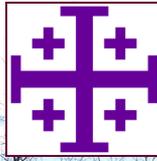


HOLY CROSS



CROSSROADS

Beloved Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

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

This month of February is a month of transitions, liturgically. We begin the month with the great feast of The Meeting of the Lord in the Temple (February 1 & 2nd). This feast concludes the forty-day celebration of the Nativity and Theophany of our Lord. Christ enters the Temple not only to fulfill the Law, but also to encounter St. Symeon, the Prophetess Anna (the daughter of Phanuel), and those who were there. These faithful and devout servants of God were waiting, with all the faithful people of Israel, for the Messiah. Jesus enters the Temple to encounter the faithful. **Each time we enter the Church, we come with that same anticipation that we will encounter Christ.** We will receive His Body and Blood in Holy Communion, and we will leave refreshed and renewed, knowing that we can indeed depart in peace, according to the Word of the Lord, for we have beheld the salvation of Christ. We can embrace the cross that Christ has given us, knowing that we are victorious, if we hold fast to the source of our joy and love.

As we leave the Church we should recite the prayer of St. Symeon:

Continued pg. 4 →



Are you ready for some **BASKETBALL?!!!**

Holy Cross GOYA is honored to host the 2023 GOYA Regional Basketball Tournament February 17,18,19, 2023

This year, there will be over 300 GOYAns participating in our tournament. Hosting a Diocese Basketball Tournament is truly a community effort. Much help and many items are needed. Please choose to help in whatever way you can. In doing so, you will not only be supporting our youth, you will be helping Holy Cross be the best we can be in welcoming our young people from our Diocese.

Thank you in advance for your support!

Sponsor:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friday Night Social Event Snacks..\$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Night Event Snacks..... \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friday Night Paper Products.....\$150 | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Night Paper Products\$150 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friday Night Beverages..... \$125 | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Night Beverages..... \$125 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Night Event Decoration...\$250 |

Or for those desiring to make a substantially larger donation.... Various opportunities exist for underwriting the larger costs of renting gyms, paying referees, buying trophies and providing the DJ for the social events. Please contact Denise Melis 412.341.9264

All donors will be acknowledged in the Tournament Program Book.

Give of your time:

Set up and Clean upHelp set up Thursday night at 6pm, Saturday at 5pm before dance, and clean up Sunday after breakfast

Monitor Gyms....Spending 2 hours at gym representing Holy Cross to make sure everything goes as planned

Chaperone Dance....Saturday night from 8:30pm in the Community to watch young people having a good time

Score Keepers....3 hours of keeping the score book or time clock at local gyms

Hotel Security...Walking halls at Crowne Plaza hotel Friday and Saturday nights

Registration....Friday 4pm in the Community Center registering players

Call Denise Melis if you would like to *volunteer your time* 412.341.9264

I have enclosed \$_____ as a TAX DEDUCTIBLE donation to Holy Cross GOYA.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

**Please return this form no later than January 30, 2023.
Holy Cross GOYA 123 Gilkeson Road Pittsburgh, PA 15228**

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church

123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228

Crossroads, published monthly Volume 23 Issue 2

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.

Fr. Michael Kallaur, Economos
Fr. Daniel Korba, Presbyter
Dn. Frank Dickos, Deacon
Elias Diamond, Pastoral Assistant

Nena Jovonovich, Secretary

Website: holycrosspgh.org

Office (412) 833-3355 FAX (412) 833-3357

Community Center Phone:(412) 854-6001

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

Organizations & Committees

Church School	Elias Diamond	(412) 833-3355
Philoptochos Pres.	Thea Manos	(412) 600-8640
Phil. Membership	Adrienne Dickos	(412) 833-4980
Circle of Angels	Carol Halkias	(412) 276-5002
	Christine Peters	(724) 693-9290
	Dina Hartlep	(412) 720-9383
Garden of Love	Stacie Metrose	(412) 833-5164
	Didra Kirschner	(412) 561-2892
Greek School	Dena Yamalis	(412) 343-8355
Junior Dance	Kristina Gzikowski	(412) 257-5015
Senior Dance	Georgia Yamalis	(412) 728-2259
Choir		
First Steps	Sophia Alfaras-Melainis	(412) 251-3209
JOY	Elias Diamond	(412)413-7427
Young Adults	Elias Diamond	(412)413-7427
GOYA	Denise Melis	(412) 341-9264
Golden Club	Cynthia Kostelnik	(412) 833-9423
	Rene Koett	(412) 831-3142
Bookstore	Mary Portellos	(724) 941-8699
House Committee	Konrad Mayr	(412) 877-7780
Building Comm.	John Conomos	(412) 831-7997
Sts. Mary & Martha	Adrienne Dickos	(412) 833-4980
Interior Design Committee	Janet Conomos	(412) 831-7997

***Services:**

Sundays:	8:15am Orthros
	9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Mondays:	6:30pm Paraclesis
Wednesdays:	7 pm Bible Study and via Zoom
Weekdays:	8:30am Orthros
	9:30am Divine Liturgy
Saturdays:	Vespers 5pm

**See monthly calendar for all services.*

Parish Council 2023

Constance Zotis, President
Jordan Nicholas, Vice President
Nicholas Tripodes, Treasurer
Jim Mustakas, Financial Secretary
Rachel Kartofilis, Secretary
Nick Ambeliotis
Christopher Chaney
Mark Hummel
Frank Kalogeris
George Liadis
Tom Mourtaeos
Christine Picard
Dean Stambolis
Donna Staub
Annie Urso

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). 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.



