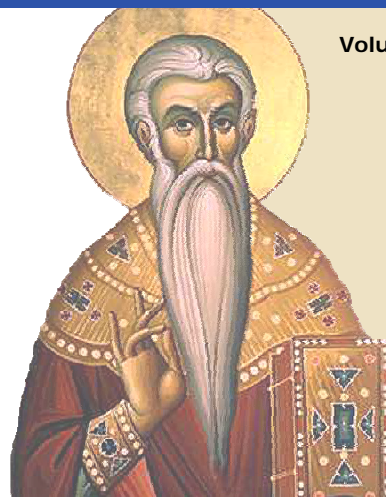


# in Touch

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May 2012



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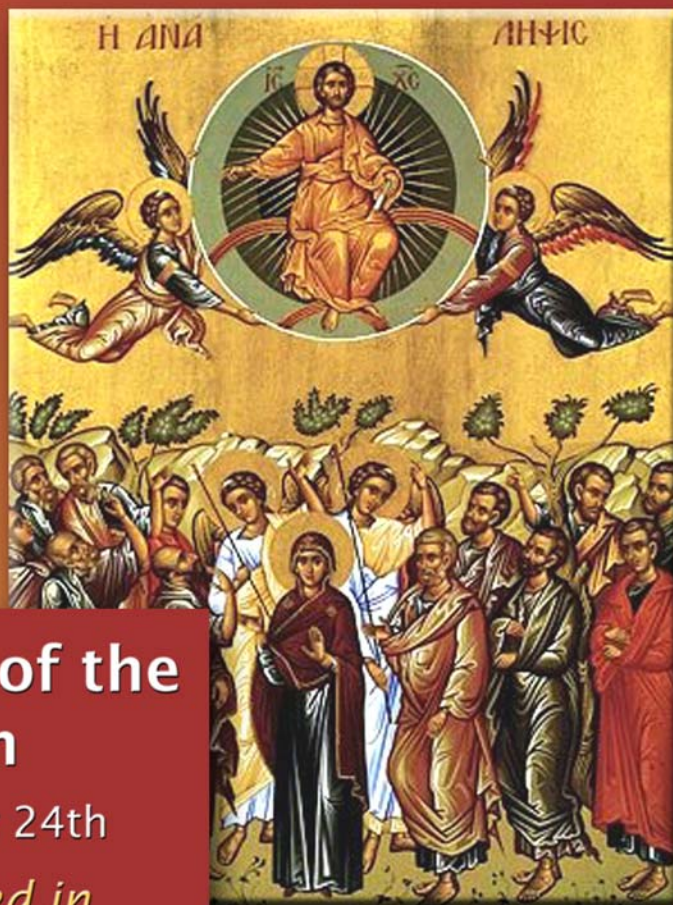
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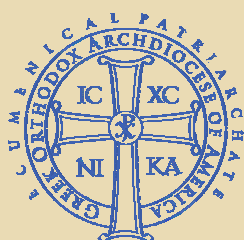


## Feastday of the Ascension

Thursday, May 24th

*"You ascended in  
glory, O Christ our  
God, and gladdened  
Your disciples with  
the promise of the  
Holy Spirit."*

*(Festal Hymn of the Ascension)*



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





# YOUTH GROUP



## Holy Friday



By Lindsay Vardalos

### Cinco de Mayo Potluck Dinner

The Youth Group will be hosting a Cinco de Mayo Potluck Dinner on Saturday, May 5 at 4pm. The entire parish is invited. Please bring a Mexican dish to share.

Our final Youth Night for the school year will be held on Monday, May 21 at 6pm and we will be having an ice cream party. Feel free to bring a topping to share. Come early for a pizza dinner at 5pm.

On Monday, May 28, the Youth Group will celebrate with a pool party and BBQ at Jeannette and Alvin Hollander's home. The fun starts at 3pm.





## Gratitude for Lent and Holy Week Services

Unless you are watching behind the scenes throughout Great Lent and Holy Week, you would not realize how many people are involved to prepare for these services, which were held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday evenings, and every evening during Holy Week.

When parishioners arrive for services, for example, someone has already arrived to open up the church, turn on the Heat (and AC as Spring arrived), the lights and sound system. Icons have been set up and decorated, service books are placed by the candle stands, the chanters and readers, according to the schedule, are at their places, along with Parish Council members and altar servers.

