



THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

MAY 2013

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May Parish Calendar

NEW CHURCH OPENS

NEXT MONTH!

HELPFUL HINTS:

- 1: Be There Before
8:30am on 6/22 for seats!
- 2: Have You Made Your
Lunch Reservations Yet?

QUICK NEWS



Iconographer Dr. George Kordis starts work on the Pantokrator icon of Jesus Christ in the dome of the new church. Want to see more scenes from the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? See the Community Life Photo Journal on page 8 or visit our online photos and videos at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

*"Why do you seek the living among the dead?
He is not here. He is risen!"*

Luke 24.5



Our Mission: To proclaim and live the Orthodox Christian Faith in its fullness as faithful members of the Body of Christ

THE HOLY TRINITY **HERALD**

About the Herald

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

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About the Parish

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

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Parish Administration

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2013 Parish Council

George Dickos, President

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Charles Petredis

Andrew Janis

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Jason Farmakis

Stephanie Sedor

Louis Kort

Alex Trivilas

Leo Loomis

Gerri Valliant

Ministries

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



“You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2.19-22

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Christ,

Christ is risen!

The doors have been hung. The flooring is being laid. The kitchen is being installed. The final touches are being completed in the last month. The building is almost ready. The interim facility which God so mercifully provided for us to rent has been sold by the owner and we have exactly enough time—down to the last day according to our contract—to complete our stay there and move right into our new home. And what a home it is!

But before we become too preoccupied with the physical beauty of the tiles, lights, arches and beautiful colors, let's remind ourselves that what makes it such a secure home is the foundation. I mean this not just architecturally, but spiritually. You see, in some ways, we are entering a brand new home. But in the most important ways, we are standing upon foundations that have been laid by God Himself in His plan of salvation many, many generations ago: “built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,” as Saint Paul says above.

No matter how many great plans we have made and excellent features we have built into this facility to host many ministries, fantastic festivals, big celebrations, valuable educational opportunities and more, it all comes down to this: we are simply finding new ways to present, bear witness to and spread the Good News of the Incarnation, sacrifice, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God. There is no hiding that core and central mission: it is our very reason for existence. Without it and the love of God that undergirds and empowers it, we are, again in the words of Saint Paul, “a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal” (1 Corinthians 13.1), because we are then simply making busy like every other organization, but empty of God's grace.

So, after all these years, here we are. We know the buildings will be amazing, because many years of excellent insight and forethought have preceded the countless hours sacrificed by our Building Committee, Vision Committee and Parish Councils to make it happen, along with so many sacrificial and meaningful donations. We know people will be overwhelmed by the beauty of the iconography and the landscape of the faith it presents. We know we are as ready for the “Thyranoixia” as we can be, because so many people have worked so hard to prepare for a once-in-a-lifetime weekend.

Are we ready for “the day after?” On that day, and on all the days that follow, we must be ready for the greatest task of the entire project: to answer the question, “Why have you done this?” and “What was it all for?” This a challenge we have already been prepared for by Saint Peter, who warns us, “Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 13.15). If it that moment we shrink back, how can we give anyone else hope?

Maybe the best answer is the ultimate answer of the Church, as proclaimed throughout this Resurrection season. Why have we done it? Because “CHRIST IS RISEN!” That is the Good News the entire world and every person in it has needed to hear from the first steps in garden the morning after He arose to the first steps we will tread as we enter this new House of God. He has risen for us and all those to whom our Church and our lives will bear witness. Let's be ready to share that great news with them!

TRULY HE IS RISEN!

WORSHIP LIFE

Weekday Services May

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

Mon. May 6 Saint George (see below)

Fri. May 10 Theotokos "The Life-Giving Fountain"

Service to be held at the Church of the Life-Giving Fountain in Martins Ferry, WV, for their Feast Day

Tues. May 21 Ss. Constantine & Helen

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Church School Graduation Date May 19

Attention Church School Staff, Parents and Students: Please note that the last day of Church School classes for this semester will be May 12. Church School Graduation will be held on Sunday, May 19. All students are asked to attend.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

GOYA Volleyball Tournament. May 11

The GOYA teen ministry will participate in the Metropolis GOYA Volleyball Tournament hosted by the All Saints Church in Canonsburg on Saturday, May 11. Watch the GOYA email list and Facebook page for information.

HOPE/JOY Horse Ranch Visit May 19

On Sunday, May 19, following Divine Liturgy and Church School Graduation, the HOPE and JOY ministries will have a quick lunch at the church and then will visit the Pagonis family's "C&G Ranch" in Evans City. The children will spend time learning about grooming, training and riding Arabian horses with a professional trainer. Watch for information on the HOPE and JOY email list.