“Lord now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word. For my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all people. A light to enlighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of Your people Israel.” (Lk. 2:29-32)

With the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord, we conclude our celebrations of the Lord’s Incarnation (His birth), Theophany (the revelation of the Holy Trinity at the baptism of Christ), and now His Meeting in the Temple (the prophecy of His Messianic work for all peoples of the world, and the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies to Israel). The Church now directs our attention toward the most intense work of the liturgical year, the Triodion. We prepare for our journey to enter into the **Great Fast, that begins this year on Monday - February 27th.**

Shortly, on February 4th, we will enter the season of the Triodion. This will mark our preparations for the Great Fast. This is the title of the year, the 10% that God asks of us to continue our spiritual renewal and embrace a discipline of fasting, prayer, and acts of mercy. All times are given to this effort, but we especially set aside this time of Lent to embrace a new regiment of prayerful struggle. The Great Fast does not begin until February 27th, however, the Church gives us almost an entire month to prepare ourselves for this important undertaking. The Church understands that unless we prepare to make this effort and fully understand why, we will not be ready to enter the Lenten season.

Lent is referred to as the “School of Repentance.” We begin an ascetical effort that helps soften our hearts that we might see our sins and confess them before the Lord. This discipline of fasting, prayer, and Church services breaks the routine of our daily schedules and forces us to place a higher priority on our relationship with God and fulfilling His commandments. The Triodion begins this year on Saturday (at Great Vespers),

February 4th, and the theme of humility is emphasized with the Gospel of the Publican and Pharisee (Luke 18:10-14). **Also, this year it is our Godparent/ Godchild Sunday. It is important to renew and strengthen our relationships with our Godchildren and Godparents.**

There are four Sundays that prepare us to enter into the Great Fast. Each Sunday focuses on a theme that is necessary for our spiritual growth.

The first Sunday (February 5th) is of the Publican and Pharisee and focuses on humility. (Luke 18:10-14). To emphasize this point, that we make spiritual progress through humility and not by boasting of our deeds before God (or man), the Church forbids fasting during this week.

The second Sunday (February 12th) is of the Prodigal Son (The Loving Father) and focuses on forgiveness and the desire of God to receive all of us into His Heavenly Kingdom. (Luke 15:11-32). This week is a normal (Wednesday and Friday) fasting week.

The third Sunday (February 19th) is of the Last Judgment and focuses on the Second Coming of Christ and how the Lord will judge mankind. The judgment is based on how we have loved, or failed to love, one another. (Matthew 25:31-46). This Sunday is called "Meatfare Sunday" and is our last day for meat products.

*** Please note that we are hosting the Metropolis Basketball Tournament this weekend. His Eminence, Metropolitan SAVAS, will be with us on Sunday. We also will be acknowledging Denise Melis' forty years of service to our youth.

The fourth and final Sunday (February 26th) before Lent is Forgiveness Sunday. The Lord commands us to forgive one another as He has forgiven us. We enter our Lenten journey by asking forgiveness from all. (Matthew 6:14-21). This Sunday is called "Cheesefare Sunday" and is our last day for dairy products. On Sunday evening we gather for the Forgiveness Vespers

(5pm) where we begin our Lenten journey by asking forgiveness of one another. Without forgiving one another, God cannot forgive us!

Lent begins on "Clean Monday" (February 27th).

PASCHA is April 16th !

St. Nicholas Velimirovic writes,

What does God seek of men, and what does He give them? He seeks repentance and gives forgiveness of sin. He seeks little and gives all. Men & women have only to repent of the committing of sin and stop sinning, and they will receive all from God, all indeed! Not only that which their hearts are able to desire, but more, much more. All is promised to the sinless. The sinless will be inheritors of the Kingdom of God, sons of God, children of light, children of immortality, companions of the angels, brothers of Christ. The sinless will have abundant life, abundant peace, wisdom, power and joy. The sinless will have all, for all is promised to them.

Man & woman must only repent, and they will receive all. The beggar must only cleanse himself and bathe and clothe himself in clean clothes before the gates of the heavenly court, and he will immediately be led into that heavenly court and be met and greeted by the King, seated at the King's table, and he will have all, in abundance and flowing over. Oh, my brethren, these are not only words, but are living and holy truths, for we know that many repentant sinners have received all that has been promised. Many have appeared from the other world and confirmed the truth of these words, witnessing how they now live as sons and daughters of the King. They repented in good time, but we have yet to repent if we want to be together with them as heirs of the Kingdom.

O merciful Lord, help us to repent before the hour of our death, that we may live in eternity." (*Prologue*, Volume I, pg. 208-209)

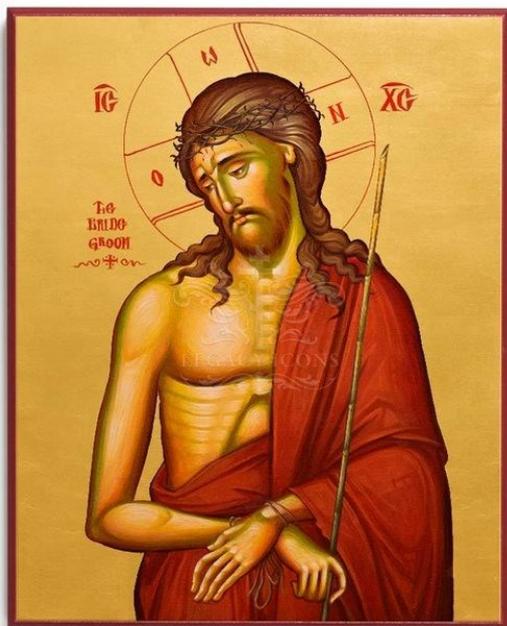
Lent is our opportunity to focus on our repentance! We do not deny our sinfulness, rather we confess our sins and ask God to help us overcome that which separates us from Him. As simple as this sounds, it does require effort and determination on our part. Our efforts will not go unrewarded. Each year (for we do not know how many Lenten opportunities we will have) we are given another opportunity to enter into this arena of spiritual warfare. Let us not give excuses or be distracted from our task at hand. As we grow spiritually, let us allow the Grace of the Holy Spirit to help us attract the holiness of God. Let us walk humbly before our God, and with faith and with love seek to approach Him.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, let us not lose this opportunity and seek to encounter our Loving God in all that Church provides for us!

