

# in Touch

Volume 15, Issue 3

March 2007



The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

The Annunciation  
Sunday, March 25

20th Anniversary  
Celebration • 2

The Goal of  
Fasting • 3

Parishioner  
Profile • 4

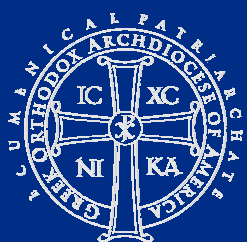
Holy Trinity  
Academy • 5

Parish Council  
Corner • 7



*"You will conceive in  
your womb and bear a  
son, and you shall call  
his name Jesus"*

Luke (1:26-39)



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

St. Haralambos



# 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY 2007

## CELEBRATING OUR PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

### St. Haralambos' 20th Anniversary Kick-off Celebration and Parish Feast Day

On Saturday, Feb. 10, in conjunction with our Parish Feast Day we all gathered for the Anniversary Kick-off Celebration. We glanced at the Past, looked at the Present and viewed the Future plans of St. Haralambos Church.



20th Anniversary Committee Members



#### 20TH ANNIVERSARY 2007 EVENTS

Jan.	Gathering of Church Archives
Feb. 10	Kick-off Celebration Event
Feb. 15-17	Parish Directory Family Portraits Taken at Church
May 12	Open House/Family BBQ
Nov. 2-4	Annual Greek Festival
Dec. 1	Gala Event





## Great Lent; Personal Discipline, Will Power, and Self-Control

Comfort food: Ice cream, chocolate, cake, cookies and chips. Sometimes it just hits the spot for a mid-day snack or as a sweet treat following a good meal, as in dessert. But not so good at the end of a rough day, when feeling exhausted or angry or lonely, hurt or depressed. It's during those times when dessert can easily become the main course. A pint of Ben & Jerry's Chocolate Therapy, a plate of brownies, an entire bag of cookies - gone before you know it. Following a nice sugar rush and a heavy dose of "I can't believe I ate the whole thing," comes the realization that those feelings of anger or depression haven't really gone away. They've just been temporarily sugar-coated.

It doesn't take a degree in nutrition to know that a person won't survive solely on comfort food. Many have tried, of course, but a good stomach ache - usually around holiday times - teaches us all we really need to know. Our bodies need a balanced, nutritious diet. Exactly what that diet consists of is still an on-going debate that has made many people (and booksellers) very

wealthy. It is also a topic about which the Orthodox Church has maintained a consistent teaching for quite some time, and this being the season of Great Lent, seems timely to mention.

"Food is meant for the stomach, and the stomach for food," St. Paul writes in First Corinthians. What type of food? The Old Testament law spelled out many dietary requirements for the Israelite nation which included the concept of (ritually) clean and unclean foods. So strong were these laws that St. Peter, in his vision recorded in Acts 10, at first refused to accept the message of the angel directing him to kill and eat animals deemed by the Old Testament Law as ritually unclean. The patristic interpretation of this vision was that the clean and unclean animals represented Jews and Gentiles, and that the Christian gospel was to be taught even to Gentiles, whom the Jews considered unclean. This breaking down of the distinction between nations included abolishing the laws of clean and unclean food, which is why there are no religious prohibitions against eating meat for

Christians.

Jesus made a similar point to the disciples. "There is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile." The disciples, like St. Peter in his vision, were surprised to hear this. But Jesus continued, "Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? (Thus he declared all foods clean.) And he said, "It is what comes out of a person that defiles." (Mark 7)

Of course there was no mention of comfort or junk food in the bible, but the point is that food (what goes into our bodies) is not as important as our behavior (what is revealed from the depth of our heart).

So bring on the apple fritters and M&M cookies? Not just yet. The other element to the equation is personal discipline, will power, and self-control. Enter Great Lent; a spiritual journey designed to put those

*(Continued on page 8)*

*The goal of fasting is not to see how many foods you can do without, but to test your willingness to put your love of Christ ahead of your love of food.*



**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

623-486-8665  
10320 N. 84th Ave., Peoria, AZ 85345  
[Office@StHaralambos.phxcoxmail.com](mailto:Office@StHaralambos.phxcoxmail.com)  
[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  
Mary Dascalos, Treasurer  
Peter Tremoulis, Secretary  
Glen Albrant  
Tracy Albrant

George Christie  
Mary Manos  
Dean Milonas  
Stella Pagos  
Mary Wysmierski

## Parishioner Profile



Argyro (Sylvia) Vasquez has been around the world and been to several countries, but she has called Glendale home since 1975. Her husband at that time was in the Air Force and his career took Sylvia and the family of six children around the world before he retired from nearby Luke AFB.

