



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

OCTOBER 2008

VOLUME 16 • ISSUE 8

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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QUICK NEWS



Our kitchen volunteers offered big smiles and a lot of days of hard work at the 2008 Holy Trinity Festival. They joined dozens of other good stewards who freely offered their time and talents in support of this annual community event. See pages 7-11 for more photos of the Festival and the Holy Trinity Youth Kick-Off event.

DIVINE LITURGY BEGINS AT

9:30 a.m



THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY
HOLY PROTECTION FEAST DAY - OCTOBER 1/28

FROM THE ICONOGRAPHY SKETE OF BOURAZERI — MOUNT ATHOS

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

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

About the Herald

The Herald is the Monthly Newsletter of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

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About the Parish

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Holy Trinity Church is a parish of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh (www.odpgh.org) and Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (www.goarch.org) under the Spiritual Jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Parish Administration

Clergy

Rev. Fr. John Touloumes, Proistamenos

Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Assistant Priest

Parish Council

Louis T. Loomis, President

Chris T. Balouris Dean J. Balouris

Sondra A. Balouris George Dickos

Anthony Loomis Robert Marsh

John Phillips Nicholas Sarandou

Vasilios Scoumis Alex Trilivas

Gerri Valliant Louis G. Zozos

Ministries

Philoptochos Esther Ladakos, Pres.

GOYA Pres. Becky Touloumes, Advisor

Choir John Nychis, Director

Over 50 Club Stella Athanasiou, Pres.

St. Lydia Study Stacy Dickos, Coordinator

Cemetery Bill Fiedler, Chairman

Greek School Effie Kilantonis, Coordinator

Social Hall Kathy Romanias, Coordinator

Bookstore Bill and Linda Areheart



My numerous hopes are placed before you, most holy one; Mother of our God, guard me with care, within your sheltered arms."

The Small Paraclesis Service to the Theotokos

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The icon on the front of this issue of *The Herald* is from the renowned iconography studio and monastery of the Bourazeri on Mount Athos and was photographed by one of our pilgrims during last year's pilgrimage. It came to mind as an appropriate cover for this month's issue when looking at the liturgical calendar and noting that, as usual, there are not just one, but two listings of the Feast of the Holy Protection of the Theotokos. What is this feast and why are there two of them?

The origin of the feast, according to the Prologue from Ochrid, is as follows: On October 1, 911 A.D., during the reign of Emperor Leo the Wise, there was an all-night vigil in the Blachernae Church of the Mother of God in Constantinople. (We had the blessing of visiting this church on our pilgrimage.) The church was full of people. St. Andrew, known as the "Fool-for-Christ," was standing in the rear of the church with his disciple Epiphanius. At four o'clock in the morning, the Most-holy Theotokos appeared in a vision to him above the people, holding her omophorion (a large veil-like garment) outstretched as a protective covering for the faithful. She was clothed in gold-encrusted purple, and shone with an ineffable radiance, surrounded by apostles, saints, martyrs and virgins. St. Andrew said to Blessed Epiphanius: "Do you see, brother, the Queen and Lady of all praying for the whole world?" Epiphanius replied: "I see, Father, and am struck with amazement!" During the time, the people in the city were threatened by a barbarian invasion. After the appearance of the Mother of God, the danger was averted and the city was spared from bloodshed and suffering. The Feast of the Protection was instituted on October 1 to commemorate this event, and to remind us that we can prayerfully receive the unceasing protection of the Most-holy Theotokos in any time of difficulty.

Wanting to offer additional thanks for the Holy Protection of the Theotokos in their national time of need, the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece elected in 1960 to transfer the celebration of the feast to October 28 to coincide with the celebration of "OXI Day," a great event in Greek history with the turning away of Mussolini's ultimatum of surrender. Though it is certainly unusual in the history of the Church to officially move a feast, it reflects the deep love and thanks of the Greek nation and the desire of the Church of Greece to link this holy event with the lives of the Greek faithful.

Therefore, since we are under the Ecumenical Patriarchate and not the Church of Greece, yet we continue to honor our Greek heritage, you might notice the curious anomaly in the October calendar, which lists both the historic day of the feast on October 1 as well as the newly-transferred celebration on October 28. (We will celebrate Liturgy on October 1 and offer "OXI Day" thanksgiving prayers on the Sunday closest to the 28th.)

In the end, it is truly every day we can offer thanks for the deep love and holy protection of the Mother of God and the Mother of us all. As we continue to grow as Christians, families and a parish community, may the assurance of her love and and blessings of her Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, be with us all!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Church School Underway

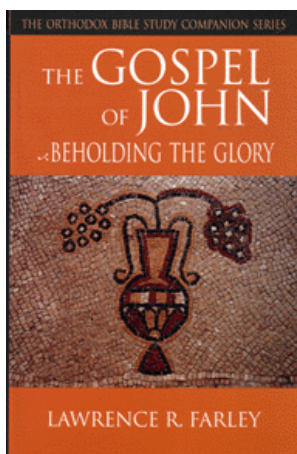
Church School for 2008/2009 is well underway! If you missed advance registration or have not yet made it to class, it's not too late. Simply sign up on the classroom lower level before taking your child to class. And don't forget, the entire Church School ministry begins at 9:30 a.m. (through October) with the start of the Divine Liturgy, followed by the children's sermon after the Gospel and classes after Holy Communion. Please be on time so your child(ren) can benefit from this special opportunity every Sunday. Thank you for making this possible for them!

