



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

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February 17-19, 2006

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

1923 • EIGHTY-THREE YEARS OF MINISTRY • 2006

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

January 2006

www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

Volume 14 – Issue 1

You have accepted to be baptized in the Jordan by the hand of a servant, that having sanctified the nature of the waters, O sinless Lord, You might lead us to a new birth through water and Spirit and restore us again to our original freedom.

Keeping feast in remembrance of this divine mystery, we ask You, O Master Who loves mankind, to sprinkle upon us, Your unworthy servants, cleansing water and the gift of Your compassion according to Your divine promise...

Make it a source of incorruption, a gift of sanctification, a remission of sins, a protection against disease, a destruction to demons, inaccessible to the adverse powers and filled with angelic strength, that all who draw from it and partake of it may have it for the cleansing of their soul and body, for the healing of their passions, for the sanctification of their dwellings and for every purpose that is beneficial.

(From the Prayer of the Great Blessing of the Waters)



Holy Theophany - January 6

Father John's Message

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

Parish Newsletter of
Holy Trinity
Greek Orthodox Church
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www.HolyTrinityPgh.org

A Parish of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America under the Spiritual Jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.
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The Cultural Side

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Publication Schedule

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



"Behold, I make all things new."

Revelation 21.5

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

One of the exciting parts of Christmas for children seems to be the idea of "new" things. This is especially evident in little ones, who can entertain themselves almost endlessly on a new toy, book or even an interesting box! Whatever it is, as long as the "newness" lasts, so does the fascination.

As Christians, there is another side of Christmas that is far more rewarding and lasting; it is the newness of life that is made possible through the coming of Christ into the world. Saint Paul speaks of this reality in very personal terms to the Colossians when he reminds them of what they were before Christ and what they can be now: "In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Col. 3.7-10) Likewise, he reminds Titus that the appearance of the Savior has brought about a newness of life in the Holy Spirit not previously possible: "We ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by men and hating one another; but when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3.3-6).

In his 2006 Stewardship appeal, our Stewardship chairman made reference to an old saying about "living in interesting times." If anything can be said about life at Holy Trinity Church over the past year, nobody can deny there have been interesting times. They have also been times of both choice and challenge, optimism and uncertainty, potential and pain. Many of these things have been experienced both on a shared community level as well as in deeply personal ways. The potential to move beyond them is now upon us; not because of the turn of a calendar page into a new civil year (because time alone does *not* heal all things), but because of the reality of renewal made possible in Jesus Christ at His coming into the world and through the Holy Spirit at His descent into both the Jordan River and our hearts, since "with God all things are possible" (Mk. 10.27).

God's encouragement is there for us, as he prods us forward through the words of the Prophet Isaiah: "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43.18-19). Look around: He is still here; He is still calling us forward.

The storehouses of potential at Holy Trinity Church are still overflowing, but the greatness of this community is not found in a building made with human hands; it is in the opening of the doors of an eternal Kingdom made possible for us by our loving God. While we continue to stretch our hands and our souls toward Him in seeking the revelation of His will for the future of this community, it is obvious—and has been stated by almost all—that there are new fields in His vineyard for us to plow outside the North Side. Yet as we continue to work toward that new location, may we not forget the daily work before us, as stated in our mission: Worship, Hospitality, Teaching, Stewardship, Fellowship and Outreach; "proclaiming and living the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ."

May the divine gifts offered to us in these great feasts of the Birth and Baptism of Jesus Christ become the cause for the renewal of our lives, our hearts, our mission and God's love in our community.

This issue of
The Herald
is sponsored in loving
memory of their fathers
John Touloumes
& John Lolis
by
Fr. John & Presvytera
Becky & family
May their memory
be eternal!

News & Events

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

No Church School Class Dec. 25, Jan. 1

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on December 25 and January 1 due to the holiday celebrations, so please plan on being in church together as a family for the entire service on those days.

St. Lydia's Orthodox Women's Fellowship Jan.

The St. Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is a ministry for women to share in fellowship and to study scripture, the Orthodox Faith and family life in today's world. The meetings take place 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.



This year's theme is a 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.

YOUTH MINISTRY

GOYA Events January

Thu. Jan. 5, 6:30 pm: Basketball practice

Thu. Jan. 12, 6:30 pm: Basketball practice

Thu. Jan. 19, 6:30 pm: Basketball practice

Thu. Jan. 26, 6:30 pm: Basketball practice

For information contact Presvytera Becky (412-831-3574) or GOYA President Victoria Kritiotis (412-766-5001).

GOYA Hoagie Sale February 5

The GOYA will be pre-selling hoagies during January for Superbowl Sunday on February 5. Please support our teens in this effort, which helps raise funds for the various events of the GOYA, outreach projects, trips and the Metropolis basketball tournaments. Thanks!

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services January

Please take note of the following weekday Liturgies for the feast days in the month of January. Orthros is at 9:00 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00.

Wed. Jan. 4, 6:00 pmParaclesis to the Theotokos

Thu. Jan. 5Forefeast of the Theophany of our Lord

This is the first of two Theophany Divine Liturgies and services of Great Blessings of the Waters.

