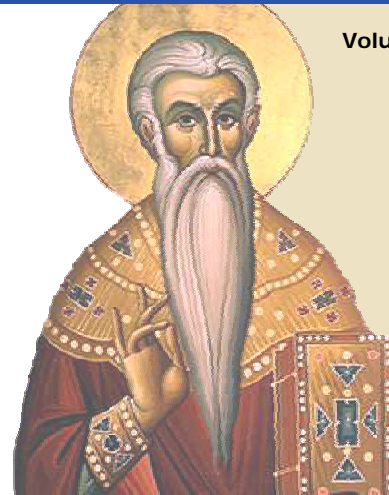


in Touch

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March 2011



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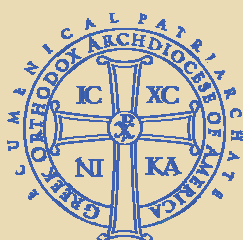
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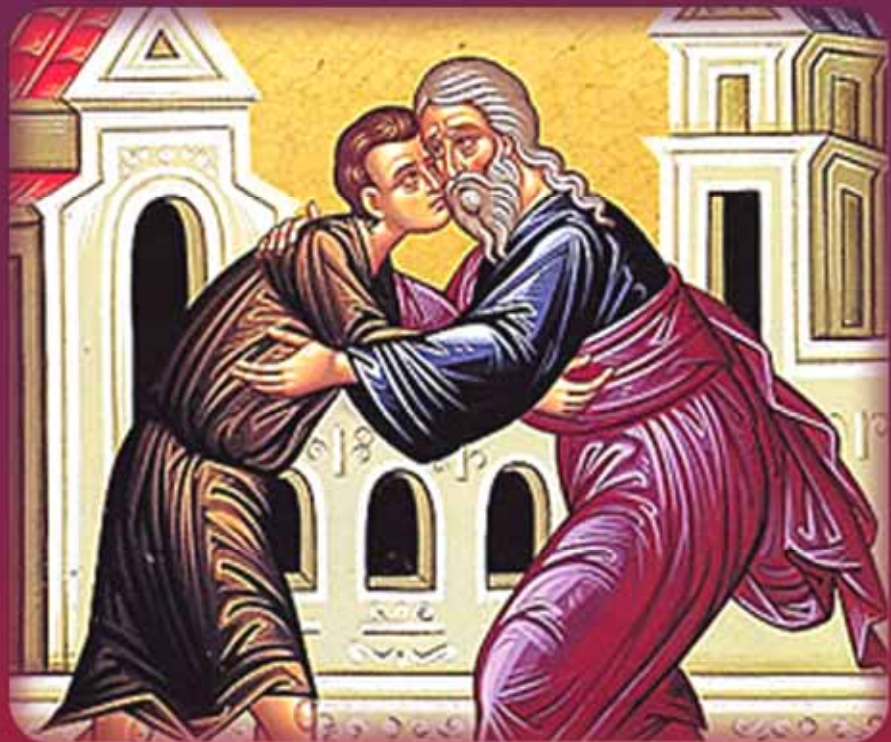
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The Prodigal Son



“O Father, foolishly I ran away from your glory, and, in sin, squandered the riches you gave me. Wherefore, I cry out to you with the voice of the Prodigal, I have sinned before you compassionate Father. Receive me in repentance and take me as one of your hired servants.”

GREAT LENT BEGINS MONDAY, MARCH 7



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

YOUTH NIGHT



Last month's Youth Night had a lesson on Temptation, along with outdoor games and a special project for the entire parish: coloring an original drawing for the parish Easter card! (page 4)



Youth Night this month: Thursday, March 10 at 6pm.

Fun for the Whole Family

Kite Flying on Saturday, March 26 at 4pm.

BYOK (Bring Your Own Kites) and finishing with a Lenten potluck supper.

Looking Ahead

There will be a Good Friday retreat for our youth on Friday, April 22, from 11am – 3pm. For the 3pm Vesper service, we're going to be involving all our young people in a very special moment in the service, so they will all want to be there. Young ladies who would like to be Myrrh-bearers for the Friday evening service should contact Lindsay Vardalos for more information.





