



# THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

DECEMBER 2009

VOLUME 17 • ISSUE 11



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

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Also enclosed:

- December Parish Calendar
- GOYA Christmas Bread
- New Year's Eve Flyer

### ATTENTION ALL HOLY TRINITY PARISHIONERS:

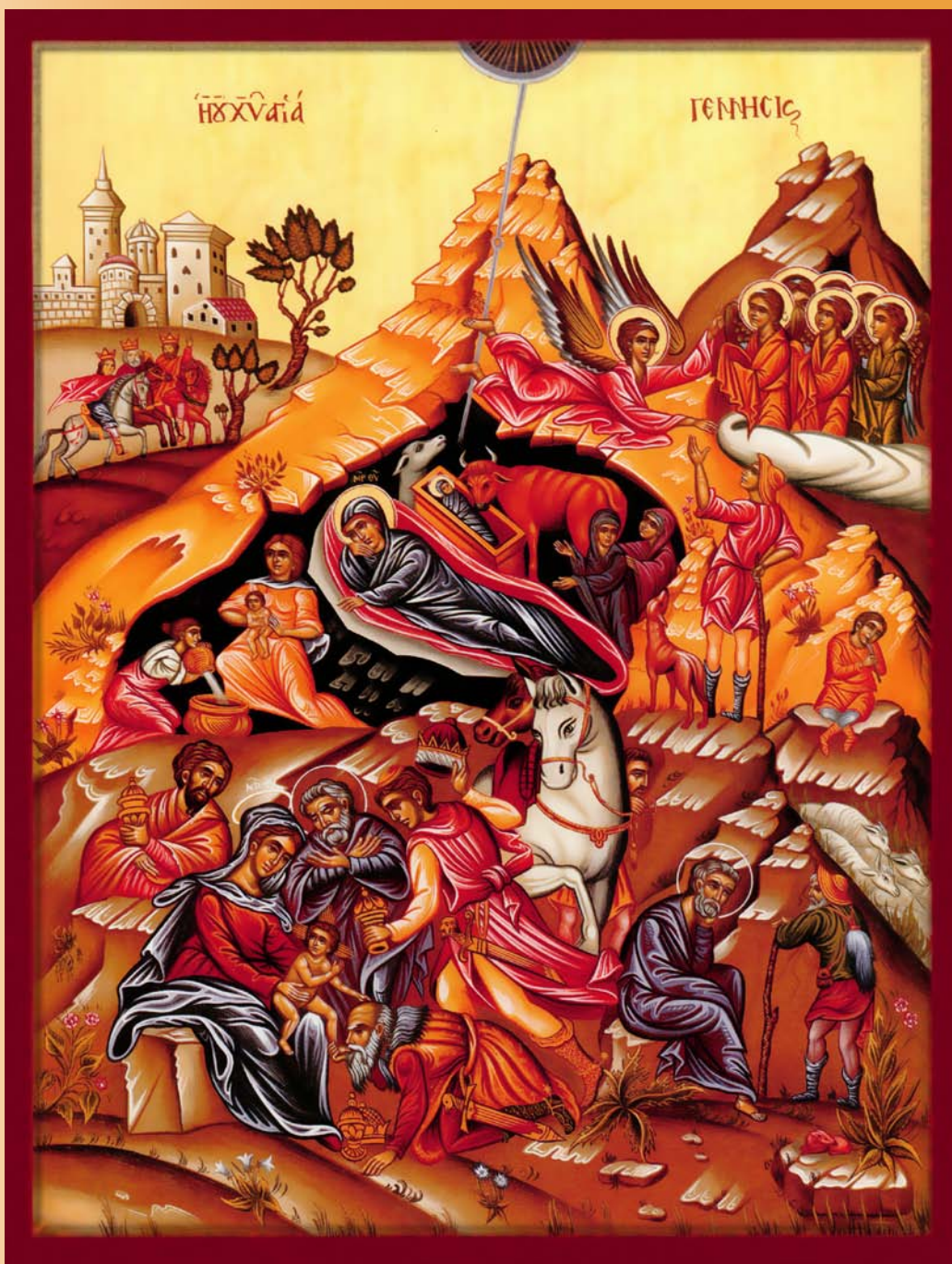
GOYA Basketball Tournament Volunteer Form and Donations Form enclosed. Please lend a hand and support our youth!

## QUICK NEWS



Christopher Georgiadis dashes down the field during the annual GOYA Turkey Bowl football game. Over two dozen teens enjoyed fun and great sportsmanship on a beautiful Thanksgiving Sunday afternoon in the park across from the church. For more photos, see the Community Life Photo Journal on pages 6-7.

