

The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



October 2025 ✦ Volume 49, Issue 6

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On the Love of Enemies and the Golden Rule

“Just as you want men to do to you, also do to them likewise.”

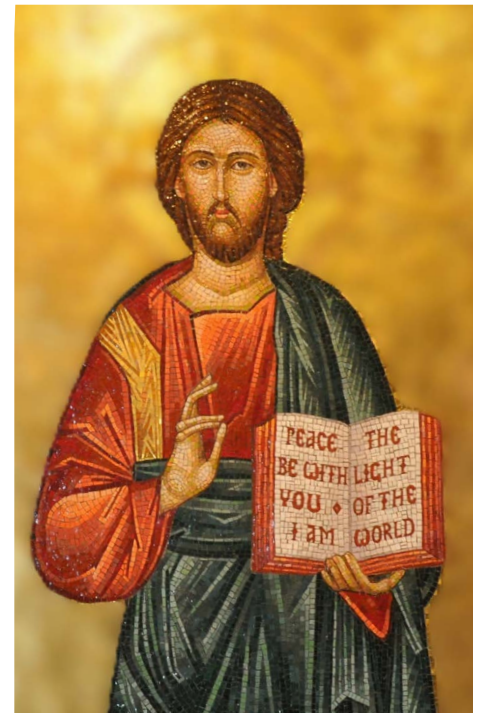
– Luke 6:31

My dear brothers and sisters in the Lord, this verse is the acclaimed Golden Rule, which seeks to promote reciprocity and empathy in interactions, encouraging people to treat others as they would like to be treated. No doubt this is a standard by which each of us should live. However, we must also realize that the standards of Christian virtue reach far beyond this. While it is true that even sinners live by the Golden Rule, it is essential for Christians to strive beyond this standard to embody the love and charity that Jesus exemplified.

in return; and your reward will be great and you will be sons of the Most High.”
– Luke 6:31-36

Each day a Christian is presented with two options concerning life. He can either follow the crowd and live as the sinner, or he can embrace the path that corresponds with an authentic Christian life. The sinner follows the standards fixed by the world. Since his life is governed by a worldly perspective, the Christian way of life is often seen as too demanding or incongruous with his. The Christian, on the other hand, wishing to live a godly life, desires to become “sons of the Most High.” He does this because he is keenly aware that the only eternal and meaningful thing is God and His kingdom.

Christian governing principles are most especially beneficial when the cruelty and harshness of this world fall on us. To Christian eyes it is obvious that there exist alien forces that cause this world to spin out of control. Understanding that evil does exist helps us remain true to our Christian identity. The Lord instructs His followers that in the face of victimization (hating, cursing, abusing, striking, stealing, begging) to remain faithful to the Gospel and endure tribulation with faith. “When reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we



endure; being defamed, we entreat.”
1Cor.4:12b

Our Lord asks us to love one another simply because this is the godly way. Christ has anticipated the archaic human response of self-defense and defensive measures. His response to self-aggrandizement and self-preservation is love. By imitating Christ, we are lifted and rise above the chaos of this world to take on a new nature and become “sons of the Most High”. ✦



We are called to imitate Christ and thus to faithfully bear the burdens of this world and to, “Love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing



Dates in the Life of Our Church

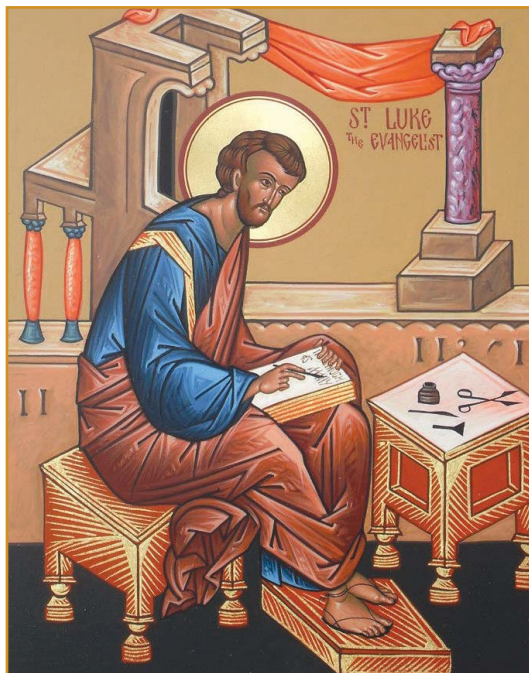
October–November 2025

OCTOBER

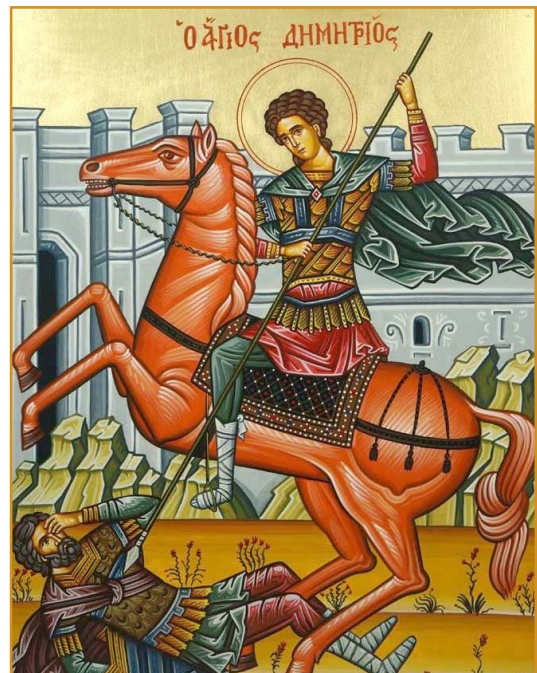
| | |
|---|--|
| 5 Church Music Sunday | 18 11:00 AM Baptism |
| 8:15 AM Orthros | 19 8:15 AM Orthros |
| 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 7 11:00 AM Trinity Circle | 5:00 PM Mr./Ms. GOYA |
| 4:00 PM Greek School | 20 7:30 PM NNJYC |
| 8 9:30 AM TOTs | 21 4:00 PM Greek School |
| 9 4:00 PM Greek School | 22 9:30 AM TOTs |
| 11 11:00 AM Baptism | 7:00 PM Bible Study |
| 12 8:15 AM Orthros | 23 4:00 PM Greek School |
| 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy | 7:00 PM Athens Food Night |
| 14 4:00 PM Greek School | 26 St. Demetrios the Great Martyr |
| 7:30 PM Parish Council | 8:15 AM Orthros |
| 15 6:00 PM Philoptochos General Mtg. | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 7:00 PM Bible Study | 28 4:00 PM Greek School |
| 16 4:00 PM Greek School | 29 7:00 PM Bible Study |
| | 30 4:00 PM Greek School |

NOVEMBER

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 2 Daylight Savings Ends | 9 St. Nektarios |
| 8:15 AM Orthros | 8:15 AM Orthros |
| 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 4 11:00 AM Trinity Circle | 11 Sts. Victor, Vikenzios, and Menas |
| 4:00 PM Greek School | 8:30 AM Orthros |
| 5 7:00 PM Bible Study | 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy |
| 6 4:00 PM Greek School | 4:00 PM Greek School |
| 7:00 PM An Evening of OCMC | 7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Mtg. |
| 8 Synaxis of the Archangels | 7:30 PM Parish Council |
| 8:30 AM Orthros | 12 7:00 PM Bible Study |
| 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy | |
| 3:00 PM Wedding | |



St. Luke the Evangelist
October 18



St. Demetrios the Great Martyr and Myrrh-streamer
October 26

Ecumenical Patriarch received Templeton Prize in New York

At the conclusion of his apostolic visit on Wednesday, September 24, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew received the Templeton Prize at a ceremony held in New York City. During his speech, he discussed the relationship between faith and science, as well as the importance of protecting the natural environment.

Upon accepting the award, the Ecumenical Patriarch emphasized that the distinction “does not belong to one individual, but to a vision that has inspired the Ecumenical Patriarchate for three decades.” He recalled his predecessor, Patriarch Demetrios’, initiative in 1989 to establish September 1 as a day of prayer for the protection of creation - a practice that was later adopted by other Christian churches.

In his lecture, “Where Heaven Meets Earth: Reflections on Faith, Science, and Our Planet,” His All-Holiness stressed that “the estrangement between science and religion must come to an end.” He noted that “when a scientist studies the melting of the ice caps and a theologian reflects on the groaning of



creation, they are reading the same book in different languages.”

The Ecumenical Patriarch addressed the environmental crisis and the loss of the “sacred rhythm of natural time,” emphasizing that when our children lose hope, it represents a moral failure and a spiritual crisis. He also stressed the importance of “discipline” and “moderation” in the face of overcon-

sumption, describing them as paths toward “liberation from the endless cycle of greed.”

