

The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



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what makes you
UNCLEAN?

“There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.”

– Mark 7:15

This Gospel verse teaches us an important lesson that no eternal element can make a person unclean. This is important to understand especially since we are approaching the beginning of Great Lent. As we begin the Season of Abstinence, we must always remember that there are no foods that are unclean or forbidden. All creation reflects God’s power and beauty and therefore food cannot corrupt us. All that God creates and provides are good and beneficial to us.

Having said this, there are, however, things other than food that we sometimes allow to enter our being which can be destructive. If we allow influences from other people to enter our hearts, these things can corrupt us. We must remember that nothing has the power to make us unclean, provided we do not allow these external things to change our spiritual composition. By taking offense or having an ego that is easily

bruised, we allow outside influences to change us and dim the light of Christ within us. If people curse us, insult us, humiliate us, this should not bother us. Let them curse us, speak ill of us and slander us, because they have no power to make us unclean.

What makes us unclean is what comes out of us. Words are the first things that come out of our mouths and we direct words towards other people. Our hearts give birth to words and therefore the words we use describe who we are. Bad words that tear others down, curses and obscenities, all are indicators of the character of our being. So, if our words are full of corruption, so is our soul. If we curse ourselves, slander others, and lie to the people around us then we make ourselves unclean.

Words are typically followed by actions or what we call our behavior. Words, actions, even an unsettling gaze reveal the state of our souls. If our

words are evil and slanderous, so is our behavior. Evil deeds and thoughts, pride, arrogance, and a tendency to show off, are the things this makes us impure. The Prophet David reveals the deeds of a corrupt man and every corrupt man is revealed through the things that come out of them:

“For this reason, arrogance mastered them; they clothed themselves with their wrongdoings and ungodliness; their wrongdoings go before them like fatness; they passed through to their heart’s intent. They thought and spoke evil; they spoke and boasted of their wrongdoing. They set their mouth against heaven, and their tongue passed through the earth.” Psalm 72:6-9

As people of God, we want our words to build up others while being supportive. We want our words to be words that ring true, proclaiming the glory

Continued on page 2 ⇨

Wait for the promise of the Father



Dates in the Life of Our Church

February / March 2025

FEBRUARY

I	2:30 PM Wedding
2	Presentation of the Lord
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
4	11:00 AM Trinity Circle
	4:00 PM Greek School
6	4:00 PM Greek School
7	6:00 PM JOY/HOPE
8	St. Theodore the General
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	11:00 AM Baptism
9	Triodion Begins
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	11:45 AM Communion Breakfast
II	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Mtg
	7:30 PM Parish Council

12	9:30 AM TOTs
13	4:00 PM Greek School
15	Metropolis Dance Festival
16	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	1:00 PM Baptism
17	Office Closed – Presidents Day
18	4:00 PM Greek School
	8:00 PM NNJYC State Mtg
20	4:00 PM Greek School
22	9:00 AM Saturday of Souls
23	Meatfare Sunday
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
26	9:30 AM TOTs

MARCH

I	Sights and Sounds
	8:00 AM Saturday of Souls
2	Cheesefare

	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
3	Great Lent Begins
	5:00 PM Great Compline
4	11:00 AM Trinity Circle
	4:00 PM Greek School
	5:00 PM Lenten Vespers
5	6:30 PM Presanctified Liturgy
	8:00 PM Theosis
6	4:00 PM Greek School
7	6:30 PM Akathist Hymn
	7:30 PM Lenten Potluck Meal
8	9:00 AM Saturday of Souls
9	Daylight Savings
	Sunday of Orthodoxy
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
II	4:00 PM Greek School
	5:00 PM Compline
	7:30 PM Parish Council

What Makes You Unclean?

↩ Continued from page 1

of God. We want our actions to reveal a good spirit and an upright heart.

As a child, I always remember my grandparents saying, “It’s not what goes into your mouth that defiles but what comes out of it.” They were quoting this Gospel passage from St. Mark. So, let us remember that nothing entering us through the mouth can make us unclean. What makes us unclean is what comes out of our mouths and makes our inner being evident to others. When we fast from certain foods let us also remember to be meek and humble in the sight of God. Let the light and sweet fragrance of Christ flow through us. Then will our fasting help purify our souls and create a clean heart within us. ❖

***“Let us, then, His servants, follow our Lord and patiently submit to denunciations that we may be blessed! If, with slight forbearance, I hear some bitter or evil remark directed against me, I may return it, and then I shall inevitably become bitter myself.*”**



Parish Council

Update

■ GEORGE KOUTSAFTES

I am deeply humbled and honored to be the President of the Holy Trinity Parish Council. I am starting my ninth year serving on the Parish Council and as I reflect on that journey, I recall the past Presidents who have served before. They are all role models I have learned from and my leadership is a reflective mosaic of each. This will influence how we at Holy Trinity pursue a deeper relationship with our Lord and drive our ministries and our faith-based outreach.

