



# THE HOLY TRINITY HERALD

JANUARY 2019

VOLUME 27 • ISSUE 1

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

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### - INSERTS -

February Movie Night  
"Men Who Cook" Flyer

**JOIN US FOR HOLY  
THEOPHANY SERVICES, THE  
BLESSING OF THE WATERS  
AND THE VASILOPITA  
LUNCHEON ON JANUARY 6.  
SEE SCHEDULE INSIDE.**

## QUICK NEWS



Cheery "reindeer" sing along with the Community Christmas Carolers for the Sisters next door. Want to see more photos of this event and others in the life and ministries of Holy Trinity Church? See the Community Life Photo Journal on page 7 or visit our online photo gallery site at [photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://photos.HolyTrinityPgh.org).

## SAINT JOHN THE FORERUNNER - FEAST DAY: JAN. 7



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

### Editor

Father John Touloumes, Protopresbyter  
Church: 412-366-8700

Home: 412-831-3574

E-mail: [fjt@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:fjt@HolyTrinityPgh.org)

### Production

Mary Portellos, Office Administrator

E-mail: [office@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:office@HolyTrinityPgh.org)

### Contributors

Rev. Fr. John Androutsopoulos

Anita Sinicrope-Maier

### Photographers

Mary-Magdalene Welsh

Peter Gagianas Theanne Gagianas

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## About the Parish

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

985 Providence Boulevard

Pittsburgh, PA 15237

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

Web site: [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org)

Email: [office@HolyTrinityPgh.org](mailto:office@HolyTrinityPgh.org)

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

## Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Parish Administration

### Clergy

Rev. Fr. John Touloumes, Proistamenos

Rev. Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Assistant Priest

### 2018 Parish Council

Gerri Valliant, President

Dean A. Balouris	Michael Passodelis
George Danis	Joyce Athanasiou
George Dickos	Stephen Stearns
Alvin Backeris	Karen Georgiadis
Tom Germanos	Alex Trilivas
Ted Stewart	Jean Willow

### Ministries

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

**"FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY."**



**Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**

Romans 12.2

My beloved spiritual family,

Here we are at the start of another year. Perhaps you look back at last year as one full of blessings and pray they will continue. Perhaps instead last year was one of loss, challenges or difficult pain and you are glad to turn the page in the calendar and start again. Either way, many of us try to get a good start by making up our mind to do the things we think will help make the new year a good one. We call these "resolutions," a word which means "a firm decision to do or not to do something." Admirable in it's intent, certainly, but wait: how does the thing to do or not do get determined?

It only takes a few minutes of television or in front of a computer or cell phone screen to find popular resolutions if you can't decide. According to one poll, here are the 2019 Top Five Resolutions for the New Year: 1) Losing weight (38%); 2) Saving money (37%); 3) Travel (24%); Find a new job/hobby (12%); and 5) Make new friends. Now, certainly all those are admirable in some way. Some are based on sage wisdom, others promoted by modern marketing, and still others by a need for greater personal satisfaction.

Saint Paul, however, uses a different measure in his Epistle to the Romans above. Instead of finding out what pleases our self, what makes us popular with others, what enriches our material status or what in any other way uses the measures of the world to conclude where we fall short and where we need to take action, he says we need to use an entirely different basis for the whole process. What we should really be seeking, he says, is "the will of God, what is acceptable and perfect." Note that "what is acceptable and perfect" is not measured by scales, balances, passports and "likes" or "re-tweets", but by "the will of God." And we will only do that as a result of our firm dedication to Him, placing His will above ours or anyone else's. St. Theophan the Recluse lays a firm foundation for that process by reminding us this: "There is a moment, and a very noticeable moment, which is sharply marked out in the course of our life, when a person begins to live in a Christian way." Note that he does not say, as some other faith approaches teach, that at that moment we become a Christian. As Orthodox Christians that happens when we are accepted by Christ at Holy Baptism. But it is, rather, the moment we begin to live in a Christian way, which he describes as this: "Christian life is zeal and the strength to remain in communion with God by means of active fulfillment of His holy will, according to our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the help and grace of God, to the glory of His most holy name."

As the priest and spiritual father of this community, I am certain that the sacrificial love and dedication we experience together here are the fruits of the already-committed Christian life of our many faithful members, and I offer thanks to God for you with all my heart. I pray we may all enter the new year blessed by the transforming and renewal our minds so we may continue this holy journey together as faithful members of the Body of Christ!

Pastorally and paternally yours,



**WORSHIP LIFE**

**Weekday Services ..... January**

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

**Mon., Dec. 31, 6:30PM: EVENING Orthros & Liturgy - Saint Basil the Great (SG)**

Open the New Year with the Lord's blessing in prayer at the Divine Liturgy in our beautiful Saint George Chapel for the Feast of Saint Basil. This is an evening Liturgy, so those wishing to receive Holy Communion should refrain from eating or drinking after their noon meal.

**Fri., Jan. 4, 9:30am: Royal Hours of Theophany (HT)**

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

**Sat., Jan. 5, 8:30am Orthros/9:30am Liturgy: The Forefeast of Theophany (HT)**

This is the first of two Theophany Liturgies and services of Great Blessings of the Waters. Please note that this is also a strict fasting day in preparation for Theophany.

**Sun., Jan. 6: The Holy Theophany of our Lord (HT)**

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

**Mon., Jan. 7: St. John the Baptist and Forerunner (SG)**

**Thu., Jan. 17: Saint Anthony the Great (SG)**

**Wed. Jan. 30: The Three Hierarchs (SG)**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**No Church School Class ..... Dec. 30**

Attention, parents: there will be no Church School class on December 30 due to the holiday celebrations, so please join together to worship as a family on that day.