Finally, he called for collective action to confront climate change. As he stated: “The scientific knowledge is there, the spiritual resources are sufficient, and the technological tools are available. What is lacking is the will?” ❖



His All-Holiness and Prime Minister Mitsotakis



His All-Holiness arriving in America

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention



For more information contact
[Nami.org](https://www.nami.org)

Each September, the National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMH) recognizes Suicide Prevention Month as a time to raise awareness, spread hope, and spark meaningful action around one of the most urgent mental health issues of our time.

Also with the increase diagnosis of mental health issues, it is important to know that the Church is here to assist those effected by mental health and their families. Holy Trinity wishes to ensure that individuals, friends, and families have access to spiritual counselling by Fr. Peter. Beyond this, the parish is connected and can provide resources or direct individuals or family members to



professionals who can help diagnose and treat these issues.

With one conversation, asking someone how they're really doing — and being ready to truly listen — can save

lives. Because here's what we know: No one has to face these issues alone. Help exists. Healing is possible. And all it can take is for one person to start a conversation. ❖

Giannis Antetokounmpo on support from the Church and safety in catechism

A few days after winning the bronze medal at EuroBasket 2025 and just before returning to the USA for the 13th season of his professional NBA career, international basketball player Giannis Antetokounmpo gave a revealing interview to SPORT24, where, among other things, he spoke about the difficult circumstances he and his family went through and about the refuge he found in the Church and the catechism program at St. Meletios parish in Sepolia. Specifically, in an excerpt from the interview, the distinguished basketball player states: "The Church helped us a lot. We would go after school and a plate a food was given us before we went to practice. Without these people, we would not be

here. So, I try to do the same. I try to create a place and an environment where children and not only children, but parents, can come to feel safe. Because I remember when I went to church, to catechism, not only that I played, but it was also a way out of the house and I wasn't at home when there was no light, no electricity, no water. When I went to catechism class I felt safe. There I also learned to play chess and board games. The church had a very nice basketball court where I shot. I was there and so I wasn't on the streets. If it hadn't been for that and growing up in Sepolia, Kolonos, Peristeri, Aigaleo, I might have done much worse things with my life. Because I



am low-key, I was a child who would do anything in my power to help my family, just like so many other people would do. I learned to give back to the world, as much as we can. We have achieved a lot so far with the Academy that we have formed both in Greece and abroad. ❖

Watch the entire interview from Sport24
[youtube.com/watch?v=FUMRUtW8dRQ&t=218s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUMRUtW8dRQ&t=218s)

The BREAD OFFERING or PROSFORO

Jesus said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh” (John 6:51).

St. Paul writes, “The Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me” (1 Cor. 11:24).

Jesus is the Bread of Life who offers Himself for our salvation. “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood you have no life in you; he who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:53-54).

A very meaningful project for the Orthodox Christian family is to bake a loaf of altar bread (prosforo) and bring it to church for the liturgy.

The significance of the bread may be explained as follows: The offering bread represents Jesus who is the Bread of Life. It is baked by someone in the congregation and brought to the priest for each liturgy.

Bread is used not only to represent Jesus who is the Bread of Life, of which if any man eat he shall never hunger, but also to express the offering of our life to God. The Greek word for the offering bread is *prosforo*, which means an offering to God. Bread is used as an offering because it represents life. It is the staff of life. Once consumed it becomes part of us, i.e., our flesh and bones. Thus in bringing the loaf of bread to God, we are, in effect, offering our life to Him. It is the gift of our love.

The priest accepts the gift and places it on the holy altar. This act represents God accepting our gift. It now passes into His possession. God is so pleased with the gift of our life that He transforms it through the Holy Spirit and gives it back

to us as His Precious Body. Thus, it is that communion with God results. We give ourselves to God and He, in turn, gives Himself to us. We come to the liturgy not just to receive Christ but also to give ourselves to Christ.

Some may object, “What meaning can a small loaf of bread have in the eyes of God? If you are going to give God a gift, don’t give Him something that symbolizes life. Give Him your very life surrendered to His will.”



Nineteenth Century Seal from Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, UK.

