



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

JANUARY 2018

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Father John's Message
- 3 News & Events
- 5 Gheronda's Corner
- 6-12 Community Life Photo Journal
- 13 Nativity Flower Donors
- 14 House Blessing Schedule
- 15 Faith and Family Weekdays Spring 2017
- 16 Stewardship Reflection
- 14 Ask the Elders
- 16 House Blessing Request

ONE HOLY TRINITY

**Have you made
your 2018
commitment yet?**

QUICK NEWS



Philoptochos volunteers gather in the kitchen to prepare their annual Christmas luncheon. Want to see more photos of this event and others in the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? See the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 6-12 or visit our online photo gallery site at photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN - FEAST DAY: JANUARY 25



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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Pittsburgh, PA 15237

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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

2017 Parish Council

Gerri Valliant, President

Dean A. Balouris	Michael Passodelis
George Danis	Joyce Athanasiou
George Dickos	Stephen Stearns
Van Backeris	Karen Georgiadis
Tom Germanos	Alex Trilivas
Marios Kritiotis	Jean Willow

Ministries

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

"FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."



I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29.11

Dear Spiritual Family,

What does the New Year have in store for you? It's a question many people tend to ask as we cross the threshold from one year to the next. Magazines, websites and entertainment media spend time looking back over the year gone by and highlight it, evaluate it and rank it. They also are quick to provide resolutions, strategies and plans for the new year, mostly centered on popular goals such as personal appearance, careers, finances and other self-focused matters. While it is certainly a good thing to accept our responsibility for ourself and embrace good plans rather than allow ourselves to be simply carried along through the new year by the random winds of cultural trends or media forces, these all tend to be about one thing: me.

Instead of parsing our life into so many parts and hoping they will add up to a better "big picture," what if we were able to invest our efforts on one thing above all and know when that is right, everything in our life will follow? For Christians, this is not only possible, but essential if we are to experience the fullness of life we seek. It is so beautifully revealed in Jesus' famous "lilies of the field" passage in Saint Matthew, Chapter 6:

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

When we seek His kingdom first, we are truly realigning our priorities, our hopes and indeed our entire life around the one goal that matters above all: our relationship with God. From there, all things flow. And by trusting Him and "going with the flow," He creates, we are carried along with an assurance of His love and care for us, rather than thrashing about trying to make our own way against the tide of His will. Many times this requires a new way of understanding our relationship with Him. That can be challenging and even unsettling as we learn to "let go and let God," but it is one of the most God-pleasing changes we can make in our life. As Father Zacharias of Essex says,

"God is well pleased when we ask Him to show us new ways of approaching Him. He comes readily to help us because He already desires to grant us a new beginning, a new grace, a new change within the heart which enables it to ascend to Him through new knowledge of Him... When we give ourselves unreservedly to the mighty Spirit of God, each day we experience the changes wrought by the right hand of the Most High, and our heart and our spirit are continually lifted up towards Him by His grace. As we experience Him anew, He renews our spiritual vision and heals our hearts, fulfilling our hope, restoring us to wholeness and granting us ever-deeper knowledge of Himself through prayer."

As we enter the New Year of the Lord's grace here at Holy Trinity Church, we can certainly look back over 94 years of ministry and life in Christ and say, "Glory to God!" and know that as we lift up our hearts to do so, He indeed renews our spiritual vision, fulfills our hope and raises us up as His people and His Church, that we may continue to share His love, mercy and grace with the world around us in our 95th year and beyond.

Many thanks to the leaders, members and selfless volunteers of our Parish Council and all the ministries of this blessed community. It is my joy to serve you and serve with you. We have experienced so many blessings together, and by God's grace and your love, there are certainly many more to come, for as Jesus said to Nathanael, "You will see greater things than these."

May we all have a blessed and faithful New Year! Paternally yours,

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services January

Please take note of the following upcoming liturgical dates. Unless otherwise indicated, Orthros starts at 8:30 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m.. Guide to locations of services: "HT"=Holy Trinity Church, 985 Providence Boulevard, Pittsburgh; "SG"= Saint George Chapel, 8941 Ringesen Road, Allison Park.

Fri., Jan. 5, 9:30am: The Royal Hours of Theophany

This special service offers readings, prophecies and hymns which point to and interpret Holy Theophany.

Fri., Jan. 5, 6:30pm: The Forefeast of Theophany

This is the first of two Theophany Divine Liturgies and services of Great Blessings of the Waters. It is an evening Liturgy, so be sure to prepare properly to receive Holy Communion by (in addition to your other spiritual preparation) abstaining from food and drink from your noon meal on. The Liturgy will be followed by the Great Blessing of the Waters service. Please note that this is also a strict fasting day in preparation for Theophany. (HT)

Sat., Jan. 6: The Holy Theophany of our Lord

This is the main Orthros and Divine Liturgy of this great Feast. We will again offer the Great Blessings of the Water at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy. (HT)

Wed., Jan. 17: Saint Anthony the Great

Services for Saint Anthony celebrated at Saint Anthony Church, 424 Miller Ave, Clairton, PA 15025, Clairton, PA.

Tue. Jan. 30: The Three Hierarchs (SG)

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

HOPE and JOY to Prepare Lunches for Needy Jan. 12

On Friday, January 12, at 6:00pm, the young people of the HOPE and JOY ministries will make 150 lunches for FOCUS Pittsburgh. Our children will assemble sandwiches and put them in bags, together with drinks, fruit, and a snack.

Ten Minutes of HOPE and JOY Jan. 14, 21

Ten Minutes of HOPE and JOY: Our children in HOPE (grades K-2) and JOY (grades 3-6) will continue to meet with Father Radu once a month for ten minutes after their Church School lesson. To have more personal interaction and a meaningful dialogue, please help your children formulate questions about our faith, and we will address those topics during our "Ten Minutes of HOPE" on Jan. 14 and "Ten Minutes of JOY" on Jan 21.

