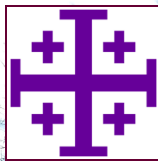


# HOLY CROSS

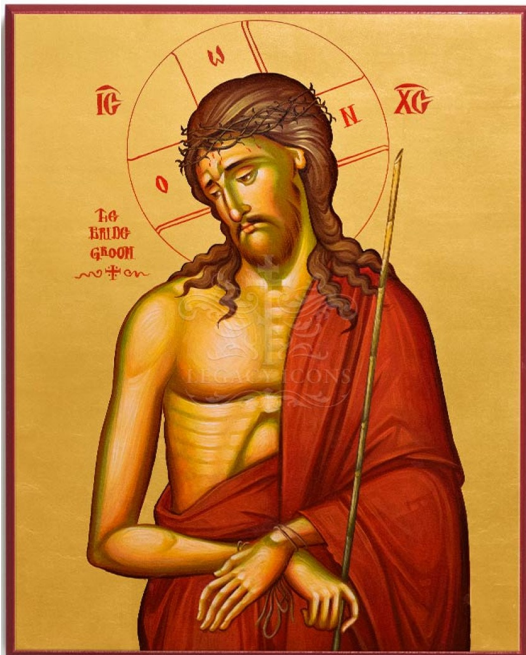


# CROSSROADS

Beloved Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

**Christ is in our midst! He is and shall always be!**

The Lenten Journey has begun. May the title of the year resonate in our hearts and may we offer to the Lord the time and effort for a good repentance. Listen to the words and wisdom of the Elder Joseph (Abbot of the Monastery of St. Gregory Palamas).



Repentance is the one thing needful, it is the resurrection of our fallen life before the Resurrection. It is the joy of the angels and the spark within us that gives rise to the Light of Christ. What joy there is when the whole Church is actively and intentionally repenting and making that great journey from “death to life”.

*Continued pg. 4 →*

March 2023

# OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2023

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week <b>FEBRUARY 5th</b>	 <i>TRIDION WEEKS</i> <b>Publican and the Pharisee</b> Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week <b>FEBRUARY 12th</b>	 <b>The Prodigal Son Returns!</b> Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare <b>FEBRUARY 19th</b> FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 <b>The Last Judgement</b> Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare <b>FEBRUARY 26th</b> FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 <b>Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise!</b> <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent <b>MARCH 5th</b>	 <i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> <b>SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY</b> Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent <b>MARCH 12th</b>	 <b>ST GREGORY PALAMAS</b> Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent <b>MARCH 19th</b>	 <b>VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS</b> <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4th Sunday of Lent <b>MARCH 26th</b>	 <b>ST JOHN of the LADDER</b> Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20, 32-12:2 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent <b>APRIL 2nd</b>	 <b>ST MARY of EGYPT</b> Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY <b>APRIL 9th</b> GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 <i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> <b>ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM</b> Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <b>APRIL 14th</b>	 <b>GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY</b> <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! <b>APRIL 16th</b> NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> <b>HOLY PASCHAI (CHRIST IS RISEN!)</b> Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

# Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church

123 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228

*Crossroads, published monthly Volume 23 Issue 3*

Under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and His Eminence Metropolitan SAVAS of Pittsburgh

The mission of Holy Cross is to keep and proclaim, pure and undefiled, the Orthodox Christian faith and traditions in conformity with the doctrine, canons, worship, discipline and customs of the Church.

**Fr. Michael Kallaur, Economos**  
**Fr. Daniel Korba, Presbyter**  
**Dn. Frank Dickos, Deacon**  
**Elias Diamond, Pastoral Assistant**

Nena Jovonovich, Secretary

Website: [holycrosspgh.org](http://holycrosspgh.org)

Office (412) 833-3355 FAX (412) 833-3357

Community Center Phone:(412) 854-6001

Office Hours Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

## Organizations & Committees

Church School	Elias Diamond	(412) 833-3355
Philoptochos Pres.	Thea Manos	(412) 600-8640
Phil. Membership	Adrienne Dickos	(412) 833-4980
Circle of Angels	Carol Halkias	(412) 276-5002
	Christine Peters	(724) 693-9290
Garden of Love	Dina Hartlep	(412) 720-9383
	Stacie Metrose	(412) 833-5164
Greek School	Didra Kirschner	(412) 561-2892
	Dena Yamalis	(412) 343-8355
Junior Dance	Kristina Gzikowski	(412) 257-5015
Senior Dance	Georgia Yamalis	(412) 728-2259
Choir		
First Steps	Sophia Alfaras-Melainis	(412) 251-3209
JOY	Elias Diamond	(412)413-7427
Young Adults	Elias Diamond	(412)413-7427
GOYA	Denise Melis	(412) 341-9264
Golden Club	Cynthia Kostelnik	(412) 833-9423
	Rene Koett	(412) 831-3142
Bookstore	Mary Portellos	(724) 941-8699
House Committee	Konrad Mayr	(412) 877-7780
Building Comm.	John Conomos	(412) 831-7997
Sts. Mary & Martha	Adrienne Dickos	(412) 833-4980
Interior Design Committee	Janet Conomos	(412) 831-7997

## \*Services:

Sundays:	8:15am Orthros
	9:30 am Divine Liturgy
Mondays:	6:30pm Paraclesis
Wednesdays:	7 pm Bible Study and <a href="#">via Zoom</a>
Weekdays:	8:30am Orthros
	9:30am Divine Liturgy
Saturdays:	Vespers 5pm

\*See monthly calendar for all services.

## Parish Council 2023

Constance Zotis, President  
 Jordan Nicholas, Vice President  
 Nicholas Tripodes, Treasurer  
 Jim Mustakas, Financial Secretary  
 Rachel Kartofilis, Secretary  
 Nick Ambeliotis  
 Christopher Chaney  
 Mark Hummel  
 Frank Kalogeris  
 George Liadis  
 Tom Mourtaeos  
 Christine Picard  
 Dean Stambolis  
 Donna Staub  
 Annie Urso

**Funeral/Memorial information:** Use of the Community Center is available for parishioner funeral lunches at no charge. Parishioners may contact any caterer they choose to purchase and prepare their **Makaria** (Mercy Meal). For **Kollyva**, you may bring your own or contact Denise Melis directly (412) 341-9264.



**Coffee Hour** fellowship is an extension of our Divine Liturgy! Please gather with family, koumbari or friends to sponsor/prepare one Sunday. See the calendar on website for open dates, and call the church office to confirm.



There are so many things in this life over which we have no control. There are so many world problems, economic uncertainties, wars, and historic consequences to mankind's sinful and passionate use of life and all of the gifts of God's creation. However, there is something over which we can exercise our will and there is a small but important area over which we have freedom. The evil one would have us think that we have no hope, no refuge, and no way out of the snares and fog of the fallen world. The devil is a liar and deceiver from the beginning. He would obscure and hide from us the straight and clear path into the paradise that God intended us from the very foundation of the world. This path begins with repentance. If we are to see the light in the darkness and receive the hope that does not fail, we will trust the invitation that our Savior offers to us through His Holy Church. There is hope and the hope that God plants in the hearts of the saints is in a sense contagious. Let us pray that we are kept in the company of the saints who point the way that leads to life and hope and be encouraged by their prayers.

More than ever our world needs men and women who have the courage to live without hypocrisy. The courage to repent is the courage to live in such a state of freedom and peace. The light of Christ begins as a spark in the heart of the one who says, "Now will I arise and go to my Father and say, 'Father I have sinned against heaven and earth, and I am no longer fit to be your son, receive me as a hired servant'". That spark is fanned into a brilliant light in those who apply their whole soul and mind and strength to repentance.

In the life of St. Nephon the ascetic bishop we read that one day a disciple asked him about repentance. The holy bishop replied, "believe me, brother, God who is good will not judge the Christian because he sinned." The disciple was very surprised and asked if sinners would be judged. The bishop (St. Nephon) replied, "There is definitely a judgment. God does not judge the Christian because he sins, but because he does not repent. Because for one to sin and to repent is human, while not to repent is a trait of the devil and his demons. Since we do not live continually in repentance, that is why we will be judged."

