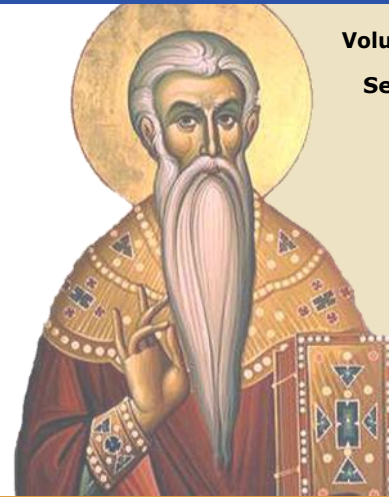


in Touch

Volume 22, Issue 9
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The Official Publication of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church

**New Play
Structure • 2**

**Get a Kick
Out of Cole • 2**

**Helping to Make
Things Better • 3**

**Orthodox Christianity
in America • 4**

**Know Your
Faith • 5**



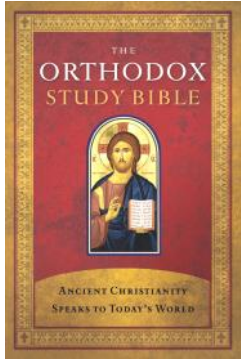
History of the Greek Orthodox Church in the United States

Final Installment: The Importance of Educating our People



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

Orthodox Study Group



The Orthodox Bible Study group will resume on Thursday Sep. 11 between 7 and 8:30 p.m. and weekly thereafter at the church. Please consider joining us this year even if you have not participated in the past. We have very lively discussions about the

meaning of our Orthodox faith in the Gospel and in our contemporary times. You need no prior participation to step right in and join us as we are starting with ACTS in the new testament.

ACTS has great interest for us in discussing the beginning of the Christian faith and the spread of Christianity through out Greece through the missionary work of St Paul. Please join us with your bible, your faith, your curiosity, and your questions. If you have any questions please call Ted Manos 623-680-6547 or talk to Dean Milonas.

New Backyard Play Structure!

The new backyard playground has been installed and is being enjoyed daily by children from Bayer School and St. Haralambos Church on the weekends! A special "Thank You" to those who have sent in donations totaling just over \$2,000: Michael Danielek, Kay Fulghum, Dennis Georgen, Angela Hapgood, Scarlett, Melody and Hannah Hargan, Voule Kapentnakis, Martha Stithem, Macrides Families, Catherine Pallad, Fr. Michael Pallad, Ioannis Papamatheakis, Argyro Vasquez and Russell Zook.



Forever Young

Dear fellow "Forever Young" members, we are planning an exciting outing for "Dinner Theater" at the Peoria Center for the Performing Arts, "Theater Works", to enjoy "The Best of the Best from an American Master". Cole Porter crafted some of the cleverest, funniest and most romantic songs ever written. I Get a Kick... is a new collection of favorites that have kept America humming and smiling for generations.

The show starts at 2 p.m., so please plan to get to the theater by 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, Sep. 21. The cost of both Dinner and the Theater is \$51. Gratuity and or alcohol at dinner are not included.

Following the show we will go to Flemings Steak House at 9712 West Northern Avenue, Peoria, 623-772-9463. South on 101, Right on Northern, Right into Park Place and Right again, next to BJ's.

Choose from ONE of these three entrées: Petit Fillet; Lamb Chops or Ahi Tuna Steak. Dinner will include a salad, main entrée, vegetable and coffee or tea.

The address for Theater Works is: 8355 West Peoria Avenue, Peoria.

The price for this is a Group price of \$51 per person; we need to have a minimum of eight to get this special pricing. Please make checks or cash payable to: Julie Karoutas by Sep 7. Call at 623-972-2382 or email: juliekaroutas@gmail.com

In October, we are planning a "Picnic" at Viewpoint Lake in Sun City. Enjoy the lake, waterfall, ponds, Miniature Golf, good food and Fellowship.

In November, we are planning a Boat tour at Lake Pleasant and then have either lunch or dinner at Dillon's at Scorpion Bay. More information will follow for these trips.