GOYA Basketball Practice Jan. 3, 9, 22, 30

GOYA will hold basketball practice in preparation for the 2018 basketball tournament season on January 3, 9, 22 & 30 from 6:30-8:30pm at Hosack Elementary School, 9275 Peebles Road, Allison Park, PA 15101.

GOYA Parents and Coaches Meeting January 7

GOYA will hold a brief but very important meeting for all parents and coaches in the Conference Room following the

Vasilopita Luncheon on Sunday, January 7. This is an important meeting to distribute and collect information regarding our GOYAns' participation in the three Metropolis Basketball tournaments for 2018. All parents, chaperones and coaches are asked to attend.

GOYA Basketball Tournaments January

Our Holy Trinity GOYA families will be participating in two Metropolis Basketball Tournaments in January this year and one in February. They will participate in the Holy Cross Church tournament in Mount Lebanon, on January 13-15, for the first tournament, and the Annunciation Cathedral tournament in Columbus, OH, from January 26-28. The third tournament location will be announced at the meeting. May God grant them good skills, safe travels, protection from injury and the joy of fellowship in Christ with their friends in our sister churches near and far. God bless you all!

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

Installation of Philoptochos Officers January 7

Congratulations to the newly-elected executive officers and board members of the Holy Trinity "Omonia" Philoptochos Chapter: Marianne Stearns (President), Nicole Steiner (1st Vice-President), Georgeanne Bounos (2nd Vice-President), Tina Fiedler (Corresponding Secretary), Constance B. Walters (Recording Secretary), Penny Balouris Tomalski (Treasurer), Sherry Clayton (Assistant Treasurer), and Board members Chrysoula Balouris, Katherine Balouris, Yvonne Balouris, Sondra Balouris, Marianne Bonfield, Joyce Countouris, Joanne Germanos and Despina Ladakos. These faithful women will be installed on Sunday, January 7, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy following the installation of the Parish Council. Congratulations to our sisters in Christ. We look forward to supporting your philanthropic works of Christian love in the coming year!

Philoptochos Meeting January 21

Attention Philoptochos current and new members: please join us for our first Philoptochos meeting of the New Year! We will be discussing all our events for the year. Please come be a part of a wonderful ministry having fun and working with your fellow parishioners to help those in need! We will be meeting in the Conference Room after Divine Liturgy.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

No Church School Class December 31

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on Sunday, December 31. Please join together to worship as a family at 9:30am.

New Year Holiday Office Schedule January 1

The offices of the Archdiocese, Metropolis and Holy Trinity Church will be closed on Mon., Jan. 1 for New Year's Day.

Parish Council Election Results/Installation January 7

Thank you to all those whose names were submitted for

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

Parish Council elections this year. The results from the vote have placed the following members on the Council for the 2018-2019 term: Alvin Backeris, Dean A. Balouris, George Dickos, Steven Stearns, Ted Stewart and Alex Trilivas. Continuing on for the remainder of their two-year term through 2018 are: Joyce Athanasiou, George Danis, Karen Georgiadis, Tom Germanos, Michael Passodelis, Jeanne Willow, and Gerri Valliant. Parish Council installation will be held on Sunday, January 7, followed by the election of officers. Thank you to all those whom you have selected to serve in this important ministry, and remember: they serve **for you and with you**, not instead of you, so when they call for support, please answer, "Yes, here I am!" Thank you.

