

# The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



November 2024 ✦ Volume 48, Issue 8

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## Happy Thanksgiving



■ BY FATHER  
PETER DELVIZIO

There is nothing more Orthodox than Thanksgiving. Though the origins of the Thanksgiving holiday are not Orthodox, the concept behind it very much is. Giving thanks to God for all He has given us is the central premise of the Orthodox Faith. If we are to call Thanksgiving a holiday, it must be more than remembering the pilgrims. It must be more than visiting with family and gorging ourselves on a sumptuous feast. It must be more than sitting in front of the television streaming NFL football or other sporting events. Thanksgiving is a state of being, one that we need to cultivate and make perpetual and present every day of our lives.

*“And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving Him thanks.” Luke 17:15-16.*

### Thanksgiving defines our Faith

*“O give thanks unto the Lord,  
for He is good, for His mercy  
endures forever!”*

Psalm 135:1

As Orthodox Christians, we should give thanks to God daily. Thanksgiving Day, though celebrated as a nation once a year, should be something we celebrate each and every day of our lives. Unfortunately, we don't thank God as often as we should. The Church stands as a constant reminder

to do just that. She offers many various services that through them we may offer unceasing praise and thanksgiving to God. The central act of the Church is the celebration of the Eucharist. This is the sacrament of sacraments, and its name indicates a crucial link between the Almighty and the thankful servant. Eucharist is the Greek word for thanksgiving. As we celebrate Thanksgiving Day as a nation, let us be filled with a spirit of thanksgiving to God for all the mighty and wondrous things He has done in our lives.

May you have a blessed and cherish Thanksgiving Day and through this national holiday may you find the proper words to express our continuous thanks to the one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. ❖



Wait for the promise of the Father



# Dates in the Life of Our Church

November / December 2024

## NOVEMBER

- I** St. Cosmas and St. Damianos  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 2** 9:30 AM Agia Skepi Monastery Excursion

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- 3** Daylight Savings Time Ends  
8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 5** 11:00 AM Trinity Circle  
4:00 PM Greek School

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- 6** 9:30 AM TOTs

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- 7** 4:00 PM Greek School

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- 8** Holy Archangels  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 9** St. Nektarios the Wonderworker  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
12:00 PM Baptism

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- 10** 8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 11** Sts. Victor, Vikenzios, and Menas  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 12** 4:00 PM Greek School  
7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Mtg.  
7:30 PM Parish Council Mtg.

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- 14** 10:00 AM Trinity Circle Trip  
4:00 PM Greek School

- 15** 6:00 PM Joy/Hope

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- 16** 11:00 AM Baptism

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- 17** Stewardship Sunday  
8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 18** 8:00 PM NNJYC State Mtg.

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- 19** 4:00 PM Greek School

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- 20** 9:30 AM TOTs

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- 21** Entry of the Theotokos  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
4:00 PM Greek School  
St. Iakovos of Evia  
6:00 PM Great Vespers  
Metropolis Patron Saint  
Great Vespers Reception – Bouras Ctr.

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- 24** 8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
12:00 PM Parish Assembly

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- 25** 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 26** 4:00 PM Greek School

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- 28** Office Closed – Thanksgiving Day

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- 29** Office Closed

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- 30** St. Andrew the First-Called  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

## DECEMBER

- I** 8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 3** 11:30 AM Trinity Circle Christmas Luncheon  
4:00 PM Greek School

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- 4** St. Barbara the Great Martyr  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 5** 4:00 PM Greek School

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- 6** St. Nicholas the Wonderworker  
8:30 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

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- 8** 8:15 AM Orthros  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
12:00 PM Parish Council General Elections

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- 10** 4:00 PM Greek School  
7:30 PM Parish Council Mtg.

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- 11** 9:30 AM TOTs

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- 12** St. Spyridon the Wonderworker  
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy  
4:00 PM Greek School  
5:30 PM Philoptochos Dinner Party and General Meeting

# STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

November 24



“...but make me worthy, Your sinful and unworthy servant, to offer these Gifts unto You.  
For You are the Offerer and the Offered, The One Who accepts and distributes, O Christ our God...”

