

# The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



March 2018 ✦ Volume 42, Issue 3

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## MIDDLE of LENT

*“Desiring to commune with the Divine Pascha...  
let us pursue victory over the devil through fasting.”*

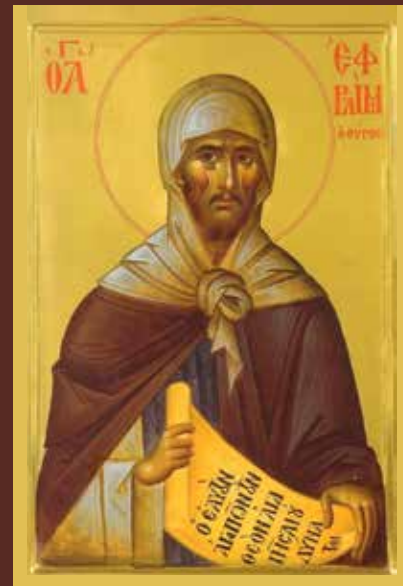
– Aposticha, Thursday Vespers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Week

From the middle of Lent, the Sunday of the Cross, we begin to see our journey's end, and the radiant feast of the Resurrection comes into view. Lent is a journey to Pascha. It is thus a season of joyful expectation. If we take Lent seriously, the journey is arduous, but this only makes Pascha all the more radiant and joyful. But throughout Lent, we are never allowed to forget the Resurrection, which fills all things, all ascetic labors, all solemnity, sorrow, and contrition, with gladness and brightness.

It would be a mistake to think of the sacrifices of Lent in purely negative terms – in terms of struggle and

deprivation. We are to think of Lent as liberation. Lent calls us to sacrifice many of those things which, while they tend to occupy such a central position in our lives, are in reality things we can do without. Lent is thus the rediscovery of that which is most essential in our lives. In this rediscovery, we return to God and to the very meaning of life.

Thus, having stripped ourselves of all that is petty and futile, having cast off the burdensome baggage of our worldly and often complex lifestyles, we can truly experience Lent as liberation and purification, as the necessary, fruitful, and wonderful journey to the joy of Pascha. – Fr. Vassilios Papavassiliou. ❖



### *A Lenten Prayer* BY ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

O Lord and Master of my life,  
take from me the spirit of sloth,  
faint-heartedness, lust of power,  
and idle talk.

But give rather the spirit of  
chastity, humility, patience, and  
love to Thy servant.

Yea, Lord and King, grant me  
to see my own errors and not to  
judge my brother, for Thou art  
blessed unto ages of ages.

Amen.

*Kali Sarakosti*  
*Have a blessed Lent*

*Wait for the promise of the Father*



# Dates in the Life of Our Church

March / April 2018

## ✠ MARCH 2018

- 1 10:00 AM Women of Faith
- 4:00 PM Greek School
- 7:30 PM Choir
- 2 7:00 PM Akathist Hymn
- 3 **Sights & Sounds**
- 4 8:15 AM Orthros
- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 5 5:00 PM Lenten Vespers
- 6 4:00 PM Greek School
- 7 6:30 PM Presanctified Liturgy
- 8:00 PM Theosis
- 8 9:30 AM TOTS
- 10:00 AM Women of Faith
- 4:00 PM Greek School
- 7:30 PM Choir
- 9 7:00 PM Akathist Hymn
- 8:30 PM Lenten Potluck Dinner
- 10 **Sights & Sounds snow date**
- 11 **Sunday of the Holy Cross**
- Begin Daylight Savings**
- 8:15 AM Orthros
- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 13 4:00 PM Greek School
- 7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting
- 7:30 PM Parish Council
- 14 6:30 PM Presanctified Liturgy
- 8:00 PM Theosis
- 15 10:00 AM Women of Faith
- 4:00 PM Greek School
- 7:30 PM Choir
- 16 7:00 PM Akathist Hymn
- 8:30 PM Lenten Potluck Dinner
- 18 8:15 AM Orthros

- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 12:00 PM Oratorical Festival
- 19 5:00 PM Compline
- 20 11:00 AM Trinity Circle
- 4:00 PM Greek School
- 21 6:30 PM Presanctified Liturgy
- 8:00 PM Theosis
- 22 9:30 AM TOTS
- 10:00 AM Women of Faith
- 4:00 PM Greek School
- 7:30 PM Choir
- 23 7:00 PM Akathist Hymn
- 8:30 PM Lenten Potluck Dinner
- 24 7:00 PM Great Vespers @ Jersey City
- 25 **THE ANNUNCIATION**
- 8:30 AM Orthros
- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 27 4:00 PM Greek School
- 28 6:30 PM Presanctified Liturgy
- 8:00 PM Theosis
- 29 10:00 AM Women of Faith
- 4:00 PM Greek School
- 7:30 PM Choir
- 31 **Saturday of Lazarus**
- 8:45 AM Orthros
- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 10:30 AM Tying of Palms

## ✠ APRIL 2018

- 1 **PALM SUNDAY**
- 8:30 AM Orthros
- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 7:00 PM Bridegroom Service
- 2 **Holy Monday**

- 7:00 PM Bridegroom Service
- 3 **Holy Tuesday**
- 9:00 AM Presanctified Liturgy
- 7:00 PM Bridegroom Service
- 4 **Holy Wednesday**
- 3:00 PM Holy Unction
- 7:00 PM Holy Unction
- 5 **Holy Thursday**
- 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy of the Mystical Supper
- 7:00 PM Divine Passion and Crucifixion
- 6 **Holy Friday**
- 9:30 AM Imperial Hours
- 10:00 AM Holy Friday Retreat
- 3:00 PM Apokathelosis/Unnailing
- 7:00 PM Lamentations
- 7 **Holy Saturday**
- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 11:00 PM Vigil of the Resurrection
- 8 **HOLY PASCHA**
- 12:15 AM Paschal Divine Liturgy
- 11:00 AM Agape Vespers
- 9 **Bright Monday**
- Church Office closed**
- 10 4:00 PM Greek School
- 12 4:00 PM Greek School
- 7:30 PM Choir
- 13 **Zoodochou Pigi**
- 8:45 AM Orthros
- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 14 11:00 AM Baptism
- 15 **Sunday of Thomas**
- 8:15 AM Orthros
- 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