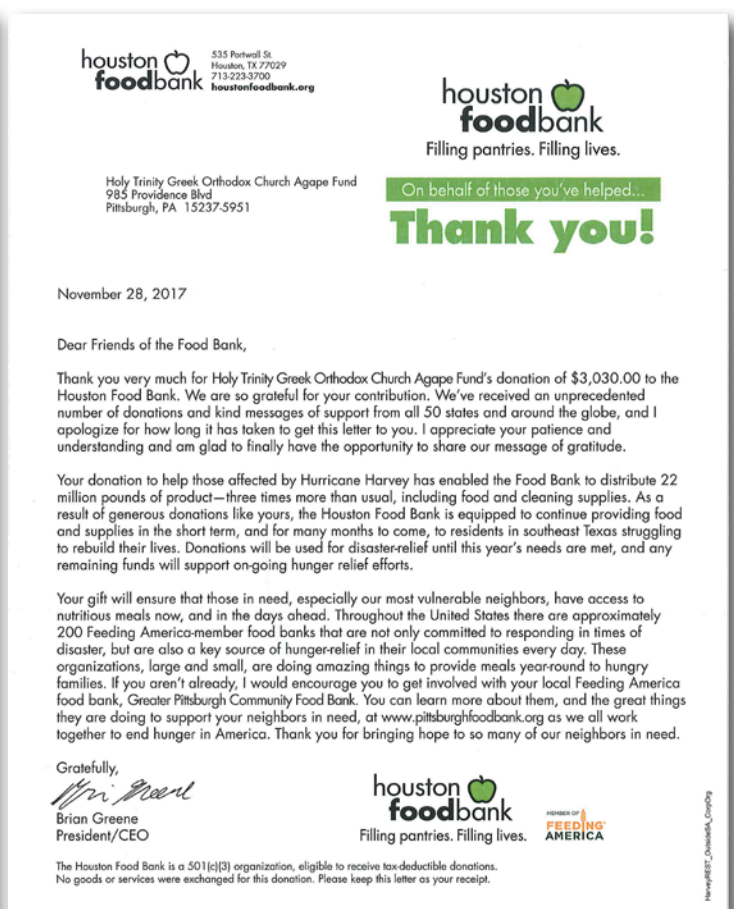
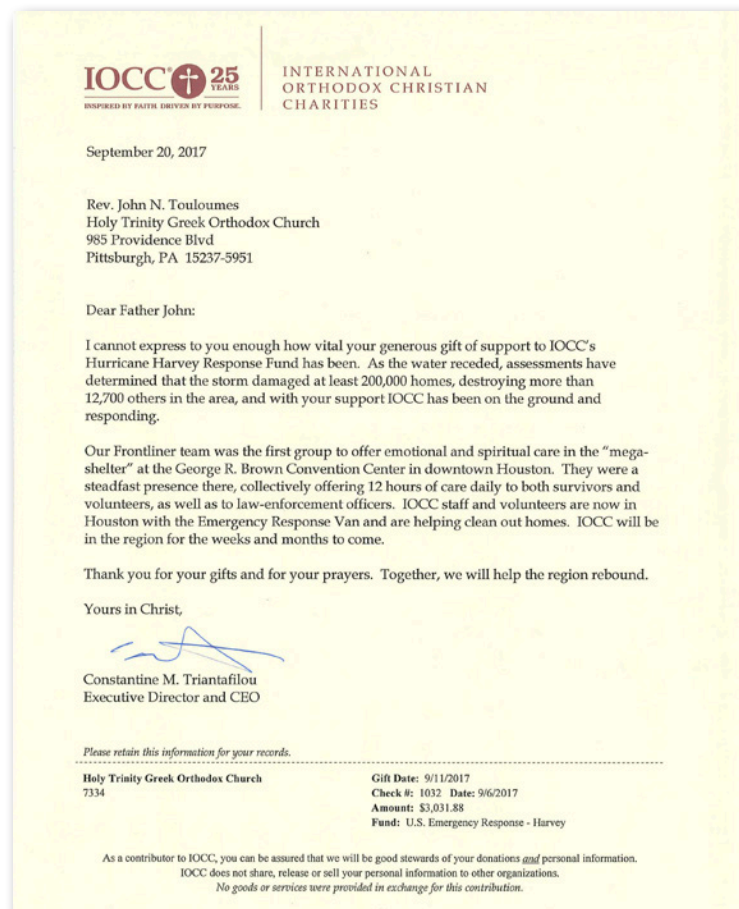
Vasilopita Celebration and Lunch January 7

Holy Trinity Church will hold the annual Vasilopita Celebration on Sunday, January 7. As usual, a special tray will be passed by the Philoptochos at the end of the Liturgy to benefit St. Basil Academy, the young people's philanthropic institution run by the Archdiocese in Garrison, NY. Then, a special new addition this year will be a Vasilopita Luncheon, hosted by the Parish Council in the Grand Room following Divine Liturgy, where the cutting of the community Vasilopita will

take place and a complimentary lunch can be enjoyed by all. Leaders and/or representatives from all parish ministries are asked to be present at the luncheon to receive the Vasilopita on behalf of your ministry. This is also an opportunity for the Council and the Festival Committee to thank all our dedicated volunteers for their sacrificial and valued help for our most-successful-ever Taste of Greece Festival this past year. Thank you for your participation!

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. Never has your house blessed before? This is a great year to start! House Blessing Request information can be found on page 13 and on the back page of this issue. The easiest way to schedule is **online** at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events. Please note and be available for the dates in your area. Rescheduling will only be done for cases of inclement weather.



Just before our 2017 "Taste of Greece" Festival, Hurricane Harvey struck Texas, and we wanted to help. The Parish Council and Festival Committee elected to use the donation jars we normally use for mortgage reduction to instead collect funds to help those in need. Here are thank you letters received from two of the designated charities, IOCC and the Houston Food Bank.

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



Father John Androutsopoulos

A Message for the New Year

"The one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead."

(Philippians 3:13)

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

The old year is behind us; a new year is before us. Some of

us will have to cross the Jordan before the year is ended. The promised land awaits God's children. God is the giver of many wonderful new things. Now, to you and me, God is giving a New Year. We wish each other a Happy New Year, but we must do more than that.

The best admonition for all of us is to repent of our sins, to resolve to be better persons and more faithful Orthodox Christians and to remember that we never can repay Christ for all that He has done for us. What has He done? He went to the Cross, took our place and died in our stead.

The following reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew will help us to become faithful Orthodox Christians:

At that time: Jesus said to His disciples: "Watch out for false prophets; they come to you looking like sheep on the outside, but they are really like wild wolves on the inside. You will know them by the way they act. Thorn bushes do not bear grapes, and briars do not bear figs. A healthy tree bears good fruit, while a poor tree bears bad fruit..A healthy tree cannot bear fruit, and a poor tree cannot bear good fruit. Any tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire. So, then, you will know the false prophets by the way they act, Not every person who calls me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants them to do."

(Matthew 7:15-21)

Who Are The False Prophets?

Jesus warned us against false prophets (wild wolves). St. Paul also warned that "grievous wolves would enter in, not sparing the flock." How can we be sure about their teachings?

- 1) We are to measure them by the two sources of our Faith: the Holy Scripture and Sacred Tradition of our

Church. If their teachings do not measure up to the truths of the Bible and Tradition in every respect, we are to reject these teachers and their doctrines.

- 2) We are to watch out for hypocrites, who show great candor on the exterior, but whose hearts are full of deceit.
- 3) We should beware of heretics, who surround their false teachings with the delusive appearance of truth.
- 4) We must avoid those writers who, under cover of attractive and pleasing language, hide the poison of falsehood and immorality.
- 5) Finally, among the false prophets are: the flesh, the world and the devil.