**Theophany Blessing of Waters ..... Jan. 6**

On the great and holy feast of Theophany, all Church School students will remain in Liturgy following Holy Communion to participate in the Blessing of the Waters and celebrate the feast as a community. All students are then asked to attend the Vasilopita Luncheon with their families.

**YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS**

**GOYA Basketball Practice ..... Jan.-Feb.**

GOYA will hold basketball practice in preparation for the 2019 basketball tournament season on January 2, 8, & 22 and February 5, 11 & 20 from 6:30-8:30pm at Hosack Elementary School, 9275 Peebles Road, Allison Park, PA 15101.

**GOYA Basketball Tournaments ..... January /February**

Our Holy Trinity GOYA families will be participating in three

Metropolis Basketball Tournaments in January this year and one in February. They will participate in the Saint Haralambos tournament in Canton, OH, on January 11-13, for the first tournament, and the Annunciation Cathedral tournament in Cleveland, OH, from January 25-27. The last tournament is February 24-24 at St. Nicholas Cathedral in Pittsburgh. May God grant all our teens, coaches and chaperons good skills, safe travels, protection from injury and the joy of fellowship in Christ with their friends in our sister churches near and far.



**Ten Minutes of HOPE and JOY ..... Jan. 20, 27**

Ten Minutes of HOPE and JOY: Our children in HOPE (grades K-2) and JOY (grades 3-6) will continue to meet with Father Radu once a month for ten minutes after their Church School lesson. To have more personal interaction and a meaningful dialogue, please help your children formulate questions about our faith, and we will address those topics during our "Ten Minutes of HOPE" on Jan. 20 and "Ten Minutes of JOY" on Jan 27.

**COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENTS**

**New Year Holiday Office Schedule ..... January 1**

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

**Parish Council Election Results/Installation .... January 6**

Thank you to all those whose names were submitted for Parish Council elections this year. The results from the vote have placed the following members on the Council for the 2019-2020 term: George Danis, Karen Georgiadis, Tom Germanos, Michael Passodelis, Jeanne Willow, and Gerri Valliant. Continuing on for the remainder of their two-year term through 2019 are: Alvin Backeris, Dean A. Balouris, George Dickos, Steven Stearns, Ted Stewart and Alex Trilivas. Parish Council installation will be held on Sunday, January 6, followed by the election of officers. Thank you to all those whom you have selected to serve in this important ministry, and remember: they serve **for you** and **with you**, not instead of you, so when they call for support, please answer, "Yes, here I am!" Thank you.

**Vasilopita Celebration and Appreciation Lunch .... Jan. 6**

Holy Trinity Church will hold the annual Vasilopita Celebration on Sunday, January 6. As usual, a special tray will be passed by the Philoptochos at the end of the Liturgy to benefit St. Basil Academy, the young people's philanthropic institution run by the Archdiocese in Garrison, NY. Then, we will once again hold will be a Vasilopita Luncheon, hosted by the Parish Council in the Grand Room following Divine Liturgy, where the cutting of the community Vasilopita will



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

take place and a complimentary lunch can be enjoyed by all. Leaders and/or representatives from all parish ministries are asked to be present at the luncheon to receive the Vasilopita on behalf of your ministry.

This is also an opportunity for the Council and the Festival Committee to thank all our dedicated volunteers for their sacrificial and valued help for our most-successful-ever Taste of Greece Festival last year. Thank you for your participation! It is community labor of love that can't happen without you!



