

# The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



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## Incense

*“For we are to God the fragrance of Christ...”*

– 2 Corinthians 2:15



■ BY REV.  
FR. PETER DELVIZIO

A human, just like any other creature, can communicate without using language. Oftentimes, non-verbal communication forms are easier and clearer to understand than the spoken word. The messages we convey through gestures, vibes, attitudes, postures, emotions can present a better picture than the things we articulate with our lips. Our spiritual composition is quite similar, in that, we emit a suggestive non-verbal element. It's like a scent that creates a mist around us. Instead of being foul, we pray that our soul's fragrance is pleasing to God.

Are you the fragrance of Christ in this world? Did you know that we are called to diffuse the fragrance of Christ's knowledge in this world? [2 Corinthians 2:14] Every time we step foot into Church and breathe in the sweet-smelling incense, we are reminded that an important part of our Christian calling is to spread the sweet fragrance of Christ's Gospel.

It is not man alone who glorifies God through pleasing smells. Nature, being a product of God's creative energies, also returns to Him the delightfulness of pleasing scents. *“Every moment of this strange and lovely life, from dawn to dusk, is a miracle. Somewhere, always, a rose is opening its petals to the dawn. Somewhere, always, a flower is fading in the dusk. The incense that rises with the sun, and the scents that die in the dark, are all gathered, sooner or later, into the solitary fragrance that is God. Faintly, elusively, that fragrance lingers over all of us.”* – Beverly Nichols

Science tells us that all around us the air is filled with subtle odors that, like sacred signals, communicate a variety of messages. Smell is the oldest silent language in the world. Most living things still use the sense of smell to communicate, from animals and insects to flowers, forests and seas. Similarly, humans use perfumes, colognes, sprays and special oils to add a pleasing scent to themselves or create a relaxing atmosphere.



It goes without saying that the use of incense in the Church provides a special fragrance and gives a distinctive odor to our spiritual home. The sweet smell of incense attracts people to the Church by creating a unique atmosphere that in turn settles the soul. The constant linger of fragrant flowers in the spaces of the Church reminds us of the eternal sweetness of the Kingdom of heaven. And doesn't each of us wish to remain in a place that is pleasing and awakens the senses. What a joy it is to enter into a sweet-smelling Church.

Incense has been used from time immemorial by many religions in the world to communicate important messages in worship. Noah, after being rescued from the flood waters, offered a pleasing odor to God not just to say, “Thank you”, but to allow his praise to rise up to heaven.

*Continued on page 2* ⇨

*Wait for the promise of the Father*



# Dates in the Life of Our Church

September–October 2018

## ✠ SEPTEMBER

2	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
3	Labor Day
	Church office closed
8	<b>Nativity of the Theotokos</b>
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
9	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	First Day of Sunday School
II	4:00 PM Greek School Begins with Agiasmos
	7:30 PM Parish Council
I3	9:30 AM TOTS
	4:00 PM Greek School Begins with Agiasmos
I4	<b>Exaltation of the Holy Cross</b>
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

I6	No Church Services - Asbury Park
I7	8:00 PM NNJYC
I8	11:00 AM Trinity Circle
	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting
I9	Joy/Hope Horseback Riding
20	4:00 PM Greek School
22	3:00 PM Wedding
23	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	1:30 PM Baptism
25	4:00 PM Greek School
27	9:30 AM TOTS
	4:00 PM Greek School
28-30	Christ Encounter Weekend
30	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

## ✠ OCTOBER

2	4:00 PM Greek School
4	4:00 PM Greek School
7	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	1:30 PM Joy/Hope Apple Picking
	4:00 PM Mr./Ms. GOYA
9	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Parish Council
II	9:30 AM TOTS
	4:00 PM Greek School
I3	11:00 AM Baptism
I4	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	11:45 Sunday School Teachers Meeting
I5	11:00 AM Holy Trinity Golf Classic
	8:00 PM NNJYC

## Incense

↔ *Continued from page 1*

– Genesis 8:20-12. Moses gave instructions for an altar of incense to be built and placed immediately before the Holy of Holies. The altar had a continual fire with incense burning upon it. The continual rising smoke symbolizes the prayers of God’s people rising to heaven.

– Revelation 5:8-9.