Why Does Christ Compare Man to Trees?

He does this in order to make known the good and the bad Christians by their good or bad works. Just as a bad tree brings forth bad fruit, so does a bad man bring forth the bad fruits of wrath, envy, hate, lust, etc.; but as a good tree brings forth good fruit, so does a good man yield the good and sweet fruits of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control (Galatians 5:22). A bad tree—in this case a bad Christian—is cut down and cast into everlasting fire. We

should not take our Christianity for granted.

Stewardship Thought

It is well to remember, as we begin a new year, that we cannot get something for nothing. Gambling is getting nothing for something. Also, New Year's resolutions are good, if they are backed up with earnest prayer for help in keeping them.

A salesman tried to sell a farmer a book on how to be a better farmer. The farmer said that he did not want the book, for he already knew how to be a better one than he was. Most of us know how to be much better Christians than we are.

Prayer: "Our Heavenly Father, as we begin a new year, we pray that all bitterness, wrath, malice, anger and evil speaking shall be put away from among us, and that we shall be kind one to another. Help us, Father, to be faithful to You. Amen."

Have a Blessed and Happy New Year!

Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos

Protopresbyter and Internal Missionary



Philoptochos Seniors' Christmas Lunch | Community Life Photo Gallery








The Holy Trinity Church School Ministry
Presents

CHRISTMAS VACATION



The Celebration of the Nativity of
Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
December 17, 2017
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
985 Providence Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA

**Holy Trinity
Church School's
CHRISTMAS VACATION**

Starring
STEFAN BORDIEANU



As
CLARK GRISWOLAKIS

**Holy Trinity
Church School's
CHRISTMAS VACATION**

Starring
Sarah Hulse



As
**Christmas Vacation
Narrator**

**Holy Trinity
Church School's
CHRISTMAS VACATION**

Starring
MELANIE HULSE



As
AUNT BETHANY

Starring
DEMETRI GERMANOS



As
**ST. JOSEPH
&
Fr. Demetri**

Starring
Maritsa Doris



As
Baby Jesus

Starring
**JACKSON FARMAKIS &
MICHAEL ALIZRAY**



As
THE INNKEEPERS

Starring
EMILY ADAMCZYK




As
PANAYIA

Starring
ANTON PEREGANCEV



As
**KING HERROD
&
SCOUT LEADER**

Starring
**CHLOE GERMANOS,
SAM PASSODELIS, &
JEWEL THOMAS**




As
**COUSIN CATHERINE,
ROCKY, & RUBY SUE**

Starring
**ALEX TOMALSKI,
LUKE TOMALSKI, &
MAX GERMANOS**



As
THE BOY SCOUTS

Starring
**ANA BORDIEANU &
LUCI MORRIS**



As
**AUDRY & ELLEN
GRISWOLAKIS**

Starring
**EMILY DUROSKO &
ANGELINA SCUMIS**



As
**MESSANGER ANGEL &
ARCHANGEL GABRIEL**

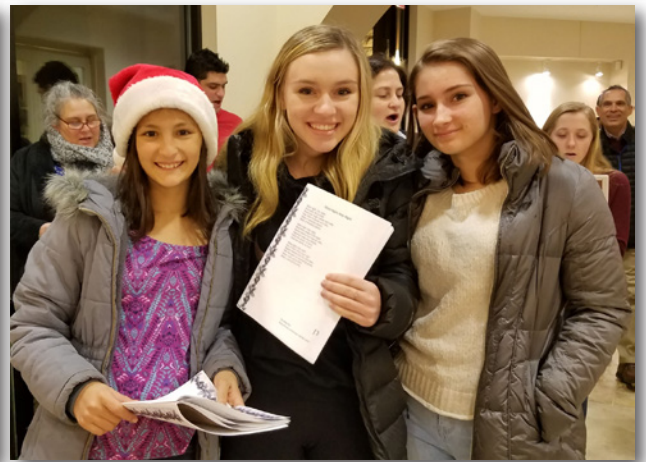
Also Starring

Ekaterina Balouris as Clark's Mother
Katerina Blosuris as Ellex's Mother
Petros Balouris as Rusty and Melchoir
Sophia Mellis as the Messenger
Andrew Mellis as Innkeeper
Dimitri Marsh as Roman Guard
Manoli Pappas as Roman Guard
Niko Marsh as Gaspar
Luke Stephens as Nativity Narrator

Holy Trinity Church School Ministry
2017/2018 Staff

Spiritual Advisor.....	Father John Touloumenos
	Father Raki Bordieanu
Pre-School.....	Doreen Patsis
	Stephanie Gironard
Kindergarten.....	Christina Mackendell
	Jessie Stepanow
First/Second Grade.....	Maria Georgiades
	Alexandra Valliant
Third/Fourth Grade.....	Penny Georgiades
	Christina Zikos
Fifth/Sixth Grade.....	Joanne Germanos
	Maria Dimarzio
Seventh/Eighth Grade.....	Milades Courtantier
	Anthony Balouris
Ninth/Tenth Grade.....	Pavlyna Loukianou Brodians
	Peter Gagianas
Eleventh/Twelfth Grade.....	Pavlyna Becky Touloumenos
	Pavlyna Ellen Seider
St. Spyridon Church School Library.....	Mary-Magdalene Welch
Concert Director.....	Nicole Steiner & "Spero the Orthodox Church Mouse"