## Christ is Born! Glorify Him!



## The Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ · December 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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Holy Trinity Church is a parish of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh ([www.odpgh.org](http://www.odpgh.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

#### Parish Council

Chris T. Balouris, President

Anthony Loomis Alex Trivilas

Sondra A. Balouris Yvonne Balouris

George Danis George Dickos

Troy Geanopoulos Joanne Germanos

Robert Marsh Nicholas Sarandou

Vasilios Scoumis Gerri Valliant

#### Ministries

Philoptochos..... Kay Balouris, Pres.

GOYA.....Pres. Becky Touloumes, Advisor

Choir.....John Nychis, Director

Over 50 Club.....Stella Athanasiou, Pres.

St. Lydia Study.....Stacy Dickos, Coordinator

Cemetery.....Bill Fiedler, Chairman

Greek School....Effie Kilantonis, Coordinator

Social Hall..... Laura Triantafillos, Coordinator

Bookstore..... Bill and Linda Areheart



**He** alone, being the Word of the Father and above all, was able to recreate all, and worthy to suffer on behalf of all and to be an ambassador for all with the Father. Now He entered the world in a new way, stooping to our level in His love and self-revealing to us. This He did out of sheer love for us.

St. Athanasios, "On the Incarnation" (4th century)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Do we experience Christmas from the outside in or the inside out? To find out, take a look around. During this time of year, the appearance of the world around us becomes festive and decorated. Trees and houses sprout lights and ornaments. Music changes from the standard selection of worldly fare to traditional and contemporary carols that reflect the message of the season. Food takes on a holiday flare. Even our clothes often reflect a festal mood. While we can rejoice that the world in its secular nature even notices Christmas anymore, it is our responsibility and calling as Orthodox Christians to not allow society, the press and the merchants to redefine this great Feast from the outside in.

One way to guard against this is to know this great Feast from the inside out. We can do this with questions such as "What happened and why?" For the Church, the message is quite clear, as stated in the passage from St. Athanasios above: because God alone was able to restore from our fallen condition, He came to us, "stooping to our level." There is an easy way to understand this. Have you ever found yourself wanting to talk with a small child? It is impossible to do effectively when he or she is only three feet tall and we are twice their height. What do we do? We "stoop to their level" so we can get closer. That simple act of self-sacrifice demonstrates to the child a love that speaks louder than words. We don't need to do it ... unless we love the child enough to humble ourself and sacrifice a bit of our adult status for a moment to do something for him or her. This is why as a priest I often find myself bending down to connect with children, whether to bring them Holy Communion or to simply relate better to them in daily encounters. It brings life closer to them.

In a similar manner, says St. Athanasios, this is what happened at the Nativity of Christ. We often think of Jesus as the baby in this scene, but perhaps it would better inform us if, in our mind's eye, we were the small child, seeing the Almighty God "stooping down" to be with us and help us understand He has come to be with us. And that scene is made even more powerful through the realization that He does it out of "sheer love for us." The importance of this self-sacrificing act of love cannot be not fully appreciated until the other great Feast—the Resurrection—when standing back up after having stooped down to embrace us, He is stretched out on the Cross to die for us and save us.

Brothers and sisters, rejoice in the feast, celebrate the holiday, having fasted and prepared properly to receive it, and please keep watch in your heart that the world does not empty it of our appreciation for and absolute dependence on that divine act of sheer love. Moreover, remember that God has both allowed and called us to be sharers in that love by passing it on to others ... even if it means that we, like Him, must humble ourselves by "stooping down" to embrace them!

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Herald Personal Sponsor for this Issue:

**In Loving Memory of Jimmie Regakis from Mother, Olga  
May His Memory Be Eternal!**

**WORSHIP LIFE**

**Weekday Services . . . . . December**

Please take note of the following upcoming liturgical dates. Unless otherwise indicated, Orthros starts at 9:00 a.m., followed by Divine Liturgy at 10:00 a.m.

- Dec. 4:** St. Barbara the Great Martyr
- Dec. 5:** St. Savas the Sanctified (Blessing w/ relics following)
- Dec. 5, 7pm:** Great Vespers of St. Nicholas (at Oakland)
- Dec. 9:** The Conception of the Theotokos
- Dec. 9, 6pm:** Monthly Paraclesis to the Theotokos
- Dec. 12:** St. Spyridon the Wonderworker (at Monessen)
- Dec. 17, 8:30am:** St. Dionysios of Zakynthos (at Chapel)  
*(Note earlier time & location: St. George Chapel)*
- Dec. 24, 10am:** Royal Hours of the Nativity
- Dec. 24, 7pm:** Vespers Liturgy of the Nativity of the Lord
- Dec. 25:** The Nativity of the Lord
- Dec. 31, 6pm:** Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

