

# The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✠ NEW JERSEY



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## You in Me

There is a story of a certain monk who knocked on the door of heaven seeking entrance. A voice asked, "Who are you?" The monk replied, "It is I." The door did not open. After many years, he tried again. As he knocked the same voice asked, "Who are you?" "It is I," replied the monk. Again the door remained shut. Finally, he went back. This time he was much older and far wiser as a Christian. When the voice asked, "Who are you?" the monk replied, "You in me," whereupon the voice replied, "Enter my son."

What is a Christian? Many answers can be given. He is a person who acknowledges the Jesus is the Son of God. He patterns his life after the teachings of Jesus. He has been baptized. He belongs to the Church. He loves his enemies and prays for those who persecute him. He receives the sacraments. He worships every Sunday. He has committed his life to Jesus as God...and many more answers. All these definitions are good, but they are not complete because they have left out the single most important thing about the true Christian: he is one in whom Christ lives. You in me!

St. Paul expressed this when he said, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me..." The Lord Jesus expressed it when He said, "I Am the Vine, you are the branches. He who lives in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." – John 15:5. "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood lives in Me and I in him." – John 6:56. ✠



*Saying of the*  
**Church Fathers**  
*St. Isaac of Syria*

*Do not fall into despair because of our stumblings. I do not mean that you should not feel pain because of them, but that you should not consider them incurable. For it is better to be wounded than to be dead. There is indeed a healer: He who on the Cross asked for mercy upon those who were crucifying Him, who pardoned murderers as He hung on the Cross.*

*Wait for the promise of the Father*



# Dates in the Life of Our Church

June / July 2018

## ✠ JUNE

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 Commander, Relics
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
10	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	11:45 AM Sunday School Graduation in Bouras Center
	12:00 PM Y2AM Career Fair
11	7:30 PM NNJYC

12	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Parish Council
14	4:00 PM Greek School Graduation
	7:30 PM Choir
16	4:00 PM Wedding
17	Father's Day
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
24	Nativity of St. John the Baptist
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
29	Sts. Peter and Paul
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

## ✠ JULY

1-5	Clergy/Laity Boston
1	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
8	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	1:00 PM Baptism
15	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
22	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
26-27	Rummage Sale
29	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

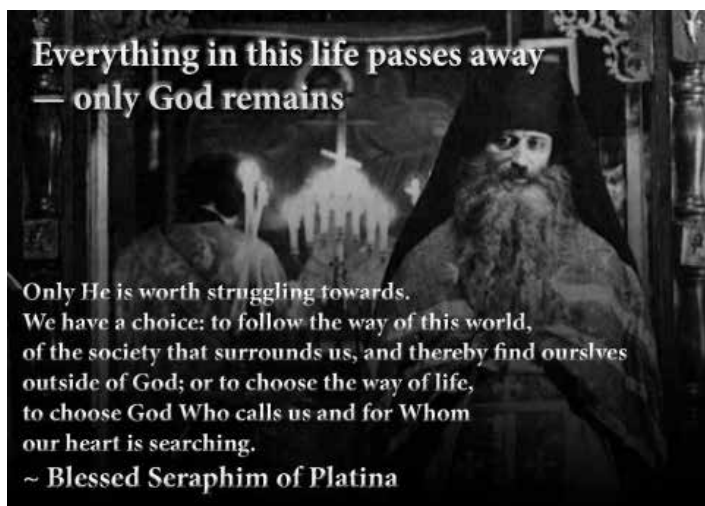
"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

- Ephesians 5:14

A devout presbyter lay on his death bed. His friends gathered around him and mourned him. With that, the elder laughed three times. The monks asked him: "What are you laughing at?" The elder replied: "I laughed the first time, because all of you are afraid of death; the second time, for none of you are prepared for death; the third time, because I am going from labor to rest."