May our preparations and desires be blessed! Asking for your forgiveness for my short comings as your priest and your prayers for a fruitful Lenten journey.

Καλη Σαρακοστη !

With love in Christ,
Fr. Michael



THE SERVICES OF THE GREAT FAST

Every year our Lenten journey is shaped by the services we experience throughout this special season. On Monday evenings we experience the service of The Great Compline (the service after the evening meal). This penitential service is enhanced (during the first and fifth weeks) by the reading from the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete. The words, "Have mercy on me O God, have mercy on me." are repeated over and over again. Like the waves of the ocean slowly transforming the sea shells and rocks into sand, we ask for God's mercy to wear away our stubborn self centeredness, our passions, and sins and lift us out of the mire and darkness of a fallen world. The prayers pierce our hardened heart and awaken in us a sense of contrition and repentance. We ask our Lord to cleanse us and strengthen us. "Lord of the Powers be with us, for in times of distress, we have no other help but You, Lord of the Powers have mercy on us."

On Wednesday evenings and Friday mornings the Church offers us the Holy Eucharist in the context of a special service called the Presanctified Gifts. Liturgies during weekdays are prohibited during Lent. The exception to this rule is the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25th). This evening service (Vespers) is familiar to us as we chant the various Psalms of Ascent. The Church selects the Psalms that were traditionally recited as one journeyed to the Temple in Jerusalem (on top of the hill). These Psalms of Ascent begin with our spiritual disposition being far away from God and conclude with us drawing near to our God. After the Psalms, readings from the Old Testament, we have an entrance of The Gifts that have been consecrated on the previous Sunday. "Now the powers of heaven serve with us. For behold the King of Glory enters invisibly escorted. Let us faith and love draw near, that we may become partakers of eternal life." The Gifts are offered to the Faithful, to help and sustain us in our spiritual efforts. In the darkness of the night, we receive the Bread of Life (and we receive the Light that illumines all!), the true food that sustains us in this life; that we might be partakers of eternal life now and in the age to come.

On Friday evenings, we gather to celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation. The lights are no longer lowered, the vestments shift from the purple back to gold and blue, and we move the focus from our own penitential efforts to the awesome mystery of God's Incarnation (His becoming man).

From the hymns:

“Gabriel the Archangel was sent from heaven to announce to the Virgin the glad tidings of her conceiving; and coming to Nazareth he pondered in amazement at this wonder. ‘ O how shall He who dwells in the heights, whom none can comprehend, be born of a Virgin? How shall He whose throne is heaven and whose footstool is the earth be held in the womb of a woman? He upon whom the six winged seraphim and the many eyed cherubim cannot gaze has been pleased at a single word to be made flesh of this His creature. It is the Word of God who dwells within her. Why then do I stand here, and not say to the Maiden: Hail, O pure Virgin; Hail, Bride unwedded. Hail, Mother of Life: Blessed is the fruit of your womb.’” (*Feast of the Annunciation from Great Vespers*)

The Apolytikion:

Today marks the crowning of our salvation and the revelation of the mystery before all the ages. The Son God becomes the son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaims the grace. Wherefore, we also cry out with him, “Hail O full of grace, the Lord is with you.”

The word for the Feast of the Annunciation in Greek is “Evangelismos.” This literally means the Good News. From this word comes the word for the Gospel, “Evangelion.” This good news is not just another announcement, but rather **The Announcement**.

It is the ultimate Announcement, for it is the Announcement that God has become man, the Announcement of the Presence of the Wisdom of God, not of the wisdom of man as before Christ, but of the Wisdom of God. It changes everything in world history, overshadowing and surpassing all human wisdom.

We stand in awe of God’s mercy and condescension. We also consider the great love and obedience of the Virgin Mary. Today God becomes an embryo in the womb of the Virgin. Today the Virgin becomes a mother, but not just a mother, but The Mother of God. Today, in accepting the announcement of the Archangel Gabriel, in accepting the Will of God, the Virgin becomes the highest of all mankind, 'more honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim'. She exceeds in her sacrifice all other men and women in human history. She becomes linked with all eternity and surpasses humanity while remaining human. In a word, this earthly being be-

Continued pg. 10 →

comes through her sacrifice the Mother of God, which is why we, though still on earth, commemorate her in heavenly blue, the vestment color we wear to honor the Mother of God. She is the "Champion General" helping us in battle to defeat the enemies both visible and invisible. We remember throughout history the many times the Mother of God has directly interceded and still intercedes on our behalf before her Son and our God.

In accepting this cross of sacrifice, the Mother of God also accepts the approaching Cross of victory of her Son. This is a very significant fact and indeed this is a spiritual law. For every sacrifice, for every cross that we take on ourselves according to God's Will, we receive a spiritual reward. It may not come at once, but it will inevitably come. This is a spiritual law, just as, in the same way, if we fail to make a sacrifice and take up our cross when God calls us, we miss that opportunity to fulfill God's will for us.

