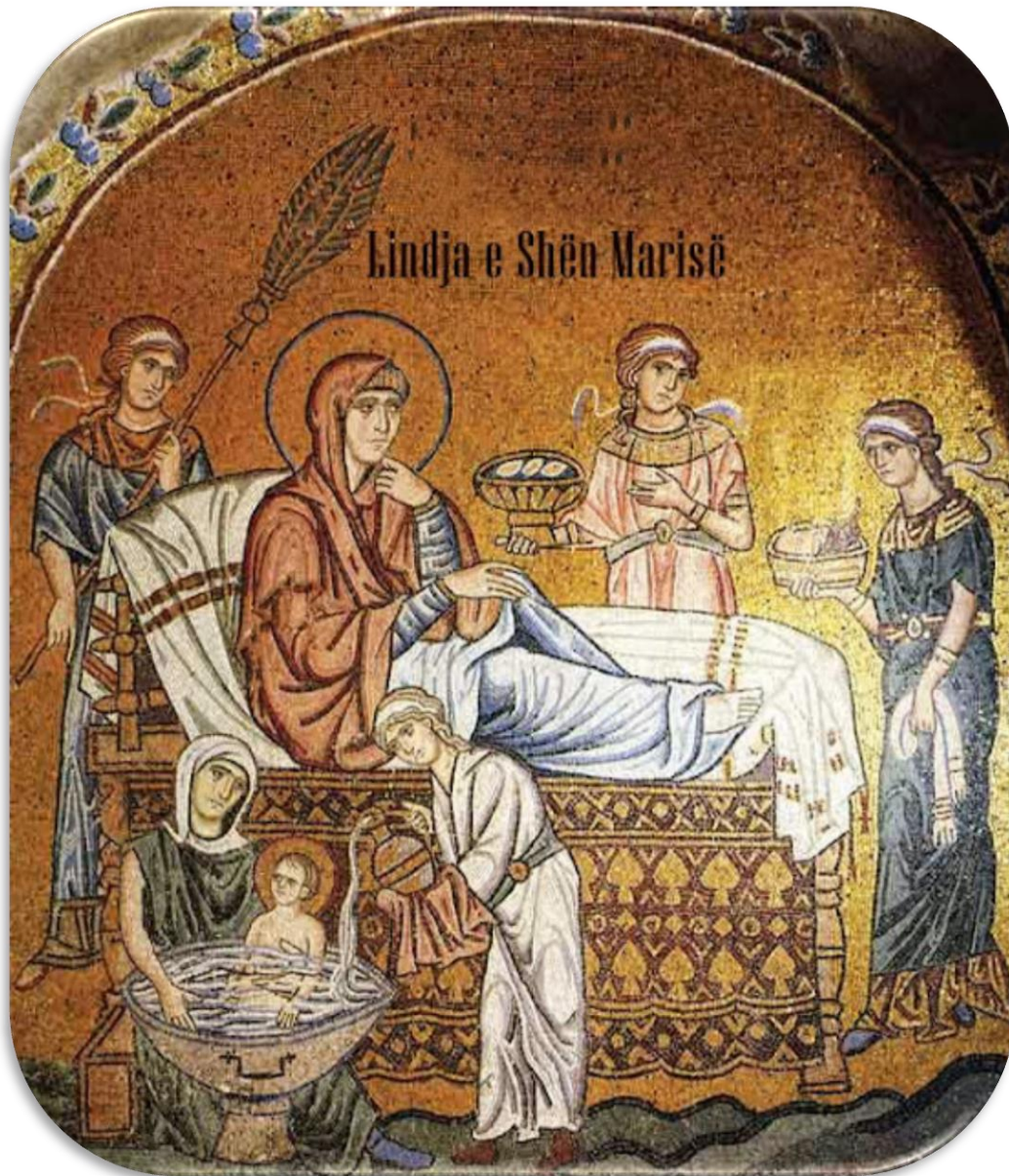


SUNDAY BEFORE THE ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



The Nativity of the Theotokos

September 7, 2025

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 Delvizi, Parish Priest

On this day we commemorate The Forefeast of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Sept. 8); The Holy Martyr St. Sozon; St. Kassiani the Hymnographer; St. John and St. Sergios, Bishops of Lerna; Our Righteous Father St. Daniel of Katounakiotis (Smyrna); The Apostles of the Seventy St. Euodos and St. Onesiphoros (2 Timothy 1:16-18)

