



December 2023
Volume 31 | Issue 11

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Christ is Born!
Glorify Him!

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



His Eminence Metropolitan Savas prays at the Holy Altar before sealing the Holy Relics in it during the Consecration Liturgy, Nov. 4. See more photos of this event and more on pages 10-22.

THE HOLY TRINITY

HERALD

Faith. Family. Community



Holy Trinity Church — Consecrated November 4, 2023

Festal Icon from the new Iconostasis of Holy Trinity Church. Iconographer: Nikolaos Zekios, Thessaloniki

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, PITTSBURGH, PA



Father John Touloumes
Proistamenos

CELEBRATING
10
YEARS
ALL YEAR!
1923 · CENTENNIAL · 2023



OUR VISION

Faith. Family. Community.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is to proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ.

We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power and the wonders He has done

Psalm 78.4

My beloved Holy Trinity family,

Honoring the past. Reaching toward the future. Throughout this blessed and historic Centennial year at Holy Trinity Church, we have opened our arms wide to embrace both sacred tasks. To fulfill our calling as a Church, both are necessary, because the past can imprison us if we only focus on looking back and the future will leave us longing for the days to come if we only look forward. Living up to our calling in the present allows us to appreciate where we've been and anticipating the future helps us understand where we're going. It is that fullness of the Holy Trinity community with all its yesterdays gone by and all its tomorrows to come that has brought us to where we are today.

When the new Holy Trinity Church was built, it was our hope that it would become a center of daily life. And for many it has, but not like the centers the world offers. Saint Irenaeus says "The Church is much more than a building or a social gathering place. It is far greater than what we as human beings could create, for it is of the Holy Spirit and of God's grace.

When visitors approach Holy Trinity Church from the outside, many of whom will eventually choose to become members and enter the Faith, they read our Vision Statement on our sign: "Faith. Family. Community." But when they cross the threshold and enter the doors, they experience that same vision lived in your hearts and your living examples as you pursue life in Christ to its fullest...and invite them along. Indeed, our new iconography is rich in theology and history as it shares the timeless faith of our spiritual ancestors, but it also speaks to the eyes and the heart in a manner described by Greek author Nikos Kazantzakis, who wrote, "You have your brush. You have your colors. Now paint Paradise and step inside."

Thirty years ago, where we have come and what we have built seemed an impossible dream. But God can use and has used us all to accomplish great things. Christian leadership expert John Maxwell writes, "No great task is accomplished without both people to do the work and a leader to inspire them." Let us all confess that we have indeed had One Great Leader who has inspired, equipped and empowered us to do the impossible. We have been led by the Holy Spirit of God Himself. He has led. We have followed. To Him and to Him alone goes all praise. If we dare open our eyes to His presence among us, we and generations to come will indeed behold His glory.

Now, as we look back with thanks over a glorious and historic Centennial, I offer my pastoral and paternal thanks and prayers for every parish ministry leader, every donor, every faithful servant of God and every prayerful soul that has been, is and will be part of the Holy Trinity community. May we enter the next 100 years of Holy Trinity Church in peace with the love of Christ in our hearts and His light burning brightly in our souls. God bless you all. Christ is born! Glorify Him!

With paternal love in the newborn Christ,

DECEMBER

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services - December

In addition to regular Sunday Orthros at 8:30am, and Divine Liturgy at 9:30am, the following weekday services will be offered this month. Please see the online parish calendar at HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar for updates. (HT=Holy Trinity Church; SG=Saint George Chapel.)

- **Mon. Dec. 4:** St. Barbara the Great Martyr and St. John of Damascus (HT - NOTE LOCATION - Service at Holy Trinity Church because relics of St. Barbara are in the Holy Altar Table of the Church)
- **Tue. Dec. 5:** St. Savas the Sanctified - Nameday of Metropolitan Savas (9:00a Orthros/10:00a Liturgy at the Metropolis Chapel, 5201 Ellsworth Ave., Pgh.)
- **Mon. Dec. 5:** St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (7:00p Great Vespers at St. Nicholas Cathedral)
- **Tue. Dec. 6:** St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (9:00a Orthros/10:00a Liturgy at St. Nicholas Cathedral)
- **Thu. Dec. 7:** Ambrose of Milan (HT - NOTE LOCATION - Service at Holy Trinity Church followed by Seniors Christmas Luncheon)
- **Sat. Dec. 9:** Conception by St. Anna of the Most Holy Theotokos (SG)
- **Tue. Dec. 12,** St. Spyridon the Wonderworker (9:00a Orthros/10:00a Liturgy at St. Spyridon in Monessen)
- **Tue. Dec. 12,** Paraclesis to the Theotokos (6:30p at Holy Trinity Church - note change of usual location)
- **Fri. Dec. 22-Mon. Dec. 25:** See below for the schedule of services for the Nativity of Christ

Services for the Nativity of Christ Dec. 22-25

Please remember these festal celebrations for the Nativity of Christ and participate in them with your family. Please note that all Christmas services will be held at Holy Trinity Church (HT).

- **Fri. Dec. 22, 8:30 am: Royal Hours of the Nativity (HT)**
This special service offers readings, prophecies and hymns which point to and interpret the Incarnation.
- **Sun. Dec. 24, 8:30am Orthros/9:30am Liturgy of Forefeast of the Nativity of the Lord (HT)**
This is Sunday Liturgy on the forefeast of Birth of the Lord. No Church School this day.
- **Sun. Dec. 24, 6:30pm Great Vespers of the Nativity (HT)** This beautiful Christmas Eve service offers hymns and readings on the Nativity of Christ that help us understand the deeper meaning of the feast. Also, the Holy Trinity Choir will be offering a selection of Christmas carols following the service. (Note: This is a not Divine Liturgy. Those wishing and prepared to receive Holy Communion for the feast may do so on

Sunday morning or Monday morning.)

- **Mon. Dec. 25, 8:30am Orthros/9:30am Liturgy of The Nativity of the Lord (HT)**

This is the main service of the Birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Open the best gift first by attending Liturgy with your family and receiving the Holy Mysteries together! Make it a family tradition to keep the most important thing about Christmas the most important thing in your home!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Church School Starts with Church!