The 40-Day Period of Great Lent

The parable of the Prodigal Son is read each year on the Sunday three weeks before the start of Great Lent. Its meaning is not difficult to understand (in fact, Jesus does not offer one word of explanation), because all of us can relate to times in our lives when we turned away from God or have felt God had turned away from us. The point of the parable, however, is not about separation, but about reconciliation. When we make up our mind, as the Prodigal Son did, that we would rather live with God at the center of our lives, we will always find that it was not God who turned from us, but just the opposite.

Remarkably, God loves us enough to say, "I'll let you decide if I am going to be a part of your life." He leaves that decision to each of us. Certainly the point of many a book, sermon, class or bible study is to help influence that decision, to show the benefits of deciding to make the Christian way of life our own; but ultimately, the decision is ours.

The 40-day period of Great Lent, which begins Monday, Mar. 7, can also be looked at as a time of bringing God more into the center of our lives; a time of

adjusting our priorities and our behavior more in-line with our Lord's teachings. The decision, again, is ours. We are free to make the days of Lent go by with no change at all, or we can look at what is involved in Fasting, Prayer and Works of Charity, and make a good attempt at picking up these spiritual disciplines and seeing the benefits they bring.

Because certain spiritual disciplines of the Orthodox Church are not followed in other Christian traditions, particularly those during Great Lent, we can be tempted to think of them as outdated, not relevant or beneficial to our faith and relationship with God, when, in fact, these are the reasons they were established!

There are always questions on fasting, for example, not only on the types of foods but also regarding the purpose of fasting. The danger with these questions is in getting hung up on the details and forgetting about its true meaning; or in biblical terms, being overly concerned with the letter of the law and completely missing its spirit.

The original spirit of fasting was developed in a very positive

sense; not asking, for example, "What must I give up?" but, "How can I strengthen my spirit to resist temptation and avoid falling into sin?"

Read from Saint John Chrysostom, who wrote often on the subject: "Fasting is the change of every part of our life, because the sacrifice of the fast is not the abstinence but the distancing from sins. Therefore, whoever limits the fast to the deprivation of food, he is the one

who, in reality, abhors and ridicules the fast. Are you fasting? Show me your fast with your works. Which works? If you see someone who is poor, show him mercy. If you see an enemy, reconcile with him. If you see a friend who is becoming successful, do not be jealous of him! If you see a beautiful woman on the street, pass her by." (Homily "On Fasting")

It is not merely a change of diet; why would something so insignificant as types of food be so critical to the way God regards our heart and soul? Fasting, as

(Continued on page 8)

"Fasting is the change of every part of our life, because the sacrifice of the fast is not the abstinence but the distancing from sins."



**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

623-486-8665
7950 W. Pinnacle Peak Rd., Peoria, AZ 85383
Office@StHaralambosAZ.com
FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com

Hours

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

Parish Council

Angie Cholas
Mike Danielek
David Durgam
Dennis Georgen
Dimitri Gryparis
Mary Manos

George Miller
Dean Milonas
Robert Szklarski
Katherine Tally
Ken Wrona
Ray Wysmierski

Name Days

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

St. Theodotos (2nd)
 St. Mark (5th)
 St. Theophylaktos (8th)
 St. Symeon the New Theologian (12th)
 St. Aristobulos (15th)
 St. Panharios (19th)
 St. Myron (20th)
 St. Euthymios (22nd)
 St. Parthenios (24th)
 St. John of the Ladder (Climacos) (30th)

Maintenance Ministry

First impressions are vitally important to the success of any organization. At St. Haralambos, these first impressions are usually visual. A message is being sent even before the first word is spoken. The 'maintenance ministry team' makes sure that this message is a positive one. We work to ensure that our Church is safe, friendly and an enjoyable experience for our stewards and visitors.

Our team will be responsible for the general care and upkeep of our Church building and grounds. This includes maintenance of the building, care of the parking lots, maintaining all safety features and the landscaping of the grounds.