Priestly prayers before Holy Communion

*A little boy asked his father, “Daddy, can I have ten dollars?” The father, wanting to understand, told the boy, “Yes, but can you tell me what you plan to do with the ten dollars?” The little boy replied quietly, “Daddy, I need the money to buy you a present.”*

**W**e are not so different from that little boy. At every Divine Liturgy, when the gifts of bread and wine are blessed and lifted in offering to God our Father, we hear the words, “Your own from Your own we offer to You.” We acknowledge, just like the little boy buying a gift for his father, that everything we have and everything we offer to God first comes from Him. In the Divine Liturgy, we offer the uniquely human gifts of bread and wine to God in thanksgiving. He accepts these gifts but then, in His usual gracious way, offers them back to us in a more perfect way, as His body and blood in Holy Communion.

## See our Church as it Could Be

As Orthodox Christians, we see the entire world as God’s gift. The beauties of the created world should be seen

as a sacrament of God’s presence and a means to commune with Him. The thankful person, seeing that every good and perfect gift comes from above, will offer back to God the many material gifts he has received from Him.

Like the boy in the New Testament who offered the five loaves and two fish,

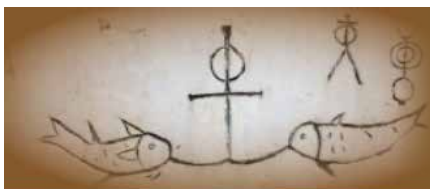


God will receive our humble gifts and in turn offer them back to us in a more perfected form.

Who is so great a God as our God. He is the God who still performs miracles. And with this in mind, it is possible for the faithful to move beyond the constraining concepts that limit our thoughts to what is only humanly possible. If we faithfully do our part, God will lovingly return to us more than we could ever imagine. This is the true meaning of: “Your own from Your own.” We will see our church, not as it is, but as it could be, with our humble gifts multiplied by God’s generosity and love.

Your Stewardship Offering is an offering to God and He is the only One Who can increase and multiply your gifts. That is why you are asked to give generously.

The parish of Holy Trinity brings together a diversity of people where we see each other as brothers and sisters with God as our common Father. We are a family who strives to share whatever we have so that through Christ we may be united in heart and soul. ❖



The Steward - The Stewardship Pledge qualifies married couples or single adults as Stewards. Stewards are considered parishioners in good standing with the Parish and may vote and seek elective office in the administration of the Parish as provided by the Archdiocesan Regulations and Parish Bylaws.

# Anniversary Celebration *at Holy Trinity*

On Sunday, October 13, the parish welcomed His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos as he presided over the Divine Liturgy in recognition of Fr. Peter and Presvytera Victoria's years of committed service to the parish of Holy Trinity and to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Fr. Peter and Presvytera Victoria have ministered to the parish of Holy Trinity for twenty years and have served the Archdiocese for thirty years in various parishes from West Coast to East. Also concelebrating on this day were Fr. John Alexandrou and Fr. Nicholas Pastrikos.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, an artoklasia was offered for the health and well-being of Fr. Peter and Presvytera Victoria and their families. Also afterwards, the altar boys of the parish were tonsured in a beautiful service offered by His Eminence. Our altar boys are committed to serving in the altar helping Fr. Peter and Fr. John every Sunday. We congratulate our newly tonsured acolytes and say AXIOS to: Antonios Saketos, Minas Saketos, Andreas Saketos, Konstantinos Pangis, Nicholas Kelly, Iakovos (Jack) Kelly, Nearchos Yatromanolakis, Lucas Nadgauda, Alex Spiridonov and Alexander Sultan.

The parish council offered a very special Anniversary Luncheon in the Bouras Center following church services. By God's grace, your faithfulness and generosity, Holy Trinity raised substantial money for the day's two highlighted funds. Fr. Peter's desire was to offer funding to programs that assist in the promotion of the priesthood. "Walk with Christ", an initiative of His Eminence Metropolitan Apostolos which offers financial aid to seminarians from the Metropolis of NJ, raised over \$6,145. "Support a Mission Priest", an initiative from OCMC that helps financially support Orthodox priests and their families in Africa, raised \$7,745.

