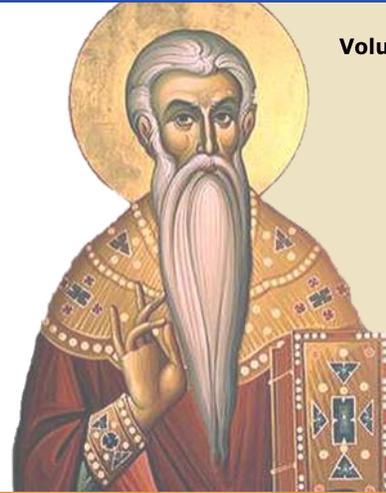


in Touch

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USE YOUR
freedom
TO SERVE ONE
ANOTHER IN LOVE.

(Galatians 5:13)



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



Service and Freedom

“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another humbly in love.” (Gal.5:13)

Celebrating the independence of our nation always brings the word “freedom” to mind. It is regarded as one of the most important human rights in most every civilized society. This month it seems appropriate to look at some scriptural passages that speak of freedom in the context of God’s love for humanity.

Service and freedom. While some see these two words as mutually exclusive, the New Testament writings of St. Paul see them as complementary, working together in pursuit of the highest of human virtues, which is love. To serve another human being, when done with a loving heart, is not servitude but voluntary service, a gift of love. If love is not expressed out of freedom, it is not genuine love. To serve another, without expecting anything in return is serving with love. The two, service and freedom, can work together beautifully.

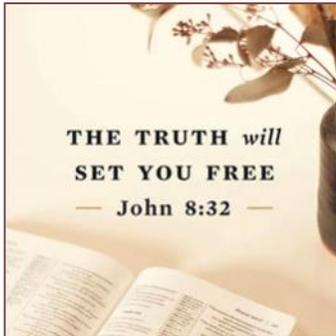
To serve the needs of someone else requires humility, the willingness to put someone else’s needs ahead of our own. Can that really be done freely? Doesn’t freedom mean being able to do whatever we want for ourselves first, without restrictions from anyone or anything else?

From the perspective of Holy Scripture, freedom, as treasured a gift as it is, does have boundaries.

“Do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature,” St. Paul admonishes. Unfortunately, history is filled with examples of this type of misuse or abuse of freedom.

Freedom is God-given; it is most properly expressed, therefore, in ways that please God. Recall God’s commandment to Adam recorded in the book of Genesis. *“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” (Gen.2:16-17)*

Freedom is God-given; it is most properly expressed, therefore, in ways that please God.



Freedom is given by God to the first Man, Adam; but God also includes restrictions that were for Adam’s protection and well-being. Exercising freedom within the boundaries set-up by God allowed Adam and Eve to enjoy all that paradise, the Garden of Eden, had to offer. Their eventual disregard of those boundaries, of God’s commandment, led to Adam and Eve being expelled from Paradise, as well as a variety of negative consequences for humankind ever since.

Even so, there have been others who have understood God’s original intent regarding freedom, and have chosen to respect His boundaries. King David writes in Psalm 119: “I will always obey your law, forever and ever. I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts.” Walking in freedom, for King David,

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**St. Haralambos
Greek Orthodox
Church**

www.stharalambos.org

Rev. Michael Pallad

Sunday Worship

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

[Services live online](#)

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Hours

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Parish Council

Cynthia Bekiaris
Harry Bekiaris
Deborah Chionchio
Angie Cholas
Virginia Dent
Dan Teska

Vivian Teska
Solomon Woldesilassie
Mary Wyszmierski
Ray Wyszmierski
Linda Zakas

Parish Council News

By Ray Wysmierski, President

We are all ready to celebrate the July 4th holiday and nearing half way through summer. All our major projects from last year are completed! Now we can plan for what the future looks like for our parish.

We know we need to continue to grow and flourish and focus on our local community.

We want to have open arms to all seeking to find a religion and provide them the education in our faith. We don't have to have a yard sale, however have a give away of our un-needed treasures and only ask to come and see us on Sundays. That is the price for the items they may have taken. Good idea? Maybe grab a hotdog and beverage while you're here and see the face lifts, we have completed in the last year.

We don't want to be that mysterious church in the neighborhood, but now we have the official designation to identify our faith with the portico.