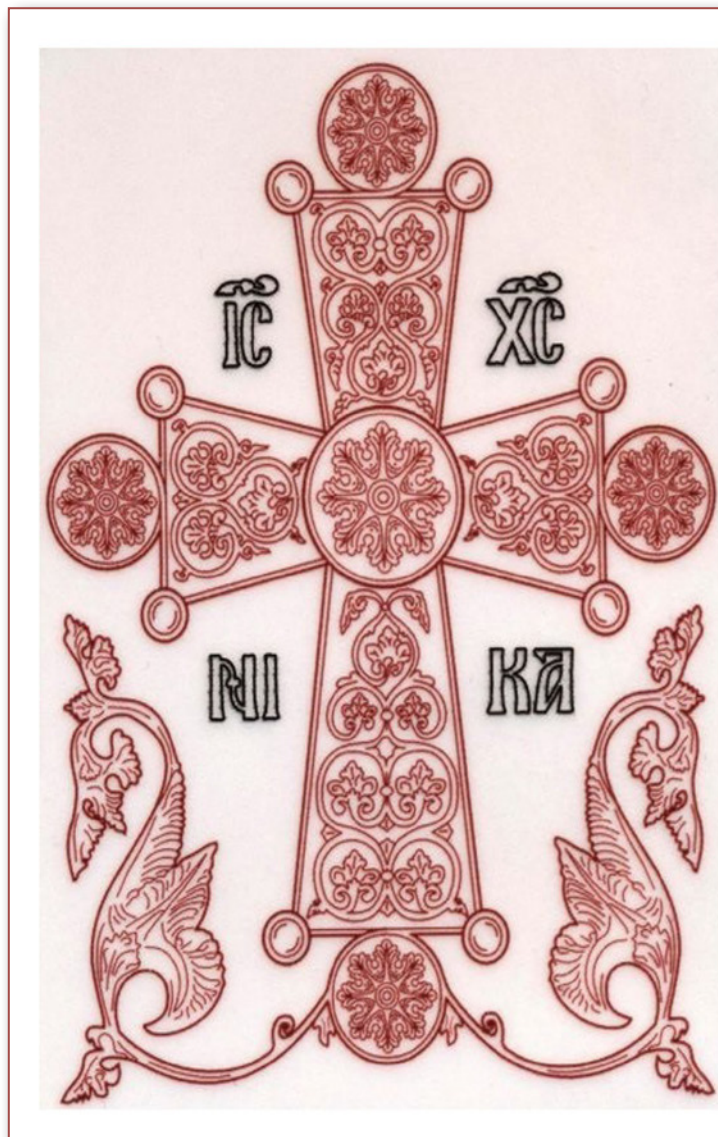
**House Blessings . . . . . January**

Services for Holy Theophany and its surrounding feasts will be held as usual on January 5-7. An important part of that celebration is the Great Blessing of the Waters service. In order to bring the blessings of the feast and the Lord into our

homes, Orthodox Christians traditionally invite the priest to bless their home with the Holy Water from the feast. Please see the enclosed information and schedule your visit by January 5. Never has your house blessed before? This is a great year to start! House Blessing Request information can be found on page 17 and on the back page of this issue. The easiest way to schedule is **online** at [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events). Please note and be available for the dates in your area. Rescheduling will only be done for cases of inclement weather.

**Cultural Exhibit On Greek Immigrants . . . . Dec. 31-Jan. 5**

The American-Hellenic Foundation of Western PA, and the Greek Nationality Room Committee of the Nationality Rooms Program of the University of Pittsburgh are sponsoring a special history exhibit from December 31-January 5 in the Main Lobby of City Hall. The exhibit is titled "The First Greek Immigrants to the City of Pittsburgh (1893-1894). Admission is free. The formal opening ceremony will be held on Sunday, December 30, at 4:00pm.



*By the grace of God and through the  
Laying on of Hands by*

***His Eminence Metropolitan  
Savas of Pittsburgh***  
*the servant of God*

***George Athanasiou***

*will be ordained to the Holy Diaconate on*

***Monday February 18, 2019***

***Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church***

*985 Providence Blvd Pittsburgh, Pa 15237*

***Orthros 8:30am / Divine Liturgy 9:30am***

*Luncheon to follow*

*RSVP at [holytrinitypgh.org/events](http://holytrinitypgh.org/events)*

*Accommodations: Fairfield Inn & Suites Pittsburgh*

*North/McCandless Crossing (next to Church)*

*\$99/night - 412-227-9600 - Athanasiou Ordination*

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



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



Father John Androutsopoulos

## New Year 2019

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today we step out across the threshold into a new year. The old year is behind us; a new year is before us. New Year's resolutions are good, if they are backed up with earnest prayer for help in keeping them.

### A Seven-story Structure (Read 2 Peter 1)

Let us build our lives this year on the foundation of Jesus Christ according to the blueprint given us by Simon Peter. The confession of Christ first made by Peter has become the foundation of our faith.

1. After the one foundation has been laid, build the first floor with **VIRTUE**, or strength. It must hold up the other floors. Give it your best material.
2. On virtue's floor build **KNOWLEDGE**. Study to show yourself approved. Zeal without knowledge is dangerous. One must know God to have a good life.
3. The third floor is **TEMPERANCE**. Temperance is a needed restraint on passions and affections. Life's building cannot grow on intemperance.
4. Temperance needs **PATIENCE**. Priests, parents, teachers, and children all need patience. Patience is LOVE IN WAITING.
5. **GODLINESS** means being Godlike. It includes morality and spirituality. It is a great and important story in the building of life.
6. **BROTHERLY KINDNESS** naturally follows as we build. "Be ye kind." Some are kinder to strangers than to their own family. "We know that we have left death and come over into life; we know it because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love his brother is still in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that a murderer does not have eternal life in him." (1 John 3: 14,15)
7. We must go **DOWN** to faith before we can go **UP** to **LOVE**. This is the roof. It protects the whole structure. The other floors hold up the roof. The roof protects against the weather of adversity. Put your best material of faith, hope, virtue, kindness, Godliness, and love into your building and you will have a blessed and happy New Year and every year of your life.

May God help us to be faithful to Him.

### Needs For Good Living

1. Health enough to work and make a living. strength enough to meet and overcome life's problems.
2. Grace enough to repent of and confess our sins, obey God, and forgive others.

3. Patience enough to work until He comes or calls.
4. Charity enough to see good in all men.
5. Faith enough to remove the mountains that obstruct our way.
6. Hope enough to face the future with perfect confidence.

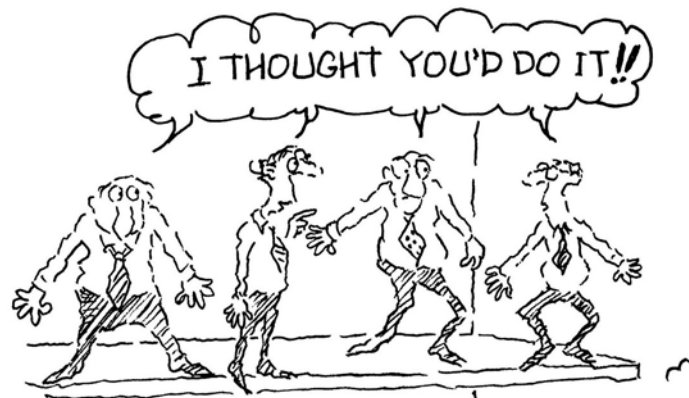
### Stewardship Thoughts For The New Year

It is well to remember that we do not give our tithes. We pay them. They are something we owe. The Pharisee in Luke 18:12 bragged about GIVING his tithes, and they certainly were NOT approved of the Lord.