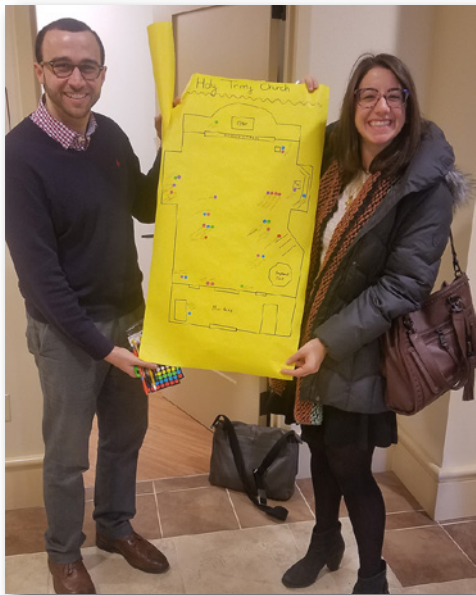
(Above, Left) December 20, 2017: Holy Trinity community members of all ages gathered to sing Christmas Carols to the retired nuns across the street at the Sisters of Divine Providence Convent. This annual event is a highlight of the year for our faithful neighbors, many of whom sing along and know all the words of the carols by heart!



(Right) December, 2017: The Christmas tree in the Holy Trinity Gallery is filled with just some of the many gifts for the needy of FOCUS Pittsburgh Special thanks to all the members of the Holy Trinity family who helped make Christmas a bit brighter for many local families!

(Below) December, 2017: The Holy Trinity Visitation Ministry volunteers prepared Christmas gift baskets for our parishioners who are home-bound or in care facilities, then made personal visits to deliver them, sometimes accompanied by the joyful presence of children from the parish family.





(Above) December 10, 2017: Andrew Abboud and Anna Valliant display their "Worship Map of Young Adults" as part of their work on the Telos Project, a national ministry effort to build young adult participation. Holy Trinity Church has been selected as a Telos Project Host Parish, 1 of 15 nationally.

(Above Right, Right) November 26, 2017: Holy Trinity GOYAns gathered over Thanksgiving weekend on the church lawn to play the annual GOYA Turkey Bowl touch football game.



(Above, Left) November 29, 2017: The Metropolis of Pittsburgh Archons of the Order of Saint Andrew gathered at Holy Trinity Church to celebrate Great Vespers for the Feast of their Patron Saint, Andrew the First-Called Apostle. Brief presentations were offered by Metropolis Archon leaders Peter Papadakos and Dr. Nicholas Loutsion. Specially honored were new inductees for 2017, Harry Athanasiou and Peter Tsudis. Axios! Stay abreast of the work of the Archons at archons.org.

Thank You | 2017 Nativity Flowers Donor List

Many thanks to the following parishioners and friends for sponsoring the beautiful poinsettias for the decoration of the church during the Christmas holidays. May the Lord remember them and those whom they have honored!

DONORS

COMMEMORATIONS

Anonymous.....	For the health of my family (8 plants)
Victor Amurgis.....	In memory of our loving parents, William and Harriet Amurgis (3 plants)
The Athanasiou Family.....	In memory of George Athanasiou
The Athanasiou Family.....	In memory of George Bertos
Anthony & Helen Balouris	For the health of family & friends
Anthony & Helen Balouris	In memory of our family, past community members & friends
Ethel & Lynn Barker	In memory of James, Julia & Areta Kalogeras
Ethel & Lynn Barker	In memory of Emmanuel & Efthalia Geanous
Reggie & Marianne Bonfield	For the health of Helen Chapas
Reggie & Marianne Bonfield	In memory of John & Mary Bonfield
Reggie & Marianne Bonfield	For the health of family & friends
The Chapas and Bonfield Families	In memory of Frank and Anne Chapas
Bill & Sophea Chapas.....	For the health of Helen Chapas
Cynthia Morris Criss.....	In memory of Tom & Dora Morris (2 plants)
Evan & Kelly Danis	In memory of Demetrios & Shea Danis
Evan & Kelly Danis	In memory of John & Sophia Regas
George & Sophia Danis.....	In memory of Demetrios & Shea Danis
George & Sophia Danis.....	In memory of George V. Gatsiopoulos and Vasiliki Gatsiopoulos
George & Sophia Danis.....	In memory of John and Sophia Regas
Helen DeMoss.....	In memory of John DeMoss and his family
Helen DeMoss.....	In memory of Steve and Anthoula Pefanis
Christine Dickos.....	In memory of Dinos Dickos
Frank & Katina Erdeljac.....	In memory of Mike & Theologia Alexiades
Frank & Katina Erdeljac.....	In memory of Mary Alexiades
Tessie Frankos.....	In memory of James Frankos & daughter Demetria Frankos
Connie, Diana and John Fries.....	For the health of family & friends
George & Phyllis Geanopoulos	In memory of Harry & Helen Geanopoulos
George & Phyllis Geanopoulos	In memory of John & Erma Haas
Mark & Karen Georgiadis.....	In memory of Mary & Peter Georgiadis and Don Lorenz and for the health of Marlene Lorenz
Eugenia Graser	In memory of my husband Robert Graser
Eugenia Graser	In memory of my parents Michael & Mary Patsalos
Andrew & Sofia Janis, James and Electra	In memory of Clifford & Athanasia Geanopoulos
Dr. Kristina Johnson and Stella Johnson	In memory of Homer J. Johnson
Dr. Kristina Johnson and Stella Johnson	In memory of Augustina Makris
George & Scarlet Karpakis.....	For the health of John Karpakis
James & Bettina Kermes.....	For the health of family & friends
James & Judith Mermigas and Family.....	In memory of Theodore Mermigas
James & Judith Mermigas and Family.....	For the health of Mary Mermigas
Arlene Metropoulos.....	In memory of my beloved Dean
Mark & Julia Opacic.....	In memory of the Opacic Family
Mark & Julia Opacic.....	In memory of the Pahountis Family
William J. Pagonis.....	In memory of James & Mary Pagonis (2 plants)
Matt & Nancy Palamara.....	For the health of the Palamara family and the Anh family
George & Rhea Pantelakis	In memory of John & Maria Pantelakis and John & Stavroula Scopelitis
The Pantelas Family – Marian, George and Ron.....	For the health of family and friends
Orestes & Arlene Paras.....	In memory of John & Maria Paras and Michael & Diana Paras
Orestes & Arlene Paras.....	In memory of Albert & Rose Russell and Arthur Russell
Parikakis and Fiedler Families.....	In memory of Sophie Parikakis, Danielle Zagnacky, parents, grandparents, family & friends
Angie Roman	In memory of Gus Roman
James F. Sicalias.....	In memory of my mother Bessie Cocheres-Sicalias
Charles Siebott & Irene Karavolos.....	In loving memory of our parents, Steve and Kelly Karavolos
James Steve Statheas	In memory of Stavros & Demetra Statheas
Kirk & Fran Stephen.....	In memory of Peter Podimatis
Kirk & Fran Stephen.....	In memory of Clessen and Viola Stephen
Katina Tanner	In memory of Nicholas Tanner
Mary Magdalene Welsh.....	In memory of my mother, Julia Welsh
George and Linda Zappas	In memory of Paul Zappas
George and Linda Zappas	In memory of Agnes Zappas
George and Linda Zappas	In memory of William Zappas
Dorothea K. Zikos	In memory of Peter J. Zikos
Anthony & Aspasia Zissis.....	In memory of our Parents (2 plants)
Jim Zuck and Family	In memory of Effie Amphrazis Zuck

