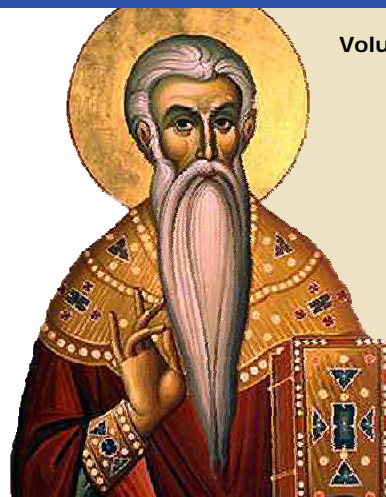


# in Touch

Volume 15, Issue 6

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The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

## Sunday of All Saints

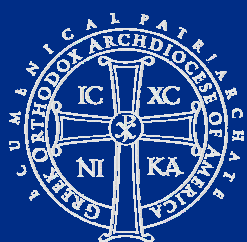
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*"Lord, You know that men  
are flesh and blood; forgive  
them their sins and pour out  
Your blessing on all."*

*St. Haralambos*

**Sunday, June 3**



# NEW CHURCH ARCHITECT

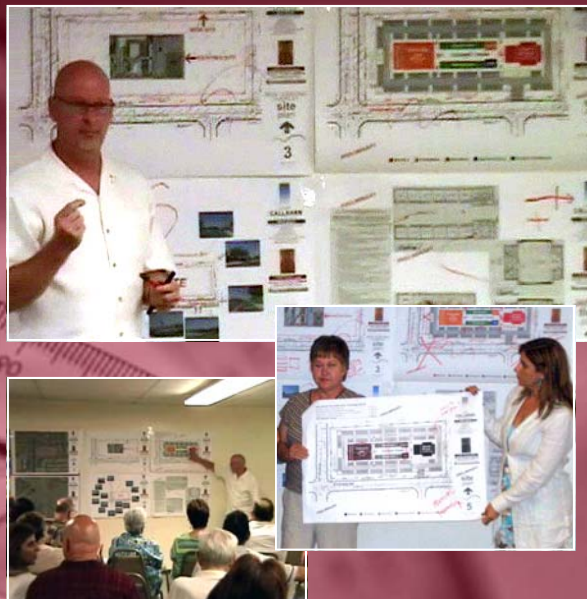
**What will be the design of the new church?**

**How many will our new Fellowship Hall seat?**

**Where will we hold our annual festival?**

**What will the overall design look like?**

These and many others questions were discussed by approximately 70 parishioners who attended the meeting with our new Architect, Kevin Callahan, last month. It generated a lot of enthusiasm as everyone saw that our plans are moving from dreams to drawings. Smaller Focus groups continued the discussion after lunch, with many good suggestions for Kevin as he continues to prepare the preliminary Master Plan.



## Saturday, May 12 Open House and Family BBQ

There were burgers and hotdogs, wonderful Greek pastries, cold drinks, a caricature artist, a dinosaur bouncer and balloons for kids at our BBQ. Thanks to everyone who donated canned foods: two large containers were filled and given to the West Side Food Bank. The outdoor temperature may have prevented more from attending, but it didn't put a damper on the fun for those who attended! Thank-you to Ray and Tom for serving as chefs and to Mary, Pam and Margaret for chairing the event.





## Where does God go for Summer Vacation?

“Where does God go for Summer Vacation?” This is the title of a creative Youth Ministry book written by Dimitri Toscas, a classmate of mine during my years at Holy Cross Seminary. The point of the book was to remind us that although certain parish groups stop meeting during the summer months, regular Sunday services continue, because, although many families go away for summer vacation, God does not!

He stays with us always. He is even with us on vacation – wherever we may go. We can talk with him in prayer whenever we like. We can ask for his protection and his guidance at all times. He never turns away from us, and is always ready to listen to prayers, to questions and concerns.

Someone may ask, “Why, then, do we need to go to church?” The answer is because, as Christians, we live in communities with others, not alone by ourselves. Private prayer by ourselves is one thing – very important and helpful in developing our faith. But praying together (corporate prayer) is only experienced

when we gather together with others from our parish family, also very important and helpful in developing our faith.

