE.....	\$13,681.80

Your generosity helped us to be able to do so much. THANK YOU. The figures talk for themselves. What more can I say? And the year is not over yet.

Esther Ladakos, Philoptochos President

Seminarian Update

To My Beloved Parish,

Greetings in the Lord from Hellenic College & Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Having just celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday, I would again like to stress my thanks for your support and your prayers for my continued success here at the Seminary. Two years ago when I wrote to you, I spoke of bumps and turns on the path of the seminarian I have experienced these bumps and turns, but through your prayers my bumps have not been so severe and my turns not so sharp. My time here at the school has been spent well to the best of my ability. Through my studies and through my spiritual growth I have experienced happiness more than I could ever have imagined. This experience, of being at this school, has been the best experience of my entire life.

Please continue to pray for me as I am for each and every one of you. Please continue your support for our Holy School as well as you love for the Orthodox youth of this country.

All my love,

George Athanasiou, Hellenic College Class of '08





Our Worship - Part 16 (The Feast Days of the Church)

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.

ON THESE GREAT FEASTS WE CELEBRATE THE VIRGIN MARY, THE THEOTOKOS

- **THE NATIVITY OF THE MOTHER OF GOD**, September 8, celebrates Mary's birth.
- **THE ENTRANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE**, November 21, commemorates the holiness of Mary, who was to become the Temple of God.
- **THE ANNUNCIATION**, March 25, recalls the proclamation to Mary that she was to become the Mother of God
- **THE DORMITION**, August 15, commemorates the death and glorification of Mary.

We also remember...

- **The Protection of the Holy Virgin**, October 1, celebrating her intercession for the world.



In addition to Pascha and the feasts of Christ and His Mother, we observe several feasts in honor of the saints.

In fact, every day of the Church year is dedicated to the memory of particular events and saints. Some of these feasts are especially popular among the faithful and are usually celebrated in parish churches.

The more commonly celebrated saints' feasts include:



Saint Nicholas of Myra,
December 6

The Maternity of Saint Ann,
December 9 (8)

Three Holy Hierarchs (Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom), January 30

Birth of Saint John the Baptist,
June 24

Saints Peter and Paul, June 29

Prophet Elias, July 20

Beheading of St. John the Baptist,
August 29



Parish churches usually also celebrate the **Name-day of their Patron Saint** with special observances.

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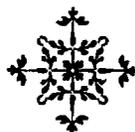
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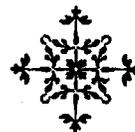
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FIVE THINGS WE MUST KNOW ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

A brief review of some of the essential truths about the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Savior, as we celebrate His Holy Nativity.

1

Jesus Christ is One of the Holy Trinity, the eternal Son and Word of God the Father. When He became man, He did not cease being God. Thus, when we encounter Christ, we encounter God Himself: For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9).

2

Christ became a real man, having a human body and rational soul. There is no essential aspect of human nature in which Christ did not share: "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest." (Hebrews 2:17).

3

In becoming man, Christ assumed human nature in its entirety. Because man is created in the image of the Holy Trinity, each human being sums up within himself the totality of human nature. He is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit according to His divinity, and one with each of us according to His humanity.

4

The divine and human natures in Christ remain distinct. When God became man, His divinity did not swallow up His humanity, but rather perfected it and made it what it was originally intended to be. The divine and human natures in Christ exist "without mixture or confusion." (Council of Chalcedon.)

5

Jesus Christ is one person, not two. Although the two natures of Christ remain distinct, they are united "without separation or division" (Chalcedon). In His person, the Son and Word of God took upon Himself our human nature and made it His own. The Word did not "adopt" or attach Himself to an already existing man named Jesus. On the contrary, the Word is the man Jesus! What is Jesus? He is both God and man. Who is Jesus? He is the eternal Son of God, One of the Holy Trinity.

Excerpted from "The Faith: Understanding Orthodox Christianity" by Clark Carlton