Behold how a righteous man dies! He is not afraid of death but rather is prepared for death. He sees that through death, he passes from the difficult life to eternal rest. When the nature of man imagines itself in its original state

in Paradise then, death is unnatural, the same way that sin is unnatural. Death emanated from sin. Repented and cleansed from sin, man does not consider death annihilation, but the gate to life eternal. If, at times, the righteous prayed to God to prolong their earthly life, that was not because of love for this life nor because of the fear of death but solely that they would gain more time for repentance and cleansing from sin in order that they



may present themselves before God, more sinless and more pure. Even if they showed fear before death, that was not out of fear of death but the fear of God's judgment. In contrast, what great fear does the unrepentant sinner have? It must truly be a heavy and sorrowful burden. ❖





# Parish Council

## Obedience To God - What a Blessing!

■ BY A.J. KARANIKOLAS, PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

—PHILIPPIANS 2:12-13—

*“Therefore, my beloved,  
as you have always obeyed,  
not as in my presence only,  
but now much more in my absence,  
workout your own salvation with fear and trembling;  
for it is God who works in you  
both to will and to do  
His good pleasure.”*



If obedience to God is difficult, why be obedient? St. Paul gives us the answer in the verses above. It is simple in theory and delightful in nature but can be difficult in practice given our personal desires. Scripture reminds us that blessings come with obedience, while trepidation and suffering come from disobedience. His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos touched on this at the Metropolis Clergy/Laity held in early May, reminding us that obedience to God through active participation in our parishes is vital as the Church allows us to grow stronger in our faith and in communion with the Lord.

While the summer months are a time of rest and relaxation as life may slow down a bit, we know that it also seems

to pass very quickly. Understanding that the new Ecclesiastical year begins in September, the Parish Council will be active during these months in its preparation - specifically with well-constructed goals which we hope to accomplish/oversee during this time. Among them, the newly constructed Stewardship program will be receiving its final touches, Religious and Greek School Educations will prepare for fall classes, Youth programs will be scheduled, our Communication and Social Media will have a fresh look, a Planned Giving initiative will kick off in earnest with hopes of further growing the Endowment, and our facilities will be tended to with work that is best done when weekly activities are subdued.

While this may seem aggressive, we aim to be obedient to one another, Holy Trinity, and God - it is not difficult, but rather a blessing!

It has been said that obedience is the key that opens every door, so let's make sure those doors stay open at Holy Trinity - by tending to the garden of our blessed parish through active participation in the many ministries offered and maintain a high level of engagement in our service to the Lord. Let's continue to demonstrate the obedience to God that we have shown for over 50 years!

The Parish Council wishes you a blessed summer as you spend time with family and friends, and we look forward to seeing you at Holy Trinity as well! ❖



# Philoptochos

## Update

■ ELLEN MANOS-ATHENSON, PRESIDENT

**P**uttin on the Ritz, our annual fashion show and largest fundraiser of the year was held on Tuesday May 1 at Brooklake Country Club in Florham Park. With close to 300 guests on a beautiful spring night, this year's event delivered an evening of fun, fashion and fellowship in grand style.

With much gratitude, we thank our dedicated, enthusiastic, dynamic chairs, Janet O'Sullivan, Deborah Efthimion and Cassandra Romas who once again, offered their valuable time, talent and treasure, truly exemplifying their "faith

in action".

Thank you to the committees; Ad Journal Chair- Julie Exarhakos Reservation Chair, Debra Vlahakis, Finance - Maria Kanaras, Advertising & Design; Jillian O'Sullivan, Grand Raffle Chair, Avi Kiriakatis, 50/50 Raffle Chair, Mary Demiris, Basket Raffle Co-chairs Nina Anastasiou and Christina Colonias, and a BIG, BIG thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors, and donors.

Much appreciation to Emily Raschias, proprietor of Emily's Boutique on

Staten Island who as a true Steward of the Holy Trinity family shared the latest, exciting new styles from the runway.

The evening included a wonderful array of Raffles and Silent Auction items. Proceeds from the Grand Raffle will benefit Homeless Solutions Inc., in Morristown, NJ as well as other Philoptochos Charities.

With much gratitude, we thank everyone for making this event a great success in support of our philanthropic mission. ❖





# Principal's End Of The Year Letter

*Greetings to all Parents/Guardians of the Holy Trinity Greek School Community,*

■ STAVROULA MERGOUPIS, HOLY TRINITY GREEK SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



Greek School has reached another end to a delightful school year. I would like to convey to all, that as a first-year principal, I have felt warmly welcomed by the school community in my new role. I would like to give thanks to Father Peter, my fellow colleagues, as well as the parents for welcoming and aiding me, in order to accomplish this role to the fullest. I will continue to serve this role with great respect and sincerity.