Summer Camp Dates June 23-29/July 7-13

Attention all Holy Trinity campers and families: Online registration is now available on the Metropolis Web Site, pittsburgh.goarch.org. Please note the deadline for registering without a late fee and for receiving the Holy Trinity grant is **May 15, 2013**. All applications submitted online by that published date will have a total fee of only \$350 (Regular registration fee of \$500 - \$150 Holy Trinity grant). It just doesn't make sense to waste the money: Going to camp? ... get your application in on time! Don't forget, to receive the Holy Trinity grant you must register online and use the **Holy Trinity discount code "SC13HP"**. This must be used at the time of registration and cannot be applied afterward. Don't wait - act this week! Please note the designated Holy Trinity weeks for our Metropolis Summer Camp dates in 2013: JOY is Week 2 (June 23-29) and GOYA is Week 4 (July 7-13).

Note: Although Holy Trinity Church normally attends JOY Week 1, we have relocated to Week 2 this year to accommodate the new church opening. Campers may attend any session, but this is the officially designated Holy Trinity week this year.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Philoptochos News

The Ladies Philoptochos Society has started collecting "Coupons for Troops" as an expression of thanks and support for the essential work our armed forces do in keeping us safe. They are asking all who are interested in donating clipped coupons to this worthwhile venture to look for the collection box in the hall. This is a program which enhances the well-being of overseas and domestic military families by sending them food, non-food, baby food and pet food manufacturer coupons to make their hard-earned dollars go farther. Ready to help? Here are the guidelines. Coupons must be:

1. From manufacturers for individual products (example: soup, pasta or toothpaste).
2. General use, not just for individual stores (example Target, K-Mart and other individual store coupons cannot be used).
3. Clipped out individually (not by the sheet)
4. Packaged in sandwich or quart-size plastic bags.
5. Active (up to 3 months remaining) or recently expired no more than 60 days.
6. Actual printed coupons (no internet coupons, food stamps or vouchers).
7. From any source as long they are original manufacturers' coupons.

Thanks for helping Philoptochos help our troops!

May is Food Drive Month

Holy Trinity Church is the sponsor community for FOCUS Pittsburgh Emergency Food Pantry. During this most holy month, as you attend the many beautiful Lenten services, Anastasi dinner and all other functions, please remember the less fortunate, who like us have basic nutritional and personal care needs every day. There are collection bags available at church, and you may bring your donations and place them in the marked bins around the church. Below are some suggested items that the FOCUS Pittsburgh Center uses the most; this is not an exhaustive list, so other non-perishable items will be gratefully accepted.

Together, we can replenish the shelves of the emergency food pantry, so no one is turned away empty-handed. Thank you for your generosity! *Mike Kritiotis, FOCUS Ambassador.*

Food Items:

Cereal, Macaroni & Cheese (Easy Mac), Canned Fruits and Vegetables, Tuna, Pasta, Rice, Beans, Peanut Butter, Soup, Chili, Stew, Fruit Juices, Ground Coffee, Hot Chocolate, etc.

Personal Hygiene Items:

Toothpaste and Toothbrushes, Floss, Toilet Paper, Diapers, Deodorant, and all other items necessary to maintain good personal hygiene.

Holy Trinity Cemetery Clean-Up Day May 11

There will be a Cemetery Clean Up Day on Saturday May 11 from 10:00am-2:00pm at the Holy Trinity Cemetery located at 8941 Ringeisen Road, Allison Park. Parishioners are invited to help out by cleaning up common areas and the graves of their loved ones. Please bring garden tools. Mulch

will be available. The rain date will be May 18th. Please let Harriet Valliant (412-780-3077 / harriet.valliant@gmail.com) know if you can attend.

Memorial Day Service for Veterans May 27

The tradition of Memorial Day started in 1866 as local observance of honoring those who died in the Civil War. After World War I, observances also began to honor those who had died in all of America's wars. In 1971, Congress declared Memorial Day a national holiday to be observed on the last Monday of May to honor our heroes who gave their lives in battle. In these times when we are especially thankful for and sensitive to the service of those who defend our country against attacks and invasions of every kind of enemy, this service takes on a special importance. Please join together in front of the Holy Trinity Cemetery War Memorial at 9:30 am on Memorial Day as we hold a special ceremony to honor those who have given their lives in defense of the United States, the Constitution and the cause of freedom they so cherished. Please note: this service is to commemorate veterans; it is not a general memorial service for all the departed — that will be held according to Orthodox tradition on the Pentecost weekend Saturday of Souls – June 22 this year – with a Divine Liturgy & Memorial at the Thyranoxia of the new Holy Trinity Church! May their memories be eternal!



First Holy Trinity Festival at New Church! . . Aug.28-Sep. 1

Please mark August 28 through September 1 (Labor Day Weekend) on your calendar as the inaugural Greek Festival at our new Church location. The Festival Committee is reaching out to everyone to join in helping at what will be an unprecedented and historic event at our new Church, and our Parish Council has challenged us with the goal of holding our parish's most successful festival ever! They are looking for parishioners to fulfill a variety of roles—there is something for everyone! To learn about how to help, please contact one of the following festival chairpeople: Harry Athanasiou: 412-292-4205, Leo Loomis: 412-563-2323, Stephanie Sedor: 412-780-6183, Penny Tomalski: 724-813-5726 and Gerri Valliant: 412-487-3977.