To understand this, let us use an illustration. Suppose there is a little girl - say two or three - who sees her father give to her mother a birthday present at breakfast. It’s Mummie’s birthday! Then she too will want to give her mother a birthday present. What can she do? She wanders out into the garden and there the bright yellow glow of a dandelion flower catches her eye. It is only a weed, really, but she does not know that. To her it is a pretty flower. So she plucks it, toddles into the house and gives it to her mother as a birthday present.

The mother, of course, is delighted. Why? Does she want a dandelion? Obviously not for herself - it has no value. But it is a gift from her daughter, and because it is a gift it has meaning. It means the love of that little girl, and that is why it is

so precious to the mother. Clearly, then, a gift which is poor in value such as a dandelion can be rich in meaning because of what it expresses; what it means.

And so it is with us and God. We give Him a present. In itself this present consists of a round loaf of bread - a very small value! But because it is a gift, it bears the meaning we put into it. We should, then, make it mean all that we can in the way of praise and love; we should put ourselves into that bread just as the child put herself into the flower. Then it will be precious to God as the flower was to the mother.

WE POUR OURSELVES INTO THE GIFT

That is our part in the sacrifice of the liturgy. When the priest holds up the bread and the wine at the altar, he tells God what we intend them to mean. It is not just the priest but everybody in the congregation who is helping to offer the sacrifice, so it is our business at that time to tell God what those gifts-which are *our* gifts-are intended to mean as far as we are concerned.

They stand for us. We put ourselves onto that paten with the altar bread, offering to God our mind and heart, our soul and body, all that we have and are. We must, as it were, pour our heart out into that chalice with the wine, and put into it all our hopes and fears, our joys and sorrows, our love and adoration, our obedience and commitment-our whole self. For all this is to go to God in the shape of a gift.

That is our part at this point in the sacrifice: we are to put the meaning into the gifts by offering ourselves. If we do not offer ourselves to God under these symbols of bread and wine, then we are not really offering the liturgy as we should. We are not “in on it.” The bread and the wine may mean somebody else. But they don’t mean us because we haven’t done anything to make them mean us. ❖



Philoptochos

Philoptochos Special Tray Collection Today – Holy Cross School of Theology

■ KATHY MAGLARAS, PRESIDENT

Founded in 1937 by Archbishop Athenagoras, Holy Cross has long been supported by Philoptochos in its mission to educate future priests and teachers. Donations help provide tuition assistance to dedicated students at Hellenic College and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.

New Philoptochos Board for 2025-27

Congratulations to the newly elected Philoptochos Board. The Affirmation of Office for the 2025–2027 Philoptochos Board was administered on Sunday, September 14. Congratulations to the new board:

Executive Board: Kathy Maglaras, Debra Vlahakis, Debbie Koutsaftes, Yiana Leichtling, Denise Eliopoulos, Marigo Chantzis. Board: Ellen Manos Athenson, Sandy Boutsikaris, Christina Colonias, Ellen Conti, Maris Kanaras, Avi Kiriakatis, Marina LoAlbo, Karen Roscoe, Elise Savnik, Mary Skiadas, Maria Stevens, Kristin Tencza, Phyllis Verenes



Please stop by the Philoptochos table during fellowship hour to learn more and how to get involved.

Promise-President's Message

I am honored and truly excited to begin this new Ecclesiastical new year with all of you! Philoptochos means a great deal to me. For over 25 years, Holy Trinity has been my family's church. I have had the blessing of being part of Joy/Hope and GOYA over the years, and now being involved in Philoptochos feels like a meaningful continuation of my journey through the ministries.

Philoptochos is the main philanthropic heart of our church. Our mission is simple - to care for those in need. We support the poor, the elderly, the orphaned, the imprisoned, and many others who may just need a helping hand. This important happens because of all of you who continuously support Philoptochos. Whether we are preparing meals, assisting families in crisis or raising funds for critical needs, our strength comes from our supporters and volunteers within the parish of Holy Trinity.

Currently, we have 150 dedicated members, and we are always looking to continue our growth in number,

strength and purpose. Please stay engaged with Philoptochos and I encourage everyone to volunteer, contribute and share our mission. Together we can continue to make a difference in the lives we serve!

Past Event: On August 26, 2025, members of Philoptochos volunteered at St. Joseph's Social Service Center in Elizabeth, NJ. As part of our National Operation Classroom initiative, we donated supplies, sorted materials, and assembled 125 backpacks for students in the Elizabeth school system. What a meaningful impact of the local children in Union County NJ.

