

The LAMPLIGHTER

HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH of Lansing

"Yea, Thou dost light my lamp; the Lord my God lightens my darkness..." (Psalms 18:28)

Volume XL

July 2007

Pastoral Reflections

Fr. Mark Sietsema

Last year in the Kresge Art Museum on the campus of MSU there was an exhibit of Tibetan monks creating a sand mandala. The mandala is an intricate circular design that reminds me of the drawings we used to make as kids with a Spirograph. A mandala is rich in colors, symbols, and depictions of fantastic creatures. It is an eye-popping spectacle, all the more impressive because the artists create the picture with nothing more than colored sand that they dribble in place grain-by-grain through slender hollow pipes.

But the end of the process is the most curious part. It takes five or six days of continuous labor for the monks to make a sand mandala. When it is finally done, though, they observe the finished product for only a few moments before they carefully take up the sand and remove it to a lake or river for disposal. Imagine that! The fruit of such intense labor, swept away in a few moments!

Why would anyone do such a strange thing? The idea is that the art itself is only a means to an end. More important than the picture are the virtues acquired in working on something with divine meaning: patience, compassion, purity of purpose. Yes, one might ask, but why destroy the art? Why not preserve it, perhaps for future inspiration? The problem, one would learn, is the temptation to become attached to the thing rather than the virtues that the thing helped to produce. The object is not the object! The goal of making a mandala is not to possess a material thing, but to grow spiritually. The thing is like a makeshift raft you might use to cross a river: once you cross, you cast the raft aside and continue your journey. You do not load it on your back and

stumble forward with something that is done serving its purpose.

I was reminded of the sand mandala by last month's Taste of Greece event. Through the eyes of a pastor, the event was a wild success. It was so joyous to behold our parishioners working together as a team in harmony and cooperation, young and old side by side for the good of the parish. It was heartening to see the end results of such good planning and preparation come to fruition in the well-oiled machine that was our drive-through operation. It was a pleasure to host the city of Lansing in our spiritual home. At first we had decided to lock up the sanctuary to prevent problems, but so many of our friends and neighbors pleaded for a look inside that I ended up giving tours for most of the evening!

Who could ask for anything more?

I suppose one might have hoped for a better turnout. But that was due to factors beyond our foresight or control. It would be easy to become attached to the "bottom line" of such an event and to lose sight of the real profit for the soul of our community. I was pleased that when Dr. George Mansour presented his preliminary report to the Parish Council in June, he emphasized the spiritual benefits that we reaped. Yes, we may need one more fundraiser in the fall to meet the budget. But this is not a cause for discouragement. This is an opportunity to grow closer as a parish family.

In a similar way, the renovations in our church building that the parish has undertaken – in the

sanctuary, the roof, the cross, the kitchen, and now the Baryames Social Room – have given the community another unique way to grow spiritually and work together. Today as I write there is a crew in the Baryames Social Room taking everything out in preparation for the redecoration that will take place over the summer. And of course, we are still in the process of completing the work in the sanctuary, with a couple of icons yet to be installed, fresh paint to go up elsewhere, and improved lighting to illuminate our worship generally.

But it is also in connection to this that I think of that sand mandala. As we enjoy the lazy, hazy days of summer, we also experience Michigan's thunderstorm season. Every time a boomer passes through town I think about our newly renovated building. What if (God forbid) a bolt of lightning were to hit our structure and start a devastating fire: what would that mean for our community?

Could we look back and say that the spiritual benefits acquired in the process far outweigh the material results? Was the renovation process one that built relationships in the parish? That increased our love for our God and our neighbors? That taught us more about our faith? That gave us occasions to show respect for the talents of every participant in the process?

God controls the clouds. Whether lightning strikes or rain falls is up to His providence. The Lord gave us our church building, and in His love, He can take it away. Therefore, our resolve should always be to conduct ourselves in a way that shows we care less for the material results of our labors and more for the virtues that these labors build in us. We should be attached less to the structure and more to the people who stand side-by-side with us there to serve God. If we carry out the work of the parish with such an attitude, we will always come out ahead, regardless of the bottom-line!

Parish Council

by *Stella Economy*

Summer is in full swing and things are really busy here at Holy Trinity. Vacation Bible School in June was a great success, as was our 'Taste of Greece' fundraiser. The redecoration of the Baryames social room has begun and the lighting committee for the sanctuary has been meeting and laying out plans for the new lighting. Also, plans for the East Lansing Folk Festival in August have begun. We've missed seeing many familiar faces, and we hope you include Holy

Trinity and Sunday services in your summer time plans and come and see the progress in the social room!

