



# THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

MARCH 2020 VOLUME 28 • ISSUE 3

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**IMPORTANT: MAY 5 6:30PM  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOTICE  
AND AGENDA ENCLOSED**

## QUICK NEWS



Our Boys Senior Team from the recent HT Basketball Tournament. 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 6-8 or browse through our thousands of pictures in the online Photo Gallery at [photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org).

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Our Vision: "Faith. Family. Community."

## The Annunciation to the Theotokos: March 25

*Icon from Stavronikita Monastery, Mount Athos. By Theophanes the Cretan, 1546 AD*



**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 ([pittsburgh.goarch.org](http://pittsburgh.goarch.org)) and Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America ([www.goarch.org](http://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

### 2020 Parish Council

George Danis, President

Alvin Backeris Anthony Balouris

Ashley Bournias George Dickos

Tom Germanos Karen Georgiadis

Richard Paese Michael Passodelis

Dean Passodelis Stephen Stearns

Gerri Valliant Jeanne Willow

### Ministries

Please visit the Holy Trinity website at [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://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."**



Create in me a clean heart,  
O God, and renew a right  
spirit within me.

Psalm 50[51]:10

My beloved Holy Trinity family,

I remember well the story my mother used to tell about her own mother, my Yiayia, and the heart problems she had back in the 1950's. She had a blockage that required an operation to give her a "clean heart," and as a result she was the first patient to receive open heart surgery at the Harrisburg Hospital. By God's grace, the operation was successful and she went on to live another 30 years, faithfully serving her family, her Church and her God.

Medical procedures have come a long way since then, including heart transplants and

even heart procedures to save babies still in their mother's womb. In each case, there is a disease or condition present that endangers the heart and, thereby, the life of the patient. Doctors do their best to correct the condition and give the one who is suffering a "clean heart."

The Orthodox Christian Church has always had a great appreciation for such skills, when used within the teachings of the Faith. Even back as far as the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Saint Basil wrote this about the correct use of medicine: "God, the Governor of life, has made us the gift of medicine, the skill to remove what is superfluous and to supply what is lacking, and in this way to be a symbol of the art of healing our souls."

Importantly, besides appreciating the gift of physical healing, this great hierarch and theologian says it gives us a good way to understand the importance of spiritual healing. "The Christian, in

"We must attend to our heart and cultivate it, for the hidden man of the heart is very precious in the sight of God. May God give us such a heart, a deep heart that is capable of divine and spiritual sensation!"

Father Zacharias of Essex  
*Remember Thy First Love*

accepting their healing, knows how they reveal the glory of God and sees in them a mirror of the healing that is needed by the soul." And there is no better place to go for the healing of our heart and soul than the Church, which offers comfort, guidance and cleansing by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

The heart plays crucial roles in both our physical and spiritual lives. Author Al Rossi writes, "The human heart is the entrance to an inner chapel where we can hear, with all creation, praise to God. The heart is the entrance to love, to the place of healing balm." So the heart and the healing and cleansing of it are the focus of our Lent 2020 theme, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," taken from Psalm 50 [51], a penitential, cleansing and restorative written by King David and used at many of our worship services.

I encourage each of us to engage in the teachings, sermons, presentations, services and prayers this Lent that will focus on that topic. Perhaps your spiritual heart pains you already, or maybe you are not even aware of the hidden conditions that may be afflicting it. Either way, treatment, therapy and even prevention are all in the heart-healing toolkit the Church has been using for two-thousand years, including Holy Confession, Communion, anointing, prayers, fasting and more. May we all indeed have "heart healthy" Lent! *Kali metanoia!*

Paternally yours in Christ,

# LENT: A JOURNEY INTO YOUR OWN HEART

## CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART, O GOD

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 50[51]:10)

### WORSHIP LIFE

#### Saturdays of Souls .....March 7

At the start of Lent the Church offers the "Saturdays of the Souls" to commemorate those who have fallen sleep in the Lord. Services are held at the Saint George Chapel located at Holy Trinity Cemetery. Please attend the last one this season on March 7, submit names for commemoration of your departed loved ones and bring kollyva (memorial wheat) to offer in their memory.

### LENTEN SERVICES & INFORMATION

#### Schedules of Lenten Services

This issue of The Herald contains a complete schedule of services for Lent. A Holy Week schedule will be included in the April issue. Please post them in a conspicuous place in your home. Make a family plan and circle the services you are able to attend and place them on your schedule and on your phone's calendar! As the hymn from the Book of Psalms tells us during the Great Compline service, "God is with us." Lent provides us a special time to be with Him. See you there!

#### Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers at Holy Trinity.....March 8

The Holy Trinity community has the honor of hosting the Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh's annual Sunday of Orthodoxy Service and Celebration this year on Sunday, March 8, at 4:30pm. We are honored to have as the celebrant and homilist His Grace Bishop JOHN of the Diocese of Worcester and New England of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese. The service will feature clergy from Orthodox jurisdictions, the annual Procession of the Holy Icons and a Pan-Orthodox Choir singing the hymns of the service under the direction of Fr. Tom Soroka. Following the service, Lenten refreshments will be served during fellowship time. Come and celebrate Orthodoxy in Pittsburgh! "This is the Faith of the Apostles. This is the Faith of the Fathers. This is the Faith of the Orthodox. This is the Faith which has established the universe."

#### GOYA Lenten Soup Sales.....March 8-April 12

The GOYA is once again offering its very popular Lenten soup sales during the Sundays of Lent. Among the many good reasons to buy some to take home are that they are strict Lenten recipes, they provide fund-raising support for our

GOYA ministry ... plus they taste great and they are good for you! Please visit the Lenten Soup Sales table in Gallery during Coffee Hour each week! Thank you for supporting our youth as you strive to maintain and grow your spiritual discipline of fasting during Lent!

#### Lenten Coffee Hour Reminder ..... Through Pascha

Please keep in mind that starting March 2 and throughout Lent our Coffee Hours following the Divine Liturgy observe the Orthodox Lenten fasting schedule. Anyone sponsoring a memorial coffee hour or providing Church School snacks is asked to take care that non-meat and non-dairy items are provided. The Philoptochos and the Church School can provide a list of suggestions for good alternatives. Thank you for helping our community grow in this proper and helpful Orthodox spiritual practice and discipline.

#### Upcoming Lenten Dates .....March-April

- Pure Monday (Lent begins) ..... Mar 2
- Sunday of Orthodoxy ..... Mar 8
- Godparent Sunday/Lenten Luncheon ..... Mar 22
- Saturday of Lazarus/Palm Cross/Candle prep ..... Apr 11
- Palm Sunday ..... Apr 12
- Holy Week ..... Apr 13-18
- Holy Friday (schedule off work & school) ..... Apr 17
- The Great and Holy Pascha ..... Apr 19

### YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

#### GOYA Sign-Ups .....March 1

GOYA will be holding sign-ups for spring activities on Sunday, March 1 following Church School class.

#### Ten Minutes of HOPE and JOY .....Mar. 15

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 they will be addressed during a combined "Ten Minutes of HOPE" and "Ten Minutes of JOY" on March 15.

#### GOYA Thank You Notes .....March 8

The teens of GOYA will gather following Church School on

For the latest updates and schedule of parish events, visit [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar)



Sunday, March 8, to write thank you notes to those who supported the recent basketball tournament. All GOYAns are asked to attend and participate.

### Metropolis GOYA Spring Retreat..... March 20-22

The Metropolis GOYA Spring Retreat will be held Friday, March 20-Sunday, March 22, at Camp Nazareth. The theme for the weekend is "Real World, Real You" and the guest speaker is Father Michael Gavrillos. HT teens should register now at [pittsburgh.goarch.org](http://pittsburgh.goarch.org). To receive the Holy Trinity parish discount, be sure to use the code "GSHHT" at the time of registration.

### GOYA Meeting .....March 29

GOYA will hold its monthly meeting following Church School classes on Sunday, March 29. All teens are invited.

## PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS

### Philoptochos Meeting.....March 15

The March Philoptochos will be held on Sunday, March 15, 2020 in the Fireside Room. All members are invited.

### 2020 Philoptochos Stewardship

The deadline for current Philoptochos members to renew their memberships for 2020 is here! Suggested annual stewardship donation is \$30.00. Checks should be made payable to "Holy Trinity Omonia." Please return your Stewardship form and your Stewardship donation to Pam Bolkovac, Membership chairperson, or mail to Holy Trinity Philoptochos, Attn: Membership, 985 Providence Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237. Copies of the form can be found in the January edition of the Herald and at the church office window. If you aren't a member, we would love for you to join us!

## COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS

### Bereavement Ministry Meeting .....March 3

Our new Bereavement Support Ministry Team will provide spiritual care to our parishioners and their extended family & friends in time of grief and loss. If you have questions about grief and want to learn and share conversation, then please attend our next Bereavement Support Group session on Tuesday, March 3, in the Conference Room. Light refreshments and relaxed fellowship begin at 6:30 p.m. for those who choose. Then 7:00-8:30 p.m. is group learning and sharing with our Bereavement facilitators. Feel free to bring a family member and/or friend. Contact Amy Armanious, Visitation Ministry Coordinator with any questions at email [Visitation@holytrinitypggh.org](mailto:Visitation@holytrinitypggh.org).

### Reminder for Church Facilities: Reservations Required!

If your ministry or committee is planning a meeting or activity to be held at the church, please note that reservations for rooms and event spaces are required. Please contact Office Administrator, Mary Portellos (412-366-8700 or [office@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:office@HolyTrinityPgh.org)). Your cooperation helps ensure every group that needs a place has one. Thank you!

### New "Safety And Security Ministry" Announces Security

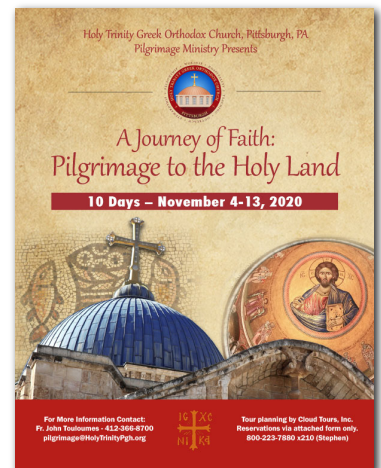
### Presence Outside Sunday Services Starting March 15

A new "Safety and Security Ministry" was recently formed by the Parish Council to assess the safety and security needs of our church and to develop a comprehensive church security plan, including the need for security presence on Sunday mornings. This is a practice being adopted by many churches today. After reviewing several proposals from security experts in the area, the ministry team has decided to employ the Town of McCandless Police and Fire Departments to provide an extra layer of security each Sunday morning and during other special church services. Beginning on Sunday, March 15th, you will see a uniformed police officer and his patrol car outside our church building. He is there strictly as an added level of precaution and a visible sign that Holy Trinity Church takes security seriously. Please note that we have not received any reports of a threat or concern whatsoever. We are simply being proactive and responsible for the safety of the entire Holy Trinity family. Additional measures currently under discussion are upgrading our security and alert systems and developing safety evacuation procedures involving all parishioners. More information about the work of this new ministry team will be available as progress continues. It is our goal to keep the parish informed, and to remind us all that no matter how we prepare, ultimately we have only One True Shepherd and Guardian of the flock: "The Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you" (2 Thess 3.3).



### Pilgrimage to the Holy Land Reservations Available

The Holy Trinity Pilgrimage Ministry has opened reservations for its 2020 trip - "A Journey of Faith: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land." The 10-day trip runs from November 4-13 and will feature visits to the Sea of Galilee, the River Jordan, Mount Tabor, Cana, Nazareth, Bethlehem and more. Sites include the Holy Sepulcher where Jesus was buried and rose from the dead, the Tomb of Lazarus, the Church of the Annunciation, the Church of the Nativity, the Tomb of the Theotokos and the Monastery of Saint Savas. The trip includes first-class accommodations and a professional English-speaking Greek Orthodox guide. Reservation forms are available from the Church Office and may only be made by sending the reservation form with deposit to the agency indicated on the form. Early registration is open now for Holy Trinity parishioners and families. Registration for all others will be available after April 1 on space available basis, so get your reservation form in now!





**ENGAGE YOUR SPIRIT BETWEEN SUNDAYS! SEE YOU THIS WEEK!**

# FAITH AND Family WEEKDAYS

AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Sometimes once a week is just not enough to satisfy your yearning for what really matters in life, answers on how to face daily challenges and simply a deeper experience of your faith. “Faith and Family Weekdays” is your opportunity to live your life in the Church between Sundays! From worship to fellowship to learning to sharing to serving, these faith and growth experiences provide rewarding points of encounter with your Church and Church family. Check it out this week and every week! There is something for you!

