

Sixth Sunday of Matthew



The Seven Holy Youths of Ephesus
The Holy Sleepers

August 4, 2024

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
250 Gallows Hill Road, Westfield, New Jersey 07090
908.233.8533 www.holytrinitywestfield.org
Live streaming services

Rev. Fr. Peter Delvzis, Parish Priest

Morning Gospel:	St. Luke 24:36-53	Ελληνικά
Epistle Reading:	Romans 12:6-14	Ελληνικά
Gospel Reading:	St. Matthew 9:1-8	Ελληνικά

Apolytikion: *“Eternal with the Father and the Spirit is the Word, Who of a Virgin was begotten for our salvation. As the faithful we both praise and worship Him, for in the flesh did He consent to ascend unto the Cross, and death did He endure and He raised unto life the dead through His all glorious resurrection.”*

Apolytikion of the Church: *“Blessed are You, O Christ our Lord and God, You who made all wise the fishermen Your Apostles, sending down upon them Your Spirit, which is Holy and through their work drawing the world into Your net, glory to You Who loves mankind.”*

Kontakion of the Pre-feast of the Transfiguration: *“On the mount [Tabor] Thou wast transfigured, and Thy disciples, as much as they could bear, beheld Thy glory, O Christ our God; that when they should see Thee crucified, they would know Thy Passion to be willing, and would preach to the world that Thou, in truth, art the Effulgence of the Father.”*

Liturgical Schedule

Monday, August 5, **Great Vespers**, 5:30 PM

Tuesday, August 6, **Holy Transfiguration**, Orthros, 8:30 AM; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Thursday, August 8, **Paraklesis to the Theotokos**, 9:00 AM

Friday, August 9, **Paraklesis to the Theotokos**, 6:30 PM

Sunday, August 11, Orthros, 8:15 AM; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Altar Donations

Altar Candles: In Loving Memory of Terpsichore Mitchell †

Large Candles: In Loving Memory of our beloved parents Spiro † and Pauline Retsinas †

Sacraments and Rites

Baptisms: Today the baptisms of Kayla Nicole Capato Dimitry, Brian Nicholas Capato Dimitry and Devon Scott Capato Dimitry will be celebrated. Their parents are Thomas and Karen Dimitry. The Godmother is Christina Dimitry. The Honorary Godparents are Elise Daniledes and John Dimitry.

Welcome Visitors

The parish of Holy Trinity welcomes those visiting our community today. We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us. If you are looking for a spiritual home, we hope that you consider becoming part of our family. Fr. Peter would very much like to meet you.

Singing the Liturgy During Summer Months

A beautiful opportunity occurs at the Divine Liturgy during the summer months in that the parish begins congregational singing. Our chanters lead the responses, and the faithful are encouraged to participate so that the church may be filled with the sweet sounds of spiritual hymns.



Prayer Request

Patty, Cynthia, Nicholas, Blace, Christos, Thomas, Rich, John, Robert, Phyllis, Lea, Mary, Mason, George, Chloe, Yolanda, Luke, George, Maria, Alexander, Athena, Demetra, Stavroula, Harry, Kathy, Jennifer, Pamela, John, Helen, Chris, Niko, Vicky, Dino, Stephanie, James, John, Theodora, Novlet, Chrysavgi, Alexandra, Sue, Marilyn, David, Basil, Laura, Marylee, Meropi, Adina, Nicholas, Constantine, Billy, Molly, Leonedas, David, Elizabeth, Tara, Lambros, Anne, Maria, Mikos, Arthur, John, Al, Jessika, Anastasia, Robert, Joanne, Vasileos, Tina, Fran, Dayvon, Sunitha, Neil, Gus, Dimitri, Freddy, Shane, Lula, Christina, Diego, Michael, Katie, Joe, Theo, Barbara, Nicholas