The sacrifice of the Mother of God in accepting to bear and nourish God, giving Him her blood, bones and flesh, and raise Him as a man is such that she alone among all mankind can lead us, if we wish to follow her, into Eternity, to the Resurrection of Christ.

Saturday Mornings are dedicated to praying for our departed loved ones. The Church remembers all those who have gone before us in the hope of Resurrection. The liturgies offered on the Saturday of the Souls are very important because we are connected to our departed fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters in Faith and in Love. Our God is the God of the living, not the dead. The prayers offered by the Church have a very powerful effect upon the departed. Through the remembrance of our departed love ones, miracles have taken place. Peace and consolation are granted to the departed through God's love and mercy. The Blood of Christ washes away the sins of those commemorated in the Divine Liturgy and grants hope to all those who call upon the Name of the Lord.

Saturday Evening Vesper services help prepare us for Divine Liturgy on Sunday. Vespers announces the new day and the various themes of the week. Each Sunday is dedicated to a particular aspect of preparation for Baptism (preparing the Catechumens to be baptized on Holy Saturday) and each Sunday is also given a secondary theme or saint (Triumph of Orthodoxy / Victory of the Holy Icons, St. Gregory Palamas, Holy Cross, St. John of the Ladder, St. Mary of Egypt).

HOLY WEEK

Lazarus Saturday - April 8th - 8:30am Matins/9:30am Divine Liturgy followed by Palm Cross Making/ Confessions/ Church clean up for Holy Week and Pascha. Vespers at 5pm

Palm Sunday - April 9th- Matins 8:15am / 9:30am Divine Liturgy with Blessing of Palms. Philoptochos Fish Luncheon immediately following the services.

Bridegroom Matins Service at 5pm Sunday evening.

Great & Holy Monday - April 10th - 9am Presanctified Liturgy / 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins

Great & Holy Tuesday - April 11th - 9am Presanctified Liturgy / 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins (Hymn of Kassiani)

Great & Holy Wednesday - April 12th- 9am Presanctified Liturgy / 3pm Holy Unction / 6:30pm Matins of Holy Thursday (with anointing of Holy Unction)

Great & Holy Thursday - April 13th - 9am Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil - Institution of the Holy Eucharist / 6:30pm Passion Gospels / 10pm Vigil by the Cross

Great & Holy Friday - April 14th - 9am Royal Hours/ 3pm Great Vespers (Taking down of the Body of Christ from the Cross) / 6:30pm Praises (Procession with the Epitaphion)

Great & Holy Saturday April 15th - 9am Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil (Proto-Anastasi)
10pm Nocturns/10:30pm Receiving of the Light/Midnight -Matins/ Liturgy of PASCHA - Agape Meal to follow services

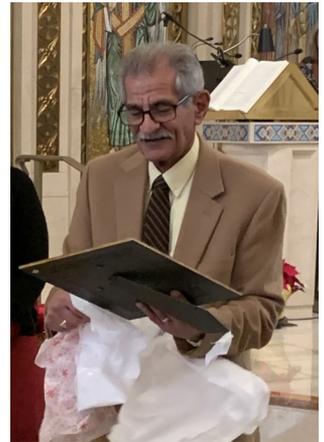
PASCHA - April 16th - 12noon - Agape Vespers (Gospel of the Resurrection proclaimed in all languages)

Please mark you calendars and please give priority, especially during this upcoming Lenten season, to the Church services. We make this offering of our time and give special effort to our spiritual life to express our love and devotion to God.

Beautiful *Uasilopita*
made by the nuns at Holy
Protection Monastery in
White Haven, Pennsylvania
and delivered to Holy Cross
by Andrew Pyros.



ICON PRESENTED
TO
DEAN STAMBOLIS
FOR SERVING AS
PARISH COUNCIL
PRESIDENT THE
PAST TWO YEARS,
2021 AND 2022.



Chrismation of Stephen Gragan, fiancé of Sophia Lugares.
Sponsor is Nick Tripodes.



Holy Cross friends of Stacie Metrose gathered for a lunch to celebrate our newest *nonagenarian*. Unbelievable that there are actually more than one in this photo. All of these beautiful ladies look fantastic!





Athena
Terzis,
99
years
young!!

Metropolis Regional Lenten Mini Retreats

Open to all HOPE and JOY Kids (K-6th Grade)

Northwest Region: March 4, 2023 from 11 am - 4 pm

Location: St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church
4548 Wallings Rd. North Royalton, OH

Contact: Anastasis Phyrillas at aphyrillas@stpaulgoc.org

Registration Link: <https://tinyurl.com/nopejoyretreat>

Central Region: March 4, 2023 from 10 am - 2 pm

Location: Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
985 Providence Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA

Contact: Alyssa Kyritsis at akyritsis@pittsburgh.goarch.org

Registration Link: HolyTrinityPgh.org/events

Eastern Region: February 11, 2023 from 10 am - 4 pm

Location: Chrysostom Academy
395 Bridlepath Rd. Bethlehem, PA

Contact: Fr. Alexey Petrides at fralexandros@stnicholas.org

Registration Link: stnicholas.org/joyretreat

Register by
January 31

Southwestern Region: March 11, 2023 from 10 am - 1 pm

Location: St. John Greek Orthodox Church
3512 MacCorkle Ave. Charleston, WV 25304

Contact: Alyssa Kyritsis at akyritsis@pittsburgh.goarch.org

Registration Link: <https://tinyurl.com/SWLentMiniRetreat>

Participants will enjoy learning about the different Sundays of Lent. Lessons include crafts, service projects and more! Lunch will be provided.

Please Register by February 24, 2023

Sacraments

Baptisms

November 5 ~ **Henry George**, son of Kevin and Ruth (Aspiotes) Schwarz. Godmother is Laurie Roorbach.