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

## “FAITH AND FAMILY WEEKDAYS” MINISTRIES GUIDE: SPRING/LENT 2020

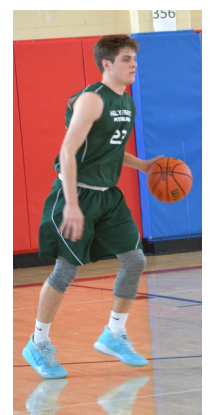
DAYS	MINISTRY	SCHEDULE	ABOUT
<b>DAILY</b>	<b>“Prayer Partners”</b> Prayer Support Ministry	<b>Every Day:</b> <b>In your personal prayers</b>	EVERYONE can participate in this vital ministry. On the first Sunday of Jan., Apr., July and Oct., prayer cards are distributed after Liturgy to ask parishioners to exchange names and become Prayer Partners. Pray and be prayed for daily!
<b>MONDAYS</b> 8:00pm until 4/6 then 7:00pm from 4/27-5/11	<b>“Journey to Fullness”</b> Introductory Series on the Orthodox Faith	<b>Mondays:</b> <b>Spring Series</b> 8:00pm following Compline on Mar 9, 16, 23, 30 & Apr. 6. 7:00pm on Apr. 27 & May 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 live question and answer period with Father John.
<b>FIRST &amp; THIRD TUESDAY</b> <b>9:30am</b>	<b>“Women’s Book Club”</b> Reading and Discussion	<b>1st &amp; 3rd Tuesday</b> <b>Oct.-May</b> Feb. 4, 18; Mar. 3, 17 Apr. 7	This new “Women’s Books Club” ministry takes a “for women, by women” approach to providing time for prayer, fellowship and discussion that is geared toward the lives and hearts of women. The group will be studying “The Screwtape Letters” by C. S. Lewis to start. All women are welcome.
<b>WEDNESDAYS</b> <b>LENTEN EDITION:</b> 6:30pm Liturgy 7:45 Dinner & Presentation	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, Lenten Dinner & Lenten Presentations  <b>2020 Theme:</b> <b>“Create in me a clean heart, O God.”</b> (Psalm 50[51]:10)	<b>Wednesdays</b> <b>During Lent:</b> <b>Mar. 4, 18;</b> <b>Apr. 1, 8</b>  (Note: No sessions on Mar. 11 for Metropolis Clergy Retreat & on Mar 25 for Annunciation	<b>LENT 2019 PRESENTATIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Mar. 4:</b> Lenten Q&amp;A with Fr. John &amp; Fr. Radu</li> <li><b>Mar. 18:</b> “Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God” by Mother Seraphima of the Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Ellwood City</li> <li><b>Apr. 1:</b> Pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain - Mount Athos team presentation</li> <li><b>Apr. 8:</b> Movie Night returns - “The Life of Saint Paisios”</li> </ul>
<b>WEDNESDAYS</b> 6:30pm Worship 7:00pm Study	<b>“Explore the Word”</b> Worship and Bible Study Ministry	<b>Wednesdays:</b> <b>Resumes after Pascha</b> Apr 29, May 6, 13, 20, 27	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 open your heart in prayer in the Church and then meet in the Conference Room for the Bible study led by Father Radu Bordeianu.
<b>THIRD THURSDAY</b> <b>7:00am</b>	<b>“Prayer and Panera”</b> Men’s Ministry	<b>3rd Thursday:</b> <b>Sep.-Apr.</b> Feb. 20, Mar. 19, May 14	The Saint Nikodemus 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.
<b>THIRD THURSDAY</b> <b>6:30pm</b> St. George Chapel	<b>“Monthly Paraclesis Service”</b> Worship	<b>3rd Thursday:</b> <b>Oct.-May</b> Apr. 30 (St. Paisios) May 21 (Theotokos)	The Paraclesis, also known as the Service of Supplication, is offered monthly at St. George Chapel. It contains hymns and prayers asking the Lord for guidance, personal strength, and healing. The most popular form invokes the prayers of the Holy Theotokos. We will alternate that service with two others, one for St. Nektarios and the other for St. Paisios.

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





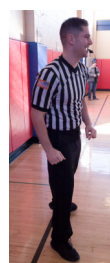






# Community Life Photo Journal | HT GOYA 2020 Basketball Tournament

**The Home Teams:** These tournaments would not be possible without the real home team: our awesome Holy Trinity people who love and support the youth of the Church! Thank you to all who volunteered, sponsored, encouraged and offered everything needed to make this event a success and an offering of love! God bless you all!



