

HOLY CROSS



CROSS ROADS



Beloved Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

**Christ is in our midst!
He is and shall always be!**

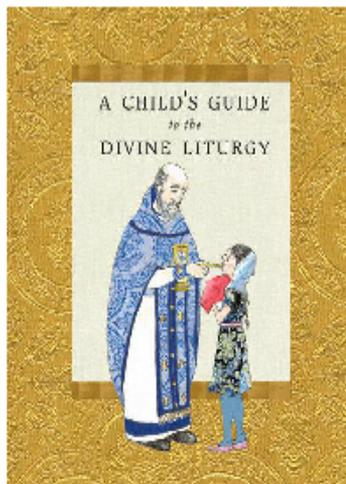
*“I see Your Bridal Chamber adorned, O my Savior, and I have no wedding garment that I may enter therein. Make radiant the vesture of my soul, O Giver of Light, and save me.”
(Exapostilarion from the Bridegroom Matins Services)*

We are all called to the “Bridal Chamber of Christ.” This glorious banquet that has been prepared for all of us, yet we know that we are woefully unprepared and unworthy to receive this encounter. We do not have a wedding garment that is clean and pure, rather it is filled with our sins and passions. How can we appear before the Heavenly Bridegroom in such a manner? The Church holds the answer for this mystery. It is only through repentance and persistence that our garments will be made radiant! Our Church helps us tremendously with the purification of our soul’s garment. Lent is a culmination of fasting, prayer, abstaining from evil desires, acts of love and mercy. Every Christian desiring salvation is humbled by the great love of our Lord, and all that He endured in the flesh to attain our salvation. When our conscience is pricked by the words of Scripture and prayer, our garment is washed by the tears of repentance. Just like the body is washed, the soul is cleansed by a good repentance and confession.

As we are now coming to the conclusion of the Lenten journey, we note that the last Sunday of the Fast is dedicated to St. Mary of Egypt. She is another icon of repentance for all of us. Her life was anything but pure and holy. Yet her desire to venerate the Holy Cross of Christ in Jerusalem led her on pilgrimage that changed her life forever. She followed the way of repentance into the desert and lived there overcoming her passions and working out her repentance. She is providentially discovered by the Elder Zossimas at the end of her life

HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX BOOKSTORE

FEATURED BOOKS OF THE MONTH



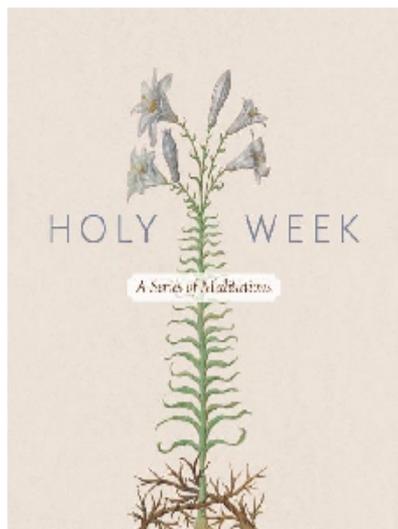
A CHILD'S GUIDE TO THE DIVINE LITURGY

A Child's Guide to the Divine Liturgy is designed as an aid to help children navigate their way through the Divine Liturgy and learn more about the Church and our faith. Small and easy to hold, with engaging illustrations. The very young child will learn basic vocabulary and come to recognize the various milestones in the Divine Liturgy. For the older child, the guide includes several longer psalms, quotes, and prayers; the 12 feast icons and kontakia; plus, an extensive glossary filled with terms and vocabulary often heard throughout the liturgical year. For ages 2 to 10.

HOLY WEEK:

A SERIES OF MEDITATIONS

The meditations in this book bring us to the heart of Holy Week, to an encounter with Christ, and with our own true selves. Featuring fourteen meditations written by past and present professors at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, and lavishly illustrated with icons, manuscript illuminations, and paintings, the beauty of these pages will redirect the reader's inward eyes to the author of all beauty, who endured the darkness of Holy Week to bring us into the light of Pascha.



Our Holy Cross Orthodox Bookstore is located in the carpeted area of the Community Center. Please be sure to stop by any Sunday following Divine Liturgy. We offer a great selection of Orthodox Greeting Cards and Books for all ages. For additional information, please contact Mary Portellos at 724-941-8699 or maryportellos@comcast.net

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church

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Under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and His Eminence Metropolitan SAVAS of Pittsburgh

The mission of Holy Cross is to keep and proclaim, pure and undefiled, the Orthodox Christian faith and traditions in conformity with the doctrine, canons, worship, discipline and customs of the Church.

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Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

***Services:**

Sundays:	8:15am Orthros
	9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Monday:	6:30pm Paraclesis
	7:30 pm Bible Study
Weekdays:	8:30am Orthros
	9:30am Divine Liturgy
Saturdays:	Vespers 5pm

*See monthly calendar for all services.

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	Didra Kirschner	(412) 561-2892
Greek School	Dena Yamalis	(412) 343-8355
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Senior Dance	Georgia Yamalis	(412) 728-2259
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First Steps	Denise Sokos	(412) 257-1610
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Building Comm.	John Conomos	(412) 831-7997
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2020
Parish Council

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Funeral/Memorial information: Use of the Community Center is available for parishioner funeral lunches at no charge. Parishioners may contact any caterer they choose to purchase and prepare their **Makaria** (Mercy Meal). Contact the church office for suggestions if you need a referral.
 For **Kollyva**, you may bring your own or contact Denise Melis directly (412) 341-9264.



Coffee Hour fellowship is an extension of our Divine Liturgy! Please gather with family, koumbari or friends to sponsor/prepare one Sunday. See the calendar on website for open dates, and call the church office to confirm.



and asks for Holy Communion. The Elder cannot believe the holiness of St. Mary and is overcome by her spiritual beauty. The Elder having lived the monastic life for over 50 years, was also attempting to make a good repentance. Led by God to this particular monastery and into the desert for Lent, the Elder was overcome by the grace that came from an unlearned and humble person. St. Mary levitated when she prayed, walked on water, and was granted the gifts of discernment and knowing the future. St. Mary's life of repentance was far superior to the Elder's. Humbled by the witness of St. Mary, the Elder Zossimas resolves to intensify his own repentance. The powerful witness of St. Mary of Egypt is another example of a restored and beautified wedding garment. God seeks us, is patient for our repentance, and grants us His forgiveness abundantly.

Many beautiful examples are also given to us during Holy Week. On Palm Sunday, we hear of the harlot who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears (Mt. 26/Mk. 14/ Lk. 7/Jn.12) and dried them with her hair. She bought myrrh to anoint Jesus, but her tears were more precious to Him than the myrrh. Through her tears of repentance, she was granted forgiveness of all her sins. Her garment became radiant. We too can offer Christ tears of repentance. There is no sin God cannot loose and unbind us from. The fathers of the Church liken our sins to a handful of sand cast into the ocean of God's forgiveness and mercy.

