

FEBRUARY 2018



Greek Orthodox
Metropolis of
New Jersey

Saint Andrew Family News

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF SAINT ANDREW GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MORRIS COUNTY

ICON: THE PUBLICAN AND PHARISEE – TRIODION BEGINS – JANUARY 28

ANNUAL MARDI GRAS – FEBRUARY 10

GODPARENTS' SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 18

Saint Andrew Family News

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF SAINT ANDREW GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF MORRIS COUNTY

On Sundays we celebrate

Orthros @ 8:45 AM & Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 AM

For other services please check our website or call the office

OFFICE HOURS

Mon – Fri 10am-4pm

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The Saint Andrew Family News is published monthly except in July and August and is distributed free of charge to all members. Submissions for the magazine are accepted **only as electronic files, (via e-mail attachment)**. Pending availability of space and permission from Editor-in-chief, your submission will be in the next month's issue.

*Please submit your articles and information on time to
Vasiliki (Bessie) Petrakos info@standrewgonj.org
Deadline for the **MARCH 2018 ISSUE** is February 12th*

DIVINE SERVICES

FEBRUARY

Thursday	1	ST. TRYPHON / RELICS*
Friday	2	THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR IN THE TEMPLE
Sunday	4	Sunday of the Prodigal Son
Tuesday	6	ST. PHOTIOS, Patriarch of Constantinople
Saturday	10	1 st Saturday of Souls (<i>with Kollyva</i>) - ST. HARALAMBOS / RELICS*
Sunday	11	Judgment Sunday (Meatfare Sunday)
Saturday	17	2 nd Saturday of Souls (<i>with Kollyva</i>)
Sunday	18	Forgiveness Sunday - Godparents' Sunday
Sunday	18	Forgiveness Vespers at 4:00pm
Monday	19	Office of the Great Compline @6:30pm <i>Lent Begins</i>
Wednesday	21	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:30pm
Friday	23	1 st Salutations @6:30pm
Saturday	24	3 rd Saturday of Souls (<i>with Kollyva</i>)) [ST. THEODORE <i>commemorated</i>]
Sunday	25	Sunday of Orthodoxy
Monday	26	Office of the Great Compline @6:30pm
Wednesday	28	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:30pm

MARCH

Friday	2	2 nd Salutations @6:30pm
Sunday	4	Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas
Monday	5	Office of the Great Compline @6:30pm
Wednesday	7	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:30pm
Friday	9	3 rd Salutations @6:30pm
Sunday	11	Sunday of the Holy Cross
Monday	12	Office of the Great Compline @6:30pm
Wednesday	14	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:30pm
Friday	16	4 th Salutations (<i>at St Andrew</i>) @6:30PM
Sunday	18	Sunday of St. John Climacus
Monday	19	Office of the Great Compline @6:30pm
Wednesday	21	Pan Orthodox Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:30pm / <i>Parishioners of St. Andrew and Holy Trinity will celebrate Liturgy at Sts Peter & Paul church, 66 Beech Street, Rockaway NJ at 6:30pm</i>
Friday	23	Akathist Hymn @6:30p
Saturday	24	Great Vespers at Evagelismos tis Theotokou in Jersey City
Sunday	25	Annunciation of the Theotokos/Greek Independence Day
Monday	26	Office of the Great Compline @6:30pm
Wednesday	28	Pre-Sanctified Gifts Liturgy @6:30pm
Saturday	31	Lazarus Saturday - Orthros & Divine Liturgy @8:00 am

Sundays: Orthros begins @ 8:45AM & Divine Liturgy @ 10AM
(*We have this saint's Relics at our Saint Andrew Reliquary*)*

ΙΕΡΕΣ ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΕΣ

ΦΕΒΡΟΥΑΡΙΟΣ

Πέμπτη	1	ΤΡΥΦΩΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΣ*
Παρασκευή	2	Η ΥΠΑΠΑΝΤΗ ΤΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ
Κυριακή	4	ΙΖ΄ Λουκά (τοῦ Ασώτου)
Τρίτη	6	+ΦΩΤΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ
Σαββάτο	10	Α΄ Ψυχοσάββατον (με κόλλυβα) +ΧΑΡΑΛΑΜΠΟΣ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΑ ΤΟΥ ΘΑΥΜΑΤΟΥΡΓΟΥ*
Κυριακή	11	Κυριακή τῆς Ἀπόκρεω
Σάββατο	17	Β΄ Ψυχοσάββατον (με κόλλυβα)
Κυριακή	18	Κυριακή τῆς Τυροφάγου –Κυριακή των Νονού και Νονάς
Κυριακή	18	Μέγας Εσπερινός <u>ώρα</u> 4:00μμ
Δευτέρα	19	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ <i>Νηστεία</i>
Τετάρτη	21	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Παρασκευή	23	Α΄ Χαιρετισμοί - <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Σάββατο	24	Γ΄ Ψυχοσάββατον(με κόλλυβα) [+ΑΓΙΟΥ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ]
Κυριακή	25	Κυριακή Α΄ τῶν Νηστειῶν (της Ὁρθοδοξίας)

ΜΑΡΤΙΟΣ

Παρασκευή	2	Β΄ Χαιρετισμοί - <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Κυριακή	4	Κυριακή Β΄ των Νηστειῶν - Γρηγόρου του Παλαμά Ἀρχιεπ. Θεσσαλονίκης
Δευτέρα	5	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ <i>Νηστεία</i>
Τετάρτη	7	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Παρασκευή	9	Γ΄ Χαιρετισμοί - <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Κυριακή	11	Κυριακή Β΄ των Νηστειῶν - Γρηγόρου του Παλαμά Ἀρχιεπ. Θεσσαλονίκης
Δευτέρα	12	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Τετάρτη	14	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Παρασκευή	16	Δ΄ Χαιρετισμοί - <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Κυριακή	18	Κυριακή Δ' τῶν Νηστειῶν - τοῦ Ὁσίου Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰωάννου τοῦ συγγραφέως
Τετάρτη	19	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Τετάρτη	21	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Παρασκευή	23	Ακάθιστος Ὕμνος
Κυριακή	25	Ο ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ «25η Μαρτίου»
Δευτέρα	20	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <i>Οι ενορίτες από τις εκκλησιές του Ἁγιο Ανδρέα και «Holy Trinity» θα γιορτάσουν την Θεία Λειτουργία μαζί με μας στην εκκλησία Sts Peter & Paul στο 66 Beech Street, Rockaway NJ <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ</i>
Τετάρτη	22	
Σαββάτο	24	Μέγας Εσπερινός στη Ευαγγελισμός της Θεοτόκου Jersey City, NJ
Κυριακή	25	Ο ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΟΥ «25η Μαρτίου»
Δευτέρα	26	Ακολουθία Μέγα Απόδειπνων <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μμ
Τετάρτη	28	Προαγιασμένη Λειτουργία <u>ώρα</u> 6.30μ
Σαββάτο	31	ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΛΑΖΑΡΟΥ

**Την Κυριακή – Ὁρθρος - ώρα 8.45πμ & Θεία Λειτουργία - ώρα 10πμ
(*Έχουμε τα Λείψανα του Αγίου στην Λειψανοθήκη της εκκλησία μας*)***

GET IN THE ARK!

By Fr. John Theodosion

When we were young we remember hearing the story of Noah and the Ark. Many of us as adults think of this story as a cute children's story in order to teach them to be good like Noah who found favor with God. In the 6th Chapter of Genesis we read:



"Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. And God said to Noah, 'I have determined to make an end of violence through them; behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and set the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks. For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in heaven; everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you and I will keep you safe.'"

As I studied this passage I thought about Noah's friends and neighbors. The Bible does not tell us a lot about friends and neighbors,

but I wonder what they were doing while Noah was building the Ark. What were they thinking? What did they talk about at the dinner table every night when in the shadow of their homes crazy Noah and his sons hammered and sawed and built. The story gets even stranger in the 7th Chapter of Genesis when God tells Noah,

"Now go into the Ark and shut the door and in seven days I am going to let the rains begin." I think about those friends and neighbors during those seven days, how they must have laughed and mocked Noah, their crazy neighbor. What would they have said, "Crazy old fool, fanatic! Weather comes in cycles. We'll be o.k. Why can't Noah and his kids be like the rest of the kids in the neighborhood?" And then the floods came and only those that were in the Ark survived.

Sometimes I think our Orthodox Faith is like that. People look at us strangely when they see us going to church at odd hours or fasting or wearing black when someone dies or any other of our traditions or customs that we as Greek Orthodox follow. Imagine how they looked at Noah but Noah and his family had such a strong faith in God that they were not afraid of what the other people thought of them what mattered was what God thought of them!

Our church which follows the Orthodox Faith is like Noah's Ark. When we have Faith in God and we climb into the church which is our ark. We find shelter and protection from the rainy days and floods of life. The floods of life can manifest themselves in so many ways. They can be floods of sin, floods of physical illness, floods of family problems, floods of money problems, and you understand what I mean.

Noah's Ark kept Noah, his family, and all the animals safe inside, just as our faith keeps us safe from the evils of the world. But we have to be inside. We need to get inside whenever the services of the church are offered. This is how we enter into the protection of the Lord. How can we be protected if we do not enter? I don't

think that entry into the church once or twice a year is really seeking God's protection. Imagine if Noah's sons said that they only wanted to be in the ark two of the 40 days. They certainly would have been drowned as soon as they left the ark.

Friends, Noah's neighbors did not seek shelter in the ark until it was too late and our opportunity to climb in is now. We shouldn't wait for the flood waters of life to come up around our neck before trying to climb in we should get in even when times are good so that we always have our church and the faith as our support and protection no matter what happens.

Bake Sale Fundraiser

January 14th - February 25th

Project Mexico
& St. Innocent Orphanage



Building Hope for Boys Without Families and Families Without Homes

Help support the mission work conducted by your fellow parishioners by keeping the success of their work in your prayers and by purchasing homemade baked goods during coffee hour. The money collected will go towards funding the trip and providing re-sources for the St. Innocent Orphanage.

MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION

2018 Αποκριάτικο Γλέντι

HOSTED BY THE ST. ANDREW PTA

SATURDAY, FEB. 10TH @ 5:00 P.M.

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New Year 2018

My Beloved in the Lord,

As we finish 2017 we are given the opportunity to contemplate the past year in preparation for the New Year of 2018. Often times people make resolutions thereby committing themselves to doing or not doing something that they believe will lead to them to being a better person. This occasion for reflection should not be limited to our external qualities, but should primarily be focused on our relationship with God, our relationship with the other, and our inner spiritual disposition.

