In ages past, there lived a man whose sanctity was so great that even angels marveled at it. The celestial hosts descended from heaven to see how it is possible to be vested with such holiness while still living on earth.

After their encounter, the angels said to God, “Lord, grant this man the gift of wonderworking!”

“I shall do this,” the Lord said, “only ask him if he wants it for himself.”

So, the Angels asked the saint, “Do you wish to grant healing and restoration of health by just your touch?”

The holy man said, “No! For it is far better thing for the Lord to do this Himself.”

“But do you want to have such power of beautiful and eloquent speech so as to turn sinners to repentance?”

“No, for repentance is in the hands of God, not in the hands of a weak man. And how can I pray for the conversion of sinners when I myself do not convert. I am the greatest of sinners.”

“Maybe you desire to draw people unto yourself by the radiance of virtue, therefore glorifying God?”

“No, by drawing people to myself I would draw them away from God.”

“So, what is it that you want?” asked the Angels.

“What more can I want? I only want that the Lord does not deprive me of His mercy. With that, I will have everything.”

The angels were confused, but when directed by the Lord they allowed the shadow of this holy man, which he does not see, to fall upon the sick. And when it falls on them to heal them and to relieve all sorrow and suffering.

From that moment it was so: wherever this saint went, his shadow brought greenery to the paths that were spiritually trampled upon, it watered many thirsty souls, beautiful flowers grew in people’s hearts where before there was only sorrow, and it dried the tears of those who suffered. As the saint walked the earth, his simple presence and abiding love for the Lord spread goodness to those all around him. He was like a beautiful field of fragrant flowers spreading its scent without even being aware of it. Glory to God for the unknown good!
# Dates in the Life of Our Church
## November–December 2022

### NOVEMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11:00 AM Trinity Circle &lt;br&gt; 4:00 PM Greek School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Daylight Savings Ends  &lt;br&gt; 8:15 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Synaxis of the Archangels  &lt;br&gt; 8:30 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  &lt;br&gt; 7:30 PM Parish Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>St. Nektarios the Wonderworker  &lt;br&gt; 8:30 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 Tots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sts. Victor, Vikenzios, Means the Martyrs  &lt;br&gt; 8:30 AM Orthros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1:30 PM Wedding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>8:15 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>7:30 PM NNJYC  &lt;br&gt; 8:30 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  &lt;br&gt; 12:00 PM Parish Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Entry of the Theotokos  &lt;br&gt; 8:30 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>6:30 PM JOY/Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>11:00 AM Baptism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>8:15 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>12:00 PM Parish Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Day  &lt;br&gt; 8:30 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Office Closed  &lt;br&gt; 8:15 AM Orthros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>St. Andrew the First-Called</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DECEMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8:15 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  &lt;br&gt; Parish Council Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>St. Nicholas of Myra  &lt;br&gt; 8:30 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>8:15 AM Orthros  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>St. Spyridon  &lt;br&gt; 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
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</tbody>
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**Trinity Circle Update**

**BY AVI KIRIAKATIS, PRESIDENT**

Our October gathering was very well attended and enjoyed by all our members. Luncheon was donated by Maria Grafas and Harriett Provel in memory of their loved ones.

We would like to welcome 2 new members to Trinity Circle. They are Kathy Genakos and Phyllis Verenes. We are very happy to have these ladies join us.

November 1st luncheon is donated by Joy Daniledes in memory of her loved ones.

Happy Thanksgiving to everyone as we thank God for all our blessings!

Members Christmas Luncheon will be on Tuesday, December 6th at Galloping Hill Caterers 11:00 - 3:00 pm. Kindly sign up with Kassandra Romas, Chairlady – the cost is $20. 🎁
People work hard to go to Heaven. But what is the reason for their work? Is it to avoid punishment so that they don’t go to Hell, or is it to encounter Christ.

Over the fourth weekend of October, the 46th Annual Christ Encounter Weekend was held. The name of the youth retreat indicates what each of us should do in our lives – encounter Christ, the Living God in our daily lives.

In the Church, we speak of a personal God who relates to us. The Christian life creates within us a deep desire to meet Christ. While moving towards Him, we encounter Him on a deeper and more meaningful level. The undeniable truth is that we are utterly dependent on God. Nothing can be done or accomplished without Him and all failures in life are caused by our abandoning Him. Therefore, everything done in our lives should lead us to encounter Christ.