Walk with Christ - \$6,145  
Support a Mission Priest - \$7,745

We congratulate and ask God to continue to bless Fr. Peter and Presvytera Victoria as they continue their work in the vineyard of Christ here at Holy Trinity. ❖

*There is still time to donate funds to these two worthy causes. Please call the church or speak with Fr. Peter if you would like to add your name to financially support our seminarians and priests in Africa.*





His Eminence with Fr. Peter and Presvytera Victoria

Ladies of Philoptochos with His Eminence

Archons from Holy Trinity



His Eminence & Fr. Peter

Parish Council with His Eminence at Anniversary Celebration

Young Fr. Peter and Pres. Victoria, 2002

# Altar Boys Tonsured





# GOYA

Update

■ BY CATIE CARAYANNOPOULOS, GOYA PRESIDENT

**G** OYA is happy to report that the 48th Annual Christ Encounter Retreat was a hit over the first weekend of October. We spent two nights at Fairview Lakes YMCA Camp learning how to parse and construct a sermon. We reconnected with nature through a magical hike that ended in a beautiful view overlooking three states: Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey. Thank you to Mr. Dean Steele, Mr. Peter Pangis, Mr. Leon Carayannopoulos, Mrs. Sophia Sakatos, Mrs. Catherine Kelly, Mrs. Christine Skalkotos and Father Peter for chaperoning and teaching the GOYANs important life lessons. The following weekend, ten members of our GOYA were made acolytes by Metropolitan Apostolos in accompaniment with Father Peter's 20-year anniversary of serving our parish. Later that evening, Antoni Manousos and Ava Savvis represented Westfield at the Mr. and Miss GOYA Pageant, where Ava Savvis made the top five and responded to a question about our faith in front of a large audience and panel of judges. We held our annual clothing drive on Oct. 26 from 10:45am to 12:45 pm in the church parking lot and had a great turn out of donations. We are avidly preparing for our volleyball and basketball games and had a friendly competition against Piscataway on Oct. 27 for our first games of the year. Stop by the GOYA table on Sundays to learn more! ❖

## 48th Annual Christ Encounter Retreat



# GreekFest 2024 A HUGE SUCCESS!

We thank Jimmy and Anthe Angelides, all the committee members, volunteers, sponsors, donors, youth and attendees who helped make GreekFest 2024 a huge success! Although the rain fell as mist, it did not dampen the spirits of anyone. The philoxenia and our faith at work allowed us to display our Greek Heritage and outreach to the surrounding community and raise money for our many ministries and charities. Without you, this endeavor would not have been possible. Great memories and friendships are always made at our Festival and this year was no exception. Και του Χρόνου ❖



U.S. Congressman Tom Kean Jr. and Westfield Mayor Shelly Brindle join GreekFest





# Mr./Ms. GOYA

The Metropolis of New Jersey Mr. and Ms. GOYA Pageant was held on Sunday, October 13 at The Hanover Manor. Holy Trinity is pleased that our Mr. and Ms. Westfield did our parish proud. Mr. Westfield, Antoni Manousos, accompanied Ms. Westfield, Ava Sarris with such chivalry and kindness. We congratulate and thank them for being wonderful participants. ❖



# Church Etiquette

## PART TWO

“These things write I to you, hoping to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living god, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

– 1 Timothy 3:14

St. Paul sought to instruct the people about church conduct. Obviously, there was a need for this and thus a letter was written to Timothy, the first bishop of the Church of Ephesus. The reason given for this is for “*all things to be done decently and in order.*”

– 1 Corinthians 14:40.

Equally so, Holy Trinity is a church of order but yet from time to time a reminder to the faithful while being in church is useful.

### Blot that Lipstick!

Have you ever looked at an icon in just the right light to see it disfigured with lipstick? YUCK! The act of reverencing an icon is beautiful and traditional for all Orthodox Christians. Lipstick may look fine on lips, but looks horrible on icons, crosses, the Communion spoon and the priest’s hand. If you choose to wear lipstick, please be mindful and blot your lips before venerating an icon, taking Communion, or kissing the cross or the priest’s hand. Even better, wait until after church to put it on. After all, God is not impressed with how attractive you look externally but how attractive you are internally. Your good heart and fine works are the beauty He wants to see.

