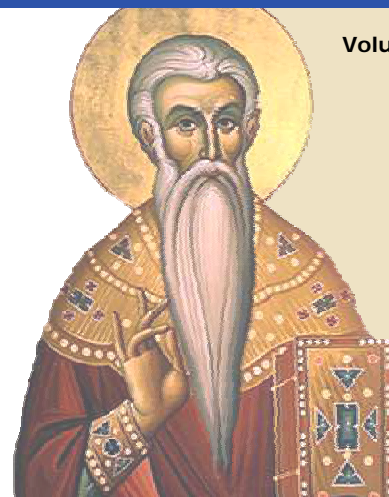


in Touch

Volume 21, Issue 1

January 2013



The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

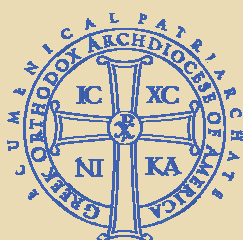
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*"You were baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, and the
worship of the Trinity was made manifest!"*

Feast of Epiphany: Sunday, January 6, 2013

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

25th Anniversary

Looking Back on the Next 25 Years

By Dennis Georgen, President Parish Council
(25th Anniversary Dinner Address)

25 years ago, a group of forward-thinking church leaders planted our Parish of St. Haralambos in Peoria, AZ. What a beautiful gift those early leaders gave us.

Many of you were a part of the beginnings of our church family, and we also remember those who are no longer with us. May their memory be eternal. What a wonderful legacy they left us.

Many more of us have come later, joining the early founders and leaders in building and growing this Parish of St. Haralambos.

As our celebration of 25 years comes to a close, we can reflect on our many accomplishments and the growth we have seen in both our numbers and in our Ministries.

It would be an opportunity lost, however, if we didn't take a moment to reflect on where we are going as a Christian community.

An anniversary is filled with many memories, of good times and of sorrows, of festivals, fellowship and faith, but it is also a time for us to look forward.

Our Parish mission statement says that "We are a loving Christ-centered community, whose mission is to keep, practice and proclaim our Orthodox Christian faith as a living presence to those around us."

The generation that came before us planted this Parish of St. Haralambos. It's in our hands today, and with the Lord's love for us and with His guidance, we hope to continue to nurture this Parish and work in His garden.

It is up to us, today, to take what we have been given, and double down. Our Church was planted on Pinnacle Peak Road for a reason.

In Matthew 25, vs. 14, a Master gave his servants silver pieces each according to their abilities. Two of them took their Master's silver pieces and invested them, doubling their share. The third went and dug a hole and hid the pieces of silver. When the Master returned, he rewarded the two who made more, and threw the third into the darkness outside. It is up to us to take what has been given to us and make more for the Lord.

25 years from now another generation will gather together again and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our Parish, and will look back on the next 25 years. What legacy will we leave for them?

My hope and my prayer is that they will say that in our generation we took this gift that was given to us, and infused with the power of the Holy Spirit, we became exactly what our mission statement says. We became that loving Christ-centered Community... keeping, practicing and proclaiming our Orthodox Christian Faith, as a living presence to those around us.



Once again, we worked together with the Peoria Community Action Agency in donating gifts and food basket for Peoria families. Thank you to all who gave so generously to provide the gifts requested from our Angel Tree, as well as providing the food boxes. Giving anonymously for the benefit of others truly falls under the category of laying up "treasure in heaven."

Christmas Holiday Donations



Trust in the Love and Power of God

Our 25th anniversary year concluded with a wonderful banquet at the Arrowhead Country Club last month. Our sincere thanks and appreciation go to Lee and Dottie Vordos for an outstanding job chairing the event, and decorating the ballroom. It was truly a night to remember.

While the beginning of the new year is a time of great anticipation, a time of renewal and new beginnings, as we've seen regularly in the news media, much of our world is in turmoil. Certainly with the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary last month, we aren't only speaking about international turmoil. As more information from Newtown, Connecticut, comes to light, including the miraculous account of a young girl who survived the attack, our prayers for God's comfort and peace continue for the affected families.

With the ability to be kept up-to-date with round-the-clock news coverage, we also need to be cautious about overloading our minds and our hearts with current events, most of which are bad, but which get the most coverage. Where to draw the line between being informed and overwhelmed may vary from person to person,

but hopefully we do not let news stories take precious time away from our daily activities and plans.