Attention all Holy Trinity parents and youth: Remember, **Church School begins with Divine Liturgy**. So please be sure to have all our students there at 9:30 am each Sunday. The youth sermon—a special time for your priests to teach and connect with our youth—takes place early in the service after the Gospel, so they won't want to miss that. Also, parents and young people please remember that all youth ministries at Holy Trinity Church begin with Church School. Thanks for your faithful participation!

Christmas Pageant Full RehearsalDecember 16

The complete cast rehearsal for the Holy Trinity Church School Christmas Pageant will be held on Saturday morning. Please check the Church School email for details.

Church School Christmas Pageant.....December 17

The Holy Trinity Church School ministry will be offering its annual Christmas Pageant this Sunday. As always, ALL the students of the Church School will be involved in this event. On that day, following Holy Communion, the students and staff will depart for their classes and final preparations for the pageant. All our parishioners are asked to stay for Hospitality Hour hosted by the Church School Alumni parents. Then, enjoy another original Holy Trinity original Christmas Pageant production!

Church School Christmas Pageant Alumni Call

Attention Holy Trinity Christmas Pageant alumni! For this year's Centennial Christmas Pageant, we are calling for everyone who has played the roles of Wise Men, Baby Jesus and Orchestra musicians over the past years to take part in a special edition of the Pageant as we recall our Pageant history. Contact Presvytera Becky at churchschool@HolyTrinityPgh.org if you are able to attend.

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

GOYA Christmas Fireside Chat.....December 10

The GOYA teen ministry will hold its annual Christmas

Fireside Chat on Sunday, December 10 from 4:00-7:00pm. Information and location is being sent directly to GOYA families on the GOYA email and Remind systems.

GOYA Christmas BreadOrder by December 12

Our GOYA teens will once again offer their delicious and popular Greek Christmas Bread this year. Orders must be placed by Tuesday, December 12 for pickup following Divine Liturgy on Sunday, December 17. **Orders may be placed at the GOYA bread table during Coffee Hour in December, directly with any GOYA teen OR ONLINE at HolyTrinityPgh.org/goyabread. Two styles this year: both Traditional Round and a new Holiday Multi-Colored Loaf!** See the flyer in this issue for more information. Thank you for supporting our teen ministry!

GOYA Christmas Bread Prep December 15, 16

All GOYAns are asked to help prepare Christmas bread on Friday, December 15, after school and Saturday, December 16, 9:00-11:00am. Parents' help is needed all day Friday. See Presvytera Becky for info and to sign up.

HOPE Parents' "Drop-N-Shop" Night Out Dec. 1

Hey parents, need some time to go out and Christmas shop or just get away for a few hours? Drop your HOPE (Pre-School-2nd) and JOY (3rd-6th) age children for a fun movie and dinner while you get away to shop or dine. Watch for info in the bulletin.

COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

Bereavement Support MinistryDecember 4

Join us for our upcoming Holy Trinity Bereavement Support Ministry meeting. Our team provides spiritual care to our parishioners and their extended family & friends in times of grief and loss of a loved one. Meetings start at 6:30pm with fellowship and light refreshments. It doesn't matter whether your loss is recent or many years. This valuable ministry offers a safe sharing environment for sharing and caring, and there is no cost for sessions or written materials. Questions: contact Amy Armanious at visitation@HolyTrinityPgh.org.

Holy Trinity Hosting GOYA Tournament.... Feb. 16-18

Save the dates for the upcoming Holy Trinity hosted GOYA Basketball Tournament to be held February 16-18, 2024! We are making plans to welcome over 400 GOYAns, clergy, coaches and chaperones from 11 parishes throughout the Metropolis. To make the tournament a success, the GOYA will need help from everyone in our community. Volunteers will be needed to run the clocks and keep score, oversee gyms & hotels, serve as medical points of contact at the gyms, sell concessions and prepare and serve meals. Please volunteer online at HolyTrinityPgh.org.

org/volunteer. Contact Tournament Chairperson, Penny Balouris at 724-813-5726 for more information.

Stewardship Update

As of the end of November we are 91% through the calendar year and, thanks to the dedicated support of our Holy Trinity stewards, our 2023 Stewardship pledges are 94% fulfilled! But we are still seeking 2023 Stewardship pledges from around 50 of our parishioners and 57 of our pledgers have either made no donations or have not yet met their half of their giving goal. If you are among that group, please visit HolyTrinityPgh.org/stewardship to make or fulfill your pledge. Remember, **a pledge card is required as part of maintaining your membership in good standing at Holy Trinity each year.** We are grateful for your commitment. Questions? Contact Stewardship Chairman George Mellis or email stewardship@HolyTrinityPgh.org.

Christmas Card FormsDue December 6

If you would like to include your name in this annual community tradition, please be sure to submit your form and donation to the Church Office by December 6. The card will be mailed with the Christmas/New Year bundle.

Holiday Poinsettias Form.....Due December 6

Please consider sponsoring of holiday poinsettias for use in the church during the Christmas and Theophany season. To donate one or more flowers in memory of a loved one or in honor of a special person or event, please complete the form and return it to the Church Office with your donation by December 6.

14-Day Vigil Candles Discontinued; 7-Day Available

Due to safety concerns regarding the plastic containers of the 14-day vigil candles, they are no longer available at Holy Trinity. The 7-day vigil glass-encased candles are still available and may be purchased and placed safely in the new candle racks during any service or during office hours.

Vasilopita CelebrationJan. 7

On Sunday, January 7, Holy Trinity Philoptochos will host our annual Vasilopita celebration in the Grand Room following the Divine Liturgy. Proceeds from the Vasilopita celebration go to the Saint Basil Academy, an education and philanthropic institution of the Archdiocese.

Hospitality Hour Hosts Needed for January/February

Thank you to everyone who has stepped up to host our newly reformatted "Hospitality Hour" following our Sunday Divine Liturgies. There are a number of available Sundays in January and February. Remember a loved one. Celebrate a special event. Share your hospitality with the community. Contact Stacy Dickos at 412-298-9409 or email her at hospitality@HolyTrinityPgh.org to reserve. ❖

Faith & Family Weekdays

Grow Your Knowledge and Practice of the Faith!

