

The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



August 2019 ✦ Volume 43, Issue 6

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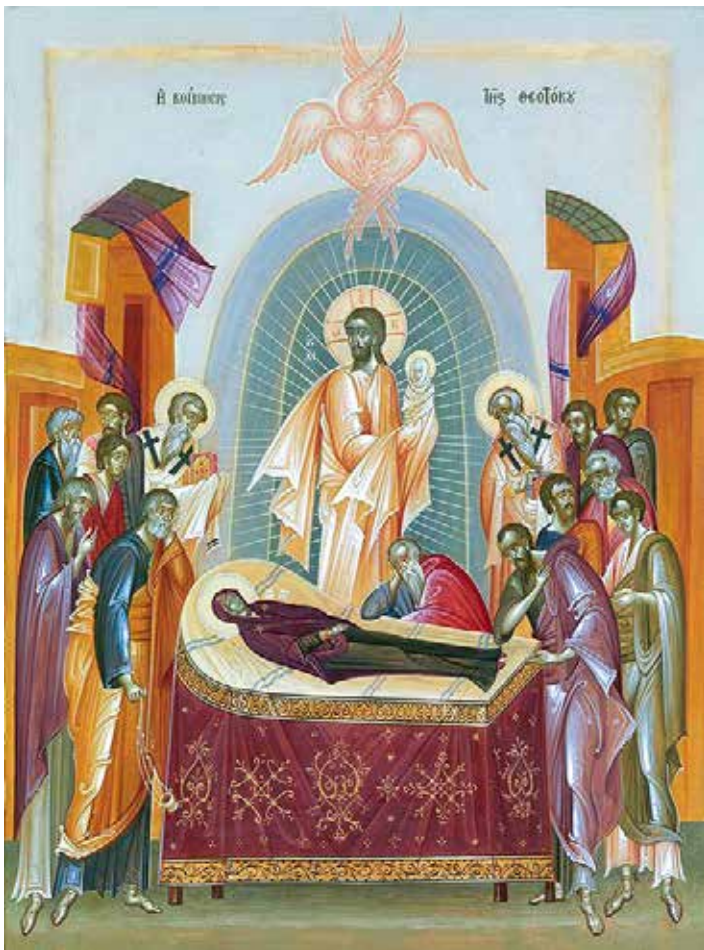
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Dormition

Koimisis Services on August 15:

8:30 AM Orthros

9:30 AM Divine Liturgy with Artoklasia



The last great feast of the Church year is the Dormition of the Theotokos, the Mother of God. That the Holy Virgin was taken to heaven three days after her death is no surprise to Orthodox Christians. For “since you are the mother of Life, you passed over to life” (Apolytikon of the Feast). Yet while the Virgin Mary was an exception in passing so quickly from death to life, it is a destiny that awaits all the faithful. For this reason in the Orthodox Church we do not speak of “death” but of “sleep” (koimisis – to sleep, from which in English we get the word “cemetery”). When we go to sleep, we expect that we shall wake up; so too, when we die, we expect that we shall rise again.

Of course, Christians still dies despite our Lord’s Resurrection, but death is no longer the same: it is not “terminal”. This is why we say that death has been destroyed by the Resurrection. Because Christ is Life itself, the very source of life, and therefore unable to be held by death, we are able to follow Him to the Resurrection and Ascension because we share in His humanity. He is the first-fruits of the risen and everlasting life to come, which His Mother was the first to share in, since it is through her that He entered the world.

St. Paul describes death as “the last enemy that will be destroyed” – 1 Cor.15:26, and it must be destroyed because there can be no true life, no real fulfillment or everlasting joy, for as long as it remains. How can we be fully human if all we are will be dissolved and gone as though it had never existed? How can we be the image of the eternal God if we are nothing but dust and ash? The fullness of our humanity cannot be restored until death has been abolished.

