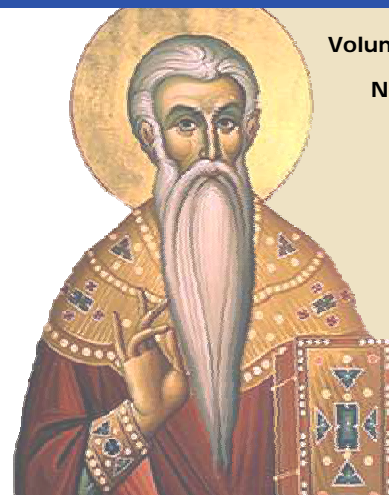


in Touch

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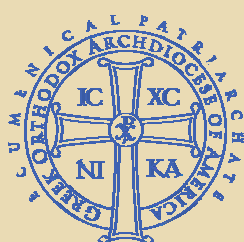
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*It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
To declare Your loving-kindness in the morning,
And Your faithfulness every night. (Psalm 92:1-3)*

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

Taste of Greece



OPA! Thanks to the wonderful volunteers who helped prepare for this year's Festival. As you can see from the photos, our success isn't just measured by the number of people who attend our event or our proceeds, but also for the smiles it brings to our parishioners who enjoy being a part of the St. Haralambos Church family.

Join us on Sunday, Nov. 13 for our Festival Appreciation Luncheon and General Assembly when a report on festival totals will be given.

Until next year...
Pam Lemons





Parishioner Involvement

Consider this shocking statement for a moment: Every priest, every pastor, every minister and layman in church leadership, all look forward to seeing a full Church every Sunday morning. All right, maybe it wasn't that much of a shock, but it's true! And if anyone tells you otherwise, they're either not being truthful, or have stopped caring and should really be looking at a different career path.

Now, what about those Sundays when we see empty pews? How does a priest not get discouraged? That is certainly a topic worth discussing at a clergy retreat; but for this monthly column, does this have any relevance for parishioners?

The short answer is yes, precisely because of the nature of the Church which is, as we learn from 2,000 years of continuous history, a living, divine and human organism; the body of Christ as St. Paul teaches. It is not simply a place, a building, a destination for Sunday mornings. A Church is a living and dynamic community, which comes together for worship, but also

for a variety of other social and spiritual purposes.

So to answer the question about potential discouragement with empty pews on Sunday mornings, the answer is best found in what is happening on the other six days of the week. If the doors are closed and nothing is going on throughout the week, something is drastically wrong and despair among the church leadership can't be too far behind.

However, if the church is open for visitors, open to welcome young and old with activities, meetings, social events, discussions and studies, the look of some empty seats on Sunday isn't such a disappointment and should be understood as a simple fact of life: not everyone will be in attendance every Sunday.

As we approach the end of 2011, the time to consider your role in church activities comes to the forefront. This month we will come together for our Fall General Assembly and the Parish Council and Stewardship Committee will be presenting a new – and quite meaningful – approach to Stewardship for the

new year. The goal is to give the idea of parishioner involvement, according to the gifts God has given us, greater attention than we have in the past.

Being an active member of the church does not mean simply filling out a card and sending it back with a check! Church membership means Church Stewardship – taking care of the activities and ministries of the Church through good use of the gifts God has given its members. Stewardship is a 7-day-a-week proposition, not just on Sunday mornings.

To recap: the Church is not just a place; it is a community, with activities that include social, religious and educational activities for its faithful and for society in general. A healthy church community will be active throughout the week, continuing its work in sanctifying the faithful with the divine sacraments, in addition to its other ministries that require the involvement of all.

***...through good
use of the gifts
God has given its
members.***



**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

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Hours

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

Parish Council

Dennis Georgen, President
Ray Wysmierski, Vice President
Dean Milonas, Treasurer
Mike Danielek, Secretary
Angie Cholas
David Durgam

Dimitri Gryparis
Mary Manos
George Miller
Katherine Tally
Peter Vardalos
Ken Wrona

25th Anniversary

Get those creative juices flowing! 2012 marks the 25th anniversary of St. Haralambos Church, and a wonderful celebration is being planned. In addition to a celebration banquet on Saturday, Feb. 11, a host of other events and activities are being prepared to mark this special “silver” anniversary, including a variety of creative opportunities for everyone.