This year was filled with beautiful instances of sincere celebrations through school festivities, as well as the magnificent work that has been done within the classrooms between our wonderful students and teachers. I have seen firsthand in my role as both principal and teacher, the incredible and sincere relationship between the students and

teachers. Our teachers considerably care for the well-being of our students and I wholly believe that our students understand this every moment they come to class. Our Holy Trinity Greek School community is one of unity and strength. The different teaching styles of our educators, allows our students to learn differently from year to year, but also to experience new methods of expressing their academic knowledge, integrity and compassion. We must always remember that our students, our children, are our legacy and thus, as they give reverence to us, we must always give reverence to them as well. Furthermore, we must all remember that even though school work is very crucial for the academic development for our children, we must also take into account that relaxation and joy is also

an integral part of the development of our children.

In closing, I would like to thank all who have been involved in the our academic program, as well as the participants (teachers, students, parents, volunteers, etc.) who allowed for our celebratory festivities throughout the year to be entertaining, informative, respectful and successful. With much love and anticipation, we once again await for the arrival of the new school year in September, in order for us to go on this journey together again, with refreshed sound bodies, minds and spirits. I wish you all a safe and relaxing summer and cannot wait to see all of you again in September. May the Holy Trinity bless you all and guide you during these days and months of relaxation. ❖





# Religious Education

## Update

■ BY CHRIS ECONOMIDES, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTOR

In Volume 16, Issue 1 (2016) issue of PRAXIS, “Parish as Educator,” it directs our reflection and discussion to one of the essential roles of the parish and of religious educators in the life of the Church. In following the example of His life and ministry, we are called by our Lord Jesus Christ to teach and admonish one another in all wisdom (Colossians 3:16). He has given gifts so that some should be pastors and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-12).

From our foundation in Christ and our calling as educators, we know that this ministry of teaching and guidance is a part of every facet of the life of the parish. Each gathering and event, every program and connection between the parish and the lives of the people, is an opportunity for learning and spiritual growth.



Within this commitment our Ministry has been very active. Eleven of our Educators participated in the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of NJ Religious Education Teachers Seminar on March 17 at St. Andrew’s / Randolph. After participating in the Divine Liturgy, about 80 participants from the Metropolis had the opportunity to hear Anthony Bosco present on “Key Steps for student/teacher relationship building”. Being an extended family in Christ, there was a lively Q&A afterwards discussing best practices and how to enhance student/parent engagement. Additionally, Mr. Bosco discussed a new revised Religious Education Certification Program to be introduced by the Archdiocese by September.

Following our Parish Oratorical Festival on March 18th, the District Metropolis Oratorical Festival was held on Saturday, April 28th at St. Demetrios / Perth Amboy. Our Senior Division Parish Finalist, Nicole Boutsikaris and Junior Division Parish Finalist, Stephanie Ticas both received an Honorable Mention for their outstanding Orations. Thank you both for representing Holy Trinity so well and to Parish Oratorical

Chairperson, George Foussianes.

As customary, we are blessed to have many of our students read the Epistles at the afternoon and evening services on Holy Wednesday. They are Julia Love, Christopher Warnick, Molly Love, Ariana Tarhanidis, Gracie Warnick, Stefani Drivas, Ava Karanikolas, Nicholas Savorgiannakis, Niko Skalkatos, Maggie Vasilopoulos, Georgi Katsingris and George Luenes.

Our Holy Friday Retreat was held on Friday, April 6 with approximately forty K-6 grade students in attendance. We focused on the theology, symbols and hymns of Holy Week and Pascha. The program concluded with students and parent’s participation in the Apokathelosis Service. A sincere thank you to Kathy Drivas for coordinating this spiritually uplifting program.

On a bittersweet note, a Plaque of Appreciation was presented to Mary Ann Mieke on Sunday, March 25 as she and her husband Tom will relocate to be closer to their daughters and grandchildren. They will be moving from Holy Trinity here in Westfield, NJ to another Holy Trinity in Charleston, South Carolina. Maryanne has served

faithfully as a 5th Grade Teacher for 18 years and coordinated many of our Holy Friday retreats. We will miss her.