For example, when we pray that one day we will enter heaven, are we praying that we will be with God forever? Oftentimes, we picture Heaven like being a paradise of unspeakable beauty, with its pearly gates in a surreal world filled with saved angels and saints. But where is God in this imagery?

Some people fear that Heaven might get boring after a while. But this is not true. Hell is dull, because it is a constant void and a deep chasm of nothingness. Heaven can never get boring because in this place God’s love will never run out.

In heaven, love will flow continuously. It will continuously flow, continuously uniting us to God.

Have you ever been bored while being in love? Of course not. Love has the power to transport us to another place where we feel light, like a feather floating in the air. Love makes us feel ecstatic, like we’ve been carried away, as though we’re walking on the moon. And for this reason, we can understand why the first commandment is for us to love God with all our might. Because when we unite our lives to Christ’s love then we are transported to heaven.

Some people think that it is unfair of God to send sinners to eternal torment. (Luke 16:19-31) This thought process, that God punishes people, is usually generated from a person who often espouses negative views of life in its entirety. Hell is not punishment but rather a consequence.

For example, how can a prideful person enter Heaven? Heaven would be a Hell for such a man. How can it be possible for a prideful man to stand with others who are not his equal? In heaven, there are no ranks or classes of people, there is no segregation or bragging of earthly glory. Heaven means true equality for its inhabitants. In heaven, all the nonsense of priority of positions has passed away, for all will stand in the presence of the Almighty God.

There is no question that our earthly work is to attain heaven. Let us work with diligence to meet God and encounter His glory that will reign forever and ever.
His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America, Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, together with Dr. Anthony J. Limberakis, National Commander of the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, presented the Athenagoras Human Rights Award to His Beatitude Theodore II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, during the annual Athenagoras Human Rights Award Banquet held at the New York Hilton Hotel on October 8, 2022, with over 600 Archons and guests in attendance.

During His Beatitude's address, he said; “Man throughout history has several times felt that he is a weak, lonely, defenseless being. In order for there to be any form of freedom, rivers of blood were shed, there were conflicts upon conflicts, individuals and peoples fought. The result was not always what was expected. The fact that there are still places around the world where personal or collective rights are violated shows that we have not yet reached the ideal. More efforts are needed toward this end. Recognizing, conceding, respecting the rights - especially of the weak - shows love and offers tranquility. Let us hope that our humble words just heard will provoke reflection, suspend fear and banish pain. Please pray that it will be accomplished as soon as possible as I will humbly continue to pray and actually strive hard for it.”
Newest Archon from Holy Trinity Invested Peter Tarhanidis
At October’s General Meeting, Philoptochos approved its 2023 budget, shared plans for upcoming events, and discussed fundraising efforts to support our charitable works, and reconnected with each other. The meeting was followed by a Scout & Cellar Wine Tasting expertly hosted by Jenny Stellakis. We learned about wines without toxic pesticides, artificial ingredients or processing aids, and low in sulfates and enjoyed a tasting of these clean crafted wines. Our next General Meeting will be our annual Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 7. Join us for a festive and fun evening with a catered meal by Marco Polo, holiday shopping, and live Christmas music by Ryan Kiel.

Furthermore, we welcome you to join us this Fall in a variety of initiatives, appeals, and fundraisers that include but are not limited to Feeding the Hungry, Operation Classroom, Christmas Bake Sale, Pastries for our Holy Trinity Friends, Community Christmas Card, and “Grecian Muse Raffle” (Avi Kiriakatis avikiriakatis@gmail.com) to benefit The Smile of the Child, a leading NGO for children’s rights and welfare in Greece and internationally.

**Feeding the Hungry**

November is the time of year where we are reminded to not only give thanks but to look around our community for ways to make a difference. We have a number of on-going efforts through December. Our 8th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner Campaign to benefit Market Street Mission. Every $3.00 provides one hungry person with a complete traditional Thanksgiving meal. Let’s continue this beautiful tradition to help make this holiday season a little bit better for those hurting and homeless. For further information, please contact Debra Vlahakis at debvlahakis@gmail.com. Throughout the year our chapter seeks ways to help feed the hungry whether it is providing bagged sandwich meals for Elijah’s Promise Community Kitchen in New Brunswick and St. Joseph’s Service Center in Elizabeth or helping at the Community Food Bank of NJ in Hillside. Reach out to Ellen Conti (eckou328@aol.com) or Kristin Tencza (kmt@asis-nj.com) if interested in getting involved.