Let’s start with the logo. Would you like to help design the 25th anniversary logo to be used for announcements and correspondence about our 25th anniversary? The logo will be put on the monthly newsletter, church stationery, anniversary banner, and more. Everyone is invited to submit their ideas for our 25th anniversary logo by Monday, Nov. 28. We’ll announce the winning design on Sunday, Dec. 4.

This anniversary is a time to hear from our parish family! Each month during 2012, we’re going to ask one or more parishioners to submit an article for the monthly In Touch newsletter, to hear their thoughts on our 25th anniversary. What has St. Haralambos Church meant to you, and what do you hope to see over the next 25 years?

Look for more information on other plans, including: a 25th anniversary family directory, a 25th anniversary time capsule, a group commemorative photo of our entire church family, updating and displaying milestones in our parish history.

Now for the really creative designers: let’s take a look at our new building. Since moving to our new property, we’ve made some needed and beautiful modifications to the interior spaces, including our church, social hall and classrooms. The front entrance, however, was not designed to look like a traditional entry of a church building. What can be done about that? How about giving some thought at creating a front entry area that is both inviting and visually more appealing as the entrance to our church.

Since we’re just talking about ideas, don’t worry about cost, precise materials or dimensions at this point. Just sit down with pencil and paper, and submit your ideas to Church Design Contest (either via email or US Mail) during the months of November and December. Let’s see what creative results come in!

Our Faith on Film

“Learn why the Orthodox faith believes in angels; when each of us is personally assigned a guardian angel; how God has put into existence the nine orders of angels; why the Archangel Michael was given his name which means “who is like God” and more!”

So reads the liner notes of a new film on the life of the Archangel Michael, part of a series of films on the lives of the saints of the Orthodox Church. The film, which is 30 minutes in length, will be shown following the Divine Liturgy commemorating the Archangel Michael on

Tuesday, Nov. 8 at 9 am. All are welcome!

In addition, a film on the life of St. Nektarios the Wonderworker will be shown following the Divine Liturgy on Wednesday, Nov. 9 at 9 am. The film, also 30 minutes in length, teaches why St. Nektarios is considered to be the saint for cancer patients; what rumor caused St. Nektarios to be exiled from Egypt penniless and heartbroken; what vision St. Nektarios had that encouraged him to continue on; and includes actual photographs that were taken of this great saint!



General Assembly and Festival Appreciation Lunch

The annual Fall General Assembly is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 13, in our Social Hall. In addition, we will be saying a heartfelt "Thank You" to our fantastic volunteers who helped with the Taste of Greece Festival last month, with a Festival Appreciation Lunch. Everyone is invited; there is no charge for this lunch.

Hear and discuss the exciting future plans for our parish. We truly want the

participation of all our families as we plan the future of our Church!

At the same time, we can all enjoy a delicious lunch and an opportunity to say "Thank You" to the most hard-working and dedicated group of people anywhere!

The General Assembly agendas will be mailed separately. See you on the 13th!

Youth Group

Family Parish Park Day: All are invited to come to a Family Parish Park Day at Fletcher Heights Park (8135 W. Lone Cactus Drive) on Friday, Nov. 11 from 10 am until 1 pm. Bring your own lunch, and feel free to bring your own recreational equipment. A volleyball set will be provided. So come out and join us for a family, fun-filled day! (No glass containers permitted.)

Philoptochos/Youth Group Potluck Holiday Party: Philoptochos and Youth Group members will be having a Potluck

Holiday Party on Dec. 5 at 6 pm at the church. All members are invited to attend this wonderful gathering. More details to follow in the coming weeks.

Recycle your 2011 Icon Calendars: The St. Haralambos Youth Group needs your help. Please give us your 2011 Icon Calendars. We will be collecting them for a project we would like to do in January. Thank you!

Soul Food

The Purpose of Being is to Become

When asked what he thought the business of the Church was, one person said, "It is to show people what they can become by the grace of God." The one thing that holds us back from becoming what God created us to be is sin. That is why the Church calls on us constantly to repent: because it is sin that holds us back from greatness, from achieving our great potential of theosis, (oneness with God).

Community Christmas Card



We will again be providing parishioners the opportunity to send Christmas greetings with a beautiful full-color icon greeting card to all our parish families. For each family name, the cost is just \$10.

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. Please make checks payable to: St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church. **The deadline is Monday, Dec. 5, 2011.**

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

Enclosed is my check for \$10.

(Please return to the church office)

Names (please print clearly)

ORGANIZATIONS

Philoptochos

By Reni Milonas, President

"Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor." Proverbs 22:9



We had another wonderful meeting on Oct. 3, and followed it up with a baby picture contest. It was so much fun to see the baby pictures and try to match them with each person's current picture. Valla Wrona guessed all eight of the pictures, which was no easy feat!

