

Holy Cross

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church
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Fr. Michael Kallaur
Fr. Dan Korba
Dn. Frank Dickos

Weekly Bulletin

Sunday, December 18, 2016

A little girl was saying her prayers a few nights before Christmas. She stopped suddenly and asked her mother a question. She asked with a worried look, "What are we giving to God for Christmas? After all, it's His birthday isn't it? What does God want for Christmas?"

One reason for bringing gifts to Jesus is that He first gave a gift to us. He didn't stop with a little gift, but He gave all He had – Himself. The Bible says: "Though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you might become rich."

Why not discuss your Christmas list with your children? What gift or gifts can you give Jesus at Christmas? One Sunday school class took a poll and found they were spending 25 hours a week watching TV and an average of only one hour a week in daily prayer, church, Sunday school, and reading the Bible. Can we give Him more time? How?

What are some of the best gifts we can give Jesus? Is love a gift? Repentance? Obedience to His will? Helping someone in need? Visiting a lonely person or a shut-in? What special gift can we give Jesus as a family this Christmas?

We share with you below what one family did for Jesus at Christmas.

A pastor tells of spending Christmas Eve with a family in Illinois. After the Christmas Eve service in church the family

gathered around the Christmas tree and opened their gifts.

When all the gifts had been opened, the mother said to her three sons – all in their early teens – "Now I want each of you to select the best gift, the gift you like the most." As each lad made his selection she nodded her head in approval and directed, "Wrap it in new paper and tie it with a new ribbon."

When this had been done, she further directed, "Now write the name and address of some less fortunate boy in our congregation on the package." Again, the boys complied.

Then, turning to the pastor, she said, "Now, Pastor, you must deliver these packages to the three persons named. Don't tell anyone who sent them. Just deliver them, please." Surprisingly, the boys didn't grumble or argue – even though this was the first time their mother had ever taken such an action.

Years later the pastor met one of those boys – now a young man in college – who recalled that Christmas Eve. He said, "It was one of the most dramatic experiences I've ever had. That event cause me to understand in a small way what it must have cost God to give His best gift."

- Fr. Anthony M. Coniaris, "Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home"

Hymns of the Day

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the First Mode

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews and the soldiers were guarding Thine immaculate Body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Saviour, granting life unto the world. Wherefore, the powers of the Heavens cried out to Thee, O Lifegiver: Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ. Glory to Thy Kingdom. Glory to Thy dispensation, O only Friend of man.

Apolytikion for Sun. before Nativity in the Second Mode

Great are the achievements of faith! In the fountain of flame, as by the water of rest, the Three Holy Children rejoiced. And the Prophet Daniel proved a shepherd of lions as of sheep. By their prayers, O Christ our God, save our souls.

Apolytikion for the Church in the First Mode

Save, O Lord, Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to the faithful against the adversaries of the faith. And, protect Your people by the power of Your Cross.

Seasonal Kontakion in the Third Mode

On this day the Virgin cometh to the cave to give birth to * God the Word ineffably, * Who was before all the ages. * Dance for joy, O earth, on hearing * the gladsome tidings; * with the Angels and the shepherds now glorify Him * Who is willing to be gazed on * as a young Child Who * before the ages is God.

This Week at Holy Cross

Today	Christmas Pageant following Liturgy JOY Christmas Caroling
Monday	6:30 pm Paraklesis/Bible Study
Tuesday	10 am First Steps of Christ
Thursday	St. Anastasia the Great Martyr 8:30 Matins 9:30 Divine Liturgy
Friday	10 am Royal Hours for the Lord's Nativity
Saturday	Christmas Eve 8:30 am Matins 9:30 am Liturgy 5 pm Great Vespers
Sunday	Christmas 8:15 Matins 9:30 Divine Liturgy
Tuesday Dec. 27th	Feast of St. Stephen 8:30 am Matins 9:30 am Divine Liturgy

Memorials

Fr. Leon Pachis - 40 Days

Steve Tsambarlis - 1 Year

Altar flowers are donated in loving memory of our Papou, Fr. Leon Pachis. From Alexis, Stefan, Joshua, Matthew, and James

The **coffee hour** today is sponsored In loving memory of Fr. Leon Pachis by the Pachis and Aronson families

Please sign up for coffee hour. Check the calendar online: www.holycrosspgh.org, click "Events", then "Coffee Hour", then scroll down to calendar, click on date to see if someone has taken it. Then email holycrosspit@mail.goarch.org or call the church office to request date.