JOM

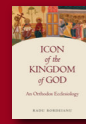
Journey of Marriage
1st Tuesday, 7:00pm



Marriage seminar aimed at preparing couples for their wedding. Based on the "Journey of Marriage" course by Dr. Philip Mamalakis. Conducted as group sessions with couples to share and grow together. Dec. 5, Jan. 2, Feb. 6, Mar. 5, Apr. 2, May 7.

ETW

Explore the Word
Wednesdays, 6:30pm



Father Radu leads us through his new book, "Icon of the Kingdom of God." Drawing on a rich knowledge of scripture, the Church fathers, and theologians, learn what the Church is and means to us. Fall dates: Dec. 6, 13.

MPS

Monthly Paraclesis Service
Second Tuesday, 6:30pm



Join in hymns and prayer, to honor the Theotokos, Saint Nektarios and Saint Paisios of Athos at our beautiful Saint George Chapel. Pray for those in need. Renew your spirit in peace and prayer. Dec. 12 (HT), Jan. 9, Feb. 13, Mar. 12..

LCC

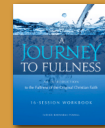
Liturgical Cooking Class
Dates TBD



Did you know that the Prosforo (bread for the Divine Liturgy), Kollyva (memorial wheat), Artoclasia (for the Blessing of the Loaves) are not bought from a store but made by parishioners? You can learn how to make them, too! Watch for dates of these free classes!

JTF

Journey to Fullness
Mondays (6-week series), 7:00pm



An overview of the Orthodox Christian Faith for newcomers interested in joining or life-long members yearning to deepen their understanding. Format: Videos and Q&A/discussion. Upcoming Spring sessions: May 13, 20; June 3, 10, 17, 24.

P&P

Prayer & Panera
1st & 3rd Thursday, 7:00am



Prayer and Christian fellowship for men. 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 45 minutes of coffee & conversation. Dec. 21; Jan. 4 & 18, Feb. 1 & 15 and more.

Orthodox Christian life happens every day, not just Sunday! Faith and Family Weekdays offers many ways during the week to grow in our faith and share in the community life of the Church. Ready to learn more about the Bible, about your Faith, about navigating life's challenges as a Christian, a woman or a man? It's all there.

Newly engaged? Prepare for Christian marriage at the **Journey of Marriage** sessions. Share the journey and grow together with other couples. Spend quiet time in prayer and fellowship time over coffee at the **Saint Nikodemos "Prayer and Panera" Men's Prayer Fellowship**. Learn more about Orthodox faith, history, and worship on the **Journey to Fullness**. There are lots of other opportunities to learn about the Faith, the Bible, marriage and Christian living. Watch the bulletin and check the online calendar at HolyTrinityPgh.org/calendar for details and locations.

AND SAVE THE DATE FOR THIS ANNUAL OUTREACH EVENT: CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT THE SISTERS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE! WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

The entire community—adults and youth alike—are invited to this special evening of Christian holiday outreach to our neighbors at the Sisters of Divine Providence on Wed. Dec. 20. Meet at Holy Trinity at 6:30pm, then head over to bring Christmas blessings and cheer to these faithful sisters!

Now What?

Father John's Homily the Week After the Consecration of Holy Trinity Church

Wow! What an amazing time it has been. Holy Trinity Church is now complete. Consecrated last weekend.

That was after the beautiful new interior woodworking was installed in October. That was after the magnificent iconography was completed in March. That was after the mortgage was paid off in 2020. That was after the church was officially opened in 2013. That was after we moved twice in two years from the North Side in 2011 to a temporary school while our new church was being built. That was after looking at 99 other possible locations until God led us to this one. That was after starting a Capital Campaign in 2008 during the financial crisis. That was after a rather challenging time of questioning where our future lay. And that was after unanimously adopting a mission and vision that has ultimately led us here today.

Whew! What a journey it's been! Perhaps like the Israelites wandering in the desert heading toward the Promised Land, the thought might occur to us, "It's been a long haul. We've arrived. We're done." As I have pondered that temptation myself, the response that I keep hearing in my heart is exactly the opposite. Rather than, "Sit back, relax and enjoy," there is a question we should all be asking ourselves as faithful members and as a community. And the question is this: "Now what?"

We have been so blessed as a community it is hard to describe. Last weekend's Consecration and Centennial celebration truly affirmed the love the people of this community have for their Church and the love the Lord has for them. He multiplied every gift and honored every sacrifice beyond what anyone could imagine. Isn't it tempting, then, to look back in awe, relax...and stop looking forward?

Actually, Jesus Himself told this little story about that a long time ago. It goes like this: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you

have prepared, whose will they be?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God" (Luke 12.16-21).

Hearing that parable as a Holy Trinity parishioner at the end of this part of our long journey, the inevitable first question must be, "Now what?" And that give birth to so many more? If it hasn't been to lay up the treasure of this beautiful new church as a testimony to all the work it took to get here, then what was it all for? Why are we here? What do we do with all of this? What is God expecting of us now?

Here are a few answers. First, God has already laid out the plans for our next 100 years. The exciting news about that is it's waiting to be discovered. You might recall that our 2023 Church School theme is "Trust in the Lord," but remembering the entire quote from Proverbs 3 might be of great help here: "Trust in the



Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths." So the parable teaches that we shouldn't "rest on our laurels" but Proverbs reminds us that we can rest secure in the sure knowledge that God will continue to direct us in everything. "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1.6)

Second, have you ever heard the expression, "a good kind of tired?" It's often used after a project or event that has taken a lot of effort. Or even after an intense exercise workout that ends panting and sweating. That's not the kind of tired that leaves us depleted and empty, but renewed and ready for what lies ahead. Eagles use a lot of energy to spread and move those big, beautiful wings, and the Prophet Isaiah uses that image to encourage us as well: "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40.31). My dear Holy Trinity family, it's not time to be weary. It's time to soar.