Paraklesis to the Most Holy Theotokos

August 8, 9, 12, 13

The Paraklesis is a beautiful service that sings the praises of the Theotokos. Its composition is attributed to the monk Theophilos. The principal part of this service is to ask for the protection, guidance and comfort (paraklesis) of the Mother of God. We call upon the Panayia for intercession because she is the greatest of all the Saints. Having dedicated her life entirely to the pursuit of holiness and by being the Mother of Jesus Christ, she has acquired the favor of God. She now continually stands in watchful prayer asking her son and our God to grant us salvation. Her constant prayer is quite effective for our salvation because Christ is quick to listen to His mother's appeal (see the Wedding in Cana, John 2:1-12). The Panayia always seeks to help those who encounter misfortune by directing them towards Christ. "Do whatever He tells you," she told the servants at the wedding in Cana. Having run out of wine, a symbol of joy, the Theotokos brought the servants to Christ - the One Who bestows everlasting joy. The Lord said to His mother, "my time has not yet come," teaching us that the fullness of God's revelation would not come until after His Resurrection. The Theotokos, however, was eager for the attendants of this wedding banquet - who represent all people - to share in the joy that God had brought to her. By interceding to her son, thirty stone jars of water were turned into wine. Her plea was the catalyst that set into motion Christ's first miracle. We now plead to her to become, once again, the catalyst for our salvation.

Statement of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Concerning Offensive Opening Ceremony of the 2024 Olympics

“The Olympic Games are a premier sporting event, attracting the interest of millions of our fellow human beings from every corner of the globe and their opening ceremony is of great importance as it serves to highlight the history and culture of the host country and spread positive messages globally.”

“It was with great sadness that we watched during the ceremony in Paris offensive performances against Christianity and the holy Gospel. This is offensive not only to faithful Christians but also for every civilized person, who recognizes the right to believe and respect religious symbols.”

“These offensive images did not brighten the ceremony, but tarnished it, for it is not progress to blaspheme God, nor is it a right to insult the religious beliefs of our fellow human beings. The spontaneous expression of disgust and disapproval on the part of the world, we hope, has sent a sufficiently loud message to the decision-makers and is a source of hope for avoiding similar actions in the future.”

Many Orthodox hierarchs from around the globe join Roman Catholic hierarchs, as well as the World Council of Churches based in Geneva to express their concern and disgust of these highly offensive images.

World Council of Churches general secretary Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay, in a letter to the International Olympic Committee and the French Olympic Committee, urgently called for an explanation of what has been perceived as a depiction of the Last Supper.

"In particular, it has angered many Christians who are disgusted and appalled by the mockery of the Christian faith as depicted in what is considered to be a portrayal of the Lord's Last Supper," wrote Pillay.

"The World Council of Churches would like you to explain to us in detail the use of this idea and whether it was intended in any way to refer to the Christian faith." Pillay reflected that the Last Supper is essential to Christian beliefs and practice and any form of mockery shows the highest form of disrespect and insensitivity.

THE SEVEN HOLY YOUTHS OF EPHEBUS – August 4

There was a great persecution of Christians during the reign of Decius. The emperor himself went to Ephesus, and there arranged a boisterous and noisy celebration in honor of the lifeless idols - as well as a terrible slaughter of Christians. Seven young men, soldiers, refrained from the impure offering of sacrifices. They earnestly prayed to the one God to save the Christian people. They were the sons of the most influential elders of Ephesus. Their names were Maximilian, Jamblicos, Martin [Martinian], John, Dionysios, Exacustodianos, and Antoninos. When they were accused before the emperor, they retreated to a hill outside of Ephesus called Celion, and there they hid in a cave. When the emperor learned of this, he commanded that the cave be walled shut. Yet God, according to His far-reaching providence, caused a miraculous and long-lasting sleep to fall upon the young men. The imperial courtiers Theodore and Rufinus (themselves secret Christians) built a small copper box into the wall. It contained lead plaques on which were written the names of these young men, and which recorded their martyric deaths during the reign of Emperor Decius. More than two hundred years passed. During the reign of Emperor Theodosius the Younger (408-450 A.D.), there was a great dispute about the resurrection of the dead, and there were some that doubted it. Emperor Theodosius was in great sorrow as a result of this dispute among the faithful, and prayed to God that He, in some way, would reveal the truth to men. Then some shepherds of Adolius, who owned the hill Celion, removed stones to build shelter. Suddenly, the youths awoke from their sleep, as youthful and healthy as on the day they fell asleep. The news of this miracle was spread abroad in every direction. Theodosius himself came with a great entourage and conversed with the youths to his delight. After a week, they again fell into the deep repose from which they had awakened, to await the General Resurrection. Emperor Theodosius wanted to place their bodies in gold caskets; but they appeared to him in a dream telling him to leave them in the earth as they had been laid there.

