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 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 dangers.
## Dates in the Life of Our Church

### September–October 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SEPTEMBER</strong></th>
<th><strong>OCTOBER</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:15 AM Orthros</td>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor Day-Church Office closed</td>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nativity of the Theotokos</td>
<td>St. Thomas the Apostle</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:15 AM Orthros</td>
<td>8:15 AM Orthros</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>7:30 PM Parish Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School- Agiasmos</td>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>7:30 PM Parish Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School- Agiasmos</td>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exaltation of the Holy Cross</td>
<td>9:30 AM TOTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 AM Orthros</td>
<td>8:15 AM Orthros</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asbury Park – Holy Cross Celebration</td>
<td>9:30 AM Divine Liturgy</td>
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<td>7:00 PM GOYA State Meeting</td>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00 PM Greek School</td>
<td>11:00 AM Parish Golf Outing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### 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 plague 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
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 Ghanas of Agios Meletios Church in Athens

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.”

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 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/20/18</td>
<td>Constantina Orellana</td>
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<td>7/28/18</td>
<td>Stacey A. Demas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/2/18</td>
<td>Dimitrios Kikidakis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/24/18</td>
<td>Eudosia Niko</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/19/18</td>
<td>Nicholas Pappas</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/28/18</td>
<td>Steven Manos</td>
</tr>
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<td>11/28/18</td>
<td>Rita Gianakis</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/7/18</td>
<td>Ioannis D. Kordonis</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/21/18</td>
<td>Euterpe Papatheodora</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/21/19</td>
<td>Edward J. Dillon</td>
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<td>2/7/19</td>
<td>Angeliki Youlios</td>
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<td>3/20/19</td>
<td>Peter M. Vanechanos</td>
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<td>3/21/19</td>
<td>Steven Fredas</td>
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<td>5/21/19</td>
<td>Athanasios J. Gavakos</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/24/19</td>
<td>Christopher M. Provel</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/20/19</td>
<td>Sophie Stappas</td>
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<td>6/27/19</td>
<td>Peter Thomas</td>
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**WEDDINGS**

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

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

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

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

Steve 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 Kaiseran
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
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-traumatic 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. Any items that were not sold were donated to the United War Veteran’s Council, a nonprofit whose

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
Michaila 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
Trinity Orthodox Toddler Social

Aft er 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 Chiarevalli. Please email vcomprelli@gmail.com or arianachevy@gmail.com with any questions.

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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

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. Kassandra 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

- SEP 17: Tuesday 11:00 – 2:00 Welcome Back Lunch/ Meeting at Bouras Center Please sign-up for Bake Sale with Hellen Kiriakatis
- OCT 1: Tuesday – 11:00 am Games and Socializing
- OCT 15: Tuesday Lunch/Meeting & Speaker on Healthy Lifestyle including Nutrition with Anastasia Papadimitriou, PhD – Rutgers
- OCT 19: Saturday Packaging for Bake Sale in kitchen
- OCT 20: Sunday Bake Sale – at Fellowship Hour Bouras Center

Holy Trinity member Harriet Provel celebrating her 90th Birthday
OBVIOUSLY IT IS THE VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS ON SEPTEMBER 14!

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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