November 19 ~ **Luca Angelo**, son of George and Alana (Dunn) Frazier. Godfather is Michael Frazier.

December 29 ~ **Annika Fotini**, daughter of James and Maria (Houmis) Buldas. Godmother is Stephanie Roccon.

January 21, 2023 ~ **Archer Reed (Achillius)**, son of Christopher and Alison (Waddle) Passodelis. Godparents are William C. Passodelis Jr and Christopher Passodelis Jr.

Marriages

October 29 **Garrett Lloyd Blake and Krista Irene Liokareas**. Koumbara is Jenna Liokareas.

December 31 **Alexander K. Pantuso and Alexa Jo Kalogeris**. Koumbara is Vasilki Kalogeris.

Funerals

October 22 **Dean Constantine Trigg** (77) of Rhode Island.

December 12 **Constance (Constantina) Carahalis** (92), — survived by son, John and wife, Jillian; daughter, Panorea and husband, Alan. Connie was a past president of Philoptochos, membership chair for years, and a familiar face serving food to the patrons of festivals well into her late eighties.

December 30, 2022 **Ann Karras**, (94), mother of Kristina Lisivick, and Eugenia and Lou.

Sympathy to families of:

Dr. Paul N. Mastros (88) of Steubenville, survived by wife Pana and children: Dr. Nicholas Mastros (Angela), **Presvytera Eleni Kallaur (Rev. Michael Kallaur)**, Maria Matzorkis (Gregory), and attorney Costa Mastros (Dr. Michelle Frangos Mastros) and nine grandchildren, including **Constantine, Apostoli and Luke**.

George Zaimes (80) of Ohio, former Holy Cross parishioner, survived by his beloved wife for 53 years, Dena “Denise” (Nichols) of Sheffield Village, OH; loving father of Tom Zaimes of Del Ray Beach, FL and Lia (Alex) Augoustidis, of Cleveland, Ohio.



FEB

11



DAY OF SERVICE A LENTEN CLEAN UP

Holy Cross Sanctuary

SATURDAY, Feb 11 10AM - NOON

Join us in cleaning up our Sanctuary. We have successfully completed the cleaning of the Community Center, the Sunday School areas and the Narthex. The crown of this effort will be the gleaming shining Sanctuary. Come when you can and choose the job you would like to do. We will be cleaning icons, marble, brass, doors, floors, and surfaces. (We will not be cleaning pews as the Altar Society cares for them each Monday.)

Community Service hours available. All ages welcome. **Please let us know if you will attend: akdickos@verizon.net.**

Dear Holy Cross Parishioner,

...from the Landscape Committee

Glory to God! Twenty-three families have stepped forward and pledged over \$100,000 toward our landscape beautification efforts. We invite our entire Holy Cross community to respond to this generous offering and match their love.

The landscape committee has developed the Holy Cross Landscape Master Plan with input from our parish, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and a professional landscape architect. We took a step toward leaving a sustainable legacy of stewardship to our children and grandchildren by adopting this plan at our January 2022 parish general assembly. Our plan represents a strategic vision to beautify and maintain our gardens, walkways, and gathering spaces.

We need your help to achieve the following goals:

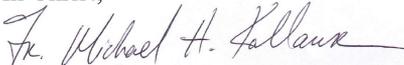
- **Beautification** through enhancing the grounds/property of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church to be as beautiful as the Church architecture.
- **Stewardship** through creating usable spaces for Holy Cross parishioners to gather, celebrate and pray. Examples of this would be our Paschal celebrations, food festivals, weddings, etc.
- **Fulfilling Environmental/Ecological responsibilities** by reducing soil erosion and remediating storm water runoff.
- **Sustainability** by planting native plants that will thrive in Western Pennsylvania and by adding pollinator habitats that support endangered species such as the Monarch Butterfly.
- **Save on long term maintenance** through less watering, grass cutting and mulching. By investing prudently now, we aim to save the community significant resources in the future.

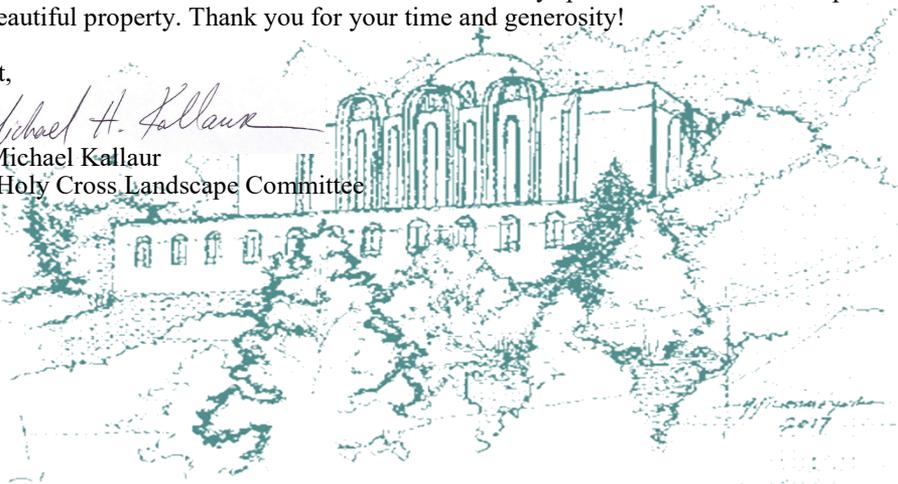
All plans and project details are accessible at <https://www.holycrosspgh.org/improvement-projects>.

Please make checks payable to Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church (memo: landscape beautification) or online payments can be made through our Holy Cross website under donations and stewardship.

