

Sunday Before Nativity



St. Sebastian the Martyr

DECEMBER 18, 2022

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

Rev. Fr. Peter Delvizis, Presiding Priest

On the Sunday before the Nativity, we celebrate all those who from ages past have been well-pleasing to God, from Adam even unto Joseph the Betrothed of the Most Holy Theotokos according to the Genealogy as recorded in the Gospel according to St. Luke; The Holy Prophet Daniel and The Three holy Children in the Furnace. St. Sebastian the Martyr and those with him; Our Righteous Father Michael the Confessor

Second Tone Ηχος Β΄

Click links for Scripture Readings

Fifth Morning Gospel:	St. Luke 24:13-35	Ελληνικά
Epistle Reading:	Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40	Ελληνικά
Gospel Reading:	St. Matthew 1:1-25	Ελληνικά

Apolytikion of the Resurrection: “When You descended into death, Life immortal, You vanquished the power of hell by Your resplendent divinity, and when You raised the dead from the depths of darkness, all the heavenly powers cried out triumphantly: O giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You.”

Apolytikion of the Holy Fathers: “Great are the achievements of faith! In the fountain of flame, as by the water of rest, the Three Holy Children rejoiced. And the Prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. By their intercessions, O Christ God, save our souls.

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: “On this day the Virgin * comes to the cave to give birth to * God the Word ineffably, * Who was before all the ages. * Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing * the gladsome tidings; * with the angels and the shepherds now glorify Him * Who is willing to be gazed on * as a young Child Who * before the ages is God.”

Altar Donations

Altar Candles in memory of Peter Genakos†

Vigil Light in memory of Myrofora Polyviou†

Large Candles in memory of Spyros Sikaras†

Prothesis Candles in memory of Christos†, Euterpe† and Phillip† Papatheodorou;
John†, Evangelia†, Christos† and Anastasios† Kiriakatis

Sacraments and Rites

Memorials: Your prayers are requested this morning at the memorial service for Myrofora Polyviou†, 7 years. Eternal be her memory.

Fellowship Hour: Please join us in the Bouras Center after church for the Fellowship Hour which is being sponsored by Penny Delfinopoulos, in memory of Stefanos† and Zoi† Delfinopoulos

Liturgical Schedule

Thursday, December 22, **St. Anastasia Pharmokylitria**, whose relics are deposited in the holy altar of Holy Trinity. Orthros, 8:45 AM; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Friday, December 23, **Royal Hours of the Nativity**, 8:30 AM

Saturday, December 24, Paramoni of the Nativity, Christmas Eve Services, Orthros, 5:30 PM; Divine Liturgy, 6:30 PM

Sunday, December 25, **The Nativity in the flesh of our Lord, God, and Saviour, Jesus Christ**, Orthros, 8:30 AM; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Welcome Visitors

Welcome all visitors to our parish. We are pleased that you have chosen to worship with us. If you are looking for a spiritual home, we hope that you will be part of our family. Fr. Peter would like very much to meet you. Please visit the Philoxenia/Fellowship table in the Bouras Center after services to meet parishioners and receive information about the parish.

The Holy Martyr St. Sebastian - December 18

This glorious saint was born in Italy and brought up in the city of Milan. While still young, he dedicated himself to military service. Being educated, handsome and courageous, he received the favor of Emperor Diocletian, who appointed him captain of the imperial guard. Secretly, he confessed the Christian Faith and prayed to the Living God. As an honorable, just and merciful man, Sebastian was greatly beloved by his soldiers. Whenever he could, he saved Christians from torture and death, and, when he was unable to do so, he exhorted them to die for Christ the Living God without turning back.

Two brothers, Marcus and Marcellinus, who had been imprisoned for Christ and were already on the verge of denouncing Him and worshipping idols, were confirmed in the Faith by Sebastian, who strengthened them for martyrdom. As he spoke with them, encouraging them not to fear death for Christ, his face was illumined. Everyone saw his shining face, like that of

an angel of God. Sebastian also confirmed his words by miracles: he healed Zoe, the jailer Nicostratus' wife, who had been mute for six years; he brought her, Nicostratus and his entire household to baptism; he healed the two ailing sons of Claudius the commander and brought him and his household to baptism; he healed Tranquillinus, the father of Marcus and Marcellinus, of gout and pains in his legs which had troubled him for eleven years, and brought him to baptism together with his entire household; he healed the Roman eparch Chromatius of the same illness and brought him and his son Tiburtius to baptism. The first of them to suffer was St. Zoe, whom they seized at the tomb of the Apostle Peter, where she was praying to God. After torturing her, they threw her into the Tiber River. They then seized Tiburtius, and the judge placed live coals before him, telling him to choose between life and death; that is, either to cast incense on the coals and to cense the idols, or to stand barefoot on the hot coals. St. Tiburtius made the sign of the Cross, stood barefoot on the hot coals, and remained unharmed. After this, he was beheaded. Nicostratus was killed with a stake, Tranquillinus was drowned, and Marcus and Marcellinus were tortured and pierced with spears. Then Sebastian was brought before Emperor Diocletian. The emperor rebuked him for his betrayal, but Sebastian said: "I have always prayed to my Christ for your health and for the peace of the Roman Empire." The emperor ordered that he be stripped naked and shot through with arrows. The soldiers did this until the martyr was so completely covered with arrows that his body was not seen because of them. When all thought that he was dead, he appeared alive and completely healthy. Then the pagans killed him with staves. He suffered gloriously for Christ his Lord and took up his habitation in the Kingdom of Christ in the year 287 A.D. at the time of Diocletian the Emperor and Gaius the Bishop of Rome.