Fri. Jan. 6The Theophany of our Lord

This is the main Liturgy of this great Feast and offers the Great Blessings of the Water service.

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

Tue. Jan. 17 St. Anthony the Great

Note: Liturgy for St. Anthony will be held at St. Anthony Church in Clairton for its feast day.

Mon. Jan. 30St. John the Baptist & Forerunner

Note: Liturgy for the Three Hierarchs will be held at Holy Cross Church in Mt. Lebanon for the feast day of the Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School.

Vasilopita Celebration January 8

The Philoptochos will sponsor the annual Vasilopita Celebration on Sunday, January 8, following Divine Liturgy. In addition to commemorating the Feast of St. Basil, a collection will be taken to benefit St. Basil Academy, the young people's philanthropic institution run by the Archdiocese in Garrison, NY.



COMMUNITY LIFE

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 2005 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 2005 pledge (to pay the balance) or the 2006 pledge (to pay ahead) and your pledge balance will be accurately calculated no matter when the offering is made. Year-end statements will be sent out at the end of January. Thanks!

Snow Line 412-321-9282, Option "6"

Please keep in mind over the winter months that the Holy Trinity "Snow Line" is available to check for the cancellation of events in the case of snow or inclement weather. Call the church office after hours, then select option "6" to hear announcements of any cancellations.

New Year's Eve

Please note: Holy Trinity Church will not be hosting a New Year's Eve event this year. Please enjoy the holi-

News & Events

day safely with your loved ones and plan on attending Divine Liturgy on Sunday, January 1, New Year's Day, to start the year off on the "right foot." A Happy and Blessed New Year to all!

House Blessings.....January

 Services for Holy Theophany and its surrounding feasts will be held as usual on January 5-7. An important part of that celebration is the Great Blessing of the Waters service. In order to bring the blessings of the feast and the Lord into our homes, Orthodox Christians traditionally invite the priest to bless their home with the Holy Water from the feast. Please see the enclosed information and schedule your visit by January 5. A House Blessing Request Form can be found on the back page of this issue. Please note that dates of your area and be available at that time. Rescheduling will only be done for cases of inclement weather.

Parish Council Elections

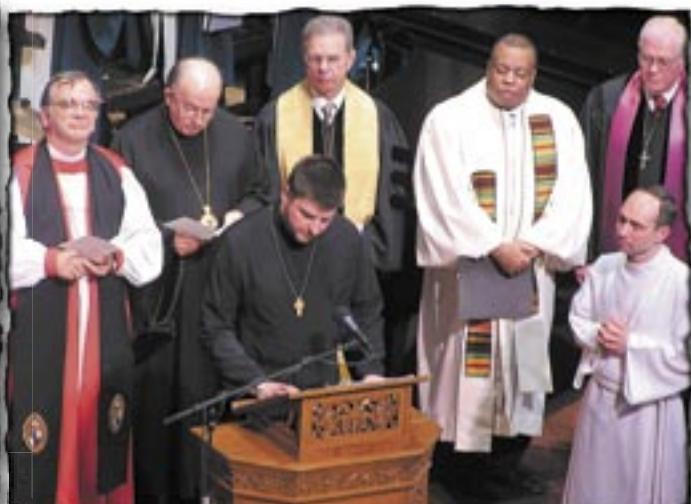
Thank you to all those who submitted their names for the Parish Council elections this year, as well as

to the Board of Elections and to everyone who voted. The following people were elected to serve a two-year term (2006/2007): James T. Balouris, George Dickos, Troy Geanopoulos, Nikki Marsh, Nicholas Sarandou and Alex Trilivas. Continuing their terms (through 2006) are: Chris A. Balouris, Chris T. Balouris, Bill Fiedler, George Georges, Steve Hodge, Leo Loomis and Lou Zozos. The 2006 Council will be installed on Sunday, January 8 at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.

Many thanks also to Dean J. Balouris and John Phillips, whose terms expire at the end of the year. Thank you, good and faithful servants of Christ, for all your fine and dedicated work!

**Looking for information on Orthodoxy?
Check out the award-winning site of
the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese:**

WWW.goarch.org



Holy Trinity Choir Members Participate in 2005 Christmas Concert at Heinz Hall

Members of Holy Trinity Choir continued a long-standing tradition by participating in the eighth annual Christmas Concert at Heinz Hall. The event is sponsored by the Christian Leaders Conference, an association of local bishops and denominational leaders. Each of the over 10 choirs (over 400 choir members in all!) offered hymns or carols from their own tradition during this ecumenical evening. Representing His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos was Father Michael Kallaur of the Presentation of Christ Church in East Pittsburgh. Thank you, Holy Trinity Choir, for have the enthusiasm, talent and dedication to be leaders in this effort, and thank you for representing Holy Trinity Church so well! Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Mouse Tales: The St. Spyridon Church School Library Update

Happy New Year to all of my precious children! It is I, Spero ready to help you celebrate God's New Year! I hope that the New Year brings health and happiness to all of my children and their families. And to help get it started, I have two books to share with everyone today!

