



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

NOVEMBER 2016

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HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
OUR VISION: "FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."

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IMPORTANT NOTICE:

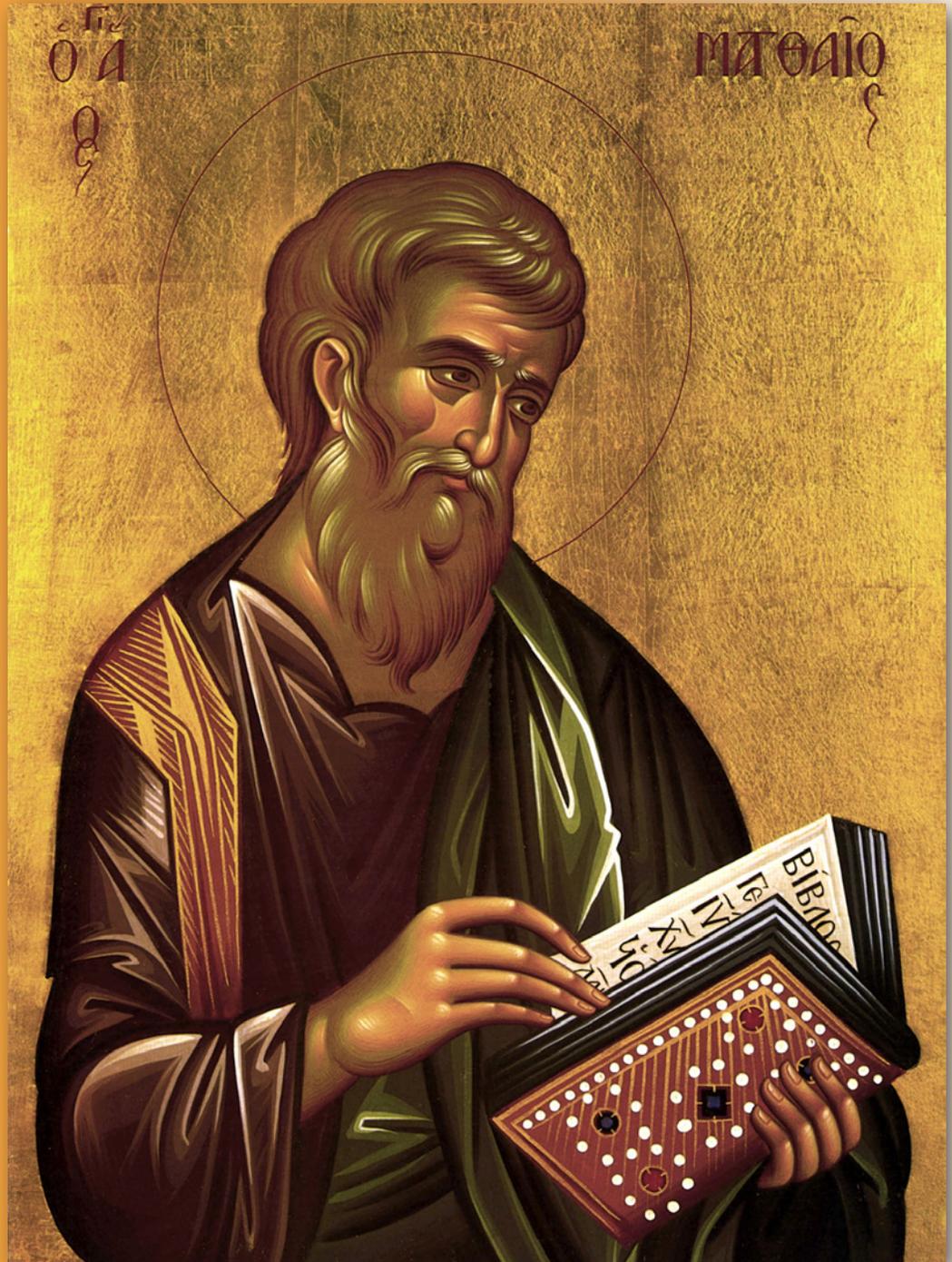
**NOVEMBER 6, 2016
FALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NOTICE, AGENDA & PARISH
COUNCIL NOMINATIONS
FORM ENCLOSED**

QUICK NEWS



The GOYA teens bounced their way through the Skyzone trampoline park on October 9. Want to see videos and more photos of this event and others in the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? See the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 6-7 or visit our online photo gallery at photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

SAINT MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST – NOVEMBER 16



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.

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Van Backeris	Stephanie Sedor
Tom Germanos	Alex Trilivas
Marios Kritiotis	Gerri Valliant

Ministries

Please visit the Holy Trinity website at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org for descriptions and contact information on Holy Trinity Church's ministries, including education, youth, senior, family and cultural opportunities. There is something for everyone, so please get involved today!



My Beloved Spiritual Children,

"In one history textbook Joan of Arc is discussed without any mention of God... In another, the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving Day is described without any reference to their thanking God for their survival in the new land."