The Church celebrates two significant feasts on January 1st which helps us to focus on these elements—the circumcision of Christ and the feast of St. Basil. Although some may be perplexed as to why the Church finds the former of these feasts to be significant, we must remain cognizant that it was not always the case in Church history when people believed that Christ actually became incarnate and took on flesh. This fact, which is most exemplified in the feast of the Nativity which has just passed, has extraordinary importance since it once again shows us that Christ has this intimate relationship with humanity insofar as He was born in the flesh and condescended to live that which was a culturally typical upbringing. It is one of the many ways in which He shows His humility even though He is God.

We also celebrate the feast of St. Basil who, throughout his life, exemplified what it meant to be in relation with his neighbor. He typified this experience through his theological works and personal letters which often show that he was strict on himself and those close to him, but to those who were spiritually weak, he remained pastoral. He also showed love for his neighbor and particularly for the poor by securing a return of funds from the empire for them when they had

been overburdened by assessments. When this money was returned to the people, he devised a fair method by putting the gold coins in loaves of bread that were distributed to the populace which is where we get the tradition of the Vasilopita.

These two stellar examples of relationships—the relationship between our Lord and us and the relationship that we foster amongst one another—help to fortify each person's inner spiritual disposition. It is impossible to strengthen any one of these aspects of our spiritual lives without it

helping to strengthen the others as well. Conversely, if we neglect any of these aspects, it can also lead to spiritual infirmity.

My beloved children in the Lord, it is for this reason that we should all set spiritual resolutions for ourselves. If you do not already pray at least once a day, then your goal should be to pray at least once a day. If you already pray several times a day, then increase your prayerfulness by doing acts of charity. If you do both of these, then increase your prayerfulness by reading the lives of the saints for personal spiritual inspiration. If you already do all of these, then find other things which build your relationship with God and your relationship with your neighbor. There is no limit to the level one can devote themselves to Christ. Additionally, everyone should increase their attendance in the Divine Liturgy since this is the place par-excellence where one can receive the bountiful blessings of God.

It is my sincerest prayer that each of you find the way to build up your spiritual lives in this New Year. Praying that you and your families have a happy, healthy, and blessed New Year filled with every good and perfect gift from our Lord, I remain

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

† E V A N G E L O S Metropolitan of New Jersey

ΤΙ ΚΥΝΗΓΑΤΕ;

Υπό π. Ιωάννη Θεοδοσίου

Φίλοι Χριστιανοί, η Βίβλος λέει «μην αγχώνεστε για τη ζωή σας, τι θα φάτε ή τι θα πιείτε· ή για το σώμα σας, τι θα φορέσετε. Δεν είναι η ζωή πιο σημαντική από το φαγητό; και το σώμα πιο σημαντικό από τα ρούχα; Ματθαίου 6:25

Θα σας πω μια μικρή ιστορία που θα μας βοηθήσει να έχουμε σύνεση στις επιδιώξεις μας.

Ένας Αμερικανός τραπεζικός επενδυτής έκανε διακοπές σε ένα μικρό χωριό στην Ελλάδα. Ενώ περπατούσε σε μία αποβάθρα, παρατήρησε μία μικρή βάρκα με ένα ψαρά. Μαζί με τον ψαρά μέσα στη βάρκα υπήρχαν αρκετοί κιτρινόπτεροι τόνοι. Ο Αμερικανός συνεχάρη τον ψαρά για την ποιότητα των ψαριών του και τον ρώτησε πόση ώρα του πήρε να τα πιάσει. «Πολύ λίγος χρόνος,» απάντησε ο ψαράς.

Ο Αμερικανός τον ρώτησε τότε γιατί δεν έμεινε στη θάλασσα περισσότερο και να πιάσει και άλλα ψάρια. Ο άντρας απάντησε ότι είχε αρκετά για να ικανοποιήσει τις άμεσες ανάγκες της οικογένειάς του. Ο Αμερικανός τότε ρώτησε, «Αλλά τι κάνεις τον υπόλοιπο χρόνο σου;» Ο ψαράς απάντησε, «Κοιμάμαι ως αργά, ψαρεύω λίγο, παίζω με τα παιδιά μου, μετά παίρνω τον μεσημεριανό μου ύπνο με τη γυναίκα μου, τη Μαρία, και κάθε βράδυ πηγαίνω βόλτα στο χωριό όπου χαλαρώνω και παίζω κιθάρα με τους φίλους μου. Έχω μία γεμάτη και πολυάσχολη ζωή.»

Ο Αμερικανός τον χλεύασε, «Θα έπρεπε να περνάς περισσότερο χρόνο ψαρεύοντας και με τα κέρδη σου αγόρασε μεγαλύτερη βάρκα και μετά με τα επιπλέον κέρδη να αγοράσεις στόλο αλιευτικών. Αντί να πουλάς τα ψάρια σε μεσάζοντα, θα μπορούσες να τα πουλάς κατευθείαν στον έμπορο. Στη συνέχεια θα μπορούσες να ανοίξεις δική σου κονσερβοποιία. Θα ελέγχεις το προϊόντα σου, την

επεξεργασία τους και τη διανομή. Μπορείς να φύγεις από το μικρό αυτό χωριό και να μετακομίσεις σε μια μεγάλη πόλη από όπου θα διευθύνεις την επιχείρησή σου.»

Ο ψαράς του χωριού ρώτησε, «Αλλά πόσο χρόνο θα πάρει αυτό;» Ο Αμερικανός απάντησε, «15 με 20 χρόνια!» «Και μετά τί;» ρώτησε ο ψαράς. Ο Αμερικανός γέλασε και είπε, «Αυτό είναι το καλύτερο. Μπορείς να πουλήσεις την επιχείρηση, να σταματήσεις να εργάζεσαι και να μετακομίσεις σε ένα μικρό παραθαλάσσιο χωριό όπου θα κοιμάσαι ως αργά, θα ψαρεύεις λίγο, θα παίζεις με τα παιδιά σου, θα παίρνεις το μεσημεριανό σου υπνάκο με τη γυναίκα σου, θα κάνεις βόλτα στο χωριό τα βράδια, θα χαλαρώνεις και θα παίζεις κιθάρα με τους φίλους σου. Θα έχεις μία πλήρη και πολυάσχολη ζωή.»

Ο ψαράς του χωριού χαμογέλασε στον Αμερικανό, μάζεψε ήσυχα τη ψαριά του και απομακρύνθηκε.

Εσείς τί κυνηγάτε στη ζωή σας; Το πώς (και με ποιόν) περνάτε το μεγαλύτερο μέρος του χρόνου σας, μπορεί να αποκαλύψει πολλά για τις προτεραιότητές σας. Ο Ιησούς είπε, «Μην αποθηκεύετε θησαυρούς για τους εαυτούς σας στη γη, όπου ο σκώρος και η σκουριά τους καταστρέφουν, και οι διαρρήκτες σας κλέβουν. Αλλά αποθηκεύστε θησαυρούς για σας στον ουρανό, όπου ο σκώρος και η σκουριά δεν τους καταστρέφουν, και όπου οι διαρρήκτες δεν θα σας τους κλέψουν. Γιατί εκεί όπου είναι ο θησαυρός σας, εκεί είναι και η καρδιά σας.» (Ματθαίος 6:19-21, NIV)

Ο καθένας μας πρέπει να ρωτήσει τον εαυτό του, «Τί είδους θησαυρούς χτίζω; Αυτοί οι θησαυροί είναι προσωρινοί ή θα κρατήσουν για πάντα; Πρέπει να κοιτάξουμε καλά τη ζωή μας και να

εξετάσουμε τις προτεραιότητές μας. Είστε ικανοποιημένοι με τις προτεραιότητές σας; Οι επενδύσεις που κάνετε σε χρόνο και σχέσεις, συμβαδίζουν με τις προτεραιότητές σας; Κυρίως, οι προτεραιότητές σας συμβαδίζουν με τη διδασκαλία του Κυρίου, τη Βίβλο, και τις διδαχές

της Εκκλησίας Του; Αφιερώστε λίγο χρόνο για αυτοεξέταση, κοιτάξτε μέσα στην καρδιά σας και προσευχηθείτε στον Κύριό μας να σας φωτίσει το νου και την καρδιά να κάνετε τα πάντα προς δόξαν Θεού.

In the Jan 2018 Issue of the SAINT ANDREW FAMILY NEWS we ran in the article "THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A GOOD STEWARD" in English. We are happy to be able to offer it to you in Greek below. (Adaptation by: Maria Kiritsis, HAS Teacher)

Η ΣΗΜΑΣΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΝΑ ΕΙΣΑΙ ΚΑΛΟΣ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ

της Georgia Haglund

Τον περασμένο μήνα, ο Πατέρας Ιωάννης πολύ επιδέξια εξήγησε «Καὶ πᾶν ὅ,τι ἐὰν ποιῆτε, ἐκ ψυχῆς ἐργάζεσθε, ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις,.....» (Προς Κολοσσαεῖς 3:23). Μας εἶπε ὅτι, ως μία κοινότητα, εργασθήκαμε με την καρδιά μας. Μας ἔδειξε ὅτι ως ενορίτες δουλέψαμε εθελοντικά και με επιτυχία αναπτύξαμε και μεγαλώσαμε τα προγράμματα της ενορίας μας – μαζεύοντας χρήματα για τις φιλανθρωπίες μας, ενδυναμώνοντας τα νεανικά μας προγράμματα, σταθεροποιώντας τον μη κερδοσκοπικό χαρακτήρα της εκκλησίας μας, και επεκτείνοντας τις εκπαιδευτικές και φιλανθρωπικές μας προσπάθειες.

Αυτά είναι εντυπωσιακά κατορθώματα. Αναρωτήθηκα, πώς γίνεται να επιτυγχάνουμε αυτά τα πολλά και θετικά αποτελέσματα; Πώς γίνεται η κοινότητα της εκκλησίας μας να είναι τόσο επιτυχής; Μήπως είναι απλή η απάντηση; Είναι επειδή η κοινότητα του Αγίου Ανδρέα καταλαβαίνει πόση σημασία έχει να είσαι καλός οικονόμος; Και, αν τόσοι πολλοί στην κοινότητά μας το κατανοούν, τί γνωρίζουν αυτοί που εγώ δεν ξέρω;

Για να απαντήσω σε αυτή τη θεμελιώδη ερώτηση, στράφηκα στη Βίβλο. Μελέτησα την πηγή της επιστολής προς τους Κολοσσαεῖς «**Καὶ πᾶν ὅ,τι ἐὰν ποιῆτε, ἐκ ψυχῆς ἐργάζεσθε**» με σκοπό να κατανοήσω τί προσπαθούσε να μου πει ο Πατέρας

Ιωάννης. Η απάντηση, ως φαίνεται, κρύβεται στην απλή ανάγνωση.