St. Lydia's Orthodox Women's Fellowship . . . Oct. 2, 16, 30

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 Stacy Dickos, 8130 Brittany Place, Pittsburgh. New participants are always welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable, the approach is casual and discussion-oriented, and the subjects are important for today's women and families. All Holy Trinity women are welcome and invited to bring a friend! For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925.

This year's topic for study is the Gospel of St. John, using the Study Guide "The Gospel of John: Beholding the Glory" by Lawrence Farley. A complete schedule is available online at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org. The topics for this month are:

- Oct. 2: First Visit to Jerusalem/ Into Judea (pp. 24-69)
- Oct. 16: Into Samaria/Into Galilee/Second Visit to Jerusalem (pp. 69-102)
- Oct. 30: Into Galilee/The Eucharist (pp. 102-126)

**St. Nikodemos Men's Fellowship Oct. 2, 16 (NOTE NEW MEETING SCHEDULE!)**

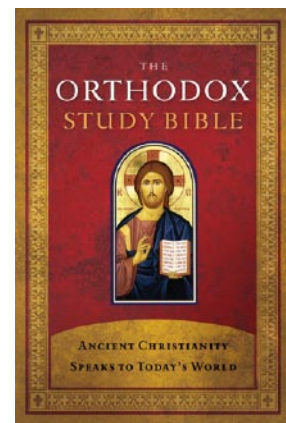
The St. Nikodemos Men's Study Fellowship is an Orthodox men's fellowship, study and discussion group which meets on the **FIRST AND THIRD THURSDAYS** of each month at from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. at the office of TriadUSA, Suite 1600, Three Gateway Center, downtown. The group seeks to provide a regular meeting for working men to discuss issues of faith, work and family. The topic for this year is "Practical Wisdom." It is open to all interested men and has been centrally located downtown to accommodate easy access for the lunchtime meetings. For directions, call Gus Georgiadis at 412-880-4999. The complete list of dates for 2008/2009 is: Oct. 2, 16, Nov. 6, Nov. 20, Dec. 18, Jan. 15, Feb. 5, Feb. 19, Mar. 5, Mar 19, Apr. 2, May 7 & May 21.

Orthodox Studies Forum October 1, 15

Now in its third year, the Orthodox Studies Forum is designed for adults who are interested in learning more about the Orthodox Christian Faith. It is led by Father Radu Bordeianu and is for both those who have been Orthodox all their lives and want to learn more as well as those seeking to embrace Orthodoxy from another background and grow further in their faith.

This year's forum will investigate one of the most important biblical themes: the People of God. Beginning with Old Testament, the participants will explore selected texts that reflect the story of creation, the fall into sin, the election of Israel, the different covenants that God has established with his people (especially the Decalogue), and the need for a new covenant as described by the prophets. The study of the New Testament will continue with the establishment of the new covenant in Jesus the Christ, as reflected in the Gospel according to Matthew (which will be read in its entirety), fragments from Luke, John, and Saint Paul's Epistles. It will conclude with the study the life of the early Church as reflected in the Acts of the Apostles and several Epistles.

The group meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the La Roche College WEST Campus, 9000 Babcock Blvd., Pittsburgh. The room is in Providence Hall at the top of Mary Way on the WEST Campus. Room 126. Parking is available behind the maintenance building. See the flyer at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org for details.



YOUTH MINISTRIES

GOYA Fellowship Night October 5

The GOYA will hold the first of its monthly fellowship nights for the season on Sunday, October 5 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. These casual meetings provide and opportunity for discussion, time with friends, questions for Fr. John and Fr. Radu and other GOYA matters as needed. The location for the first meeting is to be announced. For more information, contact Presvytera Becky at 412-831-3574 or Michael Georgiadis at 724-625-8551.

Youth & Family Hayride October 11

Attention all Holy Trinity HOPE, JOY and GOYA members and their families: our annual Youth & Family Hayride will be held on Saturday, October 11 at 6:00 pm at Reilly's Summer Seat Farm. Tickets are \$6.50 for adults and teens; \$3.50 for children ages 3-12. Please call Penny Georgiadis at 724-935-2383 by Thursday, October 9 to reserve your spots and to volunteer to bring food or drink.



GOYA Fall Bake Sale October 12

Please plan on supporting our GOYA for their Fall Bake Sale on Sunday, October 12. Take home some treats to enjoy with your family or with your co-workers at the office. All proceeds support the GOYA teen youth minstry. Thanks!

GOYA Metropolis Fall Retreat November 14-16

The Metropolis of Pittsburgh will hold its annual GOYA Fall Retreat on November 14-16 at Camp Nazareth in Mercer, PA. The guest speaker will be Father Luke Veronis on the topic, "Finding the Call of God in Your Life." Applications are available at the Metropolis web site: pittsburgh.goarch.org. As always, Holy Trinity GOYA covers half the cost of registration for all active GOYA participants. Please see Father John, Presvtera Becky or GOYA President Maria Georgiadis.