Perhaps the most famous of all penitents is the "wise thief." Crucified next to Christ and by his own admission, justly deserving punishment, he begs Christ to remember him when He comes into His kingdom. The wise thief realizes the great injustice done to Jesus and hears Him ask the Father, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Lk. 23:34) The wise thief recognizes that Jesus is a King. A King not of this world, but of the world to come. The wise thief's leap of faith and request were honored by the Lord. "Today you will be with Me in Paradise." (Lk.23:43) A garment of light, a garment of forgiveness was granted.

The Passion of Christ is intimately connected to our forgiveness and to His Kingship. Christ came to save and redeem us. Even in the Resurrection, Christ bears the marks of His crucifixion. If we reject this opportunity to receive forgiveness, it would be as if Jesus died for nothing. There is nothing more difficult for God to experience than the person unwilling to accept His gift of love and salvation. This love of God manifests itself to us through the forgiveness of our sins and His desire to make us His children, heirs and benefactors of eternal life. So what

must we do?

The direction is clear, Jesus is going up to Jerusalem and the command of the Church is to **follow Him!** The disciples were both amazed and afraid. How could such things be unfolding before their eyes? Two thousands years later, we still stand in amazement and awe, and we have the benefit of history, knowing the outcome of all the events of Holy Week. Jesus' words still echo in our ears today: "Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to Him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink, you will drink; and the with baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized...." (Mark 10:38-39) Let us go where Christ commands us to go! The most important journey is inward to purify our hearts with a good repentance. We prepare our wedding garments for the ultimate banquet of eternal life. From there, wherever the Lord calls us to be, we can follow Him to Golgotha, the Tomb, and ultimately to Life in the Resurrection (The Bridal Chamber)! May our journey be blessed! Kali Anastasi!

My brothers and sisters in Christ as we prepare to celebrate another Holy Week and Pascha, we find ourselves in difficult times. The entire world is suffering from attack and we are all affected by this crisis. The Coronavirus, and our desire to protect those who are most vulnerable to it, have prevented us from gathering together physically at the Church. We do however gather often in prayer! We have been blessed to watch the services live-streamed through various technologies. We are transported in mind and heart to be present with those whom we love and continue to hold in prayer.

This year our Holy Week services will be very different. The services will be the same, yet our participation will have to be from a distance. We are awaiting directives from our Metropolitan SAVAS and we will pass them along as soon as we know what they are. I am grateful to all of you for your patience and perseverance during this most challenging time. Please continue to communicate with us via email or phone and do not hesitate to reach out if you have particular need.

Wishing you and your families and blessed and glorious celebration of Lord's Holy Passion and Resurrection!

Christ is Risen!
Χριστός Ανεστή!!!

With love and prayers in the Risen Lord,
Fr. Michael

Circumstances being what they are, it is unusual to look out into the congregation and not see people. Yet knowing you are there watching the webcast is reassuring and even provides a poignant and powerful reminder of the greater reality of the Church. For even though we rarely actually see them, the saints and the bodiless powers are indeed invisibly present with us, just as you are also present here today, albeit in a different manner. And in particular, St. John Climacus is present with us today, this Sunday being dedicated to him. And it is wonderfully fitting that he is commemorated on this, the first Sunday where social distancing keeps most of you isolated in your homes as we do our part to “flatten the curve” and slow the spread of Covid-19. And while “fitting” may seem an unusual adjective to use in reference to this context, it is precisely understanding why it is an appropriate term that forms the key message of this morning’s homily.

For those who might not know, John Climacus, or “John of the Ladder” as he is also known, is the author of that late sixth to early seventh century spiritual classic, “The Ladder of Divine Ascent.” Written at the urging of some monastic contemporaries of John, it outlines thirty-three steps of spiritual endeavor that lead monks from earth to heaven. And while those steps are profoundly important, and often form the core of sermons delivered on this day, they are not what concerns us this morning; in fact, John’s message to us today is contained in what might seem a digression in his treatise.

Throughout the Ladder, briefly in the first step, but also in others, and particularly the fourth, John takes the opportunity to discuss the three kinds of monastic life; the first being in a large monastic community or Cenobium, the second being with a brotherhood of only a few monks in a Skete, and the third being a life of solitude as a Hermit. And of the three, John thought the second of those, namely life in a skete, was the best way to live. It was more difficult in a larger community to meet the individual needs of each monk, and the life of the solitary was so fraught with peril that only very few would find benefit from it. The skete was the golden mean, small enough for an elder to pay close attention to each of the monks under his care, and yet large enough that the monks could learn from and watch over each other, avoiding the delusions that often came from living alone.

What a blessing then, to realize that in this particular Lent, we find ourselves in exactly that situation! Quarantined in our homes, we find our lives inadvertently more like small monastic sketes than any Lent before, unless we have had the blessing to live in a monastery during

this time of year at some earlier point in our lives. To much of the world the isolation forced upon us by this pandemic is a curse, but as with so many other things in Christendom, what the world sees as an impediment or an inconvenience, we transform into a blessing, a gift from our loving and compassionate God.

Yes, it is true that for the time being we cannot gather freely as a community. But think of the Christians in the first three centuries, who had to gather in small groups in the catacombs because of persecution. Think of those who lived under the Ottoman yoke, or in the Soviet Union, forbidden to gather in churches. At least we are not persecuted for our beliefs. At most we are berated by non-believers for clinging to what they think are outdated superstitions. The call to stay in our homes is not for fear of imprisonment, it is out of compassion for our fellow man who might be more vulnerable to the pandemic that rages around us. Many of them cower in fear because this is the only life they believe in. Who would not be anxious in those circumstances?

But we see with a different perspective, especially at this time of year. Lent is set aside for reflection on what is important to us; a time for prayer and a more simple lifestyle, without the distractions of everyday life. But that's exactly what we have been given. A time where we spend most of our lives in our homes, removed from the plethora of social distractions that we typically face. It has actually made our Lent easier, but only if we take the opportunity to view it as such. Each of our homes has become a little skete, and our isolation gives us a rare chance for those living in the world to get away from the world. Even if we can't be here at Holy Cross, we become aware that each of our homes is also the κατοικον εκκλησια or the "domestic church" that we are called to have. We have the rare chance to use this season as it was intended to be used. Why squander the opportunity by focusing on the inconvenience it has caused?

My brothers and sisters, a hallmark of Christianity is to see the blessing in all adversity. We live knowing that we must take up the "way of the cross;" but more importantly, that if we look past the cross instead of dwelling on it, we can see the resurrection that follows. It is our choice to either squander this time focused on the anxiety of the moment or to rejoice in the chance to turn inward and redouble our commitment to fight the passions that threaten to consume us, and make room for the virtues that mark us as children of the Most High. And whether or not we are able to gather physically, to anticipate with joy, the Resurrection of our Lord, to Whom is due all Glory, now and forever. Amen.