This quote from the New York Times should come as no surprise to faithful Christians in America, who often feel their faith is being minimized, marginalized and even eliminated from history. What may come as a surprise is that the quote is from an article *30 years ago in 1986!* Yes, this effort to expel God from the present, past and future, in the public forum and in our educational systems, in nothing new. Some time ago, a New York University study examined sixty social studies and history textbooks used in public schools across the United States. The committee was amazed to find that almost every reference to the Christian influence of early America was systematically removed.

But in this month of November, the legally recognized and nearly universally celebrated holiday of "Thanksgiving" stands as a confession of undeniable truth: we need to be thankful. And no matter how hard the purveyors of religious cleansing try to expel God and the belief in Him from our society, the question must be asked, "Give thanks to whom?" The answer cannot be ignored.

President George Washington clearly proclaimed it in his Thanksgiving Day proclamation on October 3, 1789, when he established, "a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God." Nobody objected. And in his own proclamation of March 30, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln reminded a nation that was already in danger of losing its divine appreciation to guard against it: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven... We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God." Nobody protested. How different it is today!

So as we gather with America this month to "give thanks," may we heed fervently the call of the prayers of the Divine Liturgy, which has unchangeably proclaimed for generations to Whom we should offer our thanks. "It is proper and right to hymn You, to bless You, to praise You, to give thanks to You, and to worship You in every place of Your dominion."

With thanks to God for you and all things,

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the Lord.

You are my God, and I will give thanks to You.

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We give thanks to God always for you all.

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.

Quotes that answer the question, "Give thanks to whom?" Want to know where they are found? Why not make it your Thanksgiving exercise to look them up? (Bible required!)

Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:

Father John and Presvytera Becky Touloumes

With thanks to God for our children and our Holy Trinity Family

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services November

Please take note of the following weekday Liturgies and services this month. Unless otherwise indicated, Orthros is at 8:15 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30 at the St. George Chapel (SG).

- Nov. 8:** The Holy Archangels
To be held at 9am, Angel's Acres Chapel, Canonsburg
- Nov. 9:** St. Nektarios the Wonderworker (SG)
- Nov. 21:** Entrance of the Theotokos (SG)
- Nov. 25:** St. Katherine the Great Martyr (SG)
- Nov. 30:** St. Andrew the Apostle (SG)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY

FOCUS Fall Food Drive November

The Church School will hold a Fall Food Drive for FOCUS Pittsburgh during November. Students will receive grocery bags with a list of items attached. Please return them by Nov. 27. Creative contests will be held in each class to encourage collections. This is a great reminder of how blessed we are to be able to help those in need and to be thankful for the many blessings we have, including our daily food and shelter!

SPIRITUAL LIFE MINISTRY

"Faith and Family WEEKDAYS" November

Holy Trinity Church's new, expanded "Faith and Family WEEKDAYS" ministry is off to a great start, with many people participating in more opportunities for worship, spiritual life and educational ministries beyond Sunday morning. See page 6 for information and a schedule. Find what you like and give it a try! To submit ideas or feedback, please see Spiritual Life Ministry Chairperson Joyce Athanasiou (412-292-4205).

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

GOYA Teen Meeting November 6

The GOYA teen ministry will hold its monthly meeting on Sunday, November 6, following Divine Liturgy All teens are asked to attend.

GOYA Parents Meeting November 13

The GOYA teen ministry will hold a parents meeting on Sunday, November 13, following Divine Liturgy All parents of teens are asked to attend.

HOPE AND JOY Turkey Bowl and Lunch November 13

The HOPE and JOY ministries will be holding a Fall Turkey Bowl Event and Lunch on Sunday, November 13, at the Treesdale Commons Cider House from 1:00-4:00pm. Dress appropriately for the weather. They will be playing football, soccer, and/or basketball outside. Lunch will be provided for the children. Drink, dessert, and side dish donations are appreciated. RSVP to Nikki Marsh, nmarsh@zoominternet.net.

Metropolis GOYA Fall Retreat November 18-20

The 2016 GOYA Fall Retreat will be held at Camp Nazareth from Friday, Nov. 18 through Sunday, Nov. 20. Registration is now open at pittsburgh.goarch.org. GOYAns have received information on the Holy Trinity reduced fee code through the GOYA email system.

GOYA Turkey Bowl November 27

The GOYA will hold its annual Turkey Bowl Thanksgiving Weekend Football Game on Sunday, November 27, following Divine Liturgy. This is a fun and friendly GOYA tradition, and everyone is invited: players, non-players, cheerleaders, parents and fans! The game will be played on the main lawn at the church. Players should bring a change of clothes and shoes for play. Sign up at the November GOYA meeting. The flag football game will be followed by hot chocolate, meatless "walking tacos" and other goodies. Yum!

COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

Greek Room 75th Anniversary Celebration . . . November 5

The Greek Room Committee of the University of Pittsburgh Nationality Rooms invites all to a 75th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, November 5 at Saint Nicholas Cathedral,. See the flyer on page 7 for more information.

Fall General Assembly November 6

The community will hold its regular Fall General Assembly meeting on Sunday, November 6, following Divine Liturgy. Please see the enclosed notice agenda. Also please note the enclosed Parish Council Nomination Form.

