When our Lord reached thirty years from His physical birth, He began His teaching and saving work. He signified this “beginning of the beginning” by His baptism in the River Jordan.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, “The beginning of the world: water; the beginning of the Good News: Jordan.” At the time of the baptism of the Lord in water, the Father was revealed to the sense of hearing; the Spirit was revealed to the sense of sight, and in addition to these, the Son was revealed to the sense of touch. The Father uttered His witness about the Son, the Son was baptized in the water, and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove hovered above the water.

St. John the Baptist witnessed also and said about Christ, “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” When John immersed and baptized the Lord in the Jordan, the mission of Christ in the world and the path of our salvation were shown. That is to say: The Lord took upon Himself the sins of mankind and died under them (immersion) and became alive again (the coming out of the water); and so we must die as the old sinful man and become alive again as cleansed, renewed, and regenerated. This is the Saviour and this is the path of salvation.

The Feast of Theophany is also called the Feast of Illumination. For us, the event in the River Jordan illuminates, by manifesting to us God as Trinity, consubstantial and undivided.

Purification & Enlightenment

Holy Theophany

BY REV. FR. PETER DELVIZIS

Wait for the promise of the Father

Continued on page 2
Dates in the Life of Our Church

**January 2018**

1. **Naming of the Lord and St. Basil the Great**
   - 8:30 AM Orthros
   - 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

2. **Church Office Closed**

3. **Paramoni of Theophany**
   - 8:30 AM Royal Hours
   - 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy with blessing of the waters

4. **Holy Theophany**
   - 8:30 AM Orthros
   - 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy with the Great Blessing of the Waters

5. **Synaxis of St. John the Baptist**
   - 8:15 AM Orthros
   - 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
   - Sunday School classes resume

6. **Holy Theophany**
   - 8:30 AM Orthros
   - 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

7. **Synaxis of St. John the Baptist**
   - 8:15 AM Orthros
   - 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
   - 12:00 PM Vasilopita Luncheon

**February 2018**

8. **Three Hierarchs**
   - 8:30 AM Orthros
   - 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
   - 4:00 PM Greek School

9. **St. Anthony the Great**
   - 8:30 AM Orthros
   - 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

10. **St. Athanasios and St. Cyril**
    - 8:30 AM Orthros

Also, every one of us through baptism in water is illumined by this, that we become adopted by the Father of Lights through the merits of the Son and the power of the Holy Spirit. – Synaxarion of Orthros

**On Christ’s Baptism**

St. Cyril: “It was necessary that the Word of the Father [Jesus Christ], when He humbled and emptied Himself, and deigned to assume our likeness [Incarnation and Nativity], should become for our sakes the pattern and way of every good work. For it follows, that He who in everything is first, must in this also set the example. In order, therefore, that we may learn both the power itself of Holy Baptism, and how much we gain by approaching so great a grace, He commences the work Himself.”

St. Ambrose: “The Lord was baptized, not wishing to be cleansed, but to cleanse the waters, so that washed through the flesh of Christ which did not know sin, they had the right to Baptism.”

St. Cyril: “He received it [baptism] not so much for His own sake as for ours; for by Him and in Him are we enriched with all things. Most suitably therefore to the economy of grace does He endure with us the things of man’s estate...Now He had no need of Holy Baptism, being wholly pure and spotless, and holy of the holy. Nor had He need of the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit Who proceeds from God the Father is of Him, and equal to Him in essence.”
The indomitable spirit of Cyprus surrounded all who attended the Cultural Committee event in the Bouras Center on Friday, November 17. The creativity of Helen (Elenitsa) Bruno was noticeable as we were able to conjure so many of the sights and sounds of Cyprus, which is steeped in archaeological, historical and religious history. The photos, posters and her artwork gave us a sense of the beauty of the island as well as hearing George Dalaras’ rendition of the song Gold and Green Leaf (Χρυσοπράσινο Φύλλο), in a short music video exemplifying the natural beauty of Cyprus and the tenacity of the Cypriot people.

Author Maria Meniko Sifniades discussed her book “Archangel”, showed slides of the famous mosaics and read the Prologue. Celia Kapsomera conducted an interactive discussion as to what inspired her to write this book, followed by questions and audience participation.

The video “Cyprus – 10,000 Years of Culture and Civilization” ended the remarkable program. However, the best was still to come! We were all treated to a plethora of Cypriot-inspired delicacies and a sip of the world famous Cypriot wine Commandaria. During the crusades, Commandaria was served at the 12th century wedding of King Richard the Lionheart to Berengaria of Navarre, in the town of Limassol. It was during the wedding that King Richard pronounced Commandaria “the wine of kings and the king of wines”.

Again, the Cultural Committee (now in its 33rd year) fulfilled its mission to educate and promote Hellenic Culture! Thank you to all who attended.
Heralding in the Christmas Season

BY RYAN J. KIEL

On December 10, 2017, Holy Trinity Religious Education put on a show-stopping production to welcome the Advent season and spirit of Christmas! This show was called “A Festival of Lessons and Carols 2017”. The performance comprised of a selection of holiday favorites, poems and scripture about the birth of the Saviour, and popular carols to be sung by the entire congregation. Grades preschool through fourth performed the main musical numbers which ranged from sacred carols such as “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” to tunes from popular culture such as “Jingle Bell Rock”. Music Director, Ryan J. Kiel, assistant to Kathryn Athanasoulas of the Holy Trinity Choir, traveled from classroom-to-classroom for two months prior going over these Christmas selections. He also taught about vocal technique and elements of good choral singing. The students sang their hearts out and heralded in a season of joy for all who attended this event.

This concert was also a collaboration between all branches of the Holy Trinity community. Along with choral pieces, the show consisted of instrumental soli provided by Religious Education’s fifth grade classmates. These students generously provided their instrumental talents, as they had prepared with their private instructors and in their schools’ band programs. Furthermore, the Greek School PTSO provided the stage decorations for this year’s concert. Holy Trinity’s GOYA chapter offered musical talent as well; several GOYAns provided their vocal and instrumental talents to engage the audience. Our GOYA not only assisted in the program, but also set an astounding example for the younger students, showing that music is pan-generational and has the power to move the masses.

This festival was the perfect way to bring Christmas cheer to the congregation of Holy Trinity. Not to mention, the very merry St. Nick paid the parish a visit from the North Pole. We would like to thank all the parents and families for donating food and refreshments and the Religious Education instructors for rehearsing with the students and donating their time. Most importantly, CONGRATULATIONS to all of our excellent performers!
A Festival of Lessons and Carols 2017
The Philoptochos membership drive for 2018 begins in January with the kickoff at our annual Vasilopita and Philoptochos Stewardship Sunday Luncheon on January 28th.

**OUR HOLY TRINITY PHILOPTOCHEOS:**
We are so proud that the Ladies Philoptochos Society of Holy Trinity executes on our mission in all the work that our chapter does, often serving as a model to others. This only happens through the commitment of our capable, generous and dedicated community of women that put their faith in action.

Averaging over 200 members 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 we are able to raise at our events and through stewardship offerings. We count on your generosity. We have incorporated many new avenues of communications to reach our members and extended communities by utilizing email, Facebook and a presence on the Holy Trinity Web Site.

**CALL TO ACTION:**
We urge all women over 18 years old to join us. We must continue to build the strength and stewardship of our chapter, to infuse new ideas, to embrace new generations of women to carry on the mission. Partnering across our Holy Trinity ministries is also a wonderful opportunity to leverage the efforts of the Holy Trinity community. Please share your ideas, new ways to raise funds, or areas you would like to become involved in.

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, loss and suffering of others and support our church community……

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**WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**
On December 1st, Westfield hosted Bridges with over 100 GOY-Ans participating from Asbury Park/Ocean, Flemington, Holmdel, Perth Amboy, Toms River, Union and Westfield. We came together to bag lunches and make toiletry kits for those in need. The GOYAns also made Christmas ornaments to be donated to a children’s hospital. We would like to thank all those who participated in bridges and help those in need.

The Book Store

January is the time for New Year’s resolutions!

Do you want to start a new hobby, learn about something new, lose weight, or some other personal goal? Perhaps you would like to consider becoming a Book Store Steward! Of course all Stewardships are of equal value! With any Stewardship you will reap substantial rewards: 2 Corinthians 9:6-9: "But this I say, He who sows sparingly, reaps sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things may have an abundance for every good work.

If you are interested, stop by the Book Store table some Sunday during the Fellowship Hour: you can arrange to be a Book Store Steward for whatever time is convenient for your schedule!

The Book Store wishes everyone Happy New Year 2018 and all the Years to come, overflowing with robust good health and every happiness!
Holy Trinity Y2AM
College Outreach Report

JEANNIE ARIDA, Y2AM ADVISOR

Holy Trinity’s Y2AM (Youth and Young Adult Ministry) coordinated its 2nd Annual College Christmas Outreach project to our parish college students. Final Exam Survival Kit Care Packages were mailed out to 59 Holy Trinity college seniors, juniors, sophomores and freshmen at their respective colleges nationwide. Y2AM spearheaded this outreach project which included participation by many Holy Trinity church ministries, including the Parish Council, The Ladies Philoptochos Society, Women of Faith bible study group, GOYA, Trinity Circle, Church Book Store, Religious Education, Koulourakia Baking Team of ladies, Greek School, Joy Daniledes and many Holy Trinity Parents.

In early December, each care package of goodies was sent with notes of love and support, Christmas blessings and many prayers to strengthen our students as they completed their final exams and semester. Package contents included a pastoral letter from Fr. Peter, an inspirational letter of support signed by the GOYAns, 1 dozen Koulourakia, a Starbucks gift card, many healthy snacks for exam preparation time and the “Hear Me Orthodox Young Adult Prayer Book”. Also included was an icon of our Lord Jesus Christ with The Lord’s Prayer, suitable for hanging.

Y2AM is a national youth and young adult ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America for ages 18-30 years old. (www.y2am.org) The Mission of The Holy Trinity Youth and Young Adult Ministry is to create forums for Young Adults to connect on our Christian Orthodox faith, fellowship events and guidance as they transition into higher education and career endeavors.

All parish young adults are invited to join our Facebook group to see and share information, opportunities and to be part of a Christ-centered young adult community.
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

CLASSIFIEDS

Contact the Church Office if you would like to advertise in the next issue of The Promise!

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Westfield, New Jersey
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
250 Gallows Hill Road • Westfield, NJ 07090
Change Service Requested

Schedule of Services

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<tr>
<td>Orthros</td>
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<td>Divine Liturgy</td>
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Office Staff

- Office Manager: Diana R. Waltzak
- Admin. Assistant: E. Joy Daniledes
- Caretaker: Ocione Nunes

Worship

- Lead Psaltis: Pascalis Kuvalakis
- Choir Director: Kathryn Athanasoulas
- Organist: Phyllis Verenes
- Head Acolyte: Andreas Economides

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Ministries

- Parish Council: A.J. Karanikolas
- Philoptochos: Ellen Manos-Athenson
- Religious Education: Chris Economides
- Greek School: Stavroula Mergoupis
- Greek School PTO: Alexis Kiriakitis
- Youth (GOYA): Nicholas Savorgiannakis
- JOY / HOPE: Kathy Drivas
- TOTS: Joanne Paras
- Bookstore: Sandy Mouratoglou
- Cultural: Barbara Manos
- Trinity Circle: Helen Criares
- Fellowship: Lauren Karanikolas

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