The Great Lent is a school of repentance for the Orthodox Christian. The beautiful services, the fasting, and the entire spiritual effort

give the Christian the support and courage to make a good repentance. It began with the opening of the Triodion, with the humility of the Publican and rejection of the pride of the Pharisee. It reminded us of the Loving Father and the need to return to the Father's house through repentance (Parable of the Prodigal son). The Sunday of Judgment is a reminder that all of us will have to give an account of our actions before God and how we have treated and loved one another or failed to do so. Lent began with the Sunday of Forgiveness, reminding us that we must forgive one another as God has forgiven us. Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise because instead of seeking forgiveness, they sought to blame the other for their sin and disobedience.

What is repentance? It is that change of mind and heart that is so complete that I see my sins; I leave them and return to God. Repentance is that change of mind that is so real that my behavior is changed. After the Baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ we read of the first words of Jesus' preaching: "the time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:14).

The preaching of St. John the Forerunner was a preaching of repentance. In the third chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, we read: "bear fruits that befit repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'we have Abraham as our father', for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Luke 3:8).

The Forerunner goes on to give very clear and specific direction about the reality of repentance: "... and the multitudes asked him, 'what then shall we do?' and he answered them, 'he who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.' Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, 'teacher what shall we do?' And he said to them, 'Collect no more than is appointed you.' Soldiers asked him 'and what shall we do?' and he said to them, 'Rob no one by violence or by false accusation, and be content with your wages'."

Repentance is the very action by which we participate in the renewal of the cosmos. Repentance is the means by which God provides for

our purification, so that with “faces unashamed and eyes illumined,” we with all the righteous ones can partake of the good things that “God has prepared for those who love him.” It is repentance that prepares us for Life itself.

There is little difference in the sin of St. Peter and Judas. St. Peter denied our Lord, Judas betrayed him. The big difference is that St. Peter repented, he wept, he returned to the Master. Judas was unable to repent, he returned to the Jews who plotted against the Master. In anger he threw down the money in his attempt to make reparation, and in anger and regret he hung himself. The critical difference between the two is that one repented and the other continued to do things in his own way.

There are many people who are carrying burdens too heavy and hard to bear. Many would prefer to bear the crushing load of guilt rather than confess and free themselves from the guilt and fear that someone might discover the truth. Truly God already knows all things, and the opportunity to confess frees us in such a way that we can make a new beginning.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, now is the acceptable time, now is the time to make our physical and spiritual efforts, to be present in Church, to break the daily routine and deprive ourselves of those things we “cannot live without” and offer them to God. Now is the time for Holy Confession. Please take advantage of this great Sacrament. Let us walk humbly before God and one another and with the certainty that our God will see our good efforts (especially those done in secret) and bless us.

Wishing you a blessed Lenten journey!

Καλο Πασχα!

With love in Christ,

Fr. Michael

## Great Fast 2023

*The Lenten Spring shines forth, the flower of repentance! Let us cleanse ourselves from all evil, crying out to the Giver of Light: Glory to you, O lover of man!*

*Reprinted from the Talonton, St. Gregory Palamas Monastery*

**T**he Church invites her children to enter the season of the fast with joy and exultation, reminding us that with sincere confession and repentance, the sins of many years are washed away, and new life is breathed into our souls grown old through sin. The Great Fast is a tremendous gift and if there is a spark of faith in us, it will ignite and fire our hearts and souls with joy and anticipation. Knowing that as new life dawned from the tomb, so new life can dawn forth from the dust and ashes of selfish and self-centered lives. While we honestly lament our sins, recognize the destruction and strangulation that they impose, we nevertheless hold before our mind's eye the hope of new life that springs from the tomb of our Risen Lord.

Our Lenten effort this year is more important than ever. It is important to each one us, personally, and it impacts the world around us. Certainly this past year has brought challenges to faith and church life that we never imagined. The pandemic is one destabilizing feature and the divisive political scene is another feature of this world that has grown old in sin and in love that has grown cold. The words of the psalm ring in our ears; *Trust not in princes nor sons of men, in whom there is no salvation. When his breath departs he returns to the earth. On that very day all his plans perish.* The world around us needs people of good cheer who are not wringing their hands and trembling with cowardice in the face of what is comparatively speaking, the light affliction that we now face. People who have experienced godless communism, radical Islamic countries or communist China, laugh at the cries of persecution that Christians in America are raising in regard to our present moral and political situation. We have what

we asked for, we have what we have permitted, and certainly we can expect what has historically happened to societies that reject God and his commandments. Our only way out of this is to enter the Holy Ark of the Church. It seems that in this way we embrace the world with love, co-suffer with the innocent and live confidently, and courageously with firm hope in the providence of God.

Our only hope is with God and the men and women who live without hypocrisy, placing all their hope in Him. A positive impact on the world around us begins with me and it begins with you. It begins when we take responsibility for our own sins and their impact on the world around us. When this happens there is a certain light and joy that shines in our hearts because we realize that we are not mere victims of other people's sins. We realize that we are victims of our own sinful and egotistic thoughts and actions. God gives us power to become His children. We can, with God's help, correct ourselves. We can, with God's help remove the impediments that we place between ourselves and His Divine help. In the Great Lent we stretch out our hands for His help and we are not disappointed. In the Great Lent He softens our hearts with Divine Love and offers the tools and weapons to wage war against our own unrighteousness and the clouds of darkness that hang over us. Those weapons that cultivate repentance are prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

There is a popular psychologist/philosopher who says that if we want to do anything for ourselves and the world around us, first we have to clean up our room and make our bed. It seems that the Orthodox spiritual tradition says something similar. The journey to Paradise begins with small personal steps whereby we make our way to our Father's house and this impacts the world around us.

Saint Seraphim of Sarov said "Gain inner peace and thousands will be saved around you". There is no better example of this than the segment from Dostoevsky's novel, *Brothers Karamazov*. In this section the Elder Zosimas, at the end of his life, tells the story of his repentance. Born into a pious family of the lower nobility, his mother was widowed with two young sons. Fr. Zosimas' older brother was not particularly interested in the spiritual life. Under the influence of a certain free-thinking philosopher he began to reject his faith. He was never of robust health, had contracted tu-





berculosis and through the winter he grew worse. In the spring, he began to fast and go to Church. As he weakened and came close to death, he confessed and partook of Holy Communion. He did this and much to his family's surprise and joy, he became more peaceful, more joyful, and more repentant. He came to a peaceful end.

This memory was burned in the heart of the younger brother (Fr. Zosimas). As the younger brother grew into manhood he joined the military and partook of the work and party life of a young soldier. Well respected and admired, his love fell on a young woman who was engaged to another. In his envy he provoked the occasion of a duel. This would mean a duel in which, given his marksmanship and experience, he was sure to win. On the eve of this duel, he found himself in an agitated state, struck his servant without reason and went to bed. During the night, the memory of his older brother's repentance, gentleness and death came alive in his mind and heart. He regretted the provocation of the duel and his cruelty to his good and faithful servant. In the morning as he prepared to leave for the duel, he made a prostration and asked forgiveness of his speechless and dumbfounded servant. He reached the location for the duel, greeted his opponent and the

witnesses, walked the appointed number of paces, turned and his opponent took the first shot. He missed the mark. The future monk then threw his pistol into the trees and asked forgiveness of his opponent. His friends were shocked and angered by this odd behavior. They said that he was a coward and disgrace to the regiment. He, however, left the field joyful and peaceful and yet rejected by his friends and the society that had formerly esteemed him so highly. In this state of isolation and rejection there was one man who took an interest in him. He was a pious, charitable and wealthy factory owner, and in time, after probing the thoughts and feelings of the future monk, he confessed that he had murdered a woman. When this confession became public, further condemnation was brought on the future Fr. Zosimas. However, the matter was brought to a court of law and after the penitent was acquitted, a fatal illness overtook him. The gentleman died in peace and repentance. We see in this segment of the novel that sincere repentance and holiness has a ripple effect that is contagious. We know that when people live without hypocrisy and live without cares and worries about what others think, they inspire repentance, courage and honesty on those around them.

The paradox of the effort in Great Lent is this: while the disciplines of prayer, fasting, works of mercy, confession and repentance are to be done in secret, there is nevertheless a palpable impact on the community around us. Yes there is a social dimension that authentic spiritual life does influence. While Saint Mary of Egypt was alone in the world for 47 years, when found by a holy elder, she asked about the empire, the church, the world. The elder answered her, "Guided by your holy prayers." She was alone and isolated in that desert and yet the elder knew as we know that the world is guided by the prayers of the saints. Let us then join the company of the saints in this holy season.