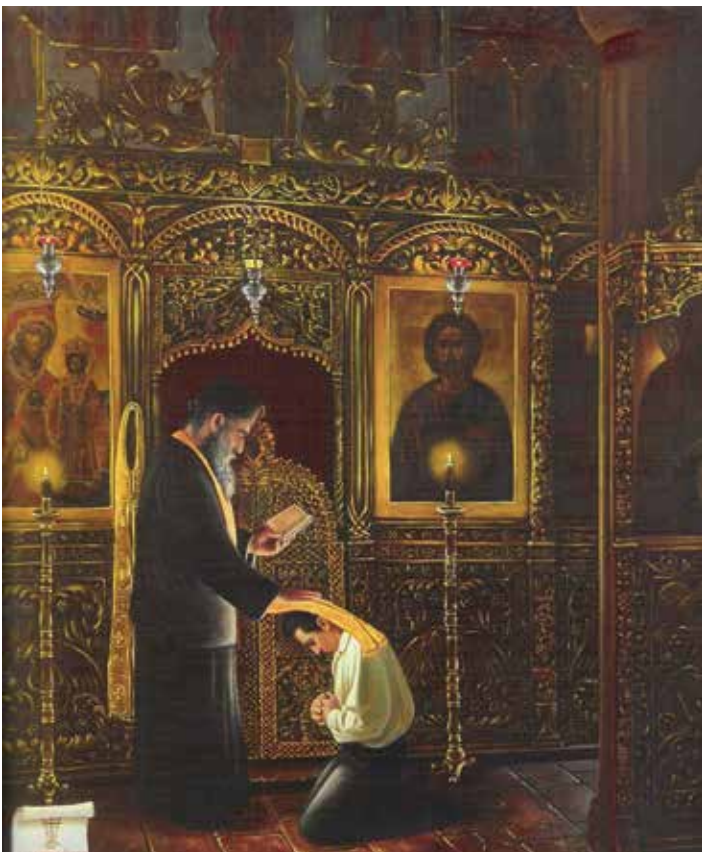


## Presanctified Liturgy; The Gift of Lent

6:30 PM

**E**very Wednesday night throughout Great Lent, the solemn Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is celebrated at 6:30 PM. This beautiful and powerful Liturgy prepares us spiritually for the Paschal celebration. Please be reminded that fasting is required before receiving Holy Communion. Since this is an evening service, if you plan to receive Holy Communion, eat a very light luncheon and keep a strict fast thereafter. After the Liturgy, you are invited to a light Lenten meal followed by the Theosis Program at 8:00 PM in Room 101. This year Theosis will examine the Gospel According to St. John. Bring your Orthodox Study Bible or other bible that you have. ❖

# A Prayer For Repentance



*To be said daily and before the Sacrament of Holy Confession*

“O Lord our God, good and merciful, I acknowledge all my sins which I have committed every day of my life, in thought, in word, and in deed; in body and soul alike. I am heartily sorry that I have ever offended You and Your goodness, and I sincerely repent; with tears I humbly pray to You, O Lord: from Your mercy forgive me all my past transgressions and absolve me from them. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to amend my way of life and to sin no more; that I may walk in the way of the righteous and offer praise and glory to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

## DO NOT BE ASHAMED TO REPENT

St. John Chrysostom in his writing on “Repentance and Almsgiving” says: “Do not be ashamed to enter again into the Church. Be ashamed when you sin. Do not be ashamed when you repent. Pay attention to what the devil did to you. These are two things: sin and repentance. Sin is a wound; repentance is a medicine. Just as there are for the body wounds and medicines, so for the soul are sins and repentance. However, sin has the shame and repentance possesses the courage. ❖

*Fr. Peter is available for Holy Confession throughout the period of Great Lent. Please, contact him to make an appointment.*

# The ANNUNCIATION

## Sunday, March 25

**W**hen the All-Holy Virgin completed the fourteenth year after her birth and was entering her fifteenth year, after having spent eleven years of living and serving in the Temple of Jerusalem, the priests informed her that, according to the Law, she could not remain in the Temple but was required to be betrothed and enter into marriage.

What a great surprise to the priests was the answer of the All-Holy Virgin that she had dedicated her life to God and that she desired to remain a Virgin until death, not wanting to enter into marriage with anyone! Then, according to Divine Providence, Zacharias, the high priest and father of the Forerunner, under the inspiration of God, and in agreement with the other priests, gathered twelve unwed men from the Tribe of David to betroth the Virgin Mary to one of them to preserve her virginity and to care for her. She was betrothed to Joseph of Nazareth who was her kinsman.