We extend heartfelt thanks to our volunteers: Yiana Leichtling, Kristin Tencza, Karen Roscoe, AJ & Alexandra Cannatella, and Kathy Maglaras

Upcoming Events: All are welcome and please stop by the fellowship hour for more information.

October 16th Thanksgiving Drive Begins "Market Street Mission"

Ladies Philoptochos Society at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Westfield... presents

ATHENS FOOD NIGHT

Presentation, Sample Delicious Recipes, Book Signing and Mingling with Diane

Diane Kochilas

October 23 2025 | 7-9 PM
250 Gallows Hill Road, Westfield NJ

Join New York Times Best Selling chef and author, Diane Kochilas, for an unforgettable evening as she unveils her new recipes from her newest release: Athens: Food, Stories, Love.

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 RSVP TODAY!

ATHENS
A COOKBOOK
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October 18th **Volunteer Day:** Mary's Place by the Sea Walk-a-thon

October 23rd Athens Food Night Presentation and Book Signing with Celebrity Chef Diane Kochilas

November 7th **Volunteer Day:** Grow-A-Row –all ages are welcome ❖

Church Images



Sept. 6 Altar Boy Meeting



Celebration of the Elevation of the Holy Cross

BRINGING GOOD NEWS

“From Westfield to the World” 40 Years of OCMC: The Mission Continues

Thursday, November 6, 2025: 7-9 PM
Complimentary Wine & Cheese Reception & Program
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church - Bouras Hall
250 Gallows Hill Road, Westfield NJ 07090



**With OCMC Senior Development
Officer Dan Christopoulos &
Holy Trinity parishioner
Janet O'Sullivan**

Dan Christopoulos, the first OCMC missionary, served in Kenya from 1985 to 1988. OCMC Ambassador Janet O'Sullivan participated in an OCMC Donor Trip to Kenya in June 2025.

They will speak about their transformative experiences bringing the Good News 40 years apart and share how we can all continue in this mission from Westfield to the world.



For questions email: OCMC Events at events@ocmc.org

RSVP for this complimentary event by October 30



**Scan the QR code or click
here to RSVP!**
**If you can't attend,
donate via QR or
ocmc.org/westfield-mixer**



www.ocmc.org

Honoring our
Church Musicians
 on
 National Church Music
 Sunday
 OCTOBER 5



Holy Trinity Choir 2025-2026
 Years of Service

We thank our choir members and parish cantors for their devotion to our Church through their ministry of Music.

- Anne Kernoski, Choir Director (2)
- Phyllis Verenes, Organist (35)
- Angela Aspromatis (35)
- Gioula Assad (40)
- Connie Baboukas (27)
- Andrea Blasi (24)
- Gregory Carey (2)
- Anastasia Carumpalos (34)
- Karen Coulis (14)
- Christopher Daifotis (15)
- Joy Danilides (20)
- Kathy Genakos (3)
- Diane Honeker Belina (15)
- Susan Karcanes (27)
- Miriam Kotsonis (27)
- Marina LoAlbo (25)
- Marigo Markos (3)
- Alix Martin (29)
- Despina O'Neil (3)
- Richard Roscoe (2)
- Steven Xenakis (14)

The Adult Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings at 7:15pm. New members are welcome any time of the year.

Holy Trinity Psaltes 2025-2026
 Pascalis Kavalakis 20 years as Protopsalti
 Anthony Pantagis

The official arm of our Archdiocese responsible for liturgical music activities and the development, education, and support of church musicians is the **National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians**. Chartered in 1976 as an official auxiliary of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, the National Forum serves as the liaison among local church musicians, the Metropolis Church Music Federations, and our Archdiocese. The National Forum also serves as the gathering place for church musicians to discuss issues related to liturgical music and to formulate needed responses.

The National Forum has four major areas of focus:

- Support for **CHOIRS**, providing resources and activities to improve the quality of choirs and the availability of choral music in the church
- Support for **CHANTERS** and the preservation of **BYZANTINE CHANT**
- Support for **YOUTH CHURCH MUSIC PROGRAMS**, including hymnology and junior choirs
- Support for **CLERGY**, including parish music ministries, and support for clergy

On this day, your support of this dedicated organization is encouraged

Yes, I want to support the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians
 Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation in the amount of \$ _____

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip/Metropolis _____
 Email _____



Church Music Sunday

Please send donations to: E. Hope Demitry, 95 Beechwood Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08618