This is why we “await the resurrection of the death and the life of the age to come” (Nicene Creed). This is why we speak of death as sleep. For we live with a sure hope and expectation that body and soul will be restored, reunited, and renewed in Christ, and that “God Himself will be with us and be our God.” – Rev. 21:3

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor mourning. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” – Rev. 21:4 ❖

Wait for the promise of the Father



Dates in the Life of Our Church

August–September 2019

✝ AUGUST

| | |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 4 | 8:15 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 5 | 6:00 PM Great Vespers in Westfield |
| 6 | Holy Transfiguration |
| | 8:30 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 7 | 5:00 PM Paraklesis |
| 9 | 7:00 PM Paraklesis |
| 11 | 8:15 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 12 | 5:00 PM Paraklesis |
| 14 | 7:00 PM Great Vespers in Holmdel |
| 15 | Dormition/Kimisis of the Theotokos |
| | 8:30 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 17 | 11:00 AM Wedding |
| 18 | 8:15 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 25 | 8:30 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 26 | 7:00 PM Great Vespers in Elizabeth |

✝ SEPTEMBER

| | |
|----|------------------------------|
| I | 8:15 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 8 | Nativity of the Theotokos |
| | 8:15 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 14 | Exaltation of the Holy Cross |
| | 8:30 AM Orthros |
| | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |

A Commentary on the Rite of Burial During the Dormition Fast

During the first two weeks of August, Orthodox Christians prepare themselves for the great feast of the Dormition of the Theotokos by fasting. As we lay the body of the Panagia in burial we are reminded of God's power to grant life to all. Being the Birth-giver of God, and the mother of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary receives the first fruits of the Resurrection. We too must walk through the portal of death but we are reassured that death has been destroyed by our Lord. The following is a commentary of the Christian Rite of Burial.

The Christian Rite of Burial bears a very strong resemblance to the Matins of Holy Saturday which recalls a "bright-sadness" predicting the glorious brilliance of the Resurrection of Christ. Having the Resurrection as the backdrop of our life, then as we gather around the mortal remains of a believer, Christians do not commemorate death; they bear emphatic testimony to their belief in God in whom everyone is alive. Man does not disappear in death: death

cannot annihilate that which God has called out from non-being into being. This is the first instance of the display of His ultimate power – He is Lord over everything created, whether living or non-living, animate or inanimate...and thus He is the Lord of the living and of the dead.

We are comforted in knowing that nothing can overwhelm God's power. Even death is limited and becomes temporary when balanced with Christ's power. For even in death, we view Christ as Victor. So, if He is Victor and His power cannot be contained, limited, or eliminated then neither the grave, nor the tomb, nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things above the earth, or upon the earth, or below it, can separate us from Him. So a Christian sees at a funeral service both what death is, but more importantly what will become of it. In Christ, death is not rupture, but union; it is not sorrow, but joy; and most profoundly, it becomes life – renewed in the Crucified and Resurrected One. ❖

Stewardship Family Picnic

A day of family fun!

Sunday
Sept 22

On Sunday, September 22, the Seventh Annual Stewardship Family Picnic & BBQ will be held immediately after Sunday School. All Stewards of Holy Trinity are invited for a day of thanksgiving to God for our wonderful and Christ-centered community of Holy Trinity. Please prepare to receive Holy Communion as a family. By offering ourselves to Christ and receiving Him, we become united with one another and God; through this linkage we make our parish stronger in faith and love.

The Parish Council will offer the main course for the picnic; you are asked to bring a side-dish or salad, snacks, dessert to share.

Please remember to bring a covered dish.



Cast Anger from Your Soul



Anger may be a normal feeling but it is not easily controlled. In fact, it usually controls us more than we control it. But it can be an effective tool when used to call people to repentance and to clarity of mind. However, its application must be done without the intention of harming or disparaging others or damaging their souls. When used in a controlled manner, anger can be a formidable ally forcibly reclaiming a lost soul.

Our Lord demonstrated the use of controlled anger for the purpose of calling His people towards repentance and away from evil. “The Lord has been very angry with your fathers, and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord Almighty: “Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord.’” – Zechariah 1:2 We should also remember



the time when the Lord overturned tables in the Temple and made a whip to violently chase out the moneychangers. This shocking occurrence was to initiate a type of spiritual renewal for His people. Jesus does this to point out that the Temple’s purpose is for prayer, devotion, and redemption; not for trade. Our Lord knew that it’s easy to turn God’s house into a bartering place. It is easy, even in contemporary times, to confuse piety with profits in relation to the Lord’s house. This is why He protects and defends the sacred space of the Temple, for it should never be desecrated with secular usage or cash management.

