

# The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



February 2024 ✦ Volume 48, Issue 2

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## The Church's Embrace

The month of February introduces us to one of the last feast days of the Lord associated with Christmas. On February 2, we celebrate the forty-day blessing of our Lord as described by the Gospel of Luke (2:22-40). The act of Simeon the elder holding the Christ child at the Temple and embracing Him is significant. Simeon represents humanity seeking salvation. By embracing Christ, he dedicates himself to the eternal realities brought by our Saviour.

This feast day is called the "Presentation" or the "Meeting of the Lord". In similar manner, like Simeon, the Church calls all to embrace Christ. The Church embraces all through its prayers but all too often we forsake the governing spirit of the Church.

There is a book of the Church called the "Evchologion", which is given to the priest on the day he is ordained. As the name amply implies, it is the book of prayer encapsulating every imaginable human circumstance requiring divine help. The book contains prayers about child-birth and miscarriages; drought conditions, sicknesses, exorcisms, demonic influences, sanctification of houses and businesses, ailment of farm animals, earthquakes, floods, fire, consecrations, against the evils of war, etc. It is the priest's prayer book



which shows the movement of Church to embrace the whole life of humanity and its calamities. The history of the Church shows its desire to embrace humanity. She extends her hand to you so that you may in like manner come to embrace it as well.

Oftentimes our minds are not aligned with the Church and so we forsake Her embrace. We quickly embrace other things such as the medical field, science, and personalities. But miracles do not spring forth from these fields. Most assuredly these seek to mock and reject miracles. But as the faithful, we know that miracles still happen, and miracles happen only when we embrace the Church. They happen when we call upon the priest to read the various prayers found in the prayer book. When

we do this, we reach out to embrace the saving action of the Church.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, there is nothing more powerful than the Church of Christ and the grace that flows from the Church. Countless souls have been saved by the actions of the Church. In difficult life moments, we should speak to a priest, for this is the way we embrace the Church. You are not changed by the priest hearing your words but by God hearing you. Therefore, it does not matter what you tell the priest but that he can help you embrace God and present the prayers of the Church to Him on your behalf. Decades of burdens and grief have been

*Continued on page 2* ⇨



# Do Not Be Vengeful

**D**o not be vengeful and never return evil for evil. The evil from your neighbor is sufficient. Do not let it abound. For if you repay evil for evil, you will double the evil in the world. If you do not repay evil with evil, then you will gain the favor of our Lord.

Do not be vengeful and never return evil for evil but be patient waiting on the Lord to act. He is the One who sees and remembers, and vengeance is the Lord's.

-Romans 12:19

Only the act of forgiveness can reduce evil in the world. So let us be quick to

forgive and thus extinguish the evil that abounds.

If you do not repay evil for evil, then you have done the wisest deed by relinquishing your struggle to the One stronger than yourself and He will fight victoriously for you. If you enter battle with the evil doer, you might be defeated. But God cannot be defeated. Therefore, relinquish your struggle to the victorious and undefeated One and patiently wait on Him.

Learn from a small child. If someone attacks a child in the presence of his

parents, the child does not return the attack by attacking, but rather looks to his parents and cries. The child knows that his parents will protect him. How is it that you do not know what a little child knows? Your heavenly Parent is constantly beside you. Thus, do not be vengeful and do not return evil for evil, rather look to your Parent and cry.

The glorious St. Paul reminds us to "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse...Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men." – Romans 12:14 & 17 ❖

**Do not be overcome by evil,  
but overcome evil with good.**

**- Romans 12:21 -**

heartlight.org

# Community Communion Sunday

## Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

### February 11, 2024

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!*

Reservations during Fellowship Hour on  
January 28 and February 4.

The form and payment can also be dropped off or mailed to the church office.  
**ATTN: Communion Breakfast**

**\$14 for Adults**  
**\$6 for children under 12**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of adults: \_\_\_\_ Number of children (12 and under): \_\_\_\_

Total \$: \_\_\_\_ Cash / Check # \_\_\_\_

Please volunteer to help Saturday 2/10 and/or Sunday 2/11  
by calling the chairperson, Andrea Cerini  
at (908) 889-5961 or emailing [andreacerini3@hotmail.com](mailto:andreacerini3@hotmail.com)

# Remember to submit your 2024 Stewardship Card

“It is by offering our blessings back to God that He will be able to continue His forgiving, healing, liberating, empowering, transfiguring, loving ministry through the Church. For God, Infinite though He be, has chosen to work through us, through our gifts, to continue His saving work in the world today.”