About the Icon: Saint Romanos the Melodist, the patron saint of church musicians, surnamed *O Melodós* and *O Theorrhëtor*, was a poet of the 6th Century. The only authority for the life and date of this greatest of Greek hymn-writers is the account in the Menaion for October; his Feast day is October 1st. According to this account, he was by birth a Syrian, served as deacon in the church at Berytus, and came to Constantinople in the reign of Anastasios. It was in the Church of the Most Holy Theotokos that he received the charisma of sacred poetry. "After a religious retreat at Blachernae, he returned to his church, and one night in his sleep, saw a vision of the Theotokos, who gave him a volume of paper saying, "Take the paper and eat it." In his dream, Romanos opened his mouth and swallowed the paper. It was Christmas Day, and immediately he awakened and marveled and glorified God. Then, mounting the ambo, he began the strains of his *I Parthenos Simeron*, the same Kontakion we sing today for the Nativity! He also wrote about a thousand other feast day kontakia before he died in 510 AD.



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 in the next issue of *The Promise!*



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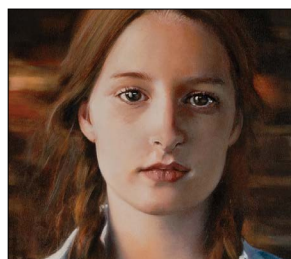
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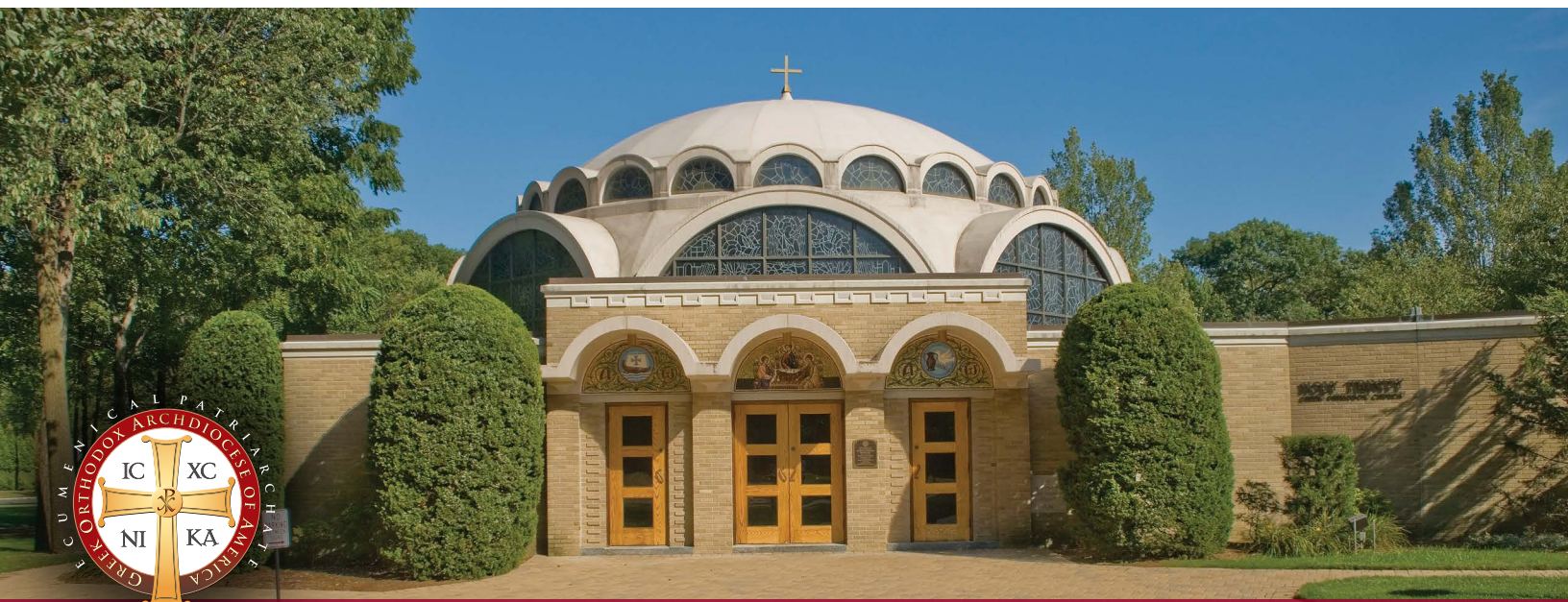
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