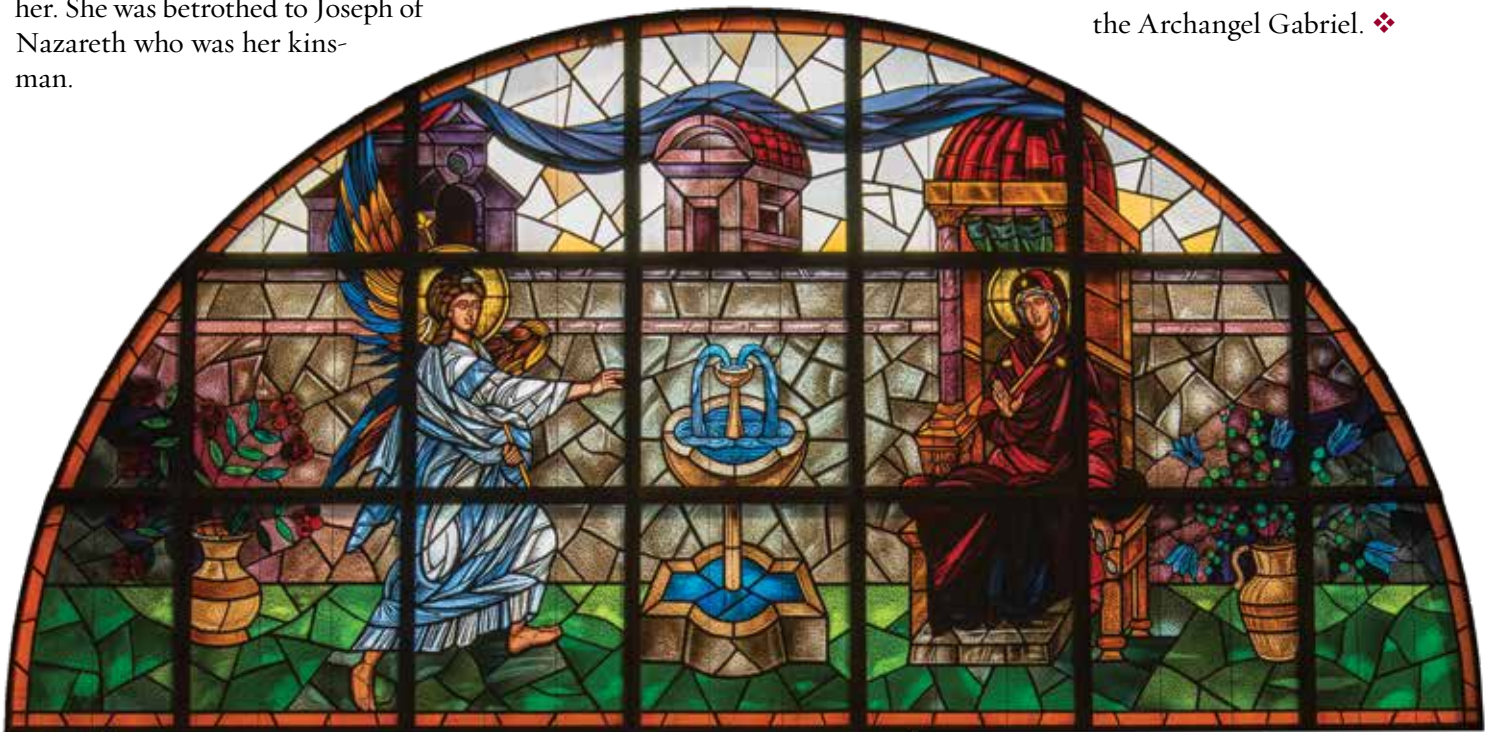
In the house of Joseph, the All-Holy Virgin continued to live as she did in the Temple of Solomon, occupying her time in the reading of Sacred Scripture, in prayer, in Godly-thoughts, in fasting and in handiwork. She rarely went anywhere outside the house nor was she interested in worldly things and events. She spoke very little to anyone, if at all, and never without special need. More frequently she communicated with both of Joseph's daughters.

When the fullness of time had come, as prophesied by Daniel the Prophet, and when God was pleased to fulfill His promise to the banished Adam and to the Prophets, the great Archangel Gabriel appeared in the chamber of the All-Holy Virgin and, as some priestly writers wrote, precisely at that same moment when she held open the book of the Prophet Isaiah and was contemplating

his great prophecy: "*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son.*" - Isaiah 7:13 Gabriel appeared in all of his angelic brightness and saluted her: "*Rejoice, highly favored one! The Lord is with you.*" (St. Luke 1:28) With this angelic annunciation and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Virgin, the salvation of mankind and restoration of all creation began. The history of the New Testament was opened by the words of the Archangel Gabriel: "*Rejoice, highly favored one.*"

### A CONTEMPLATION

Let us contemplate on the life of the Virgin Mary and how: a.) she served God for eleven years in the Temple humbly, obediently and devotedly; 2.) she served God in her chamber in Nazareth, humbly, obediently and devotedly; 3.) humbly, obediently and devotedly she received the Divine Annunciation from the Archangel Gabriel. ❖





# Parish Council

Humility - A Reflection of Strength!

■ BY A.J. KARANIKOLAS, PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4

*“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”*



**H**umility is a character trait that enables us to reflect the life of Christ in our own lives - as He was the perfect exemplar of true humility. In today’s day and age, humility is sometimes viewed as a weakness, but in reality it is a disciplined strength and an “other-centered” power as we focus not on ourselves but rather the needs of our brothers and sisters.