A POEM TO THE SEVEN HOLY SLEEPERS

When the last rays of the sun reddened the west, the Seven Youths, to God, prayed that on the morrow they might again find themselves alive and well; But, before Emperor Decius, they were brought for torture, And lay down to sleep a long, deep sleep. Time passed with long strides. One morning, in the east, the sun rose, and the Seven, from their deep sleep, awoke. Then Jamblicus, the youngest, to Ephesus ran to see and hear and, about everything, ask: Did Decius still hunt them for the slaughter? And he went to buy bread for the Seven.

But behold the wonder: this is not the same gate! And the city is completely different! Everywhere are beautiful churches, domes and crosses! Jamblicus asked himself: Are these not dreams? No familiar faces; no kinsmen anywhere: There are no persecutions; there are no martyrs! "Tell me, brethren, the name of this city, And tell me the name of the emperor who now reigns," Jamblicus inquired. The people, at him, looked, and he was the object of much opinion! "This city is Ephesus, now as before; In Christ, now reigns Emperor Theodosius!"

The proconsul heard of this, as did the gray-haired bishop; the whole city was perplexed, and all, to the cave, ran, and, seeing the miracle, glorified God and the resurrected servants of the risen Christ.

The August Edition of **THE PROMISE** Is Now Available



2024 Stewardship Campaign Update – Currently 344 Stewards have pledged \$486,951

Thank you to the parishioners who submitted their pledge cards and stewardship gifts. As of May, we graciously received 344 pledges in the amount of \$486,951. Please remember to submit your pledge card which will help us meet our operating budget of \$939,200. Consider inviting family and friends to come to visit and worship with us. Sponsor a new steward and bring them into our Holy Trinity family. Your gifts to date have allowed our Parish to achieve 51.8% of our budget and to support our annual Archdiocesan commitment, a gift to the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Foundation, and support our growing and vibrant ministries. Thank you!

Religious Education Classes Resume - Sunday, September 8

Please complete the online form for each student at your earliest convenience. The first day of classes is Sunday, September 8. We are looking forward to seeing everyone back in the Fall! Click the link to register: [Religious Education Registration](#)



Greek School Registration is Now Open

Greek School registration is now open for all classes. Classes are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4PM – 6PM. Classes begin Tuesday, September 10, grades Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st Beginners and 1st Advanced and Thursday, September 12, grades 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th.

To register [click here.](#)

Festival Baking, Saturday, August 10, 9AM

We will be making baklava and finikia (also known as melomakarona) on Saturday, August 10, at 9AM in the Bouras Center. Please join us!!! If you have any questions text Mary Carayannopoulos at 314-623-5493.

Upcoming Parish Events

SAVE THE DATE!

September 27-29, 2024

Save the Date



September 27, 28, 29

Friday
3 pm - 11pm

Saturday
11 am - 11 pm

Sunday
noon - 5 pm



Be an active part of our 2024 Greekfest! Volunteer your time, talents & treasures. Everyone is needed to make it a success! Simply scan the QR code to sign up or contact Roula Ioannou and Kelly Leunes at htgreekfestvolunteers@gmail.com

GreekFest 2024 - September 27 - 29

OPA!! 2024 Westfield GreekFest will take place, September 27-29!! Come volunteer your talent and join the fun to make this our best festival yet. PLEASE sign up and support OUR community! [GreekFest Volunteers Sign-Up](#)

Contact Roula Ioannou or Keli Leunes at HTGreekfestivalvolunteers@gmail.com

Follow us [@NIGreekFest](#) on Instagram and [NJ GreekFest](#) on Facebook to stay up-to-date on all things GreekFest!
Be sure to like and share our content!

www.njgreekfest.com



September 23, 2024

**42nd ANNUAL
HOLY TRINITY GOLF CLASSIC**



Monday, September 23, 2024

Echo Lake Country Club

515 Springfield Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090

For information, please contact the Golf Committee: George Colonias admin@htgocnj.org
908-294-7414; George Paras gparas@parasandparas.com 201-681-5366



GLORY BE TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS

✠ AMEN ✠