We derive strength from being part of a larger group of believers. “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them,” Jesus says in the gospel of St. Matthew. When we are gathered together as the Church, we are not alone, but God is with us. It is, therefore, during the Divine Liturgy, when we ask God to send us his Holy Spirit to change bread and wine into the Sacrament of Holy Communion, for the benefit of the entire church. This is not something that can be done privately; it is an act of the church praying together.

It is God’s presence during the Liturgy that provides a most beautiful and mystical sense of reverence that is felt when we all are reciting prayers together, or singing hymns together.

Our devotion to God as Orthodox Christians should include both private and corporate prayer. One is not more or less important than the other, and each of us

should learn to develop both! Lessons heard from the gospel readings and taught during the sermon should be discussed at home among the family. Names of family members who are sick or in need of special prayers should be sent to the church so they can be remembered during the morning Matins service. Prayers recited together during liturgy can be said privately at home. During the first fifteen days of August there are special prayer services just for the sick. There are countless examples that help reinforce our connection between our homes and the church community.

For those traveling during the summer, this is a great opportunity to find and visit a new church community! The Archdiocese website ([www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)) has a directory of parishes throughout the U.S., and links to others overseas.

I wish everyone a blessed and enjoyable summer season, remembering always that God will be with us wherever we may go.

*“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.”*



**St. Haralambos  
Greek Orthodox  
Church**

**Rev. Michael Pallad**

[www.stharalambos.org](http://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](mailto:FrMichael@StHaralambos.phxcoxmail.com)

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

### Parish Council

Greg Krochta, President  
George Retsinas, Vice-President  
Stella Pagos, Treasurer  
Peter Tremoulis, Secretary  
Glen Albrant  
Tracy Albrant

George Christie  
Mary Manos  
Dean Milonas  
Peter Retsinas  
Mary Wysmierski  
Ray Wysmierski

## Parishioner Profile



Olga Fredericksen of Glendale enjoys being around kids. It is easy to tell by her occupation as a third grade teacher at Paseo Verde Elementary School. She has been a teacher for 22 years. But, her focus and commitment to helping the youth at St. Haralambos displays additional joy about being around kids.

In the early '90s, Olga took the lead and founded the Greek dance group at the Church allowing children as young as five years of age a chance to learn the right steps. Today there are two dance groups with one for five to 10 year olds and another for teenagers. She also was able to procure from several areas of Greece and Cyprus traditional outfits for the dancers.

St. Haralambos dancers often perform at various functions including the annual festival, retirement homes, schools and have even appeared on several local television programs.

Additionally, she was instrumental during the '90s in helping organize and have parish youth attend a Pan Orthodox Summer Camp held in Show Low. The annual event hosted

over 100 youth from several Valley Orthodox churches.

Olga and her husband Dave have both previously served terms on the Parish Council, and both of their sons have served in the altar helping Fr. Michael. This fall, she will begin serving as Sunday School Superintendent giving her insight, experience and energy to the program.

A native of San Jose, Calif., she enjoys the beautiful Arizona weather, the abundance of outdoor activities and the opportunities to play sports with the kids outdoors.

"I look forward to the future of St. Haralambos, I think we are headed in the right direction," she said. "My hope is for our future Church campus to have something for all ages including a school, a teen center, a senior citizen center, youth groups in JOY, GOYA and senior GOYA, and activities for kids."

Elementary school, Sunday school, dance groups, summer camps, youth groups. It appears Olga enjoys being around kids, but looking closely, it is the kids that enjoy being around Olga.

## *What is happening on Nov. 2-4, 2007?*

The next  
St. Haralambos  
**Taste of Greece Festival**

Be sure to:

1. Save these dates and mark your calendar.
2. Plan to volunteer your talents and services.





## *Is the Parish our Universe, or is the Universe our Parish?*

By Dennis Georgen

This question was first raised by St John Chrysostom and it is as meaningful a question today as it was when first posed in the Fifth Century. St. John speaks to us and to our vision as a Greek Orthodox community of who we are today and what we intend to become.