- Father Anthony M. Coniaris



## *Well Done*

GOOD AND  
FAITHFUL  
SERVANT

- MATTHEW 25:23

## STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

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# Archbishop Demetrios visits Holy Trinity



His Eminence with Fr. John and Fr. Peter



His Eminence with Peter, Maria, and Nadia Tarhanidis



# Trinity Circle

Update

Trinity Circle meets the first Tuesday of every month from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM  
**Tuesday, February 6 & Tuesday, March 5**

Our monthly luncheons are donated and celebrated, in honor of or in memory of loved ones:

- February 6th** In memory of Joy Daniledes loved ones
- March 5th** In memory of beloved husband Christos Romas
- April 2nd** In memory of beloved sister Barbara Manos
- April 21** Cemetery Palm Cross Sale
- May 7th** In memory of beloved wife Theresa Kotsolios
- June 4th** Members end of the year luncheon at Galloping Hill Caterers



Angela and Clem Thomas celebrating 69 Years

## Vasilopita Cutting



Theodora wins the coin



# Don't Expect The World To Get Any Better

The consistency of the pattern in Christ's life is a challenge for rational thinking people in the world and a reversal of everything they hold to be a constant. Why? Because, having expunged God from their life, they seek comfort, complete acceptance by others, the power of wealth, and domination, all of which constitute sin and subjugation to the Evil One.

What's worse is that this sinful state is expanding without limit or hindrance, because, according to Saint Paul, 'wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being

deceived' [2 Tim. 3, 13]. No Messianism- as the expectation of any improvement in the state of the world- is acceptable to us. The world is bad and it's getting worse.

So, Christians are living in a world subject to its ruler, the devil, and it's a world in which they seem to have no place. But this is where things are turned upside down. The world of sin wishes to annihilate Christians, but it can't manage to do so. He who determines the finest details of the universe is the Lord, our Almighty God: 'He who is, was, and is coming'. Speaking of his

personal experience, Saint Paul says: 'What persecutions I endured; yet the Lord rescued me from all of them'. So here we have the reality of the depth of our faith: when it seems that we Christians are being defeated and are losing to the forces of darkness, that's precisely when the light of God's almighty power arises- our participation in Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection. Did Christ not seem weak and defeated on the Cross? But that's where His almighty power was made manifest: He rose on the third day. 'Our faith is the triumph which overcomes the world'. ❖

## The Love Of Christ

The love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge! Surpasses, not the knowledge of God, but the knowledge of man, darkened and embittered by sin. God's knowledge is equal to God's love and neither surpasses the other. But man's knowledge, alienated from God, does not at all comprehend God's love, shown through the Lord Jesus Christ. God understands man, but man does not understand God. God attempted to enable man with reason to understand through nature and through the Old Revelation, through the Law and the prophets, but man did not want to submit to that knowledge. Then God attempted to overcome men through love, and through this love, to draw them

to Himself. Hence the Incarnation of the Son of God, His sacrifice and His suffering to the death. Such inexpressible love on the part of God, beyond words and knowledge, has captured and returned many to God, that is, made them to understand and given them a new knowledge, pure and bright. But it has confused many of them as well, for it did not agree with their darkened and embittered understanding.

And to know, says the Apostle. How can we, brethren, know that which is beyond knowing and beyond understanding? In no other way than by a change of mind, an awakening and sharpening of the mind, an illumination and elevation of the mind: in brief, by the acquiring of

a new mind, which has the capability of understanding the love of Christ, which is beyond the present sinful mind of men.

O the depth of God's wisdom and knowledge! Whoever comes even a little closer to you feels that you are at the same time the depth of the love of God.

O Lord, ascended into heaven, illumine our minds with Thine understanding, that we may more easily make our own Thine unfathomable love toward mankind and weep--weep from sorrow because of our hardened hearts and because of our darkened and malicious minds, and weep for joy because of Thy love toward us, who are darkened and embittered. ❖

*To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.*

## TOTS Playgroup – February 7

The next TOTS (Trinity Orthodox Toddler Social) meeting will be on Wednesday, February 7, 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 at [vcomprelli@gmail.com](mailto:vcomprelli@gmail.com) or 612-801-8608 to sign up or to ask any questions. ❖



Sights & Sounds is fast approaching! GOYA is busy practicing and preparing for our group and individual performances. We're also working on art submissions. Thank you to the volunteers who are spearheading new sights workshops for us. We look forward to showcasing our talents and

art pieces to the rest of our parish and hope you can all make it!