REGIONAL NEWS

YOCAMA 2009 Missions Workshop October 4

This summer, Holy Trinity Church sent 26 teens and adults on a new mission adventure with YOCAMA, a domestic mission ministry under auspices of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh. Interested in next year? See the enclosed flyer for information on the YOCAMA reunion and workshop on October 4 at Angel's Acres in Eighty Four, PA.

Holy Cross Autumn Greek Food Fair October 7-9

Holy Cross Church in Mt. Lebanon will be holding its annual Autumn Greek Food Fair and Bake Sale on Tues.-Thurs., Oct. 7-9. Hours are 11:30-2:00 for lunch and 4:30-8:00 for dinner. They will also hold a "Yiayia's Attic" rummage sale during those hours.

Walk For Missions 2008 October 12

The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh will once again sponsor its annual Walk for Missions on Sunday, October 12 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 missionaries throughout the world. This year the focus will be on supporting the indigenous clergy in 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.

IOCC Wine Tasting Benefit Event. October 16

The Pittsburgh chapter of International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) will host a Wine Tasting and Dinner to benefit its philanthropic and humanitarian work on Thursday, October 16, 2008 at Jamie's Restaurant, 3220 W Liberty Ave. in Dormont. Appetizers starting at 6 p.m., followed by dinner. Tickets are \$60.00 per person. Due to limited seating tickets must be purchased in advance. To purchase tickets go to www.iocc.org/pittsburgh or contact Danielle Opacic at 412-884-2466 by Sunday, October 12, 2008. Enjoy an evening of fellowship, food and fine wine! See the enclosed flyer for more information.



HISTORIC COMMUNITY EVENTS

85th/50th Anniversary Celebration Week: Oct. 19-25

Have you mailed back your RSVP cards yet? Two important flyers concerning upcoming celebrations of great importance to honoring the the past of Holy Trinity Church and preparing for her future were mailed in September and the committees are asking everyone to respond and attend:

October 19: First Divine Liturgy and Ground Blessing Service at the New Church Property.

This historic event will feature a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy and the Blessing of the Grounds of the new church property by His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos, followed by a celebratory luncheon. Luncheon donation is \$15 per person, all ages.

October 25: "A Time to Remember" Dinner/Dance Celebrating the 85th Anniversary of Holy Trinity Church as a Community and the 50th Anniversary of the Opening of the North Avenue Church.

There are many exciting and memorable things planned for this evening, including some great entertainment. Ticket donation is \$100 per person for the black tie event at our community center.

Watch for more information and other special events in the first issue of the Capital Campaign Newsletter, to be mailed in early October. Be a part of Holy Trinity's history ... and future! Honor and celebrate Holy Trinity Church's 85 years of history and help build her future as we "Raise the Foundations of Many Generations" together.

Insights into living an Orthodox Christian life drawn from classic and contemporary authors, elders and spiritual guides.

Because we are followers of Christ, we have the obligation to center our lives upon God and his service. Our Lord reminds us of this obligation to seek God in all things when he says to us: "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness..." (Matthew 6:33). With these forceful words, Jesus is emphasizing the fact that our entire existence must first of all be oriented toward God. We are called to be "theocentric" [God-centered] persons whose daily existence is centered upon the reality of God.

God at the Center

God is our Father and the source of all life and holiness. To believe this means that no person or thing can be more important to us than he is. Our true devotion and our ultimate loyalty must always be to him. No person or thing in this life can replace his importance. We must be careful not to replace the living God with an idol which detracts us from him and becomes more important to us. Rather, the living God must always be the most important subject of our concern and the very center of our existence.

Opening Up to God

All of our spiritual disciplines are meant to re-orient ourselves towards God and to disassociate ourselves from every type of sin. When we pray, fast, receive Holy Communion, and meditate upon the Scriptures, for example, we are engaged in a process of "changing our hearts." We are opening our hearts up to the presence of the living God.

Our devotion to the Lord, however, cannot be expressed without reference to the various relationships and responsibilities of our lives. We simply cannot know God, love God and serve God outside or apart from the context of life in this world.

Living Godly Relationships

This means that the followers of the Lord are not called by Christ to neglect our relationships with other human persons and our responsibilities in the society. We are not called to forget about our obligations within our homes or within the broader community. We are not called to diminish the importance of the loving relationships which we have with others. As persons who are called to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world," we have an obligation to be faithful to the relationships and responsibilities which characterize our lives (Matthew 5:13-14).

Glorifying God

Placing God first does not mean that we do not have other legitimate concerns. We do in fact have many legitimate concerns which deserve our care and attention. These concerns have to do with our own desires to mature in a manner which gives glory to God. These concerns

also have to do with our relationships with others and with our responsibilities in the home and the society.

Recognizing the importance of our personal relationship with God does not mean that we fail to recognize the importance of the relationships which we have with others. Recognizing our obligations to God does not mean that we do not recognize the significance of the obligations which we have to others in our home, at work, in our local community or society at large.