There is every reason to begin the fast with joy and hope, knowing that when we cleanse ourselves from sin we make room for God to act both in the recesses of our heart and soul. This, in turn brings light and joy to those around. May God help us to be light in this darkened world! May God help us to be the men and women of good cheer as we enter this blessed season of repentance!

In Christ our God,

Fr. Joseph and the Brotherhood of St Gregory Palamas Monastery

## A Reflection on the Canon of St Andrew of Crete

Few other literary works compare to the Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete, for it is at once beautiful poetry, profound theology, and rich in Scripture. Moreover, it provides us with the words of repentance that are spoken in the Orthodox Church on two occasions every Great Lent, according to the Triodion, the book of Lenten services. Divided into four parts, it is read over the course of four nights at great compline during the first week of Lent, and then again in the last week of Lent, when it is chanted in its entirety during a vigil service. Practice varies from parish to parish, but here at the monastery, we read it on both occasions. The first reading begins the Lenten melody and has been likened to a choir director giving a pitch, while the second reading is a summary of our labors in preparation for Holy Week and Pascha. The interval between the readings challenges us to put the words into action.

The Canon's beauty, depth, and richness can be seen in the following passage. "A man of great wealth and righteous, abounding in riches and cattle, clothed in royal dignity, in crown and purple robe, Job suddenly became a beggar, stripped of wealth, glory, and kingship. If he who was righteous and blameless above all men did not escape the snares and pits of the deceiver, what wilt thou do, wretched and sin-loving soul, when some sudden misfortune befalls thee?" (Ode 4, Thursday) Even if we are not familiar with every detail of Job's story, the question is poignant. If a righteous and blameless man such as Job, of great wealth and clothed in royal dignity, was unable to escape misfortune, then how shall we escape it? Let us, rather, prepare for misfortune and turn to Christ now.

The Canon is written from the perspective of the faithful, as in the above passage—"What wilt thou do, wretched and sin-loving soul?" Not only does the Canon speak to the soul of each person, but it is also about each of us, since it tells the story of humanity's common nature. This story is told through Scripture, and Saint Andrew refers to both people whose fallen nature led to their ruin and to people who sought help in God's mercy. "O wretched soul, thou hast not acted like the Harlot, who took the alabaster box of precious ointment, and anointed with tears and wiped with her hair the feet of the Lord. And He tore in pieces the record of her previous sins." (Ode 9, Wednesday)



As a work of repentance, the shadow of sin hangs over the Canon, yet the story of human nature is also about redemption, so there is a bright light shining as well. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, born of the All-Holy Virgin, assumed the whole human person, including our nature. In bodily form, He resurrected from the dead and ascended to heaven, thereby restoring our fallen nature to its original purity. "I have torn the first garment that the Creator wove for me in the beginning, and now I lie naked." (Ode 2, Monday) Apart from Christ, we are naked and without protection.

Human nature is good, but has become subjected to death and corruption as the result of an act of will by the first-formed man, Adam. We inherit from him a fallen nature, although we do not inherit any of his guilt. People have a tendency, however, to overlook human nature in themselves and to focus only on one's good deeds, as if these could redeem us. Through self-justification, we risk making an idol of ourselves. "I have become mine own idol, utterly defiling my soul with the passions. But accept me in repentance and call me back to Knowledge." (Ode 4, Thursday) Let us be called back to the path of salvation, for our sins are greater if we sin with the knowledge of Christ.

The human person is body and soul. "Come, wretched soul, with thy flesh to the Creator of all." (Ode 1, Monday) The soul is meant to lead the body, because the soul is rational, yet nothing in the human person is capable of saving itself. Unless we turn to the Savior, the end is at the door. "My mind is wounded, my body has grown feeble, my spirit is sick, my speech has lost its power, my life is dead; the end is at the door." (Ode 9, Monday)

One of the effects of fallen nature is an inversion of the relationship between body and soul. The body often leads the soul, although the soul follows willingly. Passionate thoughts originate in the body, but our minds engage them in dialogue and are convinced that the thought will bear sweet fruit, like Eve with the serpent. "I have the Eve of the mind: the passionate thought in my flesh, showing me what seems sweet; yet whenever I taste from it, I find it bitter." (Ode 1, Monday) Through servitude to the body, the will grows heavy and the mind sinks into earthly cares. "In my soul and body, O Lord, I have become like Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of cruel Pharaoh; my will is heavy and my mind is drowned beneath the waters." (Ode 5, Wednesday)

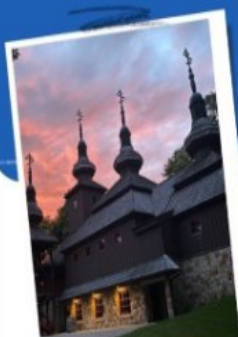
Many of the people we encounter in the Canon had no knowledge of Christ, for they lived prior to His incarnation. It is a distinct difference between ourselves and them, and this difference can clarify the following passage. "David once joined sin to sin, adding murder to fornication; yet then he showed at once twofold repentance. But thou, my soul, hast done worse things than he, yet thou hast not repented before God." (Ode 7, Monday) Like King David, we share the same fallen nature and the same need for repentance. Yet our sins are greater, even without having committed murder and fornication, because our sins were committed after having heard the Gospel message.

No matter how sin-free our lives may be, justification can be found only in Jesus Christ. He came into the world to save sinners, of whom each one of us is chief. The Canon repeats this point, as in the following examples, lest anyone should miss it. "No sin has there been in life, no evil deed, no wickedness, that I have not committed, O Savior. I have sinned as no one ever before, in mind, word and intent, in disposition, thought and act." (Ode 4, Monday) "I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned against Thee; be merciful to me. For there is no sinner whom I have not surpassed in my offences." (Ode 3, Tuesday) While we may struggle with these passages, they are more than mere words on paper, because they have the power to move us towards the fullness of life.

The Lenten melody can sometimes feel dark and despairing, but there is always an echo of hope and joy, because the Lord's Pascha is close at hand. He is ready to receive us back and His mercy is without limit, if only we offer works worthy of repentance. We are invited to join Christ in His victory over death and at His heavenly banquet in the age to come. May He give us a taste of the eternal life now!

# Upcoming Events

- GOYA Spring Retreat Registration Opens: February 1
- GOYA Spring Retreat: March 31 -April 2
- Summer Camp 2023 Registration Opens: April 4
- Summer Camp 2023 Dates: See below!



## SUMMER CAMP 2023

WEEK 1: JUNE 18-JUNE 24 (GRADES 2-4)

WEEK 2: JUNE 25-JULY 1 (GRADES 5-7)

WEEK 3: JULY 2-JULY 8 (GRADES 7-9)

WEEK 4: JULY 9-JULY 15 (GRADES 10-12)



Save the Dates!!!

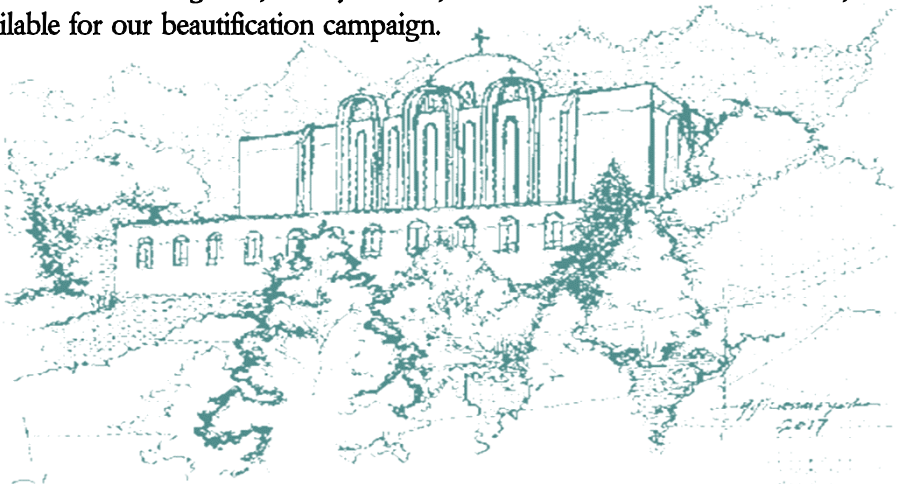
## *A message from Holy Cross Beautification/Landscaping Committee:*

Thank you to our parishioners who have responded to our mailing in January, with your donation---money that is matched dollar for dollar by our 23 generous family donors who pledged over \$100,000 to double any dollars committed by our beloved parishioners.