The turn-out for Tuesday evening Compline Services was much higher this year – could it have been the film series on the lives of the Saints of the Church which followed the service? The Lenten dinners following the Wednesday evenings Liturgies were wonderful – great variety

and beautifully prepared.

The Ladies of our Philoptochos went above and beyond the Call of Duty – way beyond! The Social hall, nicely decorated for our 25th Anniversary, was always ready with coffee and refreshments, every Sunday. In addition, towards the end of Lent, we also hosted the District Oratorical Festival, attended by His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos and Chancellor Fr. Apostollos Koufallakis, and our Philoptochos prepared a fantastic dinner for all who attended from the various parishes. With no rest for the weary, they also prepared a delicious variety of Lenten foods the following evening when we hosted the Pan-Orthodox Vespers on Sunday, April 1st.

The following weekend required many hands to prepare the Palm Crosses, and a delicious Palm Sunday fish luncheon. On Good Friday nearly 30 children attended the Retreat prepared by Chrissy King and Lindsay Vardalos, with a variety of

activities from 10:30am until 3pm. During this time, many volunteers were decorating the Epitaphios with a beautiful arrangement of flowers for the evening Lamentations service. Holy Saturday evening required Ushers and Greeters, Candle Stand helpers, choir members, chanters and readers, all involved to help the services proceed smoothly.

It's no easy feat, and doesn't happen magically, but requires dedicated parishioners to step up and offer their time and talents for the benefit of their Church – the very definition of Stewardship.

**So, Thank You** to the many volunteers who made it a point to be involved with the preparations for this most active season of our church year. Your efforts were greatly appreciated!

*It's no easy feat,  
and doesn't  
happen magically,  
but requires  
dedicated  
parishioners...*



**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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[Office@StHaralambosAZ.com](mailto:Office@StHaralambosAZ.com)  
[FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com](mailto:FrMichael@StHaralambosAZ.com)

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

### Parish Council

Roy Christian  
David Durgam  
Dennis Georgen  
Dimitri Gryparis  
George Miller  
Dean Milonas

Tony Panousopoulos  
Chris Theotocatos  
Peter Vardalos  
Dorothy Vordos  
Lee Vordos  
Ken Wrona



# 25th Anniversary

## Parishioner Profile

Each month of 2012 we'll spend some time with a member of our parish to get their memories, views and insights about the history, development and future of our parish as part of this year's 25th Anniversary celebration. This month's interview is with **Lee Vordos**.

**Question: How many years have you been a steward at St. Haralambos?**

**Answer:** About two years.

**Q: Where were you born and raised and what brought you to Arizona?**

**A:** I was born in Salt Lake City, Utah and became an electrical design engineer and was a manufacturer's representative for 39 years representing various electrical products companies. I served a large regional territory in the west and we used two offices to work out of with one in Salt Lake City and the other office in Scottsdale. In the middle 1980's we settled in Scottsdale and used that office as my home base. We attended St. Katherine's Church in Chandler at that time as it was the closest Church because Assumption in Scottsdale was not yet a community. Afterwards, as Assumption started up and that Church was closer to our home, we became stewards at Assumption when it started in the home on the Cactus Road property where they have built the Church today. I was involved in many activities including Parish Council Vice President in our 10 years at Assumption. My wife Dottie and I then moved to Fort Lauderdale, Florida for six years before returning to Arizona in 2007.

**Q: What activities and groups have you been involved in at St. Haralambos?**

**A:** I am currently a member of the Parish Council and serve as an altar server to Fr. Michael during Divine Liturgy services. I enjoy the people, everyone is friendly and I enjoy serving with Fr. Michael because he is one of the best priests that I have had the pleasure to serve.

**Q: What are some of your memories of the founding of the parish?**

**A:** I remember attending a very nice banquet that was held to celebrate the naming of this Church for St. Haralambos. It was one of the first events that they had and we were excited that we were invited to attend.

**Q: What would you like to see happen in the next 5-10 years of our parish?**

**A:** I hope we make even greater strides to grow the young families of our parish with activities and expand the programs we have now while creating new programs to help kids be involved, learn and grow.

**Q: What legacy would you like today's parishioners to develop and leave for future generations during the next 25 years?**

**A:** We need to build a Byzantine-style Church to worship in on the property

we have now so that we become a testament to the people that founded this parish and we can leave for future generations as the only Greek Orthodox Church in the West Valley.