But lest we imagine we are like the Lord, we must be very cautious when it comes to anger. Most of us don’t use anger as a means to defend that which is sacred. Nor do we use it to carefully correct a wayward act. For us, anger is generally a passion which when left unchecked grows within us to such an extent that it pushes us to hurt and harm another. If anger continues to abound without constraint, then it creates within us multiple dysfunctions that adversely affect human relationships. Anger destroys from within by dissolving love and creating aggression and animosity. With flashes of uncontained anger, a human is capable of not only demeaning but also destroying and killing another human being. “So Cain



was extremely sorrowful, and his countenance fell...and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him... God said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the ground.’” – Genesis 4.

An angry person is always vicious and provocative for “anger rests in the bosom of a senseless man.” – Ecclesiastes 7:9 The Lord warns the angry man, “I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...and whoever says, ‘You fool’ shall be in danger of Gehenna [the fires of hell].” – Matthew 5

The following prayer can calm you in difficult times when you feel the lack of self-restraint and when the passion of anger dominates your thoughts.

“Dear Lord, I am wrought with anger and anxiety. Give me goodness and longsuffering. Lord, rescue me from anger’s falsehood and the accusations that fly towards others. Instill in me Your truth that I may show sympathy to my brethren and attentiveness when they speak. Lord, take away my boasting and arrogance, and in its place bestow upon me humility, patience, and concord. Lord, separate from me the use of foul language and replace it with a divine breath that every word formed by my lips and uttered by my mouth may be words uplifting and a cause of blessings to others. Cleanse me from the wreckage of sorrow and self-pity. Allow me to confess You faithfully, with a repentant heart. Through the intercessions of our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and of the Luminous Angels of Heaven. Amen.” ❖



Philoptochos

JOIE

■ BY NITSA BRUNO, ELISE SAVNIK & PENNY PEFANIS, CO-CHAIRS

With heartfelt joy, the Ladies Philoptochos welcomed fellow parishioners, Philoptochos stewards from 13 sister parishes and friends on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at Brooklake Country Club to enjoy fun, fashion and fellowship at *Joie*, our 18th Annual Spring Fashion Show.

The Paschal season, bursting forth with Renewal, Beauty and Joy, was celebrated and honored with the presence of the National Philoptochos President, Maria Logus, Esq., and Metropolis Co-Presidents, Eleni Constantinides and Alexis Limberakis. Our most supportive and faithful steward, Emily Rassias, proprietor of *Emily's Boutique*, Staten Island, NY, graciously presented a stunning and fabulous spring and summer runway, impressing us all with her *je ne sais quoi... her indefinable and distinctive qualities... Tres magnifique!*

Through the magnanimous efforts and generous donations of all our supporters, the proceeds of the French-inspired event support the mission of National Philoptochos, beginning our 89th year of service and mercy with dignity and integrity, making a difference in the lives of those in need locally, nationally and globally.

The beneficiaries of the Grand Raffle were: *The Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research Foundation* at Rockefeller Uni-



versity and *Hellenic Relief Foundation, Inc.*, which provides support for the Greek population in Greece suffering through economic, health and nutritional crises.

The 50/50 Raffle, Brunch Party Raffle and Silent Auction winners were joyfully announced at the end of the evening. Gift Raffle winners excitedly picked up their prizes as they exited. Through the loving support of Father Peter, President Ellen Manos-Athenson, Philoptochos Board Mem-

bers, Philoptochos Sisters and GOYA Greeters the spirit of joy was radiant, for "...The joy of the Lord is our strength. Nehemiah 8:10."

Honored and humbled to have served as co-chairs, we deeply appreciated your attendance, contributions and thoughtful kindness in 2019. *Merci beaucoup!*

May the Lord continually bless you and your families with heaven's blessings as well as with human joys. ❖





■ BY AVA LEICHTLING, GOYA PRESIDENT

The GOYA year has come to an end but not without much excitement.