On Nov. 7 at 6 pm, we are going to have a quick meeting and then we are going to play Bunco or Mexican Train Dominos, along with delicious appetizers and desserts for refreshments. If you are going to play the games, please bring an inexpensive, wrapped White Elephant gift - something you own that you don't want anymore - to be used for prizes.

This month, to raise money for the National Sisterhood of Presbyteres and UNICEF, the Philoptochos is going to have a Tupperware Fundraiser. Forty

percent of all purchases will be donated to our organization; that's \$10 for every \$25 you spend! The fundraiser will run from Nov. 1 to 30. Tupperware products are durable, sustainable, and last a lifetime, all while being eco-friendly. Brochures will be provided during coffee hour. With Christmas a month away, I hope everyone will take advantage of this fundraiser to help the poor, sick, and the elderly.

November Commitments

National:

- **Ecumenical Patriarchate Feast Day of Saints Cosmas and Damianos**

Benefits the philanthropic programs and charities of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Tray Collection plus \$100 from Chapter Treasury

- **National Sisterhood of Presbyteres Benevolent Fund**

Provides short-term support for clergy and their families in a time of crisis. Amount determined by Chapter Treasury

Thanksgiving Food Drive

This month, we're collecting food for the Peoria Community Action Agency, and putting Thanksgiving food boxes together for 12 needy families in Peoria. We can use everyone's help in donating turkeys, canned and boxed food used for a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Volunteers will be needed on Monday, Nov. 21 at 10:30 am to help sort food and prepare and the boxes for pickup.



St. Christopher's Bookstore

Archimandrite Ioannikias. Themes from the Philokalia: **Watchfulness and Prayer**, 1988, 76 pgs.

"Watch...for you know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man comes" (Mt. 25:13).

The author calls the *Philokalia* a powerful and inexhaustible spiritual treasury of the holy Fathers, "a road leading man to his divine destiny." Unfortunately, it sits "untouched on the dusty shelves of our libraries." Therefore, this book was written to be concise and easier for the general public to comprehend.

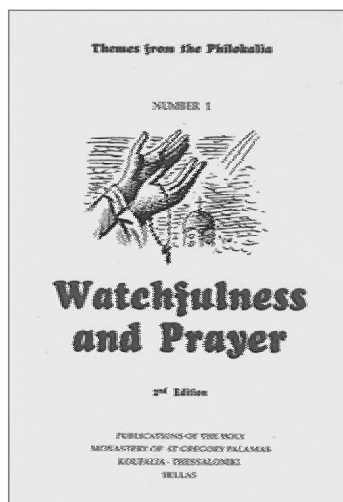
We want to understand the nature of things, search for meaning to life, and desire communication with God, but look in the wrong places. Our culture puts "a premium on rational thought," but to find God we must abandon reason and ego and enter "our inner-most self" where St. Isaac the Syrian claims we will see heaven.

In Baptism we received grace. Sadly, many have "buried the deposit of grace," becoming pre-occupied with worldly matters. To "unearth" this grace, we must obey the Commandments and "plunge in to the depths of our being" with patience and humility. Then "God in His mercy will envelop us with His love and reign in our hearts forever."

God is pleased with our own prayers as well as prayers written by others. "Only prayer said in a perfunctory manner is displeasing to God...At times we are all guilty of being parrots when we pray...our hearts and minds are miles away." Orthodox Christians should have a set time for prayer and discipline ourselves to

pray, "even when we don't feel like it." God told the pilgrim in *The Way of the Pilgrim* to give the quantity of prayer and He would provide the quality.

Of course, when we begin praying, the devil will distract us. St. John of the Ladder says repeating a short prayer, such as the Jesus Prayer, keeps us from getting distracted while searching for words, and it "takes us a step beyond reason," writes Fr. Chakos. Theophan says that the struggle against distraction makes prayer fruitful. In other words, "No pain, no gain."



He also recommends the psalms and Church hymns to achieve "inner prayer" and instructs us to stand before God with reverence, fear and contrition.

Watchfulness is wakefulness and unceasing vigilance of mind and heart. Prayer and watchfulness are inseparable in working to purify the heart from passions. The Lord said, *"Keep awake and pray*

that you may not enter into temptation" (Mt. 26:41). This is what the Fathers call "unseen warfare." With watchfulness and the Jesus prayer..."the heart accepts Grace like oxygen."