Military Appreciation Day November 6

In observance of Veteran's Day, the Cards and Phone Calls Ministry Team needs your support to coordinate a Military Appreciation Day in honor of parishioners, family, and community members who have served and are still serving our country in the military. This tribute will include a memorial service for all veterans and fallen heroes, and special recognition of living veterans and active military service members. To submit your service member information, please contact Sherry Clayton at 412-216-4793 or saclayton12@yahoo.com. Also, our gratitude will be further demonstrated by a Card Signing event by all parishioners during Coffee Hour. Finally, Coups for Troops is another way we support overseas military families. Please collect manufacturer's coupons (internet printed included) in categories of Food, Non-food, Baby, and Pets to be donated by our HT family for overseas distribution by this amazing organization.

"Drop and Shop" Evening for Parents Dec. 2

GOYA will be hosting a "Drop and Shop" evening for parents of Holy Trinity children of all ages on Friday, December 2. The GOYAns will organize activities so parents can drop of their kids and enjoy a night of Christmas shopping on their own. Reservations are required, so watch the Sunday Bulletin and email news for forthcoming details.

For the latest updates and schedule of parish events, visit www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar

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

NOVEMBER 2016 – "THE VOICE OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH"
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH, THANKSGIVING DAY: "IN REVERENCE, GIVING THANKS"



Father John Androutsopoulos

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High"

(Psalm 92:1)

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Rejoice and be thankful as we are going to celebrate Thanksgiving Holy Day. Speaking for myself, I do rejoice

and I am thankful because 56 years ago – November 20th, 1960 – I was ordained as a Deacon at the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church in Chicago, by Archbishop Iakovos, of blessed memory. I do remember an admonition by his Eminence: "Deacon John, remember and imitate your patron Saint John the Baptist and preach the truth."

The reverence inspired by thanksgiving is good. In a world of material power it is easy for us to stand amazed at the power and lose our reverence for God. Our prayers should always include thanksgiving. It is the acknowledgement that we are dependent on God. Even for the simplest things there is no possibility of our being on our own.

God Is The Giver of All Gifts

The living God gives us richly all things to enjoy. All that makes life possible and good is a gift. It is not a gift that can be appreciated, much less properly experienced, if we fail to recognize God as the Giver. God gives Himself in His gifts.

The grace of God is supremely manifested in the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Our thanksgiving will be complete, only if from our hearts we thank God above all for His love, given us in Jesus.

We have good reasons to rejoice and give thanks always, for God has bestowed upon each of us bounteous blessings. We live in a wonder world of rich natural blessing, which we are prone to take for granted. Only when one or another of these blessings is withdrawn for a time do we realize its richness. As wonderful as His material and natural blessings are, God's spiritual blessings, with the plan of eternal salvation, are infinitely more wonderful.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord and be grateful for things of a divine origin, mindful of God, their Giver. A grateful person is not one who is zealous in giving thanks but once a year. He has at all times a grateful heart and offers thanks to God daily.

Thanksgiving: A Way of Life, Not A Day in Life

Thanksgiving is a condition of one's life rather than merely

a tradition to be observed. Sincere gratitude has a way of revealing itself in our daily lives. By giving thanks we express the gratitude we have and feel for God's blessings.

"Don't You Ever Say Thank You?"

"I sent him a gift, and he never acknowledged it!"

"I visited her when she was sick, and she hasn't phoned me in weeks!"

"When he had financial problems, I loaned him some money. He hasn't mentioned paying it back!"

When a person fails to show gratitude, it hurts. We can't understand how they can accept our gifts and our love and never say thank you. But what about us? God has given us the greatest gift there is – salvation through His Son – but are we truly grateful? We nod our heads and say of course we're grateful, but how are we showing it? Do we get from Him, and not give in His name? Do we receive much from Him and not share what we have with others? Do we enjoy the security of His great love for us, and not love? There are so many ways in which we fail to show our gratitude to Him.

"Holidays" or "Holy Days"

Beloved, as the two HOLY DAYS are approaching, THANKSGIVING and CHRISTMAS, this is a good time to think about all that we have and where we got it. Let us not forget the fact that everything we have comes from God – a gift, and so, naturally, we fail to thank Him? We forget so often that all we own comes from God. We take health and love and even

life for granted. Lord, forgive us and help us to remember to thank you for everything. Amen.

"My Church"

It is composed of people like me. We make it what it is. It will be friendly – if I am; Its pews will be filled – if I help to fill them; It will do great work – if I work; It will make generous gifts to many causes – if I am generous; It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship – if I bring them; It will be a church of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, and a church with a noble spirit – if I who makes it what it is, am filled with these. Therefore, with the help of God, I shall dedicate myself to the task of being all the things I want my Church to be. BE A FAITHFUL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN. GOD BLESS YOU!

With His Love and Blessings, Have a Happy Thanksgiving Day!

*Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos
Protosphyter and Internal Missionary*



Our beloved Father John and Presvytera Ethel Androutsopoulos: We are thankful for you!