We shouldn't allow ourselves to feel a sense of misplaced guilt by reminding ourselves that "Life goes on." We do have our own responsibilities, families, jobs, plans and needs. I'm not talking about being selfish; we can, and should, care about others and offer our support when possible. What I'm talking about is a sense of grief and anxiety over current events that keep us from functioning within our own homes and communities.

We think about comforting our children, telling them that, "Everything's going to be OK;" can we do the same for ourselves? Or are we becoming too cynical to trust in the love and power of God? Ours is not the first generation of world conflict or of domestic economic concerns, and it certainly won't be the last.

But let's not give in to a despair that keeps us from prayer and trust in God. In fact, the opposite is required: even more fervent prayer that helps keep our heart and mind focused on living as good and faithful servants of the Lord, good and faithful husbands and wives, good and faithful moms and dads.

More recent studies are confirming the need for a good night's sleep; a basic human need to function at our best emotionally, mentally and physically. The reason these studies are being conducted? Because more and more people are overworking themselves, getting less and less sleep and, in the process, becoming more irritable, despondent and depressed. The solution? Get a good night's sleep!

We shouldn't need studies to tell us what we've already learned as Christians: prayer is essential, prayer can move mountains, change hearts, keep our faith strong and lift our emotions. Our good and loving God is never absent from our life! If it feels that way, it is because we have pushed Him out, when we should be inviting Him back in.

This new year is 2013 AD – which means the "Year of our Lord." Let's not be overwhelmed by evil, tragedy or anger. Start your year with prayer, attend Church regularly, fervently asking for God's blessings, grace, guidance and protection. This is how Christians begin the new year, every year.

Our good and loving God is never absent from our life!



**St. Haralambos
Greek Orthodox
Church**

Rev. Michael Pallad

www.stharalambos.org

Sunday Worship

Matins: 8:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy: 10 a.m.

Office

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Office@StHaralambosAZ.com
FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com

Hours

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

Parish Council

Roy Christian
David Durgam
Dennis Georgen
Dean Milonas
Tony Panousopoulos
Chris Theotocatos

Peter Vardalos
Dorothy Vordos
Lee Vordos
Ken Wrona
Russell Zook



New Community Outreach

Are you looking for way to boost your time-talent-treasure commitment? Or, want to help in outreach efforts? If so, then an easy way to do both has been identified for 2013.

Currently, we are looking for three to five outreach volunteers to work a brief 9 am to noon shift every Monday at the Valley View Community Food Bank that serves the West Valley. Volunteers are needed to gather and bag produce and groceries getting the much-needed items ready for delivery.

This would be an ongoing commitment and would enjoy having enough volunteers allowing us to develop a

schedule in order to support the food bank's staffing needs. In essence, a St. Haralambos bank of volunteers to serve the Valley View Community Food Bank.

Additionally, we would enjoying seeing if there is support to have a monthly food drive dedicated to a specific item such as peanut butter, tuna fish, etc., to help fulfill the food bank's needs. This also would be an ongoing monthly commitment.

If you are interested in being a Monday volunteer and/or want the parish to pursue a monthly specific-item food drive, please talk with Parish Council Vice President Roy Christian during Sunday's coffee hour in the Social Hall.

Valley View Community Food Bank

sharing the bounty . . . a harvest of hearts in the Northwest Phoenix Valley

Parish Council

God has entrusted us with His Church and the Parish Council is entrusted with the administration of the local Parish. This Parish of St. Haralambos is His, and as Parishioners in His Church, we are its Stewards. The scope and effectiveness of our various Parish Ministries depend on the involvement and support of all of the faithful.

Parish Council members practice servant leadership by identifying and examining the ministry needs of the parishioners and taking the necessary

steps to meet those needs, whether through the improvement and expansion of existing Ministries or through the creation of new ones.

There are two open seats on your Parish Council. One way that you can serve Christ as a Steward of His Church is to volunteer your Time and Talents in serving on the Parish Council. Please speak with one of the Council Members or Fr. Michael if you are interested in serving in this very important Ministry.

George and Patti Christie Celebrate 50

In this fast-moving era of the instant and the temporary, it's nice to know that some things like a marriage can stand the test of time. One very special event is the golden anniversary of a married couple. So, it was lovely to hear that George and

Patti Christie recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Nov. 24, 2012 with a surprise party given by their children, Paul and Maria. Congratulations!