Of most significance is the wafting of clouds created by the burning of incense to symbolize God’s presence. We see in Scripture that the glory of God descended upon the faithful in the form of clouds as in 3 Kingdoms 8:10-11 and the Holy Transfiguration of Christ. When incense is used we are reminded that the prayers of the divine service transform us heavenward. “Let my prayer rise like incense before You, and my hands as an evening sacrifice.” – Psalm 140 We are

*“The great Paul was such a river of perfumes flowing from the garden of the Church through the Spirit, whose streamlet was Christ’s fragrance; and other such rivers were John and Luke, Matthew and Mark, and all the others, the noble plants in the garden of the bride, who were moved by the luminous southern wind to become sources of perfume, shedding forth the fragrance of the Gospels.” – St. Gregory of Nyssa*



no longer on earth but celebrate with celestial beings, for God has united the heavens and the earth. The Holy Spirit is actively making this possible and sweetens our lives.

The clouds of incense symbolize the glory of God that is present as we worship Him. When the priest turns from censuring the saints to the censuring of each worshipper in the congregation, he is paying homage and respect to the image of God in each one of us. He reminds us of our high calling to theosis whereby

we are invited to rise to where God is, becoming partakers of divine nature. Our response to the priest who censes us is to slightly bow in recognition of this honor. In the words of St. John Kronstadt, “The fragrance of incense reminds us by analogy of the fragrance of virtue, and by contrast of the evil odor of sin, and teaches those who are attentive to inward feelings to avoid the stench of vice.”

Incense reminds us that God is pleased not just with fragrant smoke

# Stewardship Family Picnic

*A day of family fun!*

Sunday  
Sept 23

On Sunday, September 23, the Sixth Annual Stewardship Family Picnic & BBQ will be held immediately after Sunday School. All Stewards of Holy Trinity are invited for a day of thanksgiving to God for our wonderful and Christ-centered community of Holy Trinity. Please prepare to receive Holy Communion as a family. By offering ourselves to Christ and receiving Him, we become united with one another and God; through this linkage we make our parish stronger in faith and love.

The Parish Council will offer the main course for the picnic; you are asked to bring a side-dish or salad, snacks, dessert to share.

*Please remember to bring a covered dish.*



but even more so with the spiritual fragrance emitted by your soul. The aroma of loving deeds done for His glory is the finest and sweetest scent we can offer. We spring forth with spiritual fragrance each time we visit the sick, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, etc.

If we are “the aroma of Christ to God”, what aroma do we spread among those we meet? Does our presence add something to the lives of people or does it detract? Is God’s name glorified through our presence or is it defamed? Only a good tree can bear good fruit – fruits that bear a sweet fragrance. The only way to accomplish this is to allow the source of fragrant smell to be within us – Christ Jesus present within us. As we pray in the Supplicatory Canon to our Lord Jesus Christ: “Jesus, sweet-scented Flower, make me fragrant.” ❖

**SAVE THE DATE**

## HOLY TRINITY PARISH DINNER DANCE November 3

Save the date: Saturday, November 3 for the Holy Trinity Dinner Dance. Last year’s dance was a successful end to the parish’s 50th Anniversary Celebration. This year, we will continue with another wonderful evening at an attractive venue and launch into the next fifty years of this sacred parish. The cost is \$125/person. Youth cost is \$75, 18 and under. This year’s dance will be held at Echo Lake Country Club from 6:00 PM until 11:00 PM with music being provided by Fantasia Music. For questions or information, contact the church office: 908-233-8533. Reservations can be made Sunday during fellowship hour. Payment can be made by cash, check, credit card, or online at the church website [www.holytrinitywestfield.org](http://www.holytrinitywestfield.org). Don’t miss out! We want the entire Holy Trinity Family together for this unique evening of dance.





# Parish Council

Synergy - Everyone is needed!

■ BY A.J. KARANIKOLAS, PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

“There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called - one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

EPHESIANS 4:4-6

When we are asked to define “one,” how do we respond? Conventional and secular wisdom would have us answer in the singular tense - one means one, right? Our Orthodox Christian faith teaches us something very different - and very beautiful. One is really being united in the faith through the Church, in our case Holy Trinity. When we come together as the Body of Christ we are stronger, both individually as well collectively, which creates a synergy within the Church from which many things can be accomplished!