Stewardship: Eternal Returns on Our Investments

Stewardship: the buzzword of every parish council in America. What does it mean? Where is its place in the Church? Stewardship: a concept often promoted but seldom understood.

When I was first asked to write on Stewardship, I thought to myself “what could I possibly write about? I know little about Stewardship.” Indeed, I had heard the word “Stewardship” many times in my life. After all, as the son of a priest, I grew up “voluntarily” attending many exciting General Assembly meetings and heard it discussed all the time. Rarely, however, was the meaning of Stewardship discussed.

In my young adult life, my initial understanding of Stewardship was correlated strictly and interchangeably with “money.” This isn’t totally incorrect. After all, Christ praises those who give to the church in relation to their means - much like the poor widow (Luke 21:1-4). By giving back to the Church, we are laying eternal treasures in heaven (Matt 6:19-21). Whether it’s 2%, 10%, or even 20%, every penny we give enables the ministries of this wonderful community. However, since joining Holy Trinity three years ago, I learned that Stewardship goes far beyond financial terms.

I work in the corporate world and I am pursuing a Master’s Degree in Business. Return on Investment (ROI) is the dominant concept in the business world and it permeates other parts of our lives—sometimes to our own confusion. How can we quantify the ROI of Stewardship?

We can’t—there is no formula or ROI model. But, Christ gives us some clues in the scriptures. The parable of the talents (Matt 25:14-30) is an incredible story illustrating God’s expectations for us. In short, we are all given varying degrees of talents to work with in our lifetime. Those of us who cultivate our talents and multiply them are rewarded. If we selfishly keep our talents buried to ourselves, it is to our own detriment. Ultimately, we are each held accountable to what we do with our unique talents.

Everything we have is through the Grace of God. Our physical strength, our mental toughness, our upbringings, our professional successes, and more. These tools that we carry are all part of our talent toolkit. We are called upon by Christ to

use our talents for the betterment of our community. If you love music, join the Choir! If you love theology and education, Church School is for you. The Sunday Bulletin and the *Holy Trinity Herald* list a multitude of ministries that we can commit our time to. The annual Stewardship Pledge Card also lists many areas of opportunity. If you already commit your talents to the church, then multiply them! Bring in a friend or family member to join you by your side. An eternal reward is the best return we can get on our investment.

In Church School, our middle school and high school classes have spent considerable time dissecting the first two chapters of Genesis. We learned that Adam (humanity) was ordained the steward and caretaker of God’s good creation. This was one of our first roles in God’s creation. It has not changed. It will not change. Therefore, let us go forth and be good stewards to God’s creation.

In Christ,
Miltiadis Constantine

Editor's note:

Milt has been a member of Holy Trinity Church for two years and is the son of Father Thomas and Presvytera Vasiliki Constantine of Youngstown, Ohio. He has been a life-long participant in the ministries of the Orthodox Church, including being a summer camp counselor for the Metropolis of Pittsburgh at Camp Nazareth, and he is currently a Holy Trinity Church School Ministry teacher (see photo at left). Milt is a graduate of Westminster College with a major in Political Science and Public Relations and is pursuing his graduate degree in the Master of Business Administration at the University of Pittsburgh’s Katz Graduate School Business. Milt stays busy in the professional and public service worlds as a University Relations Recruiter at Alcoa, a member of the non-profit board of the Pittsburgh Urban Christian School, a “Big Brother” in the “Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Pittsburgh” program and a High School Basketball Referee.

Like last month’s Stewardship reflection, Milt’s contribution was requested by our Stewardship Ministry committee and is yet another personal and powerful testimony of the blessings received through the ministries of Holy Trinity Church that are made possible by the dedicated and sacrificial offerings of time, talents and treasures of our stewards. Above all, it reflects the important role we all play as stewards of the gift of the God-given talents that bless the life of this church through the hearts of our people. Thank you, Milt, for reminding us of the calling each of us has as stewards of God’s creation and His Holy Church!

Father John



☑ WORSHIP ☑ LEARN ☑ GROW ☑ PRAY ☑ SERVE

FAITH AND Family WEEKDAYS

AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

"Every day in the temple and at home they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." (Acts 5:42)

NEW FORMAT! NEW SCHEDULE!

Three years ago, Holy Trinity Church introduced an innovative series of educational programs under the title of "Faith and Family Wednesdays." Since then, dozens of presentations, hands-on-learning sessions and worship services provided a way for Christians to grow and progress in the knowledge and understanding of their faith. In active pursuit of growing ministries that are relevant and accessible to our faithful parishioners, this ministry is now re-launched using your feedback as "Faith and Family WEEKDAYS!" Check it out!