Third, this great Holy Trinity adventure has not led us to the end, but has set us up for a new beginning. The church is indeed beautiful, but it was never the final destination. There is so much more ahead. There is so much more good the Lord has called us to. If He empowered us to accomplish all this while wandering from place to place and living in a run-down school while doing it, imagine what lies ahead. As Saint Paul reminds the Christian in Galatia, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Gal 6.9). Not sure what that harvest is, how to plant for it and when to reap it? No



worries. Trust in the Lord. Today's Epistle ends with that hope: "He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness." We might not know how and when yet, but God knows. And we trust Him. "I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord [in Jeremiah 29.11], "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

So as we go forth from here, it is the challenge for us both as a community and as faithful members of it to ask, "Now what?" We need to ask that with a sure hope and complete expectation that it will be answered by the Lord, both for us as individuals and together as a community. That must happen together because the answers for the community depend on each of us fulfilling our calling in the future just as we have in getting to where we are today. Great things do not happen from sitting around and waiting for others to do them. They happen when we trust in God, offering ourselves to Him to do His work and His will.

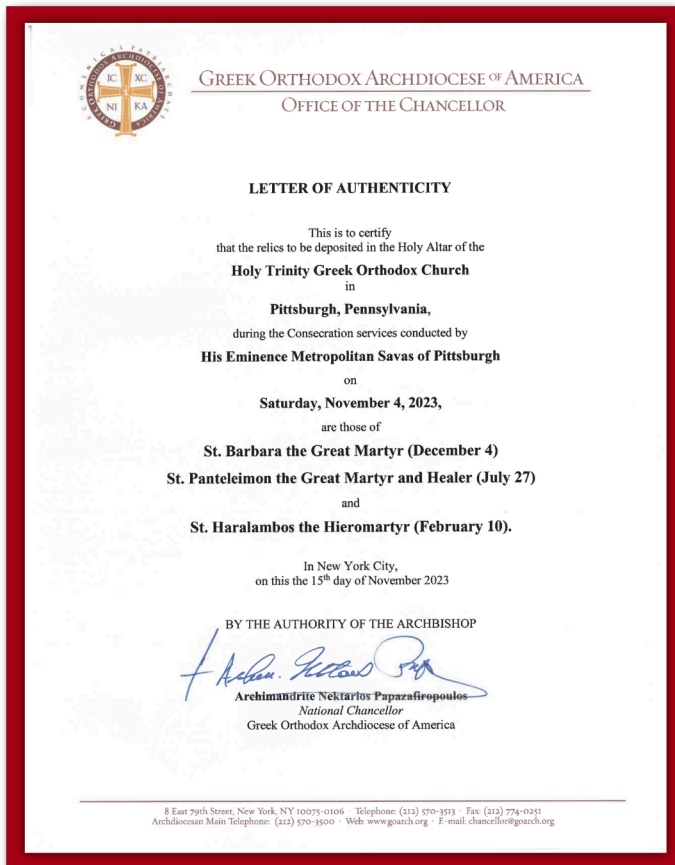
This church has built with big, tall, wide doors. Those doors provide a way for all who seek the Lord to find

their way in here. They also provide a way for us to go out and serve all those in need of spiritual and physical sustenance and hope. The parable of the Good Samaritan in today's Gospel – now also portrayed beautifully as a new icon on our Narthex wall – reminds us of that calling and expectation from the Lord. We have done it along the way, and now that the time, energies and resources needed to get to where we are have fulfilled their purpose, it's time to use them in even greater ways as the Good Samaritan's we are called to be in the world. And have no fear, we can do it by God's grace. Again, back to today's Epistle, "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work."

Glory to God indeed for the great work He has done through the 100 years of faith, love and sacrifices of the families and people of this blessed church. Dear friends, it's not time to wind down from the past 100 years. Let's gear up for the next 100 years as we ask with hope, faith and full assurance in the Lord's answers, "Now what?" Amen.

Delivered November 12, 2023 ❖

The Sacred Relics of Our Church



How Orthodoxy's Ancient Rite of Consecration Blesses the Church with More Than Icons

In the early years of Christianity the Church was not allowed to legally exist; for many years the early Christians were persecuted and killed for their faith in Christ. In those days, the Christians met in underground burial places and celebrated the Eucharist on the graves of the martyred Saints. Later, the Church was free to grow and build holy temples for public worship. They were adorned with holy icons, but also the custom of celebrating the Eucharist over the graves of Martyrs continued by placing Holy Relics in the Altar at the time of the Consecration of a Church. The usual practice is to seal the relics of three Martyrs in the center of the Holy Altar Table. In this manner, we are always reminded that the Church was built on the blood of the Martyrs and their faith in the Lord.

When a Church is consecrated in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, the relics are provided by the Chancellor out of the sacred repository of Holy Relics located at the Archdiocese. A Certificate of Authenticity verifies which saints have been provided. That Certificate is pictured here.

SAINT BARBARA

THE GREAT MARTYR - FEAST DAY: DECEMBER 4

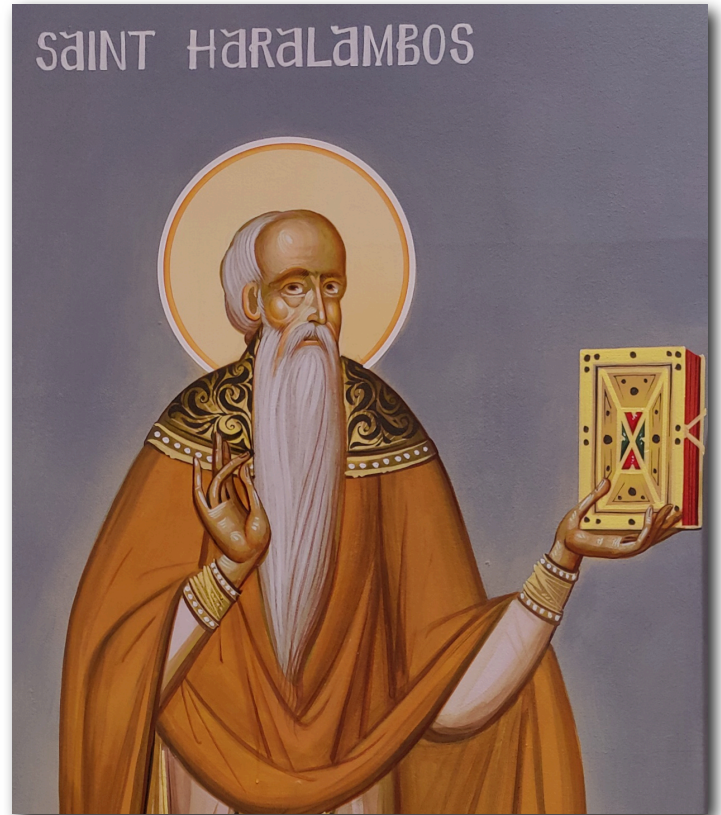
Saint Barbara was from Heliopolis of Phoenicia and was the daughter of a certain idolater named Dioscorus. When she came of age, she was enlightened in her pure heart by God and secretly accepted belief in the Holy Trinity. About this time Dioscorus began building a bath house, but he was required to go away to attend to certain matters before it was completed. In his absence Barbara directed the workmen to build a third window in addition to the two her Father had commanded. She also inscribed the sign of the Cross with her finger upon the marble, leaving the saving sign cut as deeply into the marble as if it had been done with an iron tool. When Dioscorus returned, he asked why the third window had been added; Barbara began to declare to him the mystery of the Trinity. Because she refused to renounce her faith, Dioscorus tortured Barbara cruelly, and after subjecting her to many sufferings he beheaded her with his own hands, in the year 290 A.D.