The Feast of Theophany and the Blessing of Homes and Businesses

"At Your Epiphany, 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.

The priest will offer the blessing service and offer the names of the people present and those contained on the family names list in prayer. As the service concludes, please lead the priest throughout the house to sprinkle the holy water while chanting the hymn of Theophany. He will bring a copy of the service so you can follow along and chant the hymn. 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 Our House and Business 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. It is also a pious way of asking God's blessings on our business and livelihood as good stewards of all His gifts.

2018 House Blessing Schedule

Date	Time	Area	Zip Codes
Mon. Jan. 8	6pm-8pm	South Hills (all areas)	15102, 15216, 1522X, 1524X
Tue. Jan. 9	4pm-7pm	Northside, Perrysville, Bellevue, Westview	15212, 15214, 15202
Mon. Jan. 15	3pm-8pm	Allison Park, McKnight, Ross, McCandless	15101, 15237
Thu. Jan. 18	3pm-8pm	Allison Park, McKnight, Ross, McCandless	15101, 15237
Mon. Jan. 22	4pm-8pm	Gibsonia, Treesdale	15044
Thu. Jan. 25	3pm-8pm	Cranberry, Mars & North	16046, 16066
Mon. Jan. 29	3pm-8pm	Wexford	15090
Tue. Jan. 30	3pm-8pm	Wexford	15090
Mon. Feb. 5	3pm-8pm	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 SUBMIT YOUR REQUEST ONLINE at our website, www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events (PREFERRED), OR BY FORM BEFORE JAN. 5 TO SCHEDULE YOUR HOME. YOU WILL RECEIVE A CALL TO CONFIRM YOUR TIME. THANK YOU!

EASIEST WAY: REQUEST A HOUSE BLESSING ONLINE AT www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events

☑ **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!

Four 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 has now adapted and grown into “Faith and Family WEEKDAYS!” Check it out!

“FAITH AND FAMILY WEEKDAYS” MINISTRIES GUIDE: 2017-2018

DAYS	MINISTRY	SCHEDULE	ABOUT
DAILY	“Prayer Partners” Prayer Support Ministry	Every Day: In your personal prayers	EVERYONE can participate in this vital ministry. On the first Sunday of Jan., Apr., July and Oct., prayer cards are distributed after Liturgy to ask parishioners to exchange names and become Prayer Partners. Pray and be prayed for daily!
MONDAYS 7:00pm	“Journey to Fullness” Faith Growth Ministry	Mondays: Fall and Spring Series Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23; Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27 Apr. 23, 30; May 7, 14, 21; Jun 4, 11	This excellent video teaching series is for everyone who wants to learn more about the “fullness of the faith” found in Orthodox Christianity, whether as inquirers, catechumens or life-long members. Each segment offers an interactive question and answer period. Same series repeated in fall and spring.
TUESDAYS 9:00am	“Hearts of Faith” Women’s Ministry	4th Tuesday Oct.-May Oct. 24, Nov. 28, Dec. 19, Jan. 23, Feb. 27, Mar. 27, Apr. 24, May 22	The Saint Lydia Women’s Fellowship meets for a monthly women’s morning session of conversation with God and each other. The group meets at church at 9:00 am for a 30 minute morning prayer, then gathers in the Fireside Room for an hour of sharing and discussion about the matters of a woman’s heart.
TUESDAYS 7:00pm	“Journey of Marriage” Marriage Prep Ministry	2nd Tuesday Sep.-June Sep. 12, Oct. 19 (*3rd Thu.), Nov. 14, Dec. 12, Jan. 9, Feb. 13, Mar. 13, May 10	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 Worship 7:00pm Study	“Explore the Word” Wednesday Worship & Bible Study Ministry	Wednesdays Oct.-May Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25; Nov. 8, 15; Dec. 6, 13, Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31; Apr. 18, 25; May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Prayerfully read the Bible! In Deuteronomy 11, it says, “Lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.” Each Wednesday, come and till your heart in worship in the Church at 6:30 and then meet at 7:00 the Conference Room for the study of the Book of Romans led by Father Radu Bordeianu.
THURSDAYS 7:00am	“Prayer and Panera” Men’s Ministry	3rd Thursday Sep.-June Sep. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Dec. 21, Jan. 18, Feb. 15, Mar. 15, Apr. 26, May 17, Jun. 21	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. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr. 12, May 10, Jun. 14	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

Stewardship: Investing Faithfully, Giving Back Generously

I am twenty-six years old, and while I will not be retiring anytime soon, retirement is something I think about regularly. When I first started working full-time a few years ago, I made a plan for my retirement and have been very diligent about saving and investing my money. If I want to be able to retire comfortably by the time I am sixty-five, I need to make smart decisions about how I spend and save my money now. Would I rather put my paycheck toward a vacation to Greece, or a shopping spree at the mall, or even an upgrade to the newest iPhone? Of course! But I also recognize that if I want to sustain a comfortable lifestyle ten, twenty, or forty years from now, I need to spend frugally and invest more of my money.