"FAITH AND FAMILY WEEKDAYS" MINISTRIES GUIDE: 2016-2017

DAYS	MINISTRY	SCHEDULE	ABOUT
DAILY	"Prayer Partners" Prayer Support Ministry	Every Day: In your personal prayers	EVERYONE can participate in this vital ministry EVERY DAY. On the first Sunday of January, April, July and October, blank prayer cards will be distributed. Write your first name. They will then be randomly distributed at the end of the service. Each person will commit to praying for the person they receive <u>daily</u> during that quarter. Pray and be prayed for!
TUESDAYS 9:00am	"Hearts of Faith" Women's Ministry	4th Tuesday Sep.-May Oct. 25, Nov. 29, Jan. 24, Feb. 28, Mar. 28, Apr. 25, May 23	The Saint Lydia Women's Fellowship returns with a monthly morning session of conversation with God and each other. The group meets at church at 9:00 a.m. for a 30 minute morning prayer, then gathers in the Fireside Room for an hour of sharing and discussion about the matters a woman's heart.
TUESDAYS 7:00pm	"Journey of Marriage" Marriage Prep Ministry	2nd Tuesday Oct.-June Oct. 18*, Nov. 8, Dec. 13, Jan. 10, Feb. 21*, Mar. 14, May 9, Jun. 13 (*=3rd Tues)	Marriage preparation for couples using the excellent and interactive "Journey of Marriage" materials developed by Dr. Philip Mamalakis and Fr. Charles Johannides. From "Hello!" to honeymoon, this series educates and equips couples for fruitful Orthodox Christian marriage. It's lots of fun, too!
WEDNESDAYS 6:30pm	"Journey to Fullness" Faith Growth Ministry	Wednesdays: 2 series of sessions, 8 weeks each Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26. Nov. 2, 9, 16, 30. / Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25. Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22	Father Barnabas Powell has released an excellent new video series for everyone who wants to learn more about the "fullness of the faith" found in Orthodox Christianity. Fr. Barnabas' style is sincere, straight-forward and he is not afraid to raise and speak to the tough questions. At the end of each segment there is a brief question and answer review which delves deeper into issues raised in the talk.
THURSDAYS 7:00am	"Prayer and Panera" Men's Ministry	3rd Thursday Sep.-June Sep. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 17, Jan. 19, Feb. 16, Mar. 16, May 18, Jun. 15	The Saint Nikodemos Men's Fellowship hosts this morning session of prayers and Christian fellowship (with coffee and bagels, too!). The group meets at church promptly at 7:00 a.m. for a 15-20 minute morning prayer and scripture, then moves up the hill to Panera for 30-45 minutes of coffee, breakfast and Christian men's conversation.
THURSDAYS 7:00pm	"Orthodox Movie Night" Entertainment/Fellowship	2nd Thursday Oct.-June Oct. 13, Nov. 10, Dec. 8, Jan. 12, Feb. 9, Mar. 9, Apr. 6, May 11, Jun. 8	A monthly offering of inspirational movies with snacks and good company in the Fireside Room. Free to all, it's a relaxing and uplifting alternative to the "same old stuff" on cable TV. Why sit around alone and watch that when you can enjoy a night of Holy Trinity fellowship and entertainment?

Watch for weekly updates, special events, guest speakers and youth activities in the Bulletin. Find more info at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/ffw

Original Greek language composition by Voula Hareras on the upbringing of children in solid traditions



Voula Hareras

Αγαπητοί μου,
Απασχολήσου για λίγο να ξεφυλλίσεις, και να μελετήσεις, τής παραδόσεις και τά έθιμα πού σου άφησαν κληρονομιά οί παλαιοί μετανάστες προγονοί σου, και τότε με έκπληξη θά βρεθείς αντίκρυ μέ ένα κομμάτι γυμνό, τής ψυχής σου.

Επειτα μελετώντας προσεκτικά και με σεβασμό αυτά, και φθάνοντας ως τής ρίζες τους, θά δεις καινούργιους όρίζοντες πού

ανοίγονται μπροστά σου, τις εύεργεσίες πού μπορείς να προσφέρεις και τόν ψυχικό πλούτο πού θά άποκομίσεις.

Η κληρονομιά για τήν όποίαν μιλάω, είναι οί κοινότητες, και οί σύλλογοι μας, είναι ένα μονοπάτι άνοιχτο, πού μέ κόπους και θυσιές τό άνοιξαν, γιατί δέν είχαν τά μέσα πού σε βοήθησαν, αυτοί οί ΑΜΟΡΦΩΤΟΙ να άποκτήσης έσύ.

Δέν είχαν τήν δύναμη να άνοίξουν μία φαρδιά λεωφόρο, άφησαν όμως τό μονοπάτι άνοιχτό να τό πάρεις έσύ, και πισοστρατεύοντας να βρεις τής ρίζες σου. Εκεί πού ξεκινάει ή βάση της ράτσας σου, τής φυλής σου, κάτι πού είναι πιο πλατύ απο τήν σημερινή σου οίκογένεια, και έντελώς άσχετο απο τήν μεγάλη κοινωνία πού ζεις, και πού πρέπει να σέβεσαι, εκεί είναι μια μικρή ξεχωριστή ψυχική κοινωνία που θα φυλάξεις σαν ιερό κειμήλιο, γιατί σου τό άφησε κληρονομιά ο φτωχός σε χρήματα, μετανάστης γονιος σου, αλλά πλούσιος σε ψυχικά και ήθικά αίσθήματα.

