

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 XLI

February 2008

Pastoral Reflections

Fr. Mark Sietsema

Ah, Valentine's Day! What fond schoolboy memories flood the mind every Fourteenth of February! Pastel candy hearts with cryptic inscriptions and vaguely affectionate greeting cards from schoolmates—*that's* what Valentine's Day was all about in the 1970s. Mom would buy those little valentines by the box, and you would spend the night before penning your name inside each one and then stuffing them into envelopes for the kids in your class.

Not that it was quite as mindless as all that. You had to be careful, of course, because in every box of thirty cards, there were always one or two that were a little too ... shall we say *effusive* ... in their expression of friendship. "I THINK YOU'RE SWEET!" Sorry, but that's just not a message that a fellow wants to slip to any of his buddies in third grade. (And to convey such sentiment to a third-grade *girl* perish the thought!) And so when passing out cards and candies, every kid was his own little Hayes Commission, reviewing all materials for inappropriate displays of affection and discreetly eliminating anything that smacked of true romance.

That's childhood—not telling people that you liked them for fear of mortal embarrassment. (Whereas adulthood is partly achieved through our ability to pretend to like people we can't stand.) The net result, though, is probably that

through the course of life we manage to say "I love you" far fewer times than we could or should. Like the Patrick Swayze character in the movie "Ghost," we find it hard to express our deepest feelings, even to those we love the most.

And whom do we leave out more than anyone? Is not the first commandment to "love the Lord thy God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Hard to believe that "with all your strength" doesn't also mean "with a few of your words" as well. But how often do we say to God, "I love you"? I have heard a lot of prayers in my life: written prayers, spontaneous prayers, ancient prayers and modern. Seldom have I heard anyone in prayer say to God, "I love you." Alas, for God, every day is a third-grade Valentine's Day.

Except in Psalm 18. This rollicking chapter of the Psalms begins with the fervent declaration: "*I love thee, Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer.*" Now *that's* a holy Valentine message! This verse has been taken into our Orthodox Divine Liturgy and is spoken by the priest as he reverences the Holy Gifts just before the recitation of the Creed.

But these words are not just for priests! Try it. Go find a quiet place and simply tell God that you love Him. Make a habit of it. I am reminded of the saying of a certain Baron Friedrich von

Huegel, who was asked once why it was that he kissed his adult son. (And in public no less! — though he lived in a time and place when outward displays of affection between fathers and sons were discouraged.) The Baron replied, “I kiss my son because I love him. And I kiss him in order that I may love him.” In other words, the attraction in the soul prompts the action of the body, but the action of the body can also prompt the attraction in the soul.

So stop behaving like a third-grader! If you love God, tell Him! And you might just find that over time your words become all the more true for having spoken them aloud.

May you have a Happy Valentine’s Day with your Lord *every day* this year!

A GREATER TRAGEDY

by Fr. Andrew Demotses

Dear Parishioners: I admire many of the writings of Fr. Andrew of St. Basil’s Church in Peabody, MA. In this short piece he speaks volumes about the importance of the church in our world. Think about his words below as you prepare for our budget meeting on February 3. Fr Mark.

When I was a young child, we lived in a small town. Not far from my house was a vast tract of woodlands that extended for uncounted acres in every direction. One quiet day, a young child was lost in the woods, and the town mobilized to find her. Search parties were organized, volunteers gathered, and alarms were sounded. After many hours of searching by hundreds of people, the small girl was found huddled under a tree, thankfully unhurt.

The irony, however, was that at the same time that hundreds of people rallied to save a solitary child, dozens of children were being lost in other parts of our town and not a finger was lifted to help any of them. They were lost to the drug peddler who conducted business behind the schoolyard. They were being poisoned by the parents who were too busy to provide them with values and needed guidance. They were destroyed by the pornographers who taught them

that they had no personal value or dignity. Far more lives were destroyed in the streets and open spaces of my hometown than were ever lost in the woodlands that were nearby. But the fact is that no effort was ever made to find these youngsters or to eliminate the dangers that they encountered each day of their lives

Where we live today, nothing is different. Our children are surrounded by constant dangers. As parents and adults we are duty-bound to prepare our children to face and conquer these dangers. More often than not, however, we warn of the danger that destroys the body but ignore those that poison character and deaden the soul. We respond with alarm to the small tragedy but do nothing to avert the one which is far greater.