Are we inward looking, focusing our efforts in our own community, or do we look outward and ask what can we do to affect the world around us?

These aren't meant to be rhetorical questions. They are forward looking questions that we need to ask ourselves as we develop a strategic vision for St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church that will drive what we do, how we do it and who we include in our Mission.

Our Strategic Planning Committee intends to explore some of these issues as we look ahead. We expect to engage many of you in discussion on these questions as we look at the various activities and ministries of our Church. This will be an ongoing process that we are only just beginning.

At our first meeting this year, we shared our personal vision of the future of our Church with one another. It was interesting to note that as we moved through our discussion, a central theme emerged. It was not so much about the building, as much as it was on the life of the Parish within that building.

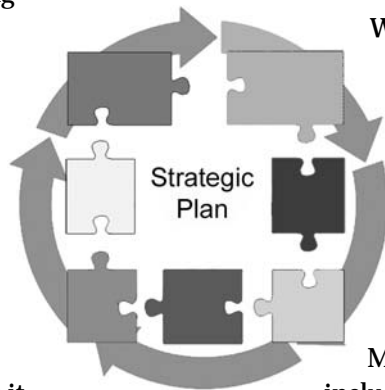
It became evident to us that in order for us

to clearly see the future of our Church, we needed a guiding statement that reflected who we are and how we see ourselves in the future. To help guide us through that future, we worked on drafting a Vision Statement for St. Haralambos.

That Vision, when adopted, will be the guiding statement for our Church as we look to the future.

### **Parish Vision Statement**

*St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church, located at 75th Avenue and Greenway Road in Peoria, Arizona, sanctifies the faithful through the Divine Liturgy and Holy Sacraments under the spiritual guidance and direction of the Metropolis of San Francisco. The Church, operating in accordance with the Uniform Parish Regulations published by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America will keep, practice, and proclaim the Orthodox Christian Faith, pure and undefiled, and is the center of Orthodox Christian worship, study, and education for the West Valley of Phoenix, Arizona.*



We welcome your comments as we work to finalize and implement this vision statement for our Church. You can forward your comments to the Church office, or to one of the members of the Strategic Planning Committee.

Members of the committee include Dennis Georgen, Monique Klabis, Greg Krochta and Pam Solomon. If you would like to serve on the committee, please contact Fr. Michael.

## **Offering Bread (Prosfora) Class Results**

Kudos to all of the students of the baking class. During the last three weeks of April, Stella Pagos, Tracy Albrant and Elizabeth Gorman baked the prosfora and presented their "offering" to the Church that was used in the Holy Eucharist. I am no longer referring to them as students; they are now "pros." Thanks to all! In Christian love,  
Christina Harris

# ORGANIZATIONS



## Philoptochos

By Charlotte Servetas, President  
Happy Father's Day!

Looking forward to seeing you at the June 4th meeting. We will be tending to last minute business and welcoming our new officers and board members.

Congratulations and success to Stavros Theoharatos, a recent high school graduate.

Enjoy a safe and relaxing summer, returning in September energized and ready to continue Philoptochos work.

## Coffee Hour

### Thank You to Our Coffee Hour Hosts/Sponsors

May 6 General Assembly Light Luncheon  
May 13 Philoptochos for Mother's Day  
May 20 Larry & Joan Coor and Chris Birtsas  
May 27 Gus & Bella Danos and James Constant

Jun. 3 Michael & Chryss Danielek, Thalia Zorbas, and Charlotte Servetas  
Jun. 10 Sue Charbel, and Barbara Hernandez  
Jun. 17 Kim & Dorothy Ayan, and Jean Sgouros  
Jun. 24 Gale & Paula Farr, and Lola Durand

*Note: Due to publication deadlines, any modifications to coffee hour listing will be noted in next month's newsletter.*

## Choir

By Dennis Georgen, Choir Director

Parishioners may remember that earlier this year, the Choir was blessed with the good fortune of receiving the coin that was baked into the Vasilopita (New Years Bread). Apparently, St. Basil has interceded on our behalf as we have had a very successful start to 2007.