**Christmas Services . . . . . December**

Please remember these festal celebrations for the Nativity of Christ and participate in them with your family:

- Thu. Dec. 24, 10 am.....Royal Hours of the Nativity**  
This special service offers readings, prophecies and hymns which point to and interpret the Divine Incarnation.
- Thu. Dec. 24, 7pm..... Vespers Liturgy of the Nativity**  
This service "opens the liturgical day" and begins the celebration of the Nativity. This is a combination of Great Vespers and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil. Those wishing to receive Holy Communion should abstain from food and drink from noon until the service.
- Fri. Dec. 25 .....Divine Liturgy of the Nativity of Christ**  
9:00am Orthros/10:00 am Liturgy. 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!*
- Thu. Dec. 31 ..... Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil the Great**  
This will be a Vespers Liturgy for January 1, held the evening of the feast at 6:00 p.m., prior to the New Year's Eve celebration.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**Christmas Pageant Rehearsals . . . . . Dec. 13, 18, 19, 20**

During the month of December, there will be various rehearsals for the Holy Trinity Christmas Pageant. Please take note of them:

- Sun. Dec. 13:** Various practices in or after class. Each teacher will have information for their class.
- Fri. Dec. 18:** GOYA will be preparing Christmas bread from 4:00 to 9:00 pm, during which rehearsals will take place for Grades 7-12.
- Sat. Dec. 19:** The complete cast rehearsal for the Holy Trinity Church School Christmas Pageant will be held on Saturday morning, December 19. from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Please note: Grades 7 to 12 are asked to be pres-

ent at 9:00 a.m. to rehearse speaking parts; Grades 6 and under are asked to be present at 10:00 for the complete rehearsal. All students and staff are requested to be present. "Bonus" attendance credit will be given for all students who participate in the rehearsal.

**PAGEANT REHEARSAL SCHEDULE FOR SATURDAY, DEC. 19**  
**Grades 7 to 12.....9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.**  
**Grades 6 & under.....10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.**

**Church School Christmas Pageant . . . . . December 20**

The Holy Trinity Church School ministry will be offering its annual Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 20. All the students of the Church School will be involved in this event. On that day, following Holy Communion, all Church School students and staff will depart for their classes and final preparations for the pageant. All our parishioners are asked to stay for the pageant and coffee hour in the social hall. Also, please note: Coffee Hour that day is sponsored by the Holy Trinity Church School Alumni. Any alumni that would like to help, please contact Presvytera Becky.

**No Church School Class . . . . . Dec. 27, Jan. 3**

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on December 27 and January 3 due to the holiday celebrations, so please plan on being in church together as a family for the entire service on those days.

**Orthodox Studies Forum . . . . . December 2, 16**

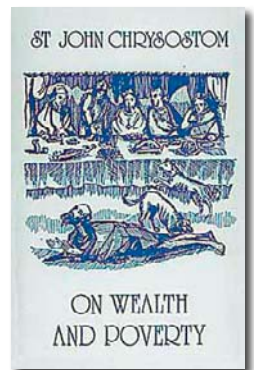
Now in its fourth year, the Orthodox Studies Forum is designed for adults who are interested in learning more about the Orthodox Christian Faith. It is led by Father Radu Bordeianu and is for both those who have been Orthodox all their lives and want to learn more as well as those seeking to embrace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

This year's forum studying the book, "On Wealth and Poverty" by St. John Chrysostom. This fourth century Father of the Church was one of the most prolific speakers and writers of the early Church and this well-translated series of messages is a contemporary and relevant to our life as Christians as it was when it was originally delivered.

The group meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at La Roche College, 900 Babcock Blvd., in the Palumbo Science Center, Room 102. For more information, visit [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/osf](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/osf) for details or contact Fr. Radu by email at [FrRadu@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:FrRadu@HolyTrinityPgh.org).

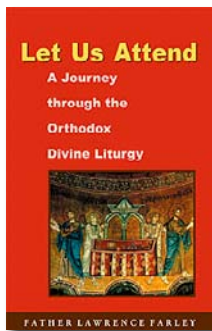
**Saint Lydia Women's Study Fellowship . . . . . Dec. 3, 17**

Now in its 11th year, the St. Lydia Women's Study Fellowship is a ministry for women to share in fellowship and to study scripture, the Orthodox Faith and family life in today's world. The meetings take place every other week on Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. This year there is a new location: the Saint George Chapel, 8931 Ringeisen Road, located at Holy



Trinity Cemetery.

New participants are always welcome: married, single, wives, mothers, working or retired, everyone is welcome! The fellowship is enjoyable, the approach is casual and discussion-oriented. The gathering starts promptly at 10:00am with an hour of study and prayer, followed by a half-hour of women's fellowship. All Holy Trinity women are welcome and invited to bring a friend! For further information on this worthwhile and informative group or for directions to the meetings, call Stacy Dickos at 412-367-0925.