We do not GIVE taxes, the light bill, or the rent, for they are debts we owe.

Children should be taught to pay their tithes each Sunday from their allowance. After they are able to earn money by selling newspapers, mowing lawns, and baby-sitting, they should be taught the necessity of paying God His dues. Habits formed early in life will stay with our children. To allow children to give quarters to Sunday school and dollars to theaters will lessen their regard for Holy things.

### The Four "Body"s In Church



Somebody, Everybody, Anybody, Nobody were neighbors. Strange people they were, hard to understand. The way some of them lived was a shame, and Everybody knew it.

For example, Somebody was gossiping about his neighbors and Everybody knew it was wrong. Anybody might have refused to listen, but Nobody did. Anybody knew that Everybody was talking about Somebody.

All four belonged to the same church. Anybody wanted to worship, but wouldn't go to church because he wasn't speaking to Somebody. Nobody did the teaching in church school. Everybody thought that Anybody would do it. Everybody thought Everybody would do it better than he. Guess who did it? NOBODY!

May God save us from such a fate!

*Have a blessed, healthy and Happy New Year!*

*Rev. Fr. John K. Androutsopoulos  
Protosyner and Internal Missionary*

Stewards of the Faith – A Personal Reflection

Walking through a packed department store, just days before Christmas, I happened upon the wall art you see here:



It struck me that, of all the merchandise in that huge building, this one drew my attention. I had gone in just to exchange a pair of shoes with a larger size. I didn't need another thing for the wall. I didn't have much time either – my wife was waiting in the car, anticipating that I'd be in and out in no time.

But, how could this be a coincidence? Just days before, I had announced to the congregation that our Stewardship theme for 2019 would be "Stewards of the Faith—All Things are Possible to the One Who Believes in Christ". Now, here is this sign, staring at me, daring me to walk on.

I picked it up. Turning the corner to approach the cashiers, dread rushed over me. The line of people waiting to check out was obscene. And not moving. "Wow, you're really testing my faith, aren't you?" I said, almost audibly. Everyone knows how I detest lines, and go to (sometimes unreasonable) lengths to avoid them. Surely, He does! I looked for an express or self-service lane. None was there.

My first urge was to leave the sign on a nearby shelf and take off. But if this is a test, I thought, bring it on! So I stood my ground—literally! There was no forward progress for what seemed to be an eternity. I texted my wife "Sorry, I picked something up and the line is rreeaally slow." So, I waited, listening to the Christmas music and the buzzing of people around me.

I'm not sure how or when it actually happened, but at one moment, through a flip of some deep subconscious switch, all noise in my ears was cancelled. Holding the heavy sign against my chest, my thoughts drifted. Images flickered in my mind's eye—my grandparents' village, war, the Army, living in America, the Church—from almost 35 years ago, when we first visited, and to where it is now—children, grandkids! So many times where odds were unfavorable, no way the out-

come should have been this good, and yet, here we are.

I smile at seeing Stella reciting the Lord's Prayer; Melina blowing us kisses at the window; Michael...How many days and nights were spent in prayer for that boy? How many in our family, especially our Church Family, constantly added their supplications to the Lord for his health! And what seemingly impossible hurdles did he, in turn, overcome! What guided the doctors' hands to so delicately care for him, the boy born without a heartbeat, and lungs smaller than my wedding ring? And, even when they would make a mistake or miss something, how did things turn out for the better? Infections vanished; a hernia corrected itself, sadness turned into joy.

I startled and realized that I was staring at the sign in my arms, but wasn't really seeing it. Its letters were floating, carried up and down waves, blurring first, now clear, and back again. I realized that tears had filled my eyes, and one splashed on the word believe. Faith is the answer; unquestioning faith is what makes the impossible possible, over and over again,

as each of us surely can attest, by being witnesses to the miraculous blessings in our lives. "All things, whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive." (Matthew 21:22).

In the darkest hours, I used to say (mainly as an encouragement to myself) that the Theotokos and the Saints were summoned and were floating all over Michael's room. "All Things are Possible to Him Who Believes", Jesus said to the father of the ill child.

How encouraging is his message, that our God of the impossible is with us, working through us and teaches us lessons about stewardship, humility, faith, riches on earth and the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus' command is simple: keep my Name front and center.

Have strong Faith. Be kind. The life of our church, the teachings to our children, the heritage gifted by our ancestors, our own offerings and good works for what's important, are all in response to this command, our act of faith and trust in Him. This is the reason we must carry on by being good stewards of his Church.

Wishing you all of God's blessings in the new year.

*In Christ's Love,*  
Mike Kritiotis  
Stewardship Ministry Co-Chairman





# 2018 Stewardship Roster | Stewardship News

Thank you to the following faithful stewards who have submitted their pledge cards for the 2018 pledge year. Please join them in their support for the ministries of Holy Trinity and complete your "One Holy Trinity" 2019 pledge commitment today! Remember, a signed pledge card is required as part of maintaining your membership in good standing at Holy Trinity Church each year.