Reflecting God

To place God at the very center of our existence should properly mean that the reality of God and our relationship to him is meant to have a bearing upon every other aspect of our life. All of our relationships and responsibilities are meant to be reflective of our fundamental relationship with God. Every aspect of our lives is meant to be transfigured by his presence. We come to know God, love

God and serve God within the context of our daily relationships and responsibilities. And it is these relationships and responsibilities that are meant to be illuminated by our devotion to God.

Completely Open to God

Christ wants to be the Lord of all of our life. There can be no dichotomy or separation between our relationship with him and our relationships with others. Those who seek to be "pure in heart" are those who strive to know, to love, and to serve God in and through every aspect of life.

Our lives are meant to be wholly and completely open to the Lord's presence. Our values should properly reflect our faith convictions. This means that the manner in which we treat ourselves, other persons, the manner in which we treat other members of our family, the manner in which we relate to our coworkers, the manner in which we behave as citizens are meant to be profoundly affected by our relationship with Christ. For those of us who have accepted Christ as the Lord, no aspect of our existence is beyond the boundary of the light of his Gospel.

The Light of Christ

To be pure in heart requires that we actively seek to rid ourselves of all forms of pretense and deception. We must rid ourselves of the "masks" which depict us as persons whom we are not and conceal our true identities. We must struggle to be the persons whom we truly are. Honestly recognizing our personal strengths and limitations, we must be willing to let the light of Christ enter into every aspect of our lives.

Excerpted from "Living the Beatitudes" by Father Thomas & Presvytera Kyriaki Fitzgerald



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



Father John Androutsopoulos

What Does the Church Mean to Us?

"O come let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker." Psalm 94:6

St. Luke in his Gospel tells us it was the custom of our Lord Jesus Christ to attend the services in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. The Church is Christ's body. Through the Church the faithful Christian is to realize the presence

of the Lord to feel the power of His grace. In becoming members of His Church, we say to God and the world that we aim at all times to follow in the footsteps of our Savior. By participating in the Sacraments and the activities of His Church, we become witnesses to His Lordship over our lives.

Can we show our interest in His Church and remain uncommitted? The Church is God's instrument for fulfilling His plans for mankind. As members of His Church, we have a responsibility to be His faithful servants. As Orthodox Christians, we cannot escape our obligations to God. The Church is a place where we find help to learn and grow to be Christ-like. Through the love and power of God working through His people, the Church can help us change and live useful Christian lives. In the Christian fellowship within the Church we find strength, comfort, and answers to whatever we lack in ourselves for God is in the midst of His people.

God requires that we be faithful stewards in His Church. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." (1 Corinthians 4:2) Through faithful stewardship we glorify God; we strengthen the Church which is our lifeline; our faith becomes meaningful and joyous.

There Are Two Seas

There are two seas in Israel. One is fresh, and fish are in it. Splashes of green adorn its banks. Trees spread their branches over it, and stretch out their thirsty roots to sip of

its healing waters. Along its shores the children play. The River Jordan makes this sea with sparkling water from the hills. Men build their houses near it, and birds their nests; and every kind of life is happier because it is there.

The River Jordan flows south into another sea. Here is no splash of fish no fluttering leaf, no song of birds, no children's laughter. Travelers choose another route unless on urgent business. The air hangs heavy about its waters and neither men nor fowl will drink from it. What makes this mighty difference in the seas? Not the River Jordan. It empties the same good water into both.

This is the difference: the Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the waters of Jordan. For every drop that flows into it another flows out. The giving and receiving go on in equal measure. The other sea is "shrewder," hoarding its income

jealously. It will not be tempted into any generous impulses. Every drop it gets, it keeps. The Sea of Galilee gives and lives. The other sea gives nothing. It is named the Dead Sea.

There are at least two kinds of people in the world just as there are two seas in Israel. Among the many enemies of the spiritual life is stinginess. The stingy man worships money. But God said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." A man cannot grow in grace if he puts material things before God.

Remember what the Holy Bible says, "It is always more blessed to give than to receive," but let us be sure that we give in the right spirit.

Laughter: The Best Medicine

Bags of old bills were returned to the U.S. Treasury. A \$1 bill and a \$20 bill in the same sack started talking. "Gee, I went to nice stores, good restaurants, country clubs and exotic places," the \$20 bill said. "How about you?" "All I ever did was go to Church, go to Church, go to Church!"

Remember: "GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

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



The Dead Sea

© David Solodar - Fotolia.com



September 21, 2008: Holy Trinity youth of all ages, from HOPE (under 8) to JOY (8-12) to GOYA (7th-12th grade) to YAM (Young Adults 18 and over) gather with their families at Pine Park for a day of great food, magnificent weather, sports, fun and planning for the coming Holy Trinity Youth year. Father Radu and Father John also had opportunities to encourage our children in their faith with age-appropriate talks, and all ages worked together on a scavenger hunt ice-breaker. Looks like its going to be another energetic and exciting year for the Holy Trinity youth ministries! Thanks!





August 27-31, 2008
faithful parisioners and
to plan for, cook for, wo
the annual Holy Trinity
over these four pages a
friends and families wh
with such selfless love a
Church. Thank you to e
people all the way to th





For the 36th year, volunteers pitched in work for and yes, enjoy, Greek Festival. Scattered are just some of the many who offered themselves and dedication for their everyone from the chair- the last volunteer!