SAINT HARALAMBOS

THE HIEROMARTYR - FEAST DAY: FEBRUARY 10

The Holy Hieromartyr Haralambos lived during the reign of Emperor Septimus Severus (194-211 A.D.), when Lucian was the governor, and he was a priest of the Christians of the city of Magnesia. Having taught the way of truth, and preached the faith of Christ, he was condemned by the the pagan Emperor, stripped of his priestly vestments, and the skin of his entire body was scraped. When the governor Lucian saw him bravely enduring these torments, he became enraged, and endeavored to rip the Saint apart with his own hands, but immediately his hands were severed, and were clung to the body of the Martyr. However the Saint prayed for him, and his health was restored. When the executioners Porphyrios and Bapto saw his faith and this miracle, they renounced the idols and believed in Christ. Three women who stood nearby and saw this, also came to believe. The governor captured all of them, and tormented them with various torments, then had them beheaded. At the time of his martyrdom the Saint was 103 old and prayed like the good thief on the Cross, "Remember me, O Lord, in Your kingdom."



SAINT PANTELEIMON

THE GREAT MARTYR & HEALER - FEAST DAY: JULY 27

Saint Pantelimon's father was an idolater, but his mother was a Christian from her ancestors. He was catechized in the faith of Christ and baptized by Saint Hermolaus. Being a trained physician, he practiced it in a philanthropic manner, healing every illness more by the grace of Christ than by medicines. Thus, although his parents had named him "Pantoleon" ("in all things a lion"), because of the compassion he showed for the souls and bodies of all, he was worthily renamed "Panteleimon" ("all-merciful"). On one occasion, he healed not only the eyes of a blind man by calling on the Name of Christ, but he also enlightened the eyes of this man's soul, leading him to become a Christian. When the man was asked by whom and in what manner his eyes had been opened, he confessed with boldness both who the physician was and the manner of his healing. For this he was put to death immediately. Panteleimon was arrested also, and having endured many wounds, he was finally beheaded in the year 305 A.D. Saint Panteleimon is one of the great "Unmercenary" healers.



Consecration
Trivia

The icons pictured in this article are from the new iconography of Holy Trinity Church. It was not know when the icons were painted that the relics of those saints would be offered by the Archdiocese for the Consecration!

Consecration Vespers

Friday, November 3, 2023

The sacred services for the Consecration of Holy Trinity Church began with the Consecration Great Vespers on Friday evening. A procession led by the Acolytes entered the Church followed by the clergy and His Eminence Metropolitan Savas, bearing the sacred relics of the Holy Martyrs in a special reliquary box. Entering the Holy Sanctuary, a Paten and lit candle awaited on the bare Holy Altar Table. The relics were venerated and laid on the Paten, which was left there for the remainder of the service and then overnight, awaiting the start of the Consecration Orthros the next morning.





Consecration Liturgy

Saturday, November 4, 2023

The Consecration of Holy Trinity Church continued early Saturday morning with a special Consecration version of the Orthros and Divine Liturgy. Beautiful Consecration prayers offered supplications to the Lord, such as "Establish and strengthen this Church, protecting it to the end of the world. Renew this Church by your Holy Spirit, that as we offer the bloodless sacrifices in it, we might become partakers of your Holy Spirit." At the beginning of the Divine Liturgy, His Eminence lifted up the Paten containing the Holy Relics and processed around the Church three times, preceded by the clergy, the processional Cross, fans and candles and the Holy Gospel, and followed by all the people. After that, a dramatic re-entry into the Church occurred when the Metropolitan banged his staff against the doors and they were opened for all to follow him in. The service continued with the placing of the Holy Relics inside the Holy Altar table, which was then sealed, washed, anointed and vested. His Eminence then anointed icons on the walls of the Church, including the great Pantokrator icon 65 feet high in the air, which he reached with a helium balloon! The Consecration now complete, His Eminence led the clergy and choir in the continuation and completion of the Divine Liturgy. It was indeed a historic day for all those who participated!







THE HOLY RELICS
ON THE PATEN



PLACING THE RELICS
IN THE ALTAR TABLE



THE RELICS IN THE
ALTAR CAVITY



FILLING THE ALTAR
RELICS CAVITY



SEALING THE ALTAR
RELICS CAVITY



WASHING THE
ALTAR TABLE



ANOINTING ALTAR
WITH CHRISM



WIPING ALTAR
WITH ANTIMENS



PLACING ICONS AT
ALTAR CORNERS



SECURING THE
"KATASARKION"



VESTING THE
ALTAR TABLE



COMPLETING THE
LITURGY



Clergy assisted His Eminence Metropolitan Savas with the Consecration Divine Liturgy (L-R): Fr. Anastasios Athanasiou, Fr. Rajko Kotic, Fr. Demetrios Constantine, Fr. Joseph Cervo, Deacon Matthew Palamara, Fr. John Chakos, Archdeacon Ryan Gzikowski, Fr. John Touloumes, Fr. George Callos, Fr. George Daskalakis, Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Deacon Mark Matejevich, Fr. Michael Gavrillos, Fr. Eleftherios Constantine, Fr. Michael Varvarelis, Fr. Peter Orfanakos and Fr. George Athanasiou. Many thanks to them all!