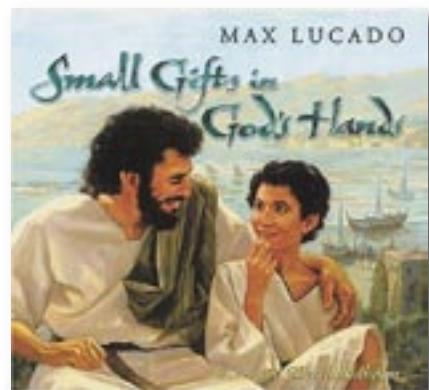


"Remember what I say son: if Jesus is who they say, then He can do big things with a small gift." With those words spoken from a mother to her son, the adventure begins. With all his heart, Elijah wants to give something to the kind teacher but Elijah has no money with which to buy a gift. He has no extra bed to offer Jesus rest. He has no boat to loan the Fisherman of man. He only has a small basket of three fishes and five loaves of bread. This story is told through the eyes of a small boy in Max Lucado's

book "Small Gifts in God's hands." This story recreates one of the Bible's most loved stories with a powerful message to all of my little ones. Can you guess which story this one? Come and tell me...I'll be waiting for you in the library on Sunday. Yiayia says that it is a reminder that no gift is ever too small when placed in our Heavenly Father's hands.

Also, my precious children, can you remember when you first met your friends? Did you like them right away ... or did you think they were a little unusual? Jesus was always making friends with those who were different and lots of people thought that He was different! However, Jesus knows that people come in all colors, shapes, and sizes and so do friends. Your relationships with friends come from the inside, not what they look like on the outside. That is because friendship is always about the heart and you know that you always have room in your heart for one more friend. So the next time some one offers to be your friend or you see some one who might need a friend, remember: it doesn't matter whether they are tall, or short, fat or skinny, or their clothes are new or old; we need to love that person just like Jesus would. Yiayia tells us little ones that the Bible tells us in John 15:12 "Love each other as I have loved you". We have a book by Joni Earckson-Tada and Melody Carlson called "Forever Friends". There is a toy shoppe on Periwinkle Lane and this is no ordinary store. When the lights go out and Mr. Giovanni goes home, all the toys come to life. It is true when all the people are asleep all the toys come alive. Jenny, the newest doll in the shoppe, cannot wait to make friends. She begins searching for a playmate only to discover a real friend in some one that she never expected. She finds out that the best friends are not necessarily the ones who look perfect on the outside, but the ones who have a kind heart. Remember when you meet your best friend they will be your closest and dearest friend for life.

I want to wish my sister Zoe a Happy, Happy, 5th Birthday! Also Happy Name Day to all Vasili's and Vasiliki's too! Well, got to go, my family is having a party for Zoe and I love cake and ice cream.



Love in Christ, Spero

Gheronda's Corner

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



Father John
Androutsopoulos

NEW YEAR 2006

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today we step out across the threshold into a new year. The old year is behind us; a new year is before us. New Year's resolutions are good, if they are backed up with earnest prayer for help in keeping them.

A Seven-story Structure (Read 2 Peter 1)

Let us build our lives this year on the foundation of Jesus Christ according to the blueprint given us by Simon Peter. The confession of Christ first made by Peter has become the foundation of our faith.

1. After the one foundation has been laid, build the first floor with VIRTUE, or strength. It must hold up the other floors. Give it your best material.

2. On virtue's floor build KNOWLEDGE. Study to show yourself approved. Zeal without knowledge is dangerous. One must know God to have a good life.

3. The third floor is TEMPERANCE. Temperance is a needed restraint on passions and affections. Life's building cannot grow on intemperance.

4. Temperance needs PATIENCE. Priests, parents, teachers, and children all need patience. Patience is LOVE IN WAITING.

5. GODLINESS means being Godlike. It includes morality and spirituality. It is a great and important story in the building of life.

6. BROTHERLY KINDNESS naturally follows as we build. "Be ye kind." Some are kinder to strangers than to their own family. "We know that we have left death and come over into life; we know it because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love his brother is still in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that a murderer does not have eternal life in him." (1 John 3: 14,15)

7. We must go DOWN to faith before we can go UP to love. This is the roof. It protects the whole structure. The other floors hold up the roof. The roof protects against the weather of adversity. Put your best material of faith, hope, virtue, kindness, Godliness, and love into your building and you will have a blessed and happy New Year and every year of your life. May God help us to be faithful to Him.

Needs For Good Living

Health enough to work and make a living. strength enough to meet and overcome life's problems.

Grace enough to repent of and confess our sins, obey God, and forgive others.

Patience enough to work until He comes or calls.

Charity enough to see good in all men.

Faith enough to remove the mountains that obstruct our way.

Hope enough to face the future with perfect confidence.

Stewardship Thoughts For The New Year

It is well to remember that we do not give our tithes. We pay them. They are something we owe. The Pharisee in Luke 18:12 bragged about GIVING his tithes, and they certainly were NOT approved of the Lord.

We do not GIVE taxes, the light bill, or the rent, for they are debts we owe.

Children should be taught to pay their tithes each Sunday from their allowance. After they are able to earn money by selling newspapers, mowing lawns, and baby-sitting, they should be taught the necessity of paying God His dues. Habits formed early in life will stay with our children. To allow children to give quarters to Sunday school and dollars to theaters will lessen their regard for Holy things.