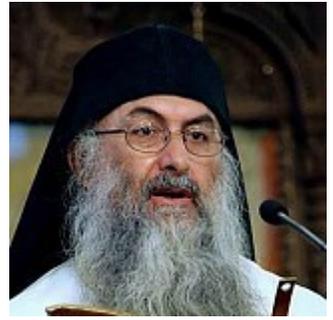
~Deacon Frank Dickos

Elder Zacharias on the Pandemic

Words of comfort from Essex, England

Many people are in confusion and others panic because of the threat of the Coronavirus epidemic that spread in the whole world. I think, however, that this should not happen, for whatever God does with us, He does it out of love. The God of Christians is a good God, a God of mercy and lovingkindness, 'Who loveth mankind'. God created us out of His goodness in order to share His life and even His glory with us. When we fell into sin, He allowed death to enter our life again out of goodness, so that we may not become immortal in our wickedness, but to seek for a way of salvation. Although we have fallen, God has never stopped to provide for us, not only material goods in order to sustain our race, but He also sent prophets and righteous, preparing His way so that He might come and solve our tragedy, and bring eternal salvation through the Cross and Resurrection of His inconceivable love. He came and took upon Himself the curse of sin, and He showed His love to the end: 'Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end' (John 13:1). All the things that God did when He created us, when He provided goods in order to sustain the world, when He prepared His way for Him to come on earth, when He came Himself in person and wrought our salvation in such an awesome way, all these things He did out of goodness. His goodness is boundless. He saves us and is so longsuffering towards us, waiting until we 'come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim. 2:4) and bring true repentance, so that we may be with Him for all eternity. Thus, at every stage of His relationship with man, our God shows only His goodness and mercy, 'which is better than life' (Ps. 63:3); goodness is His Nature and He does all things for the benefit and salvation of man.

Consequently, when He shall come again to judge the world, will a different God judge it? Will it not be the same good God, the God of mercy and lovingkindness, who loves mankind? Let us be certain that we shall not appear before any other God than Him Who created us and saved us. And so, it is again with the same mercy and love that He will judge us. For this reason, we should neither panic nor waver, for it will be the same God that will receive us in the other life and will judge us with the same kindness and compassion. Some fear that the hour of their end has come. This plague of Coronavirus has also a positive aspect, because we have a few weeks from the moment it will assail us until our end. Therefore, we can dedicate this time to prepare ourselves for our meeting with God, so that our departure may not occur unexpectedly and without preparation, but after we have run through our whole life each time we stand in prayer before God, at times with thanksgiving unto the end for all the



things God has done for us and at other times with repentance, seeking the forgiveness of our transgressions. Nothing can harm us with such a God, Who allows all things out of His goodness. We must simply keep thanksgiving unto the end and the humble prayer of repentance for the forgiveness of our sins.

As for myself, this plague is helping me. I longed to find again the prayer I had before, with which I can run through my whole life from my birth until now, thanking God for all His benefits 'whereof I know and whereof I know not'; and also, with which I can run through my whole life repenting for all my sins and transgressions. It is wonderful to be able to run through your life praying, bringing all things before God with persistence in prayer. Then you feel that your life is redeemed. This is why this situation is truly helping me. I am not panicking but 'I will be sorry for my sin' (Ps. 38:18).

We must see the goodness of God in all the things that are happening now. The Holy Fathers did see His lovingkindness. A similar epidemic occurred in the 4th century in the Egyptian desert, which harvested more than a third of the monks, and the Fathers were saying with great inspiration that, 'God is harvesting souls of saints for His Kingdom,' and they did not waver. The Lord Himself speaks in the Gospel about the last days, about the trials and afflictions which the world will go through before His Second Coming. However, we discern neither morbid sadness nor despair in His words. The Lord Who prayed in the garden of Gethsemane with a sweat of blood for the salvation of the whole world, says that when we see the terrible things that precede His Second Coming, we should lift up our heads with inspiration, for our redemption draws nigh (cf. Luke 21:28). Some tell me, 'May God extend His helping hand.' But this is precisely the hand of God. He desires and works our salvation 'at sundry times and in divers manners' (Heb. 1:1): 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work' (John 5:17). This virus may be a means that God uses in order to bring many to themselves and to repentance, and to harvest many ready souls for His eternal Kingdom. Therefore, for those who surrender and entrust themselves to the Providence of God all will contribute for their good: 'All things work together for good to them that love God' (Rom. 8:28).

Thus, there is no room for morbid dismay. Neither should we resist the measures that the government is taking in order to diminish the spreading of the afflictions we see in the lives of so many people. It is wrong to go against the authorities. We should do whatever the Government says, because they are not asking for us to deny our faith, they are only asking us to take a few measures for the common welfare of all people, so that this trial may pass, and this is not at all unreasonable. Some people take it too confessionally, they raise flags and play the martyrs and the confessors. For us there is no doubt: we shall show pure submission to the orders of the Government. It is unfair to disobey the Government since, when we fall ill, it is to their hospitals that we run and they are the ones who undertake all the expenses and our care. Why not listen to them?

Part II

This is the ethos of Christ that God showed in His life on earth and this is the apostolic commandment that we have received:

‘...be subject to principalities and powers, obey magistrates, be ready to every good work, speak evil of no man, be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men’ (cf. Tit. 3: 1-2); and ‘Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme...’ (see 1 Pet. 2:13-17). If we do not obey our governors who are not asking much, how will we obey God, Who gives us a divine law, which is far more sublime than any human law? If we keep the law of God we are above human laws, as the apologists of the 2nd century said during

the Roman Empire which was persecuting the Christians. It is surprising to see in the country where we live, in the United Kingdom, that the footballers show such understanding and discernment so as to be the first to withdraw from their activities with docility towards the indications of the Government to take prophylactic measures. It would be sad for us, people of faith, to fail reaching the measure of the footballers and showing the same docility towards the authorities for which our Church prays.

If they ask us to stop our Church services, let us simply surrender and bless the Providence of God. Besides, this reminds us of an old tradition that the Fathers had in Palestine: in Great Lent, on the Sunday of Cheese fare, after the mutual forgiveness, they would go out in the desert for forty days without Liturgy; they would only continue in fasting and prayer so as to prepare and return on Palm Sunday to celebrate in a godly way the Passion and the Resurrection of the Lord. And so, our present circumstances force us to live again that which existed of old in the bosom of the Church. That is to say, they force us to live a more hesychastic life, with more prayer, which will however make up for the lack of the Divine Liturgy and will prepare us to celebrate with greater desire and inspiration the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Thus, we will turn this plague into a triumph of hesychasm. In any case, whatever God allows in our life is out of His goodness for the well-being of man, for He never wants His creature to be harmed in any way.