On our outings we have enjoyed not just the food or the music, but the "fellowship".

Please feel free to invite your family or friends, let us all have fun together!



Helping to Make Things Better in a Positive Way

“Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”

You can almost here St. Peter’s dismay while writing these words about scoffers, those people that find it so easy and enjoyable to ridicule everything: other people, their thoughts, ideas and beliefs. Scoffers just can’t be happy knowing that other people don’t see the world the same way as they do. So they make sure they let others know how wrong they are. We’re not talking about constructive criticism here, because that is done with helpful intentions. Scoffers just tear down, belittle and criticize with no intent of making things better.

Regarding St. Peter’s comments above, the scoffers he is referring to are ridiculing Christian faith. In fact, throughout the Bible, Old

Testament and New Testament, we find scoffers who scorn the faithful, the wise, the good, the productive, and the charitable in every generation. Unfortunately, we can’t escape them and, as St. Peter warns, they’re going to be around until the end.

How do we deal with scoffers? Can’t we help turn their negative outlook around? Not likely. In the Book of Proverbs we read, “*Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.*” (Proverbs 9:8) And again, “*A wise son heeds his fathers’ instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.*” (Proverbs 13:1)

When people refuse to listen, you have a choice to make: you can get upset with them and keep pushing your point, or you can decide to let it go. You cannot force someone to agree with you, they have to do that on their own. You cannot force someone to listen to reason, they have to want to do that on their own.

Scoffers love only to tear down. What they have to say is not constructive.

In Church communities, scoffers enjoy making negative comments about this or that ministry, about the priest, about the parishioners, about the building and anything else that

may come to mind. Be careful not to allow yourself to get caught up in this type of destructive conversation. You might not be able to change the course of the conversation, but you can get up and walk away.

You can also decide to be a person who asks how you can help make things better. You can offer to assist existing programs or offer to create something new.

All parish ministries exist because of someone’s desire to put their God-given talents to good use, to do something positive, to help make parish life more worthwhile.

Scoffers will see what is lacking in a church community, talk only about its shortcomings and use it as an opportunity for destructive gossip. Others with a more positive and helpful outlook on life will recognize areas that need improvement, and step up to offer a creative plan to search for a solution!

If we would remember our sacred roles as God’s co-workers, helpers to create, build up and improve upon our Church and our world, there is nothing that we can not accomplish together!

All parish ministries exist because of someone’s desire to put their God-given talents to good use,



**St. Haralambos
Greek Orthodox
Church**

www.stharalambos.org

Rev. Michael Pallad

Sunday Worship

Matins: 8:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy: 10 a.m.

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Hours

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

Parish Council

Evanne Cuccorelli
Dennis Georgen
Kathy Harvey
Timothy Harvey
Lali Mekvabishbili

Russel Skocypec
Dorothy Vordos
Lee Vordos
Russell Zook

The Mission of the Greek Orthodox Parish in America

This month we present the final installment of Fr. George Nicozisin's look at the mission and history of parishes in the United States. Although he takes an honest look at where we've come from and the challenges we have today, he does so with a never-ending sense of hope and enthusiasm.

The article has some concluding comments on the necessity of educating ourselves, particularly adults, on the true nature and mission of the Church. For adults who would like to increase their knowledge of Orthodox Christianity, please see the notice on the "Know the Faith" classes which begin on Wednesday, Sep. 24 at 7 p.m.!

The Watered Down Mission of the Parish

Last but not least, you and I, the first, second and third generations and present day leaders of our parishes, have also played a role in what I would call "The Watered Down Mission of the Parish." Many of us mistreated Orthodox Christianity like a poor relative. We regarded her as inferior and, more often than not, an embarrassment! We identified the Orthodox Church with a few religious practices we either did not understand or with which we did not agree. We associated the Church with some customs that our parents and grandparents imported from their villages which, more often than not, have nothing to do with our belief in Christ and how we worship Him. Thus we passed sentence on Orthodox Christianity and labeled the Greek Orthodox Church antiquated, superstitious and old-country, fine for the old folks but not for us! Furthermore, we picked and chose the doctrines, teachings and liturgical practices that appealed to us and cast aside those which we did not take the

trouble to understand and which did not appeal to us.