St. Demetrios Perth Amboy hosted the annual Indoor Olympics once again on Saturday, 5/11. This is always a fun event and is geared towards GOYANs that have talents in other areas besides athletics. Activities include backgammon, chess, table tennis, badminton, Wii Dance and FIFA Soccer. Westfield had a handful of participants and came home with 4 medals!

Outdoor Olympics is always held on Memorial Day weekend at Monmouth University. GOYANs compete in track and field events, swimming and co-ed volleyball. For the past two years we experienced inclement weather and the University was expanding their track facilities, so the events took place indoors. This year the weather was spectacular! We were able to compete and enjoy all the new outdoor amenities the University had to offer! Westfield did very well this year and brought home 8 medals. It was so much fun to see the excitement and dedication of the younger GOYANs. It is also a great time to connect with friends from other churches before the summer break. Thank you to the coaches Mr. Boutsikaris and Mrs. Conti who work hard and push GOYANs to achieve their best potential, to Mr. Christodoulou and Miss Zourzoukis (Vickie) for coaching the volleyball team and to our parent chaperones Mr. George Colonias and Mr. Chris Vasilopoulos who bring lots of fun and laughter whenever they are around!

GOYANs gathered at the cafenio during the Greek Fest on May 31-June 2 to make delicious crepes and other Greek desserts like loaded loukoumades. Always favorites with the crowds!

Thank you to the Tarhanidis family

for hosting the end of the year GOYA party on Wednesday 6/26. Many families attended and had a wonderful time.

It was also a great opportunity to thank Mrs. Boutsikaris, Mrs. Leichtling and Mrs. Maglaras as they retire from being GOYA advisors after several years. They are all wonderful supporters of the GOYA ministry and love each and every GOYAN. They will be missed but GOYA is in great hands with the remaining advisors and I know Westfield GOYA will continue to grow and flourish. Mr. Boutsikaris is also retiring as GOYA athletic director. Mr. Boutsikaris coached the boys' basketball team and Outdoor Olympics for many years and helped bring home many trophies and medals for Westfield. Thank you all for your encouragement, dedication and passion. You will be missed!

One other special couple that was recognized at the Sunday School graduation in June was Mr. & Mrs. Kastingris. They are also retiring as Greek Dance Directors after many years. They have transformed the dance group under their supervision. A few of the memorable accomplishments was placing 2nd place in Sights & Sounds one year, which as we know is extremely competitive; winning 2nd place in the Parathosis competition in Brooklyn in 2018; and recently participating in the Laografia Greek Dance workshop in Montreal. Thank you!

As the excitement of graduation begins to die down, I've started to reflect on my GOYA experience. I would like to first start by thanking you for the opportunity to be the President of such a wonderful, successful and loving GOYA! Together we have achieved great awards and touched the lives of many in the community and for that I am very proud. I am also very blessed

Congratulations to our
2019-2020 GOYA Officers
and Outreach Committee!

President: Ariana Tarhanidis
Vice President: Stamati Angelides

Treasurer: Maggie Vasilopoulos
Recording Secretary: Christina Arida

Corresponding Secretary:
Julia Love

Board Members: Lea Cerini, John Colonias, Francesca Kastanos, Evan Koniaris, Molly Love, Matt Sales, Despina Tarhanidis, Nick Zotos

Outreach Sr. Coordinator:
Thomas Savorgiannakis

Outreach Members: William Arida, George Leunes, Christopher Warnick, Dean Warnick, Grace Warnick

and honored to have formed so many wonderful relationships. Every priest, advisor, and GOYAN I have crossed paths with has left me with new life lessons and long-lasting memories. Knowing I have such an incredible support system to return home to gives me comfort when leaving for college. Leaving all these extraordinary people will be one of the hardest things I'll ever do but thankfully we have facetime, and everyone is just a few clicks away. I am certain the friendships I have created will last a lifetime. No one has a bond like we do. I would not change anything about my GOYA experience, only to do it again. I encourage every 7th grader to participate in GOYA for a once in a lifetime experience. ❖





Holy Trinity Gets DIRTY

“As each one has received a gift (from God), minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” – 1 Peter 4:10

As others were relaxing and enjoying the Fourth of July week with good food, fun, and games, GOYA members and adults from Holy Trinity gave all that up to travel to central Appalachia some 550 miles away to help restore and recondition homes in West Virginia. It was a week of “Getting Dirty” and hard work for the participants of this mission trip. The group left on Sts. Peter and Paul Day, June 29 after attending the Divine Liturgy. After travelling all day, our first stop in Charleston, West Virginia was reached. After dinner at “Adelphia Restaurant” a Greek owned establishment and an overnight stay, the group attended the Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Charleston. Our boys wanted to assist Fr. Peter and Fr. Matthew so they donned altar boy robes to help serve. After brunch, we continued for another few hours to reach

our destination in Southern WVA in a small town near Brenton. Our first day at work was Monday, July 1. Holy Trinity members were split into three groups to help recondition three homes. It was a week-long effort ending after work on Friday, July 5. Although we witnessed first-hand the living conditions of many people in that area and the obvious lack of financial resources, the old adage “money doesn’t buy happiness” became very apparent. Many people are perfectly happy with what God has given them and the search and desire for material things is not at the center of their existence. This is a lesson which all of us should learn. Back at



the center, every night after dinner, the Orthodox kids (including a small group from a Greek Orthodox Church in North Carolina) had a wrap up session with Fr. Peter. With thank our GOYA members for doing such a great job and working very hard. We thank ASP (Appalachian Service Project) for hosting us. And lastly, the adults who helped make this mission trip possible: George and Christina Colonias, Anthe Angelides, Jeannie Arida, & Chris Vasilopoulos.” ❖







After Sts. Peter and Paul Liturgy



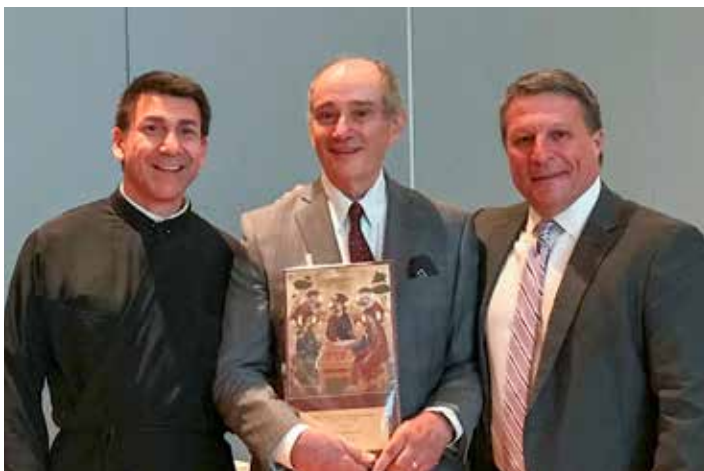




FATHER and GRANDFATHER of THE YEAR

Father and Grandfather of the Year
Philip Efthimion and Nicholas "Nick" Pantagis

Holy Trinity is proud to honor Philip Efthimion as this year's Father of the Year Recipient and Nicholas "Nick" Pantagis as the Grandfather of the Year Recipient. We are happy for them and pray that our Lord will protect, bless and keep always.



Father of Year
Philip Efthimion



Grandfather of Year
Nicholas "Nick" Pantagis



Trinity Circle

Update

■ BY AVI KIRIAKATIS, PRESIDENT

Our June Limani luncheon was attended and enjoyed by over 40 members and we thank Peggy Minaides for chairing this event. We welcome our two new Trinity Circle members Kasey & Mike Jeffries.

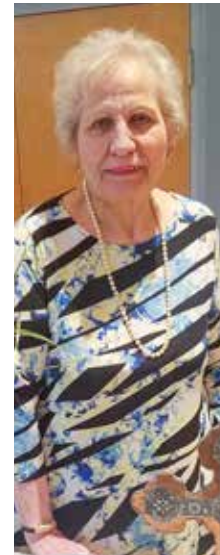
Thank you to Kassandra Romas for being our May speaker regarding “Heart attack prevention”. We also thank Frieda Anast for donating our May’s luncheon in memory of her loved ones. May their memory be eternal.