Your gift is essential to the revitalization of our community spaces and the stewardship of our beautiful property. Thank you for your time and generosity!

In Christ,


Father Michael Kallaur
and the Holy Cross Landscape Committee



Holy Cross

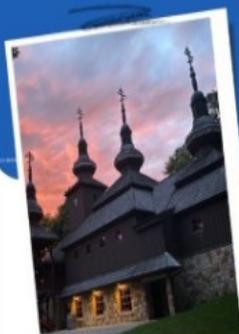
SUN	MON	TUE
<p>5 <i>Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy Godparent/Godchild Sunday and Luncheon</p>	<p>6 6:30pm Paraclesis</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>12 <i>Sunday of the Prodigal Son</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy <u>GOYA/JOY MAKING VALENTINES</u> AFTER CHURCH</p>	<p>13 6:30pm Paraclesis</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>19 <i>Judgment/Meatfare Sunday</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy No Memorials</p>	<p>20 <i>St. Leo, Bishop of Catania</i> 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Div Liturgy</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>GOYA BASKETBALL HERE</p>	<p>6:30pm Paraclesis</p>	
<p>26 <i>Forgiveness/Cheesefare Sunday</i> 8:15am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy No Memorials 5pm Forgiveness Vespers</p>	<p>27 <i>Clean Monday</i> <i>Lent begins</i> 6:30pm Great Compline</p>	<p>28 7pm <i>Sts. Mary & Martha</i> 7PM <u>YAL</u> PRAYER ROPE MAKING WORKSHOP</p>

February 2023

WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p>1 February</p> <p>4:15PM GREEK SCHOOL 6:45pm GOYA Basketball 6:30pm Vespers @Ypapanti</p>	<p>2 Meeting of the Lord @Ypapanti 9am Orthros 10am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Triodion begins 5pm Vespers</p>
<p>8 St. Theodore the General & Zachariah 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>4:15PM GREEK SCHOOL 6:45pm GOYA Basketball NO Bible Study</p>	<p>9</p> <p>7pm Catechism Class</p>	<p>10 St. Haralambos 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>11 10am-Noon Day of Service Lenten Cleanup</p> <p>5pm Vespers</p>
<p>15</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 6:45pm GOYA Basketball NO Bible Study</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 Saturday of Souls 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>6:15pm Vespers</p>
		GOYA BASKETBALL HERE @ HOLY CROSS	
<p>22</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 7pm Bible Study</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7pm Catechism Class</p>	<p>24 St. Polycarp 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Div Liturgy</p> <p>6:30PM JOY ICON MAKING WORKSHOP</p>	<p>25 Saturday of Souls 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>5pm Vespers and Acolyte Altar Cleaning</p>
<p>1 March</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 6pm Presanctified Liturgy</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3 9am Presanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Salutations</p>	<p>4 Saturday of Souls 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>5pm Vespers and Confessions</p>

Upcoming Events

- GOYA Spring Retreat Registration Opens: February 1
- GOYA Spring Retreat: March 31 -April 2
- Summer Camp 2023 Registration Opens: April 4
- Summer Camp 2023 Dates: See below!



SUMMER CAMP 2023

WEEK 1: JUNE 18-JUNE 24 (GRADES 2-4)

WEEK 2: JUNE 25-JULY 1 (GRADES 5-7)

WEEK 3: JULY 2-JULY 8 (GRADES 7-9)

WEEK 4: JULY 9-JULY 15 (GRADES 10-12)



Save the Dates!!!

Everyone has a lot of opinions about taxes. Whether it's how much, how little, who or what should be taxed, it gets talked about a lot these days. For as a wise man once said, there is nothing certain in life but death and taxes. Of course, the tendency with a subject of taxes, just like any other subject that has a long history, is that we can tend to let our contemporary views retrofit the meaning of the gospel readings. You see, taxes and tax collectors play a big role in the gospels. Matthew, one of the writers of the four canonical gospels, was a tax collector before he joined Christ. And today's gospel features another tax collector, Zacchaeus. However, unless we properly contextualize it, we miss the full depth of this aspect of the gospel.



You see, in the time of Christ, the Kingdom of Judaea was occupied by the Romans, who levied significant taxes on this small Kingdom on the edge of the Middle East. Those who collected these taxes were Jewish citizens, like Matthew or Zacchaeus, which made them traitors to the masses who decried the Roman occupation. Not only that, the wages of tax collecting were not an hourly wage, nor were they salaried, but rather, the tax collectors effectively would shake down those being taxed for as much as they could, in order to line their own pockets.

It is notable that the gospel of Mark, which I have been studying recently, one of the first major conflicts between the Pharisees and Christ comes at a point when Christ is dining at a tax-collector's house with a company of his associates. The Pharisees ask why he dines with sinners. It goes to show that the tax collectors of Christ's day were viewed as the worst of the worst, traitors to their country and thieves from the pockets of their own people. Yet, Christ's response in this passage where he dines with these sinners gets to the heart of the Gospel. For He responds that it is not for the righteous, but the sinners that He came. A man who is well is one in no need of a physician, and Christ is physician of our souls. This is not to say that Christ did not come for everyone. No, it is rather to say that he came for all of us because we are all sinners, and only someone so proud to think himself or herself truly righteous and free from sin, only someone like that can exclude themselves from the kingdom of God.