Four "Body"s In Church

Somebody, Everybody, Anybody, Nobody were neighbors. Strange people they were, hard to understand. The way some of them lived was a shame, and Everybody knew it. For example, Somebody was gossiping about his neighbors and Everybody knew it was wrong. Anybody might have refused to listen, but Nobody did. Anybody knew that Everybody was talking about Somebody. All four belonged to the same church. Anybody wanted to worship, but wouldn't go to church because he wasn't speaking to Somebody. Nobody did the teaching in church school. Everybody thought that Anybody would do it. Everybody thought Everybody would do it better than he. Guess who did it? NOBODY

Have a blessed, healthy and happy New Year!

With His love,

Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos

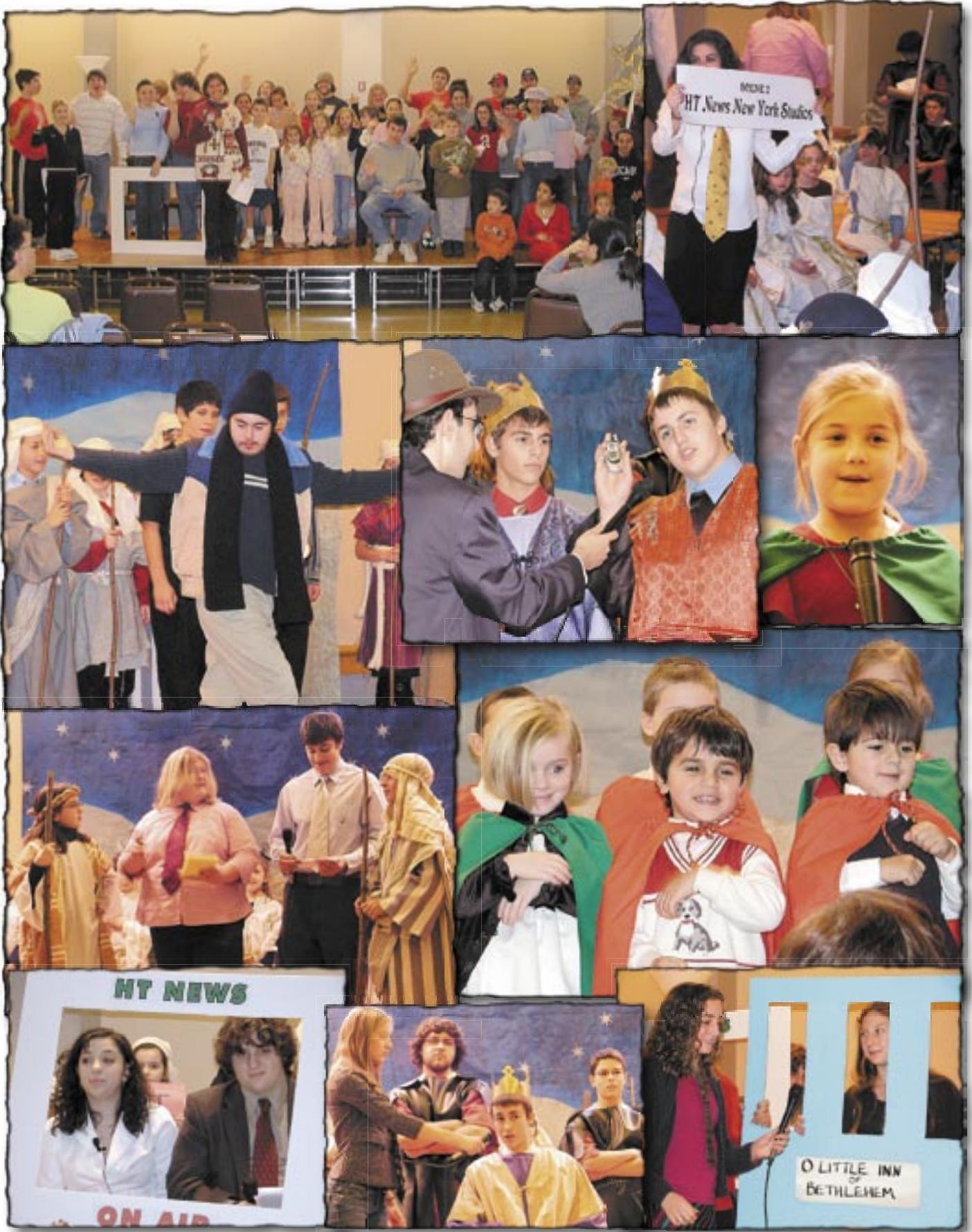
Community Life Photo Journal

GOYA Turkey Bowl November 28

The annual tradition continues! Enjoying slightly better, warmer and drier weather than in previous years, the GOYAns took to the field down the street from the church on Thanksgiving weekend Sunday for their annual gridiron match. While it's not quite the big game found down the street at Heinz Field, it's a fun and exciting Holy Trinity tradition. Here are a few highlights and action shots from the game.



