

The Promise

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

WESTFIELD ✦ NEW JERSEY



September 2022 ✦ Volume 46, Issue 5

holytrinity@htgocnj.org

908-233-8533

holytrinitywestfield.org

Elevation of the Holy Cross

September 14, the Elevation of Christ's Holy Cross, is the climax of a 40-day period that begins with the Feast of Holy Transfiguration on Aug 6, in which time we have also celebrated the Dormition of the Theotokos (Aug. 15) and her blessed Nativity (Sept. 8).

The Cross is regarded as the "Tree of Life" in the Church's liturgical hymnody, and Christ is the "Fruit of the Tree of Life". In the Garden of Eden, God commands man to eat from all the trees in the Garden, this includes the Tree of Life. Only from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is man commanded not to eat, for on that day he will surely die, says the Lord.

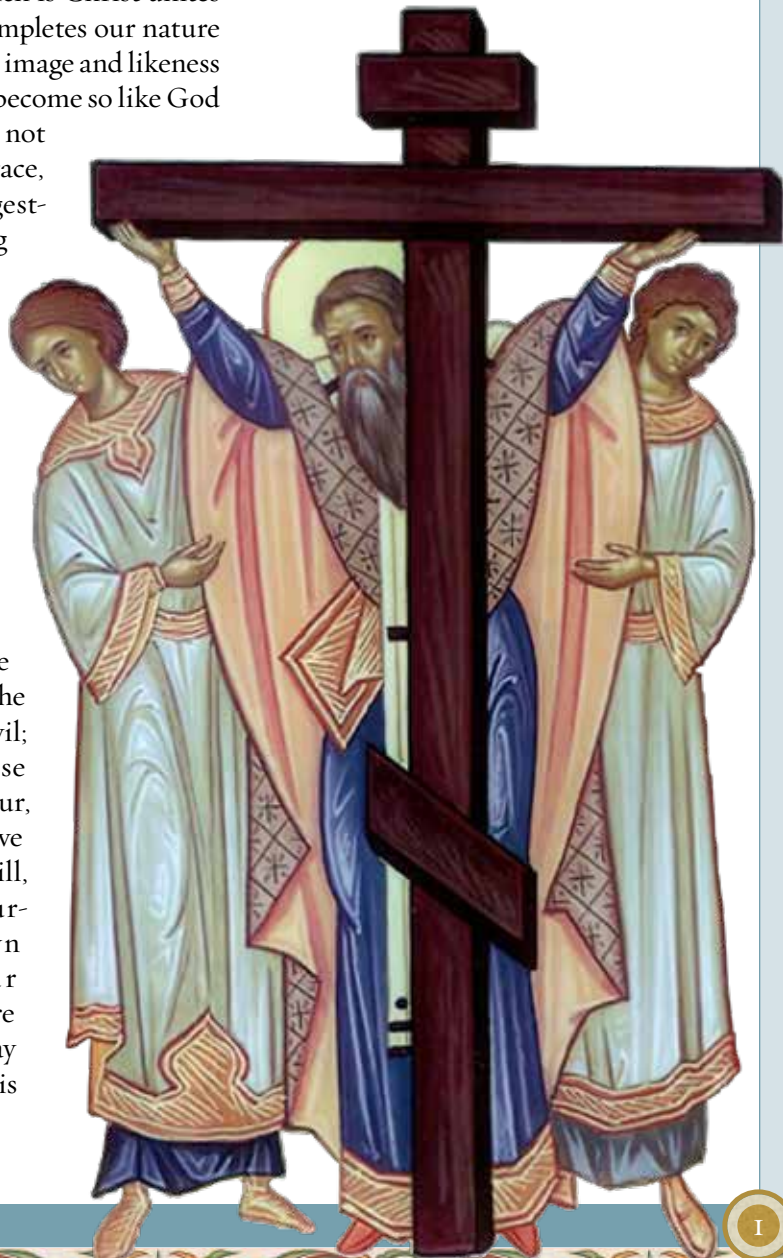
Both trees in the Garden represent a certain kind of life. The tree of good and evil represents a life lived according to what we want. That means a life of selfish desire, in which we are in effect eating ourselves: sustaining ourselves on our own wisdom and our own strength, and living by our own will.