### Venerating Icons

When you enter the church, it is traditional to venerate the icons. There are multiple icons in the narthex of the

church for veneration. When venerating (kissing) an icon, pay attention to where you kiss. We always offer the same respect to the icon as we would the actual person. So traditionally, out of deep reverence, respect and humility, we kiss the feet of the Lord or His blessing hand. We kiss the right hand of the Panagia, and the face of a saint, for they are our friends in faith.

### Talking during Church

Isn’t it great to come to church and see friends and family? But wait until coffee hour to say “Hi” to them. It just isn’t appropriate to greet people and have a conversation with them during services. Additionally, we come to church to pray, from the moment we enter the doors of the church. As mentioned above, in the icon we see the actual person. So, think about it, if you walk into the narthex and there you see standing in front of you Christ and the Panagia, would you not approach them first? We approach Christ with faith, fear, love, and with the awareness that you are in the presence of the Almighty. We approach the Panagia with love and deep affection. We venerate the Holy Gospel book knowing that its pages contain for us the path of salvation.

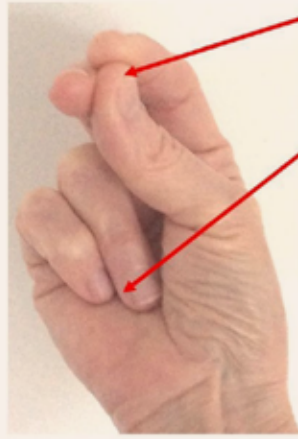
Holy Trinity has a magnificent dome. When you converse with another, even in the back, the sound from the dome is amplified and projected forward. This disturbs the faithful and the priest who

are in prayer. When we come into the nave of the church, we need to enter the flow and rhythm of the service as quickly as possible. This is easily accomplished when we arrive on time, at the beginning of the service. To enter the church after the Gospel reading or after the Great Entrance is like trying to jump on a speeding train. Maybe you’ve seen that in some old Western movie, but the reality is the service at that point is like that train speeding passed you and leaving you far behind.

### Kiss (Don’t Shake) the Priest’s or Bishop’s Hand

Did you know that the proper way to greet a priest or bishop is to ask his blessing and upon receiving it kiss his right hand? This is much more appropriate and traditional than shaking hands. When kissing the hand of the clergy, you show proper respect for their office, for they are the ones who “bless and sanctify you with God’s grace.” They are the ones who offer the holy gifts on your behalf and hold the “Host” (Amno) in their hands. At the end of the Divine Liturgy, reverencing the priest’s hand is a sign of our acceptance of the final blessing before leaving church.

# Making the Sign of the CROSS



With the Right hand, place the Thumb, First and Second finger together. This represents the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit – One God.

The last two fingers are placed to the palm of the hand. This represents the two natures of Jesus Christ, both fully human and fully Divine, who came down to earth (2 fingers placed in palm) for the salvation of mankind.

With the Right hand in this position:

- . Touch the forehead first. Then,
- . Touch the center of the chest. Then,
- . Touch the right shoulder. Then, lastly,
- . Touch the left shoulder.

The significance of this action is blessing one's self in the name of the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It is the physical action of dedicating one's entire being to the Will of God. Often the crossing is accompanied with the words, "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit".

The movement of the hand in the Orthodox Tradition can also be thought of as a personal prayer that is aligned with the wisdom and the teachings of the Apostles, Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; and, Luke 10:27, "I will love the Lord my God with all of my mind (touch the forehead); all of my soul (touch the center of chest); all of my strength (touch the right shoulder); and, all of my heart (end on the heart)".

## Sunday Dress

Remember the time when people put on their "Sunday best" to go to church? In fact, dress clothes were often referred to as "Sunday clothes." In some parts of the country, this is not common today. In fact, all too often, dress in church has become too casual. In all areas of our lives, we should offer Christ our best. And the same is true of our dress. We should offer Christ our "Sunday best", not our everyday, common, street wear. And we should dress modestly, not in a flashy way that would bring attention to ourselves. Our dress should be proper length and always becoming of a Christian - especially at church.