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 or weather cancellations? Sign up at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org.

NEW CHURCH PROJECT NEWS

Construction Progress Online: HT, Facebook & YouTube!

Want to keep up with the construction progress of the new Holy Trinity Church? Simply visit our website, www.HolyTrinityPgh.org, and click the Gallery link for lots of photos. There are also links to up-close walking tour videos with descriptions about construction progress and features of the new facilities. You can also visit us at [Facebook.com/holytrinitypgh](https://www.facebook.com/holytrinitypgh) or on our

YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/holytrinitypgh.

ONE MORE Iconography Lecture: Monday, May 13, 7:00pm

BONUS: Another session has been added to the exciting Notable Speakers lecture series being offered by our New Church iconographer, Dr. George Kordis. The final session will be held at 7:00pm on Monday, May 13 and will feature a review of the iconographic work at the new Holy Trinity Church. In addition to being a distinguished Byzantine iconographer with an international portfolio, Dr. Kordis is Assistant Professor in Iconography at the University of Athens and a visiting professor at Yale University as well as the author of many publications. Some of his major commissions include: Docheiariou Monastery (Mount Athos), St George Orthodox Cathedral, (Beirut, Lebanon), Faneromeni Church (Vouliagmeni, Greece) and Saint Sophia Church (Valley Forge, PA). **IMPORTANT NOTE:** please check with the church office or website for the to-be-announced location.

OPENING OF THE NEW CHURCH: JUNE 22, 2013!

The "Thyranoixia" Official Opening of the new Holy Trinity Church is now about only about ONE MONTH away! His Eminence Metropolitan Savas will preside over a weekend including the Opening of the Doors service and Liturgy on Saturday and at Pentecost Liturgy on Sunday. Thanks to the tremendous committee work and enthusiastic response from many people, the Saturday Evening Gala Dinner Dance has sold out. But there are many events happening that weekend, so please plan on attending them all: 1) The official "Thyranoixia" or "Opening of the Doors" starting at 8:30am on Saturday morning, June 22, including the Divine Liturgy and Saturday of the Souls Memorial; 2) The luncheon following the services - please note that a special lunch in a commemorative lunch is available, but pre-paid reservations (\$12) are required to secure your lunch; 3) Pentecost Sunday 8:30am Orthros and 9:30am Divine Liturgy and Kneeling Service on Sunday, June 23, followed by a Community Feast Day Lunch hosted by Philoptochos (free-will offerings accepted); and finally 4) The Monday of the Holy Spirit Feast Day Liturgy and Coffee reception on June 24, starting with Orthros at 8:30am and Divine Liturgy at 9:30am. These all are "firsts" and "once-in-a-lifetime" experiences, so don't miss out on any of them!



New Church Community Open House July 27

In order to introduce the new Holy Trinity Church and Holy Trinity Center to the local community, which has been both enthusiastic and curious during our construction project, we are opening our doors on Saturday, July 27, for tours and a sampling of Holy Trinity hospitality. Volunteers from the parish will be needed to host the event. Please see Parish Council President George Dickos or look for more information to follow.



My precious children,

Christ is risen! Happy Easter! Happy May! And Happy, Happy Mommy's Day!

Hi! It is me, Spero! I just love spring with all of the beautiful colors and flowers. I also love my Mommy, Yiayia's, Thea's, and Nouna. I want them to have a very special day and this year they get to share their special month with Jesus, because we celebrate Pascha on May 5th! I am so..o..o glad because that makes it more special for them and I am glad for these wonderful women that care for me. (Hey, my precious little ones, shh! Don't tell the grown ups! I cannot wait to get my red egg. Do you know what to do with your red egg on Pascha? Meet me at the long family table in the hall for the Anastasi Dinner and I will share that with you!)

The other day while I was lying on the church lawn I looked up in the puffy clouds in the sky and wondered about Jesus' return to earth. I asked myself this question, "Will I be ready for His return?" Yiayia always says that Jesus loves me and that I can trust Him to keep every promise that He makes. However, there is one promise that Jesus made that has not happened yet! The promise is that He will return to earth again one day!

Jesus told His disciples, "When I return every one will see me on the clouds of the sky, I will come with power and glory and will send all of my angels with loud trumpets to gather all of my people from every direction". I can only imagine how awesome it will be to hear the sound of those trumpets and watch the sky open and see Jesus with millions of angels. Yiayia also tells us little ones that know one knows when Jesus is coming back, not even the angels or Jesus himself. Only our Heavenly Father knows this.

Yiayia said that, "it will happen as with the flood of Noah's day, when it is least expected." One of my favorite parables that I hear every year during the Bridegroom service is the Parable of the Ten Virgins, which Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 25. They knew that the Bridegroom would be coming but no one knew when He would arrive. They brought their lamps with them so that they could wait for Him. Yet, only five of them brought extra oil. The Bridegroom was very late and they all became tired and fell asleep. At midnight, a voice cried out here is the Bridegroom come and meet Him. The ten quickly woke up and trimmed the wicks on their lamps. They needed the light on the dark path to follow him. Nevertheless, five discovered that they did not have enough oil. "Please give us some of your oil," they demanded of the others "for our lamps are going to go out." "No," the others replied, "if we give you some of our oil we will not have enough to survive the night." So, the Five Foolish Virgins went to buy more oil and while they were gone, the Bridegroom arrived and everyone went into the house and the door was closed. The Five Foolish Virgins arrived and pounded on the door but the groom would not let them in because they had not been ready.