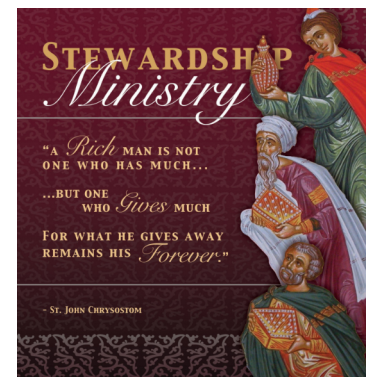


Thank you to the following faithful stewards who have submitted their pledge cards for the 2020 pledge year. Please join them in their support for the ministries of Holy Trinity and complete your "One Holy Trinity" 2020 pledge commitment today! Remember, a signed pledge card is required as part of maintaining your membership in good standing at Holy Trinity Church each year.

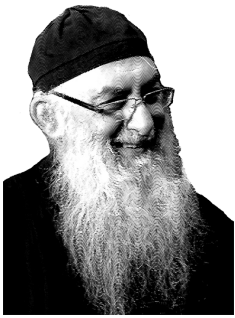
Rev. Fr. & Pres John N. Touloumes	Mrs Fedra Dedousis	Mr. & Mrs. Doug Lupnacca	Mr. Christian Petredis
Rev. Fr. & Pres. Radu Bordeianu	Mrs. Helen DeMoss	Mr. & Mrs. John Komninos	Mr. & Mrs. John S. Petropoulos
Rev. Fr. Demetrios Carellas	Mr. & Mrs. George Dickos	Mrs Penelope Komninos	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph P. Phaturos
Rev. Fr. & Pres. George Daskalakis	Mrs. Christine Dickos	Mr Louis J. Kort	Mr & Mrs John H. Phillips
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Mr. & Mrs. Mark Adamczyk	Mr & Mrs Frank Erdeljac	Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Kratsas	Ms. Christine Pusateri
Mr & Mrs Victor Amurgis	Dennis Bossick & Penny	Mr & Mrs Michael Kritiotis	Mr & Mrs Stephen Roman
Ms. Georgiana Anargyros	Fakles-Bossick	Mr. & Mrs. James Kukunas	Ms Katherine R. Warren
Mrs Beatrice Andromalos	Mr. & Mrs. Christian Farmakis	Mr. Stephen Kukunas	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sarandou
Mr Michael Andromalos-Dale	Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Ferrari	Mr. James L. Lakes	Dr & Mrs Dean Scoumis
Presvytera Ethel Androustopoulos	Mr & Mrs William Fiedler	Mrs Canella Lalikos	Mr. Vasilios Scoumis
Drs. Alexander & Katherine	Mrs. Carol Fiffas	Mr. & Mrs. Philip LeDuc	Presvytera Eileen Sedor
Anetakis	Mr. & Mrs. Brian Fitzpatrick	Antonia and David Lesser	Mr & Mrs Emmanuel Sideris
Mr. and Mrs. H. William Areheart	Mr & Mrs Andreas Fournaridis	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Loomis	Mr. & Mrs. Craig Steiner
Mr & Mrs Mark Armanious	Mr. Andrew Fournaridis & Ms.	Mr & Mrs Nicholas Loomis	Dr & Mrs Samuel Stepanow
Mrs. Desi Anthou Austin	Anna Mamo	Mr. Curtis B. Magnuson	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Stewart
Mr & Mrs Alvin Backeris	Mr. & Mrs. John Franciscus	Mr & Mrs David Majcher	Mr & Mrs Jon Stipanovich
Dr & Mrs Christ A. Balouris	Mrs Tessie Frankos	James and Trude Mancini	Mrs Katina G. Tanner
Dr & Mrs Constantine A. Balouris	Miss Diana Fries	Mrs. Despina Manias	Mr & Mrs Nicholas Terezis
Mr Anthony Balouris	Mrs Constance Fries	Elizabeth Manis Stiger	Mr & Mrs James Thomas
Mr & Mrs James T. Balouris	Mr. & Mrs. Josh Skrba	Mr & Mrs Nicholas Manis	Mrs Georgia Touloumes
Mr. Paul Balouris	Mr & Mrs Markos Gambieris	Mr & Mrs Gregory Manis	Mr. George Triantafillos
Mr & Mrs. Chris T. Balouris	Mr. & Mrs. George Geanopoulos	Mr & Mrs N. Jeffrey Mason	Athanasios Tsiris and Bryanna
Lynn and Ethel Barker	Mr and Mrs Troy Geanopulos	Mr & Mrs John McCann	Ford
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Barron	Ms. Efthalia Geanous	Mr & Mrs Marc McMullen	Ms. Eleni Valliant