Community Life Photo Journal - 2005 Christmas Pageant



Community Life Photo Journal - 2005 Christmas Pageant



Holy Trinity Project Mexico Mission Trip - June 29-July 5, 2006

"As you did it to the least of these, my brethren, so you did it to Me." (Matt. 25.40) With these words, Jesus provided both a divine command and moral imperative to do our part to serve the poor and needy.

Project Mexico, an outreach of SCOBA in which Orthodox missionaries help in the alleviation of suffering by building homes for Mexico's poor and supporting the work of the St. Innocent Orphanage and Mission Church in Tijuana, Mexico. Thousands of teens and young adults from all jurisdictions across the United States and Europe have participated since its inception, including team members from Holy Trinity Church in 2002, 2003 and 2004.

Don't miss out on this fulfilling opportunity to put the Gospel of Jesus Christ into action in your life! Reserve your spot today with the form below! More information can be found on the Project Mexico web site: www.ProjectMexico.org. Also, photos can also be found at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

THERE'S A SPOT ON THE TEAM FOR YOU!



THE HOLY TRINITY 2004 MISSION TEAM

Top Ten Reasons GOYAns and their Parents Should Be Part of the Project Mexico Team This Summer

1. **"As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."** (Matthew 25.40)
 2. **It beats playing computer games all summer.**
 3. **"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world."** (James 1.27)
 4. **There are more sunny days in Tijuana every week than there are in Pittsburgh all month!**
 5. **"Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord."** (Romans 12.11)
 6. **It's a great family project that really helps people.**
 7. **"For every person today there is a possibility to do missionary work. Mission is not only for priest or monks."** (Archbishop Anastasios of Albania)
 8. **There's a waiting line of teams wanting to go and help the orphans and build homes. (Waiting lines always make people want to get in, don't they?)**
 9. **"No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a vessel, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand, that those who enter may see the light."** (Luke 8.16)
 10. **It changes people's lives ... maybe yours!**

PROJECT MEXICO RESERVATION FORM - DUE DATE MARCH 1, 2006

<input type="checkbox"/> YES! SIGN ME/US UP! Please reserve space for me/us on Holy Trinity's 2006 Mission Trip to Project Mexico. I have enclosed a deposit of \$50 per person to hold space.		
Name(s)	Age 18 or over	Signature (Parent must sign for those under 18)
1.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:	E-mail:	
IMPORTANT NOTES: This form will reserve a spot on the 2006 team on a first-come, first-served basis and <u>SPACE IS LIMITED!!</u> Additional application information will be required before final approval. <u>Trip duration:</u> one week. <u>Dates:</u> June 29-July 5, 2006 (Arrive/Depart San Diego at noon.) Participants should be capable of performing at least light construction work, though professional skills are not required. Each participant will be responsible for covering his/her per person cost of approximately \$550 (Project Mexico costs & van transportation) PLUS your personal airfare to/from San Diego, though these costs can be underwritten by fund-raising efforts (individual and community). Individual cancellation after March 1 will result in your deposit being applied to the general trip fund-raising.		
Mail with check payable to "Holy Trinity Agape Fund" to: Holy Trinity Church, Attn: Project Mexico, 302 W. North Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15212.		

The Cultural Side • Η Πολιτιστική Πλευρά



Voula Hareras

ΧΡΟΝΕ ΠΟΥ ΦΕΥΓΕΙΣ

Χρόνε πού φεύγεις φέλω νά τό
ξέρεις
Κανέις δέν θά βρεθεί γιά Σένα
νά δακρύσει
Έσκόρπισες μ' ἀμλοχεριά, στὸν
κόσμο δυστυχία
Μόνον πολέμους, σκοτωμούς,
αύτά ἔχεις ἀφήσει

Οι τρομοκράτες βρίσκοντε σ'όλην τήν Οίκουμένη
Κι' ἀν δέν τούς πιάσουν τίποτε όρθιο δέν θά μένη
Ἐβαλαν τής Ἀμερικής τό πένθος στήν καφδιά της
Ἀφού χιλιάδες ἔθαψαν κάτω απτά κτίρια τής

Πόλεμος τό Αφχανιστάν και βόμβες τό θερίζουν
Ἀθώα κι' ἐνοχα κορμιά, τους δρόμους του γεμίζουν
Ἡ Παλαιστίνη, τό Ισραήλ, σκοτώνοντες ἀκόμα
Πάνω σ'ένα κομμάτι γή, ποτάμι ρέει το αίμα
Αύτήν τή γή πού πάτησαν, Χριστέ, τά βηματά σου
Σ' ἄγαπη και Ειρήνη ημίν, διδασκες στά παιδιά σου
Κι' ἀντί ν' ακούσουν και να ζούν σέ γή ἐπαγγελίας
Σέ σταύρωσαν λες κι' είσουνα κοινός ἐγκληματίας

Σεισμοί, πλημμύρες, πυρκαγιές τα δάση μας καιήκανε
Στής Ἐτνας τό ύφαστο, πολλά χωριά
Και ἀνθρωποι μέ λάβα ἔθαφτήκανε
Χρηματηστήρια ἐρρίκες τόν φετεινό τό χρόνο
Και αύτοκτόνησαν πολλοί πού μείνανε στό δρόμο