**Q: Anything else you would like to share?**

**A:** We have a great future ahead of us with many new and young families. We need to keep the young kids involved and have everyone's input and involvement so the Parish Council members and Fr. Michael together can make decisions needed to guide our parish today and for the long term.



## Sale Greenway Property

At our April 1st Special General Assembly, our Church Family took a significant step towards securing the financial position of our Parish. The Assembly voted unanimously to accept the offer we received to purchase the land owned by the Parish at 75th and Greenway Ave. We anticipate a successful close on the transaction later this summer.

This sale is significant to our Parish in a number of ways:

- The burden of the mortgage we took on to move into our current building has resulted in very little operating budget leeway. In 2011, after applying all proceeds from the Taste of Greece Festival and all other income received, including the Building Fund, we essentially broke even. And, we began 2012, projecting a budget deficit of over \$16,000. The opportunity to apply proceeds from the sale to pay down our mortgage balance will enable us to re-finance the mortgage this year and take advantage of historically low interest rates. The expected lower monthly payments will allow us added flexibility and protects us in the unlikely event of a significant unexpected income shortfall.
- By refinancing the mortgage this year, we will be able to save significant dollars in ongoing mortgage interest

expense. Applying the net proceeds of over \$360,000 will allow us to save hundreds of thousands of dollars over the amortized mortgage term. We anticipate saving well over \$500,000.

- Finally, after applying the proceeds of the sale and refinancing this year, the mortgage can potentially be paid off a full ten years sooner. This is significant in that our Leap of Faith was to build a Byzantine-style sanctuary as our future church home. The reality is, until the current mortgage is paid off, that vision remains only a dream. The ability to retire the mortgage earlier may allow for many of our parishioners to see that new church edifice built in their lifetimes!

Over the next several months we encourage all Parishioners to prayerfully consider giving as much as possible to help us pay down the mortgage to an even greater extent before we refinance. The effect will be to reduce our overall interest expense by an even greater amount and allow us to anticipate paying off the existing mortgage at an even earlier date.

On the day that we burn the current mortgage we will turn the page and open the next chapter in the story of our Leap of Faith.

Please join us now by giving generously.

## Treasurer's Plea

We have already brought in over \$5,000 to apply towards the refinancing of our mortgage loan. Our goal is to finance an amount between \$600,000 - \$700,000. We are currently at \$750,000. Please help us achieve this goal by donating as much as you possibly can over the next

few months. Please write "MORTGAGE" on the memo line of your check. May our Lord bless your generosity and return it to you a hundredfold, for he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully!

Thank you, Dean Milonas

## Happy Mother's Day

This year, Mother's Day is Sunday, May 13, so call, write, email, Skype or visit your mother and let her know how much she means to you!



# ORGANIZATIONS



## Philoptochos

By Reni Milonas, President

### **Christ Has Risen! Truly He Has Risen! Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!**

St. Anna's Philoptochos Society took care of business last month! How often do we get to host the Western Regional Oratorical Festival and then host Lenten Vespers the next evening? Throw in coffee hours, Palm Sunday fish dinner, decorating the Epitaphios, coloring eggs, and providing dinner after the midnight Resurrection service and you get the true definition of perseverance with agape. Thank you ladies for a job well done! Special thanks to Argyro Vasquez for cooking the fish dinner once again.

May 6th: The Philoptochos will provide a light lunch for the Spring General Assembly

### **May National Commitments**

75th Anniversary Founders Fund

- Amount determined by chapter

- Provides support to long term care facilities serving the aging Greek Orthodox population in the US and to establish similar facilities.

Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF)

- Amount determined by chapter
- Provides Orthodox Christian support to college students on campuses in the U.S.

### **May Metropolis Commitments**

Kids 'n' Cancer

- Amount: \$500 or more
- Provides a carefree camp experience for children afflicted with cancer and their families.

Pennies and Prayers

- Amount determined by chapter
- Provides support for Missions all over the world.

Next meeting is May 7 at 7 pm

## ***Name Days***

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

St. Irene (5th)  
Prophet Job (6th)  
St. Christopher (9th)  
St. Simon (10th)  
St. Glykeria (13th)  
St. Symeon (24th)  
Sts. Constantine and Helen (21st)  
Sts. Theodosios and Theodosia (29th)

## St Haralambos Mission & Vision

By Dennis Georgen, Parish Council President

At our General Assembly last November, our Parish for the first time adopted a Mission Statement.

