

# The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



November 2019 ✦ Volume 43, Issue 9

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## The Progressive Nature of the Church



■ BY REV. FR.  
PETER DELVIZIS

The Gospel of our Saviour is not abstract in its attempts to communicate a greater reality that exists beyond this world.

Giving real examples of common human experiences, we see, time and again through the Gospel, a power that shines from above lifting us heavenward overcoming the elements of this fallen world.

To the uninitiated and unlearned the Church seems archaic. How many times have we heard such things as, “oh, the church is old-fashioned; it’s outdated; it needs a more modern approach?”

### Is the church archaic?

Those comments are remarkably peculiar. For even with a simple glance, the Church is anything but this. To me, a statement like this means that most people don’t understand the basic principles of the faith. This is

an unfortunate and noticeable reality in our churches and society. To make matters worse, to this mix of untaught masses we add the self-proclaimed theologian. Whether in the Greek Orthodox Church or other, there are a myriad of individuals who hold no theological degree but regardless of this feel absolutely free to expound their own “theological belief system”. I saw an electrician’s truck that read, “electric wiring is NOT a hobby” and laughed, if only that only applied to our church. The only one’s truly qualified to speak on behalf of the Church are those who are totally grounded in the Holy Tradition and Teachings of the Church of Christ. The true progressive leaders are given the name “Church Fathers”.

Again, I ardently affirm that the teaching of the Church is not archaic. The word I would use in its place is radicle. I say this because its teaching radically pushes us outside our comfort zone to espouse something greater than the individual self.

If you really look at most people’s lives, we are really mostly followers and not the trend-setters we purport to be. We are in lock-step following the latest

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## It’s About Thanksgiving



“But as for me and my house,  
we will serve the Lord.”

— JOSHUA 24:15

This year Thanksgiving Day falls on November 28. A tragedy for the hyper-commercialized corporations who yearn for more days to sell their Christmas items but a blessing for all people of good faith.

As you know, the Christian Faith is all about thanksgiving. And so, we give thanks to our Lord on this auspicious

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# Dates in the Life of Our Church

November–December 2019

## ✠ NOVEMBER

- 3** Daylight Savings Ends  
8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 5** 11:00 AM Trinity Circle  
4:00 PM Greek School
- 7** 10:00 AM Women of Faith  
4:00 PM Greek School
- 8** Synaxis of the Archangels  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 9** St. Nektarios  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
11:00 PM Baptism  
1:00 PM Baptism
- 10** 8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
Youth Sunday Luncheon
- 12** 4:00 PM Greek School  
7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting
- 13** St. John Chrysostom  
9:00 AM Orthros and Divine Liturgy at Metropolis  
7:30 PM Parish Council
- 14** 9:30 AM TOTS  
10:00 AM Trinity Circle trip-Hunterdon Playhouse  
4:00 PM Greek School

- 15** Christmas Fast Begins  
7:00 PM Sacrament of Holy Unction in Fairview
- 16** 11:00 AM Baptism
- 17** Stewardship Sunday  
8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
12:00 PM Parish Assembly
- 18** 7:30 PM NNJYC
- 19** 11:00 AM Trinity Circle  
4:00 PM Greek School
- 21** Entrance of the Theotokos  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
4:00 PM Greek School
- 24** 8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
1:00 PM Baptism
- 25** St. Katherine the Great Martyr  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 26** 4:00 PM Greek School
- 28** Thanksgiving Day
- 29** Office closed  
7:00 PM Great Vespers in Randolph
- 30** St. Andrew the Apostle and First-called  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
11:00 AM Baptism