Yiayia tells us little ones to always be ready for Jesus return. Expect Him at any hour or any day and remember never stop praying and never give up on doing what is right. She says we are ready for Jesus return when we ask for forgiveness everyday and go to the sacrament of confession but most of all putting our trust in him.

Well this is the last issue with me until Church School in September in our NEW Church with our NEW classrooms and our NEW library! I also REALLY look forward to seeing you in church ALL SUMMER! (I'll look for your little feet under the chairs!) Be safe and have fun!

Love in Christ, Spero

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

MAY 2013 – "THE VOICE OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH"



**Father John
Androutsopoulos**

My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ: "Rejoice in the Lord always!"

Palm Sunday

We observe this day (Palm Sunday) when our Lord Jesus Christ entered into the rebellious city of Jerusalem to die for a sinful humanity. The triumphant entry of our Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem can be found in Mark 11:1-11.

This begins the last week on earth for the Son of God. He was to see His friends forsake and deny Him. The hails would turn to nails. There was a hoax in Hosanna. The cry, "Crown Him!" would become "Crucify Him!" He had lived for this final week. It was His objective from the beginning.

As the faithful ones that day laid their palm branches at Jesus' feet, may we be willing to lay our very selves at his Holy feet?

What do we learn from the above? If someone is with us today, they can also be against us tomorrow. Trust only God.

Holy Tuesday Evening: The Hymn Of Kassiani

People have asked me to explain the Hymn of Kassiani. Why do more people attend Church services on Tuesday evening? Because the special Hymn of Kassiani is chanted. In the year 830 A.D., Efosini, the mother of the Emperor Theophilos of Byzantium, invited the most beautiful young ladies of the Byzantine Empire to Constantinople to choose a wife for her son. When they arrived at the palace in the beautiful hall, Efosini gave her son an apple to give to the one he was attracted to. It was the beautiful Kassiani. But, before he gave her the apple, he wanted to test her to see if her external qualities agreed with her internal spiritual superiorities. He approached her saying, "From the woman, all evil things came into this world from Eve." Kassiani answered the following: "But from the woman came all the good things." She meant the Theotokos (All Holy) from which came the salvation of the world.

Theophilos, because of Kassiani's intelligence, gave the apple instead to the modest and beautiful Theodora. Kassiani instead decided to become a saintly queen of the heavens since she was not chosen as queen of this world. She left the worldly life and built a monastery where she lived the remaining years of her life, spending her time on ecclesiastical hymnology. And it was there she composed hymns.

In the Gospel of Luke (7:36-50), we learn of the story of the sinful woman and her forgiveness by Jesus. She fell at the feet of Jesus and kissed His feet with her profane lips and poured expensive myrrh on His feet as an expression of gratitude to her Savior. It was with great courage that she approached Jesus and asked for the remission of her sins. The sinful woman is giving a great lesson to those who are hesitating with a pessimistic spirit because of their many sins. Instead with nostalgia for the lost paradise of the Garden

of Eden, they advance blindly towards eternal condemnation. Jesus gave the answer to Simon the Pharisee and others who were surprised that Jesus accepted close to Him a sinful woman and said, "Your sins are forgiven."

One of the best hymns of our Church is the "Hymn of Kassiani," as it is called, which is chanted on Holy Tuesday evening. Why did Kassiani write this hymn? Some people think that she wrote it for herself since she failed to become queen of this world and because she took part in the beauty contest and considered this a sin. This is not true. She wrote it for the sinful woman who washed Jesus' feet with the expensive myrrh and her tears, and then used her hair to dry His feet.

Beloved, the repentance and the contrition of the sinful woman's heart gave the inspiration to Kassiani to write one of the most beautiful hymns of our Church. The four Gospel writers mentioned this event of the woman. Read Matthew (26:7-13), Mark (14:3-9), Luke (7:36-50) and John (12:3-8).

Beloved, only Luke mentions about the sinful woman. Matthew and Mark write about "a woman." John mentioned the name of Maria, the sister of Lazarus and thanks Jesus for bringing Lazarus back from the dead. The following is the Hymn of Kassiani:

"The woman who had fallen into many sins recognizes Thy Godhead, O Lord. She takes upon herself the duty of a myrrh-bearer and makes ready the myrrh of mourning, before Thy entombment. Woe to me! saith she, for my night is an ecstasy of excess, gloomy and moonless, and full of sinful desire. Receive the sources of my tears, O Thou Who dost gather into clouds the water of the sea; in Thine ineffable condescension, deign to bend down Thyself to me and to the lamentations of my heart, O Thou Who didst spread out the Heavens. I will fervently embrace Thy sacred feet, and wipe them again with the tresses of the hair of my head."