During the summer months the Par-

ish Council and the entire Holy Trinity community demonstrated synergy in many areas. The accomplishments included refining and advancing the investment strategy for the Endowment Fund following meetings and deliberations, maintenance on the building’s infrastructure, among others. And as a demonstration of outreach we came together once again to collect a significant donation for those affected by the tragic fires in Greece.

As we begin the new Ecclesiastical year, let’s ask ourselves how we can participate and further the synergy

which is already present. Everyone has special gifts and talents given by God by which can be used to serve in the various ministries and committees - with the help of all we can further the mission of engagement as the community works together for the benefit of all.

The Parish Council is excited and ready for all of the ministry events coming up over the next few months. Through fellowship and our love for our Lord Jesus Christ we will benefit from synergy as we truly act as one - one body and one Spirit! ❖

## Sayings of the Fathers...

# Almsgiving

“To do alms is a work greater than miracles...To feed the hungry in the Name of Christ is a work greater than raising the dead in Christ’s Name... When thou work miracles, you are God’s debtor, when you give alms, God is your debtor”.

-St. John Chrysostom

“God sells righteousness at a very low price to those who wish to buy it: a little piece of bread, a cloak of no value, a cup of cold water, a mite”.

-Abba [Father] Ephrem

“The bread you do not use is the bread of the hungry. The garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of the person who is naked. The shoes you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot. The money you keep locked away is the money of the poor. The acts of charity you do not perform are the injustices you commit”.

-Saint Basil the Great

“People give all sorts of reasons to excuse their lack of charity, their hardheartedness! Some say, ‘hard times.’ But if the times are hard for those who have a sufficiency, how much harder are they for the poor? This pretext alone should lead one to give all the more generously.”

-Saint Theophan the Recluse



## MOTHER and GRANDMOTHER of THE YEAR

Mother and Grandmother of the Year  
Maria Stevens and Mary Demiris

On Mother's Day, Father Peter and the Ladies Philoptochos presented the Mother and Grandmother of the Year Award. We always wish all mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, and godmothers a blessed, happy and enjoyable day. This year Maria Stevens was proclaimed Mother of the Year, and Mary Demiris was proclaimed Grandmother of the Year. ❖



Grandmother of Year  
Mary Demiris



Mother of Year  
Maria Stevens



# Philoptochos

## Philoptochos Scholarship Program

■ BY BARBARA MANOS, CHAIR

The Philoptochos Scholarships were established in 1990 under the presidency of Kassandra Romas, who formed a committee to research and determine the criteria for honoring our graduating seniors bound for college. It had been a dream of many of our members to add this other dimension – education – to our mission of helping the ill, needy and elderly in our community and providing outreach assistance nationally. One of the first chapters to initiate scholarships, we established that the recipients receive this award based on fine academic achievement and service to the community. Not based on need.

As chair of this Committee for 28 years I have had the privilege and the

honor of reviewing and participating in the judging, along with three anonymous judges, hundreds of Philoptochos Scholarship applications, and I can attest that all our students are exceptional both scholastically and in serving the community. To date we are proud that 151 students have been awarded scholarships. We applaud the parents who have brought the children to church, Greek school, Sunday School and youth activities. Through these many years we have had three anonymous judges, and this year we revealed and thanked Bess Birrell for her many years of dedicated service.

Our scholarship program expanded when Mr. Paul Stappas offered to fund

a scholarship 18 years ago in memory of his wife and our Philoptochos President, Angela. Mr. Stephen Gussis, of blessed memory, established an endowment in memory of his wife, Violet, and in his will doubled the endowment, thus assuring scholarships for many years. Ted and Julie Exarhakos funded the Constantine Exarhakos Memorial Scholarship in memory of his father, and the Nicholas and Anna K. Bouras Foundation funded a scholarship in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Bouras, founders of Holy Trinity and major benefactors.