Fourth Tone

Ἦχος Δ΄

Morning Gospel:	St. Mark 16:1-8	Ελληνικά
Epistle Reading:	Galatians 6:11-18	Ελληνικά
Gospel Reading:	St. John 3:13-17	Ελληνικά

Apolytikion: *“The joyful news of Your resurrection was proclaimed by the angel to the women disciples. Having thrown off the curse that fell on Adam, they ran elatedly to tell the apostles: Death has been vanquished; Christ our God is risen from the dead, blessing all the world with His great mercy.”*

Apolytikion of the Forefeast: *“Unto us is born today Mary the child of God,* as the branch from Jesse’s root, and as the fruit of David’s loins,* and all creation is re-created and deified.* O heaven and the earth, rejoice in unison.* Sing praises unto her, O all you Gentile clans.* Joachim is exultant, and Anna is keeping festival, crying out:* “The barren woman bears the Theotokos,* the nourisher of our Life.”*

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 Maid, Mary the true Theotokos,* the inviolate bridal room of the heavenly Bridegroom,* by the will of God is born of a barren woman,* to prepare to be the carriage of God the Logos,* as for this she had been destined,* to be the gateway of God and Mother of Life.”*

Liturgical Schedule

Monday, September 8, Nativity of the Holy Theotokos, Orthros, 8:30 AM; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Sunday, September 14, The Elevation of the Holy and Life-giving Cross, Orthros, 8:15 AM; Divine Liturgy, 9:30 AM

Welcome Visitors

The parish of Holy Trinity welcomes those visiting our community today. Worshipping the Holy Trinity is the focal point of our parish, especially on the Day of the Resurrection (Sunday). Our mission is to live the holy Gospel and spread the Good News to those in our area. We are sanctified by God's grace through the holy Sacraments and glorify Him each moment of the day. We seek God's mercy, as we confess the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Philoptochos New Year's Welcome

We hope your summer was filled with peace and joy. As we begin the Ecclesiastical New Year, we look forward to continuing the meaningful work of our Philoptochos ministry. With new opportunities ahead, it's a great time to get involved. Your support makes a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve. Please stop by our table during Fellowship Hour to learn more.



Sophia, Nicholas, Ioanna, Panagiota, Adina, James, Mary, Chris, Janeen, Harry, Kathy, Jennifer, John, Marina, Pete, George, Laura, George, Costa, Basil, Lemonia, Justin, Evangelia, Brennan, Egon, Marilyn, Tatanya, Robert, Elizabeth, George, Nicholas, Alexander, Vasilios, Danny, Bill, Lou, Foula, Eupraxia, Chris, Arlene, John, Ted, William, Theodora, Michael, Gioula, Nicholas, Hellen, Kevin, Janice, Elaine, Patty, Cynthia, Nicholas, Christos, Thomas, Rich, Lea, Robert

Sacraments and Rites

Memorials: Your prayers are requested on Sunday at the memorial services for Sotirios (Sam) Koliopoulos†, 40 days, and Robert Ardis†, 40 days. Eternal be their memories.

Churching: On Sunday a 40-day blessing of Iliana Sophia, daughter of Egzon and Yiota Banushi will be held.

Fellowship Hour: Please join us in the Bouras Center after church for the Fellowship Hour in loving memory of Angela Stappas†



+ B A R T H O L O M E W
By God's Mercy, Archbishop of Constantinople
New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America is honored to announce the official visit of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to the U.S. The visit will include public events in Washington, DC, NYC and the Metropolis of NJ offering opportunities to receive his blessing and participate in worship services.

