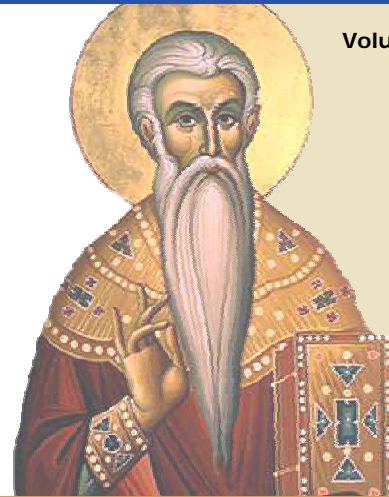


in Touch

Volume 18, Issue 1

January 2010



The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

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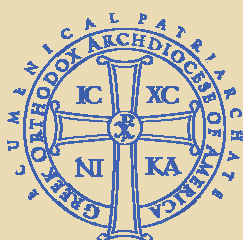
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"As you were baptized in Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest..."



Lord, You know that men are flesh and blood; forgive them their sins and pour out Your blessing on all. — St. Haralambos

SPECIAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Despite our best efforts, circumstances beyond our control make it necessary to consider alternatives to our building plans at 75th Ave. and Greenway Rd.

The news is not all negative! As one door to our future church plans is closing, another has opened. Come to the General Assembly to listen to plans our parish leadership has prepared to continue to move us forward to a new church home.

All St. Haralambos stewards are asked to attend.



- Sunday, January 10th
- Church Fellowship Hall
- Approval of Alternative Building Plans

Vasilopita Sunday

January 17th

Celebrate the beginning of the New Year with the traditional cutting of the New Year's Vasilopita (New Year's bread). Who will be the recipient of the New Year's coin for 2010?

Proceeds from the auction of additional Vasilopitas will be donated to the St. Basil Children's Academy, one of our Archdiocese Institutions located in Garrison, New York.

Everyone is invited!





John the Baptist, the Forerunner of Christ

According to the gospel of St. Luke, Jesus began his adult ministry at the age of 30 (Luke 3:23). This was when he approached John at the Jordan River while John was baptizing a multitude of people. As recorded in the New Testament, this was the first time the two had met face to face, and one can only imagine the sense of awe and humility John must have felt, being in the presence of his Lord and Master. "Behold," John exclaims, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

John the Baptist is known in the Orthodox Church as the Forerunner of Christ, the one who prepared the way and foretold Jesus' arrival. "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." (John 1:27) If there was any question in John's mind regarding Jesus' true identity, it was resolved as John observed a dove descending over Jesus' head, and the voice of God from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Some of John's followers thought he might be the Christ;

after all John had become very well known, had disciples, and was baptizing. To settle any controversy, John clearly stated, "You yourselves bear me witness that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:28-30)

John was a man who humbly knew his own identity as a servant of God. When he needed to be bold, John was very bold, as when he spoke out about Herod the King taking his brother Phillip's wife. But when he was in Jesus' presence, John stepped back and acknowledged Jesus as his Lord and Master.

John the Baptist provides us with a fine example of humility. Being humble does not mean never having a voice or opinion; it means not using your voice for self-glorification.

How difficult is it for us to follow John's example today? For example, do we

acknowledge ourselves as servants of God? Do we have the courage to stand up and speak out against injustice? Do we have the inner strength to put down temptations that would make us look good at the expense of someone else? Are we living a life that is pleasing to God? Are we willing to consider changes to our life that we know would be pleasing to God?

These are questions worth considering as we begin the new year because the value of new year's resolutions is not simply in making changes, but making changes that are pleasing to God. As Christians, we should be aware of our role as God's servants in the world, and we know whether or not our lifestyle demonstrates that awareness. The challenge for us is to look inside ourselves and begin to make any needed changes. There is no better day than today to begin praying to God for the strength to become a good and faithful servant! Make 2010 a very Happy New Year!

Are we willing to consider changes to our life that we know would be pleasing to God?