Philoptochos

By Reni Milonas, President

Happy New Year!! Thanks to your donations, 15 Peoria disadvantaged families received Christmas dinners and Christmas gifts. Special thanks to Irene Schniepp for organizing the Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. Thank you to Pres. Kristin and Irene Schniepp for the Christmas Angels coordination.

The New Year is going to be a very philanthropic year. Here's a list of the many wonderful ministries our Philoptochos Sisters are currently involved in:

- We will continue to sell basil seeds to Plant a Seed, Grow Our Faith benefitting, "The Bishop Anthony Philoptochos Student Aid Endowment Fund (BAPSAEF)" for \$5 per package. It is through this fund that our future priests, educators, and pastoral assistants are supported both financially and spiritually.
- Charlotte Servetes is collecting diapers for the Homeward Bound Diaper Drive

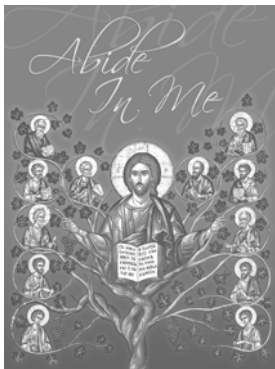
starting Jan. 6. Homeward Bound provides transitional housing and comprehensive social services to families with children fleeing domestic violence and/or homelessness.

- The Sacred Sewing Circle will begin sewing and stuffing 35 Huggy Heart pillows for the John C. Lincoln Deer Valley Hospital's Cardiac ICU on Tuesday, Jan. 8 at 10 am. Each pillow comes with a small pocket in front that holds a St. Anna's Philoptochos calling card to assist in our outreach ministry. Donations are needed to purchase fiberfill and material.
- Jan. 13 the Philoptochos Sisters will be auctioning Vasilopita bread for Vasilopita Sunday. Philoptochos donations are the main source of funding for the operating expenses of the Academy of St. Basil.

Our next meeting is Jan. 7 at 7 pm. May the Lord bless you and yours in the New Year 2013 with good health, joy, strength, and peace.



Stewardship



Last month the 2013 Stewardship Brochures were handed out during the Sunday coffee hour, following presentations by Fr. Michael and Jeannette

Hollander. This month, rather than mailing any remaining brochures that were not picked up, we're going to ask parishioners to accept invitations to

meetings at the homes of parishioners so that explanations of our Stewardship program (and brochure) can be made personally. It will also be an opportunity to get to know other parish families that live in the same neighborhood. When the call comes, we hope everyone will respond and attend. The intent of these home meetings is another way of building relationships among our parish families.

For others who have already received their 2013 Stewardship brochure, please return them to the church office at your earliest convenience.

St. Christopher's Bookstore

By Irene Nathanson

The month of January offers each of us a chance to start anew. Some of us do this by making resolutions. Why not start this year's commitment with knowing more about your faith? The perfect book to start with is **The Orthodox Church** by Timothy Ware.

Orthodox followers make the claim that their Church guards and teaches the true belief about God and that it glorifies Him with right worship. How this claim is understood is the purpose of this book. In its introduction the author writes "Orthodoxy is not just a kind of Roman Catholicism without the Pope, but something quite distinct from any religious system in the west. Yet those who look more closely at this 'unknown world' will discover much in it which, while different, is yet curiously familiar. Such has been the reaction of many, on learning more fully about the Orthodox Church and what it teaches."

The Orthodox Church is an excellent overview of the history, beliefs, and traditions of the Eastern Orthodox Church. In the first part of the book,

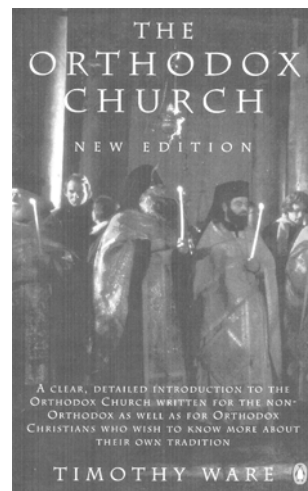
Ware chronicles the history of the Church over the last two thousand years and explains the events which mark the church's establishment: The Edict of Milan, the foundation of Constantinople, and the Council of Nicaea.