This year's topic for study is the Divine Liturgy, the central worship offering of our Church. Books are available for purchase at the study. A complete schedule is available online at [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/stlydia](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/stlydia).

**FUNERALS & MEMORIALS**

**Fiffas**

The servant of God, Deno Fiffas, fell asleep in the Lord on November 13, 2009. The Funeral was held on November 16 at Holy Trinity Church, followed by Interment at Holy Trinity Cemetery may his memory be eternal!

**Upcoming Memorials**

December 6: John Rigas & John Fakles; December 13: Deno Fiffas.

**YOUTH MINISTRIES**

**GOYA Christmas Fireside Chat . . . . . December 6**

The GOYA will hold its annual Christmas Fireside Chat at the home of Dr. Anthony & Susan Zikos on Sunday, December 6 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

**Sign Up For the Holy Trinity Email!**

Want to receive the Sunday Bulletin directly via email? Want to keep up to date with the latest Holy Trinity news, including changes of events, changes due to weather, etc.? Go to [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org) and sign up today!

**Community Christmas Card Form . . . . . Due Dec. 6**

The current issue of the *Herald* contains a form for the Holy Trinity Community Christmas Card. 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. Thank you!

**Holiday Poinsettias Form. . . . . Due Dec. 6**

The current issue of the *Herald* contains a form for the sponsoring of holiday poinsettias for use in the church during the Christmas and Theophany season. If you would like 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. Thank you!

**Year-End Stewardship & Build Fund Contribution Notes**

The Stewardship Committee and Capital Campaign thank all our Holy Trinity Stewards for their pledges and contributions this year and ask that everyone brings their offerings up to date for 2009. Please take note that all offerings you would like listed as received during the 2009 tax year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31) for tax deduction purposes must be received at the church by Dec. 31. This is an IRS regulation. You may indicate the offerings to apply for either your 2009 pledge (to pay the balance) or the 2010 pledge (to pay ahead) and your pledge balance will be accurately calculated no matter when the offering is made. Year-end statements will be sent out at the end of January. Thanks! Also, 2010 Holy Trinity Stewardship Pledge Cards will be distributed in December. All Holy Trinity Stewards should complete one as soon as possible.

**Parish Council Elections. . . . . December 6**

As indicated in the notice to the General Assembly last month, regular Parish Council elections will be held Sunday, December 6, following the Divine Liturgy. Voting rules as published and explained for prior General Assemblies apply: you must be a member in good standing (stewardship and sacramental) to vote, which includes having a current year signed Holy Trinity Stewardship card submitted and contributions being made toward that pledge. Questions about good standing may be addressed to Stewardship Chairman Michael Kritiotis or Father John.

Note: Even though there is an equal number of candidates for positions, the election process must still be conducted to make the elections official. Balloting will be held open only during coffee hour.

**New Year's Eve at Holy Trinity Again! . . . . . Dec. 31**

The Social Committee announces that Holy Trinity Church will once again be holding a community New Year's Eve celebration in our own social hall. Information is contained in the flyer included in this edition of the *Holy Trinity Herald*.



**REGIONAL NEWS**

**THEOS Christmas Concert . . . . . December 13**

The Three Hierarchs Eastern Orthodox School (THEOS), in conjunction with the Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh, will host their annual Orthodox Nativity Concert on Sunday, December 13, at 5:00 pm at Holy Cross Church in Mount Lebanon. This beautiful holiday offering will feature Orthodox choirs from around the region, including a combined Greek choir directed by our own John Nychis and supported by our Holy Trinity Choir members. Please put it on your Christmas calendar so you don't miss it!





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



**Father John Androutsopoulos**

## Our Christmas Gift to Jesus

"It is, more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

How blessed the wise men were in being able to bring gifts to the Holy Babe and to adore Him as they knelt before Him! Their hearts were filled with joy as they left that place.

Everyone who loves Jesus with all his heart wants to give Him love, coming out of a heart full of gratitude. We want to bring Him our best gift - the one He desires most. So we surrender our lives to Him that He may reign over us.

### The Gifts of the Heart

Jesus our Lord and Savior never refuses a gift given with a loving heart. When we open our hearts to Jesus, He enters and fills us with an immense and overflowing joy. His gifts are much bigger than ours. He gives in abundance. How wonderful to be His faithful servants!

"A contrite and humble heart God will not despise." At Christmas time our best gift to Jesus is an open and responsive heart. This culminates in faith which believes that Jesus is the One Whom the Scriptures say He is: the Son of God, the Savior of the world, the Bread of life, the Good Shepherd, the Living Water, the Prince of Peace, Emmanuel - God with Us.