This is what today's passage regarding Zacchaeus shows us. It shows us that even a sinner in the depths can change and become a saint. Nevertheless, this change requires two things. It requires zeal; it requires a deep desire to encounter Christ, a desire expressed by the tiny Zacchaeus as he scrambled up that tree to look upon the Lord. In addition, it also requires repentance, it requires us to change our ways, which is expressed by the way Zacchaeus pays back fourfold to those he despoiled for ill-gotten gains. So if you feel ever like you can never measure up, let this passage give you hope. In fact, it should give us all hope, that we can all become saints, if we have these two things: love and desire for Christ, and repentance.

Rejoice, people of God! Sing praises to our King! For this day the mystery before all ages has been revealed to us. For the transcendent, almighty God is now become both imminent and vulnerable. He who sits on a throne of Cherubim now lies in a manger. He, Who holds all creation in the palm of His Hand, is held in the arms of a loving mother. He, Whom no man can behold, Who wraps Himself in clouds, can now be seen, wrapped in swaddling clothes. The greatness of the Nativity lay in the reality that the inapproachable God has become approachable. But we can misinterpret this to mean only that God has come to us, since that is what "Emmanuel" means, yet there is more. As with any great act of Divine Grace, God presents Himself to us without imposing Himself on us. And there is a component of cooperation implicit in the Nativity that we cannot overlook. For God asks something of us here. If He is now approachable, then we are called to approach Him. He has come to us so that we might come to Him. Let us then consider this invitation, and what it means to us as the people of God.

In the Gospel accounts of the Nativity we see how the people responded. In Luke, the shepherds hear the good news proclaimed by the angels that "unto them was born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." But after the announcement, the shepherds did not simply rejoice and go back to tending their flocks. Indeed the Gospel records that at first they did not rejoice at all. Instead they said: "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." These simple and poor folk, among the least of the people of Israel, left their task at hand and came to see the Child. They knew that God was calling them, and they approached. And only after they encountered Him, did the shepherds "glorify God for all they had seen."

A similar thing happens in Matthew's account. The magi, who were both astronomers and astrologers, saw the star in the East, and sensing in their hearts its importance, left their duties and



went looking for One Whom they had never seen, to know the One they had never known. They approached God and after encountering Him, they worshipped Him, even though they were not of the house of Israel.

But what became of the rest of the people of God? After all, the announcement was made to them as well. For the magi came first to Jerusalem and proclaimed to Herod their intent. But instead of approaching, we see another reaction. For the Gospel records that upon hearing the news, "Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Indeed, the word used in Greek is *etaracqh*, which means "greatly distressed." More than this, Herod does not follow the example of either the magi or the shepherds. He does not interrupt what he is doing to encounter the God of his fathers, the Holy One of Israel, but continues on with his normal routine. And the rest of Jerusalem does the same. Instead, he sends those outside His faith to act in proxy to him, claiming that only after they have found the Child, will he come to worship. But Herod only pays lip service to the homage; instead, in his heart he moves away from God, both inconvenienced and threatened by God's Grace and Love. How great is this tragedy! For the respected, educated, and well-to-do of Jerusalem do not run to encounter

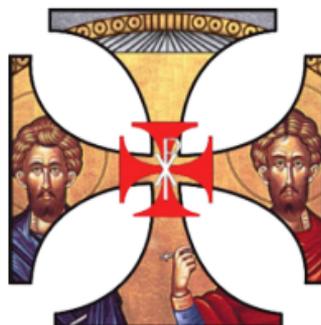
the King of Glory; instead, it is the poor and ignoble of Judea and those outside the faith who drop everything to approach Him, the One Who is the salvation of the world.

And so especially on this day, this must be a lesson for all of us. For God is here. God is among us. He has come to encounter His people. Have we come to encounter Him? We who are the among the well to do of our day and age must not follow the example of the respected of Jerusalem in the days of Caesar Augustus. We must instead follow the example of the shepherds and the magi. For indeed they walk among us today. There are shepherds here, who hold common occupations and live in modest lifestyles, who come to worship the True God, but who are overlooked by many because of their lack of social status. And there are magi as well, who have come from outside the Faith to embrace the Holy One of Israel, and are similarly overlooked because their ways are foreign to us. Yet the Lord counts all of us as His children. And united as one people, with one heart and one mind, we put everything aside to approach the incarnate God.

In the mystery of the Incarnation, not everything has changed. God is still the same in that He must be approached. Moses beheld the burning bush and approached. Elijah heard the still small voice and approached. The magi saw the star and approached. The shepherds heard the good news and approached. But Herod heard the tidings and stayed where he was. We should reject his neglect. We should reject his pomp. We should reject his pride. We should now instead put aside our prosperity and worldly station and all together with humility approach He Who in His humility put aside His immeasurable Glory and came to us. We also lay aside all earthly status and embrace one another. And let us as one people approach the God made manifest to us this day. For Christ is Born, and the heavens rejoice! Christ is Born, and the earth anticipates its renewal! Christ is Born, and the Children of Adam behold their Redeemer! To Him be all Glory, now and forever. Amen.

~Deacon Frank Dickos

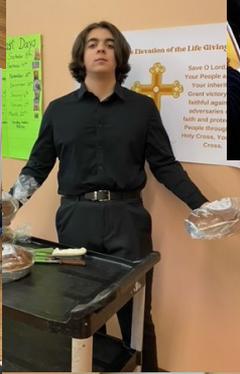
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Archdiocese Philoptochos. Anything above and beyond \$25 goes to
Holy Cross Philoptochos Charities.
Thank you for your prayerful consideration.