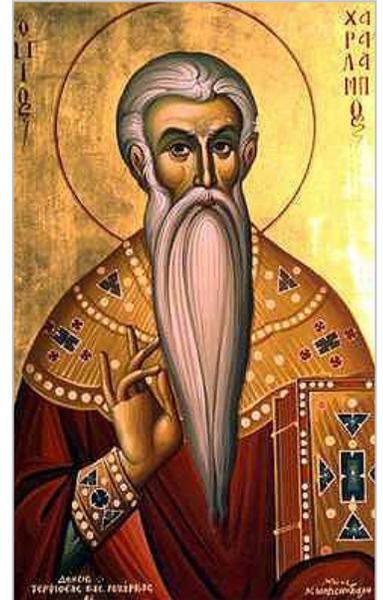
The fence is a way of segregating our property and adding an element of distinction, such as the portico.

We can also explain the reason for the fence is to protect the children we have Monday through Friday to offer added security and safety for them.

The added lighting protects our parishioners for evening services and events.

And the cameras keep a watchful eye when the area is vacant to ensure a peaceful environment, not a raceway or teenage out of the way parking spot. This should make the neighbors happy too.

Let's get some ideas and thoughts to your parish council members so we can continue on our path to shine this diamond in Peoria to become the beacon leading others to Orthodoxy.



Stewardship

We encourage all our parish families to send in the parish Stewardship form each year, together with their offerings of time, talents and treasure. If Saint Haralambos Church is the church you regularly attend, please consider becoming a steward, one who not only supports the church financially, but also with involvement in parish ministries and activities.

There are no Membership Dues in the Orthodox Church, there is no required minimum or maximum for offerings. Our offerings show our care for the continued functioning of our Church. In addition, being a parish steward fulfills the Archdiocese requirements of being a Member in Good Standing, allowing you to serve as godparents and sponsors for Orthodox sacraments.



Our financial contributions should be a percentage of our financial resources. This continues the biblical teaching on deciding an appropriate amount each year. It is fair because percentage giving is not a fixed amount applicable to all families, and it is biblical because of the teaching of the tithe, or a 10% gift back to the Church. Above all, our giving should be cheerfully given, recognizing our desire - not simply obligation - to give back to God a portion of our blessings we receive from Him.

The 2024 Stewardship brochures are available in the Narthex and the church office. Please print legibly, and enter your contributions of time, talents and treasure. Completed brochures can be mailed to the office or dropped off on Sundays.

St. Anna's Philoptochos Society

By Anna Kinniburgh, President



Philoptochos (which means friend of the poor in Greek) is a philanthropic organization that was founded in 1931 by the Greek Orthodox Ladies of Philadelphia. Its purpose is to provide aid and support to those in need, both within and outside the Greek Orthodox community.

Over the years Philoptochos has grown throughout the United States and has expanded its scope to include a wide range of charitable activities, such as : providing financial support to the poor, elderly, medical and those affected by natural disasters. A supporting organization that cares for the homeless, the hungry and those with disabilities, providing education and awareness about social issues such as domestic violence and human trafficking, engaging in community service projects such as blood drives.

Philoptochos is affiliated with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and is one of the largest and most prominent philanthropic organizations in the Greek Orthodox community. The funds we raise support all these charities plus our other commitments every month.

In order for a church to exist it has certain by laws. Having different ministries are part of the by-laws.

Philoptochos is one of the largest ministries a church has, because we support many charities. I am asking all in our church community men and women to please become members. It's not mandatory to come to all our meetings. We meet the second Sunday of every month Sept. thru May.

In my haste to send in the InTouch in June I didn't include the names of Ray and Mary Wysmierski, not only for their monetary donations but a very generous gift of a diamond bracelet for one of the raffle prizes that we held during our fund raising dinner. Mary donated her time and effort every Sunday by selling religious items she purchased and donated the funds she raised toward the Portico. All efforts are appreciated.

I want to thank everyone that instead of flowers donated money towards the building of the Portico after my husband Bob's passing. I appreciated all the kindness. When we look at the beautiful entrance now we can be happy to know we helped to build it.