Χρόνε παλήρε ἀν πέρασες
Ἄπο τήν Ἀφρική
Γιά πές μου σέ παρακαλώ
Ποιά λύση ἐδωσες ἔκει,

Μήπως βρήκες τό φάρμακο
Τό Ειτζ νά γιατρέψουνε
Πού τόν μισό τους πληθυσμό
Κοντεύουνε νά θάψουνε

Μήπως τούς ἐδωσες ψωμί
Νά φάνε νά χορτάσουνε
Όπου πεθένουν τά παιδιά
Πρωτού νά μεγαλώσουνε

Απ'ότι ξέρω χρόνε μου
Καμιά λύση δεν ἐδωσες
Κι' ὅτι δεινά είχε ὁ παληός
Διπλά μας τά παρέδωσες

Φύγε λοιπόν και ἀφησε
Νά μπή ὁ Νέος Χρόνος
Μέ τήν βοήθεια τού Θεού
Νά φύγη κάθε πόνος

Νά φέρει Ειρήνη και Χαρά
Σ'όλην τήν Οίκουμένη
Νά ζήσουμε ἀδελφικά
Και πάντα Εύτυχισμένοι

Βούλα Χαρερά / Δεκέμβριος 2001

Σέ όλη σου τήν ζωή θά ταξιδεύης στό ἀπειρον. Και όταν αύτή τελειώσθη θά ιδής στήν πινακίδα στά σύνορα μεταξύ γής και ούρανού όπου θά περάσης, τήν λέξιν, αἰώνιότης. Και τότε θά καταλαβής ότι ἀπειρον και αἰώνιότης είναι τό ίδιο πράγμα. Τήν ἐννοιαν ἀπειρον {κάτι πού δέν ἔχει πέρας, δηλαδή τέλος} τήν χρησιμοποιούν οι φυσικοί. Όμως ὁ Θεός μάς ἀπεκάλυψε τήν αἰώνιότητα.

Άπο τήν ώρα πού γεννιόμαστε, περνάμε στά σύνορά τής, και δέν φεύγομε ποτέ ἀπ' αὐτήν, γιατί ἡ ζωή μας, ἡ ὑπαρξί μας, είναι αἰώνια και ἀθάνατη.

Ὥ Θεός ὁ αἰώνιος ἔχαρισε στόν ἀνθρωπον πού ἐπλασε κατ' εἰκόνα Του τό χάρισμα νά είναι κι αύτός αἰώνιος, και σύ και ἔγω, και ὄλοι οι ἀνθρωποι, πού είμαστε δημιουργήματα τού Θεού. Όμως μέ τήν ζωή μας ὁ καθένας πρέπει νά τό ἀποδείξουμε πώς καταλαθαίνομε πόσο μεγάλο είναι τό δώρον τής ἀθανασίας πού μάς ἔχαρισεν ὁ Θεός. Δηλαδή νά προσπαθήσωμε νά ζήσωμε όπως ταιριάζει σε πλάσματα αἰώνια, πού δέν θά πεθάνουν ποτέ. Αύτό σημαίνει τό ταξίδι στό ἀπειρον. Νά πάρωμε τό σωστό μονοπάτι πού θά μάς βγάλη στήν λαμπερήν αἰώνιότητα, όπου ὁ Θεός βασιλεύει συντροφιά μέ τούς ἐκλεκτούς Του.

Ποιός θά μάς δειξη τόν δρόμο, Ὁ ίδιος ὁ Θεός.

Πολλοί νομίζουν ότι ἡ σοφία τών ἀνθρώπων, ἡ πολλή γνώσις, ὁ πολιτισμός τών αἰώνων, και ἀλλες γήινες ἀξίες, είναι κλειδιά στό ταξίδι τής αἰώνιότητος. Και όμως λαθεύουν τούς ὁδοδεικτες γιά τό ταξίδι στό ἀπειρον ξέρουν νά τούς χειρίζωνται μονάχα τά θεϊκά δάκτυλα αύτά πού ἐπλασαν τόν ἀνθρωπο και πού τόλμησαν νά τεντωθούν καρφωμένα πάνω στόν Σταυρό τού Θεανθρώπου Κυρίου μας, γιά νά μάς ἀναπλάσουν.

Και σύ λοιπόν, παλληκάρι, πού τώρα ξανοίγεσαι στή ζωή και σύ, νέο κορίτσι, πού τολμάς τά πρώτα σού βήματα στήν ἀνοιξι τής ἡλικίας σου...ἀπλώστε τά χέρια στόν Ἀρχηγόν τής ζωής πού είναι...ἡ ὁδός και ἡ ἀλήθεια...και στοιχηθείτε πάνω στά δικά Του βήματα, στά δικά Του ἀχνάρια.