Πάρε παράδειγμα τήν έργασία πού άφησε ή μάνα σου, ή ή γιαγιά σου, προσπάθησε όσο μπορούσε να κρατήσει όλα τά έθιμα τής φυλής μας, να διατηρήσει αμόλευτα απο τήν ξενικήν επίδραση και άγνά να τά άφήση πίσω της δουλεύοντας γι' αυτό πλάι πλάι μέ τόν άνδρα της.

Οί γυναίκες αυτές, φύλαξαν περισσότερο τήν παράδοση γιατί αυτός είναι και ο ρόλος της γυναίκας αυτή πάντα πιο θρησκια, και μέ πιο έσωτερικότητα μπορεί να κάνει τις παροδόσεις να φαίνονται ωραίες και να μπορούν να στέκονται όλες σωστά και σοβαρά, και περήφανα να στολίζουν τήν κοινωνία της ξένης χώρας που τις δέχτηκε, τις φιλοξένησε, και πολλές φορές τις θαύμαζε και τις άντέγραφε, γιατί είναι γεμάτες οίκογένεια, θρησκεία, αλληλοβοήθεια και αγάπη.

Οταν ξεριζώσεις τήν μητρική γλώσσα, τής παραδόσεις, τά έθιμά σου, τότε έχασες τήν ψυχή σου. Μονάχα κάτι κληρονομίες ασυνάρτητες θα άπομείνουν μέσα σου, πού θα ξεπροβάλλουν άζαφνα για να δείχνουν στους ξένους πως δέν είσαι ολότελα δικός τους. Και ένw 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, τους όμοιους σου, και μέ χαρά προχωρήστε να βρείτε τους θησαυρούς πού άφησαν, και εκεί θα ξαναβρεις άτόφια και χαμογελαστή τήν μάνα σου, τόν πατέρα σου, ή τους προγόνους σου άν γεννήθηκες έδώ.

Και τά ιδανικά πού κρύβεις μέσα σου αναφτερωμένα θα βρούν διέξοδο και θα πλάσεις και σύ τότε ότι θέλης γιατί θα

έχεις πλέον γερά θεμέλια.

Έχεις χρέος να τά μελετήσεις όλα αυτά γιατί είναι δικά σου, και αρκετά τά εγκατέλειψε σχεδόν μέχρι τώρα μέ τό να έχεις κοντέψεις να πεισθής πως αυτά δέν έχουν αξία, είναι κατώτερα και για πέταμα.

Μαθαίνοντας απο πού έρχεσαι, θα μάθεις και τόν σωστό δρόμο πού πρέπει να πηγαίνεις και όταν τά μάθεις αυτά έγινες άνθρωπος αίσθηματίας.

Για να σταθεί και να διατηρηθεί μια κοινότητα ή ένας σύλλογος, δέν χρειάζεται ιδικό κλήμα, ή πατρίδα, χρειάζεται ή καλή διάθεση ανθρώπων συνδεδεμένων μέ τά ίδια ιδανικά, και μια μικρή αφιέρωση απο τόν πολυτίμο χρόνο σας.

Χρέος έχετε να σεβαστείτε τήν μνήμη αυτών πού φύγαν και να εύχαριστήται αυτούς πού απέμειναν, και τό σπουδαιότερο θα ντύσεις τό γυμνό κομμάτι τής ψυχής σου, και θα κρατήσεις τήν σειρά.

Επειτα απο χρόνια τό ίδιο θα πράξουν τά παιδιά σου για σένα.

Ελπίζω και εύχομαι να διαβάσεις μέ προσοχή αυτό τό κείμενο και να τό εξηγήσεις και στα παιδιά σου πιστεψέ μέ θα ωφεληθούν. Καλόν χειμώνα λοιπόν.

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October 9, 2016: The teens of Holy Trinity GOYA spent the day together starting with Divine Liturgy and Church School, followed by a GOYA Steelers Tailgate and Fellowship at the home of Hank and Lucy Morris. Afterwards they took a fun trip to the Skyzone trampoline park in Leetsdale, where they bounced, battled, threw and jumped their way through an afternoon of topsyturvy fun. Another great GOYA day!



October 21, 2016: On Friday, October 21, the young children and parents of the HOPE and JOY ministries prepared almost 300 sandwiches and snacks for those served by the FOCUS Pittsburgh philanthropic ministry in the Hill District. FOCUS brings Orthodox Christians into a direct relationship of service with the poor, positively impacting their own lives while helping those in need.



October 15, 2016: Three representatives from Holy Trinity Church attended the Archons 2016 Athenagoras Human Rights Award Banquet. Archbishop Demetrios presented the award to New York Governor Andrew Cuomo. Pictured (L-R): Eleni Valliant, Father John and Anthony Balouris, who is currently serving as a United Nations Fellow at the Archdiocese.