I would like to extend a warm thank you to Penny Mavrides Sales who did a wonderful job leading our Parish Council these past two years. Under her leadership, we launched our first full festival since 2019 – it was a fellowship and financial success! We grew the number of our stewards by over 8% via strong support of ministries and fellowship events; and led a successful capital campaign raising almost \$700k to fund much needed upgrades and maintenance of our beloved Church.

As we embark on 2025, I would like to promote three pillars that will be a key focus of our Parish Council:

- Growth of our faith
- Growth of our ministries and faith-based outreach
- Growth in fellowship

Spiritual learning and growth in our faith are at the center of these pillars.

Our ministries are essential to reflecting the faith-based fellowship of Holy Trinity. Therefore, I will ensure our Parish Council is providing the appropriate leadership and support to ensure our ministries achieve their objectives. I ask that each ministry leader consider growth of our three pillars as they develop their plans for 2025 so that the Parish Council can provide the necessary support.

Mentorship will be a key element to help us grow the number of engaged parishioners. We are thrilled by the growth of the number of young families at Holy Trinity. It was noticeable at our Festival this past September. The fellowship we experienced, especially with our young adults and families, was the best I have seen for quite a long time. It is up to the experienced members of Holy Trinity to warmly embrace the engagement of our young adults and families, seek their input and involvement in our ministries and provide mentorship to be future leaders of Holy Trinity.

In my first six months, we will provide strong support to our Festival committee to ensure we have another fellowship and financial success. We will also establish greater visibility of the faith-based outreach we engage in at Holy Trinity. It's a critical activity that extends the impact of our faith within the Orthodox community and it educates those in our external community sur-

rounding Holy Trinity what it means to be an Orthodox Christian. Lastly, we will develop and communicate to all in Holy Trinity an aspirational mission for our endowment fund. We are blessed by the everlasting gift by the Nicholas J Bouras Foundation to establish the endowment fund, and we have the responsibility to honor that gift by engaging in meaningful growth of our ministries and faith-based outreach. As part of this effort, we intend to refresh our Planned Giving program with the intent to inspire those in our parish to give and grow our endowment to support its mission.

In today's turbulent environment, we are witnessing a palpable shift in the mindset of people who are seeking a Christian religion steeped in tradition and the original doctrines only offered by Orthodox Christianity. This is a key reason why the growth of Orthodox Christians in the United States is growing faster than any other Christian religion. At Holy Trinity we shall be prepared to embrace all whom seek the truth and warmly welcome them into our family of Christ. I am committed as your Parish Council President to support this mission.

PS - Our Festival is scheduled for May 30 – June 1. Please sign up early to provide your support to ensure we have another smashing success! ❖



Philoptochos

Philoptochos Stewardship

■ ELLEN MANOS-ATHENSON, MEMBERSHIP CO-CHAIR

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 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 25,000 members and more than 400 active chapters nationwide.

Our Mission:

To promote charitable, benevolent and philanthropic outreach; to preserve the sanctity of life and family; and to perpetuate and promote our Orthodox faith and traditions.

Our Holy Trinity Philoptochos:

The Ladies Philoptochos Society of Holy Trinity executes our mission in all the work our chapter undertakes. The commitment of our capable, generous and dedicated community of women put their faith in action. Dedicated to humanitarian efforts, we strive to make a meaningful impact on society. In 2024, we supported many worthy organizations, provided educational scholarships, met our annual National and Metropolis commitments, supported our church community and responded promptly and generously to individuals and families that are in great need. Our efforts are made possible through the funds we are able to raise at our events, donations and through our annual stewardship offerings enabling us to operate as a vibrant, self-funding ministry.

Call to Action:

Join us in our journey of faith, charity and community service which provides a rewarding opportunity to connect with our church community and to embrace new generations of women working together in a vibrant sisterhood of Philanthropy. We urge all women 18 years or older to become a member of this dedicated group. ❖

The Ladies Philoptochos Society greatly appreciates your generosity and participation.

We look forward to another productive and successful year ahead



O, What a Night!

A look back at our annual Christmas Dinner/General Meeting which was held on December 12th. Christmas cheer was in the air while we enjoyed a lovely catered dinner buffet followed with socializing and shopping at our Boutique tables and Christmas Boutique Bake Sale, where we sold beautifully wrapped platters of Greek pastries. We sang Christmas carols and had fun with a carol sing-a-long. Representatives from the YWCA were invited who presented us with an overview of their mission. Philoptochos President, Maria Kanaras, presented the Director with a donation from our members. A festive evening of fun and fellowship was enjoyed by all.