## To Cross or Not to Cross

Anyone who has looked around on a Sunday morning will notice that different people cross themselves at various times (and sometimes in different ways). To a certain extent, when to cross oneself is according to personal piety and not an issue of dogma. But there are times when it is specifically proper to cross yourself, and times when you should not. Here is a brief list of when to cross and when not to cross:

### To Cross

When you hear the ekphonis one

of the variations of the phrase, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit", this is usually at the end of a prayer or series of petitions. When entering or exiting the church, or when passing in front of the Holy Altar. Before venerating an icon, the cross, or Gospel book. Or when you are moved, or the spirit speaks to you directly.

### Not to Cross

Please refrain from making the sign of the cross at the chalice before or after taking Communion. The reason for this is practical as you might hit the bottom of the chalice with your hand. When the priest or bishop blesses saying, "Peace be to all" – a slight bow is sufficient at this point. When receiving a blessing from a bishop or a priest (kissing the right hand of the bishop or priest is appropriate, but not making the sign of the cross).

## Handling the Antidoron or Holy Bread

After taking Holy Communion and at the end of the liturgy, it is traditional to take a piece of holy bread or antidoron. While antidoron is not Holy Communion, it is blessed bread and as such, should be eaten carefully so that crumbs don't fall on the carpet. After receiving Holy Communion or at the end of the Divine Liturgy, take one piece of



antidoron (you don't need four or five pieces), when you return to your seat or get to a place where you can stop for a moment, eat the bread trying not to drop crumbs. If you want to give a piece to someone else, go ahead and take an extra piece.

## A Final Thought

North American society in the late 20th century is rather casual in its daily approach to life. Don't allow this prevailing attitude to enter your Orthodox Christian piety. There are surely a lot of other areas that could be covered here. Much of church etiquette is based on common sense and showing respect for God and others. Always remember that you are in church to worship God, the Holy Trinity. The priest says, "With the fear of God and faith and love, draw near." Let this be the way we approach worship. If you do, you probably already have good church etiquette. ❖



# Religious Education

Update

■ BY PETE MARKOS, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTOR


Religious Education has opportunities available to make a difference in the lives of our youth through our faith! You do not need to be an expert on Orthodoxy but if you have an interest in teaching Sunday School please see Pete Markos or Fr. Peter. They will get you to be a part of the Religious Education team! We are looking for Assistant Teachers and Substitutes!

Contact Pete Markos at [pmarkos307@gmail.com](mailto:pmarkos307@gmail.com)


Stewardship opportunities are available to help with the Christmas Program, reception and Santa on Sunday, December 15 in the Bouras Center following the Divine Liturgy! ❖

If you can help or bring a dessert, please sign up by visiting:


<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B054FAEAD28A5FDO-52I40090-religious>



**His Eminence  
Metropolitan Apostolos  
of New Jersey**



Invites All the Faithful to the  
**First Celebration of the Feast of St. Iakovos of Evia  
Patron Saint of the Metropolis of New Jersey**



<p>Hierarchical Great Vespers, Acolyte Blessing, and Dinner Reception</p> <p><b>Thursday, November 21, 2024 6:00 P.M.</b></p> <p>Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church 250 Gallows Hill Road Westfield, NJ 07090</p>	<p>Orthros, Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, and Reception</p> <p><b>Friday, November 22, 2024 9:00 A.M.</b></p> <p>Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey 215 E. Grove Street Westfield, NJ 07090</p>
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**MERRY  
Christmas**

The Ladies Philoptochos Society of Holy Trinity  
cordially invites you to a

**CHRISTMAS DINNER PARTY & "BOUTIQUES"**  
Thursday, December 12, 2024 | 5:30 pm Hors d'oeuvres & Shopping in the Bouras Center  
(Brief General Meeting will follow)

Dinner catered by **Five Star Catering by Thomas**, Westfield, NJ  
Cost: **\$45.00** per person

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George Psomas, Author of Children's book, "Manoli, The Greek Mouse"  
Handmade Clay and All Things Sparkly by Dolores Chiara Phillips