October 16, 2016: Father John (L) had the honor as President of the Archdiocesan Presbyters Council to serve Divine Liturgy at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity on Sunday, October 16, with His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and other hierarchs of the Holy Eparchial Synod for the Investiture of the 2016 Class of Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. (Photo: D. Panagos)

Greek Essay by Luke Tomalski Wins Metropolis Award

One of Holy Trinity Church’s young people, Luke Tomalski, was one of the winners of the Fourth Annual Greek Language Competition of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh in 2016. Students were to interview an elderly person with Greek or Cypriot roots and write about their life prior to coming to the United States as well as their life here in the United States. They were also to provide pictures and to write it in Greek and English. Luke did a beautiful job writing about his grandmother Katherine Mourtakos Balouris. As shown to the right, on October 23 he was presented with a certificate and \$100 for his wonderful writing by Metropolis of Pittsburgh Greek Language Program Coordinator Maria Stamoolis. Below are excerpts (in English) from his biographical entry and photos of his Yiayia Kay and her family, both in her homeland of Greece and here in America. Congratulations, Luke, on honoring your heritage and being honored yourself!



**“My Yiayia, Katherine Mourtakos Balouris”
by Luke Themistocles Tomalski**

My Yiayia, Katherine Mourtakos Balouris, was born in the mountain village of Panitsa near Gythion, in Laconia on November 3, 1935. When she was in Greece, for fun, my Yiayia picked olives at her Yiayia’s olive grove, played a game with a barrel ring and a stick, played with her family, and played with homemade dolls. Some of the chores she did were to feed animals and get water from a spring in the village.

When my Yiayia and her family arrived in New York, they went through Ellis Island where they were checked. The relative that was going to take them to their house in Washington D.C. could not take them in so they took a train to Pittsburgh and went to my Yiayia’s uncle’s house. They stayed there until they found an apartment near where PNC Park is now. My Yiayia started first grade when she was eleven at Mary J. Cowley Elementary School on Pittsburgh’s North Side. The next year, she moved into sixth grade, after she learned English.

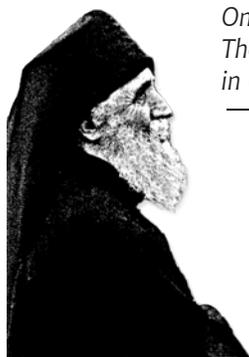


My Yiayia (far right) & her family & her uncle before they left Panitsa in 1947

My Yiayia came to the United States when she was eleven. She left Greece because there was a lack of food. She came with her mom, Maria (42), and her sister, Alice (6). Her mom had been born in Lewiston, Maine, so she was a United States citizen. Her brother Elias did not come with them because he was old enough to go into the army and the government would not let him leave. Also, her dad, Demetrios, was not a United States citizen, so he couldn’t come either. They both immigrated at a later time. My Yiayia and her mom and sister traveled from their village to Pireaus by train, then to New York by boat.



My Yiayia married my Papou, Themistocles Balouris, in 1961. He came to Pittsburgh in 1957 from Marmari, Evia. Together they had four children. My Yiayia has 12 grandchildren and we all love her a lot!



Saint Paisios

One of the great blessings of Orthodoxy is the presence, prayers and inspired words of the Holy Elders of the Faith. They have been referred to as “precious vessels of the Holy Spirit.” In recent years, many books have been published in English with their writings and talks. This column provides an opportunity for each of us to be blessed by their words.

Gheronda, how can we understand our respect for science in light of our Christian faith?

Evil starts when the mind concentrates only on science and is totally separated from God. This is why it is difficult for people who think this way to find inner peace and balance.

By contrast, when the mind revolves around God, and is illumined and sanctified, science is used both for our spiritual edification and for the benefit of the world.

Science can be of great help, but it can also muddle the mind greatly. I have met souls who possessed great lucidity even though their education was limited. If those who have muddled their mind with science manage to clarify it with the Grace of God, then, naturally, they will have more tools for their work. But if these tools are not sanctified, if their knowledge lacks holiness, then it will be used only for secular work and not for spiritual work. Our tools can be sanctified very quickly if we have the right kind of concern.

How does faith benefit intellectual and scientific thought?

Scientists and educated people who give precedence to their inner formation, to the edification of the soul, and bring their secular education to the service of spiritual growth, they will experience a rapid spiritual transformation. If they also lead spiritual lives, they will be able to help many people positively, by removing from their hearts the anxiety of hell and opening the way for heavenly joy. There are people of God who do not have as many academic degrees as others, but they can help people more, because they are full of divine Grace rather than diplomas. The world is so filled with sin that what we need the most is people given to prayer and to living a spiritual life. All these books and papers are paper money, valuable only if there are gold reserves in our bank, if our lives are spiritual through and through. And so we must drill into the “mine” of the soul, for otherwise science and education will be worth nothing.

Gheronda, how does reason reconcile with the work of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit provides, but only where there is room for Him to enter. Otherwise, He will not be able to provide. The words of a humble soul with spiritual experiences, spoken with pain from the depths of his heart, have much greater value than the fancy philological talk of a man who speaks without the heart, firing the words the one after the other from his trained tongue, but being incapable of touching other souls. For such words are spoken by a tongue of flesh and not a fiery tongue of Pentecost.

