

# The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



February 2022 ✦ Volume 46, Issue 1

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## Luke 18:35

The person of higher ideas and moral standards is always considerate of his neighbor's wellbeing. Each person, regardless of who they are or where they come from is an autonomous being who is precious in the sight of our Lord. Our Creator has endowed each person with uniqueness, and a distinctive spirit that is of unquestionable value.

The entire earthly journey of the Lord was about teaching us how to create better relationships. Our relationships don't have to be reflective of today's society of mistrust, insults and persistent moral decay. Just because our world is filled with a cacophony of anger, we don't need to follow suite.

We need to be people of higher ideals and moral standards because the Christian life calls us not to be common or blah, but to greatness. We are called to rise above the attacks on our faith and personhood, the daily assaults on common sense, and the denigration of personal autonomy.

**Christ offers us insight on how to rise above the fray of society and make every relationship better.**

*Continued on page 3 ⇨*

## What is gossip?



■ BY REV. FR. PETER DELVIZIS

A didactic story about gossip, based on the movie *Doubt*, is an adaptation of the play of the same name "Doubt - a Parable". The book, by author John Patrick Shanley, won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2005, based in part on a true story.

There was once a lady, who loved gossip, and who came with repentance to confess to a priest. The priest welcomed her, put on his stole and urged her to speak of her mistakes.

The woman was struggling to speak plainly of her offenses. After a while the priest interrupted telling her not to be ashamed or afraid to admit her mistakes. He reassured her that the Church is a safe place and that she stands in judgement of no one except for Christ. Being comforted, the woman began to speak the words that she had harbored within herself for so long. She told the priest of all the criticisms and suspicions she had for people. She confessed the sin of gossiping which included the many words and allegations she had

*Continued on page 2 ⇨*

*Wait for the promise of the Father*



# Dates in the Life of Our Church

February–March 2022

## ✝ FEBRUARY

I	11:00 AM Trinity Circle
	4:00 PM Greek School
2	Presentation of our Lord
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
3	4:00 PM Greek School
6	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
8	St. Theodore the Commander
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting
	7:30 PM Parish Council
10	4:00 PM Greek School
13	8:15 AM Orthros

	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	Community Communion Breakfast
15	4:00 PM Greek School
17	9:30 AM TOTS
	4:00 PM Greek School
20	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
21	8:00 PM GOYA State Meeting
26	9:00 AM 1st Saturday of Souls
27	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

5	8:00 AM 2nd Saturday of Souls
6	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
7	Great Lent Begins
	5:00 PM Great Compline
8	4:00 PM Greek School
	5:00 PM Lenten Vespers
	7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting
	7:30 Parish Council
9	40 Martyrs of Sebastia
	6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy
10	4:00 PM Greek School
11	6:00 PM Akathist Hymn
12	9:00 AM 3rd Saturday of Souls
13	Sunday of Orthodoxy
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

## ✝ MARCH

I	11:00 AM Trinity Circle
	4:00 PM Greek School
3	4:00 PM Greek School

## Gossip ↳ Continued from page 1

said throughout her life against people she knew and even about people she had never met.

**“A perverse man spreads evil things, and a torch of deceit kindles evils and separates friends.” –Proverbs 16:26**

The priest listened to her patiently. When it was over, the priest stood up to read the prayers of pardon. The woman thought they were finished and began to leave.

But the priest said to her: “Don’t be in a hurry. I have a penance for you. I want you to go home, get your pillow and take

it out to your balcony. There, take a knife and split the pillow in two. I want you to observe what will happen. Then, tomorrow come and tell me what happened.”

The woman went and did what the priest told her. The next day the woman went to the priest again. “I did what you told me”, the woman said. So, the priest asked her: “What did you notice as the pillow was torn in two?” The woman said without hesitation: “As soon as I started to tear the pillow, the feathers inside started to fall out and float away; some of them were taken by the wind and were blown far down the street.”

After this, the priest said to her, “Now, I want you to go home and pick up all those feathers that were in your pillow”!

The woman said, “Father, what are you saying? How can I go home to gather all those feathers? They have been scattered far and wide. Only God knows where they are by now. It’s impossible for me to pick

all of them up again.”

The priest looked her in the eyes and calmly said: “So now you understand what gossip is and how your words when they leave your mouth are scattered far and wide, infecting the ears of many others.”

The woman now truly understood of evils of gossip. She realized that although she regretted what she had said, there is no ambiguous doubt that her words may even now still hurt people and be the cause of scandal among others.

Moral of the story:

“Good words are a honeycomb, and their sweetness is a healing for the soul.”