A terrific example of humility rests within our blessed Holy Trinity community. Consider the tireless effort that is given by all who are involved in our ministries - and no time is this better than now, as we are in the midst of Great

Lent. As the verse encourages us to put others first, Great Lent offers us the opportunity to put this into practice. One way is by tending to the garden of Holy Trinity through serving in the fruit bearing ministries such as Youth - as we come together as a family to host Sights and Sounds and celebrate the gifts and talents of our youth who we love dearly. The dedication by all who participate is a wonderful example of serving others, and thereby demonstrating humility!

There are many other many opportunities to become engaged in the spirit of humility - by becoming active in one of our ministries such as Stewardship

and Fellowship, or other events such as the Philoptochos Fashion Show and GreekFest.

It was with humility and love that the Parish Council was able to donate \$1,000 to St. Basil Academy which was awarded at the Vasilopita Luncheon - and we continually strive to serve Holy Trinity and others by keeping Christ as the central focus.

The Parish Council thanks you for your prayers and support, and asks that you join us, by demonstrating the strength of God through humility and service to others! ❖

## Holy Trinity Lenten Potlucks

March 9, 16, 23

**I**n celebration of the Akathist Hymn, all parishioners are invited to a Parish Lenten Potluck Dinner following each service. Let us gather, with grateful hearts, to honor the Theotokos with the Salutation Service and then to break bread together as one family. The Holy Trinity

Lenten Potluck will be held on March 9, 16, and 23. The Akathist Hymn begins at 7:00 PM followed by the meal in the Bouras Center.

Each parishioner is asked to bring a Lenten cover dish. (No meat, cheese, dairy, eggs, fish is permitted. Shellfish and oil is permitted.) ❖



# Philoptochos

## 2018 Vasilopita and Philoptochos Stewardship Sunday

■ ELLEN MANOS-ATHENSON, PRESIDENT

One of the most beautiful, inspiring traditions and customs of the Greek Orthodox Church is the observance of Vasilopita which joins our Orthodox Faith and heritage with the history of the Christian religion.

Joining this tradition with the kickoff of the 2018 Philoptochos Stewardship Drive, the Holy Trinity community gathered on January 28 for an afternoon of celebration and fellowship. Following the welcome by Ellen Manos-Athenson, Maria Stevens offered inspiring and motivating words reminding everyone about the mission of Philoptochos and emphasizing the need to support our fundraising efforts so we can continue to meet our commitments.

AJ Karanikolas, President of the Parish Council, spoke of the important work that

Philoptochos does and urged all women to become stewards of Philoptochos. He also presented a generous donation from the parish to St. Basil. In addition, the proceeds from the Vasilopita Luncheon will be sent to St. Basil Academy along with a gift for the children.

Father Peter led the traditional cutting of the Vasilopita. Anne Michals, President of the Metropolis Philoptochos, who honored us with her presence, complimented our chapter for being the largest in the Metropolis (230 members in 2017) and citing that we are often sought out as the model for other chapters to follow. We are proud to announce that Fr. John Alexandrou received the coin this year.

This beautiful luncheon was chaired by Debra Vlahakis and Kathy Maglaras. Heartfelt thanks and much appreciation

to them for the great effort that goes into planning, organizing and executing this event. With keen attention to details, the Bouras Center looked beautiful. A special touch by the co-chairs were the favors, of individual vasilopitas, lovingly baked and generously donated.

With much gratitude, we thank Ronnie Kyritsis and family once again for donating the delicious luncheon. Thank you to the many Holy Trinity Stewards, the Pantagis Family of Snuffy's, Vardas family of the Prestige Diner, and the Zavolas family of Ambeli for their generous and delicious donations of desserts, salads, and raffle gifts.

Many thanks to each and every one who participated. Your generosity and support throughout the year, enables Philoptochos, to fulfill its true Christ-centered mission.... helping those in need. ❖



May the Lord continue to bless the Holy Trinity family with good health, happiness and prosperity.





# Religious Education

Update

■ BY CHRIS ECONOMIDES, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Stewardship is taught and practiced at a young age at Holy Trinity. Kindergarten teachers Alexandra Mavrides and Ariadne Monfalcone along with their students have successfully closed out a fundraising drive through a lesson “Happy to Help.” After reviewing several causes, the students selected St. Jude’s and Red Cross for Hurricane Relief and donated \$225. We are so proud of our Kindergarten class and thank them for demonstrating the power of giving being good stewards of Christ.