I sincerely appreciate all of the kind words many of you have shared with me regarding what the Choir adds to our Liturgical experience. Please believe me when I say it is not my doing. We have a number of very dedicated members who give of their time and let's not forget the Angels that apparently sing along with us.

We now have a regular organist, Eric Ramos, who has been an absolute joy for us to work with, and we have been blessed to have, on average, 10 to 12 voices on any given Sunday. We have held regular weekly rehearsals since last fall, and have raised nearly \$3,500 in 2007 to pay for our organist.

The Choir will be going on Sabbatical beginning Sunday, June 10, and we plan to

return in full force in September. We have not taken time off the past two summers. However, without funds for our organist and with many of us needing to be away for a few weeks this summer, it seems to make sense this year.

We sincerely hope that a number of you will decide to join us when we start up again in the fall. We are always looking for new voices. We regularly practice on Thursday evenings from 7 to 8:30 p.m. And, you don't need to know music. We learn as we go. In fact, many of our members, me included, don't know the difference between F sharp and B flat. It's not important. What is important is a desire to sing praises to our God.

The one hurdle we have is raising another \$1,500 before September. As of today, we don't have the funds we need to hire our organist back on in the fall. I can think of nothing more important than for us to do what we can to make our Liturgical experience as beautiful and meaningful as possible. The Liturgy is, after all, the "work of the people," from the Greek, "laos" and "ergon."

## Change in Sunday Service Times

For the hot summer months of June, July and August, the Sunday service times will be moved a half-hour ahead: Matins will start at 8:30a.m. and the Divine Liturgy at 9:30a.m.

# ORGANIZATIONS

## *St. Christopher's Bookstore*



*Whatever Happened to Truth?* Anthony M. Coniaris, 2001, 177 pages.

This very intriguing book attempts to convince us that there is such a thing as absolute truth, that the Truth is God, and that the Orthodox Church is the protector of the Truth.

Fr. Anthony describes the distortion in the meaning of words and the truths behind them. Pluralism, multi-culturalism, alternative lifestyles, scientism and political correctness have all contributed to this phenomenon.

Many people think what's true for them is not true for others. Once at a committee meeting, President Lincoln asked, "How many legs would a sheep have if you called his tail a leg?" Several people responded, "Five." "No," argued Lincoln, "it would only have four. Calling a tail a leg doesn't make it one."

Many individuals are anti-religion. Freud called religion, "infantile...illusion, a crutch for weak people," (Were the Christian martyrs weak?). C.S. Lewis said he used to argue against God because the world is a cruel and unjust place. However, since we are created in God's "image and likeness," we have a sense of right and wrong. God's moral laws are His unchanging truth.

Unfortunately, for many people today "sin" has been redefined so that it doesn't exist. It is easy for people to be deceived, to follow their own desires and to say that truth is relative and that anything goes. Fr. Anthony argues against Freud when he says that the unbelievers are the weak ones because they've chosen the easy way out, to do whatever feels good.

Actually, the author points out that there really isn't such a thing as "unbelief" because everyone believes in something, cults, astrology, etc. Furthermore, because the Church is not a part of many children's lives and because the family unit and parenting are not strong, many children grow up thinking

there is nothing wrong with the immoral behavior seen on TV.

The politically correct movement has caused "normal behavior" to be whatever one chooses for himself and God to be anything one wants Him to be. There also are many that think public opinion determines the truth.

However, Fr. Anthony reminds us that Barabbas was released and Jesus was crucified because of public opinion. The Lord Jesus is, "the Way, the Truth and the Life...the same yesterday, today and forever."

Though many early scientists were Christians, "Scientism" has become popular. Nevertheless, scientists today are discovering massive evidence of design in DNA, microscopic cells, etc., not created by chance (Darwinism) but by a Master Designer. There really is not a conflict between the truth of God and the truth of science because science answers questions beginning with the words: "What" and "How," whereas theology answers questions beginning with the words: "Who" and "Why," according to the author.