The author writes of the estrangement between the eastern and western churches and explains historical events as well as the issues and different outlooks that divided Orthodox Christians.

In the second part of the book, Ware explains the beliefs of the present Orthodox Church on topics such as grace and free will, the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, the Body of Christ, the Mother of God, Heaven, and Hell. An entire chapter is devoted to the explanation of the worship of the sacraments and finally, Ware concludes by

pondering on the subject of Christian unity.

This book will be featured at January's Book Club meeting. Start your new year's commitment and attend Jan. 17 at 7 pm to share your impressions and to better know your faith!



Name Days

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

St. Basil (1st)
Epiphany (6th)
St. Gregory (10th)
St. Tatiani (12th)
St. Anthony (17th)
St. Athanasios (18th)
St. Mark (19th)
St. Euthymios (20th)
St. Timothy (22nd)
St. Xenia (24th)
St. Gregory (25th)
St. Ephraim (28th)

Parish Council Elections

Congratulations to the following parishioners elected to serve on the 2013 Parish Council: Dave Durgam, Dorothy Vordos and Russell Zook.

They will be joining Roy Christian, Dennis Georgen, Dean Milonas, Tony Panousopoulos, Peter Vardalos, Lee Vordos and Ken Wrona. The remaining two seats will be appointed by the new council.

We thank outgoing Parish Council members Demetri Gryparis and George Miller for their dedicated service, and we look forward to a new year of progress and growth of our parish.

Our parish council members are our elected parish leaders. Please feel free to contact any of them with constructive comments and suggestions for the betterment of our church community.

Sunday School

By Martha Stithem, Sunday School
Director & Teacher

Following a two-week break for Christmas and New Year's, Sunday School classes will resume on Sunday, Jan. 6, the Feast of the Holy Theophany (Epiphany) of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Here are some resources for our parish families to use as we prepare to celebrate the Feast of Theophany:

ARTICLE – Feast of Theophany
www.goarch.org/special/listen_learn_share/epiphany

**SERMON – Baptism:
A Pre-Theophany Homily**
www.myocn.net/index.php/200901031323/MyBlog/Baptism-A-Brief-Pre-Theophany-Homily.html

This month, Sunday School students in grades 7 to 12 will begin to prepare for the upcoming St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival in the spring. Students in grades 4 to 6 can participate in the elementary division by preparing short talks as well. Participation in the Oratorical Festival is a wonderful opportunity for our students to grow in their Orthodox faith.

Bible Study and Book Club

Schedule for early 2013

All of the Book Club and Bible Studies will meet at the church at 7 pm.

January

Thursday Jan. 3, Bible Study
Thursday Jan. 10, Bible Study
Thursday Jan. 17, Book Club, The Orthodox Church by Kalistos Ware
Thursday Jan. 24, Bible Study
Thursday Jan. 31, Bible Study

February

Thursday Feb. 7, Bible Study
Thursday Feb. 14, Valentine's Day, no session
Thursday Feb. 21, Book Club, Mere Christianity by C. S. Lewis
Thursday Feb. 28, Bible Study

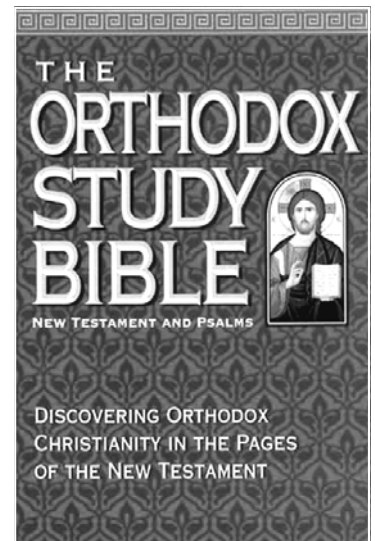
Youth Group

By Lindsay Vardalos

We hope everyone had a blessed Nativity! Our Youth Group will resume meeting this month on Jan. 12 from 4 to 7 pm so we can continue learning about the Most Holy Theotokos. We will also be having a Greek Potluck dinner, so please bring something to share. All families are invited to attend!