Accordingly, we commit ourselves to His transforming power. As surely as Jesus is the Son of God given for our redemption, it follows that when we receive Him we shall henceforth follow Him devoutly and love Him with all our hearts.

### The Gift of Ourselves

For all the gifts which we have received so abundantly from the Father, especially for the Gift of His Beloved Son, we thank our Heavenly Father. We, too, offer ourselves as a gift to Him.

Beloved, we know that many unbelieving merchants take

advantage of the spirit of the Holy Season for purely commercial purposes. But in spite of all that may be wrong, there is something wonderful about a season when we celebrate the birth of the Son of God. Let us rejoice and be happy together!

### The Gift of Christ

Did you ever try to define the little adverb "so" in John 3:16?

How about this: "For God loved the world SO MUCH that He gave His only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3.16).

The Wise Men did not exchange gifts. They made the long journey to present their gifts to Christ. The Wise Men were wise because they did the wise thing. Wise people still bring their gifts to Jesus. Exchanging gifts is not giving.

### Thoughts About Advent

The Fast of Christmas (Advent) which means "The Coming" of the Great and Holy Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

ADVENT teaches us to do some spiritual shopping for Christmas.

ADVENT should be a season of spiritual awaking for the soul. Fasting, Prayer, and the Sacraments of repentance, confession: and Holy Communion make the soul alive and exceedingly happy.

### Our Special Greetings

On Christmas Day when we celebrate the glorious Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, let us thank Christ that His coming means the dawning of the day of peace and good will among all persons.

May our Heavenly Father help us to remember that Jesus did not remain the little babe of the manger, but grew into manhood, and proved by His wonderful works that He was the Son of God.

May we never forget that He loved us and gave Himself for us. May we give ourselves wholly to Him.

With heartfelt gratitude and love, my family and I extend our special greetings to Father John Touloumes, Father Radu and their families, and may all the members of Holy Trinity Church have a blessed Christmas season!

**CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!**

*With His love and blessings,*



© Robert Young - Fotolia.com





**Sept. 29, 2009:** Holy Trinity Church was blessed with a panoply of liturgical gifts on Thanksgiving Sunday. At the Holy Altar along with Father John and Father Radu was Father George Daskalakis, here visiting family. At the chanter's stand was Seminarian George Athanasiou, along with schoolmates from Hellenic College, Samuel Johnson and Evan Karantonis.



**October 25, 2009:** The HOPE and JOY ministry children gathered for a bonfire at the home of Gus and Penny Georgiadis. Father Radu provided the lessons, parents provided the food, and the children brought the fun!







**November 29:** Holy Trinity GOYA held its annual GOYA Turkey Bowl football game on a beautiful Thanksgiving Sunday afternoon in the park across from the church with over two dozen teens participating. The great sportsmanship and fun was matched only by the expert refereeing and the entertaining halftime show! (see filmstrip below)







Hello, my precious children!

It's almost here! Christmas is such a wonderful time for everyone from Yiayias to parents to children to church mice!