Σύμφωνα με τους Κολοσσαεῖς, εργαζόμαστε με την καρδιά μας για τον Κύριο «γνωρίζοντας ὅτι ἀπὸ τον Κύριο, θα λάβουμε την αμοιβή της κληρονομιάς» («εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ Κυρίου ἀπολήψεσθε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομιάς· τῷ γὰρ Κυρίῳ Χριστῷ δουλεύετε·») 3:24. Ποιά ανταπόδοση; Ποιά κληρονομία; Αν και φαινόταν ξεκάθαρο, η απάντηση ήταν πιο περίπλοκη και διαφορετική από αυτό που αποκάλυπτε μια πρόχειρη πρώτη ανάγνωση. Με σκοπό να το κατανοήσω, αναζήτησα καθοδήγηση στον Ιωάννη Χρυσόστομο. Ο Άγιος Ιωάννης ο Χρυσόστομος μας λέει στην ομιλία του για τους Κολοσσαεῖς, στίχος 23, ὅτι εργαζόμαστε για τον Κύριο με την καρδιά μας – με καλή θέληση και ελευθερία επιλογής – και ὅτι η ανταμοιβή μας είναι ο Κύριος.

Τελικά, βγαίνει νόημα. Ο Χριστός σταυρώθηκε για εμάς. Θυσίασε τα πάντα για εμάς ὡστε ο Λόγος του Θεού να εξαπλωθεί σε ὅλο τον κόσμο Του. Δεν ζητά τίποτε ἀπὸ εμάς. Αντίθετα, ἀπλᾶ ἐλπίζει ὅτι εμεῖς Τον ἀγαπούμε ὅπως Αυτός ἀγαπά εμάς. Νομίζω ὅτι μπορούμε να το κάνουμε αυτό, ἢ τουλάχιστον, να προσπαθήσουμε. Πώς; Μπορούμε να φροντίζουμε την Εκκλησία Του. Μπορούμε να φερόμαστε με χάρη, ἀγάπη και σεβασμό μέσα σε αυτή. Είμαστε οι οικονόμοι Του, και ως οικονόμοι Του, φέρουμε αυτή την ευθύνη. Χωρίς

οικονόμους, μία τέλεια Εκκλησία σε έναν μη τέλειο κόσμο δεν μπορεί να επιβιώσει.

Όπως επανειλημμένα έχει δείξει η κοινότητά μας, τα προγράμματά μας θα συνεχίσουν να έχουν επιτυχία. Είμαι μέλος της Εκκλησίας αυτής από το 1964 που ο Πατέρας Τσίγγας με βάπτισε. Έχουμε κάνει μακρύ δρόμο από τότε. Παλιά η μικρούλα ενορία μας συναντιόταν τις Κυριακές να λατρέψουμε τον Κύριο σε μία ενοικιαζόμενη Πρεσβυτεριανή Εκκλησία στην οδό Blackwell στο Dover. Σήμερα, προσευχόμαστε και εκκλησιαζόμαστε στη δική μας ωραία, Άγια Εκκλησία. Φροντίζουμε τους φτωχούς και ασθενείς. Εκπαιδεύουμε και φωτίζουμε τα παιδιά μας. Συγκεντρωνόμαστε τις Κυριακές και τις εορτές να προσευχηθούμε. Οι γονείς και οι παππούδες μας εργάστηκαν για να εξασφαλίσουν τη συνέχιση του εκκλησιασμού μας στην Εκκλησία μας. Σήμερα εργαζόμαστε για το μέλλον, γνωρίζοντας ότι το

μέλλον δεν ανήκει σε εμάς, αλλά στα παιδιά μας. Συνεχίζοντας να είμαστε καλοί οικονόμοι εξασφαλίζουμε την κληρονομιά τους.

Τελικά καταλαβαίνω γιατί είναι σημαντικό να είσαι καλός οικονόμος. Πρώτον, για την απόλυτη ανταπόδοση από τον Κύριό μας. Δεύτερον, διότι Του το οφείλουμε. Τέλος, διότι το οφείλουμε στους εαυτούς μας και στα παιδιά μας. Διαβάζοντας τα λόγια του Αγίου Ιωάννη του Χρυσοστόμου, συνάντησα το ακόλουθο: «Η μέλισσα τιμάται περισσότερο από τα άλλα ζώα, όχι επειδή εργάζεται, αλλά επειδή εργάζεται για άλλους.» Είναι τιμή μου που είμαι μέλος της κοινότητας του Αγίου Ανδρέα. Είμαι υπερήφανη που συγκαταλέγομαι σε μία κοινότητα που κατανοεί τη σημασία του να είσαι καλός οικονόμος.

Join us for

GREEK NIGHT

•to benefit the St. Andrew Community Center

• Portion of proceeds will go to IOCC.org

SATURDAY, April 21, 6PM

At the Saint Andrew Community Center

1447 Sussex Turnpike, Randolph, NJ 07869

LIVE MUSIC BY:

NICOS NICOLAIDES & THE COSMOPOLITANS BAND

NicosNicolaides.com

Saint Andrew Dancers

Traditional Greek Foods

• Greek Pastries • Cash Bar

JOY NEWS



We, the JOY Group, hope everyone had a BLESSED Christmas and a Happy New Year! We welcome 2018 with open hearts and hope to keep on keeping on with JOY.

We closed out our year with our annual trip to Merry Heart Senior Center. This is always one of the highlights of the year. The children prepared for this trip by baking koulourakia and decorating cards and gifts for the elderly. We arrived at Merry Heart on that snowy Saturday (December 9th) with a large group of children to spread Christmas cheer to all who were in attendance. The children wore deer antler headbands and sang their hearts out to songs that everyone knows and loves. We then distributed gifts and koulourakia to the elderly. We even taught them how to say Merry Christmas in Greek!!!! (Kala Xristougenna)

In the month of December we spoke about giving and service. We told the children that caroling at Merry Heart is part of our service as Junior Orthodox Youth (JOY). We also tasked them to do one kind thing each day in the month of December and to try and carry that forward into the New Year.



2018 brings us into a new calendar year, and we have lots of fun and activities planned. We have a Rock Painting activity and Prosforo making at St. Andrew's on January 20th, right before the St. Andrew's Greek Night!!! We are all planning on going right from our activity to Greek Night next door in the Main Hall. Hope to see everyone there!

DO YOU HAVE A CHILD IN GRADES K-6? Yes? Then consider joining JOY. JOY (Junior Orthodox Youth) is a fellowship group for these ages. We have one meeting per month and one activity per month. The group is split into 2 - the junior JOY is grades K-2, and the senior JOY is grades 3-6. Junior JOY is run by Lynn Axiotes and Senior JOY is run by Harriet Karkanias. Meetings are held on Sundays after Sunday School and Liturgy (12:15pm-1pm) - child only, no parents. Activities are typically held on Saturdays once a month from 4pm-6pm (unless otherwise noted). Our calendar of activities is posted in the Social Hall on our JOY Bulletin Board. Take a peek when you are at coffee hour!



For more information on JOY or any of our upcoming events/activities, please contact Harriet Karkanias (harriet.karkanias@gmail.com) or Lynn Axiotes (laxiotes@yahoo.com).



GOYA NEWS



The GOYA signed Christmas cards and purchased gift cards for each of the 21 students at Saint Basil Academy. Who range in age from 2-19 years old.

Kassandra Ibrahim attended the annual Open House and Christmas Pageant held on Saturday, December 16th to present the gifts to His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios and president Evvelyn Tsiadis on behalf of the St. Andrew GOYA.



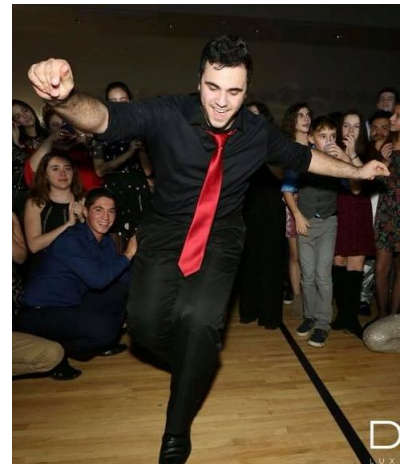
GOYA NEWS

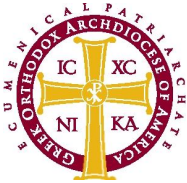


The GOYA Christmas Dance was held on December 28th at S. Nicholas, Constantine & Helen in Roseland, 35 GOYAns attended the annual event and had a great time!

Upcoming GOYA Events:

- February 2-3rd - Overnight Lock-In/Retreat
- February 4th - "Souper Bowl" Collection for IOCC
- February 16th - Valentine's Dance @ Union
- February 18th - Sights Due
- February 22nd - Monthly Meeting @ 6:30pm
- March 3rd - Sights & Sounds @ Westfield

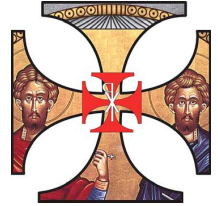




Greek Orthodox
Metropolis of
New Jersey

SAINT ANDREW GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

PHILOPTOCHOS NEWS



PHILOPTOCHOS MISSION

To promote charitable, benevolent and philanthropic outreach to preserve the sanctity of life and family and to perpetuate and promote our Orthodox faith and traditions.

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Melissa Dobias

Maria Daniskas

Jeanie Kalas

Dear St. Andrew Parishioners,

With commencement of Paschal Lent upon us on February 19th, our thoughts turn to our spiritual journey towards the Resurrection with increased focus on prayer and fasting, as well as acts of charity and compassion towards others. What better time to join St. Andrew Philoptochos? **Did you know that since its founding in 1931, Philoptochos has grown to over 25,000 members in 458 chapters, making it seemingly the second largest faith-based organization and largest Christian women’s philanthropic organization in the United States?** Do you ask yourselves, why should I join Philoptochos? I think the answer to that question was eloquently provided by Maria Logus, National Philoptochos President, in her recent Christmas letter:

I am frequently asked why someone should joint Philoptochos, why they should devote their spare time to a worthy but time consuming mission to help people they have never met, in places they may never travel. Answers quickly come to mind – a sincere desire to give back, the camaraderie of working with friends and family, a commitment to making the world better, or perhaps the basic need to connect with a world that has become increasingly disconnected.

During this Lenten period, consider the opportunity offered to you by Philoptochos - become a part of a vibrant, positive force for good. Make your commitment to join our mission dedicated to helping those in need in our own community, across our nation and beyond its borders.

Given that we have a relatively early Pascha this year, please note that we will commence taking orders for our Pascha Bake Sale on or about March 11th.