**St. Haralambos
Greek Orthodox
Church**

Rev. Michael Pallad

www.stharalambos.org

Sunday Worship

September - May
Matins: 8:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy: 10 a.m.

June - August
Matins: 8:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy: 9:30 a.m.

Office

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FrMichael@StHaralambos.phxcoxmail.com

Hours
Monday - Friday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Parish Council

Ray Wysmierski, President
Mike Danielek, Vice-President
Mary Wysmierski, Secretary
Stella Pagos, Treasurer
Angie Cholas
David Durgam

Dave Frederickson
Demetri Gryparis
Mary Manos
Peter Retsinas
Roberta Szklarski
Katherine Tally



Name Days

Many years/*Chronia Polla* to those named after the following saints:

St. Basil (Vasilios) (1st)
 St. Malachi (3rd)
 Epiphany (6th)
 St. Gregory (10th)
 St. Tatiani (12th)
 St. Anthony (17th)
 St. Athanasios (18th)
 St. Mark of Ephesos (19th)
 St. Euthymios (20th)
 St. Timothy (22nd)
 St. Xenia (24th)
 St. Gregory the Theologian (25th)
 St. Ephraim (28th)

Philoptochos

By Charlotte Servetas, President

A Blessed New Year to all!

The next monthly meeting will be Monday, Jan. 4 at 7 pm in the Social Hall.

January 17—is Vasilopita Sunday. Help make our annual Vasilopita Auction a success by either buying or baking bread. All proceeds will go to St. Basil's Academy.

F.Y.I.

1. Nov. 21, 2009, the four Philoptochos chapters of the Valley hosted a Holiday Brunch at Holy Trinity Cathedral to benefit the Bishop Anthony Philoptochos student aid endowment fund. It was a beautiful

festive event.

2. Dec. 7, 2009, a fun Pot Luck Christmas party with an entertainment program of Christmas music sung by 22 students from Peoria High School Chorale group.
3. Donated \$300 to student endowment fund.
4. Christmas outreach gift of \$100 and donation of diapers to Homeward Bound.

A special thank you to those who helped in decorating the church for the holiday season.

Remember: Donations to the Military Care Boxes.

Easier Method for Parish Contributions

Parish Pay is a means of sending church contributions electronically via the internet. By going to our parish website (www.stharalambos.org) and clicking on the "Parish Pay" button, you are directed to the Parish Pay site to easily set up your account.

There are no costs to parishioners, and you decide how much and how often contributions are sent for stewardship, building fund or any other fund you designate. Contributions can be a one-time gift, or you can set up regular monthly

payments to be deducted from a checking or savings account or charged to a credit card. It is a safe and secure system.

Benefits are: eliminates the need for writing checks; automatically sends contributions even if you are ill or out of town, earns points, bonuses or mileage when coupled with credit card accounts.

For further information, please contact our Parish Council Treasurer Stella Pagos at 623-975-0027. Consider Parish Pay for all your church contributions beginning January.

Parish Council Elections

Congratulations to David Durgam, Demetri Gryparis, Stella Pagos and Mary Wysmierski who were elected to serve on the Parish Council.

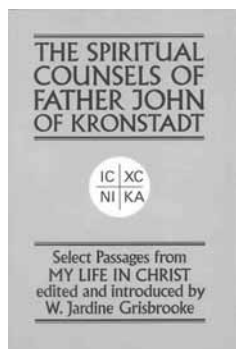
Beginning this month they will be joining the remaining council members Angie Cholas, Mike Danielek, Dave Fredericksen, Mary Manos, Peter Retsinas, Roberta Szklarski, Katherine Tally and Ray

Wysmierski at the first monthly meeting on Jan. 12.

We also wish to thank Dennis Georgen, George Retsinas and Peter Tremoulis, the outgoing council members, for their service to our parish.

May God bless and strengthen the members of our parish council in their leadership role throughout the new year.

St. Christopher's Bookstore



Spiritual Counsels of Father John of Kronstadt

W.J. Grisbrooke (ed), 1989, p.230.