Mrs Georgia Beckas Miller	Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Georgallis	Mr. & Mrs. George Mellis	Mr & Mrs Gerri Valliant
Mr & Mrs John Beckas	Dr. and Mrs. Mark Georgiadis	Mrs. Milita Mellis	Mrs Anna Vozos
Ms. Constance Bistolas-Walters	Mr & Mrs Gus Georgiadis	Mr. & Mrs. James Mermigas	Joseph and Christina Waters
Mr. Michael J. Bober Jr.	Mr & Mrs Thomas Germanos	Mrs. Mary Mermigas	Mrs Elaine Weaver
Mrs. Athena Bober	Mrs Lois R Germanos	Mrs. Arlene Metropulos	Miss Mary-Magdalene Welsh
Mr. Todd Bogdanovich	Mr. & Mrs. Spiros Giannoutsos	Christine Metropulos and	Mr & Mrs Eric White
Ms. Pamela M. Bolkovac	Mr. & Mrs. Jason Gidas	Dave Steiner	Mr & Mrs Daniel Willow
Dr & Mrs Reggie Bonfield	Mr & Mrs Peter Glyptis	Mr & Mrs Meno Mitaras	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Zagnacky
Mr. Jonathan Bonfield	Mrs Eugenia Graser	Mr. Gregory Morris	Mr. & Mrs. George Zappas
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Bounos	Miss Pennie Hareras	Mr Stanley Morris	Mr & Mrs Anthony Zissis
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Bournias	Mrs Voula Hareras	Mr & Mrs Mark Opacic	Ms Anna Zissis
Mr & Mrs James Buldas	Mr. & Mrs. John Anthony Hastings	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Paese	Mr & Mrs Louis Zozos
Alexandra and Anthony Cameron	Mr. & Mrs. Charles Henigin	Gen. & Mrs. William Pagonis	
Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Caromano	Mrs. Tina Houmis Connors	Mr & Mrs William Pagonis	
Mr. Peter J. Castellano	Mr. & Mrs. George Hulse	Mr & Mrs Matthew Palamara	
Mr. & Mrs. Doug Cervenak	Dr. Kristina Johnson	Ms. Thespina Palka	
Mr & Mrs Charles Chapas	Mrs Stella Johnson	Mrs. Veroniki Panagiotou	
Mr & Mrs James Chapas	Mr. Gus Kalaris	Mr. & Mrs. George Pandelios	
Mr Thomas Chapas	Mr. & Mrs. Evangelo Kaparakos	Mr Michael Panos	
Mr & Mrs William Chapas	Miss Voula Kapnisis	Mr & Mrs Peter Panos	
Mr. John Clayton	Mrs Alice Kapnisis	Mr & Mrs George Pantelakis	
Ms. Sherry Clayton	Dr. & Mrs. Gregory Karabin	Ms. Loukia Papatheodorou	
Mrs. Elenie Cocheres	Mrs. Irene Karavolos	Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Pappis	
Mr. & Mrs. Steven E. Cole	Mr. & Mrs. George Karpakis	Mr & Mrs Orestes Paras	
Mrs Afrodite Condos	Mr. & Mrs. Brian Kennedy	Mr Eleftherios Parikakis	
Mrs. Dorothy A. Cucuras	Mr & Mrs James Kermes	Mr & Mrs Michael Passodelis	
Mr & Mrs George Danis	Mr & Mrs Gus Kilantonis	Mr & Mrs George Pastor	
Mr. & Mrs. Evan Danis	Mr. Lazarus Kirifides	Mr. James J. Patsilevas	
Mrs Angeline Romanias Davis	Mr. & Mrs. Jonathan Kohan	Mrs. Anna Patsilevas	
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Dedousis	Mr. and Mrs. James Kolovos	Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Petredis	

**To God be the Glory!**

**If your name is not on this list, please submit it today! Thank you, good stewards!**



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 inspired by their wisdom, formatted in a question-and-answer interview approach.