Public events include the following:

Monday, September 15: Arrival in the United States – Joint Base Andrews

Wednesday, September 17: Welcome & Great Patriarchal Doxology in the Metropolis of New Jersey at St. Katherine GOC, Falls Church, VA 3:00 PM

Thursday, September 18: Patriarchal Doxology – St. Nicholas GOC and National Shrine, New York City

Friday, September 19: Patriarchal Audience/Blessing with the Young Adult Leaders – St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shine, NYC & Beacon of Hope Dinner at Casa Cipriani

Saturday, September 20: Environmental Tribute to the “Green Patriarch” – Stony Brook University Marine Station, NY; Vespers – Southampton, NY

Sunday, September 21: Patriarchal Divine Liturgy – Dormition of the Virgin Mary Church, Southampton, NY

Monday, September 23: Audience and meeting with hierarchs, clergy, monastics at Archdiocesan Cathedral & Visit Fordham University and the Orthodox Christian Studies Center

Wednesday, September 24: Patriarchal Doxology and Reception – St. George GOC, New York City & The Templeton Prize Dinner

The Patriarchal Visit to the United States follows the announcement of the Templeton Foundation of the awarding of the internationally recognized Templeton Prize to His All-Holiness for his “pioneering efforts to bridge scientific and spiritual understandings of humanity’s relationship with the natural world, bringing together people of different faiths to heed a call for stewardship of creation.”



The Ecumenical Patriarchate is the highest see and holiest center of the Orthodox Christian Church throughout the world. It is an institution with a history spanning seventeen centuries, during which it retained its see in Constantinople (today’s Istanbul). It constitutes the center of all the local Orthodox churches, heading these not by administration but by virtue of its primacy in the ministry of pan-Orthodox unity and the coordination of the activity of the whole of Orthodoxy. The function of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as center par excellence of the life of the entire Orthodox world emanates from its centuries-old ministry in the witness, protection, and outreach of the Orthodox faith.

Communion Prayers

To help prepare yourself before receiving Holy Communion, Fr. Peter asks that you read the Communion Prayers silently as he reads them aloud. The prayers are found on pages 60-63. By following along and contemplating the words, you will gain awareness of the Eucharist and be led to repentance.

The first two prayers are about confessing the divinity of Christ and asking for forgiveness. We also affirm the physical realities of the Eucharist, namely that these gifts are truly the Body and Blood of Christ. The third prayer is the Communion Hymn for Holy Thursday, expressing faith and humility. The fourth and fifth prayers are petitions for cleansing the soul. The last two prayers express feelings of unworthiness and indicate the benefits of receiving the Holy Mysteries which consist of cleansing and purification. There is also reference to a “vesture” or our baptismal garment that we should endeavor to keep it clean or else we risk losing our intimate relationship with Christ. The bridal chamber is a metaphor of an inner sanctification and state of intimacy that we are called to share with Christ.

The Nativity of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary – Sept. 8

The record of the birth of Mary is not found in the Bible. The traditional account of the event is taken from the apocryphal writings which are not part of the New Testament scriptures. The traditional teaching which is celebrated in the hymns and verses of the festal liturgy is that Joachim and Anna were a pious Jewish couple awaiting the promised messiah. The couple was old and childless. They prayed earnestly to the Lord for a child, since among the Jews barrenness was a sign of God's disfavor. In answer to their prayers, and as the reward of their unwavering fidelity to God, the elderly couple was blessed with the child who was destined, because of her own personal goodness and holiness, to become the Mother of the Messiah. As the Dismissal Hymn says: *"Your nativity, O Virgin, has proclaimed joy to the whole universe. The Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, has shone from you, O Theotokos. By annulling the curse He bestowed a blessing. By destroying death, He has granted us eternal life."*

The fact that there is no Biblical verification of the facts of Mary's birth is incidental to the meaning of the feast. Even if the actual background of the event as celebrated in the Church is questionable from an historical point of view, the divine meaning of it "for us men and for our salvation" is obvious. There had to be one born of human flesh and blood who would be spiritually capable of being the Mother of Christ, and she herself had to be born into the world of persons who were spiritually capable of being her parents. The feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, therefore, is a glorification of Mary's birth, of Mary herself and of her righteous parents. It is a celebration as well of the very first preparation of the salvation of the world. For the "Vessel of Light," the "Book of the Word of Life," the "Door to the Orient," the "Throne of Wisdom" is being prepared on earth by God Himself in the birth of the holy-child Mary.