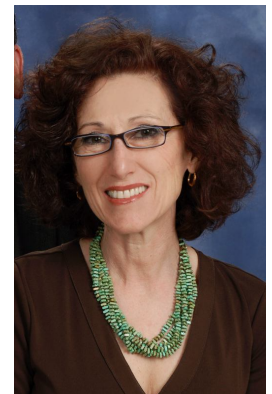
Also, please note that the deadline for submission of applications for the yearly Philoptochos Scholarship is May 1st. For more information, please contact Vasiliki Petrakos at the church office or Maria Daniskas.

Please mark your calendar for our annual **Tricky Tray** event that is scheduled for **May 11th**. We are currently working on our plans. Contributions of a gift basket are greatly appreciated. A list of suggested basket themes will be published shortly – stayed tuned. We hope you attend the fun-filled evening and try your luck on May 11th!

Kali Sarakosti!

In the Service of the Lord,

Maria Daniskas



THE TRIODION

The Triodion Period is the period of time in our Orthodox Liturgical year that encompasses 3 segments of time, that of the Pre-Lenten cycle, of Great Lent itself and of Holy Week.

(The word “Triodion” literally means “3 odes” referring to a series of hymns that are sung, but also applying to the 3 segments of time and the associated observances in each of these time segments.)

The Triodion Period begins on the 4th Sunday before Great Lent, usually in February or early March, In 2018, it began Sunday January 28 (with Vespers the evening before), earlier than usual.

During this period, the following occurs:

1. A book, called “The Triodion,” is used in the church services. There are special hymns and readings assigned to the service. This book is used throughout the Pre-Lenten period, through all of Lent, and through Holy Week, up to Holy Saturday night.
2. There is a special service known as “The Saturday of Souls” (Memorial Saturdays) that are observed in which we commemorate and remember our departed relatives.

Two of these services are held during the Pre-Lenten Period, and one more is celebrated on the First Saturday of Lent. In 2018 the dates are:

Saturday, February 10 / Saturday, February 17 / Saturday, February 24

3. Each of the four Sundays of the Pre-Lenten Period have special themes and Bible Readings.



Each Sunday initiates the week. Certain observances occur on certain weeks. These are:

A. Week of Publican & Pharisee (in 2018 – Jan. 28)
Sunday Readings are: 2nd Timothy 3:10-15 & Luke 18:9-14

Theme is: Humility and the correct observance of the teachings of God, observing without pride, and without looking down upon others. We are called to see ourselves as we truly are and compare ourselves to Christ’s teachings.

Observance of the Week:

No fasting during this week (not even on Wed or Fri), in preparation for the more strict 40-day fast period

B. Week of the Prodigal Son (in 2018 – Feb. 4)
Sunday Readings are: 1st Corinthians 6:12-20 & Luke 15:11-32

Theme is: Return and forgiveness to someone who has done wrong; we should not “rub it in” to someone who is trying to correct their mistakes. We are called to come to “ourselves” as did the prodigal to see if we also may be “far” from the Father’s house and if so, make movement to return.

Observances of the Week:

- a. Wednesday and Friday are a fast day
- b. Saturday is the First Memorial Saturday
- c. Traditional “Apokreas Parties” (apokreatiko) are held

C. Week of Apokries – Meat Fare Day (in 2018 – February 11) Sundays Readings are: 1st Corinthians 8:8-9:2 & Matthew 25:31-46

Theme is: The Last Judgment of Christ when He returns to the earth again; what will happen to mankind and what is expected of mankind. We are called to see Christ in every human being and serve those in need by doing for them, not simply intending to do, but actually doing to bring Christ's embrace to them.

Observance of the Week:

a. It is "Meat Fare" day, known as "Apokreas" (meaning, "from meat") in which we eat meat for the last time until Easter. All other foods are eaten, Mon-Sat except for meat.

b. Saturday is the Second Memorial Saturday

c. Traditional Apokreas parties (Mardi Gras, or apokreatiko) are held on the weekend

D. Forgiveness Sunday – Cheese Fare – First Week of Lent (in 2018 – February 18) Sunday Scripture Readings: Romans 13:11-14:4 & Matthew 6:14-21

Theme is: Forgiveness of each other of sins and offenses. Personal renewal with mankind (with each other), so as to prepare for the personal renewal with God during Great Lent. A sub-theme is: that of Adam's exile from paradise. We are to identify ourselves with Adam, lamenting our loss of the beauty, dignity and delight of our original creation, mourning our corruption in sin.

Observances of the Day:

a. Asking forgiveness of those whom we know we have offended and done wrong. In some parishes "Forgiveness Vespers" is offered in the evening.

b. Eating dairy and cheese products to prepare for eating of "pure foods" the next day.

The Next Day – Kathera Theftera – Pure Monday or Clean Monday: (in 2018 – February 19). The first day of Great Lent. Special Lenten Services begin and continue throughout Lent.

The 1st Saturday of Lent is the 3rd Memorial Saturday, also known as "The Miracle of St. Theodore with the Wheat." Food fasting is strict, no meat, fish or dairy products; oil and wine are

permitted on Sat & Sun. The same pattern is followed overall through Great Lent with certain exceptions based on calendar observances of particular major

A QUICK REVIEW:

The Triodion Period begins as a three week Period of Preparation for Lent (having 4 specific Sunday observances), that continues on through Great Lent with its own new series of Sunday observances and then includes as well Holy Week, that recounts the last days of Christ's life.

The Triodion is also a book used during the period of preparation and also during Great Lent and Holy Week.

During the three weeks of this first portion of the Triodion Period:

1. Various themes are presented to prepare us for the renewal, to get us thinking
2. We give special remembrance to those who have died.
3. We prepare our bodies and stomachs to fast by gradually beginning to fast more thoroughly from various foods during various weeks
4. We hear our Lord's teaching about the topic of forgiveness, fasting & treasures.....

(Matthew 6: 14-21)

"If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you; but if you do not forgive their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you, your trespasses."

"When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face that your fasting may not be seen by men...and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth & rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust consumes and thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

ΤΟ ΤΡΙΩΔΙΟ

Τό Τριώδιο αποτελεί τό κινητό ἐκεῖνο τμήμα τοῦ ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ ἔτους πού προπαρασκευάζει γιά τόν ἄξιο ἑορτασμό τῶν Παθῶν καί τῆς Ἀναστάσεως μέ ἀνάλογα βιώματα, πνευματική καλλιέργεια καί συμμετοχή, μέ ἀγῶνα μετανοίας, προσευχῆς καί νηστείας. Περιλαμβάνει δέκα Κυριακές. Ἀπό τήν Κυριακή τοῦ Τελῶνου καί Φαρισαίου μέχρι τόν Ἑσπερινό τοῦ Μ. Σαββάτου. Διαιρεῖται σέ δύο τμήματα:

Τό πρό τῆς Νηστείας (Κυριακή Τελῶνου καί Φαρισαίου, Ἀσώτου, Ἀπόκρεω, Τυροφάγου) καί τῆς Μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστῆς καί τῆς Μεγάλης Ἑβδομάδας δηλαδή ἕξι ἑβδομάδες καί μία (Α΄ Κυριακή τῶν Νηστειῶν τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας, Β΄ Κυριακή Νηστειῶν - Ἀγ. Γρηγορίου Παλαμᾶ, Γ΄ Κυριακή Νηστειῶν - Σταυροπροσκυνησεως, Δ΄ Κυριακή Νηστειῶν Ἀγ. Ἰωάννου τῆς Κλίμακος, Ε΄ Κυριακή Νηστειῶν - Ὁσίας Μαρίας τῆς Αἰγυπτίας, ΣΤ΄ Κυριακή Νηστειῶν - Βαΐων καί ἡ Μεγάλη Ἑβδομάδα).

Τό Τριώδιο διαμορφώθηκε σέ τελική μορφή γύρω στόν 15ον αἰῶνα. Ὀνομάστηκε Τριώδιο γιατί οἱ Κανόνες κατά τίς καθημερινές ἀκολουθίες τοῦ Ὁρθρου περιλαμβάνουν τρεῖς ὠδές· τήν η΄, τήν θ΄ καί μία ἀπό τίς πρῶτες ὠδές.

Κυριακή Τελῶνου καί Φαρισαίου: Ἡ συντριβή τῆς καρδιάς καί ἡ ταπεινόφρονη ἀποφυγή τοῦ φαρισαϊκοῦ ἐγωϊσμοῦ ἀνοίγει τίς πύλες τῆς ἀληθινῆς μετάνοιας καί τοῦ θεοῦ ἐλέους.

Κυριακή Ἀσώτου: Τονίζει τό πνεῦμα τῆς μετάνοιας καί τό μεγαλεῖο τῆς χριστιανικῆς ἐλευθερίας.

Κυριακή τῶν Ἀπόκρεω: Προηγείται τό Ψυχοσάββατο ὑπέρ «πάντων τῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος κοιμηθέντων εὐσεβῶς ἐπ' ἐλπίδι ἀναστάσεως ζωῆς αἰωνίου». Ἀκολουθεῖ τήν Κυριακή ἡ ὑπόμνηση τῆς μελλούσης κρίσεως καί ἡ προτροπή γιά μετάνοια. Ὁ Χριστός ἐμφανίζεται ἐπί θρόνου δόξης.

Κυριακή τῆς Τυροφάγου ἢ τοῦ ἀπωλεσθέντος Παραδείσου τῆς τρυφῆς: Μετά τήν προπαρασκευή τῶν ψυχῶν πρὸς μετάνοιαν ἀρχίζει καί ἡ σωματική συμμετοχή στή νηστεία.

Ἡ Μεγάλη Τεσσαρακοστή ἔχει βασικό χαρακτηριστικό τῆς τήν ἐγκράτεια καί τή νηστεία. Προ-

βάλλει συνταρακτικά πρότυπα.

Α΄ Κυριακή τῶν Νηστειῶν ἢ τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας. Τό Σάββατο τό παράδειγμα τοῦ Ἀγ. Θεοδώρου, πού μᾶς θυμίζει πόσο δυνατή εἶναι ἡ ζωντανή πίστη. Τήν Κυριακή τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας ἡ ἀναστήλωση τῶν εἰκόνων, ἡ νίκη τῶν καθαρῶν τῶν πνευματικῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀπέναντι σέ κάθε πλάνη καί αἵρεση.

Β΄ Κυριακή τῶν Νηστειῶν - Ἀγ. Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ: Κεντρικό θέμα ἡ νηστεία, ἡ προσευχή καί ἡ ἐντονη ἄσκηση τῆς ἐλεημοσύνης. Αὐτά βοηθοῦν τόν ἐσωτερικό καθαρμό. Πρότυπο ὁ Ἀγ. Γρηγόριος ὁ Παλαμάς. Στό πρόσωπό του συγκεντρώνεται σοφία καί γνώση πού ἀνθίζουν ἀπό μιά βαθειά ὀρθόδοξη πίστη.