We thank our benefactors, our 215 stewards and our parishioners who support our fund raising events. ❖

The recipients this year are:



ANA MARIA  
KOBORI

Angela Stappas  
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COHEN and  
CHRISTOPHER  
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Stephen and Violet  
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JOHN  
PETRIS

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Constantine Exarhakos  
Memorial Scholarship



ANDREW  
ECONOMIDES  
and NICHOLAS  
SAVORGIANNAKIS

Achievement Scholarships



# Religious Education

## Welcome Back!

■ BY ANTHONY BOSCO

Welcome back to a brand new Ecclesiastical year! We are approaching this year building on a strong foundation of religious education and bringing the program to new heights. Our goals will be to ensure consistency with curriculum, expanding focus on the Divine Liturgy, student participation in classrooms, and parent participation. The key to a successful program is to ensure quality education is linked with a community effort to bring our children to Services on Sunday mornings to hear the Gospel and to experience a real and dynamic Sacramental life. I hope everyone had a restful and enjoyable summer and I look forward with great anticipation to a very promising New Year! God bless our children and parents of our Holy Trinity Parish. ❖





# GREEK SCHOOL

Beginning of The School Year Letter  
2018-2019

■ BY MRS. STAVROULA MERGOUPIS, HOLY TRINITY GREEK SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

*Greetings to all of the parents/guardians and fellow teachers,*

We are beginning a new academic school year this upcoming September, in which I hope will bring a very productive year full of immense joy, health and creativity among the students and their respected teachers within the classroom. We are all here to ensure that the education of the children is our primary concern. Our goals will always ensure that our academic program is strong, intuitive, disciplined, creative and highly informative. I welcome you all with an immense optimistic view, in order to enhance and mold the children's creativity and respect for their religion, culture and language. Furthermore, rest assured, the children will have a safe environment in order to



learn, create and be respectful with each other, and with their teachers. Also, the teachers will be supportive of the students and ensure that each student's strive for excellence and creative diversity will be known and presented within the classroom experience, as well as in

the annual school festivities. Lastly, I would like to warmly welcome our new faculty members, who will take on the important role as new instructors for our lovely children. These are educators who are professional in all aspects of their academic role. These individuals will be detrimental in promoting new and exciting concepts of student learning within their classrooms.

I wish you all once again, especially to our students, a safe and beloved journey during this academic school year, in which we will all (parents/guardians, teachers and students) work together in unison for the successful advancement of our Greek School academic program. ❖



New Trinity Circle President  
AVI KIRIAKATIS



■ BY AVA LEICHTLING, GOYA PRESIDENT

I am so excited to begin my senior year as GOYA President. First, I would like to congratulate and introduce the new 2018-2019 Executive Board, Board Members, and Outreach Committee.

The fall is a busy time of year and we will kick off September in full swing with the following events...

Mark your calendars for our kickoff meeting of the year on Friday, September 14th! Our meeting will be held in the Bouras Center and we have many fun activities planned for both our returning and new members. Everyone is invited to attend. Our kickoff will begin at 7:00pm.

Holy Cross Celebration will be held on Sunday, September 19 in Asbury Park. Services will be held in the Convention Center following by Diving for the Cross. This year our representatives are: Junior Divers- Maggie Vasilopoulos, John Colonias; Senior Divers- Me-

lina Christodoulou, Costa Vaslipoulos. Good luck!

This year the 42 Annual Christ Encounter Retreat weekend will be held the weekend of September 28-30. This is one of my favorite events and definitely a highlight for all GOYANs. The retreat will be held at the Fairview Lakes YMCA in Newton, NJ. GOYANs will participate in sessions to learn more about their faith and become closer to God, organized team building activities, art & crafts, canoeing (if the weather cooperates) and much, much, more. The best part of the weekend is being able to spend time together. GOYANs in 7-12 grade are all strongly encouraged to attend! Deadline to register for the retreat is Sunday, September 16.

The annual Mr & Miss GOYA pageant will take place on Sunday, October 7 at the Pines Manor in Edison, NJ. Stamati Angelides and Georgiana

### EXECUTIVE BOARD:

Ava Leichtling- President  
Costa Vasilopoulos- Vice President  
Stamati Angelides- Treasurer  
Ariana Tarhanidis- Recording Secretary  
Georgiana Katsingris- Corresponding Secretary

### BOARD:

William Arida, James Cerini,  
Lea Cerini, Melina Christodoulou,  
Dimitri Kastanos, Julia Love,  
Maggie Vasilopoulos

### OUTREACH:

Sr. Coordinators- Nicole Boutsikaris,  
Stelio Kanaras, Caroline Maglaras  
Committee Members-  
Christina Arida, Thomas Savorgiannakis

Katsingris will represent Holy Trinity. All are invited to attend and to cheer on Stamati and Georgi. We wish them the best! ❖



A collection of ties occurred this past month and 475 ties have been donated to people in need. These ties have been donated to the Bowery Mission, who will distribute them throughout the community. The Bowery Mission is a shelter located in the Bowery in Manhattan. This shelter provides food, medical services, and employment assistance to the working, poor and homeless men, women, and children. At night the mission opens its chapel to serve as an emergency shelter for homeless people. In addition, it offers a long term residential program based on Christian discipleship, providing homeless men the opportunity to rejoin society as working, contributing members. I would like to thank everyone in the Westfield community and the Holy Trinity family who donated ties. Many men will benefit from your generosity.

- Thomas Savorgiannakis

*What is the most important thing about September?*

Church Book Store

Obviously it is the  
Veneration of the  
Holy Cross  
on September 14!



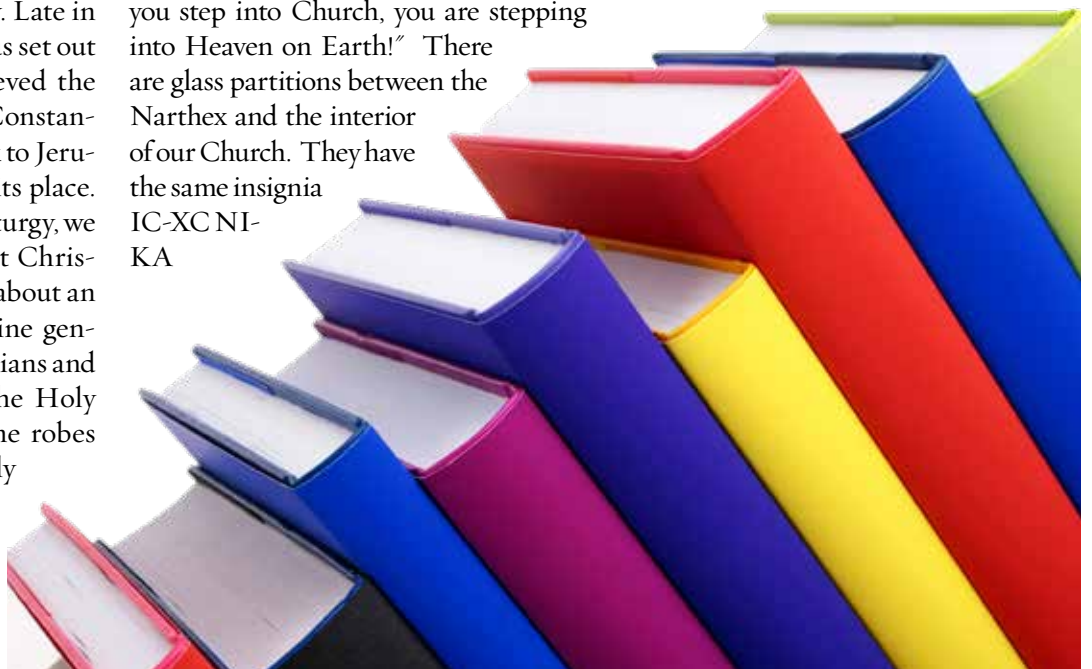
The miracles of the Holy Cross start on May 21! Saint Constantine's vision: "in the sky, after midday, beneath the sun, a radiant pillar in the form of a cross with the words; "By this shalt thou conquer." The following night our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream and declared to him the power of the Cross and its significance.

September 14 - The Elevation of the Venerable and Life-Giving Cross. The Persians plundered Palestine and took the Cross to their own country. Late in the year 628 Emperor Heraclius set out on a military campaign, retrieved the Cross, and after bringing it to Constantinople, himself escorted it back to Jerusalem, where he restored it to its place. After a recent Pre-sanctified Liturgy, we started our Theosis class about Christianity and Islam. We learned about an amazing miracle! The Byzantine general Heraclius defeated the Persians and brought to Constantinople the Holy Cross. He was dressed in fine robes but he could not carry the Holy Cross on his back as Christ did. The Bishop Zacharias saw a vision that an angel

prevented him. Heraclius stripped off his fine robes and went barefoot and repeated Christ's carrying of the Holy Cross. Heraclius, in plain clothing and barefoot, thus in his heart and mind was humble and thus he was allowed by the angel to replace the Holy Cross!