The Parish Council strives to keep you informed on what is happening in and around the community as outlined below.

- ✿ With a weekly income goal of \$5425.00, our stewardship and loose offering donations are as follows:

June 3	\$3,870.76
June 10	\$3,923.00
June 17	\$1,928.60
- ✿ The redecoration of the Baryames social hall began on Saturday, June 23 with the removal of all the tables, chair, carpeting and moldings. Contractors began on Monday, June 25 with the retiling of the storage room as their first project with the entire project lasting approximately 8 weeks. The Parish Council approved the request from the Traverse City Mission church for 100 of our old chairs. We will keep 50 chairs in case we need extra seating, and the rest are available for sale to our parishioners at \$10.00 each, available after services on Sunday and during regular office hours during the week.
- ✿ In support of our Metropolis youth programs, Holy Trinity donated \$250.00 to the youth camp in Rose City.
- ✿ A big thank you goes to George Mansour and George Lafkas for chairing our 'Taste of Greece' fundraiser and to all the countless individuals who helped shop, prepare, bake, cook, set up, direct traffic and clean up afterwards. It was truly a community event, and the fellowship was what all the workers felt was the best part of the day.
- ✿ Also, a special appreciation and thank you to Jim Setas of Stan Setas Produce for his generosity in donating all the produce for the Greek salads for the 'Taste of Greece' and for providing a refrigerated truck for us to use throughout the event.
- ✿ Holy Trinity has received several donations which were recently acknowledged. New storage cabinets for the side room by the altar were donated by an anonymous donor. These cabinets house many of the liturgical items Father Mark uses for services including the weekly icons placed by the candles. In honor of a niece and granddaughter's Baptism, Nick and Katherine Valaoras and Nick's parents, George and Georgia Valaoras donated over \$500 for the purchase of several copies of the Children's Bible Reader. With a supplement from the Sunday

School, each family with lower grade Sunday School children received a copy. Additional copies of these books will be available at our Book Store. And finally, Father Mark's office got a much needed face lift with new shelving, and a built-in desk and work station. This gift to our facility was also donated anonymously. God bless all these donors for their generosity.

Mark Your Calendar

August 10-12-East Lansing Folk Festival
September 15-Fall Dinner Dance, Lansing Center

From the Bookstore

Copies of the Children's Bible Reader are now available in the parish bookstore. The cost is \$20. This publication of the American Bible Society was prepared specifically for Orthodox children. It has beautiful icon-like illustrations. Presvytera Kathy edited this book and Fr. Mark consulted on linguistic and theological matters.

Prayers for the Sick

Archbishop Christodoulos of Greece
Pauline Geovanis
Maria Frangos
George Pappas

AHEPA

by Phillip Frangos

The District 10 convention was held at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Troy, Michigan, on Saturday, June 9. Several honors were afforded to members of our community.

Congratulations to Vackis Nicolaou who was selected District AHEPAN of the year for his many years of effort and leadership on behalf of our chapter. This is the top award presented to a member of the organization.

Congratulations to Maria Frangos and Alecos Nicolaou who were the recipients of scholarships from the AHEPA District 10 Scholarship Foundation. Maria received a \$1,000.00 award, the first scholarship presented by the Foundation to a student currently enrolled in a university. Alecos received a \$1,750.00 award, the top scholarship presented to an incoming university freshman.

This year Wolverine chapter is sponsoring two youngsters to the Diocesan summer camp at Rose City. They are Alecos Nicolaou and Matthew Sietsema. Those who have attended the camp in the past have found it to be a wonderful experience.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for AHEPA's Labor Day picnic at East Lansing's Patriarche Park on Monday, September 3. In the interim, have a most enjoyable summer.

Philoptochos

by Soussana Tesseris

At this time I would like to present the new Philoptochos Officers and Board Members:

Co-Presidents:

Eleanor Spaulding and Koula Tzoumakas

Vice-President and Secretary:

Mary Volakakis

Treasurer:

Olga Pascalenos

Our Board Members are: Glykeria Christofilis, Diane Dellis, Ethna Haggerty, Eleni Kaliyanakis, Frances Katsiris, Irene Kontis, Nancy Malvetis, Ina Samra, Martha Stathopoulos, Elan Stavros-Nichols, Dee Vosovic and myself as Advisor.

I would like to thank my entire board for their help and support throughout the years that I was President. Many hours of work have made many cherished friendships. My appreciation is also extended to everyone in the parish who has supported Philoptochos.

Our annual Bake Sale is November 7, so please mark your calendars. Glykeria Christofilis and Karen Colovos will be our Chairmen for the Bake Sale. Have a great Summer!