**Archimandrite  
Zacharias of Essex**

### **Gheronda, how does giving thanks bless us?**

St. Barsanuphius says that thanking God makes up for our shortcomings and intercedes before God for our weaknesses. If we give ourselves over to the spirit of thanksgiving, God showers upon us even greater blessings, inspiring us to ever-increasing fervor. And there comes a point when we see God's providence everywhere we look. We will thank Him for every breath of air, as we say in one of the prayers during the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. The spirit of thanksgiving also leads man to repentance, because he senses that his fallenness stops him from offering such gratitude as is worthy of God.

### **And this spirit of thanks brings us closed to the Saints too?**

We benefit from the prayers and intercessions of the Saints for the whole world whenever we give thanks to God for all the gifts we have been granted. And the same thing happens when we thank Him for His benefits towards all men, at all times and in all places. It is for the benefit of all that God bestows His gifts upon us, and this is so especially with respect to His spiritual gifts to His Saints and, even more especially, those to His Most Holy Mother.

When we thank Him for them, it is like celebrating our own liturgy before God, similar to the Divine Liturgy. Thanking God generally broadens our heart, and thanking Him for His gifts to our brethren makes them ours so that, in a mysterious way, we are spiritually enriched. As the Apostle [Paul] affirms, “All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.” Not only does a spirit of gratitude conquer the ugly passion of jealousy, it also enriches us with the gifts of our brethren, and God is glorified.

### **How does giving thanks bring us into a better relationship with others around us?**

Whenever we stand before God in prayer we should carry within our hearts our whole family or community, and each of its members in particular: if there are forty of us, forty people should be present in my heart. The Lord enjoins us to be united as one man by His Spirit, that there be no division among us. And if we all have this in mind and live by the same thought, this unity will be given us by God, and no member of the community will be absent from our heart as we stand in prayer.

The Body of Christ is manifest in every community in which God pours out His grace. His gifts are numerous and each member receives a particular charism, Christ Himself being invisibly present as the Head of the Body which contains the fullness of His grace. And because the Body is one, its

members benefit from each other's strength: the strength of the Head passes to the leg, and the strength of the arm passes to the foot and vice versa. And as the Apostle says, “When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.”

Every member of our community therefore has a place in my heart as I stand before God in prayer and give thanks for them. I am then, in a mysterious way, gifted forty times over.

### **What kind of prayers can we offer in this spirit of unity?**

When we pray, whether in church or in our rooms, we could begin with a prayer such as this:

*Lord, I come before You together with all my brethren.*

*Bless us as we stand before You*

*Make our souls and minds rejoice*

*in the invocation of Your Holy Name.*

*Pour out Your grace upon us all.*

*Fill our hearts with the great comfort of Your goodness, and let none of us leave Your holy temple without the incorruptible consolation of Your Spirit.*

This kind of prayer begets a spirit of unity and draws down on us such blessings that we will not want to stop praying. And a strange wonder: this prayer gains in strength the more we pray.

God will bless the whole community, strengthening it and consoling the hearts of all. He Himself will inspire us to deeper prayer for our brethren for the sake of His love for them. He will fill us with His gifts, with peace and love for each other. We will fulfill the words of the Apostle Peter: ‘Love the brotherhood fervently’, or ‘extensively’, as the Greek text has it.’ Every meeting with a brother will be a prophetic event — not in the sense of foretelling the future, but in the sense of bearing witness to God's will for man, that the truth of God be manifest in us.

As members of one Body, each is responsible for the health of the whole Body. We have a duty to defend the life of the Body. The Lord says, “If you bring your sacrifice to the temple and there remember that thy brother has something against you; leave there your gift, and go and first be reconciled to him.” He is not telling us to be reconciled when we know we have offended someone — that goes without saying — but when a brother has no peace because of us, even though we are not to blame. God wants us to humble ourselves as much as we can before our brother, regardless of the apparent justice of the matter. Our brother's heart will then be moved by our humility and he will be able to draw near to God again. In this way we work with God for his salvation.

❖

Excerpted from “Remember Thy First Love”  
by Archimandrite Zacharias  
of the Stavropegic Monastery of Saint John, Essex





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## Saint John Chrysostom On Fasting



Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works.

If you see a poor man, take pity on him.

If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all the members of our bodies.

Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.

Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.

Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful.

Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip.

Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers?

May He who came to the world to save sinners strengthen us to complete the fast with humility, have mercy on us and save us.

Saint John Chrysostom, Patriarch of Constantinople (4<sup>th</sup> c)

Scripture of the Month: "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10.31)