Some say that there are many religions that lead to the Truth, to God. What difference does it make whether we follow Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed or Christ? To answer this question, the author tells a story. A Moslem and a Christian were talking and agreed that both Mohammed and Christ were prophets. How do they differ then? The Christian illustrated it this way: "I came to a crossroads and I saw a dead man and a living man. Which one did I ask for directions?" The Moslem replied, "The living one, of course." "Why then," asked the Christian, "do you send me to Mohammed (or Buddha) who are dead, instead of to Christ who is alive!"

His resurrection proves that He is God. Only the Orthodox Church is the guardian of Truth and Sacred Tradition as learned from the Lord by the apostles.

How do we find the Truth, the person of Jesus Christ? Fr. Anthony insists we must confess the truth of our sins. Thereby we cleanse our hearts so we may see His Truth as stated in scripture, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

## *General Assembly Results*

Our recent General Assembly had a full agenda with committee reports from 13 different organizations. Some highlights included an excellent presentation by Ray Wysmierski on our building program for the new church, and the assembly authorizing the Parish Council to hire a professional capital enrichment firm to manage our upcoming capital enrichment campaign. Philoptochos President Charlotte Servetas reminded everyone of the many activities the Philoptochos supports and encouraged all the women of our parish to get involved. Choir Director Dennis Georgen

appreciated the many kind accolades given to our choir members for the wonderful and dedicated job they do each Sunday, and said that working with our new organist, Eric Ramos, has been very rewarding and helpful. Dennis also spoke on behalf of the Strategic Planning Committee (see article on page 5) which has been working on developing a vision statement for our parish. Our 20th anniversary committee was represented by Mary Wysmierski who reminded everyone about the Family BBQ on May 12 in the church backyard, and about the anniversary gala on Saturday, Dec. 1.

## 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 and Mary-Jean Davis, Alice Massahos, Dema Jean Milonas and George Poulos.

## Memory Eternal

Our deepest sympathies to the family of Patricia Anna Gross, who fell asleep in the Lord on April 20, 2007. The Memorial service was held Friday morning April 27. May God grant eternal rest to her soul, and may her memory be eternal.

Our deepest sympathies to the family of Andrew (Andy) Homich who fell asleep in the Lord on May 2, 2007. The Memorial service was held Saturday morning May 5. May God grant eternal rest to his soul, and may his memory be eternal.

Our deepest sympathies to the family of Marianthy Bravos, who fell asleep in the Lord on May 17, 2007. Funeral Services were held in Palatine, IL. May God grant eternal rest to her soul, and may her memory be eternal.

## Growing Families

Congratulations to Nick and Ruth Panousopoulos on the birth of their daughter, Malia Olympia on March 19.

Congratulations to Peter and Lindsay Vardalos on the birth of their son, Aristithi Haralambos on May 18.

God's blessings of health and happiness to their families.

## Congratulations Graduate!

We congratulate Stavros Theoharatos on his graduation from Mountain Ridge High School. Stavros plans on going to Greece this summer, then enrolling at Glendale Community College in the Fall. We wish him a safe and enjoyable summer, and God's abundant blessings for his future.

## *Birthdays*



George Theoharatos (6th)  
Patrick Marshall (7th)  
Aarron Johnson (11th)  
Despina Medina (14th)  
Jennifer Georgen (17th)  
Stacie Georgen (17th)  
Pam Lemons (17th)  
Alicia Krochta (18th)  
Masha Legkaya (20th)  
Laura Hargan (22nd)  
Johnny Fredericksen (22nd)

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.

## *Name Days*

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

St. Dorotheos (5th)

St. Cyril (9th)

St. Methodios, Patriarch of Constantinople (14th)

St. Jude (19th)

St. Paul (29th)



# JUNE 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> 8:30am Matins 9:30am Div. Liturgy Sunday of All Saints	<b>4</b> 7:00pm Philoptochos	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 8:30am Matins 9:30am Div. Liturgy	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 7:00pm Parish Council	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 8:30am Matins 9:30am Div. Liturgy Father's Day	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 8:30am Matins 9:30am Div. Liturgy	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>