At this point, Kassiani heard and saw Theophilos coming to the monastery. She went to hide in her private room. When Theophilos, entered the monastery and found the manuscript on the table, he read it and added a verse before leaving:

"Thy feet at whose sound Eve hid herself for fear when she heard Thee walking in Paradise in the cool of the day."

When Kassiani returned, she read what he wrote and she agreed with it. She then finished the hymn with the following:

"O my Saviour and soul-Saver who can trace out the multitude of my sins, and the abysses of Thy judgement? Do not disregard me Thy servant, O Thou Whose mercy is boundless."

If you want to know more about the sinful woman and the dialogue between Simon the Pharisee and Jesus, read the Gospel of Luke (7:36-50). Kassiani is also known by the names of Kassia, Kasia, Ikasia and Eikasia. And remember, the

kiss of the feet in the east is an expression of deep respect.

At the Last Supper: I Give You a New Commandment

Read the Gospel of John 13:34. We cannot imagine a more dramatic setting. Jesus has long foretold his suffering and death; now he is sharing a last meal with his closest friends. His disciples must have realized that this was truly a last supper, the last chance they would have to be with their beloved Lord before his death. Every moment, every word of this occasion must have been precious to them, and they must have passed all too fast.

It is now that Jesus gives his followers a new commandment. And it was truly a new commandment. On every previous occasion, Jesus had taught the law of love according to its traditional formulation of loving your neighbor as yourself. But during the last supper, Jesus commands his followers to love each other as he has loved them.

How did Jesus love his followers? By being their servant. He demonstrates this again by performing the lowly task of washing their feet. And he makes it clear that he is doing this as an example to them.

How did Jesus love his followers? By giving himself up on the Cross for their sake. His new command of love, given on the eve of his death, was a command to follow him to the cross and to imitate him even to the point of death. The Cross is both the measure of God's love for us and the standard by which our love is to be measured. Who crucified Jesus? The Jews or the Romans? The answer is neither. Our sins crucified Jesus. Christ was Crucified; Truly He was Crucified.



To The Resurrection: He Has Risen, He Is Not Here

"It is the Day of Resurrection. O people, let us be glorious in splendour. Pascha! Pascha of the Lord! For Christ, our God, hath passed us, who sing the triumphal hymn from death unto life and from earth unto Heaven" (Ode 1 of the Katavasia of Pascha).

Palm Sunday begins the most significant week in all history when almost 2,000 years ago Jesus Christ rode triumphantly into Jerusalem. The masses of people were cheering, declaring him King. What a week lay before Him! What events were packed into that week!

Moving into that first Holy Week, we see the institution of the Lord's Supper take its form as Jesus gathered his disciples in that upper room. What a moving scene this is! This little band of men with all their human frailties assembled around this one perfect man who was foretelling his doom.

Reluctantly, they believed him, and even so with little understanding. Here is Peter who denies him, Judas who betrays and even doubting Thomas – all partaking of this last supper on Thursday evening.

Then comes Easter day – the day of the Resurrection. What events crowded into that one week! There has been no other like it in human history. What occurred then changed the

course of mankind. So, from this day, Palm Sunday, with the triumphant entry, has pointed to the Resurrection.

Christ is risen! The darkness was dissolved. The chains of death were crushed. The life came out of the grave. The joy succeeded the mourning.

When the scribes and the Pharisees saw the Lord on the cross dead, all those who believed that everything was over made a mistake. They considered His crucifixion as triumphant victory, but the victory was not theirs. The myrrh-bearing women, who visited first the grave, with surprise and fear, saw the stone removed from the grave, and heard from the angel, "What are you looking for, the living among the dead? He is not here; he is risen!" (Luke 24-5).

Christ is risen! And together with the Lord resurrected the hope of redemption. All the generations needed redemption. And, our Lord, with His sacrifice of His life on the Cross, offered the ransom in order for the humanity to be saved with His Resurrection, and He proved that He is the only redeemer who is risen the dead souls of men. He is leading them to the new life, the life of the light and the joy.

Christ is risen! With His resurrection of our Lord is offered the sweetest comfort to those who are faithful to the ideals. They struggle for the fulfillment of truth and virtue. And with His resurrection, He abolished the power of death. He enlightened Hades and solved the problem of the mystery of death.

Life after death is not anymore an unknown place. But it becomes a beloved place where the risen Lord has prepared for us rest and blessedness. "Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Death,

is your power to hurt? (I Corinthians 15: 55).

My beloved, it is the Resurrection of our Lord...the day of enjoyment and gratitude...the day of resurrection! Oh people, let us be radiant. It is Pascha, the Lord's Passover: for Christ God has carried us over from death to life, from earth to heaven, as we sing a victory hymn.