Οι ὁδηγίες πού δίνει ὁ αἰώνιος ταξιδιώτης, συνοδοιπόρος τού ἀνθρώπου στό ταξίδι του πρός τήν αἰώνιότητα, είναι ἀπλές, δοκιμασμένες και πολύ, πολύ πιό ἐλαφρές και εύχαριστες ἀπό αύτές πού...πουλάει...ὁ κόσμος. Θά τίς βρίσκετε στό Εύαγγελιον, όπως τό ἐρμηνεύουν οι Ἀγιοι τής Ἐκκλησίας μας Πατέρες, Κατηχηταί, Ὁρθόδοξοι δάσκαλοι, γονείς και συγγραφείς, μέ πείραν, γνώσιν τής ἀληθείας και εύσεβιαν.

Τό ταξίδι τής ζωής μας πρέπει νά ἐπιτύχη μέ τήν ἀγάπη τού Θεού στήν βασιλεία τού Θεού.

Καλό ταξίδι, λοιπόν, μέχρι τόν ἐπόμενο σταθμό, πού στήν πινακίδα του θά γράψη 2006.

ΠΡΟΣ ΤΗΝ ΝΙΚΗΝ

Stewardship Update: Some Inspiring Thoughts



Mike Kritiotis

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Holy Trinity Church Family,

As we kick off another year of Stewardship to the Church of Christ, I thought I'd let others eloquently send the message of giving and giving thanks. I hope you enjoy reading the following excerpts and pray that God continues to bless you with abundance

so that with abundance you can return to Him the fruits in Witness and Service. Have a Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Mike Kritiotis, Stewardship Chairman

From the Bible

“All things come from you, and your own have we given you.”

(1 Chronicles 29:14)

“He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”

(2 Corinthians 9:6)

From Famous Figures

“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through the experience of trial suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved”

Helen Keller

From Contemporary Economic Advisors

“I know firsthand the value and joys of money. I respect all that it allows us to have and do. But I also know that too many people make having money and the pursuit of more money the central goal of life. Their moods swing with the value of their 401(k)s. They worry if their cars make the grade as they check out the other cars in the school pick-up line. And their only thought when it comes to God and money is “God, I wish I had some more.”

“As far as I’m concerned, the greatest blessing is to understand that true wealth resides in your humanity -- not your bottom line. True wealth is when you are confident in who you are and how you relate to others. True wealth is when your hands are open not just to receive,

but to give as well -- not just at holiday time or in the event of a disaster or for the tax deduction. I’m talking about giving your time, your heart, your compassion, on a daily basis. Why is it that we tend to always ask for blessings, but don’t understand we have the ability to give them as well? When we commit to a life of kindness and support, toward ourselves and others, we’ll be on a path that is truly filled with blessings.”

“Blessings in life truly come when you make others shine by the brightness of your own thoughts, words, and actions. Then and only then will you be truly wealthy.”

Suze Orman

Author and Host of the “Suze Orman Show”

“I came to realize that life lived to help others is the only one that matters and that it is my duty, in return for the lavish life God has devolved upon me, to help others He has placed in my path. This is my highest and best use as a human.”

“Faith is not believing that God can. It is knowing that God will.”

Ben Stein

Economist, Journalist, Actor

From Christian Stewardship Experts

“The Christian life is full of paradoxes, and the teaching of Jesus was replete with them. For example, He taught that...

To find you must lose. (Matt. 10.39)

To be rich you must be poor. (Matt. 5.3)

To live you must die. (Luke 17.33)

Another important example is found in Paul’s description of the Macedonian believers (2 Cor. 8.2): ‘Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.’ They were a living paradox: poor yet rich, pressed down yet rising up, humbled yet exalted. What a beautiful picture they were of the way believers should be. Their stewardship was exceptional, and it made an impact on others over a wide region. It reminds us that God uses the simple things to confound the wise, and the little things to accomplish great deeds. He is not impressed with outward appearances or natural abilities because ‘the Lord looks upon the heart.’ Some of the most effective servants of Jesus Christ have been the most unlikely men and women, people whose deepest longing was not to be known, but to make Him known. ‘Little is much is God is in it,’ says a well-known song, and it’s true.”

Kirk Nowery and Dave Sutherland
Christian Stewardship Consultants

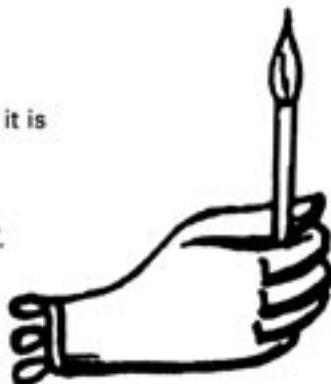
Our Worship - Part 7 (Vespers)

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.

Following O Gladsome Light, our praises continue with:

† **The Prokimenon of Vespers (a Responsorial Psalm) — On Saturday evening it is**

*“The Lord is King! He is robed in majesty!
The Lord is robed, He has girded Himself with strength.
For He has established the world so sure that it shall never be moved.
Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, forevermore.”*



† **Old Testament Readings — On feasts three selections proclaim the Old Testament prefigurations of the day's feast.**

† **Two litanies and prayers asking for God's guidance in following His commandments in the evening ahead.**

† **The Aposticha — A series of hymns glorifying the theme of the day, such as this from Saturday evening:**

*“With tears the women reached Your tomb,
Searching for You, but not finding You.
They wept with wailing and lamented:
Woe are we! Our Savior, the King of all,
How were You stolen?
What place can hold Your life-bearing Body?
An angel replied to them:
‘Do not weep, but go and proclaim that the Lord is risen,
Granting the world joy, as the only compassionate One!’”*

On feast days there may be a procession with the icon of the feast and additional prayers here (Liti).