The 2017-2018 Religious Education Year classroom studies will conclude on Sunday, June 10 as we present student attendance awards, for all grades, as follows: Honorable Attendance (4-6 absences); Faithful Attendance (2-3 absences) and Exemplary Attendance (0-1 absences). We are so proud of their commitment to their faith and grateful to their parents for supporting this most important ministry. The Awards will be followed by Graduation Ceremonies and Scholarship Presentment to 12th graders. All Seniors will be given an Orthodox Study Bible to continue learning about our Faith and the Gospel of Christ in the next step of their lives.

And finally, on behalf of our Parish, Iris and I would like to extend a heartfelt note appreciation to our volunteer Educators from Pre-K through Grade 12, who because of their personal commitment to Christ, serve His Church as teachers.

Wishing everyone a summer filled with Christ’s Blessings. ❖





# Religious Education Lenten Mission Project 2018 Coin Box Drive

■ BY CHRISTINA AND WILLIAM ARIDA



By participating in the OCMC Lenten Mission Coin Box Initiative, you have become part of the OCMC family that seeks to bring Christ's love and His precious Gospel across the globe to His children! Thank you and God bless you.

In 2017, OCMC missionaries, ministries and projects were, by God's Grace, in 29 countries. Since inception, 35 countries have been served on 6 continents because of the support of the Orthodox faithful's generosity.

"The Sun Never Sets on the Ministries of the OCMC"

The over \$1250 raised by the Holy Trinity family will have all of us in the mission field this year.

With this money, we will help the OCMC:

I

Send 24 short-term mission teams to 9 countries that will minister to the needs of nearly 7,000 people.

2

Support 24 long-term missionaries that are teaching in schools and seminaries, leading youth groups, providing family and substance abuse counseling, translating Liturgical texts and teaching the Faith in 7 countries.

3

Administer over 30 philanthropic projects that will provide classrooms, homes for orphans, healthcare and opportunities for self-support in 12 countries.

4

376 Orthodox clergy in 17 countries dedicate themselves to providing pastoral leadership to their communities and take the Orthodox Faith to new ones.

5

Support Orthodox seminaries and theological schools around the world to train new priests, catechists, and future Church leaders.

Because of the Holy Trinity Church family, many will hear about Jesus Christ for the first time and His message of salvation. They too will be able to believe and proclaim, "Christ is Risen, Truly He is Risen!" ❖

*For more info visit: [www.OCMC.org](http://www.OCMC.org)*



■ BY NICHOLAS SAVORGIANNAKIS, GOYA PRESIDENT



On April 22, the Parish of Holy Trinity marched in the annual Greek Independence Day Parade on 5th Avenue. We had over 100 people of all ages participate in the parade. It was a beautiful sunny day where we marched and waved our Greek flags with pride. We marched in the second battalion and we were able to watch some of the parade beforehand which included seeing the Evzones from Greece. We would like to thank Mrs. Warnick and Mrs. Tarhanidis for organizing the day's events.

Ζήτω Η Ελλάδα!

On April 28, GOYA participated in the indoor soccer tournament. We had a girls' team and a boys' team. The girls finished the tournament in 4th place.

The boys won the first two games but lost the final game which prevented us from qualifying for the knockout stage.

On April 29 elections were held for Mr. and Miss Westfield and the Divers for Holy Cross. All of the candidates spoke well at the meeting. I would like to congratulate Stamati Angelides and Georgi Katsingris for being selected as Mr. and Miss Westfield. Our divers this year are: Costa Vasilopoulos, Senior Boy, Melina Christodoulou, Senior Girl, John Colonias, Junior Boy, and Maggie Vasilopoulos, Junior Girl.

On May 12, Indoor Olympics took place. It is hosted by St. Demetrios in Perth Amboy. The GOYAns competed in checkers, chess, backgammon, ping pong, badminton, Wii dance, and FIFA.



During Memorial Day Weekend the annual Outdoor Olympics was held at Monmouth University. This is easily the best event of the whole year.