But this is not enough. We must shine in the light of the Resurrection! Our Lord expects us to present good deeds worthy of the great gift: to be resurrected from the works of sins and to become people of light and people of day. (I Thessalonians 5:5) Only for those close to him, there is the resurrection and happiness. He is our Lord and our God. Let us speak within ourselves, to the graves, to our enemies, friends, to the faithful and unfaithful. CHRIST IS RISEN! Then the echo which comes always from heaven, from the earth, infernal and mostly from our souls will be a most beautiful harmony. TRULY HE IS RISEN!

This is the day which the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it!" (Psalm 118:24). May we all have a blessed and happy Pascha!

*In the Love of the Risen Lord,
Rev. Fr. John H. Androustopoulos, Protoperbyter*



Top: Iconographer Dr. George Kordis of Athens begins work on the Pantokrator (Christ) and Platytera (Theotokos) icons by first sketching the outline free-hand in charcoal. **Middle:** His Eminence Metropolitan Savas visits with the iconography team and receives an explanation of the egg tempera paint method from Dr. Kordis; workers install the sound system in the church. **Bottom** Roofers install portions of the roof and gutters at the top of the Education Center; the new Holy Trinity Church peeks out from behind as the "Come and See" pre-opening banner boldly proclaims our June 22 Thy-ranoixia date to satisfy the local community's curiosity about the large new building project and to spread the good news of this witness to the Orthodox Christian Faith.



WATCH CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS ONLINE! PHOTOS at www.HolyTrinityPgh.org. VIDEOS also on Facebook and YouTube!

An original prose composition on Holy Week and the Resurrection and an original poem by Voula Hareras, "The Love of a Mother."



Voula Hareras

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!

Επέρασε καί ή Μεγάλη Έβδομάδα καί ζήσαμε όλοι μας τίς κατανυχτικές θείες ακολουθίες, μαζί μέ τόν Χριστό μας περάσαμε μέ πόνο τά πάθη του.

Καί μετά νοιώσαμε τήν μεγάλη χαρά τής 'Αναστάσεως, [τήν έορτή τών έορτών].

Όλες οί 'Αγιες ήμέρες τής μεγάλης εβδομάδος είναι γεμάτες Θεικό μεγαλείο, πλούσιες σέ νόημα

καί διδαχή.

Θά σταθώ όμως στήν Μεγάλη Πέμπτη στήν Σταύρωση του Κυρίου μας, καί θά μοιραστώ μαζί σας μερικές σκέψεις πού μου ήρθαν στό μυαλό, από τής τελευταίες στιγμές του Χριστού μας, πού υπόφερε τόν φριχτό σταυρικό του θάνατο ως άνθρωπος, γιά νά μάς γλυτώση από τίς άμαρτίες μας, καί μέ τήν Θεική του 'Ανάσταση νά μάς άνοιξη τήν πόρτα του Παραδείσου, γιά τήν αίώνια ζωή κοντά του.

Ναί ήρθε στήν Γή ως άνθρωπος, καί έζησε τήν σύντομη Ζωή του έντελώς ανθρώπινα.

Ως Θεός όμως πού ήταν μάς Δίδαξε, όλες του οί όμιλίες, οί Παραβολές, τά παραδείγματα, τά Θαύματα, καί γενικά ότi έκαμε μόνον πνεύμα Θεού θά μπορούσε νά τά κάνει.

Καί όταν πραγματικά, μελετήσεις καί έφαρμόσεις αυτά τά διδάγματα, γίνεσαι άλος άνθρωπος γιατί ζής πλέον μέ τόν Θεό.

Τήν Μεγάλη Πέμπτη λοιπόν λίγο πρίν παραδώση τό Πνεύμα του, μάς άφησε άλη μιá σπουδαιότατη διδαχή.

Κάτω από τόν Σταυρό ήταν ή Θεοτόκος Μητέρα του, καί υπόφερε καί αυτή βλέποντας τό άγαπημένο της παιδί σ' αυτό τό μαρτύριο. Καί πιά πέρα ήταν ό άγαπημένος καί έκλεκτός του μαθητής 'Ιωάννης, καί του λέγει νά πάρει τήν Μάνα του, καί νά τήν έχει σάν δική του καί νά τήν προστατεύση, τό ίδιο είπε καί στήν Θεοτόκο Μάνα του, - ότi αυτός θά είναι ό υίός σου - έτσι άπλά.

Τότε σκέφθηκα ότi ό Χριστός μας δέν έκαμε αυτήν τήν κίνηση γιά τήν Παναγία μας, διότi δέν νομίζω ή Παναγία μας νά ήθελε κάποιον νά τήν προσέχη, ό γυός της ήταν Θεός, καί σέ τρεις ήμέρες θά άναστηθή, καί όπως παρουσιάσθηκε στους Μαθητάς του, άσφαλώς θά παρουσιαζόταν καί στήν Μάνα του, άλά άς υποθέσουμε ότi κάποια άνάγκη τής παρουσιαζόταν μέ ένα νεύμα του Κυρίου μας στρατιά άγγέλων θά έτρεχαν πρός βοήθειά της.