If you can paint, make small-scale drywall repairs, glue floor base, shampoo carpets, sweep sidewalks, mop floors, remove wax from upholstery and carpet, clean and oil cabinetry and wood surfaces, change air filters, change light bulbs (fluorescent tubing, can lights in worship space), prune trees & shrubs, spray weeds, dust surfaces, lubricate door hinges and locks and many other minor maintenance procedures, we need your help. By helping

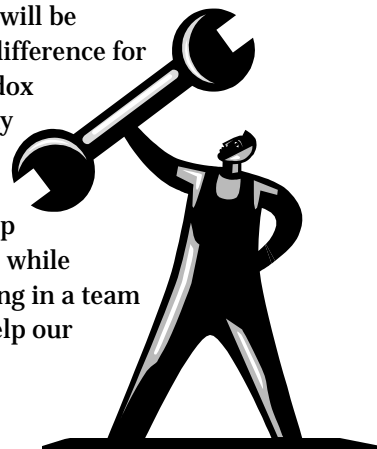
perform these duties we would be creating a positive impression for all who worship and those who visit with us.

Mission Statement: To ensure that our church building, parking lot and grounds continue to meet the needs of our growing stewardship.

This is a 'hands-on' ministry where we will meet quarterly to perform routine maintenance as scheduled or on an as-needed basis (changing burnt out light bulbs, wall repair & paint etc.).

To contact the Maintenance Ministry, please call the church office at 623-486-8665 or Michael Danielek at 602-978-1573. You will be

making a difference for our Orthodox Community and enhance our worship experience while participating in a team effort to help our Church.



Community Easter Card



The St. Haralambos Youth Group has created an original, full color Easter Card for our parish. It will be mailed to all parish families. If you would like your name included in the card, please return this form with your payment of \$10 payable to St. Haralambos Church. All proceeds benefit our youth program.

Please print your name clearly, exactly as you would like it to appear on the card. You may mail this form to the church office or sign up on Sundays during the Coffee Hour. **The deadline is Sunday, Apr. 10, 2011.**

Please include my family's name in this year's Community Easter Card.

Enclosed is my check for \$10.

(Please return to the church office)

Names (please print clearly)

Tips for Soldier Care Packages in Cold Weather

(Reprinted from Army Mom Strong)

The hot weather in Afghanistan and Iraq is winding down and the freezing cold is ready to settle in. In Afghanistan, winter sets in near the end of November and snow is common across much of the country. Winter is harsh across the country with temperatures going below zero. Spring starts again in March.

The climate in Afghanistan varies according to altitude, due to the height and location of any particular area. Temperatures in the north can be below freezing for most of the winter, and snow in the higher elevations is common.

These same tips apply for Iraq where winter temperatures are below freezing. Pack your care packages accordingly when the weather is freezing. Here are a few tips for care package items

Other Items Needed

Toiletries - toothpaste, mouthwash, toothbrushes, shampoo, body wash, body powder, razors, baby wipes, dental floss, chapstick, foot powder, lotion, hand sanitizer, toilet paper.

Food Items - canned tuna or chicken salad, single serving containers of fruit cocktail/peaches/pears/pineapple/applesauce, Cup O'Noodles, single serving packages of cookies, instant hot chocolate packets, single serving packages of trail mixes, cans of Spaghetti O's, Beef-A-Roni,

to help Soldiers get through the freezing winter.

Warm blankets
Black thermal under garments
Black stocking caps
Gloves (mechanics gloves so they can operate their weapons),
Soup packets
Hot cocoa packets
Tea bags
Hand warmers
Medicated lip balm (Carmex is good!)
Cough drops
Long sleeve t-shirts (Under Armour)
Instant coffee
Flannel sheets
Long underwear
Wool socks
Fleece or other warm blankets

single serving packages of Mac & Cheese, Ramen noodles, single serving cans of soups, candy bars, single serving cans of chili (with or without beans), single serving containers of pudding, dried soup mixes, single serving packets of coffee/sugar/powdered creamer, tea bags.

Miscellaneous - gallon, quart, pint & sandwich sized plastic bags. Bags of hard candy to use as fillers. Paperback books, magazines, puzzle books, hand-held games.