Mark your 2013 calendar with the following dates:

- Feb. 9: St. Haralambos Feast Day Vespers at church
- Feb. 16: Hike and Picnic Dinner in Thunderbird Conservation Park (59th Ave between Deer Valley and Pinnacle Peak roads)
- Mar. 9: Italian Potluck
- Mar. 17: Youth Group will Sponsor Coffee Hour with our 3rd Annual Pancake Breakfast
- Apr. 13: Lenten Potluck
- May 3: Holy Friday Retreat, 10:30 - 3
- May 11: Pizza and annual Ice Cream Social



ORGANIZATIONS

Birthdays



Christine Hollander (2)
 Gary Nicholas, Sr. (3)
 Constantine Danos (4)
 Spero Pagos (5)
 Ron Dutton (7)
 Billy Cushing (8)
 Bella Danos (11)
 Peter Stamas (11)
 Judy Farr (12)
 Tony Papamatheakis (13)
 Philemon Russom (13)
 Zondra Cooper (14)
 Elaine Giannias (14)
 Georgia Pikoula (20)
 Dimitrios Theoharatos (22)
 Scott Farr (27)
 Ocbai Tesfay (27)
 Catherine Baxter (28)
 Michael Danielek (29)
 Mary Wysmierski (29)
 Frosene Bravos (31)
 Reni Milonas (31)

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.

House Blessings

The month of January not only marks the beginning of the new year, but also a very special feastday on Sunday the 6th. This is the feast of Epiphany, the Baptism of our Lord, Jesus Christ. The word Epiphany is a Greek word, which means a manifestation or appearance, and it refers to the revealing of the Holy Trinity at the baptism of Jesus. Recorded in Chapter 3 of St. Matthew's gospel, the voice of God the Father was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." At the same time, a dove appeared over Jesus, which represented the Holy Spirit, which completed the revelation of the Trinity.

As the feast of the Epiphany occurs on a Sunday this year, it will give more of our families an opportunity to witness the Great Blessing of the Waters which will be celebrated following the Divine Liturgy. At this service, special prayers are read asking God to bless and make holy water that has been prepared in a font and in the special holy water bottles that will be made available to everyone.

The priest also fills the rantestiri, or holy water sprinkler, and sprinkles the church with the holy water. This is the same holy water that is taken to parishioner homes throughout the month of January for House Blessings.

FAMILY PICNIC

Sponsored by the Arizona Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches

Saturday, March 2, 2013 10am -2pm

Encanto Park

Phoenix

(15th Ave. 1 block S of Thomas)

Bring Your Own Lunch | Soft Drinks Provided

Family Games and Activities



JANUARY 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9:00am Divine Liturgy Circumcision of the Lord Feastday of St. Basil New Year's Day Church Office Closed	2	3 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir	4 9:00am The Royal Hours of Epiphany	5 9:00am Divine Liturgy Forefeast of Epiphany
6 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Epiphany Blessing of the Water	7 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. John the Baptists 7:00pm Philoptochos	8	9	10 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir	11	12 4:00pm Youth Group Greek Polluck
13 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Vasilopita Sunday 12:30pm Caring Friends	14 7:00pm Parish Council	15	16 7:00pm Book Club	17 7:00pm Book Club 7:00pm Choir	18	19
20 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy IOCC Offering Tray	21	22 7:00pm Men's Choir	23	24 7:00pm Book Club 7:00pm Choir	25 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. Gregory the Theologian	26
27 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	28 7:00pm Executive Council	29 7:00pm Men's Choir	30 9:00am Divine Liturgy The Three Hierarchs	31 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir		

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: North of Bell Road and West of 99th Ave./Lake Pleasant Pkwy

_____ Monday, January 7 _____ Saturday, January 12
_____ Wednesday, January 16 _____ Monday, January 21

Zone 2: North of bell Road and East of 99th Ave./Lake Pleasant Pkwy

_____ Tuesday, January 8 _____ Sunday, January 13
_____ Thursday, January 17 _____ Tuesday, January 22

Zone 3: South of Bell Road and West of 99th Ave./Lake Pleasant Pkwy

_____ Wednesday, January 9 _____ Monday, January 14
_____ Saturday, January 19 _____ Wednesday, January 23

Zone 4: South of Bell Road and East of 99th Ave./Lake Pleasant Pkwy

_____ Thursday, January 10 _____ Tuesday, January 15
_____ Sunday, January 20 _____ Tuesday, January 24