Certainly, if we will be deprived of the Divine Liturgy for a longer period of time, we can endure it. What do we receive in the Liturgy? We partake



of the Body and Blood of Christ, which are filled with His grace. This is a great honour and benefit for us, but we also receive the grace of God in many other ways. When we practice hesychastic prayer, we abide in the Presence of God with the mind in the heart calling upon the holy Name of Christ. The Divine Name brings us the grace of Christ because it is inseparable from His Person and leads us into His Presence. This Presence of Christ which is purifying, cleanses us from our transgressions and sins, it renews and illumines our heart so that the image of God our Saviour, Christ, may be formed therein.

If we shall not have Easter in the Church, let us remember that every contact with Christ is Easter. We receive grace in the Divine Liturgy because the Lord Jesus is present in it, He performs the sacrament and He is the One imparted to the faithful. However, when we invoke His Name, we enter the same Presence of Christ and receive the same grace. Therefore, if we are deprived of the Liturgy, we always have His Name, we are not deprived of the Lord. Moreover, we also have His word, especially His Gospel. If His word dwells continually in our heart, if we study it and pray it, if it becomes our language with which we speak to God as He spoke to us, then we shall have again the grace of the Lord. For His words are words of eternal life (John 6:68), and the same mystery is performed, we receive His grace and are sanctified.

Furthermore, each time we show kindness to our brethren the Lord is well-pleased, He considers that we did it in His Name and He rewards us. We show kindness to our brethren and the Lord rewards us with His grace. This is another way in which we can live in the Presence of the Lord. We can have the grace of the Lord through fasting, alms giving and every good deed. So, if we are forced to avoid gathering in Church, we can also be united in spirit in these holy virtues which are known within the Body of Christ, the holy Church, and which preserve the unity of the faithful with Christ and with the other members of His Body. All the things we do for God is a Liturgy, for they minister unto our salvation. The Liturgy is the great event of the life of the Church, wherein the faithful have the possibility to exchange their little life with the boundless life of God. However, the power of this event depends on the preparation we perform before, through all the things we have mentioned, through prayer, good deeds, fasting, love for neighbour, repentance.

Therefore, my dear brethren, it is not necessary to make heroic confessions against the Government for the prophylactic measures that it takes for the good of all people. Neither should we despair, but only wisely machinate ways so as not to lose our living communication with the Person of Christ. Nothing can harm us, we must simply be patient for a certain period of time and God will see our patience, take away every obstacle, every temptation and we shall again see the dawn of joyful days, and we shall celebrate our common hope and love that we have in Christ Jesus.

'Trauma is the lens through which many people in our community see the world'

~Pittsburgh Post-Gazette March 3, 2020

For nine years, Focus Pittsburgh cranked out sweeping social services in the Hill District to needful residents from a creaky, musty, late 19th-century building on Centre Avenue.

The former used furniture store was 1,500 square feet of raw action. On days when food and clothes were bagged and backpacks were loaded with healthy snacks for children, the downstairs looked like a refugee center. The steps to the second floor swayed. Every small room upstairs was packed to the gills, doubling as office, storage and clinic space.

Today, the nonprofit has a new name and new digs in a 6,800-square-foot building.

It reassembled in January as the Neighborhood Resilience Project, having bought the former Hill House Association's senior center at 2038 Bedford Ave. for \$250,000, with help from foundations and corporations. It serves about 4,000 clients a year.

It continues to give food and clothing, free health care and help with bus passes, IDs and birth certificates. But every service now is underpinned by the growing recognition that generational trauma is the root of instability in predominantly black neighborhoods.

The organization that Rev. Paul Abernathy founded in 2011 is striving to start a movement — strengthening neighborhoods by helping people heal.

"Trauma is the lens through which many people in our community see the world," he said. "It has affected the spiritual health of the soul."

Whether trauma is masked or apparent, "It is at the heart of everything we do," he said, "to engage, heal and empower."

In the new location, the food and clothing pantry has the basement to itself. Second floor space is devoted solely to the clinic, which is staffed by a rotation of volunteer physicians, dentists and psychological counselors.

The main room at street level is where Rev. Abernathy holds mid-day prayer service, where the music appreciation group, the story and philosophy group, the bingó and wellness groups meet.

Just inside the front door, volunteer Betty Rice sits at the intake table. People sign in, checking the box of the service they need.

One day, a young man limped in, propped on a cane. He said he had no insurance. He described his condition.

"Go to the state welfare office to apply for medical assistance," Ms. Rice told him. "Bring back a letter saying you were denied. That's how you get a free appointment."

The man stepped sideways and winced, which made Ms. Rice wince. Sitting beside her, Vicky Ely, the community support specialist, picked up the phone.

"Are you busy?" she asked Bisrat Tesfagiorgia, the community health staffer who answered in the clinic.



Tom Hall of the Hill District attends a prayer service at Neighborhood Resilience Project on Bedford Avenue in the Hill District.

Volunteer Carletta Davis pauses while loading boxes of food into a van at Neighborhood Resilience Project on Bedford Avenue in the Hill District. The food was delivered to local elementary schools. (Steve Mellon/Post-Gazette) Story slug: REFOCUS02xx (Steve Mellon/Post-Gazette)

“There’s a young man who came in and he hasn’t had his blood thinner in two months. On a cane. Can we send him up?”

She nodded at the man, “OK, we can send you up.”

Daily trauma

Rev. Abernathy said he recognized trauma in the neighborhood after returning from combat in Iraq, where he served in the Army. His service was limited, he said, while people in the neighborhood live daily with trauma due to poverty, violence, fear of violence and racial discrimination. Left untended, he said, trauma keeps people unstable.

Many of the staff and volunteers understand this first-hand, bringing empathy to their roles, he said. “You don’t have to be a therapist to be therapeutic.”

Ms. Ely, who started as a volunteer in 2012, has a face bathed in kindness, so she spends a lot of time listening.

“Sometimes people open up,” she said. “They might think, ‘This looks like a lady I can talk to.’”

“Some people are in a daze. Some are lonely. They want to be around anybody, somewhere people are.”

“If we can get them to talk, to think, to write maybe, to recognize something,” she said. “They know if things are bad, they can come here to share and get support.”

She works throughout the building, including in the pantry, which is open for several hours three days a week. The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank donates food, and individuals donate clothing and children’s toys.

Kathy Balouris of McCandless and Brigette Nadley of Highland Park volunteer in the pantry twice a month, shelving cans and boxes. They have been doing this for five years.



Father Paul Abernathy conducts a prayer service at Neighborhood Resilience Project on Bedford Avenue in the Hill District. (Steve Mellon/Post-Gazette) Story slug: REFOCUS02xx (Steve Mellon/Post-Gazette)

“Our church has always been involved with this organization,” said Ms. Balouris, whose husband holds food drives at his office. “Our church kids had a food drive in December.”

Tena Walker began working as a receptionist in early February, calling men and women “baby” and “honey” as she logs the number of items they collect.

Avesta Bey, a mother of three teenagers, held two bags, one of food and one of clothing.

She has been a client for five years.

“I am supported here, yes, but I also come to praise and to worship,” she said. “I come for therapy for issues of anxiety. I volunteer with the backpack program whenever they need me. I’m at their beck and call, forever grateful. I have faced homelessness and been through it all, and they’ve been here for me. If it weren’t for a program like this, I don’t know where I’d be.”

