

# The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



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BY REV.  
FR. PETER DELVIZIS

It's easy to think of Jesus as being admired – at least up to His Passion, when He is rejected by almost everyone. Who is Jesus and how do we think of Him? Is He the accepted Jesus; or is He the rejected Jesus?

As the accepted Jesus, He becomes the King and Ruler of my life. He becomes, as St. Thomas the Apostle proclaims, “my Lord and my God”!

As rejected Jesus, He has no relevance in my life or place in my heart. Perhaps the rejected Jesus is to us like a distant historical figure who had *some* impact on the world... once upon a time.

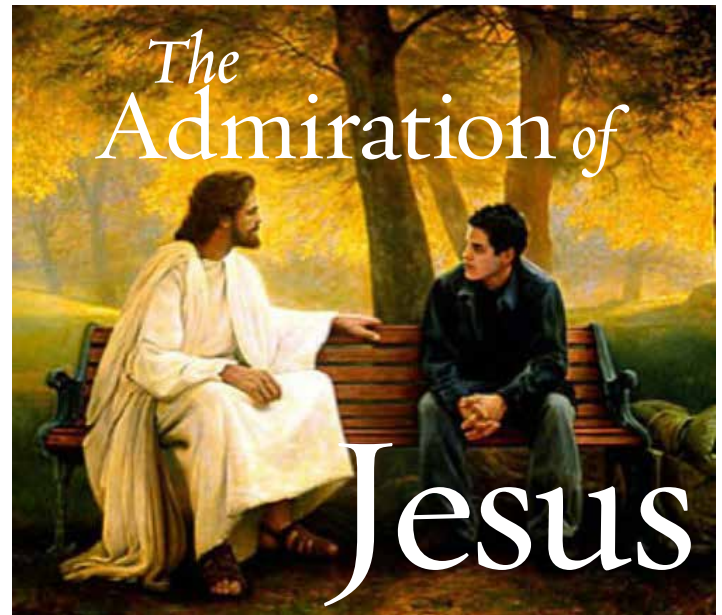
Yet, it's quite interesting the answer given by most people when asked: with which historical figure would you most want to share a common meal?

Interestingly enough, even in today's highly secularized world, survey after survey says: Jesus! After all these centuries, Jesus is still on top. He is a man to be admired.

In His time, Jesus was sought after. He was popular. When considering Jesus' enormous appeal, we might recall the disciples who immediately abandoned their old lives and livelihoods to follow Him. Can you imagine just getting up and leaving everything that is comfortable and familiar in your life to serve the Lord? I'm talking about

abandoning your source of income, your security, your stability, and yes, even your family? The Lord's fishermen or rather men of great faith did just this. They abandoned everything to serve Him. There were many others who also took the Lord's words “follow Me” quite literally. They left and sold everything after hearing this personal invitation. Perhaps these people teach us that there is something spectacularly real with Jesus and that He can give us something more profound and desirous than mere market trading and family blood ties. This certainly would begin to explain people's admiration for Him.

But the appeal for Him goes deeper. Imagine the grateful men and women Jesus had cured of illnesses; the delighted parents of healed children; the forgiven sinners who left a life they hated but for some reason felt compelled to live, the Lord gave them escape from filth and guilt. And in the place of sin, He gave them entry into a new life to live with dignity and purity. Imagine the great crowds who followed Him from town to town, who hung on His



every word – and on His person too. Frequently, people simply wanted to touch Jesus to feel Him and make some sort of connection. Can we cry out from the depths of our souls, “I need to be with You, Jesus”?

