

**February 01, 2015 ~ Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion Begins Today**

**Tone of the week: Tone One ~ First Eothinon Reading:**

The Pharisees were an ancient and outstanding sect among the Jews known for their diligent observance of the outward matters of the Law. Although, according to the word of our Lord, they "did all their works to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5), and were hypocrites (ibid. 23: 13, 14, 15, etc.), because of the apparent holiness of their lives they were thought by all to be righteous, and separate from others, which is what the name Pharisee means. On the other hand, Publicans, collectors of the royal taxes, committed many injustices and extortions for filthy lucre's sake, and all held them to be sinners and unjust. It was therefore according to common opinion that the Lord Jesus in His parable signified a virtuous person by a Pharisee, and a sinner by a Publican, to teach His disciples the harm of pride and the profit of humble-mindedness.

Since the chief weapon for virtue is humility, and the greatest hindrance to it is pride, the divine Fathers have set these three weeks before the Forty-day Fast as a preparation for the spiritual struggles of virtue. This present week they have called Harbinger, since it declares that the Fast is approaching; and they set humility as the foundation for all our spiritual labors by appointing that the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee be read today, even before the Fast begins, to teach, through the vaunting of the Pharisee, that the foul smoke of self-esteem and the stench of boasting drives away the grace of the Spirit, strips man of all his virtue, and casts him into the pits of Hades; and, through the repentance and contrite prayer of the Publican, that humility confers upon the sinner forgiveness of all his wicked deeds and raises him up to the greatest heights.

Epistle Reading: St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 8:28-39

Brethren, we know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel Reading: The Gospel of Luke 18:10-14

The Lord said this parable, "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."



**February 1, 2015**

- Monday      *Presentation of Christ @ Ypapanti*  
9am Orthros/10am Divine Liturgy  
(NO Paraclesis or Bible Study)
- Tuesday      7pm GOYA Meeting
- Wednesday    4:30pm Greek School  
6:45pm GOYA Basketball
- Thursday      6pm Great Vespers @ St. Photios Chapel, Metropolis
- Friday      *St. Photios @ Dormition of the Theotokos in Oakmont*  
8:30am Orthros/9:30am Divine Liturgy
- Saturday      10am Seminar for Parish Council Preidents and Treasurers in @ Oakmont  
*Mardi Gras: Children's Glendi 6pm/Costume Parade 7:30pm/Family Glendi 8pm*

NEXT Sunday is Godparent/Godchild Sunday.

**NEXT Sunday, February 8, 2015 is the General Assembly meeting immediately following a luncheon. The announcement was a misprint; it is correct on the calendar. Apologies for the confusion.**

Stewardship: The personal 2014 pledge statements have been mailed out to everyone. If you have not fulfilled your 2014 Pledge commitment, we ask you please send it in, as soon as possible. We are also asking those of you have not yet turned in your 2015 pledge, to please submit your pledge card. Our Parish depends on your stewardship. Pledge cards are available in the narthex, or you can submit by calling Nena at the church office.

**Collected so far for 2015:** 236 pledges for \$274,595 with a goal of a minimum of 400 pledges

## **NEXT SUNDAY IS CATCH UP SUNDAY!**

A week from today is a special day in the life of our church family. On that Sunday, gifts will be received in worship from all willing and able members -- to enable us to catch up on the payment of our church's financial obligations. Everyone should have received their 2014 pledge statements. We are asking all to fulfill their 2014 pledge and make a commitment to 2015.

At this time we are appealing to each and every member of our church family to do what you can to help bring our tithes and offerings in line with our present needs.

With your cooperation and generosity, our current obligations can be taken care of AND the ministries that we and others depend on can continue without interruption.

Your strong support now will be most appreciated. Please participate next Sunday to the best of your ability. Together as a church family, LET'S MEET THE CHALLENGE!

**Mardi Gras tickets will be sold at coffee hour. See any parish council member. Presale is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. At the door, they will be \$15 for adults and 10 for children.**

**GOLDEN CLUB NEWS:** January Golden Club event rescheduled to Tuesday, February 17th. Members are invited to attend a very special event on **Tuesday, February 17** in our community center. Please plan to arrive at 11:30 for a pizza and salad luncheon followed by a presentation offered through the senior outreach program of the Frick Museum. Topic will be "The 1893 World's Fair." Please RSVP to Rene @412 831 3142 or Cynthia @ 412 833 9423. New members (men also!) are welcome!

His Eminence cordially invites you to participate in our celebration of the Feast of St. Photios the Great, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Patron Saint of our Holy Metropolis, which will take place Feb 5-6:

**February 5** at St. Photios Chapel in our Metropolis Headquarters 6:00pm Great Vespers with light refreshments to follow

**February 6** at Dormition of the Theotokos GOC (12 Washington Avenue, Oakmont, PA 15139) 9:00am Orthros/ 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour and Clergy Synodesmos Meeting to follow

For more information please contact our offices at [info@pittsburgh.goarch.org](mailto:info@pittsburgh.goarch.org).

**Attention Holy Cross Graduating High School Seniors and Parents**

Two Holy Cross Philoptochos \$1000 Philanthropy Awards are available to two graduating high school seniors from our church. The awards are available to **ONLY PLEDGED** families of Holy Cross. The application will be available in the church office, narthex or Elaine Sofis beginning on Sunday, January 25, 2015 and returned by Sunday, March 22 2015. The award is based on your definition of philanthropy, a short essay on your philanthropic work and how your Orthodox Christian faith will guide you as you enter the adult world. A separate, but similar, Philoptochos Philanthropy Award is available to a graduating Mt. Lebanon High School senior in the guidance office, too. You may apply to both awards but will be eligible to receive only one. Please see an application for all the necessary criteria to apply for the award. The Holy Cross application may be returned to the church office or Elaine Sofis, in church, or 121 Woodhaven Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15228. -Elaine Sofis, Philoptochos President



**Mardi Gras**  
**A Holy Cross Family Celebration**  
**Family Celebration**  
**Saturday, February 7, 2015**  
 Children's Glendi 6pm/ **Costume Parade 7:30pm**  
 Family Glendi 8pm

**Donation Presale: Adult \$10**  
**Children Under 16 ~\$5**  
 Children 5 and under are free!

*Come in costume if you would like,  
 but please come and join in the fun!*

➤➤ One for  
 High School  
 Students

➤➤ One for  
 Middle School Students

High School Students

**When:** Friday February 27, 2015

**Where:** Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church  
 123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228

**Time:** 6:30-7:30pm—Salutations to the Theotokos  
 7:30-9:30pm—High School Retreat

**Cost:** \$10 and a non-perishable food item for the FOCUS food pantry

Lenten Retreats  
 with Steve from  
 "Be the Bee"



*You are loved. Life can  
 get really difficult, and  
 we all sometimes feel  
 alone or scared.  
 But always remember:  
 you are loved, exactly as  
 you are, with no strings  
 attached.*  
 —Steve Christoforou

Come, join us, and meet Steve "Be The Bee"  
 Christoforou from the video-podcast series—  
Be The Bee: Finding God in Everything, Everyday!

\*All middle and high school students from the  
 surrounding church communities are welcome!

\*Rsvp to Heidi Chakos at  
 412-944-3171 or [hm@chakos.net](mailto:hm@chakos.net)

**Middle School Students**

**When:** Saturday February 28, 2015  
**Where:** Holy Cross Greek Orthodox  
 Church  
 123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA  
 15228  
**Time:** 2:00-4:00pm—Retreat  
 4:00-5:00pm—Vespers  
**Cost:** \$10 and a non-perishable food  
 item for the FOCUS food pantry