Block-by-block

In 2015, the organization began an outreach experiment with help from Department of Human Services data, researchers at the University of Pittsburgh and Duquesne University and funding from the McAuley Ministries Foundation and Neighborhood Allies.

Community organizers began meeting with residents of the 2900 block of Webster Avenue, chosen because several people were already known to the team. Over one year, the project staff and partner agencies helped residents forge a network of mutual support. Health assessments and home repairs were part of the intervention.

The block-by-block approach has since expanded to parts of Bryn Mawr, Cherokee and Shawnee streets and an apartment building on Miller Street.

“We have taught our organizers to get the full context of a person’s life, to help them tell their stories to other people in their block,” Rev. Abernathy said. “With our local universities, we have been collecting research about what it means to go from being a trauma-affected community to a healthy community.”

Scalable data are not available yet, but the work has gotten smoother over



Ava Ely of the Hill District chooses canned food items at the pantry at Neighborhood Resilience Project on Bedford Avenue in the Hill District. (Steve Mellon/Post-Gazette) Story slug: REFOCUS02xx (Steve Mellon/Post-Gazette)

time because people spread the word, said Tyra Townsend, the program manager.

“We look for leaders on each block to empower others,” she said. “That way there’s buy-in that builds our credibility.”

The health score data — which is informed in part by the residents’ own assessment of their health — has been encouraging, she said. The Cherokee Street block showed a 26% improvement after a year.

“It’s still very early to quantify,” Ms. Townsend said.

“But the needle is moving,” said Matt Walsh, a counselor at Duquesne University and a member of the organization’s development committee. “The intervention is working. We are seeing people reconnecting.”

With Duquesne University as host, the Resilience Project created the Trauma Informed Community Development Institute several years ago. It provides training sessions for nonprofit leaders in other cities who want to replicate the model. They have come from Sarasota, Fla., New Britain, Conn., Wind River, Wyo. and Crawford County, among others.

On Thanksgiving 2017, the outreach expanded with a mobile Trauma Response Team that arrives at the scene of fatal violence and has had contact with 500 people, Rev. Abernathy said.

“We want to develop data from that, to see what the impact is,” he said.

More than 50 years ago, the building that is now home to the Neighborhood Resilience Project was called Hill City, an iconic site in the city’s civil rights movement.

“We hope we can live up to that legacy,” Rev. Abernathy said. “But I am grateful we had humble origins.

“The condition of the old building kept us mindful of conditions many people in our community have to deal with. What was accomplished out of that building was built out of adversity. It helped us to be resilient.”

Diana Nelson Jones: djones@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1626. [Twitter@dnelsonjones](https://twitter.com/dnelsonjones).



Norma Gentry, an employee of the Urban League, organizes suits for the clothes pantry at Neighborhood Resilience Project on Bedford Avenue in the Hill District. Behind her are stacks of donated food items that would soon be delivered to local schools. (Steve Mellon/Post-Gazette) Story slug: REFOCUS02xx

COMMEMORATION OF THE DECEASED

Good Friday Evening

For the repose of the servants of God



Please list first names only of your beloved deceased, and bring, fax or mail to the church office prior to Good Friday.

2020 Holy Week items needed

Anyone wishing to donate one or more of the following Holy Week items in loving memory of, for the health of, or in honor of a loved one, please contact the church office at holycrosspit@mail.goacrh.org.

Palms for Palm Sunday **\$100**

Flowers for the Nymphios (Bridegroom) Icon **\$100**

Seven candles, Olive oil, flour, Cotton Balls, Q tips for Great & Holy Wednesday **\$100 TAKEN**

Three candles for procession with crucified one (Stavromeno) Great & Holy Thursday **\$50 TAKEN**

Wreath for the Holy Cross on Great & Holy Thursday **\$50**

Crown of Thorns (Stefani) for Holy Thursday **\$50**

Purple Mums at the Foot of the Cross **\$50**

Winding Sheet for Body of Christ **\$50 TAKEN**

Epitaphion Candles **\$100 TAKEN**

Rose Petals and Lemon Leaves for First Resurrection Service
and Epitaphion Services **\$100**

Rosewater for Great & Holy Friday **\$30**

Roses for distribution at the 3pm Good Friday Service **\$100**

Mirafora baskets **\$100**

Decorated Pascha Candles for the Clergy **\$500**

Incense for Great and Holy Week **\$100**

Olive Oil for Perpetual Light throughout Holy Week **\$100**

Communion Wine—Bottle **\$35** or Case **\$210**

Order an Easter Lily to beautify our church for Pascha.

Circle ONE per plant:

In Honor of OR For the health of OR In memory of

From _____

\$20per plant.

Please return to church office by Friday, April 10.



**Emmanuel Maginas's sermon for March 15, 2020:
the Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas**

A crowd is a curious thing. It can sweep you up, move you along without any effort, towards holiness. This happened to St. Mary of Egypt, as the crowd brought her right up to the doors of the church. It happened to those welcoming Christ on Palm Sunday. The crowd brought everyone out of their homes to see the King of Israel. But a crowd is not enough. It can bring you near God, but it cannot make you touch him. To borrow the old adage, you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. St. Mary of Egypt had to repent before she could venerate the Cross of Christ. She had to step outside of the crowd before she could near God. The woman with an issue of blood had to do the same, reaching out from the crowd to touch Christ. For today's paralytic, the crowd was even more of an obstacle. While he was near Christ in the crowd, it was the crowd that prevented him from reaching the Lord, and from ultimately being healed.

Let us refresh our memory on the Gospel reading (Mark 2:1-12). The Lord is preaching in a crowded house. A paralytic is brought with the crowd, carried by four of his friends, on a portable bed. They cannot reach Christ, but they want to get close to him so that he can heal their friend. This was not an easy task. The crowd stood in their way, and they had to dismantle the roof. How many of us, if we were in that situation, would have been so determined to remove the roof, to draw near to Jesus? After all, everyone else was acting normal, jostling along in the crowd, with the crowd. But the men had to take one extra step to get to Christ; to touch him; to find healing. They had to step out of the crowd.

How many times have we felt like it was enough simply to be in the crowd? Are we content to look at Christ from within the crowd, or do we do everything in our power to draw near and touch him? Do we want him to heal us of our illnesses, spiritual and physical? If we do, it is not enough to be part of the crowd, as the men knew in today's Gospel reading. We have to have the courage to look weird. What do I mean? I mean that it takes courage to order our calendars, finances, meals, jobs, *everything* around God. We have to invite

him into our homes; we have to step out of the crowd, and touch him.

This is not impossible. All the saints stepped out of the crowd. The crowd remains on earth, but the saints reach for the heavens. They reach for Christ. This is precisely what today's saint, Gregory Palamas, did. He stepped forward, out of the crowd, to approach the Lord, to touch him, to be sanctified, and ultimately to be *deified*.