August 27-31, 2008:
Trinity Greek Festival featured many exciting moments, including the children taking the floor where they performed a dance "not that many years ago" also show a lot of behind the scenes play that makes the Festival so special to the very last celebration on Sunday evening (lower right)





The 36th Annual Holy Trinity featured a lot of favorite Holy Trinity Dancers here parents used to see years ago!" These photos of the scenes work and even possible, even after closing on (right). Thanks to all!





Voula Hareras

28 Οκτωβρίου 1940
— 2008 —

Πρίν 68 χρόνια ακριβώς, τό πρωινό τής 28ης Οκτωβρίου του 1940, ή Ελλάδα έκλήθη από τήν μοίρα νά πεθάνη ή νά ζήση έλεύθερη.

Καί ή Ελλάδα όλόκληρη, σάν μιά ψυχή, σάν νά ήταν ένας μονάχα άνθρωπος, συνεφώνησε στό [ΟΧΙ] πού έρριξε κατά πρόσωπον του ίταμού Φασίστα ό πρωθυπουργός τής χώρας πού εκείνη τή στιγμή άνυψώθηκε σέ διαστάσεις γιγαντιαίες καί εκάλυψε τίς σελίδες τίς πιο ένδοξες τής σύγχρόνου ιστορικής σταδιοδρομίας τής φυλής μας.

Η 28η Οκτωβρίου του 1940 είναι καί θά μένη ή πιο μεγάλη ήμέρα τής Ελληνικής Ιστορίας, θά είναι μεγάλη γιά τά μεγάλα πού εκείνη τήν στιγμήν, άποφάσισαν, από τόν ασκητικόν Βασιλέα Γεώργιον τόν Β. Τόν πολιτικόν Ηγέτη Ιωάννην Μεταξά, καί τό σύνολον του Ελληνικού Λαού, γιά νά φανούν άντάξιοι τών παραδόσεων τής Ιστορίας.

Θυσίας του παντός χρησίμου είς τά ιδανικά πού εκπροσωπεί ή ιδέα τής Πατρίδος.

Όλες οί άλλες μεγάλες μέρες τής Ελληνικής Ιστορίας είχαν ήρωισμούς, είχαν κάποια λογική, ή ήμέρα τής 28ης Οκτωβρίου λογική δέν είχε. Στόν Μαραθώνα, υπήρχαν έλπίδες στην Σαλαμίνα υπήρξε ή λογική τής στρατηγικής καί [τακτικής] ύπεροχής. Καί ακόμα, όταν ό Ελληνικός Λαός έπειτα από 400 χρόνια δουλείας ξεσηκώθηκε, περιωρισμένος σ'ένα κομματάκι γής έναντίον τής μεγαλειτέρας καί ισχυρωτέρας αυτοκρατορίας του κόσμου, πάλι κατέλειπε στους μαχομένους Έλληνες στοιχεία έλπίδων.

Αυτός όμως ό άγώνας έναντίον τών Ιταλών φασιστών, τών όκτώ έκατομμυρίων λογχών καί τών δέκα χιλιάδων άεροπλάνων, πού θά έπεσκίαζαν τόν ήλιο δέν παρείχε καμμία έλπίδα.

Γιά νά τό καταλάβη αυτό ό καθένας έπρεπε νά είχε ζήση εκείνες τίς ύπέροχες πρωινές ώρες τής Δευτέρας τό πρωί τής 28ης Οκτωβρίου του 1940. Στην Αθήνα, τήν Θεσσαλονίκη, στίς πόλεις, στα χωριά, Επρεπε νά ιδή γέρους, γυναίκες, παιδιά, έπρεπε νά δή άνάπηρους νά τρέχουν στό δρόμο, ν' αφίνουν τά σπίτια μέ τίς πόρτες άνοικτές καί νά φωνάζουν έξαλλοι από πατριωτικό μένος. Στόν Στρατώνα όλοι, Οπλα, δώστε μας όπλα, καί εκείνη τήν ώρα όταν άντήχησαν οί σειρήνες οί Έλληνες όλοι πίστευαν βαθύτατα ότι έκαλούντο νά άποθάνουν.

Γιατί καθένας τότε ήξερε πολύ καλά τί δυνάμεις είχε τό κράτος μας, καί τί είχαν οί Φασίσται, ήξεραν καλά τί στρατό, τί στόλο τί άεροπορία διέθεταν, ήξερε σχεδόν όλος ό λαός ότι πίσω από αυτές τίς τεράστιες δυνάμεις

παρεφύλατον καί οί δυνάμεις τής ύαίνης του Βερολίνου. Καί ήξεραν ότι ίσως θά καιγότανε ό Πειραιάς, ή Αθήνα, ή Θεσσαλονίκη, ήξερε πολύ καλά καί ό πιο μικρός μαθητής ότι μέ τίς Ιταλικές βόμβες τών δέκα χιλιάδων άεροπλάνων θά καταστρεφόντανε τά γεφύρια, οί σταθμοί, θά αχρηστευονταν οί σιδηροδρομικές συγκοινωνίες καί τά σπίτια κι' όλα, όλα, Όμως βγήκε κι' αυτός ό μικρός μαθητής στό δρόμο εκείνη τήν εύλογημένη ήμέρα γιά νά ζητήσει κι' αυτός άρματα νά πολεμήση.