It’s such a blessing being a member of Trinity Circle of Friends. Getting together once a month and sharing in our happiness and sadness. We share

and support each other when we lose a loved one as we know they are with us in love and spirit. All this is possible because we worship together at Holy Trinity and know this is our second family and home.

In September we will have invited speaker Megan Callus, fitness owner specialist, speak to us on “Functional Aging” and what we should do to stay young!

With love and gratitude to our Lord for the fellowship we share at Holy Trinity. May God’s Blessings continue to be with all our members throughout the summer. ❖



METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY CLERGY LAITY GRAND BANQUET HONOREES FROM HOLY TRINITY

Barbara Manos, Steward of the Community; Anthony Bosco, Parish Council; Mary Skiadas, Philoptochos; Stephanie Phillipou, PTO; Ava Leichtling, GOYA; Gioula Assad, Choir Member; Demetra Chergotis, senior parish member.





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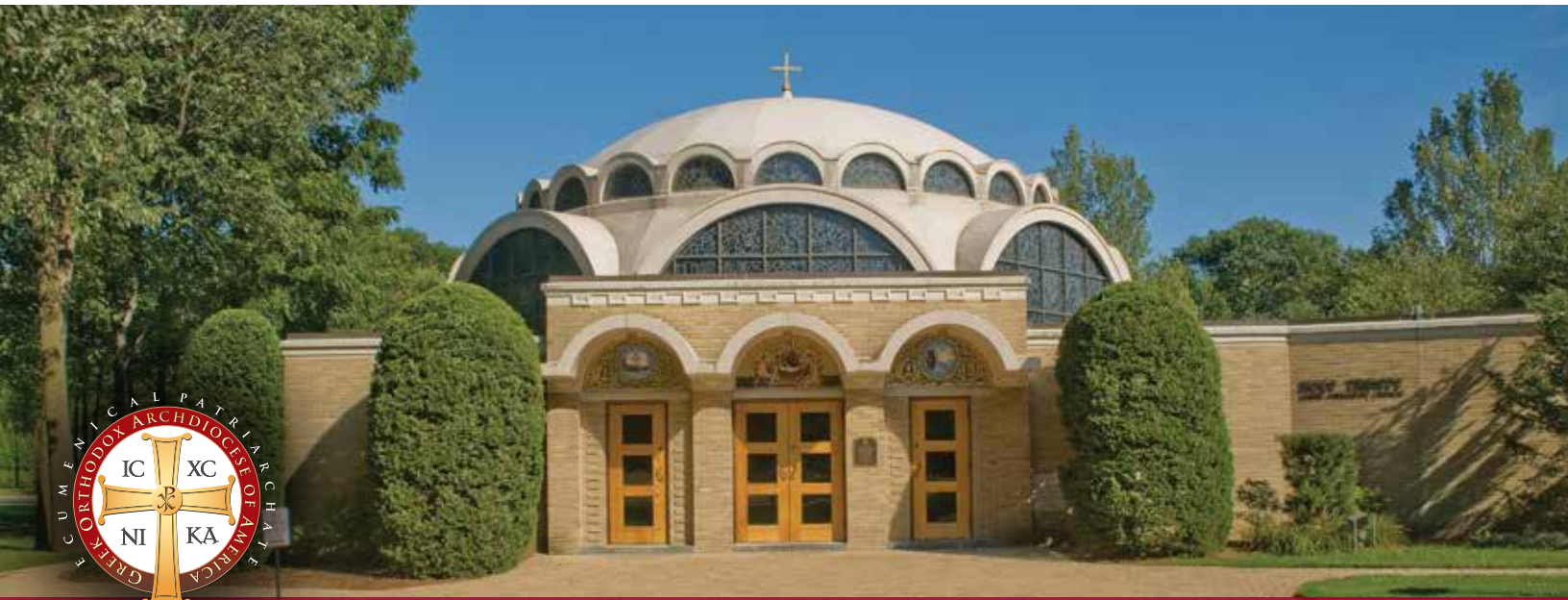
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