Man is at war  
and needs Jesus

Man is at war in this world. And more than ever do we need Jesus. The battle is continual and the enemies are numerous. False teachers are among the most dangerous enemies. Only if the mind of man is directed toward the Living God will he be safeguarded from these

*Continued on page 2* ⇨

Wait for the promise of the Father



# Dates in the Life of Our Church

September–October 2019

## ✠ SEPTEMBER

I	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
2	Labor Day-Church Office closed
8	Nativity of the Theotokos
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
IO	4:00 PM Greek School- Agiasmos
	7:30 PM Parish Council
I2	4:00 PM Greek School- Agiasmos
I4	Exaltation of the Holy Cross
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
I5	Asbury Park – Holy Cross Celebration
I6	7:00 PM GOYA State Meeting
I7	4:00 PM Greek School

7:00 PM Ministry and Organizations Meeting

I9	4:00 PM Greek School
22	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	12:00 PM Parish Picnic
24	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:00 PM Philoptochos Board Meeting
26	St. John the Theologian
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	9:30 AM TOTS
	4:00 PM Greek School
28	2:30 PM Wedding
29	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

## ✠ OCTOBER

I	4:00 PM Greek School
3	4:00 PM Greek School
6	St. Thomas the Apostle
	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
8	4:00 PM Greek School
	7:30 PM Parish Council
IO	9:30 AM TOTS
	4:00 PM Greek School
I3	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	4:00 PM Mr/Ms GOYA, Pines Manor
I4	11:00 AM Parish Golf Outing

## Admiration of Jesus

↔ *Continued from page 1*

dangerous enemies. False teachers are either as blind men or robbers.

The spiritually blind and robbers of virtue are all around us, both men and women who purport to be teachers of the ways of life. They are activists whose claims for a better way of life only engender violence protesting against and vandalizing the collective wisdom inherited through the ages. They are educators who embrace and teach the ways of death through their scholastic formulas and systems devoid of God and His healing presence. They are those who seek to censure not only speech but thought as well, shunning the godly minded person as a plagued on the new world order and whose Christian perspective at all

costs must be quarantine from the rest. They are politicians who slander one another and cloak themselves with self-righteousness looking to ever increase personal revenue streams by promoting vice over virtue. They are clergy who preach humanism and secularism over the word of God. By seeking the praise and acceptance of society more than the keeping of the integrity of office, they surrender God's providence for a smaller and weaker degree of protection under the state.

I think that Christ's admiration and appeal over the centuries come from His simple and humble nature. He is not puffed up nor is He insecure; He is simply true. In life we need to search for the Truth.

People are scared of losing control of their lives. This happens for many reasons. So they seek for answers to better control themselves and make

their lives better. The world presents a plethora of ideas and solutions to make this happen. Yet, we have already been given the answer that truly is not found in philosophical or political systems. It's not found in method, technique, or device but only in a person – Jesus Christ, the one and only unique God-man.

The mere idea of still sharing a meal with Jesus still resonates in our souls. Wouldn't that be incredible to do? His simple message is welcoming to all. I leave you with one final word from the Lord Himself, a personal invitation that will make your life the best it can possibly be,

*"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* – Matthew 11:28-30 ❖



# Be as proud as **GIANNIS ANTETOKOUNMPO**

Millions of words have been written about the great athlete Giannis Antetokounmpo who was voted as the 2019 Most Valuable Player in the NBA. Equally, many words have been written about his humble background, growing up in poverty in the Sepolia area of Athens.

However, little is known about his faith and his devotion to the Greek Orthodox Church. Antetokounmpo developed a special relationship many years ago with Father Evangelos Ghanas, a beloved priest at Agios Meletios Church in Sepolia, who baptized Giannis together with his brother Alexandros on October 28, 2012.

Even the date of the basketball star's baptism was deliberate, as he chose to be baptized Greek Orthodox on "OXI Day," Greece's second most important national holiday. Antetokounmpo's patriotism and respect for the Greek flag have often been remarked upon; for example, when his Greek fans in the US ask him to sign the blue-and-white flag for them, Giannis refuses, out of respect for the flag.

Antetokounmpo actually served as the link between his family and the parish. The years that he spent at Agios Meletios Church and their Catechetical School (Sunday School) in the poor Sepolia neighborhood were crucial for the young man in his journey to adulthood, and undoubtedly contributed to the shaping of his character.