Γ΄ Κυριακή τῶν Νηστειῶν - τῆς Σταυροπροσκυνησεως. Τώρα ὑμνεῖται ὁ Σταυρός, ὁ «τῆς ἐγέρσεως Χριστοῦ τᾶς αὐγᾶς φωτοβολεῖν». Ὁ ἄνθρωπος τοποθετεῖται ἀπέναντι στό Σταυρό. «Ὅστις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἔλθειν, ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν καί ἀράτω τόν σταυρόν αὐτοῦ». Ὁ Σταυρός προβάλλεται ὡς στήριγμα καί βοήθεια.

Δ΄ Κυριακή τῶν Νηστειῶν - Ἀγ. Ἰωάννου τῆς Κλίμακος. Μετά τήν ἄσκηση ὁ δρόμος τῆς ἀνυψώσεως. Ὁ Ἀγ. Ἰωάννης τῆς Κλίμακος προσφέρει τήν ἀνθρώπινη ἐμπειρία τῆς μυστικῆς ἀνόδου.

Ε΄ Κυριακή τῶν Νηστειῶν - τῆς Ὁσίας Μαρίας τῆς Αἰγυπτίας. Βαθειά συνειδητή μετάνοια. Πρότυπον ὁ Ὁσία Μαρία ἡ Αἰγυπτία, ἡ πρῶτην ἁμαρτωλή, ἀσκήτρια τῆς ἐρήμου γιά 47 ὀλόκληρα χρόνια. Τήν Τετάρτη ὁ Μέγας Κανόνας καί τήν Παρασκευή ὁ Ἀκάθιστος Ὕμνος.

ΣΤ΄ Κυριακή τῶν Νηστειῶν- Βαΐων: (Τό Σάββατο ἡ ἀνάσταση τοῦ Λαζάρου). Ἡ θριαμβευτική εἴσοδος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ στά Ἱεροσόλυμα.

Μεγάλη Ἑβδομάδα: Εἴσοδος στό χῶρο τοῦ μυστηρίου. Ἡ Μεγ. Τεσσαρακοστή μᾶς προετοίμασε μέ τή χάρη τοῦ Θεοῦ καί τή δική μας προσπάθεια, στήν ταπεινοφροσύνη, στή μετάνοια, στήν προσοχή, στήν ἄσκηση, τήν νηστεία καί προσευχή γιά τή συμμετοχή μας στή θεία Κοινωνία.

NAVAGATING THROUGH YOUR TEEN YEARS: BODY IMAGE

Q: When I look in the mirror, all I do is focus on everything I hate about myself. What should I do?

A: If looking in the mirror is a negative experience, next time think about saying something positive about yourself instead, whether you believe it 100% or not. Try to think about one of your favorite features instead of focusing on what you may consider faults or disappointments. If you are faced with more serious issues of frustration, disappointment, and hate, please make sure to talk to a trusted individual who can lead you in the right direction for guidance.

Q: Sometimes I feel like people are judging me because of how I look, even when I go to church! How do I deal with it?

A: No one is perfect...and most people (including those at church) are influenced by society's standards. Instead of getting upset, try a different approach. Be a role model through kindness, compassion, forgiveness, and being nonjudgmental toward others. It's possible that your example of kindness to others, even though they might not be kind to you, could change their hearts and minds. Be strong and don't let negativity change how you respond to Christ's greatest commandment to love one another!

GET THE FACTS

Body image is defined as a person's sense of his or her own physical appearance. Our body image often affects not only how we view



ourselves, but also how we interact with others. This can affect our sense of self-worth and plays a big part in our physical and emotional development.

All Day, Every Day: Did you know the average person is exposed to 3,000 ads a DAY? In addition to selling products, ads attempt to sell the myth that we can, and should, achieve physical perfection in order to feel good about ourselves. Many of these ads are even digitally altered, making it even more difficult for us to distinguish between “perfection” and reality.

The Myth of Perfection: These unrealistic expectations about body image set us up to fail, especially when we may never be able to look a certain way. Instead of inspiring us in a positive way, our constant exposure to the idea of perfection may cause us to have anxiety and an unhealthy obsession about our own body image.

KNOW THE SIGNS

The following might be signals that you have a negative or unhealthy view of your body:

- When you see yourself in the mirror, car windows, or storefront windows, you only notice things that you don't like about your body.
- You rarely think you look good.
- You have a tough time taking compliments, as you really don't believe they are true.
- It takes you forever to choose clothing.
- You compare yourself to others constantly.
- You criticize your body regularly.
- You skip events because you don't think you look good enough to be in the crowd.

THE CHURCH SPEAKS

Created in the Image of God If we were to live by society's expectations and standards of living, it would be almost impossible to be happy. Fortunately, we are blessed to have a higher standard! God loves you for exactly who you are, because He created you exactly as you are—in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:27). Rather than focusing on man-made "ideals" for beauty, think about your own reflection as an icon of Christ.

Looking Inward

"The Lord sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). Your self-image should be a reflection of who you are as a person, the decisions you make, and your relationship with God, not how you look in front of the mirror. Remember...you are more than skin and bones. You are the "temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:19). Regardless of our physical appearance, we have each been created in His image on the inside. Don't forget or

downplay this incredible honor, and remember the special way God created each of us.

Unique in God's Sight

People come in all shapes and sizes. Trying to compare yourself to someone else never really works. Each of us has unique strengths and weaknesses that make us one-of-a-kind and important in God's eyes. It says in 1 Corinthians 12:18-20, "But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body." What does this mean? Regardless of our physical appearance, intellect, skin color, or any other features, we have all been created with a specific purpose. Sit down and write all of the things that are unique about you. Consider how you can use your uniqueness and God-given talents to best serve Christ and others.

INFO

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www.facebook.com/GOYAministry

If you or someone you know is struggling with an unhealthy body image or eating disorder, it's important to tell someone. Speak to a friend, your parents, a school counselor, a trusted adult, or your parish priest to get help

Books:

- "Who Calls Me Beautiful? Finding Our True Image in the Mirror of God" by Regina Franklin, Discovery House Publishers, 2004.
- "Comfortable in Your Own Skin: Making Peace with Your Body Image" by Deborah Newman, Focus on the Family, 2007.

Online Resources:

- Building Healthy Body Esteem in a Body Toxic World: www.bodyimagehealth.org
- National Eating Disorders Association: web: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org toll free phone number: 1-800-931-2237

Article from: <https://www.goarch.org/-/orthodox-christian-teen-survival-guide>

GODPARENTS' SUNDAY – FEBRUARY 18TH

Please join us as we celebrate and pray for this special relationship and ask for God's blessing on godparents and godchildren everywhere.

A Day for Godparents, Godchildren, Family and Friends to Worship God Together.

Following the Divine Liturgy please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the Social Hall.

Honoring the Role of Godparent In Your Parish With a Godparent Sunday Celebration

By Eleni Kallaur

“Those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ... Alleluia.”

The role of the Godparent in the Orthodox Church is an important one. Along with the parents, the Godparent is charged with the responsibility of assisting in the spiritual development of the child. In some cultures the Godparent is addressed by a special name (an example is nouno/nouna in Greek.) Whether a blood relative or not, the Godparent is now embraced as part of the “spiritual family” of that child.

Although great care and many prayers are put forth by the parents in choosing the Godparent for their child, sometimes after the baptism the relationship does not grow. Other than the occasional birthday and Christmas gifts, some Godchildren and Godparents rarely see or talk to each other. As with any relationship, this spiritual one needs to be fostered and cared for in order for it to develop. The best way for this relationship to grow is through prayer. Pray for your Godchild and his or her parents, and the parents should encourage their child to pray for the Godparents. By doing this you are encouraging a relationship and giving it the spiritual basis on which to mature.

Other practical ideas for maintaining a relationship with your Godchild are to celebrate the anniversary of the baptism with a card or a telephone call. Along with learning about the child's patron saint, learn about the saint whose feast day is celebrated on the date of his or her baptism and share the story of that saint's life with your Godchild.

Model your faith through your actions. Understand the sacraments as well as the teachings of the

church so that you will be able to answer questions that your Godchild may have.

Encourage the faith life through the types of gifts that you give your Godchild. Some examples of gifts are a bible, prayer book, books on the lives of saints, prayer rope, etc. By doing this you are giving tools to help your Godchild grow in the faith, and are helping him/her to start a personal library of Orthodox teachings.

If you live in close proximity to your Godchild make yourself available to spend time with him or her. Find out when school activities and sports events are scheduled and try to go to a few. Plan a special time, whether for lunch or a trip to the zoo, to be with your Godchild. These times together will only help to make your relationship closer.

If you live far away, call, write, or email your Godchild. Send a letter at the beginning of a church season (Advent, Lent, etc.) to let him or her know that you will be praying for him. If possible, plan visits to see your Godchild.

Godparent/Godchild Sunday

One way that your church can play a significant role in honoring and fostering this relationship is by hosting a Godparent/Godchild Sunday. By doing this, the church as a community calls to mind the importance of this bond in Christ, and encourages the development of the relationship. The following description of Godparent/Godchild Sunday is taken from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and may be altered to suite the needs of each individual parish. It is the

customary practice in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese to celebrate Godparent Sunday on the Sunday after the Feast of the Presentation of Christ. However, the time and celebration of this event may vary according to local custom.

Preparation

Our parish chooses a date for Godparent Sunday, and announces it in advance. An announcement giving the date and time is printed in the weekly church bulletin, the church newsletter (which is sent to each parishioner's home), and is announced as well by the priest. A flier is placed on the church bulletin board, and each Sunday School student is given an individual flier to take home to their family. Printed in the flier, along with the date and time, is the suggestion that Godparents and Godchildren should personally invite their Godparents/Godchild to attend church with them that morning. Even if they belong to different parishes this is an opportunity for the Godparents and Godchild to pray and spend the day together.

In preparation, the younger Sunday School classes can work on a special written invitation. This allows the opportunity for the Sunday School teachers to present a lesson on the sacrament of baptism, and the role of a Godparent. It also encourages the students to make contact with their Godparents, and promotes a deepening of their relationship. If the class does not wish to create its own invitations, a prepared invitation can be passed out to the students to send to their Godparents (See sample in Appendix 2.)

In some cases the Godparent may live far away. If this is the case, in order for no one to be excluded, the Sunday School child is encouraged to ask a close family friend or favorite aunt or uncle to "stand in" for them and attend the service. I was asked to "stand in" as Godparent to a child one year. Far from taking the place of the Godparent, it was an honor to pray with that child and renew my own baptismal vows with her.