Ό Χριστός καί Σωτήρας μας άφησε αυτό σάν διαθήκη γιά μάς, ήθελε νά μάς διδάξη, ότi πρέπει νά προσέχουμε τούς γονείς μας, καί νά δίνουμε τήν πρέπουσα προσοχή σ' αυτούς όταν βρίσκονται σέ δύσκολες στιγμές όταν γεράσουν καί δέν μπορούν νάτά καταφέρουν μόνοι τους.

Η Μάνα μας από μωρά μάς κρατά στήν εύλογημένη της άγκαλιά, μάς προστατεύει, ξενυχτά, χτυποκαρδίζει, γιά μάς συνέχεια σέ όλη της τήν ζωή, καί όταν πλέον είμαστε τακτοποιημένοι, δέν σταματά νά προσεύχεται γιά μάς, καί νά μάς δίνει άδιάκοπα τήν εύχή της.

Δέν ζητά από μάς τίποτε σπουδαίο, μόνον λίγο σεβασμό

,καί λίγη αγάπη', γιά νά είναι ήρεμα τά λίγα άκόμα χρόνια πού θά ζήσει. Νά διαθέτουμε λίγη ώρα νά τήν δούμε, καί νά έχει τήν εύλογία νά βλέπει καί νά καμαρώνει τά έγγονάκια της.

Εύλογημένοι όσοι ακολουθούν αυτό πού προσπάθησε ό Χριστός μας νά μάς διδάξει λίγο πρίν παραδώση τό Πνεύμα. 'Αλλά ή Μάνα δέν άγανακτά καί μέ τούς άδιάφορους, ή καρδιά της ματώνη πού δέν τούς βλέπει όμως προσεύχεται μερόνυχτα καί γι' αυτούς γιατί είναι Μάνα.

Αυτές τίς σκέψεις έκανα, καί τώρα πού έχουμε αυτόν τόν μήνα τήν έορτή τής Μάνας είπα νά τής μοιραστώ μαζί σας. Εύχομαι νά είσθε από τούς εύλογημένους.

ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΠΟΛΛΑ ΜΑΝΟΥΛΕΣ όλου του κόσμου.

Βούλα Χαρερά

Τόν Μάϊο τιμούμε τήν έορτή τής Μητέρας.

Χρόνια Πολλά Μανούλες!



Η ΑΓΑΠΗ ΤΗΣ ΜΑΝΑΣ

Σαυτή την άστατη που ζούμε εποχή, Σο κόσμος όλος λές και νά 'άβρει κάτι τρέχει. Πούχουν αλλάξει της ζωής μας οι ρυθμοί, μόνο η αγάπη σου, Μανούλα μας αντέχει.

Όλα τ'αστέρια του ουρανού τα λαμπερά, δεν έχουν Μάνα μας τη λάμψη των ματιών σου. Κι 'από όσες γλύκες μας προσφέρει η ζωή, καμιά δεν είναι σαν την γλύκα των φιλιών σου.

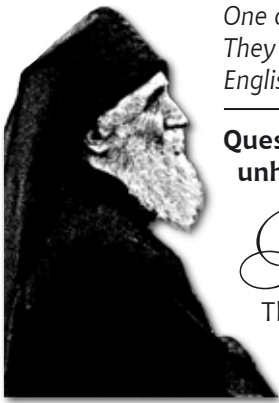
Δεν λές ποτέ για το παιδί σου δεν μπορώ, στέκεσαι πάντοτε κοντά του σαν ασπίδα. Κι 'αν τύχει κάτι στη ζωή μας θλιβερό, εσένα έχουμε Μανούλα μας ελπίδα.

Εσύ θα τρέξεις κάθε δύσκολη στιγμή, να μας βοηθήσεις με την ίδια τη ζωή σου. Εσύ θα φτάσεις ως τα πέρατα της γής, αρκεί μονάχα να γλυτώσεις το παιδί σου.

Ω, Μάνα τί να γράψω δεν μπορώ, με ποιάν Αγία να συγκρίνω τη μορφή σου, με πόση αγάπη μας κρατάς στην αγκαλιά, κι όλη την ώρα μας χαρίζεις την ευχή σου.

Γι'αυτό κι 'αν άλλαξαν τα σύνορα στη γη, μπορεί οι άνθρωποι να άλλαξαν θρησκεία, εσύ, κι 'αν είσαι μαύρη ή λευκή, είσαι Μανούλα, και αυτό έχει αξιά.

Βούλα Χαρερά



Elder Paisios

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

Question: Why are so many people unhappy with their life?

People haven't grasped the deeper meaning of life. They don't believe in the other life. This is where the whole torment of life begins. “I've been wronged,” someone says, “others are happy, but I'm not happy.” They aren't satisfied with what they have. Egoism

enters into their life, and they are tormented. God loves everyone in the world. To each person He gave whatever is of benefit to him, stature, courage, beauty, intelligence and so on, whatever will be helpful, if utilized fully, for his salvation. And yet people are tormented. “Why am I like this, while he is like that?” But you have these qualities and he has other qualities.