At the end of January, we came together with the rest of our parish for the Philoptochos Vasilopita cutting. Several of us attended the Bridges event hosted by St. John Tenafly GOYA to prepare sandwiches for homeless people

in Newark.

Our Outreach committee is hosting the Souper Bowl of Caring in February, to collect canned food items to share with the Holy Trinity Catholic Church pantry. We are also continuing to plan service activities where we can directly make an impact. ❖

## Souper Bowl of Caring February 11


Score a souper bowl victory against hunger! Team up with IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities) and GOYA to feed the hungry. 41 million people struggle with hunger in the United States, including 13 million children. Your monetary donation and non-perishable food items can help change that. Let's turn the biggest weekend of football into a super day of giving!





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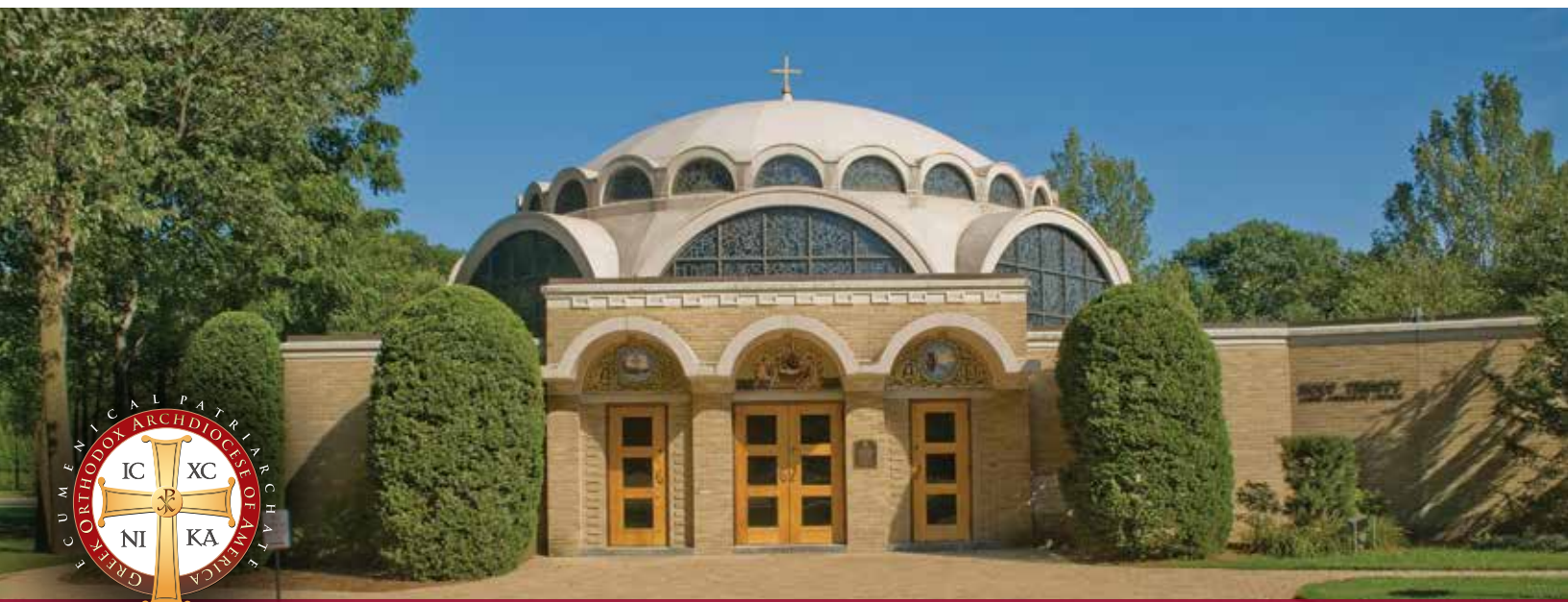
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*Presiding Priest* Rev. Fr. Peter Delvizis  
*E-mail* FrPeter@htgocnj.org

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*Caretaker* Beatriz Ramirez

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|                       | <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         |

## THE PROMISE: VOLUME 48, ISSUE 2

10 issues published annually.  
No subscription fee.  
Article deadline - 10<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month