Reconfirmation Service

An important part of the day is that the Godparents and Godchild receive Holy Communion together. The Godparents and Godchild sit together during the Divine Liturgy and throughout the Reconfirmation Service. During the Divine Liturgy, following the hymn "Praise the Lord from the Heavens", the priest comes out of the Royal Gates and asks those in the congregation to reconfirm their baptismal vows (See Appendix 1.) After the Reconfirmation Service, the Godparents and Godchild receive Holy Communion together.

Luncheon

Following the Divine Liturgy, a luncheon is prepared in honor of the day. The last two years the luncheon was prepared by the teen group at Holy Cross. The food was donated, a nominal fee was charged, and the luncheon was used as a fundraiser for the group. We also have an opportunity for the Godparents and Godchild to have their picture taken together to commemorate the day. A Polaroid camera is used so that the picture can be taken home with them. A small fee is charged to cover the cost of film. At Holy Cross the picture is taken with the Godparents and Godchild holding an icon of Christ.

The Godparent Sunday Celebration at Holy Cross has become an event that the parishioners at Holy Cross look forward to every year. It is made even more special to the Godchildren when their Godparents, who are not members of Holy Cross, make the extra effort to come to church and pray with them. By celebrating as a church community to honor Godparents, the Godchildren begin to learn the importance and significance that the church gives to this relationship. This in turn encourages the growth of the relationship with their own Godparents, and may even plant in their hearts the desire to one day become Godparents themselves.

Presb. Eleni Kallaur is an active member of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church, Mt. Lebanon, PA. A former Church School teacher, she is the wife of Fr. Michael Kallaur and mother of two young sons. | Complete article can be found on web site <https://oca.org/the-hub/projects/honoring-the-role-of-godparent-in-your-parish-with-a-godparent-sunday-celeb>



Room for Agape a voice for our seniors February 2018



February is the month our Nation sets aside contemporary forms of hate to celebrate “love of principle” akin to that of our forefathers at Philadelphia while structuring the most progressive Constitution ever. Most don’t go that far, buying candy instead: **Valentine’s Day.**

Now we are called to bring *a principled translation of love* to mind as a civil antidote for the forces around that keep trying in especially devious ways to set true love, with understanding, aside as too impractical to actualize. Addressing Jesus, to love means to trust and follow His Word but for us, while taking a shortcut, instinctually mimic worldly ways through mindlessly primal means, somehow generating sounds in our mouth without thinking about what those words are actually generating - and it’s our lazy reasoning resigned to whim that blinds us from blocking them out. Laziness encourages us to take shortcuts, going along for a mindless ride (as long as it’s about somebody else) without realizing how contagiously invasive it becomes. This ugly force has attached itself to our “gift for words” like a plague.

Reason has been around for ages - ever since Adam and Eve messed up by listening to the voice of a catalytic smooth talker rather than clinging to God’s loving voice of reason coupled with promise: (paraphrased) “*enjoy the garden I’ve given you but hold my prime tree sacred*” (simultaneously tied to threat “*eat of it and you will surely die*”). In other words, *what looked and sounded harmless enough – even inviting – turned out to be a spiritual death sentence!* As we’ve found out as well, translations can be very deceptive. What they *thought* they heard wasn’t what was meant. God’s way with the Word prevails: we get in sync with His “sound language” as it comes to light for life through the

Holy Spirit – not of our personal will to alter interpretations for comfort sake.

As a reminder of how the “Spirit Of Love” works in word, I thought to share those of beloved Apostle Paul who, himself - *personally*, first made a name for himself as a master of meanness before learning his lesson as victim to blindness on the road to Damascus for his next “event”. After Paul’s eyes were opened, after having graphically learned his lesson, brilliance lit up his mind with a new clear vision in such a way his words *still live today* to work in transformational ways – if only to take them in with warm embrace.

Romans 12: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophesy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he*

who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," (Deut 32:35) says the Lord. Therefore, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing, you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Paul was given every reason to offer advice on how to live with poisonous negativity darkened by

physical pain and denigration and yet, no, through Christ, he transformed his plague of raging vengeance battle scars with a *transformational* Godly mind, neutralizing corrosive chemicals that threatened to destroy him with a baptism of abundant spring water drawn from his spiritual well. And that's why we address and venerate him as one truly exemplar saint. If there is any one thing we can extract from his words it is the realization that we are not here to punish the actions of sinful people but to extend our arms – not of hate but understanding; we are one with them as human beings.

Our calling is to teach and assist – not judge or punish. Our goal is to redirect a nasty cycle - not compound or perpetuate it. The answer to both is Christ-centered: to live an example, hopefully in both word and deed – but always with an abiding spirit of love.

Our Valentine luncheon will be February 20 – 11:30am in the Social Hall (weather permitting).

Remember that "senior status" begins at 55! It's nice to feel how relatively young and healthy we are! Age is a state of mind; joy enhances celebrations. We help one another through mutual understanding.

MaryAnn Brinkley (973-442-3011) and Betty Kelly (973-704-0377) co-chairs

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THE IDOLATRY OF HOLLYWOOD

Some months ago I celebrated the baptism of a little boy whose father is a major powerhouse in Hollywood and known worldwide in the industry.

The one hundred or so guests in attendance included stars and celebrities recognized by all movie goers to one degree or another. Here they were from the big screen to the pews of St. Sophia Cathedral.

It is my custom for most all baptisms, that I preach a very short sermon on the meaning of the sacrament of Baptism and the importance of Christ in the formation of the spiritual life of the child and indeed the entire family, including the godparents.

At the elegant reception following the baptism in West L.A., a few guests huddled around me asking questions about the baptism and the Orthodox Church in general. In the presence of all, like a quarterback in the middle of the huddle, a famous director, proclaimed that, as charming and ethnically flavored as the ceremony was, he was an atheist.

He enjoyed the baptism in the context of a National Geographic or History Channel production. Some politely chuckled as a way of acknowledging his status in the film industry. They then looked at me to see if and how I would respond.

“Well” I said, “I have never met an atheist in all my life, and I don’t think you are an atheist. Oh you many not bow down to God in the context of the Holy Trinity but you bow down to your own gods, like Children of Israel in the Hebrew Bible, The Old Testament, bowed down before the golden calf worshipping and adoring it!!

“In Hollywood you have the Golden Oscar of the Academy Award “ritual” and all bow down and worship it. Indeed, some sell themselves and their immortal soul to get one.

All eyes were now on the director. “I think religion is a man-made superstition made up of mumbo jumbo rituals to keep people anesthetized to the realities of life.” He stated politely but firmly. Smiles all around.

“Actually,” I said, “next to Jerusalem, the Vatican and Salt Lake City, Hollywood is the most religious city on the planet!!” Laughter was heard in my expanding huddle. “Come on Father, you must have been tipping the communion wine bottle way too much to be making such a statement!”

“No, no really” I responded. “Everyone bows down to something and someone, and gods of their own making. Some bow down to money and wealth. Others bow down before fleshly pleasures and lusts. Others bow down to power and control and others bow down before the icon of themselves in the mirror every morning.

These gods are very controlling and demanding. Total silence from the huddle as I continued. “Hollywood’s churches and temples are called studios. The high priests are called producers and directors and the lower clergy are the actors and performers who kiss their rings in veneration. And it seems to me those rings are often in their back pockets.”

Nervous laughter all around, some subtly shaking their heads in agreement, out of sight of the director. “Give me your card father, let’s do lunch.” You’re a real character!! You ought to be in one of my movies he said somewhat sarcastically. When in Hollywood you hear “let’s do lunch.” It really means ‘get lost. I never want to see you again.”

Needless to say, I never heard from him and I wasn’t about to call him or “kiss his ring”. Listening to follow up conversations in the banquet hall, I overheard animated chats that revealed a thirst for something more than this world can provide. That

ultimately no wealth, no power, no contrived external beauty at the hands of a plastic surgeons or any lasting worldly pleasures can satisfy the thirst of the soul. “What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul.” (Mk 8:36)

All of us, the humble and the exalted, wake up in the middle of the night from time to time staring at the ceiling, and in the darkness contemplating our inner thirst for God, our emptiness, frustrations and true need for the love and security that only God our creator can provide.

Fr. John Bakas is dean of St. Sophia Cathedral in Los Angeles and an adjunct professor in the Loyola Marymount University Department of Theology. | Article was published in the Orthodox Observer November December 2017 issue

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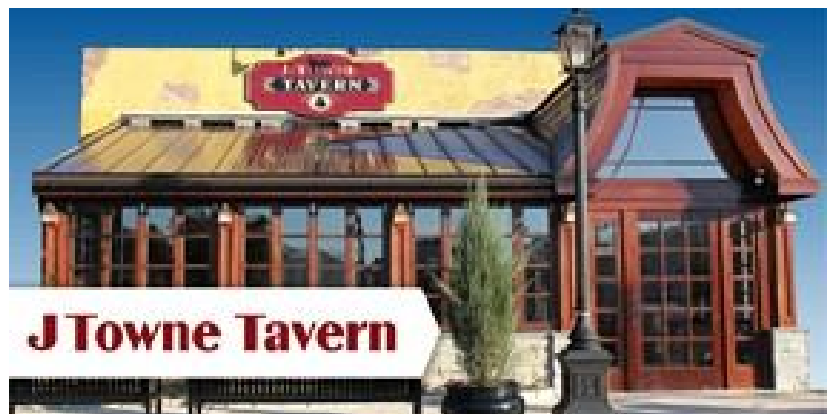
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“February – Focus on Family and You”

Welcome again to a New Year, 2018, and we have a lot to accomplish as we go through trials and tribulations with our family and friends in the coming years. We go through cycles within members of our family that continue through our lives not only during the holidays as we just experienced at Christmas and made all sorts of promises and resolutions for New Year, 2018. The family cycle has changed a bit. Let's see...



Let's talk about **The Family Life Cycle**. What is a **Family**? A definition of **family** according to health professionals states “*family consists of two or more people living in the same household that are related by blood, marriage, or adoption.*” In today's society we have re-marriages, step-children, and more extended family connections. Of course we know family also consists of “relatives” who may not live with us, and who can forget our “church family”. The holidays are times when we spend most of our time together with family we do not see everyday and connect more than usual. Do we understand the concept of “family”? How do we interact with family? Are there really stages in “family”? Absolutely there are stages in a family and it progresses as a “**Family Cycle**”. Let's examine the family cycle. The “Family Cycle” actually has five stages that extend from marriage to the death of a spouse.

The “*newlywed stage*” takes on new roles as husband and wife. The beginning of a new family begins as one that consists of a family of two. As adjustments are made to being a “pair”, the “*early parenthood stage*” comes up with the birth of the first child that continues all the way through the child's toddler, preschool, and elementary years. During those times the rewards of parenting are evident yet they are very challenging. The *newly married stage and early parenthood stage* once occurred between the ages of 20 and 40. In recent

years, however, we see our more marriages at older ages beginning late 20's and even late 30's or older.