The couple divorced and she remarried in 1980 to Bill

Vasquez who helped lead a small but dedicated and instrumental group that started hosting services and laying the foundation for a West Valley Greek Orthodox Church. The initial formative group at first evolved as a social outlet and began meeting at restaurants to discuss Church plans.

The group began holding services at a day care center before moving onto an elementary school. In both cases, the Vasquez' owned and operated a janitorial services firm that serviced schools and Bill and Sylvia were able to serve

as liaisons in finding these host building sites that suited the Church's growing need for space and location.

Sylvia served for many years in the Philoptochos and was instrumental, along with several other women, in establishing the Chapter at St. Haralambos. Also, the first permanently assigned parish priest, Fr. George Patides, stayed at the Vasquez home for nearly three months while repairs were being done to the house behind the Church where he and his family resided when it was completed in the late '80s.

Sylvia has 15 grandchildren and she continues working as a nurse in a home-care setting. She thinks Arizona is beautiful and the climate and topography remind her of Greece. She loves the weather, but she also loves her Church.

"I love this Church. It is very dear to me. I have so many memories here at this Church," she said. "Several of my grandchildren were baptized in this Church and one of my daughters was married in this Church. It will be hard to leave this wonderful Church when we go to a new building but things move on and a new Church will be a great benefit to future generations."

## 2007 Sunday Lenten Vespers

Among other significant experiences, Great Lent is the only time of the year when all of us are given the opportunity to worship together with our brothers and sisters from neighboring Orthodox parishes. Each Sunday during Lent, the evening Vesper service will be held at a different church in the valley.

This is a great opportunity to venture out past our geographic boundaries, and truly feel like a part of the greater Orthodox Church community of Phoenix. Did you know that the interior of St. George Church has been remodeled? Or that the icon screen has been installed at the Assumption Church? That St. Peter and Paul's Church has welcomed a new priest? That the nuns from St. Paisios Convent in Safford, Ariz., will be chanting the Vespers at St. Savas Church? Come and see! Meet new friends! Experience Orthodox worship in a different and enjoyable setting each Sunday evening.

All Sunday evening Lenten Vesper services begin at 6 p.m. and are conducted in English. The schedule is:

- **March 4**  
Assumption Church, 8202 E. Cactus Road, Scottsdale
- **March 11**  
Sts. Peter and Paul Church, 1614 E. Monte Vista Road, Phoenix
- **March 18**  
St. Sava Church, 4436 E. McKinley, Phoenix
- **March 25**  
St. John Church, 3749 W. Behrend Drive, Glendale

## *Holy Trinity Academy Benefit*

On Saturday, April 14, 2007, Holy Trinity Academy will host a wine tasting and silent auction fundraiser, A Toast to the Future, from 7 to 11 p.m. in the James A. Speros Community Center at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral, located at 1973 E. Maryland Ave., in Phoenix. Volunteers are already working diligently to make this an exciting and successful event. The evening will feature a sampling of local, domestic and imported wines accompanied by delicious appetizers and musical entertainment, as well as a silent auction.

Holy Trinity Academy (HTA) is a traditional Trinitarian Christian school that emphasizes academic



excellence. The only Greek Orthodox parochial school in the Southwest, HTA is in its fifth year of operation, successfully educating young children in preschool through first grade. The advanced learning programs promote every aspect of development: cognitive, physical, social, emotional and spiritual. Through

participation in music and art classes, students also expand their knowledge and appreciation of the fine arts.

With steadily increasing enrollment and a new, state-of-the-art educational facility under construction, the volunteer committee strongly believes that the time has come to hire a new teacher and expand its program next fall to include the second grade. As part of their ongoing effort to raise funds to enlarge the school, all the proceeds from the wine tasting and silent auction will directly benefit this endeavor. Please call the church office at 602-264-7863 for additional information. For event reservations, contact Alexia Haugen at 602-296-4819.