## ✠ DECEMBER

- 1** 8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
Scout Sunday  
12:30 PM JOY/HOPE Christmas Party
- 3** 11:00 AM Trinity Circle  
4:00 PM Greek School  
7:00 PM Great Vespers in Toms River
- 4** St. Barbara the Great Martyr  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
10:30 AM Freshman Care Packaging  
6:30 PM Philoptochos Christmas Party
- 5** 4:00 PM Greek School  
7:00 PM Great Vespers in Wyckoff
- 6** St. Nicholas the Wonderworker  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
- 7** 6:00 PM Metropolis Christmas Concert in Tenafly
- 8** 8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
11:45 AM Parish Council Elections  
12:00 PM Philoptochos Bake Sale  
6:00 PM Metropolis Christmas Tree Lighting
- 9** St. Anna-Flemington  
9:00 AM Orthros  
10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
- 10** 4:00 PM Greek School  
7:30 PM Parish Council

# The Progressive Nature of the Church

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trends and fashions that others set for us. In a desire to be hip and cool and to “fit it”, we march in solidarity with the newest standards established by society’s select few. In so doing, we create idols out of those things we follow and then, in turn, worship that thing despite it being made by a human hand.

The first of the Ten Commandments reminds us that we are not to have any other god before the true God. And the second Commandment is like it, telling us not to make graven images and then worshipping that which is created.

Let’s stop violating the Lord’s Commandments and stop being eager followers of the world’s ever-changing standards. Rather, let us commit ourselves to the teachings of Christ and worship Him, the only Uncreated One.

The Church of Christ is not archaic, but it is as much radicle, different, and forward-thinking as it is sublime. Let us look at the Gospel According to Luke 6:32 which says; “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you?” Do understand what’s being said here? It’s saying don’t be a follower. How? In short, the Lord is saying; “your behavior should not be determined by your friends. Rather, one is to imitate God,

who does not reciprocate but loves even the ungrateful and selfish. How you govern behavior is important.”

## Which of my actions will lead me beyond myself towards God?

The Gospel passage adds: “Love your enemies, do good, and lend hoping for nothing in return.”

Is doing good and moving beyond the self archaic or are they forward-thinking? Most of the time our actions demonstrate archaic thought and backward thinking by doing good only to those who do good to us and lending to those because we might gain a profit in return.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we must always think which of my choices is the higher one? Which of my actions will lead me beyond myself towards God?

Like the disciples, we are called to communicate a greater reality to those around us and to live a better way of life. And if we are to be followers, then follow the higher road that ultimately leads to the eternal kingdom.

The Gospel of our Saviour is given to communicate an immediate, powerful, sensitive, and significant message. It is a message invested with the power to break through the barriers of language and abstraction to communicate a bigger reality.

Can anyone in his right mind argue this is archaic?

Is it archaic to want to be a better person? To reach for something higher? To believe in a power that can help us and guide us through this present age? On the other hand, is it archaic and primitive to remain who we presently are with no further need of ongoing spiritual, intellectual, or emotional development?

The Lord gives one more compelling reason why to keep His Commandment: if you love those who love you, you are like the sinners and Gentiles; but if you love those who dislike and hate you, then you are like God.

Which is the better desire? To be like the sinner or to be like God?

Do you now understand the divine teaching and how it differs radically from the almost universal archaic and primitive human understanding of things?

Let us take up the mantle of faith by our ongoing and never-ending devotion to our Lord and continue with our spiritual development and advancement towards God’s heavenly kingdom. Amen. ❖





# Philoptochos

## 2019 Community Christmas Card



Please print your name(s) clearly and as you wish it to appear on the "Community Christmas Card."

**W**e invite you to participate in this community expression of joy over our Lord's birth. Every member of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church will receive a copy of the COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CARD imprinted with the names of those who have donated. This year we will donate the proceeds to PHILOPTOCHOS Charities.

Complete the form and send it in with your donation. All donations are gratefully received--thank you for your generosity!

New members and those not listed in the Parish Directory must include their address. For convenience in handling, make your payment by check.

**DEADLINE -- RETURN TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2019.**

Names received after December 2 may not appear on the card.

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Please issue a separate check for this donation and write "Christmas Card" in the memo section.