What's next you say for us in our family cycle? The “*later parenthood stage*” occurs between the ages of 45 and 60 and consists of the time when the oldest child begins adolescence and he/she goes through puberty, junior high years, senior high years, dating, first child

moves out of the house, second and third child follow, first child may marry. Major changes take place during this stage with parent-teen adjustments. With good communication and understanding, there are many rewards of parenting during this stage. We launch a new generation, which is independent and self-sufficient. We look forward to the achievements our teens anticipate. We begin to become adult friends with our children. (Ok—letting go here is difficult, but we must do it! This is the time we remembered to pray for strength!

The next two stages are considered in the “*aging marriage*” which occurs about age 60+. We have the “*empty nest stage*” when the last child leaves home. Children no longer depend on parents to meet their needs. It is also a time when parents need to accept a new family member, which may now be the child's mate. Parental involvement includes being a grandparent, but the role of a parent does not belong to the grandparent and this stage becomes lonely for many. During that time besides being grandparents, we have renewal of spousal relationships and caring for elderly parents. Strengthening relationships are important at this stage as retirement approaches. It is also important to spend more time renewing relationships at this time.

How many of you have reached the “*retirement stage*” when new interests and hobbies develop as well as experiencing extended family relationships?

Out of love for the soul and for speaking in truth, we offer up this convert to Orthodoxy's perspective on his former practices. The full article can be found at the link at the bottom of the page.

Excerpts are presented below:

HIDDEN FIRE: ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVES ON YOGA

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? - 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 NIV

I was raised Roman Catholic. I loved prayer. Walks through woods, playing in creeks, running through the vast fields of the imagination. These were like prayer for me: the silence, the stillness, the *hesychia* children find themselves in almost by nature. I didn't always stay in this prayerful place. But I recognized it. And I took it for granted, as a simple activity within the heart.

We all experience this to varying degrees. We use different words-or none at all, because they all seem so inadequate—to express the heart's movement toward God. It seems when we are innocent in heart, especially when we are very young, there is a tangible perception of *two* in these experiences. Lover and Beloved. The Someone Else. As I child, I didn't *articulate* this Presence as Christ-just as I never articulated my parents by their names. I just *knew* them.

As a high school student—my grandparents put me through an all-boy Roman Catholic high school—I wanted to be a Trappist monk. I attended services regularly and read the Bible often. Scripture really is like a door. You can enter through it and the Holy Spirit takes you places without ever really lifting your shoes off the ground. But I knew there was something more. A difference between reading about the experiences and the experience Himself.

Dr. Harry Boosalis writes in *Holy Tradition*: "We are not called simply to 'follow' Tradition or 'mimic' Tradition. We are called to experience it...just as the Saints have and continue to do." We know something is missing in the world around us. Some richness, some depth we are vaguely aware of and

long after. This is, of course, the richness of God's love, light, and grace. But, at that time of my life, I didn't have the language to express this. Like so many, I attributed this dissatisfaction, this unease, to other things.

Then a psychology professor in high school guided my class through self-hypnosis. My intrigue with meditation followed quickly thereafter. I felt relaxed. I let my guard down to new experiences. I felt as if the back door of my heart opened permanently. I rejected God 'to go it alone on my own.' I experienced, very clearly, a light switching off inside me. The Presence, the Someone Else, the Friend respected this decision. It felt as if He quietly left. He respects freewill. He never forces Himself. He knocks on the door of the heart and waits.

So, I started meditating regularly. Initially, especially as a teenager, it was really difficult: sitting for hours with old Tibetan Buddhists, completely still, bringing my thoughts back to the bare wall and bronze statue of the Buddha in front of me. I started studying reincarnation, karma, and samsara. I wasn't yet aware of Tibetan Buddhism's origins in the shamanistic religion called Bon, nor its embrace of astrology, magic, and other occult practices.

I wanted to learn how to calm anxiety and depression, how to sweep scattered thoughts. Visiting Buddhist meditation halls and Hindu ashrams, I was intrigued by the 'spiritual fireworks:' the ecstasies, trances, feelings, and visions. These are associated with all levels of meditation and

yoga and increase with practice. These experiences and more are sometimes referred to as siddhis, or powers acquired through sadhana (practice of meditation and yoga). Intrigue became fascination, and the fascinating became familiar. Without my noticing, my initial 'harmless' curiosity of the yoga and meditation hardened into habit. I spent more than a decade immersed in this spiritual sea.

I read all the mystical or esoteric literature I could get my hands on and kept a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita* folded in my back pocket and read the writings of Paramahansa Yogananda. I immersed myself in the writings of Osho, read Ram Dass and Ramana Maharshi, convinced there was no being more divine than myself. It was up to me to shatter my illusory self. According to so much of what I read and heard there can be no personal relationship with the Divine and this conflicted me. The calm and peaceful nature of childhood was gone. The more I delved into the meat of meditation and yoga, the more sudden and unexplainable urges I experienced to hurt myself. My soul was under attack. This was a very dark and unfortunate period of my life.

The Prodigal Son ate the food of pigs in a far country. But he returned home when he remembered the taste of the Bread of his Father's house. For more than a decade I lived in this far country, eating its food.

I saw so many people—some friends, many strangers—seeking the dissolution of self. They had an insatiable desire to lose themselves, not in the life and light of God but in the darkness of the void, in a separation from the Love Who Transcends Everything. This separation is hell. Many men, women and children seek this hell, spinning through promiscuous relationships and leaping out of the windows of drugs, through which so many fall.

But I studied and practiced Kundalini Yoga and shamanism, learning the presence of fear and coldness.

I grew a reputation for reading the tarot, an occult method of divination. I taught yoga and instructed groups through guided meditations and chanting in sage deserts. We experimented with astral projection

—guided out-of-body experiences through the bardos described in the Tibetan books. I carried not only underlined copies of the *Bhagavad Gita*, but of the *Upanishads* and sutras of the buddhas everywhere I went. Every one of these pursuits was a swim stroke away from the holy mountain of Christ. Drop water on stone long enough and you'll wither it away. Swabbing orange paste across my forehead, I rang bells offering fruit and fire while worshipping Krishna, wandering barefoot the streets of Eugene, Portland, Seattle and finally Rishikesh, Haridwar and Dharamsala in north India.

"Separated from God Who is the source of Life," writes Archimandrite Zacharias in his book *Hidden Man of the Heart*, "man can only withdraw into himself.... Gradually he is left desolate and dissolute."

Buddhism rejects the self, the soul, and the person. It folds its arms in silence against God. Suffering is never transfigured. There are crosses in Buddhism but there is never resurrection. One could say that Buddhism finds the empty tomb and declares this emptiness the natural state of things, even the goal. In Buddhism everything—heaven, hell, God, the self, the soul, the person—is an illusion waiting to be overcome, discarded, destroyed. This is the goal. Total obliteration. In this 9th-century axiom, the essence of Buddhism is summed: 'If you see the Buddha, kill him.'

Buddhism does not profess to—nor can it—heal soul and body. Both soul and body are to be overcome and discarded. In the Orthodox Church, however, the soul and body are meant to be healed. Buddhism teaches that *nothing* has intrinsic value. The Church teaches that *everything* God makes has intrinsic value. This includes the human body. We are complex beings. The actions of our body, mind and soul are linked. And these linked actions are directly related to our relationship with God and the spiritual realm.

For Orthodox Christians, everything—even suffering—is a hidden door through which we meet Christ, whereby we embrace one another.

One autumn, I traveled to Rishikesh, India. This city is named after the pagan god Vishnu, 'the lord of the senses.' Rishikesh is the 'yoga capital of the world.' It

is generally accepted to be the place on earth where yoga originated from. For 40 days I studied and practiced the so-called secret spiritual path of integral yoga in the foothills of the Himalayas. This covered not only the gym yoga of America; each class began and ended with a prayer to 'the god of the roaring storm,' Shiva.

This is while I was teaching English to Tibetan refugees and working for the Tibetan National Government as an editor. Yoga is historically rooted in Hinduism. Curious, I spoke with a rinpoche at the Dalai Lama's monastery in Dharamsal. I asked him who or what these Hindu gods *are* according to Buddhist cosmology. His answer is alarming: "They are created beings, with an ego...they are spirits trapped in the air."

What is yoga? What is kundalini energy?

The literal meaning of yoga is 'yoke.' It means tying your will to the serpent kundalini and raising it to Shiva and experiencing your 'true' self. All paths of yoga are interconnected like branches of a tree. A tree with roots descending into the same areas of the spiritual world. This is evident in the ancient books the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Yogic Sutras of Patanjali*. Of course, yoga may facilitate exceptional experiences of body and mind. But so does the ingestion of mind-altering drugs, and flavorless, imperceptible poisons. Through yoga, little by little, one is harnessing shakti, which yogis refer to as the Divine Mother, the 'dark goddess' connected with other major Hindu gods. This energy isn't the Holy Spirit, and This isn't aerobics or gymnastics. Attached to this entire system are bhajans and kirtans – pagan equivalents to Orthodox Christian akathists, but for Hindu gods – as well as mantras, which are 'sacred' formulas, like calling cards or phone numbers, to the various pagan gurus and gods.

How is yoga connected with Hinduism?

To be clear, Hinduism does not refer to a specific religion. It is a term the British gave to the various cults, philosophies and shamanistic religions of India. If you ask one Hindu if he believes in God, he may tell you that you are God. But ask another, and he will point to a rock, or statue, or a flame of fire. This is

Hindu polarity: either you are God, or everything *else* is a god.

Yoga is beneath this umbrella of Hinduism, and in many ways is the pole of the umbrella. It acts as a missionary arm for Hinduism and the New Age outside of India. Hinduism is like an extraordinary Russian nesting doll: you open one philosophy and within it are ten thousand more.

And the unopened ones are risks. You may swim easily and carelessly in waters you do not know. But unaware of the tides and nuances of the area, you may be in danger. You may be swept away by the undertow. You may cut yourself against unseen rocks and contract imperceptible infection and poison.

This happens in the spiritual life.

When we dive in the ocean, we may be attracted to the brightest, most colorful and intriguing fish but the most colorful and exotic are often the most poisonous and deadly.

The first time I visited India, I took off my shoes and socks and walked through the water, coconuts, discarded candy and shimmering fire of Kalkaji Temple. It is one of the most famous temples dedicated to Kali, 'the goddess of death.' I didn't know it, but I was right in the middle of her most important festival of the year. The temple was chaos and the energy very heightened and dark.