Special Christmas Gifts

At Christmastime, you may desire to express your love for Holy Trinity by offering special gifts such as communion wine, festal icons, incense, charcoal, pew torch candles, daily Bible guides, holy water bottles, Poinsettia plants, and wreaths that can be donated in memory of or for the health of loved ones. Please call the church office. Thank you for your generosity. A special request is asked for the floral decoration of both the Nativity and Epiphany icons.



Metropolis of New Jersey Tree Lighting – Tuesday, December 20

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros invites parishioners of Holy Trinity to the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony to be held on Tuesday, December 20 at 6:00 PM at the Metropolis of New Jersey located on 215 East Grove St., Westfield. A reception will follow the Tree Lighting.

Prayer Request



Elizabeth, Steve, Demetrios, Clem, Christos, Dorothy, Paul, Bill, Thomas, John, Ketí, Dawn, Nick, Hilary, Nicholas, Matt, Diane, Cynthia, Patty, John, Isabel, Noella, Nevin, George, Diana, Lucia, Rich, Ketí, Georgia, Harry, Kathy, Jennifer, Gayle, William, Byron, John, Robert, Connie, Donald, Terry, John, Angela, Andrew, Dianna, Edward, Sue, Thomas, Andrea, Thomas, Alexandra, Ronald, Galina, Angela, Lubove, Despina, Maria, John, Paraskevi (Parri), Dianna, Stephanie, Edward, Brian, Janeen, Cathy, James, Christine, Andrea, Molly, Anastasios, Michael, Angela, Lauren, John, Effie, Stella, Denise, Cloy, Mirka, Stamatia, Theresa, James, Matthew, Antoinette, William, Angela, Tanner, Stefanos, Helen, Katherine, Ashley, Angela, Nick, Lindsey, Alexandria, Evdokia, Chris, Zach, Notis, Erica, Christina, Fran, Joan, Hellen, Joseph, Cleopatra, James, Rosa, George, Kathy, Stephanie, Theresa, Dorothy, Shannon

2023 Stewardship Drive is Underway

Please submit your 2023 Stewardship card, by bringing it to church or mailing it to the office by December 31. Thank you for your support! We hope to increase the number of Stewardship cards submitted for 2023 and we can do so with your help.



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
250 Gallows Hill Road, Westfield, NJ 07090 • Tel. (908) 233-8533 • www.HolyTrinityWestfield.org

"Giving Thanks: Eucharistic Stewardship"

2023 CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CARD

The operating expenses of our Church for the year 2023 are estimated to be \$885,000 (or an estimated \$2,200 per family).

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/we pledge to contribute for Christ's work at Holy Trinity Church in 2023 a total amount of:

\$2,200 \$3,000 \$2,000 \$1,000 Young Adults (25-30) \$500 Other \$ _____

For additional information on Legacy or Planned Giving including donations of property, stock, or other securities, please contact the church office (908) 233-8533 or email HolyTrinity@htgocnj.org (see enclosed Stock/Security Donation Form)

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Spouse's Name _____

Email Address _____

Names of Dependents _____

Telephone Number (_____) _____

Cell Number (_____) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

*Please bring your Commitment Card to
Stewardship Sunday Liturgy December 4, 2022*

To vote or seek elective office in the administration of the parish in 2023, your signed Stewardship Commitment Card must be received by March 1, 2023.

Christmas Boutique Bake Sale

Today is the last day of the Christmas Boutique Bake Sale during Fellowship Hour! Beautifully- wrapped and delicious Christmas treats suitable to bring as a hostess gift, give to your favorite hairdresser, postal worker, teacher, or bring home for your enjoyment!!!



2022 Mitten Tree for CASA

Please continue to bring in your gifts of new mittens, hats, scarves, gloves, and socks until the New Year! They will be distributed in early January by CASA of Union County. Thank you to all who have contributed so far!

Greek School Christmas Program, Tuesday, December 20

Holy Trinity's Greek School will be holding its annual Greek School Christmas Program on Tuesday, December 20 from 4-6:00 PM in the Bouras Center. Students in Pre-K-6th grade will showcase a variety of poems and songs in Greek to celebrate Christ's birth.