Ετσι εκείνη τήν ήμέρα πραγματοποιήθηκε ή ψυχική έπαφή του Ηγέτου του Εθνους Ιωάννου Μεταξά μέ τόν Ελληνικό Λαό όλόκληρον, αξίζει νά θυμηθούμε τό διάγγελμά του.

«Καί τώρα, άνδρες, γυναίκες, καί παιδιά, έπιστρατευμένοι καί μή, άς σφίξουμε τά δόντια καί τούς γρόνθους, άς χαλυβδώσουμε τίς ψυχές μας, άς άγωνισθούμε μέ όλη τή λύσσα πού μάς προκαλεί αυτή ή άνίερη, αυτή ή άίσχρά επίθεσις έναντίον μας, Αγωνιζόμεθα όχι μόνον διά τήν ύπαρξίν μας, αλλά καί διά τούς άλλους βαλκανικούς λαούς, Αγωνιζόμεθα διά τήν άπελευθέρωσιν τής Αλβανίας άκόμη. Αγωνιζόμεθα διά τά μεγάλα άγαθά πού ή σπουδαιότητά των ξεπερνά τά σύνορά μας καί τά όρια τής Βαλκανικής, καί εκτείνεται είς όλόκληρον τήν ανθρωπότητα. Οφείλουμε νά εύχαριστήσωμεν τόν Θεό, διότι ή πρόνοιά του, έθεσε καί πάλιν τήν Ελλάδα πρωτοπόρον ενός τόσο εύγενούς άγώνος.»

Αυτά έβροντοφώνησε ό Μεταξάς τήν ίδια μέρα του πολέμου καί ήξερε καλά ό Ελληνικός Λαός μέ πιά Ύπερδύναμη θά πολεμούσε. Καί άρχιζαν τούς ύπολογισμούς, τόσα έκατομμύρια αυτοί, τόσα έμείς, μαζί τους κι' οί Αλβανοί, καί οί Βούλγαροι, Βέβαιος θάνατος, θάνατος Ναί,.. Άλλά εκείνο τό μεγάλο πρωινό, μέ τί θάρρος έκπληκτικό, μέ τί πλήθος έξαλης χαράς έπροχώρισαν προς αυτόν άφοβα, άπτότη η Ελλάδα μας.

Πράγματι εκείνο τό πρωινό όλοι σάν ένας άνθρωπος έτρεξαν στό κάλεσμα τής Πατρίδος γιατί ό άγώνας αυτός ήταν άγώνας, ύπέρ τής Πατρίδος, ύπέρ τής Άθάνατης Ελλάδας, αυτήν άγάπησαν έξαφνα μέ άσυγκράτητο πάθος, Δεξιοί, Αριστεροί, Κομμουνισταί, Άναρχικοί, κι' Εθνικόφρονες, τήν Ελλάδα καί ότι εκρुβε μέσα της, τήν ιστορία, τά Ιδανικά τίς Παραδόσεις, τήν Οίκογένεια, τήν Θρησκεία. Ναί, ό Πατριωτισμός γιά τόν Ελληνα ήταν καί είναι ψυχική άνάγκη.

Άλλά άς γυρίσουμε 68 χρόνια πίσω. Ήταν 3 παρά πέντε πρωί τής Δευτέρας 28ης Οκτωβρίου 1940. Έκείνη τήν ώρα ό Μεταξάς κοιμότανε, τό κουδούνι χτύπησε επανειλημμένος, ό Μεταξάς φόρεσε κάτι πρόχειρο κι' άνοιξε ό ίδιος, κι' είδε έκπληκτος μπροστά του τόν πρεσβευτή τής Ιταλίας.

Ο Μεταξάς κατάλαβε, και πήρε ανάλογο ύψος για να αντιπροσωπεύσει περήφανα την Ελλάδα. Ο Γκράτσι έδωσε στον Μεταξά έναν φάκελλο. Αυτός με ύσυχία άρχισε να διαβάσει.....Μέ την ύσυχία του ξανάβαλε το τελεσίγραφο στον φάκελο, και άκουσε τον Γκράτσι να λέει «Είμαι έπιπροσθέτως έπιφορτισμένος να σας ανακοινώσω ότι έν περιπτώσει μή άποδοχής τών όρων πού άναγνώσατε,τά Ίταλικά στρατεύματα θα εισέλθουν εις την Έλλάδα εις τας 6 τό πρωί.»

«Κύριε Πρεσβευτά», άπήντησε άτάραχος ό Μεταξάς, «καί τό περιεχόμενον τού τελεσίγραφου, και ό τρόπος πού μου έπεδόθη σημαίνουν κήρυξιν πολέμου έκ μέρους τής Ίταλίας.»

«Άλλά όμως δώσητε διαταγήν εις τά στρατεύματά σας ν'άφήσουν έλευθέραν την είσοδον εις τούς Ίταλούς να περάσουν...»