† **The Canticle of Saint Simeon —**This scriptural hymn reminds us that our lives have been fulfilled and made whole and complete by the coming of Christ our Savior:

*“Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace,
According to Your Word;
For my eyes have seen Your salvation,
Which You have prepared before the face of all people:
A Light to enlighten the Gentiles
And to be the glory of Your people, Israel.”*

† **The closing prayers —**The Trisagion Prayers and one or more troparia. The troparia reflect the theme of the day or feast being commemorated. Finally the priest says the Dismissal.

GREAT VESPERS traces God’s plan of salvation for His People.

It enables us to

- Experience the goodness of the Creator and His creation;
- Recall the Fall by which we cut ourselves off from our Creator through sinful pride and, ultimately, death; and
- Publicly proclaim the coming of the Savior, Jesus Christ, who is the Light by which all creation is renewed, refreshed and reconciled to God.

GREAT VESPERS IN OUR LIVES

The Divine Liturgy, as we have seen, is the very manifestation of the Kingdom of God here on earth. We lay aside all earthly cares in order to offer ourselves, each other, and our whole life to Christ God. Great Vespers prepares us for this experience by reminding us from whence we came — *“out of darkness into His marvelous light”* — the marvelous light as lived and expressed in the Divine Liturgy.

Active participation in Vespers is a moving worship experience. It is an excellent way to begin the Lord’s Day and to prepare for the Eucharistic Liturgy.

The Feast of Theophany and the Blessing of Homes

"At Your Ephiphany, the whole creation sang Your praises. For You, our God, have appeared on earth and dwelt among men. You have sanctified the streams of the Jordan, sending down from on high the most Holy Spirit."

From the Service of the Great Blessing of the Waters



"What is Theophany?"

Every year on January 6th, the Orthodox Church celebrates the Feast of Holy Theophany, which is the baptism of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church and is also known by the name, "Epiphany." The Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan at the hand of St. John the Baptist sets the example for our own baptism by water in the Holy Spirit.

"How do we celebrate Theophany?"

The main celebration is, of course, found in the Church with the holy services on January 5th (the Forefeast), January 6th (Theophany) and January 7th (Synaxis of St. John the Baptist). We also take the feast home with us by having our homes blessed with the Holy Water.

"What happens during a House Blessing?"

You will receive a call to confirm your appointment a day or two ahead. When the priest arrives, he will conduct a brief service either in your dining room or at the place where your family usually offers its prayers. It is best to have the entire family present if possible, especially children. Please be sure to have an icon and a list of the first names of all the members of your household. If you have a home censer, you may prepare it also. A bowl of water is not necessary, as the priest will bring the holy water sprinkler from the church.

As the service concludes, please lead the priest throughout the house to sprinkle the holy water. When the service is over, please understand if your priest needs to keep the visit brief in order to cover all the homes scheduled on that day.

Should I have my house blessed every year?

Yes! In the Orthodox Christian tradition, homes should be blessed each year to bring the blessings of the Feast of Theophany into the home and to rededicate ourselves and our family to the Lord. It is an annual commitment, celebration, thanksgiving and family prayer.

2006 House Blessing Schedule

Date	Time	Area	Zip Codes
Mon. Jan. 9	3pm-7pm	Northside, Perrysville	15212, 15214
Wed. Jan. 11	4pm-6pm	South Hills (all areas)	15102, 15216, 1522X, 1524X
Thu. Jan. 12	4pm-8pm	Bellevue, Westview	15202
Sat. Jan. 14	1pm-4pm	Wexford (North), Cranberry, Mars, Gibsonia, Treesdale	1504X, 15237, 160XX
Mon. Jan. 16	4pm-9pm	North Hills (McKnight area), Allison Park	15101, 15237
Tue. Jan. 17	5pm-9pm	Wexford (South)	15090, 15237
Wed. Jan. 18	4pm-9pm	All other areas not listed/Make-up date/Snow date	Various

Important note: Please be available at the time scheduled for your area. Re-scheduling will only be done in cases of inclement weather. Thank you for your help!

PLEASE RETURN THE FORM ON THE BACK OF THE HERALD BEFORE JAN. 5 TO SCHEDULE YOUR HOME. YOU WILL RECEIVE A CALL TO CONFIRM YOUR TIME.

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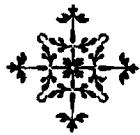
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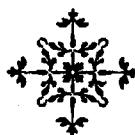
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of their
beloved
ones



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2006 Holy Trinity House/Business Blessing Request Form



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Notes, directions or special information	

A schedule and description of the House Blessing tradition can be found inside this issue of The Herald. If you would like this special blessing for your family, home or business, please mail or deliver this form to the church office by January 5. Your date and time will be confirmed the day before your visit. Note: Please be available at the time indicated on the schedule. Re-scheduling will only be done in cases of inclement weather. Thanks!