Like with my money, I invest in other aspects of my life. I invest in my work, I invest in my relationships, and I invest in my church. Church stewardship is not just about monetary donations – it is about donating time and talents, too.

I grew up attending Holy Trinity Church, and my parents made sure that my sisters and I were involved with the church from a young age. We attended Sunday School and Greek School, played in basketball tournaments all over Pennsylvania and Ohio, rolled what felt like millions of grape leaves for the festival, and spent summers attending Camp Nazareth as both campers and counselors. Our church and our parishioners invested in me as a kid and shaped me into the person I am today. Because of our church, I have learned how to perfectly stir béchamel sauce for moussaka without burning it. Because of our church, I have my close group of friends who really are more like family. Because of our church, I continue to grow stronger in my faith.

Our church has given me all of this and more, so I always ask myself, "How can I give back?" I have my monthly donation to the church set up through online giving so it is automatically taken out of my bank account. But again – stewardship is not just about monetary donations.

I decided to start teaching Sunday School a few years ago for the first and second grade class. My background is not

education or youth ministry; I work for a bank. Teaching a Sunday School class is very different from my typical day, but it is something that I look forward to every week. Before each Sunday, my co-teacher and I plan our lesson and try to make it as fun and engaging as we can. We have had the kids in our class do obstacle courses, race against each other to finish different word puzzles, and act out short plays.



The work it takes to create our lessons is worth the results. It is satisfying to hear the kids saying the Jesus prayer with their prayer rope bracelets and telling us how they used it when they got upset at school or were frustrated during a soccer game. I am so impressed with how many kids remember stories about different disciples or Jesus' miracles from past lessons when we ask them questions and test their memories. Even seeing the friendships forming between the kids over the weeks is reminiscent of when I was in Sunday School with my friends.

While I am giving back to the church and donating my time and talents, I still benefit. Teaching Church School holds me accountable to being fully present every service. Am I really listening to what the Gospel reading is telling us this week? Do I fully understand the lesson? Why are we singing a different hymn this week? Even when I give back to the church, it still finds a way to give back to me and help me continue to grow in my faith.

When you think about planning for your retirement, or how you want to invest your money, or what skills you have that could benefit the church, ask yourself – "How can I give back?" Through your time and talents, we can invest in our church for not just

future generations, but for ourselves as well.

*Alexandra Valliant
Holy Trinity Stewardship Committee Member*

PLEDGE

Submit your 2018 "One Holy Trinity" Stewardship Pledge Card today!



GIVE

Support the Church with your donations in person or online!



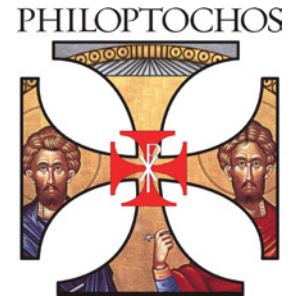
SERVE

Find your place in the ministries of the Church and serve with joy!

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

Philanthropy Offered by Holy Trinity Philoptochos in 2017

Through the support of Holy Trinity's parishioners, our Ladies Philoptochos Society was blessed in 2017 to donate \$22,984 to the worthy causes and organizations listed below. In addition to these monetary donations, the Ladies supported more than 20 families in need at both Pascha and Christmas with donations of grocery store gift cards. The Ladies also sponsored the annual Christmas Party for the seniors of our parish, which is free to the attendees. The Philoptochos provided gift bags for shut-ins that were delivered by Fr. John during the holidays. The weekly Sunday Coffee Hour was also organized & sponsored by the Philoptochos. The Ladies would like to thank all of the parishioners that have made this philanthropy possible through their generous support of the Philoptochos' fundraisers throughout the year. God bless all of you!



PHILOPTOCHOS NATIONAL MINISTRIES

- Autism Assistance Fund
- Cancer Fund
- Ecumenical Patriarchate
- Emergency Fund
- General medical fund
- Holy Cross / Hellenic College
- IOCC
- National Sisterhood of Presbyteres
- Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF)
- Orthodox Christian Missions (OCM)
- Retired Clergy / Widowed Presbyteres Benevolent Fund
- Social Services
- St. Basil's Academy
- St. Photios Shrine
- UNICEF

TOTAL NATIONAL DONATIONS..... \$3,695

METROPOLIS PHILOPTOCHOS DONATIONS

- Emergency Fund
- Good Samaritan Fund
- Metropolis Building Fund
- Metropolis of Pittsburgh Summer Camp
- Nuns of St. Elias
- Our Seminarians

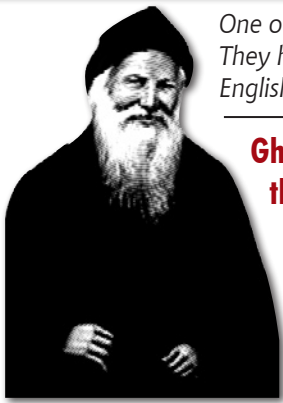
- Social Services Special Care Fund
- Youth Activities