The Godparent / Godchild Communion breakfast was held on February 11 with approximately 160 attendees. We are so grateful to have many Godparents/ Godchildren coming from near and far to celebrate the Holy Eucharist together. Students are taught the importance of being a Godparent and if they are honored to become one in the future, it is their responsibility to ensure a meaningful Orthodox upbringing of that child.

In addition to instruction preparing for the arrival of Great Holy Lent, we focus

on the Sunday of Orthodoxy (February 22) and the Procession of the Holy Icons. Every year, some students make icons in class and others choose to bring in their favorite one from home. Of course, no Orthodox home is complete without an Iconostasion where the family prays together. Students in PreK through Grade 5 participate in the Procession of Holy Icons along with Father Peter, the Acolytes and the Archons. *“The name of this Sunday reflects the great significance which icons possess for the Orthodox Church. They are not optional devotional extras, but an integral part of Orthodox faith and devotion. They are held to be a necessary consequence of Christian faith in the incarnation of the Word of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, in Jesus Christ. They have a sacramental character, making present to the believer the person or event depicted on them.”*

As for our students in Grades 7-12, the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival will be held after Fellowship Hour on Sunday, March 18. Please come and support our students speak about these very important topics that are applicable to our Faith:

## JUNIOR DIVISION (GRADES 7-9)

1. Jesus teaches about friendship to His disciples. Discuss importance of friendship in your life.
2. Choose a parable from the Gospel of Luke and discuss how it speaks to contemporary life.
3. Talk about a time and circumstance when you were in awe and wonder – where you sensed the majesty of God.
4. Discuss how prayer, fasting, serving others, or study of Orthodoxy assists you with your relationship with Christ and the Church.
5. In Mark 2:1-12, four men remove a roof to bring a paralytic to Jesus to be healed. How inventive are we in bringing people to Jesus for healing?

## SENIOR DIVISION (GRADES 10-12)

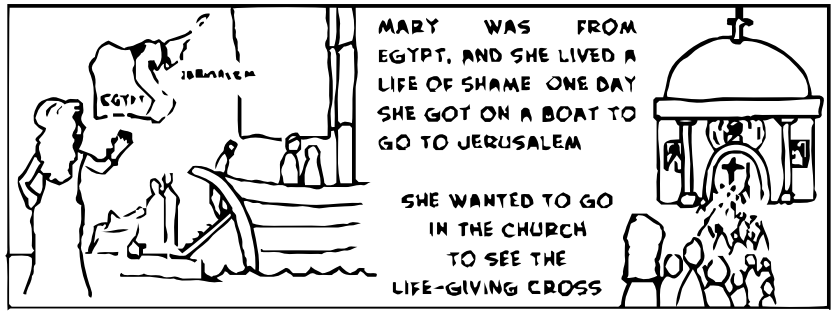
1. People often say, “It felt right” in order to explain their decisions. How many of our decisions factor in not only our feelings but also the will and commandments of God?
2. Christ’s disciples made the commitment to follow Him without knowing what the outcome might be. What does it mean to follow Christ today?
3. How can we have religious conversations on social media in an age of trolling?
4. Christ said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Mark 4:9). The Lord said this with reference to the way we hear the word of God. What is our response?
5. Our lives are saturated with violence, not only in terms of the proliferation of war and terrorism but even as entertainment in movies and video games. In such an environment, how can a Christian cultivate virtues that lead to empathy, peacemaking, and self-sacrifice?