Look at the insignia IC-XC NI-KA: Which means in Jesus Christ Conquer! Some years ago we had a Priest visit our Church. He gave a beautiful sermon, but it began with an awesome thought: "When you step into Church, you are stepping into Heaven on Earth!" There are glass partitions between the Narthex and the interior of our Church. They have the same insignia IC-XC NI-KA

It is the mission of the Church Book Store to spread the Word of God. Thus the greatest things we have are prayer books, books by religious authors, books about the Divine Liturgy, and most important of all the Orthodox Study Bible a "pearl of great value" [Matthew 13:44-46] for the small cost of \$32! "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word [proceeding from the mouth of God" [Luke 4:4]. ❖





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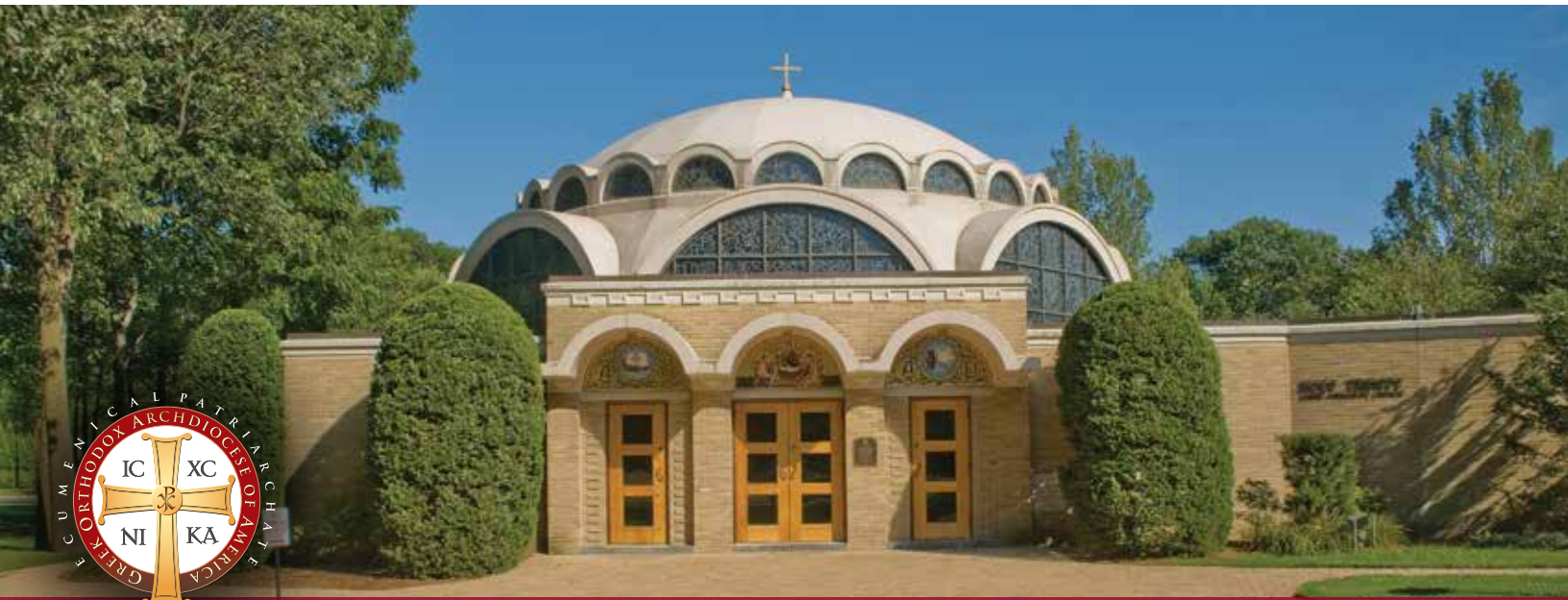
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	Sundays	Weekdays
<i>Orthros</i>	8:15 AM	8:30 AM
<i>Divine Liturgy</i>	9:30 AM	9:30 AM

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