St. Gregory lived in the fourteenth century; he was at odds with certain theologians in the Roman Catholic Church (which had already separated itself from the Orthodox). These western theologians maintained that since God is completely *other*, he is entirely unknowable. St. Gregory, however, taught that, while God's *essence* is completely unknowable, it is possible to experience God personally through his *energies*. These are the attributes of God, such as his grace and his mercy. St. Gregory contended that God's energies are not created, as the western theologians argued, but are rather *uncreated*. What this means is that when we experience God's grace, mercy, love, or any of his attributes, we are experiencing the uncreatedness of God; we are touching God himself. How do we experience these energies though? By silencing our thoughts and bringing our mind into our heart. This practice of stillness before God came to be known as *hesychasm*; it is this stillness that allows us to experience God intimately.

Now, what does all this have to do with stepping out of the crowd? While a crowd can bring us to a holy place, it does not help us to still our minds and open our hearts to God. To do so, we must step out of the crowd and seek Christ. St. Gregory did so literally, spending years in a small cave, praying the Jesus Prayer and seeking God in the stillness. But he also stepped out of the crowd by removing the roof of false theology. In so doing, he showed us who are paralyzed that it is possible to approach and touch Christ. Let us also remove the roofs of our confusions and misconceptions of God. Let us seek him, not in the crowd, but in the stillness of our hearts.

May St. Gregory intercede for all of us as we strive to experience Christ's healing of our paralyzed souls, through union with him.

Amen.

HOLY CROSS

SUN	MON	Tue
<p><i>5 Sunday of Mary of Egypt</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p><i>6</i> 6:30pm Great Compline</p>	<p><i>7</i></p>
<p><i>12 PALM SUNDAY</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy <i>No Memorials</i> 5pm Bridegroom Service</p>	<p><i>13 HOLY MONDAY</i> 9am Presanctified Liturgy 6:30pm Bridegroom Service</p>	<p><i>14 HOLY TUESDAY</i> 9am Presanctified Liturgy 6:30pm Bridegroom Service</p>
<p><i>19</i> PASCHA Noon Agape Vespers</p>	<p><i>20 BRIGHT MONDAY</i></p>	<p><i>21 BRIGHT TUESDAY</i></p>
<p><i>26 Thomas Sunday</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy <i>No Memorials</i></p>	<p><i>27</i> 6:30pm Paraclesis</p>	<p><i>28</i></p>

APRIL 2020

Wed	THU	FRI	SAT
1 <i>Great Lent...</i>	2	3	4 <i>Saturday of the Akathist</i>
6pm Presanctified Liturgy		9am Presanctified Liturgy 6:30pm Akathist	5pm Vespers/ Confessions
8	9	10	11 <i>LAZARUS SATURDAY</i>
6pm Presanctified Liturgy	7pm via ZOOM Young Professionals Coffee & Conversation	9am Presanctified Liturgy	8:30 am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy 5pm Great Vespers
15 <i>HOLY WEDNESDAY</i>	16 <i>HOLY THURSDAY</i>	17 <i>HOLY FRIDAY</i>	18 <i>HOLY SATURDAY</i>
9am Presanctified Liturgy 3pm Holy Unction 6:30pm Orthros of Holy Thursday with second anointing	9am Vesperal Liturgy 6:30pm Passion of Our Lord/Reading of 12 Gospels 10pm-6am Vigil by the Cross	<i>Office Closed</i> 9am Royal Hours 3pm Vespers/Taking down from the Cross 6:15pm Trisagion by tomb 6:30pm Praises/Orthros of Holy Saturday	9am Vesperal Liturgy (First Resurrection) 10pm Nocturnes 10:30pm <i>Receive the Light</i> 11pm Orthros /Liturgy of the Resurrection
22 <i>BRIGHT WEDNESDAY</i> No fasting	23 <i>BRIGHT THURSDAY</i> <i>St. George</i> 8:30 Orthros 9:30 Div Liturgy	24 <i>BRIGHT FRIDAY</i> No fasting 8:30 Orthros 9:30 Div Liturgy	25 <i>BRIGHT SATURDAY</i> 5pm Vespers
29	30	1 <i>May</i>	2 <i>St. Photios Banquet</i> <i>cancelled</i>

Mission team in Guatemala....





Fr. John and Presvytera Sandy help translate at the clinic, while Dr. Steve Krakora is assisted by his daughter Maria. Kassiani Politis checks blood pressure.



Procession of Icons - Sunday of Orthodoxy





Holy Cross Philoptochos April News Letter

Nineteen members attended the March 3, 2020 meeting. The next general Philoptochos meeting will be Tuesday, April 7 at 7:00PM. The Board will meet at 6:30pm. **This is dependent on the crisis.** *(canceled as of printing)*

It was a short meeting. There are 113 Philoptochos members. The 2020 membership deadline is the end of March.

An additional \$773 was voted to donate to St. Basil's Academy, making a total donation of \$1000.

Cookies are NOT needed in April for Circle of Angels. There will be no visitation to the shut-ins from the Circle of Angels because of the coronavirus crises. Please freeze cookies for a later date.

Pascha bread making is canceled for Monday, March 30 and the Palm Sunday Fish Luncheon is also canceled.

The Blanket Ministry meeting is canceled for April 2.

The NO Bake- Bake Sale concluded in March and is chaired by Dena Yamalis.

Thank you Dena for taking the time for the mailings and counting donations!

Kathy Pyros is our Neighborhood Resilience Project (formerly FOCUS) representative. She will take clothing, food and other needed items to NRP. Please set the items outside the office door and mark NRP on the bags. Volunteers are always needed at NRP. Please contact Kathy to volunteer. 412 848-2364.

The Lenten NRP Food drive Sundays are March 29 and April 5.

Dena Yamalis will also be attending the National Clergy – Laity Convention in Cleveland from June 27-July 2 with Elaine Sofis.

Fr. Paul Abernathy spoke at the March meeting about the Neighborhood Resilience Project and his ministry. At a board meeting, Mary Zotis announced that she will no longer be chairing the annual Christmas Party. A new chairperson(s) is needed.

Future Philoptochos and Orthodox Events, Dependent on the Coronavirus Pandemic

~Elaine Sofis, Philoptochos President



Sts. Mary & Martha Women's Fellowship

****CHANGES****

April 28, 7-9pm Speaker: Dn. George Athanasiou
The 12 Apostles (actually 8 - eliminating Matthew, Peter, James son of Zebedee and John son of Zebedee/Evangelist)
Hostess: Dknsa Adrien: Dicko;
1840 Kent Road, Pittsburgh, 15241
RSVP: 412-833-4980

May 26, 7-9pm Speaker: Fr. Dimitrios Carellas
The Beloved: St. John The Theologian
Hostess: Pres. Joanna Ferencz, NEW ADDRESS:
1028 Francis Rd, Castle Shannon, 15234
RSVP 724-953-1091

Graduate Sunday is Sunday, May 31:

Graduating High School & College Seniors (post graduate degree earners as well) will be recognized by the Parish. Families please send in your graduates' information to the Church Office:

holycrosspita@mail.goarch.org

Information to submit by Friday, May 15.