TOTAL METROPOLIS DONATIONS..... \$2,830

LOCAL DONATIONS

- Allegheny Valley School
- Faith Restorations Inc. (Food Bank)
- FOCUS – Pittsburgh (Food Bank & Backpack Program)
- Holy Trinity Capital Campaign
- Holy Trinity Cemetery Fund
- IOCC
- KDKA Turkey Fund
- Leukemia Society
- Mars Youth Home
- Nativity of the Theotokos Monastery
- North Hills Community Outreach (Food Bank & Christmas Party at Holy Trinity)
- North Hills Food Bank
- North Hills Foundation (Backpack Initiative)
- Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration
- Salvation Army
- Shaler Area Middle School (Backpack Initiative)
- USO
- Women's Center & Shelter of Pittsburgh
- Women's Shelter of Beaver County

TOTAL LOCAL DONATIONS \$16,185



St. Porphyrios

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 inspired by their wisdom.

Gheronda, how can we share love in the unselfish way Christ asks?

Just as a hermit, who is seen by no one, benefits the world because the mystical waves of his prayers influence people and transmit the Holy Spirit into the world, so you, too, should scatter your love, without expecting anything in return—with love, patience

and a smile.

Love needs to be sincere. And only the love of God is sincere love. To a person whom we find tiresome and troublesome, love needs to be offered in a subtle manner without the person being aware that we are striving to love him. It shouldn't be given much outward expression, because then the person will react. Silence saves us from all evils. Restraint of the tongue is a great thing. In a mystical way silence radiates out to our neighbor. Let me tell you a story.

A nun who was very concerned that life in her monastery should be perfectly ordered came to her spiritual father in exasperation and said: "Sister so-and-so is disrupting the whole monastery with her problems and her character. We simply can't endure her."

Her elder replied: "You are worse than she is."

To begin with the nun was taken aback and protested, but after the elder explained things to her, she understood what he meant and was very pleased. What her elder said was, "The evil spirit that takes hold of the other nun and causes her to behave badly takes hold of you too, ever though you think you are in a better state, and it makes a mockery of you both. The other nun gets into the state she does without wishing to, but you, with your over-reaction and lack of love, do exactly the same. In that way you do no good to your sister and you yourself are harmed."

What should we do when people do not share that love back?

When we see that the people around us have no love for God we are distressed. But with our distress, we achieve nothing at all. The secret is our prayer and our devotion to God so that His grace may act. We, with our love, with our fervent desire for the love of God, will attract grace so that it washes over those around us and awakens them to divine love. Or rather God will send His love and will rouse them all. What we are unable to do, His grace will achieve. With our prayers we will make all worthy of God's love.

Gheronda, how does the love we share in this life affect our life in the world to come?

Love towards Christ is without limits, and the same is true of love towards our neighbour. It should radiate everywhere, to the ends of the earth, to every single person. Love is above everything. I'll give you an example:

There was a hermit with two monks in obedience. He did his utmost to foster their spiritual development and to make them good. He was unsure, however, whether they were really making any progress in the spiritual life and whether they were ready for the Kingdom of God. He looked for some sign from God about this, but he received no answer.

One day there was going to be vigil service in the church of another hermitage that was many hours walk away from his own. They would have to cross the desert. He sent off his two monks early in the morning so that they could help prepare the church and he planned to follow later in the afternoon. The monks had covered some considerable distance when suddenly they heard a groaning noise. A man was lying badly injured and was crying out for assistance.

"Take me with you, please," he implored. "Here in the desert no one else is going to pass by and who will help me? There are two of you. Lift me up and take me to the nearest village."

"There's no way we can do that," they replied. "We're in a hurry to go to a vigil and we've got instructions to prepare everything."

"Please take me with you! If you leave me, I'll die. I'll be eaten by the wild beasts."

"We can't do it. We've got to do what we've been told to." And they walked on.

In the afternoon the elder set out along the same road to go to the vigil. He came to the spot where the injured man was lying. He saw him and went up to him and said,

"What's happened to you, good man of God? How long have you been lying here? Did no one see you?"

"Two monks passed by in the morning and I asked them to help me, but they were in a hurry to go to the vigil."

"Don't worry: I'll carry you along," said the elder.

"You won't be able to," said the injured man. "You're an old man and there is no way that you'll be able to lift me up."

"Not at all, you'll see I'll manage. I can't leave you here. I'll bend down and you will grab hold of me and I'll carry you along until we get to the nearest village. A little today and a little tomorrow, but I'll get you there."

With great difficulty he hoisted the man onto his back and set off. Walking in the sand with such a great weight was nearly impossible. Sweat was pouring from him in rivers. He thought to himself, "It will take three days, but I'll get there."

As he continued on his way, however, he felt his burden getting lighter and lighter until he felt that he was carrying nothing at all.

He turned round to see what was happening and was astonished to see an angel on his back.

The angel said to him, "God sent me to inform you that your two monks are not worthy of the Kingdom of God because they don't have love."

Excerpted from "Wounded by Love: The Life and Wisdom of Elder Porphyrios" Uncut Mountain Press, 2005



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2018 Holy Trinity House/Business Blessing Request Form



Name	
Address	
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Daytime phone:	Evening phone:
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 annual Theophany blessing for your family, home or business, please request a visit before January 5 either ONLINE or by returning this form. Your date and time will be confirmed by the day before your visit.

EASIER & FASTER: REQUEST ONLINE AT www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please be available during the time range indicated on the schedule.
 Re-scheduling will only be done in cases of inclement weather. Thanks!

Scripture of the Month: "The water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (Jn 4.14)