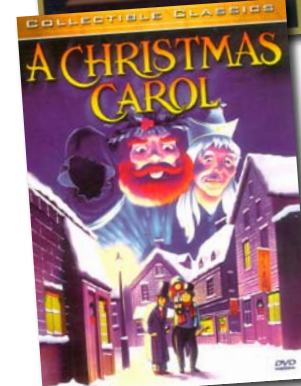
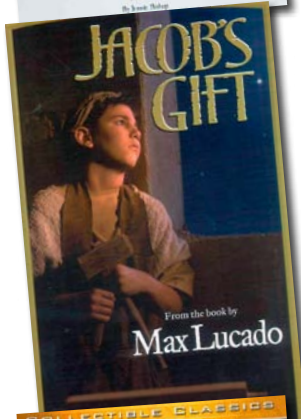
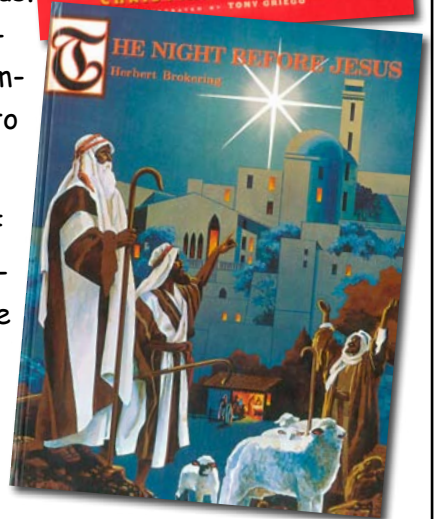
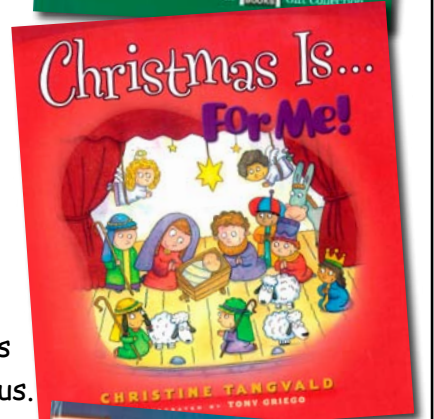
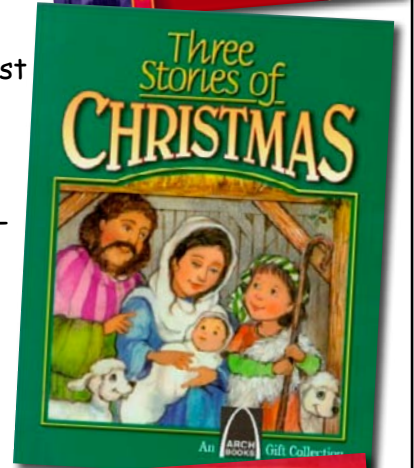
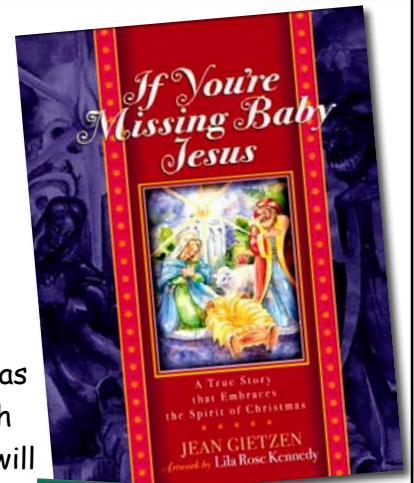
This year I would like to remind my precious children that the place to find the meaning of Christmas is not the mall, but the Church ... and of course, the Saint Spyridon Library! We have so...o...o many great Christmas books, videos and DVDs, I decided to show you a bunch of them. On the right side are four great books that will help every family with young children learn and grow together with great lessons about the Birth of Jesus Christ. On the left are just a few of the videos and DVDs we have for children of all ages that bring music, fun and solid teachings about Christmas into your home.

And one of the new items this year is also pictured: "The Three Gifts of Christmas" by Jennie Baker. It has both a book and an audio CD to go along with it! Here's what it's about: It is Christmas once again in the kingdom, but the king and queen have a big problem. Their precious daughter is so...o...o spoiled that she has grown up to be both selfish and ungrateful. The more gifts she receives, the more she wants. She really doesn't appreciate anything anyone gives here anymore. On top of that, she has forgotten the true meaning of Christmas!

Her parents come up with a plan to cure their girl of her selfishness. It begins a few weeks before Christmas with an important announcement: Nobody is to give their daughter a Christmas gift this year. They tell her they would like to be the only ones to give her gifts this year: three gifts, just like the wise men gave Baby Jesus. What do you think they are? Will the princess appreciate them? What will she do with them? Will she remember the meaning of Christmas? There's only one way to find out: visit the library and see!

And, once again, an important note to all the parents of Holy Trinity Church School: please encourage your precious children to use our wonderful library and give the younger ones a hand in checking out and returning the materials so they will be there for the next student!

Love in Christ,  
Spero





**ΟΙ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΙ**



**Voula Hareras**

**Ε**ρχονται με τις δροσιές του εφθινοπώρου πάνω στα άγγελικά τους φτερά, νά μάς κάνουν συντροφιά οί άγγελοι του Θεού, πού γιορτάζουν μαζί μας ιδιαίτερα πρύν νά μη ή χειμώνας.

Τό ήμερολόγιο τής Έκκλησίας μας σημειώνει '8 Νοεμβρίου. Η Σύναξις τών άρχιστρατήγων Μιχαήλ καί Γαβριήλ καί τών λοιπών

Άσωμάτων Δυνάμεων. Μαζί τους είναι κι ο Ραφαήλ ο Αρχάγγελος. Τό όνομα του Άρχαγγέλου Μιχαήλ δηλώνει τήν παντοκρατορική δύναμι του Θεού (τίς ως ο Θεός ήμών).

Ο Γαβριήλ με τό όνομά του σημαίνει (ήρωας του Θεού). Καί Ραφαήλ δηλώνει ότι ο Θεός ίάται (θεραπεύει) πάντας. Ίδιαίτερα ο Άρχάγγελος Ραφαήλ φανερώνει στον Τωβίτ, (πρόσωπο τής παλαιάς διαθήκης) ότι είναι ένας από τούς έπτά άγγέλους πού μεταφέρουν τίς προσευχές τών ανθρώπων στον θρόνο του Θεού.