∞

# THE LIFE OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT

∞



MARY WAS FROM EGYPT, AND SHE LIVED A LIFE OF SHAME ONE DAY SHE GOT ON A BOAT TO GO TO JERUSALEM

SHE WANTED TO GO IN THE CHURCH TO SEE THE LIFE-GIVING CROSS

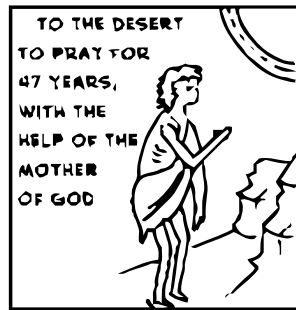


BUT SHE COULDN'T GO IN! SHE SAW AN ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD, AND WEPT FOR ALL HER SINS

SHE HEARD A VOICE FROM THE HEAVENS



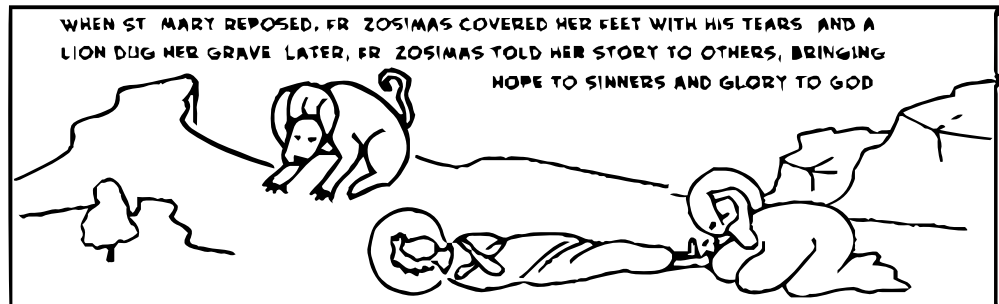
SO SHE WENT ACROSS THE JORDAN



TO THE DESERT TO PRAY FOR 47 YEARS, WITH THE HELP OF THE MOTHER OF GOD



SHE MET FR ZOSIMAS IN THE DESERT WHEN HE BROUGHT HER HOLY COMMUNION SHE WALKED ACROSS THE JORDAN AS ON DRY LAND



WHEN ST MARY REPOSED, FR ZOSIMAS COVERED HER FEET WITH HIS TEARS AND A LION DUG HER GRAVE LATER, FR ZOSIMAS TOLD HER STORY TO OTHERS, BRINGING HOPE TO SINNERS AND GLORY TO GOD

**HOLY ST. MARY OF EGYPT, PRAY TO GOD FOR US!**



## GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE

On April 22, Holy Trinity will once again proudly participate in the Greek Independence Day Parade in NYC on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue! Details forthcoming. See Christina Warnick or Maria Tarhanidis with your interest.



# GOYA

Update

■ BY NICHOLAS SAVORGIANNAKIS, GOYA PRESIDENT



First off, I would like to congratulate our Greek dancers and athletic teams. On January 27, our Greek dancers competed in the Parathosi Festival at Queens College. This competition included many churches from New York, Connecticut, and our GOYA also participated. It was a tremendous honor to have His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios in attendance watching the performances. Holy Trinity Joy/Hope group finished 3rd in the younger division with our GOYA finishing 2nd in the senior division. Our group consisted of 19 GOYANs and we filled the stage with one of the larger groups at the competition. I would like to Mr. and Mrs. Katsingris as well as Ronnie Fillipatos, for donating their time to teach us these wonderful dances. Preparing for the Parathosi put us ahead of schedule as we get ready for Sights & Sounds.

On the 20th and 21st of January, we had our athletic playoffs. Both teams had two games on Saturday in Toms River and

competed in the Finals in Asbury Park. Our Volleyball team after many years of hard work, won first place! I couldn't be more proud of our team as they put a lot of work into this volleyball season and took home first place. Thank you to Mr. Zenon Christodoulou and Miss Vicki Zourzoukis, our coaches, for their dedication and commitment to our volleyball team. As for our basketball team, with a short-handed roster we finished second. Although our team went out there and played like men, we couldn't get the final result we were looking for. Thank you to Mr. Agapios Kyritsis, our coach, for his dedication and commitment as well. I would like to thank all of the coaches from over the years who gave us this opportunity to play and make this a truly fun experience. Personally, I have been playing basketball since 4th grade. It is sad to see it come to such a bittersweet end. I have made many friends and highly encourage all younger GOYANs to join the team as it is a great

experience you do not want to miss out on.