Contact Mary Demiris 908/204-3481, Mary Skiadas 732/469-4988, Athena Vasiliadis 908/561-5147



Do you have an extra coat or two? **Donate it!**

## Philoptochos & GOYA

are holding a One Warm Coat drive and collecting clean, gently worn coats of all types and sizes.



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***In November***

( drop off box in Bouras Center)

**Donated coats will be distributed in our local community!**

For more information please stop by the GOYA and/or Philoptochos table.



# Religious Education

## Giving Thanks

As Orthodox parents, we teach our children fundamental values, like being grateful for example; generally, grateful for so many blessings that God has given each of us. Our students are taught in our Religious Education program to honor your father and mother, but take it a step further and be grateful to God that he has given us a family. Our kids are becoming more and more aware that many people ignore or take for granted that having a family is a great blessing and to belong to

their extended Church family enhances that blessing. So I would encourage all parents to continue to bring their children to Church. Give them the chance to build memories and maybe when they grow older and the world seems a bit too heavy, they can look back and remember that special kind of love. Love from family, love from their church family, and the love of God can help them get through the difficult challenges the world presents to them. In closing I just want to say that I am so grateful to

have the opportunity to work with our kids and continue to watch them grow into beautiful young adults. I am also grateful to all the teachers and the time and talents they bring to our program, making it the benchmark of Religious Education. Finally, I would like to thank Father Peter for his spiritual guidance and support throughout the year. God bless our Holy Trinity family and I wish you all a very blessed and Happy Thanksgiving! ❖

↳ Continued from page 1

## It's About Thanksgiving

day. But this day also teaches that every day is a wonderful day to count your blessings and praise the Lord.

As your parish priest, I ask one thing from you this year. When you sit at the dining room table and before eating your delicious turkey meal, I want you to bring a Bible to table to read from the Book of Psalms. This book is the one that is used by the Church in order to give proper thanks to God.

*"Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are magnified exceedingly; You clothe Yourself with thanksgiving and majesty...."* – Psalm 103



"O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good. Alleluia."

*"Shout aloud to the Lord, all the earth; serve the Lord with gladness; come before Him with great joy...enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with hymns...."* – Psalm 99

To open the Book of Psalms is to open the door into the worship of all believers in all countries of the world in all centuries before Christ till this present time. The Psalms, in short, express a deep awareness of the grace of God and how He always gives blessing upon blessings.

Praise and thanksgiving are what we do as Christians. So, to be proper Christians we need to thank God. Blessing God and keeping His name holy not only defines us as Christians but also as human beings. We are not animals but beings who are able to respond to God's blessings and to transcend ourselves and the realm of the senses and appetites through thanksgiving.

St. Athanasios the Great speaks about how each Psalm seems as though it was written from our own hearts. Even though the words were written by someone else, they feel like our own personal response to God.

*"...each one sings the Psalms as though they had been written for his special benefit, and takes them and recites them, not as though someone*

*else were speaking or another person's feelings being described, but as himself speaking of himself, offering the words to God as his own heart's utterance, just as though he himself had made them up. Not as the words of the patriarchs or of Moses and the other prophets will he reverence these: no, he is bold to take them as his own and written for his very self. Whether he has kept the Law or whether he has broken it, it is his own doings that the Psalms describe; everyone is bound to find his very self in them and, be he faithful soul or be he sinner, each reads in them descriptions of himself."* – St. Athanasios the Great

To help assist you in reading the Psalms on Thanksgiving Day, I give you the following Psalms of joyful thanksgiving to God. Pray these, as though they were your own words.

Thanksgiving Psalms: 17, 22, 29, 62, 65, 99, 102, 117, 137, 144, 146 ❖





# Trinity Circle

## Update

■ BY AVI KIRIAKATIS, PRESIDENT

Our twice a month gatherings are very well attended and enjoyed by our members as we get to see and support each other.