Prayers for the Sick

Pauline Geovanes
Rosemary Gavrilides
Mary Ann Mansour

Parish Council

by Stella Economy

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

Stewardship and Budget

- ✿ We have 186 pledge units for a total of \$223,289.00 pledged for the year 2008. We have had a good response from the community, and thank those who have returned their pledge forms. If you have forgotten, it’s not too late to get your pledge forms in. The figures from our stewardship pledges serve as the basis for our yearly budget.
- ✿ A new computer software program has been installed allowing for easier tracking of our stewardship accounting
- ✿ A 2007 year end accounting of stewardship, memorial and special donations has been sent to all stewards. In addition, an

accounting of any 2007 contributions to Iconography has also been sent. Please call Mary in the office if you have not received your end of year statements.

Parish Council Update

- ✿ The officers of the Parish Council for the year 2008 are:
 - Stella Economy, President
 - George Mansour, Vice President
 - Elaine Christofilis, Secretary
 - Hiram Fitzgerald, Treasurer
- ✿ There will be a General Assembly on Sunday, February 3 following liturgy to discuss and approve the 2008 budget. The proposed budget will be mailed prior to the General Assembly for your review.
- ✿ A necessary update of computer equipment for the main office and Fr. Mark's office has been made.
- ✿ Our Fall Raffle was a great success netting the church over \$4000.00. Many thanks to all those who sold and purchased tickets, and to our raffle chairpersons, George Mansour and George Lafkas. The lucky raffle winners were: Jan Stajos, Lewie Popoff and Greg Gavrilides.
- ✿ The Greater Lansing Food Bank is still in need of monetary donations. Envelopes are available on the table in the lobby.
- ✿ Have you signed up for the Meijer community awards program? It's easy to sign up. Contact Mary in the office for details.

Mark Your Calendars

February 3, 2008 - General Assembly-Sunday,
February 24, 2008 - Holy Trinity Oratorical Festival.

St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

by Stella Economy

Each year Holy Trinity participates in the Metropolis of Detroit St. John Oratorical Festival. This year's local festival will take place on Sunday, February 24th after the liturgy. The festival gives our teenagers an opportunity to learn, write and speak about their Orthodox faith,

church and heritage. This strengthens their understanding and appreciation of their identity as Orthodox Christians, and cultivates spiritual growth and maturity. This year we will hold a senior division (grades 10, 11, 12) and a junior division (grades 7, 8, 9) festival. Materials with topics and general festival information will be distributed during Sunday school and are also available on the Archdiocese website www.goarch.org. Please call Stella Economy (349-9671) if your student did not receive a festival packet or with any questions.

25th Anniversary of the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

Last year 204 parishes, including Holy Trinity, hosted festivals. This year's event marks the 25th anniversary of the Oratorical Festival. In an effort to make it the best year ever, the Department of Religious Educations hopes to compile a list of all previous Diocese/Metropolis finalists. The department of Religious Education would appreciate it if you have been a finalist that you submit your name, current address, phone number and email to religioused@goarch.org or call 800-566-1088.

Philoptochos

by Mary Volakakis

Congratulations to Philoptochos Charter Member Chrisoula Limber who celebrated her 97th birthday on January 3rd.

Recapping January events, the membership passed the 2008 budget at the January 7th general meeting, the Vasilopita ceremony on January 13th netted \$349, and thank you to Glykeria Christofilis and Ina Samra who quickly stepped up and assembled refreshments on the spot for the "open" coffee hour on Jan 20th, a very cold Sunday.

The coffee hour on **February 3rd** is for Foreign Missions. The next general meeting is scheduled for **February 4th at 7 p.m.** The OPA! gathering is set for **February 20th** and there will be a program.

Reminder: The 2008 dues are \$20 and are payable at any time.

Tuesday, February 26th from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Holy Trinity will be hosting the annual Interfaith Day. The topic for this year's program will be "Sacred Arts in Our Faith Traditions". Father Mark is the guest Orthodox speaker and host clergyman. A limited number of lunch tickets are available (at **\$9** each) and are purchasable from **Dee Vosovic** on Sundays or you may call her at 669-1589. Our own Philotochos members are preparing the luncheon.

Please mark your calendars for the Zorba Dance which will be held on Saturday, **March 8th**, from 8 p.m. until 12 p.m. with food being served until 10:30 p.m. Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$12 for the younger crowd, and are available now from Frances Katsiris on Sundays after church.

Looking ahead to Lent, please consider hosting a Friday night Lenten coffee; there are openings for March 24, April 4, and April 11. The sign up sheet is on the table just outside the small social room.