Young Giannis Atetokounmpo with his Sunday School class

Father Evangelos spoke to Ethnos newspaper about the character of the young basketball phenomenon, describing him as a young man with ethics who, unlike most of his peers, never held a grudge against society for his poverty.

"I don't remember him ever complain-

ing or having a sense of being wronged by life and being aggressive towards society," Father Evangelos recalled. "He may be flying on the court, but in real life I think he stands firmly on his feet."

"What I cannot forget was Giannis' gaze. I find it difficult to describe. There was an innocence (in his eyes) but also a hope. No fear and no resentment," Father



According to Father Evangelos, the whole Antetokounmpo family had a good relationship with the church, mostly because of Giannis, who loved to go to Sunday School.

Father Evangelos is beloved by all the parishioners of Agios Meletios Church, in



Father Evangelos Ghanas of Agios Meletios Church in Athens



Young Giannis Atetokounmpo with his Sunday School class

Evangelos added.

The priest said that Giannis liked Sunday School, and that helped him develop a strong character, as a giving human being who also had optimism for the future.

Describing Antetokounmpo's upbringing and schooling, the Greek priest stated: "Giannis went to school in Greece, became a Christian in the same country, and now he can live on the other side of the Atlantic, carrying his memories as a precious guide to his later life."

Father Evangelos Ghanas of Agios Meletios Church in Athens

part because he has embraced the children of migrants, who are numerous in that area. He has taken a firm stand against any actions or words which imply any possible racism, and has helped children and teenagers as much as he possibly could throughout the years of his ministry.

And Antetokounmpo has not forgotten Father Evangelos. As the new NBA MVP said in a previous interview, "When I was a kid, I went to Sunday School and there was a man there who was helping us a lot. You cannot imagine how much he helped." ❖



# Sacraments & Rites

July 2018 – July 2019

## FUNERALS

- 7/20/18 +Constantina Orellana  
7/28/18 +Stacey A. Demas  
8/2/18 +Dimitrios Kikidakis  
8/24/18 +Eudisia Niko  
9/19/18 +Nicholas Pappas  
9/28/18 +Steven Manos  
11/28/18 +Rita Gianakis  
12/7/18 +Ioannis D. Kordonis  
12/21/18 +Euterpe  
Papatheodorou  
1/21/19 +Edward J. Dillon  
2/7/19 +Angeliki Youlios  
3/20/19 +Peter M. Vanechanos  
3/21/19 +Steven Fredas  
5/21/19 +Athanasios J. Gavakos  
5/24/19 +Christopher M. Provel  
6/20/19 +Sophie Stappas  
6/27/19 +Peter Thomas

## WEDDINGS

- 9/22/18 Jillian M. O'Sullivan  
and Christopher J.  
Sonntag, Stacey Faella  
and Michael F. Sonntag,  
sponsors  
10/31/18 Nunziatina C.  
Cucaro and Costas A.  
Constantinou, Elena  
Constantinou and Peter  
Stavrinou as sponsors  
5/4/19 Joanne P. Karayiannidis  
and Steven J. Verdi,  
Ioanna Manis and  
Jeffrey Werner as  
sponsors  
5/18/19 Audrey R. Lowe and  
Anthony Pantagis, Sue  
Wong and John Kourtis  
as sponsors

## WEDDINGS continued

- 5/19/19 Eleni M. Pavlis and Antholy C. Gabriel, Athanasia Gabrilis and  
Loukia Pavlis as sponsors  
5/26/19 Christina M. Renga and Michael C. Juliano, Stephanie John and  
Robert Juliano as sponsors  
7/14/19 Daniella Tsakos and William A. Kaiserman, Alexandra Tsakos and  
Daniel Kaiserman as sponsors