The Tree of Life is the opposite to this. It represents a life in which we are eating God, partaking of the divine nature as St Peter writes. (2 Peter 1:4). We are sustaining ourselves on the Wisdom and the Power of God, which is Christ, the Fruit of the Tree of Life. We are living according to God's will and not our own, so that our will is to do the

will of God. Eating from the Fruit of the Tree of Life which is Christ unites us with God and completes our nature that was made in the image and likeness of God. Indeed, we become so like God that we become god, not by nature but by grace, by eating God, ingesting His will, eating His life, taking in His Wisdom and Power, His uncreated Light, His uncreated Joy, His ineffable Goodness, so that it is no longer we who live but Christ who lives in us.

You can see from this that when we choose to eat from the tree of good and evil; i.e., when we choose every day, every hour, every moment to live according to our will, and to sustain ourselves on our own wisdom and our own strength, we are choosing to turn away from God, and this is

Continued on page 2 ⇨



Wait for the promise of the Father



Dates in the Life of Our Church

September–October 2022

✠ SEPTEMBER

4	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
8	Nativity of the Theotokos
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
II	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
I3	7:00 PM Philoptochos
	7:30 PM Parish Council
I4	Holy Cross
	8:30 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
I7	12:00 PM Baptism

I8	No Services
	Holy Cross Celebration in Ocean Grove
I9	7:30 PM NNJYC
24	2:30 PM Baptism
25	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	11:45 AM Stewardship Picnic
26	St. John the Theologian
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
28	9:30 AM TOTs
30	7:00 PM GOYA Harvest Dance

✠ OCTOBER

I	10:00 AM Baptism
	2:30 PM Wedding
2	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	1:30 Wedding
8	11:00 AM Baptism
9	8:15 AM Orthros
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
	2:30 PM Wedding
II	St. Philip the Apostle
	9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
I5	10:00 AM Baptism
	2:00 PM Wedding

The Holy Cross

↩ from page 1

unnatural; because we were made not in our own image and likeness but in the image and likeness of God. The principle of our nature is not enmity or even indifference to God but kinship and affinity, that is to say, love of God.

Therefore, when we take up our Cross to follow Christ, we are taking up our own humanity that has been restored to its natural principle of love for God. In this, we find that the Cross is painless, full of joy and life-creating because it is our humanity living in the love of God, which is natural to us and which makes us “perfect”, whole and complete.

The way of Christ’s Cross is filled with light and joy because it is the Way of the love of Christ. In that love, we



endure the agony of the Cross as Christ did: on behalf of all and for all and in the joy that is set before us in the love of the Father because of our union in love with Christ. (Hebrews 12:12). It is the

joy of being united to Christ in His holy resurrection, and having been made whole, complete, perfect in the love of God in accordance with our nature. ❖



THE STRONGEST PERSON ON EARTH

The Meek and Humble

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.”*

—Matthew 5:3

Blessed are those who succeed in imitating the Lord’s humbleness. While the proud disregard and trample upon humbleness, the humble nourish their spirits with piety. Like a good mother who pours out her love upon all her children, humility fills the heart with God’s grace. Humility has no expectations and gladly accepts everything thrown at it. It accepts the good as well as the bad, offering only blessings in exchange. The proud can never experience the joy of the Lord or have inner peace, for they constantly feast on their own accomplishments fawning over themselves like a silly school-aged child who blows kisses to the image that is reflected in the mirror. How is it possible for the proud to see God, when all they see is themselves?

The humble person is the strongest person in the world not only because such a person carries the burdens of this world without complaint but has conquered all fear by steadfast confidence in God. Humility repels the attacks of the devil since it melts away the obstinate ego and allows the Lord to become the center of all things. Humility is the gate that keeps the vain world from entering the mind thereby keeping the soul pure.

In contrast to this, the proud hold in their hands an executioner’s knife. While exalting themselves high above

all others, they bring the mighty blade down upon themselves, cutting their soul to pieces. Speaking to them about humility is like speaking to a child who, because of fear and agitation, would rather endure the terrible fever and the cough rather than listen to the doctor and take an injection for healing.

The proud man accuses the humble man as being weak-minded and whose trust in God is foolish. But this reveals the proud man’s sickness; since the bad-tempered person is worse off than the weak-minded because his mind is darkened by malice and selfishness.

The humble man gives no regard to insults and rises above the vain world which he sees as silly and mundane. The humble man is the strongest man in the world because humility permits goodness to thrive in his soul and for divine illumination to overshadow him.