Odyssey

by Dr. Zana Litos and George Lafkas

Bouzouki Night Dance

Special thank you's go out to MSU Odyssey students, AHEPA, Georgio's Pizza and Odyssey board members who made this event a smashing success. Almost 200 people attended the event and a good time was had by all. Our MSU Odyssey students did a wonderful job in planning, funding and marketing this event.

Valentine Tea

On February 13, 2008, Odyssey Program will sponsor its first Valentine Tea. You are

encouraged to sponsor and decorate a table (\$48) and invite seven of your friends to join you for dessert, a cup of tea or coffee, entertainment and good conversation. Individual tickets (\$6) are also available. (See attached flyer.) Contact either Maria Alexander at 449-9173 or Liana Pridnia at 336-9412 to reserve your spot.

Pikeilia and a Movie

On Sunday, March 2, 2008, *Pikeilia* and a Movie, an Odyssey fund raiser, will take place in the Holy Trinity Social Room. *Pikeilia* is a Greek word often meaning a variety of foods. In the home I grew up in, it was our Sunday evening meal when it was time to empty the refrigerator of leftovers. We promise you there will be NO LEFTOVERS, but a variety of Greek dishes that will be served in hors d'oeuvre sizes, so you can enjoy all of them.

The movie will be shown on our new drop down screen in the newly remodeled Baryames Social Room. More information on the complete menu and the movie title will be available in mid February at the church.

The event will begin with the *Pikeilia* meal at 6:00 PM with the movie starting at 7:30 PM. The price for the *Pikeilia* and a Movie fund raiser will be \$20 per person. Those who only want to attend the movie are welcomed. To make your reservation, contact Anastasia Kimbouris at 351-4399 or George Lafkas at 351-3121.

AHEPA

by Phillip Frangos

Thank you to one and all for once again making AHEPA's Village Feast a success. The setting provided by our beautifully renovated Baryames Social Hall complemented the wonderful food, music, and dancing of our youth. It may not have been a taverna in Greece but it was close.

A highlight of the evening included presentation of the AHEPAN of the Year award to our chapter president, Vackis Nicolaou, by representatives of the District Lodge. The award

recognizes the outstanding efforts of Vackis who has provided leadership over the past several years. The chapter has grown in membership, inaugurated several new events including the Village Feast, and continued traditional activities during his tenure. Congratulations, Vackis.

Another highlight was the honoring of Gregory Deliyanne on his becoming a Life Member of the AHEPA. Greg has been a member of the organization for fifty years. May you make it to 100 years, Greg.

It's not too early to mark your calendars for the annual AHEPA Fish Plaki and Graduate Reception Dinner. As has been the case for many years, the dinner will be held on Palm Sunday, April 20, immediately after the Holy Liturgy. A list of students graduating from high school is being compiled by Mary Heiderson on behalf of the AHEPA. Please contact Mary with names as soon as possible so that the students can be notified of the dinner and available AHEPA scholarship opportunities.

Condolences

Condolences to Peter Priggooris on the loss of his cousin Efstathia Priggooris Kostarides in Indianapolis, IN.

Condolences to the families of Hiram and Delores Fitzgerald and Eric and Stephanie Haynie on the passing of Dee's mother Catherine Koncar.

Please note: In the January Lamplighter the name of Katerina Mangopoulos Chilkoff was misspelled in the Condolences announcements. Our apologies for this mistake. May the memory of Katerina be eternal!

Announcements

Parishioners are invited to sponsor an issue of the Lamplighter, our monthly newsletter. Sponsorships can be in memory of loved ones or in honor of family or friends. The cost is \$200. Speak with Mary Heiderson or Diana Voutsaras to arrange a sponsorship.

Please make note of the important General Assembly coming up on Sunday, February 3, after the Divine Liturgy. This meeting is to approve a parish budget for 2008. All parishioners in good standing are asked to be present and participate.

The National Altar Boy Retreat and the National Girls Retreat is being held from April 3-6 on the campus of Holy Cross seminary in Brookline, MA. Because of a Leadership 100 grant, the registration fee is a stunningly low \$75 for the weekend. Visit www.youth.goarch.org for information on the retreat and on scholarships.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES (and their Parents)

Kindly let the Parish Office know if your family has a son or daughter who will be graduating from high school in June, 2008. Thank you!



OCF Mission Trip to El Salvador

Dear Parishioner,

This Spring Break, Students from Michigan State University's Orthodox Christian Fellowship will have the privilege to travel to El Salvador and participate in a service project. The team will be comprised of College students and young adults from around the nation. We will be helping at the San Cristobal Orphanage home of approximately 60-70 children. It is located about 20 minutes south of the country's capital, San Salvador.