A Romanian fool for Christ who lived ascetically on the Holy Mountain said to someone who had such thoughts, “A bull frog saw a buffalo and said, ‘I, too, want to be a buffalo.’ The frog puffed and puffed himself up so much that he finally burst. God made the one a frog and the other a buffalo. The frog tried to be a buffalo and burst!” We must rejoice in the way the Creator has made each one of us.

When a person is helped to believe in God and in the future, eternal life—that is, when he grasps the deeper meaning of life—and repents and changes his way of life, divine consolation comes immediately with the Grace of God, which transforms the person and dispels all his inherited shortcomings. Many people who repented and struggled with *philotimo* and humility, received Grace and became Saints, whom we now revere with devotion and ask for their intercessions, whereas before they had many passions and inherited weaknesses. Take the Venerable Moses the Ethiopian, for example, who was a most bloodthirsty robber, with an inherited evil tendency. As soon as he believed in God and repented, he disciplined himself in the Christian way of life and all his passions disappeared, allowing the Grace of God to come to him and to make him worthy even of the gift of prophecy.

Question: Geronda, what precisely is the meaning of this life?

What is it? It is to be prepared for our homeland, for Heaven, for Paradise. The most important thing is for man to grasp this most profound meaning of life, which is the salvation of the soul. When man believes in God and in the future life, then he understands the vanity of this present life and prepares his passport for the other life. We forget that all of us will leave this life. None of us are going to put roots down here. This present life is not for us to have a good time. On the contrary, it is meant for us to be tested and to pass over into the future, eternal life. Our goal here must be to prepare ourselves so we can depart

with our conscience at ease when God calls us close to Him. When Christ blessed the five loaves and satisfied the hunger of thousands of people, they immediately decided that He was the ideal person to become their king! They ate the five loaves and the two fish and were enthusiastic. But Christ told them not to be concerned about this earthly bread, for they are not destined to remain here on earth.² In this life, everyone is tested to see if he measures up to what God asks of him.

Question: What must we always keep in mind in order to do God's will?

We must keep our mind focused on God; think why we are here in this life. We didn't come here to do everything and be comfortable. We came to prepare ourselves for the other life. So our mind must constantly be there and on anything that will help us to get there. By facing this responsibility with *philotimo* and by undertaking a humble and *philotimo*-filled struggle we can understand the meaning of the spiritual life. The spiritual life is a brave undertaking, a spiritual feast. Do you have any idea what it means to have a feast, a *glendi*? It means grasping the deeper meaning of monasticism, of spiritual nobility, of patristic sensitivity. Everyone has the responsibility of understanding the deeper meaning of life; not of monasticism, but of life. If they did this, then people wouldn't be mean and petty, nor would they grumble with one another. Since there is divine retribution, let's be looking to earn some spiritual cash for there, and not how to maintain our dignity and enjoy human honour and esteem. When man places himself in the realm of real life, he enjoys everything. He rejoices in living and he rejoices in dying. Not because he is tired of living, but because he will die and go to Christ.

Question: Geronda, how can we rejoice in this life when God permits suffering?

He rejoices because he can see that this life is temporary, while the other is eternal. He's not tired of life, but he thinks, “What are we doing, aren't we leaving?” and he prepares himself for there, because he understands that this is his destiny, the meaning of life. Social workers are very kind, and work very hard to help others in need. For example, a social worker goes to console and encourage a man with one leg, and he says to her, “You can tell me ‘Good morning’ with two legs, but I with only one.” What can she say to him? How can she help him with psychology? If this person isn't helped to understand the deeper meaning of life, he can't be helped at all. Even if others walked with four legs, he could say, “Thank you God, for making me able to walk even with one leg.” He must understand that if he doesn't grumble about this disability permitted by God, he will be storing up a considerable heavenly reward in the other life.

Excerpted from Elder Paisios of Mount Athos, “Spiritual Counsels, Vol. II: Spiritual Awakening”

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CONQUERING YOUR FEARS

Want to give the Holy Light of the Resurrection victory over all your fears? Saint John Climacus shows us how:

Fear is a childish feeling of the adult but empty soul. Fear is really a lack of faith that becomes obvious when we think of what unforeseen things might happen. It is lack of trust in God. The proud soul is a slave to fear precisely because it trusts in itself and so shudders at any noise or any shadow. Those who are contrite for their sins have no fear.

So if there are places where you are normally afraid to go, do not hesitate to frequent them even at dead of night, armed with prayer. Your fear is a childish and ridiculous thing, but if you give way to it only a little, it will take root in your heart and stay with you. So arm yourself with prayer and when you reach the spot lambast the enemy in the name of Jesus. There is no stronger weapon in earth or heaven than that.

And when you are cured of your fear, sing the praises of the One who has freed you. If you thank Him, He will always protect you. Sometimes only the body is afraid and the fear has not spread to the soul, then you are nearly cured. The one who serves God, fears his Lord and no other. The one who does not fear his Lord is scared even of his own shadow.



Saint John of the Ladder, "Stairway to Paradise"

Scripture of the Month: "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14.1)