At Vespers the three Old Testament readings are "mariological" in their New Testament interpretation. Thus, Jacob's Ladder which unites heaven and earth and the place which is named "the house of God" and the "gate of heaven" (Gen 28.10-17) are taken, to indicate the union of God with men which is realized most fully and perfectly—both spiritually and physically—in Mary the Theotokos, Bearer of God. So also the vision of the temple with the "door 'to the East'" perpetually closed and filled with the "glory of the Lord" symbolizes Mary, called in the hymns of the feast "the living temple of God filled with the divine Glory" (Ezek 43.27-44.4). Mary is also identified with the "house" which the Divine Wisdom has built for himself according to the reading from Proverbs 9.1-11.

The Gospel reading of Matins is the one read at all feasts of the Theotokos, the famous Magnificat from St. Luke in which Mary says: *"My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden, for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed"* (Lk 1.47).

The epistle reading of the Divine Liturgy is the famous passage about the coming of the Son of God in "the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man" (Phil 2.5-11) and the Gospel

reading is that which is always read for feasts of the Theotokos - the woman in the crowd glorifies the Mother of Jesus, and the Lord himself responds that the same blessedness which His mother receives is for all “who hear the word of God and keep it” (Lk 11.27-28). On the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos, as on all liturgical celebrations of Christ’s Mother, we proclaim and celebrate that through God’s graciousness to mankind every Christian receives what the Theotokos receives, the “great mercy” which is given to human persons because of Christ’s birth from the Virgin.

Altar Boys

Fr. Peter invites all boys ages 12 and older to commit to serve in the altar. An acolyte plays an important role in the ceremonial aspects of the Divine Liturgy. Each of us wants our children to remain in the church as they grow up. By committing and serving in this unique role, a deep respect for the divine services is created and a sense of service (stewardship) is instilled. This shapes and deepens the faith of the altar boy. Please see Fr. Peter for more information.



Sunday School Begins This Sunday

We ask that you register by using the online form for each student at your earliest convenience via <https://holytrinitywestfield.org/ministries/religious-education/> or scanning the QR code above.

HOLY TRINITY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHER AND CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS 2025-2026

GRADE	ROOM	TEACHERS
PreK	105	Anna Darity
Kdg	107	Alexandra Mavridis, Ariadne Monfalcone
1st & 2nd	102	Anna Decavalles, Melissa Krikos
3rd & 4th	101	Felicia Karsos
5th & 6th	207	Maria Tarhanidis, Beth Grivoyannis
7th & 8th	202	Leon Carayannopoulos, Elias Grivoyannis
9th & 10th	204	Tony Drivas
11th & 12th	Boardroom	Peter Tarhanidis, Nik Karsos

Angel Choir

Boys and girls ages 7-12 are invited to join the Angel Choir. Interested children should meet with the Choir Director in the Choir Robe Room (off the Narthex) immediately after Sunday School dismissal on Sunday, September 28, for initial instructions and robe assignments. The Angel Choir will be joining the adult choir during Divine Liturgy on Sunday, October 5. The Angel Choir will practice from 11:45 to 12:15 on select Sundays. For more information, contact Choir Director, Anne Kernoski, via <https://holytrinitywestfield.org/ministries/choir/> or akernoski@gmail.com

Greek School Registration is Now Open

Greek School registration is now open for all classes. Classes are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 PM - 6 PM. Classes begin Tuesday, September 9, grades Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st Beginners and 1st Advanced, 2nd; Thursday, September 11, grades 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th. Register at <https://holytrinitywestfield.org/ministries/greek-school/>

Greek Dance lessons offered to Holy Trinity youth in grades Pre-K - 12th

Greek heritage and identity are important to us at Holy Trinity. Dance is a wonderful way to: preserve Greek traditions, meet other youth members, exercise and have fun, and learn a wonderful skill. Led by Holy Trinity parishioner and member of Hellenic Dancers of New Jersey, Ronnie Filippatos.