Our primary goals will be to improve the conditions in which the children are living. We will be paving a driveway, painting, and working on electrical wiring. We will also have the incredible opportunity to spend time with the children on the playground and with craft projects as well. It is our hope to grow in Christ through the work with the children, meanwhile preaching the gospel through our actions and examples.

In order for us to participate in this trip, we will need to raise the \$1,300 each, which will help pay for my transportation, food, and lodging, along with the supplies and materials needed for our work project. Would you prayerfully consider helping to support us on this trip?

Your tax-deductible checks should be made payable to "Holy Trinity." Please earmark the check "Real Break 2008 OCF." All donations need to be collected by February 20th, 2008. Anything that you can contribute will be greatly appreciated.

In order to be members of this team, we will need both your spiritual and financial support. Please keep our whole team in your prayers, both as we prepare for the trip and when we are there. We leave for El Salvador on March 1st and will be there for one week.

We truly thank you for your prayers and for any financial help which you might be able to offer. When we return, we will be sure to tell you all about our experience!

With much love and gratitude,

Michigan State University's OCF
El Salvador Team:

Elizabeth Brown
Michelle Evans
Meredith Gantos
Georgia Katapodis
Nick Lionas



Valentine Tea

Bring your sweetie, bring your best friends!

*It's a time to celebrate Valentine's Day
with dessert, a cup of tea or coffee,
entertainment, and some great conversation.*

Date: *Wednesday, February 13th*

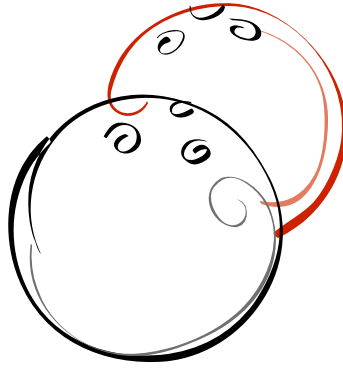
Time: *7:00 to 9:00 PM*

Place: *Baryames Social Room*

Price: *\$6 per ticket,
or host a table of 8 for \$48*

To sign up, or if you have any questions please contact
Maria Alexander at 449-9173, or Liana Pridnia at 336-9412

Proceeds to benefit the Odyssey program.



ALL GOYANS are INVITED
to
***The Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Annual
 Bowling Fun Day and Zorba Dance***
Saturday March 8, 2008

2:00-3:00	Lunch at Georgio's Pizza 1010 E. Grand River, East Lansing, Michigan, (517) 351-1000
3:30-4:00	Registration at Holiday Lanes 3101 E. Grand River Lansing, Michigan, (517) 337-2695
4:00-6:30	Bowling Fun Day, snacks, and prizes
6:30-8:00	Free time
8:00-12:00	Zorba Dance at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church 1701 E. Saginaw St., Lansing, Michigan, (517) 482-7341

The cost for bowling and lunch is \$15 per person
 The cost for dinner and dance is \$12 per person

For more information please contact:
 Stacie Neros @ 669-2816 or Sue Vlahakis @ 669-8115

Please RSVP as soon as possible but no later than February 29, 2008.
 For those who want to spend the night in Lansing, let us know and we can help with hotel information

We look forward to seeing you for a fun-filled day of bowling, fellowship and dancing!

Please join us for Liturgy on Sunday



IONIAN VILLAGE
FAITH and FRIENDSHIPS that last a LIFETIME!

Ionian Village

An Orthodox Summer Camp in Greece
for campers 8th through 12th grade

2008 Ionian Village Registration is now open!

Summer Travel Camp: June 27 through July 17
Byzantine Venture: July 26 through August 14

For more information please visit
www.IONIANVILLAGE.ORG

Registration Forms are available in the Parish Office or online

Both Sessions will be open for campers 8th through 12th grade. Children entering 8th grade in the fall of 2008, through those who will complete the 12th grade in the spring of 2008 are welcome to register for Ionian Village this year.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 28, 2008

Contact: Nikki Stephanopoulos
Tel.: 212.774-0244

ARCHBISHOP CHRISTODOULOS OF ATHENS AND ALL GREECE FALLS ASLEEP IN THE LORD

The Holy Archdiocese of America shares in the grief Archbishop Demetrios travels to Athens for the funeral service

NEW YORK – With great sorrow and deep heartfelt emotion the entire flock of the Holy Archdiocese of America learned of the passing of the late Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, Christodoulos of blessed memory.