Military Moms Support Group

Military Moms Support Group would like to invite all Moms with active duty children to our coffees at The Corner Bakery at 83rd Avenue just S. of Bell Rd. in Peoria. We meet on the second and fourth Sundays at 6:00 pm. If this is your hero's first deployment, they have just enlisted or they are stateside, and you

haven't any idea about what you need to know or any anxieties you are having, then please, come talk to us. We have all been through it (many more than twice) and we know what you are going through. Please call Frosene Bravos at 623-341-2260 if you have any questions.

2011 Lenten Vespers Services

All Vespers Services Begin at 6pm

Forgiveness Vespers

March 6, 2011

Holy Trinity Cathedral
1973 E. Maryland Ave. Phoenix

The Sunday of Orthodoxy

March 13, 2011

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church
4530 E. Gold Dust Avenue,
Phoenix

The Second Sunday of Lent

March 20, 2011

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
8202 E. Cactus Rd., Scottsdale

The Third Sunday of Lent

March 27, 2011

St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church
4436 E. McKinley Street,
Phoenix

The Fourth Sunday of Lent

April 3, 2011

Sts. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church
1614 E. Monte Vista Road,
Phoenix

The Fifth Sunday of Lent

April 10, 2011

St. John Romanian Orthodox Church, 3749 W. Behrend Drive, Glendale

ORGANIZATIONS

Philoptochos

By Charlotte Servetas, President

'Faith without works, is dead' James-2:17

Philoptochos will be meeting on Monday, Mar. 7 at 7pm. This day is also the beginning of our 2011 Lenten Journey. I urge you to attend as many special services as possible during this 'Holy Period'.

Many of our parish members have been ill, if you don't see them in church, call them and ask, R.U.O.K.

Our donation to St. Basil Academy from the sale of Vasilopitas was \$550.

Hosts for Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Lenten Suppers

- March 9: Charlotte Servetas
- March 16: Voula Dodd and Chryss Danielek
- March 23: Alice Hecht and Anna Yacyshyn
- March 30: Reni and Dean Milonas
- April 6: Valla and Ken Wrona
- April 13: Available

Our April meeting date is on Monday, Apr. 4, at 7pm.



Philoptochos – The largest Women's Benevolent Group in the USA!

Today's woman is truly a superwoman! She may be married, have children and be employed. Or perhaps she may be single, a businesswoman and owns her own home inclusive of all responsibilities. In this and in all scenarios women know the needs of their community at large. Whether it is to fulfill a need within herself, to teach her children about compassion for their fellow man or for any other reason, our women are committed to actively assisting those

less fortunate and to make a difference. needed to lead a fulfilling life."

We invite you to join in this fellowship by becoming a member in our local chapter, St. Anna's Philoptochos here at St. Haralambos Church.

Help us fulfill our mission statement: "We exist to minister to those who are poor in financial and material resources, poor in health, poor in companionship, poor in emotional stability and poor in whatever is

It is simply one woman asking another woman to care. Please complete the Philoptochos Membership Form and return by Apr. 1. Your Sister in Christ, Voula Dodd

Let us open our hearts to 'Christ' so that each of us should light our lives with faith and good works and be ready to receive 'Christ'.

2011 PHILOPTOCHOS MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ CELL PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____ NAME DAY _____

AREAS OF INTEREST, TALENT, etc

Membership Dues: \$15.00 National
\$10.00 Metropolis
\$10.00 Free Will Donation for Local Chapter

Amount Enclosed: \$

Please return form with payment to Voula Dodd, Membership Chairwoman or Charlotte Servetas, President

St. Christopher's Bookstore

PATH TO SANITY, Dee Pennock, 2010, 214 pages.

Dee Pennock converted to Christianity after reading a volume of the Philokalia and studying the early Church Fathers for two years. She presents in *Path to Sanity* their analysis of and remedies for what today are called “psychological disorders”. She describes the classic Orthodox path to mental and emotional healing in Christ for contemporary readers.

It is interesting to see how the holy counselors (Church Fathers and other saints) define sanity.