Condolences

Our condolences to Presvytera Eva Paul and the Ann Arbor parish on the passing of Fr. John Paul on July 2. May his memory be eternal!

Annual Festival in East Lansing

Your Help is Needed

August 10 – 12 the annual Great Lakes Folk Festival takes place in East Lansing, and Holy Trinity will have a booth on site. This has become one of the yearly fundraising events for the parish, an opportunity to show a presence in the greater community. Over the past several years, this event has been very successful, thanks to the collaboration of many of our parishioners. Once again, we call for your support.

Please submit the following form to the parish office by Sunday, July 15, indicating how you are willing to help out this year. The success of events like these depends on the willingness of parishioners. We need people of all ages! Come out this year, join the fun and fellowship.

We need your help:

Before the event

- prepare food, to help plan the event, transport equipment to the festival site obtain and transport beverages to the site, set up the booth

During the event

- prepare and package food in the kitchen, transport items between the kitchen and the festival site, work the grills on site, be part of the food service line on site

The hours for the Festival booths are: Friday, August 10, 6:00-10:00; Saturday, August 11, 12:00-10:00; Sunday, August 12, 12:00-6:00

GREAT LAKES FOLK FESTIVAL August 10-12

Please mark how you are willing to help.

- _____ Prepare food before the event – Spanakopita & Baklava
- _____ Help Transport equipment to the festival site
- _____ Obtain and transport beverages – soft drinks, water for sale – to the site
- _____ Set up the booth
- _____ Prepare and package food in the kitchen – Greek Salads
- _____ Transport food items between the kitchen and the festival site
- _____ Work the grills on site
- _____ Be part of the food service line on site
- _____ Help clean up the booth at the end of the event

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Please return this form to the Parish Office by Sunday, July 15.
We will contact you..



CALLING ALL YOUNG ADULTS

Building Biloxi

July 22-28, 2007

The Young Adult Ministry of the Metropolis of Detroit announces an outreach program to

BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

The Metropolis of Detroit YAL has teamed with the IOCC and Habitat for Humanity in an effort to help restore the storm-torn region of the Gulf Coast!

Please contact:

Metropolis of Detroit

Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

for more information.

Phone: 248-823-2411 or yal@detroit.goarch.org





An elegant evening
for the love of camp

A Silent & Live Auction

To Benefit The Greek Orthodox Metropolis
of Detroit Summer Camp

Strolling Dinner & Cocktails
Saturday, October 6, 2007 at 5:30pm

St. Nicholas Cultural Center
760 W. Wattles Rd. Troy, MI

Tickets \$60 each

Reservations: 248-794-7038

or email us at campauction@yahoo.com



FOR THE LOVE OF CAMP - Silent & Live Auction - Reserve Your Tickets Now!

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

I would like _____ tickets for the Silent & Live Auction, x \$60 each. Total _____.

Please Help By Donating To The Auction

Benefactor: \$1,000+ _____

Gift Donation _____

Patron: \$500-\$999 _____

(example: tickets, use of vacation home, artwork, automobile, etc.)

Sponsor: \$101-\$499 _____

Donor Name _____

Supporter: \$50-\$100 _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

Please make checks payable to MDSC and mail to: Camp Auction Committee c/o Katina Noxakis Cloutier
26309 York Road, Huntington Woods, MI 48070

Contact us at campauction@yahoo.com or (248)794-7038

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
 1701 East Saginaw Street
 Lansing MI 48912
 Office: 482-7341 Fax: 482-8524

8:45 a.m. ORTHROS
 10:00 a.m. DIVINE LITURGY
 Fellowship Coffee following Liturgy

July 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 Independence Day Church Office Closed	12	13	14
Six-year Memorial for Olga Pogoncheff	Parish Council Meeting, 7pm					
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Five-Year Memorial for Luba Millis					Wedding Rehearsal, 5pm	4pm Wedding, Kathy Raphael & Adam Scheidt
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
					10am Liturgy, Saint Panteleimon	
29	30	31				

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August 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Church Calendar Meeting, 10am Paraklesis, 7pm	2	3	4
5 Karagoulis Family hosts Coffee Hour Great Vespers	6 Transfiguration of Jesus Paraklesis, 7pm	7	8 Paraklesis, 7pm	9	10 Great Lakes Festival August 10-12	11
12	13 Parish Council Meeting, 7pm NO Paraklesis Service	14 Great Vespers	15 Dormition of the Theotokos	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Philoptochos Board Meeting, 6:30pm	28	29 Commemoration of the Beheading of John the Baptist	30	31	