Είναι ιδιαίτερα τιμητικό για μάς τούς ανθρώπους νά υπηρετούν τίς ανάγκες μας οί άσώματοι Άγγελοι. Καί λέμε άσώματοι διότι οί Άγγελοι δέν έχουν σώμα ίδιο με τό δικό μας (ύλικό) γι αυτό δέν πεθαίνουν όπως έμεις. Είναι πνευματικά όντα. Όνομάζονται (Λειτουργικά πνεύματα εις διακονίαν αποσταλλόμενα από τον Θεό για νά μάς εύεργετούν).

Οί Άγγελοι είναι δυνατοί, γεμάτοι αγάπη για μάς τούς ανθρώπους, είναι σοφοί συγκριτικά με μάς, εύεργετικοί, άγιοι καί ύποταγμένοι στο θέλημα του Θεού, τον όποιον αγαπούν, ύμνολογούν, καί λατρεύουν αιώνιως.

Οί άγιοι Άγγελοι κατά τήν γέννησιν του Κυρίου, τήν άγια νύχτα, πλημμύρισαν τά ούράνια με τήν χαρά τους καί τους ύμνους τους, στρατιές όλόκληρες πού γέμισαν τήν νύχτα καί τήν γή με τον άγγελικό τους ύμνο, πού άκόμα τον ψέλνει ή Έκκλησία μας σε κάθε θεία λειτουργία. (Δόξα έν ύψιστοις Θεώ).

Όταν όμως μιλάμε για Άγγέλους, δέν πρέπει νά ξεχνάμε ότι αυτά τά έκλεκτά πλάσματα του Θεού πέρασαν τήν δοκιμασία τής ύπακοής στο θέλημα Του. Καί όσοι από αυτούς στάθηκαν άσάλευτοι πλάϊ στον Άρχάγγελο πού έδήλωσε άνεπιφύλακτα τήν ύπακοή του στο θείο μεγαλειό, έστερεώθηκαν στην άγιότητα. Καί τήν μακαριότητα του ούρανού Βασιλέως Θεού..ένω οί άλλοι.. έγιναν διαβόλοι.

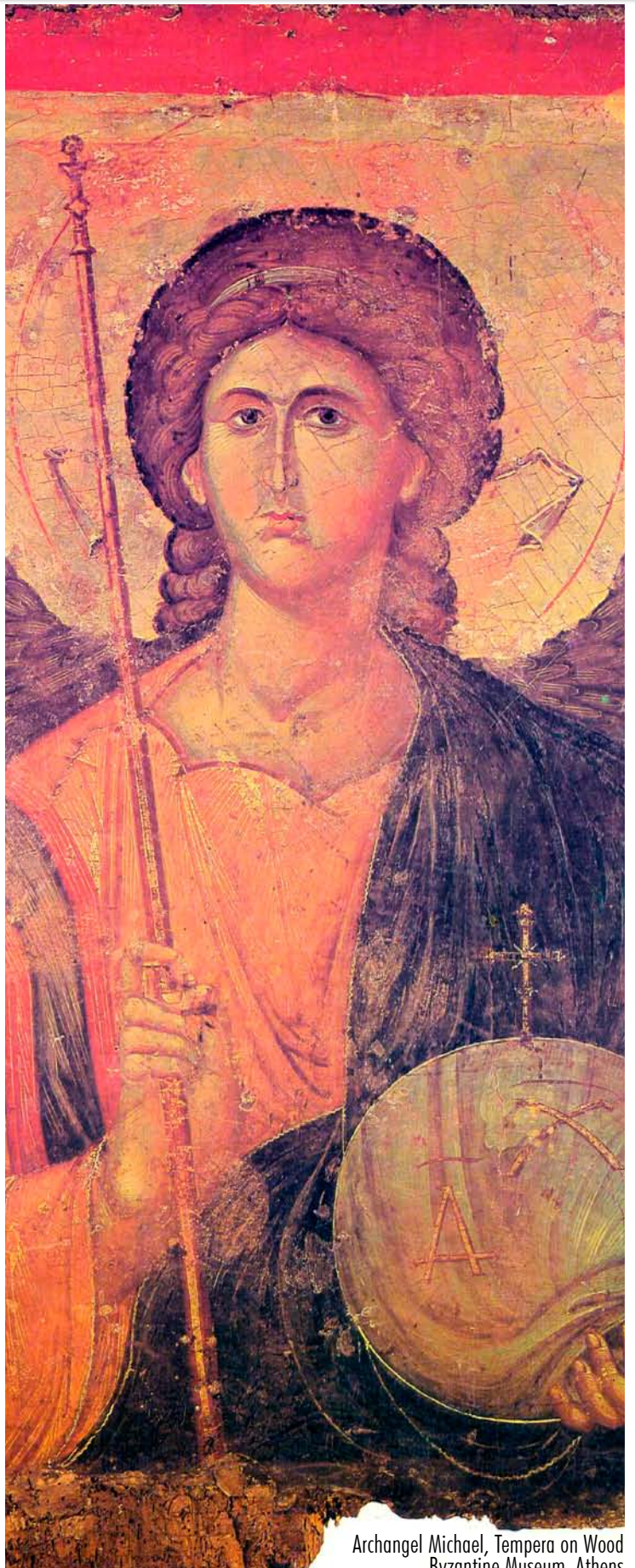
Όμως στην γιορτή τής μνήμης τους άς μη μιλάμε για σκοτάδια καί για πτώσεις. Στο χέρι μας είναι νά πάρουμε θέσι στα δεξιά του Άγίου Θεού, καί ποτέ, ποτέ, άπεναντί Του.