Ο Ιωάννης Μεταξάς τινάχθηκε,σηκώθηκε όρθιος και προσπάθησε να ύψωθή στο ύψος τού Γκράτσι,τά μάτια του έβγαζαν φλόγες. «Περιτόν να προχωρήσητε, φώναξε. ΟΧΙ! Δέν θα δώσω τέτοιες διαταγές στον ένδοξό μου στρατό, και δέν θα έπιτραπή στα δικά σας στρατεύματα να περάσουν.»

Μόλις ό πρέσβης έφυγε ό Μεταξάς ώρμησε στο τηλέφωνο σέ μισή ώρα ξύπνησε τόν Βασιλέα, τόν Άρχιστράτηγο, τούς Υπουργούς, έδωσε διαταγή στα σύνορα δέν θα περάσουν οι Ίταλοί, ντύθηκε και στής 4 ήταν κιόλας στο γραφείο του στο Υπουργείο Έσωτερικών.

Και έτσι άρχισε ή δόξα τής Έλλάδος, τά ήρωικά παλληκάρια κράτησαν για 6 όλόκληρους μήνες τόν άνισον άγώνα, και μέ την βοήθειαν τής Παναγίας, να φέρνουν την μιά νίκη δίπλα στην άλλη, Κοριτσά, Τεπελένι, Χειμάρα, Άργυρόκαστρον, και σέ άλλες πόλεις και χωριά τής Άλβανίας φέρνοντας την λευτεριά.

Καί έτσι έδωσαν καιρό και στην Άμερικη να έτοιμασθή και πανοπλοι να μπή στο άγώνα για την λευτεριά τών Λαών, πού στέναζαν κάτω από την Γερμανική μπότα,

και να πάρουν θάρρος, και παράδειγμα όλοι οι Λαοί, από τής πρώτες νίκες πού χάρισαν μέ τό τίμιο αίμα τους τά ήρωικά μας παιδιά.

Πώς μπορεί κανείς αλήθεια μέ συντομία να περιγράψει αυτήν την χρυσή σελίδα πού πρόσθεσαν όλοι οι Έλληνες άνεξερέτως στο γεμάτο δόξες Ίστορικό μας βιβλίο. Αυτό δέν μπορεί να γίνη άς άρκεστούμε στα λίγα. Ένα θα πρέπει να μάς άπασχολή, δέν πρέπει με κανέναν άπολύτως λόγο ή δικαιολογία να ξεχνάμε αυτές τής δοξης τής φυλής μας τής ράτσας μας, και ή 28η Οκτωβρίου 1940 είναι μιά από αυτές τής δοξασμένες έπετείους.

Θα πρέπει όπου στην Γή υπάρχουν Έλληνες και Ελληνικές Εκκλησίες να σκύψουν εύλαβικά και να προσευχθούν, σαν ιερό μνημόσυνο για τά ήρωικά παλληκάρια πού άφησαν την τελευταία τους πνοή στα χιονισμένα βουνά τής Άλβανίας. Να παρακαλέσουμε τόν Θεό να τά έχει στην άγκαλιά του και ή μνήμη τους να είναι αιώνια.

Βούλα Χαρερά

28 Οκτωβρίου 1940

Ήταν μιά νύχτα βροχερή, Οκτώβρης τού Σαράντα
Πού θέλησαν οι Ίταλοί, να σβύσουμε για πάντα

Χωρίς να λογαριάσουνε τί γράφει ή Ίστορία
Πώς πολεμούν οι Έλληνες για την Έλευθερία

Γι' αυτό σαν πήγε ό Πρεσβευτής για να τόν φοβερήσει
ΟΧΙ! τού λέει ό Μεταξάς ό Ντούτσε άς τολμήσει.

Κι' άν στείλει κοκορόφτερους τάνκς, όλμους, και κανόνια
Δέν τά φοβούνται οι Έλληνες μά πολεμούν αιώνια

Γιατί έχουν όλοι όρκιστεί στην μνήμη τών προγόνων
Να συνεχίζουν πάντοτε άγώνες Μαραθώνων

Και έμαθε ή Υφήλιος τότε στην Άλβανία
Τί είναι Ελληνική ψυχή, τί Δόξα, τί Άνδρεία..

Βούλα Χαρερά

Marios Tokas

Marios Tokas, the widely renowned Cypriot composer, died of cancer in an Athens hospital on Easter Sunday, April 27, 2008, at the age of 54. Born in Limassol in Cyprus on June 8, 1954, he was the son of Cypriot journalist and writer Kypros Tokas. He survived both phases of the Turkish invasion of



Maria Kraniou

Cyprus in 1974 where he served as a soldier on the front line against the Turkish invaders. Marios moved to Athens in 1974 with the dream of making a career in the music industry.

From an early age he exhibited a talent in music writing, and in 1978 he released his first album entitled "Ta tragoudia tis pareas", which earned him an early critical acclaim followed by another great success, the "Mikra Erotika" sung by Antonis Kalogianis.