Jesus wants us "to mix His Person and His Name with the routine of our life." How important is prayer? St John Climacus calls prayer "the mother of all virtues."

"Unceasing prayer...is a hunger and thirst for our sweet Savior" Who will grant His mercy, holiness and grace. "Hunger for Him Who is the 'Bread of Life.' Thirst for Him Who is the...'Fountain of Immortality.'"

Bookstore Manager Wanted

A wonderful new ministry position has just opened up for someone with a deep love of Greek Orthodoxy and who enjoys reading the latest news on doctrine and ideology.

The Saint Christopher bookstore is in need of a bookstore manager.

Management responsibilities:

1. Order books, texts, icons and Orthodox accessories
2. Upon receipt of book orders from providers, review invoice(s) for completeness, accuracy and payment
3. Inventory all items once per year
4. Write book reviews for In Touch newsletter
5. Set up annual 'Taste of Greece' Greek Festival booth and schedule workers

Don't worry about learning the ropes on your own; the current manager will assist the new manager during the transition prior to Great Lent 2012.

ORGANIZATIONS

Birthdays



Argyro Vasquez (3)
 Nicole D. Barbes (7)
 Julie Karoutas (8)
 Toulia New (8)
 Elizabeth Gorman (9)
 Judy Tsoukalas (12)
 Andrew Stithem (15)
 Adriana Hoskins (16)
 Mary Dascalos (19)
 Judy Jolly (19)
 Nikolas Panousopoulos (25)
 Arthur Manos (28)
 Dean Milonas (28)
 Kristin Pallad (28)

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.

Sunday School

By Martha Stithem, Sunday School Director & Teacher

This Thanksgiving Day as we reflect on our many blessings from God, we should give thanks also for the dedicated Sunday School Teachers, Snack Volunteers, and Wish List donors who have committed their Time, Talent, and/or Treasure to serving our parish youth.

Many thanks and appreciation to all the individuals who have served in one way or another in the past few months:

Helen Antonatos	Helene Georgiou	Irene Schniepp
Kimon & Dorothy Ayan	Andrianna Hensen	Russell Skocypec
Cynthia Bingham	Jeannette Hollander	Martha Stithem
Dr. Bill DeMoss	Chrissy King	Elaine Tsialafos
Paul DeTrana	Anna Kinniburgh	Lindsay Vardalos
Aphrodite Devolites	Tamara Kurilova	Valla Wrona
David & Luta Durgam	Ruth Panousopoulos	Ray & Mary Wismierski
Olga Fredericksen	Irene Pappas	Elaine Young

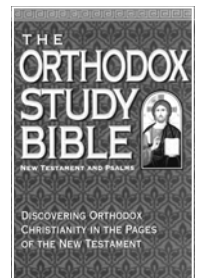
Calendar Update

There will be no Sunday School classes held on these upcoming dates: Nov. 27, Dec. 25, and Jan. 1, 2012.

Orthodox Study Group

Plans are firming up for the proposed Orthodox Study group. The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 9 from 7 to 8:30 pm at the Church. We plan on weekly meetings after that start-up date, with the exception of Holidays or other conflicts. Initially, we will start with Gospel; reviewing the book of John. I have some materials for review, but an

orthodox study guide and a willingness to engage in open discussion will be helpful. Please contact Ted Manos at 623-698-6078 or tedmanos@zona.net if you are interested in this group.



Name Days

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

SS. Cosmas and Damian (1st)	St Theodora (15th)
St. Nektarios (9th)	St. Matthew (16th)
St. Theodore (11th)	St. Philemon (22nd)
St. John Chrysostom (13th)	St. Katherine (25th)
St. Philip (14th)	St. Andrew (30th)
St. Gregory (14th)	