## **Prosfora Baking**

For those interested in learning how to prepare the Offering Bread for Divine Liturgies, a workshop will be held on Saturday, March 3 at 10 a.m. in our Social Hall. Please call Christina Harris at 623-875-7768 to learn how to participate in this church ministry.

## **Fashion Designers Needed**

On Lazarus Saturday, helpful hands are needed to fashion palm branches into crosses for Palm Sunday. Following the Liturgy, the palms will be set out on tables in the Social Hall, and a live demonstration showing the cross-making technique will take place.

We would greatly appreciate anyone who can make the time to help with the traditional palm cross designs for our parishioners. For those who master the technique, contests will be held for the fastest assembly time, largest and smallest cross, and for the really adept: mastering the one-handed technique! Come join us on March 31 and give it a try!



## **Church Yard Sale**

**Saturday March 24, 2007**

**7 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

**St. Haralambos Church**  
(in the back yard)

If you would like to donate any small appliances, house wares or clothing in good condition, or if you would like to volunteer to work at the sale, please contact Pam Lemons at 623-566-0456.

Proceeds from the sale will be used for 20th Anniversary celebration events.

# ORGANIZATIONS



## *Philoptochos*

By Charlotte Servetas, President  
**News and notes for this month**

- Thank you to everyone who baked Vasilopita and to our energetic auctioneer Pam Lemons. Altogether we raised and sent \$600 to St. Basil Academy.
- Pre-Sanctified Liturgy will be held each Wednesday during Lent. It will alternate between a morning and evening service with a Lenten meal following each service. Donations will be accepted at each meal and proceeds will benefit Holy Cross Seminary. The hosts for March 2007 meals are:
  - March 7, morning Christina Harris
  - March 14, evening Connie Scouffas and Lindsay Vardalos
  - March 21, morning Alice Hecht and Ann Yacyshyn
  - March 28, evening Voula Dodd and Penny Obren
- Proceeds from December's Bake Sale along with a contribution from St. Anna's Chapter reached a total of \$1,000. The amount was donated to the Church Building Fund.
- Philoptochos will host a Palm Sunday Fish Luncheon on April 1 following Divine Liturgy. Reservations are

required and the deadline to obtain tickets is March 25. Tickets sales begin March 4, and will be available during Sunday Coffee Hour. Cost is \$10 per ticket with proceeds going to Kids 'N Cancer.

- We can always use some extra hands and assistance to decorate the Epitaphio. Make an effort to join us during Holy Friday on April 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Our next meeting date is Monday, March 5, at 7 p.m. in the Social Hall.

Finally, be sure to check the weekly Sunday bulletin for any changes or additions to the Philoptochos calendar. Enjoy a Spiritual Lenten Journey.

## Coffee Hour

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

- Feb. 4 Charlotte Servetas  
Feb. 11 Peter & Lindsay Vardalos  
Feb. 18 Tom & Cathy Pallad  
Feb. 25 John & Penny Obren and Josie Desnoyers  
Mar. 4 Gus & Pat Stamnas and Anna Yacyshyn  
Mar. 11 Carl & Constantina Surman  
Mar. 18 Despina Medina and Mary Dascalos  
Mar. 25 Sue Charbel and Donna Gligich

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

## *Younger Generation*

The next meeting of the Younger Generation will take place in our Social Hall on Tuesday evening, March 20, following the evening Compline service.

## *Sunday School*



Only 14 more weeks remain until we complete another successful year in our Sunday School. As we prepare for next year, we need a teacher for the Junior High School class (7th & 8th grades). The curriculum is already prepared with weekly lessons as well as two textbooks, *The Ten Commandments* and *The Sacraments*. This is the last position available at this time. If you are interested, please contact the Church office.

For additional information, please call either Mary Wysmierski at 623-518-9164, or Margaret Michailides at 623-537-5777.

Additionally, we are blessed to have the following teaching assignments filled: Pre-School/Kindergarten - Monique Klabis; 1st, 2nd, 3rd Grades - Presbyteria Kristin; 4th, 5th, 6th Grades - Michelle Krochta; substitutes and assistants for the Pre-School - Connie Scouffas and Lindsay Vardalos; snacks - Chryss Danielek; and Youth Forum - Mike Danielek.