– Proverbs 16:22

“Let no corrupting word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearer.” – Ephesians 4:29 ❖

ὁ θεὸς  
ἀγάπη  
ἐστίν

# God Is Love

Many people “love” to talk about love and how to acquire it for themselves but seem to forget it’s a relational word. Love is not acquired by some type of superficial transaction but rather through sharing and sacrifice. At its center, love exists to deepen and expand a relationship resulting in a closer union between individuals.

If you want to talk about love, look up to Heaven. There you will see God’s infinite love for humanity. If you want to know if love has limits, look at the Cross of Christ. It is the ultimate sign of love having no limits and exhibits the inexhaustible nature of God’s love. The Cross shows the depths and degree of God’s love offered through sacrifice.

When one truly encounters God’s

love then he will understand how it is possible to endure the whims and obstacles that others put in front of him.

When you taste even a little bit of love, you will be filled with its sweetness. And being overwhelmed by it, you will constantly look for its taste. Things that once deprived you of the taste of love will be quickly set aside in favor of its flavor. Just as the ship rips through the waves of the sea and sails to its destination, so will you tear through the waves of temptation when driven by God’s love.

Love propels you to move on. Everything in comparison will seem small and meaningless. Even your own life will seem minuscule when compared to the expanse of love.

All the Saints tasted God’s love in

their lives, that is why their lives were a surrendering to love and a giving of it. This is why they never feared the fire of death or the sword of the executioner. They were so overwhelmed and enveloped by God’s love that the limits of human nature were easily overcome by it and thus lived in the Infinity Love.

The Infinity Love of God is the love that all can claim for themselves, to taste it and to fill our lives with its sweetness, to alter our character and human nature, returning us to the original state found in the Paradise of Delight which is an eternal relationship with God, Who is the origin and sustainer of this miraculous gift. ❖



## Luke *↳ Continued from page 1*

Christ offers us insight on how to rise above the fray of society and make every relationship better.

In the life of Christ, as recorded in the Holy Gospels, we see how society is miraculously transfigured. The Gospel readings have an amazing ability to cut through the deceptive nature of our fallen world to bring us to Christ.

Repeatedly, the Gospel stories introduce us to Christ. Time and again, they extend God’s truth to us while at the same time demonstrate how our Lord shows the deepest and most profound respect to every person with whom He comes into contact. Our Lord is the perfect man and perfect God treating everyone in accordance with their inherent human dignity.

Refreshingly, even to the modern ear, there is never mistrust or misgivings with the Lord. He never casts suspicion or shows cynicism. Rather, He goes out

of His way to converse with the sinner or outcast. In Him, the God-man, there is no fear or consequence of moving beyond social barriers to join another human being in conversation.

The Gospels clearly shows us that Christ is not encumbered by any situation and comes to all. Thus, the Church constantly reminds us of Christ’s willingness to encounter us on a personal level. We respond to Christ and join Him in conversation whether it be through prayer, contemplation or exploration of our faith.

The Lord respects the autonomy of all people. He constantly comes, asking what He can do for you. This offering to partake of divine life is His blessing to us. It is done to raise awareness of our spiritual consciousness. It is done to help raise us to a greater spiritual level and to a higher moral ground. By honoring our autonomy, the good Lord shows us the way out of obscurity to the forefront of divine life.



The autonomy of body touched by the divine gives rise to insight. The person who is touched by Christ’s life responds to Him. His vision and perception are no longer clouded or darkened by the machinations of society or currently political inklings that seek to guide us into oblivion. But rather the Christian is clothed in his right mind waiting to behold the very mysteries of life from the One who is the Source of Life. ❖



■ BY REV. FR.  
PETER DELVIZIO



# Philoptochos

We Can Make a Difference

■ BY MARIA KANARAS, PRESIDENT

## Our History:

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society Inc., established in 1931, is the philanthropic arm of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America offering 90 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 and continues to expand the vision of the Society to ensure the existence and relevance to our members and our parish communities.

## Holy Trinity Chapter:

Averaging over 200 stewards a year, we support many worthy organizations, provide educational scholarships, support our church community, meet our National and Metropolis commitments and respond to individuals and 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.

The last 2 years has presented enormous challenges for all. However, the dedication and collective efforts of our sisterhood has allowed us, with safety as a priority, to continue with many

of our important activities. We have incorporated new avenues of communications to reach our stewards and extended communities through our Newsletter, "Philotimo", email blasts, social media, zoom meetings and a presence on the Holy Trinity Web Site. We welcome partnering opportunities across the parish ministries.

Our chapter executes on our mission responsibly in all the work we do through our capable, generous and dedicated community of women that put their faith in action.