NOVEMBER 2011

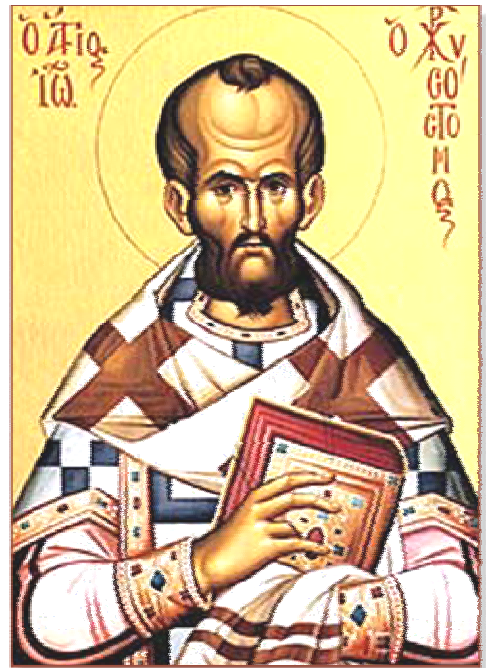
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9:00am Divine Liturgy Sts. Cosmas and Damian 2:00pm Archdiocese National Clergy Retreat Scottsdale (Tuesday-Friday)	2	3 7:00pm Choir	4	5
6 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	7 7:00pm Philoptochos	8 9:00am Divine Liturgy The Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel Film on Archangel Michael 7:00pm Parish Council	9 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. Nectarios Film on Life of St. Nectarios 7:00pm Bible Study: Gospel of St. John	10 7:00pm Choir	11 10am Family Picnic Fletcher Heights Park	12
13 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy St. John Chrysostom Fall General Assembly Festival Appreciation Lunch	14 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. Philip the Apostle	15	16 7:00pm Bible Study	17 7:00pm Choir	18	19
20 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy IOCC Sunday	21 9:00am Divine Liturgy Entrance of the Theotokos 10:30am Thanksgiving Food Drive Sorting 6pm Youth Night	22	23 7:00pm Bible Study	24 Thanksgiving Day (Church Office Closed)	25	26
27 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	28	29	30 9a:00m Divine Liturgy St. Andrew 7:00pm Bible Study			

St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival

The purpose of the St. John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival is to give our youth (grade 4 thru grade 12) an opportunity to learn, write, and speak about their Orthodox Faith, Church and Heritage. St. Haralambos is pleased to announce our Kick-off for the 2012 Oratorical Festival. Eligible Sunday School students will receive informational packets in November. The packets will include:

- Introduction to the Oratorical Program and benefits for students
- St. Haralambos Program Goals.
- Discussion of timelines and important dates.
- Distribution of topics and program guidelines for
 - Elementary Division (Grade 4 thru Grade 6)
 - Junior Division (Grade 7 thru Grade 9)
 - Senior Division (Grade 10 thru Grade 12)

Please contact Jeannette Hollander at jechollander@gmail.com or Father Michael for more details or if you have questions about the informational packets.



Oratorical Festival Topics

Junior Division (Grades 7–9)

1. Many times in the New Testament, we see Jesus caring about the blind, the paralyzed, and others with physical disabilities (for example, Matthew 9:2 and 9:27–29). Following Christ's footsteps, discuss the Christian attitude toward disabled people.
2. Discuss the lives of Sts. Cyril and Methodios and their missionary work. How can we follow their example by responding to Christ's commandment to "go forth" (Matthew 28:19)?
3. In the Old Testament, we see many stories involving disagreements among siblings. What can families learn from these stories today?
4. Discuss one of the Great Feasts of the Church. How has this feast become important to you and your family?
 - Pascha (the Feast of Feasts)
 - The Twelve Great Feasts: Nativity of the Theotokos; Annunciation of the Theotokos; Elevation of the Holy Cross; Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem; Presentation of the Theotokos; Ascension of the Lord; Nativity of the Lord; Pentecost; Theophany; Transfiguration of the Lord; Presentation of the Lord; Dormition of the Theotokos
5. In our day, when people's lives have become more

and more scheduled with events, how might we reclaim our understanding of Sunday (the Sabbath) as a day of rest and honoring the Lord?

Senior Division (Grades 10–12)

1. In Leviticus 19:33, we read, "And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him." Immigration has always been a source of growth and change in American society. What should be the attitude of an Orthodox Christian toward immigration and immigrants?
2. Discuss the prayers and Biblical references of the Sacrament of Holy Unction in the Orthodox Church (James 5:14–15). What does the sacrament tell us about faith, healing, and our relationship with God?
3. In Matthew 18:21–22, Jesus tells Peter that one should forgive one's brother not just seven times but "seventy times seven." Discuss how and why we should forgive wrongdoers, even when something within us cries out for justice—especially if we're the injured party.
4. Discuss the famous speech of St. Paul in Athens (Acts of the Apostles 17:22–31). Why is the speech meaningful and what is its relevance for others today?
5. Stress and anxiety seem to be inevitable nowadays, in our every relationship and activity. How are we as Christians supposed to act in times of worry and uncertainty?