**2022 Community Christmas Card**

You are invited to participate in this community expression of joy over our Lord’s birth. Every church steward will receive a copy of the Community Christmas Card with the names of those who have donated. This year, the net proceeds will benefit 2 worthy non-profit organizations. Best Buddies International, started by Anthony Shriver, provides people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) the opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living. Best Buddies is specifically dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of the 200 million people with IDD. Their programs empower the special abilities of people with IDD by helping them form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure successful jobs, live independently, improve public speaking, self-advocacy and communication skills, and feel valued by society. Women’s Alzheimer’s Movement (WAM) in partnership with Cleveland Clinic create awareness around Alzheimer’s, fund gender-based research, and medical guidance to reduce the risk for developing this debilitating disease. Contact Sandy Boutsikaris (908-578-3341) or Christina Colonias (917-825-5986) for further information.

All donations are gratefully accepted to support our philanthropic endeavors and thank you to those who have contributed. None are possible without our devoted and generous Philoptochos stewardship and Holy Trinity parishioners! In helping others, we help ourselves, and every act of kindness enriches our lives. With the love and blessings of God, we can lessen the pain, loss and suffering of our brothers and sisters wherever they may be.
Our dear Holy Trinity Parishioners, we invite you to participate in this community expression of joy over our Lord’s birth. Philoptochos continues its philanthropic work to assist those in need, and we are counting on your support and generosity to enable us to fulfill our mission. This year we will donate the proceeds to Best Buddies International and the Cleveland Clinic’s Women’s Alzheimer’s Movement for Research. Please join your fellow parishioners by donating to our annual Christmas Card.

COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND SEND IT IN WITH YOUR DONATION. ALL DONATIONS ARE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED.

Thank You For Your Generosity! O Holy Night

THE LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY

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Please Print Your Name(S) Clearly And As You Wish It To Appear On The “Community Christmas Card.”

Name: ________________________________________________________________

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RETURN THIS FORM NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 4, 2022

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: LADIES PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY HTGOC

For convenience in handling, you can make your payment by check, credit card, Apple Pay, Google pay or PayPal.

Include your information with the payment and how your family name(s) should appear.

Contact
Sandy Boutsikaris 908/578-3341 or
Christina Colonias 917/825-5986 for more information.

The Ladies Philoptochos Society – HTGOC is a registered 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.
National Church Music Sunday

BY KATHRYN ATHANASOULAS

National Church Music Sunday is a day set-aside by the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians along with the Archdiocese to honor the contributions of local choir members, psaltes, and music educators who serve their church. On October 2, 2022, the first Sunday after the Feast Day of St. Romanos, the patron saint of church musicians, we recognized the service of our choir members and chanters.

Fifty and Above
The Eastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians (EFGOCM) is one of the eight metropolises in the U.S. that offer support to our New Jersey Metropolis. The EFGOCM recognized two musicians who have reached 50 years of service to choirs. They are Phyllis Verenes, our organist and Susan Karcanes, choir member. Others who have reached and surpassed fifty years of singing are: Angela Aspromatis, Gioula Assad, Connie Baboukis, and Stacey Carumpalos. Axia! to all.

Angel Choir
We recently added three new Angel Choir members from our Greek School. Angel Choir is for boys and girls ages 8 to 12. We look forward to recruiting many more additional members.

Byzan-“teens”
The blue robed choir members, our Byzan-teen choir, are for girls and boys ages 13 to 17. We would like to add more singers in every category.

Get To Know The Choir

Choir Corner

Did you know:
- Phyllis was 12 years old when she was the organist for her father who was choir director in New London, Connecticut.
- Susan was secretary for the National Forum’s annual meetings for many years.
- Angela and Gioula were choir members in Holy Trinity for the entire 50 years.
- Connie was the choir director at Sts. Constantine and Helen, in Orange while Fr. John was presiding priest.
- Stacey has been singing with the Masterwork Choir in Morristown for years as she continues to sing with church choirs.
- when you sing church hymns you are praying twice
- Singing helps to keep you young
Archbishop Elpidophoros appoints Peter Arbes, Vice-Chair of the Metropolitan Council

Affirmation of GOYA

Mr. and Ms. Westfield

Congratulations to Nicholas Skalkotos & Molly Sophia Love
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Schedule of Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sundays</th>
<th>Weekdays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orthros</td>
<td>8:15 AM</td>
<td>8:30 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ministries

- Parish Council
- Philoptochos
- Religious Education
- Greek School
- Greek School PTO
- Youth (GOYA)
- JOY / HOPE
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