Marios Tokas has worked with some of the most famous Greek singers. A superb composer, his works include religious albums, folk albums, soundtracks to television shows, and pure Greek music. The Journalists Union expressed its grief, describing Tokas as "an excellent human being, a fighter of freedom, democracy, human rights and social justice... With his music and cultural work, Marios Tokas enriched Cypriot and Greek music and culture and made them proud of the national cultural heritage." (Edited from "Hellenic News")

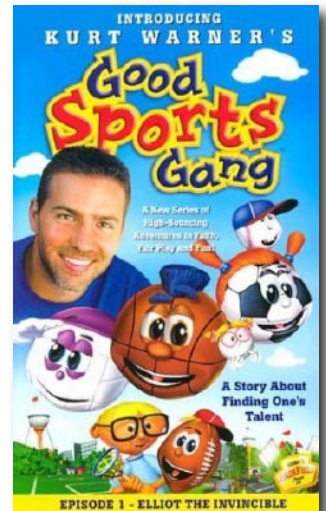
Hello, my precious children!

It's fall again, and lots of you are running around in fields all over the place, but for sports instead of scurrying for food and shelter like little mice! Well, I have a good DVD about sports called, "The Good Sports Gang: Elliot the Invincible."

In this great episode, the Good Sports Gang gets together and sets out on a mission. Their goal is to help a little boy named Elliot who thinks he cannot do much of anything find his talent. Elliot has a great dream of being a good player and captain of the team. But he keeps falling down. He always says, "Sorry! I'll do better next time!" but his teammates and even the other teams tell him, "There won't be a next time ... hit the road!"

Elliot is hurt, but at the same time he wants to be like them. The Gang decides that what Elliot needs is self-confidence. The Good Sports Gang has to help him find the gift that makes each person special. Elliot first has to see that what he has inside is just as important as being the captain of the team. In fact, it's far more important! Then the Gang has to tell him about "the plan." Everyone has a special gift to share with others. No two people are exactly alike. And God has a plan to match the gifts. Our Heavenly Father will show us the way when we ask Him. So first, we must ask God what He wants us to do. The rest will follow. Check out this DVD and see how it does!

Yiayia always tells us the same thing using a passage from the Bible: "But first seek His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be added as well" (Matthew 6:33). Remember, all those things are a part of God's special plan for each of us. The only way to find it is to follow Him!



The other great entry this month is "Moe and the Big Exit," which tells the story of Moses and the Exodus with an interesting twist: it's a western! Moses is "Moe" and Larry the Cucumber is a cowboy living in Dodgeball City while his kinfolk work their fingers (cucumbers with fingers?) to the bone diggin the Grand Canyon. Moe asks the Mayor to let his people go but ... are you ready for this? ... he says, "No!" Well, just like the Hebrews of the Old Testament, they eventually learn to follow God's plan and He leads them from bondage.

This story reminds me of what our Heavenly Father tells us in Psalm 28: "The Lord is my helper and my champion. In Him my heart hoped and I was helped." Remember, we can always call on our Heavenly Father and follow His directions. Even when we know we cannot do it, like "Mo," God will give us the strength. He will amaze us with what we can do with His help!

Love in Christ,
Spero

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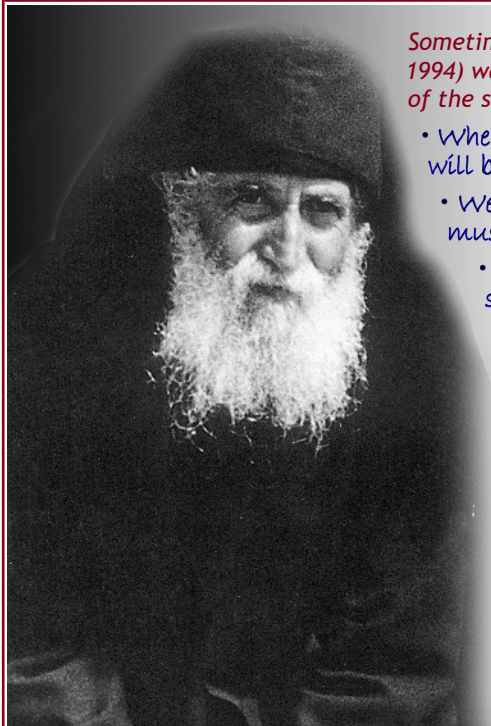


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“Speak Concisely—Say Much in a Few Words”



Sometimes greatness is most clearly revealed through simplicity. Elder Paisios of Mount Athos (1924-1994) was one of the best contemporary examples of that axiom. Below are excerpts from some of the simple but powerful advice he offered to Christians on their spiritual journey.

- When someone celebrates a nameday, wish him thus: May you live many years which will be pleasing to God.
- We should do whatever can be humanly achieved; the rest which is beyond our power must be left in God's hands.
- We must always be considerate and lenient to our fellow men, so God can also be the same with us.
- When we do good, do it only because we love it and prefer it to evil, and not because we seek reward. This way we will become children of God and not His hired workers.
- It is very important to live our spiritual life with joy and freedom and not out a pure sense of duty. We should take advantage of the little time left for us to live.
- Live as simply as you can. Do not make your own lives difficult. Too many conveniences turn people into slaves.
- Do not try to use your logic in order to understand some sections from the Holy Bible. Logic has no place in the Holy Bible. Just read it. God will reveal whatever is good for you.
- Christ is wholly love, goodness and consolation, and never suffocates. He has an abundance of spiritual oxygen.

From “Elder Paisios of the Holy Mountain”

Scripture of the Month: “Let all that you do be done in love.” (1 Corinthians 16.14)