GOYA

Update

■ BY CATIE CARAYANNOPOULOS, GOYA PRESIDENT

GOYA has been busy during February preparing for Sights & Sounds that will occur on Saturday, March 1. However, to start the month some GOY-
Ans attended the Valentines dance at St. Barbara's in Toms River for some inter-church mingling. In terms of Sights & Sounds, we had a few writing workshops and arts and crafts workshops to work on our "sights." On the other hand, the practices for the "Sounds" performances have been disciplined and motivated in hopes of taking home the first-place trophy. Our Greek Dance group is preparing a traditional

ensemble that tells a story of a poor village girl they used to call *Perperouna*. Our religious and English singing groups have been singing their hearts out every Sunday and Wednesday to shock the judges with our harmonies. This year, the band will perform Van Hallan's "Jump" to spotlight the range of instruments included, from guitar to baritone. We thank all of the volunteers that made the big setup for Sights & Sounds on February 23 successful and hope you can come watch our performances on March 1. Stop by the GOYA table on Sundays to learn more! ❖



Greek School Vasilopita Cutting



Winter Wonderland Dance





Trinity Circle

Blessed Year 2025

Ευλογημένη η Χρόνια
Happy New Year everyone!

It's always wonderful to socialize with each other every month at our Trinity Circle meetings. January was no exception as we had our Vasilopita cutting ceremony to start the New Year right. The coin was found in

the piece cut for Jesus, signifying good health and happiness to all of us in the coming year.

We thank Despina O'Neill for donating the luncheon in memory of her beloved son and husband. We thank Lefteri Ioannou for speaking to us today and sharing his story of a very

special family icon of St. Constantine and Helen that was found after so many years and returned to his family. Marina LoAlbo, membership chair started collecting 2025 membership dues. We welcomed new member Georgene Bonard of Westfield who happened to be one of our 50/50 winners. ❖



Trinity Circle with JOY/HOPE Valentine's Day Cards





Holy Trinity Sacraments and Rites

June 15, 2024 – February 1, 2025

FUNERALS

- 6/15/2024 +Thelma Adams
- 6/21/2024 +Penny Terzoglou
- 7/8/2024 +Frances Frigerio
- 8/8/2024 +Ernest Ladas
- 8/7/2024 +Carolyn Mitilenes
- 8/30/2024 +Nicholas J. Minas
- 11/15/2024 +Anagnostis (Notis) Kotsolios
- 12/2/2024 +John Baboukis
- 12/6/2024 +Derrick Arfanis
- 12/19/2024 +Kassiana Dakos Jeffries
- 12/17/2024 +Leonidas Balatos
- 12/28/2024 +Marie Combias
- 1/7/2025 +Michael Anastasiou

WEDDINGS

- 7/6/24 Monica Dawson and Leontios (Leo) Stavrinou, Franco Kyriacos Stavrinou as sponsor.
- 7/21/24 Deana S. Gifford and Brandon M=. Brooks, James, J. Mavrikidis as sponsor
- 7/27/24 Elizabeth K. Hyde and John Byrnes, Linsey Anne Minella as sponsor
- 9/1/24 Alexandra Tinfow and Eric J. Demers, Eugenia Pankow as sponsor
- 10/19/24 Michaela F. Thor and William M. Zeliff, Marigo Markos as sponsor
- 1/25/24 Maria Hatzikostas and Andrew Repousis, Maria Baxter as sponsor
- 2/1/25 Elena Theodora Baurkot and Jacob Henry Thompson, Christopher Baurkot as sponsor