## CHURCHINGS

- 7/22/18 James Nicholas Nunzio, son of Maria and Nicholas Rentas  
8/26/18 Thomas Joseph, son of Mia and Steven Piluso  
9/23/18 Anastasia Rose, daughter of Nicole and Evan Repousis  
10/14/18 Luke Andrew, son of Jennifer and Chad Wolf  
10/21/18 Nia Victoria, daughter of Ronnie and Gerardo Fernandez  
2/3/19 Steven, son of Alexa and Anthony Ciccone  
4/7/19 Vasilios Giannis and Antonios Dimitri, sons of Margie and Antonios  
Gavakos  
6/23/19 Melina Eleftheria, daughter of Allison and Stefanos Arethas  
6/30/19 Sienna Maria, daughter of Alana and Derek Marschke  
7/14/19 Savvas, son of Amanda and Harry Hatzikyriakou

## BAPTISMS

- 9/23/18 Jacob Phillip, son of Anna Stamatellos and Adam Darity, Godparent  
is Ariana Chiaravalloti  
11/10/18 James Nicholas Nunzio, son of Maria Barberi and Nicholas J. Rentas,  
Godparent is Cari Rentas  
11/17/18 Nathanael, son of Katherine H. Chung and Anthony Pazakis,  
Godparent is Simi Riesner  
11/17/18 Nikos, son of Katherine H. Chung and Anthony Pazakis, Godparent  
is Jennifer Solomon  
12/8/18 Caiden Scott, son of Leslie and Christopher Batalia, Godparent is  
Olga Nocolaou  
1/12/19 Luke Andrew, son of Jennifer Freier and Chad Wolf, Godparent is  
Tanya DeBoer  
3/3/19 Anastasia Rode, daughter of Nicole Michalitsianos and Evan  
Repousis, Godparents are Andrew Repousis and Dena Diamantis  
3/10/19 Nikos Constantine, son of Jaime L. Croddick and Dean W. Steele,  
Godparent is Theodoros J. Aris

**BAPTISMS continued**

- 3/30/19 Thomas Joseph, son of Mia Pappas and Steven J. Piluso, Godparents are Christos and Lisa Pappas
- 5/25/19 Paikos Constantine, son of Georgia Alexis and Dimitrios Vardas, Godparents are Andronikos Anastasiou and Christina Restrepo
- 6/8/19 Virginia Victoria, daughter of Ronnie Filippatos and Gerardo Fernandez, Godparent is Eleni Filippatos
- 6/9/19 Lillian Paraskevi, daughter of Eleni Plessias and Frederick Lipp, Godparent is Michael and Paraskevi Plessias
- 7/13/19 Declan Nicholas, son of Kristen Mulrain Georgilakis, Godparent is Peter Menakis
- 7/13/19 Kaitlin Joanna Harmon, daughter of Joanna Ellis and Joel Harmon, Godparent is Maria Rose

**CHRISMATION**

- 8/19/18 Adam Darity, Elias Stametellos as sponsor
- 8/29/18 Maria Angelica Ladas, Ernest P. Ladas as sponsor

**NEW MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH**

- Andy and Catherine Kelly  
8 Sherwood Lane  
Green Brook, NJ 08812-2118
- Anthony and Katherine Pazakis  
28 Berkeley Rd.  
Millburn, NJ 07091-2012

**NEW MEMBERS continued**

- Steven and Joanne Verdi  
363 Princeton Ave.  
Rahway, NJ 07065
- Peter and Marissa Stavrinou  
47 Vardon Way  
Farmingdale, NJ 07727-3956
- Andreas and Panagiota Pahountis  
415 Cook Avenue  
Scotch Plains, NJ 07076-1821
- Costa and Tina Constantinou  
11 Warwick Rd.  
Edison, NJ 08820-2606
- Timothy and Nickie Mehl  
2052 Dogwood Drive  
Scotch Plains, NJ 07076
- Paul and Kelly Lountzis  
21 West End Ave., Apt. 3602  
New York, NY 10023-8186
- Antonios and Margie Gavakos  
60 Hawthorne Dr.  
New Providence, NJ 07974-1114
- Christopher and Leslie Batalla  
939 Linden Lane  
Union, NJ 07083-8719
- Stefan and Julia Petses  
29 Sherwood Dr.  
New Providence, NJ 07974-2434
- Demetrios and Larayne Panayi  
21 Van Loan Ave.  
Sayerville, NJ 08872-3302
- Magdalene and Nearchos Ravanos  
507 Park Place  
Springfield, NJ 07081-3519
- Dean and Jaime Steele  
208 Shearwater Ct. W APT 15  
Jersey City, NJ 07305-5428
- Dimitry Gravanis  
768 Springfield Ave. Unit A5  
Summit, NJ 07901-2330

**NEW MEMBERS continued**

- Annette Diamantopoulos  
15 Madison Ave.  
Cranford, NJ 07016
- Anthony and Eleni Gabriel  
408 N. Prospect St.  
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865-1385
- Frederick and Eleni Lipp  
401 Spruce Avenue  
Garwood, NJ 07027-1219
- Patrick and Georgia Murphy  
651 Raymond St.  
Westfield, NJ 07090-2421
- Michael and Christina Juliano  
7 Shadowbrook Ln.  
Morristown, NJ 07960-6785
- William and Daniella Kaiserman  
801 Madison St. Apt. 3L  
Hoboken, NJ 07030-6446
- Aglaia Pappas  
4 E. Madison Ave  
Florham Park, NJ 07932-2634
- Taryn Lyman  
1115 Donna Ct.  
Linden, NJ 07036-6107
- Andrew Repousis  
390 Remsen Ave.  
Avenel, NJ 07001-1142
- Jennifer M. Conti  
155 Washington St. Apt. 602  
Jersey City, NJ 07302-4578
- Barbara Kotsinis  
46 Reinhold Terrace  
Union, NJ 07083-8909



# Philoptochos

## Philoptochos Rummage Sale, July 2019

■ BY NITSA BRUNO, ELISE SAVNIK & PENNY PEFANIS, CO-CHAIRS

For three days in July, the Bouras Center was transformed into an agora featuring a “Christmas in July” and Classy Collectibles Boutiques, home goods emporium and a bakery, featuring paximadia and koulourakia, as Philoptochos held its annual rummage sale.

In the last few years, the Philoptochos rummage sale has become a highly anticipated event as our parishioners get the opportunity to de-clutter their homes and assist a worthy cause. This year’s proceeds will benefit ECAD’s (Educated Canines Assisting with Disabilities) Project HEAL. Project HEAL is a program designed to meet the needs of Veterans living with physical injuries, post-traumat-

ic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) by providing skilled dogs.

Besides Project HEAL for Veterans ECAD provides skilled dogs to aid people dealing with disabilities such as Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, Sleep Apnea, Frederic’s Ataxia, vertigo, Cerebral Palsy, and spinal cord injuries among others. They also provide support and assistance to autistic children, by the use of the dogs they provide, in the areas



of emotional bonding, cognitive development, socialization and safety. For additional information on ECAD visit their website at [www.ecad1.org/](http://www.ecad1.org/) Any items that were not sold were donated to the United War Veteran’s Council, a nonprofit whose

# Philoptochos Scholarships

■ BY BARBARA MANOS AND ELLEN CONTI, CHAIRS



The Philoptochos is once again proud and honored to award scholarships in recognition of the achievements of our high school graduates. We were one of the first chapters to initiate scholarships and, to date, 159 have been awarded based on scholastic achievement and community participation. We applaud the parents who have brought the children to Church, Sunday School, Greek School, GOYA, and the many youth activities.

Our scholarship initiative expanded 19 years ago when Mr. Paul Stappas

funded a scholarship 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 for two scholarships, and in his will doubled the endowment. Ted and Julie Exarhakos funded a scholarship in memory of his father, Constantine; and the Nicholas and Anna K. Bouras Foundation funded a scholarship in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Bouras, founders and major benefactors of Holy Trinity. ❖

This year’s Scholarship recipients are:

- Angela Stappas Scholarship**  
Michailia Monfalcone
- Stephen and Violet Gussis Scholarship**  
Nicole Boutsoukaris
- Stephen and Violet Gussis Scholarship**  
Nicholas McCaffery
- Ted and Julie Exarhakos Scholarship**  
James Cerini
- Nicholas and Anna K. Bouras Scholarship**  
Stelio Kanaras
- Philoptochos Achievement Scholarship**  
Ava Leichtling
- Philoptochos Achievement Scholarship**  
Caroline Maglaras
- Philoptochos Achievement Scholarship**  
Demetrios Kastanos



mission is to honor, support and serve American Veterans.

We are grateful for the support we are constantly receiving from our Holy Trinity family and we would like to thank all of our parishioners who donated, purchased, baked, and helped with the setup, sales and the packaging of the left over items. Even though the sale spans three days the preparation and organization is a two-week process prior to the event and we appreciate all that were involved for a very successful sale. ❖

*"She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her task."*

- Proverb 31:17

# TOTS

## Trinity Orthodox Toddler Social

After 21 years of service to the Trinity Orthodox Toddler Social ("TOTS") program, Joanne Paras is retiring. In the past two decades, Joanne has served over 200 families who have benefited from her generosity, kindness and loving spirit. We celebrate her special contribution to our community, which will be dearly missed. Through TOTS, Joanne has ushered countless children into the beginnings of their Greek Orthodox life within Holy Trinity and beyond. This program is often the first point of entry into church life, making it an important building block in the fabric of our church.

"When I joined Holy Trinity in 2016, I had three small children and TOTS quickly became a very important ministry to me. Joanne has a special gift with children, and my boys took to her immediately. My children made new friends and were introduced to our church through

TOTS. But the moms benefit too! I was able to meet new Orthodox friends and looked forward to socializing with them. As a new member of the church, I began to feel more a part of the church community through TOTS. I am so grateful to Joanne for her dedication to this ministry."

-Val Comprelli

Parents, grandparents, caregivers, and children (as young as 18 months through pre-k) are able to come together to socialize and form bonds that carry on through Sunday School, Greek School and GOYA years. TOTS is held every second and fourth Thursday of the month from 9:30am-11:30am in the Pre-K room. Our first meeting is Thursday September 26. The 2019-20 program will be headed up by Val Comprelli and Arianna Chiaravalotti. Please email vcomprelli@gmail.com or arianachevy@gmail.com with any questions. ❖



## Religious Education

Update

■ BY TONY BOSCO

Welcome back to a brand new Ecclesiastical year! I pray you had a very restful and enjoyable summer. This year our focus will continue to build on the most contemporary curriculum and create workshops for our team of educators. We are looking forward to seeing all our students return and want to encourage the involvement of all our parents. Please make every effort to bring your children to church early enough to hear the Gospel reading and when students are dismissed for class usher them directly to their assigned classrooms and return to church.

Finally, I pleased to announce that Father Peter has recently appointed Cathy Pastrokos Kelly as our new assistant Director of Religious Education. We welcome her with open arms! She is going to be a tremendous addition to our team.

Thank you all for your continued support and if any parents feel they may want to assist with teaching or want to assist our program in any way, please feel free to approach me or Father Peter. ❖

### HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

#### 50/50 GRAND RAFFLE



Donation: \$25 per ticket

Drawing held Sunday, November 3, 2019  
at 12 PM in the Bouras Center

250 Gallows Hill Road, Westfield, NJ 07090

4 Prizes will be awarded. Winner need not be present.

Please support the Holy Trinity Grand 50/50 Raffle. Purchase your raffle tickets during the Fellowship Hour in September. Thank you in advance for your support. Your generous response will enable us to continue strengthening our ministries and supporting well-deserving charities.

Contact Avi Kiriakatis or Bill Theofanous at 908-233-8533 for more info.

# A Commentary of the Lord's Rebuke

The Lord's rebuke, whether it be a reprimand or sharp word, accuses and stops the act of evil. He often reproaches us for our unbelief and hardness of heart showing us that even if we have the faith as small as a grain of mustard seed nothing will be or seem impossible. We should never find fault with the Lord's grace itself

but rather with our own selves and the receiver of such grace. It is therefore folly and wicked to find fault with Christ's power. Only the combination of prayer and fasting can conquer the adversary. One of the most common self-deceptions among Christians today is that prayer is essential but fasting is optional. Too often we hear jokes about

the ways in which we avoid fasting, but even more often we attempt to justify our failure. Let us learn from Christ that we must believe with all our heart and mind, and that faith must be built up by prayer and fasting. Both are signs of the complete transformation that must be the goal of Christian life. And they help us to that end. ❖



## Trinity Circle

### Update

■ BY AVI KIRIAKATIS, PRESIDENT

Trinity Circle welcomes all parishioners with open arms to the new Ecclesiastical year at Holy Trinity where we come together to worship, pray for one another, form life long friendships and celebrate life!

This year we want to be together twice a month from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. starting with the first Tuesday of each month; socializing, playing games and celebrating the different regions of

Greece and its islands. We will learn about the different traditions, foods and lifestyles. Cassandra Romas has volunteered to be our Event Planner and has come up with this wonderful idea.

The third Tuesday of each month we will have our usual monthly meetings always starting off with a prayer from Father Peter followed by luncheons and speakers. ❖

### Trinity Circle's 2019 Events



**Tuesday 11:00 – 2:00**  
Welcome Back Lunch/  
Meeting at Bouras Center  
Please sign-up for Bake Sale  
with Hellen Kiriakatis



**Tuesday – 11:00 am**  
Games and Socializing



**Tuesday**  
Lunch/Meeting & Speaker on  
Healthy Lifestyle including  
Nutrition with Anastasia  
Papadimitriou, PhD –  
Rutgers



**Saturday**  
Packaging for Bake Sale in  
kitchen



**Sunday**  
Bake Sale – at Fellowship  
Hour Bouras Center



Holy Trinity member Harriet Provel celebrating her 90th Birthday

# HOLY TRINITY GREEK SCHOOL BEGINS ANOTHER YEAR

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

Once again, we come together to work as one entity, one school community, and one family. The wonderful and hard-working teachers of this school will be available to all students helping them as they journey towards more accomplishments. Within this extended large family, the respect of rights, as well as the sharing of different ideas and opinions are second nature, as it is second nature for us to show respect in a place of learning with tools that are provided for students to advance and succeed in their academic tasks. Thus, it is a chance today to create new goals and the teachers will be present in order to help guide the students and encourage them to achieve fantastic accomplishments and produce results in their education.

Furthermore, I would like to extend my greetings to the new incoming students, who will become part of our school community. These children will begin a sacred odyssey of learning. We warmly welcome you with open arms and loving kindness, and the faculty, as well as the current students, will make sure that the Greek School of Holy Trinity will become a second family for all of you.

Also, along with our new students, we welcome new teachers, who will bring forth their expertise and instill a sense of wonder and love of learning in our children. I am sure that our new faculty members will rise to the occasion with their fresh, invigorating ideas and positive attitudes, as they help educate the students of this wonderful school

community.

In closing, I would like to extend my greetings from my current teacher faculty and staff, for a great and joyous school year. With the holy blessings from the Church, with righteous plans, dreams and hopes, and besides the challenges in which we will face as a community, I welcome all with respect and compassion. With this message, I would like for all to understand that our mission is to preserve and foster the education of every child in this school. In this sacred endeavor, we need all to be focused, determined and dedicated to the cause of the preservation of our important Hellenic heritage, language and Orthodox Christian identity. ❖

## Book Store

**WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT SEPTEMBER?**

**OBVIOUSLY IT IS THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS ON SEPTEMBER 14!**

The miracles of the Holy Cross start on May 21! Go to goarch.org, "Saint Search", for "May 21", "Constantine and Helen: Equal to the Apostles". You will read about 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."