Καί όσοι αισθάνονται τον πειρασμό νά τούς ταλαιπωρή καί νά τούς φοβίζη, άς φέρνουν ζωντανό στή συνείδησί τους τών άγιών Άγγέλων τό πρόσταγμα (Στώμεν καλώς).

*Διαβάζοντας αυτό τό ωραίο άρθρο από τό περιοδικό, «Πρός Τήν Νίκη», έσκέφθηκα νά τό μοιραστώ μαζί σας, πραγματικά άξιζει.*

Δεκέμβριος είναι ο εύλογημένος μήνας τής Γεννήσεως του Σωτήρος μας, άς προσευχηθούμε μέσα από τήν ψυχή μας, νά βοηθήση τήν ταλαιπωρημένη ανθρωπότητα. Έπίσης τό 2010 εύχομαι νά χαρίζει σε όλους σας υγεία, τό μεγαλύτερο δώρο. ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΠΟΛΛΑ!

Βούλα Χαρερά



Archangel Michael, Tempera on Wood  
Byzantine Museum, Athens



**A**nother year is coming to a close and the stewardship program for 2009 is also nearing its end. There is a lot of good news in our community. We are blessed in so many ways and, especially this time of the year, we reflect on the gifts we were given and realize how fortunate we are. Holy Trinity has been equally blessed to have you as faithful stewards, continuing to support her through selfless giving of your Time, Talents and Treasures. Below is the most current list of stewards with signed pledge cards for 2009. This list contains 222 names, with pledges totaling \$150,000. In addition (not listed here), we have 39 contributing members who unfortunately have not yet signed a pledge card. Their contributions to-date amount to \$10,000. (There is always time to sign your pledge card and bring your membership into good standing. You can request one from the office or pick up one in the Church Narthex.)

All in all, with your continued charitable generosity through the end of the year, we anticipate that the final contributions will reach our goal of exceeding the \$170,000 mark. And, if you are anxiously awaiting the 2010 pledge package, it will be available in the next two weeks for pick-up or mailing!

Stewardship is perhaps the most classic example of expressing gratitude to God for the things we were given. Our Stewardship ministry is designed to take our parishioners and parish from where we are to where we want to be. We are still growing in our faith and still learning how to demonstrate it in our lives. In this season of reflection and spiritual renewal, let the theme in our hearts go beyond thanksgiving to focus on "thanks-living!" That is a huge leap forward. Merry Christmas and Thank You for your stewardship!

Michael Kritiotis, Stewardship Chairman

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## Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men



**H**ow do we acquire the “peace of God”? In order to acquire this peace, we do not set out to seek it. Rather, we must seek Christ in all things. The “peace of God” is the fruit of our relationship with Him. It is a consequence of living in fellowship with God. The more that we grow in our relationship with the Lord, the greater will be the “peace of God” in our life. This occurs naturally as we deepen the bond between Christ and ourselves, through the gracious activity of the Holy Spirit.

We should remember also that the Lord tells us that the peace which He gives to us is “not of this world.” The peace which the Lord offers to us is not simply the momentary feeling of contentment. Such a feeling is emotional in nature and is generally conditioned by the immediate circumstances in which we find ourselves. The peace which the Lord offers us is an inner experience and realization that we belong to God and that we are living in fellowship with Him.

This is the “peace of God” which can characterize our lives even when we find ourselves surrounded by turmoil and confronted with difficulties. It is an inner state of well-being which is present even in the face of disappointment, sickness, sorrow or troubles.

*Living the Beatitudes, Holy Cross Orthodox Press 2008*

Scripture of the Month: “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.” (1 Col. 3.15)