The Consecration of Holy Trinity Church



November 4, 2023
Pittsburgh, PA

100 YEARS
Holy Trinity Consecration Weekend

Consecration Vespers: Friday, Nov. 3rd
7PM - Consecration Vespers and Placing of the Holy Relics on the Altar

Consecration Liturgy & Luncheon: Sat. Nov. 4th
8AM - Orthros
9AM - Consecration Divine Liturgy and Procession with the Holy Relics
His Eminence Metropolitan Savas presiding
12PM - Celebration Luncheon in the Holy Trinity Grand Room
Adults: \$25 Children under 12: \$15

The Holy Trinity Centennial Gala
at the Omni William Penn Hotel
Sunday, November 5th, 5pm

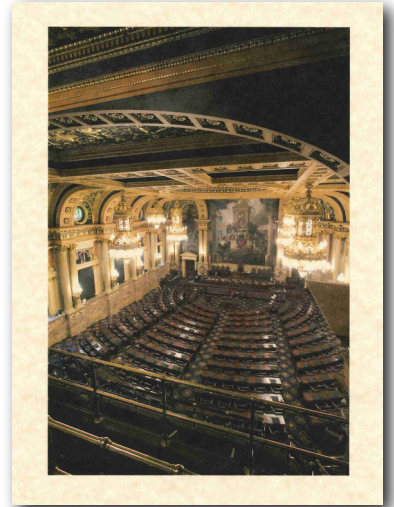
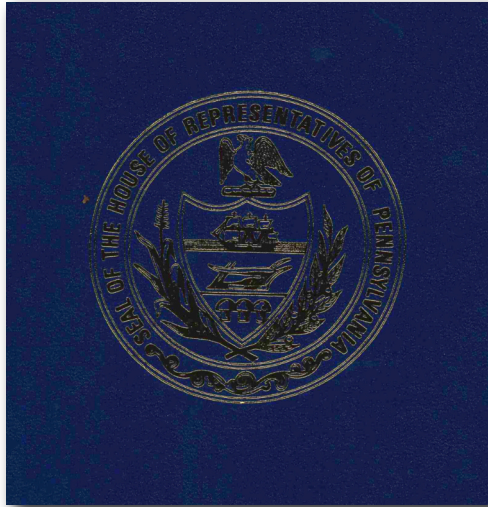









In honor of both the 100th anniversary of Holy Trinity Church and the 50th anniversary of our Greek Festival, the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania officially recognized Holy Trinity Church through the two Citations pictured below. They were presented to Holy Trinity Church in beautiful portfolios which contained the official seal of the House of Representatives embossed in gold on the front and a photo of the House chamber in Harrisburg on the inside cover. We offer our sincere thanks to the sponsor of the Citations, local State Representative Arvind Venkat, to the Speaker of the House, Joanna McClinton, and to all the Representatives for honoring the history and life of Holy Trinity Church through these official proclamations.



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



The House of Representatives


Citation

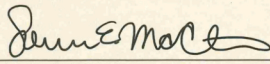
Whereas, *The Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, established in Pittsburgh in 1923, is being honored upon the momentous occasion of its one hundredth anniversary; and*


Whereas, *Originally located in a building on the corner of Sandusky Street and Stockton Avenue, the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church held its first service in 1923 and shortly thereafter moved to the second floor of a building at Sandusky and Lacock Streets. In 1931, it relocated to another building, and it held its first service at its West North Avenue location in 1960. To its great credit, the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church opened the doors to its current edifice in 2013. Over the years, the church drama troupe has performed Greek plays and comedies, and the church also hosts an annual Taste of Greece Festival. Active in its community, the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church facilitates the Feed the Hungry project and operates a Women's Auxiliary and several youth and teaching ministries. Additionally, its members have participated in many Metropolis and Archdiocesan ministries and mission trips to the Middle East, Mexico and Montana. Presently following the spiritual guidance of the Reverend John Touloumes, the members of the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church have enjoyed a long history of service to God and their fellow citizens. The church has been blessed with ministers and laypeople who strive to live in a manner that gives testimony to their spiritual beliefs. Their faith, determination, generosity and stewardship have enabled the church to become a vital and inspiring presence in their community.*


Now therefore, *the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania heartily congratulates the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church upon the joyous celebration of its one hundredth anniversary; offers best wishes for a continued tradition of devoted service to God and humanity;*

And directs *that a copy of this citation, sponsored by the Honorable Arvind Venkat on August 23, 2023, be transmitted to the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 985 Providence Boulevard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237.*



Arvind Venkat, Sponsor


Joanna E. McClinton, Speaker of the House

Attest:

Brooke Wheeler, Chief Clerk of the House



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



The House of Representatives

Citation

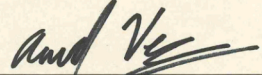
Whereas, *The House of Representatives of Pennsylvania takes great pleasure in recognizing those organizations which contribute to the benefit of their communities and ultimately to all the citizens of this Commonwealth; and*

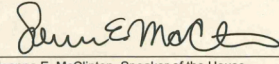
Whereas, *The Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is being honored upon the momentous occasion of its fiftieth Taste of Greece Festival, which will be held from August 31 to September 3, 2023; and*

Whereas, *Hosted by the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church for the past five decades, the Taste of Greece Festival seeks to emulate the traditional gatherings of Greece. Featuring cultural music and dancers, the festival mainly centers around dishes that are available for purchase, including souvlaki, moussaka, souzoukakia, spanakopita, tiropita, gyro and braised lamb shank. Throughout its history, the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Taste of Greece Festival has greatly contributed to the enjoyment, entertainment and cultural enrichment of countless individuals.*

Now therefore, *the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania salutes the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church upon its richly deserved recognition; offers best wishes for continued growth and success in the years to come;*


And directs *that a copy of this citation, sponsored by the Honorable Arvind Venkat on August 23, 2023, be transmitted to the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 985 Providence Boulevard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237.*


Arvind Venkat, Sponsor


Joanna E. McClinton, Speaker of the House

Attest:

Brooke Wheeler, Chief Clerk of the House





September 24: John Lowman was received into the Holy Orthodox Church through Holy Chrismation. Sponsors were Peter and Theanne Gagianas. AXIOS!