*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.*

At our upcoming Spring Regular General Assembly we will ask the question, "What does that mean?" Mission Statements are not intended to be a collection of nice-sounding words, but to

serve as a statement about who we are and what we are all about.

The next step in defining who we are is to create a Vision Statement for our Church. Again, not as a collection of nice-sounding words, but to serve as a guiding statement about the direction we see our Parish going. Future decisions about how we will "*proclaim our Orthodox Christian Faith*" and what we will do as a Church Family to be "*a living presence to those around us*" will be grounded in this statement.

Please come to the General Assembly on May 6, ready to share your ideas.

## St. Christopher's Bookstore

**Spiritual Counsels, select passages from *My Life in Christ*** by Father John of Kronstadt, edited by W. Jardine Grisbrooke, 1989

*"Behold, Satan hath desired to have you....but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."*

This book is a compilation of passages which have been edited and translated from the Russian novel, *My Life in Christ*. They reflect Father Kronstadt's passionate teachings which brought remarkable healing to thousands during times of suffering, revolution, and upheaval in nineteenth century Russia. As the title reflects, the author "counsels" his readers on numerous spiritual topics but focuses primarily on the power and difficulty of prayer, the church in heaven and the church on Earth, and spiritual life and spiritual warfare.

Father John states that "sometimes during lengthy prayer only a few minutes are really pleasing to God and constitute true prayer." True prayer comes from the heart but too often "our heart falls asleep during prayer and only the outer man prays" with his lips. A spiritual "attitude" must be developed. This is achieved by learning how to pray effectively, which involves intent, training and discipline. If you become distracted by worldly cares during prayer, bring your attention back and return to the prayer's meaning with energy and feeling. Practice praying often, remembering that prayer is "spiritual breathing" and that the true power of prayer is in the way we pray rather than on the words we say.

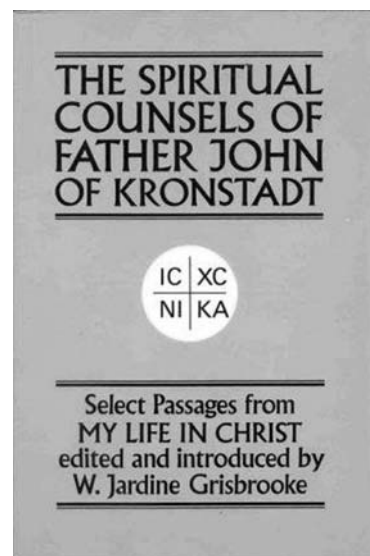
Spiritual Counsels reminds us to pray not only for the living but also for the dead. But why pray for the departed? Father John answers: "in order that the remembrance of death may live in you, and that hope in the life to come, after death, may not become extinct in you; and

that your spirit may daily be humbled by the thought of the transitory nature of your life."

In our prayers, the author wants us to access all our resources: our Church in Heaven and our Church on Earth. The Church in Heaven includes not only our loving God and his son Jesus Christ, but our Immaculate Mary, the Mother of God, all the Saints, the apostles, martyrs, holy bishops, angels, and confessors. Their intercession and prayers for us are powerful and including them in our prayers teaches us to imitate their virtues.

In addition to the Church in Heaven, the Lord is also present to us through the Church on Earth. This includes the priest's blessings and prayers, the liturgy, holy sacraments, icons, and collective prayer.

Although Spiritual Counsels is an easy book to read, it is difficult in that its implications are stark. Life is difficult and often dark, filled with despair and conflict. Father John writes at length about spiritual darkness and warns that the Devil is cunning and induces us in many ways, some of which are through evil thoughts, words and deeds, through temptation, false beliefs, and despondency. Those yearning for a spiritual life must constantly guard against the evil spirit. This mental warfare requires constant awareness and self examination. Father John encourages us to face this conflict and not despair. We must develop "spiritual armor": the armor of God which is faith, hope and love. Fight all earthly attachment, for lusting after material pleasures leads to despair. Carnal man finds pleasure with food and drink, money, self love, self-praise, and gratification of the flesh. But it is the internal or spiritual delight which brings us closer to the light of God. True spiritual food is practicing love, kindness, humility, meekness, patience and forgiveness.