Everyone enjoyed our October speaker, Anastasia Papadimitriou, MSc, PhD candidate of Rutgers University. Her presentation was on 'Mediterranean Diet: More than a Diet - A way of life' with main focus on:

- Mediterranean Diet is old news- Mediterranean Lifestyle is the new craze.
- Components of the Mediterranean Lifestyle.
- Activities of Rutgers to promote the Mediterranean Lifestyle.

The Bake Sale was very successful as everyone got to bring home some homemade treats. A big thank you to our Chair, Marina LoAlbo as well as all members and parishioners who baked, made donations, packaged, helped with the sale and purchased all the goodies. The profits will assist us with future trips.

"Storytelling is in our blood from the time of Homer to the present. With our passing, so will the valiant stories of our mothers and fathers unless we

memorialize them. In Biography 101, Prof. Chrys Grieco will be our November 19th speaker and guide the author, in each of us, to give voice to those roots that we claim. We will learn how to begin writing the biographies of our parents, their lives, their characters and the impact they have had on us." ❖

### Trinity Circle's 2019 Events



**Thursday – 9:45 am**

Bus leaves Holy Trinity returns 4:30 pm to see Christmas Holiday Musical with the Three Scrooges Lunch & Show at Hunterdon Hills Playhouse



**Tuesday – 11:00 am**

Meeting/Lunch & Speaker Chrysanthy (Chrys) Grieco



**Tuesday – 11:00am**

11:00 am – Games and Socializing



**Tuesday – 12:00pm**

Christmas Luncheon at Galloping Hill Caterers \$20. Members Only - Please sign up with Peggy Minaides



Kassandra Romas, Avi Kiriakatis, Helen Criares, and Trinity Circle celebrating Fr. Peter's birthday.



# GOYA

## Update

■ BY ARIANA TARHANIDIS, GOYA PRESIDENT

I would like to start by wishing all a most blessed Thanksgiving! It is officially fall. The 43 Annual Christ Encounter Retreat, October 4-6, featured some fall-like weather like watching the leaves change colors and bundling up in sweats. At the retreat, we participated in fun activities that helped us learn about our faith and grow closer to God and each other. This year's theme was "Thou Shalt" and we discussed the Ten Commandments: the rules that God gave us to live by, and how having structure (like these rules) helps us lead faithful lives. We had great attendance this year, especially from the younger GOYANs; we started the weekend by kicking off our "Big Brother/Big Sister" program, which partnered

the younger GOYANs with the older GOYANs, which helped us bond with not only our individual partners but the group as a whole.

Another great way to bond is through athletics, and we are off to a great season so far! With only two more games left, we are looking forward to a December tournament where we will be seeking championship titles for both our volleyball and basketball teams. Our Outreach program has grown with many new initiatives this year. We have already started collecting non-perishable items to donate to a local food pantry, and socks and undergarments for the underprivileged and homeless. Donations are always welcome!

After two years, we are again hosting

the Youth Sunday Luncheon in honor of our veterans with entertainment featuring our talented youth. We would like to thank Mrs. Penny Mavridis-Sales and our many volunteers for helping us organize and execute another successful event.

Finally, we would like to congratulate our Westfield Mr. and Miss GOYA representatives, William Arida and Melina Christodoulou. These two put in a lot of hard work for this event and are so proud of them and the amazing job they did representing Holy Trinity. Of note, that evening Melina came in first place. Now we recognize her, not only as Ms. Westfield but also as Ms. GOYA. Congratulations! ❖