This book was compiled and translated from My Life in Christ, a much larger volume written

in Russian. Father John of Kronstadt (1829-1908) a married priest, actually divided his time between Kronstadt and St. Petersburg. He was so busy that he did very little eating and sleeping. Each day, he would pray intensely at home before walking to Church with a crowd of people, sing the liturgy, make at least a dozen sick calls, and then do some teaching. When he celebrated liturgy at the Cathedral of St. Andrew, more than 7,000 people would crowd in.

A quote from the book cover says, "The practical and down-to-earth teaching of this charismatic pastor reveals him as a man of action as well as prayer." People from all over Russia helped fund his many charities, including a House of Industry, which contained a dormitory, workshops, a cafeteria, a dispensary and a primary school.

He was hated by the "'liberal' pseudo-intellectuals" who would establish an "ungodly and inhuman tyranny." These people despised him because he was such a "powerful and persuasive" example of Christianity. His prayer was the source of [his] extraordinary powers of healing." His teachings are based upon the Bible,

not upon the Philokalia (associated with monastic mystical tradition.) Fr. John celebrated the Divine Liturgy daily up to ten days before his death. Sixty thousand people attended his funeral.

This is some of his spiritual advice:

- "If you do not pray, you behave ...most unwisely, gratifying and strengthening your body...but neglecting your soul."
- "Every good comes from God, and the means of getting every good from God is fervent and sincere prayer."
- "Thank God every day for having given to you life according to his image and likeness—an intelligently free and immortal life."
- Pray with a "believing, loving, and thankful heart...do not let there be honey on your tongue and ice in your heart."
- "God is the eternal life-giving sun, and the saints are the rays of the sun. We are spiritually 'poor' and they are spiritually 'rich'. The poor ask charity of the rich. We must beg the saints for their prayers."
- The food of the mind is truth; the food of the heart is peace; the food of the will is lawfulness. Go to the Church; she will give you all this in plenty."

The editor writes that Father John realized "the utter love of God for man." He taught that **"man without God can do nothing; man with God can do everything"**.

Secure Your Legacy

Estate Planning Seminar

You have worked long and hard to achieve success and build wealth for you and your family. Now, your focus is likely to start shifting to preserving your wealth for your family and philanthropic causes.

This seminar is designed to provide you with the information and estate planning tools you need to help you preserve, protect and transfer your wealth to your family or other beneficiaries.

Date: February 20th, 2010

Time: 2:30 pm

Place: Church Social Hall

Speakers

- Dimitri A Spanos, CIMA, CIMC
- Douglas Hodges
- Christine Asimou, PC

Please call us at 623-486-8665 to reserve your place. Admission is free but seating is limited.

**MorganStanley
SmithBarney**

Food Drive

Thank you so much to all who donated food and monetary donations to our Food Drives. We were able to put together 11 huge family Thanksgiving food boxes for

the Peoria Community Action Agency. We also had a great team of volunteers to help sort out everything. Thank you all!

Birthdays



Jim Christian (2nd)
 Areti Karandreas (3rd)
 Nina Milonas (4th)
 Tyke Solomon (6th)
 Peter Stamas (11th)
 Sophia Mallos (14th)
 Elaine Giannias Winn (14th)
 George Pikoula (20th)
 Dimitri Theoharatos (22nd)
 John Obren (23rd)
 Catherine Jie Baxter (28th)
 Mary Wysmierski (29th)
 Reni Milonas (31st)
 Frosene Yelton (31st)

If you don't see your name, or those of family members, and would like to be included on the monthly birthday listing, please send the information to the church office.

Assisted Living/Hospitalization

The following parishioners may not be able to be with us physically, but are still loved members of our parish, and we ask you to please remember them in prayer: Orin Davis, Lee Feutz, Don Hensen, John and Mary Karavaras.

Dear Church Family

Thank you very much for all your prayers, visits, plants, cards and calls. Thank you Fr. Michael for your prayers, visits and calls. I feel so blessed.