Epistle Reading

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 11:9-10; 32-40.

BRETHREN, by faith Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundation, whose builder and maker is God.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets - who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated - of whom the world was not worthy - wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

Gospel Reading

The Reading is from Matthew 1:1-25

The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

Stewardship Reminder

Thank you to those of you who have submitted your 2017 Pledge. To date we have not received most of the pledge cards. We are in the process of making our budget for next year. Please make every effort to turn in you 2017 pledge.

A Note from Philoptochos

There is a limited amount of fresh Christmas bread (\$10 per loaf, check payable to Holy Cross Philoptochos) today, December 18. Please see Popi at coffee hour! Frozen Pastitsio is available at coffee hour for your holiday dinner! Please see Popi at coffee hour!

Thank you for supporting Philoptochos in 2016 in all of our fundraising endeavors!
The next Philoptochos meeting will be Sunday, January 8 at 12:30PM following Vasilopita and coffee hour.

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year! Christ is Born! Glorify Him!

Elaine Sofis Philoptochos president

Community News

Spanakopita

GOYA is selling frozen trays of spanakopita for \$30 today during coffee hour. Make your Christmas cooking a little easier and come pick up a tray following the Christmas Pageant!

Save the Date

New Years Eve

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church is having a New Years Eve celebration.

6:30 pm Vespers for St. Basil

7:15 - 8:15 pm Cocktail Hour with one hour of complimentary cocktails and appetizers 8:15 pm Dinner

9:00 pm Dance

Complimentary Breakfast at Midnight

\$85 for Adults

\$30 Youth (5-18)

For reservations call Harry Athanasiou (412) 292-4205 or HVACGREEK@Hotmail.com

GAPA is also hosting a New Years Eve celebration at Olympia Hall (at Ypapanti)

9:00 pm Appetizers, Buffet Dinner, Dessert, Music and Dancing

\$40 for Adults

\$20 Children 5-12 (Children under 5 enter free)

Cash Bar

For reservations call Tina Russhe` at (412) 244-3215

It is time once again to join or renew your membership in Philoptochos.

Please fill out the form below and return to the church or Connie Carahalís:

224 Mt. Lebanon Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA 15234

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

*From your \$25 Philoptochos Stewardship donation, \$15 is sent to the National Philoptochos, and \$10 is sent to the Pittsburgh Metropolis Philoptochos. Anything over \$25 goes to the Holy Cross Philoptochos.

December 11, 2016 Deposit	
Account Name	Deposit
Pledges from 2016	\$12,995
Pledges for 2017	\$2,600
Bulletin	
Candles	\$508
Donations – Unspecified	
Flowers/Communion Wine	
Loose Offerings	\$234
Greek School	
Sunday Church School	\$29
Vacation Church School	
Special Envelopes	
Holy Week Envelopes	
Christmas Cards	
Baptismal Candles	
Socials/Special Projects	
Hall Deposits – Current Year	
Hall Deposits – Next Year	
Hall Rental Income - 2016	
Christmas Card	\$1,025
Greek School Registration	\$5,160
Pointsettia	\$15
Total Deposit	\$19,966

Financial Snapshot based on \$2,075.33 per day operating cost				
Date	Weekly Collections	Weekly Collections Total	Estimated operational needs to following Sunday	Difference
Total through Nov.	\$498,595.07	\$498,595.07	\$718,064.18	-\$219,469.11
12/4	\$15,555	\$464,644.84	\$674,482.25	-\$209,837.41
12/11	\$19,966	\$484,610.84	\$688,955.56	-\$204,344.72