To date a total of \$102,000 has been pledged by those committed families for matching. So far, \$10,475 has been received from new parishioner donors in response to Father Michael's above mentioned letter in January. This means we have an additional \$21,000 accumulated towards our upcoming Projects--2 and 3 of Phase One (Our Entryway, Garden of Love and Cross Garden areas, along with the large slope between the upper Entry Driveway and the handicapped parking area near our Office Entry.)

We are aware that our beloved parishioners and faithful have been called on many times for emergency and routine maintenance---and you have always responded generously and lovingly. Now we are moving forward on work to actually address more than maintenance. We are managing the aesthetics, appearance, utility, and enhanced use of our Worship spaces and Church Home over the long term! We must be environmentally and sustainably responsible in the stewardship of our facility and grounds. Though costs are daunting due to the spaces and topography involved, and in large part, due to the lack of attention over many years, in faith, we firmly believe the investment will have many benefits and rewards over the years to come!

Please consider helping in this special drive to continue the good work and planning done over the last 3 years! Any amount is welcome and will bear its 'fruits' quite literally! We are hoping that - with your help - we will be able to collect the remaining \$90,000 by Pascha, so that we have the total of \$200,000 available for our beautification campaign.



# TRIUMPH OF ORTHODOXY

ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL  
3400 DAWSON ST. PITTSBURGH, PA 15213  
SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023 AT 4:30PM

HIS GRACE  
THE RIGHT REVEREND THOMAS  
BISHOP OF THE  
ANTIUCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN  
ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA



## Godparent/Godchild Sunday Luncheon





# The Greek School

cordially invites you to join us in celebrating the  
Annunciation of the Theotokos and the  
Greek Independence of 1821 from Turkish enslavement  
on **Sunday, March 26th**

The luncheon and program will be in the  
Community Center immediately following  
the Divine Liturgy.

Hope to see you all there!!!

**HAPPY GREEK  
INDEPENDENCE DAY!**



**GOYA last practice of the season before the tournament!**

**S**tories play a fundamental part in the Bible. Jesus taught His disciples in parables, in stories used to convey a spiritual truth. The Bible itself forms one long narrative, beginning with the Creation of the Cosmos, and ending with the banishing of all sorrow and evil from the world which comes with Christ's second coming and the establishment of a heavenly Jerusalem. There's something really deep in the importance of stories, because all of us could not understand ourselves or the world without stories. We think our existence in fundamentally narrative terms – "I was born here, I lived here for so long, I studied this so I can work in this field..." Narrative is essential to our understanding of the world, and the Bible is a story of which we, as Christians, are all a part of. Today, we remember a very important parable of Christ, that of the Prodigal Son. But before we consider that parable, let us first go back to the beginning.

In the beginning, God created the Cosmos, and it was good. Not only was it good, it was beautiful – this word, kosmos, has the underlying meaning of beauty as well as its scientific meaning, hence why cosmetology, is the study and practice of making things beautiful. The world was meant to be good, and God created Adam and Eve, placing them in a beautiful garden, where these first humans were to be the crown jewels in an already beautiful creation. But we know what happened. In spite of the beauty, they desired more. They took the temptation of the serpent, they ate of the fruit of knowledge, and they turned away from God. And in that moment, into this good, beautiful creation, evil came, sin was introduced, the knowledge of death and reality of mortality set in. And from there, it is like a series of dominoes knocking each other down, tragedy after tragedy. Humanity is condemned to labor in the dirt and mud, the first murder happens between the children of Adam and Eve, war, slavery and death permeate the creation, and we continue to experience the aftershocks of this in the brutal realities of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Yet, the story did not end there. God became one of us, God experienced the lowest depths of human suffering, so that we, undeserving as we may be, could be re-united with God, so that the gates of Paradise could once more be opened unto us. And though we still experience the ugliness of Adam and Eve's fall, the Church is like a beautiful flower, growing amidst a garden of weeds. And when Christ returns again to judge the living and the dead, all the weeds will be cut and burned away, and all that will be left are the flowers, the beautiful garden restored once more.

What does this have to do with the Prodigal Son? Well, it is

a very rich and deep parable, one that contains a multitude of meanings. One way of looking at it, is that it is a microcosm of the whole story of the Bible. Like the son, humanity took for granted the beautiful home of our creation, and turned away from God the Father, entranced by the riches of the world as we were. Yet the riches of the world turned out to be a bum deal, and much like the way the Prodigal Son's extravagance devolved into him dining amongst the mud and the pigs. But, just as Christ came to welcome us back to the Kingdom of God, undeserving as we are, so too does the Prodigal Son return home in humility, only to find his Father's loving embrace waiting for him.

I love the fact that the Bible has 365 instances and variations of the phrase "fear not." We are reminded once for each day of the year, that when we trust in the love of God, we need not fear, for perfect love casts out fear. So let this parable of the prodigal son be your reminder for today – the loving embrace of God the Father waits for all of us, a good reminder before the Lenten period, that if we return to God in humility and repentance, we will always find love waiting for us.

~Elias Diamond

## Metropolis Regional Lenten Mini Retreats

Open to all HOPE and JOY Kids (K-6th Grade)

**Northwest Region: March 4, 2023 from 11 am - 4 pm**

**Location:** St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church  
4548 Wallings Rd. North Royalton, OH

**Contact:** Anastasis Phyrillas at [aphyrillas@stpaulgoc.org](mailto:aphyrillas@stpaulgoc.org)

**Registration Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/hopejoyretreat>

**Central Region: March 4, 2023 from 10 am - 2 pm**

**Location:** Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church  
985 Providence Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA

**Contact:** Alyssa Kyritsis at [akyritsis@pittsburgh.goarch.org](mailto:akyritsis@pittsburgh.goarch.org)

**Registration Link:** [HolyTrinityPgh.org/events](https://HolyTrinityPgh.org/events)

**Southwestern Region: March 11, 2023 from 10 am - 1 pm**

**Location:** St. John Greek Orthodox Church  
3512 MacCorkle Ave. Charleston, WV 25304

**Contact:** Alyssa Kyritsis at [akyritsis@pittsburgh.goarch.org](mailto:akyritsis@pittsburgh.goarch.org)

**Registration Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/SWLentMiniRetreat>

Participants will enjoy learning about the different Sundays of Lent. Lessons include crafts, service projects and more! Lunch will be provided.

**Please Register by February 24, 2023**



**Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc.**

**National Philoptochos Approved \$50,000 in Emergency Funding in Response to the Devastating Earthquake in Turkey and Syria**

**For Immediate Release: February 9, 2023**

**New York, NY** – On February 8, 2023, the Executive Board of the National Philoptochos Society unanimously approved an emergency disbursement of \$50,000 to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Earthquake Relief Fund. These funds come from the National Philoptochos Emergency Fund, which enables the Philoptochos Society to immediately respond to those in need in times of national or international crisis. Fund disbursement will be directed to those impacted by the devastating magnitude 7.8 earthquake in Turkey and Syria with over 20,000 lives lost and hundreds of thousands left homeless.

This donation would not have been possible without the support of the 437 Philoptochos chapters across the nation who contribute annually to the National Philoptochos Emergency Fund. In addition, the Philoptochos Society is launching a fundraising campaign through its chapters to further benefit the earthquake victims, the *Turkey and Syria Earthquake Relief Fund*.