2nd Annual Philoptochos Vasilopita Bread Sale

Pick up your order for homemade Vasilopita from Agia Skepi Bakehouse at church today, December 18. Proceeds to benefit Saint Basil Academy.

Greek Dance for Everyone

Holy Trinity is happy to offer Greek dance classes for all ages. Joy/Hope (grades K-6th) classes meet on Sundays at 12 noon in Rm 107; GOYA (grades 7th-12th) classes are Sundays from 1-2:30 PM. The adult Greek dance class is off to a great start! Register using the following link [Adult Greek Dance Class](#). Please stop by the GOYA table after church for more information or contact Mary Carayannopoulos (carayannopoulos@comcast.net or 314-623-5493).

Trinity Circle

Our Vasilopita Luncheon Celebration will be held on Tuesday, January 3, from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM in the Bouras Center. This luncheon is being donated by Avi Kiriakatis, Hellen Kiriakatis and Marina LoAlbo for a happy and healthy New Year.

Greek Dance: Bring a Friend Night

Goya is hosting a "Greek Dance: Bring a Friend Night" fundraiser to raise money towards their trip to Annapolis for the Metropolis Folk Dance Festival competition in January. All ages are welcome - school friends, adults, and Goya alum too! Please join us on Thursday, Dec 22 from 5-6:30pm in the Bouras Center. Registration requested but walk in accepted!

www.tinyurl.com/FDFfundraiser



*Holy Trinity Hellenic Dancers
FDF Fundraiser*

BRING A FRIEND NIGHT

THURSDAY, DEC 22 5:00-6:30PM
Holy Trinity - Bouras Center

*Students \$10
Adults \$20*

[Click here to register!](#)

Holy Trinity Capital Campaign

We're almost there!

Today's contribution will allow us to reach our goal!

There is still time to give!

We thank all our donors and benefactors

Capital Campaign Progress



Dear Parishioners, as we approach the close of our Capital Campaign this December, we want to thank our parishioners and benefactors for their generosity and support of this worthy cause in the maintenance of the physical structure of our parish. We humbly ask all those who have not yet had the opportunity to donate to please do so this December so that we may bring the Capital Campaign to its successful close of \$750,000. Please note that all donations, of whatever amount, are welcomed. Success can only be attained through your participation and giving spirit this Christmas season.

To date, we have collected \$663,564 in capital campaign donations and pledges. Considering that our campaign started only in December of 2021, this is a tremendous accomplishment.

Call the church office to donate or donate online by visiting HolyTrinityWestfield.org
[908.233.8533](tel:908.233.8533)

Women of Faith Ministry

New Bible class to begin in January 2023!

There will be a study led by Fr. Peter, followed by a time of discussion, prayer and fellowship together. Refreshments will be served. Please contact Lauren Karanikolas lkaranikolas@msn.com if you are interested, have any questions, or would like to be added to our email distribution list to receive weekly summaries as well as prayer requests. More details to follow.

TOTS Playgroup – January 11

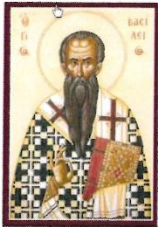
The next TOTS (Trinity Orthodox Toddler Social) meeting will be on Wednesday, December 14, from 9:30-11:30 AM in the preschool room. Children 18 months-Pre-K are welcome with their caregiver (younger siblings welcome!). Bring water, sneakers and a snack. Contact Val Comprelli (vcomprelli@gmail.com or 612-801-8608) to sign up or to ask any questions.

Fellowship Committee

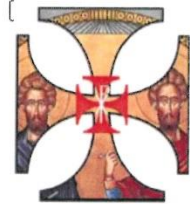
The Spanakopita Cooking Class has been postponed until after the New Year so more people can attend. Stay tuned!



The Ladies Philoptochos Society of Holy Trinity



**VASILOPITA LUNCHEON
&
STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY**



January 22, 2023

Immediately following Divine Liturgy, Bouras Center

Proceeds to benefit the Saint Basil Academy

RESERVED SEATING

RESERVATIONS DEADLINE BY JANUARY 11, 2023

ADULTS- \$20

CHILDREN 16 & under- \$10



Includes: Buffet Dinner, Salad, Mezethes, Wine & Dessert

Please mail, scan QR code or stop @ Philoptochos table to sign up

RESERVATION FORM

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____ **# Adults** _____ **# Children** _____

Amt Enclosed: _____ **Check #** _____ **Cash** _____

Checks Payable to: The Ladies Philoptochos Society of HTGOC

Send to: Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 250 Gallows Hill Rd, Westfield, NJ 07091

When mailing, mark envelope "Attn: Vasilopita"

You may pay by Zelle, Yiana Leichtling at treasurer@htphiloptochos.com

(please include RSVP information with Zelle payment)

Debra Vlahakis & Kathy Maglaras, Co-chairs



Please support Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Endowment Fund
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at **no cost to you**. [Start Shopping](#)