## Call to Action:

The Philoptochos stewardship drive for 2022 began in January. We invite and urge all women over 18 years old to become a member. We must continue to build the strength of our chapter, to infuse new ideas and to embrace new generations of women to carry on this important mission. We look forward to your involvement and count on your generosity to whatever extent possible and extend our utmost gratitude and appreciation for your support.

Together with faith in the Lord, and a willingness from within each of us to offer our time, talent and treasures to lessen the pain and suffering of others and support of our church community. ❖

*The Ladies Philoptochos Society greatly appreciates your generosity and participation in our Holy Trinity Community Christmas card, benefiting many charities, and acknowledges the wonderful success of our Vasilopita bread sale and appeal, in support of Saint Basil Academy.*

Thank You

Wishing all a Blessed New Year!

# COAT PROMISE



Philoptochos is extremely grateful and thankful for your continued support of our annual "One Warm Coat" drive. This year, we are happy to report we collected a total of 205 new and gently worn coats for men, women and children. Included in this total are monetary donations that enabled "One Warm Coat" to provide additional coats to children and adults in need. The coats were collected and distributed to the Plainfield Family Success Center in Plainfield, NJ. This center is part of the school system serves 13 local schools where any community resident can go for family support, information, and services. Plainfield Family Success Center provides wrap-around resources and supports for families before they find themselves in crisis. Family Success Centers offer primary child abuse prevention services to families and bring together concerned community residents, leaders, and community agencies to address the problems that threaten the safety and stability of families and the community.

Thank you for allowing us to distribute coats, love, and warmth this winter season and helping us make a difference in our local community. ❖



# Trinity Circle

## Update

■ BY AVI KIRIAKATIS, PRESIDENT

We are blessed at Holy Trinity to develop life-long friendships by being members of Trinity Circle. Getting together and sharing our happiness and sadness. We share and support each other and all this is possible because we worship together at Holy Trinity and know this is our second home and family.

We invite all parishioners 55 and over to join us with our membership drive and return it to Holy Trinity c/o Marina LoAlbo, Membership Chair. Dues are only \$15. per year. We always start out with a prayer by Father Peter Delvizis; have a short meeting followed by lunch and camaraderie.

*"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you."* - Philippians 1:3-4

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 year.

Stay healthy and safe with your families ❖.



## 2022 MEMBERSHIP SIGNUP

Name(s)

Birthday (month/day) (not year)

Telephone

Cell:

Email



# GOYA

## Update

■ BY MAGGIE VASSILOPOULOS, PRESIDENT

**G**OYA has had a very unusual start to our 2021-2022 year. But, despite Covid, GOYA has managed to do a great deal together. GOYA members have remained resilient, participating in activities, while using precautions to keep everyone safe. We have had fewer participants this year due to the pandemic! But, we have enjoyed our limited experiences together to the fullest, knowing that those who could not be with us in person were missed in spirit. This trial has brought us closer in our friendships and our faith.

Below, a recap show what we have done so far. We want to express our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to our Outreach initiatives and our fundraisers. We could not have performed this heart-warming outreach without every one of you!

### OCTOBER

- We attended The 45th Annual Christ Encounter Retreat, an educational and inspiring experience.
- Our athletics program began for both boys basketball and girls volleyball teams. Congratulations to both teams for giving it their all and to the girls for coming in 2nd place in our district and advancing to the finals!! Overall a great season!!
- A few of our Goyans attended the Annual Harvest Dance in Paramus, NJ, a great event that brings together Goyans from all churches in our district.
- Our Greek Dance program hosted an Adult Greek Dance Workshop, a wonderful night of Greek dance introduction and fellowship, with 20 attendees, led by our Hellenic Roots Dance instructor. All proceeds from this event will help support our Dance program. We thank our instructor and all attendees!
- In the last few months, GOYA has collected items for our clothing drive and food for the pantries that GOYA supports, including the Holy Cross of Brooklyn Outreach Center, Holy Trinity Catholic Church, and the Emanuel Cancer Center. We sincerely thank everyone who donated items!
- On November 11th, we delivered over 250 dry food items and 25 pairs of socks to the Holy Cross of Brooklyn Outreach Center.

### NOVEMBER

- We made 170 sandwiches, 55 toiletry kits, and 60 sustainable one-night food-packs for Bridges in Summit. We then delivered and fed people suffering homelessness in Newark, NJ. Our friends from the St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church's GOYA in Union, NJ, joined us in this effort.
- We held our annual clothing drive and we are happy to report that we received a check for \$300.00 with which we will purchase more food and supplies for future outreach projects.
- We held a Harvest Bread Sale to raise funds to support our programs.
- GOYA supported the Ronald McDonald House's Greek Division with a \$100.00 donation.
- GOYA supported the St. Basil Academy Christmas project. We purchased and delivered gifts for 20 children of St. Basil's Academy. We were able to fulfill one of their "wish list" gifts, and we presented them with gift cards of \$125.00 value which they can use on their own! We thank all our donors for making this important work possible!
- Goyans attended "Friday Nights Together" at St. Barbara's Church in Toms River, NJ. St. Barbara's Greek Orthodox Church initiated Friday Nights Together to help Goyans from different churches come together to strengthen our bonds and have fun. We had a great time playing games in the gym at St. Barbara's and created beautiful memories.