They say that our soul is “mentally fit” when “it knows what God made it to be.” If we have a healthy soul (sanity), “our energies work to benefit us” rather than “working to cause us... distress. Obedience to God’s will...is the ultimate sanity.” Antony the Great says, “An intelligent person will direct his mind towards the heavenly and eternal, knowing that God’s will is the source of all blessings.”

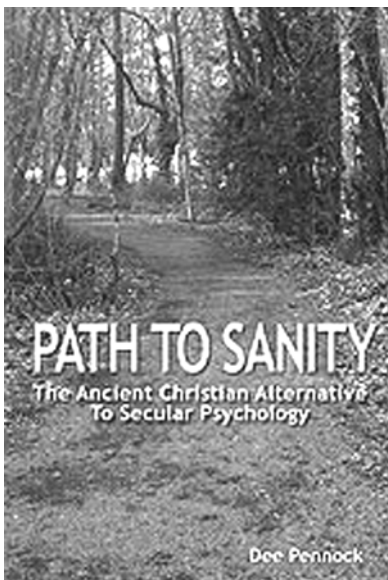
Sanity is having a connection with reality and what connects us to reality is truth, “the pearl of great price” that Jesus spoke of. I am the way, the truth, and the life (John. 14:6).

The reason we should study the saints is that they “have joined themselves to truth—to reality, to the Gospel, to God. The Lord prayed for unity among His saints that they all may be one (John 17:21) “proof that his truth is in them.” These perfect saints of God, who are called the “Tower of Truth”, bring us the

lessons of the Holy Spirit...Attaching ourselves to these teachers draws us close to them, each other, and to God.”

Gaining sanity is the process of cleansing our soul of passions (sins). It’s “having your mind in control of your soul, and having Christ as the Lord of your mind.” Passions “diminish our ability and our willingness” to recognize truth.

Patristic descriptions of the three basic passions of human nature include vainglory, wanting the approval of people more than of God, enslavement by idols,



hatred of repentance; self-love, attachment to what is carnal rather than spiritual, inability to love others, willfulness, anger and depression; and pride, ignorance of oneself and one’s need for God, self-exaltation alternating with despair, going out of one’s mind, hearing voices, frenzy.

A great quantity of prayer, “persistent begging” is needed to ask the Lord to deliver us from our passions. Furthermore, since we’re all riding on rough waters in this life,” repentance is our “life preserver.” Reading Psalm 51 is also beneficial.

Archbishop Chrysostomos says, *Path to Sanity* “speaks of the therapeutic aspects of Orthodoxy with...elegant simplicity and an amazing charm.”

Rev. Dr. Theodore Stylianopoulos recommends this book as being “a treasure of insights from Scripture and Tradition.”

Lost and Found

Can’t find those keys? Wondering where your sunglasses went? Every now and then personal items are left at the church. When we find them, we put them in the church office, hoping their owners will call looking for them. But we can’t hold onto them forever!

Currently there are a set of keys, sunglasses, earrings and a bracelet. If they might be yours, call the church office during the week and ask about them. After six months, we’ll be taking them over to Good Will.

Birthdays



Dina Surman (1)
 Costa Androulakis (2)
 James Gorman (3)
 Jared Milonas (5)
 Kathryn Macrides (7)
 Alice Hecht (8)
 Russell Skocypec (9)
 Mary Davis (11)
 Peter Batalis (13)
 Dorothy Masley (14)
 Patricia Christie (17)
 Malia Panousopoulos (19)
 Zoe Dress (23)
 Maria Papamatheakis (25)

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.

Special Thanks

It may seem hard to believe, but this month we celebrate one year in our new church building. A lot of hard work – mental, physical and spiritual – went into this historic move which has given our parish a permanent home.

One of the first remodel projects, started even before we moved in, was the construction of the iconostasion (icon screen) and solea. We brought our icons with us, but needed to build a new icon screen to accommodate them, and a raised solea in front of the altar. The funds for this project were provided by Anna

Chafoulis, of blessed memory, who was a member of St. Haralambos Church back in the days this parish was first being formed.

Many other projects have been completed since moving into our new building, and there are plans for many additional projects. This month we wanted to acknowledge this generous gift from the estate of Anna Chafoulis, a woman who cared deeply for our parish. May God grant her soul eternal rest in His Kingdom.