In Christian love, Dena Surman

Sunday School

Why do I have to go to Sunday School?

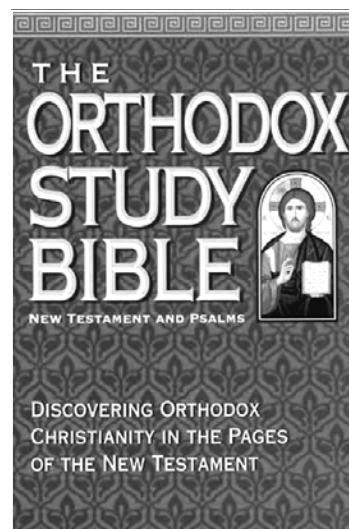
- It is essential for us to understand that the primary purpose of Sunday School is the achievement of spiritual growth.
- We should attend a Sunday school to promote the spread of our Greek Orthodox Faith, Biblical principles and develop a strong moral compass.
- A Sunday school serves as the means for our students to come together for a common cause and in this way it unites our youth...who will become our future and the Church's future.
- Attending Sunday school is an excellent way to make a small contribution towards the spread of the principles of Orthodoxy...student by student...household by household.
- Being a student of a Sunday school can pave for us a path of approaching God and understanding what He has to say.
- It is the student's 'stewardship' contribution to his Church.

As parents you need to remind yourselves that the **'apple doesn't fall far from the tree'** and each child is like **'a chip off the old block'**.

If you complain and criticize or bad mouth...spread rumors...gossip about other parishioners...or employ any number of excuses for not attending Divine Liturgy on Sunday...that is exactly what your children will think of the rest of their lives about the Church and Sunday School.

Is that what you want to be responsible for?

The best thing for each of us to do is fill the seats (pews) each and every Sunday morning... **cultivate the commitment...be the tree and the block!**



JANUARY 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 9:00am Divine Liturgy Circumcision of the Lord; St. Basil the Great	2
3 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Sunday Before Epiphany	4 7:00pm Philoptochos	5 9:00am Royal Hours of Epiphany 10:30am Bible Study 6:00pm Liturgy Eve of Epiphany	6 9:00am Divine Liturgy Epiphany: Great Blessing of the Waters	7 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. John the Baptist 7:00pm Choir	8	9
10 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Special General Assembly	11	12 10:30am Bible Study 7:00pm Parish Council	13	14 7:00pm Choir	15	16
17 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Vasilopita Sunday	18 9:00am Divine Liturgy Athanasios and Cyril	19 10:30am Bible Study	20	21 7:00pm Choir	22 7:00pm Parish Council Seminar	23 9:00am Parish Council Seminar
24 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	25 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. Gregory the Theologian	26 10:30am Bible Study	27	28 7:00pm Choir	29	30
31 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy						

House Blessings

Start the New Year with a special family event, according to the traditions of the Holy Orthodox Church, asking God's blessings for your home and your family!

Please complete the form below to indicate your preferred date and schedule your house blessing. Mail the form to the church office, or bring it with you to church on Sunday. You will be contacted by our secretary to confirm your day and time.



House Blessing Request Form

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR PREFERENCE

Zone 1: South of Peoria Ave. and West of 83rd Ave.

_____ Saturday, January 9 _____ Wednesday, January 13
_____ Tuesday, January 19 _____ Sunday, January 24

Zone 2: North of Peoria Ave. and West of 83rd Ave.

_____ Thursday, January 7 _____ Saturday, January 16
_____ Wednesday, January 20 _____ Monday, January 25

Zone 3: North of Peoria Ave. and East of 83rd Ave.

_____ Monday, January 11 _____ Sunday, January 17
_____ Thursday, January 21 _____ Tuesday, January 26

Zone 4: South of Peoria Ave. and East of 83rd Ave.

_____ Tuesday, January 12 _____ Monday, January 18
_____ Saturday, January 23 _____ Wednesday, January 27