Thousands of men, women and children gathered at this Rishikesh temple to worship this demon. Next to me, a woman's eyes rolled back in her head, arms waving back and forth, tongue wagging pink from her mouth, legs lifting and falling like a puppet on strings. This was clearly demonic possession.

Once, I venerated the Sitka Mother of God icon and experienced incredible warmth, tears of humility and love, mental clarity, and peace. It was like walking in front of a window full of warm, fragrant sunshine. At Kalkaji temple, I experienced the opposite.

Kali is often depicted as a frightful, many-armed goddess with purple skin raising a severed human head, a bloody tongue hanging from her mouth. She wears a necklace of human heads and a belt of arms.

I have drank coffee with people instrumental in the movement of yoga, Hinduism and the New Age in America who, in order to be initiated into her cult, were prompted to eat human corpses from Nepalese graveyards. Not too long ago, the popular British newspaper *The Guardian* reported that child sacrifices continue to this day, honoring this demon Kali. This is all connected to Hinduism. And it is connected to yoga because the postures of yoga are not religiously neutral. All of the classic asanas have spiritual significance. For example, as one journalist reports, the Sun Salutations,—perhaps the best-known series of asanas, or postures, of hatha yoga—the type most commonly practiced in America—is literally a Hindu ritual.

To think of yoga as a mere physical movement is tantamount to “saying that baptism is just an underwater exercise.” writes Swami Param of the Classical Yoga Hindu Academy and Dharma Yoga ashram in Manahawkin, N.J.

Teachers and students typically greet each other with the Sanskrit ‘namaste,’ which means, “I honor the Divine within you.” This is an affirmation of pantheism and denial of the true God revealed in the Bible. The Sun Salutations, or, Surya Namaskara, originated with the worship of the Hindu solar deity Surya.

In Church hagiography and iconography, we venerate saints—real people who lived righteously before God and participated and continue to participate in His light and love—asking their intercessions. Idols, on the other hand, writes Fr. Michael Pomazansky, “are the images of false gods, and the worship of them was a worship of demons, or else of imaginary beings that have no existence; and thus, in essence, it is a worship of the lifeless objects themselves.”

I have seen swamis – in *this* country, in America – transmit this demonic kundalini energy just by looking in a person's eyes. And if one is open to it, the body may shake and vibrate like a tin windup toy.

And yet when it came time for me to receive this cursed energy through Shaktipat, an unbelievable fear washed over me like cold, electrified water so I raised my shield and sword: I started saying the Jesus Prayer. Glory to God! This awful presence was deflected by the Name of Jesus. We must remember, as St. Paul writes, *We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

How is yoga connected to Orthodoxy?

Yoga is a psychosomatic practice, an interaction between mind, body, and spirit(s). We must remember the word ‘yoga’ means ‘yoke,’ like the wooden crosspiece fastened over the necks of animals attached to the plow. St. Paul warns us, *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?*

If an Orthodox Christian wants to exercise, he or she may swim, jog, hike, walk, and do stretching exercises, aerobics...These are safe alternatives to yoga. We can also offer prostrations before God. The Church doesn't want any of us to be unhealthy or unhappy. We should trust the prescriptions of our Mother the Church and follow them as best as our ability, and the grace of God, allows. No one should try to extend the life of the body at the expense of the soul. Above all, we mustn't trust our own judgment. We must be accountable to someone.

As Orthodox Christians, we know that the actions of our bodies, such as bows, prostrations, and making the sign of the Cross have a relationship to the state of our soul before the True God. Why would we ever chance copying bodily actions that for centuries have been directly related to the worship of demons? Such actions could have serious consequences for both our soul and body which belong to Christ. May we be wise as serpents and harmless as doves

For comments and questions please contact the author Joseph Magnus Frangipani at Joseph.Magnus9@gmail.com.

Source: <http://www.orthochristian.com/80417.html>

Another good perspective on the differences between the Eastern religions and Orthodoxy can be found in a book titled: *The Gurus, the Young Man and Elder Paisios*, 2008 by Dionysios Farasiotis. Available on Amazon. There are also copies in our bookstore in the church.

GREAT LENT STUDY 2018

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES OF GREAT LENT

Fridays at 10:30am on Feb. 23, Mar. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2018

“The prayer of the Church is always biblical... During Great Lent the biblical dimension of worship is given even increased emphasis. One can say that the forty days of Lent are, in a way, the return of the Church into the spiritual situation of the Old Testament – a time before Christ, the time of repentance and expectation, the time of the ‘history of salvation’ moving toward its fulfillment in Christ.” ~ *Father Alexander Schmemmann.*



During the forty days of Lent we are ALL called to read the Holy books of Genesis, Isaiah, and Proverbs. The passages to be read are found in the *Daily Bible Reading Guide* which we all received with our calendar. We hear some of these readings in the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy each Wednesday evening during Lent. We also hear many Psalms during these services. Our study will focus on an understanding of why these books were chosen by the Holy Orthodox Church to be read during Great Lent, as well as a discussion of the readings of each Wednesday evening.

Please join us for this informative and interactive study!

A Lenten luncheon will follow each study. Please bring something Lenten to share as you are able. And bring a friend to join us in this special fellowship!

FUNERAL – ΚΗΔΕΙΑ

Clara Miaoulis passed away on Sunday, December 15, 2017. The funeral was held Saturday, December 23rd at the Ascension Greek Orthodox Church on Anderson Ave in Fairview, NJ. . *Our sincerest condolences to her family and may her memory be eternal.*

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ST. ANDREW CALENDAR

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION **Sundays**

PILLOW MINISTRY TBA ON A **Monday** @11am

BAKING GROUP **Tuesdays** @9am

CHOIR PRACTICE **1st & 3rd Tuesday** @6:30pm

KNITTING GROUP **Wednesdays** @10am -2pm

Hellenic Afternoon School **Thursdays** @4:30pm

JR Greek Dancing **Thursdays** @6:30pm

GOYA Greek Dancing **Thursdays** @7pm

2/17 @3pm Baptism

2/18 GODPARENTS' SUNDAY

2/19 KATHARI DEFTERA

2/20 @11 :30AM AGAPE LUNCHEON

2/22 @7pm GOYA Meeting *4th Thursday*

2/23 @10:30am GREAT LENT STUDY 2018 also on March 2, 9, 16 & 23

2/23 @7PM "GOYA BRIDGES" Sandwich Making

2/24 Faith Kitchen Host - Philoptochos

2/26 @7:30pm Parish Council Meeting *4th Monday*

2/27 @7pm Philoptochos Meeting *4th Tuesday*

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS MARCH: 3/4 PHILOPTOCHOS , 3/11 DOP, 3/18 GOYA, 3/25 BAKALIKO

3/1 @5:45PM PTA MONTHLY MEETING

3/3 SIGHTS & SOUNDS FESTIVAL at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church of Westfield, New Jersey

3/4 @3pm Baptism

3/5 @8pm Pre Marriage Counseling also on March 12 and 19

3/15 @4:30pm HAS Rehearsals / 25 March Program

3/17 Religious Education Teachers Seminar

3/24 Faith Kitchen Host – Parish Council

3/24 @11am Baptism

3/31 **SATURDAY OF LAZARUS**

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS APRIL: 4/8 PASCHA NO C HOUR, 4/15 PHILOPTOCHOS, 4/22 GOYA, 4/29 PTA

4/8 **PASCHA**

UPCOMING EVENTS

1/28 HAS Three Hierarchs Program | **TRIODION** begins

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS FEBRUARY: 2/4 PHILOPTOCHOS

2/11 BAKALIKO, 2/18 GOYA, 2/25 PTA

2/1 @5:45pm PTA Monthly Meeting

2/1 @6:30pm HAS Teachers meet

2/2 GOYA Lock in -----Location??

2/3 @4pm JOY Cooking

2/5 @7pm Stewardship Meeting

2/10 **SATURDAY OF SOULS** also on 2/17 & 2/24

2/10 @11:30am Baptism

2/10 MARDI GRAS at Knoll Country Club West, Boonton, NJ @5pm

2/15 @6:30pm HAS Teacher's Meeting

2/16 Roxbury's Global Hi-5 Multicultural Expo

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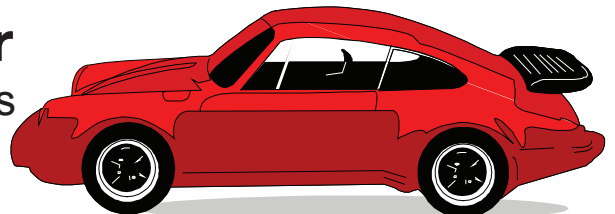
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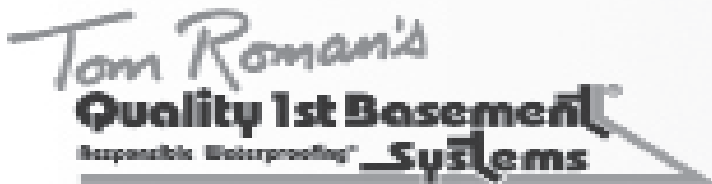
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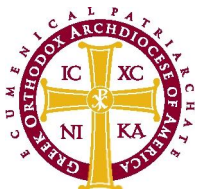
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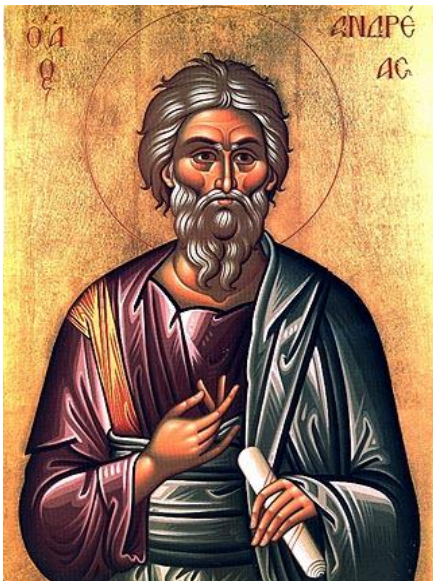
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Fr. Thomas FitzGerald:

The Holy Eucharist

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As first of the Apostles to receive the call,
and very brother of the prince of them,
intercede O Andrew,
with the Master of all of us,
peace to all the world to grant,
and to our souls His great mercy.

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟ ΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ ΑΝΔΡΕΟΥ

Ως των Αποστόλων πρωτόκλητος,
και του κορυφαίου αυτάδελφος,
τον Δεσπότην των όλων Ανδρέα ικέτευε,
ειρήνην τη οικουμένη δωρήσασθαι,
και ταις ψυχαίς ημών το μέγα έλεο

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Our Greek Orthodox Community of Morris County is a welcoming place where the family of Saint Andrew is committed to God, Orthodox worship, Christian education, philanthropy, and Hellenic culture, for the benefit of those whose lives we touch.