The Mission of the Parish

Perhaps our insufficient knowledge and understanding have misled us into regarding the Orthodox Church as static, fossilized and anachronistic. Perhaps the Orthodox Christian approach to Christ and salvation has been laying dormant within us for many years. Perhaps we have come to know Christ, either through a peasant faith, as a result of experiences and maturity, or through just plain growing up. Perhaps we have been exposed to Orthodoxy through a marriage or through a concerted effort of catechetical study. This religious faith that helps us face the problems of life, as well as prepares us for salvation, can and must be shared with others. Thus another essential mission of the parish is to evangelize and spread the "Good News."

But in order for us to comprehend the mission of the parish, in order for us to appropriate this faith for ourselves, in order for us to evangelize and share this faith with others, we must read, ingest and digest; we must internalize and externalize what Chapter II, Article I, Section 4 of the Uniform Parish Regulations sets forth succinctly and clearly: *"The diakonia (work, ministry, mission) of the parish will include proclaiming the Gospel in accordance with the Orthodox Faith, sanctifying the faithful through God's grace in worship, the Divine Liturgy and the other Sacraments and Devotional Services, enhancing their spiritual life, adding to their numbers by instructing others and receiving them into the Church through Baptism and/or Chrismation, catechizing them in the Orthodox Faith and in the ethos of the Church through the establishment of programs, schools and philanthropic*

activities, and implementing Christian ministries."

Epilogue

The first mission of the parish always has been and continues to be the instrument that brings us closer to our Precious Redeemer Jesus Christ and the salvation He offers us. Secondly, the mission of the parish is to meet all our religious, spiritual and sacramental needs.

When the founding fathers of our great American nation determined there would be separation of church and state, they never intended that church people should remain reticent, silent, remote and removed from the mainstream of the political and judicial arena of American life. Unless we stand up to be heard and counted, not only will we forfeit our role and influence, but we will also lose all our values, our moral roots and our ethics by default. Therefore, another dimension of the mission of the parish is to make known our Orthodox Christian religious viewpoints and our strong moral convictions to all levels of government, the news media and the entertainment field. We must communicate our positions and beliefs on all matters that influence our government, politics and American society. This is an integral and inseparable dimension of our mission as Greek Orthodox parishes in America.

The Orthodox parish has a tremendous mission here in America. May we accept the mission of the parish as a deposit from Christ. May we watch over our parishes vigilantly with a Eucharistic, Sacramental, Evangelical and Christ-like leadership, thus knowing that Jesus Christ will ask each of us for an accounting of our leadership, our motives, our deeds and actions.

St. Anna's Philoptochos Society



By Valla Wrona,
President

"I will sing of mercy and justice; To You, O Lord, I will sing praises."

Psalm 101:1

This year, please stay tuned to the monthly In

Touch articles for information regarding special topics and demonstrations we will have for our meetings. Also, if you have an interest, such as floral arranging, fashion, or making prosfora, please contact me, and we will do our best to bring someone to present that topic.

Beginning in September, our ladies of Philoptochos will be bringing you different treats on the first Sunday of each month in order to raise money for our commitments. On Sep. 7, we will be

selling koulouria for \$5 per dozen. We will also be selling domestic feta cheese and Kalamata olives, each for just \$6 per pound. You may preorder the baked goods at any time by contacting Stella Pagos at 623-975-0027.

For the remaining months of the year, we have tentatively scheduled the following:

- October 5: paximadia
- November 2: melomakarouna
- December 7: tsourekia, koulouria, and kourabiedes

We all feel good about helping those in need, but we also hope to bring you even more fulfillment this year with the meetings. We can't do that without you though, so please consider joining us. Be our guest at the first meeting on Sep. 8 at 6 p.m. for a potluck dinner and games to follow!