Help Wanted: We are looking for Men or Women that have experience with large scale pastry baking to be the leader, at the times we bake for our fund raising events. Please get in touch with Anna

2024 Stewardship Families

Abbitt, Demetra
Asfaha, Moges
Bachanos, Evan & Jewelie
Basha, Genti & Elda
Bastell, Rudy & Suad
Bekiaris, Harry & Cynthia
Berhe, Almaz & Mogos
Bruno-Doster, Jenny
Bryson, Tom & Joan
Carlson, Olga
Chionchio, Deborah
Cholas, Angie
Christian, Thalia
Christie, Paul & Patricia
Conklin, Tom & Maria
Cotton, John & Ali

Covault, Lloyd & Angela
Danielek, Michael & Chrissy
Deming, Janet
Dent, Virginia
Dodd, Stavroula
Evangelinos, Parry & Hope
Farr, Jeff and Judy
Finch, Dennis & Marina
Germenis, Dennis
Giannias, Elaine
Gryparis, Demetri & Magda
Hartsel, Barbara
Javaras, Harry
Jolly, Judith
Kinniburgh, Anna
Lafayette, Henry & Maria

Lazzelle, Estelle
Levendi, Mary
Mavridis, Christos
Meyer, Herman
Milonas, Nick & Jane
Nathanson, Alan & Irene
Pagos, Stella
Pallad, Fr. Michael & Kristin
Pappas, Irene
Raiciof, Catalina
Ratliff, Koula
Russom, Bereket
Sambol, Patricia
Servetas, Charlotte
Singleton, Melanie & Bryan
Frost

Surman, Dina
Tally, Katherine
Tesfay, Ocbai & Genet
Teska, Dan & Vivian
Theoharatos, George & Lisa
Thieke, James & Lucy Schouten
Trakas, Georgia
Tucker, Marvin & Eleni
Vardalos, Peter & Lindsay
Woldesilassi, Solomon & Lydia
Wysmierski, Ray & Mary
Yiannakopoulos, George & Helen
Zakas, Speros & Linda
Zaruba, Estelle

Clergy Column

(Continued from page 2)

meant obedience to God's laws, respecting God's boundaries.

St. Peter describes obedience to God in stronger terms when he writes, *"Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves."* (1Peter 2:16) How do we regard ourselves today as slaves of God?

Slavery is degrading to fellow human beings, disregarding human dignity by forcing someone into servitude. How can we rightly consider slavery as an appropriate relationship between people today, or perhaps as St. Peter wrote, between a person and God?

When slavery is redefined as serving another out of love, and when the service is offered freely and not out of obligation, I think we can begin to see where St. Peter is coming from. If we understand our freedom as God-given, and choose to exercise our freedom within the boundaries God has established, and

recognize those boundaries as intended for our wellbeing, I think that King David's words from Psalm 119 (quoted above) are also more understandable, and more believable.

If I choose to serve the needs of another, whether they are the needs of my children, my wife or my friends, and I do so freely, this does not make me a slave at all, but rather a father, a husband, and a friend. If a slave is one who does his Master's bidding, the only Master I would ever choose to follow would be our Lord, Jesus Christ, who, as St. Paul reminds, has *"loved me and gave Himself for me."* (Gal.2:20)

The right exercise of freedom is truly one of God's most important gifts to humanity. When understood within the framework of God's boundaries, it helps provide the strengthening of all human relationships, in addition to our relationship with Christ our Lord and Savior.

Name Days

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

St. Kyriaki (7th)	St. Mary Magdalene (22nd.)
SS. Cyril and Methodios (7th)	St. Paraskevi (26th)
St. Euphemia (11th)	St. Panteleimon (The All-Merciful) (27th)
St. Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain (14th)	St. Irene (Chrysovalantou) (28th)
St. Macrina (Sister of St. Basil) (19th)	St. Joseph of Arimathea (31st)

Birthdays



Mary Levendi (4)
 Andrew Macrides (5)
 Cathy Kapetanakis (8)
 Lisa Theoharatos (11)
 Alaina Perreault (14)
 Christos Mavridis (17)
 Linda Zakas (22)
 Angela Karabetsos (27)
 Desiree Milonas (27)
 Terry Pritchard (28)
 Sharon Bolas (29)
 Anastasia Macrides (29)
 Magda Gryparis (31)

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.

JULY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 Independence Day (Church Office Closed)	5	6
7 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy Fathers of the 4th Ecumenical Council	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	22	23 6:00pm Parish Council	24	25	26	27
28 8:45am Matins 10:00am Divine Liturgy	29	30	31			