Rev. Fr & Pres John N. Touloumes	Mrs. Dorothy A. Cucuras	Dr. & Mrs. Gregory Karabin	Mr & Mrs George Pastor
Rev. Fr. & Pres. Radu Bordeianu	Mr & Mrs George Danis	Mrs. Irene Karavolos	Mr. Chris Patsilevas
Rev. Fr. & Pres. John Androutsopoulos	Mr. Demetrios G. Danis	Mr. & Mrs. George Karpakis	Mr. James J. Patsilevas
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Mr. & Mrs. Justin Ambrose	Mrs. Christine Dickos	Mr. Jonathan Kohan	Mr. & Mrs. John S. Petropoulos
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Ms. Georgiana Anargyros	Mr & Mrs Frank Erdeljac	Mr. & Mrs. Doug Lupnacca	Mr & Mrs John H. Phillips
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Dr & Mrs Constantine A. Balouris	Mr. John Fries	Mr. James L. Lakes	Ms Stephanie L Sedor
Mr & Mrs Anthony Balouris	Mrs Constance Fries	Mr & Mrs George Lalikos	Presvytera Eileen Sedor
Mr & Mrs James T. Balouris	Dr & Mrs Peter Gagianas	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Leist	Mrs. Jamie Seifert
Mr Paul Balouris	Mr. John Panayoti Gagianas	Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Loomis	Mr & Mrs Emmanuel Sideris
Mr. Anthony C. Balouris	Mr. & Mrs. Josh Skrba	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Loomis	Mr James Statheas
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Mr. Jonathan Bonfield	Mr & Mrs Steven Georgiadis	Mr. & Mrs. James Mermigas	Mr & Mrs James Thomas
Mr & Mrs Reggie Bonfield	Mr & Mrs Thomas Germanos	Mrs. Arlene Metropoulos	Mrs Georgia Touloumes
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Mr. & Mrs. Michael Bournias	Mrs Toula Giannoutsos	Mr Stanley Morris	Ms. Alexandra Valliant
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**To God be the Glory!**

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

# FAITH AND Family WEEKDAYS

AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Sometimes once a week is just not enough to satisfy your spiritual yearning for a deeper experience of God. “Faith and Family Weekdays” is your opportunity to live your life in the Church between Sundays! With presentations, hands-on-learning sessions and worship services, there are opportunities for Christians to “grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3.18). These faith and growth experiences can even make your Sunday Liturgies more powerful. Check it out this week and every week!

“Every day in the temple and at home they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.” (Acts 5.42)

## UPDATED “FAITH AND FAMILY WEEKDAYS” MINISTRIES GUIDE: 2018-2019

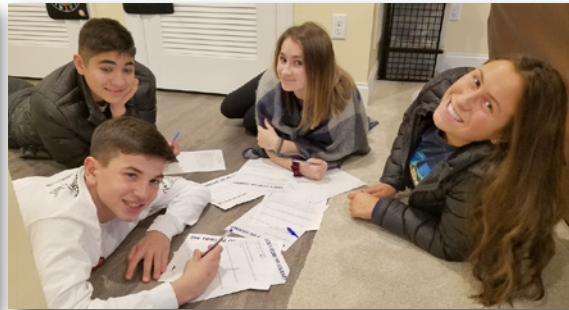
DAYS	MINISTRY	SCHEDULE	ABOUT
DAILY	“Prayer Partners” Prayer Support Ministry	<b>Every Day:</b> In your personal prayers	EVERYONE can participate in this vital ministry. On the first Sunday of Jan., Apr., July and Oct., prayer cards are distributed after Liturgy to ask parishioners to exchange names and become Prayer Partners. Pray and be prayed for daily!
MONDAYS 7:00pm	“Journey to Fullness” Faith Growth Ministry	<b>Mondays:</b> <b>Fall and Spring Series</b> Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Nov. 5, 12, 19 / Apr 1, 8, 15; May 13, 20; Jun 3, 10	This excellent video teaching series is for everyone who wants to learn more about the “fullness of the faith” found in Orthodox Christianity, whether as inquirers, catechumens or life-long members. Each segment offers an interactive question and answer period. Same series repeated in fall and spring.
SECOND TUESDAY 7:00pm	“Journey of Marriage” Marriage Prep Ministry	<b>2nd Tuesday</b> <b>Sep.-May</b> Sep. 11, Oct. 9, Dec. 11, Jan. 8, Feb. 12, Mar. 12, Apr. 9, May 14	Marriage preparation for couples using the excellent and interactive “Journey of Marriage” materials developed by Dr. Philip Mamalakis. From “Hello!” to honeymoon, this series educates and equips couples for fruitful Orthodox Christian married life. It’s fun, interactive and a great way to prepare.
WEDNESDAYS 6:30pm Worship 7:00pm Study	“Explore the Word” Worship and Bible Study Ministry	<b>Wednesdays</b> <b>Oct.-May</b> Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24; Nov. 7, 28; Dec. 12, 19; Jan. 16, 23, 30; Feb. 6, 13; May 8, 15, 22	Prayerfully read the Bible! In Deuteronomy 11, it says, “Lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.” Each Wednesday, come and open your heart in prayer in the Church and then meet in the Conference Room for the study of the Gospel of St. Matthew led by Father Radu Bordeianu.
THIRD THURSDAY 7:00am	“Prayer and Panera” Men’s Ministry	<b>3rd Thursday</b> <b>Sep.-June</b> Sep. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 29, Dec. 20, Jan. 17, Feb. 21, Mar. 21, Apr. 18, May 23 Jun. 20	The Saint Nikodemos Men’s Fellowship hosts this morning session of prayers and Christian fellowship (with coffee and bagels, too!). The group meets at church promptly at 7:00 a.m. for a 15-20 minute morning prayer and scripture, then moves up the hill to Panera for 30-45 minutes of coffee, breakfast and Christian men’s conversation.
THIRD THURSDAY 6:30pm St. George Chapel	“Monthly Paracletis Service” Worship	<b>3rd Thursday</b> <b>Sep.-June</b> Sep. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 15, Dec. 20, Jan. 17, Feb. 21, Mar. 21, Apr. 18, May 23 Jun. 20	The Paracletis, also know as the Service of Supplication, is offered monthly at St. George Chapel. It contains hymns and prayers asking the Lord for guidance, personal strength, and healing. The most popular form invokes the prayers of the Holy Theotokos. We will alternate that service with two others, one for St. Nektarios and the other for St. Paisios.
SECOND THURSDAY 7:00pm	“Orthodox Movie Night” Entertainment/Fellowship	<b>2nd Thursday</b> <b>Sep.-June</b> Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec. 13, Jan. 10, Feb. 14, Mar. 14, Apr. 11, May 9, Jun. 13	A monthly offering of inspirational movies with snacks and good company in the Fireside Room. Free to all, it’s a relaxing and uplifting alternative to the “same old stuff” on cable TV. Why sit around alone and watch that when you can enjoy a night of Holy Trinity fellowship and entertainment? Watch for the monthly flyer with a description of each offering.