*Monetary donations will be taken for the YWCA of Union County.  
Checks made payable to: Ladies Philoptochos Society of HTGOC.*

*Please stop by Philoptochos table during Fellowship Hour to make your reservation  
or contact Yiana Leichtling at 908-413-6213 or [treasurer@htphiloptochos.com](mailto:treasurer@htphiloptochos.com)*

**DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS IS DECEMBER 8TH**  
You may pay with Zelle, Yiana Leichtling at [treasurer@htphiloptochos.com](mailto:treasurer@htphiloptochos.com)  
(please include RSVP info with payment)

# HOLY TRINITY

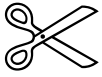
## 2024 *Community Christmas Card*

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. Please join your fellow parishioners by donating to our annual Christmas Card.

COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND SEND IT IN WITH YOUR DONATION THAT IS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED.



### *Thank You For Your Generosity!*



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." If it is the same from last year, please indicate by writing "same as last year".

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**RETURN THIS FORM NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 1, 2024**

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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.



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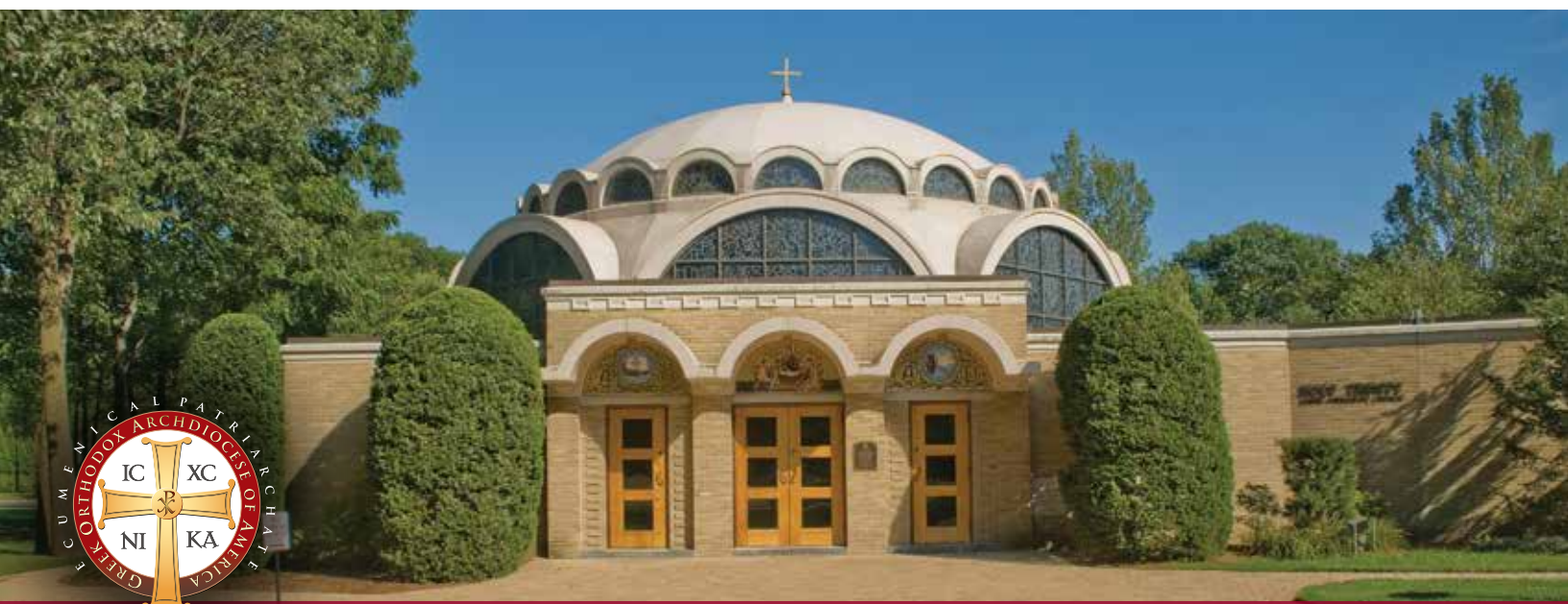
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	Sundays	Weekdays
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16 Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM	9:30 AM

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