Education and knowledge are good things, but if they are not sanctified, they are a waste and lead to disaster. Some university students arrived at my Kalyvi (hut) one day, loaded with books. They said, “Gheronda, we are here to discuss the

Old Testament with you. God permits knowledge, doesn’t He?” “What kind of knowledge do you mean?” I asked them. “Knowledge acquired with the mind?” “Yes,” they answered. “This kind of knowledge,” I replied, “will take you up to the moon, but will not lead you to God.” It is good to have the intellectual powers that take man to the moon costing billions of dollars in fuel expenses and so on, but it is better to have the spiritual powers that raise man to God, his ultimate destination, with only a bit of fuel, a mere dried piece of bread.

Once, I asked an American who visited me at the Kalyvi, “What has this great nation of yours accomplished?” “We went to the moon,” he replied. “How far is that?” I continued. “Let’s say it’s about half a million kilometres away,” he responded. “How many millions of dollars did you spend to get there?” I asked next. “Since 1950,” he told me, “we have spent rivers of dollars.” “Did you get to God? How far is He?” I added. “God,” he said, “is very, very far.” “Well,” I replied, “it only takes us a dry piece of bread to get to Him!”

Natural knowledge helps us acquire spiritual knowledge. But when man remains at the level of natural knowledge, he is confined to nature and does not reach Heaven.

In other words, he remains on the earthly paradise, which was watered by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, enjoying beautiful nature with all its animals, but does not ascend to the heavenly Paradise to rejoice with the Angels and the Saints. But in order to reach the heavenly Paradise, we need to have faith in the Landlord of Paradise, to love Him, realize how sinful we are, and be humbled. In this way, we will come to know Him, to converse with Him in prayer, and praise Him for His help but also for the ways in which He is testing us.

If we have spiritual peace, do we still need studies?

A basic education is actually a very helpful tool. But one should not seek knowledge in order to help or impress others with clever remarks; he should get an education in order to help himself. If we make the effort to sanctify whatever God may have given us, the light of Grace will come and illuminate our minds. It’s in that light that we will find all the dogmatics and theology that we need; there we will experience the mysteries of God. But we should also realize that other people may have a simple disposition and do not wish to learn more, being content with anything that God may give them.

I have noticed that among uneducated people there are some who are very proud and others who are very humble. It’s the same among the educated; some are very proud and others are very humble. In other words, what makes the difference is how cultivated one is in spiritual terms. What really matters is that we are cultivated within. If in addition to that, one is also educated and has a humble disposition, then, this is the best of all worlds.

Excerpted from “Elder Paisios of Mount Athos, The Spiritual Counsels, Volume I: With Pain and Love for Contemporary Man”



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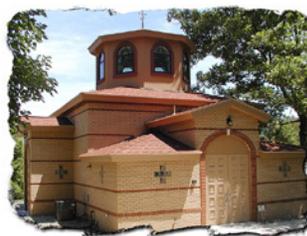
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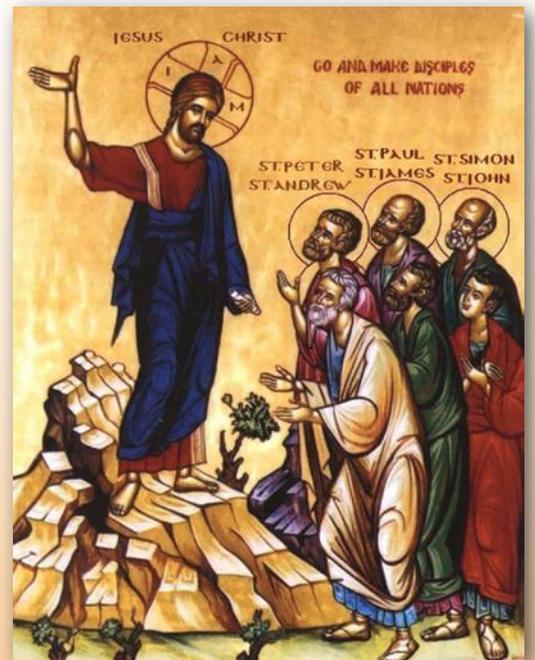
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Why the Great Commission Is Still Meant for Us Today

The Great Commission is essential to the spread of God’s Kingdom, and has been an essential part of Orthodox life and history. From the earliest days of Christianity, the message of the Orthodox Church has always been the Kingdom of God has come. The Orthodox Church is the presence of God’s Kingdom—not something we long for eventually, but a reality we can participate in now—and this is why evangelism should be integral to the life of the Church. We do not call people to stand around and wait for Christ to return, but to live in communion with Him, so that when He does return we can see Him as He is.

This is the life we should preach: that we need to turn to Christ in repentance and faith, be baptized into Him, following the teaching and fellowship of the Apostles and partake regularly of the Holy Eucharist. The early Church lived and taught this because they knew that Jesus was the pivot point of history from which everything past and future would be judged. He still is, and so we should still live.



Father Michael Keiser, “Spread the Word: Reclaiming the Apostolic Tradition of Evangelism”

Scripture of the Month: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28.19)