

The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



January 2019 ✦ Volume 43, Issue 1

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*In the Jordan, You were baptized,
O Lord and the worship of the
Trinity was made manifest. For the
voice of the Father bears witness to
You, by calling You His beloved
Son. And the Spirit in the form of
a dove confirms the certainty of His
word. O Christ our God, Who did
appear unto us and enlightened the
world, glory to You.*

- HYMN OF THEOPHANY

January 2030

The next time Theophany
falls on Sunday

Water! What an amazing gift! A few drops lift up a plant's drooping leaves, or refreshes a human body. You can wash in it, splash in it, swim in it. You can relish in its sounds – the babble of a brook or the roaring of the sea, or the breaking of the waves upon the sandy beach. Life springs with water. Not just physical life but spiritual life as well, for we are born anew in baptism by water and the Spirit.

The Great Feast of Epiphany falls on a Sunday this year. We are called together as one family of Holy Trinity to receive the sanctified and healing waters that flow from the font on the day of Christ's baptism.



St. Cyril of Jerusalem speaks of the sanctification of all things by the baptism of Christ. All creation was made holy by the fact that Jesus descended into the waters of the Jordan and the Holy Spirit came down upon Him and upon the waters at the same time, driving out the devil and making them the instrument through which the new creation, the new man in Christ, was to be born.

[The Blessing of Water](#)

On Epiphany Day or Holy Theophany a special service of the Blessing of Water is held after the Divine Liturgy. The blessing of water through prayer

Continued on page 2 ⇨

Wait for the promise of the Father



Dates in the Life of Our Church

November–December 2018

✠ JANUARY

I	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
3	4:00 PM Greek School
	4:30 PM Greek School Vasilopita
4	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:00 AM Royal Hours
5	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	5:00 PM Vespers
6	Holy Epiphany
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
7	St. John the Baptist
	8:45 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
8	4:00 PM Greek School
	4:30 PM Greek School Vasilopita
	7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting
IO	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Choir
II	Greek Night Glendi
I2	11:00 AM Baptism

13	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
15	11:00 AM Trinity Circle Vasilopita
	4:00 PM Greek School
17	St. Anthony the Great
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Choir
18	St. Athanasios the Great
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
19-21	Metropolis of NJ Folk Dance Festival
20	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
22	4:00 PM Greek School
24	4:00 PM Greek School
27	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	12:00 PM Vasilopita Luncheon
28	7:30 PM NNJYC State Meeting
29	4:00 PM Greek School
30	Holy Three Hierarchs

	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
31	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Choir

✠ 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
8	St. Theodore the General
	8:45 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
IO	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
	7:30 PM Parish Council



Epiphany Day

↔ *Continued from page 1*

and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, with the immersion in water of a small ceremonial cross, had been introduced into liturgical use in the fourth century. Through sprinkling, by sealing with the sign of the cross and by drinking of the blest water, the faithful are cleansed and sanctified. The sanctified water was used for the healing of soul and body, and for protection against evil. Gradually, it came to be used even for the heal-

King Tantalus

In Greek mythology, King Tantalus was punished in the underworld (Hades) by being chained in a lake. Its water reached to his chin but withdrew whenever he bent down to satisfy his burning thirst. Over his head were branches laden with choice fruit, but they immediately drew back every time he reached up to satisfy his hunger. A symbol of utter frustration, his name is immortalized in the English word, “tantalize”. So, too, seeking to satisfy the inner thirst of the soul apart from Christ is tantalizing and utterly futile.

Everything in this world that we use to try to satisfy the thirst of the soul – money, lust, drugs, possessions, fame – is like a broken cistern. It cannot hold the water that is poured into it. And the thirst only grows worse as a result. One would think that these broken cisterns would drive us to the fountain of living waters. But it doesn’t happen, because we seek satisfaction only in brokenness.

Let us pray that the Lord will not allow us to be satisfied with the tantalizing things of this world that serve only to increase our



ing of sick animals and for the blessing of God on new homes, buildings, or business undertakings. The faithful take bottles of holy water home with them as a sign of God’s presence and sanctification of their homes. There is even a service where the faithful dive into a body of water to retrieve the sacred cross.



“Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters and drink.”

thirst. “Anyone who drinks of this water will thirst again,” says Jesus.

We need to pray that the Lord create a new thirst in us for the real water of life. The old saying goes, “You can lead a horse to water but you can’t make it drink.” That is our great problem as priests and preachers of the Church. We try to lead God’s people to the water of life, but we cannot make them drink. We cannot create a thirst in them for the water of life. Only God can. We offer them the water of life, and they continue to drink from the broken cisterns of sin. We offer them clear, crystal thirst-quenching water of Jesus, and they continue to slake their thirst in the pig pens of the world. We offer them the pure water of Jesus, and they continue trying to satisfy their thirst in the polluted waters of sin.

Christ came to make us not cisterns but artesian wells. Cisterns cannot stand drought and rainless months, but an artesian well can endure any drought, even parched fields and empty reservoirs, because it has within its own spring that wells up with an endless flow of refreshment.

Christ says, “Whoever drinks of the water I shall give will never thirst again,” and “the water I shall give will become a well of



water within that bubbles up to eternal life.”

Therefore, we are not cursed or banished away like King Tantalus, the son of Zeus, but rather we enjoy all the blessings brought to us by Christ, the Son of the Living God. The waters of salvation are offered to all who thirst and seek Him. “Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters” – Isaiah 55:1. To make clear where these life-giving waters are to be found, Jesus says, “Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.” ❖



The Blessing of Water is held every January 6 but we are especially fortunate this year since this Great Feast falls on a Sunday, an occurrence that will not happen again for eleven years.

The holy water that is distributed on Epiphany teaches us beautifully that all the events of salvation have their connection with water. The beginning of our world opens with God’s Spirit hovering over the water. This present feast sees Jesus Christ baptized in the river Jordan. In Revelation 22:1-3 we read of the water of life that flows from the throne of God yielding each month

twelve kinds of fruit on the trees that lined the river on either side. Thus, the blessed water we receive on Epiphany is like the healing water that flows into our lives from the very throne of God, nourishing our parched souls that they may bear fruit from God’s glory. ❖





Parish Council

Pursue Excellence Through Christ!

■ BY A.J. KARANIKOLAS, PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

“I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

2 TIMOTHY 4:7

In this verse, the race is the life and work that God gave Paul, and comparisons of the spiritual life to an athletic contest is common in the writings of the ascetic Fathers - according to The

Orthodox Study Bible. We can also demonstrate our Christian athleticism in how we pursue

excellence in serving our Lord. Everything we do for Holy Trinity should be done with a

conscious awareness of His presence, and with a realization that He is watching. It should also prompt us to give our best effort at all times knowing that there is never a circumstance during which He is not with us - urging us to do our finest for our blessed Church!

The Parish Council attempts to employ this pursuit of excellence in our ministry for Holy Trinity by keeping Christ at the center in the tasks with which we are charged. The strategy of defining the narrative rather than letting the narrative define us in our work for the Lord has seen many benefits - or should I say blessings. Included is a repurposing of Stewardship where we are constantly analyzing trends within the Orthodox community provided by research groups as well as the Archdiocese - while this is a continual work in progress (in our hearts) giving per steward continues to increase! Fellowship is in everything we do, and we as the body of Christ, are more engaged now than ever, with the participation rate growing in almost every ministry and event.

We are focusing on our youth, who are not only the future but also the present, and the dedicated advisors and parents have led them to excel, producing young leaders in the church through the various activities including remarkable outreach efforts. Religious Education and Greek School programs are flourishing. On the financial side, we are constantly looking at ways to improve our bottom line through cost cutting, and reducing the budget over time by being more watchful of expenses - thus being good stewards of God's blessings. The Endowment is professionally managed, with the returns matching the investment profile - the focus now shifts to the Planned Giving aspect.

We are able to achieve these accomplishments through the grace of our Lord, and there are many things already in place for 2019, such as a fresh look at how we reach the community - with a more contemporary approach to our social media and communications offerings. Other initiatives include tending to our aging facility, outreach programs, and a more unique look at our Ways and Means events.

The Parish Council and the entire Holy Trinity community continue the pursuit of excellence through Christ, joyfully embracing the challenges as did Paul. Together, we will fight the good fight, finish the race, and most importantly keep the faith!

Happy New Year to the Holy Trinity family! ❖





Philoptochos

Philoptochos..... Achieving our Mission

■ BY MARINA LOALBO, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

As a New Year dawns upon us, we are now able to lovingly look back and thoughtfully reflect on all that we've experienced, accomplished, and celebrated. The year 2018 left us with wonderful memories, times filled with love and compassion, communion and care, commitment and contribution, and fulfillment and growth. As a fellowship, Christ has blessed us with each other, and 2018 continued to develop our life, not only in Him but in each other's lives, as well.

One such annual tradition that we can always count on to bring us together in Him is our Philoptochos Christmas general meeting and dinner, that was held on December 5th. Ellen Manos-Athenson, President, presided over our general meeting and spoke about our commitments, citing some recent examples which included, support of a Metropolis Social Services case, aid to rebuilding an orphanage destroyed by the fires in Greece, gift cards to veterans, and proceeds from our community

Christmas card to victims of Hurricane Florence. Exciting plans are underway for our largest fundraiser, our annual Fashion show, "Joie", which will be held on May 7, 2019. Our Stewardship drive for 2019 will begin in January, and Ellen reminded all that we count on everyone's continued support.

We enjoyed the fellowship of 85 women and enjoyed a lovely dinner, followed by socializing and shopping at our jewelry and boutique tables. A new addition this year was the Philoptochos Christmas Boutique Bake Sale, providing beautifully packaged homemade treats with proceeds to fund our many charities. We thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful piano playing of Christmas carols by Ryan Kiel, who also entertained us with the festive 12 Days of Christmas and recruited our guests to participate.

We were honored to have as our guest, Jennifer Vriens, Director of Development and Marketing, YWCA Union County, and we thanked her for the

important work and resources that the YWCA provides to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. In lieu of the Wish List collection, we presented the YWCA with monetary donations collected during the evening, as well as a generous donation from our chapter. May God bless this organization for the services they provide in our local community.

The year began, as each often does, with a sense of hope for what is to come, and as believers, we reflect on the good works that God gave us in 2018, with the expectation that He will continue those plans in and through us in the new year. As His faithful, we stand firmly in the promise that "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1.6) and through that promise, we look forward to 2019, knowing that His work will continue to be accomplished through us. ❖





GOYA

Update

■ BY AVA LEICHTLING, GOYA PRESIDENT

Our monthly GOYA meeting, combined with our lock-in, was held on Friday, 11/16 in the Bouras Center. Some may ask...what is a lock-in? By definition, a lock-in is to put or keep (someone or something) in a locked place or room. But at Holy Trinity a lock-in is much more than this. It is a time when GOYANs spend time together getting to know more about each other and our faith and have lots

of fun! This year, Father Peter spoke to us about how we should always take God with us and not leave Him or our faith at the Church. This hit our seniors especially hard who were in attendance since we will be heading off to college next year. Mrs. Tarhanidis and Mrs. Maglaras also spoke to us about homelessness. We learned that homelessness can strike even those that you would never expect it to. We were reminded

how very fortunate we all are to have food and shelter; something we should not take for granted. Later in the evening, we made our own great tasting pizzas and played minute-to-win-it games. Special thanks to Mrs. Colonias, Mr. Love and Mrs. Tarhanidis for chaperoning and spending the (sleepless) night with us. ❖

ATHLETICS

The athletic season is winding down. We are hopeful to qualify for the district playoffs and compete in the first unified state tournament in February.

UPCOMING EVENTS

I/II
Greek Night Glendi and
Greek Dance Lessons

I/I2
Athletic Playoffs
in Toms River

I/I3
Athletic Finals in
Asbury Park/Ocean



Feed the Needy

■ BY ELLEN CONTI AND KATHY MAGLARAS

Philoptochos and GOYA continue their commitment to work together to serve food to the homeless each month. This year we have teamed up with Family Promise, a nonprofit nationwide organization that commits to helping the homeless-



ness of families in our local community. These situational families that they assist live at the Day Care in Elizabeth who are then transported to various local churches. During their stay at the church that can be from 1-2 weeks at a time, various groups such as GOYA/Philoptochos host dinner and activities for all the families since many of them have children. Once they return to the Day Care, the organization helps them try to get housing, food etc.

On November 7, 2018, six GOYANs (Athena and Lia Ioannou, Bobby Liberatos, Caroline Maglaras, and Danny and Steven McCaffery) and Philoptochos Ladies (Ellen Conti, Kathy Maglaras and Doris McCaffery) hosted the families at the Calvary Episcopal Church in Summit, NJ. Dinner, dessert and toiletry kits were given to the six



adults and eight children that evening. Our GOYANs played various games and activities with the kids that they enjoyed very much. They also handed out special kid bags with coloring and activity books and crayons--the kids were so happy to receive "their very own bag." Seeing all the smiling faces and receiving hugs from all of the kids was truly heartwarming for all of us!

We thank the families of all who donated food and items to make this first feed the needy a very successful event. Next month we will be serving food in a different location. Please stop by the GOYA or Philoptochos table for more information and to sign up for next month. ❖

Book Store

Happy New Year! Start the New Year right with a special gift for yourself or a loved one: here are only two of the many books the Book Store has available: "Becoming a Healing Presence" by Albert S. Rossi, PhD. There is not one person [young or old alike] who does not have loved ones in need of healing: This book may give some help to that need. "In order to become a healing presence for others, we must first be healed ourselves - through an active relationship with the great Healer, Christ. Drawing on the teachings of the Fathers and saints of the Church, Dr. Rossi gently points the way toward deepening our love for God and for each other so that others may experience Christ through us."

"A Guide to Greek Traditions and Customs in America", by Marilyn Rouvelas. This book is a popular best seller and standard reference about Orthodox and Hellenic traditions throughout the world: 66,000 copies have been sold! It attempts to explain the Orthodox faith by giving advice on participating in the Sacraments, and helps in other areas such as: pronunciation of common Greek words, major cities to visit in Greece, popular Greek music, the right thing to say on special occasions, and even on how to observe name days, fast, and bake communion bread! "The reader will learn why traditions are kept in addition to the practical advice of how and when to keep them. In the

section "The Global Community" you will see Greek Americans in the wider context of the Orthodox faith and the Greek Diaspora."

Please stop by the Book Store table during the fellowship hour. If you don't see what you want, we can order it for you. Please support the Book Store, all profits are donated to our Church.❖





Living the Great Commandments of the Lord: Holy Trinity Scouts 2018

What does our Lord confirm as the greatest commandments? “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” And “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matt. 22:37-39). At Holy Trinity, we have a group of young people who work especially hard to learn about and live these commandments: our Scouts who decide to earn their Orthodox Christian religious awards.

On November 18, our parish honored and celebrated the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of Holy Trinity, who through their activities try to embody duty to

God, love of the Lord, and service to others people. Scouts attended in uniform and assisted in distributing the weekly Bulletin to parishioners and reading the Epistle. The highlight was the awarding of the highest Scouting religious award, the Alpha Omega medal, to four of our outstanding teenagers: Derrick Arfanis, Julia Love, Molly Love, and Caroline Maglaras. The requirements of this award include significant learning about our Orthodox faith, development of prayer in everyday life, and completion of four service projects. Scouts are guided in this effort by a workbook developed by the Eastern

Orthodox Committee on Scouting (EOCS). They also have the support of Father Peter, Scouting Advisor Dr. Miriam Kotsonis, and of course their own parents. Whenever possible, Scouts team up for study sessions together, making the process more engaging.

The EOCS offers the religious award program for three age levels: St. George (grades 1-3), Chi Rho (4-5), and Alpha Omega (6-12). The program now includes Trail Life and American Heritage Scouts as well as members of BSA and GSUSA. ❖

For the current school year, parents of Scouts interested in any of the awards are welcome to contact Fr. Peter or Miriam Kotsonis at: mekotsonis@gmail.com





Religious Education

Update

■ BY ANTHONY BOSCO

Happy New Year! On behalf of our Religious Education team I want to wish all our children and parents a very blessed and Happy New Year. We all set many new resolutions and new goals for this year. My prayer is that we all set new goals in committing ourselves to work as hard as we can to continue to educate our children. That we all make an effort to learn more about our Orthodox faith. Maybe make an effort at least once a

month to arriving at Church Services on Sunday morning to hear the Gospel. Let's make a resolution to be as involved as we can be in serving our blessed Holy Trinity community. There is much work to be done to ensure we continue provide the best and highest quality religious education to all our children. Make an effort to remind people that can bring their children to Sunday school but for some reason have not, let's re-invite them to attend our religious

education program. This past year we have had successes but there is still much work to do. I pray that God enlighten and inspire us all. That He gives us the vision and guidance to become to best educators we can be.

I pray that God continue to watch over our children and families at Holy Trinity and that you are all blessed with His endless love and grace.

God bless our community and a very blessed and Happy New Year to all! ❖

Christmas Program



EPIPHANY HOUSE BLESSING

I would like to have my house blessed during the Epiphany Season.

Name _____

Address _____

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I understand that I will receive a phone call from Fr. Peter to determine the date and appropriate time.

Return this form to the church office before January 5, 2017 (908) 233-8533



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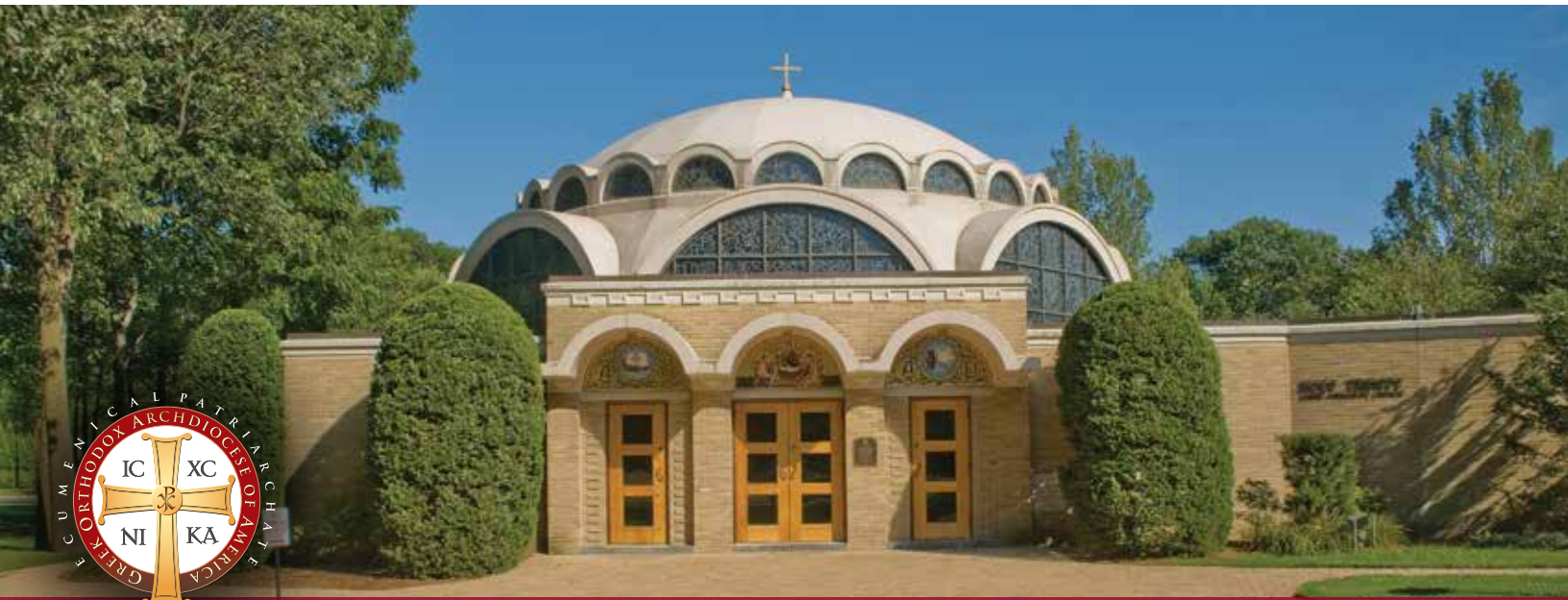
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