- ~Name of Graduate and their parents.
- ~Name of school graduating from - High School or College.
- ~What he/she intends to study or what degree has been earned.
- ~Where he/she plans to further their education or future employment plans.

Please submit a photo as well!!!





A GOOD WORD—Λόγον Αγαθόν

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

ISSUE 30 — APRIL 2020



HIS EMINENCE'S PASTORAL MESSAGE REGARDING THE PANDEMIC

We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. (St. Paul's 2nd Letter to the Corinthians, 4:8-10.)

These words of the Holy Apostle Paul speak as forcefully to the Church throughout the world today as they did to the Christian community at Corinth to which they were initially addressed two thousand years ago. The specific trials may differ across time and cultures, but the challenges they present must be borne not with complaint and self-pity, but in a manner consonant with our life in the Lord Jesus. In our time we find ourselves confronted with a disease that threatens not only our lives but our manner of living. While we are tempted to focus on the affect the change in life has on each of us personally, our identity as a Christian community also requires us to consider more highly the needs of others rather than ourselves – in the words once again of Saint Paul, we are called to “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Gal 6:2)

It is in this spirit of bearing the burdens of those at greatest risk to the current disease – the elderly, immunocompromised, those with respiratory conditions or diseases, and those who are unaware of potential complications – that we have been called in recent days to limit our interactions with others, in order to safeguard those in need around us. The need to self-limit has increased with our developing understanding of the present strain of coronavirus and the manner of its spreading. We are called to respond as the Body of Christ in a way that will protect the most vulnerable while remaining faithful to our identity as a community of prayer.

RESOURCES FOR PRAYER, WORSHIP

- Spend time at the appropriate moments to participate via video in the services. If your parish does not broadcast its services, you can find other options at <https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>



- Those with newer AppleTV devices, Roku, or Amazon Fire can find the Archdiocesan channel: <https://www.goarch.org/tv>



- Utilize the Archdiocesan Online Chapel for texts of services, daily readings, and lives of the Saints: <https://www.goarch.org/chapel>

- Utilize the various service texts available on AGES Initiatives <http://www.agesinitiatives.com/dcs/public/dcs/servicesindex.html>, singing or reading the hymns. (Replace the litanies of petitions by saying “Lord, have mercy” three times, and replace the Priest’s exclamations or blessings with “Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God have mercy on us and save us. Amen.”)
- There are many edifying bible studies and educational podcasts available via Ancient Faith Ministries (<https://www.ancientfaith.com/>) or Orthodox Christian Network (<http://myocn.net/>)



SUPPORT HIS EMINENCE AND THE METROPOLIS MINISTRIES

It costs approximately \$1,000 per day to operate our Metropolis—including Metropolitan Savas’s pastoral visitations, preparations for Summer Camp and GOYA retreats, our vital registry (tracking marriages, baptisms, chrismations, and deaths), and more. Please consider sponsoring a day in the life of the Metropolis. To contribute, visit <https://pittsburgh.goarch.org/support>



METROPOLIS AND PARISH OPERATIONS

His Eminence is cancelling his public appearances until further notice. Those who have been scheduled for visitations after March 31 will be informed by Archdeacon Ryan Gzikowski about the status of the visits.

The offices of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh will be officially closed effective immediately. Individual staff members can be contacted at their appropriate email addresses, which can be found at <https://pittsburgh.goarch.org/metropolis-staff> Keep in mind that while the offices are closed, there will be limited access to mail, telephone, and office voicemail. The most effective means of communication is via email. We ask everyone to be patient as we attempt to maintain essential functionality under these conditions.

BENEFACTORS OF THE HOLY METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

We offer our apologies to Archon Nick & Kathy Lekas for failing to include their names in the 2019 Benefactors list.

MAJOR EVENT UPDATES (CLERGY-LAITY, ST PHOTIOS, ETC.)

Please "stay tuned" for official updates regarding major Metropolis events (Summer Camp, St. Photios Banquet, etc.) and Archdiocesan events (Clergy-Laity Congress).

While there are many updates coming from multiple sources (federal, state, county, and local government and government agencies; health agencies like the WHO and CDC; ecclesial bodies like the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Archdiocese), please wait for confirmation from the Metropolis regarding anything affecting parish life.

In the meantime, our dedicated volunteers are working hard to plan the upcoming events, and will continue to prepare for them to run successfully. If they need to be postponed or cancelled, then we will shift gears. Thank you for your patience and understanding!

Non-essential gatherings (coffee hour, social activities, etc.) will be discontinued in all parishes. Classes and meetings (catechism, parish council and philoptochos, retreats) should be transitioned to videoconference. The guidelines promulgated by the respective states should be observed, especially with respect to fundraising activities of the parishes (like luncheons or fish fries).

Church services may continue as scheduled within our parishes, but the parishioners are directed to participate via the internet. A minimum compliment should be present at the parish (no more than 5 persons including the priest, all of whom should be physically healthy and at low risk for the disease, who will participate at the invitation of the priest). Those unable to participate via live streaming are encouraged to utilize other resources available to the faithful (see below). Those clergy, cantors, and parish leaders who fall within the higher risk groups (older than 65; having long-term respiratory conditions; being immunocompromised or living with the immunocompromised; etc.) must remain home.

GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232 - <http://pittsburgh.goarch.org> - info@pittsburgh.goarch.org
 412-621-5529 (Main) - 412-465-0460 (Camp) - 412-621-8543 (Youth) - 412-621-1522 (Fax)
 His Eminence Metropolitan SAVAS of Pittsburgh, Presiding Hierarch

Fr. George Callos, Chancellor

Pres. Eileen Sedor, Receptionist

Marina Papafil, Camp Ministries Coordinator

ADn. Ryan Gzikowski, Asst. to Metropolitan & Registrar

Rhea Ballas, Youth & Young Adult Ministries Director

Maria Stamoolis, Director of Greek Education and Culture

Stacey Stathulis, Stewardship Ministries Coordinator

An important Addendum: the 2020 St. Photios Awards Banquet is officially postponed. We are working on rescheduling the event, likely in 2021. Those awardee names already submitted will be honored whenever the banquet takes place; we will be personally contacting donors to the event, and will issue refunds as necessary.

Please disseminate this among your fellow parishioners to the best of your abilities. If you have any questions, feel free to email me.
Wishing you a blessed day, and continued health and protection from above,

Your servant in His vineyard,

+ Fr. George S. Callos
Chancellor

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh

5201 Ellsworth Ave Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Phone: 412.621.5529 Fax: 412.621.1522

<http://pittsburgh.goarch.org> Twitter: @GOMetropolisPGH

RELIGIOUS ICONS CELEBRATED



Alexandra Wimley/Post-Gazette

Priests from various Orthodox congregations in the greater Pittsburgh area carry religious icons in a procession during the annual Sunday of Orthodoxy Service and Celebration, hosted by the Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh, on Sunday at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in McCandless.