Sunday School

By Mike Danielek, Director

St. Haralambos Sunday School is blessed - let us count the 61 ways:

- 48 registered Sunday School students
- 6 Teachers & Coordinators
- 1 Snack coordinator
- 4 new classrooms and educational spaces
- 1 set of Play equipment
- 1 fenced grass playground

There is, however, ONE VERY LARGE PROBLEM: "WE cannot teach empty chairs"

Attempting to teach students who do not regularly attend Sunday school is difficult. Irregular attendance results in irregular or poor spiritual growth. Let's all make a concentrated effort to help our students regularly attend Sunday school from this Sunday forward.

We teachers are committed to pray for, minister to, and be guardians of your children's spiritual growth. We pray for all of our students, parents and their families. Let's build a strong foundation for our awesome and beautiful Eastern Orthodox Faith through our children's faithful attendance at Sunday School.

Clergy Column

(Continued from page 3)

St. John says, must include fasting from bad and harmful behaviors. Eating less of one type of food over another while continuing to harbor feelings of anger or lust or revenge do not help bring us closer in relationship with God.

We don't want to remain far from God, but should continually try to find ways that

move us closer to him. Like the Prodigal Son, our desire should be reconciliation, not separation. Fasting, works of charity and prayer - when practiced as originally intended – are ways that help orient our thoughts, words and actions in ways that make us better people in God's eyes.

May this Lenten season be one of positive spiritual growth for us all.

MARCH 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 9:00am Divine Liturgy 2nd Saturday of the Souls
6 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Cheesefare Sunday Pancake Breakfast 6:00pm Lenten Vespers of Forgiveness (Holy Trinity Cathedral)	7 Beginning of Great Lent (Clean Monday) 7:00pm Philoptochos	8 7:00pm Compline Service 7:30pm Parish Council	9 6:00pm Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy	10 7:00pm Choir Practice	11 7:00pm Akathist Hymn (1st stanza)	12 9:00am Divine Liturgy 3rd Saturday of the Souls
13 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy 1st Sunday of Lent Sunday of Orthodoxy 6:00pm Lenten Vespers	14	15 7:00pm Compline Service	16 6:00pm Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy	17 7:00pm Choir Practice	18 7:00pm Akathist Hymn (2nd stanza)	19
20 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy 2nd Sunday of Lent 6:00pm Lenten Vespers	21	22 7:00pm Compline Service	23 6:00pm Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy	24 7:00pm Choir Practice	25 9:00am Divine Liturgy Annunciation to the Theotokos 7:00pm Akathist Hymn (3rd stanza)	26 4:00pm Youth/Family Potluck, Kite flying
27 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy 3rd Sunday of Lent Parish Oratorical Festival 6:00pm Lenten Vespers	28	29 7:00pm Compline Service	30 6:00pm Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy	31 7:00pm Choir Practice		



The Jesus Prayer

**Saturday
April 9, 2011
9am–2:30pm**
(Vespers following)

Holy Trinity Cathedral

1973 E. Maryland Ave.
Phoenix, AZ
602-264-7863
Lunch included

\$10/person in advance
\$15 at the door

Please make checks payable
to ACEOC, and mail to
St. Haralambos Church
7950 W. Pinnacle Peak Rd.
Peoria, AZ 85383

Other books by Mathewes-Green
will be available for purchase at
special discount prices.

Special Guest Speaker:

Khouria Frederica Mathewes-Green

Kh. Frederica is a wide-ranging author, whose work has appeared in such diverse publications as the *Washington Post*, *Christianity Today*, *Smithsonian*, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. She writes regularly for the multi-faith web magazine *Beliefnet.com*, and movie reviews for *National Review Online* and *Christianity Today Movies*.



She has published 9 books, including *Facing East: A Pilgrim's Journey into the Mysteries of Orthodoxy* (HarperCollins, 1997) and *The Illumined Heart: The Ancient Christian Path of Transformation* (Paraclete, 2001). In the past, her commentaries have been heard on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* and *Morning Edition*.

Sponsored by the Arizona Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches