

The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



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God's Protection



BY REV. FR.
PETER DELVIZIS



A panther or something like it spotted a man walking alone upon a deserted desert road. The big cat began stalking the intruder. The man suddenly felt uncomfortable as though someone or something was watching. Anxiety set in and fear entered his being. He spun around to look behind him but saw nothing. His mind started racing. He felt, not so much that he was being studied or simply watched, but rather stalked. Yet his eyes disclosed nothing. "Perhaps it's only my imagination", he repeated, trying to ease his growing concern and to convince himself that nothing was out there.

Every few steps, the man stopped on the sunbaked road to survey the land. "There is no cover and nowhere to hide. The only thing that may possibly help are these few large stones lying on the side of the road." Suddenly, in his peripheral vision there was a movement and then a rustle in the sage bush. "Why did I come here," he suddenly thought. "I was told these parts are not really safe."

As the animal sprang into motion to attack its prey, the man's last words were, "God, help me!"

Reports were that the man didn't die but he did suffer injury. In his struggle for survival, some power seemed to lift him to safety. All he remembered saying was, "God, help me!" And by Divine Providence, he was helped.

The Divine Providence is such that you will truly be surprised to see how it works. And even though we have not found ourselves being stalked by a wild animal on a deserted desert road, we are victims, time and again, of the devil who seeks to hunt us down. The opponent of God feasts on the carnage of a careless soul. He attacks us when we wander away from God's path and walk on a road that is unsafe. In this world, we find protection from the enemy who hunts us down by calling upon the Lord's name. In times of trouble, we must also cry out "God, help me!"

The Good Samaritan, as found in Luke 10:25, is an image of God's mercy and

compassion. He comes to those who have fallen "among thieves, who strip him of his clothing, wounding him, and departing leaving him half dead." – Luke 10:30

We must remember that the devil constantly vies for our soul, tracking us like the mad and wild animal he is. He waits for us to stumble and then viciously attacks with a fury that is formidable. The Providence of God, however, acts with "mathematical precision" in that when we seek His protection, we will be sheltered under the comfort of His wings. He will send angels to protect us and then without delay He will come to bind our wounds pouring on the remedy of healing. Our Lord is the ultimate power and by abandoning our weaknesses, fears, and anxieties, and walking behind Christ, we follow His steps that will ensure our eternal welfare.

May God help each of us and deliver us from the pursuit of the Evil One. ❖

Wait for the promise of the Father



Dates in the Life of Our Church

February–March 2019

✠ FEBRUARY

2	Presentation of our Lord
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
3	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
5	4:00 PM Greek School
7	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Choir
10	Godparent/Godchild Sunday
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	12:00 PM Communion Breakfast
12	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting might change
	7:30 PM Parish Council
14	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Choir
15	7:30 PM Cultural Event
17	Triodion Begins
	8:15 AM Orthros

	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
18	Church Office closed
19	11:00 AM Trinity Circle
	7:30 PM NNJYC
21	7:30 PM Choir
22	7:00 PM Greek School Dance, Galloping Hill Caterers
23	6:00 PM Sights and Sounds Preview Show
24	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
26	4:00 PM Greek School
28	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Choir

✠ MARCH

2	8:00 AM 1st Saturday of Souls
	Sights and Sounds
3	Meatfare Sunday
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	1:00 PM Baptism
5	4:00 PM Greek School

6	7:00 PM Philoptochos General Meeting
7	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Choir
9	2nd Saturday of Souls & 40 Martyrs of Sebastia
	9:00 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	Sights and Sounds snow date
10	Cheesefare Sunday
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
11	GREAT LENT BEGINS
	5:00 PM Great Compline
12	4:00 PM Greek School
	5:00 PM Lenten Vespers
	7:30 PM Parish Council
13	6:30 PM Presanctified Liturgy
	8:00 PM Theosis Bible Study
14	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Choir
15	7:00 PM Salutations
16	3rd Saturday of Souls
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy



Reflection

"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light". - EPHESIANS 5:14

A devout elder lay on his death bed. His friends gathered around him and mourned him. With that, the elder laughed three times. The monks asked him: "What are you laughing at?" The elder replied: "I laughed the first time, because all of you are afraid of death. The second time, for none of you are prepared for death. And the third time, because I am going from labor to eternal rest."

See how with faith the righteous man dies! He is not afraid of death. He is prepared for death. He sees that through death he passes from the difficult life to the bliss of heaven. When the nature of man imagines itself in its original state, in Paradise, then death is seen as unnatu-

ral, the same way that sin is unnatural. Death emanated from sin. Repented and cleansed from sin, man does not consider death annihilation but a gate leading to life eternal.

If, at times, the righteous prayed to God to prolong their earthly life, this is not because of love for this present life, nor because of the fear of death, but solely that they would gain more time for repentance and cleansing from sin in order that they may present themselves before God, more sinless and purer. Even if they showed fear before death that was not out of fear of death but the fear of God's judgment. What kind of fear, then, must the unrepentant sinner have before death? It must be tremendous. ❖

The Second Sunday of the Triodion Prodigal Son

February 24

Open to me, O Giver of Life, the gates of repentance: for early in the morning my spirit seeks Your holy temple, bearing a temple of the body all defiled. But in Your compassion cleanse it by Your loving-kindness and Your mercy.

– Troparion of Orthros



Great Lent begins on March 11. Prior to its beginning, there are four preparatory Sundays that sets a spiritual tone. If there is one central theme to Great Lent, it is without a doubt repentance. The above hymn is frequently repeated in the period leading up to and throughout Lent. We are thus reminded that the purpose of Lent is to return to God and not simply to change our diet. The theme of repentance – of returning to God – is made explicit on the second Sunday of the Triodion: the Sunday of the Prodigal Son.

We are to identify with the prodigal in that we have squandered the gifts and opportunities God has given us on our own selfish desires. All too often, Christians forget that this parable is not only one of repentance, but also

one of forgiveness. There are two key characters in the story: the compassionate father, a symbol of God the Father, whose readiness to forgive we are called to imitate; and the unforgiving brother, whose cold-heartedness we are warned to avoid.

The fatted calf that is slain for the prodigal represents Christ. We are thus reminded that Christ came into the world to save sinners. During Great Lent, we must not be like the unforgiving brother, who observed all the father's rules but lacked compassion. How could he be a true son when he acted in opposition to his forgiving father? So too, we learn, that we are not to observe the Lenten rules of fasting with coldness of heart and callousness to our fellow human beings. We are to be compassionate and welcoming to

our brothers and sisters in Christ and quick to forgive just as the compassionate father. True repentance is the fruit of humility. When we are humble, we judge ourselves and not our neighbors. That is why the theme of repentance follows the theme of humility.

The spiritual fathers of the Church teach us that we are to be hard on ourselves and easy on others. This is true humility; this is true repentance. We are invited to master this humility and repentance during Lent. Fast as rigorously as you can, but do not demand or expect it of others. If indeed we are all prodigals who have squandered the gifts God has given us, let us take further care not to squander the spiritual gift of Lent, which is an invitation and a means to return to God in humility and repentance. ❖

Over the next several issues of *The Promise*, a specific ministry of the Archdiocese will be highlighted in order to provide insight to the parishioner. It may also foster a spirit of participation and support of these ministries designed to keep us connected to the church and deepen our commitment to the Gospel message.



CROSSROAD
ORTHODOX YOUTH TAKE THE CHALLENGE

CrossRoad is a ten-day academic summer institute that prepares high school juniors and seniors to make big life decisions and invites them to connect with the Orthodox Christian theological and spiritual tradition. Participants from all over the country come together to experience daily worship, take theology classes from some of the best professors in the country, visit local parishes, serve their neighbor, tour the city, and even spend a day at the beach.

Historically, CrossRoad has been hosted solely on the campus of Hellenic College/Holy Cross in Boston, MA. Last year, CrossRoad offered a third session in Chicago on the campus of North Park University in Chicago, IL.

Session 1

JUNE 15-25
in Boston

Session 2

JULY 2 -12
in Boston

Session 3

JULY 23 -AUG. 2
in Chicago

www.crossroadinstitute.org

Godparent/Godchild Sunday with Communion Breakfast

**Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
February 10, 2019**

Sponsored by
Holy Trinity Religious Education



Godchildren are encouraged to invite their Godparents to receive Communion with them and to attend the Breakfast.

All parishioners, family and friends are welcome!



Religious Education

Teaching "Love"

■ BY ANTHONY BOSCO



The month of February is normally referred to as the month of love. Centered on Valentine's Day we see stores jammed with chocolates, cards, and flowers. All this activity is fine, however, what signal is given to our children when they see this kind of activity? Is love something material? Is it only celebrated in the month of February? It is important that our children learn that an act of love is ethereal and costs nothing to give. Caring for each other and praying for each other are

all based on love. The importance of the word love is that it is a powerful word and should not be used casually. The love that a mother and father have for their children is immeasurable. In return, the love a child has for their parents is an unbreakable bond. The most powerful love is the love God has for mankind, "for God so LOVED the world that He sent His only begotten Son". It is equally important that our children learn that no matter how serious the sin, no matter how many times a person may falter in

life, God's love will reign eternal. The love of God is witnessed in His forgiveness, His promise for everlasting life, and the mercy and divine grace He blesses all mankind with. So let us all continue to demonstrate our love for each other for our children to see. Let us all continue to demonstrate the love we have for our Church and our faith, and most of all let our children witness the love and devotion we share and celebrate in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ❖

THE CHURCH FATHERS SAY ABOUT LOVE:

"The main name of our God is love...Just as we love our God, let us also love our brother"

-St Kosmas Aitolos

"All that exists can divide itself into two categories: uncreated and created. God is uncreated; everything else is created. And love is uncreate - uncreated and eternal. For love is not just an attribute of God but the name of God - one of the names of God - and the plenitude of divine being. This is also how it has been said "God is love" (1Jn. 4:8)."

-Kassiana, Chap. VI: Lessons in Divine and Christian Love



Cultural Committee

Virtues Shared by Ancient Greek Philosophers and Christian Orthodox Saints

Friday, February 15 7:30 PM, Bouras Center

The Cultural Committee at Holy Trinity is excited to present its next event with Dr. Cornelia Tsakiridou, Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Diplomat-in-Residence Program at LaSalle University, Philadelphia, PA. She will present a talk on the virtues shared by ancient Greek philosophers and Christian Orthodox saints.

The philosophical training of the Greek Fathers of the Church is well-known, as the theological writings of St. John Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nyssa or St. Maximus the Confessor and later St. Gregory Palamas amply show.

Less known, however, is the continuity between ancient Greek philosophical schools that emphasized philosophy as a way of life (such as the Cynics and Stoics) and the ascetical tradition of Christianity beginning from the third century in Egypt and Palestine and continuing to the present. It is this continuity and the questions that it raises about the relationship between philosophy and the Christian life that will be her focus in this talk, which is structured to elicit reflection and conversation.

Dr. Tsakiridou was raised in Thessaloniki, Greece, and earned a doctorate in Philosophy at Georgetown Univer-

sity after graduate studies in Philosophy and History at Temple University. She specializes in the philosophy of the visual arts and has been working in the past twenty years on Orthodox iconography, theology and Christian art. Her most recent books are two monographs, *Icons in Time, Persons in Eternity* (Routledge, 2013) and *Tradition and Transformation in Christian Art* (Routledge, 2018).

We are looking forward to welcoming Dr. Tsakiridou to Holy Trinity for a most informative talk on a fascinating subject and hope that you will join us. ❖

Book Store

“Hey mom, the way to your family’s hearts is through their stomachs!”

February is traditionally the month of the heart. The Church Book Store has a variety of Cook Books that provide wonderful recipes!

Let your Family come in from the winter cold into a home warmed by the aromas from *Around a Greek Table: Recipes and Stories*; *The Complete Book of Greek Cooking*; *The Greek Vegetarian*; and, because Lent begins on March 11: *A Lenten Cook Book*

and *Fasting as a Family*. With these Cook Books you can give your Family a “Valentine” that lasts all year long!

In addition to Cook Books, we have a wide variety of Children’s Books, Greek Language Books for Adults, Non-Religious Books, Religious Books and Icons.

Come and browse the Book Store table during the Fellowship Hour. If you don’t see what you want, we can order it for you. ❖





Philoptochos

Philoptochos Stewardship

■ BY ELLEN MANOS-ATHENSON, PRESIDENT

OUR HISTORY:

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society Inc., established in 1931, is the philanthropic arm of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America that has offered over 88 years of philanthropy through a multitude of programs that make a difference in the lives of people in the United States and throughout the world. Today Philoptochos has 26,000 members and more than 400 active chapters nationwide.

OUR HOLY TRINITY CHAPTER

Averaging over 200 stewards a year, we are able to meet our commitments, support many worthy organizations, provide educational scholarships, support our church community, meet our

National and Metropolis commitments and respond to individuals/ families that are in great need and turn to the church for support. This can only be done through the funds raised at our events, donations and stewardship offerings. We count on your generosity. Our chapter executes on our mission in all the work we do through our capable, generous and dedicated community of women that put their faith in action. We welcome partnering opportunities across the parish ministries.

We have incorporated many new avenues of communications to reach our stewards and extended communities by utilizing email, Facebook and a presence on the Holy Trinity Web Site.

CALL TO ACTION:

The Philoptochos stewardship drive for 2019 began in January with the kickoff at our annual Vasilopita Luncheon. We ask all women 18 years and older to join. By continuing to build and strengthen our chapter, we can infuse it with new ideas and embrace the younger generation of women to carry on this important mission.

Together with faith in the Lord, and the willingness to offer our time, talent and treasures we can help lessen the pain and suffering of others while supporting our church community.....

*Philoptochos
Makes a Difference*



Greek School
Cutting of the Vasilopita

Golf Outing

Holy Trinity Charities Helping Others

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Westfield, New Jersey holds an annual golf outing with the profits benefitting various outreach ministries and organizations. This year, I am happy to report that the 36th Annual Golf Classic will donate \$13,000. This sum shows not only the success of the golf outing but that the parish is dedicated to bringing the Gospel message to others through its outreach efforts. Keep this in mind when Golf Outing happens next year. We can make it even bigger and touch more lives with your participation and support.

Here's how the donation breaks down:



IOCC offers emergency relief and development programs to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church to so respond. It is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America and has provided over \$625 million in assistance in more than 60 countries.

Since 2007, the Folds of Honor has carried forth this singular, noble mission: To provide educational scholarships to spouses and children of America's fallen and disabled service-members.

Their motto says it best: **Honor Their Sacrifice. Educate Their Legacy.** In the folded flag we see the heavy price of freedom. Yet it is also a symbol of hope, representing the enduring ideals that make this country a beacon of democracy. We chose this logo because it reflects our mission – to honor the sacrifice of America's heroes, while giving hope to the bearers of their legacy.

The Policeman's Benevolent Association is a local labor union comprised of police officers and supervisors of area Police Departments. The PBA strives to protect the rights of all employees in their departments. The main goal is to help those in their time of need and give back to the communities in which they serve, honor, and love.



GOYA

Update

■ BY AVA LEICHTLING, GOYA PRESIDENT

Holy Trinity GOYA participated in several activities as 2018 came to a close. A favorite GOYA tradition is Christmas caroling during the holidays. This year we visited various Veterans and Senior centers as well as local parishioners in our community. Caroling is truly a favorite because we can share the holiday spirit with our church family!

This year Asbury Park hosted the annual GOYA Christmas Dance on Thursday, December 27, and there was a great turn out of Goyans from all over the state. Everyone was excited to see

their friends from the other churches. It is always a great time getting dressed up and having a blast with your best friends! It was an amazing way to finish out the 2018 year!

The Alumni Games are a popular event held every Christmas break. GOYA alumni come and try to beat the current GOYA volleyball and basketball teams. It is awesome being able to see friends that have graduated. It is a little scary to think that next year the seniors will be on the other side of the court. Special thank you to Mrs. Conti for reaching out to all the alumni, to

Mr. Panagos for being the referee, and to Mr. Savorgiannakis for keeping score. Thank you to all of the parents that attended to cheer the teams on! The Alumni beat our teams this year but not by much!

The athletic playoffs and finals will take place on Saturday and Sunday, January 12 and 13. The volleyball team is currently ranked in 1st place and hopes to bring home the gold once again! The basketball team is currently ranked in 3rd place. Best of luck to both teams! ❖





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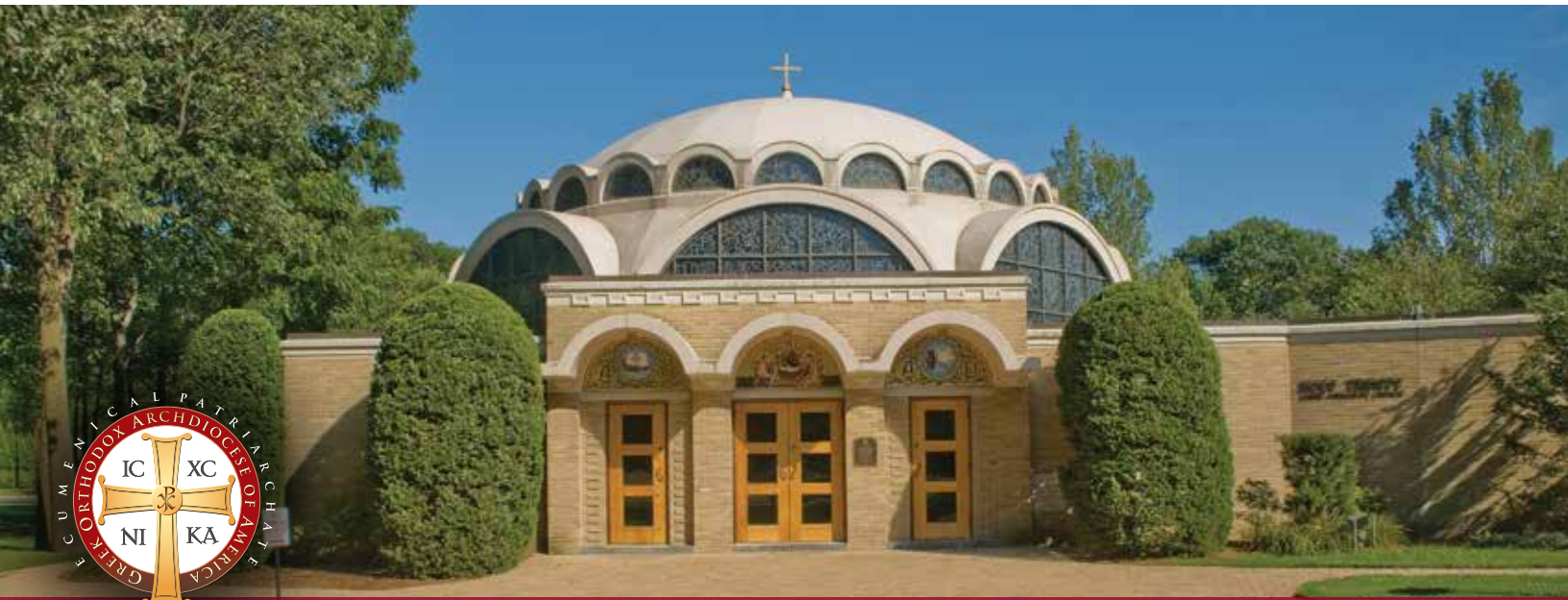
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Caretaker Ocione Nunes

WORSHIP

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Choir Director Kathryn Athanasoulas
Organist Phyllis Verenes
Head Acolyte Michael Apostolou

MINISTRIES

Parish Council A.J. Karanikolas
Philoptochos Ellen Manos-Athenson
Religious Education Anthony Bosco
Greek School Stavroula Mergoupis
Greek School PTO Melissa Krikos
Youth (GOYA) Ava Leichtling
JOY/HOPE Kathy Drivas
TOTS Joanne Paras
Bookstore Sandy Mouratoglou
Cultural Celia Kapsomalas
Trinity Circle Avi Kiriakatis
Fellowship Lauren Karanikolas

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

	<i>Sundays</i>	<i>Weekdays</i>
<i>Orthros</i>	8:15 AM	8:30 AM
<i>Divine Liturgy</i>	9:30 AM	9:30 AM

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