2020 Clergy Retreat

**Sunday of Orthodoxy
at
Holy Trinity,
North Hills**





SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY CELEBRATING ORTHODOX UNITY AND DIVERSITY

NEW YORK – On March 8, 2020, eleven Orthodox hierarchs from various canonical jurisdictions concelebrated the Divine Liturgy on the first Sunday of Lent, also known as the “Sunday of Orthodoxy,” at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, in New York City.

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America presided over the Divine Liturgy. He was joined by: His Grace Bishop Irinej of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North, Central and South America; His Grace Bishop Saba of the Georgian Apostolic Orthodox Church in North America; His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta; His Eminence Metropolitan Antony of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (Ecumenical Patriarchate); His Eminence Metropolitan Savas of Pittsburgh; His Eminence Archbishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (Ecumenical Patriarchate); His Grace Bishop Apostolos of Medeia; His Grace Bishop Ierotheos of Ekarpia of the Sacred Patriarchal and Stavropegial Orthodox Monastery of St. Irene Chrysovalantou (Ecumenical Patriarchate); His Eminence Archbishop Michael and His Grace Bishop Alexis of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA). His Grace Bishop Alexis also presided over the service of Orthros.

At the conclusion of the service, icons were carried in a procession around the Cathedral commemorating the victory of icons, because “he who venerates the icon, venerates in it the reality for which it stands” – holiness and the reality of deification.

In his sermon, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros linked the victory of the icons with the need for Orthodoxy in America to promote an image of unity and communion. The Archbishop said: “Yes, we differ in jurisdiction; we differ in ethnic background; we differ in native language; we differ in customs. But the Faith that we confess is in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church! We believe and confess the same Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. We share in the Same Eucharistic Meal – the Mystical Supper of the Lord. And we look forward to the Same Glorious Resurrection of our God in His Holy Pascha.”

Several choirs also participated in the services, offering chanting from the Greek, Slavonic and Georgian traditions.

To read the Encyclical for the Sunday of Orthodoxy,

<http://www.assemblyofbishops.org/news/2020/encyclical-sunday-of-orthodoxy-2020>

To read His Eminence’s sermon,

<https://www.goarch.org/-/homily-sunday-of-orthodoxy-march-8-2020>

**Camp Nazareth Registration
opens April 20!**

GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH

SUMMER CAMP 2020

WEEK ONE (2ND-4TH GRADES):
JUNE 21 - JUNE 27

WEEK TWO (5TH-7TH GRADES):
JUNE 28 - JULY 4

WEEK THREE (7TH-9TH GRADES):
JULY 5 - JULY 11

WEEK FOUR (10TH-12TH GRADES):
JULY 12 - JULY 18



Codes	For Holy Cross
Full	HCSCF
Half	HCSCH
\$200 off	HCSCP



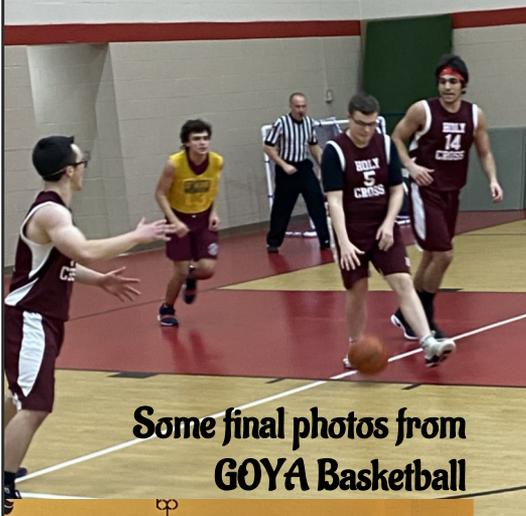
FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: Y2AM.PITTSBURGH.GOARCH.ORG



**Metropolis
Volleyball
Tournament
at
St. Nicholas
in
Oakland**







**Some final photos from
GOYA Basketball**





Nothing like a little pressure....
tie score and 1.2 seconds left!



2020 Orthodox Christian Vacation Church School

at Holy Cross

Bring your Children to learn God's word @VCS!

VCS is Dedicated to teaching our young children about Orthodox Christianity in a fun and exciting atmosphere. It's an extension of the Sunday School experience that can greatly enhance a child's sense of belonging to the church, while providing our children with an opportunity to make lifelong friends in the church community.

Activities include daily skits illustrating lesson, brief classroom instruction, religious music lessons, hands-on crafts relating to lesson, recreation time, snack & social time.



This year's theme is:

Journey to the Promised Land

Monday, July 27, 2020 ~ Friday, July 31, 2020

9:00 am to 12:00 Noon

**Monday, July 27, Children should arrive at 8:30 am*

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, 123 Gilkeson Road, Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228

If you have questions, or in case of emergency during VCS, call (412) 833-3355

Welcoming all children age 3 years through entering 6th grade

High School students, Parents, interested adults needed to volunteer.

Nominal registration fee of

\$20 per student is due by June 30th

\$30 if received by July 15th,

\$40 if received after July 15th

**Please register early so we can prepare
nametags, snacks & crafts!**

Make checks payable to Holy Cross VCS and send to:

123 Gilkeson Road, Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228

Should you need financial assistance, please contact

Fr. Michael Kallaur (Holy Cross) at (412) 833-3355

Orthodox Christian Vacation Church School at Holy Cross

2020 Registration Form - Please print.

Child's First & Last Name	Age on July 30	Grade Entering Fall 2020	Allergy information (Food, Medicine, Other)

Parent's Name(s): _____

Home Phone: _____

Address: _____

Church Parish you belong to: _____

Mother's Cell Phone/Work Phone: _____

Father's Cell Phone/Work Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Emergency information, OTHER THAN parents

1st Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone _____

2nd Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone _____

Parental Consent: _____

I give my child(ren) listed above permission to participate in the Vacation Church School held July 27 - 31, 2020. I understand that my child(ren) will be responsible for obeying the rules and regulations of VCS as enforced by the directors, teachers, and staff. I hereby release Holy Cross church, its VCS teachers and staff from liability for the safety and/or conduct of my child (ren). I also give permission for emergency medical care to be administered to my child(ren) if necessary.

Signature of Parent _____ Date _____

For administrative use:

Date Received _____ Amt Recd/Check _____ Amt Recd/Cash _____

HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
123 GILKESON ROAD
PITTSBURGH, PA 15228

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

✠ PASCHA ✠

HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 18
9AM VESPERAL LITURGY
(FIRST RESURRECTION)



10PM NOCTURNES

10:30PM *Receive THE LIGHT*

11PM ORTHOS/LITURGY OF THE RESURRECTION

✠ PASCHA ✠

SUNDAY, APRIL 19
NOON

ACAPE VESPERS

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