BAPTISMS

- 6/29/24 Henry Augustus Oertel, son of Christopher Oertel and Kiriaki Louros, Godparent is Sopia Louros
- 7/13/24 Olivia (Olympia) Miyako Carey, daughter of Gregory and Kyoko Carey, Godmother is Penelope Combs
- 7/27/24 Ellen June Shepard, daughter of Timothy and Kassandra Shepard, Godmother is Ariana Anderson
- 7/28/24 Nikos Alexander Stevens, son of Kevin Stevens and Eva Evgeniou, Godmother is Eleni Evgeniou
- 8/4/24 Kayla Nicole Capato Dimitry, Brian Nicholas Capato Dimitry and Devon Scott Capato Dimitry, their parents are Thomas and Karen Dimitry. The Godmother is Christina Dimitry. The Honorary Godparents are Elise Daniledes and John Dimitry
- 8/5/24 Hudson James "Dimitrios" Leles, son of Dimitri Leles and Kathryn Zias, Godfather is Alexander James Zias
- 8/10/24 Sofia Guastella, daughter of Peter and Gerri Guastella, Godfather is Evan Jim Repousis
- 9/15/24 Effie Olivia "Efthalia" Sprague, daughter of Dane Sprague and Leah Lalos Sprague, Godfather is George Fikaris
- 9/21/24 Sebastian Costas Mateo Hidalgo and Alexandra Maria Teresa Hidalgo, the son and daughter of Juan and Christina Hidalgo, the Godparents are Peter and Melissa Petropoulos
- 9/21/24 Eliana (Helena) Diana Eleftheriou, the daughter of Evangelos and Kristen Eleftheriou, Godmother is Stephanie Eleftheriou
- 9/22/24 Margaret (Margarita) Maria Coppa, daughter of Vivian Repousis and Zachary Coppa, Godmother is Evangelina Repousis
- 10/5/24 Frangiskos Emmanuel Vozos, son of Emmanuel and Courtney Vozos, Godparents are Margo and Costa Costidis
- 10/12/24 Georgios Apostolos Stagias, son of Athena and Apostolos-Panagiotis Stagias, Godfather is George Douvelis
- 10/20/24 Frank John "Theofanis" Naglieri, son of John Naglieri and Sophia Savva Naglieri, Godfather is Andreas Savva
- 10/27/24 Mark Anthony Jefferys, son of Tom Jefferys and Laura Maneates, Godmother is Katie Tencza
- 11/9/24 Theodore John Rofrano, son of Steven and Mia Rofrano, Godfather is Nicholas Sikellis
- 11/16/24 Evelyn Harmony Rose, daughter of Andrew and Caitlin Rose, Godfather is George Rose



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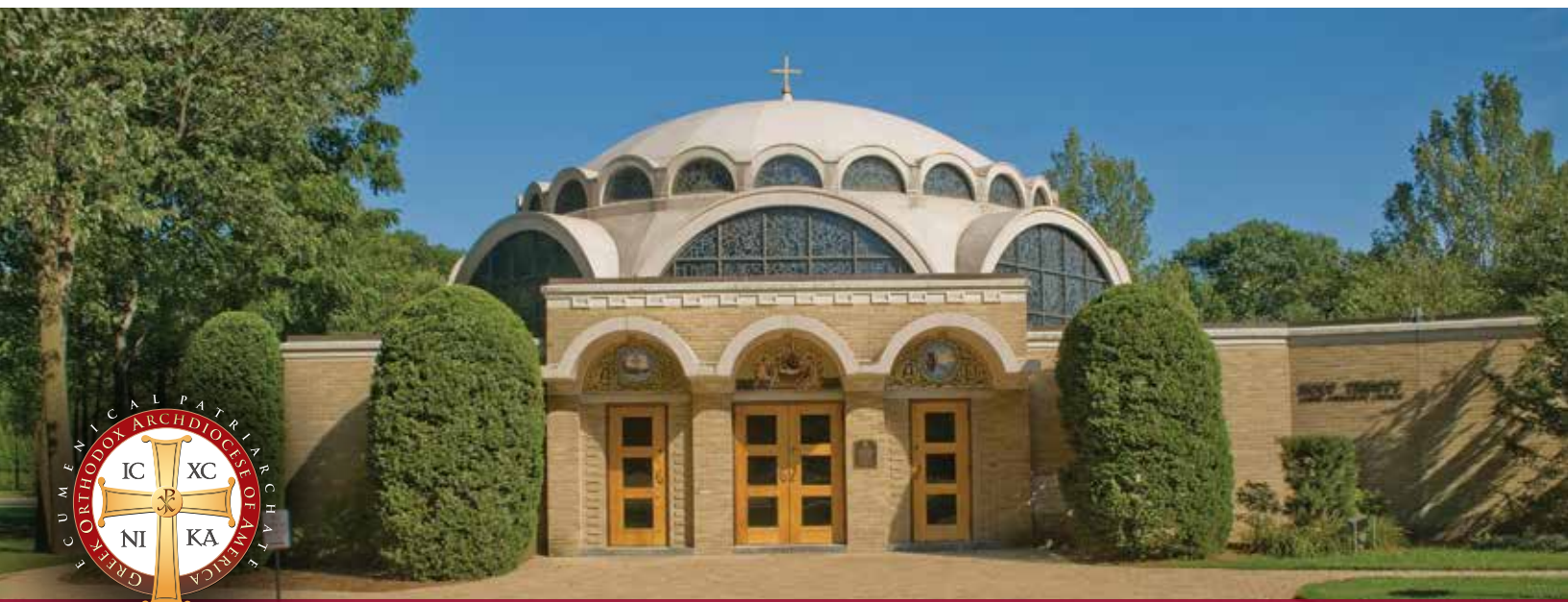
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	Sundays	Weekdays
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Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM	9:30 AM

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