Please keep the victims, their families and loved ones in your prayers and please be as generous as possible. Donations can be made online: <https://ppay.co/-N5VYeUg5Jl>. Checks may also be sent to the **National Philoptochos Society**, 126 East 37th Street, New York, NY 10016 in the memo stating, "***Turkey and Syria Earthquake Relief Fund.***"

**PHILOPTOCHOS PASCHA BREAD MAKING AND SALES**

SAVE the Date for Philoptochos Pascha Bread Making and Sales on Thursday, March 30th. Round circular bread in aluminum pans will be made with our delicious, traditional recipe at 10am. Egg washing will occur at 11:30am. Wrapping of bread begins about 1:45pm-4:00pm. ANY of your time is appreciated! Lunch will be provided! The Pascha Bread, \$10 A LOAF, plain or with sesame seeds, will be sold on baking day, Thursday, March 30th from 2-4:30pm. The Pascha bread will also be sold on Sundays, April 2nd and if available, April 9th, after Divine Liturgy. Please make checks payable to Holy Cross Philoptochos. Thank you for supporting your Holy Cross Philoptochos in its philanthropic endeavors!  
Co-Chairs, Elaine Sofis, [esofis@comcast.net](mailto:esofis@comcast.net)  
Domenica Gulli, [meranteboys@comcast.net](mailto:meranteboys@comcast.net)

# The Metropolis of Pittsburgh Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society

**Thank you for your  
participation**

**2023 Daffodil Luncheon  
on Saturday, April 1, 2023, 11:00am  
at the  
Sheraton Suites Akron  
Cuyahoga Falls**

**1989 Front Street  
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221**

**Your Hosts:**

Annunciation, Akron  
Annunciation, Cleveland  
Sts. Constantine and Helen, Cleveland Heights  
St. Demetrios, Rocky River  
St. Demetrios, Warren  
St. Haralambos, Canton  
St. Nicholas, Lorain  
St. Paul, North Royalton

**Proceeds to benefit the:**

Metropolis of Pittsburgh Social Services and  
Seminarians Our Future Scholarship Fund

**Speaker:**

Eleni Constantinides,  
Metropolis of New Jersey President  
Social Services Liaison between National and the New  
Jersey Metropolis

**For information or questions, please contact:**

Anna Vedouras  
216-235-2798  
annavedouras@gmail.com

**Please fill out the reservation/sponsorship form  
enclosed and mail with payment to arrive before  
March 15, 2023.**

Reservations are not confirmed until payment is  
received. Payments can be via PayPal or Check.  
Reservations/Sponsorships can also be made online.

**Checks should be made payable to:**

Metropolis of Pittsburgh Ladies Philoptochos Society.  
Please send reservation/sponsorship form and  
payment to: Metropolis of Pittsburgh Ladies  
Philoptochos Society c/o Eleni Gugliotta, 3792 Cascade  
Oaks Trail, Richfield, OH 44286.



**Reservation Link and QR Code:**  
[https://www.paypal.com/donate/?  
hosted\\_button\\_id=4VKZJPB5SQXZG](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=4VKZJPB5SQXZG)

**Sponsorship Link and QR Code:**  
[https://www.paypal.com/donate/?  
hosted\\_button\\_id=E47EWR33JV2J](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=E47EWR33JV2J)



**Reservation/Sponsorship Form**

\*Reservations/Donations are not limited to  
Philoptochos members

\_\_\_\_\_ I/We will attend the 2023 Daffodil Luncheon. Please  
reserve \_\_\_ tickets at \$65 each. Total amount enclosed  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

or

\_\_\_\_\_ I/We will not attend, but please accept the donation of  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ paid by check, online, or QR code. Your sponsorship  
will be listed in the luncheon program.

**Sponsorship levels:**

- Friend up to \$99                       Gold \$500 - \$999  
 Bronze \$100 - \$249                     Platinum \$1,000 - \$1,499  
 Silver \$250 - \$499                       Titanium \$1,500 and over

**Parish Name and Chapter Number:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Person making the reservation:**

(Name, Phone #, and Email)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please list the names of the attendees who wish to be seated  
together (maximum of 8 per table) and circle their choice of  
meal.**

1.	Fish or Vegan
2.	Fish or Vegan
3.	Fish or Vegan
4.	Fish or Vegan
5.	Fish or Vegan
6.	Fish or Vegan
7.	Fish or Vegan
8.	Fish or Vegan

## Holy Cross Philoptochos Sponsored Nursing Student Graduates

Mati Lucas has graduated from nursing school in Guatemala after years of help from our Holy Cross Philoptochos. Thank you to all who continue to support our Philoptochos efforts in very many ways and make blessings like Mati's graduation, possible. Please keep Mati in your prayers as she begins her career of service to others. Please also keep Father John Chakos in your prayers as he travels to Guatemala next month for mission work. Father John will visit Mati and present her with a gift from our Philoptochos.





Dear HC Women,

Please join (renew) your Holy Cross Ladies Philoptochos Society membership for 2023. It is our goal that every Holy Cross woman enjoy the love and fellowship of our Philoptochos whether you participate by reading emails from an armchair at home, through full immersion in our programs or anywhere in between. You will be welcomed! Remember, the deadline is March 25. PLEASE include your email with your check.

Love,  
Adrienne Dickos  
Membership Chair

**HOLY CROSS  
LADIES' PHILOPTOCHOS SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP NEW or RENEW  
2023  
DUE BY MARCH 25, 2023**

Send a check made out to Holy Cross Philoptochos  
Adrienne Dickos  
1840 Kent Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15241  
OR  
Online at [holycrosspgh.org](http://holycrosspgh.org)

A base amount of \$25 covers our dues to the Metropolis and the Archdiocese Philoptochos. Anything above and beyond \$25 goes to

Holy Cross Philoptochos Charities.  
Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

# GOYA Basketball in Reading, PA







# Holy Cross

**SUN**

**MON**



**Tue**

O Lord and Master of my life!  
 Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk.  
 But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to  
 Thy servant.  
 Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions and not  
 to judge my brother; For Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.



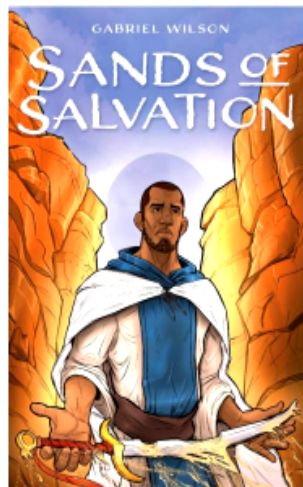
<p>5 <i>Sunday of Orthodoxy</i>                  8:15am Orthros                  9:30am Divine Liturgy                  No Memorials                  4:30PM VESPERS @                  ST GEORGE ANTIIOCHIAN CATHEDRAL                  IN OAKLAND, PITTSBURGH</p>	<p>6                       6:30pm Great Compline</p>	<p>7                       7pm GOYA Meeting</p>
<p>12 <i>Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas</i>                  8:15am Orthros                  9:30am Divine Liturgy</p>	<p>13                       6:30pm Great Compline</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>19 <i>Sunday of the Holy Cross</i>                  8:15am Orthros                  9:30am Divine Liturgy                  No Memorials</p>	<p>20                       6:30pm Great Compline</p>	<p>21  <b>Ham Golden Club</b></p>
<p>26 <i>Sunday of St. John Climacus</i>                  8:15am Orthros                  9:30am Divine Liturgy                  GREEK SCHOOL LUNCHEON                  AND PROGRAM</p>	<p>27                       6:30pm Great Compline</p>	<p>28                       7pm Sts. Mary &amp; Martha</p>

# March 2023

WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p>1 March</p> <p></p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 6pm Presanctified Liturgy</p>	<p>2</p> <p>7pm Bible Study</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9am Presanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Salutations I</p>	<p>4 <i>Saturday of Souls</i> 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Divine Liturgy</p> <p>5pm <i>Vespers and Confessions</i></p>
<p>8</p> <p>4:15PM GREEK SCHOOL 6pm Presanctified Liturgy</p>	<p>9</p> <p>7pm Bible Study</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9am Presanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Salutations II</p>	<p>11 <b>Lenten Retreat</b> 10am–3:30pm <i>Details see pg. 20</i></p> <p>3:30pm <i>Vespers and Confessions</i></p>
<p>15</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 6pm Presanctified Liturgy</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7pm Bible Study</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9am Presanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Salutations III</p>	<p>18</p> <p>GOYA Day Trip to Saxonburg Monastery</p> <p>5pm <i>Vespers and Confessions</i></p>
<p>22</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 6pm Presanctified Liturgy</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7pm Bible Study</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9am Presanctified Liturgy</p> <p>6:30pm Salutations IV</p>	<p>25 <i>Annunciation of the Theotokos</i> 8:30am Orthros 9:30am Div Liturgy</p> <p>5pm <i>Vespers and Confessions</i></p>
<p>29</p> <p>4:30PM GREEK SCHOOL 6pm Presanctified Liturgy</p>	<p>30</p> <p>10am <i>Pascha bread making</i></p> <p>7pm Bible Study</p>	<p>31</p> <p>9am Presanctified Liturgy 12:30pm FIRST STEPS in NURSERY</p> <p>6:30pm Akathist Hymn</p>	<p></p> <p><i>Entire month is Lenten</i></p>

# HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX BOOKSTORE

## FEATURED BOOKS OF THE MONTH

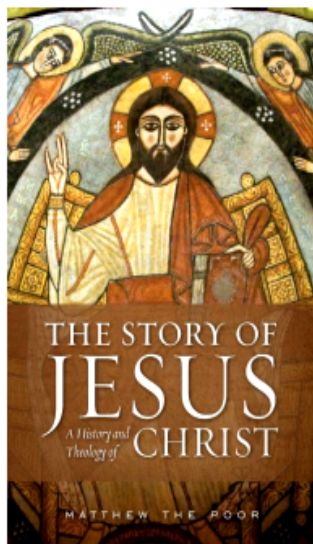


### SANDS OF SALVATION: THE STRENGTH OF ABBA MOSES

Consumed by his own desires and unable to escape the reminders of his past, Moses must learn of the True Source of freedom and power. Meet St. Moses the Strong, also known as St. Moses the Black, as he surpasses his physical strength with spiritual discipline, obtaining the crown that thieves can neither harm nor steal. This is the third graphic novel in the "Among the Saints" series.

### THE STORY OF JESUS: A HISTORY AND THEOLOGY OF CHRIST

Part history, part theology, part devotional, The Story of Jesus explores the complete life and teachings of Our Lord from before His conception in the womb of Mary until His Ascension. Written by Twentieth-century Egyptian elder and scholar Matthew the Poor and translated by James Helm. Known in the West as Matthew the Poor, Abba Matta communicates the deepest spiritual truths in the simplest and most practical language, making them accessible to laypeople as well as monastics.



Our Holy Cross Orthodox Bookstore is located in the carpeted area of the Community Center. Please be sure to stop by any Sunday following Divine Liturgy. We offer a great selection of Orthodox Greeting Cards and Books for all ages. For additional information, please contact Mary Portellos at 724-941-8699 or [maryportellos@comcast.net](mailto:maryportellos@comcast.net)

## **GOLDEN CLUB MEMBERS/NEW MEMBERS:**

After our holiday/winter hiatus, we will start 2023 off with our yearly Lenten, **covered-dish luncheon on Tuesday, March 21st**, starting at **11am** in the Community Center.

We will begin serving at 11:30am. We're suggesting Lenten items/dishes, such as vegetables, salads, fruit and desserts. Following lunch, we will welcome Michael Walter from the Cathedral of Learning Nationality Rooms, who will speak on the artifacts associated with the 31 rooms. We will also be collecting dues of \$10 for 2023. *Please RSVP by Tuesday, March 14th to Rene 412-559-1721 or Cynthia 412-722-9512*

## **Thank you to all who participated in the Lenten Cleanups these past 12 months.**

A total of 4 Clean-Ups were accomplished between March of 2022 and February 2023, all occurring during or near a Lenten period. We had participants from Golden Club all the way through JOY for approximately 240 hours of cleaning. We scrubbed stairwells, walls and furniture, high touch doorknobs and kick plates. We washed windows, mirrors and artwork, dusted pews and kneelers, gently cleaned mosaics and marble. Baseboards, window sills and floors were shined. Years of olive oil was cleaned from the Baptismal Font. Bathrooms were cleaned from floor to ceiling (by GOYA members). Sunday School rooms, Cry Room, elevator rooms, Acolyte Room and Vestry were dusted, shined and swept...even the corners. There is always more to do. But this project has been completed...a year of service to restore some of the beauty of Holy Cross. Many, many thanks for all of your hard work!



But I say to you, the Lord says, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you. Why did He command these things? So that He might free you from hatred, sadness, anger and grudges, and might grant you the greatest possession of all, perfect love, which is impossible to possess except by the one who loves all equally in imitation of God.

*~St. Maximus the Confessor*

Today is the Sunday of the Canaanite Woman, which is the last Sunday of the regular worship cycle. Next week begins the Triodion, which is the book that covers the period leading up to the Resurrection. Lent does not begin next week; instead, we have three weeks of pre-Lent. And tomorrow is the feast of the Three Hierarchs, the feast when education and learning are traditionally celebrated. But instead of any of those topics, today we focus our attention on a very important saint commemorated on this day; namely, Ignatius of Antioch. Many of you may know of him, but it is likely that many if not most do not. And that will not do, for Ignatius is truly one of the greats, and so it merits us to take the time this morning to discuss why he is so important and what his example means to us.

Ignatius was born around the year 50, which means he is one of the first generation of Christians who were born *after* the Resurrection, but still knew and interacted with the Apostles. Ignatius in fact, was a disciple of John the Theologian, one of the four Evangelists, and was consecrated a bishop by the apostles themselves. The Church places great importance on what is called Apostolic Succession, which means they can trace their ordinations directly back the Apostles themselves. But in the case of Ignatius, his connection was direct. He was of the first generation of bishops, and became the second bishop of Antioch, after Evodus. It is also where the Apostle Peter spent several years between the Jewish expulsion from Rome under Nero and the return under Claudius. Antioch as you may recall from the Book of Acts, was the place where the followers of Jesus were first called Christians. It remains a great center of Christianity, being one of the one of the five great ancient Patriarchates, and the place where Chrysostom was raised. To be the bishop of such an esteemed city is thus no small thing, but to have been ordained there by the Apostles themselves is a testament to the character and quality of Ignatius.

It was a quality that was to be greatly tested. The emperor Trajan was sojourning in Antioch, and while he was a noble man, he also proclaimed that professing Christianity was a crime worthy of death. His actual policy though was like an ancient version of "don't ask, don't tell;" moreover, Christians who sacrificed to the Roman gods were forgiven. Ignatius, aware of the threat this presented, was zealous in protecting his flock and availed himself of every means and opportunity to both protect them and keep them faithful. It was not long before Ignatius was brought before the emperor himself, and accounts report that he was both noble in bearing and eloquent in speech; nonetheless, he was convicted and sentenced by Trajan to be taken to Rome and given to the lions in the Colosseum. That Trajan did not have him slain in Antioch, but instead taken to the capital, and also permitted his remains to be returned to Antioch after his martyrdom, is itself a testament to the greatness and caliber of Ignatius.

Recall that at that time, travel from Antioch to Rome was a journey of months. Ignatius' journey took him through Seleucia, Tarsus or Attalia in Pamphylia, Laodicea, Philadelphia, Sardis, and then to Smyrna, where Polycarp, another great early martyr was bishop. He stayed there a long while, and many representatives of the various Christian communities in Asia Minor came to see him. From there he wrote letters to the congregations of Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles, exhorting them to remain obedient to their bishops, and to avoid the contamination of heresy. He also wrote to the Christians of Rome, asking them to not interfere with his martyrdom. These letters, along with those he wrote from Troas to the Christians of Philadelphia and Smyrna, and to Polycarp, survive as one of the great early patristic texts and give us insight into not only life in the early Church, but also to the character of this great saint.

His legacy was profound and immediate. Because of the combination of zeal, faithfulness, but also charity, love, and nobility, he acquired the title Θεοφόρος, or God-bearer. Chrysostom, three centuries later, wrote a homily which we still have, extolling him, and describing crown after crown awarded to this worthy hierarch. He accounts Ignatius in some ways more worthy than even the Apostles, for they had seen Christ and walked with Him, but Ignatius was of the first generation to not have known Jesus in the flesh, and part of a community that was still persecuted and unsure of itself and of its future, and yet remained unflinching in his love and dedication to the Lord.

This last observation is of particular importance to us. Ignatius, along with Polycarp, are the first Christians who left writings and who were not mentioned in the New Testament, even though they had known some of the Apostles. So while they lived after the apostolic age, they were of the generation immediately following it. They demonstrate without doubt that the Church maintained continuity after the Apostles left, and their writings show us that from the very beginning, bishops were the focal point of guiding, instructing, and protecting the Body of Christ. They describe a community very much like our own, and one with which Chrysostom easily identified.

My brothers and sisters, Ignatius shows us without question that our Orthodoxy did not just appear after the first Ecumenical Council in the fourth century, but was present from the beginning in the first. The life and writings of Ignatius the God-bearer provide the tangible and irrefutable link between the apostolic and patristic ages. You are invited to read the words of the faith written just after the scriptures. Our faith is one. Our church is one. Our Lord is one, to whom is due all glory, now and forever. Amen.

~Deacon Frank Dickos



**GOYAns helping  
First Steps/HOPE/JOY  
make  
Valentine Craft**







# Saints Mary & Martha Women's Fellowship

*\*Please note that most of the  
Venues below have changed.\**  
**The Akathist Hymn**

**March 28, 2023**  
**Stanza IV**

Speaker: Fr. Stelyios Muksuris  
At the home of Irene Zotis  
76 Woodland Drive  
Mt. Lebanon 15228  
RSVP Text 412-721-0146

**April 25, 2023**  
**Canon**

Speaker: Fr. George Callas  
At the home of Adrienne Dickos  
1840 Kent Road  
Upper St Clair 15241  
Text to RSVP 412-400-4290

**May 23, 2023**  
**Aspile**

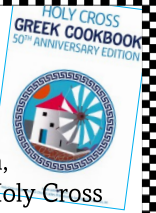
Speaker: Elias Diamond  
At the home of Joanne Ferencz  
1028 Francis Road  
Castle Shannon 15234  
Text to RSVP 724-953-1091

**Remember, all meetings run  
from 7pm-9pm.**



## COOK BOOK

The Holy Cross 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of our Greek Cookbook, \$20 each, cash or check payable to Holy Cross Philoptochos, is available throughout the year at coffee hours on Sundays or at the home of Elaine Sofis. Please contact Elaine at coffee hour or Home 412 344-7046 or email [esofis@comcast.net](mailto:esofis@comcast.net) for a copy. These cookbooks make fantastic Mother's Day, Anniversary, Birthday, Bridal shower and Housewarming gifts! Some of our most cherished and now departed Holy Cross members have recipes listed in the cookbook!



### Attention High School Seniors and Parents!

The application for the **Popi Hagelios Memorial Philanthropy Award of the Philoptochos Society of Holy Cross** is available in the Narthex, from Elaine Sofis, [esofis@comcast.net](mailto:esofis@comcast.net)

OR

Denise Melis, [dmelis@comcast.net](mailto:dmelis@comcast.net), electronically.

The application is DUE by Sunday, March 19, 2023.

**NO EXCEPTIONS!**

The application should be emailed to ALL the committee members listed on the application. Two awards are available to two eligible and deserving 2023 PLEDGED Holy Cross family members who are graduating high school seniors in 2023. A similar application is available at Mt. Lebanon High School. You may apply to both philanthropy awards, but will only be eligible for one \$1500 award. The awards, if deemed deserving, will be presented at Graduate Sunday, June 11, 2023.

GOYA on the way to a tournament

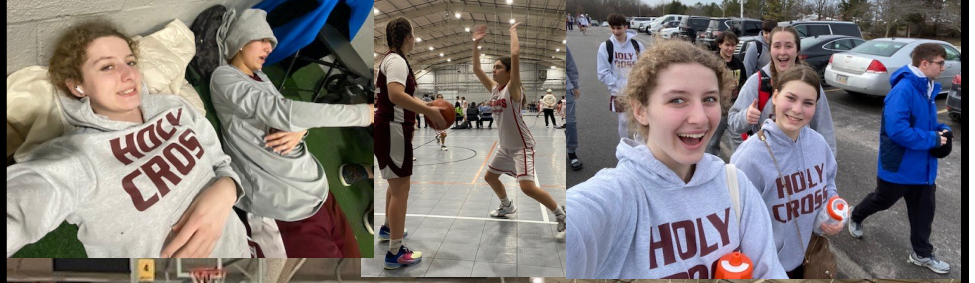
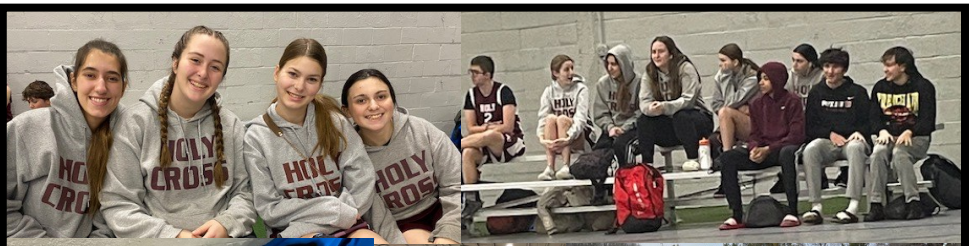




GOYA Tournament in Akron







GOYA Tournament in Akron



## The Body of Christ: Every Member Sacred

**MARCH 11, 2023 | 10 AM - 3:30 PM**  
**HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
123 GILKESON RD. PITTSBURGH, PA 15228

Our speaker, Presvytera Melanie, serves as Resource Developer for the GOA Center for Family Care. She directs the Fully Human Ministry and hosts a monthly podcast called *Family Matters: Fully Human Edition* on Ancient Faith Radio.

Drawing from the Gospels, the lives of the Saints, and Liturgical elements of worship, the retreat sessions will include both group and personal reflections, interactive discussions, and Q/A.

In worship we hold every particle of the Eucharist as precious and sacred. We will reflect on how God invites us to do the same with every member of His Body. Adults & teens welcome!



To Register, Go to: [tinyurl.com/mddj858d](https://tinyurl.com/mddj858d)





## *Youth Health Kit Drive and Assembly* *Youth Volunteers and Monetary Donations Needed!*

April 1, 2023 | 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

**HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

123 Gilkeson Rd. (Mt. Lebanon), Pittsburgh, PA 15228

All Orthodox Youth Groups are asked to participate.  
Students, please bring your volunteer forms for school credit.

**Our goal is to assemble several thousand health kits.  
Donations are needed to purchase bulk health kit supplies.**

To donate, please make checks payable to "Holy Cross AGAPE Fund"  
with "IOCC Health Kit Project" in the memo, and mail to  
**Nick Terezis, c/o IOCC, 306 Marberry Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15215**

Please contact Ava Terezis at 614.569.2414  
or [AvaT.Orthodox@gmail.com](mailto:AvaT.Orthodox@gmail.com)  
to coordinate your youth group attendance.

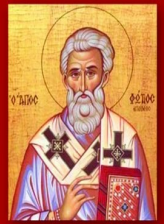


**IOCC®**



# A Good Word - Λόγον Αγαθόν

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH



### THOUGHT PROVOKING PRESENTATION ON PARISH STEWARDSHIP

The Parish of St. Demetrios, Warren, OH welcomed Fr. Barnabas Powell to discuss "The Parish as Steward." Fr. Barnabas gave an insightful and inspiring presentation and how we can improve outreach in the present moment and in the generations to come. We strongly recommend all parish leaders - clergy and lay; Council and non-Council - take the time to watch the presentation and discuss how it could be applied within your own parish's life.

### Philoptochos News by President Joyce Spanakis

Thirty Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos sisters gathered together in Washington, PA for a two-day "Meet and Greet" Retreat titled "New Year - New Relationships." The women from all over the tri-state area participated in various icebreaker and team bonding activities to learn more about each other, share ideas and simply enjoy each other's company. A delicious breakfast and luncheon buffet was served and the members were blessed to have His Eminence Metropolitan Savas join.

Each of the women left feeling grateful for the beautiful bond shared between the women of the Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos. More importantly, they are thankful to be part of such an amazing #ArmyofAgape with the mission to help those in need.

The Metropolis of Pittsburgh  
Greek Orthodox Ladies  
Philoptochos Society

2023 Daffodil Luncheon  
on Saturday, April 1, 2023, 11:00am  
at the  
Sheraton Suites Akron  
Cuyahoga Falls

1989 Front Street  
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221

We are honored to have as our guest speaker for the event the National Philoptochos President, Mrs. Arlene Siavelis-Kehl.

SAVE THE DATE

THE 2023  
METROPOLIS OF  
PITTSBURGH ST.  
PHOTIOS AWARDS  
BANQUET

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023

DOUBLE TREE BY HILTON  
PITTSBURGH CRANBERRY  
MARS, PA

Hours of service - 4:00 pm  
Dinner & Awards - 5:00 pm

[pittsburgh.goarch.org/st-photios-awards-banquet](http://pittsburgh.goarch.org/st-photios-awards-banquet)



JOIN US for the Daffodil Luncheon on April 1st

Visit [pittsburgh.goarch.org/philoptochos](http://pittsburgh.goarch.org/philoptochos) for more information and to make a reservation for the luncheon. Or scan the QR code to make a sponsorship donation today!



### Weekend of Service: March 11-12

The Philoptochos has partnered with the Metropolis Youth and Young Adult Ministries to hold a Metropolis-wide "Weekend of Service." We are encouraging our members to work together with the Sunday School, HOPE, JOY, and/or GOYA on either March 11th or 12th to do a worthwhile project to help those in need.

Projects that involve the entire parish are strongly encouraged. Can you prepare meals for a homeless shelter? Do the grounds around your church need spruced up? Perhaps a nice blessing basket with fresh fruit, cards, canned soups, etc. might be nice gift for them.

Could you collect or create soft blankets for widows or widowers within the parish? Maybe you could hold a stuffed animal drive to give to first responders for children they may encounter at the scene of an accident or house fire?

Below you will find the link to a video with Philoptochos President, Joyce Spanakis and Alyssa Kyritsis, the Director of the Metropolis Youth and Young Adult Ministries. Please plan to share it with your members or show it at a Philoptochos meeting where you will be discussing the Weekend of Service. I know that the ladies of the Philoptochos will work to guarantee that this project is a success! <https://youtu.be/ZBoqy1NvZwE>

### Turkey and Syria Earthquake Relief Fund

The National Philoptochos has established the Turkey and Syria Earthquake Relief Fund to aid the victims of the devastation that occurred in the region. They are urging all Philoptochos chapters across the country to give generously to aid the victims of this disaster. The Executive Board of the National Philoptochos unanimously voted to disburse \$50,000 to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Earthquake Relief Fund. These funds come from the National Philoptochos Emergency Fund, which enables the Philoptochos Society to immediately respond to those in need in times of national or international crisis.

Please keep the victims, their families and loved ones in your prayers. Donations can be made online: [ppay.co/-N5VYeUg5JI](https://ppay.co/-N5VYeUg5JI). Checks may also be sent to the National Philoptochos Society, 126 East 37th Street, New York, NY 10016 in the memo stating, "Turkey and Syria Earthquake Relief Fund." Please give generously as a chapter and also encourage your members and fellow parishioners to do the same. Our Metropolis of Pittsburgh Philoptochos Board will disburse \$5,000 from our Metropolis Emergency Fund to aid the victims of this disaster. Thank you in advance for your donation.

### Camping Ministries Update:

Our GOYA Spring Retreat is March 31-April 2 at Camp Nazareth. Father Matthew and Pres. Jennifer Moore will be presenting about relationships; the ones we have with ourselves and others. We are only a handful of spots away from selling out!

Summer Camp registration will open April 4th! We cannot wait for another great summer with our campers and staff. We will be learning more about the Trinity this summer with our mystery based theme, "Who is God?" Be on the lookout for our Amazon Camp Wishlist that will posted on our social media accounts and website.

*The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese,  
the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh Y2AM and  
the Ukrainian Orthodox Church USA present...*

## 2023 Young Adult Spring Retreat at Camp Nazareth

*Open to those 18-35 from all jurisdictions!*

### March 17-19, 2023

Plants Made Before the Sun and  
a Tired God who Rested:  
A Spiritual Reading of Genesis 1-2

With Keynote Speaker:

*Rev. Dr. Radu Bordeianu*

Register: [tinyurl.com/23YASpringRetreat](https://tinyurl.com/23YASpringRetreat)

**SUMMER CAMP 2023**

- WEEK 1: JUNE 18-JUNE 24 (GRADES 2-4)
- WEEK 2: JUNE 25-JULY 1 (GRADES 5-7)
- WEEK 3: JULY 2-JULY 8 (GRADES 7-9)
- WEEK 4: JULY 9-JULY 15 (GRADES 10-12)

Save the Dates!!!

### SUPPORT HIS EMINENCE AND OUR METROPOLIS MINISTRIES

It costs approximately \$1,000 per day to operate our Metropolis - including Metropolitan Savas's Archpastoral visitations, preparations for summer camp and GOYA retreats, our vital registry, and more. Please consider sponsoring a day in the life of the Metropolis:

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, 5201 Ellsworth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232

412-621-5529 (Main) 412-465-0460 (Camp) 412-621-8543 (Youth)

[pittsburgh.goarch.org](https://pittsburgh.goarch.org) [info@pittsburgh.goarch.org](mailto:info@pittsburgh.goarch.org)





**Tournament Weekend**











FEBRUARY 18, 2023  
DENISE MELIS  
IN HONOR OF YOUR 40 YEARS OF SERVICE  
TO THE PARISH OF HOLY CROSS AND ITS YOUTH  
WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE IN CHRIST,  
YOUR HOLY CROSS FAMILY







## **Holy Cross New Community Center Rental Terms 2023**

New Rental Terms for Community Center (presented at General Assembly, January 29, 2023)

After ceasing of rentals to third parties in 2015, Holy Cross decided to only make the community center available for use by parishioners and for other events upon special approval by the Parish Council.

Since that time, the House Committee has worked hard to develop fair terms and conditions for these rentals, initially on a temporary or trial basis with very simple terms.

We realized that we needed to work on more firm arrangements due to:

- regulatory issues such as serving alcohol
- liability issues - need for insurance coverage
- security for larger events
- housekeeping and clean up requirements
- other restrictions for rentals

Thanks to the untiring efforts by the House Committee and thanks to the insights and experience of outside experts, we were finally able to obtain the approval of the Parish Council in December 2022.

So, what is new? Here is a quick summary:

- only current members of Holy Cross (age 26+) may rent the community center
- two tiers:
  - events up to 50 people may rent the 'carpeted area' and use the kitchen for \$300
  - any larger events will cost \$900
  - there is a security deposit needed for \$300 and \$750 respectively
- we have a new established process to secure the rental with
  - confirming the date by contacting the church secretary
  - meet with House Committee representative Domenica Gulli and John Klimko to define the event needs
  - procure liability insurance 'rider' or event insurance naming Holy Cross for \$1Million
- alcohol may only be served by properly licensed bartenders (either the caterer or ACE bar tending referred by House Committee)
- security services (Frank Albert) need to be contracted for any events where alcohol is served or for larger events (>50) and evening events (after 5:00pm)
- 2 dishwashers must be secured for events with >100 people (HC offers referrals)
- Clean up as specified in the agreement and checklist posted in kitchen area (also attached to agreement)
- upon fulfillment of all terms & proper clean up, security deposit will be returned to renter
- payment terms:
  - security deposit when date has been secured on official church calendar and agreement has been signed;
  - remainder two weeks before event
- cancellation option until 2 weeks before event

if you are interested, please contact the church office (412) 833-3355

## 2023 Holy Week Donations

Anyone wishing to donate one or more of the following Holy Week items in loving memory of, for the health of, or in honor of a loved one, please contact the church office at 412.833.3355

- \* Palms for Palm Sunday \$150
- \* Flowers for the Nymphios (Bridegroom) Icon \$150
- \* Seven candles, olive oil, flour & Qtips for Great & Holy Wednesday \$150
- \* Three candles for procession with crucified one (Stavromeno)  
Great & Holy Thursday \$75
- \* Wreath for the Holy Cross on Great & Holy Thursday \$75
- \* Crown of Thorns (Stefani) for Holy Thursday \$75
- \* Purple Mums at the Foot of the Cross \$50
- \* Winding Sheet for Body of Christ \*TAKEN
- \* Epitaphion Candles \$100
- \* Rose Petals and Lemon Leaves for First Resurrection Service and  
Epitaphion Services \$100
- \* Rosewater for Great & Holy Friday \$30
- \* Roses for distribution at the 3pm Good Friday Service \$200
- \* Mirafora baskets \$100
- \* Decorated Pascha Candles for the Clergy \$500
- \* Incense for Great and Holy Week \$150
- \* Olive Oil for Perpetual Light throughout Holy Week \$100
- \* 4 Beeswax Altar candles for Holy week services \$75
- \* Communion Wine Bottle \$35  
Case \$200

Order an Easter Lily to beautify our church for Pascha.

Circle ONE per plant:

In Honor of OR For the health of OR In memory of

---

From

---

\$20 per plant

Please return to church office by Friday, April 7.

**HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
123 GILKESON ROAD  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15228**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
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Permit No. 2412  
Pittsburgh, PA

THE ORTHODOX CLERGY BROTHERHOOD  
OF GREATER PITTSBURGH



**Triumph of Orthodoxy  
Pan-Orthodox Vespers**

**ST. GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL  
3400 DAWSON ST. PITTSBURGH, PA 15213  
SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023 AT 4:30PM**