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





(Above left) November 18: Young Adults make a presentation to the Ladies Philoptochos about a coffee hour project. (Above right and below) December 9: GOYA held its annual Christmas Fireside Chat at Bordeianu home. November 25: The GOYA Turkey Bowl!



November 29: Father John and Jim Secosky, our forensic architect, examine repairs to the dome, finally completed by the workers above. December 11 & 15: Dozens of Christmas gifts and over 1,200 canned food goods were donated to FOCUS Pittsburgh this year!











# Community Life Photo Gallery | IOCC Orthodox Homefront Seminar

**November 11:** Holy Trinity Church had the honor of hosting the first Metropolis of Pittsburgh IOCC Orthodox Homefront training seminar. IOCC US Country Representative Dan Christopoulos offered a three-hour program on this new emergency and preparedness program being made available on a national level to all Orthodox churches. He distributed a 50-page IOCC Homefront Preparedness Manual, discussed the work IOCC does for emergency and disaster recovery and how our parishes can participate with our people and facilities. Critical situation preparedness and response was also presented and actively discussed by the dozens in attendance from Orthodox parishes around the Pittsburgh area. For more info visit [iocc.org/where-we-work/united-states](http://iocc.org/where-we-work/united-states).





# 2018 Parish Family Retreat | Community Life Photo Gallery



**November 30/December 1:** Holy Trinity Church's Spiritual Life Ministry and Notable Speakers Series presented their first Parish Family Retreat, titled "Created to Thrive." The presenter was Dr. Phillip Mamalakis, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Dr. Mamalakis has spoken at conferences and retreats around the country on the topics of Orthodox pastoral theology and marriage, family, and parenting. He presented four sessions starting Friday evening and concluding Saturday afternoon: Thriving in Our Home, Thriving in Our Marriage, Thriving in Parenting and Thriving in Our Community. The host committee offered a delicious lunch of lenten soups on Saturday. This event was opened to all Orthodox parishes in the Pittsburgh area at no charge, a blessing made possible by the Holy Trinity Notable Speakers Series. Thank you to all!





# Community Life Photo Gallery | Philoptochos Christmas Luncheon







**December 19:** Holy Trinity community members of all ages gathered to sing Christmas Carols to the retired nuns across the street at the Sisters of Divine Providence Convent. This annual event is a highlight of the year for our faithful neighbors, many of whom sing along and know all the words of the carols by heart. They even did "Silent Night" in German!