Now go to goarch.org, "Saint Search", for "September 14", "The Elevation of the Venerable and Life-Giving Cross." Read about how Saint Helen found the three crosses and identified which one

belonged to our Savior! "...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 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. Then 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.

Now that you have read all this about the Holy Cross, look at the insignia in the top left of goarch.org: IC XC NI KA: Thus, 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. These windows are the same insignia.

So what does all this have to do with the Church Book store? Sure we have cookbooks, travel books, novels, and icons. But 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 [the original Greek at goarch.org, not included in many English translations]] of God" [Luke 4:4]. ❖





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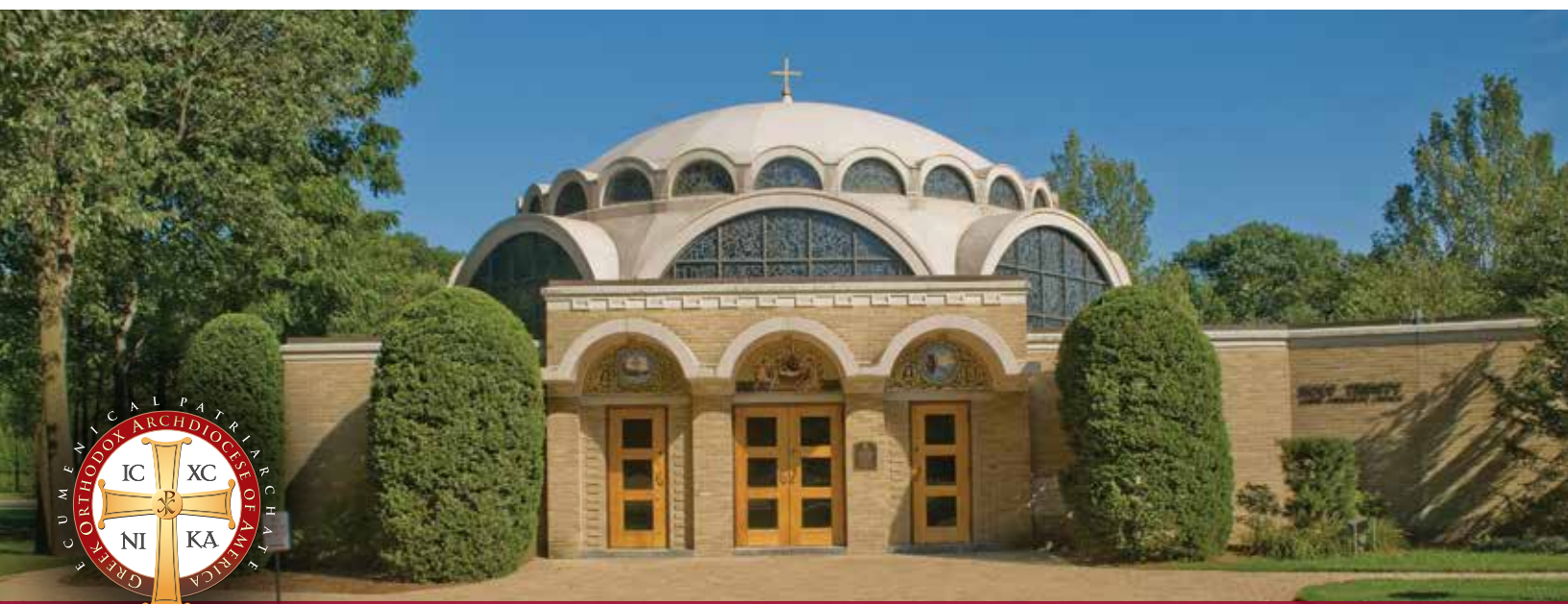
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