The late Archbishop Christodoulos reposed in the peace of God at 5:15 a.m. (Greek time), today, Monday, January 28, 2008, at his residence, after battling with a disease that lasted many months and which required lengthy medical treatments administered to him at home, which is where he desired to be, despite the swift deterioration of his health.

His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of America, as soon as he was informed of the passing of the late Archbishop Christodoulos, issued this statement:

The passing of the late Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, Christodoulos of blessed memory, saddens us deeply, for with his departure from this world the Church has lost an exceptional and highly esteemed Hierarch, as well as a brilliant champion of Orthodoxy and of the universal values of the Hellenic cultural tradition. I had the special honor to know him from the time he attended high school, and afterwards, to appreciate his dynamism, his kindness, his intellect and his great offering to the Church in important areas such as the divine worship, pastoral and social care, as well as inter-Orthodox and inter-Christian relations. I pray fervently to the Lord for the repose of the soul of the distinguished and ever-memorable brother and concelebrant, the late Archbishop Christodoulos, in the tabernacles of the saints and of the righteous.

The illness of the late Archbishop was diagnosed on June 9, 2007, when he was admitted to the “Aretaio” Hospital of Athens. On August 18, 2007, the Archbishop traveled to Miami, Florida, with the prospect to receive a liver transplant, which in the end was not possible, and for which reason he returned to Greece on October 26.

Immediately after the announcement of the passing of the late Archbishop Christodoulos, a four day mourning period was declared. The funeral service will take place in the Cathedral of Athens on Thursday, January 31, 2008.

Archbishop Demetrios of America will depart for Athens tomorrow, Tuesday January 29th, in order to accompany His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at the funeral services of the late Archbishop Christodoulos.

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

8:45 am ORTHROS
 10:00 am DIVINE LITURGY
 Fellowship Coffee following
 Liturgy

February 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING Philoptochos Coffee Hour-Foreign Missions	Philoptochos General Meeting, 7pm				Odyssey Classes, 4:30-6pm	Presentation of Jesus Christ in the Temple, Liturgy 10am
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Sunday School Coffee Hour St. Haralambos the Martyr	Parish Council Meeting, 7pm		St. Valentine's Day Tea, 6-8pm	St. Valentine's Day	GOYA Basketball Tournament 15, 16 and 17	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
NO Sunday School OCF Coffee Hour St. Theodore Triodion Begins	Interfaith Meeting, 1pm Lampighter Deadline Presidents' Day		OPA Gathering, 1-3pm	G.L.A.R.S.P. Luncheon, 11-2pm	NO Odyssey Classes	
24	25	26	27	28	29	
OCF Coffee Hour Oratorical Festival	Set-up for Interfaith Day	Interfaith Day Gathering at Holy Trinity, 9am	Bible Study, 7pm		Odyssey Classes, 4:30-6pm	

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March 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Philoptochos Coffee-IOCC Odyssey "Movie Night" Fundraiser, 6pm Meat Fare	3 Philoptochos Board, 7pm General Meeting, 7:30pm	4	5 Bible Study, 7pm	6	7 Odyssey Classes, 4:30-6pm	8 Saturday of Souls, Liturgy 10a.m. Youth Groups Bowling ZORBA Dance, 8pm
9 Macaronada Luncheon & Coffee Hour Cheese Fare Daylight Saving Time begins	10 Parish Council Meeting, 7pm Great Lent Begins	11	12 Presanctified Liturgy, 5pm Bible Study, 7pm	13	14 GOYA Lenten Lock-In Odyssey Classes, 4:30-6 Salutations, 7pm	15
16 Sunday School Coffee Sunday of Orthodoxy Icon Procession	17 Lenten Potluck, 6pm Great Compline, 7pm	18	19 OPA Gathering, 1-3pm Presanctified Liturgy, 5pm Bible Study, 7pm	20	21 Odyssey Classes, 4:30-6pm Salutations, 7pm	22 Greek Independence Day Rehearsal
23 Greek Independence Day & Odyssey Program Choir Coffee Hour Western Easter	24 Lamplighter Deadline	25 Philoptochos Luncheon Annunciation of the Theotokos, 10am	26 Presanctified Liturgy, 5pm Fr. Jim Bogdan Presentation, 6:30pm	27	28 Odyssey Classes, 4:30-6pm Salutations, 7pm	29 SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY
30 GENERAL ASSEMBLY Parish Council Coffee	31					