# Thank You | 2018 Nativity Flowers Donor List

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

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Dr. Imad, Zelfa & Michael Alizray.....	In memory of Garwan & Hila Alizray
Victor Amurgis & Family.....	In memory of our loving parents, William & Harriet Amurgis (3 plants)
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Joyce & Harry Athanasiou.....	In memory of George Bertos
Anthony & Helen Balouris.....	For the health of family & friends
Anthony & Helen Balouris.....	In memory of our family, past community members & friends
Chris & Kathy Balouris.....	For the health of our parents Rev. Fr. John & Presvytera Ethel Androutsopoulos(2 plants)
Chris & Kathy Balouris.....	For the health of our parents Anthony & Helen Balouris (2 plants)
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John R. Clayton.....	In memory of his wife, Michele A. Clayton
Joyce Countouris.....	In memory of Andrew Countouris
Joyce Countouris.....	In memory of Peter Countouris
Cynthia Morris Criss.....	In memory of Tom & Dora Morris (5 plants)
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Jeff, Mina, Elizabeth & Emily Durosko.....	In memory of James & Elli Stephanou
Frank & Katina Erdeljac.....	In memory of Mike & Theologia Alexiades
Frank & Katina Erdeljac.....	In memory of Mary Alexiades
John, Georgia & Stephanie Franciscus.....	In memory of George & Betty Beckas (2 plants)
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George & Phyllis Geanopulos.....	In memory of John & Erma Haas
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Steven Georgiadis.....	For the health of family & friends
Steven Georgiadis.....	In memory of family & friends
Eugenia Graser.....	In memory of my husband Robert Graser
Eugenia Graser.....	In memory of my parents Michael & Mary Patsalos
Eugenia Hoehn.....	In memory of my parents James & Margaret Phaturos
Brian & Debbie Jewell.....	In memory of Sam & Georgia Booras
Brian & Debbie Jewell.....	In memory of Marsha Booras
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Brian & Debbie Jewell.....	For the health of Sophia Bridoux
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James & Judith Mermigas and Family.....	In memory of Theodore Mermigas
Arlene Metropulos.....	In memory of my beloved husband Dean
William J. Pagonis.....	In memory of James & Mary Pagonis (2 plants)
Matt & Nancy Palamara.....	For the health of the Palamara family & the Anh family
George & Rhea Pantelakis.....	In memory of John & Maria Pantelakis and John & Stavroula Scopelitis
Orestes & Arlene Paras.....	In memory of John & Maria Paras and Michael & Diana Paras
Orestes & Arlene Paras.....	In memory of Albert & Rose Russell and Arthur Russell
Eleftherios Parikakis & Family.....	In memory of Sophie, Michael, Virginia, Helen, Danielle, Murat, Anastasia, Zoy & Peter
Steve and Electra Roman.....	For the Health of and In Memory of our Families
James F. Sicalias.....	In memory of my mother Bessie Cocheres-Sicalias
James Steve Statheas.....	In memory of Steve & Demetra Statheas
Josie & Richard Stofko.....	In memory of Olga Regakis
Katina Tanner.....	In memory of Nick Tanner
Georgia Touloumes.....	In memory of John-Peter Orfanakos
Joanne Ladakos Watson.....	In memory of her family
Elaine Weaver.....	In memory of Robert Weaver
Mary Magdalene Welsh.....	In memory of my mother, Julia Welsh
Dorothea K. Zikos.....	In memory of Peter J. Zikos
Anthony & Aspasia Zissis.....	In memory of our Parents (2 plants)
Julie & Louis Zozos.....	In memory of Eileen Hoffmann
Julie & Louis Zozos.....	In memory of Helen Sfakianos
Julie & Louis Zozos.....	In memory of George Zozos
Julie & Louis Zozos.....	In memory of Persephone Zozos



# The Feast of Theophany and the Blessing of Homes and Businesses

*“At Your Epiphany, the whole creation sang Your praises. For You, our God, have appeared on earth and dwelt among men. You have sanctified the streams of the Jordan, sending down from on high the most Holy Spirit.”*

*From the Service of the Great Blessing of the Waters*



## “What is Theophany?”

Every year on January 6th, the Orthodox Church celebrates the Feast of Holy Theophany, which is the baptism of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church and is also known by the name, “Epiphany.” The Baptism of Christ in the River Jordan at the hand of St. John the Baptist sets the example for our own baptism by water in the Holy Spirit.

## “How do we celebrate Theophany?”

The main celebration is, of course, found in the Church with the holy services on January 5th (the Forefeast), January 6th (Theophany) and January 7th (Synaxis of St. John the Baptist). We also take the feast home with us by having our homes blessed with the Holy Water.

## “What happens during a House Blessing?”

You will receive a call to confirm your appointment a day or two ahead. When the priest arrives, he will conduct a brief service either in your dining room or at the place where your family usually offers its prayers. It is best to have the entire family present if possible, especially children. Please be sure to have an icon and a list of the first names of all the members of your household. If you have a home censer, you may prepare it also. A bowl of water is not necessary, as the priest will bring the holy water sprinkler from the church.

The priest will offer the blessing service and offer the names of the people present and those contained on the family names list in prayer. As the service concludes, please lead the priest throughout the house to sprinkle the holy water while chanting the hymn of Theophany. He will bring a copy of the service so you can follow along and chant the hymn. When the service is over, please understand if your priest needs to keep the visit brief in order to cover all the homes scheduled on that day.

## “Should I Have Our House and Business Blessed Every Year?”

**Yes!** In the Orthodox Christian tradition, homes should be blessed each year to bring the blessings of the Feast of Theophany into the home and to rededicate ourselves and our family to the Lord. It is an annual commitment, celebration, thanksgiving and family prayer. It is also a pious way of asking God’s blessings on our business and livelihood as good stewards of all His gifts.

## 2019 House Blessing Schedule

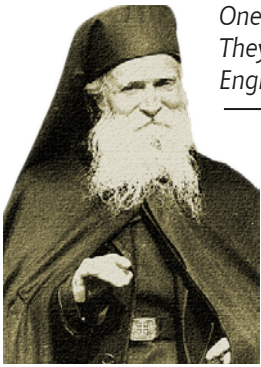
Date	Time	Area	Zip Codes
Mon. Jan. 14	5pm-8pm	South Hills, Northside	15102, 15216, 15212, 15214
Mon. Jan. 21	4pm-7pm	Allison Park, McKnight, Ross, McCandless, Glenshaw	15101, 15116, 15223, 15237
Tue. Jan. 22	3pm-8pm	Allison Park, McKnight, Ross, McCandless	15101, 15237
Thu. Jan. 24	3pm-8pm	Gibsonia, Treesdale	15044
Mon. Jan. 28	4pm-8pm	Cranberry, Mars & North	16046, 16066
Tue. Jan. 29	3pm-8pm	Cranberry, Mars & North	16046, 16066
Mon. Feb. 4	3pm-8pm	Wexford	15090
Tue. Feb. 5	3pm-8pm	Wexford	15090
Thu. Feb. 7	3pm-8pm	All other areas not listed/Make-up date/Snow date	Various

Important note: Please be available at the time scheduled for your area. Re-scheduling will only be done in cases of inclement weather. Thank you for your help!