On the 4th of February we had our Souper Bowl Sunday. We collected lots of non-perishable food items and \$462. The food was donated to the Emmanuel Cancer Society. The money was donated to IOCC. Thank you to all of our parishioners who supported these two charitable organizations. We truly appreciate your support.

On the 16th of February the Valentine's Dance was held at St. Demetrios Church in Union. Many Goyans attended the dance and it was a blast. The food was great as well as the music. DJ Taso never disappoints, and we enjoyed some of the throwback music that he played. Overall, it was a great night filled with dancing and we all had a lot of fun.

### SAVE THE DATE:

On April 29th we will be attending the Greek Independence Day Parade on 5th Avenue. I encourage everyone to come to support our Greek heritage. ❖





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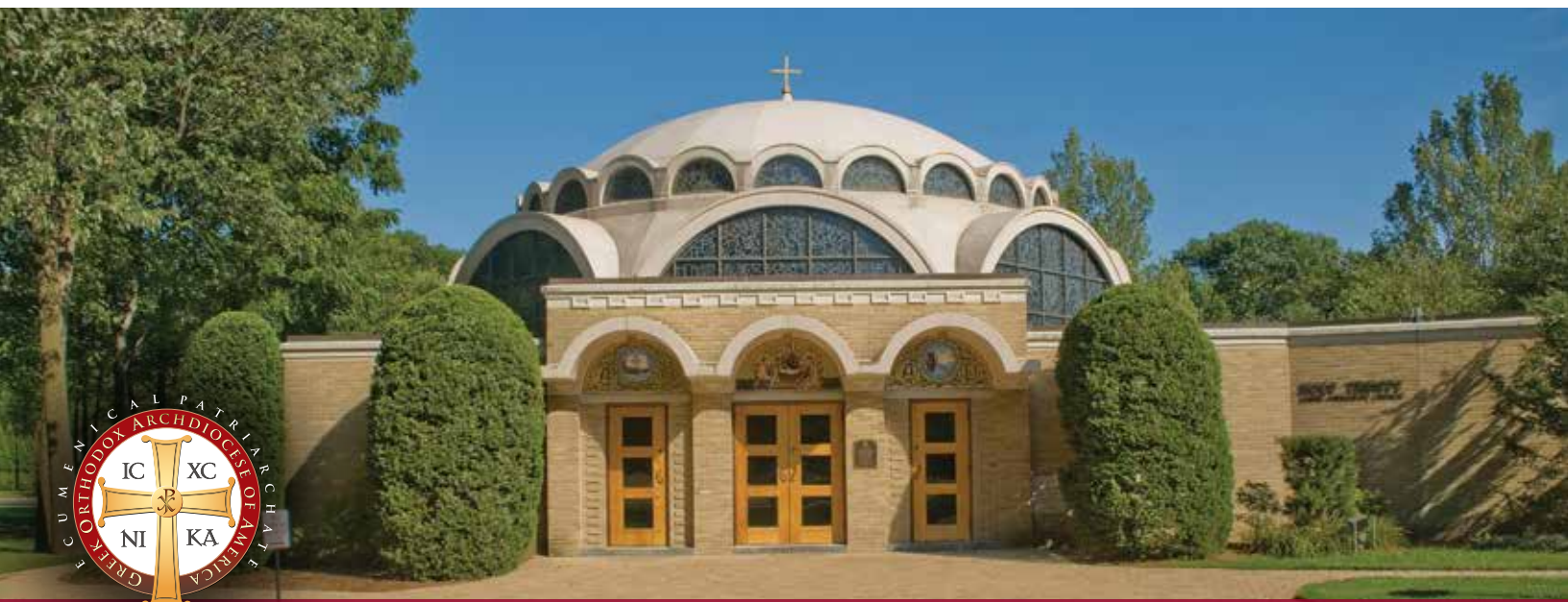
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*Admin. Assistant* E. Joy Daniledes  
*Caretaker* Ocione Nunes

## WORSHIP

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*Organist* Phyllis Verenes  
*Head Acolyte* Andreas Economides

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## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

	Sundays	Weekdays
<i>Orthros</i>	8:15 AM	8:30 AM
<i>Divine Liturgy</i>	9:30 AM	9:30 AM

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