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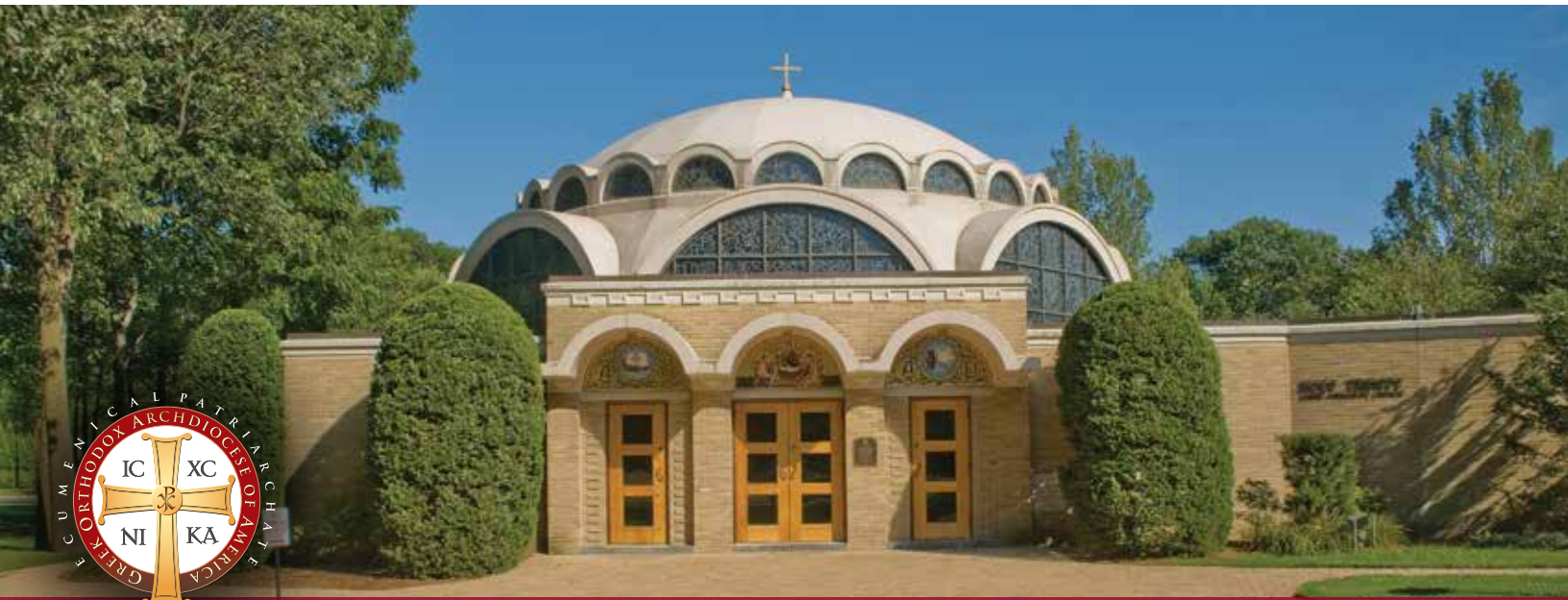
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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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*Web site* holytrinitywestfield.org  
*Presiding Priest* Rev. Fr. Peter Delvizis  
*E-mail* FrPeter@htgocnj.org

## OFFICE STAFF

*Office Manager* Diana R. Waltsak  
*Admin. Assistant* E. Joy Daniledes  
*Caretaker* Ocione Nunes

## WORSHIP

*Lead Psaltis* Pascalis Kuvalakis  
*Choir Director* Kathryn Athanasoulas  
*Organist* Phyllis Verenes  
*Head Acolyte* Elias Carayannopoulos

## MINISTRIES

*Parish Council* George Colonias  
*Philoptochos* Ellen Manos-Athenson  
*Religious Education* Anthony Bosco  
*Greek School* Stavroula Mergoupis  
*Greek School PTO* Melissa Krikos  
*Youth (GOYA)* Ariana Tarhanidis  
*JOY/HOPE* Kathy Drivas  
*TOTS* Valerie Comprelli  
*Bookstore* Sandy Mouratoglou  
*Cultural* Celia Kapsomera, Co-chair  
Nitsa Bruno, Co-chair  
*Trinity Circle* Avi Kiriakatis  
*Fellowship* Lauren Karanikolas

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

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

## THE PROMISE: VOLUME 43, ISSUE 9

10 issues published annually.  
No subscription fee.  
Article deadline - 10<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month