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR REQUEST ONLINE at our website, [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events) (PREFERRED), OR BY FORM BY JANUARY 3rd TO SCHEDULE YOUR HOME. YOU WILL RECEIVE A CALL TO CONFIRM YOUR TIME. THANK YOU!

**EASIEST WAY: REQUEST A HOUSE BLESSING ONLINE AT [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events)**





Elder Thaddeus

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

### Gheronda, what is the best way to serve God?

Any work we do here on earth is God’s work. However, we always work with reservation, without sincerity. Not only can God not bear that, but no human being can. We know that the universe

belongs to God, that the Earth is God’s planet, and that everything belongs to God, no matter what type of work we do.

Whether a person is good or not, pious or not, a dedicated worker or not, he will answer for it. We should not think too much about who our superiors are, or who our employer is. What we should bear in mind is that every type of work on earth and in all the universe is God’s work, and as such it should be performed from the heart, without reservation. When we do so, we can free ourselves from our interior resistance. Every action of ours will then help our neighbor, beginning with our family, wherever we may be. So we must always be sincere. Then we radiate peace, quiet, and love, and we are loved in return. With our thoughts we either attract or repel enemies, friends, family, and neighbors. However, people usually take this lightly and suffer a lot as a result.

### And how can I best serve my neighbor as a Christian?

When we talk to our fellow men and they tell us about their troubles, we will listen to them carefully if we have love for them. We will have compassion for their suffering and pain, for we are God’s creatures; we are a manifestation of the love of God. However, we often consider this a great burden, for we are oppressed by our own cares, worries, and weaknesses. We need to rest from all these cares, but only God can give us rest. He is the Bearer of all our infirmities and weaknesses. That is why we must always turn to Him in prayer. That is our only source of comfort. Then we will be relieved of our burdens and the burdens of our neighbors’ troubles as well, for we will have taken all of them to the Lord.

When our neighbor comes to us with his troubles, we take part in them, but if we do not know how to relax—to give all our infirmities and those of our neighbor to the Lord—then we bear this cumbersome burden in our own minds and hearts and, over time, we become unbearably stressed and nervous. We become irritable; we cannot stand our own selves, let alone other people around us—our family members and, of course, our co-workers. Our life becomes miserable and stressed, and our nerves become strained. This is because we have not taught ourselves to let go of our thoughts. When our thoughts are at peace, our body rests too

### But it is so hard to find that peace in my crazy, busy life.

Our plans and interests often interfere with our lives. We make all these plans, believing that we will never succeed in anything unless we arrange everything meticulously. We truly must try to do everything as our conscience tells us, but we

must not do anything in haste. It is when we are in a hurry that the enemy traps us. In haste we cannot be aware of whether we have said something to offend our fellow man or whether we have ignored him, because we have no time to think of him; we are too busy with the plans inside our head. In this manner it is easy to sin against our neighbor. And when we sin against our neighbor, we are actually sinning against God, for God is everywhere. He dwells in the souls of each and every one of us. Our relationship toward our fellow men defines our relationship toward God.

It seems that we do not understand one thing: it is not good when we return the love of those who love us, yet hate those who hate us. We are not on the right path if we do this. We are the sons of light and love, the sons of God, His children. As such we must have His qualities and His attributes of love, peace, and kindness toward all.

### Gheronda, my workplace is a beehive of constant chatter, and it is hard to not get drawn in. What can I do?

When we are among a large number of people, say at our workplace, people often argue there, especially at large meetings. It is always best to keep silent at large gatherings. Let the others bring out their suggestions. We should keep silent. If you absolutely must say something, then say it so as not to offend anyone’s dignity. It is better not to become involved. Mind your own business and try to keep your peace.

I often find that I want to defend justice, but always seem to end up having injustice done to me.... We can defend justice, but will justice be done? The Lord knows why He has permitted injustice to happen. We will not prevent injustice by our words. With words we can only offend someone and make him hurt the other person even more. We think we are defending someone, but we are, in fact, only making matters worse. If a person is in the power of the spirits of evil, such a person breeds evil. Are we going to prevent this with our words? Quite the contrary. Even if we say something while trying to defend someone from injustice, we are not doing that person a favor. The best we can do is turn to the One Who alone gives justice.

Once, at a certain gathering of Christians where there were representatives of many religious groups present, there was a Chinese man participating in one of the meetings. Every representative presented his arguments and beliefs, but the Chinese man just sat there without saying a word. When the meeting was over, they asked him, “Why didn’t you give a suggestion or argue in favor or against some of the other suggestions? Why didn’t you at least say something?” And he answered, “I was praying to God all the time. I was asking Him to solve the problem Himself in the best possible manner. I was praying to arrive at one decision, a decision that would benefit everyone.” Now this is how one should defend justice. We must turn to the Almighty, to Him Who is Master of all minds and hearts, and everything will be well.

*Excerpted from “Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives”*





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**2019 Holy Trinity House/Business Blessing Request Form**



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Address	
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Daytime phone:	Evening phone:
Notes, directions or special information	

A schedule and description of the House Blessing tradition can be found inside this issue of The Herald. If you would like this special annual Theophany blessing for your family, home or business, please request a visit before January 3 either ONLINE or by returning this form. Your date and time will be confirmed by the day before your visit.

**EASIER & FASTER: REQUEST ONLINE AT [www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events](http://www.HolyTrinityPgh.org/events)**

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

Scripture of the Month: “Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.” (Psalm 50 [51])