Memory Eternal

May God grant eternal rest to the soul of his servant, Petros Hambas, who fell asleep in the Lord on Friday, Aug. 15. Petro, with an ever-present smile, had friends at, and enjoyed being a part of, St. Haralambos Church community, along

with Holy Trinity and St. Katherine's in Chandler. Our love and deepest sympathies are extended to his sisters, Koula Ratliff and Elizabeth Andersen, and brother Dimitri Hambas. May his memory be eternal.

Know the Faith

An Introduction to the Teachings and Traditions of Orthodox Christianity:

All adults are welcome to attend the new Know the Faith classes which will begin on Wednesday evening, Sep. 24 at 7 p.m. in the Church.

The classes will look at the history and development of Orthodox Christianity,

similarities and differences with other Christian traditions, and the various customs and traditions regarding Church family life.

There is no cost for the classes, but if you are planning on attending, please call or email the church office so we know how many copies of handouts will be needed.

Sunday Coffee Hour

Thank you to our coffee hour hosts/sponsors.

August

- 3: Philoptochos
- 10: Mary Manos
- 17: Sunday School Teachers
- 24: Available
- 31: Available

September

- 7: Available
- 14: Penny Obren
- 21: Available
- 28: Available

Birthdays



- Anna Kurilova (2)
- Elaine Tsialafos (2)
- Nebiel Desta (3)
- Gary Nicholas Jr. (3)
- Angie Cholas (4)
- Demetrios Gryparis (4)
- Emily Wirsing (6)
- Katherine Tally (7)
- Monica Gheorghe (8)
- Andrei Sofronie (12)
- Erini Papamatheakis (14)
- Milan Sofronie (16)
- Solomon Woldesilassie (16)
- Penny Obren (17)
- Nicholas Tremoulis (17)
- Florence Curran (19)
- Kathleen Harvey (19)
- P. Chris Theotocatos (19)
- Trenton Wilkins (20)
- Philip Williamson (21)
- Jane Milonas (22)
- Zara Sofronie (23)
- Christine Batalis (24)
- Irene Howerin (24)
- Lydia Ghebrehiwot (25)
- Stavroula Papamatheakis (26)
- Jacob Harris (27)

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.

SEPTEMBER 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Labor Day (Church Office Closed)	2	3	4	5	6
7 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Mortgage Reduction 2nd Tray Philoptochos Bake Sale	8 9:00am Divine Liturgy Nativity of the Theotokos 6:00pm Philoptochos Pot Luck	9	10	11 7:00pm Choir	12	13 10:30am Festival Meeting
14 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Feast of the Holy Cross	15	16	17	18 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir	19	20
21 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy IOCC Offering Tray	22 7:00pm Executive Council	23	24 7:00pm Know the Faith: Teachings and Traditions of Orthodox Christianity	25 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir	26	27
28 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	29	30				



**St. Haralambos
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Caring Friends Ministry

By Frosene Bravos and Donna Manos, Chairpersons

The Caring Friends ministry is a wonderful way to use your talents of compassion and caring for our fellow parishioners! You can offer as little as 20 minutes a week, 1 hour a month, or more if you choose--and you will make a huge difference in a person's life! Your commitment can even be periodic or temporary as we have regular members who often vacation or leave for the summer months and we need coverage.

Caring Friends ministry was originally created to support our fellow parishioners who were ill or homebound by staying in touch through visits and phone calls. Today some of the volunteers have extended their gifts of care even though they are not obligated to! This speaks to the devotion of our present volunteers. As a volunteer, you choose your hours, days, and level of involvement and that involvement can change as your needs change. Truly this is an opportunity for us to transfer God's love and kindness into action. We have the power to offer companionship to the homebound and keep them connected to our faith and our church.

Contact the church office if you would like to join our group or if you know of someone who is homebound and would like us to call or visit them regularly. As new Chairpersons, we are honored to have our first meeting of the year on Sunday Sep. 21, following coffee hour. We will review procedures and guidelines. Come join us and help our group continue this valuable ministry!