October 23: Holy Trinity Youth Sunday provided many opportunities for our younger generation to step up to ministry responsibilities. The special youth messages on the topic "Trust in the Lord" were offered by Yianni Anetakis (HOPE), Constantine Dedousis (JOY) and GOYA President Rebecca Bordeianu. GOYAns also stepped up to Parish Council and Hospitality Ministry duties by greeting parishioners and visitors, handling the candles and passing the collection trays. They also ran the annual FallFest following Liturgy, offering homemade foods and treats for all.

November 19: Holy Trinity GOYAns attended the Metropolis Fall GOYA Retreat at Camp Nazareth.



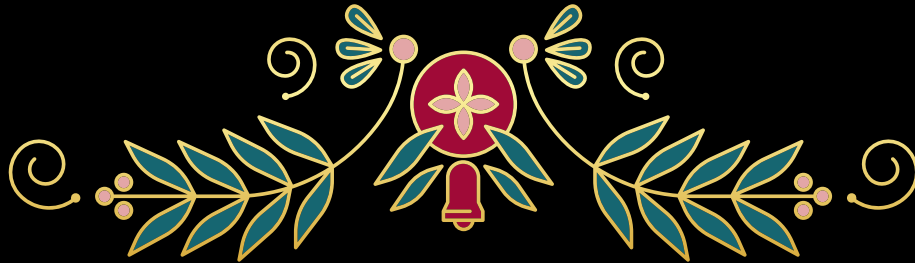
PHILOPTOCHOS PRESENTS AN OFFICIAL HOLY TRINITY CENTENNIAL EVENT

10 YEARS



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

1923·CENTENNIAL·2023



ALL HOLY TRINITY SENIORS ARE INVITED TO JOIN
TOGETHER TO ROUND OUT OUR CENTENNIAL YEAR
WITH AN ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TRADITION:

Philoptochos Seniors Christmas Luncheon



DECEMBER 7, 2023

8:30 ORTHROS/9:30 LITURGY

ST. AMBROSE OF MILAN
& ST. GERASIMOS OF EUBOIA

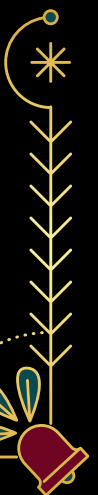
11:00AM LUNCHEON



Enjoy the company of your Holy Trinity friends!
Dress in your Christmas best! Celebrate the season!

For reservations, contact Yvonne Balouris
at 724-316-2847 by December 1st

Meal choices: Fish or Chicken



Hosted by Holy Trinity Philoptochos

Holy Trinity GOYA is pleased to take your order for

Homemade Greek Christmas Bread

Now available in two styles!



Traditional Round



Holiday Multi-Colored Loaf

Both available with or without Sesame Seeds. Still only \$12 per loaf.

Order deadline: Tuesday, December 12th
Bread will be available for pick-up on Sunday Dec. 17th
following Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity Church

Order in-person from any Holy Trinity GOYA teen - OR -

Place your order online at HolyTrinityPgh.org/goyabread

Homemade with love by Holy Trinity GOYA

985 Providence Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15237 GOYA@HolyTrinityPgh.org

Thank you for your support of the Holy Trinity GOYA Ministry!

**“SING PRAISES TO OUR GOD,
SING PRAISES”**

THE ANNUAL PAN-ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS CONCERT
is Back!



**FEATURING: CHOIRS FROM MULTIPLE
ORTHODOX JURISDICTIONS
AND
THE PAN-ORTHODOX CHOIR OF GREATER
PITTSBURGH**

Sunday, December 10, 2023, 4 pm

**St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church
2110 Haymaker Road, Monroeville**

SPONSORED BY: THE ORTHODOX CLERGY BROTHERHOOD OF GREATER PITTSBURGH

Fellowship following the concert Freewill offering to benefit various Orthodox Charities



*Gloria to God in the highest, and on
earth peace, good will toward men.*

Choral Concert

Featuring

**The Byzantine Choir
of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh**

and

The St. Elijah Serbian Orthodox Church Choir

singing sacred a cappella choral music from the Byzantine
and Slavic traditions to celebrate the Nativity season.

Saturday, December 23

St. Elijah Serbian Orthodox Church

2200 Main Street

Aliquippa, PA

5 pm - Vespers

6 pm - Concert

Light Refreshments to follow

Free admission, non-perishable items
accepted for donation



The Holy Trinity GOYA & Philoptochos will be filling boxes for

The Jared Box Project

to help lift the spirits of children in the hospital

Jared Boxes are plastic shoeboxes filled with small gifts, games, books & other fun activities that are given to children in the hospital to provide a fun diversion.

The boxes will be assembled as a service project during the Holy Trinity hosted GOYA basketball tournament February 16-18, 2024.

We are collecting items for tween & teen boys & girls (8 years old and up):

Crayons, markers, colored pencils, pens, coloring books, word searches, doodle pads, writing journals, Silly Putty, stuffed animals, card games, LEGO kits, puzzles, brain games, books, magazines, lip balm, lotion, fun socks, colorful pillowcases, jewelry making kits, craft kits, paint sets, reusable water bottles.

Other items that are labeled as suggested for teens. Items don't need to be expensive. The dollar store has lots of great options!

IMPORTANT: All items must be new. No food items. No tiny items due to choking hazards. No snow globes or glass items that can break. No pencil sharpeners. No bubbles. No holiday items.

Keep in mind, toys need to fit into a plastic shoe box

YOU CAN HELP!

- ✓ Learn more at: <https://thejaredbox.org>
- ✓ Purchase dollar store items & drop off in the Gallery between Jan 7 - Feb 11, 2024, or
- ✓ Purchase items from our Amazon Gift Registry "Holy Trinity Pittsburgh GOYA" or by using the QR code



Contact Nicole Steiner 412-352-0289 for more info



IONIAN VILLAGE 2024

REGISTRATION OPENS FEB. 1, 11AM!

Official Greek Summer Travel Summer Camping Ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America



IONIAN VILLAGE is a special place where campers and staff embark on a unique journey to deepen their understanding of Orthodox Faith and Hellenic Culture. They also have the incredible opportunity to connect with faith-centered peers from all corners of the country. Teens and young adults create unforgettable memories during their time here, forming bonds and friendships that endure a lifetime.