Saints Mary & Martha Women's Fellowship

**Please note that most of the Venues
below have changed.**

The Akathist Hymn

February 28, 2023

Stanza III

Speaker: Fr. George Athanasiou
At the new home
of Margaret Diamond
1020 Waterford Court W
Canonsburg, PA 15317
Text to RSVP 724-413-7410

March 28, 2023

Stanza IV

Speaker: Fr. Stelyios Muksuris
At the home of Irene Zotis
76 Woodland Drive
Mt. Lebanon 15228
RSVP Text 412-721-0146

April 25, 2023

Canon

Speaker: Fr. George Callas
At the home of Adrienne Dickos
1840 Kent Road
Upper St Clair 15241
Text to RSVP 412-400-4290

May 23, 2023

Aspile

Speaker: Elias Diamond
At the home of Joanne Ferencz
1028 Francis Road
Castle Shannon 15234
Text to RSVP 724-953-1091

**Remember, all meetings run
from 7pm-9pm.**



COOK BOOK

HOLY CROSS
GREEK COOKBOOK
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The Holy Cross
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Greek Cookbook, \$20 each,
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on Sundays! Please see Elaine
Sofis or call Home 412 344-7046
or email esofis@comcast.net
for a copy. These cookbooks
make great Valentine, Anniver-
sary, Bridal shower and Birth-
day gifts!



Attention
High School Seniors
and Parents!

The application for the
**Popi Hagelios Memorial
Philanthropy Award of the
Philoptochos Society of Holy
Cross**

is available in the Narthex,
from Elaine Sofis,
esofis@comcast.net or
Denise

Melis, dmelis@comcast.net,
electronically.

The application is due by Sun-
day, March 19, 2023.

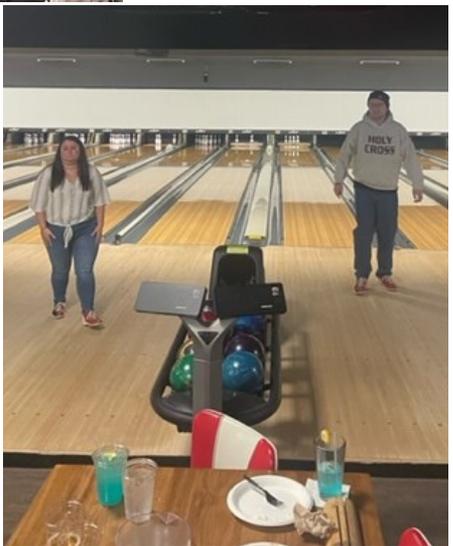
The award is available to a
2023 PLEDGED

Holy Cross family member
who is a graduating high school
senior in 2023.

A similar application is available
at Mt. Lebanon High School.
You may apply to both philan-
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YAL Bowling









The Body of Christ: Every Member Sacred

MARCH 11, 2023 | 10 AM - 3:30 PM
HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
123 GILKESON RD. PITTSBURGH, PA 15228

Our speaker, Presvytera Melanie, serves as Resource Developer for the GOA Center for Family Care. She directs the Fully Human Ministry and hosts a monthly podcast called *Family Matters: Fully Human Edition* on Ancient Faith Radio.

Drawing from the Gospels, the lives of the Saints, and Liturgical elements of worship, the retreat sessions will include both group and personal reflections, interactive discussions, and Q/A.

In worship we hold every particle of the Eucharist as precious and sacred. We will reflect on how God invites us to do the same with every member of His Body. Adults & teens welcome!



To Register, Go to: tinyurl.com/mddj858d



HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX BOOKSTORE

FEATURED BOOKS OF THE MONTH



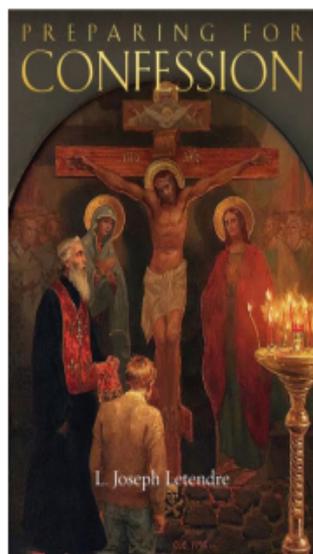
GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

BY PRESVYTERA ALEXANDRA CHAKOS

Meet Steven and his family - older brother, Paul, little sister, Sophia, who tries to keep the peace between her battling brothers; Dad, an Orthodox priest, busy with his own fundraising to build a new church; and Mom, just trying to keep up with all the activity. Enter into this charming world of a young clergy family - a place where God's presence is revealed in unexpected ways.

PREPARING FOR CONFESSION

"Preparing for Confession" has been an extremely popular book ever since it was first published in 1987. This helpful book has recently been brought back into print with this newly revised edition. From practical advice for preparation, to answering questions such as "what is sin?" and "what is the priest's role?" This is the guide that every Orthodox Christian needs for a more powerful experience of the Sacrament of Holy Confession.



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

Join Us for The Annual
Vlahokerasiotiki
Makaronada Dinner & Dance

Sunday, February 19th

St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral
419 S. Dithridge Street

Dinner Followed by Music

Cocktails 6:00 p.m.

Dinner 7:00 p.m.

Adults – \$35.00

Children 12 and under – \$15.00

Children 3 and under – Free

Pan of Makaronia To Go – \$20.00

***All proceeds will be matched by the Society and donated to the
St. Nicholas Cathedral ceiling restoration fund!***

For reservations, please contact Nikki Velisaris Lykos by February 12th
phone: 412-897-8208 e-mail: nvlykos@gmail.com

Name: _____ PHONE: _____

_____ Adults _____ Children 12 and under _____ Children 3 and under

_____ Pans of Makaronia To Go

Make checks payable to Manthyrea Educational Society and mail to:

Nikki Velisaris Lykos
1512 La Salle Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15216

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Godparent/Godchild

**Sunday
And Luncheon**

February 5, 2023