HOPE/JOY (Pre-K - 6th) Instructor: Ronnie Filippatos, lessons to be held on Sundays following religious education. 3 groups, exact times for each group to be determined once all are registered.

GOYA (7th - 12th) Instructor: Nick Fourniadis, lessons to be held on Wednesdays 7 - 9 pm.

Dance Fee:

HOPE/JOY (Pre-K - 6th): \$250 1 dancer, \$400 2 dancers, \$500 3 dancers, \$550 4 dancers

GOYA (7th - 12th): \$350 1 dancer, \$600 2 dancers, \$700 3 dancers, \$750 4 dancers

To Register click on the link: [Greek Dance 2025 - 2026](#). The deadline to Register is September 14, 2025.

Please make payment directly to the church via check payable to: Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church or pay Online: <https://secure.myvanco.com/YQBS/home>. Select the "Youth Greek Dance Lessons" tile. For questions, please contact Ronnie Filippatos

ronnie.filippatos@gmail.com

Trinity Circle

Tuesday, September 9, lunch/meeting 11 AM - 2 PM, Bouras Center. Steve Xenakis' presentation will be "Alexander of Macedonia". Luncheon to be donated by Adina Toescu in memory of her loved ones.

**Bible Study and Orthodox Inquiry
Begins Wednesday, October 1
The Gospel According to St. John**

Join us in person or on Zoom every Wednesday night at 7:00 PM as we read through the Holy Gospel According to St. John. The Holy Trinity Bible Study will begin October 1 and run for seven weeks. We will examine this divine book through the lens of the Holy Fathers. This class is open to all parishioners who wish to deepen their knowledge of this Gospel and to those who are inquiring about the Orthodox Faith. As people of faith, we need to know the message of the Good News for the Holy Gospel is: “an embassy of God to men” (St. Maximos the Confessor), “an ocean of spiritual benefits” (St. Ambrose of Milan), “an epitome of all theology” (St. Jerome the Presbyter), “a workshop of souls and a storehouse of spiritual herbs by which any disease can be cured” (St. Basil the Great).

TOTS: (Trinity Orthodox Toddler Social)

A fun way to connect with other Orthodox families with small children. First meeting Wednesday, September 17, 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 with any questions.

44th Annual Holy Trinity Golf Classic - Save the Date!

Monday, September 29, 2025 at Echo Lake Country Club, 515 Springfield Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090. For more information or to register visit our website at <https://holytrinitywestfield.org/community/golf-classic/>



Join the Choir...
You'll Be Glad
You Did!

Adult Choir for ages 18 to senior citizens



Angel Choir for boys and girls ages 8-12



Byzan "teens" for boys and girls

Ages 13-17

For more information, email Anne Kernoski, Choir Director:

akernoski@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

September 9, 2025

**Come Join
Holy Trinity Greek School in
Westfield!**



Registration for all classes are open now!

2025-2026 Greek School Tuition

Holy Trinity Stewards

One student.....\$520

Two students.....\$850

Three students...\$1050

Non-Stewards

One student.....\$930

Two students.....\$1,510

Three students...\$1,780

Payments can be made at Holytrinitywestfield.org under Ministries:



[Greek School & PTO Registration](#)



[This QR is for PTO DUES only](#)

Classes will take place on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 4:00pm-6:00pm

Tuesday, September 9, 2025 Grades Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st Beginner and 1st Advanced, 2nd and

Thursday, September 11, 2025 Grades, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th.

If you have an **important** conflict please reach out to Principal Stavroula Mergoupis at etsoutsani62@gmail.com

Tuition Assistance If you are experiencing financial difficulty with tuition, please feel free to reach out to Father Peter Delvizi in confidence at FrPeter@htgocnj.org



Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
250 Gallows Hill Road
Westfield NJ 07090



T.O.T.S.- (Trinity Orthodox Toddler Social)

Mission Statement

The mission of the Trinity Orthodox Toddler Social (T.O.T.S.) of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is to provide an environment fostering fellowship and prayer for children aged 18 months to 4 years of age and their mother, father and/or caregiver. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of comfort and security in God's house while experimenting in independent and cooperative age-appropriate play under their caregiver's supervision. Concurrently, the toddler social enables these adults the opportunity to meet, pray, and socialize.