### DECEMBER

- A small group of brave Goyans faced the cold for our Christmas Caroling. Following this, we attended a Christmas party with a White elephant gift exchange hosted by the Carayannopoulos' at their home. We had a great time!
- Goyans attended the Christmas Dance at St. Barbara's Church in Toms River, and we had a terrific time.
- We have continued to hold Greek Dance practice sessions each week, with precautions to keep everyone safe. The Goyans are currently working on their incredible Greek dance performance for the Sights and Sounds!
- We have begun planning for this year's Sights and Sounds. We were thrilled to see many Goyans interested and registering for this beautiful experience.



The COVID pandemic may have slightly abbreviated the above list of events, but it was no less fun! Coming together in friendship and faith has meant even more to us this year than ever before. It has made us truly appreciate the wonderful group of friends we have and the work we are capable of accomplishing together. We, again, want to thank everyone who participated and everyone who donated to our group's many charities. We can't wait to see all our Goyans in full force for the second half of the year! We wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year!



## Cutting of the Vasilopita



# Christmas Images







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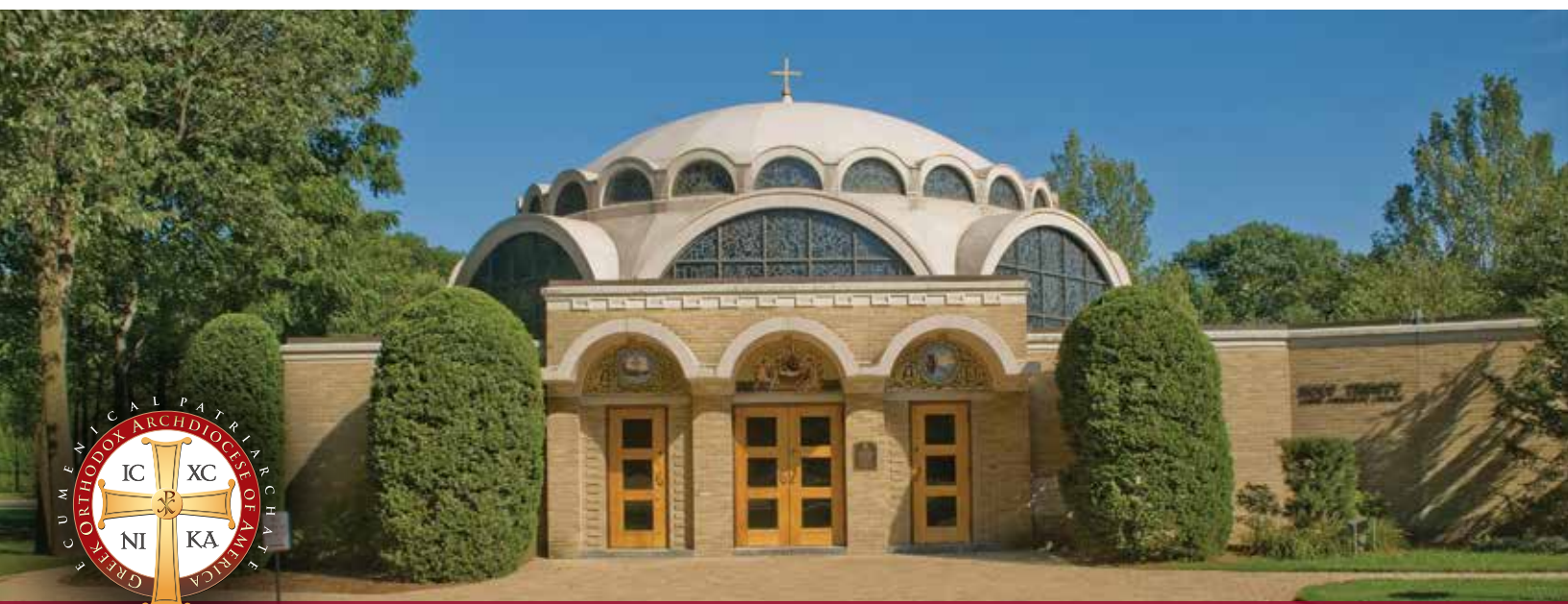
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<i>Divine Liturgy</i>	9:30 AM	9:30 AM

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