# ORGANIZATIONS

## Parish Council Corner

By Greg Krochta, President

The members of this year's Parish Council, both old and new, want to "Thank You" for your trust and well wishes for us as we begin a new year. This year will be an exciting year for all of us as we celebrate our 20th Anniversary at St. Haralambos church! I hope you will be able to attend as many of the planned celebrations throughout the upcoming year as you can since this will not be an event celebrated just once but we will have several events during 2007.

We should be incredibly proud of our church's history here in Peoria and should likewise look toward the future of our church and our next 20 years with as much excitement!

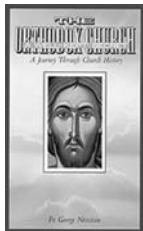
As you glance at our Parish Council pictures on the wall in the hallway (...oops, guess we'll have to work on that!) you may or may not recognize many of us. This year's council is comprised of many new names and faces, and along with that comes many new thoughts and ideas. Please keep an open mind and don't disregard these "new" ideas. In order for our community to continue reaching out to those in search of God and the original

church, we must continue to grow and not become a stagnant community. We will keep our ears open to you and your ideas as well, so don't hesitate to stop by and talk to us.

As Parish Council President I have briefed the council on several goals I have set for us in 2007. First, we will strive to increase and improve communication among ourselves and the many committees that exist within our church. It is required that the council and parish priest know all that is taking place in the committees formed to serve the church. Second, we are going to increase our outreach to the community around us, whether it is our local Peoria neighbors or with our fellow Orthodox churches in the Valley of the Sun. Third, we plan to increase our level of stewardship by an amount yet-to-be-determined so that, fourth, we can make the bold decisions necessary to move forward on the planning and construction phases of our future church and hall on our new property.

Can we do all of this in just one year? I hope so. Will 2007 be a year marked by wonderful 20th Anniversary celebrations and memories that we'll all look back on with fondness? With all of your help and God's grace it will.

## St. Christopher's Bookstore



*The Orthodox Church: A Well-Kept Secret*, by George Nicozisin, 1988, paperback, 190 pages, \$16.

The Light-N-Life catalog describes this book as "a historical jet trip through the two thousand year history of the Orthodox Church." Why do the 176 pages read much faster than most history books?

It's partly because the language is very simple and the history obviously is condensed. However, it's not what's left out, but rather what's put into the book that makes it fast, easy and enjoyable to read.

Though the history of the Church begins in 33 A.D., the book actually begins with Adam and Eve, who the western Churches believe were created perfect. The Orthodox Church, on the other hand, believes that man was created with the potential to be perfect, with the capability to be godlike if he chooses (using his free will) to strive for theosis, the state of godliness. This was God's Covenant promise with Adam and Eve that they broke.

Thus begins a book of doctrines, ideas or beliefs about the nature of man, the nature(s) of God, the role of the Church and Papal infallibility, how salvation can be achieved, and many other controversies that developed over time such as the Eucharist, infant baptism, the priesthood, the need for other sacraments, the icons, the source(s) of Divine Knowledge (Holy

Scripture and/or Holy Tradition) and others.

While learning salient Orthodox doctrines, we are also learning the major doctrines of Judaism (the four most prominent sects: the Scribes, the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the Hellenistic Jews), Islam, the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant faiths (a few of the 260 Protestant denominations: Lutheran, the Reformed Church organized by John Calvin, Presbyterian, Anglican, Congregationalist, Episcopalian, Baptist and Methodist). The reader also learns about religions that cannot be called "Christian" such as Seventh Day Adventists, Mormonism, Christian Scientist, Quakers and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Therefore, this book is not just a quick history of the Orthodox Church, but also a quick study in comparative religions. Actually, about half of the book parallels the history of the Western Church along side the Eastern Rite enabling the reader to understand the cultural, political and theological causes of the Great Schism of 1054 and the events of the following centuries that resulted in further differences. Surprisingly, after explaining all these differences, the book ends with a discussion of the Ecumenical movement.

*The Orthodox Church: A Well-Kept Secret* would be even better if it had an index, but since it's organized chronologically it's not crucial. It does contain a lengthy bibliography and suggested reading list. All in all, the book itself is "a well-kept secret."