# ORGANIZATIONS

## *Birthdays*



Beycue Russom (1)  
Charlotte Servetas (5)  
Shirley Germenis (8)  
Despina Tremoulis (8)  
Megan Pallad (10)  
Tamara Kurilova (12)  
William McBride (12)  
Hermela Desta (13)  
Helene Georgiou (17)  
Aristithi Vardalos (18)  
Voule Kapetanakis (19)  
Alexandra Pallad (19)  
Jeff Sokol (20)  
Nicoletta Theoharatos (21)  
Marcus Munteanu (23)  
Yiorgos Papamatheakis (23)  
Genet Tesfay (23)  
Katherine Joy Stithem (26)  
Ann Morley (28)  
Barbara Hartsel (29)

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.

## Soul Food

By St. Maximos the Confessor

### **Jesus Christ our Example**

Our Lord is truly a light to the Gentiles (cf. Isa. 49 : 6 ; Luke 2 : 32): through true knowledge He opens the eyes of their mind, closed as they have been by the darkness of ignorance. More-over,

through His divine conduct He has made Himself a noble example of virtue to the faithful, becoming their model and pattern. Looking to Him as the author of salvation, we attain the virtues by imitating Him in our conduct, so far as this is possible for us.

## Sunday School

By Martha Stithem, Sunday School Director & Teacher

### **Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!**

In a few short weeks we will be celebrating the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Since Sunday School classes will have ended for the summer by this time, families can learn more about the biblical story and icon of this feast by clicking on, [www.goarch.org/special/listen\\_learn\\_share/ascension](http://www.goarch.org/special/listen_learn_share/ascension).

During the summer, families can continue their religious education by checking out the various websites that were listed in previous editions of inTouch and the Orthodox Observer. Also, be sure to visit our parish bookstore for new material for all ages.

The last class day for Sunday School will be Sunday, May 13. On Sunday, May 20, there will be an end of year presentation of certificates for our students following Divine Liturgy.

## Greek Festival

By Pam Lemons

The Festival committee met in March and discussed several new ideas for improving our 25th Anniversary Greekfest. Some of the areas reviewed were: sponsorships, marketing/media promotion and carnival games. We are happy to announce that Abrazo Health Care has agreed to be a 2012 corporate sponsor. Look for the sponsorship form in the next InTouch and please help us secure additional supporters to offset

expenses. Also, we have added a Festival Facebook page this year. If you subscribe to Facebook, go to "Peoria Greekfest" and click "Like" and share the page with your friends. More information on the Festival will be posted throughout the coming months on both Facebook and the Festival website at [www.peoriagreekfest.com](http://www.peoriagreekfest.com).

Thank you to our new corporate sponsor – Abrazo Health Care!

**OPA!**



# Abrazo Health Care



# MAY 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> 11:00am Seniors Club	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 4:00pm Parish Fiesta Night
<b>6</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Spring General Assembly	<b>7</b> 7:00pm Philoptochos	<b>8</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. John the Theologian	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Mother's Day	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:00pm Choir	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Last Day of Sunday School IOCC Offering Tray	<b>21</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy Sts. Constantine and Helen 6:00pm Youth night	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:00am Divine Liturgy Ascension of Christ 7:00pm Choir	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	<b>28</b> Memorial Day Church office Closed	<b>29</b> 7:00pm Executive Council	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 7:00pm Choir		

Pan-Orthodox Camp for campers entering  
3rd grade through High School Seniors

The Camper Application can be found at  
[www.holytrinityphx.org](http://www.holytrinityphx.org)  
or on Facebook at All Saints Camp Arizona +

Submission deadline is May 18, 2012



*"Let us run with perseverance  
the race that is set before us..."*  
Hebrews 12:1



# All Saints Camp 2012

Monday, June 4—Saturday, June 9



All Saints Camp is a sleep-away camp in Prescott, Arizona, that offers volleyball, basketball, Capture-the-Flag, a climbing wall, hiking, miniature golf, bonfires, songs, games, arts and crafts, organized Olympics, delicious meals, and more—all within an Orthodox setting with daily Matins, Vespers and Christ-centered lessons.

We're at Pine Summit Camp in Prescott!  
[www.pinesummitcamp.com](http://www.pinesummitcamp.com)

For more information, contact Directors  
Kathy Clarke at **602.757.1025** or  
**kathyclarke@cox.net**

or  
Kristen Vasilarakos at **602.332.8809** or  
**kvasilarakos@cox.net**

**\$275.00**

Contact the church office if you would like a Camper Application.