To end the GOYA year, on June 10th we will be having our senior dinner after Sunday School Graduation. Location is TBD. This is to honor our graduating seniors and to wish them well in their future endeavors. ❖



## *A Parish Life in Pictures*



Honoree Nicholas Savorgiannakis with Fr. Peter and His Eminence



Fr. Peter and A.J. Karanikolas receiving Honoree award posthumously for Anasti (Ernie) Garo



# HOLY WEEK









## GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE

APRIL 22, NEW YORK CITY

Holy Trinity proudly marched in this year's Greek Independence Day Parade in NYC on 5th Avenue. It was a glorious day remembering our Hellenic Heritage and the struggles of our forefathers for human dignity and religious freedom.












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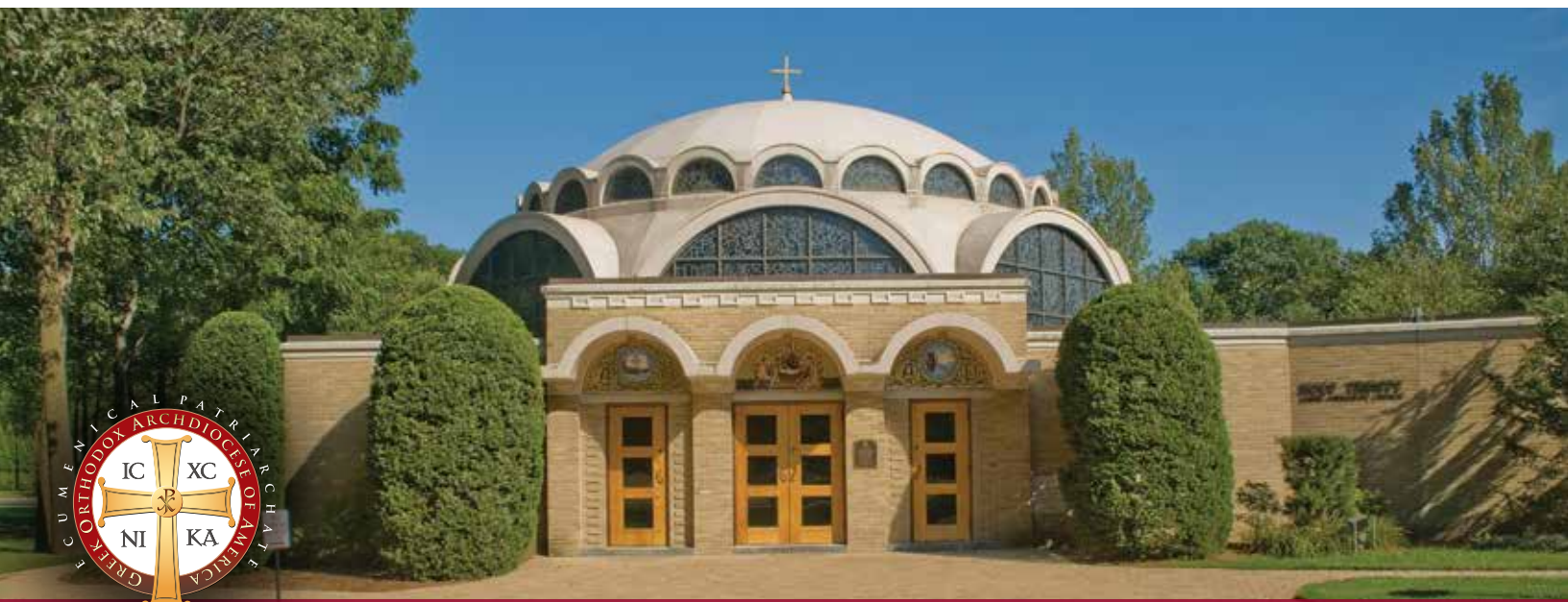
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Greek School Stavroula Mergoupis  
Greek School PTO Alexis Kiriakatis  
Youth (GOYA) Nicholas Savorgiannakis  
JOY/HOPE Kathy Drivas  
TOTS Joanne Paras  
Bookstore Sandy Mouratoglou  
Cultural Barbara Manos  
Trinity Circle Helen Criares  
Fellowship Lauren Karanikolas

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

	Sundays	Weekdays
Orthros	8:15 AM	8:30 AM
Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM	9:30 AM

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