## Birthdays



Alice Hecht (8th)  
 Pete Tremoulis (10th)  
 Kevin Marshall (12th)  
 Patti Christie (17th)  
 Danny Kostas (22nd)  
 Darren Waters (22nd)  
 Sharon Crews (23rd)  
 Nick Milonas (23rd)  
 Kiera (Klabis) Sneed (28th)  
 Shawna Tremoulis (30th)

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. Anastasia (10th)  
 St. Symeon (12th)  
 St. Euthymios (22nd)  
 St. John (of the Ladder) (30th)

## 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: Marianthy Bravos, Orin and Mary-Jean Davis, Mary Harrington, Alice Massahos and George Poulos

## Memory Eternal

May God grant eternal rest to the soul of John Barna who passed away on Feb. 3. A beautiful Memorial Service was chanted by the choir of Sts. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church, and celebrated by Fr. Michael and Fr. David of Sts. Peter and Paul. May his memory be eternal.

## Pastors' Column

*(Continued from page 3)*

personal characteristics to the test – not only with certain foods, but with our entire attitude towards our Christian faith. The goal of fasting is not to see how many foods you can do without, but to test your willingness to put your love of Christ ahead of your love of food.

One of the most well-known and often-quoted statements of Jesus is, "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." That is a phrase worth considering during Lent. Following the disciplines of Great Lent helps us to see how much more we need Christ in our lives than bread/food. A poem titled, "The Difference" by Grace Naessens makes a good point:

*I got up early one morning and rushed  
 right into the day;*

*I had so much to accomplish, I didn't  
 have time to pray.*

*Problems just tumbled about me and  
 grew heavier with each task;*

*Why doesn't God help me, I wondered;  
 He answered, "You didn't ask."*

*I wanted to see joy and beauty, but the  
 day toiled on, gray and bleak;*

*I wondered why God didn't show me - He  
 said, "But you didn't seek."*

*I tried to come into God's presence; I  
 used all my keys at the lock;  
 God gently and lovingly chided, "My  
 child, you didn't knock."*

*I woke up early this morning and paused  
 before entering the day;*

*I had so much to accomplish that I had to  
 take time to pray.*

The discipline of self-denial through fasting from foods and other behaviors is to help turn our minds and hearts towards Christ. Hopefully Lenten disciplines will carry over into the rest of the year, during those times when we're faced with an overwhelming desire to consume the most sugar-coated, cream-filled, chocolate covered treat we can find. The comfort it provides is short-term! The real comfort we seek and need comes not from food, but from Christ. He knows our needs, and is able to satisfy them in a way that comfort food, and so many other vices, cannot.

Self-control builds strong character; and will help us when confronted with a multitude of temptations we face every day. Enjoy the challenge!



# MARCH 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b>	7:00pm Choir	<b>2</b> 7:00pm Akathyst Hymn 2nd Stanza	<b>3</b> 10:00am Offering Bread Baking Workshop 1:00pm Altar Boys meet
<b>4</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Div. Liturgy <b>2nd Sunday of Lent</b> 6:00pm Vespers	<b>5</b> 7:00pm Philoptochos	<b>6</b> 10:30am Bible Enrichment 7:00pm Compline Service	<b>7</b> 9:00am Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Lenten Breakfast	<b>8</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>9</b> 7:00pm Akathyst Hymn 3rd Stanza	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Div. Liturgy <b>3rd Sunday of Lent</b> 6:00pm Vespers	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 10:30am Bible Enrichment 7:00pm Compline Service 7:30pm Parish Council	<b>14</b> 6:00pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Lenten Dinner	<b>15</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>16</b> 7:00pm Akathyst Hymn 4th Stanza	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Div. Liturgy <b>4th Sunday of Lent</b> 6:00pm Vespers	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 10:30am Bible Enrichment 7:00pm Compline Service 7:30pm Younger Gen.	<b>21</b> 9:00am Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Lenten Breakfast	<b>22</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>23</b> 7:00pm Akathyst Hymn Complete	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Div. Liturgy <b>5th Sunday of Lent</b> <b>The Annunciation</b> 6:00pm Vespers	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 10:30am Bible Enrichment 7:00pm Compline Service	<b>28</b> 6:00pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Lenten Dinner	<b>29</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 8:00am Matins 9:00am Div. Liturgy <b>Saturday of Lazarus</b> Preparation of Palm Crosses