Since 1970, more than 20,000 campers have become part of a 53-year-old tradition dedicated to building "Faith and friendships that last a lifetime."

The goal of Ionian Village is simple: to provide our campers and staff with a life-transforming summer experience by bringing them closer to their Orthodox faith and exploring the richness of Hellenic culture and history. This happens through a program full of travel, worship, and meaningful content. Campers travel to sites of both religious and historical significance, not as tourists but as pilgrims, as people on a journey to learn more about their faith, their culture, and ultimately, themselves.

Ionian Village is not just another summer camp; it is like nothing you have ever experienced. Campers and Staff come not only to understand their Orthodox Faith and Hellenic Culture in a more realistic and tangible way, but

also to meet and interact with other young people just like them from all over the country. Through this interaction, their eyes are opened as to what the reality of being an Orthodox Christian in this world truly should be; to be people who live Christ-centered lives, to be people of love.

The program is marked by excursions to places like Ancient Olympia, Bartholomio, Patras, Zakynthos, Kefalonia, Kalavrita, Aegina, and even Athens! It's the best combination of faith and heritage while also having the time of your life, surrounded by your peers.



Summer 2024 Dates: Session One June 25– July 14; Session Two: July 23–August 11.

Don't wait! Sessions fill quickly. Registration opens Feb. 1, 11am. Find information at ionianvillage.org.

Discernment: The Crown of the Virtues

The more a person progresses in the spiritual life, the more the eyes of his soul will be opened. His mind is polished clean, and he can better discern his own faults, as well as the many blessings of God; he becomes humble; he is broken within; this in turn, naturally brings the Grace of God, divine enlightenment; and discernment is acquired.

Geronda, what is discernment?

Discernment is spiritual vision. And spiritual vision is what one who has a purified mind has; this is why he also has spiritual clarity and divine enlightenment.

Geronda, Saint John of the Ladder says, "The eyes of our body are a light for all the bodily members; and the discernment of the divine virtues is a light for the mind."

That is right. You see, if our eyes are healthy, we see clearly, but if our eyes have an ailment, we cannot see well. Our vision is analogous to the health of our eyes. The same thing happens in the spiritual life. Our spiritual health is also analogous to our spiritual vision, our discernment.

How are the eyes of the soul opened?

Didn't Jesus Christ open the eyes of the blind man with mud? But for the eyes of the soul to be opened, we must throw the mud of sin off of us. If we do not throw away our self and become free of the old man within,

but retain self-love, egoism, and the desire to please people, we cannot have spiritual clarity.

The more a person progresses in the spiritual life, the more the eyes of his soul will be opened. His mind is polished clean, and he can better discern his own faults, as well as the many blessings of God; he becomes humble; he is broken within; this in turn, naturally brings the Grace of God, divine enlightenment; and discernment is acquired. Then, he clearly sees what the will of God is in every situation and he does not stumble in his spiritual progress. Indeed, discernment is the steering wheel which guides one securely, such that he will not detour from the straight road and fall off, either to the right or to the left.

Geronda, when one starts off with good intentions but something bad happens, does it mean that discernment is missing?

One may start out well, but, if he is not careful, egoism will get involved and lead him astray. When our self,



Saint Paisios of Athos

our ego, enters into our actions, passions are created, and then the devil comes to do his winnowing. This is why you must try to live inwardly, humbly, working inconspicuously in order to obtain divine enlightenment. Whoever lives inwardly, humbly, rises above human triviality, fanaticism and so forth.

Geronda, how can one love everyone equally and yet love them with discernment?

One can love everyone equally, but he will not express his love to each person in the same way. One is loved from a distance, because that person needs to be kept at a distance; another will be loved up close, according to what will benefit each person. Discernment, divine enlightenment, is the over-arching principle in all circumstances, This is why I always pray for God to provide enlightenment — enlightenment to the people. And so I say, "Lord Jesus Christ, we have lost our home, as well the road which leads there. Enlighten us to find our home, our Father. Give us divine knowledge."❖

Excerpted from
Spiritual Counsels, Vol. V

THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

Faith. Family. Community

About the Herald

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

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About the Parish

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985 Providence Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Phone: 412-366-8700 | Fax: 412-366-8710

Web site: HolyTrinityPgh.org | Email: office@HolyTrinityPgh.org

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

Parish Administration Clergy

Rev. Fr. John Touloumes, Proistamenos
Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Assistant Priest

2023 Parish Council

George Dickos, President (pcpresident@HolyTrinityPgh.org)

Alexander Anetakis	George Danis	Dean Passodelis
Anthony Balouris	Evan Danis	Michael Passodelis
Andrew Fournaridis	Tom Germanos	Chris Sarandou
Ashley Bournias	George Mellis	Jeanne Willow

Ministries

Please visit the Holy Trinity website at 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! Everyone is welcome!

"FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."

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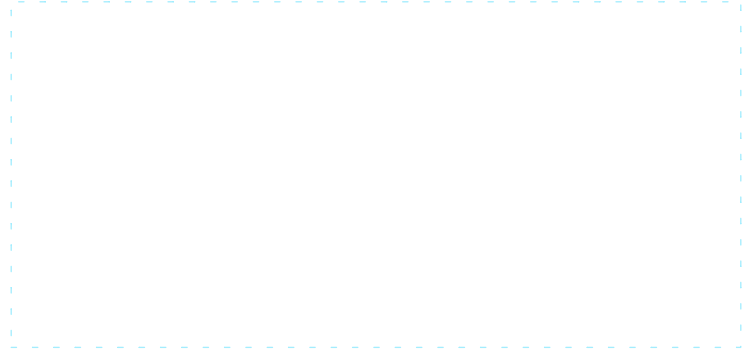
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THE NATIVITY: HE CAME FOR US



He was a Baby, He was a
Child, so that you may be a
perfect man;
He was wrapped in swaddling
clothes, that you may be loosed
from the snares of death;
He was in a manger, so that
you may be in the Altar;
He was on earth, that you may
be in the stars;
He had no other place in the
inn, so that you may have
many mansions in the Heavens.

St. Ambrose of Milan (4th c).