TOTS meetings: Wednesdays, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM, Pre-K Room

2025

September 17
October 8, 22
November 19
December 10

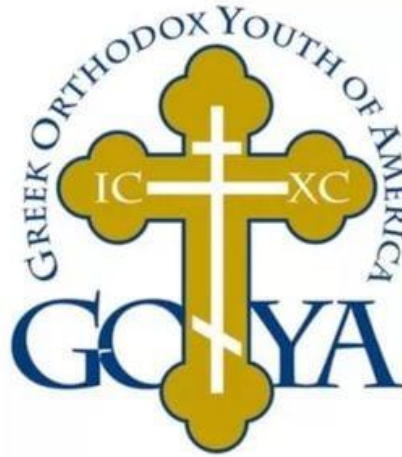
2026

January 14, 28
February 11, 25
March 11, 25
April 22
May 13, 27

Bring water, sneakers and a snack. Contact Val Comprelli (vcomprelli@gmail.com or 612-801-8608) to sign up or to ask any questions.

2025 GOYA KICKOFF/ELECTIONS EVENT

Friday, September 12 from 6:30-10 pm in the Bouras Center



Holy Trinity youth entering grades 6th -12th are encouraged to attend!

Elections, ice breakers, food, and fellowship!

Parents, please drop off in the Bouras Center at 6:30 pm and pick up by 10 pm.

GOYA REGISTRATION: <https://forms.gle/hAmPHc4bLkk9eN9F8>

Contact Sophia Saketos at 908-247-6048 or goya@htgocnj.org with questions.

September 29, 2025

44th ANNUAL

HOLY TRINITY GOLF CLASSIC

Monday, September 29, 2025

Echo Lake Country Club

515 Springfield Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090



Schedule

Practice/Driving Range	10:45 am
Lunch	11:00 am
Kapsimalis Putting Contest	11:30 am
Shotgun Start	12:30 pm
Cocktail Hour and Reception	5:00 pm

Sponsorship Opportunities

<i>Platinum Benefactor</i>	\$ 10,000
<i>Gold Benefactor</i>	\$ 5,000
<i>Silver Benefactor</i>	\$ 3,500
<i>Cocktail Hour Sponsor</i>	\$ 3,000
<i>Lunch Sponsor</i>	\$ 2,000
<i>Kapsimalis Putting Contest Sponsor</i>	\$ 1,500
<i>Halfway House Beverage Sponsor</i>	\$ 1,000
<i>Range Sponsor</i>	\$ 500
<i>Hole Sponsors (18)</i>	\$ 200

Benefiting:

Windy25 Memorial Fund
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Westfield

For information, please contact:

George Colonias gcolonias@yahoo.com 908-294-7414	Stefanos Arethas stefanos.arethas@gmail.com 301-518-6816	George Paras gparas@parasandparas.com 201-681-536
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REGISTRATION FORM

To pay and register online: ["Online Giving"](#)

Name: _____

Company: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Players

Name: _____ Email _____

Name: _____ Email _____

Name: _____ Email _____

Name: _____ Email _____

Please Check all that apply:

	Individual Golfer(s) \$450
	Foursome(s) \$1,800
	Sponsorship: Please indicate level below
	Reception \$100

To make your reservation, please complete this form and return it with your payment to or pay online:

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

250 Gallows Hill Road

Westfield, NJ 07090

Attention: Golf Committee

If paying by credit card, please complete the following and sign:

Name (as it appears on your card): _____

Master Card Visa American Express

Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Month _____ Year Security Code # _____

Mailing Address for this credit card: _____

Cardholder's Signature: _____

Total Enclosed or Authorized \$ _____

To pay and register online: ["Online Giving"](#)