The proud man has a darkened soul because he walks away from divine illumination which falls only on those who are humble. Thus, he is constantly troubled inwardly. The proud man’s selfishness never allows him to look at the depths of his soul. He constantly stands on the surface of things looking no further than himself. Thus, he cannot enter nor even fathom the deeper essence of life. Since he ascribes life’s meaning and purpose only to himself,



the divine pearl embedded in each human soul stays hidden and undiscovered.

The humble and good man, having purity of mind and inner calmness, also has spiritual depth and ability to see the divine meaning in all things. This person, possessing a living faith, becomes an ardent witness to the mysteries of God.

“I am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ...” — 1 Corinthians 10:1 ❖



Philoptochos

Hello and Welcome Back!

■ BY MARIA KANARAS, PRESIDENT

September is a time of change and new beginnings. While we enjoy the last days of lingering summer weather, we also look forward to the crisp air of the upcoming autumn season. Some of us are beginning new adventures as college freshman or new careers while others are taking those cherished first day of school photos or embracing retirement and other life changes. Our sisterhood includes women of all ages from as young as 18 years old to the young at heart! Whatever stage of life you find yourself in, Philoptochos is a welcoming place for all women! We are especially eager to

begin this new Ecclesiastical year and to reconnect with our beloved sisters, generous benefactors, and tireless volunteers. We cannot wait to see you all and continue our work together to fulfill the mission of Philoptochos:

“to aid the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church.”

The Holy Trinity Ladies Philoptochos Society (501c3) works hard to stay true to our mission and to responsibly

manage funds raised to meet our commitments and respond to urgent social service requests. Each year, our chapter donates more than \$45,000 to numerous organizations and individuals, including our National, Metropolis and Community obligations. With many requests to consider, the Board utilizes a variety of tools (e.g., Charity Navigator, Charity Watch & 1099 searches) to ensure we support highly rated organizations. We are ever grateful to all those who contributed to our success by donating and supporting us so we can deliver on our commitments and not only achieve our goals but exceed them.

September through December Budgeted Donations:

- Children’s Gaucher Research Fund
- IOCC
- St Michael’s Home Ad Journal
- Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad
- Ovarian Cancer Foundation
- Doctors Without Borders, USA
- National Forum of Greek Orthodox Musicians
- Breast Cancer Research Foundation
- HomeFirst – Homeless in Union County
- Orthodox Mission to Sierra Leone
- GEMS (Girls Educational & Mentoring Svcs.)
- UNICEF
- Social Services
- Holy Cross/Hellenic College
- Taybeh Education Fund
- GOYA NJ State Scholarship Ad
- Sunday School Christmas Party
- Y2AM College Care Packages
- Retired Clergy & Widowed Presbyters Benevolent Fund
- National Philoptochos Emergency Fund
- Ecumenical Patriarchate
- National Sisterhood of Presbyters
- General Medical Fund
- St Basil Academy

In addition to our monetary commitments, Philoptochos stewards generously give of their time and talent to support our many activities. Philop-

tochos is also dedicated to assisting the other ministries of our parish. If you are interested in joining our Army of Agape or teaming up to work to-

gether on a current or new initiative, then stop by the Philoptochos table during Sunday Fellowship or email info@htphiloptochos.com ❖

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”

~ Aesop

Philoptochos Scholarship Program

In 2018, Barbara Manos of blessed memory wrote the following history of the Philoptochos Scholarship Program. *“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.”* Barbara faithfully chaired this Committee for almost 30 years!

Since 2020, Ellen Conti has served as the sole lead chair with unbiased dedication by organizing the application process and coordinating the review

and award process with our anonymous panel of judges. To date, we are proud that 185 students have been awarded scholarships. These students have been exceptional both academically and in service to the community. We applaud the parents who have brought the children to church, Greek school, Sunday School, and youth activities. In addition to our stewards and parishioners who support our fund-raising events, the scholarship program has been benevolently funded through the Angela Stappas Memorial Scholarship, Stephen and Violet Gussis Scholarships, Constantine Exarhakos Memorial Scholarship, the Nicholas and Anna K. Bouras Foundation Scholarship, and finally the Barbara M. Manos Memorial Scholarship, which was added in 2020, through the generosity of her children. This year, Philoptochos was privileged



to present a new Holy Trinity scholarship, the Theresa Kotsolios Memorial Fund, which is lovingly funded by Notis Kotsolios. ❖

THIS YEAR'S SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS ARE:



Angela Stappas
Memorial Scholarship
Despina Tarhanidis

Stephen and Violet Gussis
Scholarship
Francesca Kastanos

Stephen and Violet Gussis
Scholarship
Philip Koutsaftes

Constantine Exarhakos
Memorial Scholarship
Thomas Athanasios Seckinger

Nicholas and Anna K. Bouras
Foundation Scholarship
John Colonias

Barbara M. Manos
Memorial Scholarship
Sophia Helen Lambrianakos

Theresa Kotsolios Memorial Fund
**Despina Tarhanidis and
John Colonias**

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We thank all our donors who have responded to the needs of Holy Trinity. With your generosity and support, the facility of our beloved parish will remain pristine. With everyone pitching in, we're closing in on \$600,000 in donations. If you haven't already given, it's not too late to join your brothers and sisters who have given with their whole heart.

August 29, 2022

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Mr. & Mrs. Richard Roscoe
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2022 National Clergy/Laity – Ted Bozonelis and Fr. Peter with Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon



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www.hchc.edu/give

Stewardship Family Picnic

A day of family fun!

Sunday
Sept 25

On Sunday, September 26, the 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.





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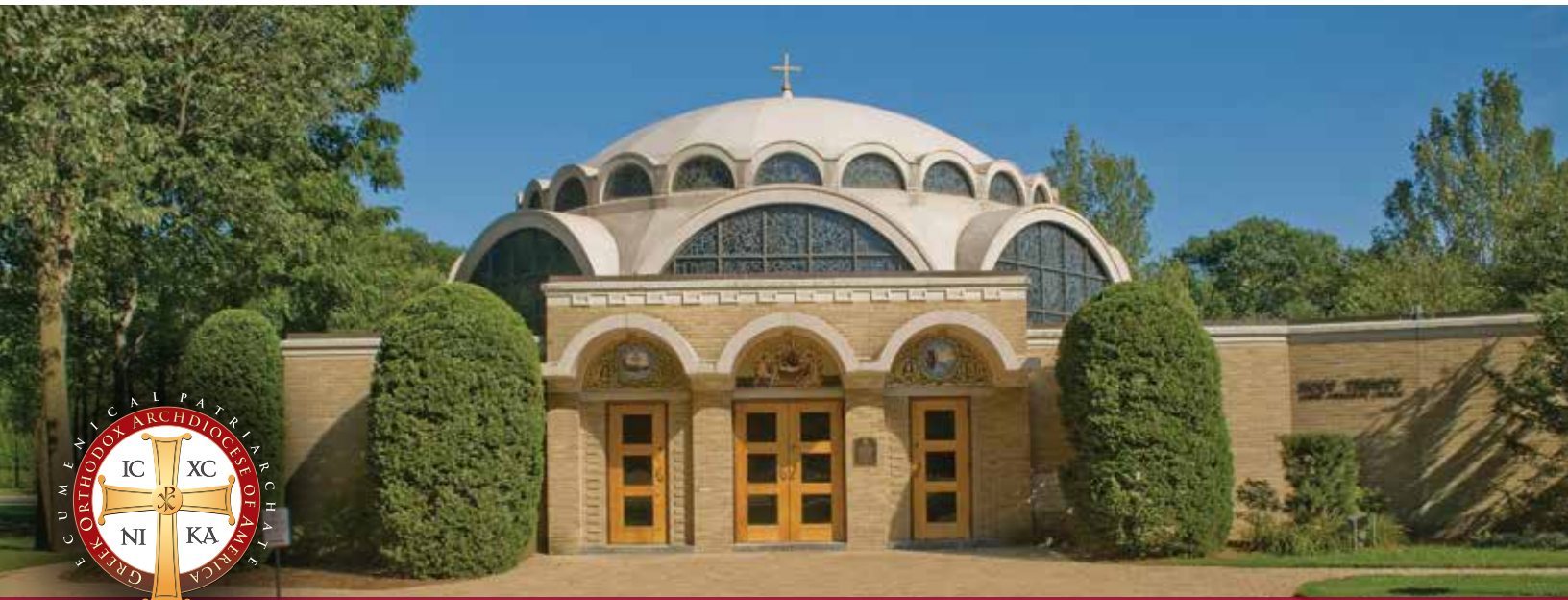
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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

	Sundays	Weekdays
Orthros	8:15 AM	8:30 AM
Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM	9:30 AM

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